AN ENTRY-YEAR TEACHER'S COMMITMENT TO TEACHING WRITING WITH A WHOLE LANGUAGE PHILOSOPHY IN A TRADITIONAL SCHOOL SYSTEM AND THE SOCIALIZATION PROCESS SHE EXPERIENCES: A CASE STUDY

By

JANICE DEANNE DAVIS BUCKLES

Bachelor of Science
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma
1964

Master of Education
Northwestern Oklahoma State University
Alva, Oklahoma
1978

Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate College of the
Oklahoma State University
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the Degree of
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Thesis Approved:

David Yellin
Chairman/Thesis Adviser

Suzanne Olson

Margaret M Scott

Joseph Pearl

Thomas C. Collins
Dean of the Graduate College

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

> Education in the true sense is helping the individual to be mature and free, to flower greatly in love and goodness. That is what we should be interested in, and not in shaping the child according to some idealistic pattern.
> --J. Krishnamurti

Idealistically armored to conquer the world, the beginning teacher embarks on a professional career. She is educated, motivated, and dedicated to creating a magical kingdom that will equip children with the necessary learning tools for ultimate growth and development--physically, intellectually, and emotionally. She will provide a classroom that fosters creativity, cooperation, and autonomy. She will commit to her educational philosophy, innovatively implementing her teaching strategies in a way in which children will perceive school as exciting, challenging, and meaningful. What noble aspirations. What grandiose plans. Yet, somewhere between the first day of school and an undetermined future time, a process takes place; one that has the potential to change the individual's career direction.

This process, known as socialization (Crase, 1979), is a powerful force which can have a profound effect on the first year teacher in terms of both her attitude toward the

teaching profession and her implementation of methodologies that reflect her educational philosophy, especially when that philosophy, the whole language philosophy, conflicts with the traditional philosophy of the school system in which she teaches.

Socialization according to Van Maanen and Schein (1979) is a process involving the way an individual acquires social skills and knowledge necessary to assume an organization role. Teacher socialization includes acceptance of attitudes, values, and interests of the teaching profession in addition to learning how to teach (Lacey, 1977). When teachers have conformed to the attitudes and roles defined by the school organization, they are said to be socialized (Crase, 1979). In the past, this process has taken place in schools maintaining a traditional philosophy of education. Just what is this traditional philosophy of education?

A traditional philosophy of education metaphorically focuses on production, an industrial model that views students as raw materials to be molded by skilled technicians for the purposes that best fit them (Schubert, 1986). This factory model perceives students as products which are fed information by the teacher who is the authority figure in a dictatorial capacity. The teacher teaches for children to learn. The instructional materials are frequently textbooks, workbooks, and ditto sheets. The subjects are taught separately and at different times during the day. The classroom is segmented and content-centered. Assessment is usually made through formal testing (Hoskisson

& Tompkins, 1987).

Looking at writing specifically, Standal and Betza (1990) state that in the traditional classroom, the product is the main emphasis. Students are given a topic on which to write then allowed a brief period of time to complete the assignment, proofread for errors, and hand in a finished product, often within a thirty to forty-five minute time frame. The emphasis is on mechanics--an error-free paper--rather than content. How, then, does the traditional philosophy of education compare with the whole language philosophy of education?

The whole language philosophy of education is a grass-roots movement (Y. Goodman, 1989). It is basically an attempt to get educators, students, and the public in touch with the basic processes of reading, writing, and learning (Harste, 1989). It is child-centered and focuses on choice, sense of community, ownership of the curriculum, large blocks of time, structure, and response (Atwell, 1987 and Hansen, 1987). It is comprehension centered, emphasizing that learning should make sense to the child, begin where the child is in terms of language and experience, develop around the development of the child, and be language based, related to thinking and experience (Farris & Kaczmarski, 1988).

Looking at writing specifically in a whole language classroom, process is what is emphasized. Children are given large blocks of time for writing. They progress through stages, constantly conferring with peers and the

teacher and receiving feedback for revising and editing. Risk-taking is encouraged, early emphasis is on content rather than mechanics, and a sense of authorship is generated (Tompkins & Hoskisson, 1990; Farris & Kaczmarski, 1988).

Students choose their own topics and are taught about the writing process and about writing forms. They assume ownership of their writing and write collaboratively, sharing writing in groups. A large percentage of time is spent in brainstorming--the pre-writing stage. The students then write rough drafts to pour out ideas, revise and edit these drafts, and eventually make final copies (Tompkins & Hoskisson, 1991).

Beginning teachers who choose to adopt a philosophy which conflicts with that of the traditional school of thought must be totally committed to their personal beliefs about education, teaching, and how children learn. They must face adversity on a day-to-day basis, often standing alone among administrators, colleagues, and parents. What causes such commitment--a commitment to implement one's philosophy of teaching, regardless of the cost?

Cause for Commitment

Webster (1989) defines commitment as a pledge, promise, involvement, or obligation. Commitment according to Funk and Wagnall (1976) is the act or process of entrusting or consigning or an engagement or pledge to do something. Webster's New World Thesaurus (1974) defines commitment as

being synonymous with engagement, responsibility, and assurance. Commitment in terms of its relationship to an educational philosophy involves the obligation and responsibility to carry out one's educational philosophy by providing a compatible learning milieu and appropriate methodologies in the classroom, regardless of the general educational philosophy of the school system in which one is teaching. Yet, how does a beginning teacher develop this strong commitment to an educational philosophy and to implementing that philosophy?

Commitment may include many elements in the life of a teacher. According to Nias (1981), it may be synonymous with involvement of an individual in response to the perceived demands of teaching; a willingness to give thought, time, and energy to the day-to-day performance of the job. It may refer to a pursuit of personal ideals or to a search for high standards of occupational competence. It may even be viewed as a way to describe a sense of personal identification as a teacher. Considering these elements, one can perceive commitment as a powerful, driving force, one that Rice (1986) suggests identifies teachers who are deeply convinced that their professional lives have meaning and that their responsibilities have importance in contexts extending far beyond themselves. It involves a personal satisfaction in developing in students an appetite for learning, experiencing the joys of the profession and an ongoing life of learning.

Thus identifying the elements of commitment, the cause

for commitment for the subject of this case study was the personal and professional desire of a teacher to create a learning environment that was an alternative to the traditional classroom; one that envisioned children as learning from the Piagetian viewpoint with emphasis on development of autonomy, intrinsic motivation, and student empowerment (Kamii, 1982) and one that supported the whole language philosophy of teaching.

Many concerned educators are supporting this holistic approach to teaching. Nancie Atwell (1987), a middle school teacher in Boothbay Harbor, Maine, adopted this approach as she moved from a creationist who set in motion, managed and maintained a curriculum to an evolutionist who observed the curriculum as it constantly unfolded. With a whole language teaching philosophy, she and her students now learn together as they experience reading and writing workshops and are immersed in a literate engagement with the world.

Jane Hansen (1987) left the elementary classroom in 1975 to pursue a doctorate and to find a better way to teach reading. During her several years of involvement in research in elementary classrooms, she learned about reading through writing--observing children as members of a literate environment. These children were taught in classrooms in which time, choice, response, structure, and community were key components of the learning milieu.

There are many other educators who support this whole language approach to teaching. Dorothy Watson (1989) perceives this holistic philosophy as an exciting

alternative to the traditional philosophy of education. It is an alternative that allows learners to inquire into life and literature by fully using language; an alternative that allows teachers to assume roles of researchers, learners, and educators. Yetta Goodman (1989) suggests that the educational theories and beliefs representing whole language today will be foundational to educational practices of the future. Jerome Harste (1989) perceives whole language as visionary; an attempt to awaken educators, students, and the public to the basic processes of reading, writing, and learning within an authentic framework. Farris (1989) supports whole language emphasizing its focuses on process rather than product, integration across the curriculum, choice in selection of materials and activities, involvement in authentic experiences, and student/teacher empowerment. Newman and Church (1990) believe whole language to be a collaborative venture in which the teacher and the students are implicated in one another's learning, each having an active voice. Prenn and Scanlan (1991) emphasize the elements of time, ownership, process, conferences, and resources as vital to whole language; elements which encourage teachers and students to shift roles, to re-think approaches to learning and teaching, to re-examine practices as readers and writers. For all of these enthusiastic supporters, this holistic philosophy provides an exciting environment for learning.

The whole language philosophy has emerged as a result of research relating to how children learn and how children

learn language. Cognitive, psycholinguistic, and sociolinguistic theories of learning have influenced the whole language movement. These language learning theories have been developed by such researchers as Piaget, Bruner, Vygotsky, Norm Chomsky, Halliday, Frank Smith, Pinnell, Teale and Sulzby, Jaggar, Morrow, and DeStefano.

Jean Piaget (1969, 1975) describes learning as the modification of individuals' cognitive structures as they interact with and adapt to their environment. This definition requires teachers to engage students with experiences and environments requiring them to modify their cognitive structures and construct their own knowledge rather than to dispense knowledge in the traditional way. Jerome Bruner (1978) also supports constructivism, asserting that individuals come to know the world by interacting with it and by using operational, cognitive structures to explain what has been perceived. Lev Vygotsky (1978, 1986), a sociologist, views language learning as a social reflection of the culture and community of which one is a part; a way to learn as well as to communicate and share experiences with others. Chomsky (1974, 1979) theorizes that language learning is natural for human beings, maintaining that individuals use a built-in language acquisition device to construct an elaborate rule system for generating and inventing complex and interesting speech. Halliday (1973, 1975) believes that language acquisition grows out of an active need to use language to function in society. Frank Smith (1975, 1977, 1979) combines cognitive psychology with

linguistics to focus on the cognitive or mental aspects of language learning. Pinnell (1975) emphasizes that children use language for functional purposes, for genuine communication as they interact with one another. Teale and Sulzby (1989) theorize that young children are active learners who construct their own knowledge and become literate through observing and participating in real-life settings in which reading and writing are used. Jaggar (1985) suggests that children pass through stages of oral language development, doing so at different ages because of developmental differences as well as differences in social and cultural backgrounds. Morrow (1989) also theorizes that young children acquire oral language in a fairly regular and systematic way. DeStefano (1978) addresses children's phonological development, suggesting that sounds develop at particular stages, with specific sound substitutions made at certain ages. All of the above researchers have been an influence on a holistic approach to teaching.

Committed teachers across the nation are planning classroom instruction within the framework of the whole language movement (Brand, 1989; Buckley, 1987; Fisher, 1989; Griffith & Klesius, 1990; Harbaugh, 1990; O'Neil, 1989; and Ridley, 1990). Watson (1989) suggests that many teachers who were once discouraged and burned out are now ignited by a new professionalism, movement, philosophy, and spirit in the name of whole language.

When experienced teachers commit to changing from a traditional to a whole language philosophy of teaching, they

can do so with a strong degree of security because of the confidence gained from years of teaching experience. They have endured the
first years of socialization and believe in their abilities to successfully implement new ideas in the classroom. Nancie Atwell (1987) and Jane Hansen (1987) are examples of teachers who had the courage and confidence to commit to the transition from traditional teaching to whole language teaching.

Other teachers across the nation have made a similar transition. Kathy Dulaney Barclay (1991), a faculty member at Western Illinois University, reports findings regarding seven elementary teachers, Sue Bensch, Aleta Sunley, Donetta Bruner, Charleen Johnson, Debra Bonmarito, Judith Sterns, and Diane Fox, who have made the change to a whole language environment. Griffith and Klesius (1990) conducted a study involving three teachers, Betty, Alice, and Carol, who were implementing whole language programs at kindergarten, first, and third grade level in three central Florida counties. Lia Ridley (1990) discusses a group of teachers in a suburban Denver, Colorado, school district who are implementing whole language instruction in their classrooms. In the text Coming to Know: Writing to Learn in the Intermediate Grades edited by Nancie Atwell, thirteen teachers from Maine, Vermont, and Massachusetts share their ideas and methodologies for teaching report writing from a whole language perspective as a part of their transition from a traditional to a holistic classroom. Andrew Frew

(1990), a middle school teacher in Providence, Rhode Island, has been moving toward a whole language approach to teaching reading for several years. Current research supports Dorothy Watson's (1989) suggestion that the transition to whole language has ignited a new professionalism across the nation.

Beginning teachers, however, face a totally different situation. They must undergo the socialization process without the security and self-confidence gained from years of teaching experience. Problems can quickly surface when commitment to an educational philosophy conflicts with that of the school system of which they are a part. Such was the case of the subject of this research study.

Statement of the Problem

Once committed to an educational philosophy and to the implementation of that philosophy, the beginning teacher faces a tremendous challenge. She must cope with the socialization process (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979; Crase, 1979; Lacey, 1977). If her teaching philosophy conflicts with that of the school system of which she is a part, serious problems can surface. Michele*, the subject of this research study, experienced such problems. Michele's whole language philosophy was in conflict with the traditional philosophy of the school system in which she taught. As she

*To adhere to professional ethics involving research subjects, all real names of persons and places involved in this study have been replaced by fictitious ones.

attempted to apply that philosophy in her classroom, she experienced the socialization process; a process which challenged her teaching philosophy, her methodologies, and her ability as a professional. Thus, the general problem was one of socialization; pressure to conform to the attitudes and roles defined by the school organization (Crase, 1979). Specific problems within the realm of socialization were evident.

One problem involved administrative pressures (Hensley, 1989, and Wells, 1984). These administrative pressures take a variety of forms. Teachers experience them in terms of classroom control in which principals issue mandates regarding both the physical arrangement of the room and the methodologies of instruction employed (Hensley, 1989). The administrator also often impresses upon teachers the need to conform to traditional values and practices established by the school administration, evaluating beginning teachers on their ability to follow routine lesson plans and to control students, using materials dictated by the traditional school system of which they are a part (Wells, 1984).

Within the first week of school, Michele encountered such administrative pressures. She received mandates from her principal to change the physical arrangement of her room, use different teaching materials, and rearrange her class schedule.

A second problem related to parental pressures. Several parents requested that their children be transferred to Michele's classroom; others requested that their children

be removed from her classroom.

A third problem centered around teaching colleagues. Two of the three other first grade teachers complained about Michele's educational philosophy and methods of teaching.

A fourth problem related to Michele's plans for teaching process writing. Because of administrative pressure to organize her morning schedule into segmented content area teaching, Michele could not allow the students to experience process writing throughout the day. Instead, she had to create a time block for process writing following lunch.

A final problem focused on the affective domain. The socialization process affected the subject's physical, emotional, and professional state as she struggled to survive her first year of teaching.

These specific problems were all a part of the socialization process; a process which proved problematic to an entry year teacher whose commitment to a whole language philosophy was challenged in a traditional school setting.

Research Questions Guiding the Study

Relevant research questions guiding the collection and analysis of the data included the following:

1. Commitment to a philosophy
    - 1.1 What influences aid in the formulation of a teaching philosophy?
    - 1.2 What motivates a beginning teacher to commit to a specific philosophy?

1.3 Must a first year teacher compromise her commitment to a philosophy in order to survive? If so, in what ways?

2. Effects of socialization
   - 2.1 How does socialization affect the beginning teacher's methodologies implemented and materials used?
   - 2.2 Does socialization affect the physical and emotional state of the teacher? If so, how?
   - 2.3 Who is involved in the pressures applied as a part of the socialization process?
   - 2.4 How does socialization affect the physical elements of the classroom?
   - 2.5 How does socialization affect the students in the classroom?
3. The whole language philosophy of teaching vs. the traditional philosophy of teaching
   - 3.1 How do the philosophies differ?
   - 3.2 How is writing taught within the parameters of each philosophy?
   - 3.3 What is the role of the teacher?
   - 3.4 What is the role of the student?
   - 3.5 What physical arrangements best facilitate each philosophy?
4. Process approach to teaching writing
   - 4.1 What are the advantages of teaching process writing?
   - 4.2 Can process writing be taught effectively

within the confines of a traditional school?

4.3 Can definite progress in writing be observed when teaching through process? If so, how?

Scope of the Study

The case study seeks holistic description and explanation while focusing primarily on insight, discovery, and interpretation (Merriam, 1988). It is strong in reality and recognizes the embeddedness of social truths (Cohen & Manion, 1985), allowing the readers to view the world through the eyes of the researcher (Eisner & Peshkin, 1990).

A case study was selected for this research design because it would enable the researcher to provide a descriptive record of a beginning teacher's day-to-day life in the classroom, offering valuable insights into her feelings, responses, and reflections as she attempted to teach according to her belief system, faced the socialization process, and survived through compromise. This was made possible through tri-weekly observation, detailed journal entries, examination of relevant materials and samples of children's process writing, and in-depth interviews. With these research tools, questions were designed to seek understanding and meaning in the data. These questions, predominantly "how" and "why" questions, focused on process more than products. The researcher's perceptions and intellect were the tools for analysis. Using observation, in-depth interviews, and journal entries, the effects of commitment and socialization were examined

over the course of the entire school year, beginning in August and ending in May.

Qualitative research is coming of age in the field of education (Merriam, 1989). Basically, it relies on watching people in their particular territory, interacting with them on their own terms (Kirk and Miller, 1986). According to Geertz (1973), its goal is to enrich human discourse rather than to produce a formal body of knowledge. It arrives at findings in a comprehensive, holistic manner and seemed most appropriate as the design for this particular study.

Assumptions and Limitations

Four assumptions relating to the elementary school system chosen for this study were made. First, this school was considered a traditional, self-contained elementary school, grades kindergarten through five. The goals and expectations for the teacher, support staff, and students were similar to what one would find in any other traditional elementary school within the United States. The success of students to a large degree was measured by the performance on achievement tests at the end of the year. The curriculum was generally based upon state adopted textbooks, and the average teacher instructed by lecturing with students using textbooks to learn.

The second assumption was that the children in the first grade class studied were normal children who came into the classroom with similar school experiences, most having attended kindergarten at that particular school.

The third assumption was that the day-to-day observations made by the researcher were routine days involving normal activities, interruptions, and experiences with typical interactions between the teacher and the students.

The fourth assumption was that the children would react normally in regard to both behavior and performance in the presence of the researcher who frequently observed and jotted down daily observations.

There were a number of limitations to this case study. One limitation involved the population of the school. The school was a middle-class school with relatively few minority students. The facility was fairly new and well-kept, evidencing an abundance of faculty, student, and community pride. Parents, many of whom were professionals, exhibited a great deal of interest and involvement with their children and the activities of the school. Thus findings can only be generalized to similar schools.

Another limitation was the element of time. Many hours of observation were spent in the classroom, yet the researcher was limited to one to two hour segments of time due to her work schedule.

A third limitation was the scheduling of in-depth interviews. The people involved were all professionals with extremely demanding schedules which presented scheduling problems. Because time was of the essence, the researcher could not record all of the responses during the actual interviews; therefore, additional information had to be

recalled and recorded after leaving the interviewee.

A final limitation was the stipulation by the Board of Education that tape recorders not be allowed in the classroom. There are times when a tape recorder would have proved beneficial during classroom observation.

As with any research project, the element of human bias is a limitation. Because the researcher knew the subject personally, she had to constantly guard against interjecting her own beliefs when dialoguing with her.

Definition of Terms

For clarification of the study, the following seven terms and/or phrases will be defined: commitment, socialization of teachers, traditional philosophy of education, whole language philosophy of education, traditional approach to teaching writing, process approach to teaching writing, and implementation.

Commitment: Webster (1989) defines commitment as a pledge, promise, involvement, or obligation. Commitment according to Funk and Wagnall (1976) is defined as the act or process of entrusting or consigning or an engagement or pledge to do something. Webster's New World Thesaurus (1974) states commitment as synonymous with engagement, responsibility, and assurance. For the purpose of this research, commitment will be defined in terms of its relationship to an educational philosophy. Commitment will be defined as the obligation and responsibility to carry out one's educational philosophy by providing a compatible

learning milieu and appropriate methodologies in the classroom, regardless of the general educational philosophy of the school system in which one is teaching.

Socialization of Teachers: Teacher socialization (Crase, 1979) is the process of learning, unlearning, and adjusting behaviors both old and new in order that new teachers meet the role expectations and institutional expectations placed before them. This process includes education skill training acquired as well as the formal orientation period at which time the teacher arrives at school (Wells, 1984). This is a widely held definition by researchers and the one identified as appropriate for this study. When teachers have conformed to the attitudes and roles defined by the school organization, they are said to be socialized (Crase, 1979).

Traditional Philosophy of Education: The traditional philosophy of education focuses on the factory metaphor of teaching. Students are products which are fed information by the teacher who is the authority figure in a dictatorial capacity. The teacher teaches for children to learn. It is compatible with what Dobson and Dobson (1981) identify as Essentialism--Behaviorism which defines curriculum as a structured series of intended learning outcomes that are predetermined, logical in sequence, and content-centered. The organizational emphasis is on management and the focus is homogeneous grouping.

Whole Language Philosophy of Education: The whole language philosophy of education is a way of viewing

children and their learning, based upon the observation that children grow and learn most readily when they actively pursue their own learning (Weaver, 1990). It is child-centered and focuses on choice, sense of community, ownership of the curriculum, large blocks of time, structure, and response (Atwell, 1987 and Hansen, 1987). It is comprehension-centered, emphasizing that learning should make sense to the child, begin where the child is in terms of language and experience, develop around the development of the child, and be language based, related to thinking and experience (Farris & Kaczmarski, 1988). Its focus is the learning process rather than the product (Weaver, 1990).

Traditional Approach to Teaching Writing: The traditional approach to teaching writing has been one of children being given a specific writing assignment made by teachers. Little or no instruction is provided, and the focus is on the finished product. There is little or no collaboration, and a single-draft composition is usually required, at which time content and mechanics are the focus at once. Students are expected to produce an error-free work in less than an hour. The teacher is the primary audience and assessor of the writing, assigning a grade for the finished product (Tompkins & Hoskisson, 1991). This approach is a part of the traditional philosophy of education.

The Process Approach to Teaching Writing: The process approach to teaching writing is one in which students choose their own topics and are taught about the writing process

and writing forms. They assume ownership of their writing and write collaboratively, sharing writing in groups. They write rough drafts to pour out ideas, then revise and edit these drafts before making final copies. Errors are corrected during editing but a greater emphasis is placed on content rather than on mechanics (Graves, 1983, 1989a, 1989b; Murray, 1980, 1982, 1984, 1985; Zinsser, 1985). The teacher teaches about writing and provides constant feedback during revising and editing. Students may spend one, two, or three weeks working on a composition. Assessment focuses on the process that writers use and the finished product (Tompkins & Hoskisson, 1991).

Implementation: Implementation is a change in curriculum consisting of changes in knowledge and understanding, organizational structure, role/behavior, subject matter or materials, and value internalization as a result of innovative ideas (Fullan & Pomfret, 1977).

Summary

This case study was designed to describe the ways in which a beginning first grade teacher committed to teaching process writing within a whole language philosophy in a basically traditional elementary school system and the socialization process which she experienced. Specific observations were made relating to the students' progress in both writing and school adjustment and to the teacher's physical and emotional responses to the socialization process. Using observation, in-depth interviews, and

journal entries, the effects of commitment and socialization were examined over the course of the entire school year, beginning in August and ending in May.

A review of literature relating to beginning teaching and the socialization process, commitment and the effects of socialization, the traditional philosophy of education, whole language philosophy of education, and comparison of writing instruction within the two philosophical frameworks will comprise Chapter II. The methodology and procedures of this research design will be contained in Chapter III. There will be a discussion of the appropriateness of qualitative research generally and the case study specifically relating to this particular inquiry. Also included in the chapter is a descriptive analysis of the subject, the target school, the research conditions, and the data collection procedures. Chapter IV focuses on the beginning teacher as she commits to her philosophy of education and experiences the socialization process. Also, attention will be given to relevant findings relating to the teacher's background experiences and acquaintances, the classroom, the students, the administration, colleagues, and parents. Chapter V will provide a summary of the research findings, the significance of those findings, and recommendations for future studies.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

> There is no such thing as truth or reality for a living human being except as he participates in it, is conscious of it, has some relationship to it.
> --Rollo May

Introduction

The purpose of this section is to survey pertinent literature relating to the research study. This chapter will specifically address (1) beginning teaching and the socialization process, (2) commitment and the effects of socialization, (3) the traditional philosophy of education, (4) the whole language philosophy of education, (5) process writing, and (6) comparison of writing instruction within the two philosophical frameworks. Following the review of literature will be a summary of the findings.

Beginning Teaching and the Socialization Process

By focusing on the socialization process of beginning teachers one can better understand the challenge to commitment and the pressures to compromise. The

socialization process is a process of learning, unlearning, and adjusting behaviors in order to meet the role expectation and institutional expectations placed before new teachers (Crase, 1979). The process includes educational skill training acquired as well as the formal orientation period at which time the teacher arrives at school (Wells, 1984). Teacher socialization includes acceptance of attitudes, values, and interests of the teaching profession in addition to learning how to teach (Lacey, 1977). Thus defined, how do researchers measure the effects of teacher socialization?

For the most part researchers have looked at changes in the attitudes of the beginning teacher by using such instruments as the Minnesota Teacher Attitude Inventory (MTAI) developed by Cook, Teeds and Callis (1974) and the Pupil Control Ideology (PCI) measure developed by Willower, Eidell and How (1967). The former measures attitudes of the instructor toward student-teacher relationships relating to whether the approach to student control is more or less personal. The latter measures the teacher's approach to classroom control looking at the degree of humanistic orientation to discipline that is exhibited (Wells, 1984).

Deal and Chatman (1989) suggested that all professions use a variety of socialization strategies to teach new members the expected way to believe, perceive, think, and feel. Wanous (1980) describes five strategy types. The first strategy is training, which for teachers includes both learning while working and additional professional training

at the university level. The second strategy is education, which in public schools focuses on the formal policies, procedures, and practices of a specific school. The third strategy is apprenticeship, which places student-teachers with veteran teachers under general supervision of a professor for a six-to-eight week period of practice teaching. The fourth strategy is debasement, which attempts to unfreeze the newcomer from previously held beliefs and values in order to mold the individual into a new mold, placing the organization in a better position to exert influence. And the fifth strategy is coadaptation, at which time a newcomer is admitted to the organization and is abruptly absorbed into it.

In past years, a variety of studies have been conducted to address the problems of beginning teachers. O'Dell (1988) reported that most beginning teachers found teaching much different from their expectations, citing that both teaching and aspects of time management were considerably more difficult than they had anticipated. In a case study by Bullough (1990), the beginning teacher being studied experienced tremendous stress due to student pressures, a lack of confidence in her knowledge base relating to one area of her teaching assignment, and a lack of understanding of her role as a teacher.

Additional research studies indicated that new teachers who have not been given induction support often suffer "reality shock" and a collapse in the teacher training ideals due largely to the monumental pressure encountered in

the daily world of the classroom teacher (O'Dell, 1988). During the first weeks of school, their distorted picture of the realities of teaching is often accompanied by a sense of isolation and aloneness with an exhaustive and overwhelming amount of paper work and reports to complete, tasks that they perceived administrators to deem as highly important aspects of the teaching profession (Felder, 1979). It has also been found that administrators pressure beginning teachers to use certain texts and even decorate classrooms in particular ways (Hensley, 1989). Pressures such as paper work, bureaucracy, transition from learner role to teacher role, and curriculum planning result in a loss of a considerable amount of autonomy (Knowles, 1988). The classroom work conditions and the type of work assignments often affect beginning teachers' behaviors, pushing them to change their methodologies in order to survive (Jordell, 1987; Etheridge, 1988). Even beginning teachers' expectations relating to the professionalism of colleagues, parental support, guidance of the principal, and inservice programs established by the school are not consistent with reality. Neither orientation programs nor policies and procedures developed as a part of the new teacher induction process address the strains, anxieties, and socialization process of beginning teachers (Quaglia, 1989). It is evident that the school bureaucracy is alive and thriving and soon sends a message to new teachers that they must conform to the traditional values and practices of the system of which they are a part (Wells, 1984).

Commitment and the Effects of Socialization

According to Nias (1981), teacher commitment falls into four categories: (1) commitment to making a contribution to society, with a willingness to allow the job to take over one's life to some extent; (2) commitment to working hard and seriously at becoming the best teacher possible as long as one remains in the profession, viewing it as an occupation rather than as a career calling; (3) commitment to living up to one's self-image because one has always wanted to teach or because it was the occupation chosen; or (4) commitment to career-continuance, feeling tied to a job in a different sort of way.

Several elements of commitment are influential in maintaining the teaching role. These elements include intrinsic enjoyment of the subject matter and the sense of efficacy in doing a job well; extrinsic rewards such as money, recognition, awards, and favors; and social support in the form of mutual esteem of colleagues and membership within a professional community (Snyder & Spreitzer, 1984).

Commitment to an educational philosophy involves obligation and responsibility. It involves providing a classroom environment, materials, and methodologies conducive to that environment. And it involves a belief in oneself and in children and how they learn.

Being committed to implementing one's philosophy, regardless of the philosophy of the system in which one

teaches, is not a new venture. In past years, several dedicated teachers have made an impact in the field of education with their commitment to a teaching philosophy much different from that of the school systems of which they were a part (Kohl, 1967 and Holt, 1970). Kohl has continued his pursuit of teaching excellence with this commitment to a non-traditional philosophy and has been joined by such educators as Nancie Atwell (1987, 1990); Jane Hansen (1987); and Eliot Wiggington (1986). Yet, regardless of one's commitment, the socialization process wields a powerful influence on the beginning teacher.

Ryan (1986) suggested that beginning teachers pass through stages of development. The "fantasy" stage begins when the individual considers the possibility of becoming a teacher. This stage is interrupted during the student teaching experience at which time the fantasy is either built upon or begins to be dismantled. As the first year of actual teaching is experienced, the second stage, "survival," becomes the reality. It is during this stage that socialization begins. This usually occurs from the early weeks to midway through the year. The survival stage throws beginning teachers into a variety of major crises and challenges and can be a "fight for life" regarding the testing of personal beliefs, attitudes, and philosophies. This stage often causes the teacher to become disenchanted about education and teaching, resulting in a considerable loss of autonomy (Knowles, 1988). How, then, does this socialization process affect the attitudes and behaviors of

beginning teachers, that spirit of commitment which so intensely motivated them in the beginning?

Studies by Muuss (1969) indicated that because of the disillusionment and loss of idealism, a return to a more traditional attitude, less tolerance and less sympathy for children and their behavior results. Hoy (1968) and McArthur (1978) also found new teachers to alter their liberal attitudes toward education to more traditional ones. They changed their ideological beliefs to more tough-minded, custodial, and realistic ones during, and perhaps as a result of, their initial experience as full-time teachers (McArthur, 1978). The bombardment of information, prescriptions and expectations from many sides also act to influence classroom practices (Hoffman & O'Neal, 1985).

In summary, research findings clearly indicated that socialization--the process of conforming to the attitudes and roles defined by the school organization--does take place in the life of entry-year teachers. These findings further suggest that beginning teachers start their teaching career with idealistic philosophies but soon pass through stages of disillusionment resulting from major crises, challenges, and administrative pressures causing disenchantment with education and a considerable loss of autonomy. Because of these experiences, methodologies are changed or adjusted and more tough-minded, custodial, realistic beliefs are internalized and a more traditional attitude toward education is adopted. Thus one observes that the original commitment to a philosophy and the

implementation of that philosophy is frequently altered, and at times compromised, in an attempt to survive as a first year teacher.

The Traditional Philosophy of Education

A traditional philosophy of education focuses on the teacher and curriculum, rather than the children and their needs, as the center of the schooling enterprise. Children are viewed as passive recipients of knowledge who are instructed in formal, direct, systematic settings by the teacher with emphasis on skill acquisition. Groups are inflexible, often formed according to achievement tests. The classroom environment fosters competitiveness and isolation, and evaluation is typically formal (Reutzel & Hollingsworth, 1988). The industrial (classroom management), military (centralization of power), and medical (labeling) metaphors of curriculum and instruction (Dobson, Dobson, & Koetting, 1987) can be identified with the traditional philosophy of education.

According to Eisner (1983), the historical development of this philosophy in American education, one of scientific diagnosis and prescription, was influenced by Wundt in Germany, Galton in England, and Hall, James, Skinner, and Thorndike in the United States. Thorndike is a focus of attention for his contributions to learning theory and scientific inquiry and for the establishment of a scientific technology of teaching. Thorndike's ideas, research, and

faith in science influenced educational research for the next 70 years.

At the same time, Francis Taylor developed the concept of scientific management. Teachers were regarded as workers to be supervised by specialists with prescriptions to be followed and goals to be attained. Thus, Thorndike's scientific metaphor and Taylor's industrial metaphor worked in conceptual tandem to set a tone in American education that is still an influence (Eisner, 1983).

Another way of perceiving the traditional philosophy is one of commitment to training based on the belief that children are passive participants in an environment of which they are the sum total of their experiences (Dobson & Dobson, 1989). Training according to MacDonald (1968) is the process of preparation for performing defined functions in predictable situations.

Perceiving the traditional philosophy of education from a basic design, one views the following education components: (1) interaction as role-oriented, with expectations, (2) curriculum as predetermined, structured, and logical in sequence, (3) instructional behavior as purposeful, governed by management, and predetermined in intent, (4) resources as being designed according to predetermined objectives, (5) organization as being orchestrated and established, (6) time-space as being segmented, parcelled, and time-space matched, (7) subject matter as isolated and parcelled, (8) evaluation as comparative, competitive, and disruptive, (9) outcomes that

are expected, not known, corrective measures, (10) end-results bringing closure through expectations, never knowing what could have been. The paradigm of this basic design focuses on expecting, and expecting is a technique used in management (Dobson & Dobson, 1989).

In regard to the classroom and materials in a traditional setting, students' desks are arranged in rows with the teacher's desk at the front of the classroom, conveniently located for teacher lecturing (Goodlad, 1984) and instructional materials are frequently textbooks, workbooks, and ditto sheets. The classroom is segmented and content-centered. Assessment is made through formal testing (Hoskisson & Tompkins, 1987).

Whole Language Philosophy of Education

The whole language philosophy of education is a grass-roots movement (Y. Goodman, 1989). It is basically an attempt to get educators, students, and the public in touch with the basic processes of reading, writing, and learning (Harste, 1989). Its development can be linked to several pedagogical influences.

John Dewey, a major philosopher of the twentieth century, emphasized the importance of reflective teaching, students being at the center of curriculum planning, and integration of language across the curriculum (Y. Goodman, 1989). Dewey (1938) believed that students, regardless of age, should be active participants in their own learning,

solving real problems that are important to them at the moment.

Another significant influence on the whole language movement was the Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget who researched for a lifetime how people come to know concepts, ideas, and moralities. Piaget and his co-researchers demonstrated through clinical methodology how children actively pursue their knowledge, attempting to answer questions and solve problems posed for them by the world. They construct knowledge from within rather than wait for someone to transmit knowledge to them, developing conceptualizations that are often different from those of adults (Duckworth, 1987).

According to Piaget, children construct knowledge from the inside through interaction with the environment, passing through one level after another of incorrect responses from an adult's perspective. This constructivist point of view perceives children as constructing knowledge by putting things into relationships, acknowledging that their learning is constructed as an interrelated whole, not being compartmentalized into subject matters. As a result, this knowledge advances only within the constraints of developmental levels. The aim of constructivist education is autonomy, a state of being governed by oneself including the ability to think logically at the formal operational level. This view of education requires educators to totally change their way of thinking about teaching methods. Autonomy as the goal of education implies the necessity of

rethinking everything that is done in the name of education (Kamii, 1982).

Another influence of the whole language movement is the Russian psychologist Vygotsky (1986), who researched the relationship between the individual learning of the student and the influences of the social context. Vygotsky emphasized the importance of the role of the teacher and peers in the student's learning process, stating that both may support or thwart the language and cognitive development of the individual within the school environment. He also emphasized the importance of play as a major source of development (1978).

The linguist M.A.K. Halliday (1975) has had a major impact on the whole language curriculum with his emphasis on integration across the curriculum, contending that learners use language, learn language, learn through language, and learn about language all at the same time (Pinnell & Haussler, 1988 and Hoskisson & Tompkins, 1987).

According to Y. Goodman (1989) other influences on the whole language movement are educators from the fields of reading, writing, and early childhood education.

Reading educators, Kenneth Goodman and Frank Smith, established the idea of reading as a unified interaction between the reader, the text, and language (Y. Goodman, 1989). K. Goodman (1991) also introduced the idea of reading as a psycholinguistic guessing game, one in which the reader uses graphophonic, syntactic, and semantic information to make sense of print.

Louise Rosenblatt (1976, 1978), another reading researcher, described reading as a transaction between the reader and the text. This is known as the transactional theory of reading. It is a concept which helped to establish the rights of readers to their own meanings. This view of the reading process originated with the ideas of Dewey and Bentley (1949) and has more recently been popularized by K.S. Goodman (1985) and F. Smith (1982). According to this theory, reading is a relationship in which the reader, the text, and the social-situational context are inseparable and are transformed as a result of the reading event. As a result of the reading transaction, both the text and the readers' knowledge structures have been changed (K.S. Goodman, 1985). This theory also implies that readers transact in different ways for different purposes, thus, the context and intent of the reader also condition the nature of the reading transaction. The transaction theory of reading views the reader, the text, the situational context, and the purposes for reading as whole and indivisible in the reading process (Reutzel & Cooter, 1992).

Reading educators Dorris Lee and Lillian Lamoreaux (1943) and Lee and Roach Van Allen (1963) were instrumental in popularizing the language experience approach to teaching reading. The language experience approach provides active involvement in the reading process by allowing children to dictate or write their own reading selections and to perceive reading as a practical form of communication. The children create their own instructional materials for

readiness, decoding, and comprehension experience (May, 1990), giving them a sense of ownership of the curriculum and allowing them to learn through authentic experiences.

Charles Read (1971, 1975, 1986) advocated the importance of invented spelling. Through research studies of preschoolers, Read discovered that children use their knowledge of phonology to invent spellings. Researchers have identified five stages that children pass through on their way to becoming conventional spellers, using different strategies at each stage (Bean and Bouffler, 1987). These stages are (1) precommunicative spelling, the stage in which children string scribbles, letters, and letter-like forms together, not associating the marks made with any specific phonemes (usually at ages 3-5); (2) semiphonetic spelling, the stage in which children begin representing phonemes in words with letters, suggesting a rudimentary understanding of the alphabetic principle linking letters and sounds (usually at ages 5-6); (3) phonetic spelling, the stage in which children further refine their understanding of the alphabetic principle, continuing to use letter names to represent sounds but also using consonant and vowel sounds (usually at age 6); (4) transitional spelling, the stage in which children come close to the correct spellings of English words, spelling many words correctly, but misspelling words with irregular spellings (usually at ages 7-8); and (5) correct spelling, the final stage in which children spell many but not all words correctly (usually at ages 8-9). It is at this time that children are typically

ready for formal spelling instruction (Gentry, 1978, 1981, 1982, 1987).

Educators and researchers from New Zealand, influenced by John Dewey, implemented a holistic and progressive educational policy, cultivating a view of reading instruction that has influenced the teaching of reading within the whole language movement (Penton, 1979).

Supported by the research of Marie Clay (1972), Donald Holdaway (1979) developed the idea of shared book experiences. He promoted literature-based reading programs which are being recommended by many educators today. To accommodate the concept of shared book experience, "Big Books" were produced.

"Big Books" are greatly enlarged picture books, used most commonly in the primary grades. Teachers enlarge picture books which are popular with the children, place them on an easel or chart where the entire class can see them, and read them with small groups or the whole class. Although any type of picture book can be made into a big book, nursery rhymes, poems, songs, and predictable books are most popular (Tompkins & Hoskisson, 1991). Because children love big books, they often want to write their own (Reutzel & Cooter, 1992), hence enhancing the reading-writing connection.

Influenced by such New Zealander educators as Sylvia Ashton Warner (1963), Jeannette Veatch (1985) questioned the validity of packaged reading programs and basal readers. Veatch had long been an advocate of individualized reading

instruction (1978), also known as self-selection or self-pacing. This type of reading instruction permits students to choose their own books from a wide selection of trade books (Reutzel & Cooter, 1991). It is a personalized literature programs based on three principles: (1) seeking, (2) self-selection, and (3) self-pacing. According to Veatch (1985), a classroom library of trade books should be large enough to allow each child to have a minimum of three books. In addition to seeking, self-selection, and self-pacing, sharing books activities are incorporated in the program. Six aspects of activities and experiences are recommended. These are (1) reading aloud activities, (2) oral reporting activities, (3) activities involving writing experiences--later used for audience presentation, (4) listening activities, (5) dramatizations, and (6) activities involving other expressive media such as painting, drawing, and making things. Veatch popularized individualized reading instruction in the United States and has influenced the whole language movement.

Leland Jacobs (1965), Charlotte Huck and D. Kuhn (1968), Martha King (1985), and Bill Martin, Jr. (1974) have also emphasized the power of trade books, advocating literature-based reading programs.

Literature-based reading instruction is a vital ingredient of the whole language philosophy. Several studies support the success of this literature-based approach to literacy with a variety of students (Cohen, 1968; Cullinan, Jaggar, & Strickland, 1974; Eldredge &

Butterfield, 1986; and Larrick, 1987).

Several basic elements are a part of literature-based reading programs. According to Tunnell and Jacobs (1989) these common elements include reading aloud to children, provisions for sustained silent reading, teacher modeling (Holdaway, 1982), use of natural text (Goodman, 1988), and emphasis on improvement of student attitudes (Larrick, 1987). Also important to literature-based instruction are self-selection of reading materials, meaning orientation with skills often taught in meaningful context, belief that reading skills can be learned in much the same way as learning to speak (Forester, 1977 and Holdaway, 1982), and the teaching of writing through process (Tunnell & Jacobs, 1989).

Advantages of literature-based programs include improved personal interest in reading and greater achievement due to choice in book selection, more efficient skill teaching within the context of materials that each child is actively reading, vocabulary building within the context of stories being read, informal assessment by both teacher and students with emphasis on process rather than product, and elimination of worksheets and tests (Fuhler, 1990). Also important to literature-based instruction is the multicultural learning that can take place. According to Rasinski and Padak (1990), literature can convey knowledge about a subject while providing an impetus for action. It can help develop an awareness and an internal value system about multicultural events and issues. And it

can provide motivation for acting in a positive way on that awareness and those values. Literature can also be used successfully in teaching writing in the content areas in the intermediate grades (Atwell, 1990). Probably most important of all, literature-based instruction can be fun, enjoyable, and rewarding to both students and teacher (Frew, 1990), creating a community of learners who value learning for the intrinsic rewards in the pursuit of knowledge.

Also impacting the whole language movement are educators from the field of writing (Y. Goodman, 1989). These educators include Alvina Burrows, et al, (1984) who advocated that children need to write about their own experiences from the very beginning of school, Donald Graves (1983) who has authored several books on teaching writing and the importance of a supportive writing environment, several English educators such as James Britton, Harold Rosen, Nancy Martin and others (Britton, Burgess, Martin, McLead, & Rosen, 1975) who were a part of the London Institute of Education, Donald Murray (1984) and Frank Smith (1982).

Graves, Murray, and Smith all emphasized the necessity of learning to write by writing, reading, and by perceiving oneself as an author. They also advocated process-centered teaching, invented spelling as a natural way of learning how to spell developmentally, and learning to write holistically rather than through isolated skill teaching of writing mechanics. Graves (1983) emphasized the importance of making connections between literature and writing with

literature as the basis for literacy learning.

Another influence on the whole language movement has been early childhood education which adopted ideas developed in the British infant schools (Y. Goodman, 1989). The British Infant School concept is based upon a mixture of Piaget, Dewey, and Montessori. Each child integrates the school's offerings into his/her own interests and energies according to his/her own abilities and drives. Supporters of this integrated approach contend that there is no difference between work and play at this age level. Children are actively involved in their learning, given choice in selection of materials and activities with no time limits on their intellectual pursuits. No individual desks are used, and tables are arranged in conjunction with areas of learning. Centers relating to math, reading, art, play, and other activities are created, and cooperative learning at different age levels is encouraged.

Early childhood educators, influenced by the British Infant School, have followed the child's lead in planning curriculum, starting where the child is, expanding from that point with the goal of encouraging problem solving. They view play as the building blocks of intellectual development (Loughlin & Martin, 1988). Early childhood education, with its emphasis on an integrated curriculum, choice, absence of time limits, cooperative learning, and problem-solving, closely parallels the whole language philosophy in several ways. Having thus established the pedagogical links to the whole language philosophy, what are some of the principles

and practices involved?

The basic rationale for a whole language classroom is that learning should make sense to the student and that learning should begin where the child is in both experience and language. Learning is developed around the child and must be language-based as it relates to both thinking and experience (Farris & Kaczwarski, 1988 and Anderson, 1984).

Principles of the whole language philosophy center around how children learn and how children learn language. The emphasis is on the natural acquisition of literacy through active involvement, collaborative group efforts, risk-taking which includes learning from one's mistakes as well as one's successes (Hoskisson & Tompkins, 1987), whole-to-part learning, and curriculum evolvement according to the needs of the children as they explore topics and themes and generate new interests and goals (Weaver, 1990 and Newman & Church, 1991).

In a whole language classroom, children learn to write by first experiencing writing with stories, poems, notes, letters, orders, newspapers, lists, reports, and journals of authors and adult role models. They, in turn, learn to write with conviction and conventions by writing. Writing in whole language classrooms is a celebration (Watson, 1989).

Evaluation within this philosophical framework takes on many forms, mostly informal in nature. Assessment may include individual checklists, journal writing and response, conferencing in peer groups and/or with the teacher,

examination of progression of students' work, recording observations, student-kept records, portfolios, interviews, inventories, questionnaires (Weaver, 1990; Newman & Church, 1991; Linek, 1991) constant "kid-watching" (Goodman, 1978; Jaggar, 1985).

The actual physical environment of the room is one in which a literate environment is created. Print can be seen everywhere and in functional ways, with labels on everything. Charts, maps, posters, and bulletin boards are located around the room and literate print is made readily available--print in the form of newspapers, magazines, reference books, and a large supply of literature books. Hands-on materials and reading and writing centers are found throughout the classroom (Weaver, 1990; Newman & Church, 1991; Atwell, 1987; and Hansen, 1987).

Process Writing

In recent years, researchers like Donald Graves (1983) and Lucy Calkins (1986) have advocated a writing approach far different from the traditional approach most frequently used in the elementary classroom. The approach involves a shift from product to process, with children passing through stages as they develop as writers. The process is not, however, linear but cyclical, involving recurring cycles. Labeling these stages is an aid to identifying and discussing activities representing each stage. The stages merge and cycle as students personalize the process to meet their needs. They vary the process according to each

writing assignment (Tompkins & Hoskisson, 1991). The process approach of teaching focuses on developing children's ideas and understanding writing as communication. It simply stresses meaning first, then skills in the context of meaning (Graves, 1985).

The five stages of process writing include (1) the prewriting stage, (2) the drafting stage, (3) the revising stage, (4) the editing stage, and (5) the publishing stage (Tompkins & Hoskisson, 1991).

The prewriting stage is the getting-ready-to-write stage. It has been in the past, perhaps, the most neglected stage of writing (Tompkins & Hoskisson, 1991). Murray (1982) believes that 70 percent or more time should be spent in this stage. It is during this stage that children brainstorm for ideas, often free writing (Elbow, 1981). Children select a topic of interest, collect useful support information, outline ideas, and create opening sentences for the story, also referred to as alternative leads (Reutzel & Cooter, 1992).

The drafting stage follows the prewriting stage. It is during this stage that the writer first attempts to record ideas or thoughts on paper. Because ideas are the important consideration at this point, little emphasis is placed on mechanical correctness (Reutzel & Cooter, 1992).

During the third stage, the revising stage, the manuscript is changed to include any or all new ideas for improving the work. At this time, student-teacher writing conferences are organized and teachers ask questions and

offer suggestions for revisions (Reutzel & Cooter, 1992). Students may also work in writing groups, sharing their compositions and giving and receiving feedback. During this stage, writers add words, substitute sentences, delete paragraphs, and move phrases (Tompkins & Hoskisson, 1991).

During the fourth stage, the editing stage, there is a careful review of the composition to check for correct spelling, sentence construction, topic sentences, awkward language, and composition sense (Reutzel & Cooter, 1992). Editing checklists, developed by the teacher, can be used for proofreading. Students first proofread their work, followed by peer editing. Students then correct their errors, followed by a conference with the teacher for a final editing. Teachers often use the editing stage to informally assess students' mechanical errors and to develop mini-lessons on a skill or skills that several students are having difficulty with (Tompkins & Hoskisson, 1991). Nancie Atwell shares the importance of these mini-lessons in her book, In the Middle (1987).

The final stage, publishing or sharing, brings the composition to life as writers share their work with an audience. Students often make their stories into books; submit their stories, poems, or books to magazines that publish children's writing; or read their compositions aloud, generating a sense of authorship (Tompkins & Hoskisson, 1991).

Several other concepts are important to process writing. These concepts include choice (Graves, 1985; and

Hubbard, 1985), large blocks of time for writing (Graves, 1985; Atwell, 1987; and Hansen, 1987), response to child meaning (Graves, 1985; Atwell, 1987; and Hansen, 1987), the establishment of a community of learners (Graves, 1985; Hansen, 1987; and Crews, 1987), and the development of the concept of authorship (Graves, 1985; Atwell, 1987; Hansen, 1987; Tompkins & Hoskisson, 1991; and Reutzel & Cooter, 1992).

Choice, an important component of process writing, allows children to be consciously in control of their writing. With choice in regard to topics, revisions, and illustrations, writers develop a sense of commitment to and pride in their work (Hubbard, 1985). According to Graves (1985) topic choice is at the heart of success in writing. The most important thing children can learn is what they know and how they know it. Through choice of topics, children are already aware of their knowledge about the subject selected for writing.

Another important concept of process writing is time. According to Graves (1985), children need a minimum of four days a week allotted to writing if appreciable progress is to be sustained. Students need large blocks of time for planning, reflectively thinking, and experiencing the stages of writing (Hansen, 1987).

Response, too, is important to process writing because people write to communicate--to share, whether with themselves or others. When an audience responds to the writer's message, there is confirmation that the text fits

the author's intention. In the classroom, both teacher and peers respond to the writer's work. Response allows the audience to learn more about the author's subject. It can also provide invaluable feedback, enabling writers to learn to listen to their own texts and to improve their compositions (Graves, 1985).

Another aspect of process writing is establishment of a sense of community. Writing is a social act and the development of a community of learners is essential if social actions are to work (Graves, 1985). A general sense of community exists in classrooms where process writing is implemented (Crews, 1987). Graves (1985) suggests that this sense of community is established by allowing children to write daily for a minimum of 30 minutes, working to establish each child's topical turf, collecting writing in folders so that writers can see an accumulation of what they know, establishing a predictable pattern of teacher participation, and ending each writing period with responses by the children. Receiving and questioning in a predictable format, delegating responsibility to the children in regard to classroom routines, and continually reporting the responsibilities assumed by the groups also encourages the development of a sense of community among writers.

A final component of process writing centers around the development of the concept of authorship. According to Lamme (1989), authorship brings a vital dimension to reading and writing. Emergent literacy studies suggest that an important element of the child's natural acquisition of

literacy is his/her attachment to favorite authors and a sense of ownership for individual pieces of writing. Children are more highly motivated when actively involved in learning situations. The real life role for writing is becoming an author. Authors write for real purposes and for genuine audiences. When children learn that the writing process which they are using is similar to that of published authors, students can think of themselves as authors (Tompkins & Hoskisson, 1991). This concept enables children to become excited about writing and, at the same time, builds a high degree of self-esteem. With the provision for "author's chair," children can sit in a specially designated chair and share their compositions while assuming the role of a real author (Graves & Hansen, 1983).

Also important to the sense of authorship when experiencing process writing is the development of the "community of authors" feeling--the writers' club--to which each child belongs. With a cooperative, caring environment, children can share and respond to literature through conferencing and author's chair. This creates a supportive environment in which children's reading and writing can flourish (Lamme, 1989).

If writing teachers are to successfully implement process writing, Knudson (1990) suggests that they must: (1) assess students' writing ability in terms of their knowledge of the strategies involved in prewriting, writing, and revision; (2) give students many opportunities to write for different audiences and in response to different writing

tasks; (3) realize that they should be alert to all parts of writing instruction, and (4) realize that the goal of process-oriented instruction is to teach writing in such a way that students will become independent writers.

In summary, process writing involves five interrelated stages that writers work through--prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. The emphasis is on the process students use when they write rather than the finished product. After learning the stages of writing, students use these steps to write stories, poems, reports, and other forms of composition. Teachers become facilitators or partners, and students develop a sense of authorship. Choice, time, and response are important to the process and a sense of community is established.

Comparing Writing Instruction Within the Two Philosophical Frameworks

Having thus examined both a traditional and a whole language philosophy generally, the focus on teaching writing will be reviewed due to its importance in the elementary curriculum and due to its inclusion as a part of this particular research study.

The traditional method of teaching writing in the United States has been teacher-centered, with the teacher at the head of the class, dictating what the children will do, and diminishing the student's role to one of imitating whatever the instructor presents. According to Bayer (1986), writing has been thought of as a set of discrete

skills to be mastered; thus, perfect mechanics is the goal of writing instruction. The traditional textbooks have outlined writing instructions as sequences of punctuation skills, grammatical structures, spelling, and penmanship, each of which is to be taught and mastered as separate skills. Looking at writing as such, the components appear to be organized hierarchically with the mastery of any level dependent upon the mastery of all subordinate levels. Here one sees the notion of separate and sequential skill teaching. It is teaching by the reductionist model of literacy.

This type of instruction results in knowledge about language forms rather than knowledge about how to use language appropriately in real life situations in reading and writing.

In the upper grades, the five-paragraph essay has been the format for formal writing in schools. This essay allows for three ideas and a few details about each with the fifth paragraph repeating the rest rather then adding knowledge in any way. This type of writing has often become a substitute for thinking (Standal & Betza, 1990).

Traditionally, most writing activities in the elementary grades have fallen under the heading "creative writing." Teachers have assigned a topic that is written on the chalkboard after which students are expected to write a creative story. Students are allowed 30 minutes to write a single-draft story which is to be error-free. Papers are collected and graded with emphasis on product rather than

process (Tompkins & Hoskisson, 1991, p. 227).

Process writing instruction, an important element of whole language, focuses on learning to write developmentally. This learning takes place over a period of time and usually involves a number of stages, not excluding knowledge of the conventions of writing, namely mechanics and usage (Rubin, 1990, p. 223). The processes involved are prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing (Tompkins & Hoskisson, 1991).

Following the whole language philosophy of teaching writing, students become fluent writers by being given the opportunity to write for a variety of purposes, on topics of their own choices, and for their own audiences. Children are encouraged to write in real life situations to relatives, authors, and informational companies--writing with different purposes in mind. Beginning writers are encouraged to take risks and use invented spelling, de-emphasizing accurate spelling, punctuation, and neat handwriting. The emphasis is more on meaning than the technical aspect at this point (Farris & Kaczwarski, 1988). As students progress developmentally, the technical aspect becomes more important, being emphasized in the revising and editing stages of the writing process.

This alternative method of teaching writing implies that language development occurs through meaningful language use, using language as a tool across the curriculum. With this approach, language is used to construct meaning to solve the thinking tasks of various subject areas. With

this constructivist view, students are active participants and the teacher is more of a collaborator in the writing process. Students are encouraged to draw from past experiences to generate hypotheses, test the hypotheses, and reframe them in their writing (Bayer, 1986). Such an approach has as an important goal the development of independent writers.

The concept of authorship is another important element of process writing. Writers perceive themselves as authors, valuing the interaction with their audience. A feeling of being a part of a community of authors is a powerful influence, and the cooperative, humanistic classroom in which conferencing and author's chair occur and where children can freely share and respond to literature is a supportive milieu where both reading and writing can flourish (Lamme, 1989).

When comparing the traditional approach to the process approach of teaching writing, one can perceive a variety of differences. With the traditional approach, the focus is on the finished product; topic selection is made by the teacher in one specific creative writing assignment; little or no instruction is given by the teacher; students feel little ownership in their writing; the teacher is the primary audience; there is little or no collaboration; students write a single draft and must focus on content and mechanics at the same time; error-free compositions are expected; the teacher assigns and grades the composition; most writing assignments are expected to be completed in less than an

hour; and the teacher assesses the quality of the composition after its completion. In comparison, the process approach focuses on the process that students use when writing; students choose their own topics, or select them from content-area study; teachers teach about both the writing process and about writing forms; students assume ownership of their writing; students collaborate and share their writing in groups; students write rough drafts to draw upon many ideas then revise and edit these drafts before making final copies; most errors are corrected during editing, but a greater emphasis is on content than on mechanics; the teacher both teaches about writing and provides feedback during revising and editing; one, two, or three weeks may be spent on a composition; and students receive feedback while writing using it as a means of improving their compositions with assessment focusing on the process used and the finished product (Tompkins & Hoskisson, 1991).

Summary

Socialization, the process of learning, unlearning, and adjusting behaviors in order to meet the institutional expectations placed before new teachers (Crase, 1979) is a subject of increasing interest and concern. The idealistic views of beginning teachers are quickly altered after initial teaching experiences. Beginning teachers soon come to accept the more traditional values and attitudes toward education in order to survive within the organizational

system of which they are a part. They quickly learn that conformity to the rules, regulations, and traditional teaching methods of the traditional school bring about both acceptance and rewards (Well, 1984).

As a result of socialization, many beginning teachers experience changes in behavior and attitude as they face the reality shock of daily classroom living (Veenmen, 1984). The problems brought about by socialization create an obvious need for both communication and collaboration among novice teachers, university faculty, public school administrators, teaching colleagues, and parents to better equip beginning teachers with coping skills to survive and develop positively as professionals (Daves, Morton, & Grace, 1990). If we, as educators, expect beginning teachers to become autonomous, outstanding professionals, we must provide the educational background and proper support system in which they can develop to full potential.

The socialization process has typically taken place in the traditional educational setting supported by a philosophy based on a reductionist model of literacy; one which views the teachers as an examiner, discourages peer and/or cooperative learning, creates homogenous grouping, and advocates quantitative assessment, often in the form of standardized skills tests (Bayer, 1986).

The recent emergence of the whole language movement has brought with it an alternative philosophy of education. This philosophy focuses on an interactive-constructive model of literacy; one which views the teacher as a collaborator,

encourages independent thinking with peer interaction and cooperative group learning, creates heterogenous grouping, and advocates qualitative assessment, often in the form of informal evaluation and "kid watching."

When a beginning teacher brings to her teaching assignment this new philosophy in a traditional system, she must bring with her strong causes for commitment in order to survive. These causes, according to Nias (1981), are (1) the strong need to give, (2) the commitment to hard work, (3) the commitment to teaching as a deep-rooted part of one's self-image, and (4) commitment to career entrenchment. Commitment plays a vital role as one implements a personal philosophy of education in the classroom.

Writing instruction is an important component of the elementary school curriculum. Process writing, an important element of whole language education, has evolved through the research of such educators as Graves (1978, 1980, 1983, 1985, 1989), Murray (1980, 1982, 1984, 1985), Calkins (1980, 1986), and Burrows, Jackson, and Saunders (1984). This approach to writing allows students to understand the kinds of thinking processes writers experience as they produce different forms of text. Children become wordsmiths who can enjoy works of authors on new and higher levels (Reutzel & Cooter, 1991). Writing is explored in a natural way as children move from stage to stage. They are allowed time, choice, freedom, and collaboration and develop the concept of authorship, gaining a greater appreciation of themselves and of others as writers (Atwell, 1987; Hansen, 1987;

Graves, 1983).

Writing instruction varies with particular teaching philosophies. With the traditional philosophy, writing is presented in brief segments of time, after students are assigned a specific topic. Within that time frame, students are expected to present a finished composition, error free. The teacher then assesses the finished product with emphasis on correct mechanics.

With the whole language philosophy, process is emphasized with large blocks of time allotted for writing. Writing progresses in stages with much peer collaboration and student-teacher conferencing. There is constant feedback given with content emphasized in the early stages and mechanics stressed in the final stages. Assessment is on-going, writing is assigned for functional purposes, choice is given in topic selection, and the concept of authorship is developed (Hansen, 1987; Atwell, 1987; and Tompkins & Hoskisson, 1991).

When comparing the two methodologies, one sees product versus process; mechanics emphasis versus content emphasis; teacher control versus student control; short blocks of time for writing versus large blocks of time for writing; and formal assessment versus informal assessment.

Through the review of literature, it is apparent that the socialization process affects the beginning teacher as she commits to teaching with an educational philosophy contrary to that of the school system of which she is a part. It is also evident that the traditional approach to

teaching writing and the whole language approach to teaching writing are on opposite ends of the philosophical continuum in education. And, in past years, the socialization process has typically taken place in the traditional educational setting supported by a philosophy based on a reductionist model of literacy; a philosophy that supports product rather than process writing.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

> We shall not cease from exploration and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time.
> --T. S. Eliot

Introduction

Qualitative research in education is coming of age. It is increasingly being used for studying educational issues (Bogdan & Bicklen, 1982) and for educational evaluation (Worthen & Sanders, 1987). When compared to a quantitative approach to research, it is evident that the two methodologies are located at opposite ends of a continuum, in both philosophy and procedures.

According to Schofield and Anderson (1984), qualitative research generally (a) takes place in natural settings; (b) has as its principle instrument the researcher; (c) draws upon thick description from everyday patterns of interaction and meaning from the perspective of the person or persons being studied; (d) focuses more on social processes rather than outcomes; uses several data-gathering methods, especially participant-observation and interviewing; and (f) analyzes data inductively, drawing concepts from the volume

of details which comprise the data base. It is rooted in phenomenology and symbolic interaction; it is flexible, evolving and emergent in design; and it arrives at findings in a comprehensive, holistic, expansive mode (Merriam, 1988). There is a greater concern for understanding rather than knowledge as a set of axiomatic laws (Noblit & Hare, 1988). The goal is to enrich human discourse (Geertz, 1973). It basically relies on watching people in their particular territory and interacting with them on their own terms (Kirk & Miller, 1986).

Quantitative research generally (a) tests specific hypotheses that are smaller parts of a larger theoretical perspective; (b) emphasizes experimental design and statistical methods of analysis; (c) stresses standardization, precision, objectivity, and reliability of measurement and replicability and generalization of findings; and (d) focuses on producing numbers and generating numbers suitable for statistical tests (Schofield & Anderson, 1984). It is philosophically rooted in positivism and logical empiricism; it embodies a large, random, representative sampling; and uses scales, tests, surveys, questionnaires, and computers in data collection, arriving at findings in a precise, narrow reductionist mode. Its goal is investigation, prediction, control, description, confirmation and hypothesis testing in unfamiliar, artificial settings (Merriam, 1988).

The case study is a particular research design which lends itself well to qualitative research because it seeks

holistic description and explanation, focusing primarily on insight, discovery, and interpretation rather than hypothesis testing (Merriam, 1988). Wilson (1979, p. 448) perceives it as a process "which tries to describe and analyze some entity in qualitative, complex and comprehensive terms not infrequently as it unfolds over a period of time." MacDonald and Walker (1977, p. 181) define the case study as "the examination of an instance in action."

There are several possible advantages of the case study. Case studies (1) are down-to-earth, strong in reality, and provide a natural basis for generalization, (2) allow generalizations about an instance or from an instance to a class, (3) recognize the embeddedness of social truths, (4) may form an abundance of descriptive material rich enough to admit ensuing reinterpretation, (5) begin in a world of action and contribute to it, and (6) present research or evaluation in a more publicly accessible form than other kinds of research allowing the reader to judge implications of the study for himself/herself (Cohen & Manion, 1985).

According to Eisner and Peshkin (1990), case studies are advantageous because (1) of accessibility, allowing the research to go to places where most would not have the opportunity to go, (2) they allow readers to look at the world through the eyes of the researcher, perhaps seeing things he/she might not otherwise have seen, and (3) they provide a vicarious experience to the reader; one which is

less likely to produce defensiveness and resistance to learning. For example, "a teacher reading a narrative description of the self-fulfilling prophecy phenomenon at work in another teacher's classroom will likely feel less threatened than if initially asked to confront that phenomenon in his or her own work." The decision to use a case study design for this research was based on the rationale of the above authors and researchers.

The pages that follow will explain the methodology implemented in this research design. Specifically addressed will be the properties of a case study as related to this research; a description of the subject, the target school, and the first grade classroom; data collection procedures, and data analysis.

The Case Study

The focus of this research was to study an entry-year teacher's socialization as she implemented process writing--an important component of the whole language philosophy--in a traditional school setting; thus the case study was an appropriate design to utilize. It enabled the researcher to focus on process, meaning, and understanding. Four inherent properties of a qualitative case study are characteristic: descriptive, particularistic, heuristic, and inductive (Merriam, 1988). This study, as related to these properties, will be explained in the following paragraphs.

Descriptive refers to thick description of the situation being studied. It includes many variables and

their interaction over a period of time (Merriam, 1988). Data is collected, recorded, and analyzed. For this study, observation was the primary source of data collecting. Field notes were recorded during and after each classroom visit in the form of journal entries. Interviews were also conducted to gain insight relating to the subject's educational philosophy. Samples of the children's writing were gathered and examined throughout the school year to evaluate progression in process writing.

Particularistic means that case studies concentrate on a specific phenomenon, taking a holistic view of the situation, making it a good design for practical problems (Merriam, 1988). This research involved one entry year teacher and the socialization process which she experienced as she determined to teach writing with a philosophy which differed in general from that of the school system of which she was a part.

Inductive relates to inductive reasoning, an important element of case studies. When examining data, the researcher discovers new relationships, concepts, and understanding with an emergence of generalizations grounded in the context itself (Merriam, 1988). Through this process of inductive reasoning, the researcher emerged with a greater understanding of what an entry-year teacher faces--and how she copes for survival--as she experiences the realities of the classroom and the pressures of socialization. The researcher also emerged with a greater understanding of process writing; its possibilities for

development; and its impact on children in regard to building self-esteem and a sense of authorship.

Heuristic involves bringing to the reader a greater understanding of the phenomenon; one of discovering new meaning, extending the reader's experience, or confirming what is known. Emergence of previously unknown relationships and variables can lead to a rethinking of the situation being studied (Merriam, 1988). The intent of this study was to gain insight into how socialization can affect a beginning teacher as she determines to teach according to her belief system about how children best learn--specifically, about how they best learn to write. As her involvement in the socialization process progressed, insights into her feelings, frustrations, and actions were observed and recorded as she fought for emotional and professional survival in the face of compromise relating to her teaching methodologies.

"The case study is a particularly good means of educational evaluation because of its ability to explain the causal links in real life--interventions that are too complex for the survey of experimental strategies" (Merriam, 1988, pp. 28-29).

Subject

The subject of this study was an entry-year teacher who had accepted a first grade teaching position. We had met previously as graduate students enrolled in a summer course at the university. At this time, Michele (the subject) had

expressed to me her enthusiasm regarding her teaching assignment for the fall.

Michele was secure in her educational philosophy, voicing her belief in a holistic approach to teaching, with emphasis on process writing. She shared her views relating to developmentally appropriate materials and active involvement in learning. I was especially impressed with her desire to learn as much as possible before beginning her entry year. This was evidenced by the fact that, upon graduation in the spring, she took it upon herself to enroll in two graduate classes in the summer to better prepare for her fall teaching position. She was enthusiastic about the teaching profession and demonstrated a sincere love for children as she shared with me her belief in youth and her desire to teach.

During the summer, I determined the type of research project which I felt appropriate to my area of concentration and immediately thought of Michele. I contacted her, explained the focus of my study, and asked her if she would be interested in being my subject. She enthusiastically agreed, expressing her excitement regarding being a part of a research project. Because a case study is a detailed micro study, focusing on a particular individual or group, Michele qualified as a likely candidate.

Michele was an excellent subject because she was an entry-year teacher. She was secure in her educational philosophy, expressing her belief in whole language. She advocated teaching process writing and was anxious to

implement the appropriate methodologies in her first grade classroom. Commitment to her teaching philosophy, to the profession, and to children was strongly evident. Being aware of the traditional philosophy of the elementary school administrator under whom she would work, she was still committed to executing her philosophy in her classroom.

The Target School

Fairmont Elementary School is a middle-class, self-contained elementary school accommodating kindergarten through fifth grades. It is one of six elementary schools located in a major state university town. The school is fairly traditional in its educational philosophy. State adopted textbooks are the core of the curriculum. The majority of the teachers lecture, using texts and accompanying workbooks. There are approximately four teachers per grade, dependent upon class enrollment. There are specialized teachers in the areas of music, physical education, art, learning disabilities, and reading. There is a full-time counselor and a full-time librarian who is in charge of a centralized library. There is also a computer lab with a special assistant who works with individual classes each day.

There is strong parental support within the school, and many parents frequently volunteer to assist teachers in the classrooms and workrooms. There is open communication between the school and the homes with active involvement in PTA and other school events.

The Research Conditions--The First Grade Classroom

Michele's classroom was one of two first grade classes located in a two-room building behind the main school building. Her room was spacious, fully carpeted, and cheerfully painted. She began the school year with 21 children. This number fluctuated slightly as the year progressed. A small restroom was located in a corner of the room. Shelves lined most of one wall. There was a chalkboard at the front of the classroom. Two bulletin boards hung on an adjacent wall. Hooks and shelves for the students' belongings adorned the back wall. Desks were not placed in traditional rows but were, instead, placed in clusters and organized as learning centers. There was a reading corner containing an old-fashioned bathtub and a variety of library books. Another area housed building blocks for creative play. Michele's room was alive with print, creating a literate environment, a vital element of the whole language classroom. A more detailed description of the classroom will be described in Chapter IV.

Data Collection Procedures

Observation

The principle form of data collection was observation, a key component of qualitative research involving case studies (Cohen & Manion, 1985 and Merriam, 1988). According

to Merriam (1988) participant observation ranges on a continuum from complete observer in which the researcher is hidden from the group or in a public setting to complete participant in which the researcher is a member of the group concealing his/her observer role. In- between is the observer as participant with participation secondary to the role of information gatherer or participant as observer with observation subordinate to the researcher's role as participant (pp. 92 & 93).

For this particular study, the researcher's role was one of observer as participant. According to Spradley (1980), it is important that the participant observer become involved in activities as appropriate to the situation, observing the people, the physical aspects of the situation, and the activities themselves. In order to obtain thick description, one needs an explicit awareness of everything that is happening, approaching the situation with a wide-angle lens. As the researcher is colleting data, he/she needs to alternate between being an insider and an outsider, experiencing both simultaneously. If the researcher is to fully understand new situations, introspection must be cultivated. For this study, observer as a participant was the approach selected in order to gain the necessary introspection.

The teacher and children were always aware of my presence yet the focus was on observation of the teacher and the children as they interacted in the classroom. It was my intent to record the actions of both the teacher and

students as process writing was being implemented. At the beginning of the visitations the children noticed my presence in the classroom, frequently initiating interaction; however, as my visits became routine, they accepted me as a class member and continued their work without interruption. On several occasions, a student would request that I read a book or listen to his/her story, tasks which were a delight as a participant.

Research points to several reasons why observation is an effective tool to data gathering (Merriam, 1988). An outsider notices things that are routine to group members, things which may lead to understanding context. The participant also gains first-hand knowledge, recording behavior as it happens (Merriam, 1988). It is the observer's task to investigate the setting, participants, activities and interactions, frequency and duration of the situation, and subtle factors such as informal and unplanned activities, nonverbal communication, physical clues, and what does <u>not</u> happen. Analysis is inductive and findings are comprehensive, holistic, and expansive (Merriam, 1988).

Classroom observations were recorded by the researcher in the form of journal entries made each time the classroom was visited. Michele's class was observed two to three times a week from September to May from 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. at which time process writing took place. On various occasions the researcher would stay longer, observing the children as their writing time was extended after recess at 2:30 p.m. During this first period after lunch, the

children were given freedom to interact, examine library books, listen to stories, and write and illustrate their own books, realizing that these activities were all encouraged as a part of the process of developing as authentic authors. Much time was spent in conferencing (Pils, 1991 and Prenn & Scanlan, 1991), collaborative group interaction (Farris, 1989; Adams & Rotondi, 1990; and Fine, 1989), and peer revising and editing (Fitzgerald, 1989). Author's Chair (Lamme, 1989) was also a part of the agenda during this class period.

Interviews

Interviews are commonly used in descriptive research (Kamil, Langer, & Shanahan, 1985). According to Cohen and Manion (1985), interviews may be used as a major way of collecting information which directly contributes to the research objectives, may test hypotheses and/or suggest new ones or help identify variables and relationships, and may be used in combination with other research methods.

In qualitative case studies, interviewing is an important source of data for understanding the phenomenon being studied. It provides for constant assessment and evaluation of information, enabling the inquirer to change direction, explore, and synopsize (Merriam, 1988).

Because Michele was the focus of the case study, the interview was an appropriate method of probing to better understand the subject's background and educational

philosophy. In-depth interviews with the subject's previous university professors, her student-teaching cooperating teacher, her principal, her co-teachers, and two parents were conducted to gain insight about their perceptions of her, her educational philosophy, her commitment to teaching writing according to her belief system, and the changes which have taken place within her classroom and within her emotionally as an individual. Many hours of informal talks with Michele during breaks and after school also provided important insights invaluable to the study. It was during these periods that we discussed at length the changes taking place within the subject emotionally, the observations regarding the children's progress in writing, and the disillusionment involved in teaching as the socialization process emerged.

Document Analysis

In addition to observation, note-taking in the form of journal entries, and formal and informal interviews, several documents were examined. These documents included the teacher's planning book, basal readers, supplementary resources provided by Michele, bulletin boards, charts, test materials, teacher memorandums, correspondence with parents, and many samples of children's writing. This additional material provided insight relating to the subject's educational philosophy and methodologies employed in teaching writing as a process.

Data Analysis

According to Merriam (1988), data analysis involves the process of making sense out of data. It is an ongoing process in which findings are consolidated, reduced, and interpreted (Merriam, 1988) with the goal of coming up with reasonable conclusions and generalizations (Taylor and Bogdan, 1984). As was the case in this research study, data was recorded weekly, and the researcher examined journal entries frequently, probing for links and commonalities of findings. Speculation, a key to developing theory, involving playing with ideas of relative possibilities (Merriam, 1988) allowed the researcher to go beyond the data and make projections about what would happen in the future in regard to the subject's socialization process and the students' advancement in process writing. This researcher observed from week to week throughout the school year.

Observations were recorded immediately in the form of journal entries. Responses to in-depth interviews were written in detail immediately following the appointments. Children's samples of process writing were photocopied and studied by the researcher periodically to observe growth in writing. By daily observing Michele, her students, and the physical aspects of the classroom, one could observe first-hand the changes that occurred in the subject's professional life and the progress in writing that the children experienced as a result of Michele's belief system about teaching and about how children learn.

By analyzing data from all of the sources employed, both commonalities and differences could be verified. Patterns of behavior were observed, categorized, and analyzed in relationship to the research questions stated in Chapter I. The four areas of focus were: commitment to a philosophy, effects of socialization, the whole language philosophy of teaching versus the traditional philosophy of teaching, and the process approach to teaching writing. Findings relating to these areas will be presented in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER IV

DESCRIPTION OF THE TEACHER, THE CLASSROOM, AND DISCUSSION OF SOCIALIZATION AND COMMITMENT

> The logic by which we teach is not always the logic by which children learn.
> --Glenda Bissex

Introduction

This chapter describes the experiences of Michele, a first grade entry-year teacher, as she committed to teaching process writing in a traditional school. It begins with a discussion of Michele's background and how it influenced the formulation of her teaching philosophy.

A description of the classroom, the daily schedule, materials used, and methodologies implemented during writing time will follow. Included in the discussion of process writing will be observations relating to the students' writing performances and growth.

Socialization and its effects on both Michele and her students will also be discussed in this chapter. Included in this discussion will be problems encountered relating to administrative pressures, parental concerns, and colleagues' reactions to Michele's ways of teaching. The socialization

process greatly affects the beginning teacher during the initial teaching experience (McArthur, 1979; Jordell, 1987).

Also addressed in Chapter IV is the issue of commitment to an educational philosophy. Commitment will be described in terms of how it impacted Michele's determination to teach according to her belief system regarding children and learning. Effects of the subject's commitment will be discussed in the concluding remarks.

Michele's Background

Michele had aspired to become a teacher at a very young age. She was reared in a large family, the youngest of seven children. As I interviewed her, it was evident that she had been a part of a close-knit, loving family who had been a positive influence on her growth and development. She had grown to womanhood with a mature perspective of life. She was secure in who she was as a person and in what she wanted as a professional.

Michele was motivated to become a teacher for some of the same reasons given by others in the profession: (1) wanting to make a difference in the world, (2) desiring to work with children whom they loved and cared about, (3) determining to share their love for learning, and (4) wanting to give back to the world--all responses reflecting a high level of idealism (Berg, Reno, & Coker, 1992; Lortie, 1975).

Michele had always loved children, and she had grown up baby-sitting nieces and nephews whom she adored. She

expressed a strong commitment to making a positive difference in the lives of children by becoming the best teacher that she could possibly become.

She shared that at nine years of age she had pretended to be a schoolteacher, assembling her nieces and nephews to serve as the students. Using the children as her class, she would plan and present programs for the family. She felt that she was a natural at organizing and motivating the children, and the desire to become a teacher was evolving.

Several teachers have impacted Michele's life on her journey toward becoming a teacher. She shared memories of love and admiration for her first grade teacher who provided a loving, safe environment; one in which she was always made to feel that she was a good student.

In later years, teachers continued to be a positive influence on Michele. Several college professors inspired and encouraged her in her areas of specialization. The university where the teacher is trained often impacts the attitudes and behaviors of a beginning teacher, and she was no exception. Her science, math, and language arts instructors all emphasized a holistic approach to teaching, stressing active involvement in learning. Her special education instructors also stressed active learning, developmentally appropriate materials, and hands-on experiences. Michele determined to incorporate these ideas in her own classroom.

Her cooperating teacher during her student-teaching experience was also a tremendous influence as she continued

to develop an educational philosophy at both a theoretical and a practical level. Michele shared that she began developing a philosophy of education in her sophomore year in college. This philosophy continued to emerge as she progressed through the university program. Her student-teaching experience strongly reinforced her beliefs about teaching and children's learning (Interview 9/23/90--all interviews were conducted in 1990 and 1991).

Michele's undergraduate background training included emphasis in elementary education and special education. She had taken courses which prepared her for teaching in both areas, having met the requirements for certification in each field. After graduation in May of 1990, she had enrolled in two summer courses at the graduate level; one relating to teaching reading, the other relating to teaching mathematics. She also attended a whole language conference in August, prior to the beginning of her entry-year teaching assignment. This desire to further her training at the graduate level is indicative of her commitment to become a quality teacher (Nias, 1981).

Although her elementary education background had exposed her to both traditional and alternative philosophies and methodologies of teaching, her special education background influenced her more strongly in the formulation of her educational philosophy. It was through this vein of training that she received the most emphasis in a holistic approach to teaching with recommendations for active involvement in learning, hands-on materials for instruction,

and developmentally appropriate materials for each individual child. She came to view education not as a prescribed curriculum but as a means of taking a child where he/she is, identifying individual needs, and providing an environment in which a child is free to choose what he/she wants to learn. She emphasized the need for the teacher to be a gentle guide and helper, allowing each child to develop to full potential while being actively involved in the learning situation. She also expressed the need to create a safe, secure milieu in which each child develops a positive self-concept.

Michele's student-teaching experience was at the kindergarten level. Her cooperating teacher had adopted a holistic approach to teaching and served as a dominant role model for Michele. The classroom in which she gained her first practical teaching experience was rich in a literate environment. It contained a variety of learning centers and numerous hands-on materials which promoted active involvement in learning. Children learned through sharing and experimenting, pursuing, to a great extent, their own interests and desires. A sense of community was evident, and the classroom was an exciting, enjoyable setting for learning--an environment in which reading, writing, and learning together were valued experiences.

It was here that Michele became interested in process writing. The process approach to writing emphasizes meaning first, then skills in the context of meaning. Four essentials of process writing are: (1) large blocks of time

for writing (a minimum of four days per week), (2) choice in writing topics, (3) response to child meaning, and (4) development of a sense of a community of learners (Graves, 1985).

Michele's cooperating teacher often read aloud to the children. Following was writing time, beginning with a brainstorming session. Later, children dictated their individual stories to Michele. She wrote them down, then the children could, amazingly, read them back to her. As they progressed developmentally, they began writing attempts without the aid of the teacher. Michele was learning from observing the children. She was becoming a researcher in the classroom which many educators believe to be the best way to conduct research (McConaghy, 1990).

It was evident from in-depth interviews with Michele that her background was heavily influenced by family, teachers, and professional training in both elementary and special education.

As I interviewed Michele's former university professors, current colleagues, parents, and the principal, several commonalities regarding their perceptions of her personality characteristics began to emerge. All of the interviewees viewed Michele as warm, caring, compassionate, committed, creative, enthusiastic, patient, energetic, innovative, determined, and strong. These personality traits were totally congruent with my personal observations of Michele.

Also emerging was a congruency relating to Michele's

teaching philosophy. The interviewees perceived her as believing in active involvement in learning, giving children choices, providing developmentally appropriate materials and concrete experiences, creating a child-centered curriculum, integrating across the curriculum, supporting cooperative learning, learning through process, and creating a love for reading and writing through meaningful reading and writing experiences. They also perceived her as believing in fostering a safe, caring environment in which children (1) feel free to take risks, (2) grow to full potential, and (3) learn to believe in themselves. This perception of Michele's teaching philosophy was totally consistent with my daily observations in her classroom--observations relating to the physical environment, the materials used, the activities provided, and the general atmosphere of the milieu.

Physical Description of the Classroom

Michele's classroom was one of two first grade classes physically housed in a small, separate structure behind the main elementary school building. Her room was spacious, well-lighted, and cheerfully painted.

Her classroom was a milieu of literacy, a necessary component of a whole language classroom (K. Goodman, 1986; Y. Goodman, 1989; D. Watson, 1989). Functional print was everywhere--on the walls, doors, charts, chalkboard, posters, bulletin boards, and signs. Large alphabet letters

in the form of a train were placed above the chalkboard. Two poems, "Crowded Tub" by Shel Silverstein (above the bathtub) and "Swift Things Are Beautiful" by Elizabeth Coatsworth, were printed on posters and displayed in the room. Color words and number words were posted by corresponding pictures. Class rules established by the children during the first day of school were exhibited on a poster board.

Children's literature books were in a wagon and on shelves. The whole language movement emphasizes heavy use of literature, advocating that children learn to read by actually reading, that reading is a part of language learning, and that learning in any one area of language helps learning in other areas. Many teachers and librarians are observing children learning to love to read through literature (Cullinan, 1989). Literature-based instruction has been successfully used with all types of children; gives students choice in reading and, therefore, a reason to read; lends meaning and pleasure to the reading process; makes skills instruction meaningful; and empowers both teachers and students (Tunnell & Jacobs, 1989). Michele believed in the value of literature books and was anxious to involve the children in literature-based instruction. A large old-fashioned bathtub stuffed with pillows was located in one corner of the room beside the bookwagon and shelved books. A huge paper mache "Dr. Seuss" structure stood beside the tub. Reference books and textbooks were also on shelves.

Along the west wall were built-in cabinets which housed

hands-on materials, including games and manipulatives. On top of the cabinet was an aquarium, the home of a variety of tropical fish. Also on the cabinet top was a hamster cage containing a male and a female hamster family.

A writing center was located in another corner with necessary materials for independent writing activities. The centers contained paper, pencils, erasers, and crayons.

Children's desks were arranged in groups of three in the center of the room. At each area was an independent activity center relating to math, science, or language arts.

In another corner was a large play region equipped with building blocks. An art easel was placed near the lavatory with materials for creative art activities.

The teacher's desk was at the back of the room near the door and in front of a bulletin board. A file cabinet was located beside the desk.

A large chalkboard covered most of the north wall. Messages relating to activity centers were written at one end of the chalkboard.

It was evident from both the physical structure of the room and the types of materials available that the classroom environment was built around a whole language philosophy (Weaver, 1990; Watson, 1989; Y. Goodman, 1989).

The Daily Schedule

Michele began her first days of teaching with a flexible schedule. At the beginning of school, the routine duties were performed--daily attendance, lunch count, and

announcements.

Michele believed in a classroom that supported oral language development. When this type of classroom is created, the language children bring to class is valued as a basis for growth and development. It is a class in which children have various firsthand experiences with their environment and can focus on materials and events that have meaning for their lives. And it is a class in which children have opportunities to communicate with many people and to express what they know and feel (Strickland & Morrow, 1988). Michele was determined to create such an atmosphere in her classroom.

Following the routines was a sharing time in which children were encouraged to develop oral communication skills in a relaxed atmosphere. This was a time of getting acquainted and allowing children to formulate their <u>own</u> class rules in the beginning week. It was also a time for the children to talk about their families and to bring things to school to show their peers.

Active participation is important to the whole language philosophy. This active participation begins with the design and direction of the school process and continues through active involvement in daily classroom learning pursuits (Reutzel & Hollingsworth, 1988). Michele created many activity centers to accommodate this concept.

After sharing time, activity centers were explained and children were given options regarding which activities they would select. A time limit was designated in order to allow

all of the children the opportunity to work at their chosen centers. There was a recess break in the morning with continuation of activity centers until lunchtime.

After lunch was the reading/writing period during which time the children had options of either reading a library book or writing. It was during this 50 minute period that the process writing experience began to evolve.

After reading/writing period, the children were sent to an adjoining building for a 30 minute computer class. Recess was scheduled after the computer class.

Following afternoon recess, the children were again given options and often continued their reading/writing activities.

A process oriented classroom has been recommended by such researcher/educators as Kenneth Goodman, Frank Smith, Donald Graves, and hundreds of others. One simple yet effective way to begin is by reading aloud to the students (Lindberg, 1988). Through reading aloud, a love of reading is transmitted, listening skills are strengthened, comprehension is improved, imaginations are more fully developed, and a better sense of story can be realized. This enhances both the reading and writing processes (Fuhler, 1990).

Michele believed in the value of reading aloud; therefore, she often read aloud during flexible periods during the day. During these times, there was much interaction--responding to literature and exchanging ideas. Michele's beginning schedule was relaxed, flexible, and

compatible with a whole language philosophy.

Teaching Process Writing

Donald Murray (1984) maintains that writing is thinking and discovering. Individuals write to (a) record what they have seen, felt, or thought, (b) celebrate experiences, and (c) just of find out what it all means, for by writing, we can stand back from ourselves and see significance in what is close to us. Writing takes time. It is a cyclical process involving recurring cycles (Tompkins & Hosskisson, 1991).

Important prerequisites for becoming a writer are understanding writing as a communication tool and developing an appreciation for authorship (Graves, 1989). Michele emphasized these two concepts.

The concept of authorship, a key component of whole language, brings a vital dimension to reading and writing. It is an important aspect of literacy development. Through the development of authorship, children confer with others using the class as an audience. They learn to make choices and to revise their writing, naturally refining their creativity and skills as writers. They learn to appreciate real authors and books while learning to be perceptive readers and writers. Most important of all to a process writing program is the way in which authorship creates a "community of authors" becoming members of the writers' club; a club to which every child can belong (Lamme, 1989).

From the first day of school, Michele fostered these

concepts by discussing the importance of books and daily exposing the class to a variety of genres and authors. She was a role-model for reading and writing as she participated in both activities. As Jane Hansen suggests in When Writers Read, we learn to write by reading; we learn to read by writing. A host of educators in the field of writing state that the best way to learn to write is to write, write, write (Graves, 1983, 1989; Murray, 1982; F. Smith, 1982; and William Zinsser, 1990).

From the first week of school, Michele began exposing the children to writing by reading aloud then engaging the class in collaborative stories. One day, Michele read the poem, "What if" by Shel Silverstein. After dialoguing about it, the children composed a "What if..." poem which Michele later made into a class book. The poem by the class read as follows:

What if. . .

I say my ABC's wrong?
My head gets too small?
My desk blows up?
The teacher gets smaller?
I have chicken pox in school?
Lightening tears up my kite?
I look funny?
A porcupine stings me?
I rip my pants?
I drown in the ocean?
I grow green hair all over me?

I trip over a rock and fall into poison ivy?

I start getting smaller?

I stepped on a cactus?

A scorpion bites my toe?

I'm bigger than everyone else?

The children were delighted with their creation and read it aloud together on several occasions.

Another collaborative effort at story writing followed Michele's reading of A Book of Hugs by Dave Ross. A collaborative story book was composed as follows:

Fish hugs are very cold; never hug a shark.

You can hug a volcano; just make sure it never explodes.

Don't hug a giant; you might get squished.

Never hug a neck; you might choke somebody.

Never hug a teddy bear; it will hog the covers.

Never hug a horse; it will run away with you.

Never hug a rabbit; it might hop away.

Never hug the sun; you'll get hot.

Again the children were excited about their book, and they were developing a sense of authorship while writing and reading collaboratively.

Writing takes time, and the children were given large blocks of time for experiencing the writing process. The five stages of process writing are: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and sharing/publishing (Tompkins & Hoskisson, 1991).

The children spent a large amount of time in the

prewriting stage which, according to Murray, should envelop 70 percent of the writing act. This is the stage in which children actually get ready to write. By talking, reading, and writing, writers begin to think about what they already know and what direction they want to take in their writing. During this time, writers choose a topic; consider purpose, form, and audience; use different informal writing strategies to generate and organize ideas; and write collaborative compositions. Children might even interview community leaders to gather more information relating to their subject areas. They brainstorm, free write, cluster main ideas and details, and organize their thoughts (Tompkins & Hoskisson, 1991). During this stage, the children would discuss as a class, in pairs or groups, or individually with the teacher, possible topics and genres for writing. Brainstorming usually related to their own experiences and interests. The creative seeds of writing were planted during this stage.

During the drafting stage, students write and refine their stories through several drafts, taking their tentative ideas and focusing on getting those ideas down on paper. There is little concern for mechanical errors. They concentrate on rough drafts, writing leads, and content (Tompkins & Hoskisson, 1991). Donald Graves (1989) addresses the importance of these leads suggesting that the writer can speculate on what is possible in the remainder of a story based on the lead. He sees the lead as a promise, a development of possibility. During the drafting stage in

Michele's class, some children began drawing pictures while others started jotting down words or brief sentences. At the beginning of the year, the writing always took the form of picture books, concept books, or very brief dialogue with illustrations.

The revising stage is a time for refining ideas. Students often share their rough drafts with peers or the teacher, receiving helpful feedback for their compositions (Tompkins & Hoskisson, 1991). During the revising stage, Michele's children discussed their stories with peers, and Michele constantly interacted with the children, listening, responding, and assisting when invited. Collaborative learning is important to a whole language classroom. Michele's students found collaboration during process writing an invaluable learning tool. It was especially effective during the revising and editing stages. Like Michele, other teachers have found that collaborative learning enables children to learn from each other, develop close friendships, plan and organize activities, and build self-confidence (Crouse & Davy, 1989). It is also invaluable because it affords gifted and talented children the opportunity to make a better educational contribution to themselves and society. Involving these students in cooperative work during process writing--and during other activities of the day--can help develop reflective thinking skills and active decision making skills across ability levels. By developing high interest strategies based on fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration in

creative thinking skill, all children can profit in the learning process (Adams & Rotondi, 1990).

It is during the editing stage that writers proofread their errors, often with assistance from several peers. Errors are marked or corrected with special editing marks. Teachers often use this stage to conduct mini-lessons on skills with which students are having difficulty. Teachers then proofread the final edited story (Tompkins & Hoskisson, 1991). During the editing stage, Michele was the source for final approval because the children were not yet proficient enough in the mechanics of writing. Toward the end of the year, however, several of the children could assist in proofreading and error correction.

In the final stage, children usually made books out of their compositions. At the beginning of the year, Michele compiled class books, putting each child's story--or page--in a collaborative large bound book. Soon the children learned to make their own books using a variety of methods from stapled, construction paper books to much more sophisticated bound books (with the aid of the teacher or parents).

As an extension of their story writing, two groups of children composed plays from their original story books. They made costumes in class and presented their plays for their peers. This was a delightful activity incorporating drama with authorship.

Also, an important part of the final stage was author's chair, a time when each child would sit in the designated

author's chair and read his/her story to the class.

"Author's chair" is an integral part of the writing process. It is important to the revision process of writing by giving children feedback, modeling content conferencing, and developing a community of authors (Graves & Hansen, 1983). It also provides a supportive, caring environment in which children become eager to write and share their writing if facilitated in a positive way. Michele did an excellent job of modeling to her children the positive aspects of the activity. The children loved sharing their writing and truly perceived themselves as authors. I frequently observed during this activity and witnessed the children's development as they proudly read and responded as authors. It was during this period that children came to perceive themselves as genuine authors, taking pride and ownership in their original books.

The children were not only given a large block of time immediately following lunch for the writing process, but they were also allowed to work on their stories at various other times during the school day. They were always given choice, encouraged to experiment and take risks, and never required to complete a composition if they chose to abandon it. These are all important considerations when teaching process writing (Atwell, 1987). The entire process of writing was taught in a holistic, authentic way totally compatible with a whole language philosophy.

With a whole language philosophy, evaluation is usually informal in design. Assessment takes the form of daily

observation--"kid-watching" as Yetta Goodman suggests--anecdotal records, individual folders with weekly samples of children's work, conferencing, the student's self-evaluation, and individual skill checklists (Atwell, 1987; Y. Goodman, 1989; and Weaver, 1990). Michele practiced these informal methods of assessment as an on-going process of evaluating process writing. She daily observed, conferenced, made notes of skill weaknesses, kept individual folders with samples of the children's work, and noted weekly and monthly the progress that the students were making.

Progress in Learning to Write

Observing children as they progress developmentally through stages of process writing is an educational phenomenon. Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development (Kamii, 1982) suggests that children's thinking develops sequentially through stages as they explore their environment and act upon it. This theory is certainly compatible with my observations of the children in Michele's first grade class.

Michele provided the children with many daily opportunities for writing. There were large blocks of time allotted for (1) individual dialogue journal writing, (2) collaborative story writing as a class, (3) individual story writing, (4) cooperative group story writing in pairs or trios, (5) response writing following read-aloud books or

poetry, (6) letter writing to the teacher and later during the year to men in the armed services involved in Desert Storm, and (7) writing to express feelings.

Michele expressed that the journal writing time was a special time for both her and the children. Journal writing is an important element in a whole language classroom. A journal offers several invaluable benefits. Through journal writing, (1) the teacher gets to know the students better and vice versa, (2) children practice saying what they mean, (3) the teacher gets an overall picture about whether certain lessons have become functional in the children's writing, and (4) the entries provide individual records of growth in language awareness. The children realize that journal writing is a communication tool--writing for a purpose (Strackbein & Tillman, 1987). This activity was invaluable in learning more about the students, creating a personal closeness through dialogue, and observing progress in writing throughout the year.

It was obvious from the beginning of the process writing experience that the students were not at the same stages of development. Some children began writing with pictures only, telling their stories through a series of illustrations. Donald Graves (Investigate Nonfiction, 1989) suggests that children's drawings are a source of information for teaching. Their drawings create an understanding of how children are depicting events. Picture drawing is, therefore, not only the most elementary form of story writing, it is also a means of determining how

children are thinking and learning. Most of the children who began writing through drawing eventually progressed to story compositions with the addition of words.

One particular child began her writing with wordless books. She was a talented artist, and she continued picture writing for months. Finally, in the spring she began to accompany her drawings with words which eventually evolved into stories. Following is the narrative from one of her beautifully illustrated books:

Me and My Monkey (title)

Ray's Birthday is on
November 1 (page 1)

Ray likes Music and
I like Music Too (page 2)

Ray likes Bubbel Gum
and he can Blow a big
Big Big Big BIG
BIG Bubbel! (page 3)

Ray likes the
Fariswell and so do I (page 4)

Another group of children began writing by constructing concept books, drawing illustrations and labeling with one or two words to correspond to the pictures. They, too, progressed through the year with more advanced stories.

One particular first grader began by writing the following concept book:

COLERS AND SHAPES (title)

LION (with a sketch of a lion's face on page 1)

A MOUSE (with a sketch of a mouse's face on page 2)

FOX (with a sketch of a fox's face on page 3)

TIRGLE, CIRCLE, SORREE (with sketches of a triangle, a circle, and a square on page 4)

Several months later the same child had written and illustrated the following story:

No! Thorwing Toys on The floor! (title)

After school one day I wanted To play and my mom said "don't thorw Toys on the flor winn your finnsed" (page 1)

And I said Okay But. . .

I Thorw Some Toys on floor (page 2)

and I Thorw Toys on the Bed. (page 3)

and then when my mom came

in There was Toy all

ove The floor!!! (page 4)

I got in troble and had

to clean up (page 5)

The End (page 6)

A third group of children began their writing with illustrations and accompanying sentences. These children used invented spelling and eventually composed books with concepts of story consisting of beginning, middle, and end. A few of the children within this group even progressed to chapter books. One trio of girls composed a series of books about a rabbit family. Following is the narration from one of the first stories written collaboratively by the three girls:

The Magc Gambol

(Title: The Magic Gumball)

Tar was a Ltl mohs

An he saw a magc gambol (page 1)

He told hes Famle aba it. (page 2)

Wat ar we going

to Do wet it Sad the Mathr (page 3)

The Fothr Thot For a Manit

And Than He Now We Kan Kept It

So No Wan Wad No (page 4)

Tha Pot n the Box (page 5)

The Mom wos up Arley

And Se Had (page 6)

Neat spt for it (page 7)

Two months later these same three girls wrote a beautifully illustrated story with the following narration:

Snow Flake's Birthday (title)

"Daddy" "Daddy" I am going to have a birthday

party tomorrow. (page 1)

Ok. You can have a birthday pade (page 2)

Mommy

Mommy

I'm going to have a birthday. (page 3)

Ok she sad (page 4)

Tas is going to be a

good birthday Mom (page 5)

How is coming to my birthday? (page 6)

A trdl and a bane and a pag

and a dak ar cameg

To yor birthday (page 7)

Se tot aboat (it) (page 8)

Sn se

fal a seep (page 9)

it's so dark in hare (page 10)

More to came?

Yes! (page 11)

Sprise! (page 12)

Tan se

bow at candls (page 13)

and Opand

Prasas (page 14)

Ta plad tall

bad time (page 15)

Mom tat was

a great pade!! (page 16)

The End (page 17)

It was obvious from variance in spelling that different girls shared individual responsibility for writing each page even though the content had been carefully planned collaborately. It was apparent that in just two months' time, the girls had moved from semi-phonetic to phonetic to transitional and, in some instances, to correct spelling. Their syntax was more fully developed and their concept of story had broadened.

Among my most fascinating areas of observation as a researcher were those involving children who worked in pairs

or groups. The children without exception always began their compositions by drawing pictures. They added the dialogue for the stories after completing the illustrations. Frequently, they would construct their stories one page at a time, drawing a picture then adding sentences or short paragraphs. I was amazed at the constant interaction, discussion, suggestions, and responses of those children working collaborately. There was rarely a serious confrontation. The children often disagreed but listened to one another's suggestions and almost always resolved their own conflicts. It demonstrated clearly the value of cooperative learning (Johnson & Johnson, 1987) and how children will take charge of their own learning and resolve problems if given responsibility and choice (Kamii, 1982).

Another fascinating area of development is related to invented spelling. Psycholinguists in recent years have widely recognized the value of invented spelling, realizing that spelling errors are a necessary part of development. Invented spelling is a child's way of building a coherent system of writing. It is also a way to correct his/her errors. If a child's errors are corrected by the teacher, it will stifle his/her confidence and drive to write. If left alone to construct his/her own knowledge (Piaget), the child will progressively correct his/her own spelling errors (Kamii & Randazzo, 1985). Michele supported this theory of development and encouraged invented spelling in all of the students' writing. Their progress was amazing.

Frank Smith (1982) suggests that children use invented

spellings in their writings because they have fewer correct spellings at their command. Learning to spell takes time; it begins with misspellings. Children who end up writing only the words they can spell write very few words indeed. Michele encouraged her children in the development of content by accepting invented spellings. It allowed the children to take risks without fear of making errors and, therefore, encouraged them to think about meaning and story development rather than isolated words. It encouraged them to use many words that they could not spell correctly from an adult's point of view. They were constructing their own knowledge. As a result, writing became communication. I readily observed the stages through which children progress as they learn to spell naturally in a whole language classroom (Tompkins & Hosskisson, 1991). Again there was an evident range in stages of development of these first graders.

Some of the children were in the semi-phonetic stage of spelling, combining consonants to represent words. Most of these children progressed to the phonetic stage and some advanced to the transitional stage by the end of the year. A second group of children began at the phonetic stage using consonants with vowels. Most of these students reached the transitional stage and a few advanced to the correct stage by the end of the year. The third group of children also began with phonetic spelling and rapidly advanced to transitional spelling. Several of these students reached the correct spelling stage by the middle of the year,

spelling many words correctly and building a vocabulary which was evident in their more advanced story compositions.

The children learned to use punctuation naturally through constant exposure to literature books and through actual construction of stories. Through collaborative story writing as a class, Michele first exposed them naturally to both capitalization and punctuation as she printed their stories on large pieces of paper of poster board. They were taught the need for mechanics in a holistic form as stories were developed, first emphasizing content then progressing to mechanics in a meaningful context.

As Frank Smith points out in Writing and the Writer, development of composition does not reside in writing alone, but requires that children read and be read to. Through the written language of others, children learn to observe and understand conventions and ideas together. Rather than teaching punctuation rules, children must develop an understanding of punctuation through exposure to passages of writing which includes a variety of punctuation types. Children can learn all of the conventions of writing by telling, reading, and listening to stories. Composition is learned through reading, writing, conversation, and discussion. Intention, sensitivity and skill develop together. These were all concepts that Michele believed in and practiced as she gently guided her students in learning the conventions of writing.

The progress in process writing was apparent as I observed the children from week to week during the

reading/writing period. They advanced in spelling, in constructing elements of story, in experimenting with different genres, in using punctuation correctly, and in cooperative learning skills. They became a community of learners who perceived themselves as authors, took pride in their writing, and felt a sense of ownership in their classroom.

Problems Encountered in the Socialization Process

Socialization is a reality of life in any profession. It is a process involving the way an individual acquires social skills and knowledge necessary to assume an organizational role (Maanen & Schein, 1979). Teacher socialization involves learning, unlearning, and adjusting behaviors both old and new in order that new teachers meet the role expectations placed before them (Crase, 1979). For Michele, the idealist views of teaching were expeditiously challenged by the realities of classroom life as dictated by the socialization process.

Visiting with Michele in her classroom the day before school began, one could readily observe that idealistic enthusiasm embracing a beginning teacher. She was bubbly in personality and shared with me her excitement and anticipation about the first day of school. She walked me through her classroom, showing me the many different materials which she had created and sharing her plans for teaching. The entire room was reflective of her whole

language perspective. She was idealistically armored to create a classroom that was indicative of her teaching philosophy.

On the afternoon of the third day, the realities of teaching had set in. The socialization process of an entry teacher had begun. The principal walked into Michele's classroom unannounced and observed for the remainder of the day. Immediately following the children's dismissal at the end of the school day, the principal informed her that her room arrangement and methodologies were fine for kindergarten where she had completed her student-teaching experience; they were, however, totally inappropriate for first grade.

Parents had already contacted the administration. Research indicates that pressure from parental groups often plays a major role in determining the course of curriculum for children. Parents make different demands based upon their particular values and expectations (Wells, 1984). Parents had applied pressure directly to the principal. She, in turn, had reacted quickly. Some of the parents had requested that their children be transferred to Michele's room because they believed in a more holistic approach to teaching; others had requested that their children be transferred from Michele's room to a more traditional classroom with a strict environment and direct skill teaching. Because one transfer request had been granted, Michele's cooperating first grade teacher was upset with Michele for offering an alternative to her traditional

classroom. Michele was experiencing the pressures of the principal, the parents, and colleagues.

The principal made several suggestions to Michele. She recommended that Michele: (1) place the desks in rows, (2) provided worksheets for skill practices, (3) organize reading instruction with the use of basal readers, (4) be more assertive in regard to discipline, (5) organize subjects in segmented time periods, (6) demand much less opportunity for oral communication, and (7) totally eliminate choices in the curriculum, stating that children, and even adults, can have too many choices. The only area in which Michele verbalized her disagreement--and she disagreed with every recommendation--related to the suggestion regarding providing less opportunities for oral communication. Michele expressed her conviction that oral communication was vital to early language and literacy development. She stated that she would, therefore, continue to encourage oral communication within the confines of her classroom. The principal did not respond to Michele's adamant statement.

Michele also received pressure from her cooperating entry-year teacher, one of three other first grade teachers within the school. This teacher was traditional in her teaching philosophy. She was also the teacher of a child whose parent had requested a transfer to Michel's class during the first week of school. She criticized Michele's methods of teaching and she, too, suggested that Michele needed to "be weaned" from kindergarten teaching and adopt

her methods of instruction. This, too, added to Michele's sense of frustration. When she came to observe, Michele would present a lesson compatible with the teacher's philosophy. It was yet another game that Michele learned to play to survive.

The socialization process was well under way, and Michele was devastated. She was experiencing some of the same frustrations related by other teachers--frustrations resulting from loss of control and interference from administrators mandating changes in teaching methods (Hensley, 1989). The "reality shock" (Veenman, 1984) had struck like a bolt of lightening.

The days that followed were days of change for Michele. She stayed up until two in the morning after the confrontation by the principal, at which time she totally rearranged the physical environment of her classroom. Desks were rearranged in traditional rows, centers were put away, and reading began with basal instruction. I also noted changes in her lesson plans. They had become more structured, and worksheets were now being added. The mornings were spent in traditional teaching of reading--group instruction according to ability grouping, whole class instruction, and seatwork in the form of worksheets. Michele had begun her philosophical compromises in order to survive the mandates of the principal. The fact that Michele received little support from her principal was not too surprising. According to research (O'Dell, 1988), overall, school principals are not viewed as a particularly

strong support system for beginning teachers. She did, however, continue to allow large blocks of time for reading and writing in the afternoons and during free time when assigned work was completed. She also continually read aloud from literature books and encouraged the children to read and write as much as possible.

It was during the following weeks that a remarked change had taken place within Michele personally. She looked tired and stressed during my observation periods. She expressed frustrations regarding the restlessness of children. Her enthusiasm was seriously waning. She shared with me that she cried every night when she went home and even, at times, burst into tears during recess. She also shared that the principal had daily entered her classroom without prior notice. Sometimes, she would visit twice a day. Michele expressed the fear that was evoked--fear accompanied by trembling--as she watched the principal approach her room. The fear, the pressure, and the stress of the entire situation became progressively worse for Michele until the Christmas holiday. At one point, she considered leaving the profession. This is not an unusual consideration for beginning teachers. According to Ryan (1970, 1980), leaving the profession or leaving the current school is a recurrent theme of beginning teachers.

Michele also expressed the feeling of isolation. A few teachers were ignoring her as a statement of their disapproval of her methods of teaching. Even the physical isolation of being in a building detached from the main

school took on a new meaning. It was that sense of isolation and aloneness that researchers have suggested accompany the beginning teachers' distorted picture of the realities of the profession (Felder, 1979).

Michele shared that her father's death, as traumatic as it had been, was not as difficult for her to deal with as was this situation. She viewed the criticism and pressure as a personal and professional "stab" because she was never given a chance to explain her plans or to defend her actions. Michele had quickly learned that the school bureaucracy was alive and thriving, sending the message that new teachers must conform to the traditional values and practices of the school system of which they are a part (Wells, 1984).

In spite of the realizations and frustrations of the socialization process, Michele managed to conceal much of her anxiety from the children. She worked hard to appear enthusiastic as her students continued their reading and writing activities after lunch. And daily observations of her children as they developed as a community of authors was a continual bright spot in the midst of personal struggles. She was experiencing her classroom in much the same way as did Nancie Atwell who described her classroom as ". . .an evolving text; a communal scribble in which we revise together" (1987).

After the Christmas break, the principal began to visit the classroom less frequently. Through the socialization process, Michele had learned to compromise and to play the

games. She had altered her materials and methodologies and had even "trained" the children in a positive way to behave as the principal expected them to behave during her daily visits.

By February, she could meet the principal in the hall without trembling. She regained confidence in herself as a teacher--the confidence that was evident at the beginning of the school year. She eventually rearranged her room to once again accommodate a whole language philosophy. The spring became a time for reflection, for redirection, and for renewal of her beliefs about teaching.

Commitment: Its Impacts and Effects

Commitment is a powerful, driving force that motivates teachers to create a classroom environment that is compatible with their beliefs about children and how children learn. It is the driving force that inspires teachers such as Herbert Kohl (36 Children), Eliot Wigginton (Foxfire), Nancie Atwell (In the Middle), and Eleanor Duckworth (The Having of Wonderful Ideas) to teach according to their philosophical belief systems.

Commitment was a driving force in Michele's life also. Michele's sense of commitment was intense. It was a combination of several types of commitment researched by Nias (1981)--commitment (a) to a pursuit of personal ideals in education and society, (b) to a search for high standards of professional competency, (c) to loving and caring for

children, and (d) to active involvement congruent with a personal philosophy of education.

In spite of the trials and frustrations of the socialization process, Michele drew strength. It was a strength that was inspired by commitment--commitment to the teaching profession, to the children, and to her philosophical beliefs. It was a commitment--as expressed to me in her interviews--to be the best teacher that she could possibly be.

Because of Michele's commitment, she sought and received support for her philosophy of teaching from two teaching colleagues (the kindergarten teachers who shared the same beliefs in the whole language philosophy) and from her university entry-year supervisor. These three teachers provided invaluable encouragement, assistance, and friendship. She also received support from several parents who expressed their belief in her philosophy of education and in her ability as a teacher. These parents offered their assistance by frequently serving as classroom aids.

Because of her commitment--and in spite of the compromises made for survival--Michele always managed to incorporate holistic ideas in the classroom. She continually immersed the children in a literate environment, exposing them to a plethora of literature books. She allowed large blocks of time for reading and writing each day.

As a result of Michele's commitment to teaching process writing, the advancements of the children's compositions

were evident. All of the children had advanced from picture writing to communication with words. Most of the children were at least in the phonetic stage of spelling; many had progressed to the transitional stage; and several were writing with mostly correct spelling.

All of the children had a sound concept of story, composing books with a beginning, middle, and end. They also had developed a natural understanding of the basic mechanics of writing, using capitalization at the beginnings of sentences and placing punctuation marks at the ends. Some had incorporated direct dialogue.

Two groups of children--groups who had worked collaboratively throughout the school year--had advanced to writing very sophisticated story plots for first graders. One trio of writers had written chapter books and had eventually advanced to writing a series of books about a rabbit family.

All of the children illustrated their stories, and a couple of naturally talented artists had created beautiful, sophisticated illustrations to enhance their books. They were learning through a holistic process, and they enthusiastically and proudly perceived themselves as readers and writers. Writing had become that wonderful "celebration" of learning that Dorothy Watson addressed (1989).

The first year of teaching was one of the most difficult periods in Michele's life on both a personal and professional level. It was a time of survival, a part of

the school socialization process for which she had not been prepared (Quaglia, 1989).

Michele's strong personality aided her in her commitment to "hang tough"; therefore, she emerged at the end of the school year with a renewed sense of confidence as a teacher and with a stronger belief in her educational philosophy.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

> It is far more important to have the capacity to change than to view the change itself. . .
> --Russell Dobson

Summary

The purpose of this study was twofold. It was designed (1) to examine how a beginning teacher teaches process writing, a whole language concept, in a traditional school system and (2) to research what a beginning teacher experiences during the socialization process as she commits to implementing an educational philosophy that conflicts with that of the school system of which she is a part.

The intent of the researcher was to gain insight and understanding relating to the realities of teaching and learning; therefore, a qualitative, case study approach was selected. A case study is down to earth, strong in reality, and lends itself well to an in-depth study of an individual or group within a limited time frame. It begins in a world of action, emphasizes process, and provides a natural basis for generalization. It was, therefore, appropriate for this research design.

The period of observation covered nine months, beginning in late August and ending in May. During that time, tri-weekly observation visits were made to the classroom, detailed journal notes were recorded, school records and materials were examined, and in-depth interviews were conducted.

The study focused on (1) commitment to a philosophy, (2) effects of socialization, (3) differences in the traditional and whole language philosophies of education, and (4) teaching writing through process.

This specific study was unusual in that the beginning teacher was confident in her abilities and committed to teaching according to her philosophical beliefs, even when those feelings were in conflict with the traditional values of the school. Michele had been reared in a safe, loving family environment. She had expressed a sincere love for children as she nurtured her nieces and nephews. Her strong family ties had enabled her to mature with confidence in who she was and in what she wanted to do with her life. Her educational philosophy had developed during her years as a university student. Several teachers in both special education and elementary education had influenced her as she committed to a belief in developmentally appropriate materials, active involvement in learning, hands-on materials, and holistic teaching.

Michele began the school year by creating a classroom reflective of the whole language philosophy of teaching. She constructed her own learning centers, established a

relaxed, flexible environment, provided a variety of hands-on materials, and generated an immediate excitement for reading and writing by providing numerous opportunities for reading and writing activities. She placed all textbooks on shelves to be used as reference resources.

Her commitment to teaching process writing was apparent from the first days of school. She immediately exposed the children to literature by reading aloud, then engaging them in dialogue about the stories. Together, Michele and the class composed their own stories, then Michele bound them for the class library. Time was allotted for daily journal writing. Large blocks of time were provided for reading and writing through process. Michele was daily practicing what she believed--that language is learned through immersion, personal relevance and experience, active involvement, and choice. She fostered a safe classroom that encouraged cooperation, collaboration, risk-taking, discovering, inquiring, creating, and development to full potential.

In spite of her commitment to her educational belief system, Michele encountered the stark realities of socialization by the end of the first week of school. As a result, she experienced personal anxieties and fears which forced her to quickly make compromises for personal and professional survival. Due to parental pressures and administrative mandates, she made adjustments in schedules, materials, and activities, incorporating traditional methodologies with her holistic ones. Her principal suggested that Michele: (1) place the desks in rows, (2)

provide worksheets for skill practice, (3) organize reading instruction with the use of basal readers, (4) be more assertive in regard to discipline, (5) organize subjects in segmented time periods, (6) demand much less opportunity for oral communication, and (7) totally eliminate choices in the curriculum. Michele learned to "play games" and even to teach the children to "play games" until she could regain enough courage and confidence to ease her way back to what she was committed to doing as a classroom teacher.

The amazing end result was that Michele survived the pressures and the mandates; gained the respect of the principal, colleagues, and parents; and ended the school year full circle. She began the school term with a whole language philosophy of teaching. She survived the administrative pressures during the middle of the year through compromise. And, by spring, she was once again implementing her whole language philosophy, more committed than ever to her belief system about children, about teaching, and about learning.

Michele had experienced the idealism of her belief system and the realism of the socialization process of a beginning teacher. Through it all, she had struggled with doubts and fears, yet she had survived. She had survived because of her strong commitment to children and to the profession. She had survived because of the support system of several colleagues, parents, and friends. And, most importantly, she had survived because of her love for children and because of the progress that they were making.

During her daily observations, she observed tremendous growth socially, mentally, and emotionally.

They had grown from picture writing to sophisticated story writing. They had made tremendous progress from invented spelling to nearly correct spelling. They had learned correct punctuation by seeing the need for punctuation in meaningful contexts. They had learned to compose in different genres. And they had learned that writing is a powerful communication tool. They had become a community of authors who truly loved to read and write and who believed in themselves and in the value of their classmates.

Conclusions

Because a case study allows the researcher to gain insight and understanding through observations of everyday patterns of interaction, several conclusions seem apparent. These points relate to formulation of and commitment to a teaching philosophy, effects of socialization on a beginning teacher, and the process approach to teaching writing.

1. The formulation of a teaching philosophy can be greatly influenced by family background, university professors, and the student-teaching experience.

Michele's loving, caring attitude toward children began with a close-knit family and positive experiences centering around nieces and nephews with whom she played "teacher" at a very young age. Her family always supported and encourage

her in her desires to become a teacher and in her ideas about what teaching should be. Dan Lortie in his book Schoolteacher (1975) found this a very common underlying factor in many young women's aspirations to enter the teaching profession and in their development of a teaching philosophy.

Numerous university professors influenced her philosophical viewpoints by advocating developmentally appropriate teaching materials, active involvement in learning, holistic teaching, a child-centered curriculum, meaningful learning through authentic experiences, and creating a loving, caring, safe environment. Several of her methods classes provided opportunities for experimenting with hands-on activities. Etheridge (1989) suggests that first-year teachers begin their teaching experience with a teaching philosophy influenced by extensive formal training at the university level.

Michele's cooperating teacher during her student-teaching experience was probably the most profound influence of all. It was during this time that Michele moved from theory to practice, learning from her cooperating teacher how to create activity centers, promote cooperative learning, provide hands-on activities, use manipulatives, begin teaching process writing, nurture a love for books and for reading, learn with the children, provide choice in learning, and create a loving, safe environment for all.

It was obvious in the way that Michele began her first year of teaching that the above mentioned individuals had

impacted her beliefs about teaching.

2. A beginning teacher's commitment to a specific philosophy can be motivated by her belief system regarding how children learn.

Michele was a strong, confident personality who believed that children learn best in a classroom promoting a whole language philosophy. This belief system was based on her experiences working with children and on her university training. It is a belief system related to years of research by such educators as Piaget (1975), Kamii (1982), K. Goodman (1989), Graves (1989), Hansen (1987), Duckworth (1987), and Halliday (1975).

Michele had become a teacher/learner while observing the children in the kindergarten class in which she student-taught. This, too, reinforced her motivation to commit to her educational philosophy.

3. A beginning teacher may be forced to compromise her commitment to a philosophy in order to survive emotionally and professionally.

Michele experienced tremendous pressure because her philosophy was in conflict with the traditional philosophy of the school. She was constantly observed without prior notification, she was confronted by her principal, and she was mandated to make changes--changes that were in total conflict with her belief system about teaching. Because the pressure persisted for months, Michele began to lose her

self-confidence and eventually experienced deep emotional stress. She feared for her career--entertaining the possibility of not being re-hired the following year if she did not adjust her teaching materials and methodologies. As a result, she adapted. She incorporated some traditional materials and methodologies with her holistic ones. By complying with the suggestions of her principal, the observations and pressures eventually lessened, and she gradually regained her confidence.

4. The socialization process of an entry-year teacher can affect materials used, methodologies employed, physical arrangement of the classroom, the physical and emotional state of the teacher, and the direction of the students' learning.

Michele began non-traditional teaching in a traditional school system. As a result, she experienced the socialization process--the process of conforming to the attitudes and role defined by the school organization--on the third day of class. She immediately rearranged her room, added traditional materials in the form of worksheets and textbooks, and organized ability- grouped reading. Her physical and emotional state quickly changed. She began the year as a happy, relaxed, energetic, and confident teacher. As the socialization process took form, she became serious and tense, crying easily and slowly losing self-confidence. She often looked weary as I entered her classroom, and she lived in fear of unannounced observations by the principal.

She tried very hard to conceal her anxiety from the children, but, at times, the children sensed her uneasiness and became restless. She learned to "play games" to prepare for the principal. She taught the children to "play games," too,--to behave in a way that would accommodate the expectations of the principal. She was experiencing the same pressures that other beginning teachers have experienced; mandates regarding what materials to use and how to arrange the classroom (Hensley, 1989).

5. The socialization process involves the administration, teaching colleagues, and parents.

Although the principal was the primary agent who initiated the socialization process, others were definitely involved. The parents are frequently a driving force in the direction of the life of a school. As research indicates (Wells, 1984), parents bring specific values and expectations to the system and often influence the direction of the curriculum. In Michele's case, parents applied pressure to the principal, pressure which she did not want to deal with; therefore, she reacted quickly to prevent future confrontations.

The teaching colleagues also play a role in the process. Michele's entry-year cooperating teacher was traditional, and she applied pressure, insisting that Michele be weaned from her kindergarten approach to teaching and suggesting that Michele use traditional materials and methods in her classroom. Several other teachers remained

detached, adding to Michele's feeling of isolation. Teacher isolation is frequently a factor in the socialization process. Deal and Chatman (1989) have found that this classroom isolation greatly limits the development of shared ways and understandings, often leaving new teachers to learn the ropes alone. Gehrke (1991) suggests that even the spatial, temporal, and organizational structures of schools often cut teachers off from each other, forcing beginners to find their own ways alone. This finding certainly held true for Michele. Not only did she experience professional isolation brought about by the principal's mandates to conform; she also experienced the structural isolation of having her classroom located in a separate building, housing two classrooms, behind the main school structure.

6. Regardless of a beginning teacher's degree of commitment to a philosophy and determination to implement that philosophy, a strong support system is necessary for survival during the first year of teaching.

During the continual dialoguing with Michele, she expressed frequently and emphatically that she could never have survived emotionally during her most stressful months without the support of the two kindergarten teachers and her university entry-year supervisor. She spent many hours during breaks and after school conferring with her two colleagues, often crying and seeking advice, friendship, and reassurance. These teachers held the same philosophical beliefs about teaching and gave her the positive feedback

that was necessary to her survival. At one point, one of them even confronted the principal, expressing her concerns regarding the fact that Michele had never been given time--or the opportunity--to find her way as a teacher. These teachers served as Michele's mentors, friends, and counselors.

Also a positive force in Michele's support system was her university supervisor. Michele contacted her early in the school year to share her frustrations, beliefs, and problems. The professor was totally empathetic and supportive and constantly encouraged Michele as the year progressed.

As a researcher advocating the whole language philosophy, I, too, became a positive support system for Michele. I continually listened and encouraged her as she faced the frustrations of her situation.

7. A beginning teacher's philosophical compromises for survival do not have to be permanent ones.

Michele's first year of teaching was a traumatic time in her life--so traumatic that she expressed to me how her father's death, as devastating as it was, could not compare to the anxieties she experienced during her first months in the classroom. Her emotional and professional survival depended upon compromise--compromise in materials, methodologies, and physical readjustment of the environment. Yet, the bright side of the picture--the hope for future entry-year teachers--lies in the fact that Michele's

compromises were only temporary ones. She learned to "play games"--to meet the mandates of the principal--long enough to regain her confidence, prove herself as a teacher, and receive tremendous support from parents.

She structured her mornings to meet the principal's demands for a more traditional classroom. She continued her holistic methodologies in the afternoons and during free time. She covered the basal readers as quickly as possible, and provided fewer and fewer worksheets as the year progressed. Because of the loving, caring atmosphere which always prevailed, and because of the freedom that the children were given in reading and writing activities during the afternoons, the principal, colleagues, and parents observed amazing progress in the children's reading and writing development and in their positive attitudes toward school. The students anxiously anticipated free time and afternoons, and I frequently heard requests such as, "Can we work on our stories now?" or "Can we read our books to the class?" The children loved school, and reading and writing had become a celebration of learning.

By late spring, Michele had gone full circle. She had rearranged her classroom in a holistic manner in much the same way that she had begun the school year. The state-adopted textbooks were back on the shelves, and materials and activities were once again totally reflective of a whole language philosophy.

8. Process writing supports the Piagetian theory of

learning and is advantageous because: (a) it allows each child to progress developmentally at his/her own pace and stage of learning, (b) it affords children large blocks of time to experiment and construct knowledge from within, (c) it promotes autonomy by giving children choice in what they desire to write, and (d) it encourages risk-taking and eliminates fear of failure by emphasizing content before mechanics and by accepting invented spelling.

From the first day of school, Michele convinced the children that they were all writers by allowing them to begin writing where they were, whether communicating by pictures, letters, words, phrases, or sentences. As Kamii and Randazzo (1985) suggest, all children come to school at age four, five, or six knowing something about writing. It is important that they be allowed to use this knowledge to develop as authors. They were encouraged throughout the year to continue at their own pace and stage with guidance rather than criticism or mandates.

The children were given large periods of time to experience the stages of process writing. They were gently nudged when necessary. Constant dialoguing between teacher and peers was a daily occurrence, and time was available for experimenting and reflective thinking. As a result, children constructed knowledge from within, drawing upon their own schemata as they interacted with their writing environment. They brainstormed, collaborated, and drew from their own personal experiences to construct their stories.

The social interaction which they experienced is very important to writing. As Kamii and Randazzo (1985) point out, it allows children to learn actively from a dual source: (1) specific information provided by the environment and (2) each individual's possibilities of assimilating this information into the organization already constructed. Children both receive information and give it with critical, immediate reactions from their peers. In a natural way, they are free to accept or reject their peers' ideas. Through social interaction and process organization, the first graders progressed developmentally in spelling, punctuation, syntax, story concept, and genre writing.

Michele always gave the children the freedom to choose what they desired to write. By allowing choice, children developed autonomy, being able to think for themselves and make decisions independently by taking into account relevant factors brought about by the interaction between their existing cognitive structures and the environment.

Michele created a caring, safe milieu by encouraging, facilitating and supporting rather than by dictating and demanding. She emphasized content rather than mechanics in the beginning stages of writing, never correcting invented spelling and other errors unless invited to do so. She believed, as do Kamii and Randazzo (1985), that errors are a necessary part of development, and corrections only serve to stifle children's confidence and desire to write. She found that children progressively correct these errors themselves if given numerous opportunities to read and write. They

also become risk-takers, experimenting and learning from mistakes and developing a strong sense of confidence.

9. Process writing can be taught successfully in a traditional school if the teacher is willing to persevere, stand by her convictions and organize a writing program which: (1) provides large blocks of time for writing, (2) allows freedom of choice in writing topics, (3) facilitates responses to child meaning, and (4) establishes a community of learners in the classroom.

Even under pressure, Michele daily continued her reading/ writing block of activities. She constantly immersed the children in a literate environment. And she organized her writing program in process format as Donald Graves (1985) recommends. It was, therefore, successful in spite of other teaching compromises which had to be made.

10. Definite progress in writing can be observed when teaching through process.

Michele repeatedly shared that what probably motivated her the most to persevere during this first year of teaching was the daily progress that she readily observed in the children's writing as they developed into a community of authors. The progress was realized in the children's continuing development in story structure, spelling, punctuation, syntax, use of genres, and overall improvement in communication skills. It was observed in the increasing number of books that were being published by the children.

And it was discerned in the development of a community of authors who looked forward to writing and sharing in a happy, safe environment.

Recommendations

A case study cannot be compared because it is a specific situation--in this case, a particular subject with a particular class which will never again be the same. It, therefore, limits the generalizability of the results. This study did, however, provide invaluable insight and information relating to the socialization of an entry-year teacher and to how children develop as writers through the process-writing approach to teaching.

Several recommendations can be made regarding how teacher-education programs can better prepare entry-year teachers for the socialization process. I would recommend that a senior division university course addressing the socialization process be added to the teacher-education training program. This course would include research relating to the socialization of beginning teachers. It would also include scheduled talks by (1) teachers who have just completed their first year of teaching, (2) principals addressing their expectations of first-year teachers, and (3) other guest lecturers who could provide relevant enlightenment. Time would be allotted for extensive dialoguing at which point problems and questions could be addressed. Specific time should be designated for comparing the idealism of beginning teachers with the realism of daily

classroom life.

Another recommendation would be that university professors in the teacher-education program work closely with the public schools, developing, as a team, an organizational plan for preparing first-year teachers for the realities of socialization and of classroom teaching. Some suggestions might include: (1) provide weekly opportunities for beginning teachers to dialogue with the administration regarding expectations, (2) restructure schools to provide more opportunities for informal peer interaction (Deal and Chatman, 1989, suggest providing teaching teams, giving teachers the chance to observe each other, plan together, and discuss school-wide issues and problems of teaching), (3) offer alternative classrooms at each grade level within the schools, and (4) involve parents in immediate interaction with beginning teachers, giving the teachers opportunities to dialogue with parents regarding their teaching philosophies, methodologies, and expectations for their classrooms.

A third recommendation would be to require that student-teachers spend more time in classrooms prior to first year teaching. If prospective teachers were more fully exposed to the realities of classroom life firsthand while gaining teaching experience under mentors, perhaps they could acquire more confidence and teaching expertise that would enable them to better understand and cope with the socialization process.

Several recommendations can be made relating to process

writing. This study revealed marked progress in the writing development of children exposed to a process-centered program. Also significant was the positive attitude that the children acquired in regard to both reading and writing.

I would recommend that our prospective teachers be required to take a process writing course at the university level. One of my major concerns as an educator has related to the observations that the majority of students at all levels of learning do not enjoy writing, are not proficient in the writing act, and are lacking in exposure to writing through process. If we are to recommend that our beginning teachers teach process writing, I believe it invaluable that they be actively involved in the process through first-hand experience at the university level.

I would also recommend that principals, parents, and teachers within the schools be exposed to process writing through on-cite writing workshops. The most convincing knowledge is the lived experience. If we, as educators, are to create change at the university level theoretically, we must interact on cite with those who are responsible for the practical application of the theory. As Schwab suggests (Schubert, 1986), we must develop curriculum on cite through interaction of the teachers, learners, subject matter, and milieu, gaining insight and understanding through the dictates of the students. This will allow us to make responsible decisions in meeting the needs, desires, and problems of students.

There are several possibilities relating to future

research for graduate students. One recommendation would be to conduct numerous case studies of first-year teachers in their socialization process. It might be beneficial to specifically identify qualities necessary for coping with the problems encountered by beginning teachers, especially in a school system in which the educational philosophy conflicts with that of the new teacher. This information might be helpful at the university level in screening teacher candidates early in their career pursuits, aiding them in avoiding bad career choices. It might also alleviate some of the statistics regarding entry-year teachers who soon give up the profession because of disillusionment and inability to persevere.

I would also recommend as a research study conducting in-depth interviews with beginning teachers who support a whole language philosophy in a traditional school setting. These teachers could be interviewed at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year. Once data has been collected, the researcher could analyze the findings in relationship to socialization and its effects on the teacher, the students, and the milieu, gaining insight and understanding regarding the problems, frustrations, and triumphs of first year teachers.

Another research possibility is one relating to administrators. In-depth interviews could be conducted to analyze principals' responses to the socialization process. Questions relating to administrative interpretation of socialization, expectations regarding beginning teachers,

and role perceptions of all employees of the school system could be addressed. This information might be useful when preparing beginning teachers for the realizations of the classroom.

Also a suggestion would be to compose a detailed questionnaire to be sent to teachers in schools across the nation. This survey could address the socialization process that each teacher experienced as a beginner. This data could be used in conjunction with qualitative studies to further analyze the socialization process.

Longitudinal studies of successful career teachers could be considered. A researcher might conduct several life histories of these individuals. Understanding how they have coped within the school system might supply information that will provide beginning teachers with valuable survival skills.

Research concerning process writing holds numerous possibilities. I would recommend a longitudinal case study of one child over a four-year period, from kindergarten through third grade, as the student develops writing skills through process. This type of research would have to be conducted in a school system that offered both traditional and whole language classrooms at each grade level. With this type of study one could observe the developmental progression of writing that a particular child experiences over an extended period of time. A portfolio of the student's writing samples could be collected, analyzing progress over the four years. A further possibility might

be to examine writing samples of children who have experienced traditional writing instruction for four years within the same school system. The researcher could then compare and analyze the compositions in regard to sentence structure, development of story, and skill understanding relating to punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

A final suggestion would be more case studies of entry-year teachers teaching process writing in a school system which also requires traditional methods of teaching writing, comparing the two methodologies to determine how young children best learn to write effectively. Writing is an extremely important communication skill which merits serious attention as we aim to prepare students for successful intellectual and social adjustment to life.

We, as educators, must continually research, always striving to find better methods of preparing our prospective teachers for the profession and better ways of meeting the needs of all children in the classrooms. We must create an educational milieu that will foster a love for learning for the intrinsic rewards. We must provide an atmosphere which eliminates prejudice and provides our minorities with materials rooted in their cultures. We must eliminate bias in methods of evaluation. Finally, we must emphasize the importance of each human being, striving to build a positive self-concept while challenging each child to develop to full potential, intellectually, creatively, physically, and emotionally.

If this research study has enlightened an educator in

even one small way that will influence the direction of future first-year teachers in a positive manner, it has served a worthwhile purpose. If it has provided insight that will touch the life of even one child, and create in that child a desire and love for reading and writing, it has performed a noble act. If it has furnished one individual with a new understanding that will motivate him/her to improve the quality of life within our schools, it has been an honorable endeavor. Our children deserve the best possible education that we can provide. They are the delight of the present and the hope of the future.

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VITA

Janice Deanne Davis Buckles

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: AN ENTRY-YEAR TEACHER'S COMMITMENT TO TEACHING WRITING WITH A WHOLE LANGUAGE PHILOSOPHY IN A TRADITIONAL SCHOOL SYSTEM AND THE SOCIALIZATION PROCESS SHE EXPERIENCES: A CASE STUDY

Major Field: Curriculum and Instruction

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Alva, Oklahoma, the daughter of Rex L. and Traca Fern Davis.

Education: Graduate of Dacoma High School, Dacoma, Oklahoma; Bachelor of Science Degree in Elementary Education, Oklahoma State University, 1964; Masters of Education, Northwestern Oklahoma State University, 1978; Completed the requirements for the Doctor of Education degree at Oklahoma State University in December, 1992.

Professional Experiences: Third Grade Teacher, Great Bend, Kansas, 1964-1966; Sixth Grade Language Arts and Remedial Reading Teacher, Dacoma, Oklahoma, 1978-1981; Adjunct Professor of Speech and English, Northwestern Oklahoma State University, Alva, Oklahoma, 1985-1986; Interim Secondary Speech/English Teacher, Cherokee, Oklahoma, 1987; Graduate Assistant and Instructor in Reading/Language Arts and Supervisor of Student-teachers, Oklahoma State University, 1989-1992.