FOUR CASE STUDIES: THE READING ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES OF TEACHERS AND STUDENTS IN SECOND GRADE

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this study was to investigate the nature of reading attitudes and practices in second-grade teachers and students. Surveys and interviews were conducted with second-grade teachers and students in Northwest Ohio. Four teachers participated in surveys and interviews. Thirty-eight students participated in an attitude survey, and 24 students were interviewed. After the results were analyzed, four case studies emerged with many common trends including teacher attitudes, student attitudes, the students’ views about the teacher’s reading attitude, and the instructional practices found in the classroom.

The results of this study indicated that teachers seem to be enthusiastic about reading, but they lack the time needed to read during the school year. Likewise, a majority of second-grade students seem to have positive attitudes toward reading. The instruction in second-grade classrooms appears to include read alouds, book talks, student reading, and hands-on activities. However, most teachers are not incorporating time for students to discuss books.

As a result of this research, it is recommended that teachers continue to be an explicit model of reading to students. Teachers must also balance their instruction to engage students in positive reading attitudes. Principals and librarians should support the reading of teachers by providing book clubs throughout the school year.
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CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

As children progress through school, they engage in the process of learning how to read for approximately 12 years (Cramer & Castle, 1994). Cramer and Castle state, “After completing school, however, too many people do not voluntarily choose to read for their own personal pleasure or information” (p. 4). Harris and Sipay (1985) question, “Of what value is it to develop skillful readers if the skill is used to little purpose in adulthood?” (p. 562).

The process of reading is extremely complex and involves cognitive skills, but it is important for teachers to realize that there is an affective component involved - attitudes (Alexander & Filler, 1976). Harris and Sipay (1985) argue, “A successful reading program must not only develop children who can read but also children who do read” (p. 562). For students to have the desire to read, they must have a favorable attitude toward reading (Harris & Sipay). McKenna, Kear and Ellsworth (1995) suggest, “Even for the fluent reader, poor attitude may occasion a choice not to read when other options exist, a condition now generally known as aliteracy” (p. 934).

Mueller (1973) believes, “All teachers are reading teachers, especially at the elementary school level, and therefore have immeasurable potential for influencing pupils’ attitudes toward reading” (p. 203). According to Gambrell (1996), teachers are extremely instrumental in modeling the love of reading for pleasure and information. Another important way to influence the reading attitudes of students includes the use of best practices in literacy instruction (Gambrell, Morrow, & Pressley, 2007; Morrison, Jacobs, & Swinyard, 1999).

As a result of the research, this study explored the nature of reading attitudes in second-grade teachers and students. Furthermore, the study studied the nature of reading practices in second-grade classrooms.
Statement of the Problem

Applegate and Applegate (2004) believe:

Because teachers, particularly elementary school teachers, play a significant role in motivating children to read, a lukewarm or task-oriented attitude toward reading can be problematic. Teachers often motivate their students to read by sharing their own enthusiasm for reading. But what if they have no love for reading? (p. 556)

Another question to ask is, “How can teachers encourage children to become lifelong readers if they aren’t readers themselves?” (Dillingofski, 1993, p. 31). Unfortunately, one study found that teachers are not avid readers (Mour, 1977). Mueller (1973) reports that many teachers do not value reading very highly.

Alexander and Filler (1976) argue that a teacher’s attitude toward reading is influential in the attitudes of students. Therefore, teachers need to “practice what they preach” (Mour, 1977, p. 401). Dreher (2002/2003) adds, “Teachers who are engaged readers are motivated to read, are both strategic and knowledgeable readers, and are socially interactive about what they read” (p. 338). As a result, these interactions help to develop readers who are engaged (Dreher). Research conducted by Applegate and Applegate (2004) suggests, “…negative reading experiences can have long-lasting harmful effects on children” (p. 561).

Research Questions

This study was designed to explore the nature of reading attitudes and practices in second-grade teachers and students. To explore this issue, the study was designed around the following question: “What is the nature of reading attitudes in second-grade teachers and students?” To thoroughly investigate this question, the following sub-questions were investigated.
1. Do second grade students think that their reading teacher likes to read?

2. What is the nature of reading practices in second grade?

Based on the given driving question and sub-questions, it was possible to identify other trends in teacher and student reading attitudes. These trends provided information about reading attitudes and instruction in the classroom setting.

Rationale

Strickland and Walker (2004) suggest that attitudinal issues are “…the most essential ingredients in the teaching of literacy” (p. 405). According to Applegate and Applegate (2004), “Practicing teachers must remain sensitive to the fact that what they project to their students truly matters and it is unlikely that they will be able to mask their own attitude toward reading” (p. 562). Mour (1977) reports, “Nevertheless, the reading habits of teachers is an area upon which few studies have focused” (p. 397). Dreher (2002/2003) also says:

It has long been argued that teachers who are readers convey their love for reading to their students, that this love for reading provides a role model, and that it makes a difference in classroom practice. But not much research has been available to support this view. (p. 338)

Research also implies a possible relationship between reading attitudes and achievement, which also supports the rationale for this study. Alexander and Filler (1976) report, “Relatively little research has been done on the relationship between attitudes toward reading and achievement in reading” (p. 3). Askov and Fischbach (1973) completed an investigation of primary pupils’ attitudes toward reading and found a relationship between attitude and children’s reading achievement. According to Askov and Fischbach, “Since it was demonstrated in this study that attitudes toward reading are more positive with improved achievement, programs that
focus on improving attitudes are perhaps misplacing their efforts” (p. 4). Dwyer and Dwyer (1994) found research to suggest, “…teacher attitudes toward students the most critical factor in influencing student achievement” (p. 70). Despite a lack of evidence to support attitudes and achievement, Alexander and Filler suggest some possible relationships between attitudes and achievement. One suggestion is that a reader’s attitude toward material may affect the comprehension of the material. Another suggestion states, “The development of more favorable attitudes may result, for some students, in increased achievement and more reading that may be maintained over time” (Alexander & Filler, p. 6). Overall, “…there is not always a positive correlation between high achievement and favorable attitudes” (Alexander & Filler, p. 6).

Definition of Terms

The following list of terms is essential to the study and research of teacher and student attitudes. Many of the terms listed will be explained in greater detail throughout the study.

Aesthetic Stance: “…attention, of course, to what the words refer to, but mainly to what we are experiencing, thinking, and feeling during the reading” (Rosenblatt, 2005, p. 90).

Attitude: “A system of feelings related to reading which causes the learner to approach or avoid a reading situation” (Alexander & Filler, 1976, p. 1).

Best Practices: “…are characterized by meaningful literacy activities that provide children with both the skill and the will they need to become motivated and proficient literacy learners. Best Practices include ways that teachers support students in their reading development by creating classroom cultures that foster reading motivation, such as providing a book-rich classroom environment, opportunities for choice, and opportunities to interact socially with others” (Gambrell, Malloy, & Mazzoni, 2007, pp. 18-19).
Efferent Stance: “…acquiring information that we wish to retain after the reading has ended” (Rosenblatt, 2005, p. 90).

Engaged Readers: “Engaged readers are motivated to read for different purposes, utilize knowledge gained from previous experience to generate new understandings, and participate in meaningful social interactions around reading” (Baker & Wigfield, 1999, p. 452).

Enthusiastic Reader: Applegate and Applegate (2004) consider enthusiastic readers as people who have “…a positive attitude toward reading and who engaged in reading during the summer, whether that reading was selective or broad” (p. 558).

Explicit Teaching: According to Cambourne (2002), “Explicit teaching refers to the practice of deliberately demonstrating and bringing to learners’ conscious awareness those invisible processes, understandings, knowledge, and skills they need to acquire if they are to become effective readers” (p. 33).

Influential Teacher: “The Influential Teacher enables literacy learning to become an active, exciting, collaborative, and learner-centered process of discovery” (Ruddell, 1995, p. 462).

Interest: An interest in reading involves what a person likes to read (Alexander & Filler, 1976).

Motivated Readers: According to Gambrell, Palmer, Codling, and Mazzoni (1996), “Highly motivated readers are self-determining and generate their own reading opportunities. They want to read and choose to read for a wide range of personal reasons such as curiosity, involvement, social interchange, and emotional satisfaction” (p. 518).

Self-Concept: “Self-concept may be defined as an individual’s perception of himself; that is, what he believes he is” (Alexander & Filler, 1976, p. 6).
Unenthusiastic Reader: An unenthusiastic reader is a person “…who associated no or very little enjoyment with reading and did little or no leisure reading over the previous summer” (Applegate & Applegate, 2004, p. 558).

Value of Reading: “…the value students place on reading tasks and activities, particularly in terms of frequency of engagement and reading-related activities” (Gambrell, Palmer, Codling, & Mazzoni, 1996, p. 522).

Limitations

Because of the limited amount of time available, this study investigated the reading attitudes of four second-grade classroom teachers and their students at one school in Northwest Ohio. Despite the small sample size, the study included surveys and interviews of teachers. It is also essential to report that a replication of this study with different teachers and students would most likely yield different results.

Summary

A teacher’s attitude toward reading provides a model for students and makes a difference in reading instruction (Alexander & Filler, 1976; Applegate & Applegate, 2004; Dreher, 2002/2003; Morrison, Jacobs, & Swinyard, 1999; Mour, 1977; Mueller, 1973). Based on this statement and the lack of quality research on this topic, it was necessary to investigate this topic in further detail (Dreher; Morrison, Jacobs, & Swinyard; Mour). To investigate this topic, four second-grade classroom teachers and their students participated in surveys and interviews to determine attitudes towards reading. The data collected were used in four case studies to determine the nature of reading attitudes and practices in second-grade teachers and students.
CHAPTER II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This study focused on four case studies. Surveys and interviews were administered to investigate the nature of reading attitudes and practices of second-grade teachers and students. Given the context of this study, it was necessary to explore the concepts of attitudes and reading, including: theoretical orientation, historical research, developing and maintaining positive attitudes, parents and the home environment, classroom environment, student attitudes and behavior, teacher attitudes and behavior, assessing attitude, and instructional practices.

Theoretical Orientation

Research seems to expose a relationship between attitudes and reading (Mathewson, 1994). There are several reading models, which attempt to explain the affective state of attitude in relationship to the process of reading. The theories to be explained are the Mathewson model, the Ruddell-Speaker model, and the McKenna model.

The Mathewson Model

The Mathewson model (1985) involves the affective processes of attitude, motivation, affect, and physical feelings. Mathewson states, “This cognitively mediated influence of affect upon reading may be represented by a decision process component in the new affective model of reading” (p. 845). In the model, physical feelings could influence whether a person continues to read. One possible decision to read is a “…general attitude that ‘reading is good’” (p. 846). According to Mathewson:

In addition to attitudes toward reading as a universal good, it is also possible that attitudes toward the source of reading materials may be important in determining a decision to read. The source of a book or magazine might be a friend, a teacher, or a club. Thus, the present model incorporates the notion that relevant attitudes toward reading may include
attitudes toward the content, format, and form but may also include such attitudes as those toward reading as a universal good and attitudes toward the source of reading materials. This expanded notion of the range of attitudes, which may influence reading, ensures a broad scope for the model, but at the same time poses difficult questions for the researcher who might wish to assess the effects of attitude upon reading. (p. 847)

In the primary component of the model, Mathewson depicts attitude, which may influence attention and comprehension through the decision process. The secondary component includes recall, reflection, and application. This was important to the model to depict that students should do more with their reading. Mathewson adds, “The present model thus predicts that the decision component influences the primary and secondary reading processes in the same way. Decision to read, whether primary or secondary processes are involved, is based on attitude, motivation, affect, and physical feelings” (p. 848).

The earlier version of Mathewson’s model (1985) includes an extension. In the extension, Mathewson depicts how attitude is developed over time. McKenna, Kear and Ellsworth (1995) explain, “Mathewson’s principal concern was with the role of attitude as a factor during the act of reading and during the period when one learns to read” (p. 937). Mathewson’s new model (1994) has a three-component definition of attitude. In Mathewson’s model, he states, “The three aspects of attitude toward reading form a whole attitude that influences intention to read; intention to read in turn influences reading behavior” (p. 1135). Within the model, there are two factors that contribute to the reading decision including external motivators and the emotional state of the individual (Mathewson). Mathewson (1994) explains further by stating, “Attitude toward reading includes evaluations of content and purpose, feelings about engaging in a particular kind of reading, and action readiness for initiating or sustaining reading activity” (p.
Although this model is helpful, it is limited in predicting the development of attitude over time (McKenna, Kear & Ellsworth).

*The Ruddell-Speaker Model*

The model by Ruddell and Speaker (1985) is different from the Mathewson model because Ruddell and Speaker include word-recognition subprocesses. This causes the model to be comprehensive to reading (McKenna, 1994). The Ruddell and Speaker model includes four interactive components. These components include: Reader Environment, Knowledge Utilization and Control, Declarative and Procedural Knowledge, and Reader Product. Reader Environment involves immediate textual, conversational, and instructional features. The “…processes of text and the activation of information and procedures” (Ruddell & Speaker, p. 751) are influenced by Knowledge and Utilization and Control. McKenna (1994) explains, “This component involves not only the cognitive and metacognitive dimensions of a reader’s thinking but the ‘affective state’ as well” (p. 22).

According to Ruddell and Speaker (1985):

The Affective State serves to establish the reader’s goal direction and expectations for content, processing time and product. Highly interesting text or text which has been judged as important to the reader’s goal will receive maximum processing and persistence. With less interesting text or text judged to be of little importance, the reader will be less persistent, and limited processing will occur. (p. 757)

Within the Declarative and Procedural Knowledge component, decoding, language ability, and general knowledge are involved. The final component, Reader Product, involves the interactions of the other components (McKenna, 1994; Ruddell & Speaker). As depicted by the model, the affective state connects to most of the areas in the model. Therefore, the model is representative
of the importance of the affective state in reading (McKenna). McKenna adds, “The Ruddell-Speaker model, like the Mathewson model, accounts for slow changes in attitude toward reading partly through the notion that feedback is cumulative from each individual act of reading to overall attitude toward reading” (p. 24).

The McKenna Model

McKenna (1994) proposed a new model after synthesizing the information from Mathewson (1985), Ruddell and Speaker (1985), and others. The features of the other models overlapped quite a bit, which led to McKenna’s new model. McKenna states, “The proposed model preserves Mathewson’s notion of a decision to read, which is a consequence of subjective norms, intent, and attitude – all three of which are conditioned by contingencies” (p. 30).

McKenna’s model did not adapt the three attitudes presented in the Mathewson model (McKenna, Kear, & Ellsworth, 1995). According to McKenna, Kear and Ellsworth:

Specifically, the McKenna model identified three principal factors influencing attitudinal change: (a) beliefs about the outcomes, (b) beliefs about the expectations of others in light of one’s motivation to conform to those expectations, and (c) the outcomes of specific incidents of reading. (p. 938)

Based on McKenna’s model, a prediction can be made about a teacher’s influence on a reader’s attitude in an indirect way. Using the proposed model, a teacher could create a classroom library and give students the opportunities to use this resource. This action will change the environment in a positive way. As a result, the reading attitude of the students may not be directly affected. However, it is assumed that children in the class will choose to read. Eventually, this impact could have an influence on a student’s attitude (McKenna).
Historical Research

Many research studies have been conducted about reading attitudes. These studies provide insight on the topics of assessing attitude, teacher attitudes, instructional practices, and the teacher as a model. The historical research to be investigated includes studies by Estes (1971), Ransbury (1973), Mueller (1973), Mour (1977), Heathington and Alexander (1984), Manna and Misheff (1987), Morrison, Jacobs, and Swinyard (1999), and Applegate and Applegate (2004).

Estes

Estes (1971) states, “…the value of reading ability lies in its use rather than its possession” (p. 135). This statement led Estes to question the change in a student’s attitude toward reading. As a result, an attitude scale was developed to determine the reading attitudes of students. This scale was given to a sample of students in grades three through 12. In the sample population, the younger students demonstrated more of a positive attitude toward reading (Estes). According to Estes, “The scale will allow teachers of reading to measure objectively how pupils in their schools and classes feel about reading, allowing a view of the pupil not presently permitted by testing programs” (p. 138).

Ransbury

Ransbury (1973) asked 65 children, their parents, and teachers to describe a person who enjoys reading and a person who does not enjoy reading. “The children associated attitude with verbal statements about the merits of reading, with the number of reading materials possessed, and the coupling of reading with other activities” (Ransbury, p. 26). The parents in Ransbury’s study indicated, “…the frequency of reading and the diversity in types of materials read are indicative of attitude toward reading” (p. 26). In contrast, the teachers mentioned a child’s
intelligence as a strong indicator of reading attitude (Ransbury). Along with the original question, Ransbury asked about the factors influencing the reading attitudes of children. The same sample population was utilized for this question (Ransbury). “The results showed that children attribute their own reading attitude primarily to their reading ability” (Ransbury, p. 27). It was also found that the teacher’s influence is minor to the reading attitude development in children (Ransbury).

*Mueller*

In 1973, Mueller questioned whether the people in America truly valued reading. Because there seemed to be a decreased value placed on reading, Mueller wondered whether teachers valued reading. Mueller reasoned, “Since teachers teach what they themselves stand for, pupils are certain to be affected when the teacher shows excitement and enthusiasm over a book; they will be no less influenced by a teacher’s apathy toward reading” (p. 203). As a result, Mueller decided to study the professional and personal reading attitudes of teachers (Mueller).

For Mueller’s study (1973), a questionnaire was developed and administered at the beginning of the semester. The questionnaires were given to one graduate and one undergraduate reading methods class at two different institutions. On the questionnaire, students were asked to select responses from choices and respond to open ended questions. This process was used to determine the value that teachers and student teachers placed on reading (Mueller).

After administering the questionnaire, Mueller (1973) stated, “…the students in the sample value reading mildly in their lives, both professionally and personally” (p. 205). Although this study only surveyed 41 students, the results are interesting to consider. Mueller’s primary concern in this study was the affect of teacher attitudes toward reading on pupil attitudes. Based on the results, Mueller wanted teachers to become aware of their value of
reading. He explained, “In any event, the teacher who has clarified his own values can help his pupils understand, accept, or possibly change their reading values” (p. 205).

Mour

Mour (1977) believes that children learn to be lifetime readers from the modeling of adults. Furthermore, Mour assumes that “…the teacher who reads much would present a more positive and enthusiastic model than would the teacher who reads little” (p. 397). At this time, there was not enough data to realistically support Mour’s assumptions. Because of a lack in data, Mour produced a questionnaire to gain information about the nonprofessional reading of teachers. This questionnaire was administered to 224 subjects in a graduate reading course at the University of Louisville. Mour collected data from two semesters and two summer sessions of classes. Those involved in the study were counselors, principals, supervisors, curriculum consultants, and teachers (Mour).

The primary goal of this study was to investigate the nonprofessional reading of teachers. However, the study did include some questions pertaining to the professional reading of teachers. Based on the results, it became evident that “…teachers read educational journals which are primarily pragmatic in nature” (Mour, 1977, p. 398). Aside from the professional reading, teachers were asked detailed questions regarding their nonprofessional reading. Research from this particular study concluded, “…teachers apparently are not avid readers” (p. 401). The amount of professional and nonprofessional reading done by the teachers in this study was minimal. Mour concluded this study like the Mueller study, which encouraged teachers to take a look at their value of reading (Mour).
Heathington and Alexander (1984) wondered whether teachers assessed student reading attitudes and planned activities to encourage a positive reading attitude. For their study, Heathington and Alexander used a sample of 101 teachers. These teachers were primarily first, second, or third grade teachers with a range of experience. The sample was given a comprehensive questionnaire to examine the reading instruction utilized in the classroom. In the questionnaire, teachers were asked to list nine instructional practices in order of importance. Teachers were also asked about the assessment instruments and the five activities that contribute to a positive reading attitude. It was found that teachers distribute their time between comprehension, phonics, oral reading, silent reading, word meaning, sight words, structural analysis, attitudes, and study skills. The results of this survey indicated that teachers do consider reading attitudes to be important. Many of the teachers, however, did not spend a lot of classroom time on the development of positive attitudes. Heathington and Alexander suggested that teachers might not spend much time on attitudes because they are focusing attention on skills. Some teachers may feel the burden to work on skills and others may believe that skill development will increase reading attitudes (Heathington & Alexander).

Manna and Misheff (1987) began their study as a result of the negative attitudes of students in their children and adolescent literature courses at a university. The researchers wanted their students to become aware of the experiences that led them to an attitude about reading. This process would hopefully help the students to realize the role of a reading teacher. To learn about the influences on reading attitudes, the students were asked to complete an autobiography assignment. The assignment required students to write about their earliest
memories of reading to the most recent reading experiences. To obtain other information, the assignment probed for details about classroom and home environment, developmental patterns, and perceptions about teaching. The study collected more than 1,000 autobiographies, but the authors analyzed 50 assignments from undergraduate and graduate students (Manna & Misheff).

After reviewing the autobiographies, it was apparent that the students truly realized the importance of teaching reading. At the end of the essay, the students were asked to discuss recommendations for promoting the development of readers (Manna & Misheff, 1987). According to Manna and Misheff, “They indicated that enthusiasm for reading is caught, not taught: that parents and teachers should serve as models for the kinds of benefits and rewards that reading promises” (p. 166). The students also discussed the importance of learning about student interests to provide materials that correlate. They add, “Furthermore, the autobiographies attest to the importance of gearing reading matter to the needs and interests of individuals, for they revealed a strong association between readers’ active participation and their desire and willingness to read” (p. 168).

Morrison, Jacobs, and Swinyard

Morrison, Jacobs, and Swinyard (1999) realized that there was a lack of quality research on the issue of teachers as readers. They write, “The purpose of this study was to examine relationships between two related issues: the personal, recreational reading of teachers with their use of recommended literacy instructional practices in their elementary classrooms” (p. 82). To collect data, a questionnaire was developed with 15 items about instructional practices and six items about personal reading habits. The sample for this study consisted of nearly 2000 elementary school teachers throughout the United States (Morrison, Jacobs, & Swinyard).

According to Morrison, Jacobs and Swinyard:
The results of this study are intriguing and suggest several possible recommendations for teachers. Among these recommendations are that teachers should read personally in their lives, that teachers should make time for reading, and that teachers should share books with children in a variety of ways. (p. 97)

This study also found that elementary teachers do read often, and they enjoy books. The overall results of this study imply the necessity of reading to become a more complete individual. Despite a busy schedule, it is recommended that teachers take time to read during sustained silent reading (Morrison, Jacobs, & Swinyard).

*Applegate and Applegate*

The “Peter Effect” is used to characterize “…teachers who are charged with conveying to their students an enthusiasm for reading that they do not have” (Applegate & Applegate, 2004, p. 556). Applegate and Applegate designed a study to investigate the Peter Effect. First, a pilot study was compiled of 195 sophomores enrolled in teacher education programs at two United States institutions. To survey the students, an open-ended questionnaire was developed to investigate the reading habits and attitudes of teachers. It was reported from the pilot study that 54.3% of the people surveyed were unenthusiastic readers (Applegate & Applegate).

After the pilot study, Applegate and Applegate (2004) conducted another study. In this study, there were a few changes to the survey questions. In the second study, the sample included 184 prospective teachers from the same universities in the pilot study. The results of the second study showed the percentage of unenthusiastic readers declining to 48.4%. Overall, Applegate and Applegate surveyed 379 students and found that 51.5% were considered unenthusiastic readers by their standards. “It was clear that significant numbers of respondents were affected, either positively or negatively, by the instruction they received during their early school years.”
(p. 560). From this study, teachers should realize the impact that their reading attitudes can have on students (Applegate & Applegate).

Developing and Maintaining Positive Attitudes

*Parents and the Home Environment*

Spiegel (1994) believes, “Parents play a crucial role in the development of children who have positive attitudes toward reading and who become successful readers” (p. 74). There are two components to the role parents play with reading attitudes. First, the home literacy culture is significant to the development of children. Within the home literacy environment, there should be a presence of literacy artifacts including many different kinds of printed materials. Many literacy artifacts are inexpensive, and books are available from the public library for no cost. Regardless of the amount of reading materials in a house, it is more important what is done with these materials. Another aspect to the home environment is reading to children. By reading to children, parents are providing children with necessary skills for reading success. Second, parents must value reading (Spiegel). According to Mikulecky, Shanklin, and Caverly (1979), children may be affected by the reading habits of adults. “Parents need to be both vigilant observers of their children’s reading behavior and role models of engaged reading” (Applegate & Applegate, 2004, p. 562). When parents value reading, they will create the proper environment for children to succeed (Spiegel). “The parental role in the development of children who both can and will read is enormous” (Spiegel, p. 84).

Alexander and Filler (1976) believe, “Since parents and the home environment seem to have important impacts on attitudes, it may be necessary for the school to work closely with parents in order to foster positive attitudes” (p. 59). Parents may be willing to make changes to profit their child. However, some parents may not know what to do with their child. To involve
parents, the teacher will need to give explicit instructions about reading to children and the benefits of the new behaviors. Parents also need to be encouraged to visit the library with their children (Alexander & Filler).

**Classroom Environment**

The ideas of classroom teachers can help to promote positive reading attitudes in students (Cramer, 1994). Alexander and Filler (1976) believe, “Both the teacher and the general atmosphere of the classroom may have effects on positive attitude development and maintenance” (p. 8). Dwyer and Dwyer (1994) add, “The foundation of any learning environment is a warm invitation to learn” (p. 71). One of the best ways to promote positive reading attitudes in the classroom is an environment with a wide selection of reading materials. The teacher should create a classroom library for the students to borrow books. This area should be aesthetically pleasing with carpet, posters, lamps, and space. It is also helpful to display seasonal and topical books for students. By reading sample passages, students will be more motivated to read displayed books (Brophy, 2004; Cramer, 1994). A classroom library is critical because it can “…have a positive effect on the amount and quality of the literacy experiences in the classroom as well as the home environment” (Gambrell, 1996, p. 21). Bulletin boards should also display a positive attitude about reading by incorporating book jackets or information about authors (Cramer).

The materials in the classroom environment are essential for developing the attitudes of readers. To provide appropriate materials, the teacher should consider the interests of the students in the classroom (Alexander & Filler, 1976). Alexander and Filler warn, “The difficulty level may also be a vital factor” (p. 43). When a student constantly struggles with the text provided in the classroom, he or she will probably not develop a positive attitude about reading
the given material. Some students will have little interest or a poor attitude toward reading. As a result, a wide variety of materials such as comics, newspapers, magazines, and trade books should be available (Alexander & Filler). In a whole language classroom, a teacher would also include directories, signs, packages, labels, posters, and other varieties of print all around the classroom. The students could also bring in appropriate materials to correlate with their interests and the curriculum (Goodman, 1986). “No one is too young to participate in the creation of a literate environment: to dictate a story, label, put together the displays and bulletin boards, or simply experience how the literate environment was created” (Goodman, p. 32).

*Student Attitudes and Behavior*

There are some generalizations that can be made about children’s reading attitudes in the United States. Knowledge of these trends can guide parents and teachers in the development of positive reading attitudes for students. According to McKenna, Kear, and Ellsworth (1995), there is “…a negative trend in children’s attitudes toward recreational reading and reading instruction as they pass through elementary grades” (p. 952). A reason for this trend could relate to the attitude theory, which predicts that leisure options compete with reading as children get older. Skillful readers may also be influenced by this theory (McKenna, 2001). Another trend in student attitudes toward reading is the difference in attitude between good and poor readers. Research shows a negative recreational attitude is related to ability. This gap in attitudes tends to widen with age. A way for teachers to bridge this gap is to use interventions in the early grades (McKenna; McKenna, Kear, & Ellsworth). Regardless of this trend, “…teachers should not assume that more intelligent students will necessarily have more positive attitudes toward reading than will less intelligent students (Alexander & Filler, 1976, p. 13).
In 1976, there was little research done on the relationship between gender and attitudes (Alexander & Filler, 1976). Askov and Fischbach (1973) found that girls tend to have a more positive attitude toward reading. This difference was attributed to the roles of boys and girls in culture (Askov & Fischbach). McKenna, Kear, and Ellsworth (1995) also found that girls possessed a more positive attitude toward academic and recreational reading than boys. With this trend, the recreational attitude gap widens with age, but the academic attitudes were moderately constant. This trend can also be explained by the attitude theory, which also states that the beliefs of significant others will guide the development of attitudes. Therefore, the cultural environment will play a role in the reading attitudes of children (McKenna, Kear, & Ellsworth; McKenna, 2001). “Teachers should be cautioned not to assume that girls will necessarily have more positive attitudes toward reading than will boys” (Alexander & Filler, p. 13).

McKenna, Kear and Ellsworth (1995) report, “Ethnicity appears to play little role in the negative trend in either recreational or academic reading attitude” (p. 952). In the study conducted by McKenna, Kear, and Ellsworth, students were placed into three categories of ethnicity. These categories included African American, Hispanic, or White. Within the three subcultures in this study, the reading cultural norms were similar (McKenna, 2001). According to McKenna, “Membership in smaller social units, such as families, classrooms, clubs, gangs, cliques, and friendships, may well exert stronger normative influences” (p. 146). Age, proficiency, and gender seem to be better predictors of attitudes toward reading (McKenna).

Based on their research, McKenna, Kear, and Ellsworth (1995) report, “The extent of a teacher’s reliance on basal readers does not appear to be meaningfully related to recreational or academic reading attitude” (p. 952). Alexander and Filler (1976) suggest, “The use of appropriate materials is important for developing and maintaining positive attitudes” (p. 43).
However, studies also show that teaching techniques are attributed to reading attitudes (McKenna, 2001). McKenna states, “Use or nonuse of basals is clearly a gross categorization that allows a range of methodologies on either side” (p. 147).

Teacher Attitudes and Behavior

To help children succeed with reading, the teacher must model a genuine love for books and reading because this role is vital to students (Johns & VanLeirsburg, 1994; Strickland & Walker, 2004). The teacher’s role is developed by certain beliefs, attitudes, and instructional skill (Rasinski & Padak, 2000). Rasinski and Padak add:

Moreover, teachers are models of literate behavior. Through what they do as well as what they say, teachers show students what it means to be a reader, how readers handle problems, what value reading can have in a person’s life, and so on. This role – teacher as model – is critical to the development and maintenance of an effective instructional environment. (p. 31)

Paratore (2002) sums it all: “When all is said and done, the teacher makes the difference” (p. 65).

Gambrell (1996) explains the importance of teachers who are explicit reading models for students. When a teacher becomes this type of reading model, he or she can help to motivate students to read. A way for teachers to show students their love of reading is to read during sustained silent reading. However, this type of model is passive instead of explicit (Gambrell). Gambrell states, “Teachers become explicit reading models when they share their own reading experiences with students and emphasize how reading enhances and enriches their lives” (p. 20). An explicit reading model shares personal reading experiences from reading selections with students (Gambrell). “If we want our students to be thinkers, researchers, writers, and evaluators, then they need to see us thinking, researching, collaborating, reading, writing, and evaluating.
We need, literally, to live the life we’re asking them to lead” (Routman, 1996, p. 166). A goal for reading instruction is to create the lifelong love of reading in students (Johns & VanLeirsburg, 1994). According to Mour (1977), students will acquire their reading habit from the modeling of adults. “If we serve as explicit reading models for our students and specifically associate reading with enjoyment, pleasure, and learning, our students will be encouraged to become voluntary lifelong readers” (Gambrell, p. 21).

“Because teachers, particularly elementary school teachers, play a significant role in motivating children to read, a lukewarm or task-oriented attitude toward reading can be problematic” (Applegate & Applegate, 2004, p. 556). It is unlikely that a teacher can mask a negative attitude toward reading. Therefore, teachers need to evaluate their beliefs and values about reading (Applegate & Applegate; Mueller, 1973). “If teachers remain open to the joys and rewards of engaged reading, they stand a much better chance of sharing that joy with their students” (Applegate & Applegate, p. 562).

When it comes to a student’s attitude toward reading, the teacher is one of the most powerful sources to influence the student. Teachers must practice behaviors that show the student his or her value as a person and success with reading. These behaviors will help to engage a positive self-concept and attitude toward reading (Alexander & Filler, 1976). Rasinski and Padak (2000) offer some other important beliefs for teachers to incorporate.

Teachers must (1) expect all their students to learn, (2) see the value of everything that students bring into the classroom, (3) believe that it’s more important to focus on what students can do rather than on what they can’t do, and (4) believe that learning is easiest when students have choices and their instructional opportunities are based on interest and relevance. (pp. 30-31)
By utilizing these beliefs, teachers create a positive atmosphere for students, which will promote positive attitudes and maximum achievement from students (Dwyer & Dwyer, 1994, p. 72).

Assessing Attitude

The reading attitudes of students should be assessed and used to maintain positive attitudes toward reading. To become aware of reading attitudes, there are several ways to assess students (Alexander & Filler, 1976). Fredericks (1982) suggests the benefit of informal interest inventories to promote positive reading attitudes. To help students with a negative attitude toward reading, it is first necessary to find out about their attitudes and interests (Rasinski & Padak, 2000). Rasinksi and Padak believe, “The best way to find out about attitudes and interests are to observe children’s behaviors in the classroom and ask students to share their ideas in conversation or writing” (p. 38). To get an accurate idea of the student’s attitudes and interests, it is beneficial to closely observe the reading done in the classroom and the reading done by the student on his or her own. Some other ways to find out about student interests include informal discussion or surveys. Through conversation, a teacher can learn about a child’s hobbies, favorite books, and favorite authors. A survey is a way to find out initial information about a student’s interests (Rasinski & Padak). After discovering the interests of students, the information can be used “…to plan instruction, suggest books, and help children form interest groups for inquiry” (p. 41). At this point, the teacher aims to guide his or her students to be successful readers who place value in reading (Rasinski & Padak).

McKenna and Kear (1990) developed a public-domain instrument called the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS) that would enable teachers to estimate levels of attitude with efficiency and reliability. This instrument contains many criteria that were not included in other instruments. Some of the criteria for this instrument included: applicable to all elementary
students, student-friendly response format, appropriate for group administration, and subscales for recreational and academic reading (McKenna & Kear).

For the instrument, a pictorial format was selected to appeal to children, and the character called Garfield was utilized. Each item on the instrument is scored with a number one through four. To score the survey, count four points for the happiest Garfield, three points for the slightly smiling Garfield, two points for the mildly upset Garfield, and one point for the upset Garfield. A total raw score of 50 falls in the middle of the scale. As a result, an indifferent attitude toward reading is assumed. To determine the average percentile ranks of a class, average the raw scores first and use the table to locate the percentile. Once the information is collected from students, it is essential to use the information to plan instruction.

The instrument will not identify the cause of negative attitudes. However, the ERAS can be used to monitor the attitudes produced by certain instruction or to speculate about the attitudes of students. In the beginning of the school year, the ERAS was a valuable instrument to administer to characterize class averages in academic and recreational reading. After administering the ERAS, the teacher may find a need to do some further investigation of the reading attitudes of particular students. To accomplish such an investigation, the teacher may choose to use interviews, incomplete sentences, or interest inventories (McKenna & Kear).

Overall, the ERAS provides teachers with “…a tool that can be used with relative confidence to estimate the attitude levels of their students and initiate informal assessment efforts into the role attitude plays in students’ development as readers” (McKenna & Kear, p. 629). The ERAS document can be found at www.reading.org/Library/Retrieve.cfm?D=10.1598/RT.43.8.3&F=RT-43-8- McKenna.pdf.
**Instructional Practices**

Once attitudes are assessed, the information can be used to guide instruction. There are many practices to maintain positive attitudes in the classroom. Applegate and Applegate (2004) state, “Because classroom instruction is largely driven by the beliefs of the teacher, it seems reasonable to conclude that some teachers will be unable to promote aesthetic reading through their instruction because they have had no experience with it” (p. 561). To be an influential teacher, students should be encouraged to transact with text. This will happen when the influential teacher promotes aesthetic responses to literature (Rosenblatt, 2005; Ruddell, 1995). Teachers need to realize how students transact with text. Each student will bring a different meaning to the text depending on the circumstances in his or her life (Rosenblatt). Rosenblatt states, “Above all, students need to be helped to have personally satisfying and personally meaningful transactions with literature. Then they will develop the habit of turning to literature for the pleasures and insights it offers” (p. 63). For students to relate their experiences with literature, the teacher must utilize materials that will evoke responses in students. Teaching techniques are also imperative in creating transactions between the reading and the text (Rosenblatt). According to Rosenblatt, teachers “must create practices that will meet the acid test:"

Does this practice or approach hinder or foster a sense that literature exists as a form of personally meaningful experience? Is the pupil’s interaction with the literary work itself the center from which all else radiates? Is the student being helped to grow into a relationship of integrity to language and literature? Is he building a lifetime habit of significant reading? (p. 71)
The study by Morrison, Jacobs, and Swinyard (1999) found a positive relationship between teachers as readers and a teacher’s use of best practices in the classroom. When it comes to best practices for literacy instruction, there are many elements in the classroom including: a culture of motivation, authentic reading experiences, scaffolded instruction, time to read in class, literature across the genres, texts to expand vocabulary, a community to build on prior knowledge, teacher and student led discussions of text, use of technology, and a variety of assessments (Gambrell, Malloy, & Mazzoni, 2007). To offer effective literacy instruction, the teacher must be committed to spending the time to provide the best instruction. Teachers must use their knowledge to make decisions based on the strengths and weaknesses of their students (Gambrell, Malloy, & Mazzoni). By facing this challenge, the teacher will “…help children become engaged life-long readers and writers” (Gambrell, Malloy, & Mazzoni, p. 24).

Castle (1994) provides these thoughts, “I can think of no more powerful way for teachers to foster a love of reading than to read to, with, about, and in front of children” (p. 147). Reading to students is a way to keep students interested in reading. Students of all ages look forward to a read aloud. Teachers can read to students at a particular time each day or use a read aloud to engage students when their interest is diminished (Alexander & Filler, 1976). Castle states, “If improved attitudes toward reading were the only advantage for children who are read to, I believe that would be enough to justify its inclusion in the daily curriculum” (p. 148).

When it comes to instructional practices, whole language practices should be explored. According to Goodman (1986):

Whole language is an attempt to get back to basics in the real sense of that word – to set aside basals, workbooks, and tests, and to return to inviting kids to learn to read and write by reading and writing real stuff. (p. 38)
In the whole language classroom, students have access to a wide variety of books including fiction, non-fiction, difference in difficulty levels, and many interest levels. Students are made to believe that they have choices in their learning experiences (Goodman). Goodman adds, “Achieving the goal of providing for choice, ownership, and relevance throughout the curriculum is neither simple nor easy. But whole language teachers keep these goals in mind to ensure that the curriculum is most effective” (p. 31). Teachers provide centers for their students that are centered around themes. The learning centers are correlated with the whole language program, and students play a role in the organization of the centers (Goodman). In a whole language program, “…teachers do not ignore phonics” (Goodman, p. 38). The teachers of whole language provide students with opportunities to learn phonics through real reading activities.

Summary

According to the research, a teacher’s attitude towards reading is likely to affect student attitudes toward reading. The research also suggests that teachers are not reading, which is a problem. Over time, a student’s attitude toward reading will likely decline (McKenna, Kear, & Ellsworth, 1995). However, teachers can assess student attitudes to instruct teaching (McKenna & Kear, 1990). When it comes to student attitudes toward reading, parents and teachers are models (Applegate & Applegate, 2004; Spiegel, 1994). As a result, teachers should be aware of their influence on reading attitudes and provide best practices, which will promote positive attitudes toward reading (Morrison, Jacobs, & Swinyard, 1999).
CHAPTER III. METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The four case studies were designed to investigate the nature of reading attitudes and practices of teachers and students in second-grade. The study examined reading attitudes and practices through surveys and interviews. Data obtained from this study were used to answer the following driving question: “What is the nature of teacher and student reading attitudes in second-grade?” The study also explored the following sub-questions:

1. Do second-grade students think that their reading teacher likes to read?
2. What is the nature of reading practices in second-grade?

Methods

Research Design

This research study was focused on four case studies. Mertler (2009) explains, “In case studies, a particular individual, program, or event is studied in depth for a defined period, usually relying on a variety of sources of data” (p. 79). The research design used mixed methods by collecting qualitative and quantitative data in the forms of surveys and interviews (Mertler). To collect data, four teachers and 38 students from a rural elementary school in Northwest Ohio were given surveys to complete. The surveys helped to determine the reading attitude of teachers and students. On the teacher survey, the questions first asked about the instructional practices in the classroom. Then, teachers were asked about their attitude toward reading. The students were given the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (McKenna & Kear, 1990). The four teachers and only 24 students (six from each class) also participated in interviews.

To be prepared for the interviews, the researcher arranged interview guides (see Appendix A), which contained the questions asked (Mertler). The teacher interviews gave details about the teacher’s reading attitude, as well as, the instructional practices in the classroom.
Student interviews gave information about the students’ attitudes, their view of the teacher’s reading attitude, and the instructional practices in the classroom. The questions about instructional practices on the teacher reading attitude survey and student interview were similar in nature (Mertler).

Participants

The participants for this study were four second-grade teachers and 38 second-grade students. Due to time constraints, only 24 of the students were asked for an interview. These teachers and students were from the same rural elementary school in Northwest Ohio. The school attendance was approximately 550 students from pre-k to sixth grade. Each grade level except pre-k contained four classrooms of students with approximately 20 students in each class. This school only had one pre-k class. The elementary school chosen for this research study included predominantly White students. However, a small percentage of students were considered multi-racial. This particular school was chosen based on the researcher’s acquaintance with the school.

At this school, all 67 second-grade students were divided into four groups for reading class. The students were divided based on reading ability, and the four second-grade teachers each instructed a group of students. As a result, most of the students were placed in a reading class with a teacher who was not their homeroom teacher.

Participants were chosen without any regard to age, race, religion, gender, or disability. The participants were grouped by classroom. Each teacher was assigned a pseudonym to protect his or her identity.
Classroom Demographics

In classroom A, the teacher, Mrs. Powell\textsuperscript{*}, was approximately 5 to 10 years away from retirement. There were 11 boys and five girls who were considered to have low, middle abilities in reading. Mrs. Powell had a reading area in the back, left corner of her classroom with a wide range of books. This collection of books continued to grow as Mrs. Powell purchased new books for her class. The desks in Mrs. Powell’s classroom seemed to change on a regular basis because several seating arrangements were observed while the study was conducted. Mrs. Powell’s desk was directly beside the door along the wall. The computers were across from Mrs. Powell’s desk. The seating arrangement filled a majority of the classroom, and there were white boards all along the wall on the right side of the classroom. On the right of the classroom, Mrs. Powell had a table to accommodate a small group of five to seven students.

Classroom B contained seven girls and seven boys who were considered the lowest readers in second-grade. The teacher, Mrs. Davis\textsuperscript{*}, had approximately five years of teaching experience. In the back of the classroom, Mrs. Davis had two small shelves with leveled books for the students, and this area was carpeted. Mrs. Davis had a shelving unit along the left wall of her classroom. She had many leveled readers in the cabinets, and the basals were stored on these shelves when they were not in use. Mrs. Davis had baskets for collecting various assignments on the shelf closest to the door. There were two white boards in this classroom along the front and back walls. Mrs. Davis had her desk in the back, right corner of the classroom along with the computer. On the walls, Mrs. Davis had a word wall, phonics dance hunk and chunks, and the alphabet. This classroom contained two small tables for small group work because the special

\textsuperscript{*} pseudonym
education and Title I teachers assist Mrs. Davis with reading instruction. As a result, multiple tables were needed for guided reading instruction.

In classroom C, there were seven girls and eight boys who were considered the high, middle readers in second-grade. The teacher, Mrs. Foster*, was near retirement. Mrs. Foster had computers towards the door on the right side of the room. She had desks in the middle of the room in front of the white board. Along the left side of the room, Mrs. Foster had many shelves filled with reading books and supplies. The right side of the room contained Mrs. Foster’s desk and many containers filled with math supplies. There were shelves in the back of the classroom as well.

Classroom D contained the only male teacher in the study, Mr. Clark*. Mr. Clark’s room was much smaller than the other classrooms. He had six boys and 15 girls in the highest reading class for second-grade. The desks were arranged in the middle of the room in groups of four or five. The table for small groups was shoved against the back, right corner of the room. Beside the door, Mr. Clark had a table with a variety of materials. Mr. Clark’s desk was in the middle of the left wall of the room. The reading shelves, reading carpet, and computers were in the back, left corner of the room.

Data Sources

For this study, surveys and interviews were given to teachers and students. The students took the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey by McKenna and Kear (1990). On this survey, students were asked 20 questions, which provided information about their reading attitudes. The student interviews contained questions about the student’s reading attitude, the student’s view of

* pseudonym
the teacher’s reading attitude, information about the student’s motivation, student opinions about likes and dislikes in reading class, and instructional practices in the classroom.

Teachers were surveyed and interviewed based on the questions in the Applegate and Applegate (2004) and Morrison, Jacobs, and Swinyard (1999) questionnaires. Many questions from these studies were used, and other questions were added as well (see Appendix B). The teacher survey contained questions about the instructional practices in the classroom, and these questions were similar to the questions asked at the end of the student interviews. At the end of the teacher survey, there were a few questions focused on the reading attitudes and practices of teachers. In the interviews, the teachers were asked about their attitudes toward reading and the instructional practices in the classroom. Specifically, the interviews investigated overall feelings toward reading, the students’ views of the teacher’s reading attitude, the teacher’s ideas about how to increase reading attitudes, and discussion about the instructional practices. Throughout the interview process, teachers participated in “active interviews” (Holstein & Gubrium, 1997, p. 121). According to Holstein and Gubrium, “The interview and its participants are constantly developing” (p. 121). The interview process for the teachers was also considered semistructured in nature because the researcher followed the interview guide. However, some questions that were not on the guide were asked (Mertler).

Procedures

The process for this research study started with a conversation and signed consent form (see Appendix C) from the principal of the elementary school. After this information was collected, the teachers discussed the study with the researcher. The teachers were given their consent forms (see Appendix D) along with the consent forms for the parents (see Appendix E). Next, the parents of the students were given a letter to explain the study along with a consent
form to sign. This letter was given to the students to take home to their parents. It took approximately one week to get the consent forms signed and returned. Once the parent consent forms were collected, the researcher scheduled a day to read and explain the student consent forms (see Appendix F) to students.

After students signed their consent forms, they were immediately given the *Elementary Reading Attitude Survey* (McKenna & Kear, 1990). At this time, the researcher scheduled days and times to interview the teachers and students. One teacher scheduled a time after school for her interview, and this interview took one hour. The other three teachers scheduled interviews during their planning period, and these interviews ranged from 15 to 20 minutes in length. All of the teachers turned in their consent forms at the time of the interview. The teacher reading attitude surveys were collected at the time of the teacher interview or shortly after the interview. The student interviews were occasionally given on the same day as teacher interviews, and these interviews took place in the hallway. Each student interview took approximately 15 minutes.

Once the students finished the surveys, the survey results were scored. The raw score average of reading attitudes for each class was also calculated. To accomplish this task, the full scale raw scores for each student were added. Then, the total raw scores were divided by the number of students surveyed. The teachers all received a chart with the data along with the article written by McKenna and Kear (1990).

When the teacher interviews were completed, a transcription of the interview was typed and given to the teacher. The teachers participated in member checking by providing corrections to the transcription if needed. Once the student interviews were completed, copies of the interview notes were given to the teachers. When the student interviews were completed, the information was organized in a binder according to class. There were questions on the teacher
survey and student interview about instructional practices, and the questions were extremely similar to each other. These questions were all assigned a category and recorded as fractions based on the responses of the students. The categories assigned were teacher read alouds, technology, book talks, student reading, and balanced student and teacher discussions of books. These categories were assigned based on the best practices for instruction. To analyze the student and teacher responses, charts (see Appendix G) were created with the teacher responses and student responses to find similarities and differences. The teacher interviews were transcribed and explained in the research study.

Data Analysis

Quantitative and qualitative data were collected for this study. The student surveys, student interviews, and teacher surveys contained quantitative data. For the student survey, the data were combined in tables to analyze whether students in the class had an overall positive, neutral, or negative attitude toward reading. According to McKenna and Kear (1990), a score of 50 was reflective of a neutral attitude toward reading. Therefore, a score above 50 would be considered positive, and a score below 50 would be considered negative. This information was compared to the information provided by the teachers in their interview to determine whether teachers were aware of the reading attitudes in their classroom.

Another portion of quantitative data included the instructional practices questions from the teacher survey and student interview. Charts for each classroom (see Appendix G) were created and analyzed to view whether teachers and students had similar perceptions about the instructional practices in the classroom. These charts were analyzed according to the categories assigned, which included teacher read alouds, technology, book talks, student reading, and balanced student and teacher discussion of books.
A majority of the data analysis was qualitative in nature. Teacher interviews were transcribed and studied for common trends. As similarities and differences were found, notes were made about these trends. The teacher interviews were also compared to the questions about teacher attitudes on the teacher survey. Student interviews were also used for qualitative analysis. The student interviews gave information about the student’s views of the teacher’s reading attitude. From the qualitative data analysis, common trends were found with teacher attitudes, student attitudes, the students’ views of the teacher’s reading attitude, and the instructional practices in the classroom.

Summary

This study investigated the reading attitudes of second-grade teachers and students at a rural school in Ohio. Furthermore, the study investigated the nature of reading practices in second-grade classrooms. The data were collected after conducting surveys and interviews of both teachers and students. Once the data were collected, it was analyzed to find out the nature of teacher reading attitudes and student reading attitudes.
CHAPTER IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to explore the nature of reading attitudes in second-grade teachers and students. Data were collected over a three week period from four, second-grade classrooms in Northwest Ohio. During this time, four teachers responded to surveys and participated in interviews. Six students in each reading class participated in an interview, and 38 students agreed to complete the *Elementary Reading Attitude Survey* (McKenna & Kear, 1990). Throughout this process, the specific question addressed was: “What is the nature of teacher and student reading attitudes in second-grade?” The following sub-questions were also explored:

1. Do second-grade students think that their reading teacher likes to read?
2. What is the nature of reading practices in second-grade?

Several forms of data were collected in an effort to answer the research questions. The data for this study were primarily qualitative in nature. However, the *Elementary Reading Attitude Survey* (McKenna & Kear, 1990), teacher attitude survey, and student interviews provided some quantitative data. The results from the *Elementary Reading Attitude Survey* were collected in tables for ease in analysis. The teachers and students were asked similar questions about instructional practices. These questions were included on the teacher reading attitude survey (see Appendix B) and student interview questionnaire (see Appendix A). These data were analyzed through the grouping of questions into best practices. Then, the students’ responses to each question were calculated into fractions for each class (see Appendix G). The questions were categorized into teacher read alouds, technology, book talks, student reading, and balanced student and teacher discussions of books.

In this section, both forms of data were presented for each classroom in regards to the reading attitudes of all participants and the instructional practices for the classroom. Pseudonyms
were given to the teachers to protect their identity. Afterwards, the trends found between the classrooms were briefly conveyed. These trends were found by studying the responses made by the participants on the surveys and interviews.

Results

Classroom A

Classroom A consisted of 11 boys and five girls who were classified as the low, middle readers out of the second-grade students. Mrs. Powell said, “So, the dynamics in here are really different because we have so many boys.” She also stated, “Traditionally, reading is not a boy thing, and they would rather do something else.” In Mrs. Powell’s classroom, a big portion of the room was dedicated to a classroom library. The room had a brown shelf filled with books for each unit studied. Mrs. Powell said, “I’m fortunate that I have a lot of books because I’ve been here a long time.”

Reading Attitudes

Mrs. Powell sat down one day after school for her interview. At this time, she handed in her signed consent form along with her teacher attitude survey. Then, the interview took place for approximately one hour. When Mrs. Powell was asked about her reading attitude, she said, “I think I would be considered an avid reader. I love to read. I always have a book in my hand, newspaper in my hand, or something in my hand to read.” Most of the time, Mrs. Powell reads books, but she reads her magazine subscriptions in the morning while eating her breakfast. On road trips, Mrs. Powell is found in the passenger seat of the car reading a book. Overall, Mrs. Powell reads a lot. In fact, she mentioned that she reads each night before going to bed because it calms her down. Her favorite kind of reading material is historical, romantic novels, but she would like to read more educational books in the future to get students motivated to read and
write. When choosing a book, Mrs. Powell goes directly to the back cover of the book because looking at the front cover “messes you up.” If a book looks interesting from the back, Mrs. Powell will most likely read it. Mrs. Powell is motivated to read by seeing many different books at the library. She stated, “I think looking at books in the library gets me so excited. I love the library.”

Although Mrs. Powell loves the library and all of the choices found there, she purchases most of her books and will share them with her sister or take them to the library after she finishes reading. At times, Mrs. Powell and her sister will read the same book and discuss it briefly. In the past, Mrs. Powell has been a part of a book discussion group at school. This group discussed educational books for teachers to get ideas about topics like differentiated instruction. Once a week, the group met to discuss the books. Mrs. Powell said, “It was a great way for us to get together and talk about different things.” She thinks the book group was a very good idea. However, she says, “It’s just finding the time for everyone to sit down.”

When Mrs. Powell was asked about the reading attitudes of the 11 boys and five girls in her reading class, she said her students seem to have a neutral attitude toward reading. She does not think the majority of students have a negative attitude because none of them have commented that they dislike reading. Information about the reading attitudes of Mrs. Powell’s students was gained through the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (McKenna & Kear, 1990) and student interviews.

On the day of the survey administration, there were nine students in Mrs. Powell’s class who had parent consent forms signed and agreed that they would participate in the study. Once the survey was scored, the results (see Table 1) showed that three students fell into the category of having a negative reading attitude based on the raw scores of 42, 44, and 45. Although these
scores indicate a negative reading attitude, the scores are close to the raw score of 50, which indicates more of a neutral reading attitude. On the other hand, six of the students fell into the positive reading attitude category. The total raw scores for these students were 55, 65, 66, 70, 77, and 78. To determine the class average, the researcher averaged the raw scores of the class. The average raw score is 60. Based on the results, it seems that Mrs. Powell’s class is above the raw score of 50. Therefore, the class seems to have an overall positive attitude toward reading, but the raw score is close to the neutral range as Mrs. Powell indicated.

Table 1

Elementary Reading Attitude Survey Results for Classroom A.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Student Numbers</th>
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<th>Academic Raw Scores</th>
<th>Full Scale Raw Scores</th>
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Note: Neutral score = 50. Positive score = >50. Negative score = <50.

In Mrs. Powell’s class, six students participated in an interview. This interview took place in the hallway approximately one week after the surveys were completed. Each student was
randomly selected and interviewed individually. The session was audio recorded and took from 10 to 15 minutes for each student. All six students were asked how they felt about reading, and four students said they liked reading. When these four students were asked why they liked reading, three of them said, “It is fun.” The other student said, “Reading is fun because of the Accelerated Reading tests.” There were only two students who said reading was “okay.” During the interview, students were also asked if they considered themselves to be good at reading, okay at reading, or not very good at reading. The results from this question showed that five students think they are okay at reading. Many of the students commented that they are just okay at reading because they miss words or do not do very well on reading tests.

Some questions from the interview focused on what and who motivates or gets the students excited about reading books. This question yielded a plethora of answers. Some students got excited about books at the library or new books bought at the bookstore. One student said, “Good grades get me excited about reading.” Another student mentioned that reading a lot is a way to get excited about books. When students were asked who got them motivated to read, family, friends, and teachers were mentioned.

The researcher asked Mrs. Powell what her students would say about her reading attitude. Based on her love of reading, Mrs. Powell thought the students would consider her attitude positive. She said, “I love to read, and I just want to share that with everybody.” Mrs. Powell was correct, and all six students interviewed said that she liked to read. Many of the students said, “Mrs. Powell likes to read because she reads books in class.” One student said, “She uses her voice. It is funny like the characters.” Another student said that Mrs. Powell likes to read because “she makes her students read a lot of books, but she also helps them a lot.” During the interview, the students were also asked if they have seen Mrs. Powell read for fun. On this question, four of
the six students interviewed said, “Yes.” They were also asked if Mrs. Powell talks about books that she reads, and half of the students interviewed said, “Yes.” One student said, “Yes. I think.”

**Instructional Practices**

Mrs. Powell was asked to describe a typical week of instruction in her reading class. On Monday, Mrs. Powell works on phonics. Tuesday is a day for the story in the basal and comprehension activities. Leveled readers and a phonics review occur on Wednesdays. Thursday and Friday are unit activities. One unit was olden days, and they are getting ready to do a unit on mysteries, which will involve problem solving activities. The students will be involved in looking for details, main ideas, and drawing conclusions. Mrs. Powell also uses trade books from her cupboard on Thursday and Friday. Throughout the week, Mrs. Powell also mentioned that she uses team points in reading class. The reason for the team points is that the students tend to listen better to Mrs. Powell when they have the motivation of an extrinsic reward at the end of the week. Students usually work in teams when she asks comprehension questions. Mrs. Powell gives students a dry erase board. “They have to write their answer down, and they can collaborate with their teammates.”

Mrs. Powell implements learning centers into her reading instruction. For learning centers, students participate in game activities. “One center might be sight words and a treasure chest game. Another group might be context clues.” Usually, students will go to two centers in one day and complete the other two centers the next day. All of the centers incorporate something that is being learned in reading. When asked about learning centers, Mrs. Powell says, “I try to make game types of things out of it so the kids think they are having fun. They’re having fun, but they don’t know they’re learning anything.”
During Mrs. Powell’s interview, she discussed using instructional practices that interest the students. One activity included reading an Arthur book and making a book. Mrs. Powell was not sure the boys would like the activity due to the amount of writing in the project. However, she had a boy tell her the activity was fun. She said, “I have some students in here that reading is probably the last thing they want to do because they really have no interest in it. This is why I try to do things that will get them interested.” When Mrs. Powell was asked how to improve the reading attitudes of students in her class, she said, “I think finding things that are of interest to them.” She likes to find topics that students want to read about, and she orders books for the students based on their interests. Mrs. Powell will get books about basketball and football to peak the interests of her students. Another way for Mrs. Powell to keep students interested is to “…scramble things up so that it is a little different. So, it’s kind of a surprise thing.” Mrs. Powell makes learning fun by taking a workbook page and turning it into a game. When asked why these strategies are beneficial, Mrs. Powell said, “I think because so much is game oriented now with the Wii and Nintendo and DS or whatever they have.” Mrs. Powell believes students should have a balance between paper and pencil activities and fun games.

One trend common with Mrs. Powell is her use of books in reading instruction. Mrs. Powell says, “Usually, I read to my reading group so that I can model for them what it’s like to read and get them interested in different books.” It seems that Mrs. Powell uses books for a variety of purposes in daily instruction. Arthur books were used to make student books about the story. Students read the book, rated it, and sequenced the events from the story. She also mentioned reading *Grandpa’s Slideshow* by Deborah Gould and *Nana Upstairs, Nana Downstairs* by Tomie DePaola with her students. After reading *Nana Upstairs, Nana Downstairs*, the students wrote about a special person on a falling star cut out. At some point in
the week, Mrs. Powell also gives book talks about stories. *Thank You, Mr. Falker* by Patricia Polacco was read one day, and Mrs. Powell showed the students some other books by Patricia Polacco. Mrs. Powell says, “I want them to think about what they learned from other books to compare or think about their life and how it connects.”

One aspect of Mrs. Powell’s reading instruction that is noteworthy includes her use of praise. She says, “I think a lot of praise when it’s warranted is important because so many times I think they hear, ‘You’re not reading fast enough’.” Mrs. Powell implements praise when students do a good job or use expression while reading. Recently, Mrs. Powell had a student use appropriate expression with an italicized word. This gave Mrs. Powell an opportunity to encourage and motivate this particular reader.

The students interviewed in Mrs. Powell’s class were asked about their favorite activity in reading class. The students responded that they liked playing games. Some other favorite aspects of reading class were Accelerated Reading tests and getting candy. When the students were asked what they disliked about reading class, two of them said writing papers; two said they disliked nothing, and two said reading something boring. Finally, students were asked what they would like to do more in reading class. These responses ranged and included reading more books, making something fun, playing games, and taking Accelerated Reading tests.

Mrs. Powell and her students were asked similar questions about teacher read alouds. During the teacher interview, Mrs. Powell repeatedly mentioned her use of picture books in the classroom. She also stated on the teacher survey that she uses picture books between daily and two to three times a week. This response is similar to the six students interviewed because three of the six said Mrs. Powell uses picture books “sometimes.” On the question about the frequency of short stories, Mrs. Powell circled the response for two to three times a week, which also fits
nicely with the students’ responses. Four out of six students stated that short stories are read aloud “sometimes.” From the teacher survey, it is evident that books are read for recreation and instruction around two to three times a week.

A majority of the students interviewed (three out of six) said read alouds for recreation occur “most of the time.” When it comes to read alouds for instruction, the students were evenly split with responses of “most of the time” and “sometimes.” Mrs. Powell wrote on her teacher survey that she reads aloud books of student choice two to three times a week. Five of the six students said that Mrs. Powell reads books of their choice “sometimes.” Overall, Mrs. Powell and her students seem to have similar perceptions about the frequency and purpose for the read alouds in class. It would appear that read alouds are valued by Mrs. Powell and her students.

Mrs. Powell and the six students interviewed in her class were asked about the use of technology in the classroom. The teacher was asked, “How often do you use technology to link and expand reading concepts?” However, the students were asked, “How often does your teacher use technology (i.e. movies, computers, the Internet, the overhead projector, etc.) in reading class?” On this question, Mrs. Powell marked that she uses technology daily. The students responded to this question, and most of the students (three out of six) said technology is used “sometimes.” Although a majority of the students stated that these practices happen “sometimes,” many of the students (two out of six) said technology is used “most of the time.” This slight difference in perception could be the result of the different questions asked of the teacher and students.

Mrs. Powell and the students interviewed were asked similar questions about the introduction of new books in the classroom. Mrs. Powell marked on her survey that she introduces new books to students approximately two to three times a week, and the students were
evenly split on their responses. On this question, two out of the six students said, “most of the time,” “sometimes,” and “not usually.” Mrs. Powell was asked how often she recommends specific titles to the class, and she wrote, “once a week.” For this question, half of the students said that Mrs. Powell discusses good books for them to read “sometimes.” Both the teacher and students in this class similarly perceive the instructional practice of book talks. Although the perceptions are similar, the students seem to be evenly split on their responses to the introduction of new books to the class. Mrs. Powell mentioned that she will introduce books by a similar author from her class library. Perhaps, some of these new book introductions are familiar to the students in her class because they have read or looked at these particular books in the past. As a result, the students may not perceive all of the new book introductions as new to them.

When it comes to student reading in the classroom, the students in Mrs. Powell’s class seem to have a slightly different view of the instructional practices. Mrs. Powell wrote that students read on their own daily. The teacher survey also revealed that Mrs. Powell asks students to read from a class set of books daily. On both of these practices, the students seemed to think these activities were happening only sometimes. This question showed that four out of six students said, “sometimes.” Furthermore, the students were asked another question about their reading. Students were asked, “How often do you get to read books that you like to read at school?” This question revealed that three out of six students said, “Most of the time.” Three out of six students said, “Sometimes.” Because the students have a different perception of their reading in class, they may not think that reading from a basal is the same as reading from a class set of books. Perhaps, the students do not know about a class set of books.

On questions about book discussions, Mrs. Powell and her students seem to have similar perceptions. Mrs. Powell said that students discuss books with her once a week, and a majority
of the students (three out of six) said this practice occurs “sometimes.” According to Mrs. Powell and her students, book discussions among students in the class were not usually occurring. For this question, four of the six students interviewed agreed that book discussions in class did not usually happen.

**Classroom B**

Classroom B had seven boys and seven girls, and this classroom was the lowest group of readers out of the second-grade students. During the three weeks of research, this classroom had changes to the desk arrangements. Cupboards along one side of the room were filled with supplies and class sets of guided reading books. In the back of the room, there was a carpet with a bookshelf of books.

**Reading Attitudes**

Before Mrs. Davis’ interview, a signed consent form and the teacher reading attitude survey were received. On the survey, Mrs. Davis indicated that she enjoys reading books of her choice. She also wrote, “The pressure of having a set deadline and grade of understanding of text turns me off.” Mrs. Davis was interviewed during her planning period for approximately 15 minutes. She was first asked to describe herself as a reader. Mrs. Davis said, “I would not describe myself as a consistent reader. I wish that I read more than I did if I had time.” During the summer, Mrs. Davis says she reads approximately two to three books because she is not busy teaching. Throughout the school year, Mrs. Davis reads with her students, but she tries to read a chapter book of her choice over breaks.

The type of reading that was prevalent for Mrs. Davis was reading from the Internet. As Mrs. Davis came across interesting articles online, she read them. While Mrs. Davis was at the store, she picked up a magazine and read it. However, she does not have any magazine
subscriptions. Mrs. Davis also mentioned that magazines of any kind are considered her favorite reading material. Overall, Mrs. Davis does not believe she has time to read. She says, “When I only have a half hour to relax, picking up a book is just not the thing that I choose to do.” Mrs. Davis was asked about a book that she had read recently. Mrs. Davis read Nicholas Sparks. She also read two of his books over the summer.

Nicholas Sparks was Mrs. Davis’ favorite author. She started reading Nicholas Sparks books because her aunt suggested that she read them. Mrs. Davis was motivated to read by her mom and younger brother. She said that they were into mystery novels. When Mrs. Davis’ mom and brother discuss books, Mrs. Davis wants to read them, but she waits until the summer. At one point, Mrs. Davis was involved in an educational book discussion group at school. This group is not currently meeting, but Mrs. Davis liked to hear the different opinions of her colleagues. If there was a fictional book discussion group at school, Mrs. Davis thinks that she would be more motivated to read throughout the school year. She also said, “If I give students a chance to read silently, then I could pick my book up and show them that I’m reading, too.”

Mrs. Davis described the reading attitudes of the students in her reading class as negative because they are struggling readers. She said, “I don’t know if they don’t have the support at home or if they’re just not getting it like one day the light bulb is just going to click.” Despite the general trend of negative attitudes described in this class, Mrs. Davis said there are some students with positive reading attitudes. In this class, the students described with positive attitudes just need further help with comprehension.

On the day of Mrs. Davis’ interview, the students in her reading class were given the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (see Table 2). Many of the students in this class either did not have permission to participate from their parents or decided not to participate. However,
there were six students who agreed to fill out the survey and participate in the interview. The results from the survey indicated that two out of the six students fell in the negative reading attitude category with total raw scores of 43 and 44, which are close to the neutral score of 50. The four students with positive attitudes were above the neutral range with scores of 53, 63, 64, and 68. Overall, the students in Mrs. Davis’ reading class have an average raw score of 56. The raw score average seems to average in the positive range for reading attitudes.

Table 2

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<th>Full Scale Raw Scores</th>
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Note: Neutral score = 50. Positive score = >50. Negative score = <50.

In Mrs. Davis’ reading class, the six students who agreed to participate in the research study were interviewed. The students were asked how they felt about reading. Of the six students, three students said, “I like reading.” Three students said, “Reading is okay.” The students who claimed that they liked reading said, “Reading is fun.” These split results seem consistent with the data collected from the survey results. With further questioning, the students revealed how good they were at reading. One student mentioned being good at reading.
However, three students said they were okay at reading, and two students said they were not very good at reading. Most of the students stated the reason for these feelings related to their ability or lack of ability to decode words. One student mentioned that eye therapy has helped his reading to improve. When students were asked what will get them excited about reading, the students mentioned new books, the book fair, books recommended by friends, and stories from class. The students said family members get them interested in reading. A student also mentioned that Mrs. Davis gets her excited about reading because she tells the class about books or shows them cool books.

Mrs. Davis was asked how the students would describe her reading attitudes. For this question, Mrs. Davis said, “I would say probably a neutral attitude.” This response seems to come from the way Mrs. Davis views her reading attitude. Mrs. Davis also said, “I wish I was more of a motivator or knew how to motivate them more.” Because Mrs. Davis has the low readers, she believes the students do not like reading. As a result, it is a struggle for her to know how to get them excited. She did say, “If I got more excited, maybe that would intrigue them more towards reading.” Despite the fact that Mrs. Davis thought her attitude would be considered neutral towards reading, the students interviewed in her class all said that Mrs. Davis likes to read. Most of the students said that Mrs. Davis likes to read because she reads a lot of stories to the class during reading. Some other students said, “She reads a lot and is good at it. She is a teacher, and she likes having fun with us.” The students were also asked whether they have seen Mrs. Davis read for fun. The six students interviewed answered this question, and three out of six students said, “Yes.” Next, the students were asked if Mrs. Davis talks about books that she reads. On this question, two students said, “Yes.” One student said, “Sometimes.” However, three students said, “No.”
Instructional Practices

During reading class, Mrs. Davis had the Title I teacher and special education teacher in the room with her. With three teachers, it was possible to split the students into three small groups that rotate every 15 minutes. In these centers, students worked on the skills for the week. After this portion of instruction, the students worked on the phonics dance and the hunk and chunks. This was something that was worked on a lot to help the students decode words. The students in this particular reading class did not seem to know the words. Mrs. Davis said, “This is a big struggle for them.” Due to this struggle, the students “…expect someone to tell it (the word) to them or they just read it, and it doesn’t make sense.” For the last 45 minutes of reading class, the students were able to receive whole group instruction.

Mrs. Davis believed that one way to help improve the reading attitudes of students in her reading class was to find a way to motivate them by giving choices. By giving choices for stories, Mrs. Davis believed this may help students to read something interesting even if they were just looking at the pictures. Mrs. Davis believed this would eventually lead the students to look at the print. Another way Mrs. Davis tried to improve reading attitudes was through fun activities. She found this hard to do with reading. However, Mrs. Davis kept students up and moving as much as possible. One idea that Mrs. Davis was hoping to implement soon was silent reading. Mrs. Davis would like to give students 10 to 15 minutes to read at the end of class time. At this time, Mrs. Davis would like to conference individually with students to get them motivated. Mrs. Davis was thinking this can help her to know how the students were doing with reading all on their own.

During the week of Mrs. Davis’ interview, she implemented student choice for one reading selection. She said, “Hopefully, they are already engaged or want to learn more about
that.” Mrs. Davis said some students choose a story because they already have an interest in the topic, and they want to know more about it. She also implements games into learning “…because they need the hands-on interaction in order to help them learn.”

When it came to implementing strategies for enhancing the reading attitudes of students, Mrs. Davis suggested that these strategies do not happen as often as they should. There were many things that needed to be done throughout the reading block of time. She said, “It’s hard to give them the option.” However, Mrs. Davis said the students do better with hands on or game situations. “They see it as a game they want to play that is fun.” She used these learning opportunities as positive reinforcements for students. “The hard thing is for them to take that skill we’re playing in the game and apply it into their reading.”

Mrs. Davis and her students were asked similar questions about instructional practices in the classroom. These questions were asked on the teacher survey and student interviews. Mrs. Davis and her students seemed to have a difference in perceptions about read alouds in the classroom. When asked about the occurrence of picture book read alouds, Mrs. Davis stated that these read alouds occur daily. The students seemed to have a similar view on this question because four out of the six students interviewed said picture books are read aloud “most of the time.” Mrs. Davis was also asked, “How often are short stories read in class?” She circled the response for daily. However, students were asked, “How often does your teacher read aloud a short story to your class?” Four of the students interviewed said, “Sometimes.” This difference could be a result of the questions asked. Mrs. Davis does use guided reading texts, which are short stories, with her students daily. Another question asked about the frequency of read alouds for recreation purposes. Mrs. Davis wrote that these read alouds happen once a week, and three of the students interviewed said read alouds for recreation occur “most of the time.” According
to Mrs. Davis, books are read for instructional purposes two to three times a week. The students in this class were evenly split on their responses to this question. When it comes to student choice of read alouds, Mrs. Davis admitted that this practice did not usually take place. However, five students said that they had a choice for read alouds “sometimes.”

Technology was also a topic that Mrs. Davis and her students were asked about. Mrs. Davis and her students had similar perceptions about the frequency of technology in the classroom. Four of the students interviewed in this class said technology occurred sometimes. Mrs. Davis marked on her survey that technology was used once a week.

On the topic of new book introductions, Mrs. Davis and her students seemed to have similar perceptions. Mrs. Davis said that new books were introduced two to three times a week, and three of the students interviewed said new books were introduced “sometimes.” When it comes to specific titles being recommended in the classroom, Mrs. Davis circled that this practice takes place once a week. The six students, however, were evenly split with responses of “most of the time,” “sometimes,” and “not usually.”

When the six students were interviewed, they were asked, “How often do you get to read books that you like to read at school?” Three students said that this happens “most of the time.” Mrs. Davis and her students were asked how often students read from class sets of books. Mrs. Davis marked on her survey that students read from class sets of books two to three times a week. The six students interviewed were evenly split on this question with responses of “most of the time,” “sometimes,” and “not usually.” Mrs. Davis was also asked, “How often do students get to read on their own?” On the teacher survey, Mrs. Davis said the students do this daily, but four students said this happens “sometimes.” Overall, Mrs. Davis and her students seem to have different perceptions on student reading practices in the classroom.
The students seem to have the same perception as Mrs. Davis about the balanced discussion of books in the classroom. Mrs. Davis marked on her survey that students discuss books with her two to three times a week. On this question, three students said, “Most of the time,” and three students said, “Sometimes.” Another question asked whether students discussed books in class. Mrs. Davis said this practice does not usually happen, and three students had the same response.

Classroom C

The students in classroom C were considered the high, middle readers out of the second-grade students. There were seven girls and eight boys in the reading class. In this classroom, there were many supplies for different subjects found around the room. It seemed that Mrs. Foster had taught for a while. She had many books along one side of the room and bins filled with math manipulatives along the other side of the room.

Reading Attitudes

Mrs. Foster was interviewed for 20 minutes during her planning period on the third week of research. She turned in her consent form and teacher reading attitude survey at the time of the interview. For the first question, Mrs. Foster was asked to describe herself as a reader. Mrs. Foster said, “I love to read. If I had my choice, I would have my nose in a book all the time.” During the school year, Mrs. Foster did not read often because of school activities. However, she did read the newspaper every day. At lunch, the teachers discussed the quiz questions in the newspaper. Mrs. Foster said this occasionally motivates others to read to find more information about topics brought up in the quiz.

When Mrs. Foster had vacation time, she looked forward to reading books. Throughout one summer, Mrs. Foster read all five Harry Potter books by J. K. Rowling. The reason Mrs.
Foster likes to read was because she makes a movie in her mind. She said, “I can block out everything else except for the story. It’s a good experience.” Mrs. Foster’s favorite kind of reading material was science fiction and fantasy. She also liked historical fiction. Some of the authors that Mrs. Foster likes were Vince Flynn, James Herriot, and Tony Hillerman.

Once in awhile, Mrs. Foster got ideas about books to read from bookstore ads. However, she tried not to visit the bookstore often because she tends to spend too much money. As a result, Mrs. Foster buys used books at the bookstore. In one visit to this bookstore, she bought all the Tony Hillerman novels available. This gave her plenty of books to read during the summer, and she took them back to trade when she was finished. Her summer reading list also included some Vince Flynn books and the Star Trek books. Mrs. Foster read out of curiosity. She enjoyed learning how people lived. Because Mrs. Foster’s husband was also a teacher, she talked to him about books all the time. They shared books with each other. Mrs. Foster has also been a member of a book club with people who have different occupations. This discussion group read science fiction books, but many times members came to the group without reading the chapter for the week.

Mrs. Foster described the reading attitudes of the students in her reading class by saying they were about half and half. She said some of the students in her reading class seemed really serious about learning, and other students liked to get done in a hurry. In Mrs. Foster’s class, eight students were able to complete the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (see Table 3). Of these eight students, five students fell in the negative attitude of reading with raw scores of 29, 33, 45, 47, and 47. Although five scores are considered negative, three of these scores are close to the neutral score of 50. The three students with positive reading attitudes had a raw score of
63, 72, and 74. For this class, the average raw score was a 51. As a result, the average raw score is close to the neutral score for reading attitudes.

Table 3

Elementary Reading Attitude Survey Results for Classroom C.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Numbers</th>
<th>Recreational Raw Scores</th>
<th>Academic Raw Scores</th>
<th>Full Scale Raw Scores</th>
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</thead>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Neutral score = 50. Positive score = >50. Negative score = <50.

Six students were randomly selected for an interview. Four of the six students said they liked reading. The students who liked reading mentioned a variety of reasons saying, “It’s fun. You learn things.” “We get to read books and do fun stuff.” “It makes you smart.” Only two students said reading was okay. One student said, “I would rather do other things besides reading.” Students were also asked whether they are good at reading, okay at reading, or not very good at reading. From the students interviewed, only two students said they were good at reading. One student said her mom helps with words, and the other student said she knows big words. The okay readers felt this way because they struggled with decoding words or got lower
than an A in reading. During the interview, students were also asked to describe what and who gets them excited about reading. Students mentioned many motivators including the library, bookstore, new books, teachers, school, family, and friends. One student in particular stated that Mrs. Foster gets her excited about reading because of the fun activities in class.

Mrs. Foster was asked whether the students in her reading class would say her reading attitude is positive, neutral, or negative. At first, Mrs. Foster said, “I’m not sure. I’m very serious, and I keep calling them back to be serious.” Despite her serious side, Mrs. Foster has fun by singing songs about synonyms and antonyms, and she uses different voices when reading books. Later, Mrs. Foster said the students in her class would probably say her reading attitude is positive. The students who were interviewed in Mrs. Foster’s class were asked whether she likes to read. One student said “maybe” because “she learns new things and words.” The other students all said “yes” because “she likes to read,” “helps children learn,” “reads a lot to the class,” and “is a reading teacher.” The students interviewed were also asked whether they have seen Mrs. Foster read for fun. Three students said, “Yes,” and three students said, “No.” Then, students were asked whether Mrs. Foster talks about books that she reads. On this question, three students said, “Yes.” One of the students who said yes also said, “She asks us questions to see if we’re paying attention.” Two of Mrs. Foster’s students said, “Sometimes.” Only one student said Mrs. Foster does not discuss books that she reads.

**Instructional Practices**

Mrs. Foster said the typical week in her reading class looks a lot like the other teachers. On Monday, Mrs. Foster works on phonics and a game called “guess the covered word.” In this game, students get three guesses to figure out the covered vocabulary word. If students do not guess the word, they are given the beginning sound and three more guesses. Another thing Mrs.
Foster likes to start on Monday is silent reading of the story in the basal. Tuesday is a day to read through the story with the CD or aloud. When students read the story, Mrs. Foster likes to focus on asking comprehension questions after a couple of pages. She said that there is a focus on understanding what was read and what was found directly in the story. The instruction on Wednesday focuses on the skills for the week. During some weeks, the skills take place on Wednesday and Thursday. If Thursday is not a skill day, Mrs. Foster will begin reading the leveled readers with students. Friday is used for leveled readers as well. Occasionally, Mrs. Foster will have students participate in literacy circles while reading. In these groups, students have jobs. The jobs vary and include a reader, word attack person, and a connector. After students read the leveled books, they take an Accelerated Reader quiz on it to show their understanding of the story. Mrs. Foster uses these quizzes as grades in her grade book. Lately, Mrs. Foster has tried a new strategy called “word ladders.” In a “word ladder,” students take a word and change the letters based on the clues given. The new words change in length until the students reach the top of the ladder.

Mrs. Foster tries to make her instruction as fun as possible to improve the reading attitudes of students. She said, “I’ve been around for a long time, and instruction has changed. You have to be like a video game now.” To make instruction fun, Mrs. Foster mixes her practices up with different activities. She tries not to do the same thing over and over again. However, the game “guess the covered word” has lasted all year. The students are sad when Mrs. Foster skips this activity. If time was not an issue, Mrs. Foster said she would like to do more Reader’s Theatre and board games for context clues and comprehension. Usually, fun activities take place on Thursday and Friday. Overall, Mrs. Foster feels these instructional practices work well with her students.
Mrs. Foster and the students interviewed in her class were asked similar questions about some instructional practices in the classroom. On the topic of teacher read alouds, Mrs. Foster wrote on her teacher survey that picture books are read aloud daily or two to three times a week from August to October. The six students interviewed were evenly split on this question with two responses of “most of the time,” “sometimes,” and “not usually.” Mrs. Foster wrote that short stories are read aloud daily or two to three times a week from October to June. The students seemed to have the same perception because four students said short stories are read aloud “sometimes.”

On the survey, Mrs. Foster also circled the response for sometimes about read alouds for recreation. Three students in Mrs. Foster’s class agreed with a response of “sometimes.” According to Mrs. Foster, books were read for instruction approximately two to three times a week, but five students interviewed said books are read for instruction “most of the time.” A final question about read alouds revealed that Mrs. Foster implements student choice sometimes. However, five students interviewed said they do not usually get the opportunity to choose a read aloud book. Overall, the students seem to perceive instruction differently than Mrs. Foster with regard to read alouds.

Technology is another instructional practice used in Mrs. Foster’s class. Mrs. Foster’s survey revealed that technology is used once a week in the reading classroom. Three students said technology is used “sometimes.” Therefore, it seems that Mrs. Foster and the students in her reading class have similar views on the use of technology in the classroom.

Mrs. Foster and her students do not seem to have similar perceptions about the introduction of books in class. A majority of the students seemed to think these practices were occurring “most of the time.” Mrs. Foster mentioned the introduction of new books once a week.
Three students said the introduction of new books takes place “most of the time.” However, two students said this practice does not usually take place. Mrs. Foster also said that specific titles are recommended once a week, but three students said this occurs “most of the time.”

The six students interviewed were asked whether they get to read books that they like at school. Three students said, “Most of the time.” Three students said, “Sometimes.” Mrs. Foster and the students interviewed were asked, “How often do students read from class sets of books?” Mrs. Foster’s survey showed that this practice happens once a week. Three of the students interviewed said, “Most of the time.” There seems to be a difference in perception about this instructional practice. However, Mrs. Foster and these students have similar perceptions about student reading. Mrs. Foster’s survey revealed that students read on their own daily or two to three times a week. Four students said they read on their own “sometimes.”

On the questions about balanced teacher and student book discussions in the classroom, Mrs. Foster’s survey stated that these practices take place two to three times a week. Three students interviewed said they discuss books with the teacher “sometimes.” Three students also said books are discussed in class “most of the time.” Overall, Mrs. Foster and the students interviewed seemed to have similar perceptions about book discussions.

Classroom D

In classroom D, the students were considered to be the high level readers. There were 15 girls and six boys in this reading class. Mr. Clark had the smallest classroom out of the second-grade classrooms. For this classroom, the desks were arranged in groups of four or five students. In the back of the room, there was a carpeted area with a variety of books.
Reading Attitudes

Mr. Clark was interviewed during his planning period for approximately 15 minutes. At this time, he turned in his signed consent form, and his survey was turned in later that week. When Mr. Clark was asked to describe himself as a reader, he said, “I would describe myself as an avid reader. I try to read as much as I can.” In fact, Mr. Clark said that he reads while eating, working out on the treadmill, and sitting around. On the reading attitude survey, Mr. Clark said, “I really enjoy reading. It is more fulfilling to complete a novel than to watch television.” However, Mr. Clark mentioned that he does not read many books until the summer because he lacks time. Mr. Clark did have a subscription to *Sports Illustrated* magazine, which he recently read after school. He also read a magazine while working out on the treadmill. Mr. Clark likes to read anything about sports, and he read for entertainment purposes. Mr. Clark also read for information about coaching or teaching. Therefore, his reading seems to be balanced between entertainment and information. Usually, Mr. Clark will discuss his reading with the students in his reading class to give them background knowledge. For his summer reading, Mr. Clark had two coaching books picked out to read. He learned about good books to read by going to the bookstore and looking around. Mr. Clark said he could spend hours in the bookstore looking at books. If the school had a book discussion group, Mr. Clark would be more motivated to read throughout the school year. However, it was difficult for him to make the time because he was a coach. The book discussion groups in the past have discussed books that he already read.

The reading attitudes in Mr. Clark’s class were described as very positive. Mr. Clark said the students in his class are fluent readers who have not been extremely frustrated with reading in the past. He also said, “They come to me with a very positive attitude, which makes it easy.” In Mr. Clark’s class, 15 students returned their parent consent form and agreed to participate in the
Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (McKenna & Kear, 1990). The results from this survey (see Table 4) seem to correlate with Mr. Clark’s perception of the reading attitudes of students in his class. According to the raw scores on the survey, all of Mr. Clark’s students fell above the neutral score of 50, which indicates a positive attitude toward reading. However, three students were close to the neutral score with scores of 51, 53, and 58. The average raw score for the students in Mr. Clark’s class was a 66, which would indicate an overall positive attitude toward reading.

There were six students randomly chosen to participate in an interview. From this group of students, four students said, “I like reading.” Two students said, “Reading is okay.” Those students who said they liked reading mentioned, “reading is fun,” “there are fun games,” and “you can read alone or with others.” One student said she does not like listening to the stories in reading class from the same author because “it gets old.” The other student said he “sometimes doesn’t like reading.” As a result, he would read a small book for a while. There were five students in this class who claimed to be good at reading. For two of the students, they believed they were good at reading because family members or Mr. Clark complimented them on their reading skills. The other two students believed they were good at reading because of their decoding skills and grades on Accelerated Reading tests. Students in this class mentioned a variety of reasons for being excited and interested in books including the library, friends, new books, family, the desire to learn, a particular author, and Mr. Clark. One student was excited about reading because she said, “When I go to reading class, I know Mr. Clark is going to read Edward Tulane.” Another student said, “Mr. Clark reads his favorite books which become my favorite.”
Table 4

Elementary Reading Attitude Survey Results for Classroom D.

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Note: Neutral score = 50. Positive score = >50. Negative score = <50.

Mr. Clark was asked how the students in his class would view his reading attitude. He said the students would associate him with a positive attitude toward reading. Mr. Clark said, “I try to make every story and every reading activity as engaging and fun as possible. We use
voices; we use characters; we use anything to sell the notion of reading to them to make it fun, positive, and rewarding.” According to the students interviewed in Mr. Clark’s class, he does like to read. All of the students interviewed said Mr. Clark liked to read. Some students mentioned that Mr. Clark said he liked to read and that reading was his favorite time of the day. One student said, “He’s really good at acting out voices. I don’t think he could do this if he doesn’t read a lot.” Another student said, “When he reads, he tells us it is his favorite.” The six students interviewed were also asked whether they have ever seen Mr. Clark read for fun. Four students said, “Yes.” Three out of six students said that Mr. Clark talked about books that he read.

Instructional Practices

In Mr. Clark’s class, the students worked on the same basal story and skills as the other second-grade classes on Monday and Tuesday. Throughout the rest of the week, Mr. Clark worked on higher level thinking with his students. He usually read a chapter book to students from the third to fourth grade reading level. During the week Mr. Clark was interviewed, the students were working on higher level thinking with character traits. Students also read independently. Mr. Clark’s schedule changed according to the state standards that he needed to accomplish. Mr. Clark was reading a lot of Kate DiCamillo books with his students because “the connections between her books are quite vivid.” With this author’s books, Mr. Clark worked on making connections with characters, events, and themes of the author.

To improve the reading attitudes of students in his class, Mr. Clark exposed the students to different types of reading. He liked to make learning to read non-fiction as fun as reading fiction. Students in Mr. Clark’s class seemed to enjoy funny stories, but he tried to engage them in fact finding activities to make this kind of reading fun. Mr. Clark wanted all of his students to grow as readers, and he did hands on activities with them. Another activity was literacy circles.
The students had different jobs like fact finders and roles to help them with reading. Literacy circles also allowed students to be independent. During this time, Mr. Clark observed and sat with the students. Usually, Mr. Clark had students work independently with a story that fit their independent level and zone of proximal development. Mr. Clark’s goal was for the students to use the strategies learned in class on their own. His students did not need phonics and fluency because they had mastered these concepts. Mr. Clark practiced, modeled, and worked through the steps of many strategies. This quarter he wanted his students to apply and understand the comprehension checks on their own. The students in Mr. Clark’s class seemed to respond well to the centers that were done. Mr. Clark said, “The centers are so they can be successful. They’re not boring. They’re pretty instructional and pretty feasible for them to do.”

Mr. Clark and six students in his class were asked similar questions about the instructional practices in the classroom. On the topic of read alouds, Mr. Clark and his students seemed to have similar perceptions of instruction. The teacher survey revealed that Mr. Clark read picture books two to three times a week. Four of the six students interviewed said picture books were read aloud “sometimes.” Mr. Clark stated that short stories were not usually read aloud in class. Three students said short stories were not usually read aloud. There were no students who said this practice occurs most of the time. Books were read aloud for recreation in Mr. Clark’s class two to three times a week, and all of the students in the interview said this happened “most of the time.” Mr. Clark stated that books were read aloud for instruction two to three times a week. Five students interviewed said that books were read aloud for instruction “sometimes.” When it came to student choice for read alouds, this practice did not usually take place. Three students had the same response as Mr. Clark and said, “Not usually.”
Technology was another category of questioning, which was similar on the teacher survey and student interview. Mr. Clark and the students interviewed were asked, “How often is technology used in reading class?” Mr. Clark’s teacher survey showed that technology was used two to three times a week. Five students said technology was used “sometimes.” Overall, it seemed that Mr. Clark and the students interviewed have similar perceptions of this practice in the classroom.

Mr. Clark and his students were asked similar questions about the introduction of new books to students. The first question in this category states, “How often are new books introduced to students?” Mr. Clark’s teacher survey revealed that this practice does not usually occur in reading class. However, three students said, “Most of the time.” Three students said, “Sometimes.” According to Mr. Clark, specific book titles were recommended to the class daily, but four students said this practice was occurring “sometimes.” As a result, it did not seem that Mr. Clark and his students had similar perceptions about book talks.

The students interviewed in Mr. Clark’s class were asked, “How often do you get to read books that you like to read at school?” Three of the six students said, “Most of the time.” Mr. Clark and the students interviewed were asked similar questions on the topic of student reading. The teacher survey showed that class sets of books were read two to three times a week, but the six students were evenly split on this question with responses of “most of the time,” “sometimes,” and “not usually.” Despite the split answers on this question, five students all said that they read on their own “most of the time” in reading class. Mr. Clark said this practice took place daily. Therefore, Mr. Clark and the students interviewed seem to have similar perceptions about this portion of the student reading topic.
The students interviewed were asked about the balanced discussion of books in reading class. One question was focused on the frequency of discussion between Mr. Clark and the students. Mr. Clark’s survey revealed that this does not usually occur in his reading class. None of the students said this practice took place most of the time. Three students said they did not usually discuss books with Mr. Clark. Mr. Clark also said that the class does not usually discuss books in class. However, four students interviewed said this practice takes place “sometimes.” Overall, it seems that Mr. Clark and the students appeared to have similar perceptions about discussing books with their teacher, but they did not have similar perceptions about book discussion in class.

Discussion of Results

The results of the reading attitudes and instructional practices in each classroom provided an assortment of information to answer the research questions presented. Upon further analysis of the data between the classrooms, there were general trends emerging in the forms of teacher attitudes, student attitudes, the students’ views of the teacher’s reading attitude, and the instructional practices. The following information provides details for these trends.

Teacher Attitudes

The teachers in all four classrooms seemed to be enthusiastic readers. From the interviews and surveys, it was evident that Mrs. Powell and Mr. Clark considered themselves avid readers. Mrs. Foster mentioned a love for reading, but Mrs. Davis said she did not read consistently until the summer. Overall, all of the teachers seemed to value reading. However, three teachers discussed how difficult it was to find the time to read during the school year.
Student Attitudes

In the student interviews, students were asked whether they liked reading or thought it was okay. The results from three of the classes yielded four students who liked reading and two students who said reading was okay. Students in classroom B had similar results because three students said they liked reading and three students said reading was okay. Overall, it seems that a majority of second-grade students enjoy reading.

Another interesting trend was the number of students who said they were good at reading in each of the classrooms. In the highest reading class (classroom D), five students said they were good at reading and one said she was okay at reading. The next highest reading class (classroom C) had two students who said they were good at reading, and the other students said they were okay at reading. From the low, middle reading class (classroom A), one student said she was good at reading, and the other five students said they were okay at reading. In the lowest reading class (classroom B), one student said she was good at reading, and three said they were okay at reading. This class was the only class to have two students say they were not very good at reading. After students were asked about their ability in reading, they were asked why they were good, okay, or not very good at reading. With this question, many students linked their reading ability or lack of ability to their decoding skills and grades in reading.

A final trend to the students’ reading attitudes was in the topic of gender. It is interesting to note that there were 34 total girls in the second-grade. From these 34 girls, there were 15 in the highest reading class. The other 19 girls were evenly split among the other three reading classes. This reading class also contained the lowest amount of boys (six) from the total of 33, second-grade boys. The low, middle reading class had the highest amount of boys with 11.
The Students’ View

When the students were interviewed, they were asked whether their teacher liked to read. The students could respond by saying “yes,” “maybe,” or “no.” All of the students except for one said their reading teacher liked to read. One of Mrs. Foster’s students said maybe. The students were then asked why they thought that their reading teacher liked to read. Many of the students said their teacher liked to read because “she likes to read stories in class.” In Mr. Clark’s class, a few of the students said, “He likes to read because he says that he likes to read.”

Instructional Practices

Based on the teacher surveys and interviews, it seemed like all of the teachers read aloud to their students consistently. All of the teachers also used the same reading program for second-grade. During the teacher interviews, three of the teachers mentioned the use of hands-on activities in their classroom. The other teacher discussed the use of different activities, but she did not specifically mention the term “hands-on.” Two teachers use “centers” with their students. The other two teachers use “literacy circles” in their reading class. The four teachers seemed to use several best practices in their teaching including read alouds, technology, book talks, and student reading. These practices may not occur each day, but they are taking place in the classroom. Another trend was that three out of the four teachers said they did not usually have students discuss books in class. One teacher said this instructional practice occurs two to three times a week.

Summary

Data were collected from four teacher surveys, four teacher interviews, 38 student surveys, and 24 student interviews. After the data collection, the four classrooms were studied and analyzed. With analysis, there were similarities and differences found among the teachers’
reading attitudes, students’ reading attitudes, the students’ views of the teacher reading attitude, and the instructional practices in the classroom.

The teachers in this study were all found to be enthusiastic readers, and a majority of their students have positive attitudes towards reading as well. All of the students interviewed seemed to realize that their teachers liked to read. Furthermore, the instruction in the classroom included read alouds, technology, book talks, student reading, and hands on activities. However, most of the teachers did not usually allow time for students to discuss books in class. Evidence of these similarities and differences were found throughout the surveys and interviews.
CHAPTER V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

According to Alexander and Filler (1976), a positive attitude is significant to reading attainment. “It seems safe to assume that, in part at least, a lifetime reading habit, or the desire to continue reading, is transmitted to children via modeling” (Mour, 1977, p. 397). By modeling a personal excitement for reading, teachers can help to motivate students (Applegate & Applegate, 2004). “But what if they have no love for reading?” (Applegate & Applegate, p. 556).

Research states the importance of the teacher as a model of reading to students (Applegate & Applegate, 2004; Dreher, 2002/2003; Gambrell, 1996; Mour, 1977). Dreher claims, “It has long been argued that teachers who are readers convey their love for reading to their students, that this love for reading provides a role model, and that it makes a difference in classroom practice” (p. 338). As a result, this study explored the research question: “What is the nature of teacher and student reading attitudes in second-grade?” Furthermore, the study explored the following sub questions:

1. Do second-grade students think that their reading teacher likes to read?
2. What is the nature of reading practices in second-grade?

This chapter will describe the findings of the common trends, conclusions, and the recommendations.

Summary

Dillingofski (1993) asks an important question: “How can teachers encourage children to become lifelong readers if they aren’t readers themselves?” (p. 31). According to Applegate and Applegate (2004), “Because teachers, particularly elementary teachers, play a significant role in motivating children to read, a lukewarm or task-oriented attitude toward reading can be problematic” (p. 556). Strickland and Walker (2004) suggest that attitudinal issues are “the most
essential ingredients in the teaching of literacy” (p. 405). Based on these statements and the lack of quality research on this topic, it seemed necessary to investigate this topic in further detail (Dreher, 2002/2003; Morrison, Jacobs, & Swinyard, 1999; Mour, 1977).

Many research studies have been conducted about reading attitudes. A study by Manna and Misheff (1987) stated, “They indicated that enthusiasm for reading is caught, not taught: that parents and teachers should serve as models for the kinds of benefits and rewards that reading promises” (p. 166). Because parents and teachers are important to literacy development, the home and classroom environment should include a variety of reading materials (Brophy, 2004; Cramer, 1994; Spiegel, 1994). The study by Morrison, Jacobs, and Swinyard (1999) found a positive relationship between teachers as readers and a teacher’s use of best practices in the classroom, which may promote positive reading attitudes in students. According to Gambrell, Malloy, and Mazzoni (2007), teachers must be committed to provide the best instruction for students.

For this study, the researcher surveyed and interviewed four second-grade teachers. Surveys were conducted with 38 second-grade students, and 24 students were randomly selected out of four reading classes to participate in an interview. Before the research was conducted, the principal, teachers, parents, and students were all asked to sign a consent form. The students were given the Elementary Reading Attitude Survey by McKenna and Kear (1990). Teachers were given a survey similar to the questions on the Applegate and Applegate (2004) and Morrison, Jacobs, and Swinyard (1999) questionnaires. In the interviews, teachers and students were asked about their attitudes toward reading and the instructional practices in the classroom. To analyze the data, the surveys and interviews of the teachers and students were studied to find common trends.
From this study, it was found that teachers seem to be enthusiastic about reading, but they lack the time to get a lot of reading accomplished during the school year. Likewise, many students in second-grade have a positive attitude toward reading. It was also found that second-grade students think their reading teachers like to read. For reading instruction, teachers of second-graders use many hands-on activities, read alouds, technology, book talks, and student reading. However, most of the teachers from this study did not usually include student book discussions during class time.

Summary of Findings

After the research was analyzed, common trends were found. These trends include teacher attitudes, student attitudes, the students’ views about the teacher’s reading attitude, and the instructional practices found in the classroom.

Teacher Attitudes

The primary research question asked, “What is the nature of teacher and student reading attitudes in second-grade?” Based on the teacher surveys and interviews, all four teachers in this study seem to be enthusiastic about reading. In fact, two of the teachers considered themselves avid readers, and one teacher said she loves to read. One teacher said she was an inconsistent reader, which does not seem to indicate that she is unenthusiastic about reading. These positive reading attitudes contradict previous research. Mour (1977) said, “…teachers apparently are not avid readers” (p. 401). Mueller (1973) said, “…many teacher do not value reading very highly” (p. 205). Another study done by Applegate and Applegate (2004) found that 54.3% of the students in teacher education programs surveyed were considered unenthusiastic readers. However, a study by Morrison, Jacobs, and Swinyard (1999) compliments this study because they found that elementary teachers do read often, and they enjoy books.
Three teachers in this study also mentioned how difficult it is to read during the school year. Morrison, Jacobs, and Swinyard (1999) recognize the busy lives of teachers in their study, but they recommend that teachers read during sustained silent reading. Mrs. Davis mentioned that she would like to start a silent reading time at the end of her reading class. At this time, Mrs. Davis said she would like to conference with students, but she also said that she could read a book for herself. Dillingofski (1993) also mentioned the busy schedules of teachers. She said, “There is no time set aside on a regular basis for classroom teachers to read – no time for personal reading, no time for professional reading…” (p. 31). The teachers in this study seem to relate to this statement.

Student Attitudes

The first research question asked, “What is the nature of teacher and student reading attitudes in second-grade?” This research study represented an interesting sample of second-grade reading students because the students are grouped by ability. When the data were analyzed, it was found that only two students in the lowest reading group said they were not very good at reading. All of the other students said they were good or okay at reading. McKenna, Kear, and Ellsworth (1995) found this as a trend in student attitudes. There tends to be a difference in attitude between readers who experience success and frustrated readers. This gap in attitudes tends to widen with age (McKenna, Kear, & Ellsworth).

This study also found that the highest reading class (classroom D) has more girls than any other reading class. According to the survey results, the highest reading class also contains students with positive attitudes toward reading. Research seems to correlate with these findings. Askov and Fischbach (1973) found that girls tend to have a positive attitude toward reading. This difference was attributed to the roles of boys and girls in culture (Askov & Fischbach).
McKenna, Kear, and Ellsworth (1995) also found that girls possessed more of a positive attitude toward academic and recreational reading than boys. Research done by Shapiro (1980) provides another explanation for the positive attitudes in classroom D. Shapiro said, “What does appear to be a significant finding is that the subjects in male-teacher classrooms had significantly better attitudes to reading than the subjects taught by females” (p. 257). This explanation seems to make sense with male students because the male teacher is demonstrating that it is acceptable for boys to read. However, females may have better reading attitudes in order to please the male teacher (Shapiro).

The Students’ View

One of the sub-questions of the study asked: Do second-grade students think that their reading teacher likes to read? To answer the research question, the students were asked, “Do you think your teacher likes to read?” On this question from the student interview, 23 students said, “yes.” One student responded by saying, “maybe.” As a result, it is concluded that students do recognize that their teachers like to read. After answering the question, students were asked to explain their response. Many of the students said their teacher likes to read because he or she reads stories in class. According to Applegate and Applegate (2004), “Practicing teachers must remain sensitive to the fact that what they project to their students truly matters and it is unlikely that they will be able to mask their own attitude toward reading” (p. 562). From the research, it appears that the teachers in this study seem to value reading and project a positive reading attitude to the students in their reading class.

Instructional Practices

The final sub-question asked: What is the nature of reading practices in second-grade? From the teacher interviews, the teachers appeared to be enthusiastic about reading and worked
extremely hard to provide students with positive reading instruction. The trends found in the data show that teachers are reading aloud to their students. When it comes to read alouds, there is a vast amount of research. Castle (1994) said, “I can think of no more powerful way for teachers to foster a love of reading than to read to, with, about, and in front of children” (p. 147). Teachers are sharing their love for reading through read alouds, and students seem to notice this practice.

Teachers are implementing technology, book talks, and student reading. However, many teachers are not usually providing time for students to discuss books in class. The research suggests that influential teachers encourage students to transact with text. This occurs when teachers promote aesthetic responses to literature instead of primarily efferent responses (Rosenblatt, 2005; Ruddell, 1995). A balance between teacher and student led discussions is evidence of best practices (Gambrell, Malloy, & Mazzoni, 2007). However, teachers are not making a lot of time for this during reading class. Heathington and Alexander (1984) said teachers recognize the importance of attitudes, but “they spend little time specifically fostering good attitudes” (p. 484). Heathington and Alexander suggest that teachers may not spend much time on attitudes because they are focusing attention on skills. Some teachers may feel the burden to work on skills and others may feel that skill development will increase reading attitudes (Heathington & Alexander). While book discussions take time, it is recommended for this practice to be balanced with other instructional practices.

The regular instruction in the classroom also involves the use of basal readers and instruction in skills. Based on their research, McKenna, Kear, and Ellsworth (1995) report, “The extent of a teacher’s reliance on basal readers does not appear to be meaningfully related to recreational or academic reading attitude” (p. 952). However, studies show that teaching techniques are attributed to reading attitudes (McKenna, 2001). The teachers in this study use
basals, but they implement many other strategies and trade books to keep students engaged. Alexander and Filler (1976) suggest the importance of appropriate reading materials in the classroom, which consider the interests of the students in the classroom. When students constantly struggle with grade level texts, they will probably not develop a positive attitude about reading the given material. Therefore, a wide variety of materials such as comics, newspapers, magazines, and trade books should be available (Alexander & Filler). The teachers in this study have many reading materials in their classroom libraries. One teacher orders books based on the interests of her students. However, it is uncertain whether the teachers in this study are providing comics, newspapers, and magazines to supplement the basals and trade books.

Rasinski and Padak (2000) suggest, “This role – teacher as model – is critical to the development and maintenance of an effective instructional environment” (p. 31). Overall, it seems that the teachers in this study are modeling and reflecting their positive reading attitudes within their instruction in some ways. The read alouds and hands-on activities are engaging students. However, some activities to promote discussion are left out.

Conclusions

After analyzing the data, several conclusions were made about the nature of reading attitudes and practices in second-grade teachers and students. First, teachers are reading, but they do not seem to have time to read a lot of books during the school year. It also seems that second-grade teachers value reading. The students in this study seem to recognize that their teachers like to read.

When it comes to second-grade students, they seem to have positive reading attitudes, and a majority of second-grade students like to read. Many of the students with positive reading
attitudes are girls. From this study, it is also evident that a student’s self-concept about reading is closely related to his or her ability to read.

It appears that students and the instruction needed to keep their attention have changed over the years. Second-grade teachers seem to incorporate best practices including read alouds, book talks, student reading, and technology in their reading instruction to engage students. Teachers also add supplemental materials to the curriculum. However, the perceptions of instructional practices are sometimes different between the teacher and students. This difference in perception seems to be the result of each student’s interpretation of the question.

Recommendations

The following information provides teachers, principals, librarians, parents, and teacher educators with strategies to improve the reading attitudes of students. Despite the demands of the standards, there are ways to encourage students to have a positive attitude toward reading.

*Teacher*

According to Gambrell (1996), teachers should become explicit reading models for students. Teachers can read during sustained silent reading to demonstrate their love of reading. However, this is a passive instead of explicit way to model for students (Gambrell). Gambrell states, “Teachers become explicit reading models when they share their own reading experiences with students and emphasize how reading enhances and enriches their lives” (p. 20). Mr. Clark demonstrates an explicit model with his students by discussing his reading with students to give them background knowledge. It is recommended that this practice should continue to take place in this classroom and in the other classrooms. As Gambrell states, “There is usually something worth sharing in most of the books and materials we read – an exciting or informative paragraph, a description of a character, or an interesting turn of a phrase” (p. 21). This is the type of explicit
modeling that should take place in the classroom as much as possible. Basically, teachers need to “practice what they preach” (Mour, 1977, p 401). Dreher (2002/2003) said, “It has long been argued that teachers who are readers convey their love for reading to their students, that this love of reading provides a role model, and that it makes a difference in classroom practice” (p. 338).

Teachers must become aware of the reading attitudes of students in their class. This can be done through assessments, interviews, questionnaires, or observations (Alexander & Filler, 1976). One assessment for reading attitudes is the *Elementary Reading Attitude Survey* by McKenna and Kear (1990). By implementing this assessment or other assessments twice a year, teachers can track the reading attitudes of students. When teachers interview, question, and observe students, they can gain information about the interests of students (McKenna & Kear; Rasinski & Padak, 2000). With this information, teachers can “plan instruction, suggest books, and help children form interest groups for inquiry” (Rasinski & Padak, p. 41).

It is recommended that teachers implement balanced best practices in their literacy instruction. A balance of best practices includes a culture of motivation, authentic reading experiences, scaffolded instruction to promote independent reading, time to read in class, high quality literature across the genres, texts to expand vocabulary and other concepts, a community to build on prior knowledge, teacher and student led discussions of text, use of technology, and a variety of assessments (Gambrell, Malloy, & Mazzoni, 2007).

To enhance teacher and student led discussions, teachers should create meaningful experiences for students to transact with text through aesthetic questions. It is effortless to consistently ask students efferent questions while teaching certain skills with texts. However, it is believed that aesthetic questions should be promoted first to engage students with the text in a meaningful way (Rosenblatt, 2005). According to Rosenblatt, teachers “must create practices
that will meet the acid test: Does this practice or approach hinder or foster a sense that literature exists as a form of personally meaningful experience?” (p. 71). For teachers to truly balance instruction, they must “avoid overemphasizing any one particular dimension of literacy instruction. Instead, balance today requires attention toward multiple dimensions that fall along the context and content continua” (Pearson, Raphael, Benson, & Madda, 2007, p. 47).

It is also suggested for teachers to improve the reading attitudes of students by working closely with parents. To involve parents, the teacher will need to give explicit instructions about reading to children and the benefits of the new behaviors. Parents should be encouraged to read personally and with their children (Alexander & Filler, 1976; Spiegel, 1994).

Despite the lack of time, it is recommended that teachers participate in a book club at school. Although a book club has taken place with educational books, it is suggested that a book club continue with educational books along with other reading materials. Cardarelli (1992) discussed the success of such a book club in his article. He said, “This program was initiated and funded for the purpose of renewing and promoting teachers’ love of literature, developing a new appreciation for colleagues, and, it was hoped, generating an enthusiasm that would carry over into the classroom” (Cardarelli, p. 668). From teacher interviews, there is evidence that teachers enjoyed the book club in the past. Therefore, it would be beneficial to continue the book club in the future.

Principal

Mour (1977) makes an interesting recommendation for school administrators by suggesting, “Schools could provide ‘reading days’ just as they provide ‘conference days’ and give the teachers some unencumbered time during which they might work toward becoming up-to-date with regard to educational literature” (p. 400). Dillingofski (1993) discussed a program
called Teachers as Readers, which took place in Virginia. This group can involve the building administrator, teachers, school board members, and parents. The purpose of this group is to read and discuss children’s books for use in the classroom (Dillingofski). It is believed that implementation of a similar book club could encourage teachers to use a wider variety of text in the classroom.

Librarian

Dillingofski (1993) discussed the benefits of a book club for teachers, administrators, school board members, and teachers. This book club should read and discuss children’s literature that would potentially reach the interests of students in the classroom. A book club of this magnitude would require a facilitator to prepare the books and discussions (Dillingofski). It is suggested that school librarians lead this task in schools. By implementing this type of book club, there is “potential to encourage educators to use children’s books even more extensively in the classroom, as well as to model the kind of in-depth book discussions that build a love of literature” (Dillingofski, p. 33).

Parent

Although parents were not researched in this study, research studies suggest the crucial role that parents play in the reading attitudes of their children (Spiegel, 1994). Parents must provide a home literacy culture with many different kinds of printed materials. Despite the amount of reading materials in the home, parents must read to children. Along with reading to children, parents must value reading (Spiegel). It is encouraged that these practices take place in the home of children.
Teacher Educators

Future teachers need information about the affective domain of reading including reading attitudes. Teachers must learn about the theory behind the affective domain. It is also suggested that teacher educators provide information about assessments for reading attitudes, as well as, information on how to score and analyze the assessments. It is necessary for teachers to learn about best practices for instruction, which include implementation of aesthetic questions. Finally, future teachers should be encouraged to read and model an enthusiastic attitude toward reading to students.

For Future Study

For further study of this topic, research should include information about the reading attitudes of parents and the home environment. The teachers in this study all seemed to have positive attitudes toward reading; however, parents play an important role in the reading attitudes of students (Spiegel, 1994). As a result, a future study could research the relationship between the reading attitude of parents and students in a similar way to this study.

Researchers could also gain more information on this topic by learning more about the instructional practices in the classroom. With observation, the researcher could gain better evidence of the practices used in the classroom. A future research study could explore the current instructional practices in a classroom. Teachers could then attend a teaching seminar on balancing best practices. After the class, the researcher could observe the teachers again. Along with observations, the students could participate in interviews before and after the teacher instruction. A study of this nature could yield interesting information about instructional practices in the classroom.
To further investigate this topic, a study should be conducted on a grade level of students without ability grouping. The group of students in this particular study was separated by ability, and each class contained students of similar abilities. However, this study would most likely produce different results with students of mixed ability in each reading class. A future study could also provide different results with all male teachers or all female teachers. Perhaps, a study could make a comparison between male and female teachers and the reading attitudes of students in their reading classes. Furthermore, studies could compare and contrast the reading attitudes of students between grade levels or between urban and rural schools.

There is an implied theory that there is a relationship between reading attitudes and achievement. Alexander and Filler (1976) report, “Relatively little research has been done on the relationship toward reading and achievement in reading” (p. 3). It is possible that some studies have focused on this area of research. However, future studies could research this relationship further to gain better understanding of this relationship.

Summary

Research suggests the importance of the teacher as a model of a positive reading attitude. Furthermore, the research suggests that a teacher’s love of reading may make a difference in classroom instruction. The results of this study show that teachers value reading, but they lack the time to read throughout the school year. This study also concluded that a majority of second-grade students like to read and have a positive attitude toward reading. Second-grade students also believe their reading teacher likes to read. This belief is formed because teachers read aloud in reading class. During classroom instruction, teachers tend to implement some best practices. It is recommended that teachers focus on expressing enthusiasm toward reading while using best
practices with opportunities for aesthetic response in reading class. With a positive attitude and best practices, it is believed that students will achieve a higher reading attitude.
REFERENCES


Castle (Eds.), *Fostering the love of reading: The affective domain in reading education* (pp. 18-40). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.


APPENDIX A

TEACHER AND STUDENT INTERVIEWS
Teacher Interview Questions

1. How would you describe yourself as a reader? Why?
2. How often do you read?
3. If you don’t read very often, why not? If you do like to read, why?
4. Do you discuss your reading with anyone? If so, who?
5. What is your favorite kind of reading material? Why is this your favorite type of material?
6. What have you read lately? How did you make the choice to read this selection?
7. What are some books you’d like to read? How did you find out about these books?
8. What or who motivates you to read? How does that person motivate you to read? Why is this person or thing such a motivation for you?
9. What are your thoughts about having a book discussion group at school? Would this motivate you to read? Would it help you to read more often?
10. How do you think your students would describe your attitudes about reading? Would they say you have a positive, negative, or neutral attitude toward reading?
11. What is the majority of reading attitudes in your reading class? Would you say that they are overall positive, negative, or neutral?
12. How do you think that you can help to improve the reading attitudes of students in your reading class? Explain the strategies or ideas.
13. What instructional practices are you using in your class that you believe will help the reading attitudes of students? Why do you think these strategies are the most beneficial?
14. How often do you implement these strategies?
15. How do you feel that the students in your class respond to these instructional practices?
Student Interview Questions*

Please choose the smiley face that best describes your feelings about the question.

1. How do you feel about reading?

I like it.  It’s okay.  I don’t like it at all.

Why do you feel like this about reading?

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

2. Do you think that you are good at reading?

I’m good at reading.  I’m an okay reader.  I’m not very good at reading.

Why do you feel this way?

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

4. Do you read books for fun at home?

Yes, I do this a lot.  Yes, I do this sometimes.  No, I never do this.

Why do you feel like this?
Why or why not?

5. Do you think your teacher likes to read?
   Yes  Maybe  No
   😊  😐  😞

Why do you think this way?

6. Have you ever seen your teacher read a book for fun?
   Yes  No
   😊  😞

7. Does your teacher ever talk to you about books that he or she reads?
   Yes  No
   😊  😞

Please answer these questions.

1. What are some things that get you really excited about reading books?
2. Who gets you really interested and excited about reading books? What do they do to get you excited?

3. What are your favorite things to do in reading class? Why?

4. What do you dislike doing in reading class? Why?

5. If you could do one thing more often in reading class, what would it be?

Please choose the smiley face that best describes the answer to the question.

😊  😞  😞

most of the time  sometimes  not usually

1. How often does your teacher read aloud a picture book to the class?

😊  😞  😞

2. How often do all of the students in your class read the same book?

😊  😞  😞
3. How often does your teacher read a short story to your class?

[Emoji images]

4. How often does your teacher talk to you about new books in your class?

[Emoji images]

5. How often do you get to read on your own?

[Emoji images]

6. How often does your teacher talk to you about good books for you to read?

[Emoji images]

7. How often do you get to talk to your teacher about the books you are reading?

[Emoji images]

8. How often do you get to talk in class about the books you are reading?

[Emoji images]
9. How often does your teacher read aloud books just for fun?

[Blank ratings]

10. How often does your teacher read books aloud to teach you something?

[Blank ratings]

11. How often does your teacher read books of your choice?

[Blank ratings]

12. How often does your teacher use technology (i.e. movies, computers, the Internet, the overhead projector, etc.) in reading class?

[Blank ratings]

13. How often do you get to read books that you like to read at school?

[Blank ratings]

* Some of the questions were taken from Gambrell, L. B., Palmer, B. M., Codling, R. M., & Mazzoni, S. A. (1996).
APPENDIX B

TEACHER READING ATTITUDE SURVEY
Teacher Reading Attitude Survey *

I. Take some time to think about your reading instruction. How often do you implement the following activities? Please circle the answer that best describes your instruction.

1. Read aloud a picture book to your class.
   A. daily  B. 2-3 times a week
   C. once a week  D. not usually

2. Took your students to the library.
   A. daily  B. 2-3 times a week
   C. once a week  D. not usually

3. Stayed in the library with your students.
   A. daily  B. 2-3 times a week
   C. once a week  D. not usually

4. Children read from a class set of paperbacks.
   A. daily  B. 2-3 times a week
   C. once a week  D. not usually

5. Read a short story in class.
   A. daily  B. 2-3 times a week
   C. once a week  D. not usually

6. Introduced new books to students in your class.
   A. daily  B. 2-3 times a week
   C. once a week  D. not usually
7. Gave students class time for their own reading.
   A. daily
   B. 2-3 times a week
   C. once a week
   D. not usually

8. Recommended specific book titles to the class.
   A. daily
   B. 2-3 times a week
   C. once a week
   D. not usually

9. Read from a children’s novel to the class.
   A. daily
   B. 2-3 times a week
   C. once a week
   D. not usually

10. Had children talk to you about books they read.
    A. daily
    B. 2-3 times a week
    C. once a week
    D. not usually

11. Had children talk in class on books they read.
    A. daily
    B. 2-3 times a week
    C. once a week
    D. not usually

    A. daily
    B. 2-3 times a week
    C. once a week
    D. not usually

13. Read trade books in class for instruction.
    A. daily
    B. 2-3 times a week
    C. once a week
    D. not usually
14. Read trade books in class for recreation.
   A. daily  B. 2-3 times a week
   C. once a week  D. not usually

15. In class, read aloud in books of students’ choosing.
   A. daily  B. 2-3 times a week
   C. once a week  D. not usually

16. Used technology to link and expand reading concepts.
   A. daily  B. 2-3 times a week
   C. once a week  D. not usually

II. Take some time to think about yourself as a reader. Please answer the questions with some detail.

1. What reading did you do this past summer?

2. Are there any titles or authors that are your favorite?
3. In general, what do you like to read for recreation?

4. When you think of yourself in general as a reader, how much enjoyment do you associate with reading? What reason(s) do you have for responding in this way?

APPENDIX C

PRINCIPAL CONSENT FORM
Dear Principal,

My name is Erin Schmitt, and I am a graduate student at Bowling Green State University. I am writing to ask your permission to spend time in your school as part of the research for my master’s thesis. I would like to conduct research in your second grade classrooms with the purpose of exploring the reading attitudes of teachers and students. This topic is of interest to me because of the research that has been shown to support the relationship between the reading attitudes of teachers and the reading attitudes of his or her students. My overall goal of this study is to determine whether there is a relationship between the reading attitudes of teachers and students. With this goal in mind, I will also determine whether the instructional practices in the classroom contribute to the reading attitudes of students. Hopefully, this research study will provide your teachers with information about the reading attitudes of their students.

I would like to administer a reading attitude survey to all of the second grade teachers and students. The survey will take approximately twenty minutes for the teachers and twenty minutes in class for the students. After administering the survey, I would like to interview all four teachers separately for approximately an hour. I would also like to interview six students from each reading class for a total of fifteen minutes. Once the interviews are conducted, they will be transcribed and given to the teachers for approval. After the research is conducted, I will be sure to provide you with a copy.

If you choose to allow me to conduct research at your school, it would be helpful. By allowing your school to participate, I believe that the teacher’s reading instruction and the student’s reading attitudes will benefit from the information provided. Your decision about
whether or not to allow your school to participate in this study will not interfere with your school’s status or relationship to the institution in any way. Please also keep in mind that the likely risks to you, your teachers, and your students are no greater than those encountered in daily life.

If you choose to allow me to visit your school, I would simply like to include student and teacher responses in my data analysis. For the purposes of the research study, all identifying information (i.e. names and signatures) will be removed. Pictures and/or video will not be used as part of this study. However, I will use an audio recorder for the teacher interview. All data will be stored in a locked cabinet. I will be the only person with access to this locked information. You may choose to withdraw your school from the study at any time without any form of penalty. Please contact Erin Schmitt by email at eschmit@bgsu.edu or by calling (419) 372-7320 if you have any questions. You may also contact my advisor, Dr. Cynthia Bertelsen, by email at bertels@bgsu.edu or by phone at (419) 372-7320. Specific questions regarding students’ and teachers’ rights as research participants can be directed to the Chair of the Human Subjects Review Board at BGSU at hsrb@bgsu.edu. Please do not sign this form until your questions have been answered in such a way that you feel confident as to the specifics of the described study. Thank you so much in advance for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Erin Schmitt

Graduate Student at Bowling Green State University
Please circle one:  I AGREE     DO NOT AGREE to allow you to research at this school

Principal’s Name (please print) ________________________________

Principal’s Signature ________________________________

Date ________________________________
APPENDIX D

TEACHER CONSENT FORM
Dear Teacher,

I am a graduate student at Bowling Green State University pursuing my Master’s Degree in Reading. Currently, I am conducting a study for my research project on the reading attitudes of teachers. Specifically, I am investigating the relationship between the reading attitudes of teachers and students. I am writing to ask your permission to survey and interview you and your students for the research study. I would like you to fill out a survey about your reading attitudes, which should take you approximately twenty minutes. Next, I would like to interview you. The interview is expected to take an hour of your time, and I will use an audio recorder to record your responses. This interview will investigate your reading attitudes, the student’s reading attitudes, and the instructional practices used in your reading class. All interviews will be transcribed from the recorder. After the information is transcribed, I will seek your approval before entering the information in my thesis.

I would also like your permission to survey your students using the Garfield Reading Attitude Survey. This process will take approximately twenty minutes of your class time. After surveying the students, I would also like to randomly select six students from each class to interview. This interview will take each student out of class for approximately fifteen minutes. The goal of this study is to benefit you as an educator by allowing you to learn more about your reading attitudes, as well as, the reading attitudes of your students. Hopefully, this knowledge will help you better engage your students in reading.

If you choose to allow me to work with you and your students, I would simply like to include your responses and your students’ responses in my data analysis. For the purposes
of the research study, all indentifying information (i.e. names and signatures) will be removed. Pictures and/or video will not be used as a part of this study. However, an audio recorder will be used for the interview only. The information obtained from this study will be kept confidential and will only be reported in my thesis paper with no specific, identifying connections made to any individual child, teacher, or school. You will be given a copy of this paper at the end of the study. All data will be stored in a locked cabinet. I will be the only person with access to this locked information. As participation in this study is voluntary, you may choose to withdraw yourself and/or your classroom from the study at any time. Your decision about whether or not to participate in this research study will not interfere with your status as a teacher or relationship to the institution. Please keep in mind that the likely risks to you and your students are no greater than those encountered in daily life.

Please contact Erin Schmitt by email at eschmit@bgsu.edu or by calling (419) 372-7320 if you have any questions. You may also contact my advisor, Dr. Cynthia Bertelsen, by email at bertels@bgsu.edu or by phone at (419) 372-7320. Specific questions regarding students’ and teachers’ rights as research participants can be directed to the Chair of the Human Subjects Review Board at BGSU at hsrb@bgsu.edu. Please do not sign this form until your questions have been answered in such a way that you feel confident as to the specifics of the described study. Thank you so much in advance for your time and consideration.
Sincerely,

Erin Schmitt

Please circle one: I AGREE  DO NOT AGREE to allow you to conduct research with my students

Please circle one: I AGREE  DO NOT AGREE to participate in the survey for this research study

Please circle one: I AGREE  DO NOT AGREE to participate in the interview for this research study

Teacher’s Name (please print) ________________________________

Teacher’s Signature ________________________________

Date ________________________________
APPENDIX E

PARENT CONSENT FORM
Dear Parent/Guardian,

I am a student at Bowling Green State University in the Graduate Reading Program. I am currently doing a research study on the reading attitudes of teachers and students. The purpose of my study is to find out whether there is a relationship between the reading attitudes of teachers and students. To complete this study, I would like to survey and interview the second grade teachers and students at your child’s school. My goal is to survey each student by giving a reading attitude survey to each class. This survey will take approximately twenty minutes. If you would not like for your child to participate in the survey, he or she will read quietly at his or her desk. I would also like to interview six students in each classroom for fifteen minutes during reading class. The students will be randomly selected for the interview. During the interview, I will be using an audio recorder to record the contents of the interview. After the interview, I will transcribe the interview and erase the audio recording. If your child is not interviewed, he or she will continue to participate in reading class as normal.

The purpose of this letter is to ask your permission for your student to be a part of this study. If you choose to allow your child to participate in this study, I would simply like to include your child’s responses to the reading attitude survey and interview. For the purposes of this research study, all identifying information (i.e. names and signatures) will be removed. Pictures and/or video will not be used as a part of this study. The information obtained from this study will be kept confidential and will only be reported in my thesis paper with no specific, indentifying connections made to any individual child, teacher, or school. All data will be stored in a locked cabinet. I will be the only person with access to
If you choose to allow your child to be a part of this study, it would be helpful. By allowing your child to participate, each teacher will gain better information about each student’s reading attitudes. This information can help to guide your child's teacher with his or her instruction in reading. However, participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision about whether or not to allow your child to participate will not interfere with your child's grades, progress, or development in second grade. Please also keep in mind that the likely risks to your student are no greater than those encountered in daily life. By completing the form, you are agreeing to allow your child to be a part of the study. You may choose to withdraw your child from the study at any time without any form of penalty.

If you have any questions, please contact Erin Schmitt by email at eschmit@bgsu.edu or by phone at (419) 372-7320. You may also contact my advisor, Dr. Cynthia Bertelsen, by email at bertels@bgsu.edu or by phone at (419) 372-7320. Specific questions or concerns regarding your child’s rights as a research participant can be directed to the Chair of the Human Subjects Review Board at BGSU at hsrb@bgsu.edu. Please do not sign this form until your questions have been answered in such a way that you feel confident as to the specifics of the described study.

You are making a decision whether or not to allow Erin Schmitt to use your child’s responses to a survey and interview regarding his or her reading attitudes for research and writing purposes only. Your signature below also indicates that you are over the age of 18. Please fill out the following information and have your child return the form to his or her teacher. Thank you for your consideration and cooperation with this study.
Sincerely,

Erin Schmitt

Graduate Student at Bowling Green State University

Please circle one: I AGREE   DO NOT AGREE to allow my child to participate in the survey for this study

Please circle one: I AGREE   DO NOT AGREE to allow my child to participate in the interview for this study

Child’s Name (please print): ________________________________

Guardian’s Name ________________________________

Guardian’s Signature ________________________________

Date ________________________________
APPENDIX F

STUDENT CONSENT FORM
Dear Student,

I am a student in college. I want you to answer some reading questions for me. The reading questions will tell me what you think about reading. Some questions will be on paper. You do not have to answer the questions on paper. The students who do not answer the questions on paper will read quietly at their desk. I also would like to talk to you about reading. You will talk to me out in the hallway. This will happen during reading class. I will make notes about what you say. I will also record what you say. You do not have to talk to me. The students who do not talk to me in the hallway will stay in reading class. You do not have to answer any of these questions. You will not get in trouble or get a bad grade for not doing this. These questions can help your teacher to know what you think about reading. Then, your teacher can better help you with reading. You can stop answering these questions at any time.

“Yes” means that you would like to answer questions on paper about reading. “No” means that you do not want to answer questions about reading on paper. Please circle your answer.

YES

NO

Student Signature _____________________________

Date _______________________________________

“Yes” means that you would like to talk to Mrs. Schmitt in the hallway about reading. “No” means that you would not like to talk to Mrs. Schmitt in the hallway about reading. Please circle your answer.

YES

NO

Student Signature _____________________________

Date _______________________________________
APPENDIX G

CLASSROOM RESULTS FOR INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES
### Classroom A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Read Alouds</th>
<th>Teacher Responses</th>
<th>Most of the time</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Not usually</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How often are picture books read to the class?</td>
<td>daily or 2-3 times a week</td>
<td>2/6</td>
<td>3/6</td>
<td>1/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How often are short stories read in class?</td>
<td>2-3 times a week</td>
<td>1/6</td>
<td>4/6</td>
<td>1/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How often are trade books read for recreation/fun?</td>
<td>2-3 times a week</td>
<td>3/6</td>
<td>2/6</td>
<td>1/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How often are trade books read for instruction/information?</td>
<td>2-3 times a week</td>
<td>3/6</td>
<td>3/6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. How often are read aloud books of student choice?</td>
<td>2-3 times a week</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5/6</td>
<td>1/6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Technology

| 1. How often is technology used in reading class? | daily | 2/6 | 3/6 | 1/6 |

### Book Talks

| 1. How often are new books introduced to students? | 2-3 times a week | 2/6 | 2/6 | 2/6 |
| 2. How often are specific titles recommended to the class? | once a week | 2/6 | 3/6 | 1/6 |
### Student Reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How often do you get to read on your own?</td>
<td>daily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How often do you get to read books that you like to read at school?</td>
<td>3/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>student question only</em></td>
<td>3/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How often do students read from class sets of books?</td>
<td>daily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1/6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Balanced Discussion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How often do students talk to the teacher about books?</td>
<td>once a week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How often do students get to discuss books in class?</td>
<td>not usually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4/6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Classroom B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Teacher Read Alouds</strong></th>
<th>Teacher Responses</th>
<th>most of the time</th>
<th>sometimes</th>
<th>not usually</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How often are picture books read to the class?</td>
<td>daily</td>
<td>4/6</td>
<td>2/6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How often are short stories read in class?</td>
<td>daily</td>
<td>1/6</td>
<td>4/6</td>
<td>1/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How often are trade books read for recreation/fun?</td>
<td>once a week</td>
<td>3/6</td>
<td>2/6</td>
<td>1/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How often are trade books read for instruction/information?</td>
<td>2-3 times a week</td>
<td>2/6</td>
<td>2/6</td>
<td>2/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. How often are read aloud books of student choice?</td>
<td>not usually</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5/6</td>
<td>1/6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Technology

| 1. How often is technology used in reading class? | once a week | 2/6 | 4/6 | 0 |

### Book Talks

<p>| 1. How often are new books introduced to students? | 2-3 times a week | 2/6 | 3/6 | 1/6 |
| 2. How often are specific titles | once a week | 2/6 | 2/6 | 2/6 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Student Reading</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How often do you get to read on your own?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How often do you get to read books that you like to read at school?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>student question only</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How often do students read from class sets of books?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Balanced Discussion</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How often do students talk to the teacher about books?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How often do students get to discuss books in class?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Classroom C

### Teacher Read Alouds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Teacher Responses</th>
<th>Most of the time</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Not Usually</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How often are picture books read to the class?</td>
<td>1. daily or 2-3 times a week (Aug.- Oct.)</td>
<td>2/6</td>
<td>2/6</td>
<td>2/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How often are short stories read in class?</td>
<td>daily or 2-3 times a week (Oct.-June)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4/6</td>
<td>2/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How often are trade books read for recreation/fun?</td>
<td>sometimes</td>
<td>2/6</td>
<td>3/6</td>
<td>1/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How often are trade books read for instruction/information?</td>
<td>2-3 times a week</td>
<td>5/6</td>
<td>1/6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. How often are read aloud books of student choice?</td>
<td>sometimes</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1/6</td>
<td>5/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td></td>
<td>1/6</td>
<td>3/6</td>
<td>2/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. How often is technology used in</td>
<td>once a week</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reading class?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3/6</td>
<td>1/6</td>
<td>2/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3/6</td>
<td>2/6</td>
<td>1/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Talks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. How often are new books introduced to</td>
<td>once a week</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>students?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How often are specific titles recommended to the class?</td>
<td>once a week</td>
<td>3/6</td>
<td>2/6</td>
<td>1/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. How often do you get to read on your own?</td>
<td>daily or 2-3 times a week</td>
<td>2/6</td>
<td>4/6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How often do you get to read books that you like to read at school?</td>
<td>3/6</td>
<td>3/6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*student question only</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How often do students read from class sets of books?</td>
<td>once a week</td>
<td>3/6</td>
<td>1/6</td>
<td>2/6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Balanced Discussion                |                |     |     |     |
|                                    |                |     |     |     |
| 1. How often do students talk to the teacher about books? | 2-3 times a week | 1/6 | 3/6 | 2/6 |
| 2. How often do students get to discuss books in class? | 2-3 times a week | 3/6 | 1/6 | 2/6 |
## Classroom D

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Teacher Read Alouds</strong></th>
<th><strong>Teacher Responses</strong></th>
<th>😊 most of the time</th>
<th>😐 sometimes</th>
<th>😞 not usually</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How often are picture books read to the class?</td>
<td>2 -3 times a week</td>
<td>1/6</td>
<td>4/6</td>
<td>1/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How often are short stories read in class?</td>
<td>not usually</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3/6</td>
<td>3/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How often are trade books read for recreation/fun?</td>
<td>2-3 times a week</td>
<td>6/6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How often are trade books read for instruction/information?</td>
<td>2-3 times a week</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5/6</td>
<td>1/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. How often are read aloud books of student choice?</td>
<td>not usually</td>
<td>1/6</td>
<td>2/6</td>
<td>3/6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Technology

| **1. How often is technology used in reading class?** | 2-3 times a week | 1/6 | 5/6 | 0 |

### Book Talks

| **1. How often are new books introduced to** | not usually | 3/6 | 3/6 | 0 |
### Students?

2. How often are specific titles recommended to the class?  
   - Daily: 2/6  
   - 2/6: 4/6  
   - 0: 0

### Student Reading

1. How often do you get to read on your own?  
   - Daily: 5/6  
   - 1/6: 0

2. How often do you get to read books that you like to read at school?  
   *Student question only*  
   - 3/6: 2/6  
   - 2/6: 1/6

3. How often do students read from class sets of books?  
   - 2-3 times a week: 2/6  
   - 2/6: 2/6

### Balanced Discussion

1. How often do students talk to the teacher about books?  
   - Not usually: 0  
   - 3/6: 3/6

2. How often do students get to discuss books in class?  
   - Not usually: 0  
   - 4/6: 2/6