

Outline: Learning From Our Teaching:  
2006 National Reading Recovery Conference presentation

Dr. Catherine Compton-Lilly, RR Trainer, University of Wisconsin at Madison: the value of teacher action research in RR and the Networks on-line journal for Teacher Research

Sue Geier, Monroe 2-Orleans BOCES RRTL:

- the rationale for using a teacher action research model for professional development for experienced, trained Reading Recovery teachers
- how the groups were set up, frequency of meetings, incorporating BTG lessons
- the ERIC article as a starting point: Action Research in Early Childhood Education, Borgia and Schuler, November 1996

Donna Ianello, Hilton, NY CSD, RRT

- description the action research (book introduction/first reading of the new book)
- how this related to the key features of action research in the article
- what the group learned from the experience

Judy Pray, Spencerport, NY CSD, RRT

- description of the action research (teaching for accelerated learning in RR)
- what the group learned from the experience

Sue Geier

- two more action research groups: (writing in the Reading Recovery program, fluency in the Reading Recovery program)
- description of their action research
- 4 min. video clip from the writing group findings
- 2 ½ min. video clip explaining the data collected in the three ring binder
- 4 min. video clip, getting feedback from Cathy Lilly on our process
- Segue into 2004-2005 focus on oral language for RR Continuing Contact, and the somewhat less formal RR action research project on English Language Learners in Reading Recovery

Eileen Johnson, Churcville-Chili, NY CSD and Judy Pray

- Description of the work and of our CC session with ESL staff developers
- Overhead transparencies (powerpoint)
- Video clip of Nancy Roux, RRT, as an ELL learning to read in the US

Sue Geier

- Why we believe the teacher action research format is valuable for professional development of trained RRTs
- 2 ½ min. video-clip of culminating interview
- Q and A

## Teacher Action Research

### Change over Time in Text Level for First Round Reading Recovery Students

Focus Question: What are the changes over time that are expected of Reading Recovery students making accelerated progress?

Challenge: Design an action research study group utilizing Reading Recovery student work, readings, an "average" first grade case study, and examinations of Reading Recovery procedures to maximize student learning.

#### Designing the Study:

Factors considered:

- ◆ how to monitor progress
- ◆ selection of student and their characteristics
- ◆ checking on our teaching-audio tapes
- ◆ collegiality-when, where and how we would meet, agendas for the meetings
- ◆ understanding the question and challenge

#### Ah-ha's

- ◆ took seasoned Reading Recovery teachers and made them go back to the Guidebook to examine their practices
- ◆ reinforced the importance of each part of the lesson and to carefully reflect on what the child demonstrates each and every day
- ◆ each of our students presented with different concerns besides literacy but the program worked for each one of them. Sharing our observations with each other was very helpful (hearing impaired, attention issues, home environment, etc.)
- ◆ takes time to design the study and we adjusted our study from our original focus being both reading and writing.
- ◆ each of us took something away from our reflection-book choice, insistent and persistent, oral language patterns stronger links from making and breaking into writing and reading, building a strong home/school relationship, spending time in the classroom to see what the child can do, how much help is given, etc.
- ◆ make sure you understand the challenge statement

Continuing Contact, 2003-2004  
Teacher Action Research Project:  
Writing in the Reading Recovery Program

- ❑ This research group was composed of six experienced, trained Reading Recovery teachers from two suburban districts, representing five elementary school buildings.
- ❑ The Focus Question they set for themselves was: What changes do we see in writing over the first round in our Reading Recovery students?

The “writing” group developed the following process for the implementation of their action research project:

1. Selected one student each from their first round as their own case study student
2. Collected and read 15 articles and chapters about writing in Reading Recovery
3. Studied the 6+1 Traits assessment approach for beginning writers (both districts were using this in the classroom ELA program.)
4. Collected initial and final Observation Surveys of their case study students to examine growth in writing vocabulary and hearing and recording sounds in words, plus made copies of the first and last RR writing journal entries.
5. Collected classroom writing samples of their RR case study student corresponding to the beginning, middle and end of their RR programs
6. Created a chart to document growing evidence of control over spacing, letter formation, thought processes, fluency, generation of new words, length of story, six + 1 traits and phonological awareness and evaluated progress of their case study student’s classroom writing at the beginning, middle and end of the RR program using this tool
7. Wrote a report about the reasons for and best practices in the teaching of writing in an RR lesson based their readings, their sharing of data on their case study students, and discussions following behind-the-glass lessons.
8. Presented the report orally, each person taking a section: the purpose of writing in an RR lesson, the benefits of linking reading and writing, the composition phase, the use of space on the page and mechanics, word work in writing, and analyzing sounds in sequence
9. Reflected on their teacher action research in terms of how it impacted their RR teaching this year and how it impacted their student’s writing progress
10. Participated in the videotaping of their oral report, an interview with the RRTL and a Q and A session with an audience of trained RRTs.

Continuing Contact, 2003-2004  
Teacher Action Research Project:  
Fluency in the Reading Recovery Program

- ❑ This research group was composed of four experienced, trained Reading Recovery teachers from three suburban districts, representing three elementary school buildings.
- ❑ The Focus Question they set for themselves was: How is Demonstration an Effective Technique in Helping Second Round Reading Recovery Students Become Fluent Readers?

The “fluency” group developed the following process for the implementation of their action research project:

1. Developed working definitions for the terms “demonstration” and “fluency”
2. Identified, collected and read 15 articles or chapters on the subject of fluency and its impact on the reading process
3. Collaborated on writing a three page paper summarizing various aspects of fluent reading and a rationale for teaching for it in RR
4. Chose one student each among their four RR students who they felt most needed to work on fluency
5. Arranged to audiotape that student reading the familiar book, the running record book and the new book both before they began the study and after three weeks of daily extra attention to fluency within the RR lesson.
6. Analyzed their student records to evaluate whether or not they were getting a shift with this intensive, multi-faceted approach
7. Wrote about the fluency of each of their case-study students pre and post intervention, using very detailed and descriptive language
8. Drew conclusions about teaching for phrasing and fluent reading in Reading Recovery lessons and collaborating with classroom teachers on teaching for this in guided reading.
9. Reflected on their teacher action research in terms of how it impacted their RR teaching this year and how it impacted their student’s reading progress
10. Participated in the videotaping of their oral report, an interview with the RRTL and a Q and A session with an audience of trained RRTs.

Culminating Activity  
Oral Report of Teacher Action Research, 2003-2004

- There were four Teacher Action Research groups whose members were comprised of experienced Reading Recovery Teachers meeting their Continuing Contact (professional development) requirement.
- Our final meeting consisted of a videotaped oral presentation by each group on their processes and findings, an interview with the Teacher Leader and a Q. and A. session for other Continuing Contact members.

The format that was used for the videotape was as follows:

1. The RRTL was the videographer, and asked the group members to introduce themselves
2. The group reported out on their processes and findings, each member speaking in turn
3. One person spoke about what was in the three ring binder each group created to document their Teacher Action Research project.
4. Applause !
5. The RRTL asked interview questions, including:
  - What was your experience like? What was easy? What was challenging?
  - How did you narrow your focus to a manageable research question?
  - Were there any surprises in your process or findings?
  - What impact did the Teacher Action Research have
    - i. on your RR teaching?
    - ii. on the student's performance in Reading Recovery?
    - iii. on the student's performance in the classroom?
  - What stories do you have to tell about a particular child's growth? What stories do you have to tell about your first experience doing action research in RR?
  - What aspects of RR teaching might you want to pursue further next year in a Teacher Action Research format?
  - How can the design be improved?
6. The audience of RR colleagues had an opportunity to give feedback and ask clarifying questions.

**Action Research Project  
Reading Recovery Continuing Contact  
Fall 2003  
Seven Members**

**In action research, teachers investigate their own practices taking a closer look at what children and they themselves actually do. It is a process that involves:**

1. **Identifying the question:** What are the most effective ways to work with RR students at the beginning of a first round program?
2. **Narrowing down the question:** Studying the New Book Orientation and First Read Started with more than one focus-also writing part of lesson-kept tabs on both
3. **Ways to capture data and provide documentation:**
  - Audio taping of NBO and First Read
  - Field Notes
  - Behind the Glass sessions
  - OS Surveys: Pre, 8 weeks, Post
  - Video taped writing part and chose to audio tape NBO.
4. **A Review of the Literature:** read ten articles concerning text reading in children
5. **Collecting data to provide documentation:**
  - Effective practices from BTG
  - Effective practices gleaned from the audio tapes
  - Documentation occurs through detailed descriptions of children and teachers, field notes, interactive journals, etc. through observations of such
  - Followed lowest progress child throughout project.
6. **Implementing the solution:** We followed the effective practices that were documented from our data.
7. **Evaluating the effect of these practices:** OS Survey: Pre, 8 weeks, Post, Spring DRA
8. **Modifying one's own practices in light of the evaluation.** Self reflection is critical in action research.

**What was learned:** That reflecting upon one's own teaching and those of colleagues can have a more powerful effect on needed changes to effect instruction in the field. Video taping and colleague visits would be most helpful.

**What Would We Do Differently?**

We would give the project more time, at least full program. We would video tape the sessions of the New Book Orientation and First Read to see what children and teachers **do** as well as say that would be effective in scaffolding children in text level reading. We would have only one focus rather than two. Meeting every two weeks would be beneficial. There was a time limit on our project and this limited our meeting times. More time was needed for a review of the literature.

We also interviewed colleagues after the project was complete. This proved to be insightful.

**Networks: an On-line Journal for Teacher Research**  
**<http://education.ucsc.edu/faculty/gwells>**

Notes For Contributors:

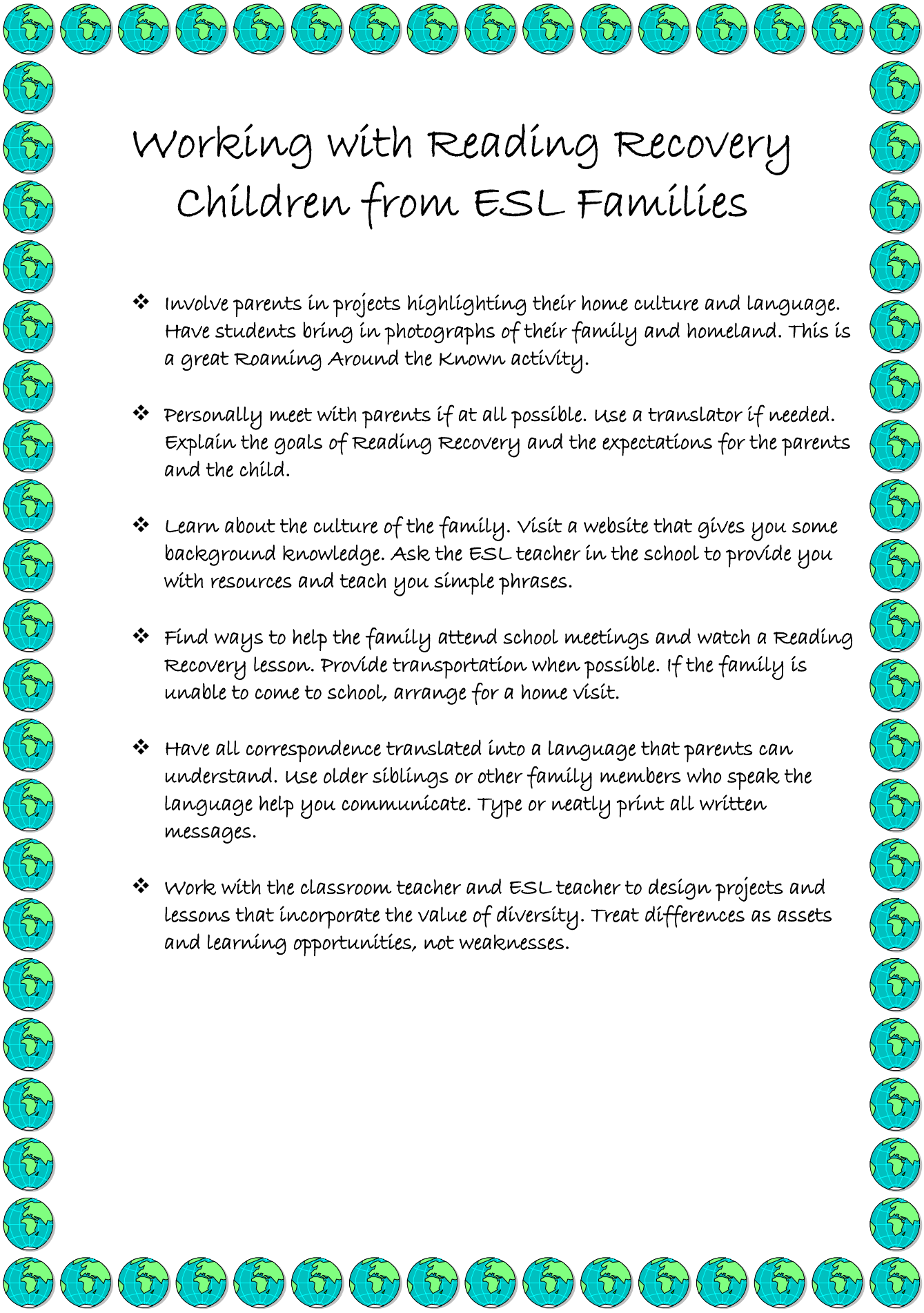
This journal offers a place for sharing reports of action research, in which teachers at all levels, K to Postgraduate, are making changes and observing their effects. It also provides space for discussion of other ways in which educational practitioners, alone or in collaboration, are using inquiry as a tool to learn more about their work with the hope eventually of improving its effectiveness. We do not envisage a journal in which the contributions will necessarily be reports on studies that have already been completed; there is much to be said for reports of work in progress that can open up areas of discussion and interchange of experiences and ideas that will benefit all involved.

We plan to have three or four sections in each issue of the journal. When submitting a contribution, please indicate the section for which your submission is intended.

\* full-length articles (normally 2,000-3,500 words). These will typically report a completed investigation, or offer a critical review of a number of investigations with a common theme or topic.

\* shorter articles and notes (about 300-750 words). These might describe work in progress, raise issues arising from such work, or discuss general issues related to methodologies, ethics, collaboration, etc. .

\* book reviews (about 750-1000 words). These will typically provide a sense of the main arguments and presentation style of the author. In addition, reviews will take the perspective of a critical friend in terms of the author's assumptions, arguments and evidence, drawing, where possible, on other work on the same topic or issue.



# Working with Reading Recovery Children from ESL Families

- ❖ Involve parents in projects highlighting their home culture and language. Have students bring in photographs of their family and homeland. This is a great Roaming Around the Known activity.
- ❖ Personally meet with parents if at all possible. Use a translator if needed. Explain the goals of Reading Recovery and the expectations for the parents and the child.
- ❖ Learn about the culture of the family. Visit a website that gives you some background knowledge. Ask the ESL teacher in the school to provide you with resources and teach you simple phrases.
- ❖ Find ways to help the family attend school meetings and watch a Reading Recovery lesson. Provide transportation when possible. If the family is unable to come to school, arrange for a home visit.
- ❖ Have all correspondence translated into a language that parents can understand. Use older siblings or other family members who speak the language help you communicate. Type or neatly print all written messages.
- ❖ Work with the classroom teacher and ESL teacher to design projects and lessons that incorporate the value of diversity. Treat differences as assets and learning opportunities, not weaknesses.

# Working with ESL Students in Reading Recovery

Eileen Johnson  
Judy Pray



# Beginning

- Assessments
- Collegiality
- Selection process



# Roaming

- Note taking
- Listening to student's oral language
- Additional assessment(s)
- Modifying our oral language



# Establishing our Relationship

- ESL teacher as a resource
- Family contact
  - Cultural background
  - Language
  - Articulation/grammatical structures
  - Print in native language



# Lessons

- Book choice
- Reading and Writing as Language Processes:
  - Making and breaking
  - Book introductions
  - Silent picture walks
  - Writing
- Letting things go
- Concrete examples



# Parent Involvement

- Contact (s)
  - Notebook
  - Phone calls
  - Home visits
  - Observing lessons



# Our Insights

- The role of language
- Impact for all students
- Expanding collegiality



Thank you for coming to our  
presentation today!

Sue Geier, Reading Recovery Teacher Leader  
[sgeier@monroe2boces.org](mailto:sgeier@monroe2boces.org)

Donna Ianello, Reading Recovery Teacher  
[dianello@hilton.k12.ny.us](mailto:dianello@hilton.k12.ny.us)

Eileen Johnson, Reading Recovery Teacher  
[eileenjohnson@cccisd.org](mailto:eileenjohnson@cccisd.org)

Judy Pray, Reading Recovery Teacher  
[jpray@spencerportschools.org](mailto:jpray@spencerportschools.org)