

Analyzing the Frequency and Content of Read Aloud Articles Published in Selected Journals across the K-8 Curriculum

William P. Bintz*

School of Teaching, Learning, and Curriculum Studies, Kent State University, Kent, Ohio, USA

Corresponding author: William P. Bintz, E-mail: wpbintz@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

This article reports research results from an analysis of frequency and content of read aloud articles published between 2011 and 2015 in selected, national, peer-reviewed journals across the K-8 curriculum. An introduction describes the problem, purpose, and limitations of the study. It provides a review of research on reading aloud at home, in school, across the curriculum, and across grade bands. It also identifies research questions, discusses frequency and content analysis as research methodologies, and describes data sources, data collection methods, and data analysis procedures, followed by a presentation of results. Major results include (i) articles were found that described teachers using reading aloud more as an instructional tool, rather than an intervention technique to use with specific populations of students, e.g. struggling readers, (ii) articles were found that used reading aloud with literary text, followed by informational text, informational/literary text, and hybrid text, and (iii) articles on reading aloud were found to be published in English/Language Arts (ELA) journals, followed by Social Studies, Mathematics, and Science. Results are discussed and implications are described.

Key words: Column Article, Content Analysis, Feature Article, Frequency Analysis, Journal Article, Reading Aloud

INTRODUCTION

Several United States national education reforms and pieces of federal legislation recommended amounts of time and instructional activities that were to be emphasized during literacy instruction (Teale, Paciga, & Hoffman, 2007). No Child Left Behind Act (2001) and later the Every Student Succeeds Act (2015) were based on a highly influential, evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading conducted by the National Reading Panel (NRP, 2000). This assessment found that direct instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension significantly benefits the literacy development for all readers, proficient and struggling. However, reading aloud by teachers was an instructional activity not included in these recommendations, despite the fact that an extensive body of research consistently indicates that reading aloud is a sound instructional practice with many benefits and virtually no drawbacks for readers of all ages (Layne, 2015). This exclusion left “many teachers wondering about the efficacy of reading aloud” (Clark & Andreasen, 2014, p. 162). Even more confusing is that fact that few teachers above first grade read aloud to their students every day, even though reading aloud is a “high-impact, low-input strategy because it does not require special materials or training; it simply requires a decision to use class time more effectively” (Allington & Gabriel, 2012, p. 15). Consequently, students are exposed

to reading-aloud less frequently as they move from primary through intermediate grades (Brooks, 2011), and the practice of reading aloud all but disappears in high school (Delo, 2008).

The underemphasis and underutilization of reading aloud as students advance through grade levels is problematic. On the one hand, it is problematic because much research indicates that reading aloud is an effective instructional strategy that supports literacy growth and development across grade levels and across the curriculum (Layne, 2015). On the other hand, however, national reform efforts underemphasize and teachers underutilize reading aloud as students progress through grade levels and across the curriculum (NRP, 2000). Simply stated, the problem is that reading aloud is an effective instructional strategy, but teachers underemphasize and underutilize it throughout the grades.

Many indicators could be analyzed to address this problem. Among others, these indicators include analyzing titles and descriptions of sessions, symposia, and round table discussions at literacy conferences; professional development workshops and summer institutes sponsored by major commercial publishing companies; calls for book proposals and book chapters on specific topics by publishers of commercially-produced professional literature; calls for manuscripts on specific topics by national peer-reviewed literacy journals; and articles published in peer-reviewed journals in literacy

and other journals across the curriculum. Other indicators could include resources from professional organizations. For example, each year the United States International Literacy Association (ILA) publishes a report that presents “survey findings that take the temperature of the literacy dialogue and note the changing trends from year to year” (What’s Hot in Literacy, 2018). Analyzing indicators like these has potential to provide new insights into the disconnect between what research says about the benefits of reading aloud and what research says about the underemphasis and underutilization of reading aloud.

This study focused on two indicators, namely, the frequency and content of read aloud articles published in national, peer-reviewed journals across the K-8 curriculum. The purpose of analyzing frequency was to determine the degree of emphasis indicated by the number of published read aloud articles. The purpose of analyzing content was to determine the content characteristics of published read aloud articles. These characteristics included function (instructional or interventional strategy), text type (literary, informational, hybrid, literary/informational, other), grade band (primary, intermediate, middle grades), and genre (fiction, nonfiction, biography, mystery, fairy tale, other, etc.). Function referred to whether articles emphasized reading aloud as an instructional strategy or an intervention procedure. In this study instruction referred to reading aloud as an instructional strategy used with all students in regular classroom settings. Intervention referred to reading aloud used as part of a pull-out program or as a set of steps with a small and selected group of struggling readers. Literary text referred to a fictional piece of writing with the purpose of telling a story. Informational text referred to nonfictional piece of writing with the purpose of informing the reader about a specific topic. Hybrid text referred to a single text that integrates narrative and informational text using a variety of design elements like marginalia, text boxes, miniature embedded illustrations, and other multimodal and semiotic resources (Jewitt & Kress, 2003). Literary/informational text referred to a single text that includes, but does not integrate, fiction and nonfiction (Tribunella & Hintz, 2015). This type of text is a narrative and tells a story, but also includes information about the story through a foreword or afterword. Grade Band referred to a range of grades that contain students of similar age. Genre referred to a recognized category or popular class of writing. Finally, the focus on K-8 (primary, K-2; intermediate, 3-5; and middle grades, 6-8), rather than K-12, grade bands was based on research indicating that the practice of reading aloud all but disappears in high school (Delo, 2008). Given this research, a high school grade band (9-12) was excluded based on the concern that few, if any, read aloud articles were published in selected, national, peer-reviewed journals between 2011 and 2015 at this grade band.

Two different kinds of articles were analyzed: feature and column. A variety of resources (Collins English Dictionary, the Random House Unabridged Dictionary, Free Dictionary, Learner’s Dictionary, and Oxford Dictionary) were used to operationally define differences between feature and column article. Feature article was defined as a longer piece

of nonfiction writing that stands alone, and column article as a recurring, short piece of nonfiction writing with some common theme.

To further clarify distinctions between a feature and a column article, the table of contents of several journals were reviewed. *Reading Teacher* is one major literacy journal that provides clear distinctions between feature and column articles. In the table of contents *Reading Teacher* includes a number of major headings. One heading is entitled “Issue Information” in which editors provide general information about the journal. No data were collected from these kinds of sections in any journal. *Reading Teacher* also includes a section entitled “From The Editors” in which the editors provide an overview about the articles that appear in the edition. No data were collected from these kinds of sections in any journal. *Reading Teacher* also includes a section entitled “Feature Articles.” This section includes peer-reviewed articles, each by a different author(s), and each addresses a different literacy-related topic in depth (approximately 6500 words), unless the volume is theme or topic-specific. Data were collected from these sections in all journals, but only articles that focused specifically on reading aloud. *Reading Teacher* also includes a section entitled “Teaching Tips.” This section is a column and includes peer-reviewed articles, each by a different author(s), and each provides a practical, classroom-based teaching tip for teachers on a specific topic (approximately 2500 words). Typically, articles in this section focus on important, but unrelated, themes or topics. Data were collected from these sections in all journals, but only articles that focused specifically on reading aloud. Finally, *Reading Teacher* includes additional sections like “Voices from the Classroom.” These sections consist of short vignettes written by teachers about their experiences in the classroom, as well as Book Reviews and Commentaries. No data were collected from these kinds of sections in any journal.

This study asked the following question: What is the frequency and content of read aloud articles published in selected journals across the K-8 curriculum? It has two limitations. One limitation is the selection of specific professional organizations. Many other professional organizations than those included in this study focus on reading aloud. Another limitation is the selection of specific journals. Many other national, peer-reviewed journals than those included in this study also publish articles on reading aloud.

Purpose

The purpose of this article is to report research results from analysis of the frequency and content of read aloud articles published in selected, national, peer-reviewed journals across the K-8 curriculum between 2011 and 2015.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Reading aloud allows learners of all ages to actively listen, talk, and think about a text being read (Harvey & Goudvis, 2007). Historically, it is a time-honored social practice practiced by parents reading to children, teachers reading

to students, or friends reading to friends. Over time much research has consistently indicated that reading aloud is an effective practice, in school and out of school (Layne, 2015). In fact, reading aloud to your children is an important first step to literacy (Shannon, 2002). Today, the value of reading aloud is virtually unquestioned as a strategy parents can use at home and teachers can use in school, across the curriculum and with readers of all ages (Oczkus, 2012).

Reading Aloud at Home

Reading aloud at home is important. Among other things, it has a positive relationship with listening comprehension. Listening comprehension comes before reading print comprehension, and therefore reading aloud at home is a way for parents to teach reading comprehension (Routman, 2003). It also allows parents to help children become members of the 1000 book club. Children who hear a thousand stories read aloud to them before they begin to learn to read for themselves experience much reading achievement in school (Fox, 2001).

In addition to comprehension, reading aloud at home helps children grow intellectually, emotionally, and linguistically. Intellectually, reading aloud and discussing what they are reading stimulates children's brains. It improves concentration, problem-solving, and personal expression (Fox, 2013). It also helps them develop emotionally and linguistically. Reading aloud promotes children's interest, supports emotional development, and stimulates their imagination. There is also a fourth area that is stimulated by reading aloud and it is the child's language. Reading aloud authentic literature promotes natural language learning and provides a wealth of quality stories and vocabulary for children to learn and use, both in and out of school (Trelease, 2001). Conversely, children who have not been read aloud to from birth struggle more in school than they otherwise might. In particular, learning to read becomes a major struggle rather than an enjoyable and informative experience (Fox, 2013).

Reading Aloud in School

Reading aloud is also important in school. It is an effective way for teachers to demonstrate positive reading behaviors, engage students in books they may not normally read, and help create positive dispositions about books and reading (Delo, 2008). Listening to read alouds helps students develop listening comprehension, academic vocabulary, and literary appreciation, as well as hear reading demonstrated with prosody and expression, and also allows students to simply focus on and appreciate the reading experience (Braun, 2010). Laminack and Wadsworth (2006) identify six purposes for teachers to read-aloud. These include addressing standards, building community, demonstrating the craft of writing, enriching student vocabulary, enticing children to read independently, and modeling fluent reading. Teachers can read aloud to increase student fluency and comprehension skills, expand vocabulary, develop background knowledge, sense of story, and awareness of genre and text structure (Samuels & Wu, 2004).

Reading Aloud across the Curriculum

Reading aloud across the curriculum is important because it increases student engagement, content knowledge, and fosters positive dispositions about reading. The text can be a narrative or informational picture book, chapter book, essay, short story, poem, etc. Narrative picture books are most popular, but reading aloud informational picture books across the curriculum is interesting and informative at the same time (Oczkus, 2012). These books integrate ideas, images, content, and vocabulary, and become a bridge to cross the curriculum, connecting different subjects and topics in an interconnected way (Laminack & Wadsworth (2006).

Reading aloud informational picture books can also introduce new topics or generate interest in new concepts. Science is a good example. Reading aloud informational picture books in science helps students better understand scientific ideas (Webster, 2009), and stimulate an interest in science and reading science text more effectively (Lee, 2010). Reading aloud biographies of scientists especially help students understand how scientists think, observe, infer, formulate and test hypotheses, and draw conclusions (Zarnowski & Turkel, 2012). Informational picture books also serve to help students visualize concepts, increase academic vocabulary, better understand content, and develop positive dispositions about science (Braun, 2010). Social Studies is another example. Stories are effective ways to describe and record the past (Columba, Kim, and Moe (2009). Reading informational picture books are ideal to integrate literacy and social studies. They can be used to teach civic competence, one of the most important reasons for teaching social studies (Libresco, Balantic, & Kipling, 2011). In sum, reading aloud across the curriculum has many benefits. It can increase word knowledge, syntax knowledge and genre knowledge, and thus motivation to read (Allen, 2000), as well as support student conceptual understanding of concepts across the curriculum (Hoffman, Collins, & Schickedanz, 2015).

Reading Aloud across Grade Bands

Simply stated, reading aloud across all grade levels improves literacy (Fox, 2013). Historically, reading aloud across all grades has long been viewed as an important tool that creates successful readers, as well as an instructional strategy to help students develop positive dispositions about reading (Routman, 2003). However, compared to research on preschool children and primary grade students, little research has been conducted on reading aloud with older readers (Albright & Ariail, 2005). Research that has been conducted indicates that reading aloud has many benefits for middle grades students and is one of the most preferred instructional strategies by middle grades teachers (Harvey & Goudvis, 2007). Reading aloud to middle grades students has positive outcomes for motivation, interest, engagement, and learning (Albright & Ariail, in Korbey, 2013). Teacher read-alouds allow middle school students to experience texts that may be otherwise inaccessible (McCormick & McTigue, 2011), and also allow teachers to model aspects of fluent reading, such as pronunciation, intonation, rhythm, and style (Ariail &

Albright, 2006). It also enhances student academic vocabulary development, especially when teachers pause to go over difficult words and then have conversations with students using the new words after reading (Reutzel & Cooter, 2008).

Reading aloud also benefits high school students (Zehr, 2010). In fact, high school students who are less fluent readers experience the greatest benefits from teachers reading aloud (Meloy, Deville, & Frisbie, 2002). Trelease (in Korbey, 2013) states: "The first reason to read aloud to older kids is to consider the fact that a child's reading level doesn't catch up to his listening level until about the eighth grade... You have to hear it before you can speak it, and you have to speak it before you can read it. Reading at this level happens through the ear" (2).

Finally, Serafini and Giorgis (2003) identify several scientifically-based reasons for reading aloud, especially with older readers. Reading aloud introduces readers to new titles, authors, illustrators, genres, and text structures; builds a sense of community; provides opportunities for extended discussions; connects readers with content area subjects; demonstrates response strategies; increases readers' interest in independent reading; provides access to books readers may not be able to experience on their own; helps readers understand the connection between reading in school and reading in life; and provides demonstrations of quality writing.

METHODS

The research question asked: What is the frequency and content of read aloud articles published in selected journals across the K-8 curriculum? This section describes the research design, and methods of data sources, data collection, and data analysis.

Research Design

Frequency analysis and content analysis were research methodologies used in this study. Frequency analysis is a quantitative method of recording numerically the number of times an item appears in one or more data sources. Content analysis is a qualitative method of describing written artifacts (White & Marsh, 2006). Specifically, it "involves the inspection of patterns in written texts, often drawing on combinations of inductive, deductive, and abductive analytical

techniques" (Hoffman, Wilson, Martinez, & Sailors, 2011, p. 29). The goal of content analysis is to generate "knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon under study" (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1278). In this study written texts were feature and column articles, and the frequency and content of read aloud articles was the phenomenon under study.

Data Sources

Table 1 illustrates multiple data sources used in this study. These sources focused on academic discipline, professional organization, journal, and grade band. Four academic disciplines were included: English/Language Arts, Social Studies, Mathematics, Science. These disciplines were selected because they are commonly considered major disciplines in the field of curriculum and instruction. Five professional organizations were included: International Literacy Association (ILA), National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), National Council of Social Studies (NCSS), National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), and National Science Teachers Association (NSTA). These organizations were selected because they are national organizations that publish peer-reviewed journals about their respective disciplines.

Ten journals were included: *Language Arts*, *Reading Teacher*, *Voices in the Middle*, *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *Social Education*, *The Social Studies*, *Teaching Children Mathematics*, *Mathematics Teaching in the Middle School*, *Science and Children*, and *Science Scope*. These journals were selected because they are national, peer-reviewed journals published by major professional organizations, and because they one or more grade bands, K-8. They were used as sources to find articles based on three factors: type of article, time of publication, and grade band. Type of article focused on feature and column articles. Time of publication focused on feature and column articles published during 2011-2015. Grade band focused on feature and column articles across three grade levels: primary (K-2), intermediate (3-5), and middle grades (6-8).

Procedures

Data collection involved a multi-stage process. Stage 1: The official website for each professional organization was reviewed in order to identify two peer-reviewed journals

Table 1. Data sources

Academic discipline	Professional organization	Journal	Grade band
English/Language Arts	International Literacy Assoc. (ILA)	Language Arts	Kindergarten-8
English/Language Arts	International Literacy Assoc. (ILA)	Reading Teacher	Kindergarten-8
English/Language Arts	Nat Council Teachers of English (NCTE)	Voices in the Middle	Kindergarten-8
English/Language Arts	Nat Council Teachers of English (NCTE)	Journal of Adol. & Adult Lit	6-12
Social studies	Nat. Council of Social Studies (NCSS)	Social Education	Kindergarten-8
Social studies	Nat. Council of Social Studies (NCSS)	The Social Studies	Kindergarten-8
Mathematics	Nat. Council of Teachers of Mathematics	Teaching Children Math	Kindergarten-4
Mathematics	Nat. Council of Teachers of Mathematics	Math Teaching in Mid School	6-8
Science	Nat. Science Teachers Association	Science & Children	Kindergarten-4
Science	Nat. Science Teachers Association	Science Scope	6-8

published by that organization, making sure journals focused on one or more grade bands. For example, *Science and Children* was one journal selected. It is a national, peer-reviewed journal published by the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) and focuses on the primary grade band, K-2. Likewise, *Science Scope* was another journal selected. It is published by NSTA and focuses on the intermediate grade band, 3-5. In the end a total of 10 peer-reviewed journals across four academic disciplines were selected.

Stage 2: Digital or print copies of feature and column read aloud articles published in their respective journals from 2011-2015 were accessed. Each journal article was recorded, including name of journal, total feature articles published, number and percentage of feature articles dealing with reading aloud, total column articles published, and number and percentage of column articles dealing with reading aloud.

Stage 3: For the purpose of content analysis, categories for collecting and analyzing data on the content characteristics of feature and column articles were developed. Categories focused on specific content characteristics and included: function, text type, grade band, and genre. Function referred to the purpose of reading aloud. Did the feature or column article discuss reading aloud as an instructional tool, an intervention strategy, both, or other? Text type referred to the type of text used or suggested in the article, e.g. informational, literary, hybrid, informational/literary, other. Text genre referred to the genre of text used or suggested, e.g. poetry, realistic fiction, narrative nonfiction, historical fiction, narrative, folk tales, fairy tales, expository, biography, autobiography, mystery, basal, other. Finally, given the existing diversity of grade band definitions, grade bands here, except for middle grades, were selected arbitrarily and based on the following system: Primary (K = 0, grade 1 = 1, grade 2 = 2); Intermediate (grade 3 = 3, grade 4 = 4, grade 5 = 5); Middle (grade 6 = 6, grade 7 = 7, grade 8 = 8).

Stage 4: A content analysis was conducted on each feature and column article, using analytical categories described above.

Data Analysis

Data analysis involved a two-stage process. Stage 1: A frequency analysis of feature and column read aloud articles was conducted. The total number of feature and column read aloud articles were tallied and recorded within and across four academic disciplines. The purpose of analysis was to quantitatively document the frequency of feature and column read aloud articles.

Stage 2: A content analysis of feature and column read aloud articles was conducted, using a priori content characteristics categories as a checklist. These categories included function, text type, grade band, and genre. Like data sources, these specific categories were selected primarily for purposes of general and personal interest. The purpose of content analysis was to qualitatively identify and record content characteristics of each feature and column read aloud article.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents and discusses results from a frequency and content analysis of feature and column read aloud articles.

Frequency Analysis

Table 2 illustrates that a total of 78 (3%) out of 2,297 feature read aloud articles, and a total of 24 (1%) out of 1,829 column read aloud articles were found. More feature read aloud articles (78) were found than column articles (24). More feature articles (46) and column articles (11) were found in English/Language Arts (ELA) journals than in all other journals combined. Although more feature and column read aloud articles were found in ELA journals, the percentages of these articles were very low (3% feature articles; 1% column articles). In other journals more feature articles were found in *Social Studies* (12) than *Social Education* (3), and no column articles were found in either

Table 2. Frequency analysis

Journal	Feature RA	Total feature	Percentage	Column RA	Total column	Percentage
Social Ed.	3	343	1	0	0	0
Social Studies	12	173	7	0	0	0
SS subtotal	15	516	3	0	0	0
Reading Teacher	21	263	8	4	184	2
Language Arts	14	144	10	0	64	0
JAAL	2	281	1	1	143	1
Voices in Middle	9	133	7	6	67	9
ELA subtotal	46	821	6	11	458	2
T Children Math	13	195	7	0	302	0
Math in MS	1	200	1	0	319	0
Math subtotal	14	395	4	0	621	0
Sci & Children	2	260	1	1	436	0
Sci Scope	1	305	0	0	314	0
Sci subtotal	3	565	1	1	750	0
Total	78	2297	3	24	1829	1

journal. More feature articles were found in *Teaching Children Mathematics* (13) than *Mathematics Teaching in the Middle School* (1). Few feature articles and column articles were found in science journals.

Only 3% of feature and column articles were found to emphasize reading aloud. Several possible perceptions held by different stakeholders might help explain this low percentage and low emphasis on reading aloud.

One group of stakeholders is editors, subscribers, and readers of journals. Given all of the important issues in literacy education, these stakeholders might perceive reading aloud as an important topic, but not a highly relevant or essential issue today. In general, all journals must take into consideration a variety of factors that influence editorial decisions about journal topics and themes. For example, editors must keep track of topics and themes already published in previous issues, types of columns and articles, the number and quality of advertisements, and even page limitations. These types of considerations influence the editorial decision to publish article A instead of article B. In addition, and perhaps most importantly, journal editors must consistently track and accurately interpret interests of subscribers and readers of the journal. Readership wants to read articles that are timely, informative, controversial, and relevant to their lives as teachers and teacher educators. In this study, the significant lack of emphasis on reading aloud may suggest that editors, subscribers, and readers might perceive that reading aloud is not currently a timely, informative, or controversial topic, but rather an already widely accepted and virtually unchallenged instructional strategy. They might perceive reading aloud as not a very hot topic in literacy education today. Rather, it is a common instructional strategy that requires little to no further emphasis.

Another group of stakeholders is classroom teachers. Teachers might perceive reading aloud as not a complex and challenging practice, but a simple, straightforward, and traditional strategy that already works (Layne, 2015). For example, in this study the majority of articles described reading aloud in traditional ways, e.g. teachers read aloud and students actively listen, talk, and think about a text being read (Harvey & Goudvis, 2007). Very few articles described reading aloud in untraditional, alternative, or experimental ways. Reading aloud was described and discussed as a traditional practice, rather than as a flexible, innovative, and multi-dimensional strategy with power and potential for unlimited variation. Classroom teachers might perceive that reading aloud is a one-dimensional, traditional, and accepted practice and therefore requires little to no further emphasis.

Still another group of stakeholders is the combination of editors, subscribers, readers, and classroom teachers. This group might perceive reading aloud traditionally as a disciplinary, not an interdisciplinary, instructional strategy (Richardson, 2000). This perception might hold that ELA is the traditional discipline for reading aloud, ELA journals are the most appropriate venues for read aloud articles, and therefore requires little to no further emphasis in journals across the curriculum.

Content Analysis

Table 3 illustrates results based on a content analysis of feature and column read aloud articles across four major categories (function, text type, grade band, and genre) and is presented in two parts. The same journals are listed in the same order in both parts.

In terms of function, feature and column read aloud articles emphasized the function of reading aloud more as an instructional strategy, rather than as an intervention technique. Specifically, feature and column articles emphasized reading aloud as a general instructional strategy appropriate for all students, more than an intervention technique for small groups of struggling readers. English/Language Arts journals published more articles emphasizing reading aloud as an instructional strategy than the other journals combined.

This result about function might be attributed to, or influenced by, teacher perception about the relationship between reading aloud and the teaching of reading. Especially in the primary grade band (K-2), teaching reading is an important and high priority. During this band, it is important for teachers to teach children a number of requisite skills for learning to read (Rasinski, 2003). Moreover, teaching reading is commonly associated with, and embedded in, the English/Language Arts curriculum, as opposed to other curricula in which reading aloud is used to teach content area subjects like social studies, mathematics, and science (Fisher, Brozo, Frey, & Ivey, 2007). In the ELA curriculum teachers might perceive reading aloud more as an instructional tool to teach reading, and only secondarily as an intervention technique to help struggling readers develop reading skills they currently lack (Krashen, 2004). Unlike ELA, social studies, mathematics, and science teachers may not perceive reading aloud as an effective instructional strategy because they do not explicitly teach reading in their respective content areas. In other words, they see themselves as teachers of content, not reading.

In terms of text type, significantly more feature and column read aloud articles were found that emphasized literary text, followed by informational, literary/informational, and hybrid text. Specifically, more feature and column read aloud articles were found in ELA journals that emphasized literary more than informational text. Social studies journals emphasized a near balance between literary and informational text, mathematics journals emphasized more literary than informational text, and science journals emphasized only informational text.

The emphasis on reading aloud literary text might explain a perception by teachers that students prefer literary over informational text (Harvey & Goudvis, 2017). This perception, however, is based on an uninformed understanding of student preferences of text type (Libresco, Balantic, & Kipling, 2011). For example, in this study it was somewhat expected that feature and column read aloud articles would emphasize informational text more than literary text. This expectation was based on the fact that Common Core State Standards (CCSS), the current driving force in educational reform in the United States, place more emphasis on informational than literary text. This expectation was also based on an extensive body of reading research indicating that K-8

Table 3. Content analysis

Journal	Function			Text type					Grade band			
	Tchr	Interv	Other	Literary	Info	Hybrid	I/L	Other	Prim	Inter	Mid	Not Spec.
Soc. Ed.	3	0	0	2	3	0	0	0	3	2	1	0
Soc Std	12	1	0	7	7	0	2	0	4	8	2	3
SS subtotal	15	1	0	9	10	0	2	0	7	10	3	3
Read Tch.	20	5	0	14	7	2	2	4	8	0	3	10
Lang Arts	13	10	1	3	9	1	1	8	8	1	4	2
JAAL	1	2	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	0
VIM	10	3	0	8	4	1	0	5	0	0	12	4
ELA subtotal	44	20	1	28	20	4	3	18	16	1	22	16
TCM	13	0	0	18	3	0	7	0	9	7	0	0
MTMS	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Math subtotal	14	0	0	19	3	0	7	0	9	7	1	0
S & C	2	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	2	0	1	1
Sci Scope	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sci subtotal	3	1	0	0	4	0	0	0	2	0	1	1
Total	76	22	1	56	37	4	12	18	34	18	27	20

Journal	Genre												
	Real fict	Hist fict	Narr nonfict	Narr	Bio	Auto	Mys	Expos	Folk tales	Fairy tales	Poetry	Basal	Other
Soc. Ed.	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	3	0	2	0	0	0
Soc Std	3	2	4	0	0	0	1	2	0	6	2	0	0
SS subtotal	4	2	6	1	0	0	1	5	0	8	2	0	0
Read Tch.	1	4	6	21	5	1	1	5	4	0	1	0	2
Lang Arts	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
JAAL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
VIM	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
ELA subtotal	1	5	7	21	0	0	0	5	4	0	2	0	2
TCM	0	1	0	10	0	1	0	2	1	0	3	0	0
MTMS	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Math subtotal	0	1	0	11	0	1	0	2	1	0	3	0	0
S & C	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0
Sci Scope	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Sci subtotal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0
Total	10	8	13	33	0	1	1	16	5	8	7	0	2

students prefer to read informational rather than literary text (Farris, Werderich, Nelson, & Fuhler, 2009; King & Gurian, 2006; Young & Brozo, 2001; Perkins-Gough, 2006; Smith & Wilhelm, 2002). This preference for informational text is expressed by both males and females, but especially by males (Brozo, 2006). In terms of text type, this study found just the opposite. Feature and column read aloud articles emphasized literary over informational text.

In terms of grade band, English/Language Arts, Social Studies, Mathematics, and Science journals published feature and column articles that emphasized reading aloud

differently across grade bands. ELA journals published articles that emphasized reading aloud mostly at the middle grades (6-8), then primary, (K-2), and intermediate level (3-5). Social Studies journals published articles that emphasized reading aloud mostly at the intermediate grade band, then primary, and middle grades. Mathematics journals published articles that emphasized reading aloud at the primary grade band, then intermediate, and middle grades. Science journals published articles that emphasized reading aloud at the primary grade band, then intermediate, and middle grades.

This result about grade bands might be attributed to, or influenced by, teacher perceptions about the lack of a relationship between reading aloud and increasing reading test scores. That is, teachers might perceive reading aloud as a sound strategy to teach reading, but not an effective technique to increase student test scores in reading. This perception might also be highly influenced by the current educational climate surrounding high-stakes testing in the United States (Bintz, in press).

For example, in the United States today high-stakes standardized testing is prevalent and pervasive. At all grade levels and across all content areas, teachers work in a high-stakes testing world that has positive, but mostly negative, consequences. One negative consequence is that the higher the stakes the less risk teachers are willing to take with instructional strategies, and therefore teachers tend to use only strategies that are likely to increase test scores (Darling-Hammond, 2004). Another negative consequence is that high-stakes testing operates mostly on a skill and drill mentality, particularly with reading instruction. Teacher might perceive that reading aloud is a theoretically sound, but not a compatible strategy with a skill and drill mentality, and therefore is not an effective technique to increase student scores on high-stakes tests (Bintz, in press).

This teacher perception might also be attributed to, or influenced by, the timing of high-stakes testing in particular grade bands. For example, other than Social Studies, feature and column read aloud articles found in ELA, Mathematics, and Science journals emphasized reading aloud mostly in the primary grade band, then the middle grades, but not the intermediate grade band. The emphasis on reading aloud in the primary grade band, less so in the intermediate grades, but emphasized again in the middle grades might be a teacher reaction to the time periods and grade bands in which standardized testing occurs. Teachers understand that the intermediate grade band (3-5) is when high-stakes standardized testing in reading commonly occurs; in fact, most often occurring in 3rd grade, the beginning grade of the intermediate grade band. Not surprisingly, 3rd grade teachers place much emphasis on and time for using instructional strategies that best prepare students to be successful on high-stakes standardized tests, e.g. test prep strategies. Teachers may not perceive reading aloud as an effective test prep strategy. However, once through the testing period, reading aloud is again emphasized by teachers in the middle grades. Perhaps reading aloud is not emphasized in intermediate grades because this is the grade band for teachers to focus on standardized testing (Bintz, in press). Therefore reading aloud requires little to no major emphasis during this critical period.

In terms of genre, a majority of feature and column read aloud articles were found that emphasized reading aloud primarily with narrative text, followed by expository, narrative nonfiction, historical fiction, fairy tales, folk tales, autobiographies, and mysteries. Feature and column read aloud articles in English/Language Arts journals emphasized narrative most frequently, followed by social studies journals, mathematics journals, and science journals. More

specifically, feature and column read aloud articles emphasized narrative in the primary grades and expository in the intermediate grades. The preference on narrative might partially explain a perception by primary teachers that narrative is the preferred genre for reading aloud (Moss & Loh, 2010). It may also partially explain a perception by intermediate and middle grades teachers that expository is the most appropriate genre for reading aloud, especially across the curriculum, because that genre focuses on content area information (Laminack & Wadsworth, 2006).

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Out of a total of 2297 feature and column articles published in selected, national, peer-reviewed journals across the curriculum between 2011 and 2015, only 3% (78) were found to deal with reading aloud. This low number and percentage clearly indicates that reading aloud was little emphasized in this collection of articles. When reading aloud was emphasized, it appeared in more feature than column articles and in more English/Language Arts (ELA) journals than all other journals combined. These articles emphasized the function of reading aloud significantly more as an instructional strategy than an intervention technique, the use of literary over informational text, the primary over intermediate and middle grades grade bands, and narrative as the preferred genre for reading aloud.

These conclusions suggest several implications for future practice on reading aloud. One implication suggests the need for teachers and researchers to think more broadly about the function of reading aloud. This study found that reading aloud was emphasized as an instructional strategy to teach reading with narrative text in the primary grades, and teach content area material across the curriculum with expository text in the intermediate and middle grades. These functions, of course, should be highly emphasized and widely utilized by teachers in the classroom. However, these two functions represent traditional and limited views of reading aloud. Teachers need to think more broadly about the power and potential of reading aloud to all students, in all grades, and across all disciplines. In other words, teachers need a wider lens than the one they might be currently using.

Using a wider lens can help teachers extend traditional views of reading aloud. Specifically, it can help teachers view reading aloud not as a simple instructional strategy, but as a multi-dimensional instructional practice. For example, teachers can think about reading aloud as a practice to model expert reading, to show what good readers do when they read. Specifically, they can use reading aloud to demonstrate what prosody and fluency sound like when expert readers read aloud, as well as demonstrate a variety of fix-up strategies that expert readers use when their comprehension breaks down. Teachers can also use reading aloud to demonstrate the many different strategies expert readers use when reading informational rather than narrative text, as well as strategies expert readers use to organize and synthesize information and develop academic vocabulary from informational text. In addition, teachers can use different variations of read aloud strategies, like think-alouds, interactive

think-alouds, and reverse think-alouds, to demonstrate strategies that expert readers use to comprehend difficult and complex text across the curriculum.

Ultimately, and perhaps most importantly, seeing reading aloud through a wider lens can help parents and teachers use reading aloud to help children and students develop positive dispositions about reading. At home, parents can use reading aloud to help children begin to develop positive dispositions about reading, and in school, teachers can use reading aloud to help students develop more positive and sophisticated dispositions about reading across the curriculum and throughout the grades. Ideally, using a wider lens to think about reading aloud will help teachers more effectively emphasize and utilize this instructional strategy throughout grade levels, across content areas, and with all students.

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