Reading Recovery and Research: Beyond the Intervention

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Reading Recovery® is one of the most well-researched interventions available and has consistently shown positive results for children, yet the continued reactivation of the reading wars at the very least ignores the impact of Reading Recovery and at worst attacks and villainizes it as dangerous or harmful to at least some students. This disparagement is also transferred to universal instruction, especially in some districts that embrace the research of Marie Clay and Reading Recovery. Literacy programs in districts and schools are being questioned and challenged by parent advocacy groups and proponents of particular programs and practices. Practitioners need to be critical consumers of research and understand what it really tells us about effective instruction. This article acknowledges how Clay's research and Reading Recovery research have influenced instruction and learning in early literacy and identifies research from outside of the Reading Recovery community that validates and supports major aspects of Clay's influences on classroom and small-group instruction.

In Reading Recovery articles and presentations, the references are largely internal. Reading Recovery teachers, teacher leaders, trainers, and researchers support their thinking primarily with references to Clay's work and the work of other Reading Recovery educators. While this is appropriate for Reading Recovery, it is not always enough—or even appropriate—when applied to universal classroom and small-group instruction.

Clay (2016) reminds us:

> Because it is an individual intervention delivered only to the children experiencing difficulty, Reading Recovery cannot specify how a classroom pro-gramme for children of wide-ranging abilities should be mounted. One would not design a satisfactory classroom programme by studying only the needs of struggling learners. (p. 2)

Yet, many of the insights Clay had about beginning reading are relevant and actionable in the classroom for both whole-class and small-group instruction. Even more, her

work has had a profound effect on early literacy teaching and learning in general.

Janet Gaffney and Billie Askew, in a biographical sketch of Marie Clay adapted from their 1999 book, *Stirring the Waters Yet Again*, share this on the Reading Recovery Council of North America website:

> Clay's role in developing and guiding the implemen-tation of Reading Recovery is such a demanding and illustrious one that there is a danger that it will mask her accomplishments in other areas, including oral language (Clay, 1971, her first book; and Clay, Gill, Glynn, McNaughton, & Salmor, 1983), writing (Clay 1975, 1987), and teaching-learning interactions that accommodate individuals with diverse starting points and rates of learning in typical primary classes (Clay, 1998). (n.d.)

Across the country, there is currently pressure from the media and the public to adopt a Simple View of Reading (Gough & Tunmer, 1986) and/or implement instructional programs and materials focused on the "science of read-ing." In some states, legislative mandates have codified these concepts (Thomas, 2021). Proponents regularly claim that if you are not using a program based on the science of reading, then you are not providing research-based instruction. As part of this push, there are a number of concepts that are repeatedly misrepresented and deni-grated as inappropriate and even dangerous to children's literacy development. These challenges include attacks on

- complex literacy processing systems in favor of a simple view;

- the use of multiple sources of information, includ-ing but not limited to phonics and morphology;

- the use of connected text carefully chosen by the teacher to meet the needs of the student instead of relying solely on decodable texts;

- building on student strengths and responsive teaching rather than relying on a program approach where every child gets the same instruction regard-

less of what they may already know, or the additional support they might need; and

- a knowledgeable teacher who makes decisions based on the needs of the students as opposed to purchased programs with a specific scope and sequence.

Despite the fact that all of these concepts have been attacked in the past, and those attacks have essentially been proven to be unfounded, they continue to be raised (Thomas, 2021). Publishers and vendors have again jumped on the bandwagon to promote their products as THE answer to any concerns districts, schools, and educators have about literacy instruction, even though those products may have little, if any, independent evidence of effectiveness (Gabriel, 2021).

In contrast to packaged programs, Reading Recovery is an approach for developing teacher expertise that empowers teachers to intervene early before students fall too far behind in foundational literacy skills and strategies. In addition to Reading Recovery, Clay's work encompassed a number of important concepts that are currently being disputed. A critical review of research adds evidence for many of these ideas.

Research: What We Need to Know

As practitioners and critical consumers, there are a few relevant understandings we must know about research. Pearson (as cited in International Literacy Association [ILA], 2019, n.p.) provides six rules for using research. Among those rules, two are particularly relevant:

- When research is applied, it ought to be applied in an even-handed way. No cherry picking!! (ILA, n.p.) You must look at all research, not just the bits that fit your biases.

- When you invoke the mantle of science, you have to accept the full portfolio of methods scientists use (ILA, n.p.)

Literacy practitioners must be critical consumers of research. As critical consumers, one main priority is to recognize the difference between research, opinion, anecdotes, and testimonials. Levitan (2017), neuroscientist and cognitive psychologist, cautions "[j]ournalists sometimes forget that the plural of anecdote is not data; that is, a bunch of stories or casual observations do not make science" (p. 172). This contention is important

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for educators as well, as journalists are not the only ones who confuse opinion, anecdotes, and testimonials with research. Often, blog posts, news articles, and program testimonials or marketing information—rather than research—are offered as supports for instructional processes and products. While blog posts and other kinds of opinion pieces can be informative and can lead us to further investigation, they should not be considered research or taken at face value. There is a reason they are labeled as opinion and not published in peer-reviewed journals. Even if references are included, it is important to examine those references closely. It may be they are simply referencing other opinion pieces. The following questions may be helpful when evaluating the information blogs and other opinion pieces:

- Who is the author and what are their qualifications? Does the author have expertise in the field of literacy instruction? What is the nature of that expertise — a degree, training, work experience in the field?

- Might the author have certain biases? What is the author's motive for providing the information? What does this author have to gain or lose?

- What is the source of the information? Are there references for the information being provided and what are those references? Are references to relevant research included, or are references made to other opinion pieces?

There are a variety of kinds of research and all of them contribute to our understandings in different but significant ways. While all research comes with limitations, some research adds significantly to our knowledge base, while others do not. Literacy researchers Duke and

Martin (2011) remind us that "the educational enterprise is far too complex for one type of research to answer all of our questions or meet all of our needs" (p. 11). They describe different types of research, tell how each adds to our understandings, help us identify high-quality research, outline what research can and cannot do, and provide important questions to ask about research.

Currently, research that is based on randomized controlled trials is being privileged over other types of studies. As with all types of research, there are limitations. For example, a popular position is that scientific research has proven the one best way to teach reading and this is often described as an almost exclusive focus on phonemic awareness and phonics instruction in the early grades. Proponents often argue that this is settled science. However, one thing that we know about science is that it is never settled. Or, as Gabriel (2021) reminds us, "science is tentative, not tyrannical" (p. 64).

Shanahan (2020) describes two types of science, basic and applied. Basic science aims at answering fundamental questions such as how the reading brain works and how we may learn to recognize words, but also clarifies that these studies provide no direct test of any instruction. This is contrasted with applied science which tries to solve practical issues, like how best to teach reading. Shanahan cautions against over-relying on basic science in determining how to best teach reading:

> If our goal is to determine how best to teach reading, then we must rely on data that evaluate the effectiveness of teaching, rather than depending solely or even mainly on studies of reading processes or of other noninstructional phenomena, which are then applied to teaching through analogy or logical deduction or from premature conclusions drawn from empirical investigations that do no more than describe or correlate. (p. S236)

Shanahan (2020) also states: "No matter how scientific basic research may be, ultimately any science of instruction will have to depend on applied studies of teaching, that is, those studies that require smaller inferences to application" (p. S239) cautioning against using basic science alone to prescribe pedagogical practice and policy. Shanahan goes on to discuss what he refers to as "pieces that do not fit" and uses Reading Recovery as an example, referring to it as a hummingbird.

According to Ransford (2008), "[t]he hummingbird is an animal that by all rights shouldn't be able to fly. Its wing movements are very different from that of other birds. But not only can they fly, they're so good at it that they're the only species which can fly backward. They're also one of the few—but not the only—that can hover" (para. 1).

Shanahan considers Reading Recovery to be a hummingbird because, despite the "inconsistency of that program with what is known about effective decoding instruction … qualitative syntheses (e.g., Shanahan & Barr, 1995), meta-analyses (e.g., D'Agostino & Harmey, 2016), and specific high-quality studies (What Works Clearinghouse, 2008) have all concluded that Reading Recovery improves reading" (2020, p. S242).

According to Shanahan, this hummingbird of a program "has no impact on phonological awareness" (Shanahan, 2020, p. S242) and he cites a 2001 study by Chapman, Tunmer, & Prochnow. However, both the analysis of Reading Recovery (2013) by the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) and the single study analysis that looked at the results of the May, et al., (2016) i3 grant study (WWC, 2016) showed a significant effect in the area of alphabetics. The WWC specifically includes phonological awareness in its definition of alphabetics.

Complexity

Clay (2015a) defined reading:

> … a message-getting, problem-solving activity, which increases in power and flexibility the more it is practiced. My definition states that within the directional constraints of the printer's code, language and visual perception are purposefully directed by the reader in some integrated way to the problem of extracting meaning from cues in a text, in sequence, so that the reader brings a maximum of understanding to the author's message. (p. 6)

However, the definition currently being promoted in the media (Hanford, 2018) and through advocacy groups is the Simple View of Reading (SVR). Unlike Clay's understanding of reading as a process, the simple view says that reading is more like a mathematical formula: decoding x oral language = comprehension (Gough & Tunmer, 1986). In practice, the simple view often focuses almost exclusively on the decoding side of the equation. Definitions are important because they provide the understanding around which research questions are developed

and research studies are designed. If reading is conceived of as a simple process, then the research conducted will likely be designed to answer simple questions. For example, a study may be designed to test the acquisition of knowledge of specific skills without testing whether those skills are then transferred to new situations.

Although proponents often claim that the SVR has been proven in a plethora of research studies, more recently they like to say that it isn't really simple; that it includes lots of complexity. The fundamental elements, decoding and oral language, are often broken down using Scarborough's rope (2001) or another model as the visual for this complexity. Perhaps that is because others are questioning whether this theory does enough to explain reading.

The National Research Council (1998) described reading as "a complex developmental challenge that we know to be intertwined with many other developmental accomplishments: attention, memory, language, and motivation, for example. Reading is not only a cognitive psycholinguistic activity but also a social activity" (p. 15). The 2000 National Reading Panel (NRP) report, especially the sections on phonemic awareness and phonics, is frequently invoked as the ultimate proof of the recommended focus on decoding in early literacy learning and the simple view. What is often not acknowledged is that all of the research in that report was conducted before the year 2000, when the report was published. Proponents also often fail to consider the other areas covered in the report, the narrow range of research examined, and the many areas that the NRP did not have enough time to consider.

Since the publication of the NRP report, two other reports have been published by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) in an attempt to broaden the thinking promoted in the NRP report. The first report, *Improving Reading Comprehension in Kindergarten through 3rd Grade: A Practice Guide,* (Shanahan et al., 2010), is focused on comprehension for beginning readers. Comprehension instruction, especially for students in kindergarten through Grade 3, was largely absent during the No Child Left Behind years, despite the inclusion of comprehension as one of what are often referred to as the "five pillars" identified by the NRP. The introduction to the guide states, "[T]he panel believes that students who read with understanding at an early age gain access to a broader range of texts, knowledge, and educational opportunities, making early reading comprehension instruction particu-

larly critical" (Shanahan et al., 2010, p. 5). The report goes on to say "the panel believes decoding instruction alone will not produce desired levels of reading comprehension for all students" (p. 6).

The second document, *Foundational Skills to Support Reading for Understanding in Kindergarten through 3rd Grade* (Foorman et al., 2016) "reviews research published since 2000 and finds new evidence supporting instruction in alphabetics, fluency, and vocabulary, as well as new evidence supporting instruction in additional skills" (p. 1). The document also expands definitions from the NRP report: "*Fluency* includes the automaticity and speed of decoding skills as well as reading accuracy and expression, while *alphabetics* includes additional attention to morphologic skills" (p. 99).

Williams (2019) describes a review of the recommendations in the foundational skills guide and the references used to support those recommendations. The review found that "Research from Reading Recovery is cited 117 times by the authors in support of the panel's four recommendations" even though Reading Recovery is never mentioned in the document. However, it is important to note that, in addition to the Reading Recovery research references, there is significant additional research that supports the complexity of learning to read within the 2016 Foorman et al. document.

Cartwright and Duke (2019) advise "[P]olicy and practice suffer when understandings of reading are too simplistic" (p. 7). They use driving as a metaphor for explaining the complexity of reading, the different bodies of knowledge, and for what happens when we read. For example:

- Monitoring your reading is like monitoring the road and the dashboard as you drive.

- Reading different texts is like driving on different roads.

- While the wheels, which represent decoding and word recognition, are necessary to make the vehicle move, there are many other aspects that need to be a part of the process.

In 2020, the National Academy of Education (NAEd) published the results of their federally funded, decade long, $120 million study known as the *Reading for Understanding Initiative* (Pearson et al., 2020). Key findings are summarized and include "(a) the importance of emphasizing comprehension in pursuit of knowledge and insight; (b) redoubling our efforts to enhance language

development, both oral and written, for students across the age-span; and (c) changing the culture of classrooms to emphasize collaboration, deep comprehension, critique, and the generative use of comprehension" (NAEd, n.d., para. 2). These findings confirm the importance of teaching comprehension not just relying on the child's current level of oral language for understanding text.

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While this research focused on comprehension, the SVR was the theory under which the research was conducted. In an article focused on the research carried out under the grant program, Cervetti et al. (2020) raised some cautions about the simple view. The research validated the SVR, but also noted challenges to using it, essentially stating that it did not go far enough in helping to understand reading comprehension or diagnosing reading difficulties in young children. The authors explain that the research "rendered the Simple View of Reading more complex by proposing different models of how the broad components of listening comprehension and decoding interact at various stages of development" (p. 4). Perhaps the reason that the SVR was found to be insufficient was because it "was originally intended to provide a broad model for understanding the role of decoding in reading comprehension and to identify potential sources of reading disabilities" (Gough & Tunmer, 1986, p. 1). It was never intended to answer broader questions about reading.

Clay (2015b) believed "[i]f literacy teaching only brings a simple theory to a set of complex activities, then the learner has to bridge the gaps created by the theoretical simplification. The lowest literacy achievers will have extreme difficulty bridging any gaps in the teaching programme and linking together things that have been taught separately" (p. 105). The SVR is not necessarily wrong, it just does not go far enough to explain the complexity of literacy learning. In turn, a complex theory of literacy learning that considers a broader range of influences, including student language and the importance of comprehension, would be supported.

Reciprocity of Reading and Writing

Clay (2016) describes the contributions of writing to literacy learning:

> During early literacy learning, writing helps the young reader to analyze some of the detail in print.
>
> • Fosters a slow analysis of print, from left to right
>
> • Highlights letter forms
>
> • Coaches the eyes to scan letters in a word from left to right
>
> • Forces the learner to attend to different levels of analysis (features and letters) and to attend to the importance of letter sequence
>
> • Requires the eye and hand to coordinate awareness and actions
>
> • Puts the learner under pressure to group letters so he can get the message down quickly
>
> • Consistently, but subtly, seduces the learner to switch between the different levels of letters, clusters, words, phrases and messages (p. 77)

Anderson and Briggs (2011), provided additional information on the reciprocity between reading and writing including reciprocity in relation to meaning, structure, grapho-phonic information, and self-correcting. Unfortunately, this reciprocity between reading and writing is not always acknowledged. In 2014, the International Dyslexia Association (IDA) adopted the term "structured literacy" to describe instructional approaches that teach students explicit and systematic strategies for decoding and spelling words. Currently, Structured Literacy™ (IDA, 2019) is being marketed as the answer to issues with literacy learning in the United States. Teacher education programs are being pressured to revise courses to focus exclusively on structured literacy using the IDA's *Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading* (2018).

The IDA website includes a letter to members stating: "The term *'Structured Literacy'* is not designed to replace Orton Gillingham, Multi-Sensory, or other terms in common use. It is an umbrella term designed to describe all of the programs that teach reading in essentially the same way. In our marketing, this term will help us simplify our message and connect our successes. *'Structured Literacy'* will help us sell what we do so well" (IDA, 2014, para. 6).

In a 2019 introductory guide, the IDA continues: "This approach is characterized by the provision of systematic, explicit instruction that integrates listening, speaking, reading, and writing and emphasizes the structure of language across the speech sound system (phonology), the writing system (orthography), the structure of sentences (syntax), the meaningful parts of words (morphology), the relationships among words (semantics), and the organization of spoken and written discourse" (p. 6). Yet, in practice, writing appears to refer largely to basic skills including spelling words accurately, penmanship, and sentence structure.

Evidence of the importance of writing to support and extend reading instruction dispute this simple view. Weiser and Mathes (2011) examined eleven studies and found that "struggling readers and spellers receiving encoding instruction integrated with decoding instruction were indeed able to make significant gains in phoneme awareness, alphabetic decoding, word reading, spelling, fluency, and comprehension" (p. 190). More recently, Graham and his colleagues (2018) conducted a meta-analysis of programs that balance reading and writing instruction, including 47 studies, and concluded: "These findings demonstrated that literacy programs balancing reading and writing instruction can strengthen reading and writing and that the two skills can be learned together profitably" (p. 279).

The ILA (2020) research advisory, *Teaching Writing to Improve Reading Skills,* examined and synthesized meta-analyses of scientific studies where writing, reading, or both were taught and concluded that "[c]ollectively, writing and the teaching of writing enhance not only students' comprehension and fluency when reading but also their recognition and decoding of words in text" (p. 2). Again, there is adequate evidence to support Clay's position that "[w]riting can contribute to the building of almost every kind of inner control of literacy learning that is needed by the successful reader" (1998, p. 130).

Oral Language

Clay (2001) writes: "If we harness the established power of children's oral language to literacy learning from the beginning, *so that new literacy knowledge and new oral language processing power move forward together, linked and patterned from the start,* that will surely be more powerful"

(p. 95). Although oral language is invoked as an important element in conversations around the SVR and the science of reading, in practice, as with writing, it is often ignored or marginalized.

In *Hard Words*, the documentary which is often recognized as the catalyst for most recently reigniting the reading wars, Emily Hanford (2018) actually stated that "[l]anguage comprehension is what develops naturally in children when people talk to them. … Decoding is what kids have to be taught" (p. 13). Hanford is essentially saying that oral language does not need to be a focus of instruction. However, several of the documents referred to earlier in regards to the complexity of literacy refute this idea and also provide considerable support for the importance of oral language in literacy instruction. It is also important to note Hanford is a journalist, not a researcher or educator, yet she continually argues as to knowing the "right way" to teach reading.

Shanahan et al., (2010) includes a recommendation for guiding students through focused, high-quality discussion on the meaning of text, even in the primary grades. Foorman, et al, (2016) includes a recommendation for teaching academic language skills. They contend that "academic language is a critical component of oral language" (p. 6) and define academic language skills to include the following:

- Articulating ideas beyond the immediate context (inferential language)

- Clearly relating a series of events, both fictional and nonfictional (narrative language)

- Comprehending and using a wide range of academic vocabulary and grammatical structures, such as pronoun references (p. 6).

In addition, the NAEd Reading for Understanding project delved deeply into the area of oral language in their studies. One of the key findings was the importance of "(b) redoubling our efforts to enhance language development, both oral and written, for students across the age-span" (NAEd, n.d., para. 2).

Cervetti, et al. (2020) noted "this research has pointed to the importance of early oral language development and, thus, potential limitations of an exclusive focus on decoding in early reading instruction. In addition, the research

has suggested that language is best conceptualized as a constellation of closely related skills and knowledge that are likely best developed together from the earlier through the later years of schooling" (p. 5).

Alphabet knowledge at preschool and kindergarten is often cited as a key predictor of later reading success (National Early Literacy Panel, 2009, p. vii). However, the NAEd research also suggests that a student's oral language level may be a better predictor of later reading comprehension than low letter knowledge in preschool and kindergarten. The NAEd project concludes that "these findings point to the significance of early oral language for later reading comprehension and suggest that language development early in school may set the stage for later success with comprehension" (Pearson et al., 2020, p. 49). Even more, Clay's teaching on the importance of oral language has been supported by additional research, as noted in the following:

> So my discussion proceeds on these assumptions: that literacy learning includes reading and writing, that the aim is to have children reading a variety of texts using a range of flexible strategies (including but not restricted to attacking unknown words phoneme by phoneme), and composing simple messages in writing. As children work towards this end goal, oral language is both a resource and a beneficiary. (Clay, 2001, p. 95)

Teacher Expertise

Zhao (2020) used the analogy that educators are becoming "teaching machines," being told exactly what to teach as well as when and how to teach it. The media has picked up on calls from advocates for simple answers to issues with reading proficiency. A single "right way" to teach reading that is focused on vendor products is being heavily promoted as discussed earlier. The concern with this is that research clearly tells us that the quality of the teacher and their decision making in response to the unique needs of their students is what makes the difference for students, especially those who have difficulty.

Clay's often cited quote, "If a child is a struggling reader or writer the conclusion must be that we have not yet discovered a way to help him learn" (2016, p. 166), reminds us that good teaching is heavily connected to teacher expertise. The teacher must be able to analyze

> *The teacher must be able to analyze what the student can do, understand what the student needs to learn next, and provide appropriate instruction for optimal student learning.*

what the student can do, understand what the student needs to learn next, and provide appropriate instruction for optimal student learning. This is often referred to as "responsive teaching" and its importance has been borne out in numerous research studies over many years.

During the 1990s, Michael Pressley, Richard Allington, and their colleagues examined multiple classrooms across the U.S. to determine what made some classrooms more effective than others. Among their findings, published in a number of peer-reviewed articles and several books, is the following:

> [Primary-grade teachers] in the most effective schools supplemented explicit phonics instruction with coaching in which they taught students strategies for applying phonics to their everyday reading. Additionally, more of the most accomplished teachers and teachers in the most effective schools employed higher-level questions in discussions of text, and the most accomplished teachers were more likely to ask students to write in response to reading. In all of the most effective schools, reading was clearly a priority at both the school and classroom levels. (Taylor et al., 2000, p. 121)

Peter Johnston's (2003) work, which has taught us much about how expert teachers use language, grew out of his work with Pressley and colleagues on teacher effectiveness. Johnston studied successful literacy teachers by noticing, recording, and analyzing the "powerful and subtle ways these teachers used language, and began to explore its significance" (p. 2). He focused "on those things teachers say (and don't say) whose combined effect changes the literate lives of their students" (p. 2). His work has had profound influence on the importance of the language that teachers use. Similarly, in research for the book, *Professional Capital*, Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) found that the one

variable that has consistently proven effective is teacher expertise. They assert that honoring and developing the capability of all teachers is critical for the future of the teaching profession:

> The essence of professionalism is the ability to make discretionary judgments. … If a teacher always has to consult a teacher's manual, or follow the lesson line-by-line in a script, you know that teacher is not a professional, either because he or she doesn't know how to judge or isn't being allowed to. (p. 93)

No program can replace an expert teacher. It is the skillful teacher's responsiveness to the needs of the student, rather than the dictates of a program, that will have the greatest positive impact on student learning. In the Reading Recovery i3 study, one of the questions explored was regarding instructional strength. Why was the Reading Recovery intervention more successful in some places than in others? The researchers concluded that two

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critical factors were *deliberateness*, "an encompassing commitment to thoughtful practice" and *instructional dexterity* which was defined as "the flexible application of deep skill" (May et al., 2016, p. 91). The best Reading Recovery teachers exhibit these characteristics, and it is likely this commitment to the teacher as expert decision maker that really sets Reading Recovery apart. Experience and evidence provide support that these factors also apply to instructional settings beyond the Reading Recovery tutoring situation.

Conclusion

Marie Clay's work has taught us much about what is important to effective early literacy learning, especially for beginning readers and those who may experience difficulty acquiring early literacy. As Gaffney and Askew (n.d.) note in their biographical sketch:

> A major contribution of Marie Clay's has been to change the conversation about what is possible for individual learners when the teaching permits different routes to be taken to desired outcomes. This conversation is now embedded in diverse international educational systems. Our thinking has been stretched in ways that make some former assumptions about the lowest-achieving children intolerable. We now live inside of a new agreement about what is possible…an agreement, a paradigm that did not previously exist and that will shape future actions and conversations.

It would be detrimental to see this commitment to students stifled by the search for simple solutions to valid concerns of literacy learning in the U.S. and elsewhere. Additionally, current conversations around literacy learning seem to be focused on looking at many learners as "broken" and in need of being "fixed" rather than seeing their strengths and questioning how we can build on those strengths. As Clay (2016) said, "in the end it is the individual adaptation made by the expert teacher to that child's idiosyncratic competencies and history of past experiences that starts him on the upward climb to effective literacy performance" (p. 196).

Clay's work has exhibited a broad sphere of influence spanning far wider than the Reading Recovery intervention. It is imperative for educators, policymakers, and beyond to be critical consumers of research and to constantly search for answers to questions regarding children's literacy teaching and learning. There are no quick fixes, simple solutions, or one-size-fits-all answers to complex processes such as reading and writing. It is the knowledgeable, expert teacher who recognizes each student's strengths, respects their differences, and is responsive to their emerging needs who will make the difference for student success, especially for those learners who struggle. Only by being critical consumers of information and research and accepting the complexity of literacy teaching and learning will we see lasting, large-scale impacts on student literacy achievement.
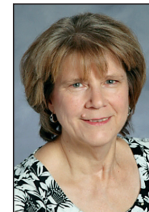
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