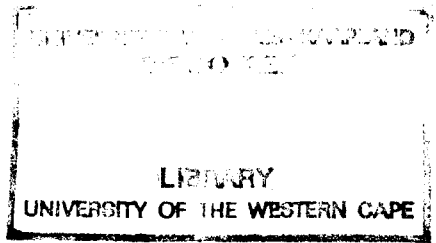


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**AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE IMPLEMENTATION  
OF / COOPERATIVELY PLANNED RESOURCE-BASED LEARNING  
FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF TEACHERS**

**A THESIS**

**Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and  
Research in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
the**

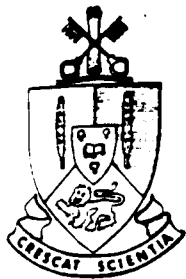
**Degree of Master of Education  
in Educational Administration**

**by**

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**Saskatoon, Saskatchewan**

**March 23, 1990**



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## ABSTRACT

This study investigates from the teachers' perspective how the teachers' experiences with cooperatively planned resource-based learning/teaching had influenced their use of this teaching method. The four schools studied were from a school system which had been encouraging its teachers to implement this teaching strategy for seven years. During that period Saskatchewan Education had also expressed its commitment to implementing this teaching strategy.

Since the emphasis in this study was upon the subjective meaning and the factors which affected teachers' implementation of cooperatively planned resource-based learning/teaching and the extent to which the teachers employed this teaching method, on-site semi-structured interviews were used to collect the data as well as participant observation in each of the school libraries.

Subjective meanings held by the teachers interviewed varied from commitment to the innovation to fear that the students would not learn anything if the teacher were to use this teaching strategy. The degree of integration of the innovation into the teaching repertoire, also, differed among teachers as well as among schools. Variation was found in the teachers' perceptions of the innovation itself, its meaning and demands, and school level factors. Administrative

support, teacher interaction and benefits to students were the school level factors which were particularly significant.

In each of the four schools, teachers who had implemented the innovation had plans for continuation. However, continuation was threatened in schools where there had been a principal change or would have a new principal in the new school term.

Findings from this study suggest that school systems which wish to achieve implementation of an innovation must provide leadership, encouragement and support at all levels. In addition, they must guard against threats to the innovation to ensure its continuation.

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Student advisors play a critical role in guiding a student through the research process. I would like to thank Earle Newton for the time he spent guiding me through each step of this study, reading my work and discussing it with me.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### THE PROBLEM

With the introduction of the Common Essential Learnings as well as new resource-based curricula by the Saskatchewan Department of Education (1987, 1988a, 1988b), teachers are expected to implement resource-based learning strategies. The implementation of cooperatively planned resource-based learning strategies had been an expectation throughout the past seven years in the school system in which this research was done. Since resource-based learning represented a major change in the use of the school library and the working relationship between the teacher-librarian and the teacher, the implementation of resource-based learning in all grade levels of these schools has been a gradual process. This study is an examination of this change process from the classroom teachers' perspective.

#### Background

Although all school libraries in the system had already been staffed by teacher-librarians for five years and some teachers and teacher-librarians had been using cooperatively planned resource-based learning techniques, a major initiative to implement this

teaching strategy began in November, 1982 when Ken Haycock, the library consultant for the Vancouver School system, and his wife, Carol-Ann, a practicing teacher-librarian, presented a workshop promoting the use of cooperatively planned resource-based learning teaching methods. The ideas presented in this workshop were adapted by the library consultant, the coordinator of library services and the Learning Resource Centre Advisory Committee and presented in workshops to the principals of the schools and to the teacher-librarians who did not attend the workshop. Following these workshops a major initiative began in the system to implement cooperative planning between teacher and teacher-librarian using resource-based learning strategies.

In 1982 the Ministry of Education in Ontario published the document Partners in Action: The Library Resource Centre in the School Curriculum which clearly articulated the meaning of resource-based learning and explained the roles of the teacher, the teacher-librarian and the principal in implementing this teaching strategy. After a copy of this document was purchased for each school in the system, principals were encouraged to use it as a guide to developing effective Learning Resource Centre (LRC) usage in their schools.

In 1983-84 the LRC Advisory Committee produced a learning skills continuum for K-8. This learning skills continuum outlined the sequential skills which should be incorporated into resource-based units taught at each grade level. In the fall of 1984 teachers and principals throughout the system attended related inservice sessions. All schools were expected to begin implementation after they had attended the inservice.

In the spring of 1985 the principals and teacher-librarians attended an inservice session on the School Library Needs Assessment (Meadley & Thompson, 1986) package which had recently been developed by the Curriculum Development Division of Saskatchewan Education. The needs assessment provided a framework for evaluating the level of usage which existed in the provinces school libraries and was developed to be used in conjunction with the Educational Development Fund. Many schools in the system used the needs assessment package to evaluate their school libraries and to plan ways to improve their effectiveness.

The Saskatchewan Association of Educational Media Specialists (now, Saskatchewan School Library Association), a special subject committee of the Saskatchewan Teachers Federation, published The 4th R: Resource-based Learning; The Library Resource Centre in the School Curriculum in 1986. Principals were

Introduced to this document in the fall of 1987 and were encouraged to promote resource-based learning in the schools.

Saskatchewan Education published Resource-Based Learning: Policy, Guidelines and Responsibilities for Saskatchewan Learning Resource Centres in November, 1987 and Learning Resource Centres in Saskatchewan: A Guide for Development in March, 1988 which explained the role of the Learning Resource Centre in the core curriculum.

In August, 1988 Saskatchewan Education published Understanding the Common Essential Learning: A Handbook for Teachers. This document identified the importance of using cooperatively planned resource-based learning in developing students who could take responsibility for their own learning and supported the initiative of the school system studied. Since this school system first began to implement cooperatively planned resource-based learning, much more emphasis on this teaching strategy has developed throughout the province and the country. The system continues to work toward full implementation of resource-based learning in all of its schools by providing inservice sessions to administrators and teachers. In 1989 a workshop on resource-based learning was held for vice-principals and their teacher-librarians. To further emphasize the

Importance of implementing resource-based teaching/ learning strategies, this system has included the instructional technique in the developmental supervision of teachers. By including in developmental supervision the assessment of teachers' use of this teaching strategy, the school system is indicating its expectation that cooperatively planned resource-based teaching will become part of a teacher's instructional repertoire.

In addition, during the 1989-90 term teachers and teacher-librarians attended inservice sessions focusing on the new social-studies and health-lifestyles curricula. Since these new programs are based upon resource-based learning strategies, the inservice again emphasized the instructional partnership between teachers and teacher-librarians as outlined in the Core Curriculum and the Common Essential Learnings (Saskatchewan Education, 1988a, pp. 50-57).

#### Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to investigate from the teachers' perspective how teachers' experiences with cooperatively planned resource-based learning had influenced their use of this teaching method. The results from this research would enable administrators to plan future change strategies to encourage more

teachers to adopt resource-based learning and cooperative planning techniques.

The following questions, based on implementation research (Fullan, 1982; Miles, 1983; Huberman, 1983), were used to investigate the experiences of the teachers:

1. What subjective meanings about resource-based learning did the teachers hold in terms of required changes in beliefs, materials and teaching strategies?
2. To what degree have resource-based learning techniques been integrated into their teaching repertoire?
3. How did various factors affect the implementation of resource-based learning strategies?
4. What are the teachers' plans for continuing to use resource-based learning techniques in 1989-90?

#### Definition of Terms

Resource-based learning/teaching is a method in which teachers and teacher-librarians cooperatively plan and teach units of study which involve students in a meaningful use of a wide variety of print, non-print

and human resources (Ontario Ministry of Education, 1982; SAEMS, 1986 and Saskatchewan Education, 1988).

Saskatchewan Education (1988b) defined resource-based learning as having two sections: 1) a learning skills continuum component and 2) a cooperative planning and teaching component. The learning skills continuum is a set of processing skills used to reach certain designated learning goals. These skills are taught within the context of a unit of study in which the student can practise the skills.

In cooperative planning and teaching the teacher and the teacher-librarian work together as partners in planning a unit of study which incorporates a variety of resources into the curriculum. The teacher brings expertise in the content area and the learning needs of her/his students and the teacher-librarian provides expertise in resources. As partners, the teacher and the teacher-librarian plan, teach and evaluate the unit of study.

The operational definition for this study is that resource-based teaching/learning is an approach which involves a teacher and teacher-librarian in cooperatively planning and teaching a unit incorporating a variety of print and non-print materials. Any study skills required are taught within the context of the unit. The terms resource-based



teaching and resource-based learning are used interchangeably throughout this study.

### Significance of This Study

Saskatchewan Education has clearly delineated its expectation for the use of cooperatively planned resource-based learning in Understanding the Common Essential Learnings (Saskatchewan Education, 1988a, pp. 50-57) and in Learning Resource Centres in Saskatchewan (Saskatchewan Education, 1988b). With the implementation of the Common Essential Learnings in Saskatchewan, administrators in schools throughout the province will be encouraging all of their teachers to incorporate resource-based learning strategies into their teaching repertoire. An understanding of what influences teachers to adopt and become committed to the use of resource-based learning will provide administrators with possible strategies for further implementation in their schools.

### Assumptions

One of the assumptions of this study is that the information received from the teachers interviewed was valid. The study assumes, too, that teachers' responses were grounded in their own subjective meaning of the change. That is, their responses reflected what resource-based

teaching/learning strategies meant to them in terms of the learning of their own students and the work involved in using this strategy.

### Limitations of the Study

This study took place during the month of May, 1989. Since the end of the school term was approaching, teachers' thoughts about resource-based teaching/learning may have been different than they would have been at another time of the year. They were able to reflect upon the ways they had used cooperatively planned resource-based learning throughout the year, to assess their successes and failures, and to consider their plans for using it in the coming year. The willingness of the teachers to be open and to share their feelings about resource-based teaching/learning was another limitation of this study. Some teachers may have been unwilling to share their reasons for not using resource-based learning since it was a system expectation that they would be incorporating it into their teaching strategies.

### Delimitations

Four schools from the same school system were involved in the study. Each school had a full time teacher-librarian in the school which limited the study to schools of a population of 350 students or more.

Schools with a full time teacher-librarian were chosen because since some schools with a half time teacher-librarian do not have a library technician, the teacher-librarian is often forced to assume more of a technical role in the LRC.

One week was spent in each school during which teachers in grades three, five and eight were interviewed. In order to interview teachers from the three different levels within the school, these grades were chosen. Interviews were also conducted with the teacher-librarian and the principal in the school.

### Overview of the Thesis

In this chapter, background information about the problem has been delineated as well as the problem and the questions used to gain insight into the problem. Definitions of terms, the significance of the study, assumptions, limitations, and delimitations used in the study were also presented.

Chapter II reviews the literature relevant to the problem of this study, while Chapter III describes the design and the research methodology that was used. Chapter IV includes the presentation and analysis of data from the study. Chapter V, the final chapter, is devoted to a summary of research findings and implications for practice and further research.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In this chapter the literature relevant to the stated purpose of this study is reviewed. The first section focuses on resource-based learning/teaching, the second section surveys change literature related to implementation of an innovation, and the final section examines the teacher in the change process.

#### Resource-based Learning/Teaching

Meaning. The philosophical framework for the development and implementation of a resource-based program is cooperative planning and teaching between the teacher and the teacher-librarian (Haycock, 1988). Cooperatively planned resource-based teaching contributes another teaching strategy to the teachers' repertoire. The Saskatchewan School Library Association (1989) document The School Library and Cooperative Planning stated that "cooperative teaching and planning provides the process for translating resource-based curriculum concepts into practical learning experiences for students" (p. 3).

Steps in Resource-based Teaching. Loertscher (1988) indicated that the resource-based teaching/learning method is comprised of four steps. The first step occurs when the teacher shares unit objectives with the teacher-librarian

and is willing to revise these objectives as needed.

Haycock (1988) believed that "planning operationalizes the cooperative partnership" (p. 31). She explained that planning is a priority for which time must be set aside. When a scheduled planning time occurs after an initial contact, according to Haycock, there is "think time" for both partners to prepare for the planning session.

Preparation is the second step in the resource-based teaching/learning method. During this stage, materials to be used are selected, the activities to use those materials are prepared, and the product to be created by the students is determined. The teacher brings knowledge of the students and knowledge of the content area to the planning session while the teacher-librarian contributes knowledge of the resources and knowledge of the information skills (Haycock, 1988). During the preparation stage, the teacher and the teacher-librarian establish the minimum expectations for the processes of gathering information, recording and presenting information to insure success for all students; however, more capable students will be expected to work beyond the minimum expectations to reach their own potential.

Haycock (1988) warned that teachers who are inexperienced in using cooperatively planned resource-based teaching sometimes believe that their responsibilities end once the planning stage is completed. If the teacher-librarian is also a novice, s/he might assume full

responsibility for the preparation and teaching of the unit after the planning stage. If information skills and resource centre experiences are to be integrated into the curriculum, it is essential that the teacher and the teacher-librarian remain partners throughout the unit. Although the partnership may not be shared equally, to be effective it must have been shared.

The third stage of a cooperatively planned resource-based unit outlined by Loertscher (1988) is the teaching of the unit. In some cases the teacher and the teacher-librarian teach as a team. At other times parts of the unit will be taught individually by either the teacher or the teacher-librarian. Although the teacher-librarian does not spend the same amount of time teaching as the teacher, students are aware of the team approach being used.

Evaluation of the unit is the final stage of cooperatively planned resource-based teaching. Loertscher (1988) stated that during this stage not only are the students' learning activities evaluated but the teacher and the teacher-librarian evaluate the success of the unit, the effectiveness of the activities and the adequacy of the materials.

Variety of Media. Resource-based teaching, which is the opposite of the textbook/lecture method of instruction, employs a variety of media formats and technologies to achieve the instructional objectives (Loertscher, 1988).

Since resource-based teaching requires the use of a variety of media, the LRC has a direct impact on learning, whatever the topic of the unit, when this teaching method is used. In addition to the use of a variety of media, another feature of resource-based teaching is that it fits well with many models of teaching.

Prerequisites. There are several prerequisites for successful implementation of cooperatively planned resource-based learning. One requirement is a LRC timetable which is flexible to allow teachers and the teacher-librarian to schedule blocks of time for working on a unit of study which requires the use of resources (Davies, 1979 & SSLA, 1989). When the LRC is flexibly scheduled, a teacher can book his/her class into the LRC for an appropriate length of time to work on a cooperatively planned resource-based unit with the teacher-librarian.

In addition to a flexibly scheduled LRC, successful resource-based teaching requires a teacher who is willing to use a variety of media, a LRC containing enough resources to accommodate resource-based units and a teacher-librarian who is willing to work in partnership with teachers on cooperatively planned and taught resource-based units (Loertscher, 1988). In order to achieve a successful partnership, both partners must know and respect the other's skills, philosophy of education, and responsibilities (Ontario Education, 1982). The final requirement for

success is a cooperatively developed, sequential program for teaching learning and research skills necessary to use materials effectively (Ontario Education, 1982). These skills must be taught within the context of a meaningful unit of study.

According to Haycock (1985), the classroom teacher is responsible for the effectiveness of resource-based learning. If the teacher chooses not to involve the teacher-librarian in planning and teaching of research and study skills as outlined in curriculum guides, s/he assumes the responsibility for the development of those skills in her/his students. However, when the teacher chooses to work cooperatively with the teacher-librarian, not only the planning but the preparation and implementation of programs are shared by both partners.

Advantages. Several advantages to using cooperatively planned resource-based teaching techniques have been identified. Loertscher (1988) indicated that the most important advantage for the student is the increased learning which occurs when resource-based teaching strategies are employed. Other advantages for the student mentioned by Loertscher are that a variety of learning styles are accommodated, the student's thinking ability increased, creativity and inquiry grew, and the students showed more interest in learning. Haycock (1988) added that



cooperatively planned resource-based teaching benefits the student in the following ways:

- (a) maximizes the use of all school resources to the best possible effect for the student population;
- (b) ensures the integration of information skills instruction and application, developmentally, across the curriculum;
- (c) guarantees successful learning experiences for all children (p. 32).

Loertscher (1988) believed that the teacher who employs resource-based teaching strategies enjoys certain advantages as well. Using this teaching technique adds variety to the teacher's day, provides the opportunity for the teacher to share teaching responsibilities with the teacher-librarian, allows the teacher an opportunity to help the students who are having difficulty with regular classroom procedures and offers the teacher the opportunity to be creative.

Disadvantages. Several disadvantages of using cooperatively planned resource-based teaching strategies were also pointed out by Loertscher (1988). Time is always in short supply in most schools and cooperatively planned resource-based teaching requires planning time. Since cooperatively planned resource-based learning requires creativity, imagination, flexibility, and cooperative strategies, it is a more demanding method than the traditional textbook/lecture method. Some teachers might consider this method more work and "risky" and prefer to continue using the traditional textbook approach which

provides security, is usually easier to organize and allows more control over students and content.

Factors. Haycock (1985) contended that the factors which influence teachers to use cooperatively planned resource-based teaching methods are "involvement in program planning with the teacher-librarian and team teaching, inservice program organized by and/or put on by the teacher-librarian, administrative support for the library program, and the personality and qualifications of the teacher-librarian" (p. 104). He viewed the teacher-librarian's role as that of an initiator and change agent who attempts to get teachers to change their teaching strategies and to adopt cooperative planned resource-based teaching methods.

However, Brown (1988) asserted that such a view is a naive notion of change and that to expect the teacher-librarian in a school to be responsible single-handedly for changing teaching practices in a school is unrealistic. She emphasized that this is a complex change which requires the active support of the principal as well as total staff involvement. Because, according to Brown, cooperatively planned resource-based teaching requires not only a change in materials used but a change in teaching strategies, it requires a change in teachers' beliefs about the way students learn. Teachers, who believe that students only learn when information is presented to

them, would experience difficulty using this teaching strategy. To get these teachers to change might require showing the teacher that students could learn when the teacher is the guide and creator of the learning experience rather than the information giver.

Brown (1988) also indicated that for teachers to implement this teaching strategy would require teachers to view teaching not as an isolated activity where they have complete autonomy in their classroom but as a partnership with the teacher-librarian and the LRC as an extension of the classroom. She also suggested that for many teachers planning exact objectives for a learning activity to meet particular needs would be a new experience, and if cooperatively planned resource-based was to be successfully implemented, these teachers require support.

Summary. Cooperatively planned resource-based teaching is a complex change for teachers because it requires them not only to change their beliefs about how students learn but to change their teaching materials and teaching practices. In addition to these changes, a teacher must also work in partnership with the teacher-librarian which requires them to relinquish some of their classroom autonomy. Since cooperatively planned resource-based teaching/learning is a complex change, the change process plays an important role in determining whether it is fully implemented.