

Beliefs And Attitudes of Pre-Service Elementary School Teachers About Nonfiction Children's Literature

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Abstract

Children's non-fiction books have been revitalised in recent decades and occupy a very important place in children's literature. Research shows the benefits of reading them, yet they are hardly used in primary school classrooms. It is necessary to determine the reasons for this contradiction and whether university education affects pre-service teachers' beliefs about reading non-fiction books. Therefore, in this paper we present an analysis of the beliefs and attitudes of pre-service primary school teachers about reading non-fiction books. The sample consisted of 30 pre-service teachers (n=30) and the data collection instruments were the semi-structured interview and the analysis of two productions, with mainly qualitative procedures. The general attitude of the pre-service teachers towards non-fiction books is positive. They are attracted by the visual appearance of the non-fiction book and value the curiosity that reading it fosters, as well as the simplified access to reading decoding through visual aids and other accessibility elements. They consider it important to introduce it in their classrooms, but they conceive fiction as more beneficial for the creation of reading habits and for the development of reading and writing skills. The pre-service teachers' beliefs about non-fiction reading show the need for prior university training to mitigate the gap between their positive attitude towards non-fiction books and their absence in the classroom. This conclusion needs to be supported by a larger sample to determine the reasons why informative reading with non-fiction books still does not occupy the same place in the classroom as it does in the research.

Keywords: Reading, information literacy, non-fiction books, children's literature, teacher beliefs