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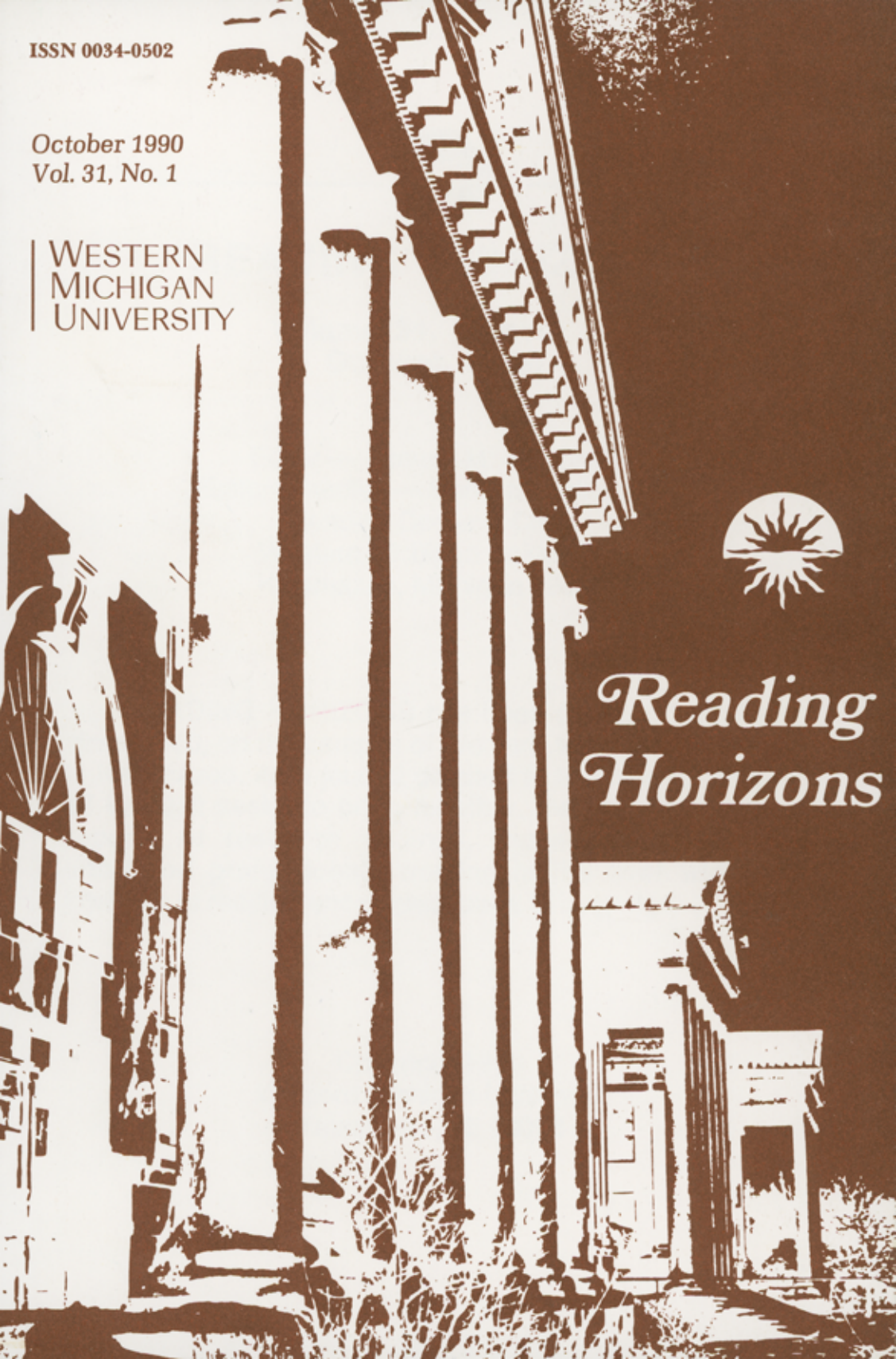
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Kalamazoo, Michigan 49008

READING HORIZONS has been published quarterly since 1960, on the campus of Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo. As a journal devoted to teaching reading at all levels it seeks to bring together, through articles and reports of research findings, those concerned and interested professionals working in the ever widening horizons of reading and related areas of language.

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Adopting a Whole Language Program for Learning Disabled Students: A Case Study

**Pamela J. Farris
Carol Andersen**

The study of how children learn has moved from examining the accumulation of isolated pieces of knowledge to the current research position that it is appropriate to study children's acquisition of complex subject matter and development of learning strategies. Resnick and Klopfer (1989) believe that "[k]nowledge is acquired not from information communicated and memorized but from information that students elaborate, question, and use." As researchers become concerned with how students develop and utilize learning strategies, Resnick (Brandt, 1989) warns that "strategies will not be effective unless there is also attention to self-monitoring and motivation."

Classroom instruction for many children is dictated by teachers and school districts depending upon textbooks as guides. Wilkerson (1988) cautioned against such reliance upon textbooks in her response to *Becoming a Nation of Readers*, stating that "...continuity and quality control through textbooks, and accountability based on tests that have been denounced as inadequate, do not help us accomplish our goal in excellence in literacy education." Unfortunately, the desire for control over the sequence and

accountability of learning often continues to have priority over the student's role in learning when the emphasis remains upon the product rather than the process of learning.

The whole language approach is a contrast to the teacher and curriculum centered educational view in that the students and their needs become the heart of schooling (Reutzel and Hollingsworth, 1988). Reading strategy instruction, building upon students' prior knowledge and language strengths, is a part of this meaning centered curriculum as students are taught to integrate learning and become flexible in their application of efficient and effective reading strategies (Slaughter, 1988).

This article is a case study of a learning disabilities teacher who struggled with the traditional instructional approaches and who adopted a literature-based, whole language program. Her reflective comments are presented along with references from the literature of whole language researchers and theorists.

Rationale

As a teacher of learning disabled junior high school students, I have seen many students who have had difficulty in learning to read, comprehending what they read, and having no desire to read. Over the years, I have experienced a growing dissatisfaction with the behavioral approaches in which much of my training and educational background have emphasized almost to the exclusion of any other methods. The philosophy of the whole language approach is one which is diametrically opposed, but which holds the promises of all new approaches — fresh excitement and a possible solution.

In special education, students' problems with reading have been assumed to be due to a deficiency in previous skills necessary for reading, and remediation has included the use of precise teaching methods in specific skill areas. The basic premise has been that once students know the parts, they will be able to combine the parts to form a whole. In my experience, there has been little transfer from isolated drills to actual reading, where skills must be integrated.

The predominant reading instructional technique in regular classrooms has been the skills-oriented and teacher-centered basal reader. In special education for many years, students' reading problems have been met with rigid, structured methods to insure that the students acquire and master the missing skills or pieces of knowledge that are essential for comprehension to occur. However, Reutzel and Hollingsworth (1988) recently stressed in an article that "[t]he solution to the problem for many learning disabled children is to put language together again for the LD learner[s] and help [them] rediscover the meaningful relationships that exist in our language."

Basal readers contain a wide range of selections written by well-known children's authors; however, due to the need to control the length of the selections, the majority of the selections are reduced or modified to meet publishers' specifications. This results in shortened sentences and a limited vocabulary as less frequently used words are exchanged for those more commonly used. According to Ken Goodman (1988), "In the process of controlling the vocabulary and syntax, the style and wit of the original is lost and the language becomes much less natural and thus less predictable." He goes on to state that, "[w]hat we now know is that authentic, sensible, and functional language is the easiest to read and to learn to read. When we tamper with

narrative language, try to control the vocabulary, or tinker with texts to lower their readability levels, we make them less predictable, less cohesive, and less interesting. And that makes them harder to read."

Literature-based reading programs have been found to be successful when compared with basal reader and/or mastery learning programs. In Tunnell and Jacobs' (1989) review of the research in this area, they found that "...even older children who have experienced years of failure with reading and writing have been exposed to literature-based, whole language programs with notable success."

The change from a basal reading program to a literature-based approach can help to break the cycle of failure experienced by most, if not all, remedial and learning disabled students. Students with reading problems often are given reading materials which are less interesting, and therefore less motivating to read, than those given to good readers. In addition, the materials provided for the learning disabled students are often written for younger students. A change to a literature-based reading program can result in the improvement of self-esteem and a positive attitude towards reading. Literature can revitalize and enrich their experiences. A paperback copy can excite them and challenge them. My students hated carrying around a "babyish looking" reading book last year. There are no complaints about being seen with a real book.

In Holdaway's (1980) view, "[i]t is difficult to provide natural motivation for reading in an environment where books are things you work through rather than things you come to depend on for special pleasure and enlightenment." In a literature-based approach, rather than being asked to read material two to three grade levels below their grade

placement, students are allowed to read high interest materials which have excellent language models. Instead of being embarrassed about their reading level, they aspire to read more challenging materials.

Reading aloud

A characteristic of literature-based reading programs is that teachers regularly spend more time reading aloud to their students. This was my entry point into a period of change in my teaching methods and philosophy. In the summer of 1988, while browsing in a bookstore, I came across a copy of *The Read Aloud Handbook* by Jim Trelease (1985), and bought it for my summer improvement reading. Over the years my program had become so fragmented with students coming and going from my resource room, I had stopped reading aloud to my students. Even though I was now teaching junior high, I decided to incorporate read aloud time on a daily basis in my classroom. Much time during the rest of the summer was spent in locating appropriate books and reading them to myself. I rediscovered the sheer enjoyment of reading children's literature.

It took a while for my students to get into the swing of things, but I soon began to notice little changes. They asked to borrow books from my collection. They noticed authors and brought up their names in class. I also learned something important about my students' strengths in reading that were usually overlooked in the push to learn more basic skills. The "worst" reader had the strongest skills in prediction, in story sense, in analyzing and synthesizing information orally. He was hooked on listening!

Trelease (1985) urges adults to, "[r]ead aloud to children to awaken their sleeping imaginations and improve their deteriorating language skills." Children with reading

problems often can listen and comprehend at levels above their own reading level. According to Chambers (1983), "Listening to books read aloud bridges that gap, making available to children books they are mature enough to appreciate but which they cannot yet read with ease themselves."

Self selection of reading materials

I read an article by Henke (1988) who reported that the West Des Moines Schools use whole class reading because they believe that a learning community is built on shared experiences. I began in January of 1989 with a similar structure in one of my reading classes. The class selected several books from an educational book club. I ordered the books, and they have become a major component of our reading class. I felt this was important in order to get a handle on how my LD students would react to reading real books, and to have a common ground to begin working on reading strategies. Independent reading of books of their own choosing has also become a part of the class. Letting students select their own reading materials is advocated by Atwell (1987) and Calkins (1986). Atwell believes that students should have complete choice and read independently in class; Calkins supports having students read from a thematic web or common genre, with each student selecting a personal book.

Written and oral responses to literature

Students responded to the books they were reading using reading journals, spiral bound notebooks in which they recorded all written responses. They included self-selected vocabulary as used in context, with their interpretation of the meaning of the word; diary entries written from the point of view of a character; character descriptions, traits, comparisons and contrasts; their personal reactions

to the book at various points in the story, including why they thought the way they did; as well as any other written responses they wished to record. Effective instruction research indicates that active learning time is an important variable in student achievement (Levin and Long, 1981). Writing in a response journal cannot guarantee that the student will be actively engaged in learning, but this type of activity makes it difficult for the student to be passive (Fulwiler, 1980).

The writing process causes the student to be actively engaged in discovering and stating relationships between newly acquired and old information (Van Nostrand, 1979). Manipulation of the random flow of thoughts one has during response writing allows the individual to discover meaning by creating connections and verifying or rejecting knowledge and information already possessed. Acting as a memory prompt, such writing facilitates reflection upon the ramifications of an idea and allows for evaluating a particular stance or viewpoint (Moffet, 1984). Atwell (1987) states, "[w]ritten dialogues about literature can work to open up texts to young readers and compel reflection."

Typically, learning disabled students have been taught primarily through teacher directed activities. Because they are so conscious about giving the "correct" answer, they tend to be hesitant about speaking in student directed group discussions. It is as though the students have been trained to let others do their thinking and talking for them (Koeller, 1988). In addition to their reading journals, students participated in group discussions at points throughout the book. I guided their discussions by focusing on higher level thinking skills and away from literal questioning. They were encouraged to look back into the book for support of their opinions. I found that after a few discussions they automatically went

back to the book, even if they were talking among themselves. The students also demonstrated much better recall of literal information than I expected. They were constantly surprising me with their insights.

Sustained Silent Reading (SSR)

Sustained silent reading is a time provided for students and teachers to read materials of their own selection without interruption. Everyone in the classroom, including the teacher, reads for a set duration of time (McCracken and McCracken, 1978). I incorporated time for silent sustained reading during class with the current trade book students were reading as a group. Students were given 15-20 minutes each day to read the book at their own pace. If they had finished reading their group book, they read a book of their own choice during this time.

Conclusion

Throughout my years of teaching learning disabled students, I have done my share of looking for the "magic" solutions that would allow my students to "catch up" and join the mainstream. Unfortunately, I never found the cure. A literature-based reading program may not be the answer for all students, but it is a desirable alternative. The research is still continuing to be gathered in comparing traditional with whole language programs. Motivation to read seems to favor the whole language program. Whether or not students will become lifelong users of the learning strategies they develop in a whole language program remains to be seen.

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Reading Horizons welcomes suggestions for innovative teaching ideas for inclusion as "Expanding Horizons" features. (See page 38 of this issue for an example.) Submit two typed copies of your idea to Editor, *Reading Horizons*, Reading Center & Clinic, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI, 49008, with two stamped self-addressed envelopes.



The Reading Teacher as a Workplace Literacy Consultant

Patrick P. McCabe

A number of leaders in industry and government have asserted that many workers in this country lack the basic skills to perform adequately on the job; they claim that a wave of workplace illiteracy is sweeping this nation as never before. Whether the cause of this problem is perceived to be a deficit in the educational delivery system or a lag in skills due to the sudden technological explosion, it seems that there are many adults who need training in basic workplace skills in order to obtain and keep employment.

Elizabeth Dole, U. S. Secretary of Labor, has stated, "The gap between the skills of our workers and those required in the workplace results in billions of dollars in productivity and time being lost" (1989). According to Bill Wiggenghorn, Vice President of Training and Development at the Motorola Corporation, "It will cost about 35 million dollars over the next three years to bring the workforce up to the necessary sixth and seventh grade mathematics and reading level" (1989). Recently, seeking entry-level workers for jobs ranging from telephone operator to service representative, New York Telephone Company screened more than 22,000 applicants before finding 3,600 meeting

minimum standards for vocabulary, number relationships and problem solving (*Curriculum Update*, 1989).

This is a problem demanding a solution and directly or indirectly affecting all individuals in this country. The solution needs to be a unitary, national priority toward which the resources of both the public and private sectors will be directed. (While it may be simplistic to perceive this problem as unrelated to other social problems in this country, such as poverty, unequal opportunity, and disenfranchisement of whole sections of our national multicultural fabric, one part of the solution can be training programs with a goal of maintaining high employment.) According to Nancy Lynn Bernardon, "New and innovative adult teaching programs must be developed and implemented in order for us to remain competitive" (1989, p.29). Because of the changing world technology, skills which were once commonplace may be outdated; more sophisticated technology has created a demand for new workplace literacy skills. For example, in the robotics industry, reading instrument panels may replace the reading of text; in the automotive repair industry, reading a computer printout will replace reading an automobile manual.

Since "it is often more cost effective for an employer to have an external provider design a generalized curriculum for a particular workplace skill or to simply provide tuition reimbursement for basic workplace skills training that the employee selects from an outside provider" (Carnevale, Gainer, and Meltzer, 1988, p.27), one part of the solution to this problem has resulted in an evolving partnership between business and education. While there are many in-house programs offered by employers to ensure that employees possess a proficient level of communications skills, corporate in-house personnel proficient in workplace skills

may lack the ability and training to plan, implement, and evaluate the basic literacy skills of others. This has and will continue to create opportunities for outside consultants to become more and more involved in the problems of workplace literacy. Determining objectives, planning to implement strategies to teach mastery of those objectives, and assessing the degree to which the objectives have been learned are skills essential for good teaching. These generic skills, taught in teacher training colleges and programs throughout this country, can be applied to business and industry to help solve the problem of workplace illiteracy.

In a recent joint publication of the U. S. Departments of Labor and Education, a workplace literacy audit — a means of pinpointing a deficiency of workplace skills — was described (U. S. Department of Labor and Education, 1988). According to that document:

A literacy audit is an investigation that leads to definitions of jobs in terms of their basic skills requirements and then to an assessment of the workforce's proficiency in those skills. This procedure is not inexpensive; however, it will yield a detailed picture of job-specific basic skills requirements and should result in training that doesn't waste time or money in non-relevant areas. The tools of a literacy audit are observation, collection and analysis of materials, interviews, and customized tests (p. 13).

There is a striking parallel between the "tools" necessary to implement the steps of the workplace literacy audit (described below) and those skills which are essential to teaching. The educator, in particular an educator with an expertise in the teaching of reading, is the ideal individual to conduct a workplace literacy audit and to contribute to the

effort to upgrade the level of literacy in the workplace. The relationship between each of the steps in the workplace literacy audit and the skills involved in teaching are accomplished through a five-step process.

1) Observation of employees

Employees are observed in order to determine the basic skills they must use in order to perform their job effectively. This process occurs over a number of workdays to note the literacy (or other) skills required to complete a task related to the job.

As one example, this could include observation of cashiers as they perform assorted tasks related to check-out, such as reading coupons, reading inventory sheets, locating the price on an item, reading store sale brochures, reading to respond to questions about product warranties, reading to understand what price to charge for an individual item which is usually sold in larger quantities, and reading a weight scale.

The parallel in education is curriculum development, a task with which all teachers are familiar. A curriculum defines, describes, and prescribes what is to be taught. For example, acquiring knowledge of a given aspect of science or history may be one task that the student must accomplish in order to be successful at a certain grade level in school. This prescribes what the student must accomplish in order to perform a particular job effectively. The curriculum describes the intellectual environment in which the students must thrive in order to be successful in the grade. The curriculum dictates that which is to be taught just as the work environment dictates those skills necessary to complete a job task.

2) Collect materials

Collect all materials that are written and read on the job to determine the degree of skill proficiency an employee must have to do the job well. This can be an analysis of the reading skills necessary to comprehend memos, inventory forms, or requisition slips required for the job. This could also include a readability analysis to determine reading level of the material as well as an analysis of the style and organization of the written presentation.

The discovery that one worker must read cryptic material with many abbreviations while another worker must read lengthier material which has numerous details supplemented by charts and graphs suggests a differentiated approach to workplace literacy for these workers (who may be working in the same department).

There is a close parallel to the planning which social studies and science teachers do when they plan to use a given text with a group of students. A survey of the text reveals which reading skills or strategies may be necessary to comprehend the material successfully. Reading graphs, maps, political cartoons, following directions, or reading critically are some possible skills which might be used as the learner reads the social studies books.

3) Conduct interviews

Interview employees and supervisors to determine their perception of the basic skills needed to do the job. In this step of the literacy audit, top performing employees and supervisors are asked to identify those skills which are necessary to be successful on the job. In addition they are asked how such skills are used by them to complete the job.

This is similar to a teacher asking students about the process they follow in reading. Recent research in reading education suggests that students who have the ability to monitor their reading and thinking processes are better readers compared to readers who cannot do this. According to Frank May, an authority in the field of reading instruction, "A good reader tends to know what she knows and what she doesn't know" (1986, p. 39).

4) Assess skills

Determine if employees have the basic skills necessary to do the job. This involves assessing employees, both formally, through tests, and informally, through observation and interviews, to determine their level of proficiency in relation to a given job or task in the workplace.

The skills necessary to complete this step of the literacy audit are very familiar to the teacher. In the school setting, one way to determine students' levels of reading proficiency, for example, is to administer a teacher-made or commercially developed test. However, "testing," as Howell and Morehead (1987) noted in their discussion of educational assessment practices, "elicits behavior under what may be artificial conditions. All things being equal, observation is superior to testing because it supplies information about behavior that may be less strongly influenced by the evaluator or the evaluation process itself" (p. 16). Observing and monitoring a student reading content area material, such as a social studies or science text, and noting problems, is an additional way to determine if the student will be successful in comprehending the material, just as observing and monitoring employees in the workplace will help to determine who has a given skill and who lacks that skill.

5) Develop assessment measures

Build tests that ask questions relating specifically to the employees' job or job group. In this step the person conducting the literacy audit uses job-related language and style in situations and formats in which the skills being tested will occur. Also, the employee is asked to perform the tasks that simulate what he or she encounters on the job.

The ability to ask the correct questions is a crucial skill which teachers possess. Designing questions to determine mastery of specific skills is critical to a valid interpretation of the success of instruction. For example, responding correctly to a question which requires a "yes" or "no" answer will not reveal a depth of understanding which may be critical to the completion of a given task whether it is in the workplace or in the classroom in an elementary, middle, or high school.

In summary, those skills which teachers possess and which are outlined above are generic and can be applied to any teaching-learning situation. Working closely with a content expert from the particular business, the professional educator can make a major contribution to the workplace literacy effort in this country. The professional educator's strength is in the process of designing, implementing, and evaluating a program; the businessperson's strength is in knowledge of the content of the workplace literacy program. Both working together can develop a program tailored to the needs of the particular business or company involved. Since the skills which educators and businesspeople possess regarding workplace literacy are complementary, one model describing an educational program for the improvement of workplace literacy skills calls for a team effort involving professionals from different segments of our society working cooperatively toward a common goal.

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**READING HORIZONS EXPANDS
TO FIVE ISSUES ANNUALLY**

Beginning with this first issue of Volume 31, *Reading Horizons* expands to offer its subscribers five issues a year, published bimonthly during the school year, from October through June. The publication of all issues during the school year will, we believe, make the journal even more useful to all our subscribers. Information about subscription rates can be found on the last page of this issue.





The Development and Validation of a Comprehensive List of Primary Sources in College Reading Instruction

**Norman A Stahl
Cynthia R. Hynd
William G. Brozo**

It may be argued that a field only comes of age when its professional membership is able to gain insight into the present and begin to predict the future through the organized studying and the collective valuing of the field's past. As we enter the 1990's, it is time for the field of college reading and learning assistance to achieve a broader perspective that more fully incorporates the field's rich and varied past. To achieve this end, collectively we should endeavor to understand our professional roots through chronicling, interpreting, and evaluating the fundamental ideas, the pedagogical achievements, and the research contributions of our colleagues, both past and present.

Along these lines, Stahl, Hynd, and Henk (1986) suggested that we could learn much about our past by evaluating the textbooks utilized in college reading programs across the years. However, until now no authoritative compilation of instructional materials has been available to

assist college reading and learning specialists with their research investigations.

It is the purpose of this paper to describe the development and possible uses of an in-depth reference tool for college reading and learning assistance professionals. The tool, a reference list, targets the work of three types of scholars: 1) researchers who are oriented primarily to the present as well as those whose concerns are equally with the historical roots of the profession, 2) curriculum design specialists who want to understand the legacy of tradition in college reading, and 3) graduate students who undertake research for theses or dissertations.

Description of the list

The list is comprised of 593 bibliographic entries covering the years 1896 to 1987. The dates which form the historical parameters for the reference list, while not based on specific identifiable eras, fit rather neatly through 1958 into the eras proposed by Leedy (1958) and into the more recent time frames mentioned elsewhere in this report. The list does not include those religious or moralistic treatises pertaining to reading or studying that were issued before 1896 (Aquinas, translated 1947; Porter, 1870; Todd, 1835; Watts, 1721, 1741). The earliest date on this list is that of the first text published after Abell's now classic college reading investigation of 1894. The list terminates with 1987; there have been a number of content analyses immediately preceding this date.

Most of the texts included in this list were written primarily for use in college reading programs or in reading/study skills units of learning assistance centers. However, we did include trade books that have often served

in dual roles for both the academic and the popular press markets.

The list was further defined by limiting the subject matter of texts selected for inclusion. We used the text categories identified in previous content analysis research (Stahl, Simpson, and Brozo, 1988). Texts or workbooks that fell clearly into either the college study-skills category or the college reading-skills category were automatically placed on the list. Texts pertaining to speed reading that were equally concerned with comprehension instruction and study methods were also included. The same criteria were adhered to for those texts generally classified as college survival texts. Vocabulary development texts were omitted. (See Stahl, Brozo, and Simpson, 1987, for an extensive listing of current vocabulary books). In addition, we eliminated most texts that might be categorized as teacher education methods texts. However, since the differentiation between a methods text and a student-oriented college reading text was blurred during the early years of the century, several texts with this dual purpose are included on the list. Furthermore, we learned that across the years a sizable number of texts were published originally in the Commonwealth countries. Rather than overlooking these texts, we included a representative sample of these materials for their value in comparative reading studies. These selected texts and workbooks are listed separately in a latter section of the report entitled "International Texts." Clearly, this section of the list is not comprehensive but rather serves as a sample of available texts.

Development of the list

Two mutually supportive activities were used to develop the reference list of college reading texts. The first step was the identification of potential entries. Initially, we

consulted a number of secondary sources focusing on instructional materials issued for college reading programs over the past 85 years. We examined the content of selected texts and workbooks across specific historical periods: the prewar era (Laycock and Russell, 1941), the first G. I. Bill era (Ironside, 1963; Miller, 1957), the community college boom years (Bahe, 1970; Browning, 1976; Utsey, 1968), and the contemporary period (Brozo and Johns, 1986; Heinrichs and LaBrance, 1986; Radencich and Schumm, 1984; Stahl, Brozo, and Simpson, 1987). In addition to analyzing content, each of these reports contains reference lists of texts issued during the respective eras. In all, we identified 335 probable sources via the review of these studies. The titles that met the selection criteria for this project were placed on a preliminary reference list.

The next set of secondary sources leading to the identification of instructional texts consisted of historical sources on college reading instruction. In this task we perused historical chronicles of the overall field (Leedy, 1958) and historical analyses of instructional methods (Stahl, 1983). Thus we identified specific instructional texts thought to be of importance by the historians and the chroniclers of the field. We also carefully reviewed historically important texts that provide the field with an understanding of the various trends in pedagogical thought, research, and instructional design over the years. Here we are referring to both methods texts (Ahrendt, 1975; Leedy, 1964; Maxwell, 1979; Triggs, 1943) and instructional texts containing reference lists at either the chapter level or text level (Bird, 1931; Kornhauser, 1924; Robinson, 1946). Finally, we compared secondary sources by earlier authors (Bliesmer, 1957; Narang, 1973). Such comparisons provided additional sources to be included in our list. At this stage the list was comprised of 452 entries.

Internal verification was the next step in preparing the reference list. Here we needed to evaluate each entry to guarantee that the text was germane to content covered in postsecondary reading programs. First, whenever possible, we reviewed texts that were in our personal libraries, the libraries of our respective institutions, or available from interlibrary loan.

Next we asked a panel of experts to check the list for accuracy, to provide additional sources that might have been overlooked, and to validate the inclusion of texts that we were unable to obtain and review through the previously mentioned methods. The panel was representative of the profession, as we selected members from various sections of the nation and various stages in their professional careers (ranging from initial entry to retirement).

Once we felt that we had formulated a highly comprehensive list (although we do not presume that it is exhaustive), we continued the validation procedures at the level of each of the 470 entries. We were now concerned with an entry's depth – the number of editions a text might have gone through during its publication history.

To validate the accuracy of each entry, we looked up each text or workbook in the references that provides bibliographic information on publications held by the Library of Congress. For texts issued before 1956, we searched the *National Union Catalog Pre-1956 Imprints*, which contains copies of actual author cards found in library card catalogues. These entries provided standard bibliographic data, such as author, publication date, complete title, edition number, city of publication, and publisher. For texts issued since 1956, we searched various editions of *Library of Congress Catalog Books: Subjects*, spanning the years

from 1950 to 1987. For this validation procedure, we searched both the "Reading" category and the "Methods of Study" category, along with the numerous subcategories within each main category. Finally, we searched *Books in Print: Subjects* and the *Cumulative Books Index (Books in English)* to verify listings of more current texts.

As necessary, we searched *The National Union Catalog Author List*, which contains listings of texts by authors' names. Here again we were able to verify bibliographic data. The verification activities, while time consuming, were required as we utilized secondary sources along with primary sources in the development of the list.

While this overall process was one of verification, we did find more than 100 titles that appeared to be likely additions to the list. These sources were subjected to the procedures previously described in this paper, and those texts found to be germane to the list were then added.

Uses of the list

We believe that the list will be a valuable tool for individuals undertaking any of a number of research endeavors or curriculum projects. With the help of this comprehensive secondary source, researchers can locate hundreds of primary sources. Here are several potential uses of the list.

First, researchers developing historical analyses of particular eras of college reading instruction or conducting content analyses can use the list (see Table 1) to determine the texts that were in print during the era of interest. The ability to identify such texts is of great import, for as Leedy (1958) points out in his seminal historical treatise of the field, "The tenor of an age is usually indicated by the books which that age produces. They objectify the thinking and

voice the interests of the time" (p. 237). Such an axiom is true for society as a whole and is equally valid for the literature of an academic specialty.

Furthermore, by using information drawn from the list, a researcher might observe trends in publication suggesting delimitations for historical eras or confirming the existence of eras postulated previously from the study of program descriptions, national and regional surveys, applied research, and even basic research with college students (e.g. eye movement studies). Hence, as an example, let us examine representative texts from a historical era. Table 1 presents a chronological listing of 18 texts issued throughout the decade of the 1920's. Leedy (1958) describes this historical era as a period of "how to study" classes in which instruction in silent reading skills tended to serve an ancillary function. A perusal of the reference list and then the identified texts would tend to support Leedy's historical analysis of that decade. The vast majority of the texts stressed study methods. On the other hand, there is evidence that the profession's newly developed interest in silent reading skills (rate and comprehension) was starting to find a place in texts issued for the college reading market (Cole, Pressey, and Ferguson, 1928).

The list's breadth permits the writer not only to identify texts of broad national impact issued by the large publishing houses but also to locate the often overlooked texts issued in lesser numbers by small presses and academic presses.

Second, the list will help researchers to conduct both theoretically-driven and research-driven cross-generational content analyses. Through such research, one can determine whether there has been an interaction between basic research, applied research, and instructional methodology.

Table 1
College Reading-Study Skills Texts
Issued In the 1920's

<u>Date</u>	<u>Author. Title. City. Press</u>
1922	Sanford, F. <i>How to study--illustrated through physics</i> . New York: Macmillan.
1922	Thomas, F.W. <i>Training for effective study</i> . Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
1922	Wiley, J.A. <i>Practice exercises in supervised study and assimilative reading: A guide for directing the formation of efficient study habits</i> . Cedar Falls IA: Author.
1923	May, M.A. <i>How to study in college</i> . Syracuse NY: Syracuse University Press.
1924	Dow, E.W. <i>Principles of a note-system for historical studies</i> . New York: Century.
1924	Kornhauser, A.W. <i>How to study: Suggestions for high-school and college students</i> . Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
1924	Lyman, R.L. <i>The mind at work in studying, thinking and reading: A source book and discussion manual</i> . Chicago: Scott, Foresman.
1925	Edwards, A.S. <i>The fundamental principles of learning and study</i> . Baltimore: Warwick & York.
1925	Hagboldt, P.H. <i>How to study modern languages in college</i> . Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
1926	Book, W.F. <i>Learning how to study and work effectively: A contribution to the psychology of personal efficiency</i> . Boston: Ginn & Co.
1926	Crawford, C.C. <i>The methods of study</i> . Moscow ID: Author.
1926	Doermann, H.J. <i>The orientation of college freshmen</i> . Baltimore: Williams & Wilkins Co.
1927	Book, W.F. <i>How to succeed in college</i> . Baltimore: Warwick & York.
1928	Cole, L., Pressey, S.L., & Ferguson, J.M. <i>A manual of reading exercises for freshmen</i> . Columbus OH: Ohio State University Press.
1928	Crawford, C.C. <i>The technique of study: A textbook for use with upper secondary and lower division college students</i> . Boston: Houghton-Mifflin.
1928	Wiley, J.A. <i>Practice exercises in silent reading and study</i> . Cedar Falls IA: Author.
1928	Yoakam, G.A. <i>Reading and study</i> . New York: Macmillan.

In other words, are research findings eventually translated into instructional methods found within texts, or are the texts slaves to tradition? We surmise from our previous analyses of the content of college reading-learning instruction books (Brozo and Johns, 1986; Stahl, Brozo, and Simpson, 1987; Stahl, Simpson, and Brozo, 1988) that there exists a unique interaction of the holding power of tradition with the desire to include research-driven instructional methods and student strategies (although often with a lag time of five to ten years) as authors develop the content of texts and workbooks.

Still, there is a continuing need for other researchers to analyze the content of the texts on the list in light of the summaries of reading research issued during corresponding years within various historical eras of reading pedagogy (Smith, 1965) or college reading (Leedy, 1958). The list also permits the researcher to examine both the breadth of publications for an era and across several periods. In addition, it gives writers an opportunity to focus in-depth on the content of specific texts through several editions or on the multiple texts written by one author. For instance, if one were to use the reference list to review the works of Francis Robinson (1941, 1946, 1961, 1962, 1970), it becomes clear that the SQ3R technique did not initially emerge in his 1941 text as is often referenced. Rather, it first came to print in 1946 and specific recommendations for its use evolved over the remainder of Robinson's career.

Third, the list can be used as an aid for the in-depth review of literature that should accompany research reports (particularly technical reports that have yet to be boiled down to research articles) and the literature review section of a thesis or dissertation. Such literature reviews are generally creditable in their discussion of the research bases of

"hidden treasures" was omitted or that a particular edition of an included text was not listed. Nevertheless, the list, as it now stands, is the most extensive reference of its nature yet compiled. It should prove to be a useful secondary source for researchers and practitioners alike.

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THEMED ISSUE ON READING RECOVERY: CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS

In the spring of 1991 *Reading Horizons* will offer a special issue on the theme of Reading Recovery. Contributions in the form of case studies, commentaries, and articles about all aspects of the Reading Recovery program are welcomed. All manuscripts will be evaluated anonymously, following *Reading Horizons* standard review procedures. (See Call for Manuscripts on page 58 in this issue.) Prospective contributors may, but are not required to, send a letter of inquiry describing their proposed article to Dr. Jeanne M. Jacobson, Editor, *Reading Horizons*, Reading Center and Clinic, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI 49008, enclosing a stamped, self-addressed envelope for reply.

The co-editor for the themed issue will be Dr. Jim Burns of Western Michigan University. Manuscripts submitted for this issue should be postmarked no later than December 15, 1990.



Using Predictable Songs in Beginning Reading Activities

Sandra L. Renegar

One of the universal languages of humankind is music, a source of rhythms for toe-tapping, melodies for humming, and lyrics for remembering. Like nursery rhymes, many simple songs contain repetitive and/or predictable language which can serve as a means for teaching sight vocabulary to beginning readers (Bridge, Winograd, and Haley, 1983). Predictable text is characterized by the repetitive pattern of the author and concepts familiar to children (Rhodes, 1981). This repetition may be evident in the rhyme and rhythm of the language and/or the cumulative pattern in stories or songs. By introducing beginning reading vocabulary through music, the children's psychological involvement in the experience is intensified and the range of clues on which they can rely is multiplied (Kuhmerker, 1969). This article describes a procedure for providing children with multiple opportunities to recognize high frequency words in dependable musical contexts.

Song selection is an important step because the lyrics form the focus for the beginning reading activities. A short song with a simple melody which can be sung easily by young children is ideal. The lyrics should be repetitious, containing high frequency words which will have utility in the

children's independent reading. Examples of patterns found in songs include a repetitive-cumulative pattern in which a word, phrase, or sentence is repeated and another is added in each succeeding verse as in "Old McDonald Had A Farm" or a pattern based on familiar cultural sequences (cardinal and ordinal numbers, alphabet, months of the year, days of the week, etc.) as in the Alphabet Song.

After selecting the song, the teacher introduces it by singing it to the students several times. The children may join the singing at will. Songs with simple actions or movements are especially useful for encouraging participation.

Next, the song lyrics are placed on a chart where the children can see the words easily. The teacher now models finger-point reading for the children by pointing to each word while singing the song. The music of the song will automatically provide a sense of rhythm to the language.

After singing through the song several times with the teacher pointing to the words while the children join in the singing, individual children may take their turn at pointing to the words during the singing. Occasionally the lyrics can be chanted in rhythm without following the melodic line of the song to place more focus on language.

Interaction with the song continues by giving the students strips with lines from the song which are placed under the corresponding line on the chart. Next, students receive individual word cards to be placed under the matching words in the chart. Children are asked to identify individual words in the song chart when the teacher points to the words in random order. Students again sing the whole song. The teacher may hold up a word card and instruct the

children to signal or do some motion each time that word is sung.

This series of activities serves a variety of purposes. Not only do the children develop a memory of the text and see a model of the reading process, just as they would from a predictable book (Morris, 1981), but the teacher can also assess the development of concept of word in beginning readers. Do the children point to each word correctly as they sing through the song? If they mismatch a spoken (sung) word to a written word, do they self-correct without teacher assistance and continue with the singing? Can they identify individual words immediately or must they use contextual support by repeating an entire line or even the entire song?

The language of the children themselves can be used by having them suggest words which can be substituted into the song. They may change individual words or entire phrases. After recording the words or phrases on cards or strips which are used to cover the parallel song lyrics, the "new song" can be sung. The highly structured pattern of the song provides a simple framework for the children to express themselves.

Predictable songs are a rich resource for beginning reading activities from which multiple benefits accrue. Through high involvement, students have the opportunity to acquire sight vocabulary, to develop positive feelings about reading, and to express themselves. The teacher is able to assess the development of concept of word, sight vocabulary and positive attitude toward reading. Because it can provide vivid learning experiences, music is a potential tool for helping build successful readers.

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. . . . Expanding Horizons **Picture Books in the Middle School**

*This teaching idea is shared by Jean Porath,
 who teaches at Cassopolis Middle School, in Cassopolis, Michigan.*

We're never too old for a good book. In my seventh and eighth grade Literature classes I often use picture books to present new terms and ideas or to review them. These books are short and to the point; they enable me to segue into more complicated pieces of literature — and they have other appealing characteristics: great illustrations, humor, and memories.

To review story grammar before reading complex short stories or novels I often use *The Little Mouse*, *the Red Ripe Strawberry*, and *the Big Hungry Bear* by Don and Audrey Wood. The solution to the problem it presents creates the theme, which is sharing. The story, told in less than 150 words, is complete with characters, setting, conflict and strong plot. My students enjoy the book and discussing the concepts.

Often I ask them if they'd like to work in pairs to create a picture book and no one has said no yet. I leave the picture books in the room all year for silent reading and personal enjoyment, and the students have learned to appreciate the picture book as a form of literature which is not just for young children.





Teaching Reading in a Multicultural Framework

Arlene L. Barry

Cultural pluralism stresses a new interpretation of the word different as applied to cultural differences. This is illustrated by the story of a Westerner who saw his Oriental friend putting a bowl of rice on his grandfather's grave and asked "When will your grandfather get up to eat the rice?" To which his friend replied, "At the same time that your grandfather gets up to smell the flowers you put on his grave." Different means different, not better than or worse than.

Harry N. Rivan, cited in Cuch, 1987, p. 65.

People in the United States have not melted into one homogenous group. Ethnic groups have retained customs, language, and beliefs. Some have referred to this special diversity as the "tossed salad" effect. Diversity in our population is likely to remain. In 1987, immigrants from 48 different countries arrived on U.S. shores. Our country's Hispanic population increased 30 percent in the last decade. More than 37 million Americans have disabilities and the majority of disabled children spend a good part of their day in regular classes. As educators, we find many representatives of this diverse population in our classrooms. We have an obligation to teach all of these children and to do so effectively. In order to be effective, we must understand, accept, and address our students' differences. In educational terms, acceptance of diversity has come to be known as multicultural

education. More precisely, multicultural education is the term used "to describe educational policies and practices that recognize, accept, and affirm human differences and similarities related to gender, race, handicap, and class" (Sleeter and Grant, 1988, p. 137). The purpose of this article is to provide guidelines for teaching reading in a multicultural framework, to discuss *why*, *when* and *how* to use multicultural literature, and to offer criteria for choosing good multicultural literature.

Why use multicultural literature?

Reading is a key to a good education. And education is, for most, the key to a better life. The integration of multi-ethnic literature into a school reading program can lead to five important outcomes:

1. *Multicultural literature helps students recognize similarities among people.* Literature can point out that all human beings are connected to one another through common experiences, emotions, needs, and desires. Understanding our common humanity is one way to learn to accept one another.

2. *Multicultural literature helps students recognize the value of differences.* Books can help us realize the history, contributions, and heritage of other cultures. The handicapped and elderly certainly possess knowledge and insights that are valuable because of their uniqueness.

3. *Multicultural literature helps students develop an awareness of social issues affecting all of their lives.* Poverty, racism, or war are not social issues to be discussed only during the social studies class. Social issues can be addressed regularly through literature so children come to understand that the problems of a minority can be solved with the cooperation of the majority.

4. *Multicultural literature aids the learning process and enriches the education of all students.* A healthy sense of

self has been found to be a key factor in academic success (Lewis and Margold, 1981). The study of one's own cultural group can develop a child's sense of self and make the child feel welcomed to the learning environment. Curriculum content that builds on a child's experiences and background knowledge can be more easily incorporated into the existing cognitive structure. Majority students who live in a diverse society need more than a monoculture experience.

5. *Multicultural literature builds on our future.* We are a mobile population with a global economy. We must work together to share goods and resources so we can all benefit. We also have nuclear weapons. Literature can help us teach our children to know, understand, and respect each other so we do not destroy our earth.

How and when to use multicultural literature

Multicultural literature can be used in the same manner as any other material for reading instruction. Studies on early learning help answer the question of when to begin using multicultural literature. "Research has shown that between the ages of three and four children are aware of the status assigned by race and sex...Young children learn racist attitudes from adults — from our language. ..from the environment we create ...from the books we read to them" (Wilson, 1983, p. 6). It is critical, therefore, that during the first few months when parents begin sharing books with children, they choose books that represent a variety of ethnic backgrounds, social classes, abilities, ages and both sexes. These groups should be portrayed in a positive, but realistic, fashion. One example of a good book to begin with is Helen Oxenbury's "big board book," *Tickle, Tickle*. In this storybook Black, White, and Asian toddlers "squelch" in the mud, scrub in the tub, and play before naps. Adult males and females both care for the busy children and a spirit of cooperation is evident. Other appropriate books are

Welcome Little Baby (Alik, 1987), *The Baby's Catalogue* (Ahlberg, 1983), *Ten, Nine, Eight* (Bang, 1983), and *All Fall Down* (Oxenbury, 1987).

As children's communication skills develop over the next couple of years, they begin to play actively with language. New words and phrases are frequently repeated and nonsense words are created. Two and three-year-olds enjoy rhyme, repetition, and playing with words (Owens, 1984). Nursery rhymes fit easily into this stage of development. *The Prancing Pony: Nursery Rhymes from Japan* (Deforest, 1968), *Tortillitas Para Mama and Other Nursery Rhymes* (Driego, 1981), and *Chinese Mother Goose Rhymes* (Wyndham, 1982) are nursery rhymes that take some other cultures into consideration.

Table 1 **Recommended Children's Books**

- Alik. (1987). *Welcome little baby*. Greenwillow.
- Ahlberg, J. & A. (1983). *The baby's catalogue*. Atlantic Monthly Press.
- Bang, M. (1983). *Ten, nine, eight*. Greenwillow.
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- Wyndham, R. (1982). *Chinese Mother Goose rhymes*. Putnam.
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- Bradman, T. (1987). *Through my window*. Illustrated by E. Browne. Silver Burdett.
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- Tax, M. (1981). *Families*. Illustrated by M. Hafner. Little, Brown.

By ages three and four, children use language as a tool to discover their world (Norton, 1985). Their burgeoning vocabularies help them describe what they see. Children in this age group ask many questions in order to continue expanding their knowledge of the world around them. Books that represent a range of families, homes, and environments can supply information to children about our diverse society. A few age-appropriate books that do this effectively are *At This Very Minute* (Bowers, 1983), *Through My Window* (Bradman, 1987), *Being Adopted* (Rosenburg, 1984), and *Families* (Tax, 1981). The message is reinforced, that no one culture or lifestyle is inherently better or worse, just different. As Tax's book explains, "families are who you live with and who you love." Children can make and share books about their own families as well as enjoy books written by many others.

The five-year-old has developed a complex range of physical, social, emotional and cognitive skills. Many children of this age who are beginning kindergarten can control their fine motor skills and use such tools as scissors, pencils, crayons and paint brushes. They are usually interested in letters and numbers and begin to print and copy these symbols. The emergent reader recognizes that one can get meaning from printed words and frequently tries to "read" books and messages. Kindergarten teachers can assist their students by remembering two principles:

1. *Read to your students.* According to *Becoming a Nation of Readers* "the single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children" (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott and Wilkinson, 1985, p. 23). Reading aloud enhances vocabulary development, background information, a sense of story structure, and it acquaints children with book language as opposed to oral language. Reading aloud

permits a child to observe reading behaviors and builds positive attitudes towards reading. Remember also that reading aloud can build attitudes towards others. Campbell and Wirtenberg (1980) reported increased favorable attitudes toward other races by children who read stories depicting the targeted groups in varied roles. Fisher (1980) also found that children developed positive attitudes toward other ethnic groups when exposed to literature portraying those ethnic groups in a positive light.

2. *"Consider print awareness as a prerequisite for children's success with beginning reading"* (Durkin, 1989, p. 111). Print awareness is developed through meaningful experiences that involve written language. Children can draw pictures or make greeting cards and include information they "print" themselves or that which is written by an adult. The language or dialect the child uses can be written as spoken. Standard English should be modeled, of course, but meaning is more important than form in the beginning (Jaggar and Smith-Burke, 1985). Children also need to know that their language, one of the few things they bring to school as representative of their family, is respected. Harber and Bryen (1976) did not find evidence that a dialect difference interfered with children who were learning to read.

Criteria for choosing multicultural literature

As children move through the elementary grades, a wide range of reading material is used. Basal readers and trade books are two of the more common sources of literature. Basal readers are important to consider because "more than 90 percent of elementary classrooms in this nation contain basal readers" (Vacca, Vacca and Gove, 1987, p. 266). There is concern among some educators that the stories in basal readers reflect an unrealistic representation of minorities, families, the elderly, disabled, and women.

For example, the three most frequently depicted careers for white women in basals were mother, teacher, and queen. Minority women's top three careers were mother, teacher, and slave (Britton and Lumpkin, 1983). Careers most commonly depicted for minority men were worker, farmer, warrior, Indian Chief, and hunter. These are hardly realistic representations of the occupations held by today's women and minorities. Garcia and Florez-Tighe (1986) noted other inaccuracies. They found that although most Hispanics live in metropolitan areas, they were consistently depicted in rural settings. Almost no stories portrayed Native Americans as they currently exist, which is on reservations, in cities or assimilating into American life. The Native American is still depicted as a "Noble Savage" (Garcia and Florez-Tighe, 1986). Basals have chosen not to address the real life problems minorities encounter: prejudice, discrimination, or the civil rights movement. Publishers have also avoided questions of sexism by creating neutral and neutered characters. Sixty-five percent of the main characters in current basals are neutral (Hitchcock and Tompkins, 1987), whereas a decade ago 23 percent were neutral (Britton and Lumpkin, 1977).

Disabled and elderly individuals have clearly been underrepresented in basal readers. It is possible for a nondisabled child to be exposed to only one basal story about a disabled person in six years of school (Hopkins, 1982). Few elderly are depicted at all — representing only two percent of the characters depicted when they are twenty-one percent of the population (Britton and Lumpkin, 1983) — and even fewer are shown engaged in activities outside their homes. If the purpose of putting minorities, disabled, and elderly in basal stories is to create more positive attitudes toward these individuals, underrepresentation and unrealistic representation will not serve that end.

The teacher who is committed to the principles of a multicultural classroom and is required to use a basal does have options. One interesting basal supplement is a text called *Embers* (Equity Models for Basal Readers) designed for grades 3 and 5, later to be expanded for grades K-6. The curriculum consists of an anthology of readings and a teacher's manual. These materials, according to Project Embers staff members, "were designed to serve as a model both to improve children's reading competency and to promote children's understanding of social and educational inequities based on sex, race, and disability" (Embers Staff, 1982, p. 38).

Another option is the use of trade books (story books or novels chosen by students and/or teachers). Trade book units are a good way to integrate multicultural literature with content subjects. Guidelines for choosing other quality multicultural materials have been constructed by several sources. Grant and Sleeter (1989) provide an in-depth method for analyzing printed material for bias, based on sex, race, social class, and disability. A briefer guideline constructed by the Racism and Sexism Resource Center for Education, a division of the Council on Interracial Books for Children, consists of 10 points:

1. Check the illustration. Look for stereotypes, for tokenism, and for who's doing what.
2. Check the story lines. Look for subtle forms of bias in such approaches as standards for success, resolution of problems, and the role of women.
3. Look at the lifestyles. Are minority persons depicted in unfavorable contrast with white middle-class suburbanites?
4. Weigh the relationships between people. Do whites in the story possess the power, take the leadership, etc.?

5. Note the heroes. Are minority heroes admired for the same qualities that have made white heroes famous?

6. Consider the effects on a child's self-image. Are norms established which limit the child's aspirations and self-concepts?

7. Consider the author's or illustrator's background. Is there anything in that background to recommend this person as the creator of the book?

8. Check out the author's perspective. Does the direction of the perspective weaken or strengthen the book?

9. Watch for loaded words. Does a word have insulting overtones?

10. Look at the copyright date. Pre-1970 books may be biased.

It appears that the current U.S. population diversity will make future teaching an exciting and challenging task. As teachers, we can learn from our students at the same time they learn from us. Through the use of multicultural materials, we can try to help our students recognize similarities among all people and appreciate the value of human differences. Parents should be encouraged to use multicultural literature from the time they begin sharing books with their children. In this way, the concept of acceptance of others is made a continuous process, beginning in the home and continuing through school. We send powerful messages to students through the methods and materials of our instruction. We can tell them that every person has value or we can tell them that only some of them do.

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Lessons from a French Class on Becoming Literate: A Personal Reflection

Beth Weir

Recently I set myself the task of learning the French language. I knew the undertaking would be fraught with frustration. I did not know it would provide me with insights into the demands made upon the child who is learning to read and write. Neither did I know it would so soundly reaffirm my belief in the whole language approach to literacy instruction.

French, in common with other languages, can be taught by immersion. As suggested by the title, this is an instructional approach in which students are subject to only the new language with no recourse to their native tongue. Languages can also be taught through instruction with graded texts that specify vocabulary and grammar. In addition, discourse or dialogues and exercises that provide the learner with reinforcement of the concept(s) introduced are provided.

My experience in learning French was primarily with this latter text-based approach, with limited exposure to immersion procedures. During the course I began to see parallels between instructional methods used in language teaching and instructional methods used in developing

literacy. As a result, I began to develop a feeling that learning demands on a language novice would be similar to those placed upon the child learning to read and write. This prompted me to reflect upon my learning experiences and by extrapolation upon the literacy acquisition process from the learner's point of view. Understandings about reading gained from this reflective exercise are noted following discussion of teaching methodologies.

Teaching methodology: Text based approach

The text-based method of teaching a second language appears to have a number of features in common with the basal reading program used in 90% of American schools (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott and Wilkinson, 1984).

A typical text for instruction in French lists vocabulary to be learned in the next unit of study. It is usually discussed by the instructor with the class prior to the reading of dialogues which employ the new words. Likewise, vocabulary to be introduced in the upcoming story in a basal is generally presented by the teacher prior to reading and discussed with the students. In each case, that is with both French and reading texts, vocabulary tends to be heavily controlled, particularly at the introductory levels. This is to avoid placing too heavy a cognitive burden on the learner.

One effect of constraining the French vocabulary is that initially the dialogues tend to sound stilted and unnatural. For instance, the negative form of the verb *to like* (*aimer*) may be presented as follows:

J'aime la voiture. Et toi? (I like the car. And you?)

Moi, non, je n'aime pas la voiture. (Me, no, I do not like the car.)

Similarly, basal texts employ contrived sentences to accommodate the lack of sight word knowledge in the beginning reader. A page in a primer basal may read thus:

*"I am up.
Sun is up.
Mother is up."*

After reading a passage, be it dialogue or story, both the basal and the French text provide exercises to assist in consolidating understanding of a skill. For the young reader these consist of worksheets designed to enhance understanding of phonics, vocabulary or comprehension. Such activities as coloring pictures of rhyming words or filling in blanks in sentences are typical. Assignments in French relate largely to developing facility with vocabulary or grammar such as insertion of correct articles in listed sentences or completion of a verb form.

The approach to teaching via a text, be it reading or second language, has many commonalities at the beginning level, besides those already noted: controlled vocabulary, unnatural language patterns, a heavy skills component, and teacher-directed instruction. Vocabulary, stories and skills are presented to the students. They have no control over the content and little over the pacing of the program.

Lessons to be learned

While a certain amount of frustration and tension is essential for learning to occur, the presentation of French "a la basal" seems to increment it. Reflection suggests this is partly because the focus of the approach is upon components of language, grammatical understandings and vocabulary, rather than upon use of the language as a vehicle of communication.

An example may be illustrative. When working with grammar, rules for a given case are typically presented along with a sentence or two to demonstrate use. For instance, when introducing appropriate employment of "ce" (this) versus "il" or "elle" (he or she), the parts of speech to be used with each pronoun are listed along with a stilted sentence. The text typically looks as follows:

il/elle + adjective — Elle est intelligente.

C'est + proper noun — C'est Georges.

While some connected text to reinforce these learnings is always included, there is seldom any extended discourse provided. Thus, there is little opportunity to "see" the given grammatical structure in a natural language context.

What does this mean for the learner? One consequence of this text approach for the novice French student is that there is little chance of gaining an implicit understanding of French syntax. There is only meager opportunity to develop a sense of the grammar of the language, in the way very young children gain an implicit sense of the grammar of their native tongue while learning to speak. Thus, the relationship of the part to the whole, the particular skill to the language process is very difficult, if not impossible, to envisage.

It is posited that a similar situation exists with respect to skill instruction for the beginning reader. The drilling of consonant blends in isolation, for example, must seem as abstract an entity to the first or second grader as the use of "ce" or "il/elle" seems to the novice French student.

Working with vocabulary in French provided opportunity for an additional insight in the learning demands placed upon a student coming to terms with literacy. As noted

previously, words associated with each chapter are presented and employed in short dialogues to assist acquisition. However, on occasion there are terms employed without definition and their meaning has to be ascertained from context. From personal experience I know these words tend to be recalled more readily than those whose meaning is merely presented. Because the learner has had to actively process the information, it becomes more meaningful.

One implication of such an experience for reading instruction is that the time honored practice of preteaching new vocabulary prior to the reading of the story could be of little value. It may, in fact, be more efficient instructionally to tackle difficult or strange words only within the particular context in which they are presented. A recent, related study (Elley, 1989) of vocabulary acquisition through a program of story reading, suggests this to be an efficient means of enhancing word knowledge.

One further and significant lesson gleaned from the process of learning French via a text needs to be mentioned. The approach imposes an instructional agenda on the student with scant account of the contributions he or she makes to the learning situation. One effect of feeling little control within the instructional setting is a gradual loss of motivation on the part of the learner.

The basal series, similarly constructed to the French text also imposes an agenda with little opportunity for the student to control his or her learning. By extrapolation, one can suppose children may also feel themselves without rights in an instructional situation with a concomitant lack of motivation for the reading process. The failure of students

to read in their free time outside of school (Anderson, Wilson and Fielding, 1988) supports this suggestion.

All of the shortcomings of a basal program, of course, can be answered by competent and sensitive instruction. It is possible to relate skills to the story in such a way that their function within the reading process can be realized. The literature is replete with suggestions for dealing with vocabulary instruction (Noble, 1981; Richek, 1988). Alternatives to the stilted language patterns can be offered through a program of story reading and approaches such as language experience. Unfortunately, reports (Durkin, 1990) suggest that often it is the case that the basal, despite its limitations, becomes the reading program.

Teaching methodology: Immersion

Immersion procedures in teaching a foreign language were observed to be akin to those advocated by a whole language approach to teaching literacy.

During an immersion approach to learning a second language, correct grammatical forms, both written and spoken, are modeled by a mature language user. The student is required to make him/herself understood in the adopted tongue. Efforts at approximating the model are reinforced or rewarded and inappropriate usage is ignored. Under such a method, language acquisition occurs almost as a byproduct of making meaning through interaction with the environment. The learning agenda tends to be dictated by the needs and interests of the student.

Activities associated with the immersion approach range from conversation with a model, role playing, reading and discussing materials such as stories, newspaper articles and writing. Language is always dealt with in a

meaningful context and students are expected to be active participants in the program. Mistakes are regarded as a natural function of the learning process.

A similar philosophy underlies the whole language approach to teaching literacy. A full description of the holistic theory and methods, which have been elegantly advocated by writers (Graves, 1983; Goodman, 1982) is outside the province of this paper. Suffice to say all language functions – writing, reading, listening, and speaking – are regarded as an integrated whole. They are fostered concomitantly as development in one skill enhances development in others (Fitzgerald, 1989). A whole language classroom is characterized by use of literature for reading materials, discussion, basis for writing and drama, "publishing" of children's writing, considerable hands-on experience as a base for concept and related vocabulary growth, to name a few activities. Like immersion, it is learning that is meaning-based, learner-centered and exploits fully the student's contribution, such as writing, to the literacy process.

Lessons to be learned

I have many opportunities to speak and write in French, thereby simulating an immersion program. My instructor converses with me in the language frequently. In addition, notes between us are written in French. Access to French novels and newspapers provide a chance to read the language.

There are many benefits that accrue from such broad exposure to the language. Application of syntax (extension of vocabulary, for example) occur more readily when demanded as part of natural discourse. Perhaps more significant though is the sense of power working with the language bestows upon the learner. For instance, to my

delight I found Guy de Maupassant's "Pierre et Jean" almost readable despite my very rudimentary knowledge of the language. More importantly, I found dealing with the text immensely more motivating than: *J'aime le sport. Et toi? Moi, non je n'amie pas le sport.*

My level of persistence with this self-imposed story reading task was considerable even though verb forms, for instance, were much more difficult than those being learned from the text.

The assumption is made, based on reflection of these experiences, that children who have exposure to a wide variety of language activities, such as those noted above, will also enjoy this sense of empowerment. The feeling of ownership of the learning process engendered provides the motivation to carry children through the difficult cognitive task of learning to read.

Conclusions

The parallel drawn between the experience of learning to read and write a first language and learning to read and write in a second is obviously not totally congruent. For instance, the acquisition of a foreign language is aided by facility with a native tongue whereas learning to speak/write a first language is "from scratch." There are a number of striking similarities, though, in the approaches used to teach languages and the literacy process. The experience of being a novice with the French language led me to reflect upon my own reactions to the approaches and by extrapolation upon those of the child coming to terms with reading and writing.

In short, the experience of learning through an approach that permitted me to talk, read, and write freely, was

a highly satisfying one. I concluded that the satisfaction derived from feeling a growing sense of power gained through meeting self imposed learning goals. This occurred even though most language encounters were marked by considerable error. The experience with the text based approach to language was less satisfactory. The freedom to make mistakes appeared missing since most exercises and activities hold the learner to standards of correctness. This creates a tension that detracts from, rather than supports, the learning process because the learner tends to feel incompetent when failing. Learning is no longer fun, particularly when the value of the skill to the language process is not evident.

When learning to read, via a whole language approach or the basal method, children likely feel similar reactions to those noted. While their experience with the learning process is more limited than that of the mature language user, their reactions to positive and negative instructional situations undoubtedly are the same.

The implication for the classroom teacher is clear. A wide range of language related activities to create many different opportunities to "play" with language is essential. Children will become truly literate inasmuch as they both can and want to read only if they are permitted to read and write, in some measure, on their own terms.

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Closing the Gap Between Theory and Practice: Teacher Beliefs, Instructional Decisions and Critical Thinking

**Jon Shapiro
Donna Kilbey**

Before beginning first grade, Matthew was a child who just loved books. He could already read some familiar books and composed his own stories and poems. He read his compositions to anyone willing to listen, which included the family dog.

Matthew's first grade teacher noted that he had scored poorly on the readiness test administered at the end of his kindergarten year. He also appeared to her to have a short attention span and he was a messy printer. Matthew was assigned to the low reading group.

After two months of school, Matthew was waking up each morning with a stomach ache. He was persistently cranky and he was even wetting the bed on occasion. Matthew also stopped reading and writing his own stories at home.

Matthew's second grade teacher had no reading groups. She encouraged Matthew to choose books about dragons and dinosaurs, two of his favorite subjects. She encouraged him to write his own stories and

read them to his classmates and to her. Matthew's compositions often appeared in the school newspaper. Matthew loved going to school. In fact, weekends and holidays were a bit boring for him. He began to bring home library books and would spend many hours with a friend, composing stories on the family computer.

Introduction

Matthew's story has a touch of irony to it in that both of his teachers had graduated from the same teacher preparation program in the same year. In fact, they had many of the same professors for their reading/language arts courses. Their principal had allowed them to choose their own methods and materials. The first grade teacher chose one of the district-approved basal reading programs while the second grade teacher decided to implement an integrated reading-writing-thinking approach, common to the whole language philosophy.

While it is difficult to speculate why these two teachers chose divergent approaches to teaching literacy skills, it is important to understand factors which influence teachers' practices. The one factor which would seem to be most important is teachers' beliefs about the reading process.

Examining the relationship between instructional practices which teachers use and current theories of literacy development is also important. If beliefs inform behavior, action must be taken when discrepancies between the two exist or when beliefs are antithetical to what we know about children's language and cognitive development. Strategies must be devised to assist teachers to examine critically both their beliefs and instructional practices and decisions. While the movement to empower teachers (Fagan, 1989; Shannon, 1989) clearly implies that teachers play a part in determining their literacy methods and in selecting

materials, they must be accountable for these choices — accountable in the sense that they can provide justification which is based upon accurate knowledge of literacy development.

In discussing the gap between theory and practice we will present the relationship between the two. The "fit" between current theories of literacy development and the traditional basal reader approach will be shown to be inadequate. We will also address the role of critical thinking in transforming teachers' perspectives about the reading process and how they teach reading. This transformation leads to a call for a form of instruction, epitomized by many whole language programs, which is congruent with our new knowledge of literacy development.

Teacher beliefs and behavior

Teachers are a diverse group. They differ in age, ethnic and cultural heritage, and they have had a multiplicity of experiences. Therefore it is not surprising that teachers also hold divergent expectations and beliefs about education. Teachers begin their careers with preconceptions about the role of the teacher. Teachers may hold one of two views of teaching (Campbell and O'Loughlin, 1988). The first is the mimetic or banking approach, whereby the teachers' job is to fill the empty vault with something of worth (knowledge). The second view is the transformative or midwife approach. Teachers who hold this view tend to see the learner as bringing something to the learning situation and it is the role of the teacher to 'give birth to this knowledge.' The majority of teachers tend to subscribe to the former belief. They "...hold the empiricist view that knowledge is reducible to objective facts; that teaching is the transmission of facts; and that learning is the accumulation of facts" (p. 57). Shannon (1989) presents a similar argument re-

garding teachers overreliance on basal reading programs. He argues that educators have reified commercial reading materials. That is, they hold the belief that the materials have some sort of scientific validity and that the materials with their scope and sequence of skills must be followed rather closely.

While most teachers hold a conventional view of reading instruction, diversity of views is apparent with the new attention being paid to whole language approaches (Newman, 1985; Froese, 1990). This diversity can be seen in views of the concept of reading readiness held by seven well-known American reading experts. These views ranged from a total rejection of the term itself to the inclusion of the traditional components of this concept first established in the 1925 National Society for the Study of Education's annual report (Wilson and Thrower, 1985).

It has been argued that in the teaching of beginning reading there is often a disparity between teachers' espoused beliefs about reading and their actual practices (Argyris and Schon, 1974; Davis, 1986). On the other hand, it has been reported that teachers actively formulate and reformulate their beliefs and adapt their instruction accordingly in the process of teaching (Borko, Shavelson and Stern, 1981). While it can not be denied that some teachers maintain congruence between their beliefs and instruction, Duffy (1982) maintains that the belief of the urgency to cover material and have a well-managed classroom is the actual driving force behind most teachers' instructional decision-making.

The picture regarding teachers' beliefs and practices is not yet clear. Research indicates that, at times, teachers' beliefs about reading or certain aspects such as voluntary

reading (Morrow, 1985) do influence their practice. However, it is also evident that classroom practices are strongly influenced by practical realities of classroom life, teachers' perceptions of administrative desires (Shannon, 1986), and commercial reading materials (Shannon, 1987). We believe that it is desirable to have congruence between teachers' beliefs and practices. If we are to foster this congruence, then teachers must be led to examine the assumptions underlying their beliefs, as well as the beliefs of others. Teachers must learn to question why they are using specific instructional practices and how these practices relate to current theories of literacy development. These two points are central to any transformation in reading instruction since there may be congruence between beliefs and instructional strategies, yet the type of instruction is still not desirable. This situation can occur when the beliefs are not accurate reflections of what we know about children's development of language and literacy. Thus congruence between beliefs and practice are not in themselves desirable. Teachers must move toward an understanding of the current knowledge concerning literacy acquisition and development.

Literacy theories and conventional Instruction

Historically, theorists have focused on instructional versus developmental models of reading and skills-based and meaning-based approaches to reading instruction. Since the advent of the scientific management perspective of reading instruction in the early twentieth century (Shannon, 1989), instructional, skills-based models have held sway along with the continuation of the belief that reading instruction can be scientifically managed. That this view is still predominant is seen in the Commission on Reading's statement that "America will become a nation of readers when verified practice of the best teachers in the

best schools can be introduced throughout the country" (Anderson et al., 1985, p. 120).

It has been suggested that this model is "...based on the assumption that all children are at a fairly similar level of development..." (Morrow, 1989, p. 10). The major difficulties with this assumption are that 1) it gives no credence to current theories of language and intellectual development (Piaget and Inhelder, 1969; Vygotsky, 1981); 2) the goals of reading instruction are reduced to identifiable levels of reading competencies and; 3) as a result, the process of reading is fragmented into discrete skills. These theories, as well as current research, point to the fact that reading acquisition is the factor of the social environment of literacy development (Salinger, 1988). Holdaway (1979) has proposed that: Developmental learning is highly individual and non-competitive; it is short on teaching and long on learning; it is self-regulated rather than adult-regulated; it goes hand in hand with fulfillment of real life purposes; it emulates the behavior of people who model the skill in natural use (p. 14).

For teachers who wish to examine their beliefs and practices it is useful to ask whether conventional reading instruction, as exemplified in most basal reading programs, match Holdaway's views on developmental literacy learning.

Developmental learning

With conventional reading programs ability grouping provides the typical framework for instruction. This form of grouping, however, tends to reduce the likelihood of individualization of instruction and a non-competitive atmosphere.

When students are grouped in this manner "...teachers tend to think about the group and not the individual student" (Shavelson and Stern, 1981, p. 475). A

study of four approaches to providing reading instruction found that in classrooms which utilized basal readers, no individual instruction was provided in reading, writing or enabling skills (Freeman and Freeman, 1987).

Although competition within and between groups may not be overtly promoted, it is often a by-product of ability grouping and teachers can unknowingly use subtle messages to confirm a child's status within the class. Hiebert (1983) found some teachers who openly differentiated between materials and classroom areas intended for high and low groups. Similar results were found by Grant and Rothenberg (1986) who concluded that "...there is a fundamental conflict between the practice of ability grouping and public schools' avowed goal of providing equal opportunity to all students" (p. 47).

It is also likely that the frequently found practice of marking workbooks and worksheets, which are typically designated as practice material, causes a subtle form of competition within groups as children compare their marks with others. It would seem that the practice of compulsory oral reading in front of the group also fosters a competitive environment in which there are "winners and losers."

The traditional practice of ability grouping and the competition which it tends to foster seems to be entrenched in conventional uses of basal reader programs. Indeed, some of these practices are often encouraged by the reading experts who devised the series and school district personnel responsible for the "reading curriculum." These aspects of programs need to be questioned because they appear to work against the first two tenets of developmental learning.

Short on teaching, long on learning

Holdaway (1979) asserts that developmental learning emphasizes learning as opposed to teaching. Implied in this statement is support for the transformative approach to teaching. However, conventional approaches to the teaching of reading tend to promote the mimetic approach. In a comparative study of knowledge-driven and stimulus-driven reading programs, it was found that teachers using basal readers spent more than half of the reading period in teacher-directed activity in which they played the role of expert and the children were receivers of information (Evans and Carr, 1985). Another study which compared whole-language and conventional reading instruction classrooms characterized the interaction in the latter as "teacher-contingent" (Wilucki, 1984).

Literacy learning implies more than just the accumulation of skills. What appears to be of paramount importance is the ability to apply knowledge for "...specific purposes in specific contexts of use" (Scribner and Cole, 1981). Yet conventional reading instruction has been found to be content-centered rather than student-centered, with the emphases on word recognition and word analysis skills (Rupley and Logan, 1985).

Self-regulated rather than adult-regulated

Conventional reading programs are regulated by teachers usually following explicit directions found in a basal reading series. Teachers guidebooks clearly spell out what is to be taught, in what sequence, and by what method. Little decision-making other than grouping and the pacing of lessons is left to the teacher. Certainly no decision-making is left to the child.

Shannon (1989) claims that students are the biggest losers in technically-controlled commercial materials. There is no learner self-regulation and "...students become individuals within the system only according to the rate at which they progress through the specified curriculum" (p. 94).

To some extent, teachers are also losers within the conventional approach. Since very few decisions are made by the teacher, they have become deskilled (Shannon, 1987). Skilled professionals make decisions which are integral to their work. Teachers who, because of the program they adhere to, do not make decisions about which material to use with different students and which instructional techniques to utilize at different times, are no longer professionals as far as their reading instruction is concerned (Shannon, 1989). Shannon goes on to claim that teachers become alienated from their reading programs.

Real life purposes

While it can not be said that conventional reading instruction is purposeless, it is obvious that children do not perceive the true purposes of reading. In studies conducted in the United States (Johns and Ellis, 1976) and in Ireland (Cairney, 1988), children in basal reading programs did not perceive that the major purpose for reading was to construct meaning. Shapiro and White (1990) reported clear differences in perceptions of the purposes of reading among children in traditional and nontraditional reading programs. The former group perceived the function of reading primarily in utilitarian or job-related perspectives. The latter group perceived the function of reading from both enjoyment and knowledge acquisition frameworks.

It appears that with conventional reading instruction comes the perception that reading is a set of skills to be

acquired. Holdaway (1979) suggests that this view is self-defeating. He states that, "Unless they function in concert and are taught largely within meaningful contexts, the so-called basic skills constitute a parody of reading and writing" (p. 190).

The research on emergent literacy clearly indicates that children come to school knowing a great deal about reading and writing and the purposes of these acts (Shapiro, 1990). It is clear that most young children use simplistic forms of reading and writing in purposeful ways. We may wish to question whether conventional forms of reading instruction distort children's perceptions.

Naturalistic modeling

How do young children come to know so much about literacy before they come to school? They learn by observing significant individuals using literacy for real-life purposes. It has been argued that instructional practices should build, not only on children's knowledge but, on the manner in which they have learned prior to school entry (Shapiro and Doiron, 1987).

Children should read material written in natural language. Research indicates that written language which is familiar to the child promotes comprehension (Simons and Ammon, 1987). Children should also hear stories and much oral language since these have been shown to increase vocabulary (Elley, 1989) and mediate writing ability (Dyson, 1983). Teachers should be seen using print in purposeful ways so that their students come to fully understand and appreciate the value of written language. Teale (1982) proposes that the modeling done by teachers assists children in understanding the functions, purposes, and conventions

of print. More importantly, the modeling is a motivating force.

Conventional reading instruction can create barriers to naturalistic learning. The text of beginning reading material often contains stilted language. Written feedback related to children's workbook or worksheet assignments frequently consists of brief remarks as opposed to well-written, constructive comments. In many conventional classrooms, less time is spent reading good literature to children due to pressures related to covering what is seen as the necessary components of the "reading curriculum." Children receiving conventional reading instruction may, in fact, have little opportunity to see literacy modeled in purposeful ways.

Critical thinking and perspective transformation

Questions regarding how conventional reading instruction matches views of literacy learning as a developmental process lead to doubts as to whether this form of instruction is congruent with theories we believe in. Perhaps the most challenging job facing administrators and teacher educators is that of assisting teachers in critically examining these discrepancies between practice and theory and to facilitate the necessary changes. While this may seem to be a formidable task, it is a necessary one. If teachers are to regain professionalism in the teaching of reading, they must regain some of the responsibilities for classroom decision-making.

Critical thinking skills must be an essential component of a teacher's repertoire. Teachers have a professional responsibility to reflect on their practices, yet they are often so consumed by the mechanics of their position that they neglect to examine their practices, or refuse to examine them systematically. Goodman argues that "...children

receive the best education when teachers develop what Dewey referred to as the habit of reflection, that is, the ability to consistently question the existing education found in our schools and society and explore viable alternatives" (1986, p. 183).

Critical thinking, however, entails more than just reflecting on one's beliefs and practices. It is synonymous with emancipatory learning, a three-step process in which learners first become aware of the situation they are in, then become aware of the forces that brought them to that situation, and complete the process by taking action to change some aspect of the situation (Brookfield, 1987, p. 12). Thus, critical thinking is both reflection and action. Eventually it leads to empowerment because it is seen as a force "which frees people from...institutional...forces that prevent them from seeing new direction..." (Apps, 1985, p. 151).

It is important to note that critical thinking occurs best in a supportive environment. Critical thinking involves personal and professional risk-taking. It can be a very discomfoting process because our beliefs are often interwoven with our self-concept. When a teacher's beliefs are challenged, especially by an external agent, the teacher's self-perception as an educator is at risk. Administrators and teacher educators must challenge teachers to think critically, but they are responsible for ensuring that this occurs in an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect. Teachers must know that their experience and knowledge is valued. Ultimately they must be encouraged to use that knowledge and experience to form new perspectives about their reading instruction.

Critical thinking alone will not necessarily lead to sound instructional practices in reading. However, this type of

introspection is a necessary first step in changing reading practices (Shapiro, 1979). Without it, reading instructional practices may remain static.

Summary

While there are many factors which influence a teacher's reading instructional practices, their beliefs about reading can shape their behavior. When these behaviors and beliefs are at odds with accepted theories of child language learning and development intervention should occur.

There appear to be some discrepancies between conventional forms of reading instruction, involving basal readers, and current theories of literacy development. If this is so, then teachers, administrators and teacher educators have a professional responsibility to consider change and to challenge us to think critically about our professional practices. Strategies for intervention need to be developed so that self-examination can occur in a risk-free, supportive environment. Critically examining our practices may prevent us from reducing reading instruction to little more than technical rationality. Conventional reading programs need to be modified to bring them into line with current views of literacy goals and research (Barr, 1989). It is apparent that programs which fall under the "whole language umbrella" are more consistent with these views.

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Alternate Streams in Education: Instructional Flow in the Classrooms of Non-Influential and Influential Teachers

"The instructional flow in the classrooms of non-influential teachers may be described as being like a straight, yet shallow, river, whose waters are held close to a precharted course, unable to veer from the laborious goal of reaching the ocean, or as a river whose banks wind toward the sea but whose rocky bed causes the waters to splash aimlessly in all directions, easily losing sight of its elusive goal of also reaching the sea.

By contrast the instructional flow in classrooms of the influential teachers is similar to a deep full river meandering to the sea following a clear course. While bubbling waters from entering streams may gurgle excitedly as they join the river they are easily assimilated, adding a richness and complexity to the river. Even a casual observer could follow the river's flow as it reaches its destination."

Robert B. Ruddell, speaking at the annual conference of the International Reading Association, May 7, 1990.



READING: THE CONFERENCES

Jeanne M. Jacobson

***International Literacy Year:
Celebration, Inspiration, Dedication***

**International Reading Association,
35th Annual Convention, May, 1990**

Among the presentations at the annual convention of the International Reading Association, held in Atlanta in May, was a session titled "Teachers, Students, and Literacy Instruction: Profiles in Learning." The two session leaders, Robert B. Ruddell, from the University of California at Berkeley, and Martha Rapp-Haggard Ruddell, from Sonoma State University in Rohnert Park, California, discussed their research, which has focused on two aspects of instruction: the characteristics of influential teachers, and the manner in which skillful and less skilled teachers employ ambiguity in their teaching.

In an eight-year longitudinal study, Robert Ruddell investigated the characteristics of teachers who are identified

by their former students, in after years, as having had a strong influence on their lives and learning. Such teachers are rare; some students never have the experience of being taught by a teacher whom they perceive as influential. When the experiences of high and low achieving students are contrasted, the low achievers, on average, report having studied with one or two such teachers; the average number of such teachers reported by high achievers is three.

High and low achievers tend to perceive teachers similarly, and to have similar views of the characteristics of influential teachers. Quality of instruction is a primary factor, and teachers' enthusiasm for their subject matter is important as well. Students also were strongly influenced by teachers who understood their potential for learning and adjusted instruction accordingly, who showed personal care for them, and who were willing to recognize their personal concerns and help them.

Dr. Ruddell offered an analogy (see page 74) between classrooms as learning environments in which the flow of teacher-guided instruction is intended to lead to future learning, and rivers flowing to the sea. The metaphor illuminates the importance of teaching which is goal-directed but not goal-driven, teaching which welcomes and assimilates diversity among students and among the many paths which lead to learning.

Martha Rapp-Haggard Ruddell discussed her research focusing on ambiguity in instruction and learning. Lack of clarity is frequently a factor in learning situations; instructional ambiguity may be categorized as intended or unintended. Skillful teachers intentionally introduce opportunities for students to make choices, and to take responsibility for aspects of their own learning. In the classrooms

of skillful teachers, students contribute to defining literacy, task content and task procedures. Student activities which have a component of intended ambiguity include open-ended writing, discussion, and group problem solving. Teaching methods which present elements of intended ambiguity include asking higher level comprehension questions such as those requiring analysis and synthesis, and engaging students in considering abstract ideas.

In the presence of ambiguity, students must make decisions. If decision making occurs in a supportive situation, where the teacher encourages students to accept a role in their own learning, and where different responses are valued, students' independence as learners is enhanced. If, however, the ambiguity is unintentional and students are engaged in guessing "what the teacher wants," and at risk if their understanding does not match a narrow range of options which the teacher has envisioned, both students' comfort in the learning situation, and their sense of themselves as learners, are diminished. In these cases students' thought and effort tend to focus not on learning, but on attempting to determine and fulfill the teacher's expectation. Moreover, students may carry this pattern of passivity into other learning situations.

Dr. Ruddell illustrated the concept of unintended ambiguity by describing her investigation of students' approaches to the "spelling story" assignment, in which a student's task is to write an original story using a set of assigned spelling words. In such an assignment the teacher's view of the task is also an ambiguous one, since a collection of unrelated words do not provide a useful basis for a story. Is the assignment truly to create an interesting, coherent tale? Or is it to complete a weekly, spelling-related task which is manageable for students in terms of its length, and

for teachers in terms of the ease with which it can be evaluated?

When interviewed, some students showed that they were able to disambiguate the assignment through their own planning. Although their strategies differed, all the students in this group had decided on ways to approach the task which enabled them to impose meaning on the process, as they completed the task successfully. These students planned metacognitively — they were conscious of the strategies they used, and their plans had a fail-safe component in that they were able to adopt a new strategy if their first was unsuccessful. A second group of students developed a single method for completing the task, and used it consistently without self-evaluation. A third group approached the task without planning. The requirement to complete an ambiguous writing task overrode their need to make sense in their writing.

The implications of research on classroom ambiguity are threefold. Teachers should be aware of various sources of ambiguity, develop literacy tasks intended to be ambiguous while avoiding sources of unintended ambiguity, and guide students as they work through ambiguous tasks, helping them to develop rich metacognitive plans as they make decisions and act upon them.

The presentation ended with a teaching strategy which both presenters recommend — reading aloud. Martha Ruddell chose a poem by Judith Viorst, appropriately titled "Before I Go."

The next annual convention of the International Reading Association will be held in Las Vegas, Nevada, on May 6-10, 1991. For further information about the convention, write to: International Reading Association, 800 Barksdale Road, PO Box 8139, Newark, Delaware, 19714-8139.



REVIEWS

Professional Materials

Learning to read: The quest for meaning. Malcolm P. Douglass. 1989. Teachers College Press, 1234 Amsterdam Ave., New York NY 10027. ISBN: 0-8077-2970-1. Cloth. 176 pp. US\$22.95.

In this interesting and provocative work, Malcolm Douglass presents a multifaceted framework for conceptualizing the reading process. The framework he constructs has definite implications for the educational system as a whole, and, more importantly, strong recommendations for change in the traditional practices surrounding reading instruction.

The basic premise of this work presents two opposing views of how individuals best learn to read. The first view, labeled by the author the traditional view, presents reading as "a subject best learned through the study of component skills" (p. 15). Historically this traditional or conventional view has dominated classroom practice in the United States. The second view, the experiential or naturalistic position, holds that learning to read will best evolve as other language acquisition does, through exposure and practice in a natural setting in which constructing meaning is the goal.

Douglass builds support for the naturalistic approach by tying together threads from many perspectives. These

varying perspectives are included in chapters devoted to historical trends in reading, the roles of sensory input and language acquisition and learning theory.

The audience for this work, including educators, parents and anyone interested in the act of reading itself, is encouraged by the author to reflect upon his stated theoretical orientation and to evaluate what should appropriately constitute reading instruction. In a most readable and logical fashion the author certainly leaves no doubt to which philosophy he subscribes. (KW)

Books for Children

Galimoto. Written by Karen Lynn Williams; illustrated by Catherine Stock. 1990. Lothrop, Lee & Shepard, 105 Madison Ave., New York NY 10016. ISBN: 0-688-08789-2. Hardcover. 32 pp. US\$13.95.

Galimoto begins with Kondi, a seven-year-old boy in an African village, examining his "box of things" — the kind of box that will be familiar to many seven-year-old boys. His box holds a knife, a "dancing man," and pieces of wire. Kondi's greatest wish for the day is to have enough wire to make a "galimoto," which is a type of hand-made wire toy children in his village play with. Kondi perseveres in his quest the entire morning, even in the face of derision from his older brother, and, much more intimidating, anger from other village members. By the afternoon, he has enough wire to make a pick-up truck as his galimoto.

In the evening, after his long and rewarding day, Kondi hears the other village children singing "let the moon be

bright, for us to play and sing tonight." Kondi proudly brings out his new toy, and the children play together.

Catherine Stock spent several weeks gathering impressions in the African country of Malawi, and her illustrations portray daily life of the village in muted, realistic colors. Karen L. Williams captures the definitive essence of an African village through the eyes of a child, but manages to make the story of Kondi and his toy a universal one. Kondi and his "galimoto" will be endearing to the hearts of young readers. (SC)

Holiday Series: Hanukkah, Passover, Halloween, Christmas, Easter. Written and illustrated by Miriam Nerlove. 1990. Albert Whitman & Co., 5747 W. Howard, Niles IL 60648. ISBN 0-8075-3143-X; 8-8075-6390-9; 8-8075-3131-6; 0-8075-1148-X; 0-8075-1871-9. Hardcover, 24 pp. US\$10.95 each.

Reading Horizons presents the comments of two reviewers who examined selected books in the series.

Review by Eloise Van Heest, Associate for Christian Education, Hope Church (Reformed Church in America), Holland MI.

Even though young children have experienced each of the annual holidays and holy days only a very few times, they realize that these are very special days. The stories in this series emphasize the simple, warm pleasures of families celebrating together and the loving relationships of children with parents, siblings and grandparents. Baking Christmas cut-out cookies, dyeing Easter eggs, and making Thanksgiving pies are some of the rich holiday traditions in which preschoolers share.

A particularly appropriate focus is on the children in the stories giving to others rather than only receiving from grownups. The excited anticipation and joy of sharing holiday meals with extended families is also depicted. The author balances the common "secular" customs such as Santa Claus and the Easter bunny with a straightforward and clear telling of the Christian stories of Christmas and Easter. Although some might resist the mixture, the presence of both aspects encourages further conversation between reader and young listener.

Review by Dvora Heckelman, Hebrew Academy of the Capital District, Albany NY, and Union College, Schenectady NY.

These charming picture story books reflect careful thought and considerable talent on the part of the author Miriam Nerlove. The illustrations are delightful and were pleasing to a group of kindergartners who heard the stories read aloud.

While the language and content are appropriate to the young preschooler for whom the books were written, care was exercised to keep the facts accurate if incomplete. The author, bound by such concerns as rhyme, fact, historical authenticity, sexual equality, sensitivity to religious differences, politics, and a child's capacity to understand, must make accommodations. It appears that in making the necessary selections, rhyme was a primary dictator necessitating sometimes the sacrifice of good language or occasionally accuracy. For example, in the book of Passover, it was necessary to use the term "Seder Book" to rhyme with "look" instead of "HAGGADAH," the authentic name for the booklet used to tell the Passover story.

Notable and praiseworthy is the presence of several generations in the home, the father as cook, and the multi-racial approach in the series.

A young Jewish mother who was asked to read the books to her young children expressed disappointment that the HANUKKAH book states "Each night there are gifts." This, in fact, is not tradition and has been instituted by some families in an attempt to compete with Christmas. Since, in all other aspects, these books appropriately accept differences and avoid judgments, the author apparently has inadvertently accepted as custom a practice limited to some families and observed, in the reviewer's judgment, for the wrong reasons.

Of note also is the fact that the author has chosen not to mention Jerusalem or Israel in any of the books despite the fact that it was the locale for the history of Hanukkah and of Easter. In the light of current political interest in the Holyland, it is understandable. However, this territory is the geographical area from whence grew the three major Western religions. Were the world to recall our common origins we might better create a climate in which our young readers may find the wisdom to achieve peace and practice the love of humankind intended by our ancestors.

Materials reviewed are not endorsed by *Reading Horizons* or Western Michigan University. The content of the reviews reflects the opinion of the reviewers whose names or initials appear with the reviews.

To submit an item for potential review, send to Kathryn A. Welsch, Reviews Editor, *Reading Horizons*, Reading Center and Clinic, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI 49008.

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