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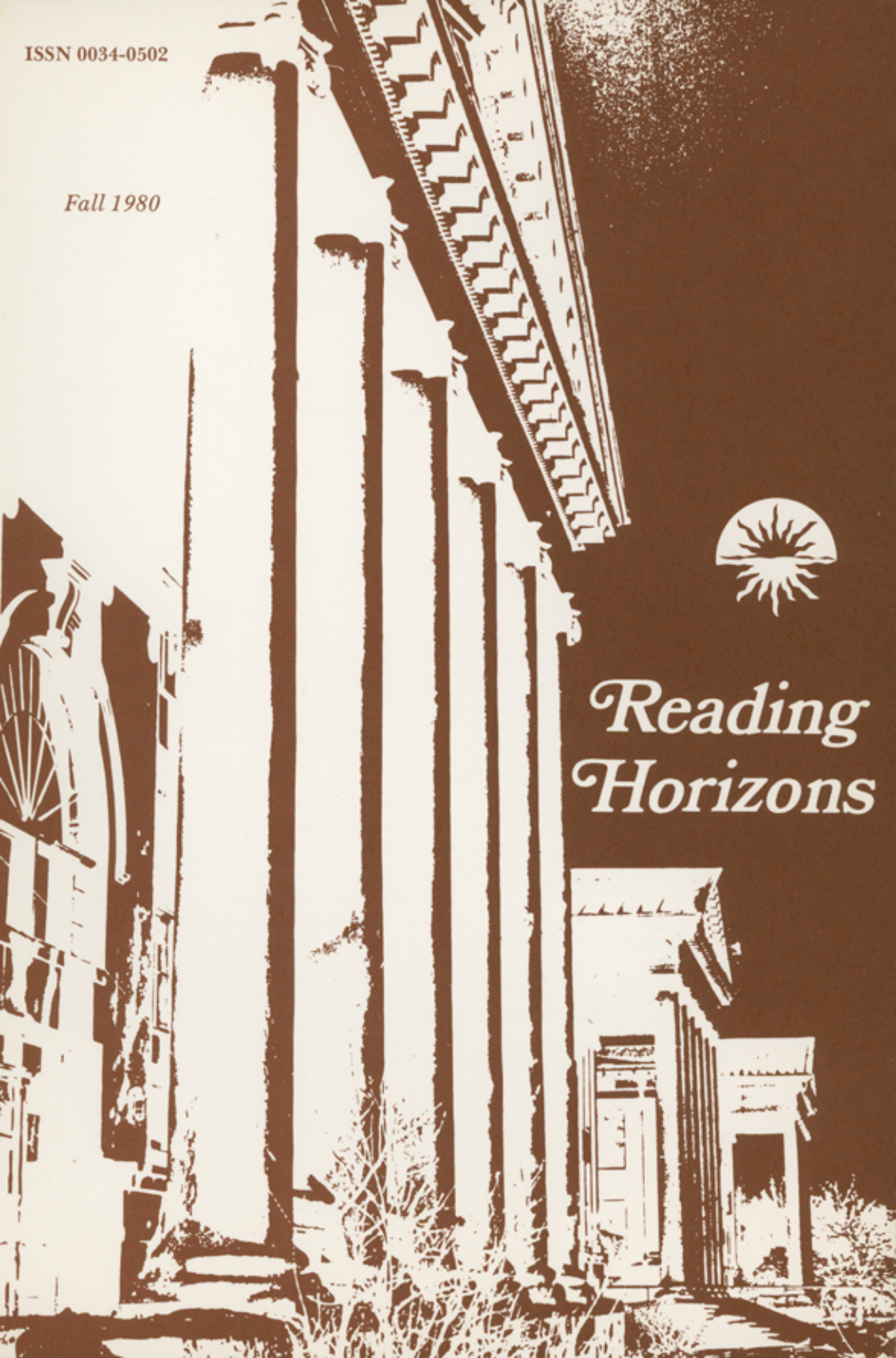


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GUEST EDITORIAL

THE ELDERLY READER OF THE FUTURE—NEED WE BE CONCERNED?

Richard D. Robinson

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI—COLUMBIA

Anne Marie Bernazza Haase

STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, ALBANY, NEW YORK

Joseph A. Califano (1978), former Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, noted the following dramatic changes anticipated in the nation's population during the next few years.

There has been a gain of ten years in life expectancy at birth since 1940. Males born today can expect to live to 69 years on the average, and females 77 years. Three quarters of the infants born today will live to age 65; once there, they will live on the average, for another 16 years, to age 81.

The post war "baby boom" will turn into a senior "boom" in the early 21st century. Today 11 percent of 24 million people are 65 or older, but in the year 2030 a dramatic increase will be evident with 18 percent or 55 million in this age group.

The composition of the older population will also show marked changes in the future. Thirty percent of those 65 or older had reached 75 in 1940 by the year 2000, 45 percent will have reached this age.

Even though people are living longer they are retiring earlier and will do so in greater numbers in the future. Nearly one-half of all men 65 or older remained working thirty years ago, while today only one man in five and one woman in twelve are working at this age.

The ratio between employed persons to retired citizens will decrease:

- in 1940 there were nine employed for each retired individual
- in 1978 it is six to one and
- in 2030 it will be three to one.

It seems evident that based on these figures we are facing a future world with a larger population of older people. In addition, it is also apparent that this older generation will experience an increasing number of years in retirement. Whether reading is a meaningful part of these

years for our students in the 21st century is in great measure being determined by the practices being followed in elementary classroom reading programs today.

This early influence on a lifetime of reading interests and habits cannot be overemphasized. Recent studies with the older reader (Haase 1979; Robinson 1979) have noted the lasting effect beginning experiences with reading have had on attitudes towards reading throughout a person's lifetime. As one older gentleman noted in a humorous but also very revealing statement concerning his reading activities, "I don't read very many books, because I always feel I need to do a book report on them!" Perhaps an overstatement, but what are we doing each day in our reading classes to prevent the development of an attitude such as this particular one in our students?

Our interviews with older readers have brought to light some interesting insights into their reading attitudes and habits. Contrary to what many believe, retirement does not bring with it significant changes in previous reading practices. Those reading customs and routines which have been established throughout younger life, for the most part, continue into the retirement years. The hope that with additional available time there will be added interest to read more extensively than what had been done previously does not seem to be true for many older readers.

It was also revealing to note that among those older people who indicated reading had been a significant part of their lives there almost always was reference made to a classroom teacher's influence on developing this love for reading early in life. Descriptive phrases such as, "made reading fun," "always open to questions," "respected my opinions," and "widened my reading interests," were typical of the memories these elderly readers had held for a lifetime of their elementary reading teachers. For these older readers, the term "life long reading" was not simply an abstract goal found in a curriculum guide but rather had become a significant aspect of their daily lives.

As teachers of reading it perhaps might be worthwhile for each of us to examine our daily reading activities in light of what we are doing to prepare readers of the future. Will our current students remember us in their old age as being the ones who developed and nurtured a love for reading? No finer legacy could be given to future generations.

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READ IT WITH MEANING: ALOUD

Gary A. Negin

MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY, MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

Judith L. Rios

WEST ALLIS CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL, WISCONSIN

Between 1910 and 1925 the emphasis in reading instruction in elementary and secondary schools switched dramatically from oral reading to silent reading. Emphasis on oral reading was almost totally neglected. Educators of the 1920s believed that silent reading was more efficient than oral reading in the areas of rate, comprehension, and convenience. As McCluskey (1942) explained, "a theory was put forth that the faster one read, the more one understood. Speed, therefore, became thoroughly entrenched and oral reading with its slower ways was politely placed in solitary confinement" (p. 15).

However, some educators did not agree with this harsh treatment of oral reading. I. Jewell Simpson (1929) commented that "while readily admitting that overemphasis on oral reading beyond the fourth grade is equally regrettable, much of the best in literature makes it appeal to the ear" (p. 167).

Runchey (1931) stated that "too much literature is read silently . . . silent reading has usurped the time which used to be given to the study of literature" (p. 90). He felt that silent reading emphasized quantity, not understanding or appreciation. McCluskey (1942) agreed with this line of thinking when he wrote that "overemphasis on silent reading has made oral reading almost a lost art—to the detriment of the pupils who have been taught to sacrifice accuracy and clear thinking to speed" (p. 15).

Price and Stroud (1945) stated that in the 1930s and early 1940s many secondary educators felt that much reading difficulty in high school could be attributed to an emphasis on oral reading in elementary schools. Yet, Price and Stroud (1945) further observed that:

It is rather curious, however, that these opinions have not been subjected to thorough experimental investigation. While we do not make the direct assertion that no direct experimental evidence in support of the proposition is to be found, inspection of more than 1200 published investigations on reading and dozens of books on reading in which statements are used concerning the ill effects of oral reading has failed to reveal a single instance in which those statements are supported by experimental evidence (p. 20).

In recent years some educators have again begun to consider the values of including oral reading activities in classrooms at all grade levels. Yet, according to Fry (1972), speed is still stressed, and secondary pupils are seldom required to read aloud. This lack of oral reading practice at the secondary level is common in our present system of education. However, little research has been conducted which explores the advantages and disadvantages of oral reading at the secondary level. The present study explored the effects of oral and silent reading on the comprehension of disabled secondary readers.

Method

Subjects

The subjects were selected from the population of tenth-grade students enrolled in reading classes at West Allis Central High School, a Wisconsin school of approximately 1,500 students. Students meeting the following criteria were classified as disabled: (1) students scoring 100 or below on the Henman Nelson IQ Test (Lamke & Nelson, 1973), and (2) students scoring at or below the twenty-fifth percentile on the reading subtest of the STS, Form R, Developmental Series (Scholastic Testing Service, 1975).

Twenty of the sixty reading students were randomly selected for participation in a pilot study. The forty remaining subjects were randomly assigned to the two treatment groups of the main study.

Materials

Pilot study. Twenty tenth-grade reading students were randomly selected for participation in the pilot study. The task was carefully explained to each student. Each subject read the passages orally in an isolated and quiet location, starting at reading level four. Following this oral reading, the student answered the comprehension questions for each passage orally. An independent reading level was reached and recorded. The subject then continued to read more difficult passages until the frustration level was reached.

After completing this procedure, an easy (independent) reading level and a hard (frustration) reading level were determined for the group. The easy level was identified as the fifth-grade level, and the hard level was defined as the eighth-grade level. At least eighty-five percent of the group's independent and frustration level scores were found at the fifth-grade level and the eighth-grade level respectively.

Main study. The data gathered from the pilot study were used as a basis for the main experiment, involving forty other sophomore reading students. The forty subjects were randomly divided into two groups of twenty.

In one group, each subject read the easy passage and the hard passage orally to the investigator. Comprehension questions were asked after the completion of each story, and the number of the correct and incorrect answers was recorded. Each subject within the second group

read the same easy and hard passages as the first group, but read them silently. Again, the comprehension questions were asked orally after the completion of each story and the results recorded. Both groups were forewarned that their performances would be judged on the basis of the comprehension scores. Students were not told that the difficulty levels of the stories were different.

A 2 x 2 repeated measures, one between-one within design was employed. Reading mode was the between factor. Two levels, oral reading and silent reading, were selected. Material difficulty was the within factor. Two levels, easy material and hard material, were chosen.

Analysis of variance techniques were utilized to carefully examine the data. A .05 level of significance was used as the criterion for acceptance or rejection of the hypotheses.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 reports the means and the standard deviations for the reading mode x material difficulty cells. Table 2 reports the findings of the analysis of variance.

Table 1
Means and Standard Deviations for the Reading Mode x
Material Difficulty Cells

Mode	Easy		Hard	
	x	sd	x	sd
Oral	6.25	1.21	6.23	1.49
Silent	5.48	1.25	4.63	1.45

Table 2
Analysis of Variance Table

SV	df	SS	MS	F
<i>Between S's</i>				
Mode (A)	1	28.21	28.21	22.39*
S (A)	78	98.52	1.26	—
<i>Within S's</i>				
Difficulty (B)	1	3.83	3.83	7.23*
AB	1	3.40	3.40	6.42**
BA (A)	78	41.14	.53	

*Significant at .01.

**Significant at .025.

The results of the study indicated that the comprehension scores of the oral readers were higher than the comprehension scores of the silent readers for both easy and hard reading materials. One possible explanation is that the students put more concentration and effort into their reading to impress the investigator and to save themselves from embarrassment. However, it is felt that the results were due to a combination of the following variables:

1. Oral reading forces a student to attend more closely to print. This explanation is supported by the results of eye movement photography which show that silent reading requires fewer fixations, shorter pauses, and fewer regressions. Increased concentration is important to an unskilled silent reader who may skip important portions of a text, stare at a single word, or attend to unimportant cues.
2. Meaning is enhanced through oral reading, since disabled readers are more comfortable and efficient in processing language through their sense of hearing than through their sense of sight.
3. The transformation of the visual input to an auditory form may provide the rehearsal needed for memory to be improved. The use of two modalities may add helpful redundancy.

The study also showed that the comprehension of the hard material was worse than the comprehension of the easy material. This outcome was anticipated, since the influences of sentence length and word familiarity are firmly established as variables which distinguish between levels of difficulty.

A significant interaction effect was obtained. Students did better when reading hard material orally than they did when reading easy material silently. One possible explanation is that students rushed through the silent reading of the easy material because they mistakenly thought that the passage was not challenging. A more plausible explanation is that the difference between the easy and hard materials was not great enough. Since the average subject got only 73 percent of the comprehension questions correct for the easy material, it would follow that the easy material was not simple enough.

Conclusion

The primary implication of the present study for teachers of disabled secondary readers is that oral reading should be encouraged as a possible aid to comprehension. Any technique which helps a student succeed should be promoted, since it is through success that motivation and self-confidence are built.

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THE EFFECT OF INTEREST ON THE READING COMPREHENSION OF GIFTED READERS

Kathleen C. Stevens

NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

All too often, little attention in our classrooms goes into "getting the most out of" superior students. This is particularly true in the field of reading. As long as their reading performance is consistently above average, superior students are often considered to be doing "well" in reading. However, this overlooks the fact that such readers may still be performing far below their potential. That is, gifted students should exhibit extremely superior reading ability—yet teachers are often content with less-than-minimum performance from these individuals.

Teachers owe it to these students, "the best and the brightest," to challenge them sufficiently. These students have the potential for excellence, and for educational leadership and scholarship. However, if teachers remain satisfied with less than maximum reading performance, they may be depriving their charges of the potential for greatness. Although gifted programs are a new trend in many states, the educational system largely focuses on work with poor readers. Thus, it may be up to the classroom teacher to provide the resources necessary to challenge the superior student in reading.

This report discloses research done with superior readers (having superior intelligence) regarding the effect of interest on their reading comprehension. It shall be shown that, when challenged with interesting material, superior students demonstrated "reserves" of reading comprehension power. This effect was not found for the average students in the sample.

Subjects: The subjects were ninety-three fifth and sixth grade students in a small city. Of these subjects, thirty-one were identified as "superior" students. These students, eighteen boys and thirteen girls, exceeded the 83rd percentile of reading ability on the *SRA Assessment Survey* comprehension subtest (1963). The average IQ of this group was 123.35 (s.d. = 9.02), as measured by the Otis-Lennon Mental Abilities tests. This "superior" group was compared with subjects of lesser ability in the same fifth and sixth grade classrooms.

Materials: Reading passages were taken from the *McCall-Crabbs Standard Test Lessons in Reading*, Books D and E. Interests of individual pupils were assessed by asking subjects to complete an interest inventory (seven steps ranging from "not at all interested" to "very interested"). The twenty-five entries on this inventory were factually

based, and were those for which reading passages were available from the *Standard Test Lessons*. To guard against passage effects, paragraphs were balanced across interest conditions.

Procedures: Interests of subjects were assessed on twenty-five topics. Two topics of higher interest and two topics of lower interest were identified for each subject. Reading passages corresponding to these four topics were given to all subjects in the samples. Thus, each subject read two passages as indicated of higher interest, and two passages of lower interest. Following the reading of each passage, multiple-choice questions were answered by the subjects concerning the passages. The grade level score accompanying the number of questions correct for that passage was the dependent variable.

Design: The data were analyzed using a 2x2x3 ANOVA design, with interest condition as the repeated measure. There were two levels of interest, two levels of sex, and three levels of ability. Of special interest was the high ability group. Grade level scores of the two higher interest and two lower interest passages were averaged for each subject in the study.

Results: Results are summarized in Table 1. Of the main effects, only ability was significant. This is natural, since ability is related to achievement in reading. Of greater interest is the significant ability and interest interaction. This means that the overall effect of interest was not the same at each ability level. A test of simple main effects was undertaken on this significant interaction. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 1
ANOVA SUMMARY TABLE

Source	df	F	
Ability (A)	2,87	35.22	*
Sex (B)	1,87	.6146	
Ability x Sex	2,87	.0923	
Interest (C)	1,87	1.57	
Sex x Interest	1,87	2.49	
Ability x Interest	2,87	4.75	*
Ability x Sex x Interest	2,87	2.61	

* = significant at the .05 level

These results show that interest had an effect on reading comprehension only for the high ability group. That is, subjects in the high ability group read significantly better under the higher interest condition than under the lower condition. This higher ability group was the only ability group for which interest was a factor.

Discussion: The results of this research indicate that superior ability students can be motivated to perform better in reading comprehension. In this design, superior ability subjects were motivated to read

Table 2
Summary for Simple Main Effects Test

<i>Source</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	
Ability (A)	2,87	35.22	*
Ability x Interest	2,87	4.76	*
Interest at Hi Ability	1,87	6.0	*
Interest at Mid Ability	1,87	.914	
Interest at Low Ability	1,87	.043	
Ability at Low Interest	2,87	31.25	*
Ability at Hi Interest	2,87	20.15	*

* = significant at the .05 level

significantly better when given material that was of interest to them. Interest did not have the same beneficial effect for middle or lower ability students. One possible explanation for the salutary effect on superior readers is that only these readers had not yet reached the “ceiling” in reading comprehension. That is, only superior readers had the “reserves” of reading comprehension ability necessary to significantly increase reading achievement. These results indicate that superior readers can exhibit greater reading power when given interesting material.

This result also suggests that superior students do not always employ their maximum reading comprehension power. In this experiment, gifted pupils were clearly reading substandardly (for them) on the lower interest passages. Only when given passages of a challenging nature (that is, of special, individual interest), did superior students demonstrate the higher levels of their reading ability. This effect was not found for other students.

These results have important implications for the education of gifted pupils. Apparently, the factor of interest is an important one for gifted students. This interest factor is perhaps a proxy for challenge for them. That is, when given interesting (and thus challenging, since the pupil has a desire to learn about the topic) material, superior students bring all their reading abilities to bear. When given uninteresting and non-challenging material, superior students are content with less than maximum success. Teachers given the responsibility of educating superior students should strive to challenge and interest them.

Individualized programs for gifted students should take the interest factor into account. Classroom teachers might adapt reading lessons and assignments so that gifted readers can develop their own areas of interest. For example, a reading group of superior students might be allowed to choose individual “research topics,” rather than read from a circumscribed “reading program” or basal reader. Reading assignments would be to read several books on the area of interest (book selection may be undertaken in conjunction with the librarian). Thus, one reader might read about spiders, and another might devour five books about rocketry. The group could reconvene for sharing of ideas gained, with

the possible side-effect of expanding other group members' interests. This "individualized reading" approach to the gifted group would challenge them far more than putting them through textbook paces evolved for the average learner. This reading program for superior students might be tied to the other language arts by having students write reports on their topics of interest, give class presentations, or work on units with less talented students, so as to share their insight and expertise.

Gifted programs now being developed in many states should take note of the factor of interest and its beneficial effect on reading comprehension. Gifted programs should allow for personal growth. By encouraging students to read widely in their areas of interest, this growth can be promoted. The gifted teacher's role as a facilitator of learning should include supplying children with a myriad of reading material on topics of interest to them. Rather than straightjacket our gifted students, we can use the lever of interest to challenge them to greater reading heights. Gifted programs should consider basing reading instruction on an "individualized reading" approach, rather than a skills approach.

There may be other as yet unexplored factors that also have bearing on the reading comprehension of gifted students. At any rate, educators must strive to develop each child's capacities to the maximum, especially in the field of reading, which is the key to so much knowledge and beauty. This research suggests that close attention to gifted pupils' interests may be one such key to developing their maximum reading abilities.

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READING SKILLS IN A PAPERBACK CLASSROOM

Lynne G. Rehder

ELDORADO HIGH SCHOOL, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

Humanities teachers have been reluctant, with justification, to trust mathematical measurements of literary experience. They know that the learning in which students participate in the classroom cannot be put on a bubble sheet with a number two pencil, but the threat of accountability and standardized testing is forcing them into a defensive position. Those teachers who have enjoyed the satisfactions of working with relevant material in the past few years are now threatened by basics. The good teachers, of course, never stopped teaching the basics but found that relevancy could be used as a motivational tool. The best of the lot always learn how to ride out the waves of educational fadism by adapting the demands of current philosophy to fit what they believed all along.

Paperback literature classes have been a fad of the past decade. In recent times teachers offering these courses have felt the need to be defensive about their "trash lit." Classic teachers tend to look down on popular fiction as a "dumping ground" for students who can't pass the "real" literature courses, basic skills proponents frown because they feel poor readers should be in remedial classes learning roots and suffixes from specialists and the popular fiction teachers defend their paperback "junk" on the basis that they are teaching students to "like" to read. "Liking" is one aspect of relevancy, of course, but in the age of accountability it is a very difficult philosophy to justify because it can't be empirically measured. Reading levels, however, can be measured using standardized tests, the most threatening weapon of the back to basics proponent. All of the various points of view do agree somewhat loosely that reading levels should be affected by the amount of material read, and students should read more books if they could read the ones they like to read. The following study was an attempt to find out how much liking affected measurable skills.

The popular fiction course offered a selection of carefully collected high interest paperbacks so that students were able to choose from a wide variety of titles and read in volume. A few books were required reading for all students, some books were selected from a choice of titles offered and a few books were independently provided by the student. The course was designed as an eighteen week semester elective for juniors and seniors, and the students were required to read nine books, or an average of one every two weeks. This number often sounds overwhelming to the new student who has never read a single book for

pleasure, but in the five years the course has been offered, there have been very few who failed to meet the basic requirements. The book selection varies every semester, but the books used during the period of this study are listed on the following chart:

Required Books	Choice of one or more from each unit below	
	Science Fiction/Fantasy	Assorted Novels
<i>And Then There Were None</i>	<i>Alas, Babylon</i>	<i>Alive</i>
<i>A Day No Pigs Would Die</i>	<i>Day of the Triffids</i>	<i>All Quiet on the Western Front</i>
<i>Of Mice and Men</i>	<i>Fahrenheit 451</i>	<i>Andromeda Strain</i>
<i>The Pigman</i>	<i>The Hephaestus Plague</i>	<i>Black Boy</i>
<i>Red Sky at Morning</i>	<i>The Hobbit</i>	<i>I Never Promised You a Rose Garden</i>
<i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i>	<i>The Last Unicorn</i>	<i>Runway 08</i>
<i>Walkabout</i>	<i>1984</i>	<i>Terminal Man</i>
	<i>The Swarm</i>	<i>We Have Always Lived in the Castle</i>
	<i>Watership Down</i>	

Students were required to complete one or more assignments for each book and pass an objective test as a measure of whether the book had been read and understood. For purposes of this study, books were counted as read if the objective test was passed with a score of 70% or better. Grades in the course were given on the basis of the average of grades earned on required assignments and tests plus additional credit allowed for extra books read. To receive an "A" in the course, students had to read two independently selected books for each of the two grade periods, bringing their required total to thirteen books for the semester. During the course of this study, the average number of books read was 9.7, which was 0.7 books higher than the requirement for the course; the lowest number read was two and the highest was eighteen. Credit for reading independently selected books was gained in one or two ways: students could write the standard book report following a required format, or they could participate in a book conference. Book conferences were scheduled for groups of four to six, and students had to submit a copy of the book to the teacher several days in advance. The main purpose of the book conference was for the students participating to convince the other members of the group to read the book they had completed. Conferences were held at a round table and students were asked to summarize the general plot idea of their book in a very few sentences and then give a short critical evaluation telling what they liked about the book. In some cases students were asked to discuss thematic ideas while in other books character or plot was a more interesting aspect to share. Book conferences were among the most satisfying phases of the course. Students discussed something they enjoyed in a non-threatening

atmosphere, student-teacher relationship improved with small group communication and a great deal of lending and borrowing took place over the table.

All books in the course were rated by length. The average novel is about 150-250 pages long and was rated as one point with longer novels receiving more points. *The Hobbit*, for example, was a two point book while *Watership Down* was credited at three points. The basic requirement of nine books could be met with nine points rather than nine titles which encouraged students to read longer books.

The assignments required for each book varied. A few books had the traditional literary analysis study questions to accompany them. *To Kill A Mockingbird* lends itself to this treatment as it is a very long book, and poor readers miss many of the meaningful points if they do not have study guides to follow. *And Then There Were None* had a puzzle grid to complete that helped the students sort the characters and figure out "Who done it?" Many of the books had optional creative assignments. In *The Last Unicorn*, for example, students could draw or create the mythological figures discussed in the book, and the *Runway 08* assignment provided an opportunity to write a plot outline for a disaster story. Many of the books had several optional assignments and students chose the one they preferred.

Enrollment and informal surveys indicated that the course was successful. Students seemed to be learning to like to read. The measurable aspects of the study were concerned with how much reading levels might be raised by reading a prescribed number of high interest books in a short period of time. Students were pre-tested and post-tested in the one semester course using the Nelson-Denny Reading Test (Form C) for vocabulary, comprehension and rate levels. Records were also kept of the number of books read and the letter grades students earned in the course. A control group of comparable students who were not taking a literature course were tested for comparison. There were 69 students in the test group and 32 students in the control group. Mean scores for each group are summarized in the chart on the following page.

It will be noted that the pre-test scores of the test group are slightly higher than the control group. An analysis of variance was run between the two groups which indicated a 0.001 chance for error, or not enough to affect the results of this study.

The control group gained almost the equivalent of one semester in reading skills during the semester test period. The control group for this study was chosen from composition classes, and it can be assumed they were doing an average amount of reading in other courses. The popular fiction students showed an average gain of 1.87 years for all tests with the largest gain of 2.6 years in reading rate. The final column on the chart shows the significant gains that the popular fiction students exhibited above the gains achieved by the control group. These scores indicate that a reading course of this nature can accelerate reading scores for vocabulary to eight months above the norm as established by the

Nelson-Denny Reading Scores				
Control Group: Non-literature students				
	Raw Score	Pre-Test Grade Equivalent	Post-Test Raw Score	Post-Test Grade Equivalent
Vocabulary	21.4	11.5	22.4	11.8
Comprehension	29.5	9.8	30.9	10.4
Total	50.7	10.7	53.3	11.1
Rate	202.0	9.8	198.1	9.4
Test Group: Popular Fiction students				
	Raw Score	Pre-Test Grade Equivalent	Post-Test Raw Score	Post-Test Grade Equivalent
Vocabulary	23.7	12.3	28.4	13.4
Comprehension	33.4	11.3	39.0	13.0
Total	57.1	11.8	67.5	13.1
Rate	198	9.4	226.5	12.0
Grade Equivalent Changes				
	Control Group	Test Group	Significant Gain: Test minus Control	
Vocabulary	+ 0.3	+ 1.1	+ 0.8	
Comprehension	+ 0.6	+ 1.7	+ 1.1	
Total	+ 0.4	+ 1.3	+ 0.9	
Rate	-0.4	+ 2.6	+ 2.6	

control group and for comprehension, one year and one month above the norm. The most dramatic gain, however, is in the reading rate where students increased 2.6 years in the literature course and showed a loss in the control group.

In addition to the reading skills tests on these students, pre-course and post-course evaluations were completed. Before the course began, students were asked how many books they had read for their own enjoyment in the past year and what their attitude was toward reading. Answers indicated that well over half the class did not read for enjoyment at all, and about one-fourth had selected the course because they already loved to read. At the end of the class period, well over half the students indicated that the most valuable part of the course to them had been to learn to enjoy reading. Many students indicated plans to continue the habit. The basic philosophy for this course from its conception was to try to interest students in independent reading for enjoyment, and it appears that reading for enjoyment is also an effective means of increasing skill levels.

One score in the above charts opens an area for future speculation. The control group showed a drop in reading rate that appears to be

significant. This study was run during the second semester of the school year, and many of the students in the control group had just completed a course comparable to the popular fiction course. The drop in score could indicate that such a rapid increase in reading rate must be practiced to be maintained. It appears that rate slows if students are reading only text book or technical information. The scores would indicate that popular fiction reading will increase rate quite rapidly.

Each student in the study was provided with an individual profile of both pre-test and post-test scores. The students who made the most dramatic individual gains were students who said they had never independently read a book for pleasure before. Students were counseled to help them select future courses to aid deficiencies and were encouraged to continue independent reading.

As mentioned earlier, it is difficult for humanities teachers to judge experience in the classroom by mathematical values, and this difficulty is never more apparent than when a letter grade must be placed on the semester's work. One part of the study was concerned with how much the level of the basic skill the student possessed affected the grade he or she received in the course. It was suspected that many students were overcoming reading deficiencies through individual determination. Figures did not prove this assumption to be true, as shown in the following chart where grades are correlated with reading level, with changes in reading scores and with the number of books read.

Letter Grade Earned	Post-test Grade Equivalent		Raw Score Changes		Average Books Read
	Total Score	Rate Score	Total Score	Rate Score	
A	15	13.5	13.6	35.8	14
B	13.1	12.9	9.7	44.8	11.3
C	12.8	12.7	10.8	18.9	9.7
D	12.0	8.7	8.7	14.8	6.5
F	10.9	9.7	11.2	18.2	4

It can be seen on the chart that there is a direct correlation between the total post-test skills level scores and the grade received in the course, with the "A" students having the highest reading levels at the Grade 15 total level and a reading rate equivalent to grade 13.5. It is also interesting to note, however, that the mean total score on students who failed the course is 10.9 which is well above the reading levels of most paperback novels that fall between the 7-10 grade reading level. The greatest change in total scores was once again found in the "A" students, but the second greatest change was in the failing students. Students failed this course because they did the work as reflected in the direct correlation between grades and average number of books read. It can probably be projected that the total change scores in the failing students who only averaged reading four books would be dramatically affected if they could be motivated to complete the work in the course. There is a

very high repeat rate in this course with students who fail one semester and then repeat and pass the course. These students often start with a poor attitude which is difficult to overcome in one semester, but sharing the experience with enthusiastic participants in the course often leads them to revise their attitudes and repeat quite successfully. This experience would argue strongly for courses that place poor readers with achievers rather than separating them into remedial sections.

The assumption has been made for a long time that students will learn to read better if they have something to read that they enjoy. The recent publicity about the profit statements of publishing houses, the obvious proliferation of paperback book stores and the crowds gathered around the quickly emptied paperback racks in the local supermarket should convince many critics of what kinds of books people enjoy reading today. The paperback teacher can give testimony about losing books to the “real” literature teachers who borrow the “trash” to read for fun. A popular fiction course can’t be defended on the merit of literary standards, and it won’t be kept on the curriculum menu much longer if teachers continue to be defensive about trying to get students to “like” to read. The results of this study indicate that liking, however, can be a strong motivational factor in the increase of basic skills, and it is pretty hard to argue with numerical facts in a statistical world.

WHAT IS BEING DONE FOR BLACK CHILDREN IN READING?

Sandra F. Guillory and Charles S. Gifford

UNIVERSITY OF NEW ORLEANS

That there are concerns for reading problems in general is evident by the profusion of studies that have been, are being, and will be reported. However, the history of research reports regarding the reading ability of speakers of Black English is rather brief. Only in recent years have there been published reports on the high frequency of failures of Black children in reading (Smith, 1975), the urgent situation of language differences of Blacks (Knapp, 1975), and the disparity between the reading achievement levels of Black children and White children (Rupley and Robeck, 1978). This report is intended to review the literature regarding some of the practices or approaches used in teaching primary reading to Black children.

Before discussing the approaches used in reading instruction for Black speakers of nonstandard English, some theories or philosophical orientations concerning these practices should be briefly reviewed. The theorists generally fall into three groups: educators, psychologists, and linguists. Many educators and psychologists in the earlier studies felt that Black children came to school with a deficient language system, restricted in potential for abstraction, underdeveloped due to an impoverished environment, and a barrier to school success (Bailey, 1976; Bereiter and Englemann, 1966; Deutsch, 1963). Interpretations of this theory led many teachers to try to eradicate the children's dialect and replace it with Standard English (Fowler, 1976). However, far too many children began to discontinue efforts to communicate. This theory has "generally fallen out of favor due to linguistic research in addition to obviously humanistic concerns of educators relating to the welfare of students" (Fowler, 1976, p. 246).

Since the third group of theorists, by profession, study the structure of languages, they, therefore, hold the viewpoint that Black English is a highly structured, rule-governed system (Harper & Bryen, 1976; Shuy, 1970b; Stewart, 1969). Black English and Standard English have many of the same linguistic features in phonology, vocabulary, syntax, and grammar (Dillard, 1972); Fasold and Wolfram, 1970; Harber and Beatty, 1978; Labov, 1970). Black English is not a deficient system but a different legitimate language system in its own right (Baratz, 1969; Goodman, 1965; Houston, 1970).

According to the research on approaches to be used in teaching reading to Black speakers of nonstandard English, the main practices appeared to have been categorized into the following: language

remediation, instruction with dialect-based materials, dialect rendering of extent materials, neutralization of dialect differences, a language experience approach, or combinations of the former approaches.

Even though the “deficient” language theory has been, by and large, fading out as a basis for reading instruction, there are some educators and psychologists who still hold this viewpoint. The DISTAR (Direct Instructional System for Teaching Reading) program, developed by Englemann and Bereiter and initiated in 1964, is based on the premise that socially and economically deprived children need remedial reading involving repetitive sequential drills. Ogletree and Dipasalegne (1975) reported on an evaluation of the DISTAR program by twenty-one primary grade teachers who taught DISTAR in a Chicago elementary school for one to three years. The findings indicated effectiveness in teaching reading. However, there were qualifying statements: too structured; teachers should have flexibility in modifying format; update materials every two years; reduce boredom of some students by readily moving them into another DISTAR subgroup; program should be used as a supplement to other methods of teaching reading.

Much of the research in the latter part of the sixties and some in the seventies appeared to focus on dialect-based readers in reading instruction. This approach was based on studies that indicated Black children failed in reading because there were dialect interferences between some linguistic features of Black English and those of Standard English (Baratz, 1969; Stewart, 1969). These researchers advocated that initial reading materials should be written in a Black vernacular until the child has an ability to read. Then, transitional materials would be used to gradually introduce Standard English. Baratz (1969) felt that the child’s self-identity and self-concept would be strengthened by using these types of readers.

However, Venezky (1970) discussed some liabilities with the dialect-based reader approach. One, there are practical problems of implementation in integrated classroom reading material. Two, it is an enormous job preparing special materials for each dialect group. There are variations of English forms among Black English speakers. Nor are all Black children speakers of Black English (Dillard, 1972; Labov, 1967). Three, there are studies that have indicated that dialect differences *per se* were not major barriers for learning to read (Peisach, 1965; Weiner, 1969).

Smitherman (1975) stated that “it is nearly impossible to render the flavor and excitement of Black speech via the written word.” Mays (1976, cited in Rupley and Robeck, 1978) reported that Black second graders preferred dialect speech over Standard English. However, they did not exhibit confusion or problems when reading words which were expressed in traditional orthography. Rystrom (1970) found that a dialect training program had a negative effect on decoding skills. Another finding (Hunt, 1974-1975) indicated that differences between Black English and Standard English did not appear to interfere with

Black children's oral comprehension of Standard English materials. Cagney (1977) reported on listening comprehension abilities of kindergarten and first grade children when stories were presented in Standard English as well as Black English. Overall, the 48 children made more correct responses to all questions after listening to stories presented in Standard English. The study, thus, did not support the "interference" theory behind dialect-based readers.

Since some linguists advocate that the Black child's language is a legitimate system and should be left intact and appreciated for its rightful worth, they (Douglas, 1973; Goodman, 1965) recommended that the child use traditional materials but read aloud in his Black vernacular. Yet, others (Hendrickson, 1971; Venezky, 1970) suggested that Standard English be taught simultaneously with or prior to primary reading. However, no matter how much the linguist attempts to or suggests change from Black English to Standard English, the Black child will persist with his native language patterns in some form or another (Wolfram, 1970).

Another approach reported in the literature was dialect neutralization. Shuy (1970a) recommended that dialect differences, specifically grammar, be neutralized. Since there are many similarities between the two grammatical systems, this would mean a lessening of interference between them. Materials should concentrate on similarities between Black English and Standard English and not differences. Venezky (1970) offered a variation to this approach in which the content and vocabulary of Standard English materials are modified to better reflect the environment of the child. However, spelling and syntax are not altered, other than to try to avoid those patterns which are markedly different in the nonstandard dialect. From his longitudinal study of Black and White children from the second to seventh grade, Marwit (1977) found that there was a linguistic convergence with time. There were no significant differences between Black children and their White peers by the seventh grade. However, this convergence was only on three or four linguistic features out of the whole area of the language systems.

Another practice which appears to be a combination or variation of the dialect and neutralization methods is the language experience approach. Teachers should have the child relate his own experience in stories in the early steps of the program. The teacher writes exactly what the child has said. When writing, s/he would use standard orthography so that the child would not have to learn two spelling systems. Thus, Standard English would be gradually learned without "putting down" or eradicating the child's language.

In all the above mentioned practices, the authors observed or recommended that the teacher's attitude in teaching these approaches is an important aspect which affects achievement in reading Fowler, 1976; Hoover, 1978. Teachers should accept, appreciate, respect, show interest in, and have positive attitudes toward Black children and their language system and its usage. They should be flexible in scheduling, in

matching materials to students and implementing instruction.

Cureton (1978) discussed a “Black learning style” as described and used successfully by some inner city teachers. These teachers suggested that they learned to understand the type of motivation that “turns on” Black children to learning—utilize their strengths. The strengths are usually overlooked or not measured by readiness tests. The teachers suggested that the strengths can be determined through cognitive style mapping; whether the students learn better through auditory or visual means or what is the best day and time for learning. They reported that the inner city child learned more effectively through physical, oral, and group involvement.

A “new” approach reported by Hoover (1978) advocates the use of basic skills along with a philosophical “Excellence” perspective. Emphasis is placed on strong motivations for excellence, for high expectations, in working toward group-valued community while achieving basic skills in traditional orthographies, in comprehension, vocabulary, study skill exercises. These are practiced in addition to a language experience approach. This method also advocates strong teacher training programs and use of paraprofessionals and volunteers. As evidence of program success, the students were reported to have achieved at grade level on standard reading tests.

From the studies reviewed, there appears to be several possible approaches in teaching primary reading to Black nonstandard speakers of English. But why are there conflicting findings? Various researchers have listed factors that should be considered in evaluating the methodology of research, e.g. sampling bias, overlooked variables, weaknesses or limitations in measurement techniques. Because there appears to be some methodological problems within some of the studies reviewed previously, there could be caution about generalizing results. Harber and Bryen (1976) identified some points worthy of consideration:

1. Some investigations study only a few surface linguistic features, e.g. third person singular verb markers. If the material were translated into Black English, there would be no change in meaning. Therefore, apprehension should not be affected.
2. The subjects in some studies were not screened to assure that all the Black subjects spoke Black English and that all the White subjects spoke Standard English. There is evidence that all Blacks do not speak Black English and that there are intraspeaker as well as interspeaker variability in linguistic features (Dillard, 1972).
3. In having subjects perform on oral reading tasks, non-readers would appear to be automatically excluded from the study.
4. Very few longitudinal studies have been conducted to investigate the long term effectiveness of these methods.
5. Many variables that affect reading performance may need further investigation, e.g. environment, perceptual deficiencies, health status, teacher attitude, test bias (Harber and Beatty, 1978).

Even though there are educational alternatives to teaching reading to Black English speakers and there are reports of success, there appears to be some unanswered questions concerning the shortcomings in the research on these methods. When these are investigated carefully and all possible variables explored, then maybe the introduction of the reports of studies on teaching Blacks to read will not have such openers as "Black students in American cities have serious reading problems and are failing. . . ."

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HOW PRESERVICE TEACHERS PERCEIVE TRADITIONAL AND COMPETENCY-BASED READING EDUCATION

Richard T. Vacca

KENT STATE UNIVERSITY, OHIO

John L. Johns

NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

Several semesters ago an undergraduate education major left a note, unsigned, on the desk of one of the authors. The note masked the student's disenchantment with her/his professional education. The phantom notewriter outlined a "typical" preparatory program in the art and science of sailing. S/he asked:

If I were going to teach someone how to sail a boat, How would I proceed? Perhaps I would use an academic model. If so this is how it might look:

Sailing 101. An introduction to the sport of sailing. Subjects include classifications of ships, their various riggings and basic design formats.

Sailing 200. History of sailing vessels. Course covers the entire historical development of sailing crafts from the primitive reedboat to the modern variable slot wing high, forward floatation, cut away stern, racing catamaran.

Sailing 327. Theory of hull design. Covers all aspects of design inherent to keel (fixed and centerboard), planning and multihull.

Sailing 337. Bases of sail plan. Focuses on aerodynamic factors relating to proper rig design for a given hull.

Sailing 406. Intricacies of Seamanship. Stresses preventive maintenance and use of equipment in turbulent weather.

Sailing 499. Practicum. You are put in a boat and left alone in the middle of the Atlantic.

We don't know to this day whether the message was a fine creative effort or whether it was "borrowed" from a professional source to suit the writer's intended purpose. However, we were puzzled. Dissatisfaction among students and educators for traditional teacher education programs certainly has helped to usher in the era of CBTE – Competency-Based Teacher Education – where "competency"

and “job relevancy” have frequently become synonymous terms. CBTE generally attempts to maximize the relationship between what teachers are taught to do and what they must actually do on the job.

CBTE—its rationale, philosophy, strengths and cautions—has been widely discussed with respect to the preparation of reading personnel (Allington, 1974; James, 1975; Burnett and Schnell, 1975), in particular, note that:

Since competency or job relevance is demanded early and in large classes where supervised practicum work ordinarily is not feasible an emerging emphasis is on paper and pencil exercises . . . These simulation experiences calling for responses approximating as closely as possible those responses called for in an actual classroom setting are tending to take up course time previously given to lecture-discussion (p. 546).

Moreover, Allington (1974) supports CBTE as a means of offering realistic alternatives to traditional-based reading programs. He sees CBTE as providing a framework in which students will no longer “complete a course through passive but regular attendance. No longer will instructors simply stand at the front of the room all term and talk, for in order to truly assess competence requires interaction on a personal basis” (p. 522). Traditional-based programs have thus been chastised and not without provocation—for providing too much “talk,” i.e., concern for the theoretical, and not enough “job relevance,” i.e., concern for the practical, in the preparation of teachers of reading.

Our reaction to a student's implied dissatisfaction resulted in the qualitative study that is described below. The study, we should emphasize, was exploratory in nature. Its purpose was to generate tentative insights into the effects of traditional and competency-based reading education so that relationships between the two instructional approaches could be better understood and lead to further hypothesis-making and empirical verification.

Procedures

Twelve preservice teachers who enrolled voluntarily in a secondary reading methods course participated in the study. Each participant satisfied two necessary requirements: First, each had no previous teaching experience. Second, each was enrolled in his/her first reading methods course. Although they were not told that they were part of an experiment, the students were aware that the course was to be conducted “differently” from previous offerings, and that their participation was vital in the evaluation of the new course format. The “different format” involved the implementation of two eight-week instructional modules: a Traditional-Based Module (TBM) and a Competency-Based Module (CBM).

Students participated in the TBM for the first half of the semester, meeting twice weekly for 75-minute class sessions. The TBM consisted of sixteen lessons in which students were exposed to cognitive type objectives. Information was introduced and techniques and materials were presented for discussion. Knowledge was covered in four reading areas in order to form the cognitive base from which instructional decisions could be made in a real teaching situation. The four reading areas of study were: instructional objectives, diagnostic evaluation, work perception, and comprehension.

During the second half of the semester, the participants were exposed to the CBM. The CBM consisted of a field-based practicum in which the participants tutored students in a nearby high school, twice weekly for eight weeks, for 75-minute instructional sessions. Given a general framework and goals for the practicum experience, the participants formulated competency objectives in the reading areas covered during the TBM phase of the study. The objectives were developed under the close supervision of the instructor and varied with the learning needs of the high school students. Clearly, emphasis during the CBM treatment condition was on performance, to "practice what was preached" in the first half of the semester. Participants developed the learning activities and provided the materials which would accomplish their objectives. The preservice teachers evaluated their performance through individual conferences with the instructor. Throughout the CBM the instructor served as a facilitator providing assistance when needed by the participants.

There were three dependent variables in the study: (1) attitude toward becoming a reading teacher, (2) attitude toward the instructional modules and, (3) knowledge acquisition. Attitude toward becoming a reading teacher was determined by administering equivalent forms of Remmers' Scale to Measure Attitude Toward Any Vocation. Attitude toward the instructional modules was determined by adapting Remmers' Scale to Measure Any School Subject. In the Remmers' scales, students check those statements with which they agree. Each statement has a scale value, decreasing in order from 10.3 to 1.0.

Knowledge acquisition was measured by equivalent forms of a 26-item test. The two forms were developed by selecting questions from the Artley-Hardin Inventory of Teacher Knowledge of Reading (1971). In order to be selected for inclusion in the outcome measures, test items from the Inventory of Teacher Knowledge of Reading had to meet two criteria. First, questions had to test the four reading areas covered in the TBM and CBM treatments. Second, questions had to have general application to secondary reading methods. Questions dealing specifically with elementary school reading were not included.

Design

Due to the limited number of students enrolled in the secondary course, it was not feasible to compare an experimental group with a

control group. Instead, each preservice student in the study was tested under each treatment. Thus, immediately following the TBM phase of the study (the first eight weeks of treatment), students were administered the dependent variable measures. Upon completion of the CBM phase (the second eight weeks of treatment) students were tested on equivalent forms of the same dependent variable measures. Because of the nature of the study (a small sample size and lack of randomization), a repeated measures design for statistical analyses was considered inappropriate. Instead, we decided to observe the means and standard deviations for all tests as descriptive indicators of performance.

Throughout both treatment conditions students were required to “log” on a daily basis their thoughts, feelings, reactions, observations, etc., of each module. Each participant also submitted a retrospective/introspective comparison of the two instructional modules at the end of the semester. These impressionistic data were then analyzed to determine if any patterns of response emerged.

The interpretations which emerged from the loggings and comparisons were contrasted with mean performances on the tests. In this way each set of information—quantitative and qualitative—served as a check on the other during the insight making process of the study.

Results and Discussion

A perusal of the means and standard deviations for each dependent variable (See Table 1) indicates the following: (1) There is practically no observable difference for knowledge acquisition between traditional-based and competency-based modes of instruction. (2) There appears to be a slight observable difference in students' attitudes toward the instructional modules in favor of the traditional-based module. (3) There is also an observable difference in students' attitudes toward becoming teachers of reading in favor of the traditional-based instructional module.

Table 1
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR
TRADITIONAL-BASED AND COMPETENCY-BASED MODULES

Dependent Variables	Reading Education Modules			
	Transitional-Based		Competency-Based	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Knowledge Acquisition	20.6	1.8	20.3	2.2
Attitudes Toward Modules	8.4	.4	7.9	.9
Attitudes Toward Becoming A Reading Teacher	8.1	.8	7.3	1.2

The qualitative analyses of the participants' observation and the introspective-retrospective comparisons of the two instructional modules seemed to suggest the following: First of all, it appeared that students acquired reading understandings equally well in both traditional-based and competency-based reading education modules, even though the TBM ostensibly stressed acquisition and the CBM, performance and utilization. Participants, however, observed that the CBM demanded an inquiring attitude on their part. It seemed that the preservice teachers felt a "sense of urgency" to search out (and research) information "solve" their immediate problems—to improve the reading performance of the high school students they tutored. One participant aptly stated, "I worked hard during the second half of the semester (the CBM treatment). I spent countless hours going through the material . . . searching for something that would work for me." Another participant noted, "Instructing in a real-life situation made the experience meaningful and loose ends seemed to come together." Interestingly, all but one of the participants voiced satisfaction with their experience in the TBM treatment. The TBM made them receptive. The CBM, however, seemed to force them to act upon and utilize knowledge to purposeful ends.

It is also possible that the knowledge acquired from the first treatment condition (TBM) may have affected students' test performance at the end of the second treatment (CBM). Several of the participants implied that an "interactive effect" was at work. One student commented in his log that, "The first eight weeks were informative, but it was actually putting knowledge to use that helped me retain what I learned." Another preservice teacher remarked, "Those second eight weeks (CBM) would not have been possible without the knowledge of the first eight weeks . . . without the second eight weeks (however) I feel that much of what was taught would have soon been forgotten."

The preservice teachers in this experiment seemed to have more favorable attitudes toward becoming reading teachers after the traditional-based module than after the competency-based module. The qualitative response of the participants gave insight to this result. It appeared that the "real thing," i.e., on-the-job training, during the preservice experimental situation had a tempering effect on students' attitudes toward becoming a reading teacher.

Conclusion

What the experiment suggests is a continuous reciprocity between traditional and competency-based modes of instruction. An art major who participated in the study depicted the mutual relationship that existed between the traditional and competency-based modules. She commented:

The first half of the semester was like one of those "how to draw" books. It is necessary to learn the processes of making an

accurate drawing. The second half of the semester was like the awakening of the artist . . .

Traditional-based reading education has been, perhaps, too harshly criticized in the recent literature. To the end that traditional-based instruction efficiently and effectively carries out cognitive-type objectives, it plays a necessary role in the preparation of teachers of reading. Although necessary, the role certainly is not sufficient. Reading education programs should continue to find ways to balance cognitive and performance objectives.

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DIAGNOSIS OF TEACHER'S READING INSTRUCTION AS WELL AS THE PUPIL'S READING PROGRAM

Timothy R. Blair

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA, GAINESVILLE

William H. Rupley

TEXAS A & M UNIVERSITY

Diagnosis is the heart of effective reading instruction. This educational tenet embodies the expertise of the teacher to collect relevant data on pupils, to interpret and synthesize the data, and to prescribe appropriate instruction. One assumption underlying the traditional diagnostic-prescriptive model is that the teacher possesses techniques and materials to provide appropriate instruction. The primary focus of such an approach is on the pupil and little attention is given to teachers and their instructional programs. It is our contention that tantamount to diagnosis of the pupil is close scrutiny by teachers of their instructional practices. Teachers should be encouraged to concurrently evaluate their reading instructional program and diagnose its strengths and weaknesses as well as focusing on the pupil. The detection and correction of reading problems are depending not only on noting pupil's strengths and weaknesses, but are also reliant on the examination of the type and quality of instruction that can be provided by the reading teacher to meet the pupil's individual needs.

In order to objectively evaluate reading programs, teachers need non-threatening means that encompass the major components of the teaching of reading. One such means of self-evaluative instruments that enable teachers to focus analytically on their reading instruction. An example of such an instrument is the "Teacher Effort Scale in Reading."¹ (Rupley and Blair, 1979). A study reported in *The Reading Teacher* (Blair, 1976) showed that teachers who exerted more effort in the teaching of reading in the areas evaluated by this instrument produced significantly higher pupil achievement scores in their classes than did teachers who exerted lesser amounts of effort. This scale has four subscales entailing teacher's efforts to utilize a variety of materials, provide differentiated instruction, keep accurate records and conduct conferences with interested parties. Teachers can utilize such an instrument

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¹Rupley, William H. and Blair, Timothy R. "Teacher Effort Scale in Reading." The complete scale can be found in *Reading Diagnosis and Remediation: A Primer for Classroom and Clinic*, copyright 1979, Rand McNally Publishing Company.

This instrument enables reading teachers to determine the degree of emphases they give to various components of their reading instruction. Specifically, the emphases given to comprehension, diagnosis, recreational reading, word recognition, and oral reading can be determined. A self-report format allows teachers to record how often they focus on a specific aspect of their reading instruction over a six-week period. Examples of comprehension items are:

Questions are asked that require the students to infer character traits based on explicit ideas.

1	2	3	4	5
never	emphasized	emphasized	emphasized	emphasized
emphasized	1-3 times	4-6 times	7-8 times	10 + times

Various ways of saying the same thing are explored and discussed with students.

1	2	3	4	5
never	emphasized	emphasized	emphasized	emphasized
emphasized	1-3 times	4-6 times	7-9 times	10 + times

There is really no correct or incorrect response for each item on the STERI, and teachers should evaluate their responses in relation to reading development of their pupils. That is, if several pupils' reading progress in comprehension is not at an acceptable level; then, the teacher can evaluate his/her instructional emphases in this area. This evaluation could reveal that the teacher is not balancing his/her comprehension instruction in relation to the pupils' needs. The focus shifts from looking at the pupils and questioning their capabilities to the instruction that they are offered, which could directly relate to their lack of progress.

In addition to informal instruments there are other procedures that teachers can employ to evaluate their reading instruction. Daily diary reports can assist teachers in developing a broader perspective of their reading instruction and its effect on children's reading growth. Diary entries should be as objective as possible, focusing on what instruction was offered, how it was presented, what materials were used, how much time was devoted to learning, and, most importantly, what effect such factors had on students' reading development.

Informal evaluation of instruction can be based on a grade level or school level approach, also. All elementary teachers or all teachers at a given grade level who teach reading in a particular school can begin to focus on important areas of their reading program. By including a greater number of teachers the focus shifts from one classroom to the goals of the school's total reading program. Evaluation of instruction could be based on defining reading goals for students at each grade level, determining how well these goals are being met and identifying the needed instructional modifications that would maximize the pro-

bability that the goals would be achieved. This technique requires that teachers be objective in their thinking and not rely on scapegoats, such as insufficient materials, lack of parental cooperation, and so forth, to support their present state of instruction. When evaluation suggests that changes are desired, the focus should be on implementing such changes, rather than alibing the present state of instruction.

Diagnostic-prescriptive thinking in the past has not ignored the diagnosis of instructional practices, but tacitly implied the first and foremost area of concern to be the pupil. More than fifty years ago, Gates (1973) in disputing the age old belief of a mental age of 6.5 was required to be a success in reading, showed that with good instruction pupils with mental ages below 6.5 could be successful in reading. Gates turned attention away from the pupil and toward the type and quality of instruction. Commenting on the findings of his study, Gates wrote:

The most significant finding is the fact that the correlations between mental age and reading achievement were highest in the classes in which the best instruction was done and the lowest in those in which the poorest instruction was provided. More specifically, the magnitude of the correlation seems to vary directly with the effectiveness of the provision for individual differences in the classroom. (p. 507)

Standing back and looking at one's own program is a necessary step before looking at individual children. The key difference between a teacher who goes through this process and one who does not is that by looking at one's own program, the teacher is identifying strong and weak points to help fit the curriculum to children's learning needs. If a teacher looks only at a child, this could be setting the stage for requiring every child to fit the curriculum. The curriculum should be adapted to youngsters at every grade level, not vice versa. If emphasis should be on prevention, rather than correction of reading problems as is popularly espoused, the primary focus should be on teacher practices.

The components of non-evaluative means on reading instruction can be viewed as catalysts for program improvement. Teachers cannot change the family background of their students but they can affect instructional practices over which they have direct control. Believing that the teacher is the key to the success or failure of a youngster learning to read, the assessment of program strengths and weaknesses in order to be able to provide adaptive instruction for a wide range of ability levels as well as diagnosing the child is warranted. Bateman (1971) seemed to be addressing this very point when she stated:

To that extent are reading disabilities preventable by more adequate initial instruction? Today's assumption is that the child requires diagnosis; tomorrow's assumption may be that the reading program and teaching strategies should be diagnosed. (p. 133)

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READING ATTITUDES ACROSS A BROAD AGE SPECTRUM

Edward J. Dwyer and Flora Joy

EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

BACKGROUND:

Children with parents who demonstrate a highly positive attitude toward reading and who read to their children generally profit from instruction when they begin learning to read and also enjoy considerable success (Durkin, 1966; McCormack, 1977). On the other hand, a review of current research indicates that there is little information available which demonstrates how school-age children as well as adults say they feel about reading. Further, Zirkel and Greene (1976) suggested that "there is a paucity of verbal self-report instruments in the reading attitude assessment area" (p. 107).

Parker (1978) used an objectively scored interview specifically designed to compare attitudes toward reading among students in grades two through six in an elementary school in east Tennessee. Students selected for the study were those classified by their teachers as either among the ten best or the ten weakest readers in their respective classes. Students in Parker's study classified as "poor" readers were predominantly from lower socioeconomic strata while the others were generally of average income. Very few students in the school were classified as being from homes with high incomes. Parker reported that there were no significant differences in attitudes toward reading between groups of "good" (N = 60) and "weak" (N = 60) readers. She concluded from this rather surprising result that children in earlier grades might tend to maintain positive attitudes toward reading despite evident difficulties with learning to read.

Relative to socioeconomic status and self-concept, Soares and Soares (1969) determined that adults (primarily parents and teachers) usually do not expect socioeconomically disadvantaged children to excel in school and, consequently, these children do not usually suffer damage to their self-concepts by not succeeding academically. Likewise, in a study involving high and low socioeconomic status elementary school children, Smith, Zingale, and Coleman (1978) concluded that the low socioeconomic status children did not generally suffer damage to their self-concepts because of academic failure. On the other hand, they reported that children in the high socioeconomic group tended to suffer from lowered self-concepts due to academic failure. Data from the above studies tend to corroborate findings reported by Parker concerning the relatively positive attitudes toward reading demonstrated by low socioeconomic children; i.e., inability to read efficiently probably did

not contribute to lowered self-esteem, consequently, such children did not demonstrate feelings of animosity toward reading.

In light of research cited above this study was undertaken to determine how attitudes toward reading vary among subgroups from within the general population.

PROCEDURES:

Attitudes toward reading were ascertained through administration of Estes' (1971) Attitude Scale. This instrument consists of 20 statements concerning reading for which the respondent selects from a one through five point scale ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree." The highest possible score is 100 while the lowest obtainable score is 20 provided that the subject has responded to all the items. The higher the cumulative score, the more positive is the attitude toward reading reflected by the respondent.

This attitude scale was administered to whole classes at one sitting for Groups 1-4. Due to the composition of Groups 5 and 6, the instrument was individually administered to each subject.

DESCRIPTION OF GROUPS:

Subgroups were selected from among the population residing in the upper region of east Tennessee. There were five groups obtained for the purposes of this study while data concerning one additional group were obtained from an earlier study. There were 200 subjects in each group. A high percentage of the respondents in all of the subgroups were natives of the upper east Tennessee area. The proportion of males and females was approximately the same for all of the groups. A description of each group follows:

Group 1 was comprised of sixth-grade students in randomly selected classes in 1971. These students responded to Estes' (1971) Attitude Scale during that year as a control group in a study conducted by Fowler (1972). These students are currently of the typical age of the 1978 class of college freshmen.

Group 2 was comprised of students in sixth-grade classes in 1978.

Grade 3 consisted of students enrolled in a three-credit-hour elective course entitled "Reading Improvement" at East Tennessee State University (ETSU).

Group 4 consisted of students enrolled in required freshman English classes at ETSU.

Group 5 was comprised of men and women of age 60 or older.

Group 6 consisted of high school graduates, ages 18 through 22, who had never been enrolled in a college.

RESULTS:

Mean scores relative to positive attitudes toward reading ranged from a low of 70.23 for the non-college group of age 18-22 years to a high of 80.00 for the group in the classification of age 60 or older. The

mean score of 70.23 was substantially lower than that of any other group. Mean scores and standard deviations are presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1

Means and Standard Deviations

Group	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	77.685	13.342
2	77.940	11.729
3	78.100	10.139
4	76.510	10.850
5	79.995	13.250
6	70.510	16.231

Analysis of variance yielded differences greater than .001 between the 18-22 year old non-college group and all of the other subgroups. As mentioned above, the older group demonstrated the most positive attitudes toward reading. This group produced a mean substantially higher than that of the non-college young adults but also significantly higher (.004) than that for students in the freshman English classes.

Comparison of mean scores between the 60 and older group yielded a less substantial but nonetheless notable difference (.083) in favor of the older group when compared with the 1961 sample of sixth graders.

Overall, mean differences ranged from greater than .001 through .884. The least difference occurred in responses of 1978 sixth graders when compared with students in the Reading Improvement classes. Table 2 presents probability levels determined through analysis of variance when all the subgroups were compared.

TABLE 2

Probability Levels Determined Through Analysis of Variance

	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5
Group 2	0.839	—	—	—	—
Group 3	0.726	0.884	—	—	—
Group 4	0.335	0.206	0.131	—	—
Group 5	0.083	0.101	0.109	0.004	—
Group 6	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001

As can be seen from the tables above, the most substantial differences were found between the non-college group of young adults and the other subgroups. The older group demonstrated the most positive attitudes toward reading and books.

DISCUSSION:

Both of the sixth-grade groups demonstrated highly positive attitudes toward reading even though there were substantial numbers of students in these groups from lower socioeconomic strata. Therefore, it appears that many of the sixth graders who are relatively poor achievers demonstrated positive attitudes toward reading. This conclusion is consistent with Parker's data reported earlier. Such findings suggest that it is not justifiable to suggest that negative attitudes toward reading are prevalent among elementary school children nor that such attitudes evolve primarily because of socioeconomic status and/or failure in learning to read competently. Further, if failure in learning to read substantially contributed to lowered self-concept among lower socioeconomic sixth graders, than it would be expected that negative attitudes toward reading would have resulted.

Apparently, changes in attitudes toward reading in the non-college young adults evolved primarily as the result of factors occurring after grade six. The question naturally arises, "What were those factors which contributed to the less positive attitudes toward reading demonstrated by the non-college young adults?"

Perhaps reading attitudes became less positive because of the heavier demands placed on them as secondary school students to gain information from reading material which was too difficult for them. Further, since formal developmental reading instruction often ends when students leave elementary schools, it can be assumed that many of the non-college young adults did not have the opportunity to engage in the type of intensive program necessary for them to become more competent readers. If the non-college young adults had been involved in such reading programs beyond grade six they probably would have more adequately mastered reading skills with accompanying positive attitudes. These contentions lend to the conclusion that intensive remediation of low achievers should not only be undertaken in elementary schools but should be continued through grade twelve if necessary.

The results, relative to positive attitudes among the sixth graders, provide for cautious optimism concerning the prospects of low achievers for making substantial gains in reading achievement in the years beyond grade six. Since positive attitudes evidently exist among most low achieving sixth graders, it appears likely that many would respond positively to intensive remedial instruction provided that such efforts did not result in further frustration. It appears likely that the further beyond grade six such remediation were attempted, the less probable would be prospects for success. Perhaps low achievers upon leaving elementary schools should be guided into special reading/language programs until levels of mastery suggest that they are likely to experience success when placed in grade level academic classes.

The highly positive attitudes toward reading demonstrated by older citizens indicate that there is a potentially large and productive population which could more adequately be served by secondary schools and

colleges. Given various amounts of guidance, older citizens could comfortably participate in course work along with younger students in regular academic and continuing education courses. Watkins (1979), citing a report released by the National Council on the Aging, indicated that approximately half of the current population of adults between the ages of 50 and 64 years desire to continue working after reaching the age of 65. It is evident that desire to change occupational roles would frequently be accompanied by a need for further formal education which would involve considerable reading. Further, Watkins reported that there are currently four million Americans over the age of 65 who want to be gainfully employed while another two million express interest in various types of volunteer work. The intent of older citizens to be meaningfully occupied, along with evidently positive attitudes toward reading, suggests that schools and colleges would be well advised to more widely open their doors to older citizens through community relations and counseling programs.

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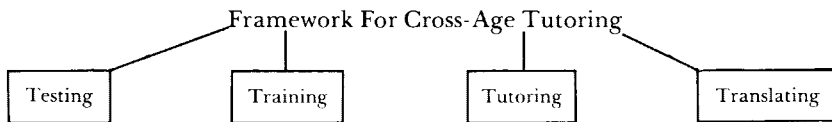
CROSS-AGE TUTORING— USING THE 4 T's

Lawrence L. Smith

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

Cross-age tutoring or peer tutoring can be an effective instructional strategy for remedial reading teachers who are overloaded with students. While the concept is not new, the purpose of this paper is to describe an organizational change in remedial reading classes using a cross-age or peer tutoring paradigm developed by the author. The paradigm is entitled the "4 T's Tutoring" (see Figure 1).

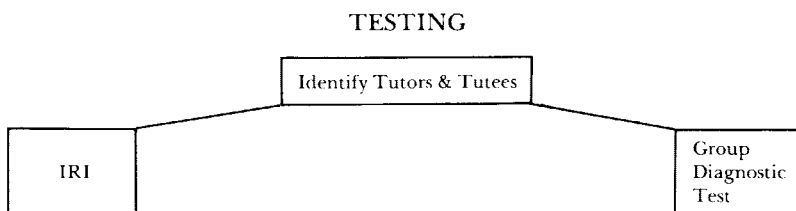
Figure 1



According to Spache (1976), "Of all the organizational changes that are supposed to be helpful, only those advocating using pupil teams or tutors seem currently to be achieving an impact upon pupil growth in reading" (p. 291). Also, cross-age tutoring can help the reading teacher individualize instruction, increase tutor and tutee motivation, improve the self-concepts of tutors, and tutees, as well as helping the teacher give direct instruction to more students. While many cross-age tutoring projects are well-planned, many times students who are put into a teaching role are given very little preparation prior to tutoring. While this technique may be satisfactory for a few students, more than likely it results in minimal improvement in reading.

Testing (T₁)

Figure 2

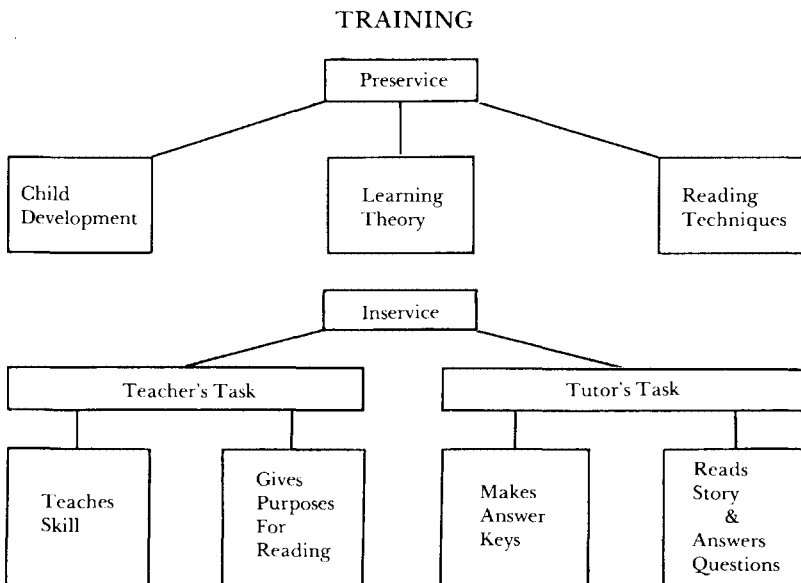


In this paper, a more structured tutoring program is recommended. In order for older disabled readers to tutor younger readers, testing of both groups is necessary in order to know their strengths and weaknesses. Depending upon the severity of the disabilities, the minimum diagnosis should include a thorough analysis of an Informal Reading Inventory (IRI) and a group diagnostic test such as the Silent Reading Diagnostic Test (1970) or the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test (1976). Through the use of the IRI, both an estimated instructional level and patterns of oral reading errors can be determined. The group diagnostic test should help determine strengths and weaknesses of word identification skills, and, depending upon the test used, comprehension skills.

While it is impossible to make a perfect match between tutor and tutee, an approximate match can be made based on instructional levels determined from the IRI. The tutor should be a slightly better reader than the tutee in order that they be a more fluent reader when oral reading is done. Since we, as teachers, like to perform better than our students at reading, and since the tutor is the "model" for the tutee, it is necessary for the tutor to have an instructional level at least as high as the tutee. If several tutors and tutees have approximately the same instructional levels, the match can be based on similarities of strengths and weaknesses based on the group diagnostic test used.

Training (T_2)

Figure 3



Just as a professional educator has two types of training—preservice and inservice—it is also necessary for the tutors to have both. Once the tutors are selected, some discussion of child development is necessary in order for the tutor to better understand the tutee. These discussions, while extremely important, should be on a level that the tutor will understand. For example, if the tutors are sixth graders and they plan to tutor third and fourth graders, a discussion could develop from the following questions:

1. How have you changed since you were in the third and fourth grades?
2. What did you do then that you think is silly now?
3. When you were in the fourth grade, how did you feel about sixth graders?
4. What types of things do you see third and fourth graders doing that you think are silly? Why do you suppose they do those things? Do you think that the third graders think those things are silly?
5. Have you ever noticed that you act in some ways different from fourth graders? 10th graders?

If the tutors have a better understanding of why younger students behave the way they do, it will help the tutors tolerate some of those “childish” behaviors.

Behavior is not the only part of development that should be discussed. Students’ reading interests are important for helping select books for the tutee to read and enjoy.

Discussions about effective learning are also necessary. That is, discussions about when and how you do most of your learning. What happens when the teacher gives you too much work? Do you feel better when you are asked to do something that you are fairly certain that you can do but is neither too easy or too difficult? Do you feel better when the teacher says nice things about your work or do you like it better when she is uncomplimentary about it?

It is also necessary during this preservice training to teach the tutors the steps for a directed reading activity. While most lessons are prepared for the tutors and they simply have to follow them, it is important that the tutor knows why new words need to be presented in context, why purposes are set just prior to reading part of the story, and why a discussion should take place immediately following the story.

It is important for the tutor to be exposed to these areas prior to tutoring. It not only should make the tutors more understanding of the tutee, but, hopefully, it will help them have a better understanding of why teachers of reading do what they do in class.

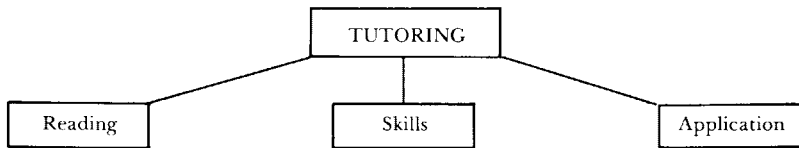
The inservice part of the training is getting the tutor ready just prior to each tutoring session. The reading teacher is really teaching the tutor skills that he or she will be teaching the tutee. In other words, if a tutor or several tutors are going to teach the tutee a word recognition skill, such as the “final e rule,” the teacher presents the tutors with a short

skills lesson on the “final e rule.” After presenting this lesson, each tutor is given a worksheet to complete based on the “final e rule” which will become the tutor’s answer key when he or she presents the lesson to the tutee. While the reading teacher is teaching the skills lesson, other tutors can be preparing for the reading part of the lesson. Possible suggestions for managing the reading part for each tutor are to have the purposes of reading the selection for each tutor on a sheet of paper, let the tutor read the selection, and have comprehension questions designed in a manner that makes the response brief for the student. The format can vary from short answer responses (recall) to circling correct responses (recognition). These response papers as well as the skill sheets need to be checked by the teacher prior to the tutoring in order to be certain that the tutor’s “answer key” is correct.

It can be seen that the size of the tutoring group needs to be small in order for each tutor to receive the necessary attention. The group size could increase if para-professionals were available to help the teachers. One must also remember that each tutor-tutee dyad does not need to have a new skill taught each lesson. Meaningful practice of using the skill in context is very necessary.

Tutoring (T₃)

Figure 4



Immediately following the training session, the tutors should work with the tutee. The tutoring session should last about thirty minutes and should have at least 3 parts to it; reading, skills, and applications.

The reading portion of the lesson should consist of the tutor setting purposes for the tutee to read. (Generally they will be the same purposes the teacher sets for the tutor.) Following the setting of purposes, the reading can be done several ways, but probably the technique that is most enjoyable and beneficial to both tutor and tutee is to take turns reading, such as switching after each paragraph. The tutor and tutee can then discuss the story, or the tutor could give the tutee a worksheet like the one he or she received during the training session. Any misconceptions or incorrect responses could be clarified by the tutor at that time.

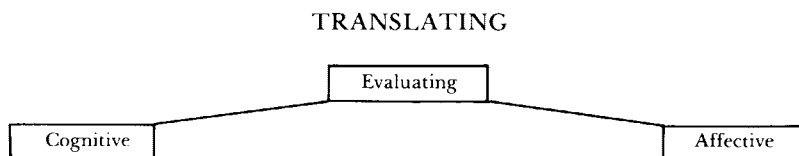
The skills part of the session should focus on the skill that the tutor was taught prior to the tutoring session. Based on past experience of the author, one can be fairly certain that the tutor will say basically the same things the reading teacher told him during the training session.

Following the teaching of the skill, the tutee completes the same worksheet the tutor had done earlier.

The last part of the tutoring session is used to apply the skill taught through some enjoyable way such as games, cross-word puzzles, etc. Practicing a meaningful skill in a pleasant manner should help the child retain and transfer the skill at other times.

Translating (T₄)

Figure 5



The fourth “T” is Translating and is designed for the tutor to make a short evaluation of the lesson that was taught. The reason for this part of the session is to give the tutor an opportunity to reinforce the skills taught by writing what he learned. In order for the tutor to reflect on both the affective and cognitive domains, questions that reflect both areas should be answered during the translating portion.

Suggested questions are:

1. What skill did you teach today?
2. Describe at least one successful task accomplished by your student.
3. Do you think your student enjoyed the tasks you asked him or her to do? Please explain.
4. How did you feel about helping your student with his or her work today?
5. Did you find any part of the lesson difficult to teach? Please explain.

When the 4 T’s technique is used, listening, reading, speaking, and writing, all become integral processes by which the tutor can develop reading skills.

The focus of this technique is predominately on the tutor. The reason is that it is extremely difficult to teach the older student the reading skills that are expected to be learned in the primary grades. Intermediate and upper grade students are usually “turned off” by having to work on lower level skills; however, when the tutor is learning a skill in order to teach it to a tutee, the tutor is usually more receptive to learning the skills. Another problem that occurs when one attempts to teach lower level reading skills to older students is the inability to give the student enough meaningful repetition in order to learn the skill. In one ses-

sion where a reading skill is taught using the 4 T's, the tutor makes the answer key (1), teaches the skill to the tutee (2), evaluates the tutee's work (3), and describes the skill in the translating portion of the session (4). Not only has the tutor received four reinforcements following instruction, but also the processes of listening, speaking, reading, writing, and spelling have all been used to develop the necessary skills to improve reading. Using three senses (seeing, hearing, and feeling) should help the tutor retain the skill.

Other benefits accruing to the tutor are that the learning to read process should be more meaningful, his or her reading skills should be better developed, and the improvement of these skills should be noticeable. Furthermore, cross grade tutoring gives the tutor adult responsibility, and the self-worth of the tutor should be evident because helping someone else to learn gives most of us a good feeling.

The tutor is not the only one that benefits from a program like this. The tutee's reading skills should improve. The tutees will probably like working with an older student, and hopefully, the tutees will be able to see growth in reading, as well as an improvement in their self-concept.

The teacher is also a beneficiary in a program like this. It will help the teacher individualize instruction more effectively, and the process will help teachers make a difference with more children than he or she could by being forced to teach so many children using a more traditional organizational approach.

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THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTENSIVE PHONICS

Gwen Fulwiler

PRIMARY SUPERVISOR
SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 34, ABBOTSFORD, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Patrick Groff

PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION, SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY

An examination of the history of reading instruction reveals that there has been a long-standing controversy over the effectiveness of the teaching of phonics. It is readily apparent from such an historical study that the enthusiasm for phonics as an effective methodology by the experts in reading instruction has waxed and waned over the years (Matthews, 1966). Only in relatively recent times, however, have carefully-controlled and analytical reviews been made of the total of the respectable research evidence that deals with this issue.

Phonics Is Important

The first of such reviews in this century was that by Chall. Chall concluded from her impressive review of the studies of the effectiveness of phonics that "the research from 1912 to 1965 indicates that a code-emphasis method—i.e., one that views beginning reading as essentially different from mature reading and emphasized learning of the printed code for the spoken language—produces better results, at least to the point where sufficient evidence seems to be available to the end of the third grade" (Chall, 1967, p. 307). Dykstra's more recent examination of the research on phonics Chall reviewed, plus that of like nature carried out since 1965, leads him to the same conclusion. Dykstra judges that this "evidence clearly demonstrates that children who receive early intensive instruction in phonics develop superior word recognition skills in the early stages of reading and tend to maintain their superiority at least through the third grade." It is clear, he concludes, that "early systematic instruction in phonics provides the child with the skills necessary to become an independent reader at an earlier age than is likely if phonics instruction is delayed and less systematic" (Walcutt, et al., 1974, p. 397).

The New Anti-Phonics

Despite the strong endorsements for phonics instruction from the comprehensive reviews of its historical effectiveness there has emerged among reading experts, since the publication of Chall's report, what has been called the "new anti-phonics movement" (Groff, 1977). These recent critics of phonics are adamant in their conviction that phonics in-

struction is, at worst, detrimental to the development of children's reading skills, or at the very least, is of no consequence one way or the other to the reading teacher. Smith, for example, finds phonics instruction "a potential and powerful method of interfering in the process of learning to read" (1973, p. 184). It is "the great fallacy" of reading instruction, he contends (1973, p. 70). Therefore, one of the "easy ways to make learning to read difficult," Smith argues, is for the teacher to "ensure that phonics skills are learned and used" (1973, p. 184). Hoskisson agrees that with phonics teaching "the child will be hindered from learning to read" (1975, p. 446). "The unfortunate child who follows too closely upon the phonics preachment may fixate at this stage and go no further," Henderson adds (1978, p. 248).

If phonics instruction is not outrightly harmful to beginning readers, at least it is of little importance to them, others of the new anti-phonics persuasion contend. Goodman, for instance, insists that "phonics in any form in reading instruction is at best a peripheral concern" for the reading teacher (1975, p. 627). Meier concurs that phonics is a "very trivial" skill in learning to read (1975, p. 32). "When it comes to phonics in reading instruction, the motto 'Just a little dab will do you' seems appropriate," Lundsteen recommends (1977, p. 199). For "it is difficult to find children who over-rely upon phonics," Ammon furthermore notes (1975, p. 245). As proof of the unimportance of phonics Johnson and Pearson aver that "we know very well that some children can read well but do poorly on phonics exercises" (1975, p. 759). In any event, Artley asserts, "the symbol-sound relationship in English words are not sufficiently consistent to make it possible to use phonic generalizations with any degree of regularity" (1977, p. 122). Harris agrees that the "relationships between sound symbols and printed symbols are tenuous *at best*" (1976, p. 31). (emphasis added)

The Present Study

It is obvious that the present-day opponents of phonics find the past research as to the positive effects of phonics teaching, as this research has been reviewed by Chall and Dykstra, for example, unconvincing. Accordingly, it appears necessary, if the present controversy over phonics is to be resolved, to gather further evidence as to the relative effectiveness of intensive phonics instruction as versus that of teaching methodologies which emphasize phonics to a lesser degree. With this need in mind the present study was carried out.

For this purpose two different approaches to beginning reading were identified. The first of these, referred to hereafter as "intensive phonics" was the Lippincott *Basic Reading* program (McCracken and Walcutt, 1975). The Lippincott reading program is often cited in the literature on beginning reading instruction as a prime example of an intensive phonics approach (Aukerman, 1971).

The second reading approach identified for use in this study, referred to hereafter as "less-intensive phonics," was the *Cop-Clark Cana-*

dian Reading Development Series—Primary (MacIntosh, 1962). This reading program begins by teaching first grade children to recognize fifty to seventy-five "sight words." Only after this goal is reached does it teach phonics, and then in an incidental manner. Beyond being delayed until a set number of "sight" words are learned by pupils, phonics is taught in this program in a less intensive, less direct, and less systematic manner than it is taught in the Lippincott Basic Reading program.

The subjects of this study were seventy-three first grade children in three classrooms who for a school year were taught intensive phonics, and seventy-four first grade children in three classrooms who during this year were taught less-intensive phonics. (Not all these pupils completed all of the three parts of the standardized test of reading that was administered (King, 1976). (See Table 1.) It was judged that the pupils in the three intensive phonics classes had the same level of intelligence as did the pupils in the three less-intensive phonics classes. This conclusion was based on observations of the socioeconomic backgrounds of the pupils involved and on the intelligence test scores of other children in the schools the subjects of the present day attended.

It was not possible to make an assessment of the respective teaching abilities of the six teachers in this study. It was arranged, however, that the three teachers in the less-intensive phonics classes were those who had had more experience teaching reading than did the three teachers in the intensive phonics classes.

Findings

As shown in Table 1, the first grade children in the intensive phonics group in the present study gained higher levels of achievement in vocabulary, word analysis, comprehension, and in the average of these three skills than did the group of pupils in the less-intensive phonics classes. As indicated by the *t* ratios given in Table 1, the differences in mean scores found between the intensive group and the less-intensive phonics group were all found to be statistically significant, beyond the .01 level of confidence.

Conclusion

The findings of the present study do not support the contentions of the recent opponents of phonics instruction that phonics teaching is detrimental to the development of children's reading skills, and/or that it should be considered a matter of little or no concern to the reading teacher. To the contrary, the findings of the study reported here reaffirm the findings from past research on this issue. These findings have indicated that intensive phonics teaching brings on greater beginning reading achievement than do reading programs which deemphasize phonics teaching. The present study thus suggests that instruction in intensive phonics is critical to the development of beginning reading skills and therefore is to be recommended.

Nor do the present findings support an added assertion of some cur-

Table 1
First grade reading achievement with Intensive Phonics (IP)
and with Less Intensive Phonics (LIP)

Reading Skill	N	Grade Level			Diff.	t ratio
		Mean Scores				
Vocabulary	73	IP	2.81	.700	.59	4.796
	74	LIP	2.22	.765		
Word Analysis	68	IP	2.45	.700	.62	5.390
	72	LIP	1.83	.660		
Comprehension	73	IP	2.90	.830	.68	4.690
	74	LIP	2.22	.950		
Average	68	IP	2.71	.665	.63	5.430
	72	LIP	2.08	.710		

rent opponents of phonics, that is, that phonics instruction may perhaps teach word analysis skills but will hamper the development of reading comprehension. It can be noted from Table 1 that the superiority in reading scores of the intensive phonics group of pupils in the present study was greater for comprehension than it was for the other reading skills that were measured.

The present study made no attempt to resolve the soundness of one other negative criticism of phonics that has been made of late. Today's negative critics of phonics have commented that the past findings, which indicated that the teaching of intensive phonics was superior to reading approaches which deemphasize phonics, are invalid because the standardized tests used to gain these findings do not truly measure reading competencies. Goodman, for example, maintains it is not true that "existing [reading] tests can be used for accurate individual assessment" in reading (Goodman, 1978, p. 4). There appears to be no empirical evidence at present, however, to substantiate his notion that standardized reading tests cannot accurately assess children's reading skills. Considering this, the authors of the present study hold that its findings do accurately reflect the reading competencies of the children involved in this investigation.

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FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH TEACHER KNOWLEDGE OF READING AT THE SECONDARY LEVEL*

Harbans Lal Narang

UNIVERSITY OF REGINA

Though widespread use is made of nonprint media to enrich and supplement teaching, most academic learning takes place through the study of printed materials. The secondary school relies heavily on textbooks for its daily work in the classroom. Secondary teachers are, therefore, expected to teach reading skills in their particular content areas. Most colleges and universities offer one or more classes in reading instruction for teachers in training. Bader (1975) indicates that more and more institutions in the United States are requiring prospective secondary teachers to take at least one course in reading as a part of their certification requirements.

Several studies have identified the variables associated with teacher knowledge of reading at the *elementary level*. Wade (1960) administered a test of teacher skills used in the teaching of reading. He found that inservice teachers scored higher than preservice teachers.

Sabin (1973) administered the *Teaching Tasks in Reading—Form C* to 345 teachers and prospective teachers enrolled in a reading methods course at Ball State University. He found that the relationship between the amount of teaching experience and instructional competencies in reading was negligible. He further found that females scored higher than males.

Kingston, Brosier and Hsu (1975) administered the *Inventory of Teacher Knowledge of Reading* to undergraduate students, teachers, and reading specialists. The mean score of the reading specialists was the highest and that of the undergraduate students without reading course(s) was the lowest. The differences between the mean scores of the reading specialists, elementary teachers, and secondary teachers were also found to be highly significant.

Vanroosendaal (1975) also used the *Inventory of Teacher Knowledge of Reading* and found no significant difference in the mean total score between the primary and intermediate teachers.

PROBLEM

This study was an attempt to examine the status of teacher knowledge of reading at the secondary level and to investigate the fac-

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tors which may have contributed to that knowledge. Factors selected were: inservice, amount of experience, level of teaching, coursework in reading, field of specialization, and sex.

METHOD

Instrument

The Test of Teacher Knowledge of Reading (TTKR) consisting of 45 multiple-choice items covering the following topics was used:

- I. GENERAL BACKGROUND
  - A. Reading and Reading Problems
  - B. Nature and Difficulty of Material
- II. READING SKILLS
  - A. Word Recognition and Vocabulary
  - B. Comprehension
  - C. Study Skills
- III. INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES
  - A. Motivational Techniques
  - B. Lesson Plans and Study Guides
- IV. MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION
  - A. Reading Tests
  - B. Informal Techniques
  - C. Test Interpretation

The procedure for test construction and validation has been presented elsewhere (Narang, 1976).

Subjects

The Test of Teacher Knowledge of Reading (TTKR) was administered to 188 persons enrolled in eight graduate and undergraduate classes at the University of Oregon during the first week of the 1976 summer session. Subjects were asked to provide background information and their major subject area of preparation. The four most frequently mentioned areas were: English (44), Social Studies (29), Physical Education (20), and Music (15).

RESULTS

The test scores ranged from 11 to 40 with a mean of 24.5. The standard deviation was 6.3 and the standard error of measurement was 3.03.

Comparison 1

The mean scores of inservice teachers and preservice teachers were compared using the t-test to determine if the difference between the two groups was significant. The results were presented in Table 1.

The obtained t-value was significant at the 0.05 level of confidence. Inservice teachers on the average scored significantly higher than preservice teachers.

TABLE 1
COMPARISON OF INSERVICE TEACHERS AND
PRESERVICE TEACHERS SCORES

Groups	N	Mean	t-value
Inservice Teachers	124	25.4	2.42*
Preservice Teachers	64	23.1	

*p .05

Comparison

In order to determine if reading course(s) taken by the subjects in this study was related to performance on the Test of Teacher Knowledge of Reading, the mean score of those with a reading course(s) was compared with the mean score of those with no reading course. Table 2 presents the results.

TABLE 2
COMPARISON BETWEEN PERSONS WITH
AND WITHOUT A READING COURSE(S)

Groups	N	Mean	t-value
Persons with reading course	91	26.7	4.79*
Persons without reading course	97	22.5	

*p .05

The t-value obtained was significant at the 0.05 level of confidence. Persons who had taken a reading course(s) achieved significantly higher than those without course work in reading.

Comparison 3

The performance of male and female pre- and inservice teachers was compared using the t-test. The data is presented in Table 3.

TABLE 3
COMPARISON BETWEEN MALES AND FEMALES

Groups	N	Mean	t-value
Male	92	24.3	.60
Female	96	24.8	

The results show no significant difference between the two groups in their knowledge of reading.

Comparison 4

The junior and senior high school teachers were compared on the basis of their performance on the test. (Those who had taught at both levels were not included.) The results are presented below in Table 4.

TABLE 4
PERFORMANCE OF JUNIOR AND SENIOR
HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS

Teachers	N	Mean	t-value
Junior High	56	26.0	1.66
Senior High	40	23.9	

The obtained t-value is less than the tabular value of t. Thus, there was no significant difference between the junior and senior high school teachers in terms of their knowledge of reading.

Comparison 5

A comparison by means of one-way ANOVA was made between the teacher groups based on their teaching experience. There were 90 teachers who had taught from one to five years, 20 teachers from six to ten years, and 14 teachers for 11 or more years. Table 5 presents the summary of analysis of variance.

TABLE 5
ANOVA COMPARING TEACHER SCORES
GROUPED BY EXPERIENCE

Source	N	Sum of Squares	MS	F
Between groups	2	19.88	9.94	0.252
Within groups	121	388.31	39.49	

The F ratio obtained was not significant. Thus, it seems that experience does not contribute to the variance in teacher knowledge of reading.

Comparison 6

In order to determine if the major teaching field of the persons taking the test had any influence on their scores on the Test of Teacher

Knowledge of Reading, three groups, each representing at least 10% of the population, were compared by one-way ANOVA. These groups were: English (44), Social Studies (29), Physical Education (20). The summary of analysis of variance is presented in Table 6 below:

TABLE 6
ANOVA COMPARING TEACHER SCORES
GROUPED BY TEACHING FIELD

Source	N	Sum of Squares	MS	F
Between groups	2	120.31	60.29	1.46
Within groups	90	3716.23	41.29	

The F-ratio obtained was not significant. It was, therefore, concluded that the teaching field or the content area of teachers did not contribute to their knowledge of reading.

DISCUSSION

The findings of comparisons # 1, 2, 4, and 5 are in agreement with previous studies involving *elementary teachers* reported earlier. The finding of comparison #3 is contrary to what Sabin (1973) found. In his study females scored significantly higher than males. However, he cautions that the small number of males in his study (25 males vs. 221 females) may be a factor limiting the generalizability of his finding to a large population in which males would be represented in large numbers. The finding of comparison #6 is contrary to expectation. This may have occurred because the subject-matter categories in this study consisted of both inservice and preservice teachers.

The finding of comparison #2 suggests that a reading course adds to the teacher knowledge of reading. This is perhaps not surprising in view of the nature of the instrument used. One would hope that a course in reading would aid teachers in understanding the reading process and in applying reading skills in their content areas, thereby increasing student competence in dealing with the printed materials. Any conclusion concerning the relationship between high school teacher scores on the TTKR, and teacher effectiveness in dealing with reading problems in the field must, however, await further study.

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VOCABULARY ACQUISITION DURING ELEMENTARY AND POST-ELEMENTARY YEARS: A PRELIMINARY REPORT

Martha Rapp Haggard

NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY, DEKALB, ILLINOIS

Variables which contribute to language learning have been the subject of a great deal of research interest and study. Generally, research has concentrated on preschool language acquisition and, until the past decade, has supported the conclusion that language development is very nearly mature by about age six. Growing numbers of researchers, however, are acknowledging the need for research concerning language acquisition beyond the preschool years (C. Chomsky, 1969; Ruddell, 1976; Wardhaugh, 1976). Of specific interest are the developmental processes through which elementary and post-elementary children gain grammatical and lexical control of their language. Embedded in this larger concern are questions dealing with vocabular acquisition which Manzo and Sherk (1974) have identified as being singularly important, but relatively unresearched; specifically, (1) what condition or conditions precipitate the acquisition of new words? and (2) what strategy or strategies are used to incorporate new words into the speaking vocabulary? A third, and just as important concern, is whether the conditions and/or strategies change developmentally, and if so, what relationship this change has to current theories of cognitive development.

Elementary and post-elementary age cognitive development, according to Piagetian theory, includes the periods of *concrete operations* (ages 7-11) and *formal operations* (ages 11-16). Progress through these stages, which follow the *sensorimotor* period (birth-2) and period of *preoperational thought* (ages 2-7), is marked by qualitative changes in thinking which have to do with a person's "way of knowing" (Ammon, 1977; p. 160).

As the organism proceeds from one stage to another, three factors interact to regulate rate of progression: (1) maturation, (2) physical experience, and (3) social interaction (Piaget, 1967). Flavell (1977) emphasizes the organism's active search for selection and interpretation of environmental information, and neo-Piagetian theorists (Ammon, 1977) have attempted to specify more clearly those factors which account for individual differences in the selection of environmental stimuli. Pascual-Leone, for example, has suggested that of all the schemes which could be active in an organism at a given moment, those

which are active are determined by the activation weights of "scheme boosters." These scheme boosters may originate with forces inherent in the environment (F Operators); they may depend on affective or emotional factors (A Operators); or they may regulate the amount of mental energy available to perform mental transformations (M Operators). By attaching weight to various environmental stimuli, the scheme boosters determine not only which stimuli will be attended to, but the amount of mental transformation which will occur as well (Pascual-Leone, *et al.*, 1978).

This paper presents the results of two introspective studies designed to examine how and why elementary and post-elementary children learn new words. The original study will be summarized, and data from the subsequent study will be presented. Results will then be discussed.

THE ORIGINAL STUDY

Method

The study was conducted with a population of twenty-six college seniors enrolled in a reading methods class. The students were presented with three questions to determine if they could recall specific instances when new words were learned, and if so, what strategies were used. The questions were asked prior to discussion of language/vocabulary acquisition, and with no preliminary information given. The questions were:

1. Can you remember an incident when, as a child (between first and seventh grade), you incorporated a new word into your speaking vocabulary? If so, identify the word and describe the incident as fully as possible.
2. Can you remember an incident when, as a teen-ager or young adult, you incorporated a new word into your speaking vocabulary? If so, identify the word and describe the incident as fully as possible.
3. What personal strategy or strategies do you use for incorporating new words into your speaking vocabulary?

Results

The results yielded four major types of precipitating conditions for both the elementary and post-elementary years: (1) the word was said by an adult or older sibling and was appealing because of its sound or its "adulthood;" (2) the word was learned as the result of an incident involving strong emotions; (3) the word was learned because it had immediate usefulness; and (4) the word was learned as a result of peer usage. The major differences which occurred between the elementary and post-elementary responses were the response frequencies for each category. At the elementary level, the most frequent response was category one — the word was appealing because of its sound or "adulthood." Only one response was in the "peer group usage" category. At the post-elementary level, "peer group usage" was the most frequent response,

with only one response in the “appealing sound” category. Incidents involving strong emotion were all negative—embarrassment and shame—and responses in that category decreased with age. “Immediate usefulness” responses were generally school related at the post-elementary level, with only two responses indicating that the word was learned as a result of direct teaching.

Analysis of the responses to the strategies question revealed that, generally, a two-part procedure for learning new words is followed: first, meaning is obtained and then the word is rehearsed through repeated usage. The importance of rehearsal was stressed and, in most responses, emphasis was placed on the active search for both the meaning and the opportunity to rehearse.

STUDY II

Because of the small number and the homogeneous nature of the original study population, a second study was conducted to examine the same questions with a population different from the original one.

Method

Two sub-populations were chosen for the second study: Group A was comprised of twenty-three freshman students enrolled in a required English course; Group B was made up of twenty-one graduate students enrolled in a secondary reading methods course. The questions asked in this study were the same as those in the original study. They were asked with no preliminary information given and prior to discussion regarding language development.

RESULTS

Responses to the three questions were analyzed and tabulated for each group separately. Two responses at the elementary level (Group A) could not be categorized because the word was remembered but not the condition; one elementary response (Group A) related to learning English as a second language. There were a total of nine “no responses” (5 elementary; 4 post-elementary) which were spread evenly between the two groups.

PRECIPITATING CONDITIONS: ELEMENTARY

Four major categories of precipitating conditions were found.

I. *The words was said by an adult or older child and was appealing because of its sound or its “adulthood.”* (Group A, 5 responses; Group B, 9 responses). Parents, teachers and older siblings were listed most frequently as the source of the new word, with only one response stating explicitly that the word was learned in order to “feel big.” Similarly, only one response stated directly that the sound was appealing (“I learned the word ‘fickle’ because it rhymed with pickle.”). Implicit in the responses, however, is that acquisition is stimulated by an interaction between appealing sound and wanting to feel grown up. The words themselves attest to this (deign, foibles, lewd, fickle, pyrotechnics, in-

corporated, exhibitionist) and one response characterizes this relationship.

My 5th grade teacher said to another teacher, "You look lewd in that dress!" I looked up the word since I was rather curious.

II. *The word was learned as a result of an incident involving strong emotions.* (Group A, 6 responses; Group B, 5 responses). Most of the responses here indicated that the emotion was acute embarrassment; however, differences were noted regarding the source of the embarrassment. Four of the six college freshmen recalled the shock of their first encounter with obscene words. Graduate students, on the other hand, reported that the source of their embarrassment was mispronunciation of words. Among those listed was the venerable pitfall "fatigue."

III. *The word was learned because it had immediate usefulness.* (Group A, 4 responses; Group B, 4 responses). Five of the responses were school-related (roommother, multiplication, amen, characterize, perturbed), with only one (perturbed) reported as learned through direct instruction.

IV. *The word was learned as a result of peer usage.* (Group A, 3 responses; Group B, 0 responses). Two responses were similar to type I responses, except that the source of the new word was a peer instead of adult or older sibling. The other respondent learned the word "wretched" because the neighborhood group of children called one member "Wretched Ritchie."

PRECIPITATING CONDITIONS: POST-ELEMENTARY

I. *The word was learned because of its appealing sound or "adulthood."* (Group A, 1 response; Group B, 3 responses). Two of the responses indicated that phrases were learned because of their appealing sound (Aurora Borealis, reckless abandon). The word "malicious" was learned by one student because ". . . it was really great to know long words that no one else knew."

II. *The word was learned as a result of an incident involving strong emotion.* (Group A, 0 responses; Group B, 5 responses). All of the responses identified embarrassment as the emotion, with obscene words listed twice and mispronunciation once. One word, "ignominy" was learned in an unforgettable manner.

During an English class, I was talking with another girl. We were reprimanded lightly and stopped, but then continued. (Our teacher was very easy-going and liked to goof around and get off the track, so I suppose we figured we weren't missing anything.) Suddenly, he stopped and pointed at us bellowing, "Ignominy! Ignominy!" That stopped us for sure. I never forget the meaning, and it became our class catchword that year, though it didn't stop the talking.

III. *The word was learned because it had immediate usefulness.* (Group A, 9 responses; Group B, 7 responses). Thirteen of the responses in this category were directly related to classroom experience. Of these, two words were identified as having been learned through word list study.

IV. *The word was learned as a result of peer usage.* (Group A, 12 responses; Group B, 4 responses). Slang words and expressions comprised the majority of responses in this category (10/16), with eight of these identified by the College Freshman group. Such expressions as "cool your jets," "all right!" and "yo" were included. Supplied also by the College Freshmen were the terms "What a rush!" and "bong." Enter the drug culture.

The propensity of adolescents to play with language, mentioned earlier with "ignominy," was reported by both groups. The words "loquacious" and "dysmenorhea" became classroom or school catch-words, and apparently acquired many properties indigenous to cultural allusions. This phenomenon, along with the longevity of the allusions, is demonstrated by the comments concerning "dysmenorhea."

This became an "in" joke in high school because it was our school nurse's fancy word for cramps. We just had our 20th reunion and the Mistress of Ceremonies incorporated it into her jokes.

One final subcategory related to peer usage was identified. The words "infatuation," "facade," "loathe," and "remiss" were learned through conversation with friends. Comments indicated that these words were supplied as labels for known concepts.

Total response frequencies for Precipitating Conditions: Elementary and Post-Elementary are summarized in Table 1.

TABLE 1
Total Response Frequencies for Precipitating Conditions:
Elementary and Post-Elementary

Category	Study II		Original Study	
	Elementary	Post-Elementary	Elementary	Post-Elementary
I. Sound/Adulthood	14	4	9	1
II. Strong Emotion	11	5	4	1
III. Immediate Usefulness	8	16	4	7
IV. Peer Usage	3	16	1	12

Comparison of these frequencies reveals that, for each category, an inverse relationship exists between elementary and post-elementary

levels, and that the pattern of frequency increment from one category to another changes inversely between the elementary and post-elementary levels.

STRATEGIES FOR VOCABULARY ACQUISITION

The vocabulary acquisition strategy reported most frequently was to find the meaning of the word (Group A, 7 responses; Group B, 10 responses), and the method reported by most subjects was to look words up in the dictionary. A two-part strategy was identified by thirteen respondents (Group A, 4 responses; Group B, 9 responses) which involved obtaining meaning first and then rehearsing by trying the word out on family and friends. Ten responses (all College Freshmen) told *where* new words were found, e.g., school, home, watching T.V., etc., rather than how they were learned. Three responses could not be categorized.

DISCUSSION

Conditions Which Precipitate Vocabulary Acquisition

One of the most striking findings in this study is the influence of affect on vocabulary acquisition. This influence appears to take various forms and to be either long-term or episodic in nature. Immediately noticeable is the pattern of change which occurs within the identified condition categories between elementary and post-elementary years. This pattern is parallel to, and in fact reflects, the social development considered typical for passage from childhood to adolescence.

During the elementary years, parents, teachers, and older siblings form the group of significant others from whom words are learned. Wanting to "sound big;" i.e., to emulate, important adults evidently is a potent factor in word learning and it accounted for nearly one-half of the elementary responses. "Peer group usage," on the other hand, was the single most frequent response at the post-elementary level, indicating a shift of influence from family and teachers to friends.

The episodic influence of affect on vocabulary acquisition can be explained by the operation of activation weights on environmental stimuli. Informally, students have often described the phenomenon of learning a new word only to discover that, once sensitized to it, they encounter the word everywhere—even in material recently read or heard. The word, obviously, was always there, but was simply not attended to until it could serve a functional purpose. This phenomenon undoubtedly is the result of a complex of factors, but can be explained partially by the operation of activation weights upon existing stimuli: "Some schemes are activated more strongly, or weighted more highly, than others. Those schemes with the highest *activation weights* will be the ones that actually apply to (i.e., assimilate) the situation" (Ammon, 1977, p. 177). As was mentioned earlier, this weighting can be the result of A Operators (affective schemes), F Operators (forces inherent in the field), or M Operators (mental energy available), but whatever the

source of the weighting, it serves as the “final arbiter” in the selection of stimuli to attend to (Ammon, 1977).

Teachers were mentioned as a stimulus for vocabulary acquisition at both the elementary and post-elementary level; their influence, however, was almost always that of a *model* for vocabulary usage rather than as a resource for vocabulary study. Students heard and incorporated into their vocabularies many of the words used by teachers, but rarely remembered learning words as the results of direct teaching. Evidently, the A Operators (e.g., liking the teacher; wanting to sound adult) attached greater activation weights to those words than the F Operators (e.g., unknown words) could attach to word lists or other widely used teaching materials. The A Boosted words were therefore “selected” to be learned.

Selective attention resulting from the activation weights of A Operators appears to influence acquisition when words have particularly distinctive or pleasing sounds. Students reported that, especially as children, they often learned a word for no other reason than its sound—they liked rolling it around in their mouths and hearing themselves say it. This attraction to the sound of a word was often closely linked to the further positive feelings of sounding big, adult, grown up. Somewhat associated with this is the indication that adolescents enjoy playing with words which are unusual or exotic-sounding to their ears.

Strategies for Vocabulary Acquisition

The most noticeable finding with regard to strategies for vocabulary acquisition is that, at least for some words, acquisition is a conscious, deliberate, *active* learning process which follows a strikingly singular pattern. Students reported that they first demand meaning and then actively seek opportunity to apply the newly obtained knowledge.

Study II results do raise questions, however, concerning the importance of rehearsal in the process of vocabulary acquisition. It may be that deliberate rehearsal is not necessary for acquisition; on the other hand, it may be that implicit in the process of “getting the meaning” is a form of rehearsal which simply was not articulated by the respondents. Further questions are raised by the number of College Freshman responses which told where new words were found but not how they were learned. Although data were not collected for age, this was the youngest group, and their responses could represent a stage of meta-linguistic awareness which is still developing during late adolescence.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The major conclusion which can be drawn at this time is that social affect plays an important role in the process of vocabulary acquisition. Conditions which precipitate acquisition, (appealing sound/adulthood, strong emotion, peer usage) are closely associated with both affect and social environment. Furthermore, the potency of these conditions

changes developmentally from childhood to adolescence in a manner which is consistent with social/emotional changes which occur during that same time period. This pattern suggests a reciprocity between the organism and its environment which is closely in line with the Piagetian view of the organism as an active participant in learning, as well as the influence of social factors on language development. Neo-Piagetian explanations of individual differences serve to identify further those factors operating within this reciprocal construct.

A second conclusion concerns educational attempts to assist in vocabulary development. Although many classroom-related words were identified in the "Immediate Usefulness" category, rarely were they learned as a result of traditional teaching methods. Generally, words were not learned from lists, but from teacher usage within the classroom. In addition, new vocabulary was most potent when words had particular significance for the individual, or could be applied to immediate experience or need. It appears that if educators are to be successful as facilitators of vocabulary acquisition, methods must capitalize upon the role of the teacher as a model of language proficiency and upon the needs and interests of the students themselves.

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PROFESSIONAL CONCERNS

R. Baird Shuman

EDITOR

R. W. Reising

CONTRIBUTOR

R. W. Reising, Professor of Communicative Arts and Native American Studies at Pembroke State University in North Carolina, provides a point counterpoint on the question of whether students' dialects interfere with their ability to read. He suggests three specific actions to which educators concerned with reading instruction might turn their efforts in order to enhance the quality of such instruction for students who normally use a dialect other than standard.

Despite decades of investigation and discussion, the profession remains divided on the role of dialect in learning to read. Typical of one group is Doris C. Ching, who accurately alleges that "most of the evidence indicates that dialect differences per se are not major barriers to learning to read" (*Reading and the Bilingual Child*, IRA, 1976, p. 8). "Most" is obviously a key word in Dr. Ching's cautiously worded contention. Indeed, some evidence favors a different conclusion, one which the internationally respected Kenneth S. Goodman doubtless has in mind when, in his often-anthologized essay "Dialect Barriers to Reading Comprehension," he argues, first, that "it is harder for a child to learn to read a dialect which is not his own than to learn to read his own dialect" and, later, that "an important hypothesis" is valid: "*The more divergence there is between the dialect of the learner and the dialect of learning, the more difficult will be the task of learning to read* [Goodman's underlining]."

The two most recent pronouncements involving reading and dialect have brought not finality but increasing furor to the dispute. The judgment in the case of *Martin Luther King, Jr., Elementary School v. Ann Arbor School District Board*, rendered in a U.S. district court in July of 1979, legally decrees that at least one collection of minority dialects, those known as black English, does not represent a language barrier in and of itself, yet simultaneously suggests, as Sharon Kossack notes, that dialect differences "affect the number and quality of oral-reading miscues made by youngsters who speak black English" ("District Court's

Ruling on Nonstandard Dialects Needs Cautious Interpretation," *Phi Delta Kappan*, May, 1980, pp. 617-19).

Published just a few months ago, Patrick Hartwell's allegations have already elicited several rebuttals—and promise to elicit still others. In a thoroughly researched, amply documented essay, Hartwell maintains that "all apparent dialect interference in writing is reading-related . . . that systematic error in writing is correlated with reading disfunction, both reflecting an imperfectly developed neural coding system, the print code" ("Dialect Interference in Writing: A Critical View," *Research in the Teaching of English*, May, 1980, pp. 101-18). Unfortunately, Hartwell's explanation of "reading disfunction" fails to indicate whether such disfunction creates, is created by or is even directly related to dialects different from standard English. Similarly, his explanation fails to identify how and why dialect speakers—as individuals and as groups—are uniquely victimized by an "imperfectly developed neural coding system."

Thus the controversy continues, and administrators, classroom teachers, and reading personnel have reason, perhaps, to sense that they are caught between two feuding camps. Yet, instead of fleeing the field and surrendering the whole question of reading and dialect to researchers and scholars, they should commit themselves to three actions. In fact, to remain effective in their respective positions, educators *must* commit themselves to those actions:

1. They must stay abreast of scholarship bearing on reading and dialect. All of the materials mentioned earlier in this article are worthy of study. Two others are, too, because of the horde of information and insights they contain: "Everyone Does Not Think Alike," by Grace C. Cooper, in the April, 1980, issue of *English Journal*, the NCTE publication; and *Reading and Dialect Differences*, one of the five booklets making up the *Dialects and Educational Equity* series published in 1979 by the Center for Applied Linguistics, located in Arlington, Virginia. As Hartwell's provocative article proves, the profession is inching toward significant breakthroughs in understanding the ties between reading and dialect, and all professionals have countless reasons, moral as well as pedagogical, for learning about the progress as it unfolds.
2. They must be aware that negative attitudes toward dialects militate against success in reading for dialect speakers. "The task of learning to read is not an easy one," Goodman concedes, and teachers and other educators who through words or actions indicate less than respect for students' native dialects are only making the task that much harder for those students. For professionals who sense difficulty in acquiring or maintaining that respect, help is available. *Attitudes, Language, and Change*, by Ann Gere and Eugene Smith, provides 108 pages of enlightened discussion of the three matters listed in its title. The third chapter of that NCTE volume, published in 1979, is particularly relevant: treating

“Changing Language Attitudes within the Profession,” it contains several superb suggestions for educators to consider.

3. They must determine and exploit what works for them in teaching dialect speakers to read. Once they have recognized that research in reading is a powerful ally, they must go one step further and recognize that research that they conduct in their own schools is the most valuable ally of all. Educators across the globe can learn from one another, certainly; but since no two learning situations are perfectly analogous, just as no two dialects are exactly alike, the staff of a particular school must identify and then continue to employ what works for them. They must neither apologize for nor feel guilty about strategies and materials that they use, even if those strategies and materials are not fashionable or effective elsewhere. There must be a commitment to what works—nothing less—and they must be convinced of what works not by wishful thinking or sales pitches but by evidence gleaned from and in their own classrooms.

Amidst the reading-dialect controversy, practitioners should feel not confused but confident. They obviously have a chance not merely to learn from it but also to continue to contribute an essential ingredient to it—sense, common and uncommon.

QUICK REVIEWS

Nancy Weddle
Lincoln University, Jefferson City, Missouri

Freedman, G., and Reynolds, E. G. "Enriching basal reader lessons with semantic webbing." *The Reading Teacher*, vol. 33, no. 6 (March, 1980), pp. 677-685.

This article describes an unusual and interesting instructional technique, semantic webbing, as a way for students to organize and integrate the concepts of stories. The semantic web is a visual display representing the categories and relationships of the story content, as well as the reader's related knowledge and background of information. Freedman and Reynolds present the basic model for constructing a web, and a detailed example of using semantic webbing with a basal reader story. The basic model may be used with all grade levels and reading materials to help students to organize and integrate information.

Yarborough, B. H., and Johnson, R. A. "How meaningful are marks in promoting growth in reading?" *The Reading Teacher*, vol. 33, no. 6 (March, 1980), pp. 644-652.

This synopsis of a research project, which examined the significance of marks in promoting cognitive and affective pupil development in the area of reading, will be of interest to specialists and classroom teachers. The findings of this study suggested equally effective reading instruction can be offered through either nongraded or traditional settings. It was further suggested there is no great difference on global or specific intelligence test scores or the affective development of pupils at the elementary level between reading instruction without marks or report cards, and reading instruction with marks or report cards. The affective development of students in the bright or gifted ranges may have been slightly more effected by marks than other students. Generally, the study suggested that marks have limited meaning and value as a means of promoting growth in reading or as a means of communicating pupil achievement to parents. Yarborough and Johnson state the need for educators to devise more effective methods of informing parents and students of academic progress.

Sulzby, Elizabeth. "Using children's dictated stories to aid comprehen-

sion." *The Reading Teacher*, vol. 33, no. 7 (April, 1980), pp. 772-778.

Many teachers and specialists use LEA in their classrooms. Oftentimes, however, these educators do not know how to use language experience to aid reading comprehension. Sulzby suggests two teaching strategies to use the LEA. The first strategy involves students rereading and editing his/her own text in order to better understand their own dictations. The second strategy involves comprehension, but also explores the child's awareness of the conventions of written language. The author clearly describes the development of these strategies in the class room with beginning reader/writers.

Lauritzen, Carol, "Oral literature and the teaching of reading." *The Reading Teacher*, vol. 33, no. 7 (April, 1980), pp. 787-791.

The four linguistic patterns of oral literature are of interest and helpful to reading teachers. First, the pattern of repeated wording uses a set of words in a poem, story, or song. Also, a syntactic pattern may be repeated many times with new words substituted into the pattern each time. In addition, link wording is common in oral literature. In link wording the ending phrase or word of one sentence becomes the beginning phrase or word in the next sentence. Finally, the characteristic of cumulative structure is found in many folktales. The tale begins with one episode, this episode is repeated and another added, these two are repeated and another added, and the process continues to the end of the tale. These four patterns may appear in combinations of two or more. Teachers may use oral literature for listening and reading. The constancy of an oral literary pattern may be used as a pattern for using prediction strategies. Children usually enjoy the repetition and the rhythmic nature of oral literature, as well. Lauritzen suggests additional ways to use oral literature in reading, as part of a total language arts program.

Moustafa, Margaret, "Picture books for oral language development for non-English speaking children: A bibliography." *The Reading Teacher*, vol. 33, no. 8 (May, 1980), pp. 914-919.

All teachers occasionally have difficulty finding appropriate materials to use in the classroom. This may be especially true for teachers of non-English speaking children. The bibliography in this article is an excellent reference for those teachers. The books were selected for their usefulness in illustrating English meanings when read aloud to elementary-

age, non-English speaking students. The language pattern characteristic and a brief suggestion for using each book are also indicated. The list is divided into three levels, noting those books most highly recommended by the author.

Johnson, Laura S., Ed., *Reading and the Adult Learner*. Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, Inc., 1980.

In contemporary society many adults are discovering a need for additional help in reading. According to Laura Johnson, such adults "are not seeking the right to read, but the right to know how to read." The responsibility for instructing the adult learner in reading education is clearly a challenge to reading professionals. The challenge lies not only in working directly with students but, also, in training para-professional assistants and volunteers. This publication, *Reading and the Adult Learner*, is a compilation of selected IRA convention and journal articles which describe a few selected reading programs for adult learners in the United States.

Survival Series, as told to Ben East. Edited by Jerolyn Nentl and Howard Schroeder, ill. by Jack Dahl. Crestwood House, 1979.

The eight dramatic stories of the Survival Series offer a moving and vivid saga of wilderness survival and man's struggle against nature. Each story is a first-person account of the adventures as told to Ben East. Mr. East, who is a well-known and popular editor/writer for "Outdoor Life Magazine," uses his special talents as a wildlife journalist to retell each story in a way which will capture the interest of juvenile readers. The series is edited by Jerolyn Nentl and Dr. Howard Schroeder, and illustrated with realistic sketches by Jack Dahl. The books are of consistent length and yet, each story is complete and exciting.

The following stories, as told to Ben East, are included in this series.

Mistaken Journey. A rancher and his family travel through wild, virgin country in Canada to homestead land. The family's joy turns to despair when they encounter many problems in the wilderness. Finally, on the final leg of their five-week trip, the homesteaders realize they have been traveling in the wrong direction. This story is a gripping account of their survival on the pioneer journey.

Forty Days Lost. Seven men make an emergency airplane landing in the wild bush country of Canada. Extensive rescue efforts fail and the stranded passengers must attempt to keep themselves alive for 40 days. The determination to survive and

help each other are dramatically related in this adventure.

Grizzly. This story is an account of Napier Shelton's adventure when his long time desire to meet a grizzly bear is realized. When Shelton is attacked by this wild animal, he narrowly escapes with his life. His frightening experience teaches him the important lesson that bears, especially grizzlies, are not to be trusted.

Desperate Search. This book relates the experiences of a 77-year-old man who becomes lost in the woods while grouse hunting. The hunter must survive three days and four nights of hunger and cold because he is without food to eat or matches with which to start a fire. This older outdoorsman, who hardly hoped to get out of the woods alive, has timely advice to share with others who may become lost and are faced with survival in wild country.

Danger in the Air. A calm, winter night in Florida Bay turns into a fight for survival when three people in this story are trapped in a sudden storm. When the rough and turbulent seas destroy their boat, the trio barely reach a nearby island. The following day, one of the brave men must set out to open sea in a small boat in search of help and rescue for his companions. This episode relates the survival of those brave people during a violent storm in the isolated Florida Keys.

Trapped in Devil's Hole. In this survival adventure two trout fishermen become injured and stranded in the gorge of a dangerous river. Their ordeal becomes even more complicated and dangerous when the rescue team is not sure the men can be brought out alive. This exciting story relates the courage of the trapped fishermen, as well as the skill and bravery of the men of the rescue team.

Found Alive. Junior Harmon, a fourteen-year-old boy, sets out on his first hunting trip in unfamiliar wilderness and becomes hopelessly lost. Two hundred searchers comb the woods for five days and nights before the young hunter is found. This saga tells of his struggle to survive without food or fire and to endure ice and snow without shelter.

Frozen Terror. The ice-fishing trip of a northern Michigan man ends in terror when he becomes stranded on an ice-floe. For a terrible week in January, this brave fisherman fights the bitter cold and ice-fields attempting to get back to shore. This true story vividly describes one man's steadfast courage and fight for survival in the face of constant danger.

Learning Through Reading in the Content Areas. Richard Allington and Michael Strange. 258 pp. D. C. Heath and Company 1980. (125 Spring Street, Lexington, Massachusetts 02173).

Reviewed by Suzanne L. Bunkers, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, Wisconsin

An innovative and useful new methods text, *Learning Through Reading in the Content Areas* is organized around the belief that "one of the primary goals of content area instruction should be to develop and refine the learner's ability to learn from textual materials" (p. 237). In targeting their book not only at content area teachers but also at reading specialists and curriculum directors, Allington and Strange show these groups how to supplement each other's instructional work and help students learn to read critically.

The authors begin by discussing factors which influence the student's learning from text as well as the teacher's choice of text; for example, the learner's reading ability, the readability of the text, the author's writing style, and the teacher's objectives. Then Allington and Strange present their thesis: before a teacher can "tailor textual material to the reading abilities of the learners and to the goals of the content area lesson," he or she needs to understand (1) the basic processes in learning from text and (2) the most common barriers to such learning (p. 10).

Subsequent chapters present orderly and thorough analyses of aspects of content area reading instruction. Elements and theories of the reading process are briefly but clearly explained. Barriers to learning from text (such as inability to vary reading rate and lack of structural analysis skills) are covered not only in sufficient depth but also in a style conducive to readers who are not necessarily experts in the reading field. Humor is often effective in getting points across. For instance, when discussing strategies for increasing "wait time" after asking students a question, Allington and Strange advise teachers to scan up and down the rows of students, count slowly to five, and "take a deep breath and check your fingernails for hangnails" (p. 199).

By focusing first on assessing reading ability by commercial and informal means, then on evaluating textual materials, and finally on setting goals for teaching and learning, the authors provide their audience with an appropriate sequence for examining students' reading experiences, needs, and objectives. Particularly noteworthy is the emphasis on helping students learn to read effectively in both the narrative mode, in which they "learn to read," and the expository mode, in which they "read to learn" (p. 182).

A highlight of *Learning Through Reading in the Content Areas* is its final chapter on differentiated instruction, which describes strategies (multiple text instruction, use of the Group Informal Screening and Diagnostic Tests, and constellation grouping) that enable the reading specialist, curriculum director, and inservice consultant to “ease the burden” of the content area teacher. The authors’ “Three-Year Plan” provides an especially workable timetable for the beginning teacher who would like to introduce differentiated instruction into her or his classroom (pp. 229-33).

Admittedly, some aspects of this text may fall short of the reader’s expectations. One might, for instance, take issue with the authors’ belief that middle- and secondary-level students should receive instruction that focuses exclusively on the development of silent reading abilities to the exclusion of oral reading abilities (p. 92). Then, too, at times one might find the authors’ solutions to teaching problems too flippant, as when they discuss reluctant learners’ complaints about being asked to read what they consider “baby books.” Rather than offer concrete suggestions for dealing with the situation, Allington and Strange simply state that “such reluctance can be overcome with adroit efforts by the teacher” (p. 231).

Despite these minor shortcomings, however, *Learning Through Reading in the Content Areas* admirably fulfills the purpose for which it is intended: it provides content area teachers, reading specialists, and curriculum directors with specific strategies for helping students improve their literal textual comprehension as well as their ability to read carefully and critically.

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