

A CURRICULUM STUDY OF THE LANGUAGE ARTS AREA
KINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE TWELVE

for

WAMEGO USD #320

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SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The major value which resulted from the curriculum study was the teachers' awareness of the need for more correlation between the subjects of the language arts areas and the beginning correlation of materials in the language arts area. There were also improvements in the subject content and instruction in the classroom. These improvements benefited all the students enrolled in the Wamego Unified School District.

The direct involvement by all of the teachers in some part of the curriculum study more nearly assures that changes in the program will ensue. This direct involvement of teachers usually improves their own professional growth and improves their classroom teaching.¹

By working with others at different grade levels, teachers are afforded an opportunity to have a better understanding of the total scope of the subject fields. Such an experience helps teachers to know and understand for the first time the problems and work of the teachers at other grade levels as well as the subject content covered.

¹Arthur Hass. "An Exploration of Methods of Organizing Elementary Schools for Curriculum Study" (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1962), Chapter 2.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the curriculum study were to encompass the following:

1. A study of the existing language arts curriculum so all staff members could be informed about what was being taught, and the grade level at which it was taught.
2. An evaluation of the existing language arts curriculum with the objective of discovering areas of strength, weakness, or needless repetition.
3. To look at the latest research and latest innovation in the language arts area which could be used to improve the learning environment of the boys and girls enrolled in Wamego Unified School District #320.
4. To recommend changes which will lead to an improved learning situation for the boys and girls enrolled in Wamego Unified School District #320.

LIMITATIONS

The curriculum study was started in the first part of November and was to be finished in April. This limited the amount of time to be devoted to the study.

Since this work was done by classroom teachers with assistance from the State Department of Public Instruction and Dr. Leo Schell of Kansas State University there was a limitation to how much depth and energy could be given after doing a full-time job of teaching.

The State Department of Public Instruction at that time did not have

a Reading Consultant but Lois Cafflyn, English consultant from the Kansas State Department of Instruction, was used as a consultant for the language arts area.

There was also an English curriculum committee whose areas involved grammar, literature, oral and written communication, and spelling. There was much overlap of these areas by the two committees. Cooperation and communication between the two committees were excellent and more depth and breadth in the study was achieved.

Dr. Leo Schell attended one of the Language Arts Committee meetings giving us some of the new and challenging directions in the language arts areas. Dr. Schell also helped us by giving guidance in finding the latest research materials in the language arts area.

The Board of Education permitted school to be dismissed at two o'clock one day a month to allow time to work on the study. The early school dismissal increased the amount of time spent on the study and helped the morale of the staff during the period.

DEFINITION OF AREA

The language arts area or the language arts field used in this study refers to subject content area of reading, the teaching of the reading skills, and the communication areas such as listening, speaking, writing, spelling, and handwriting.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

I. Basal Reading

The Basal Reading Approach is the most popular of the reading programs

in the United States today. Many series are available, providing textbooks, the teacher's guides, and supplementary materials for grades kindergarten through six or beyond. Sequential skill development and controlled vocabulary is generally provided. Enrichment materials are provided for the gifted or advanced learner and easier materials for the slow learner. The Basal Reading Approach is a synonym for Basic Reading Approach and Traditional Orthography.

The Basal Reading Approach is concerned with providing children with experiences which will help them learn how to read printed symbols. This approach may be contrasted with other reading programs which provide broader experiences in reading different types of printed materials and engaging in other independent activities for the purpose of greater generalized learning. Personal growth and recreational appreciation through reading are not primary objectives of the basal reading approach. Corrective or remedial instruction for individuals or groups are not considered a part of the basal reading program.

Skill development is the important part of the basal reading approach. The skills include analyzing, locating, interpreting, and comprehending written or printed symbols from the page. The primary objective of this program is the development of reading skills which are common to all reading situations involving printed or written words. In fulfilling this objective the method used is the direct, systematic instruction, usually on a daily basis, through the use of a basic "reader" text or series of basic "reader" texts. The readers present a sequential organization for development of reading skills. A controlled vocabulary is utilized in presenting and providing for this sequential organization in this approach. Three or more flexible

groups in the class are utilized to provide for the differences in abilities of pupils. Students may advance at different speeds through this sequential program but all students must follow the predetermined sequence.

Hawkins², using eight experienced teachers, made a limited study of the movement of pupils from one reading group to another and the reason or reasons for the movement. The students were in self-contained classrooms and were divided into three groups for reading instruction. Twenty-one reasons were given by teachers for moving students from one group to another. The teachers indicated that most of the changes were based on teacher opinion with other evidence lacking for the most part. In the study teachers could not identify particular strengths or weaknesses that would suggest that a change in group placement would contribute to a child's progress in reading.

This study was quite limited in scope and in research technique. It did raise questions related to the evidence teachers needed for determining when children should be moved from one group to another and also if teachers had the resources available to them for assessing the specific reading strengths and weaknesses of their pupils. Research is needed to determine and test workable guide lines for aiding teachers to develop flexible grouping.

Dawson³ made a study to determine whether or not a conventional basal reading approach, supplemented with a perceptual skills program would prove more effective than conventional reading instruction.

²Michael L. Hawkins, "Changes in Reading Groups," The Reading Teacher, XXI (October, 1967), 48-51.

³David Kenneth Dawson, "An Instructional Program for Children with Perceptually Related Learning Disabilities," Dissertation Abstracts, XXVII (January, 1967), 2095A-2096A.

The experimental group consisted of fifteen students who had failed to achieve reading skills in first grade consistent with their ability. The Control Group I consisted of sixteen students who were repeating first grade. Control Group II were thirty-two students placed in grade two on trial. All students had average or better than average mental ability with some degree of perceptual disorganization. These students had not been successful in learning to read in grade one.

This study lasted for a school year. The experimental group received special visual and auditory perceptual training and also training in gross and fine motor coordination. The Control Groups both received only the conventional basal reading approach.

Results from this study suggested significant differences in improvement between the experimental and Control Group I in sight vocabulary and reading comprehension. There was a difference in comprehension between the experimental group and Control Group II. There were no differences in word discrimination skills.

Olive Niles⁴ conducted a study to examine the effects of certain changes in materials and procedures upon the achievement of first grade children identified as potential problem readers.

This study involved children in forty classrooms of thirty-two schools in Springfield, Massachusetts. An extensive battery of intelligence and readiness tests were given to identify students who seemed least likely to be successful with first grade reading. The forty classrooms were then divided into four groups of ten classrooms each. Group A (control) were assigned

⁴Olive S. Niles, "Methods of Teaching Reading to First Grade Children Likely to Have Difficulty in Reading," The Reading Teacher, XX No. 6 (March, 1967), 541-545.

to the basal reader program with no changes in methods or materials from the ordinary basal reading program. Group B students used the same basal program as Group A, but the slower learning students were given three additional half periods of instruction per week by a special reading teacher. Group C used differentiated materials for the slow students only. Group C used special readiness materials and then were given trade books as they were able to read them. Group D combined the procedure of Group B and C. The potentially poor readers used the readiness materials, trade books, and were given three half-hours of additional reading instruction each week.

Conclusions drawn from this study and from the analysis of the data received from a battery of tests given at the end of the experiment, lead to the following points. Students that are likely to have special problems in learning to read could be identified prior to reading instruction. The slow students were subject to different treatment in the four groups, but no clearly significant differences in achievement were demonstrated. The differences in achievement which did appear, might have been due to lack of teacher familiarity with unusual procedures, inadequacy of measuring instrument in detecting total pupil growth in reading, and lastly, improvement might not be measureable until the end of the second grade.

II. INITIAL TEACHING ALPHABET

The Initial Teaching Alphabet is a new augmented Roman Alphabet for teaching beginning reading. Sir James Pitman, its inventor, believes that the introduction of a one-to-one co-correspondence between the phoneme and grapheme in English will improve the ability to learn to read. The Initial Teaching Alphabet is a system in which each symbol represents one, and only one,

sound. Sir James Pitman thinks that beginning reading material should be written in this medium until children develop the recognition skills necessary to transfer to materials written in traditional orthography. Experiments are now being carried on in various school systems throughout the United States and England.⁵

A view of several studies on the worth of Initial Teaching Alphabet maintains that the early favorable results reported by some researchers have not been substantiated. Five U.S. Office of Education First Grade Studies comparing Initial Teaching Alphabet and traditional orthography, cited by Fry⁶, showed that on the basis of test results four out of five of the studies found no significant differences between groups at the end of the first year of instruction.

In a study of the relative advantage of Initial Teaching Alphabet and traditional orthography using a sentence method and a kinesthetic method with three hundred ninety-three pupils, tests at the end revealed that the experimental groups were significantly superior to control on tests of reading ability and word recognition. The tests for experimental pupils were written using i. t. a. Subjects taught by the kinesthetic method were significantly higher in reading and word recognition than those subjects taught by the sentence method. This study, as evaluated by Morris⁷, gives

⁵Opinion expressed by Sir James Pitman during a speech at the NDEA Remedial Reading Institute at Kearney State College, Kearney, Nebraska, on July 9, 1967.

⁶Edward Fry, "i. t. a.: A Look at the Research Data," Education LXXXVII (May, 1967), 549-553.

⁷John Lloyd Morris, "The Teaching of Reading Using a Phonetic Alphabet," California Journal of Educational Research, XVII (January, 1967), 5-22.

an advantage to first grade students.

Comparing silent reading achievement of a group of second grade pupils taught by i. t. a. and T. O., Eichel⁸ found no significant differences.

Swales' study was carried out in six different English schools to investigate the attainments of students in reading and spelling taught to read using the i. t. a. method. The results indicated that there was no significant difference in reading achievement between matched groups. The spelling of the students was not adversely affected in the i. t. a. group. No difference in incidence of backward readers were found. A significant factor in determining level of reading achievement was intelligence.⁹

The results of Fry's¹⁰ third year study comparing three groups of children who had beginning instruction with i. t. a., basal readers, and basal readers with diacritical marks applied showed that in silent reading as measured by the Stanford Achievement Test there were no significant differences among any of the three methods on any subtest with several minor exceptions. During the first year only, the spelling subtest was scored according to directions which was traditional spelling, the i. t. a. group was significantly inferior. However, when the test was rescored allowing either i. t. a. or traditional spelling the group was no longer inferior. Spelling inferiority was not noted at the end of the second or third year, after transition was completed. The group which used a basal reader with

⁸Albert Julian Eichel, "A Study of Effect of the Initial Teaching Alphabet on Reading Achievement," Dissertation Abstracts, XXVII (May, 1967), 3611A-3612A.

⁹Terence D. Swales, "The Attainments in Reading and Spelling of Children Who Learned to Read Through the Initial Teaching Alphabet," The British Journal of Educational Psychology, XXXVII, (February, 1967), 126-127.

¹⁰Edward Fry, "Comparing of beginning reading with i. t. a., DMS, and t. o. after three years," The Reading Teacher, XXII No. 4, (Jan. 1969), 357-362.

diacritical marks was significantly inferior on the word meaning subtest at the end of the second year, but not the third year.

Oral reading ability, as measured by the accuracy and rate scores of the Gilmore Oral Reading Test, showed no significant differences. The test was given to a randomly selected subsample for each method group.

Each child was asked to read aloud a list of phonetically regular words and a list of high frequency words. There was no significant difference on the high frequency words but the i. t. a. children were able to read the phonetically regular words significantly better.

The i. t. a. children wrote significantly longer stories in the first and second grades. In the third grade groups the writing samples collected showed no significant differences.

Teachers might find it disconcerting to read that classes of the varying sizes studied did not differ significantly in reading achievement. None of the class sizes were particularly large. The first grade classes ranged between nineteen and twenty-eight with a mean of twenty-four. The second grade classes ranged between seventeen and twenty-nine with a mean of twenty-six. The third grade classes ranged between eleven and thirty-one with a mean of twenty-six.

Fry stated that teachers can be encouraged by the finding that "good teacher" as determined by teacher-rating correlations do make a real difference in reading achievement. Low correlations were generally found between reading and the teacher's age, the teacher's years of experience, and the number of teacher's absence.

The main finding of no significant difference between methods on either of the standardized oral or silent reading tests, has been fairly well

confirmed in other studies. An interesting observation was that the variability between classroom means within one method was so much greater than the variability between method means. It is difficult to see how comparing methods between just two classrooms each using a different method can ever be thought as reliable.

In the public schools of New Castle, Pennsylvania, a three year longitudinal and two year replication study of four different approaches to beginning reading instruction has been completed by Hayes and Wuest.¹¹ The four approaches used the following methods and materials which were compared in the study. In one approach a basal reader program utilized a "whole word" carefully controlled vocabulary approach to beginning reading instruction and ability grouping procedures, represented by Scott, Foresman and Company. A second approach used a phonics approach, with many different words, using essentially whole class teaching procedures and filmstrips correlated with the reading texts, published by the J. B. Lippincott Company. A third approach was a combination of whole word plus phonics approach using the materials and methods of Scott, Foresman and Company with grouping techniques, but supplemented with Phonics and Word Power, series of booklets published by American Educational Publication, Incorporated. The fourth approach was the Early-to-Read i. t. a. Program published by i. t. a. Publications, Incorporation, which employs a total language approach, grouping procedures, a heavier than usual vocabulary and an initial teaching alphabet designed to overcome phonic and spelling inconsistencies of the

¹¹Robert B. Hayes and Richard C. Wuest, "A Three year look at i. t. a., Lippincott, Phonics and Word Power, and Scott, Foresman," The Reading Teacher, XXII, No. 4 (January, 1969), 363-370.

English language. Except for i. t. a. each treatment was continued throughout the study. Since i. t. a. was designed for beginning reading instruction, the Treasury of Literature Series of Charles E. Merrill Books, Incorporated, was used when pupils made the transition to traditional orthography. All the children were encouraged to do wide independent reading. The teachers used only those methods and materials recommended by the book company consultants for instructional purposes.

Only the major three year study results were reported in this article. The replication study results largely confirmed the major study.

In grade one the most books were read by the Scott, Foresman pupil but the other three programs generally appeared to help children to higher silent achievement as measured by a standardized test. A significant difference was found on word recognition achievement for i. t. a. and Lippincott. Reading programs with a heavy phonic emphasis apparently gave children greater power in recognizing word lists. but since the overall comprehension results were not significant, this advantage may not be transferable to understanding meaning of words in context in oral reading. This study suggests that children who do well with phonetically regular words also do well with phonetically irregular words, and that those who do poorly with the one, do poorly with the other.

In grade two, there was a significant difference in reading attitude which was lower for the Scott, Foresman pupils, but by April of grade three, there was no longer any significant difference. The pupils of i. t. a.-Merrill and Lippincott were significantly ahead on word recognition, but by April there were no longer any significant differences.

By the end of grade three, Lippincott scored significantly higher on paragraph meaning and spelling than did Scott, Foresman and Phonics and Word Power. Lippincott showed a significant difference over Phonics and Word Power on word meaning at the end of third grade. On word study skills, the students using Scott, Foresman materials scored significantly lower than the other three groups.

Method and materials as well as teachers, it appears, can make a difference in the teaching of reading. Significantly better results are produced by an intensive phonic approach than by an eclectic basal reader. The i. t. a. Merrill program did not confuse students in spelling and this group achieved the best results in silent reading achievement by the end of grade three. Basal reader programs should give serious consideration to increasing both vocabulary and phonics in their beginning reading materials.

III. LANGUAGE-EXPERIENCE APPROACH

The Language-Experience Approach is an instructional program which brings reading and other communication skills together. It uses the language and thinking of the individual as the basis for skill development. Each child is encouraged to share his ideas with others through the use of words and pictures from the beginning of the child's first day in school. Students are given repeated opportunities for creating stories and for writing stories with teacher help. Students begin to develop writing vocabularies and are able, in an amazingly short time, to write their own stories independently. To expand writing vocabularies the teacher uses devices such as word ladders, picture dictionaries, and room labels. The only limit to a student's ability to express his ideas is his ability to create ideas.

Each student brings to school a unique language personality which the teacher recognizes, and strives to preserve at the same time that certain common understandings and skills are being habituated. The teacher from the first day requires the individual to express his own thought, ideas, aspirations, and ideals. This is quite different from the usual experience charts which are supposed to represent the thinking of the group.

The children and teacher base the motivation and building of experiences upon the language experiences of listening, verbalizing, and writing from library books, basic texts, stories and poems read by the teacher or a child. Open-ended sentences, films, filmstrips, study trips, class or small group discussions, art prints, and children's paintings are other media and means to build language experiences. Students are encouraged to use their personal experiences for language development in the Experience Approach. Many of the stories the students write are drawn from literature, science, and social studies.

Each student is given opportunities to learn reading individually with the teacher, in small groups, and in the total class group. A student in each situation is expected to express and record his own thoughts, ideas, aspirations, and ideals as well as to read and understand the thinking of others.

Basic sources of reading are student-prepared materials. Printed materials are developed for general reading and the expressed purpose of teaching reading skills. All kinds of books are used and are necessary for the child to get a balanced program of reading and to increase his skills of word recognition and interpretation of reading. The student makes progress in reading and writing through self-expression. The student evaluates his

progress as he uses materials prepared for teaching reading skills.

In the beginning stages, the teacher assumes the responsibility for writing on each student's painting or drawing, such as the title and/or story of the painting or drawing. The teacher does not need to know the "readiness level," the I.Q. or other information commonly considered to be necessary in grouping children for reading. That each student shall represent and express his own thoughts is the one basic requirement. The student observes as the teacher translates a phrase or a sentence into a story right before his eyes. All the while the teacher talks informally with the student or students about words, names of letters, sound values of letters and groups of letters, beginning sounds and sounds in between. The teacher shows the children that anything they say can be written down with the letters in our alphabet and that a person who knows how to read can tell them exactly what they said without hearing them. As students live and learn to read in an integrated, balanced program, they develop more mature concepts about what reading really is in the world about them. The students become aware of the value of reading in their own lives, the skills they will need to develop in order to achieve their reading purposes, the relationship of reading to thinking, and the stimulation which reading can give to creative living.

The emotionally disturbed, the slow-learning child, and the "immature" make significant progress in a program where each student's own ideas are valued and used. A gifted child may have the opportunity to come closer to developing his potential by being able to express his own ideas.¹²

¹²R. Van Allen and Gladys C. Halvorsen, "The Language-Experience Approach to Reading Instruction," Ginn and Co. Contributions in Reading No. 27 (Boston: Ginn and Co., 637, XXVII, 1961), 1-6

Kendrick and Bennett¹³ reported on the second year of a longitudinal study to determine the relative effectiveness of the experience approach and the traditional approach. This study involved fifty-seven teachers and their classes from the San Diego area schools. Four areas of the language arts were separately-measured reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The results of the study seem to indicate that as pupils continue to receive instruction in these prescribed language arts approach methods, the experience approach enhances achievement in those variables measured in this study somewhat more than does the traditional method. The experience approach seems to facilitate the achievement of girls slightly more than it does that of boys. In the differences observed the level of confidence also improves with time in instruction. The number of significant differences appears to be comparable to the number appearing at the end of two years when students are exposed to this prescribed teaching methods, but there are substantially fewer comparisons significant at the one hundredth level of confidence. An effective method of instruction in the language arts was clearly the experience approach. It seems that the achievement may be enhanced in other subject matter areas, as was reflected in the superior performance of the lower socioeconomic groups on the Science-Social Studies and Arithmetic Concepts tests of the Stanford Achievement Test.

Hahn¹⁴ reported on a study similar to that of Kendrick. The results of the second year of study for children involved in i. t. a., language

¹³William M. Kendrick and Clayton L. Bennett, "A Comparative Study of Two First Grade Language Arts Program-Extended into Second Grade," The Reading Teacher, XX (May, 1967), 747-755.

¹⁴Harry T. Hahn, "Three Approaches to Beginning Reading Instruction-ITA, Language Experience, and Basic Readers-Extended to Second Grade," The Reading Teacher, XX No. 8 (May, 1967), 711-715.

experience, and basal readers and related language development programs. At the close of second grade the pattern of differences in performance among children in the three approaches which was noted in first grade continued to show. Students who were given ample time for purposeful writing, speaking, and listening together with many opportunities to read books of their own choice have demonstrated greater control over the basic skills than those boys and girls involved in the structured program which focused on skills daily. The basal reader children had many opportunities to read independently and write extensively, but the framework of the basal program did not permit the freedom and opportunity for personal commitment to learning found in the language experience approach.

The teacher served as a catalyst to initiate learning and as a ready resource to keep it going in the classroom where the instruction was focused on student's thoughts, ideas, and various methods for self-expression. The boys and girls had more opportunity to become independent and self-reliant workers in this type of environment. The students found a great deal of satisfaction in their own achievement, as well as in the achievement of others.

The students that used the initial teaching alphabet do not appear to have an advantage over those students using a comparable instructional approach with the basic readers approach nor do the i. t. a.-oriented students appear to be handicapped by their unique learning experience. The new alphabet provided i. t. a. teachers and students with a lively and exciting examination of a provocative method for reading and writing which both teachers

¹⁵Ibid.

and students found beneficial. Hahn feels that there is a constant need for spirited, research-oriented instruction which will challenge all of us to take a good hard look at practices and programs which are too often taken for granted.

The greatest problem in the use of i. t. a. is perhaps an administrative one. Some children take longer to master the simpler alphabet. It is hard to find materials and to encourage and sustain interest in teachers with such a few students over a longer period of time.

The purpose of the study by Stauffer and Hammond¹⁶ was to test the hypothesis that there was no significant difference between the effects of two methods of primary reading the language experience approach and the basal readers when extended through the second grade level. Seventeen areas were tested for significant differences between groups. The results favored the language arts approach in all areas except three. Both approaches were found effective for second grade reading instruction, but the language arts approach is the more effective of the two. Students have more success in writing communication skills and reading tasks in addition to the advantages indicated by the results of standardized tests in the language arts area approach.

IV. INDIVIDUALIZED READING APPROACH

The Individualized Reading Approach is to provide opportunities for each student to progress at his own rate of growth and to gain experiences in a variety of reading situations. This reading approach is based upon the

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Russell G. Stauffer and W. Dorsey Hammond, "The Effectiveness of Language Arts and Basic Reader Approaches to First Grade Reading Instruction-Extended into Second Grade," The Reading Teacher, XX (May, 1967), 740-746.

student's own desire to discover, explore, and react to stimuli in his environment. A student guided by his own motivation to learn and his reaction to these stimuli which he selects enables him to develop meanings which are essential to behavioral change. The principle of learning theory, which is basic to this reading approach, is that it recognizes that each individual learner is most genuinely motivated in terms of his own needs. If the individual is provided with appropriate environment, guidance, and materials he will tend to choose materials most suitable to his maturity, ability, and interests.

A teacher's major function in this approach is to provide a balance of reading materials, to evaluate growth, to teach reading skills, and to develop pupil interest and attitudes. The teacher fulfills these functions by helping students select materials, offering guidance during individual conferences, keeping records of pupil progress and offering individual and group encouragement during silent reading periods.

Students are engaged in many types of creative independent activities during the time when they are not engaged in reading or individual or group conference. Students evaluate their own growth through self-testing situations. Each student who is reading self-chosen materials should be given encouragement and opportunity to develop new interests and understanding of the range of reading materials available.

Teigland¹⁷ conducted a study comparing the effectiveness of a two-year

¹⁷Anna Elizabeth Teigland, "A Comparison of the Effectiveness of Two Approaches to Teaching Reading-The Individualized and the Basal Reading," Dissertation Abstracts, XXVII (March, 1967) 2754A.

program of individualized and basal reading in terms of vocabulary and comprehension growth and the development of positive attitudes. One hundred sixty-two kindergarten pupils were selected from three suburban schools with one hundred and thirty-four completing the experiment. There were no significant differences according to tests. The individualized groups read more books. The socio-economic level and reading achievement correlated significantly for students which used the basal reading groups. Girls scored higher than boys in both groups and developed more positive attitudes toward reading. Students of higher intelligence scored higher than those of lower intelligence.

V. LINGUISTIC APPROACH

The Linguistics Approach is concerned with introducing the alphabetic principle, phonemic regularities and the natural sentence structure. Before children learn to read, their speech patterns in oral language are developed which affect their achievement in a language arts program.

Linguists are not in agreement about the specifics of their field. There are certain general principles about which linguists are in agreement. Four major principles of linguistics having implications for the teaching of reading follow: Firstly, speech is the language; print is only the representation of the language, but as educated adults we too often behave as if the reverse is true. We are engulfed in print and seem to believe that the spoken word was the representation of print. Secondly, language is systematic; it is not haphazard or random and because it is structured language can be studied in a systematic fashion. The linguist usually approaches the language in terms of three levels of analysis: phonological,

morphological and syntactic. Thirdly, language is habitual and one develops skill in a language by operating within it, not by talking about it or by learning rules that supposedly codify it. Finally, the typical school-age child has already mastered the sounds and the basic sentence patterns of English.

Linguistic reading programs use pupil books, teacher guides, and work-books. There is no vocabulary control as is typical of basal readers, but there is provided what might be called a "phonemic control". The phonemic control gives a sentence such as "The cat can bat the pan."

Linguists emphasize vowels and hope to develop grapheme-phoneme associations for the simple vowels inductively through being exposed to consistent word patterns. The word attack skill places emphasis on spelling the words to be read. Students are expected to use spelling or to recognize the known graphonic unit in an unknown word and then to unlock new words through substitution.

Oral reading is used in an effort to bring to a conscious level a student's control over the suprasegmental phonemes--pitch, stress, and juncture. A conflict exists when the students are not using semantic context and try to arrive at proper pitch and stress levels without using the context of what they are reading.

The teacher guide does not give thorough directions and suggestions. Interpretive skills through discussion are practically nonexistent in the guide.¹⁸

¹⁸Robert L. Hillerich, "Linguistic Efforts in Reading," The National Elementary Principal, XLVIII (September, 1968), 36-43.

Reading is a complicated process more than mere word recognition. Reading is in no sense a passive process. Reading requires effort to get meaning from the printed page. Perceptual skills such as visual skills are required in reading that are not required in oral communication. Written material is a special type of linguistic performance; it cannot be considered just speech written down. Wardhaugh¹⁹ believes also that most of us can read and comprehend faster than we can listen and comprehend, but no matter what definition of reading is used certain basic linguistic principles must be recognized in such a definition.

The first basic linguistic principle is that a clear understanding of any kind of language use can be based only on discovering answers to the questions of what language is and how it works. The second principle encompasses the important distinction between competence and performance. Competence should be the concern in teaching because it is competence which allows one to produce and understand new sentences. Performance is but a record of those particular sentences that were produced along with all the imperfections that occurred in their production. Performance acts are used to investigate all competence. Thirdly, most, if not all, language behavior is rule-governed behavior and this fact must be taken into account if one is to seek to reinforce or change existing behavior.

The impact that linguistics will have on reading materials and instruction is unknown because experts do not agree on the linguistic facts about American English. More study and analysis of our language are needed before conclusive facts are known. Much research is being carried on at this time.

¹⁹ Ronald Wardhaugh, "Linguistics-reading dialogue," The Reading Teacher, XXI No. 3, (February, 1968), 432-441.

Recent research indicates that phonic systems by themselves, no matter how superior in quality, must be constantly supplemented by meaning-based materials and methods. Dawson²⁰ thinks that structural linguistics seems to have a great deal to contribute to the teaching of oral reading. Teachers who understand the structure of oral English have a better background that will enable them to teach students to read expressively and that should help to end the taking turn type of oral reading. English words have lost most of their inflections, and therefore convey details of meaning by arranging words in a certain order since English has about eight basic sentence patterns. Meaning is modified and made specific by the use of modifiers such as words, phrases, and clauses. Modifiers tend to lengthen sentences more and more as a person approaches maturity. Word clusters make up sentences which we can identify in two ways: pauses between word clusters, and varying intonation on the words within each cluster. Intonations are at four levels: the first level is a very soft and low pitched voice; the second level is used for most of the words; level three is higher in pitch and possibly louder in volume, and used to bring out the key word or words in each cluster; and at level four intonations are used to emphasize a word or words and a high-pitched and prominent voice is used. Teachers who understand the system of word clustering and intonations as the basis of meaning in English will not be satisfied with mere word calling and monotone-type oral reading. Teachers will know when a child really comprehends the situation and ideas involved in the selection when a student reading reflects his understanding by inflecting the voice properly in giving the correct intonation to the

²⁰Mildred A. Dawson, "Looking ahead in reading," The Reading Teacher, XXI No. 2 (November, 1967), 121-125.

words within the clusters. A student will stop to breathe where he would stop in speech (i.e., between clusters).

In investigation of the effect of using Basal Readers, Modified Linguistic Materials, and Linguistic Readers in a first grade class, found that the average achievement of the pupils did not differ significantly at the end of grade one. Sheldon, Nichols, and Lashinger²¹ extended the investigation through grade two to attempt to determine if differences not measurable in grade one occurred at the end of grade two in word study skills, word recognition, spelling and reading comprehension. The differences between boys and girls were also considered.

Analysis of test results at the end of the second year concluded that all three approaches were effective for reading instruction. Some significant differences were noted in some of the subskills or related skills of the total reading process, but none of the three approaches were demonstrated to be superior in all aspects of reading. Further investigation is needed in two areas. First, two of the approaches to teaching reading emphasized comprehension while the third, the linguistic method, did not; equal achievement in comprehension was observed. Secondly, two of the approaches provided the student with training in a variety of word recognition skills, while the linguistic method provided only one technique. However, all three groups achieved equally well when tested on word study skills and word recognition.

²¹William D. Sheldon, Nancy J. Nichols and Donald R. Lashinger, "Effect of First Grade Instruction Using Basal Readers, Modified Linguistic Materials, and Linguistic Readers--Extended into Second Grade," The Reading Teacher, XX (May, 1967), 720-725

The study by Schneyer²² compared the results of teaching by a linguistic approach and by a basal reading approach. At the end of second grade three differences were significant at the .01 level favoring the basal reader group in paragraph meaning, spelling, and word study skills. There were no differences for word meaning and language. At all ability levels the differences were not consistent.

The pupils in the linguistic approach at the end of first year received higher adjusted scores obtained from the writing sample which included writing mechanics, number of words spelled correctly, and total number of words written. This continued at the end of the second grade as pupils obtained higher mean scores on all of the writing measures. The differences were smaller and no longer significant.

In an extended three year study by Schneyer²³ his primary purpose was to compare at the end of third grade the reading and spelling achievement of pupils at three ability score levels who were taught by a linguistic approach and a basal reader approach. Neither of the two approaches to primary reading instruction proved to be more effective when the two treatments were considered as a whole; that is, without breakdown by ability score levels or sexes, and when performance on all of the criterion measures is considered. Significant differences were found on some of the subskills for reading or related areas as measured in this investigation. It was found that neither of the approaches demonstrated superiority in all, or even most, aspects of the reading process.

²²J. Wesley Schneyer, "Reading Achievement of First Grade Children Taught by a Linguistic Approach and a Basal Reader Approach--Extended into Second Grade," The Reading Teacher, XX No. 8 (May, 1967), 704-710

²³J. Wesley Schneyer, "Reading achievement of first grade children taught by a linguistic approach & a basal reader approach--extended into third grade," The Reading Teacher, XXII No. 4 (January, 1969), 315-319.

Pupils at the end of grade three in the linguistic approach achieved significantly superior performances in rate of oral reading and running words. Pupils in the basal reader group were significantly higher in word study skills on the Stanford subtest. No significant differences were found in the two groups on any of the remaining nine criterion measures for silent reading, oral reading, or creative writing.

At the end of third grade, girls performed significantly better in spelling. On four measures of the writing sample, running words, different words, spelling, and poly-syllabic words, the girls performed significantly better than boys. Boys did as well as girls on all other criterion measures.

The effects of three different reading programs on junior high school students were studied. Students were matched on the basis of chronological age, IQ, reading grade, years in school, and sex. The three programs were structured in the following manner: Group I-experience with an investigator, Group II-basal instruction with investigator, and Group III-basal instruction without investigator. Group I obtained significantly higher scores than Group II in word recognition, English usage, and on all three intelligence tests, and on scores of achievement and intelligence when compared with Group III. Group II obtained significantly higher scores on speed, word recognition, and performance than Group III.²⁴

A study by Kranke²⁵ was conducted to compare the relationship of phonic ability, irrespective of how it was acquired, and silent reading comprehension

²⁴ Anthony D'Annunzio, "An Investigation of the Effects of Three Different Reading Programs on Junior High School Students," Dissertation Abstracts, XXVI, No. 3 (March, 1965), 1473-1474.

²⁵ Louis Kranke, "A Study of the Relationship of Phonic Ability, Irrespective of How It was Acquired, and Silent Reading Comprehension of High School Students," Dissertation Abstracts, XXVI, No. 11 (April, 1965), 6446.

of high school students. Phonic ability was defined in terms of the ability to work out the pronunciation of an unfamiliar word with no clue other than letters and diacritical marks assigned to long and short vowels of these nonsense words. Three statistically significant relationships existed in the scores of the combined sample when intelligence was held constant; this was in phonic ability and word meaning, phonic ability and sentence meaning, and phonic ability and total reading. From this study it was concluded that phonic ability is essential but not sufficient for effective comprehension skills in silent reading comprehension.

VI PROGRAMMED INSTRUCTION

Programmed Instruction is based on the organization of skills to be learned into small learning units, which call for responses and yield correct choices for self-scoring.

A distinct type of programmed materials is the teaching machine where a student sits at the machine and responds to a series of programmed questions or problems. After each response, the correct answer is presented to him. On the basis of either right or wrong a new question or problem is introduced.²⁶

A study was undertaken to test the effects that self-directed reading materials have on improving children's ability to read, as reflected by their ability to carry out manipulative activities. The materials developed incorporated certain features of programmed instruction such as active learner participation, prompting, self-pacing, small steps, and immediate reinforcement. Pupils' real word of preception and manipulation were given important consideration in the developing of materials. The materials were developed which

²⁶Arthur I. Gates, "Teaching Machines in Perspective," The Elementary School Journal, LXII (October, 1961), 1-13.

enabled students to read written and illustrated procedural steps and perform manipulative tasks related to science, mathematics, art, social studies, and arts and crafts. Each activity in the programmed instruction was related to a particular concept being taught in grade five. Calder²⁷ assumed that interest could be increased if students were reading and receiving an immediate reward or re-enforcement. The importance of the materials to be read should be related to the students' immediate needs and interests. The programmed instruction was used to supplement a fundamental and developmental reading program. The activities selected were based on the assumption that students can be led to an interest in reading through the use of intrinsic motivational devices emphasizing their immediate needs and interests.

The results of this programmed instruction showed no significant difference between the groups in reading achievement of programmed instruction or a fundamental and developmental reading program. The investigator felt confident, on the basis of this exploratory study, that attitudes toward reading can be reinforced and that over a long period of time these attitudes would result in significant gains in reading achievement for slow learners.

That students who feel an immediate need and desire to read will do so without concern for difficulty of the words used was indicated in the results of this study. Pictures acted as clues and prompt students when they encounter difficulty with words. In many cases, students do not relate programmed instruction with learning to read or even reading. Students indicated that they read the instructional procedure because they were important and relevant to the task being performed. Improvement in work habits, self-

²⁷Clarence R. Calder, Jr., "Self-directed reading materials," The Reading Teacher, XXI No. 3 (Dec., 1967), 248-252.

motivation, self-confidence, reliability, and increased enthusiasm were noted by teachers.

This study indicated that there is a need for further research in the use of intrinsically motivating materials as a supplement to the basic fundamental or developmental reading program. Classrooms need to be equipped with work space and materials if programmed instruction is going to be used. It is important for students to have the opportunity to learn concepts in the various curriculum areas and to utilize reading for an immediate need and desire.

Calder, Jr.²⁸ suggests that these materials be tested for a period of one year to determine the effects on reading for a group of students at least two or more years below grade level. Teachers' comments on an evaluation relating to increased interest in reading and school was the basis for the recommendation for further study.

Meyer²⁹ contends that programmed learning has generally failed to do what the optimists promised: to prepare students for the mastery of appropriate skills and tasks as well as teach critical and deductive reasoning. This is because programmed learning cannot provide the kinds of individual and personal instruction it's supposed to.

Programmed learning was promoted before adequate programs had been designed. Lack of carefully arranged sequences, identifiable ranges of objectives, and personally structured rewards plagues the development of programs. Standardization of instruction and commonality in learning has

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹James A. Meyer, "Programed Learning: Education's Turkey?" The American School Board Journal, CLVI (October, 1968), 26-27.

been sacrificed for instructional diversity and individualized learning.

Machines are educationally neutral and can only channel information and won't solve the learner's problems and actually may increase the frustrations of the learner. The new technology may increase the student's load with still more tasks within his limited time, energy, and interest. Children with learning disabilities have often met with added problems due to a reading level beyond their comprehension, idea content outside their experiences, and material that moves too quickly to be understood. Some students complain that is is a dull way to learn.

In spite of all the drawbacks, programmed learning with new and better programs are being manufactured every day. Meyers says that programmed learning won't surpass conventional teaching methods or be effective with all students, but it can effectively complement the regular curriculum.

A delight to the imagination is the vision of interesting sequential, and meaningful experiences for youth through the program approach method. Reassessment of its current status and redesigning of future programs should improve the programmed learning quality. The theory of a highly individualized approach quality. The theory of a highly individualized approach to learning is advancement in the learning situation.

Williams³⁰ conducted a study to determine the placement and evaluation of a developmental reading program in an eighth grade class. Utilizing the adopted reader, a basal reading program was compared with a developmental reading program which used SRA Reading Laboratories, pacing, machines,

³⁰ Fred Stewart Williams, "A Study to Determine the Placement and Evaluation of A Developmental Reading Program in the Eighth Grade of the LaMarque, Texas, Junior High School," Dissertation Abstracts, XXVI, No. 3 (May, 1964), 1439-1440.

controlled readers, and the state adopted basal reader. During the first semester of each year the developmental program was used by half of the students and the basal program by the other half. This procedure was reversed at the beginning of the second semester. The following conclusion was indicated: the developmental reading program may be interchanged by semesters without significantly affecting achievement, and students at lower levels of reading proficiency derived more benefits from the developmental program of higher reading proficiency. Certain teachers may have aptitudes which lend themselves to increased efficiency in the teaching of the developmental reading program.

A study designed by Friedman³¹ to test the effectiveness of machine instruction in the teaching of spelling to second and third grade children was conducted. Programmed lessons using tape recorders for presentation were developed by the investigator and the experimental group at each grade level received instruction during the year long period. Spelling instruction using the traditional lessons was received by the control group. No significant differences were found between the two groups. An interesting effect of treatment at different grade levels was noted. At the second grade level the traditional method produced significantly superior performance by the subjects while the reverse of this was found in the performance of third grade subjects.

The effectiveness of fourteen proofreading lessons on the spelling achievement of students was conducted by Personke and Knight.³² Students in

³¹Myles I. Friedman, "The Effectiveness of Machine Instruction in the Second and Third Grade Spelling," The Journal of Educational Research, LX No. 8 (April, 1967), 366-369.

³²Carl Personke and Lester Knight, "Proofreading and Spelling: A Report and a Program," Elementary English No. 7 (November, 1967), 768-774.

four sixth grade classrooms were assigned to experimental or control groups and the series of proofreading lessons were administered to the experimental classes over a three week period. The percentage of spelling errors on a creative writing sample taken at the conclusion of the lessons was the measure used to determine spelling accuracy. The results indicated significant differences favoring the total experimental group when compared with the total control group. No differences were noted for girls in either group. Boys in the experimental group made significantly fewer spelling errors than boys in the control classes. Boys might benefit more from instruction in proofreading skills while the evidence for girls is not conclusive.

A study to examine whether different methods and media used in teaching reading would give rise to different types of spelling errors was reported by Peters.³³ The study was divided into two portions. The first portion dealt with eight year old children's spelling performance who were taught by a rigorous phonic method or by an equally rigorous look-and-say method. Sex, age, socio-economic level, and intelligence of the groups were matched. No significant differences appeared in total spelling errors by the two groups as measured by a diagnostic dictation test developed by the investigator, and a standardized spelling test. An examination of types of errors indicated the group receiving the phonic reading method made significantly more errors involving reasonable phonetic substitutions while the look-and-say group made significantly more unclassified errors.

³³Margaret L. Peters, "The Influence of Reading Methods on Spelling," The British Journal of Educational Psychology, XXXVII (Feb., 1967), 47-53.

The second portion of the study examined types of spelling errors made by students using the look-and-say or phonic approaches to reading instruction with the types of spelling errors made by i. t. a. trained children. No significant differences were noted in total number of errors, but different types of errors were exhibited by the two groups.

Students taught by the look-and-say method used visual techniques best in spelling and phonic approach students do best in a phonic approach. I. t. a. taught students seem to be more systematic in their approach to spelling and seem to have a skeletal structure from which traditional orthography spellings can be readily accepted.

Plattor and Woestehoff³⁴ conducted a study to examine the relationship between reading manuscript and cursive writing. A substantial relationship between student's abilities to read manuscript writing and their abilities to read cursive writing was found. No relationship was found between the ability to read cursive writing and the ability to write in cursive style.

In two articles by Brown^{35,36} dealing with speech and listening in language arts textbooks, the author examined the kind and quality of speech

³⁴Emma R. Plattor, and Ellsworth S. Woestehoff, "The Relationship Between Reading Manuscript and Cursive Writing," Elementary English, No. 1 (January, 1967), 50-52.

³⁵Kenneth L. Brown, "Speech and Listening in Language Arts Textbooks: Part I," Elementary English, No. 4 (April, 1967), 336-341

³⁶_____. "Speech and Listening in Language Arts Textbooks: Part II," Elementary English, No. 5 (May, 1967), 461-465.

and listening content. He noted that authors and publishers of the textbooks expressed a need for emphasis upon speech and listening, yet the greatest number of lessons and space was devoted to content and writing. Listening was not emphasized as a distinct area for direct instruction. Improvement in listening was not frequently related to improvement in speaking.

What measurable differences exist between oral and written grammatical structures in the language of children in grades three, five, and seven? How do these grammatical structures differ in respect to differences in grade level? How do these grammatical structures differ in respect to sex of the subjects? These three questions were investigated by showing two short films and both oral and written responses were elicited. It was found in examining the differences between oral and written discourse that there was greater significance in oral than in written for grade three; written units were longer in grade five and seven, but not significantly longer. Differences by grade showed the length increased significantly with advance in grade level, but length did not differ significantly by sex. A number of possible constructions not used by students and the restrictions of the oral and writing patterns used give an indication of the type of teaching which might be done to increase the students' flexibility in expressing ideas. ³⁷

Basic language patterns were found to be well established by the time students start to school. A study was made to determine changes in sentence patterns, lengths, and structures, and the ability to elaborate and expand sentences.

³⁷ Roy C. O'Connell, William J. Griffin, and Raymond C. Norris, "A Transformation Analysis of Oral and Written Grammatical Structures in the Language of Children in Grade Three, Five, and Seven," The Journal of Educational Research, LXI No. 1 (September, 1967), 35-39.

Taped samples of pre-school speech was taken. Four years later each subject made two tapes, one in conversation with a peer and the other with the examiner. The findings showed that certain aspects of language appeared to be a function of age such as a reduced use of short utterances, flexibility in handling fixed slots and movables, increased use of compound sentences, increased ability to expand and elaborate, and increased use of non-structured elements in oral language. Writing was more characteristic of their early speech in terms of flexibility than of their current speech.³⁸

Composition is an important and integral part of the educational process. Many of the students are unable to write good compositions. Students need to write to learn how to improve in writing. Goals should be provided for the students so that it might be possible to evaluate one's written product effectively and put into action measures to improve one's writing. Pupils need to be shown how to vary their sentences, to be concise and to use imagination.

Students should study certain literary selections for particular writing techniques used by the writer to achieve a particular effect. Students should not be expected to analyze deeply the literature, but to understand why it is excellent literature. Students should be given opportunities to apply the technique of the excellent literary writer in their own compositions, orally or in writing. Individual instruction and practice may be provided as the needs indicates.

Teachers must provide encouragement in writing compositions. Papers returned with red circles and marks will not encourage a student, but it may make the student revert to words that he can spell and short sentences in

³⁸ Kizpah Jones Welch, "A Descriptive Study of the Language of a Selected Group of Young Children at the Beginning and End of the Four-Year Interval," Dissertation Abstracts, XXVII (May, 1967), 3766A.

an effort to avoid frustration. As a result he will regress in writing compositions. Teachers should comment on the good things, such as original ideas, fresh invention, or the vivid, individual way of saying something. Freedom to express himself will result in personal growth for the student.³⁹

VI. SUMMARY OF LITERATURE REVIEW

The different approaches or methods to reading reviewed were Basal Reading Approach, i.t.a., Linguistic Approach, Language-Experience Approach, Individualized Reading Approach and Programmed Instruction. No one reading approach was consistently significantly better than another approach. Of the materials which were used with the different approach, no one material was shown to be superior. The deciding factor of whether a particular method or material was successful in the classroom was the teacher's ability to motivate the students and to meet the basic needs and interests of the students.

³⁹Henry T. Fillmer, "Teaching Composition Through Literature," Elementary English, XIV No. 6 (October, 1968), 736-739.

PHILOSOPHY OF THE LANGUAGE ARTS PROGRAM

The Language Arts Committee recognized that the desired outcomes of classroom experiences are achieved to the extent that the learner and the learning environment are wisely assessed and planned as part of the teaching procedure. Factors that influence learning and the characteristics that are desirable for learning situations as they exist in classrooms were felt important. Learning is usually defined as the modification of behavior as a function of practice in motor, ideational, or affective responses.⁴⁰

The concept of learning is defined as that behavior which results from the child's experience and which may be desirable or undesirable learning. The school is concerned with helping the child develop desirable patterns of behavior in accord with his own individual needs and the demands of society; it is important that the child's relationships with other children and with adults contribute to stable emotions and cooperative attitudes. Emotional stability, personality, and social attitudes have been regarded by many persons as of little importance in the learning experiences of children. Learning involves feelings as well as ideas and physical behavior; the teacher must be concerned with all aspects of learning.⁴¹ The changes which may occur in the learner as a result of mental processes may be in the form of ideas, attitudes, physical activities, or combinations of all of these. It is difficult in any learning situation to separate the outcomes into attitudes, ideas, or skills. In any class a student may not only learn

⁴⁰Louis Thrope, Child Psychology and Development (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1955), 547.

⁴¹Albert H. Shuster and Milton E. Ploghoft, The Emerging Elementary Curriculum Methods and Procedures (Charles E. Merrill Books, Inc., Columbus, Ohio, 1963), 63.

facts in the subject matter, but learn attitudes about other children, the value of subject-matter, and about the teacher.

Factors which affect learning are of definite interest when the concept of learning is being considered. The following factors have been compiled by the findings of psychologists and classroom teachers: "Basic needs" of children, "readiness" are important factors to the learning process; the "maturation" and "intelligence" of the child are still other concerns in the child's learning performance; and "previous experiences" and "purposes" of the learner are thought to have considerable effects upon the learning process.

Educators, psychologists and sociologists identify the basic needs as physical well being, a satisfactory home life, being accepted by others in one's peer group, to experience success, and having a feeling of self-worth. The failure of a child to satisfy basic needs in one area may have harmful effects made by the child to satisfy needs in other areas.

A recently revised concept in education is readiness. Readiness was first regarded as a state of mental receptiveness, but more recently it is looked upon as a composite of several factors such as social readiness, emotional readiness, and physical readiness. Readiness may be regarded as a period during which the conditions affecting learning are favorable for effective performance by the child. Also, lack of opportunity to learn that which is expected of the child at the appropriate time may have an unfavorable effect upon later learnings of the child in specific areas. In a classroom where forcing learning is the rule, there is a low rate of retention and utilization of facts and skills by the children if a child lacks maturity for a specific learning situation, there is doubt whether the learning

experience will profitably be incorporated into the child's behavior pattern. Readiness for any learning task, whether physical, social, or mental nature, involves the state of physical, social, emotional and mental maturity of the individual.⁴²

Intelligence has been looked upon by some as a composite of many mental factors. Others look at intelligence as that which is observable in the adaptive behavior of a person. It has also been regarded as a mental factor that "manages the learning processes". It has been suggested that intelligence be regarded as "the ability to solve problems of all kinds".⁴³ Many definitions of intelligence have in them a common element in that they regard intelligence as the ability to solve problems in the academic and social areas.

Observation of actual pupil performance and the results of group and individual intelligence tests for clues and information as to the child's mental capacities should be guidelines upon which the teacher should rely. The teacher can plan educational activities appropriate to the child's capacity. Mental maturity in terms of mental age is the important element in readiness for certain learning tasks rather than intelligence quotient. In judging a child's intelligence a teacher should take into consideration a child's oral language, listening comprehension, written expression as well as reading performance and influences of the home.

Children have many and varied experiences, but it is a question of the types of experiences in which the children are involved which leads to their particular behavior. Teachers are concerned with the nature of the previous

⁴²Gertrude Hildreth, Readiness for School Beginners (New York: World Book Company, 1950), 6.

⁴³L. S. Bischof, Intelligence, Statistical Concepts of Its Nature (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1954), 1.

experiences and the effect it has on the child's readiness to engage in certain school activities. Schools cannot control pre-school activities and environment of children. The teacher must recognize influences of experiences and where readiness appears to be lacking make every effort to enrich the school program with first-hand experiences. Trips to the bank, postoffice, and other places will provide the child with some meaningful concepts which will enable the child to enter into the abstract learning situations with greater confidence and understanding.

Purpose has been defined as being the driving force behind any type of behavior. Others have defined purpose as being synonymous with motive. Many times purpose is regarded as being that part of a specific behavior pattern which provided the impetus of movement or action toward attainment of a goal. Purpose as a factor in learning in the school setting may be realized if it is accepted that children will have an increased interest toward, and exert more energy in an activity or problem which is important to them.⁴⁴

Research⁴⁵ has provided teachers with much data in support of their important role in providing interest, purpose, and motivation in the learning tasks for children. The amount of effort and the persistence with which an individual engages in a task are definitely related to the purpose, interest and motivation. How much a student retains or remembers is directly related to the meaning and purpose which the student associates with the learning task. It is therefore necessary to be sure that meaning and purpose are parts of the learning situation. Extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation

⁴⁴ Edward William Dolch, Methods in Reading (Champaign, Ill: The Garrard Press, 1955), 28-42.

⁴⁵ A.T. Jersild and R.J. Tasch, Children's Interests and What They Suggest for Education (New York: Columbia University, Bureau of Pub., Teacher's College 1949), 72.

are basic forms of motivation. Intrinsic motivation leads to better and more effective learning. Group activities can influence motivation of individuals if the child accepts the group's goal. It is also recognized that motivation should be geared to the individual child when he is ready and able to profit from certain educational experiences. Success is another part of motivation. When it seems that success is impossible, the child is apt to become emotionally involved and retreat from the situation. Shuster and Ploghoft⁴⁶ suggest that teachers will definitely want to use various approaches to motivate pupils in terms of such individual factors as levels of aspiration, areas of interest, abilities and aptitudes, and emotional and temperamental characteristics. Motivation is a major concern of teachers. Intrinsic motivation is the most desirable; it should foster desirable social attitudes and should be based upon positive or success aspects of the task. Individual problems of children should be recognized.

Teaching methods now require the use of many materials. Knowledge of effective and efficient use of materials is essential. The language arts provide the vehicles for the passing of information from person to person, from generation to generation, and from era to era. Human endeavor escapes no fields which do not depend upon the language arts for the transmission of ideas and information. Sciences, arts philosophy, and the daily affairs of all societies must look to the language arts for the means of common understanding and communication.

⁴⁶ Albert H. Shuster and Milton E. Ploghoft, The Emerging Elementary Curriculum Methods and Procedures (Columbus, Ohio, Charles E. Merrill Books, Incorporated, 1963), 81

Talking, listening, reading, and writing comprise the major components of the language arts curriculum. Oral language had its beginning long before the time of recorded history as a means for the expression of thought and information.

It is necessary for citizens in a democracy to have proficiency in the use of the language arts skills and the recognition of the worth of the individual. The privilege of voting gives the schools the responsibilities not only to provide for the general literacy, but they must promote the most efficient use of the language arts to enable individuals to discriminate in their reading, write with clarity, and communicate effectively with their fellow citizens and people of other nations.

Teachers of language arts can no longer be satisfied with providing only drill in skills since the language arts are regarded as avenues by which the citizen in a democracy informs himself and to express his views. This area is a vital part of language learning.

Earning a livelihood, managing routine business affairs, and establishing social contacts with others will be difficult if a person does not have proficiency in the language arts area. It places a great responsibility on the classroom teachers and school administrations to plan, implement, and evaluate carefully and completely the language arts program at all levels.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The School curriculum at all levels must emphasize the acquisition of the ability to read the multi-varied materials confronting the learner today in our society. A brief segment of the primary school curriculum focuses on reading as such in order to help students make the transition from spoken to

written language. Teachers have assumed that if a particular skill is taught in one situation, it can be applied by the students in all other situations. Psychological research shows that the greater the degree of similarity between two tasks, the greater the amount of positive transfer obtained.⁴⁷ In order that students will be able to use language arts skills effectively, teachers will need to plan together in order to permit the student to engage in a broad spectrum of activities. A communication program should permeate the total school curriculum. All instructional materials must be carefully scrutinized so that students will be able to have the power to evaluate the materials. Skills and attitudes will change in relation to the demands of the teacher, and the student, and the nature of the materials.

Teachers must work toward matching the materials of instruction to the ability of each student. Teachers must work also toward matching the content of the materials of instruction to the ego-needs, the community needs, the work-needs, and the interest of the students. Teachers must work toward a well-stocked library and communications center staffed by a child and life-oriented librarian.

As teachers we need to read and interpret some of the present research directed toward how students learn so that we can differentiate instruction with regard for the methods which will benefit each student the most. Planning must encompass a wide number of approaches utilizing those procedures and materials most suitable for particular students.

⁴⁷Henry C. Ellis, The Transfer of Learning (New York: Macmillan Co, 1965), 16.

The nature of instruction and of the materials used in instruction must be toward developing citizens who respect themselves and those about them. The students need experiences in reading varied and often controversial materials and should be unwilling to accept any set of principles on face value. Students must become citizens who after understanding the message of an author, raise questions, disagree, agree, view the message within the framework of what they know of the present and what they may expect of the future.

Emphasis should be placed on prevention rather than remediation. Help should begin for the students when his need is first noted whether in kindergarten, first grade or later. A student who cannot read material on his grade level should be given tasks so that he can achieve some small measure of success in his classroom. The student should work on needed skills, be provided with easy-to-read books and work on vocabulary. Differentiated assignments should be given such as study pictures, charts, graphs, or small portions of the text with a definite purpose or purposes in mind.

In-service work and group planning by teachers are needed to improve the language arts curriculum. A representative committee needs to work in the summer, or in released time from a teacher's day, or after school, or Saturday or a combination of any of these with compensation. Visitation of schools with outstanding language arts curricula or attending conferences of innovations would be beneficial. The in-service work should be the planning and evaluating of materials for the language arts curriculum and how they can be integrated with other content areas such as social studies, science, and mathematics. This will be difficult to achieve because a program across a network of disciplines involves careful planning and expertise of numerous

people. Consultants should be used to help teachers to study the different types of administrative ways of implementing a language arts program. They should be used to help teachers to describe an instructional program which can be solved through a series of operations such as first focusing on an important skill and then helping teachers develop informal tools to evaluate the learner's ability to grasp the skill, and a revision of the tool used is not doing the job effectively and efficiently. In-service programs need to stress actual involvement by giving teachers a chance to manipulate materials, see and take part in demonstrations, and have time to try out ideas. In-service work will be needed to improve and integrate the language arts program to fulfill the philosophy of the teachers in our district.

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A CURRICULUM STUDY OF THE LANGUAGE ARTS AREA
KINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE TWELVE

for

WAMEGO USD #320

MABEL FAYE GOEHRING

B. S. Kansas State University, 1963

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ABSTRACT

A curriculum study of the Language Arts Area for Kindergarten through Grade Twelve in the Wamego USD #320 was made during the school year 1967-68 as the Wamego High School was being evaluated for reaccreditation by the North Central Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges and the district had been organized in the fall of 1966. The Kansas State Department of Public Instruction assisted and all the teachers participated actively in some phase of the curriculum study. The major value of this study was that the teachers' involvement resulted in their awareness of the need for more correlation between the subjects of the language arts areas and beginning correlation of materials in the language arts area, and in the teachers' own professional growth. The Language Arts Area included the subject content area of reading, the teaching of the reading skills, and the communication areas such as listening, speaking, writing, spelling, and handwriting.

The different approaches or methods to reading reviewed were Basal Reading Approach, i.t.a., Linguistic Approach, Language-Experience Approach, Individualized Reading Approach, and Programmed Instruction. No one reading approach was significantly better than another approach. Of the materials which were used with the different approach, no one material was shown to be superior. The deciding factor of whether a particular method or material was successful in the classroom was the teacher's ability to motivate the students and to meet the basic needs and interests of the students.

It is recommended that In-Service Workshops be organized that would

give teachers the opportunity and assistance in examining instructional methods and materials, and to read and interpret research. Guidance could be provided in matching the instructional methods and materials to the ability, needs, and interests of each student so that each student acquires the skill to read and critically interpret the multi-varied materials found in today's world.