Methods for the improvement of reading skills in the mentally retarded

M. Julian Kleekamp

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METHODS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT
OF READING SKILLS IN THE
MENTALLY RETARDED

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by
Sister M. Julian Kleekamp, C.PP.S.

A RESEARCH PAPER
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Today, perhaps more than ever before, much attention is being given to educational change and planning, to the quality of education in the nation. One of the first subject areas to be upgraded is reading.

The ability to read is an important element in life in every corner of the world. The illiterate does not experience individual and social life fully. The struggle against illiteracy is one of the most gigantic and demanding tasks of our present generation. And this multifaceted task concerns all of us.

In the current campaigns being waged in the United States to assure the "right to read," particular attention is being given in many schools, to various kinds of disadvantaged learners, including the mentally retarded. However, to assume that all children who are failing to achieve at grade level or within the normal range can, by special effort or a change in the reading program be brought up to a level predicted on the basis of chronological age is
unrealistic. The thrust of the right to read effort was, as originally conceived, toward seeing that each individual achieves to the limits of his capacity. ¹

This is where the mentally handicapped are especially concerned. The retardate may never reach the grade level to which his chronological age corresponds, but if the teacher can bring him as far as his ability allows him, she has done an excellent work.

There are priorities established for the accomplishment of the "right to read" goal. To be able to read, the child must bring to the reading situation several competencies which will enable him to give meaning to the printed words. He must have an adequate speaking vocabulary and oral language structure. He must have the ability to comprehend conversation and to use oral language appropriately to the level on which he wishes to read. ² It can be seen, therefore, that reading is a complex procedure.

The late Ruth Strang stated that:

Certain underlying mental abilities may facilitate or inhibit a child's reading development. If the functioning of these abilities can be improved, it may be possible to raise the child's level of reading achievement. ³

Statement of the Problem

The task of the reading teacher is very challenging, especially when working with the mentally retarded. The purpose of this paper is to describe certain reading methods that can be used in teaching the mentally retarded so that they can achieve to the limits of their capacity. These methods and skills are the same as those taught to normal children, but taught and retaught in different ways. In other words, the mentally retarded must be over-taught. The teacher must be careful not to measure global reading progress only but rather to identify specifically what a reader has or has not learned, whether he is learning at a rate commensurate with ability, and what kinds of reteaching may be necessary.

We must also work much harder at helping youngsters establish their own purposes for wanting to read. Perhaps one of the greatest motivations for the slow learner is experiencing the enjoyment that can be realized from the reading process. To know this enjoyment the reader must often have the opportunity to choose what he wishes to read.

Significance

It must be stressed that the total reading act encompasses more than the decoding although, admittedly the reading process must begin here. Reading is only one form
of language processing and while it is certainly a most vital one, the teacher needs to understand that it is not the only way in which the human transaction takes place and information is transmitted. This point is made here because content area teachers often insist a pupil cannot learn because he cannot read the material. The terms "learning" and "reading" are not synonymous, nor does a cause-effect relationship necessarily exist between them. It is equally important for the teacher to realize that reading can and should be taught as part of the language-communication cluster in every subject area. In this way the teaching of reading rather than being an esoteric and "magical" affair reserved for the reading period becomes a matter of communication inseparable from each and every teaching situation.4

Summary

Not all children progress at the same rate. Even among pupils of adequate ability, but especially among the mentally handicapped, some meet problems that delay or block learning. The effective developmental reading program is thus built on a foundation of early diagnosis of inadequacies, careful evaluation of needs and abilities and the utilization of professionally designed methods and materials.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Readiness for the Learning of Reading

Education is a field in which no one has all the answers. This is even more true for a relatively new branch of that field, the education of the mentally retarded.¹

The language development of a child during his early school years is of the utmost importance to his entire life. If communication is easy for him, he tends to learn easily and to enjoy school. The child whose mind is retarded in its development will, of necessity, be retarded also in speech. He comes to school using a small vocabulary and immature speech patterns. His usage may be poor and his articulation infantile. His problem is not so much a remedial one as it is one of development. Contact with other children who speak better than he and the good example of the teacher are his best sources of help. The child gains nothing from attempts to force him. He can develop

only as rapidly as nature has made it possible for him to progress.

Ruth Strickland has pointed out that teachers can learn three things about children if they listen to their speech. First, the quality of a child's language reflects the language of his home and neighborhood. Second, the vocabulary a child uses tells something about the breadth of his experiences, real and vicarious, and the extent to which he has talked them over with adults and older children. The quality of his language—whether it is standard or non-standard—reveals nothing about his I.Q. Third, how he uses language tells about his self-concept; whether he is confident and outgoing or timid and repressed.²

Again according to Strickland the mentally retarded child will learn largely through firsthand experiences. He is incapable of much, if any vicarious learning. Firsthand experiences with things and people will gradually build vocabulary if the words that go with the experiences are used in many ways, over and over. Returning from firsthand experiences to study the same thing in picture often helps to reinforce the learning. He will learn in just the same ways as normal children, but he will reach each stage

at a later age, and will remain in each stage longer than will normal children. Encouragement and sympathetic interest will spur him on, while efforts to force him will only add to his problem through undermining his faith in his ability to learn. 3

Besides understanding of language the major factors contributing to reading success are sufficient mental age, background of experience, social and emotional development and maturation in the areas directly related to word recognition. No one particular factor can be said to be the contributing factor toward reading success or failure. The factors enumerated are interdependent and all encompassing in their influence.

Larrick states that from birth a child is growing physically, emotionally, socially and mentally and as he grows he is learning. 4 With the acquisition of physical skill, a child is learning to communicate with others.

In the home, when a child observes actions like combing hair, or tying shoe strings, he can imitate these actions. The actual process of reading cannot be imitated. Almy states that: an environment that provides the child with many opportunities for varied sensory and motor

experiences is essential. So, too, is the presence of people who read and write and who share these activities with children.  

Ward interprets reading as the "ability of a child to draw from ideas and experiences . . . his and those of others . . . which have been put into written or printed form and to reproduce these in ways which satisfy the listener that he comprehends and can utilize those ideas.  

Administrative Approaches

There is no single superior method or approach to the teaching of reading that meets the needs of all children. What is beneficial for one child may not be effective for another. The Harvard Report on Reading in Elementary School makes the recommendation that:

No single method of instruction in beginning reading be advocated but that a variety of approaches be utilized and that these be adjusted to the competencies and needs of individual children and that research studies be initiated to determine the interrelationship of personality, socio-economic backgrounds, ability, and the various approaches to teaching reading particularly at the initial stages of reading instruction.  


Individualized Reading

The past ten years have seen more and more mention of individualized reading in the professional literature. A review of the articles on individualized reading makes it difficult to define what is meant by the term. There appear to be many personal ideas concerning the definition of individualized reading. Every writer seems to have his own concept of what the term embodies. L. C. Hunt states that:

Individualized reading is a program organized to give particular attention to the needs and interest of each individual student.\(^8\)

However, the common elements from these articles have been extracted for presentation here.

The basic principle of individualization is that all children differ as to level of development and rate of learning. To require all children to read from the same book and to subject them to the same exercises violates these differences. Instead of using the basal reader as the primary tool, a trade book is designed for the general public and is written primarily for individual reading. It does not constitute a basal text. Proponents argue that basal readers are dull and deadening, whereas trade books are interesting. These books are found in abundance and any child can find something he is interested in reading.

\(^8\)Reading and Inquiry, International Reading Association Conference Proceedings (Newark, Delaware, 1965), p. 146.
The second principle of individualized reading is the principle of seeking. All humans are curious. This causes them to continually search their environment. In addition, each human has certain needs and these searches of the environment are an attempt to satisfy these needs. Therefore, the teacher using the individualized reading approach sees to it that the environment is saturated with a wide variety of attractive and interesting books at varying levels of difficulty and covering a wide range of topics. The child, in his seeking activities will explore this environment which contains books.

This seeking activity leads to the third principle, that of self-selection. In his seeking activities the child will find a book which he feels satisfies a need or arouses his curiosity. He will begin to read this book. Although the teacher may, on request, guide the child in making a selection, she never interferes with his selection even though she may feel that the book is wrong for this particular child.

The fourth principle is that of pacing. Under what the individualized reading proponents call the "look, step" method of the basal reader, it is the teacher who determines how fast the class will go. Under individualized reading the child sets his own rate of reading and, therefore, is never pushed ahead as children under the basal approach often are.
As children read their individual books, the teacher serves as a guide and helper. Through this guiding and helping activity, she identifies needs of individuals and organizes small group practice for children needing the same skill development. She sets up individual conferences and prepares practice sentences for individual pupils. The teacher is expected to have individual conferences with each child at least once a week to check on his progress, his needs, and his plans for future reading.  

The Nongraded School

Another trend which seems to be gaining momentum in the American schools is that of the nongraded school. This approach represents an attempt to make the school fit the child, rather than changing the child to fit the school. Current writers define the nongraded unit as a "pattern of organization designed to insure full recognition of individual differences in the instructural setting by the elimination of arbitrary grade classifications and grade expectations."  

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Or, to illuminate another aspect of this scheme, the nongraded primary is an organizational unit "that permits continuous educational progress for all by providing individual children opportunity to work at their own rates of speed without fear of failure."\(^{11}\)

There are some educators who believe breathing life into the theory of the nongraded primary is more difficult than one would initially assume. Examinations of various nongraded programs and visits to nongraded schools force some educators to conclude that much of what is labeled nongraded is in truth simply another form of grading. In these schools, children are grouped by ability, by reading age, by general academic progress, by interest, or by any one of a number of variables.

Contrasted with such grouping, the true nongraded primary takes all kindergarten, first, second, and third graders and randomly assigns them to primary teachers. With such a procedure, the typical nongraded unit of children will have within it equal numbers of five-, six-, seven-, and eight-year olds. The child remains in this primary unit as long as he needs. Once he is capable of doing the work required of a primary child, he moves into the upper grade unit.

Such a move generally takes four years. It may take five or more, or it may take as little as two or three, based on the needs and abilities of the individual. Clearly, the mentally retarded child will take longer than the average four years.

The nongraded primary offers an opportunity for teachers to make use of their own special abilities. One teacher might be particularly skillful in developing the auditory and visual readiness of reluctant readers, while another might be interested in oral reading and a third enjoys development of comprehension skills. The child is assigned to a homeroom teacher for much of his instruction, but he moves from teacher to teacher for specialized assistance. So far as we know there are more benefits than disadvantages for the child who associates with several bright interested adults.\footnote{Ramon Ross, "Reading Instruction in the Ungraded Primary," Reading and Inquiry, Proceedings of the Annual Convention of International Reading Association (Newark, Delaware, 1965), 6, p. 123.}

The proponents of the nongraded primary claim a number of advantages for their approach to the teaching of reading. First they claim that the nongraded primary will provide a program which will better meet the needs of each child since it breaks the large grade steps into from twenty-eight to fifty smaller levels of achievement. Secondly,
these levels of achievement permit each child to progress at his own rate of speed. It is claimed, thirdly, that this program permits more opportunities for establishing teacher-learner situations which would contribute to better social and emotional adjustment of the child. The implication is that pressures and frustrations are greatly reduced. Fourthly, the nongraded primary prevents many of the problems resulting from a child needing to repeat a grade. The child moves along continuously at his own rate. Some children become reading disability cases because they have a maturational lag and do not progress too well in the first two school years. However, given the chance, they usually catch up in their third year—and without the stigma of having failed a grade.13

Individual instructions and improved mental health of students are worthy goals. The ungraded primary offers assistance in both of these areas. However, reading instruction may pose an even greater problem for the teacher of the nongraded cycle than for the regular classroom teacher because of the increased range of abilities present in a nongraded classroom. The teacher needs help in providing quality reading instruction. Adequate diagnostic techniques, pupil teams, learning kits, a wealth of good books, parent support

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and assistance, and a tough spirit are needed. With them, it may be that the nongraded primary can make the first years successful ones for larger numbers of children and a wider variety of them.

**Linguistics**

For children to comprehend what they read, they must be able to understand the written language structures by which ideas, information and concepts are conveyed. Although children may be fluent in their use of oral language and may have acquired control over the basic sentence patterns of the English language by the time they enter school, it does not follow that this fluency will automatically transfer to written language structures. Furthermore, although a child may have acquired the basic patterns of the language by the time he enters school, it must be remembered that the task of manipulating more and more complex structures still lies before him.\(^\text{14}\)

For the last thirty years or more, linguistic scholars have been toying with the idea of applying the knowledge they have acquired on the development and characteristics of our spoken language to the problems of reading that language. One or two linguistic scholars have tried to assemble some

of the regular characteristics of the spoken language into printed form which might serve as practice materials for children starting to read the language.\textsuperscript{15}

Linguistics! What is it? The analysis of the speech-sounds of a language so as to develop a systematic, scientific description of that language is known as linguistics.\textsuperscript{16} The science of linguistics is in its infancy in that the identification and structuring process is still in a developmental stage. Therefore that which the writer of this paper presents here is what some—perhaps a majority, but not all—linguists believe.

The linguists believe that our language is made up of phonemes. A phoneme is a unit of sound in spoken language. These phonemes are expressed in writing by graphemes. A grapheme is one or more letters of the alphabet representing a single sound. Combinations of graphemes or phonemes which transmit meaning are called morphemes. The morpheme may or may not be a word. The key to a morpheme is that it conveys meaning, such as the s in cats. Although there is some disagreement among linguists as to the number of phonemes in the English language, they generally place the number somewhere in the forties, with forty-four being close to the central tendency. A phoneme may be represented


\textsuperscript{16} Kaluger and Kolson, Reading and Learning Disabilities, p. 364.
by one or more graphemes. Likewise, each grapheme may signify one or more phonemes. The symbol–sound relationship in English is not always predictable.

The linguists have divided word symbols into predictable sounds and unpredictable sounds, according to their spelling and the sound-symbol relationship. The predictable sounds are taught as patterns whereas the unpredictable sounds are taught as being exceptions to the rule. The linguists claim that if phoneme-grapheme relationships are taught, these patterns can be applied to a large number of predictable words. As a result, this approach would eliminate the necessity of memorizing a large number of word forms in learning to read.

A review of the literature on linguistics seems to have the following implications for the reading program. (1) Children should first be taught the phonemes and their corresponding graphemes. (2) The vocabularies of beginning readers should be controlled so as to present only two to three letter monosyllabic predictable words. (3) Configuration clues should be minimized. According to some linguists, configuration clues should be eliminated. (4) Picture clues should be eliminated since they tend to distract from the main objective of learning to translate graphemes into phonemes.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, p. 365.}
Curriculum Approaches

Experience Charts

One attempt which is widely used to improve the teaching of reading is the experience approach. This approach is based on the belief that the children's own experiences should serve as the basis for their reading text. The children would first share a common experience. This experience could be a field trip, such as a visit to a farm, to the post office, or some such place, or it could be a special classroom activity such as a program, a party, or a project. After discussing the experience, the class would compose a story concerning the experience. The teacher would write down the story on a large chart. After the story had been written, the children would read the story. The following day, they would review the story by reading it again. The common experiences and the class-composed story are believed to provide a motivating, meaningful approach to reading. Since the children wrote the story, their interest should be maintained in it and the vocabulary should be understandable. Dechant says that this experience method "de-emphasized the importance of systematic and sequential presentation of materials in favor of purpose, interest and meaning." 18

this approach would typify the current reading needs and wants of children—purpose, interest, meaning. Today, however, few schools teach exclusively by the experience approach; but on the other hand, few primary teachers fail to use some form of experience chart in their teaching of the reading program. 19

Programmed Learning

In the field of word attack skills, several types of cues lend themselves nicely to programming: phonics, syllabication, structural analysis, and even contextual analysis. Programming is the preparation of a program or procedure, which in this case, seeks to alter behavior through the reinforcement of operant behavior. 20 This approach applies Skinnerian learning theory.

The subject matter to be learned by programmed instruction is divided into simple, easily accomplished steps. The learner is to make a response at each step. Each response is immediately reinforced, either positively or negatively. Positive reinforcement tends to elicit the same response with greater speed and frequency in the future. If, however, the learner made an incorrect response, he immediately receives a negative reinforcement which serves

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19 Kaluger and Kolson, Reading and Learning Disabilities, p. 190.

20 Ibid., p. 362.
to weaken the frequency and strength of the undesired response. In most instances, this is the case but, more realistically some children, especially the mentally retarded, have the tendency to ignore the incorrect response. Consequently the negative reinforcement is either inhibited or cancelled completely.

The advocates of programmed instruction claim several advantages for this approach to teaching. They feel that learning will take place under this method because the student is an active participant in the learning process. As the student works his way through the material, giving answers and having his correct answers positively reinforced, his reflective thinking and immediate recall are strengthened. He actively seeks the knowledge and he captures it. A second advantage is that the student controls this part of the learning situation. He is responsible to himself, so to speak. He manipulates the material and he utilizes it as he sees fit. This leads to a third advantage. The student works at his own pace. Relieved of extreme pressure, he is less apt to have tensions and anxieties which can hinder his learning progress.

Much research has been done recently concerning programmed instruction. Indications are that multiple choice items are superior when the aim is recognition. When the
aim is total recall, write-in responses seem superior. At present little research has been done to give conclusive evidence concerning the transfer of learning.21

Letter Sound Correspondence

The Spaldings have proposed that reading instruction should begin by correlating writing the letters with learning the sounds of the letters. Basically their approach is a phonic system designed to entrench phonic knowledge through the employment of as many senses as possible. Before any reading is done, the children are taught the letters of the alphabet, and the sounds they signify. As many senses as possible are used in teaching the letters. The children visually see the letter, kinesthetically (through writing) feel the configuration of the letter, tactually (through finger contact) feel the letter, and auditorally hear the letter by saying the sound.

When sounds are learned, they are blended phonetically to form words. The children learn rules for doing so. If a word gives difficulty an approach similar to the one used in teaching the sounds originally is employed to overcome the obstacle. The child is taught to respond to a visual

21 Ibid., p. 362.
or auditory stimulus--a letter name or letter sound--with the name of the letter a keyword, and the sound of the letter.  

The Open Court Readers use a strictly phonic approach to learning to read. The first grade materials from this series employ a multi-sensory approach to establishing an understanding of sound-symbol relationship. Children experiencing phonic difficulties many times can be aided by this approach.

The steps in the Fernald method vary from word tracing to word analysis and are determined somewhat by the ability and progress of the child. Fernald's method is a VAKT (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile) method. There are similar methods labeled only VAK. In these, the pupil does not do any tracing of the word.

Numerous writers have advocated phonetic methods both for remedial work and as a general portion of the developmental program. Monroe, in 1932, evolved a synthetic phonetic approach using considerable repetition and drill. The basic emphasis was the development of auditory discrimination. Pictures are mounted on cards and the child is taught to

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23 Kaluger and Kolson, *Reading and Learning Disabilities*, p. 244.

identify initial consonants and consonants followed by a
vowel. After a few of these phonetic elements are known,
blending is begun. Gradually the child is initiated into
the reading of specially written stories. Tracing is
used in this method as the need arises, but the child uses
a pencil rather than the forefinger. Monroe found her
method to be highly successful with serious reading dis-
ability cases and with children who have great difficulty
in making visual associations.25

Considering the multi-faceted approaches and innova-
tive reading programs available today, one is overwhelmed
with the variety and diversity of materials. Yet as we
investigate more thoroughly we sense the scarcity of
methods and materials which have been subjected to intensive
research studies applying these approaches to the retarded
child. The review of materials and methods discussed in this
chapter seems to suggest that the burden remains on the
teacher. Individual differences in children indicate that
the "ideal" situation would be to allow each teacher to
utilize the approach most applicable to each child's learning
problem. Individualized instruction is a method most beneficial
to each individual child. A program carefully planned,

25 Marion Monroe, *Children Who Cannot Read* (Chicago:
executed, and reinforced could well be the answer to the problem of teaching reading skills to the mentally retarded.

To analyze each approach and its practical application to each individual necessitates the understanding of the components of the program, the teacher implementation of the instructional materials, the learner's readiness and finally, the responsiveness of the pupil to the program. Presently it is possible only to analyze what the programs contain or what can be inferred from the literature.

The emphasis must be changed from which method works better, to what specific help does this or that method offer a particular child.

**Summary**

Although the methods for teaching word recognition have been described separately, an efficient teacher seldom uses one method to the exclusion of all others. It is desirable that the disabled reader have the experience of reading something independently as soon as possible. Therefore, if he can learn by a sight method, he begins with it. But in order to achieve mature reading habits he must be able to unlock unfamiliar words without assistance, so he is gradually helped to improve auditory discrimination and perception and knowledge of phonics. Soon he learns to
apply phonic principles to help him remember the sight words. When words are particularly difficult, he may resort to tracing. The instructor helps the student build on his strengths for rapid success but at the same time slowly builds up the weak areas in order to establish a firm foundation in reading skill. Teaching is most effective when the best of all methods are used in combinations suited to the particular needs of the individual being taught.26

CHAPTER III

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Impetus for the improvement of reading instruction in this century began with the flight of Sputnik. All the world was then challenged by the supremacy of Soviet technology. This event was the spark which touched off a technological and informational explosion that has resulted in the greatest period of scientific activity the world has ever known. Education has shared in this activity, and reading has been included in it.

One result of stepped-up activity in education was an outcropping of many new or resurrected approaches to beginning reading. Authors and publishers hoped that their respective products would enable children to read better in a shorter time.

For generations, in various parts of the world, two basic methods had been used for beginning reading, either the global method or the synthetic method in some variation. The global method tends to define readiness in terms of such characteristics as language ability, experience, general intelligence, interest, emotional and social development. There is heavy stress on picture reading, listening, and
discussion. Letter or word discrimination are omitted and letter names are not taught. The synthetic method is an approach whereby children are taught to sound letters and letter combinations singly and then blend these individual sounds to form a word.

The material of instruction had been a set of basal readers. Now, as has been seen in this paper, a whole galaxy of new methods and materials has appeared. Will some of these newer methods and materials replace the two basic methods of past worldwide usage? Will we settle down to one or two favorite new methods in the immediate years ahead?

In seeking clues to answer these questions we have turned to research. Recently in the United States a cooperative study was made, funded by the United States Office of Education, in which investigators used the newer methods in various combinations with basal readers in the first grade in twenty-seven locations in our country. During the first year of this series of studies, data were compiled from the twenty-seven individual projects in which different methods and materials had been used.

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3 Guy L. Bond and Robert Dykstra, "The Cooperative Research Program in First Grade Reading Instruction," Reading Research Quarterly, II (Summer, 1967), pp. 26-146.
Following the first year of experimentation, thirteen of the twenty-seven projects were continued for another year to assess the relative effectiveness of these programs after two years of instruction.\(^4\)

The results of the first grade study indicated that code emphasis reading programs tended to produce better overall achievement for beginners than did meaning emphasis programs. The "code-emphasis" group believe that the initial stage in reading instruction should emphasize teaching children to master a code—the alphabetic code. The "meaning-emphasis" group believes that children should and do learn best when meaning is emphasized from the start.\(^5\)

The results of the second year study indicated the same thing, that early and relatively intensive teaching of sound-symbol correspondences appeared to be highly related to reading achievement at the end of the second grade, also.

When the third grade is reached, however, a different situation was found. Six investigators (Fry,\(^6\) Harris,\(^7\)

\(^4\)Robert Dykstra, "Summary of the Second Grade Phase of the Cooperative Research Program in Primary Reading Instruction" Reading Research Quarterly, IV (Fall, 1968), pp. 49-70.


\(^6\)Edward Fry, Comparison of Three Methods of Reading Instruction, Results at the End of Third Grade, Final Report, Project 3050 (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University, 1967).

\(^7\)Albert J. Harris, et al., A Continuation of the CRAFT Project: Comparing Reading Approaches with Disadvantaged Urban Negro Children in Primary Grades, Final Report, U.S.O.E. Project No. 5-0570-2-12-1 (New York: Selected Academic Readings).
Hayes, Ruddell, Schneyer, Vilscek) of the original twenty-seven projects followed their pupils through the third grade. According to this projection of the U.S.O.E. Cooperative Studies into the third grade, the code emphasis in beginning reading did not show superiority over other methods. There was no consistent advantage for any of the methods studied when pupils were followed through to the end of the third grade.

Similar conclusions were found resulting from studies conducted in other countries. Morris made a follow-up study in England of ninety-eight "poor readers". She found a slight difference in favor of phonic methods at the end of infant school, the first three years, the next three years...
somewhat favored those whose introduction to reading had been the whole word method. The differences were not significant. She concluded "The teachers competence, the children's intelligence, the classroom facilities were factors found to be more important influences on later reading success than the method used in the initial phases of reading instruction."\textsuperscript{12}

And so it is that research supports the contention that in the long run the teacher, the children, the school, and other general factors are more important than the method or the material.

To answer the question posed in regard as to which method will reign in the 70's, research and philosophy at the present time would lead us to believe that many different methods will be and should be used according to the learning styles of children, the teaching styles of teachers, and the school and environmental influences under which the children and teachers are working.

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