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Study of the factors influencing the reading problems of the Spanish-speaking Mexican-American child in order to plan a pilot-type reading program in kindergarten and grade one

Patricia Beidatsch

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A STUDY OF THE FACTORS INFLUENCING THE READING PROBLEMS
OF THE SPANISH-SPEAKING MEXICAN-AMERICAN CHILD
IN ORDER TO PLAN A PILOT-TYPE READING PROGRAM
IN KINDERGARTEN AND GRADE ONE

CARDINAL STRITCH COLLEGE
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Milwaukee, Wisconsin

by
Patricia Beidatsch

A RESEARCH PAPER
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS IN EDUCATION
(READING SPECIALIST)
AT THE CARDINAL STRITCH COLLEGE
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
1973
This research paper has been approved for the Graduate Committee of the Cardinal Stritch College.

George K. Smith
(Advisor)

Date March 1, 1973
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I lovingly dedicate this research paper to my friend, confidant and physician, the late Dr. Edmund A. W. Scholter, who always inspired me to nobler ideals by example and exhortation.

Special thoughts of thanksgiving

to my mother, Emily
to my advisors, Sister M. Julitta George Cretilli
to my principal and vice-principal, Walter Oestreich Myron Anczak
to my friends, Monsignor Joseph Woda Joan Blaicher
to those who gave me interviews, Sarah Graffenberger Virginia Moore Elena Chavez and Mary Randall

and to all my teachers at Cardinal Stritch College.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Significance of the Problem

"The history of educational neglect of the Spanish-speaking is overwhelming. Our median level of education is two years behind that of the Anglo. The high percentage of functional illiterates follows the same pattern. Our dropout rate is unbelievably disproportionate to that of the entire population. The question must be asked, why?"¹ So speaks Armando Rodriguez, Chief of the Office for Spanish Speaking American Affairs.

The Office for the Spanish-speaking American Affairs in a recent report lists the confronting problems as: (1) a scarcity of resources; (2) poor communication at all levels; (3) guideline constraints discouraging creativity and innovative educational programs; and (4) a rapid change of personnel.²


Statisticians publish findings of a growing number of studies which indicate that disadvantaged children typically approach early school learning with significant perceptual, linguistic, and cognitive deficits.  

Statement of the Problem

Forest Home Avenue School, an elementary grade school operated by the Milwaukee Public School System at 1516 W. Forest Home Avenue, is in an ever-changing neighborhood. According to a survey for the Federal Government completed on May 5, 1970, the following socio-economic family statuses were given.

10% Economically very poor (e.g. on welfare, in need of special food and other assistance programs, etc.)
80% Moderately poor (e.g. unskilled or low-skilled jobs)
10% Moderately well-off (e.g. live in comfortable but modest homes and surroundings, etc.)
0% Quite well-off or very well-off (e.g. live in expensive housing and surroundings, hold highly-skilled jobs or responsible positions, etc.)

At that time the percentage of pupils attending the school was tabulated as:

1% American Indian
0% Negro
0% Oriental
10% Spanish-American (Mexican)
89% All other

Two years later, there had been an exodus of many of the established neighborhood dwellers (many eligible for government loans in housing in the suburbs), and the number of Spanish-American pupils had increased. This is a trend which will grow increasingly in the future as the Spanish-American migrants have nowhere to expand but westward and southerly. In lieu of this fact, the school, in the very near future, must change its curriculum to cope with the problems which plague the culturally different child. Perhaps vision now will help to make a smoother transition for both teachers and pupils.

It is the purpose of the writer to broaden her concept of existing handicaps experienced by the Spanish-American populace in the area of education by ferreting out and exploring viewpoints in research accomplished by authorities in reading and on the disadvantaged. After a careful examination of proposals and programs, the writer plans to incorporate a program of study in reading geared to meet the needs of the Spanish-speaking Mexican-American child in kindergarten and grade one at the Forest Home Avenue School, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

A study of the factors influencing the reading problems of the Spanish-speaking child and the pilot-type programs that have been successfully used follows.
Design of the Study

This research paper is a descriptive survey of literature concerning cultural disadvantages peculiar to the Spanish-speaking Mexican-American children and their relationship to reading. A limited review of pilot-type programs designed to meet the reading and language needs of the Spanish-speaking follows.

The writer proceeds to design a program geared to bring the Spanish-speaking children to their highest potential in the area of language arts through a special readiness program rich in oral language and experiential background experiences. There is a Mexican saying that if you open a highway, you open the world.

Limitations of the Study

Two of the newer trends in reading are: (1) the concern for special learning problems of the disadvantaged, and (2) the development of reading programs for the disadvantaged. Many pilot-type programs have emerged as a result of the new impetus in reading. However, they are, for the most part, innovative, fairly new, and it is too soon to evaluate them objectively. Longitudinal studies are needed for accurate assessment.

There are limitations on the conclusions to be drawn from the studies on the disadvantaged. The Spanish-speaking children are handicapped verbally and, as a result, score poorly on standardized reading tests. Hall states that there is a need for new tests to accurately measure
the capabilities, experiential backgrounds, cognitive functioning and language development for linguistically different children.4

Definitions of Important Terms

The culturally disadvantaged.--This term is used to designate those who are economically poor and who are usually members of the lower socio-economic class. Language differences and experiential backgrounds unlike those of the school culture handicap the culturally disadvantaged child.5

The linguistically different.--This term is used to describe those children whose native language is not English or those who speak a dialect of English which differs from standard English.6

The language experience approach.--This term denotes a method of teaching reading in which, during the early phases, reading materials are developed by recording children's spoken language. The content of pupil-created reading materials represents the experiences and language patterns of the reader. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are integrated in language arts and reading instruction.7

4Mary Anne Hall, The Language Experience Approach for the Culturally Disadvantaged (Newark, Del.: ERIC/CRIER and IRA, 1972), p. 25.

5Ibid., p. 6.

6Ibid., p. 6.

7Ibid., p. 6.
The basal reader approach.--This term is an organized method of teaching reading, preplanned down to tiny details, in which the materials have been written to conform with the method and the details of method are planned for use with these specific materials. "Basal" reader and "basic" reader have been used interchangeably.  

Basal reader series for the first grade.--This term includes: (a) a series of books, starting with readiness materials and including two to four preprimers, one or two primers, and one or two first readers; (b) a set of manuals for teachers, which include a definite lesson plan for each story; (c) workbooks correlated with the readers; (d) large word and phrase cards; (e) usually a "big book" which serves as an introduction to preprimer reading; and (f) several kinds of related materials (i.e. filmstrips, single paper-bound stories, correlated storybooks). 

Self-directive dramatization of stories.--This term denotes the pupil's original imaginative, spontaneous interpretation of a character of his own choosing in a story which he selects and reads cooperatively with other pupils in a group which is formed only for the time being and for a particular story.

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9 Ibid., pp. 49-50.
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9 Ibid., pp. 49-50.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Relationship Between the Socio-economic Status and Reading Ability of the Spanish-Speaking Mexican-American Children

It is a well-known fact that poverty and limited education are associated with cultural disadvantage. The 1960 Conference on Economic Progress reported that "more than 77 million Americans (more than two-fifths of a nation) lived in poverty or deprivation."\(^1\) In 1960 one child in every three in the fourteen largest cities of the United States was 'culturally deprived.'\(^2\) A decade later, 1970, one deprived child for every two (50%) was enrolled in schools in these large cities.\(^2\)

Margaret Rhoads Ladd investigated the reading skill of 315 children enrolled in three public elementary schools of New York City and found only a slight relationship

\(^1\) John McCrossan, "The Reading of the Culturally Disadvantaged" (ED 010 755), U.S. Dept. of Health, Education and Welfare, No. 80, p. 4.

\(^2\) Ibid., p. 4.
between reading ability and socio-economic status as measured by the Sims Socio-Economic Score Card.

The correlation of .16 found between reading age and the score on the Sims Socio-Economic Score Card is just large enough to indicate a relationship reliably above zero, but one would conclude that the kind of socio-economic status measured by this test is not a very important factor in reading achievement, at least among a group which is relatively homogeneous in socio-economic status.³

Witty and Kopel questioned the validity of the Sims Score Card.⁴

Helen M. Robinson also saw little relationship between reading failure and education or ability of parents, socio-economic status, foreign language in the home or recordable attitudes.⁵ She also wrote that studies had not given objective evidence of the relationship of socio-economic status to reading disability.

Hubert A. Coleman did find a relationship between socio-economic status and reading ability discovering that poor readers as a group came from children of low socio-economic status with surprising consistency.⁶

³Ibid., p. 5.
⁴Ibid., p. 6.
⁵Ibid., p. 6.
⁶Ibid., p. 6.
Harrison Gough concluded that socio-economic status had a slight positive relationship to academic achievement.\textsuperscript{7}

Certain socio-economic characteristics were related to reading skill according to William Sheldon and Lawrence Carrillo. They also concluded that the size of the family was related to reading ability noting that the smaller the family, excepting only children, the greater the percent of good readers.\textsuperscript{8} Both researchers also acknowledged the educational level of parents and the number of books found in the home to be important factors related to reading ability.

It is William S. Gray's belief that a child's social environment and relationships are potent factors in determining his attitude toward reading and his choice of reading material. These attitudes are acquired in the home, the neighborhood, the church and other social institutions.\textsuperscript{9}

Esther Milner studied the language I.Q. of children of varied socio-economic levels and concluded that the kind of home in which a child lived had an important influence on his language skills.\textsuperscript{10}

\textsuperscript{7} Ibid., p. 7.
\textsuperscript{8} Ibid., p. 7.
\textsuperscript{9} Ibid., p. 10.
\textsuperscript{10} Ibid., p. 10.
Bond and Wagner reiterate that attitudes toward reading, beginning very early in the home, have a powerful influence on a child's progress in reading.  

Among Spanish-speaking students, Mexican-Americans have received the most attention in the area of self-concept in research. Anderson and Safar (1967) in a study involving ethnic rather than self-identification, found negative perceptions of Mexican-Americans among Anglo- and Mexican-American "significant others". They theorized the possible internalization of such attitudes into the self-concepts of Mexican-American children.

Coleman (1966) found that the mean self-concept of Mexican-American children was significantly lower than the mean self-concepts of both Negro and white children.

McDaniel (1967) found the mean self-concept of Mexican-American children to be significantly below that of white but not that of Negro children.


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11 Ibid., p. 10.


13 Ibid., p. 213.

14 Ibid., p. 213.

15 Ibid., p. 213.
However, Najmi (1962), Carter (1968) and DeBlaisie and Healy (1970) found no significant differences between the self-concepts of Mexican-American and white children.  

Carter (1968) suggested that the supposed negative self-concept of the Mexican-American child was nothing more than "our own stereotype projected unto him."  

Mexican-Americans have developed poor self-concepts because of their heritage, socio-economic level, physical appearance, language, habitation and question of identity.

Relationship Between Language Skills and Reading Ability of the Spanish-Speaking Mexican-American Children

The school and its curriculum present insurmountable difficulties to the Mexican-American child who begins school speaking only Spanish. Expectations are high. The children must learn to speak, read and write English from teachers, who, for the most part, cannot speak Spanish and who haven't been trained to teach English as a second language. This language handicap is a big drawback in learning.

Rodriguez asserts that in the past, intelligence and achievement tests have produced a de facto ethnic

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16 Ibid., p. 213.
17 Ibid., p. 213.
segregation in the classroom. Spanish-speaking children have often been labeled "slow" and "mentally retarded" because of low scoring on tests that were unrelated to their language and cultural experience.

In San Francisco a decision against the Soledad School District declared that the use of testing instruments and the tracking that results is a denial of the educational rights of the Spanish-speaking children.

Riessman lists insufficiency of language and reading skills as one of the reasons educators give to explain why the disadvantaged do not do well in reading.

Strickland and others have always stressed the importance of oral language in reading readiness and reading achievement.

Loban states that the competence in reading and writing depends largely upon a child's competence in the spoken language.

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20 Ibid., p. 19.


Ladd sees a relationship between reading success and the quality of the child's language background.\textsuperscript{23}

Kaufman concludes that direct instruction in reading Spanish should be offered to Spanish-speaking retarded readers. Its potential value will be a source of transfer to reading ability in English. Therefore, reading ability in Spanish has value in its own right.\textsuperscript{24}

Dialect diversity may affect all levels of linguistic structure according to Ervin (1966).\textsuperscript{25} There seems to be little doubt that many American underprivileged children have poor phonemic discrimination or even different phonemic systems because of dialect or second-language features.

A number of studies show a positive relationship between auditory discrimination and reading achievement (Bond, 1935; Wepman, 1960; Wheeler and Wheeler, 1954).\textsuperscript{26}

Mexican-Americans who speak English with heavy accents will learn and practice unaccented speech if it is known of a certainty that the future position in society

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{23}Ibid., p. 400.
  \item \textsuperscript{24}Maurice Kaufman, "Will Instruction in Reading Spanish Affect Ability in Reading English?" Journal of Reading, Vol. 11, No. 7 (April, 1968), p. 526.
  \item \textsuperscript{26}Ibid., pp. 143-144.
\end{itemize}
demands it and that local society permits that ethnic group to occupy that status. 27

In his studies of culture conflict, Ramirez (1967) concludes that many 'traditional' Mexican-Americans bring values with them to the school which in some cases are in direct opposition to those of their teachers, counselors and administrators. The bicultural student then must not only face conflicts at school but also in the home when the values he learns in the school are not accepted by the parents. He is thus continuously faced with the choice of conforming or quitting. Feelings of insecurity ensue along with negative feelings toward the school which is the source of his frustration and ambivalence. 28

A relevant factor influencing self-conception is that a poor reader behaves in a manner consistent with his misconception of self. Lumpkin (1960) observed that underachievers revealed more negative self-concepts. 29 Therefore, the self-concept does influence the individual's behavior scholastically and socially.


28 Ibid., pp. 168-169.

Without preschool language instruction, sixty to eighty per cent of the Mexican-American children in Texas were failing in the primary grades. The primary cause stemmed from reading difficulties due to the disadvantaged barrier and the language barrier. Stemmler's study of these children resulted in the following observations: (1) a minimal attention span; (2) minimal development of auditory and visual discrimination; (3) minimal experiential background for the type of content appearing in the tests and beginning instructional materials; (4) lack of variety and information even in their native Spanish on such topics as their own families and names; (5) fear, apathy, or insensitivity toward the school environment; (6) general inadequacy in simple cognitive abilities, such as simple direction-following, labelling, classifying and visual discrimination of gross differences among objects even when spoken to in Spanish; and, (7) marked nutritional deficiencies.

Appropriate objectives for Spanish-speaking students who are non-verbal in English appear in Thomas and Allen's Oral English. They are: (1) to help the pupil communicate in English in the school environment; (2) to

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31 Ibid., pp. 571-572.
help the pupil hear and pronounce the sounds of the English language; (3) to help the pupil acquire automatic use of English language patterns; (4) to help the pupil become familiar with the language patterns and vocabulary that he will encounter in the pre-primer and primer; and, (5) to help the pupil learn about the English-speaking culture while maintaining appreciation of his own culture.32

A summary of test results from eleven schools in Las Cruces, New Mexico, compiled in 1963, 1964, and 1965 showed that on the Metropolitan Readiness Test in reading and total achievement children from schools with a predominantly Spanish-Mexican enrollment scored on the average of one year and six months below students from schools with a predominant Anglo enrollment.33

Gaarder acknowledged emotional and intellectual problems as being closely linked to language.34

Zintz observed that children required to adjust to a different culture, with a different language while lacking verbal expression became completely frustrated with a blocking of thinking skills.35 Communication was nil and the children became nonlingual.

32Ibid., p. 572.


34Ibid., p. 263.

35Mary T. Keith, "Sustained Primary Program for Bilingual Children," p. 263.
Wolk, in her study of reading disability errors of bilingual children, found in the analyzation of errors that most of them resulted from inadequately spoken English.\textsuperscript{36}

Ewers, in discovering a high positive relationship between bilingualism and the inability to blend syllables, concluded that reading ability involves many aspects of auditory perception.\textsuperscript{37}

**The Language Experience Approach**

Research reviews by Wrightstone in 1951 showed that language experience material can be used with effective results (although the method in connection with disadvantaged children was not mentioned).\textsuperscript{38}

Hildreth, in 1965, after a series of thirteen studies of the language experience approach (three of which had culturally disadvantaged as subjects), concluded that by the end of the third grade typical children taught systematically by experience methods combined with individualized reading were reading as well as or better than children taught with basals.\textsuperscript{39}


\textsuperscript{37}Ibid., p. 252.

\textsuperscript{38}Mary Anne Hall, "The Language Experience Approach for the Culturally Disadvantaged," p. 7.

\textsuperscript{39}Ibid., p. 8.
It is worth observing that as early as 1933 Meriam suggested using the language experience approach with Mexican-American children whose background lacked relevance with existing books. In 1969, Rosen and Ortega again supported this idea for the self-same reasons.

The first large scale project using the language experience approach was conducted by twelve elementary school districts in California with sixty-seven teachers participating, during the 1959-1960 school year. Results showed that the language experience approach through the first three years of elementary school can be an effective way of teaching reading.

Brazziell and Terrell in 1962 entered their six-week study on a readiness program using experience charts for one class of twenty-six culturally disadvantaged pupils. They discovered that experience materials provided meaningful reading content when used in connection with other readiness activities and materials. Scores on the Metropolitan Readiness Test at the end were significantly higher for the experimental group than for the three control classes. However, the effect of the experience charts alone is unknown because of the combined use of materials.

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40 Ibid., p. 9.
41 Ibid., p. 9.
42 Ibid., p. 10.
43 Ibid., p. 10.
Pilot-Type Reading Programs for the Spanish-Speaking
Mexican-American Child, K-3

Language-Experience Approach, Whisman Regional Reading/
Learning Clinic, California.

Cultural and linguistic differences in background were believed to be the reasons why Spanish-speaking pupils fell into the lowest quartile of the Stanford Achievement Test administered in the Whisman School District in California. As of the 1969-1970 school year, the Whisman Regional Reading/Learning Clinic located in the San Francisco Bay area services second and third grade Spanish-speaking pupils who need intensive individualized help in reading. 44

In this program, lessons are given in a trailer from Monday through Thursday for forty minute periods daily to a total of sixteen children who work in smaller groups of four. The ratio of pupils to teachers is 2:1. Two days a week the trailers remain open after school to afford additional time to pupils wishing to complete a project or finish a book.

The language-experience approach to reading is used, and it is found to be particularly effective for pupils who must overcome cultural barriers to reading proficiency. This method includes an integrated combination

of oral expression, listening, writing and reading; however, the major emphasis is on the child himself. It is his personal unique experience which is worthy of attention and which helps him to make a contribution. A team of thirteen full-time and part-time specialists stimulate the child's ability to read by concentrating on his personal interests and in regarding him as a valuable individual thus strengthening a satisfying self-concept.

Building effective relationship with the home is another integral part of the program. Social worker Annette Greenberg feels "that families from other cultures fear public authority and that reducing the unnecessary tensions between parent and educator is imperative if the chasm is to be modified and good educational practice is to result." Mrs. Greenberg helped to organize the Whisman Mothers Housing Committee to keep the children in the schools and the families in the community.

The staff emphasizes in-service training in the analysis and interpretation of standardized language arts tests. From two to four in-service programs are held each month during the school year.

Findings of evaluative tests to measure the results of the reading program are not available, but the clinic staff announces "dramatic" gains in reading achievement.

The program is hoped to be extended to include kindergarten and first grade through government funding.

Project 2648, Texas.

In Texas, a study comparing the effectiveness of three methods of developing reading readiness in Spanish-speaking children in grade one was made in 1965. The science-based program, focusing on reading readiness, utilized (a) audio-lingual techniques in English, (b) audio-lingual techniques in Spanish, and (c) readiness techniques recommended by the San Antonio Independent School District to prepare pupils to enter the basal reading program. The science "culture fair" materials which were chosen were not intended to contain elements providing an unfair learning advantage to pupils either Spanish-American or Anglo-American cultures. Detailed lesson plans in English and Spanish were written by the project staff.

Twenty-eight first grade classrooms were arbitrarily assigned to one of three methods for an instructional period of 140 days. Group I, (OAE), nine classrooms of oral-aural English used "culture fair" science materials with audio-lingual techniques for one hour a day replacing the readiness one hour instructional program. Group II,

nine classrooms of oral-aural Spanish also used audio-lingual techniques with "culture fair" science materials of one hour per day replacing readiness instruction of one hour. Group III, (NOA), ten classrooms used the "culture fair" science materials used in Groups I and II without the audio-lingual techniques. Rather than a reading readiness period, this was used as the regular science period.

The regular reading readiness program outlined by the school district was followed in preparation for using the locally adopted basal reading Ginn series. Weekly consultant services were provided for all three groups.

The subject matter of the program, science, is not the usual content around which the reading program is built. Serving as operational models for the design of specific learning experiences were: science, linguistics, foreign language teaching, child development, learning theory, psychology of the educationally disadvantaged and cultural anthropology.

The language implications were: (1) The school in disregarding the Spanish language severs its main street of communication with Spanish-surnamed children as well as rejecting much of what the child is, culturally. (2) These were disadvantaged children lacking the experiential background associated with beginning school learning
and reading and lacking a sense of personal identity (self-concept). (3) There is a need for another type of program which would directly provide learning experience and language instruction organized around the development of a satisfying self-concept.

The most significant implication that can be drawn from the findings and conclusions of this research: (1) There is a need for developing suitable measures for assessing the capabilities, experiential background, cognitive function (including range and usability of concepts and cognitive styles), and language levels of Spanish-speaking disadvantaged children. (2) There is a need for developing programs of sequential learning experiences.

Limitations of this research included: (1) socio-economic factors, (2) self-concept levels, (3) language factors, (4) teacher command of audio-lingual techniques, (5) interactions between teacher and pupil attitudes, (6) appropriate instructional materials, and (7) linguistic analyses.

Project 2734, Colorado.

Manuel, Tireman and others in the Southwest working with the Spanish-speaking child are of the firm belief that pre-school or kindergarten instruction was an important
part of the process of teaching English language skills and other needed acculturation skills. 47

Research Project 2734 began in the spring of 1964 in the Colorado school districts to prove this contention and to focus upon one of those skills, reading in English. Its main objectives were: (1) To test the null hypothesis that there is no difference in achievement in reading English in first grade between pupils who speak Spanish at home and are taught (a) by a conventional English readiness and basal reader approach (BR), (b) by a modified "teaching English as a Second Language" approach (TESL), or (c) by a language-experience approach (LEA); (2) To provide and organize data to aid in determining a specific sequence of skills appropriate for first grade children from Spanish-speaking homes who are learning to read in English and to identify appropriate materials and techniques for teaching these skills in a culturally integrated first grade classroom. 48

All three groups used reader series or materials which were new to them. Group 1 (BR) used the Betts Basic Readers, Third Edition, 1963, using the teachers' guide with modifications. Group 2 (TESL) used the We Learn English


48 Ibid., p. 670.
series by Bumpass together with a flannel-board and a collection of flannel-board materials. Aural-oral pattern practice was stressed with varied activities in the sequence, "Listen, repeat, practice, look and say, read, ask and answer, write." Group 3 (LEA) used three LEA units prepared by the San Diego County Schools and five experimental teaching units prepared by Dr. R. V. Allen of the University of Arizona. The approach emphasized the introduction of new experiences, followed by the practice on how to relate the experiences in English, discussion, dictation to the teacher who recorded the sentences on charts, oral practice and reading practice with the charts.

The conclusions and findings indicated that the Basal Reader Approach developed the highest achievement in reading skills. It was recommended that the basal reader approach be used with Spanish-speaking first grade children when they are ready to begin formalized reading instruction.

Teaching English as a second language (TESL) and language experience approach (LEA) were recommended as supplementary approaches. Because the TESL and LEA approaches were used at preschool and kindergarten level for the development of oral English skills and experiential background, the first graders in the TESL and LEA programs had shown strengths in oral vocabulary and writing fluency.
Project 2677, Craft.

In Project Craft, two main approaches with four specific methods were tried. The approaches were: (1) the skills-centered approach and (2) the language-experience approach. Methods for the former consisted of: (a) skills-centered method using basal readers with close adherence to teachers' manuals; (b) skills-centered method using basal readers with substitution of phono-visual way of teaching word-attack skills accompanying the basal readers. Methods for the latter consisted of: (a) the language-experience method in which beginning reading materials were developed from the oral language of the children; (b) language-experience with heavy supplementation of audio-visual procedures.

Although this research was done with Negro children, it would have implications for the Spanish-speaking Mexican-American child. Conclusions drawn from the aforementioned study proved that most disadvantaged children can make substantial progress in learning how to read by using the same methods that will work with white middle-class children. The basal reader method had a slight lead among the methods at the first grade level.

"Second Chance"

An experimental program labelled "Second Chance" was conducted for first and second grade Mexican-American children in Texas. Its major emphasis was placed on oral language. The use of a magnetic board supplied with manipulative figures inspired the youngsters to relate to it with oral and written communication. There was a continuous interchange of ideas between student and teacher.

The Mexican-Americans wrote compositions displaying pride in their Mexican ancestry. This method was a constructive self-concept builder. 50

Project Population, Vieau School, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

The bilingual program at Vieau School, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, according to Mrs. Virginia Moore, Vice Principal, originally began in 1969 as a federal program funded under Title VII. 51 In its first year the program encompassed kindergarten and lower primary (grade one). With each succeeding year, additional grades were to be incorporated into the program. In its second year of existence, middle primary (grade two) was added. Today, grades two, three and four are federally funded, while kindergarten and grade one are funded by the Milwaukee School Board.


51 Virginia Moore, interview held at Vieau School, October, 1972.
All nine teachers are bilingual and all but one are of Latin descent. Seven are full-time teachers, one is a resource teacher who also serves in a supervisory capacity and one is a reading center teacher. A psychologist is available for testing and counselling.

The school population (enrollment approximately 650) is 70% Latin (50% of Mexican descent and 20% Puerto Rican).

Reading is taught in both Spanish and English in the child's dominant language. After a child becomes fluent in Spanish, he is then taught to read in English. Conversely, when fluency is gained in English, Spanish mastery is then begun. The main objective is to make the child bilingual with emphasis placed on culture and personal pride in the inherited culture.

Basal reading textbooks used in English are the Ginn 360 and Ginn 100. In Spanish, the Follett readers and SCDC (Spanish Curricula Development Center) materials developed in Miami (written in Cuban Spanish) are utilized. Groupings are flexible. Teacher observation plays a major role in regrouping. The school administrators feel that testing should be an oral process in order to give the child a fair chance.

Miss Elena Chavez, resource teacher of Spanish descent in the bilingual program at Vieau, insists that
"bilingual education is a necessity" for her people. She has seen frustration grow when one language, English, is the accepted language of the schools. The Spanish-speaking child feels a negation to what is seen, spoken, eaten and enjoyed at home.

Fourteen long-range goals were defined by the project director in the original bilingual program proposal. They are:

1. To develop a bilingual readiness in Spanish-speaking and English-speaking children.
2. To stimulate Spanish-speaking children to understand and communicate in English.
3. To cultivate in Spanish-speaking pupils a pride in their native language and culture and a more positive self-image as they make the transition to another culture and language.
4. To enable Spanish-speaking and English-speaking pupils, by the end of Grade 6, to achieve such general proficiency that they can pursue their studies with about equal ease in English and Spanish.
5. To promote in the English-speaking children a personal awareness and respect for the cultural values of the Spanish-speaking people.
6. To motivate English-speaking children to communicate in Spanish and to develop the skills needed to do so.
7. To enable English-speaking pupils to achieve sufficient skills in Spanish so that at the end of Grade 6 they will attain Level 1 proficiency.
8. To enable the pupils in the above classes to progress in school with minimal retention so that by the end of Grade 6 they will reach grade-level achievement in all their subjects.
9. To promote mutual understanding and respect between the Spanish-speaking pupils through interaction as they help with each other's language.
10. To increase the Spanish-speaking pupil's self-concept and pride in his own cultural background at the same time he is learning to appreciate and esteem a new culture.

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52 Elena Chavez, interview held at Vieau School, October, 1972.
11. To foster in the English-speaking pupils an appreciation of the contributions of the Spanish-speaking pupils.

12. To increase the newly-arrived Spanish-speaking pupil's confidence by providing him with a content course which he can immediately understand.

13. To motivate parents to become more involved in the educational process and to become more aware of communication channels that exist between home and school.

14. To help teachers, principals, and counselors better understand and appreciate their Spanish-speaking pupils' potential and their cultural background.

During the 1971-1972 school year, the elementary program was in operation at Vieau School. Pupils were enrolled into the bilingual classes by their parents. The program was open to pupils of all ethnic backgrounds. An estimated 100 pupils were enrolled in one class at each level, kindergarten through grade three.

CANBBE, Allen-Field School, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

CANBBE (Curriculum Adaptation Network for Bilingual Bicultural Education) has its Midwest regional Curriculum Adaptation Center located at the Allen-Field School in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. This center coordinates the efforts of five formal centers in pilot testing the materials developed by the Spanish Curricula Development Center in Miami Beach, Florida.

Mrs. Sarah Graffenberger, Allen-Field principal states that organization of the bilingual program began with

the discovery that "pockets" of the school population (one third is of Spanish background) predominantly the Spanish-speaking children had severe academic needs. An investigation in the possible causes revealed: (1) The migrant population of the school who were frequently "on the move" were depriving their children of a sequential developmental program. (2) Spanish was the child's dominant home language. (3) The Title I program incorporating ESL (English as a Second Language) and the Language Development Program, although beneficial, left much to be desired with much potential undeveloped. (4) The results of the Behm Test of Concept Development were not satisfactory because of the language barrier reason. The plan adopted was to, therefore, build on the stronger of the child's language experiences.

In the spring of 1971, Mr. Tony Gradisnik, Curriculum Specialist with the Milwaukee Public Schools, was instrumental in developing a successful bilingual bicultural program. A complete brochure listing the goals, performance objectives, in-class test items and process (K-4) attest to this fact. The publication is entitled "Bilingual Elementary Program, K-4", 1971.

Sarah Graffenberger, interview held at Allen-Field School, October, 1972.
Mrs. Graffenberger stressed the point that the bilingual approach was not used as an end in itself but as one means of individual instruction for those children whose parents request it knowing that benefits will be derived from such a program. Its master goal is to develop pupil potential through individual instruction.

The Allen-Field School is unique in its individualized learning center including bilingual kindergarten and readiness center.55 This center provides a bilingual approach which allows children whose dominant language is Spanish to capitalize on their conceptual strengths. Parents are given the opportunity to enroll their child in either the bilingual kindergarten program or a regular self-contained kindergarten classroom.

There are twenty-four children presently enrolled in the Readiness Center's Bilingual Program. Seventy-five per cent of them speak and understand Spanish and English equally well.

One of the purposes of the center is to help the children develop a pride in their own cultural background and also understand the American culture. For a bilingual child the transfer from the Spanish-speaking home to an English-speaking school presents some difficulties. The child speaking only Spanish in a school limited to English is so frustrated and confused that he often fails.

55 Mary L. Randall, interview held at Allen-Field School, October, 1972.
The classroom is divided into several interest centers or stations. There is an adjacent room which is used for small group and individual work. The classroom opens onto a courtyard where there is large motor equipment (i.e. climbing units, see-saws, tricycles, wagons, play tables, sandboxes).

The first part of the day is spent in group conversation and sharing time. This period provides opportunity for vocabulary growth and develops language skills and concepts in both Spanish and English. The children learn to express themselves well before a group, take turns, and become better listeners.

Spanish songs and games are learned along with English songs and games often taught in kindergarten. Movies, filmstrips, records and stories are often presented in Spanish.

There are eight interest centers or stations: a library corner, a construction area where large blocks are kept, a visual-motor area, a puppet center for role-playing, a housekeeping corner, a science area and a math center which has many concrete materials which help the child to classify, see relationships and form judgments.

In order to provide individualization, guidance and observation at the various learning stations, the Readiness Center is staffed with a Readiness Teacher, a bilingual kindergarten teacher, a bilingual teacher-aide,
a part-time student teacher and a National Youth Core Worker.

During the latter part of the day, a small group of lower primary children join the Readiness Center to work in the various interest areas. Children are allowed to select the station in which they wish to work.

Each day small groups work in the adjacent room with various audio-visual equipment (i.e. the language master, headphones and phonograph, cassettes, overhead projectors, film previewer machines, etc.), used to develop the reading readiness skill of auditory and visual discrimination. Many of the materials used have been translated into Spanish.

David Ballesteros cites five positive purposes of bilingual education quite succinctly.

1. It reduces retardation through the ability to learn with the mother tongue immediately.
2. It reinforces the relations of the school and the home through a common communication bond.
3. It projects the individual into an atmosphere of personal identification, self-worth, and achievement.
4. It gives the student a base for success in the field of work.
5. It preserves and enriches the cultural and human resources of the people.56

There are pros and cons revolving around the subject of bilingual instruction. Bilingualism has been found acceptable in New York City in kindergarten. Excellent results were reported with no negative effects observed in the children's use of language.57

Among the disadvantages of bilingualism pertinent to the Spanish-speaking Mexican-American child, the subject of this paper, are the following handicaps in speech development: (1) faulty articulation with resultant substitutions; and (2) inappropriate pronunciation. The Spanish have an intermediate vowel which makes "sheep" and "ship" sound identical to them and which makes their articulation in both words seem inaccurate to the English listener. 58 Also, a Spanish youngster speaking English may add a vowel before some initial consonant groups and may omit the final consonant, for so many of his words end in vowels. 59

Lynn, in a study of "Bilingualism in the Southwest," analyzes the English spoken by Spanish-speaking children in Arizona. 60 She discovers these flaws: (1) direct


59 Ibid., p. 134.

60 Ibid., p. 134.
substitutions; (2) similar sounds, especially plosives, were produced differently because of a variation in voicing, aspiration and tension; (3) a confusion of the sounds with identical orthography; (4) insufficient transition between sounds which gave the effect of clipped, rapid speech; (5) all vowels shorter than in English; and (6) a difference in stress. She concludes that these variations did not diminish with age or skill because the early influence of Spanish was too dominant, and the English was introduced before the Spanish had been firmly established.

The findings of Travis, Johnson and Shover in their intensive experimental study to determine the relationship between bilingualism and stuttering showed that there were more stutterers among the bilinguals than among the monolinguals. Twenty-six per cent of the bilingual stuttering group began to stutter at the time of the introduction of the second language.

In defense of bilingualism, many researchers transfer the blame of bilingualism to speech environment as a more likely causal factor. They concur that speech inaccuracies should not be overemphasized. McCarthy and


Becky state that bilingualism poses no serious handicap to speech development. 63

There are those empiricists who agree that an individual cannot learn both languages equally well because of some linguistic interference. 64 Pintner concludes that the language handicap would probably be the greatest in the first grade but would decrease from that point. 65

Totten stresses the positive value of vocabulary extension for the bilingual child. 66

Weinreich states that "the majority of experimenters deny the allegedly evil effects of bilingualism on mental development." 67 However, many investigators point to the low scores on intelligence tests which relied upon language facility as the demon linking bilingualism with intellectual impairment. 68 If, however, the child has only a superficial knowledge of one language and/or if he is not of superior intellectual ability, he may show signs of mental confusion and uncertainty. 69

63 Ibid., p. 358.
66 Ibid., p. 359.
67 Ibid., p. 359.
68 Ibid., p. 359.
While one school of thought blames bilingualism for emotional instability with a loss of self-confidence, while another shifts the blame to immature emotional constitutions, excessive family tensions and sociological considerations (poor self-image, poor teachers).

Recommended attitudes and procedures for the home and the school are feasible. (1) Give good speech examples. (2) Create a healthy happy learning atmosphere. (3) Encourage free expression. (4) Use tact when criticizing. (5) Praise good results. (6) Make one language dominant. (7) Use both languages equally but be consistent. However, the second language is to be taught only when the native language is firmly established.

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72 Ibid., pp. 361-362.
CHAPTER III

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Restatement of the Problem

This study purports to review recent literature showing the relationship between the socio-economic status and the reading ability of the Spanish-speaking Mexican-American children, the relationship between language skills and the reading ability of the Spanish-speaking Mexican-American children and pilot-type reading programs for the Spanish-speaking Mexican-American children.

Compensatory Education for the Spanish-Speaking

Despite the presence of a significant number of Spanish-speaking people in the United States (the second largest minority group), there were scarcely any bilingual bicultural programs in existence less than a decade ago.

At the federal government level, the following compensatory educational programs are extant:

(1) The Bilingual Education Act, Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) which aims to give impetus to the education of the Spanish-speaking students with the following stated objectives: to strengthen
the education of bilingual children particularly those of low-income families; and to promote bilingualism among all students.

(2) The Education Professions Development Act under which funds are provided to train and retrain the bilingual and bicultural classroom teachers to create a new learning environment.

(3) The Office for Spanish-speaking American Affairs (within the Office of Education) which strives to attain equal educational opportunities for the Spanish-speaking populace.

Approximately 55,000 students are benefiting from 131 bilingual educational projects according to a 1970 survey.1 Significant progress has been made in the following areas:

(1) the assessment and availability of existing materials;

(2) curriculum development in Spanish in grades one through three;

(3) the development of testing instruments to assess skills of children whose language is other than English;

(4) the development of strategies for creating a positive self-image.

Summary of Current Research Findings

There is an inconclusive relationship between reading achievement and the socio-economic status of the individual since conflicting results have been obtained by different researchers. M. R. Ladd and Helen M. Robinson report a minimal relationship between the factors (with Robinson questioning objectivity in some of the studies while Coleman, Gough, Sheldon, Carrillo, William S. Gray, Milner, Bond and Wagner indicate a positive correlation between reading proficiency and rich experiential background).

Three considerations concerning the Spanish-speaking child and reading progress seem significant from the literature.

(1) The relationship of total language proficiency.

Milner, Strickland et al. state that the mastery of language skills does have an important bearing on reading success. This will be restricted where children are deficient in language (in terms of dominant language) due to cultural differences.

(2) The significance of auditory discrimination and reading achievement.

Studies by Bond, Wepman, Wheeler and Wheeler have shown a positive relationship between auditory discrimination and reading achievement. This has been demonstrated in a general school population and, therefore, it is relevant to Spanish-speaking children. If the child hears
the correct sounds, he imitates them, and conversely, if he does not hear English spoken at all, as is the case of many of the Spanish-speaking Latins, his auditory training for the perception of the sounds of English will be deficient.


The majority of researchers do agree that inadequate self-concepts seem prevalent among the Spanish-speaking Mexican-American children. The major cause appears to be that of their cultural background notably their language background. Herein lies the applicability to reading. The educational agencies which formerly sought to transmit middle-class standards have recently introduced a variety of programs. These programs have been initiated through the synergistic efforts of the federal government, local school authorities, and the community. Emphasis has been on cultural distinctions, history, language, etc., in attempts to provide for the identity needs of the Spanish-speaking students.

Research reveals the Spanish-speaking educational median level as being two years behind that of the Anglo. Testing instrumentation and the resultant low scores have raised the issue of validity and fairness due to the unrelatedness of cultural experience and the language barrier.
Tests with a cultural bias must necessarily be insignificant. Tests appropriate to assessing the oral language ability, self-concepts, and experiential background of the Spanish-speaking populace are relatively new, the former being made available in 1966. It is assumed that these will be more widely used during the next few years and may confirm or correct what is presently known about Spanish-speaking medians compared with those of other sections of the population.

As to the method found to be the most successful in the teaching of reading to the Spanish-speaking children, research survey points to the basal reader approach as developing the highest achievement in reading skills. English as a second language and the language experience approach have been recommended by many of the researchers as supplementary approaches. It has been confirmed that the language experience approach shows strengths in oral vocabulary and writing fluency.

There are implications involved in the review of the positive and negative aspects of childhood bilingualism. They include: (1) Bilingualism needs to be defined. Is it the learning of two languages simultaneously from birth? Does it include the ability to use two languages verbally?

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Is it the ability to understand two languages? (2) There is a need to organize and categorize the number of children selected for experimentation. Are the groups too few in number? Are they too atypical? (3) Attitudes need to be determined. Is the personality of the child considered? Are variables taken into account? What is the intelligence and emotional stability of the child's parents? What are the speech standards in the home environment? (4) Investigators ought to be labeled. Who are the investigators? Teachers? Linguists? Psychologists? Speech therapists? (5) Methodology needs to be described. What are the teaching strategies? Under what conditions were the data secured? Where were the bilingual responses taken?

Summarily, more intensive probing must be done.

Present and Future Situations as Viewed by the Writer

The projection of a need for finding ways to build positive self-concepts as a necessary component of Spanish-speaking programs seems pertinent. Concentration on the personal interests of the child, an individualization program utilizing the language experience approach would seem feasible; however, it is to be noted that the small student:teacher ratio (2:1) are not possible outside of a clinical situation. In the regular classroom there is usually a 32:1 student:teacher relationship. Differentiated staffing to provide a smaller student:teacher ratio under which more learning experience approach is possible would merit consideration.
It is apparent that in-service programs are virtually essential for teachers who serve the Spanish-speaking disadvantaged child. Among considerations such programs might be focused upon are: (1) the inclusion of the study of the Spanish language and heritage, so necessary for communicative and cultural purposes; (2) ways and means of developing experiential background and language skills; (3) the inclusion of a program gravitated toward the development of a satisfying self-concept; (4) the incorporation of a program of sequential learning experience and techniques for developing the reading process; and (5) a study of the strengths and weaknesses of both the Anglo-American and the Mexican-American cultures.
CHAPTER IV

IMPLEMENTATION OF FINDINGS

Design for a Suitable Reading Program for the
Spanish-Speaking Mexican-American Students
at the Forest Home Avenue School,
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Reading research indicates that while the average
disadvantaged person has a relatively low level of reading
ability, most reading programs for the disadvantaged learner
fail to consider his characteristic learning problems. The
writer has alluded to the multifactor theory of causation
regarding the problem and now proceeds to formulate a
program designed: (1) to place emphasis on specific
behavioral modifications desired in the student; (2) to
increase the language communication skills and experiential
background of the Spanish-speaking Mexican-American child;
(3) to identify the disadvantaged student at the pre-
primary and primary levels; (4) to raise the aspiration level
of the student (self-concept); (5) to begin a developmental
sequential program of reading in grade one; (6) to con-
tinuously assess strengths, weaknesses, and progress of the
student; (7) to attempt differentiated staffing in kinder-
garten and grade one as an aid to achieving goals in reading;

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(8) to encourage community involvement in the reading program with parents being invited to participate in activities centered around reading; (9) to attempt to upgrade teacher competencies (understanding of the reading process, knowledge of the factors influencing the reading problem for Spanish-speaking children, training in oral aspects of learning English as a second language) and, (10) to broaden teacher cultural exposures and sensitivities through in-service training and community interrelationships.

Through experience, the writer has ascertained that the attitudes of the teacher and of the student are of paramount importance, hence, the following teacher goals are to be engendered: (1) Every child is to be accepted and respected by the teacher and by his peers. (2) Every child is to be made happy and comfortable in his school room environment. (3) Every child must experience success. (4) Every child must be reassured of his capacity to learn. (5) Every child must be challenged to master the art of reading through high motivation and intellectual stimulation.

Student goals would incorporate the following ideas: (1) Every day is Discovery Day. I must listen attentively to learn effectively. (2) Every day is Participation Day. I must speak and contribute to the group even though I may make some mistakes in so doing. (3) Every day is Reading Day. Either the teacher will read to me, and/or I will read to myself or the class or to the teacher.
(4) Every day is Happiness Day. I am happy that I am alive and healthy, that I am in school, that people listen to me and appreciate me, that I am learning so many new ideas, that I can read and write and express myself orally and that I am growing in word power, understanding and knowledge.

Before executing the "know how" in reading, the teacher must discover the "know about" children. Therefore, teacher obligations include: (1) to become acquainted with the child, his experiential background, his home and its cultural aspects, his language (greet him in Spanish and use the familiar Spanish idiomatic expressions). Try to understand his attitudes, values, self-concept, linguistic orientation, moods, likes, dislikes, responses, potential, maturity and manner of logical thinking. Adaptations must then be made. (2) to construct status-building activities before reading activities; (3) to allow the learner maximum contact with English for vocabulary mastery, pronunciation, syntax, and idiomatic expressions; (4) to promote communication through the language experience approach, the Ashton-Warner approach and the self-directive dramatization of stories; (5) to explore needs determining the child's strengths and weaknesses through testing instruments (verbal), check lists, and personal observation; (6) to organize varied kinds of learning experiences with volunteer tutors: mothers, retirees, the
elderly, high school students coming in during their free periods on a daily basis; and, (7) to demonstrate techniques (i.e. Fernald tracing, the Cruikshank method of administering small doses of material in a minimally distracting physical setting, the Ginn Tutorial Word Analysis books).

Many culturally disadvantaged pupils are poor readers because they lack the prerequisites to become good readers. Readiness prerequisites or needs require educating the parent and re-educating the teacher.

Most researchers have recommended environmental intervention as a means of increasing the achievement of children from deprived backgrounds. Bruner, Deutsch, and Hunt focused on stimulation in the preschool child's physical and social environment as a possible determinant of intellectual achievement.\(^1\) Attendance at Head Start classes and at nursery schools are excellent sources of learning enrichment.

Readiness entails effective teaching methods. It is an accepted fact that the Spanish-speaking are non-verbal in English. Their intake of the English language is greater than their output. In other words, they do comprehend but they do not verbalize. Emphasis, then,

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\(^1\)Virginia Crandall, "Achievement Behavior in Young Children," The Disadvantaged Child, Forst and Hawkes, editors, 1966, p. 155.
must be placed on the language arts program with language patterning an important segment of each child's aural-oral experience. The teacher, serving as a model, gives basic sentence patterns in English while the children listen carefully and repeat each sentence until a habitual pattern is established. Tape recorders and listening posts will aid the teacher in this activity. Albert J. Harris reiterates the fact that vocabulary, maturity of sentence structure and pronunciation are the most significant aspects of language development for reading readiness.2

In order to gain full language capacity a child must be efficient in word comprehension, oral expression, concrete concept formation, visual memory and association and the ability to calculate. Physical, kinesthetic, auditory and visual aids must be used to translate language into meaningful associations at the child's readiness period of learning. Not until the child understands and speaks the language should he be introduced to formalized reading.

The writer agrees with Lester Golub that the research of Piaget and Vygotsky in the area of language awareness and thought process is directly relevant to the way we teach English.

2Albert J. Harris, Effective Teaching of Reading (New York: David McKay Company, 1962), p. 27.
It is Piaget's belief that a child's thought is primarily egocentric until approximately the age of eight. Therefore, direct personal experiences will serve best to develop his language skills. He will also be better able to interpret his peers' contributions of shared experiences. Vicarious experiences can be utilized likewise. Readings, creative dramatics and pantomimes will help convey meaning to ideas.

Vygotsky notes that grammar is important for the mental development of the child. It is important for him to learn correct pronunciation and the construction of sentences. Grammar and writing will aid the child in arriving at a higher level of speech development.

Experience is basic to language; therefore, a variety of experiences both in and out of the classroom must be given. Listening is associated with experience; therefore, a good set of listening habits must be established. This task demands high motivation. The experience of listening and speaking will help the child to integrate the proferred materials.

Forest Home Avenue School has an ideal location in that it is situated near a shopping area, Mitchell

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4 Ibid., p. 448.
Center, and has not only a school library but also a public library directly across the street.

In kindergarten, the child's first exposure to school, it is suggested that the teacher utilize the community resources readily available. Many field trips may be taken on foot since all of the following visiting sites are within a half-mile radius. They include: the Green Market (seasonal: spring, summer, fall); Food Stores: Kohl's, National Tea Company, A & P; Drugs and sundries: Walgreen's, Pill and Puff; Department Stores: Sears, Penny's, Gimbels's, The Grand, Goldmann's; Clothing Store: Robert Hall's; Shoe Stores: Kinney's, Schiff's Dimestore: Woolworth's; Variety store: The Fair; Card Shop: Mr. Greeting Card; Restaurants: Marc's, Dutchland Dairy; Lunch Counters at Gimbel's, Woolworth's; Furniture: Hack's; Horticulture: Bauer's Garden Shop; Banks: First Wisconsin and Mitchell Street State Bank; Theatre: Modjeska; Churches: St. Jacobi Lutheran (now designated a landmark) and St. Anthony's Catholic Church; High School: South Division; Junior High School: Kosciuszko; Park: Kosciuszko; and Hospital: Johnston Municipal Hospital.

American libraries have been most successful with the middle and upper socio-economic groups. It is a challenge for the librarians to achieve success with the
culturally disadvantaged. Therefore, a weekly class visitation to the Forest Home Library can be a great motivating force. Library use is related to reading habits. Readers of books do have better vocabularies than non-readers. The Forest Home Library also provides an hour long Spanish-oriented program weekly from four until five p.m. which is supervised by a Spanish-speaking librarian who has been observed to have excellent rapport with children, both Spanish and non-Spanish speaking.

After exploring the various areas of community resources, the children, upon their return to school would do follow-ups consisting of oral and written experiences with emphasis on comprehension and ideas. In kindergarten and grade one, the use of language experience charts with stories dictated by students referring to the five W's (Who? What? When? Where? Why?) is recommended.

The kindergarten and grade one teacher need an immense picture file which must constantly be enlarged and kept current for communication purposes and the language experience approach. Vocabulary development, together with intellectual stimulation and practice in the language area will contribute wonders to readiness.
All of the field trip experiences contribute wholesome to readiness. It is important that the initial experiences are well-planned and are made enjoyable. The teacher can then check perception: auditory, visual, tactile, kinesthetic. The Reading Check List might incorporate: vision, speech, listening, social behavior, emotional behavior, interest in learning to read.

For kindergarten, the writer advocates use of the Ashton-Warner approach, that is, the use of materials for reading instruction invented by the children themselves. The vocabulary thus generated has to be consistent with their own language competency. The self-concept tends to be raised because the children deem their contribution as "important" enough to be used. The teacher may then link familiar experiences to give meaning to the unfamiliar word. A LEA approach with audio-visual supplementation would be recommended for kindergarten and grade one. It is a successful way to develop oral proficiency.

It is essential for the teacher of Spanish-speaking students to understand the patterning of the child's speech via the Spanish dialect. Venezky (1970) recommends the use of standardized English materials that minimize dialect and cultural difference; however, he advocates no teacher interference with the children's attempts to translate from writing to the form of language that they understand best.5

It is so necessary for the reading teacher to make a distinction between a mistake in reading and a difference in pronunciation due to the Spanish American dialect.

When the child is ready to begin formal reading, the basal reader approach is to be adopted with the Ginn 100 as the choice. The Miami Linguistics Series was considered but rejected because of the low interest and controlled vocabulary. The Ginn 360 was also rejected on the basis of difficult vocabulary.

In grade one, the specific reading objective would be the development of perception readiness skills. Checklists of the following perception skills could be distributed: association and relationship of ideas; visual perception of form, size and color; perception of number groups and figures; simultaneous association of form, meaning and sound; auditory and visual discrimination; enrichment of meaning association. Planned demonstration activities might include storytelling, reading with follow-up discussion, listening to Scott, Foresman and Ginn records (SOUNDS AROUND US, LET'S LISTEN), simple direction giving, playing games with picture cards, using the Peabody kit designed to improve the vocabulary and the expressive ability of disadvantaged kindergarten and grade one children.

The ability to listen to and provide an ending for a story is a good indicator of potential progress in reading which the teacher might utilize at the first grade level.
If scores on a listening comprehension test are higher than the scores on a reading comprehension test, it is a good indication of the pupil's potential ceiling in reading ability. The teacher must know how to interpret the test results.

The writer would also like to attempt differentiated staffing utilizing certified teachers (classroom, reading) librarians, teacher aides, volunteers, youth, and paired learners. This type of program might be started in grade one and continued through grade three if proven successful and rewarding to all involved.

Reinforcement, repetition and rewards given facially and verbally are conducive toward achieving better results. A program integrating reading instruction and the development of positive self-perception offers the promise of meeting individual needs for learning and for good emotional well-being.
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