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A study of college-level remedial materials for developing reading skills

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A study of college-level remedial materials for developing reading skills

by

Thomasita Homan

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Partial Fulfillment of The Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Major: English

Signatures have been redacted for privacy

Iowa State University
Ames, Iowa

1979
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CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of this study is three-fold: (1) to survey theories of reading remediation for college remedial students; (2) to develop a descriptive instrument for use in evaluating remedial reading materials designed for college-level remediation; (3) to apply this instrument to selected remedial reading materials. This purpose is predicated on the belief that although proper diagnosis of the strengths and weaknesses of individual students is a valuable part of remedial procedures, successful remediation is greatly enhanced by good instructional materials.

Though there are many theories of remediation, few guidelines for the evaluation of learning materials have been written. The combining of theory and application in this paper stresses the importance of their interrelationship.

Justification for the Study

The scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), the test used to predict a high school student's probable college success, have declined annually over a fourteen year period. In October, 1975, Willard Wirtz was appointed by the President of the College Entrance Examination Board and the President of Educational Testing Service to chair a committee to "consider the matter of the SAT score decline and assist in the . . . understanding of it." The report of this advisory committee states that "roughly one million young people in each high school senior class who take the SAT represent approximately a quarter of their age group as a
whole and about half of the number going on to college." The panel assessed the fourteen-year drop as "unquestionably significant."

They reported a decline in the average of the total test scores but noted that the greatest drop is in the Verbal portion of the test—assessing reading skills and understanding of word relationships. Statistics show a forty-nine point drop from 1963 to 1977 on the Verbal part: 478 in 1963 to 429 in 1977. This decline means that "only about a third of the 1977 test takers do as well as half of those taking the SAT in 1963 did. . . . [A] decline of this magnitude continuing over a 14-year period, following a previous period of stable or even slightly rising score averages, is clearly serious business."

Scores on the American College Testing Program (ACT) have also declined. Timothy R. Sanford, Assistant Director of the Office of Institutional Research, states that over the ten-year period 1964-65 through 1973-74, the composite average score dropped 1.2 standard scores (19.9 to 18.7), "which is . . . a per year decline of 2 percent of a standard deviation."

These declining scores of incoming college freshmen indicate the need for studies to determine (1) the direction for more effective educational development in the precollege years, (2) appropriate and comprehensive remedial measures at the college level. To implement such programs of developmental education and remediation, good diagnostic and instructional materials are needed.
Scope of the Study

1. The study surveys such selected theories of remediation as form the basis for the major categories of remedial instruction.

2. Although its applicability may be broader, the descriptive instrument is designed to serve primarily as an aid in the evaluation of college-level reading texts.

3. In this study, the application of the descriptive instrument is limited to workbooks written for the remedial college student and copyrighted within the last five years (1974 or later). This final limitation restricts the focus to those materials which have, perhaps, been studied and reviewed to a lesser extent than earlier programs and, practically speaking, this limitation provides a convenient boundary. The samples selected for evaluation herein vary widely in readability range 4.0 to Adult; however, their content and interest levels are suitable for college students.

Clarification of Terminology

A definition or clarification of terms is desirable at the outset of this study. Some of these terms are defined below. Other terms, more specifically relating to finer points within the paper, will be defined in the context of the study.

Reading is the "meaningful interpretation of written or printed symbols." 7

Reading Comprehension is a term defining the broad reading process which involves both "the acquisition of the meanings intended by the
writer and the reader's own contributions in the form of interpretation, evaluation, and reflection about these meanings."  

**Reading Disability** and **Reading Deficiency** are terms applying to the performance of students "whose reading is significantly below expectancy for their age and intelligence and is also disparate with their cultural, linguistic, and educational experience."  

**Remedial Reading** is the program planned to teach specific reading skills that a student is expected to have learned.  

**Diagnosis** is a term used to define an exploration of a reading problem. In this paper, diagnosis specifically means "a careful study of the condition to determine its nature and find out about its causation, with the aim of correcting or remedying the difficulty."  

**Prescription** refers to the recommendations for remediation or continued growth in reading achievement. The recommendation, or prescription, encompasses an understanding of the singular or plural causes of the reading problem(s) and suggests programs, materials, and methods that might benefit a particular student.  

**Reading Expectancy Level** is the estimated level of reading ability "most consonant with the relevant facts known about the individual. These relevant facts should include measures of verbal and nonverbal intelligence, age, amount and quality of schooling, familiarity with standard English, and adequacy of sociocultural background."  

There are a number of ways of computing the reading expectancy level, if the level is not indicated on a given test. Most of these methods, however, are less applicable above the age of fourteen. Harris, in *How to Increase Reading Ability*, suggests an
adaptation of an expectancy formula to include this age group and then states,

When aptitude and reading tests used in secondary school and college do not have age or grade norms, it is more appropriate to use a regression equation based on the correlation between the particular aptitude and reading tests employed than just to compare percentile or standard scores on the two tests. After a predicted reading score has been obtained for an individual, it is compared with his obtained reading score; if the discrepancy is at least as large as its standard error, the chances are at least five to one that a genuine failure to read up to expectancy exists. Of course, if the aptitude test score is quite high and the reading test score is quite low, one does not need elaborate computations to see that a disability is present.12

Organization of the Study

This study is divided into five chapters: an introduction, a survey of remedial reading theories, a descriptive instrument useful for the evaluation of reading materials, annotated listings, and a summary. Appended to the study is a selected list of publishers and their addresses.

Chapter I outlines the purpose of the study, defines the need for such a study, limits and focuses the scope, clarifies selected terms, and presents the general organization of the thesis.

Chapter II reviews related research, particularly the theories of remediation which apply to the reading deficiencies of college students.

Chapter III contains the background rationale for the development of an evaluative instrument for materials selection and an "Instrument for Evaluating and Selecting Remedial Reading Workbooks." The instrument, in checklist form, is intended to suggest a systematic procedure for
selecting appropriate materials for specific remedial purposes. The instrument should be an aid in determining strengths and weaknesses of particular texts, as well as an aid in quickly assessing the contents of any remedial reading materials.

Chapter IV builds upon the theories of remediation explored in Chapter II and applies the instrument developed in Chapter III to selected remedial materials.

Chapter V summarizes the paper. Its purpose is to restate the reasons for the study, to summarize the views of specialists in the area of remediation, to re-emphasize the necessity for careful selection of remedial materials, and to suggest possible directions for developing remedial reading education for the college student. This final chapter, then, reviews where remedial reading has been, where it stands now, where it might go, and how one might hasten reading progress through appropriately selected remedial materials.

The Appendix includes a list of sources for the kinds of materials included in this study. Selected publishers and addresses are listed.
CHAPTER II. REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH:
SUMMARY OF DIFFERENT THEORIES OF REMEDIATION AT THE COLLEGE LEVEL

The specific remedial instruction prescribed for any student is greatly dependent upon the theoretical predilections of the prescriber. Theories of remediation are numerous and much of their variety comes from their differing etiological concerns: intellectual development, clinical disability, psychological development, and environment. Problems in one or more of these areas may produce the need for remediation, but for many theorists appropriate remedial action is heavily weighted in the direction of their own area of specialization. In recent years these areas have expanded to include psychologists, linguists, psycholinguists, computer scientists, reading specialists, and neurologists. Despite this range of background and orientation, virtually all work in the area of remedial reading is based on the one hypothesis that improvement in reading is possible.

For remediation at the college level, many theorists concentrate on psychological and sociocultural factors as the principal causes of reading problems. By reason of their popularity, these two theoretical areas are more thoroughly developed in college-level remediation. The other two areas, intellectual development and clinical disability, have been subdivided to produce ever-widening assortments of causes and treatments.

This chapter reviews and evaluates theories of remediation at the college level. The chapter is divided into theories related to (1) intellectual development, (2) clinical disability, (3) psychological development, (4) environment. And although the chapter is thus divided, it is important to note that clearly delineated boundaries between these
divisions are nonexistent. Factors and theories related to one area frequently are related to one or more of the other areas. Such overlapping notwithstanding, the identification of remedial theories continues to focus on etiological emphases, and for that reason these categories seem justified and reasonably accurate.

Theories Believed to Relate to the Developmental Lag of the Intellect

I found no study of college-level remediation which explicitly addressed the intellectual factors of reading problems. Still, intellectual factors, or the developmental lag of the intellect, may be central to all those theories that focus on a deficiency in the rate of learning and retaining reading skills. In this paper, skill development will be discussed as representative of the "intellectual development" theory of remediation.

Wayne Otto justifies his rationale for skills orientation thus:

Why skills? Because we need them in order to focus instruction . . . or individualize instruction . . . or differentiate instruction . . . whatever terminology we use to describe a process whereby we (a) decide what we want learners to know, (b) find out what individuals do and do not know, and (c) teach individuals . . . what they don't already know. Anyone who rejects the notion of focused instruction rejects skills. 13

Even Kenneth S. Goodman, perhaps the best known advocate of more holistic instruction, admits the occasional necessity of skills instruction:

If a reader does not develop independence in the use of the strategies and techniques required for adequate functioning of the reading process then special attention may be required. Cycles of skill instruction could be planned which would move the learner from
language to a focus on the technique or knowledge which he needs and then back to language so that he can test the technique as he attempts to read. . . . Sequencing of skill instruction in reading has often been strongly advocated by publishers and curriculum workers. But the reading process requires that a multitude of skills be used simultaneously.14

According to Ruth Strang, some skills apply to all levels of reading competence and are appropriate to every level of remediation. The basic skills, applicable to any age, include "word recognition, vocabulary, and literal comprehension--abilities that support higher competences such as interpretation, critical and creative reading, and the application of ideas."15

Within the skills approach to remediation lies the controversy between the holistic approach (emphasis on meaning and comprehension) and the subskill approach (emphasis on parts--letter sounds, word analysis, word meaning, sentence structure, etc.--that develop comprehension). This controversy was suggested by Goodman (see above) but is more sharply stated by Samuels:

A major point made by critics of the subskill approach is that fractionating the reading process interferes with the essential characteristic of reading, which is comprehension. This point is well taken. Many teachers who use the subskill approach have lost sight of the fact that the subskill approach is simply a means to an end. What has happened in many classrooms is that goal displacement has occurred and the means have become ends in themselves. In using the subskill approach care must be taken to prevent the subskills from becoming the focal point of instruction. . . .

As the advocates of the holistic approach point out, the essential element of reading--deriving meaning--is destroyed by taking a whole and breaking it down. However, current research suggests that before one deals with wholes, smaller aspects have to be mastered.16
Samuels then minimizes the difference between the two approaches and suggests that,

The adverse relationship between holistic and subskill approaches may not exist. Both approaches recognize there are subskills. Subskill approaches start with smaller units and move to larger and more complex units. On the other hand, the holistic approach begins with the larger unit and moves to smaller units. One of the important factors differentiating the two approaches is sequencing.\(^{17}\)

Although Samuels has explained one segment of the relationship in this statement, one might seriously question his heavy emphasis on the importance of sequencing and his failure to stress the differentiating primary focus, the primary emphasis of the two approaches. The difference of focus constitutes the reasons for selection, method, and sequencing (e.g., the holistic approach implies a greater concentration on the larger, more general unit and suggests a corresponding method of instruction; the subskill approach implies a concentration on specific skills--more selective in method and content). This difference supersedes that of sequencing in the relationship between holistic and subskill approaches.

There is an important similarity that Samuels notes between the two approaches, however, when he writes that "both recognize the importance of diagnosis of difficulty in reading and the need to remedy the problem."\(^{18}\) Hence, diagnosis and prescription are vital aspects in both approaches.

The holistic and subskill problem is variously stated by reading authorities. Irene Athey, an advocate of the holistic approach, writes, "The importance of skills interaction and its role in reading may have
been overlooked in the emphasis on specific isolated skills" [emphasis added].

Jeanne Chall, in comparing the general and specific approaches, sees a definite difference in the two theories. In her work she refers to the differing views of Thorndike and Davis. Chall states:

Probably the most far-reaching theoretical question on reading comprehension is whether it is a general skill or ability or whether it is made up of a number of specific, identifiable skills.

This debate was launched recently by Robert L. Thorndike who took the position that reading comprehension is a unitary ability composed mainly of verbal reasoning. . . . At the other extreme is Frederick Davis's concept of reading comprehension. He concluded from considerable study that comprehension is composed of separate skills and abilities, such as understanding, word meanings, verbal reasoning, getting the main idea, detecting the author's mood, and discerning word meanings in context.

These two theories of reading comprehension can lead to considerably different approaches to testing and teaching. If the specificity concept is accepted, then both tests and instructional materials will pay particular attention to the different comprehension skills. A general concept of reading comprehension will lead to a more global approach to reading improvement, one that tries to develop reasoning ability by reading and other means.

Samuels says of reading theorists in general that some lean toward the subskill or specificity theories, others toward the more general, the holistic approach. Though Samuels believes that both approaches recognize, to some extent, the importance of subskills and that the difference lies in the sequencing, other theorists, Otto, Chall, and Davis, disagree and believe that total emphasis and focus of the program constitute the determining difference.
The case for skills and subskills shall assume a primary position in this paper. One reason for this choice is based on my personal teaching experience; the subskill approach yielded more noticeable results. The other reason is that the arguments for the subskill approach appear far more convincing.

In the focus on the importance of skills development in remediation, one must keep in mind that the educator, in diagnosing problems of individual students, is obliged to determine which skills and which sequence of skills will prove most beneficial. It is, after all, the student and the student's response that should, in each case, determine the appropriate selection of materials, procedure for instruction, and sequencing of skills. In any case, there still exists the danger that one may become "so engrossed in the skills approach that the major goal is lost sight of." The skills approach is merely one part of a total remediation program. It is "not antagonistic but complementary to other approaches, and is not, therefore, in itself a complete program for reading."  

Theories Related to Clinical Disabilities and Neurological Development

Much of what theorists of reading pedagogy have written on neurological involvement in the reading process seems to be intended for the beginning reader or the young disabled learner, rather than for the remedial college reader. For example, the Frostig theory of the significance of visual perception in the reading process resulted in programs and materials for specific perceptual training, but these materials and
programs are designed to be used by the beginning or the young disabled reader. According to Harris, the Delacato approach, intended to develop neurological organization and integration, was begun in an attempt to remedy the problems connected with mixed or crossed dominance resulting from the organism's failure to achieve neurological integration below the cortical level of the brain. (Crossed dominance exists when dominant eye and dominant hand are on opposite sides of the body.) Recent research, particularly that of Gene V. Glass and Melvyn P. Robbins, raises significant questions about Delacato's study. To Glass and Robbins, the importance of mixed or crossed dominance to reading development has been denigrated.

Another dimension of the argument, related to neurological organization and integration, is currently demanding considerable research attention, however. This research may, in time, result in theories supporting some of Delacato's insights. The supporting research is that concerned with the interhemispheric relations and right-left cerebral dominance—studies of lateralization in the nervous system.

Although numerous new studies are being conducted in this area, the theory of the neurologist Samuel T. Orton, in which he relates dominance to reading, has been a controversial issue for over thirty years. Orton's theory resulted in the "Orton-Gillingham Approach" to remedial instruction of dyslexic students. Orton's method utilizes the kinesthetic approach in developing visual-auditory language associations. It is heavily phonetic and progresses from isolated phonetic units to words. The steps of learning are methodical and cumulative. Orton believed that failure
to develop consistent dominance leads to what he termed "strephosymbolia" (twisted symbols) and is "the reading disability." 27

The theories of Frostig, Delacato, and Orton have received particular attention in the last decade. For it was in the late 1960s that reading specialists noticeably reversed some earlier beliefs about remediation. This change in position affected emphasis on neurological development. Albert J. Harris writes,

Majority opinion among specialists has for many years favored the policy of beginning remedial reading by using perceptual and memory abilities which are normal or least impaired and while ... learning by a method with which he can achieve some success, working to strengthen those perceptual and associative abilities that are particularly weak. Major emphasis has been on capitalizing on strengths with minor emphasis on building up areas of weakness. 28

In clarifying this point, Harris quotes Silver and Hagin:

Efforts now are directed to the stimulation of the defective perceptual areas. This is almost a complete reversal of our earlier approach. Our purpose now is really to enhance cerebral maturation, to bring neurological functioning to the point where it is physiologically capable of learning to read. 29

Other recent studies related to clinical disabilities merit attention. One such study of reading-disabled college students explored the hypotensive and hypertensive physiological reactions exhibited while reading. The study was conducted by Konrad W. Reichurdt whose theory was that there exists "a need for programs which would first of all remediate the emotional components of the abnormal physical or psychomotor responses." 30 The experimental group received training similar to Erhard Seminar Training, the goal of which is the planned change of client systems. Reichurdt's purpose was "to effect the kind of
Another hypothesis, developed by Smith and Carrigan, is that reading disability may result from some biochemical peculiarity or physiological difficulty resulting from faulty conduction of nerve impulses in the brain. Using special tests they outlined a physiological explanation of five groups of cases. They were unsuccessful in attempting to demonstrate a relationship with endocrine functioning. Although their hypothesis is unproved, Smith and Carrigan have opened new areas for research—the controversial question of drug treatment as a possible solution for some cases of reading disability. 32

In summary, the neurological factors in the reading development of the college student have not been areas of concentrated research or study. Knowledge and interest in this area are increasing, however, and emphasis is beginning to reach beyond neurological aspects of reading disabilities in the beginning reader. There are two matters of particular importance in remedial reading theories relating to neurological development. They are (1) the need for continuing the extensive study of the brain and the neurological processes involved in the reading process; (2) the need for research which establishes the comparative efficiency of placing primary instructional emphasis on strengths or on areas of deficiency. In general, more controlled research is necessary before directions of development can be clarified.
or conclusions can be made regarding neurological theories and their relationship to remedial reading and the college population.

Theories Related to Psychological Development

Personality patterns and reading development

Thomas J. Edwards has stated, "If there is such tremendous variation among individuals in so many dimensions of human makeup--both physiological and psychological--how, then, can we look for the method that will be the universal panacea for problems in the development of reading ability or of any other skill?" I support Edwards in his statement. It is not the "universal panacea" that is sought, but an understanding that results in more satisfactory prescriptions for the individual remedial student.

George D. Spache speaks of operant conditioning--"a systematic approach to learning borrowed from the fields of animal and experimental psychology. Basically the approach involves analyzing the learning into small steps, repeated frequently with immediate reinforcement or reward until the desired behavior becomes fixed." Programmed instruction, based on this approach, broadened into what is now termed "systems approaches."

Spache also writes that in order to meet the student's individual needs, one should understand the student, his/her specific learning problems, and the therapies appropriate for such problems:

We still do not know what personality patterns are peculiarly characteristic of retarded readers. We are not certain of what kinds of maladjustment problems we are attempting to treat... We still do not know what kinds of therapy... In the near future, there are numerous remedial or therapeutic approaches that we must explore by controlled research--values of bibliotherapy--
various types of group therapy used alone or in conjunction with the usual remedial instruction. We also need to discover the type of individuals among high school and college students for whom directive, semidirective, or permissive kinds of psychotherapy may provide a better answer than formal skill instruction . . . explore all the possibilities of counseling and guidance procedures in the remedial reading program.\textsuperscript{36}

Though some research has been done on therapeutic techniques for the remediation of reading, more research is needed. Studies combining group discussion and therapy with remedial reading generally report gains in the reader as person, and the reader as reader. One such program was reported by Elsie J. Dotson. The primary emphasis of the program was on the reader.\textsuperscript{37} Another program, incorporating ten group therapy sessions conducted by a clinical psychologist, resulted in the therapy group making statistically significant gains in reading and noted improvement in personality factors. Studies continue to report that therapy, combined with reading instruction, is a valuable approach to remediation.\textsuperscript{38}

Psycholinguistics and reading

In order to understand the "psycholinguistic theory of reading" and its place in remediation, one must first trace the relationship of linguistics to reading.

Aaron Carton, in \textit{Orientation to Reading}, notes that until the early 1960's little attention was given to the application of linguistics to reading. Leonard Bloomfield, though he did his work in the late thirties, received no recognition for it until the early sixties. Bloomfield concentrated on phonemics and argued that reading "extends only as far as the decoding process."\textsuperscript{39} Bloomfield did not, however, develop a linguistic program of reading instruction based on his theory.
Another linguist, Charles Carpenter Fries, wrote about the process of teaching reading from a linguistic point of view and focused on "spelling patterns and the descriptive linguistic principle of minimal contrast." \(^{40}\) *Fries Linguistic Readers*, published in 1963, resulted from the work of Fries and Bloomfield. \(^{41}\) Some of the basic exercises Fries developed have been incorporated into many reading programs.

Charles LeFevre, another linguist, was primarily interested in the sentence. Carton writes that LeFevre concerned himself with the "phenomena of sentence intonation and what linguists call 'suprasegmental' phenomena." \(^{42}\) LeFevre's linguistic approach assumes that "in order for much of the intonation to be returned to a written message by an individual reading aloud, it would be necessary for him to comprehend the message. Intonation seems to imply comprehension." \(^{43}\) Therefore, he concentrated on the sentence and its importance in the reading process.

Of these three who laid a foundation for the development of psycho-linguistic thinking, Carton says that "LeFevre's linguistic approach, which emphasizes the sentence as the essential unit of study and involves behavior (in the form of sentence intonation) that suggests comprehension, proves to be more compatible with global definitions of reading, while Bloomfield's and Fries' approach is more compatible with atomistic approaches." \(^{44}\)

Goodman, speaking of the relationship of linguistics to reading, states, "The narrowness of early applications of linguistics to reading has led to the development of two unfortunate misconceptions: (1) that a linguistic method of teaching reading exists and (2) that linguistics can be applied to reading only to explain phoneme-grapheme
correspondences." These misconceptions are indeed unfortunate, albeit not as widespread as Goodman's statement implies.

In the late sixties and early seventies, atomistic linguistic reading theories gave way to psycholinguistic thought. Although there has not, as yet, been a proposed and complete theory of psycholinguistics, there has been study, theorization, and insight relating psycholinguistics and reading. Goodman defines psycholinguistics thus:

Psycholinguistics, as its name suggests, lies at an intersection of psychology and linguistics. . . . Its central task, according to Miller, is to describe the psychological processes that go on when people use language. . . . Linguistic analysis also shows that language has two levels—a surface structure—that is, the sounds or written representation of language—and a deep structure—that is meaning. . . . Psychology contributes insights about how language must be learned and used. . . . At the intersection of these areas of psychology and linguistics lies the growing and fascinating field of psycholinguistics. Already there is an imposing body of knowledge about how fluent language-users construct and perceive sentences. Psycholinguistic research confirms, for example, the linguistic insight that language is processed at deep structure levels.

This theory, as most other psycholinguistic theories, is based on how fluent readers perform. Psycholinguists then apply that theory to the disabled as well as the "normal" reader.

There do exist areas of agreement in psycholinguistic theorization. Carton sets forth six broad outlines of these areas. Briefly they are:

1. "Chunking" (named and studied by James McKeen Cattell)—refers to the attempt to group materials in perceptual fields.
2. "Structuring"—the attempt to organize and identify separate objects.
3. Relationship of the structure of language—as a major source for
structuring the written text. This provides for the study of relationships between deep structures and surface structures.

4. **Context** is believed to provide an aid to interpretation of any linguistic utterance or text. Context refers here to the surrounding material and to the situation. (cloze procedure)

5. Errors are believed to be an inevitable aspect in the process of reading.

6. Probability and number of cues are significant in decoding. Recognition of a greater number of cues suggests greater comprehension.

Psycholinguistics, then, is the intersection of psychology and linguistics. It is not a theory as such. Carton states its value thus:

Less doctrinaire approaches to reading than have hitherto characterized reading pedagogy are called for by a psycholinguistic approach to reading. Sophisticated psychological and linguistic analysis of reading suggests that mixed strategies of instruction and mixed strategies for the learner and the mature reader are most sensible.

The value of psycholinguistics is not as an established theory, not as a psycholinguistic approach, not in its psycholinguistic materials of instruction. Of its value, Goodman writes, "The value of psycholinguistics, we are firmly convinced, lies in the new understanding it can give us all--researchers and practitioners--about the reading process and learning to read."

In summary, by their efforts to understand the interaction between spoken and written language and thought, psychology, linguistics, psycholinguistics all contribute to an understanding of the reading
process. The united effort of the combined disciplines should lead to significant pedagogical implications in reading development.

Cloze procedure

Another approach to remediation—one which spans the intellectual and the psychological areas of reading development—is that of the cloze procedure based on the probability theory and the gestalt idea of closure. It is "the impulse to complete a structured whole by supplying a missing element." The test or exercise, in the "cloze" technique, contains passages from which certain words have been omitted. The student is instructed to fill in the missing words. This procedure is used most extensively in testing comprehension. According to Ruth Strang, "Cloze tests in which only nouns and verbs were omitted showed a high relation to tests of factual comprehension; cloze tests in which all types of words were omitted showed a high relationship to tests measuring comprehension of relationships." In testing both the factual comprehension and syntactic and semantic relationships, the procedure touches upon both the intellectual and the psychological areas of reading.

Carton, in speaking of the cloze procedure as developed in 1953 by Wilson Taylor, writes that "findings imply that familiar linguistic structures are present as expectations in our minds when we read and that the availability of any contextual material can suggest other textual material." One might argue whether the expectations present in the mind are present intellectually or psychologically. Though the gestalt idea and the structured whole are psychological studies it
seems that the areas are indeed overlapping, and the cloze procedure does span both the intellectual and the psychological fields.

Cloze exercises can also be used in remediation. Strang reports,

Use of a graded series of cloze exercises produced more improvement in the reading comprehension of college students than did other remedial procedures. However, in an experiment with sixth-grade pupils, Schneyer found that "the pupils who had completed the cloze exercise did not show significantly greater improvement in reading comprehension than the control group, though both groups made higher scores in reading comprehension and vocabulary and lower scores in reading speed."53

Strang emphasizes that the improvement in comprehension through cloze exercises will not come from merely filling in the blanks and checking. The reasons for the choices must be discussed as well as the process of arriving at each choice.

The cloze procedure, based on the probability theory, and its linguistic complexities deserves further study. As research has shown, its effect can reach into diagnosis and remediation—and certainly holds values as yet undiscovered.

Theorists in psychology, in psycholinguistics, and supporters of the cloze technique are actively engaged in continuing experiments and study. Research in each of these separate areas, as well as in their combined area(s), merits attention.

Theories Related to Environment and Sociocultural Factors

In addition to the factors and theories related to intellectual development, clinical disability, and psychological development, the final etiological area of concern in this paper is that of environment. Cultural factors play a significant role in language and reading
development and differences. And language and cultural differences demand variation in theories of reading.

Roger W. Shuy, supporting the thinking of Morton Wiener and Ward Cromer, speaks of the student whose "cultural operative system is simply different from that of the reading instruction." He believes that if a nonstandard dialect interferes with the acquisition of standard English skills and a mastery of the reading material, either the material or the cultural behavior pattern must be changed. He believes, "If the end result is successful, the system used is immaterial." He further states that if the major focus of reading is to derive meaning from the printed page, there should be no hesitation about developing materials to correspond with the student's grammatical system. Shuy argues that standard grammar is not a necessary part of the reading process per se, and its development is a different, though related, discipline.

Though this theory is still in the formative stages, various college texts are specifically written for the culturally "different" student. The experiences, the language, and the interest level are all significant aspects of the underlying sociocultural theories upon which such texts have been written. These texts have been written for the Spanish-American, the Black-American, and students from various other cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

Response to the ethnically oriented texts has been mixed. Immediately some resisted the approach and insisted that students learn the language they would "use in life." Their position is quite different from that of Shuy. They would undoubtedly see standard
grammar as an essential part of the reading process. Shuy had divorced the two, stating only that standard grammar and reading are "related."

Thus, while a significant number of educators and researchers comment on the importance of sociocultural factors and their relationship to reading, and while there is disagreement on what measures to take to improve the reading programs for the culturally and ethnically "different," there is a definite need for scholarly research and theorization in this area.

Summary

In relating reading proficiency to cognitive, neurological, psychological, and sociocultural development, one uncovers theories, fragments of theories, and questions. Each strain of theorization is just that: a strain. There seems to be, however, a pedagogical/attitudinal framework underlying all.

The framework "underlying all reading instruction at the college level should be one of possibility rather than deficiency."

Remedial reading procedures that are based on a pedagogy of possibility, that concentrate on the cumulative development of individual skills and subskills, that are aware of underlying neurological processes, that show an understanding of personality and an awareness of language development and dialect differences, and that are individually structured
and sequenced, utilize segments of a number of the theories just reviewed. And, because research studies indicate multiple causation is at the root of the majority of reading problems, multiple solutions, varied materials, tailored approaches seem, of necessity, to be the rule for effective remediation. Harris states this well when he speaks of diagnosis and relates that to effective remediation:

The diagnostic problem would be comparatively easy if one could expect to find only one important handicap in each reading disability problem. That would be, unfortunately, a mistaken expectation. Most . . . who develop severe disabilities labor under the burden of several different handicaps, any one of which could be an important drawback to progress in reading. . . . Remedial teaching is highly individualized . . . based on diagnostic study of the . . . unique problems and needs. It is highly individualized also in the skills that are selected for emphasis, in the materials used, and in the varied approaches."\textsuperscript{59}

If remediation demands such selectivity, the educator is responsible, it seems, to evaluate the worth of particular remedial materials for individual students. Thus, the ensuing chapter contains an instrument developed specifically to aid in the selection of appropriate materials.

There is one final note on the review of literature relating to remedial reading theories. The study revealed that there is a definite need for extensive research on and constant evaluation of reading theories, remedial theories, instructional procedures and materials, and, most importantly, student needs at the college-adult-level.
CHAPTER III. AN INSTRUMENT FOR THE EVALUATION
AND SELECTION OF REMEDIAL READING WORKBOOKS

Background Rationale for the Evaluation Instrument

One reason that might be given for developing this instrument is the need to relate the theoretical causes of reading problems, as indicated in the last chapter, to possible prescriptions for these causes. For example, a student lacking a specific word attack skill will require learning materials that stress that skill. An instrument like the one presented in this chapter should assist the educator in assessing the worth of a particular workbook for an individual student. Does this book, or does it not, contain the skills needed?

The selection process is increasingly more difficult because of the great variety of remedial materials available. Research indicates the rapid increase in such materials. Writing of the reading educator's dilemma in selecting appropriate reading materials for the student, Martha J. Maxwell states,

Kenneth Komoski, President of the Educational Products Information Exchange Institute, a consumer's union for school systems and educators, estimates that less than 10% of the educational products on the market today have been field tested and far fewer have been subject to more rigorous learner verification testing. . . . Komoski fears that the proliferation of educational materials has led to providing schools and teachers with an increasing number of trivial options rather than the high quality alternatives they need.60

It is true that since the 1950's there has been a significant increase in instructional reading materials for the college and adult reader. Prior to that time, textbook materials for college and adult reading were virtually nonexistent. Paul Conrad Berg, in his article,
"Methods and Materials in College and Adult Reading Programs," summarizes the development thus:

Although Louella Cole Pressey published a Manual of Reading Exercises for Freshmen as early as 1928, few other instructional materials appeared on the market before 1950. . . . Harvey Robinson, in a review of remedial texts at the college level as late as 1950 stated: 'No particular professional acuity is required to penetrate the superficiality of types of exercises and treatments which characterize most of these volumes.' Further, according to Robinson, these materials were overly concerned with reading speed, contained no well-rounded index of comprehension, and indicated an absence of exercises to develop basic organizational skills.61

During the 50's educators began to plan and experiment with their own programs, resulting in an increase in materials for the teaching of reading. And, as Berg notes, in 1959 Bliesmer reported that the trend in college reading was toward a greater variety of skills--a more balanced reading program. That same year, Lyle Miller's review of remediation programs indicated that the workbook, supplemented by individual practice with mechanical equipment, was most popular, and in 1960 Oscar Causey published a survey reporting that "88 percent of the more than five hundred college programs then in existence used workbooks as an integral part of their materials."62 Because of this increase in reading materials, and the difficulty in developing an instrument that would be applicable to a number of different reading devices, the decision was made to concentrate on an instrument for selecting workbooks. This choice was also made because workbooks have proven to be such an important component of the college reading program.
The evaluation instrument proposed calls for judgments concerning the book's background information (authorship, philosophy, objectives, and organization), general and specific content, suitability of content, and format. While it is not possible to set up absolutes in textbook selection and prescription, it is possible and necessary to evaluate the particular emphases of the workbook. The instrument should facilitate the selection process. Summary statements relating causal factors of reading problems to selectivity of remedial materials will conclude this chapter.
Instrument for Evaluating and Selecting Remedial Reading Workbooks

Preliminary statements:

1. One form is to be used for each textbook.

2. Since an instructor is most likely to look for workbooks with particular profiles, it would not seem necessary to give numerical values to the gradings and compute the estimated overall effectiveness. This is a possible direction, however, that an evaluator may choose.

3. Areas of primary importance are Specific Content and Suitability of Content. The eclectic educator will give particular attention to these two areas.

4. Following each major division a space is provided for additional comments and questions that may prove helpful in the selection process.

5. Several evaluators per textbook, including reading educator, member(s) of English Department, student(s), are advisable if there is to be group evaluation of a selected number of books.

6. The presupposition is that the final decision will be made for an individual student by an individual educator.
INSTRUCTIONS:

Complete the Basic Information.

Place an "X" in appropriate column.

Comment or question where you deem it appropriate.

Complete Evaluator Information.

Basic Information:

AUTHOR _______________________

TITLE OF TEXT ______________________

PUBLISHER ______________________

COPYRIGHT ______________________
Legend:  E - Excellent  
        H - High  
        A - Average  
        P - Poor  
        NI - Not Included  
        NA - Not Applicable  

(Place an "X" in appropriate column.)

<table>
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<th>E</th>
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<th>P</th>
<th>NI</th>
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I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A. AUTHORSHIP
   Background qualifications of author*

B. PHILOSOPHY**
   Appropriate
   Consistently applied
   Based on sound learning/
   psychological principles

C. OBJECTIVES**
   Appropriate for college level
   Text fulfills objectives

D. ORGANIZATION
   Clear organization of material
   Sequencing of units

COMMENTS: ____________________________________________
__________________________________________
__________________________________________
__________________________________________
__________________________________________

*Criteria for qualifications are to be decided by the group doing
the evaluating.

**How consonant with the Philosophy/Objectives of this particular
department/school?
II. CONTENT
   A. GENERAL CONTENT
   Table of contents
       Current reading reference list
       Time-rate conversion table
       Progress graphs
       Accompanying teacher's manual
       Companion audio-visual aids

   COMMENTS:

   B. SPECIFIC CONTENT
   Placement and Evaluative Materials
       Readability level (if indicated)
           Indicates student's appropriate placement
       Diagnostic pre-test
       Diagnostic post-test
       Prescriptive suggestions

   Skills (in general)
       Program of skills
       Sequence of skills
       Presented adequately
       Sufficient repetition
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Skills (in particular)</th>
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<th>H</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>NI</th>
<th>NA</th>
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<td><strong>COMPREHENSION SKILLS</strong></td>
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<td>Literal comprehension skills</td>
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<td>Inferential skills</td>
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<td>Critical/Analytical skills</td>
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<td><strong>REFERENCE AND STUDY SKILLS</strong></td>
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<td><strong>SPEED READING SKILLS</strong></td>
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</table>

**COMMENTS:**

**C. SUITABILITY OF CONTENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interest level</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>NI</th>
<th>NA</th>
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<td>Clarity of explanations</td>
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<td>Promotes positive self-image for all social groups and individuals</td>
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<td><strong>Literary quality of selections</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Balance of types of literature</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Variety of subject matter</strong></td>
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**COMMENTS:**

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______________________________
III. VERIFICATION AND VALIDATION

Has been recommended by professional persons or reviews
Has been validated through systematic field-testing procedures
Provides information on how teachers have used these materials and with what results

IV. FORMAT

Number of pages Average number of words per exercise:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Under 900</th>
<th>900-2000</th>
<th>over 2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>E</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>NI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Book is comfortable size and shape
Cover and pages open flat
Paper quality
Type size
Effective use of spacing
Attractiveness
Illustrations/art/pictures
Tables/graphs/charts

COMMENTS: __________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________

EVALUATOR: ________________________________________________
DATE: ___________________________________________
Theories of Remediation and the Actual Prescription

Just as the theories of remediation and the causes of reading problems overlap and interrelate, so, too, the areas of this instrument relate in varying degrees to the etiological concerns present in reading theories. The instrument's extended section on development of skills relates most directly to the intellectual development theories of remediation. Psychological and sociocultural needs are reflected in the "Suitability of Content" section. In practice, however, psychological and sociocultural needs frequently employ supplementary remediation such as counseling, group therapy, and language development. Yet, since causal factors of reading problems are in these two etiological areas, careful attention to the "suitable" section seems advisable.

One might argue that "clinical disability" is not duly treated in the instrument. This area is difficult to include in a workbook selection process. Most techniques developed for remediation in this area involve neurological exercises in combination with a skills-oriented remediation program. Therefore, careful attention to sections of the instrument pertaining to skills and "Suitability of Content" should assist the educator in selecting appropriate materials to use as part of the program of remediation. These materials may be supplemented by neurological exercises in the remediation process.

Though different causal factors contribute to particular reading problems, in each case the educator should carefully examine remedial material--the content, the sequencing, the interest level, and various other components--in making the actual prescription. In "Training
Teachers of Adult Reading," Wayne Otto and Richard Smith write, "Once needs have been identified through diagnosis, a teacher must be in a position to meet those needs in the most effective manner for the individual involved. This means that a teacher must be an eclectic, one who is able to select the best from what is available for a given purpose." And Walter H. MacGinitie states,

There is considerable evidence that the practice of defining what is to be learned, and then evaluating and attending to the gaps in each learner's preparation, can result in a substantial increase in the number of students who make the desired gains. . . . The materials we choose or prepare involve considerations ranging from vocabulary selection to affective impact."

In the selection and prescription process, utilization of an instrument, such as that presented herein, is an important step. With such an instrument, the profile of the contents and the strengths and weaknesses of a particular program are graphically evident, and may be carefully matched to meet the needs of particular students. The needs of students differ; different programs can be designed to meet different needs.
Elwood L. Prestwood, in "Criteria for Selection of Reading Materials," insists that educators examine reading materials

... with a sharp critical eye, and not rely upon statements indicating their intent. Too frequently materials designed to improve comprehension use exercises that really call for the use of but one comprehensive skill, for example, questions requiring the recall of details. Such materials may be of little value for pupils whose need lies in learning how to draw conclusions or how to secure implied meanings. Once the skill deficiency of a student is determined, the supplementary materials must have the elimination of that deficiency as their chief target.66

Later, Prestwood states,

The ultimate in reading materials will be achieved when they contain inherent motivation that entices the students to read. Although teachers will have to select materials that are related to the realistic reading needs of their students, they may not disregard the interest appeal the materials have.67

If Prestwood's concerns about the content and interest-appeal of supplementary instructional materials are valid, the evaluative instrument proposed in Chapter III should prove helpful. By presenting an evaluation and an annotated listing of ten selected workbooks, this chapter provides not only an assessment of the workbooks selected, but a demonstration of the usefulness of the evaluation checklist.

In selecting the workbooks to be evaluated, care was taken to include a representative sampling of the wide variety now available for college remedial students. The workbooks are all of recent copyright (1974 or later). Their overall-worth, content, and interest-appeal vary significantly. Some books which do not explicitly indicate that they are
"remedial level" are included; they are representative of workbooks which contain a diversity of readability levels and a wide range of skill exercises.

In evaluating the materials selected, I used an abbreviated adaptation of the descriptive instrument (Chapter III). This condensed version facilitates a more graphic comparison of texts, thereby more clearly demonstrating the usefulness of the instrument. The modification chosen for this demonstration focuses attention on "Content" and "Suitability of Content" of the workbooks. As will be seen, these two areas spotlight the skills components of the workbooks being evaluated. Other modifications are possible. The flexibility of the instrument allows for any selective or piecemeal adaptation which suits the user's purpose.

In assessing the qualities and arriving at evaluative markings, I considered the programs in relation to one another. Thus, the markings are comparative rather than absolute ratings.

In the "Specific Content" section, judgment of placement and evaluative materials is based on the predicted usefulness of the tests. "Excellent" designates a program which includes tests of what it proposes to teach (pre-tests), as well as tests of what it has taught (post-tests).

In "Skills (in general)" the "Program of skills" is interpreted "range of skills." A program presenting an exceptionally well-balanced range of skills ranks "excellent"; those with a more limited range rank lower.

"Sequence of skills" pertains to the order in which the skills are presented. Programs which show a logical progression of skills rank higher than programs whose sequence is not as evident.
"Presented adequately" refers to the initial presentation of new skills. If the presentation is sufficiently detailed and clear, the program's rating reflects this. If the skills are "Presented sufficiently," i.e., with well-designed repetition, the rating also reflects this.

Because different workbooks emphasize different skills, a comparative evaluation of skills components must take a more descriptive form than other content. This description is effected in the "Skills (in particular)" section by placing asterisks in each area of greatest emphasis within a particular book. A book of general skills has no asterisk. Other pertinent comments regarding this section are included in the annotated listings.

Within the "Suitability of Content" category, "Interest-appeal level" presents special problems for the evaluator. The following guidelines are followed in this application of the instrument, and may be of general use. Judgment is based primarily on interest and motivational appeal. Other considerations include the variety and quality of reading selections, method(s) of presentations, quality of presentations, and motivational devices such as learner profiles or progress charts. The final decision is based on the probable "general-interest appeal" of all of these.

Additional information, such as might be contained in the "Comments" section of the full evaluation instrument, is provided herein as "Annotated Listings."
An Evaluation of Selected College Remedial-Reading Workbooks

Books to be considered:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adams, W. Royce and Jane Brody Spira</td>
<td>Reading Beyond Words</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bracy, Jane and Marian McClintock</td>
<td>Read to Succeed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brown, James I.</td>
<td>Reading Power</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conlin, Mary Lou</td>
<td>Concepts of Communication: Reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dauzat, Sam V., Jo Ann Dauzat, Wayne Otto,</td>
<td>Steck-Vaughn Adult Reading (Level 2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>and Burton W. Kreitlow</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pauk, Walter</td>
<td>Six-Way Paragraphs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pauk, Walter</td>
<td>A Skill at a Time Series</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pimsleur, Paul and Donald Berger</td>
<td>Encounters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spargo, Edward, ed.</td>
<td>Selections from the Black</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weinberg, Joel</td>
<td>College Reading: Skills and Practice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[An author's last name and abbreviated titles will be used in charting the evaluation.]

Legend:  E  - Excellent
         H  - High
         A  - Average
         P  - Poor
         NI - Not Included
         NA - Not Applicable
Table 1. Comparative ratings of ten college remedial-reading workbooks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legend: E - Excellent</th>
<th>H - High</th>
<th>A - Average</th>
<th>P - Poor</th>
<th>NI - Not Included</th>
<th>NA - Not Applicable</th>
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<td><strong>Area(s) of emphasis in this particular book.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>More extensive information given in annotated listing</strong></td>
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<th>Specific Content</th>
<th>Placement and Evaluative Materials</th>
<th>Skills (in general)</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Readability levels indicated</td>
<td>Program of skills</td>
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<td></td>
<td>6.0-10.0</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Sequence of skills</td>
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<td>H A H E E E ** ** A H E</td>
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<td>Presented adequately</td>
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<td>E H H E H H H A A A E</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Sufficient repetition</td>
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<td>E H H E E E E H H H</td>
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<td>Skills (in particular)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>VOCABULARY SKILLS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Word meaning skills</td>
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<td>Word analysis skills</td>
<td>NI</td>
<td>E*</td>
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<td><strong>COMPREHENSION SKILLS</strong></td>
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<td>Literal comprehension skills</td>
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<td>Critical/Analytical skills</td>
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<td>Clarity of explanations</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>A</td>
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<td>Promotes positive self-image for all social groups and individuals</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>H</td>
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<td>Literary quality of selections</td>
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<td>Balance of types of literature</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety of subject matter</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This 359-page book is divided into ten chapters which stress a "4Rs" approach to reading improvement. Each chapter begins with "R1 Reading Preparation," which is the method whereby students are trained to develop the purposes for reading that chapter. "R2 Reading Actively" is the second focus of each chapter. This section instructs and gives practice in identifying main ideas, making inferences, identifying biases, etc. "R3 Reading Skills Check" teaches reading comprehension and vocabulary skills through selected readings. "R4 Reading Applications" reinforces the skills taught in the chapter and its purpose, according to the author, is "to get the student out of the book and into actual application of the reading skills taught."68

The focus of the book is on the development of more cognitively active and more affectively responsive reading. Although the book may be used in tutorial situations or independently, many of the exercises and responses call for interaction with the instructor or other students.

Several short stories are included in the book, but most of the selections are from textbooks, periodicals, and newspapers.

As noted in Table 1, literal comprehension, critical analysis, and diversity of subject matter are strong areas in the text. Because interaction and regular feedback are also vital to the program, this material seems particularly suited for intellectually capable college students whose reading deficiencies may be partially related to psychological and/or sociocultural factors.

Although the readability level is not indicated, the authors do state that the book is specifically for students scoring in the 1st to 15th percentile on the Nelson-Denny Reading Test. According to the authors, the program was developed to assist students in those basic reading skills needed to achieve success in higher education.

The program begins with a questionnaire assessment of reading habits of the student. Each of the six instructional units begins with a diagnostic test. These tests may be taken either before unit instruction to determine weaknesses, or after unit instruction to measure improvement. Record sheets and progress graphs are included in the text.

The manual suggests alternate methods of implementing the program: (1) the "Lab Method" in which the student works independently; (2) the "Inter-Mix Method--Part Traditional, Part Cooperative" in which the instructor presents the lesson to the class and then groups the students to work cooperatively. Cassette tapes for additional instruction and practice are available. Masters to be used in making instructional transparencies are included in the manual.

The 157 pages direct most attention to word attack, dictionary, and vocabulary skills. Minor emphasis is given to comprehension of paragraphs and essays. The reading selections are quite short and are used primarily to develop skills of literal comprehension. No fictional prose is included.

This low-readability level book is suited for a student weak in word analysis skills. These skills are presented well. However, because the
selected readings are uninteresting and the comprehension skills insufficiently developed, the instructor may well omit these sections.


Readability level is not indicated. However, the selections included are "relatively easy reading, none being rated 'very difficult' or 'difficult' on the Flesch Reading Ease scale." They clearly progress in order of increasing difficulty.

The first section of the book tests word power, comprehension, and reading rate. According to the author, the purpose of these "informal" tests is to involve the reader in a way that will motivate him/her to exert greater effort.

Vocabulary improvement is a major emphasis in each of the five chapters. Definitions, word parts, and words in context are the text's primary methods of vocabulary improvement. Dictionary usage is encouraged throughout.

Specific speed-reading skills, such as surveying, skimming, and scanning techniques, are emphasized to a lesser degree. Comprehension skills, a part of each lesson, stress development of literal comprehension.

Besides the forty-four reading selections (averaging 1000 words in length), and instructional and practice exercises, the book contains an appendix consisting of an answer key, a time-rate conversion table, and progress record charts.

This program is best suited to the independent learner who needs to strengthen basic reading skills. Its high quality and diverse reading
selections make it appropriate for students whose reading deficiencies may be due to intellectual and/or psychological factors.


Three modules of instruction make up this reading program. The Vocabulary Module includes the study of context clues, word parts, dictionaries, and other skills for developing word meaning. The Ideas Module contains lessons on main ideas and supporting details in short readings selected primarily from textbooks, periodicals, and newspapers. This module also presents various study skills--surveying, reading charts and graphs, and using glossaries and indexes. The Inferences Module contains lessons on forming opinions about ideas presented in texts, making generalizations from textual information, and reading for implied meanings.

Part I, the Vocabulary Module, is contained in one workbook. The second book, Ideas Module/Inferences Module, includes the other two sections of the program. The teacher's manual includes a suggested instructional schedule, reproducible answer keys, and the word count and grade level of each reading. A progress chart is included in the text.

This is a well-designed program for remediation of word and/or comprehension skills. The arrangement of the instructional materials in modules provides the instructor with a flexible sequence of skills. Presentations are clear; practice is consistent. Its one weakness is its lack of high-quality post-tests.

*Adult Reading* is divided into two sets of books. Level 1 consists of seven books (1100-1700) on grades 0-4 level. Level 2, the set reviewed here, consists of eight books (2100-2800) on grades 4-8 level.

A placement inventory test is included. A student is expected to advance from the level of his initial placement.

Each book concentrates on specific skills: **Reading 2100** - Words; **Reading 2200** - Sentences; **Reading 2300** - Main Idea; **Reading 2400** - Relationships/Conclusions; **Reading 2500** - Sequence; **Reading 2600** - Locating and Organizing Information; **Reading 2700** - Maps, Graphs, Tables; **Reading 2800** - Personal Reading Skills.

Frequent criterion-referenced inventories are an integral part of each book. A "Learner Profile" chart serves as a record of the student's progress in these tests.

Reading selections include newspaper and textbook excerpts and readings on life situations—no literature. The self-correcting format of the exercises which follow the readings allows for immediate feedback and reinforcement. The books range from 70 to 120 pages.

The program rates as very practical for the student with serious reading problems. The low readability, logical sequence of skills, extensive practice, and frequent testing make it a comprehensive remedial program.

The book contains one hundred short passages arranged in order of ascending difficulty. Passages are adapted from nonfictional articles in journals or magazines.

The entire book develops six categories of comprehension: subject matter, main ideas, supporting details, conclusions, clarifying devices, and vocabulary in context. After each selection of expository prose, there are six questions, one based on each category. A diagnostic chart helps the student identify a weakness in any category.

The purpose of the book, suggested methods for study, and directions for the student are clearly expressed in the first thirteen pages. The remaining 223 pages contain practice in the six areas of comprehension, the answer key, and the diagnostic chart.

Because of the selectivity of skills and the narrow scope of subject matter, this book's suitability is limited. Since most of the readings are scientific and historical—adaptations from *Aramco World Magazine* and *Petroleum Today*—the program seems appropriate for students who need development of literal comprehension skills and may be motivated by scientific and historic reading matter.


Each of the ten booklets in the series develops one specific reading comprehension skill. The purpose is to encourage mastery of essential skills one at a time.

The titles of the booklets are: *Vocabulary in Context*, *Using the*
Signal Words, Understanding Figurative Language, Getting the Author's Tone, Reading Between the Lines, Getting the Main Point, Recognizing Traits of Character, Recognizing Points of View, Perceiving Structure.

Each booklet contains one hundred passages; each passage is followed by one question designed to develop the skill emphasis of that booklet. The passages are of high literary quality and expose students to excerpts from well-known books.

The initial part of each booklet is instructional and motivational. The method for using the book is clearly outlined. A combined answer key and record chart are part of each booklet.

As indicated in the "Comparative Ratings" section, this series ranks "excellent" in all comprehension skills. Because of the separate booklets, skills may be isolated and specific aspects of comprehension carefully analyzed. I recommend this series for students weak in particular skills of comprehending literature. Because its readability level is 9.0-Adult, it is not suited for seriously remedial students.


The text is intended to teach reading comprehension skills and to familiarize the student with aspects of life in the United States and Canada. To attain this purpose, pertinent journalistic articles have been simplified--using a 1500 word basic vocabulary.

The twenty-seven articles vary in length (181-851 words). The number of words per article is indicated. Brief exercises emphasizing vocabulary, structure, and comprehension skills follow each article. The book is designed to be used with oral interaction and practice.
Although explanations and directions are clear, they are quite limited. Definitions of new words are in the margins near the related text. The book also contains a great number of black and white photographs and a listing of the basic vocabulary.

Although this book has several "high" markings in the comparative rating table, I do not highly endorse it because of its general mediocrity. Its quality is that of a social studies book intended for an intermediate student. In lowering the readability level, the authors have seemingly neglected to maintain an appropriate interest level. It is clearly intended to assist the student whose reading difficulties are compounded by sociocultural factors. I doubt that it would prove highly successful in this intent.


Each of the three books in this series features thirty selections by black writers. Readability levels progress in the selections: Olive Book--levels 6, 7, and 8; Brown Book--levels 9, 10, and 11; Purple Book--levels 12 through college.

Practice on comprehension skills, vocabulary skills, and word meaning skills follows each selection. The Olive Book includes a thirty-lesson phonics program. The Brown and Purple books contain lessons developing comprehension skills, the mechanics of reading, and methods of concentration and remembering.

Additional components of the program include the answer key, bibliography, time-rate conversion table, progress graph, and comprehension skills profile--all located in the back of each book.
The author intends for Selections from the Black to speak to all--to tell what the black man is "saying today and what he has said in the past."\textsuperscript{69} The author, in concentrating on blacks, hopes to "offset an imbalance which already exists."\textsuperscript{70}

It is difficult to assess the possible worth of this series because of its combination of strengths and weaknesses. Though strong in word analysis, literal comprehension, and speed-reading skills, it lacks diagnostic testing instruments and offers limited interest-appeal. I question basing an entire reading program solely on contributions from any one cultural or economic segment of society. The "balance" might better be achieved within the texts by integrating wider concerns and interests.

Selections from the Black might effectively be used in combination with another remedial program of broader interest-appeal. The instructor should carefully weigh the pros and cons before implementation.


The wide variety of reading and study skills presented are in order of increasing difficulty. The skill progression of the six chapters is: Word Identification, Vocabulary, Study Skills, Reading Rate and Comprehension, Critical Reading, Reading in the Subject Areas. Throughout the book individual sections include pre-test, exercises, progress test, exercises, and review test—in that order. The frequent testings are not meant to be diagnostic, but motivational devices showing progress.

Readability level is not indicated, but the program clearly
progresses in this respect also. A great diversity of reading selections is included in the 407-page spiral workbook.

The accompanying manual supplies background information, answer keys, and a test-scoring table.

*College Reading: Skills and Practice* is suitable for remedial students needing additional practice in the basic reading and study skills. The program rates above average in all sections of the evaluation except inferential skill development. Lessons are clearly presented and followed by well-designed practice exercises. Constant reinforcement, through testing, makes the book particularly appropriate for the low-self-image student. Students whose reading deficiencies stem from intellectual and/or psychological factors should meet with success in this program.

**Summary Statement**

The combination of table comparisons and annotated listings, as used in this chapter, is evidence of the usefulness of an Evaluation Instrument for comparison and selection of texts. In conjunction with a thorough needs assessment of a student, and a study of the possible underlying etiological factor(s) contributing to the deficiency, such an evaluation process should lead the educator to identify appropriate remedial materials.
CHAPTER V. SUMMARY

Chapter I presented a partial justification for the development of a descriptive instrument useful in the evaluation of college-level remedial materials. It reviewed the concern over declining reading test scores on college entrance tests.

The discussion then focused on major theoretical approaches to adult remediation (Chapter II). This discussion provided evidence that appropriate materials are an important part of remedial instruction. Chapter III presented an instrument for identifying and evaluating the appropriateness of remedial reading materials. The final step was to apply this evaluative instrument to selected reading workbooks (Chapter IV) to show how appropriate reading materials for college-level remedial students may be selected.

The survey of reading theories revealed that their diversity is responsible for much of the variety in remedial materials. For example, those theorists concerned with the intellectual factors involved in reading problems are closely identified with "skills approaches" to remediation. A review of the skills controversy produced the following observations:

1. Diagnosis and prescription are vital aspects of both subskill and holistic approaches.
2. The argument for skills appears much stronger than that for the holistic approach.
3. The skills approach is complementary to other reading approaches.
Those theorists concerned with clinical disability and neurological development generated fewer remedial materials than theorists with other orientations. One significant development in this theoretical area was the move, in the late 60's, to discern methods of improving neurological functioning as a part of the remediation program. It has been suggested that continued research in this area may result in better methods of strengthening neurological weaknesses. Earlier neurological work, such as that by Orton, remains a prime example of a highly structured kinesthetic approach to skills mastery.

In general, it was found that the psychological disciplines have dominated research and theory in the area of remedial reading. It has been noted that some theorists propose a dual program of counseling and remedial reading instruction. Still other theorists, in the general area of psychology, have been influential in the development of reading programs that include motivational devices, bibliotherapy techniques, immediate feedback, and varying degrees of independent and group work. Several of the remedial programs evaluated in Chapter IV are particularly appropriate for strengthening psychological development in the remedial program.

Linguistic theorists, such as Bloomfield and Fries, developed decoding exercises for elementary instruction. LeFevre did studies relating sentence intonation to reading comprehension. In the late 60's and early 70's, linguists and psychologists combined their efforts. Psycholinguists have significantly contributed to an understanding of the reading process and an overall development of the reading program.
Finally, those theorists concerned with sociocultural influences on reading deficiencies were instrumental in the development of dialect readers and language-experience programs for beginning and remedial instruction. In this study, *Encounters* and *Selections from the Black* were evaluated. In each of these workbooks the authors attempted to induce effective motivation and to meet the learning needs of minority groups.

The survey of theories of remediation made it evident that causal factors and remedial materials must interrelate, and that remedial reading materials should be examined with a clear understanding of the reading process, a careful analysis of strengths and weaknesses of students, and in a systematic and effective manner. The evaluative instrument presented in Chapter III provided a checklist of important considerations in the selection of reading workbooks. The application of an abbreviated checklist (Chapter IV) demonstrated the kind of comparative information and evaluative conclusions it can facilitate.

Finally, in presenting the conclusions of this study, I admit keen awareness of the need for scholars to engage in unbiased research that will continue to define the reading process (behaviorally and scientifically), to research causal factors of reading deficiencies, to experiment with remedial methods, to develop effective remedial materials, and to determine possible prescriptive materials for apparent remedial reading problems. A multi-disciplinary approach to research and remediation appears necessary.
NOTES


2S. P. Marland, Jr., Prefatory Note, On Further Examination, p. iii.

3Advisory Panel, SAT, p. 3.

4Advisory Panel, SAT, p. 45.

5Advisory Panel, SAT, pp. 3-5.


7Albert J. Harris, How to Increase Reading Ability, 5th ed. (1940; rpt. David McKay, 1970), p. 3.

8Guy L. Bond and Miles A. Tinker, Reading Difficulties: Their Diagnosis and Correction, 2nd ed. (New York: Meredith, 1967), p. 22.

9Harris, p. 11.

10Harris, p. 138.

11Harris, p. 208.

12Harris, p. 216.


17Samuels, p. 177.

18Samuels, p. 177.


21Samuels, pp. 164-66.

22Athey, p. 233.

23Athey, p. 234.


25Harris, p. 248.


27Harris, p. 234.


29Archie A. Silver and Rosa A. Hagin, Specific Reading Disability: An Approach to Diagnosis and Treatment, New York: Dept. of Neurology and Psychiatry, N. Y. Univ. Bellevue Medical Center, 1966 (mimeographed), quoted in Harris, "What About Special Theories of Teaching Remedial Reading?", p. 392.


31Reichurdt, p. 711.

32Harris, Increase Reading Ability, pp. 229-30.


35Spache, p. 351.
36Spache, p. 446.

37Elsie J. Dotson, "The Reading Improvement Program at the University of Texas," in Techniques and Procedures in College and Adult Reading Programs, ed. Oscar S. Causey (Fort Worth: Texas Christian Univ. Press, 1957), pp. 32-43.

38Strang, Improvement of Reading, p. 87.


42Carton, p. 132.

43Carton, p. 133.

44Carton, p. 133.


48Carton, p. 177.


50Strang, p. 250.

51Strang, p. 250.

52Carton, p. 162.

53Strang, p. 250.


55Shuy, p. 37.

56Shuy, p. 42.
57 Miriam T. Chaplin, "Where Do We Go from Here: Strategies for Survival of College Reading Programs," in *Journal of Reading*, 21, No. 7 (April 1978), 587.

Chaplin, p. 587.

59 Harris, *Increase Reading Ability*, pp. 278 and 281.


63 This entire section is from Howard G. Ball, "Standards for Materials Selection," in *Journal of Reading*, 20, No. 3 (Dec. 1976), 210.


67 Prestwood, p. 149.


70 Spargo, p. 5.
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Chaplin, Miriam T. "Where Do We Go from Here: Strategies for Survival of College Reading Programs." *Journal of Reading,* 21, No. 7 (April 1978), 586-87.


Harris, Albert J. How to Increase Reading Ability. 5th ed. New York: David McKay, 1970.


Minkoff, H. "Speech is Speech and Prose is Prose and (n)ever the Twain ---." New York State English Council Meeting. 1974.


Strang, Ruth A. Reading Diagnosis and Remediation. Newark, Delaware: IRA, 1968.


Tillman, Chester E. "Four Year College Reading Improvement Programs and Grades: An Annotated Review, 1945-1971." Journal of Reading Behavior, 5, No. 2 (Spring 1972-73), 100-09.


Yngne, V. H. "Computer Programs for Translation." Scientific American, 206, No. 6 (1962), 68-76.

APPENDIX. A LIST OF PUBLISHERS AND THEIR ADDRESSES

The following list contains the names and addresses of selected publishers for the kinds of materials included in this study. Only one office is listed for each company.

Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 470 Atlantic
Boston, Massachusetts 02210

AGS American Guidance Service, Inc., Publishing Building
Circle Pines, Minnesota 55014

Appleton-Century Crofts, Inc., 440 Park Avenue South
New York, New York 10016

Behavioral Research Laboratories, P.O. Box 577
Palo Alto, California 94302

Benziger Bruce and Glencoe, Inc., 8701 Wilshire Boulevard
Beverly Hills, California 90211

BFA Educational Media, 2211 Michigan Avenue, P.O. Box 1795
Santa Monica, California 90406

Bowmar, Box 3623
Glendale, California 91201

Burgess Publishing Company, 7108 Ohms Lane
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55435

Changing Times Education Service, 1729 H Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006

College Skills Center, 1250 Broadway
New York, New York 10001

Craig Corporation, P.O. Box 5664
Compton, California 90220

T.S. Denison and Company, Inc., 5100 W. 82nd Street
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55437

Developmental Reading Distributors, 1944 Sheridan Avenue
Laramie, Wyoming 82070

The Dial Press, 750 Third Avenue
New York, New York 10017
E. P. Dutton and Company, Inc., 201 Park Avenue South
New York, New York 10003

Economy Company, 1901 N. Walnut
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105

Educational Activities, Inc., P.O. Box 392
Freeport, New York 11520

Educators Publishing Service, Inc., 75 Moulton Street
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

Fearon Publishers, 6 Davis Drive
Belmont, California 94002

Field Enterprises Educational Corporation, 510 Merchandise Mart Plaza
Chicago, Illinois 60654

Follett Corporation, 1010 W. Washington Boulevard
Chicago, Illinois 60607

Garrard Publishing Company, 1607 N. Market Street
Champaign, Illinois 61820

Ginn and Company, 191 Spring Street
Lexington, Massachusetts 02173

Harcourt, Brace, and Jovanovich, Inc., 757 Third Avenue
New York, New York 10017

D. C. Heath and Co., College Dept., 125 Spring Street
Lexington, Massachusetts 02173

Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 383 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10017

Houghton Mifflin Co., 2 Park Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02107

Jamestown Publishers, P.O. Box 6743
Providence, Rhode Island 02940

Jenn Publications, Box 1155
Louisville, Kentucky 40201

Laidlaw Brothers, Thatcher and Madison Streets
River Forest, Illinois 60305

Learn, Inc., Mount Laurel Plaza, 113 Gaither Drive
Mount Laurel, New Jersey 08054
Steck-Vaughn Company, P.O. Box 2028
Austin, Texas 78767

Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 1234 Amsterdam Avenue
New York, New York 10027

Franklin Watts, Inc., 730 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10019

Weston Woods
Weston, Connecticut 06880

John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 605 Third Avenue
New York, New York 10016

Winthrop Publishers, 17 Dunster Street
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

Xerox Education Division, 1200 High Ridge Road
Stanford, Connecticut 06902