

THE EFFECTS OF A DUAL READING PROGRAM ON  
FIRST GRADE STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD  
AND PERCEPTIONS OF READING

THESIS

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of a language experience approach to reading used in conjunction with a basal-reader program on students' attitudes toward and perceptions of reading at the first grade level.

A sample population of twenty-six students was drawn from two, first grade classes in a middle income, suburban school district. A quasi-experimental design was used in the study.

Student attitude toward reading was evaluated by a pretest and posttest of student attitude toward reading developed by the researcher. Students' perceptions of reading were evaluated by personal, tape-recorded interviews. A computer program was used for the purpose of analyzing the data.

The findings of the study indicated that the treatments used did not influence attitudes toward and perceptions of reading at the first grade level in the district sampled. However, the study raised questions regarding the need for further research dealing with affective factors and reading.

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## CHAPTER I

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of a dual reading approach on first grade students' attitudes toward and perceptions of reading.

The study sought to answer the following questions:

1. Does a language experience approach to reading used in conjunction with a basal-reader program develop a positive attitude toward reading at the first grade level?
2. Does a language experience approach to reading used in conjunction with a basal-reader program develop an accurate perception of reading at the first grade level?

#### Need for the Study

The trend in reading research has been to seek out areas directly related to reading achievement. The main emphasis has been placed on cognitive skills (Athey, 1976). Recently, the role of affective variables in the reading process has been questioned. However, experimental studies dealing with the affective domain have been sporadic. The lack of reliable and valid assessment instruments has made research in the affective areas difficult (Askov and Fischbach, 1973).

Children's attitudes toward and perceptions of reading influence their reading development (McConkie and Nixon, Stewart, 1966; Wilson and Hall, 1972). Children arrive at the classroom door with a myriad of experiential backgrounds which foster or hinder reading growth. Children lacking in experiences related to reading may develop a distorted perception of the reading process (Dennis, 1951).

Teachers need to be aware of the nature and thinking of children in their classrooms (Denny and Weintraub, 1963). Reviews of research on children's failure in reading provide evidence that a breakdown in the thinking processes shows up later as a problem in learning to read (Downing, 1959).

Research studies dealing with the relationship of affective variables to reading have not seemed as urgent as those possessing obvious relevance to reading (Athey, 1976). Researchers and educators can not afford to slight any area that might offer insight into improving reading performance. Research efforts should be focused on the beginning reader to insure that he develops a positive attitude toward reading.

#### Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this study it was necessary to define several terms.

In the present study, the reading process is viewed as that succinctly defined by Goodman (1970).

A process by which a person reconstructs a message encoded, graphically by a writer. Reading like listening is a receptive psycholinguistic process. Language in its graphic form is the starting point. The reader brings to the text his knowledge of the language. As he reads there is an interaction between

language and thought processes such that the reader moves from a language encoding of meaning to meaning itself. (p. 125)

Conceptually, a basal reading program is concerned with the systematic and sequential development of skills, abilities, and understanding necessary for interpreting written symbols. It comprehensively seeks to include all aspects of the reading act, including word perception, comprehension, critical and emotional reactions and the application of reading for recreation and practical purposes (Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich Bookmark Reading Program, 1970).

A language experience approach to reading is one in which the common language patterns and vocabulary are the words and phrasings common to the learner. It utilizes written and dictated experiences. It is related to the self-concepts and needs of each child. It is a whole language approach rather than a fragmented, synthetic one (Van Allen, 1965; Aukerman, 1971).

In the present study, perceptions are defined as what the student understands of the reading process (McConkie and Nixon, 1959). As Foshay and Wann (1954) pointed out, perceptions are what one sees in a given situation.

Attitudes are defined as a system of feelings related to reading which cause the student to approach reading in a positive or negative manner.

#### Limitations of the Study

The present study was limited to investigating attitudes toward reading and perceptions of reading at the first grade level for the duration of the school year. The population involved in the study was

limited to a specific school environment in a suburban setting. The methods of reading instruction utilized in the investigation were limited to the language experience approach and the Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich Bookmark Reading Program.

### Summary

This study questioned the effect of a language experience approach used in conjunction with a basal reader program on first graders' attitudes and perceptions of reading. Researchers have pointed out the need for studies dealing with affective variables (Athey, 1976; Downing, 1969).

The study investigated attitudes and perceptions of first grade students utilizing the language experience approach to reading and a basal-reader program for instructional purposes.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of a language experience approach to reading used in conjunction with a basal reading program on attitudes and perceptions of reading at the first grade level.

A review of the literature relevant to this study has been divided into three categories:

- (1) The Role of Attitudes
- (2) The Role of Perceptions
- (3) The Relationship of Language Experiences to Attitudes and

Perceptions

#### Attitudes

The need for research relating to young children's reading should focus on affective variables. The need for this information may offer insight into developing methods of teaching beginning reading (Denny and Weintraub, 1963).

The affective domain, including attitudes, plays an important role in reading development. Attitudes are involved in the learner's approach to or avoidance of the reading process (Alexander and Filler, 1975).

A positive attitude is an essential for success in reading. However, very few reading definitions have included affective areas.

Robeck and Wilson (1974) stated that affective components are also involved in the reading process.

Athey (1976) commented that "by increasing our knowledge of the affective life of the child, we broaden our understanding of his total functioning in the academic situation." According to Athey, intellectual variables do not operate in isolation but are affected by the individual's attitudinal and personality characteristics. These factors are susceptible to intervention treatment by researchers, and especially by teachers.

Askov and Fischbach (1973) reported that research in reading has not explored some basic questions regarding attitudes, such as the relationship between pupil attitudes and reading achievement or the changes in attitudes toward reading over a period of time. They undertook an evaluation of an experimental, diagnostic reading approach. The study, which included an assessment of pupil attitudes at the first and third grade levels, was undertaken to determine if the approach under question would result in more positive attitudes toward reading. An instrument for assessing pupil attitudes was developed. The instrument utilized a forced choice, paired comparison format. Students were asked to respond to questions by choosing between a picture of a child reading and one of a child involved in a recreational activity.

Askov and Fischbach (1973) concluded that a favorable attitude toward reading might be associated with good readers who have few comprehension difficulties. Other findings of the study were that girls have more positive attitudes toward reading than boys, both before and after removing the effects of achievement. Grade placement did not

seem to have a significant relation to attitude toward recreational reading. First graders had some concept of independent reading and were able to express either positive or negative attitudes toward it.

While children may pass readiness tests and appear successful at the readiness stage, they may have already developed unfavorable attitudes toward reading. Johnson (1959) found that by categorizing first grade children as eager or reluctant readers, he could predict reading success in the second grade, even though the two groups made comparable scores in initial reading readiness tests.

Askov and Fischbach (1973) cited the lack of reliable and valid assessment instruments in the affective areas as the probable cause of the gap in information regarding attitudes of young children toward reading. Kennedy (1975) questioned how attitude toward reading could be measured. Kennedy commented that the answer to the question could be found in the use of a reading attitude inventory, but that there has been little effort exerted in recent years toward the development of such an instrument.

Ransburg (1973) asked sixty, fifth and sixth grade children, their parents and teachers to describe the reading behavior of a person who enjoyed reading and the reading behavior of one who did not. Responses revealed that teachers, students, and parents did not select similar behaviors as indicative of attitude toward reading.

The children associated attitude with verbal statements regarding the merits of reading, the number of reading material possessed, and the involvement of reading with other activities.

Parents contended that the amount of reading and the variety of materials read were indicative of attitude toward reading.

Classroom teachers associated a child's attitude toward reading with intelligence.

The general results of the study showed that children attribute their own reading attitude to their reading ability. Ransburt concluded that an often overlooked aspect of attitude toward reading is the relationship of experiences in a child's life to his feelings about reading.

Although children may have already developed unfavorable attitudes toward reading at an early age, Healy (1963) found that attitudes can be changed. In an experimental setting, ten year old children who were allowed to choose reading material according to interest, developed a more positive attitude toward reading. Squire (1969) also found that approaches to reading and literature in the classrooms may affect the attitudes of readers.

### Perceptions

Research indicates that children's perceptions of their environment are affected by values, needs, and desires which they have internalized. Tovey (1976) stated that little credence has been given to children's perceptions of the reading process. He indicated that studies which focus on children's views of the reading act have been few and limited in scope.

The importance of children's perceptions of reading in the school program and in life should not be overlooked. The way in which the child perceives the reading process should be of concern to researchers and educators (McConkie and Nixon, 1959).

Research efforts should be directed more toward a concern for the child's own ways of thinking in learning to read. An exploration of the thinking of young children should yield needed information regarding ways of improving their thinking (Downing, 1969; Almy, 1970).

Piaget's (1959) work on the concept and description of egocentric language and thought in children below the age of seven or eight years provides an understanding of the child's mode of thinking at the typical reading age.

Piaget's work was replicated and expanded by Vygotsky (1962). Vygotsky's work focused on the teaching of the written form of the Russian language to children. Vygotsky concluded that children only have a vague idea of the usefulness of the written form of language at the age of beginning formal instruction. At this age, the idea of written language is abstract and children do not understand its purpose. According to Piaget's theory of the development of thinking, abstract ideas are least appropriate at this age because the child's egocentric view of this environment is not conducive to a natural understanding of the purpose of the written form of the language.

In a later article, Elkind (1974) described Piaget's demonstration of the difference between the way in which children and adults see the world as one of his most important contributions to education.

Reid's (1966) research provided evidence to support Vygotsky's conclusions. Reid conducted intensive interviews with twelve, five-year-old children in their first year in school regarding their thought about the reading process. Reid concluded that for young beginners, reading is a mysterious activity. The subjects in Reid's study displayed only

vague ideas of what the reading process involves and its purpose. Reid, as Vygotsky, found that the abstract terms applied to reading by adults were difficult for the children to understand.

Braumbaugh (1940) asked student teachers to interview kindergarten children to find out what pupils "expected the first grade to be like." He discovered that half of the children sampled expected to learn to read in first grade, and half also believed that reading would be a hard task.

McConkie and Nixon (1959) interviewed kindergarten children to determine their perceptions of reading and differences in these perceptions by sex. They concluded that most kindergarten children perceive first grade as a time when they would begin to read. Children varied in their thinking as to when in first grade they would actually accomplish the reading act.

McConkie and Nixon found great variability in children's ability to define reading. They reported that all children in the study were able to verbalize some concept about the meaning of reading.

Muskopf (1962) administered a forced-choice, paper and pencil test to two groups of first graders at the end of the school year to determine how children see their reading in an attempt to distinguish how children see the process in a basal reading or eclectic program and in a phonic oriented program. He concluded that there is no significant correlation between a child's concept of reading and his reading achievement.

In working with eight and nine-year-old children, Betts (1956) found that some children enter first grade with no idea of what happens during the reading act.

A slight correlation between the concept of reading and reading achievement was found by Edwards (1961) in a study using fifth grade students as subjects.

Reid (1966) later pointed out the inconclusiveness of the studies by Muskopf and Edwards. In both studies a test was devised that required the subjects to choose from two or three statements, the one that described the "best" reader. Two types of statements were used, formal and functional. The formal statements emphasized accuracy, speed, and gaining of approval. The functional statements emphasized reading for enjoyment and practical usefulness. Both studies assumed the scores would determine the child's concept of reading.

Muskopf, in discussing the results of his study, stated that more conclusive evidence would have been gained from direct questioning of the subjects.

### Language Experiences

It has been purported that the language of basal readers is not the normal language of children. Reliance on repeated exposure, limited sight vocabulary, and unrealistic story lines have been cited as disadvantages of the basal reader approach (Aukerman, 1971).

These disadvantages are especially debilitating to the beginning reader of six or seven. Aukerman (1971) suggested that the use of a combination of language experiences and a basal reader may provide children with a more effective method of reading instruction.

Miller (1974) indicated that the language experience approach is considered by reading specialists to be one of the main approaches to teaching beginning reading in the United States today.

Dr. R. Van Allen was noted for refining and publicizing the approach. The approach was subjected to study in many first grades in San Diego County, California. One study indicated that the language experience approach developed a positive interest in learning to read at the first grade level (Van Allen, 1962).

Among the many advantages of the language experience approach described by Miller (1974) were: it allows children the opportunity to conceptualize during the early stages of reading instruction, fosters creative writing, and develops a true interest in reading.

Hahn (1963) reported that in the sixties, reading research focused on the nature of the language of the young child and the importance of oral language development in the early stages of learning to read.

In 1964, the twenty-seven first grade studies provided evidence that schools were beginning to attend more closely to children's language patterns (Vilscek and Cleland, 1965; Stauffer and Hammond, 1967).

Hahn (1963), at the end of the second year of a continuing study, reported that pupils instructed with a language experience approach read significantly more books and wrote longer stories than pupils in I.T.A. classes.

The language experience approach has been tried with urban children whose language patterns are not typical. Harris (1966) in a pilot study in New York, found it advantageous to use language experience charts as a basis for beginning reading instruction.

Smith, Goodman, and Merideth (1970) related the process of reading to language. They found that reading can be best understood

when consideration is given to language and the devices within language that convey meaning.

Other researchers have also pointed out the relationship of language to reading and have called for more investigations dealing with this relationship (Smith, 1971; Shuy, 1973).

### Summary

The review of the literature pointed out that research has neglected the relationship of attitudes and perceptions to the reading development of young children. However, there is little disagreement regarding the importance of these areas insuring success in reading.

Researchers have found that the lack of reliable and valid assessment instruments in the affective areas has limited research efforts in this domain.

The language experience approach to reading focuses on affective areas and offers experiences important to the development of positive attitudes and accurate reading perceptions.

## CHAPTER III

### RESEARCH DESIGN

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of a language experience approach to beginning reading used in conjunction with a basal reading program on attitudes and perceptions of first grade students.

#### Hypotheses

The null hypotheses investigated in this study were:

1. There is no significant difference between the development of attitudes toward reading of first grade students instructed by a basal-reader approach to reading and the development of attitudes toward reading of first grade students instructed by a basal-reader program used in conjunction with a language experience approach.

2. There is no significant difference between the development of perceptions of reading of first grade students instructed by a basal-reader approach to reading and the development of perceptions of reading of first grade students instructed by a basal-reader approach in conjunction with a language experience approach.

#### Methodology

##### Selection of Students

A sample population of twenty-six students was drawn from two, first grade classes in a middle-income, suburban school district. Mean

percentile scores on the Pre-Reading Composite of the Metropolitan Readiness Test, Level II (1976 edition) of each class were computed to assure compatibility of the groups selected regarding achievement levels. The mean score for the groups was 70.

Mean class scores on the California Test of Mental Maturity administered to the groups in September 1976 were computed to determine compatibility regarding intelligence. A mean score of 113 was computed for both groups.

Although the classes were housed in separate kindergarten-fourth grade buildings, similar daily programs and instructional time periods were maintained for both groups.

Exposure to prior formalized reading readiness programs was controlled. The Alpha One reading program was used throughout the district. Only students who had attended kindergarten in the assigned schools were involved in the study.

### Instrumentation

The effect of parental attitude toward reading on the variables under consideration was dealt with by the administration of a twenty-item, parent attitude inventory.

The inventory was developed from criteria derived through a review of the literature dealing with the nature and assessment of attitude, as well as criteria determined by members of the Master's Program in Reading, seminar class at the State University of New York College at Brockport (Spring 1976). The students were asked to list the most important criteria for determining parental attitude toward reading.

The lists were compiled and analyzed for frequency of response. The inventory questions were then constructed to sample the various areas indicated.

Because of its adaptability to the needs of the study, the Estes Attitude Scale was selected as a model for construction of the questionnaire. The original scale was designed for grades three through twelve. The validity of the Estes Scale was checked by item analysis. Split-half reliability was reported as substantial. Alexander and Filler (1976) described the scale as useful in pretest and posttest comparisons. Estes stated that the development of the scale was based on the assumption that affective dimensions of reading are important and deserve attention.

Parents were asked to respond to statements on a continuum of agreement indicated by five possibilities: strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree. Each response was assigned a numerical value. The response possibilities were listed at the top of the questionnaire.

Parents indicated their answer to each statement by placing a letter on a line to the right of each statement. The letters represented the five response possibilities. Scores on the scale ranged from 20 to 100.

### Pilot Studies

Pilot studies were conducted in the Fall of 1976 to determine the reliability and validity of the instruments developed for study.

The parent reading attitude questionnaire was piloted on a small sample representative of the population under study. Ten parents

were asked to respond to the instrument. The split-half reliability of the instrument was computed at .83, significant at the .05 and .01 levels. Parent evaluations of the questionnaire content and form were considered in the refinement of the instrument. (See Appendix A)

The student reading attitude questionnaire was administered to a group of ten, first grade students prior to the start of school in August 1976. The ten students involved in the pilot study were representative of the students sampled in the actual study but did not participate in the study. Reliability of the scale was established by the split-half method at .90. (See Appendix B)

In the pilot study, it was discovered that first grade students experienced difficulty responding to negative statements. Therefore, in refining the scale, only positive statements were included. The student questionnaire was administered by the teachers participating in the study to their respective students. (See Appendix B)

### Procedures

The first grade instructors involved in the study were selected on the basis of availability and willingness to participate in the study. The researcher instructed the experimental group and the control group was instructed by its classroom teacher. An effort was made to control teacher variables in the selection of instructors. Both instructors were approximately the same age, had five years of teaching experience in the district at the primary level, and had similar educational backgrounds.

To control teacher effect and assure strict adherence to instructional procedure, the school principal made periodic observations

of the classes. Observations were made to determine deviations or adjustments in the programs that might have an effect on the outcome of the study. (See Appendix A)

The parent questionnaire was sent home to the parents of students participating in the study in September 1976. (See Appendix A)

Student attitude toward reading was evaluated in September 1976 and the beginning of April 1977. A pre and post inventory of attitude toward reading was developed following the procedure outlined for the development of the parent questionnaire.

Students were asked to respond to oral statements. Responses were indicated by three possibilities: yes, not sure, and no. The response possibilities were indicated by three faces: a smiling face, a blank expression, and a frown. Each response possibility was assigned a numerical value. Ten sets of faces were placed on an answer sheet. A picture was placed to the left of each set to direct the student successively down the page.

The student was asked to respond to each orally read statement by placing an x on the face that indicated how he felt about the statement. A sample item dealing with a statement not related to reading was given to insure that the child understood the marking procedure and questionnaire format. Possible scores on the scale ranged from 20 to 10.

To insure maximal accuracy of student response, the students were told that the teacher was working on a project for college and needed their ideas to help her. The testing situation was handled as routine classroom interaction.

Teacher observations of students' demonstrations of their attitudes toward reading in the classroom were also utilized. Teachers filled out observation forms for each student in September 1976 and April 1977. The form was developed from a review of the literature prior to the start of the study. (See Appendix D)

Students' concepts of reading were evaluated in September 1976 and April 1977, by personal, tape-recorded interviews. The interviews and rating of responses were developed by a review of the literature dealing with the subjects, as well as criteria established by the reading seminar in the fall of 1976 (See Appendix C)

The following categories were utilized as a basis for determining the accuracy of students' perceptions of reading:

The child defines reading as a process of obtaining meaning from the printed page. (item a) The child perceives time as a factor in the reading process of reading. (items b, c, d)

The interviews were tape-recorded and later transcribed for evaluation and scoring.

Responses in each category were assigned a numerical value: 2 accurate responses, 1 unaccurate responses, 0 unrelated responses. Possible scores ranged from 20 to 10.

At the beginning of the interview, a conversation dealing with subjects unrelated to reading was carried on with each student to assure that the child did not feel threatened by the interview.

#### Methodological Assumptions

Problems inherent in the testing of young children make it difficult to secure reliable and valid test measures, particularly in the affective areas. However, the questions and format used in the

student attitude inventory were drawn from instruments that had established reliability and validity. The instructors administered the instruments individually to the student and were confident that the students were comfortable and honest in the testing situation.

It was assumed that the number of questions on the questionnaire and in the interview were adequate to sample a young child's way of thinking.

Limitations could be imposed in interpreting data gained from the interviews since the questions tapped a relatively small sample of each child's behavior.

Whether a change in response from one interview to another represents random behavior can also be questioned. However, teacher observations were employed to determine whether changes in responses actually corresponded with student performance.

Alexander and Filler (1976) state that interpretation of attitude assessments are best obtained from more than one means over a period of time to note consistent patterns. The time period of six months between the pretest and posttest was of sufficient length to negate attributing change in response to practice.

#### Summary

A quasi-experimental research design was employed in this study. Two hypotheses dealing with first grade students' attitudes toward and perceptions of reading were tested. A sample population of approximately twenty-seven students was used. Intelligence and achievement factors were controlled.

The experimental group was instructed by a program utilizing language experiences in conjunction with a basal reader. The Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich Bookmark Reading Program was used to instruct the control group.

Pilot studies were conducted to determine the reliability and validity of the instruments used in the study.

## CHAPTER IV

### STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of a language experience approach to reading used in conjunction with a basal reader program on students' attitudes toward and perceptions of reading at the first grade level.

The hypotheses presented in an earlier section of this paper were tested statistically by use of a three dimensional, repeated measures design following the RPEAT program for the IBM 1130 computer.<sup>1</sup>

#### Findings and Interpretations

The first null hypothesis investigated in this study stated that there is no significant difference between the development of attitudes toward reading of first grade students instructed by a basal-reader approach to reading and the development of attitudes toward reading of first grade students instructed by a basal-reader program used in conjunction with a language experience approach.

Table 1 presents the repeated measures analysis of variance of mean attitude scores for (A) testing occasion (B) treatment and (C) sex. As indicated, the interaction of the three factors was not significant, (Critical Value for  $F = 5.79$ ;  $df = 1$  and  $22$ ;  $\alpha = 0.05$ ).

Table 1  
Analysis of Variance Summary Table for Attitudes

Source	DF	SS	MS	F-Ratio
Among				
B	1	155.76	155.76	0.56
C	1	67.86	67.86	0.24
BC	1	123.75	123.75	0.45
Subjects	22	6039.69	274.53	
Within				
A	1	88.92	88.92	2.00
AB	1	15.07	15.07	0.33
AC	1	53.87	53.87	1.21
ABC	1	25.10	25.10	0.56
AS	22	978.01	44.45	
Total	51	7548.07		

Analysis of the data regarding hypothesis one resulted in failure to reject the null hypothesis. There was no significant interaction between treatment, sex, and testing occasion. There were no significant differences between mean scores on attitude for both treatment groups. There were no significant differences between the mean score for boys and girls on the attitude factor. Results on the investigation indicated no significant differences for the total population in terms of attitude.

Hypothesis two of the study examined the difference between the development of perceptions. The null hypothesis stated that there is no significant difference between the development of perceptions of reading of first grade students instructed by a basal-reader approach

to reading and the development of perceptions of first grade students instructed by a basal-reader approach in conjunction with a language experience approach.

The results of the repeated measures of analysis of variance of mean perception scores for (A) testing occasion, (B) treatment, and (C) sex are presented in Table 2 (Critical Value for  $F = 5.79$ ;  $df = 1$  and  $22$ ,  $\alpha = 0.05$ ).

Table 2  
Analysis of Variance Summary Table for Perceptions

Source	DF	SS	MS	F-Ratio
Among				
B	1	83.76	83.76	0.37
C	1	28.16	28.16	0.12
BC	1	83.23	83.23	0.37
Subjects	22	4936.76	224.39	
Within				
A	1	0.69	0.69	0.01
AB	1	13.00	13.00	0.26
AC	1	17.95	17.95	0.37
ABC	1	-6.24	-6.24	-0.12
AS	22	1064.60	48.39	
Total	51	6221.92		

The results of the analysis of data indicated no significant interaction of any type. There were no significant sex differences and no significant treatment differences. The analysis of the data failed to reject the null hypothesis regarding perceptions.

The findings of the study suggested that the use of a language experience approach to reading in conjunction with the Harcourt Bookmark Reading Program does not effect first grade students' perceptions of reading.

#### Summary

The intent of the present study was to examine the effects of two reading programs on the attitudes and perceptions of first grade students. A three dimensional, repeated measures design was utilized to analyze the study data.

Findings of the study failed to reject the null hypotheses.

✓ Evidence derived from statistical analysis showed that the use of the two approaches under investigation did not significantly influence attitudes toward and perceptions of reading at the first grade level.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This study investigated the effects of a dual reading approach on first grade students' attitudes toward and perceptions of reading.

Results of the study failed to reject the null hypotheses which stated that there would be no significant difference in attitudes and perceptions between testing occasion and treatment.

The findings of the study imply that the treatments used did not influence attitudes toward and perceptions of reading at the first grade level in the district sampled. However, conclusions drawn from these findings can only be generalized to the district involved in the study. Since the study focused on a middle income suburban district, caution is advised in making generalizations concerning the effects of the treatments in districts of varying socioeconomic levels. The socioeconomic factor may have influenced the results of the present study. Students in the district at the first grade level may have been exposed to language experiences informally outside of school and in the home. Therefore, supplementary language experience programs did not appear to influence their progress in the affective area.

Although the treatments did not influence attitudes and perceptions at the first grade level, questions regarding the effect of these treatments at other grade levels remain unanswered.

The present study dealt with two specific reading approaches. It must be kept in mind that any one reading approach will not reach all children. The study did not provide sufficient evidence to draw conclusions regarding the effects of the language experience approach when used in conjunction with other reading programs or when used in isolation of other programs.

Intelligence and achievement variables were controlled in the present study. Inferences drawn from the findings of the study must be limited to the levels of intelligence and reading abilities sampled.

The Alpha One, kindergarten reading program, was used with all students participating in the study during their kindergarten year. In drawing conclusions regarding the effects of the approaches studied, consideration must be given to the influence of the kindergarten program on the factors under investigation.

The findings of the study imply that the treatments used in the study were equally unsuccessful in influencing attitudes and perceptions at the first grade level. The assumption that the teachers carried out the role expectations of the two treatments was supported by control of the treatment in the procedures of the study.

#### Implications for the Classroom

Answers to questions regarding what variables operating within the classroom influence the affective domain need further clarification. Classroom teachers and those in educational, decision making positions need to be cognizant of affective factors and their relationship to the reading process.

The findings of this study can be of value to other teachers and school systems engaged in the improvement of instruction. Children develop attitudes and perceptions in many ways. Educators must continue to search for the best means of developing children's attitudes and perceptions. Future research for the classroom should place emphasis on an understanding by teachers of the affective variables and their implications for reading instruction.

#### Implications for Research

From the findings of this study, it is evident that a need exists for more comprehensive and systematic research on affective variables as they relate to the reading process.

Although no significant differences were found in the two treatments tested in the present study, many factors in need of further research were revealed.

In attempting further research in the affective area, the researcher suggests replication of the present study at the second and third grade levels. Generalizations concerning the present study must take into consideration the fact that the analysis has considered a very small sample of a specific first grade population. The long term effects of the study have not been determined. Therefore, in depth, longitudinal studies dealing with affective variables may prove beneficial.

Research dealing with the effects of the language experience approach on affective variables in an urban classroom setting has

potential significance. Answers to questions regarding what variables operate within an urban classroom and their effect on affective variables need further clarification.

Questions regarding the influence of other reading programs on affective factors is an area in need of further research. Investigations focusing on the effects of reading approaches on attitudes and perceptions at different ability and socioeconomic levels may prove fruitful.

The development of reliable assessment techniques in the affective domain has posed a problem in past research. Development of adequate evaluation instruments should continue to be of concern to researchers.

## REFERENCE NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Analysis for Repeated Measures Designs. Prepared by  
Dr. C. M. Dayton. College of Education, University of Maryland.  
Revised for IBM 1130 by Nancy Oshier.

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## APPENDIX A

September, 1976

Dear Parent,

I am participating in a research study as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Education: Reading at the State University of New York at Brockport. The study seeks to answer questions regarding reading attitudes. The attached questionnaire is part of this study. There are no right or wrong answers. Information gained from this questionnaire will be used for the sole purpose of this study.

I would appreciate it very much if you would complete and return the questionnaire to \_\_\_\_\_ by October 8, 1976. You may send the completed form to school with your child or drop it off in the school office.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Sincerely

Mary Lou Galasso  
Brookview School

Name \_\_\_\_\_

A will mean I strongly agreeB will mean I agreeC will mean I am undecidedD will mean I disagreeE will mean I strongly disagree

1. Reading is for learning but not for enjoyment. 1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Money spent on books is well spent. 2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Reading reviews of newly published books is not worthwhile. 3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Taking children to the library is not important in developing positive reading habits. 4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Reading is a good way to spend spare time. 5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Discussing books in class is a waste of children's instructional reading time. 6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. Parental attitude toward reading influences a child's reading development. 7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. Children's reading habits are not influenced by the variety of reading materials available in the home. 8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. It is not important for children to see their parents reading on a regular basis. 9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. Reading is rewarding to me. 10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. Reading becomes boring after about an hour. 11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. Most books are too long and dull. 12. \_\_\_\_\_
13. Allowing children free time to read books of their own choice in school does not teach anything. 13. \_\_\_\_\_
14. There should be more time for children to read books of their own choice in school. 14. \_\_\_\_\_
15. There are many books I hope to read. 15. \_\_\_\_\_
16. Children do not need to read books that do not pertain to their schoolwork. 16. \_\_\_\_\_
17. Reading on a regular basis is important. 17. \_\_\_\_\_
18. A certain amount of each day should be set aside for reading. 18. \_\_\_\_\_
19. Reading to children is important in developing their interest in reading. 19. \_\_\_\_\_
20. Reading should not be fun. 20. \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX B

## STUDENT ATTITUDE INVENTORY

The inventory should be individually administered to each student.

A practice session should be conducted to relax the student and to provide practice in marking the answer sheet. Two or three questions similar in structure to those on the inventory but not related to reading should be used in the practice session.

1. Reading is fun.
2. It is fun to buy books.
3. I like to talk about books I have read with my friends.
4. When I have time in school to do what I want to do I like to read.
5. I want to learn to read.
6. I wish I had more time in school to read.
7. I like to go to the library.
8. I like to get books for presents.
9. I like to have people read to me.
10. I like to read at home.

## APPENDIX C

## CRITERIA FOR PERCEPTION INTERVIEW

List five factors that might influence a first grade child's concept of reading.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

List three questions that might lead a first grade child to verbalize his concept of reading.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

List five criteria that could be used to determine a first grade child's concept of reading.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

## PERCEPTION INTERVIEW

A picture of a child walking to school is shown to the youngster and he is told the following story:

"This is Mary, and she is now in the first grade. She is on her way to school. One of the things she will do in school is to read."

- A. What do you think reading is?
- B. Do you think Mary knows how to read?
- (If response is no, ask why?)
- If response is yes, ask:
- When did she learn?
- How did she learn?
- Who showed her how?
- Why do you think she learned how to read?
- What can she read? (books, signs, magazines)
- C. Can you read?
- D. Only for children who say they cannot read or responded no to B.
- When will Mary learn how to read?
- Will she learn on the first day of first grade?
- What will happen?
- What will Mary do?
- What will Mary Read from?
- Why does Mary want to learn to read anyway?

APPENDIX D

## TEACHER OBSERVATION FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Can this child read? \_\_\_\_\_ Instructional Level \_\_\_\_\_
2. Does he talk about reading positively or negatively? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Does he seem eager to learn to read? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Does he bring books of his own from home? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Does he choose books as an activity during free time? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Does he enjoy storytime? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Does he enjoy visiting the library? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Does he take books out of the library? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Does he take books home? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Does he enjoy discussing books with his classmates? \_\_\_\_\_