CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

METHODS AND APPROACHES USED IN
TEACHING ADULT REMEDIAL READING

A graduate project submitted in partial satisfaction of
the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in
Education
by
Ethel Brown Sudin

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The graduate project of Ethel Brown Sudin is approved:

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DEDICATION

This writer wishes to dedicate this project to her husband, Albert, whose encouragement and devotion helped make it possible.
The writer wishes to express gratitude to three special individuals who contributed their time, skills and friendship in assisting with this thesis:

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ABSTRACT

METHODS AND APPROACHES USED IN TEACHING ADULT REMEDIAL READING

by

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Master of Arts in Education

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A survey was conducted in the Los Angeles area to determine what methods and approaches were used to teach reading to adults. The intent of the survey was to indicate which reading approach was most successful and had finally been adopted.

The research methodology employed was a personal interview survey conducted by the writer. The instrument used was a questionnaire containing 24 questions grouped around four areas of interest. The first section of the questionnaire dealt with objectives and the student body. The second section dealt with teaching methods and practices used and implemented in reading programs. The third section dealt with questions pertaining to the materials used in the reading program. The fourth section
raised questions pertaining to the approaches used to teach children as opposed to approaches used to teach adults, effective approaches used to teach adults, and terminal objectives of the individual reading program.

The survey was conducted among a representative sampling of reading teachers and reading directors in selected adult reading programs. The findings of the survey indicated that all respondents questioned administered pretests to entering students but not all respondents administered posttests. One successful method used to structure a program was to individualize the reading program to suit the student's needs.
CHAPTER I

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Introduction

The ability to read well remains one of the most important qualifications for an adequate life in our society today. Since the inception of the federally sponsored anti-poverty drive in the United States, there has been a great clamor for programs to eradicate illiteracy among adults. In providing funds for adult basic education in 1964, the Congress expressed the intention of assisting adults whose lack of skills in reading and writing were restricting their possibilities of securing employment commensurate with their potential ability (National Advisory Committee on Adult Basic Education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1968).

California has attempted to conform to this trend. Their goals in adult education were designed to help adult students develop civic responsibility, realize their individual capacities, maintain effective relationships, and become economically efficient. The major goal of programs in adult education has been to provide opportunities for participants to become proficient in meeting their community needs (California State Department of Education, 1966). The ability to read is primary
in achieving these goals.

Problem

In the field of adult literacy, there appears to be considerable confusion when many communities attempt to locate a model program that will ensure success. All through the history of education there has been controversy about how to teach reading.

Teaching reading to adults presents a particularly troublesome problem. Their literacy skills are at the same level as children, but their overall maturity does not permit them to use the same teaching approach used to teach children.

Research conducted in the adult reading field indicated that adults appear to surpass children in immediate memory (Cass and Crabtree, 1956). However, adults tend to forget more in the first forty-eight hours after learning than children tend to forget, and a few weeks after the original learning, memory was very poor.

Memory was shown to be selective even though the ability to remember declined. Things best remembered were those which were presented with the greatest initial force or intensity (Cass and Crabtree, 1956). In order to successfully teach adult students to read and improve their literacy abilities, one would have to take all of these factors into consideration.
This study attempted to break down various representative answers in reply to questions on a questionnaire and outline an effective teaching approach in adult remedial and improvement reading. In addition, it attempted to trace any emerging learning patterns in the adult reading field.

Purpose

The purposes of this study were:

1. To conduct a survey of the different methods and approaches used in teaching adult remedial and improvement classes in reading.
2. To determine the most effective methods used in raising adult literacy levels.
3. To determine which approaches were the most successful under the guidance of a teacher in the field of adult education.

Questions

The questions of this study were as follows:

1. What were the methods used in adult reading?
2. Which approach was the most effective in raising adult literacy levels?
3. Which approaches were the most successful under the guidance of a reading teacher?
Limitation

The survey was conducted in the Los Angeles area. Only adult educational institutions were contacted where professional teachers and directors were engaged in selected adult reading programs.

The institutions contacted were: (a) Adult Basic Education; (b) Continuation High School; (c) Junior College; (d) State University; and (e) University of California.

The questions asked were confined to a written questionnaire.

Remainder of Chapters

Chapter II: Chapter II contained a review of the literature in the adult remedial and improvement field.

Chapter III: Chapter III outlined procedures and methodology used in conducting the survey. It also explained how the sampling of respondents were chosen.

Chapter IV: Chapter IV stated the questions asked of the respondents and analyzed the data submitted.

Chapter V: Chapter V contained conclusions, patterns and recommendations.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

One of the earliest studies in the remedial field was instigated by the army during World War II when that organization attempted to train illiterates. The study was conducted by Dr. Samuel Goldberg, who defined illiteracy as inability to read and write the English language as commonly prescribed for the fourth grade in grammar school (Robinson, 1952).

Those who were mentally incapable of army participation were eliminated. Performance was tested by scaled ratings on the non-language tests given by the army for army classification and academic achievement. One out of ten of the inductees in the army were functionally illiterate. The same study also indicated that despite the fact that the 1940 Census had revealed that 86.5% of persons over 26 years of age had more than five years of school, there were three times as many functional illiterates as college graduates in the country.

A pattern of the data revealed that a high percentage of illiterates came from the South and the Southwest sections of the country. However, no single geographical area was exempt from some illiteracy. Race was not a major factor. When interracial comparisons
were made, it was found that the degree of illiteracy was approximately the same for Negroes and whites from the same geographical section of the United States.

The basic purpose of the army literacy program was to prepare the illiterate to become a useful soldier. The methods used were eclectic. The first step was the use of a filmstrip to develop meaning of words. In the second step, attention was given to building a sight vocabulary. The third step developed independence in word-attack skills by using a phonetic approach. In the last step, comprehension of phrases, sentences, and simple paragraphs was stressed.

This program was completed in about twelve weeks. The rapid progress was attributed to high motivation, the army's ability to exercise 24 hour control of the men, the ability to draw on unlimited funds, and a large reservoir of personnel. The program was also without precedent so that the best theories and techniques could be organized and applied unhampered by tradition (Ibid).

Teachers of adult basic education reported that one of the difficulties inherent in any program was getting started in the introductory stage. Of the 25 teachers questioned in a research conducted in the Chicago area (Adult Education Council of Greater Chicago, 1965), the
majority felt it was important to impress seriousness of purpose upon their pupils by engaging in some kind of instruction the first session, however meager it might be.

Most of the teachers conducted some sort of orientation at the first meeting where particulars of the program such as room number, times of meeting, and general requirements were stated by the teacher after he had introduced himself. Many of the teachers asked the students to introduce themselves and all the teachers recognized that their students were shy and tended to be nonverbal (Ibid).

Participants were encouraged to talk about their occupational backgrounds, where they have lived and about their families, as well as state why they had entered the program thus giving a glimpse into the experiential background of the students. Some of the teachers made a deliberate effort from the first session on to impress upon their students a confidence that it can be done. The research pointed out that every attempt should be made to prevent an individual from failing at any task (Ibid).

Most research programs indicated that prospective students were administered pretests with some standardized test. R. J. Pulling (New York State Bureau of Adult Education, 1964) recommended the reading battery of the Iowa Basic Skills Test. Many authorities recommended
that each student be given an initial informal reading inventory (Horn, 1970). Several tests were available, such as the Botel Reading Inventory, Nila Banton Smith's Graded Selections for Informal Reading Diagnosis and the Gray Oral Reading Test.

The most commonly used standardized test for adult education was the Stanford Achievement Test. Teacher's comments indicated that groupings done on the basis of the Stanford scores generally proved to be accurate. After initial placement, very few adjustments were necessary (Austin, Bush, Heubner, 1961).

A study was made of the point at which teachers began instruction in an adult basic education program throughout the State of Tennessee (Rakes, 1971). The primary question was: Is there an efficient, accurate approach to placing adult basic education students on their instructional levels and, if so, how does the process operate?

One approach that proved satisfactory in many classes was the Instructional Inventory method. Hereafter designated as II. The procedure for administering the II was for the student to read approximately 100 words orally from a particular material while the teacher kept a running count of the number of oral reading errors. If the reader's error rate was less
than 10%, he was moved up one-half to one grade level and the process was repeated. If the error rate was 10% or greater, the reader was moved back to material one-half to one grade level lower and the process was repeated.

If the error rate was still 10% or greater, the reader was moved down and the process repeated again. If the error rate was not 10% or lower, the material was judged to be at the reader's instructional reading level.

It was recommended that instruction should begin on the instructional reading level and that the same procedure be followed each time a student was placed in a new reading material area.

The Instructional Inventory was based on the premise that the purpose of any testing was to guide instruction. By locating the point at which a student becomes frustrated, it was felt that the student may then simply be directed downward towards material that was less difficult.

Hayes, Lighthall and Lupton conducted a survey of materials and methods used and found that a great many of the basal reading materials for adults had a phonic orientation (Adult Education Council of Greater Chicago, 1965). In answer to a question concerning the efficacy of the phonics approach in the introductory stage of adult literacy education, most teachers felt that it was
one of the most successful approaches.

Other widely used approaches were the word attack
skills method and sight vocabulary. Arguments in sup-
port of this approach stated that students achieved an
immediate sense of progress towards their goals of liter-
acy. This was deemed essential as time was found to be
a matter of great importance since adults were easily
discouraged.

Mary C. Wallace (1965) felt that reading was an
acquired skill. It was the ability to respond to printed
symbols with the appropriate sounds. Reading was a com-
plex cognitive behavior requiring recognition and re-
response to the experience and knowledge that were presented
by means of these symbols. She did not recommend one
reading instructional approach by itself for adults, but
recommended the use of a variety of approaches and ele-
ments for beginning reading instruction. She endorsed
the sight-word approach, the phonics approach and the
linguistics approach.

Wallace indicated that beginning reading programs
should take into account the words in the speaking and
listening vocabularies of the students. She reported
that some plans should be made to include writing in the
program, an opportunity to listen to oral language in
meaningful context and an opportunity to listen to oral
reading.
Wallace further pointed out that oral reading was of special importance because it enabled the student to concentrate on comprehension instead of sounding out words. This would permit the student to become familiar with the syntax of written prose, which is different from the syntax of his own speech. She was wary of reading programs that try to teach pronunciation. She believed that reading is not a matter of correct pronunciation and that people with different pronunciations will respond to the same spelling. She urged that students be permitted to have freedom to talk naturally.

Adults want to learn fast; therefore, she advised the selection of a program that moved along rapidly while giving the student many opportunities for success. She felt that adults learn faster than children because they have better visual perception, larger speaking and listening vocabularies and know a great deal more about the world than children. They have gotten along in the world without any formal reading but may have in fact become very skillful in certain kinds of reading such as signs and gestures and they can follow clues and pick up meaning from context.

Esther Fox (May, 1964) recommended the standardized technique developed by Mills with time variations according to individual needs. The technique involved four
approaches: the visual; phonic; kinesthetic; and, combinations of experience charts to make up for the lack of simple reading material of adult interest.

For non-readers, she suggested the sight approach with visual-motor approach making use of three to nine cards, each with a word unknown to the reader. Together with the sight-motor approach, she indicated the adult should be able to profit from a phonetic approach with four to five sounds, ending and middle sounds, and blends. The teaching of word families, prefixes, suffixes, and root words should then follow.

Fox (Ibid) points out that the kinesthetic approach would serve to increase progress in both reading and writing. The illiterate adult was more likely to be engaged in manual pursuits rather than academic ones. This approach had greater appeal when the teacher wrote a word in large cursive writing about two inches high and the reader traced the word with his index finger.

William S. Gray (1956) offered some broad objectives towards which current reading programs should be directed in correcting functional literacy. The reading done during the training period should meet the practical needs of daily living such as being alerted to danger, finding one's way about, keeping posted on current events, keeping in touch with relatives, to improve
health, develop an understanding of one's local traditions, institutions, understand other places, peoples and times, broaden cultural background, satisfy religious aspirations, and to get enjoyment and pleasure out of reading.

He had devised a four-step program that should take about 150 to 300 hours of carefully planned teaching and was in keeping with the trend during recent years to divide reading programs into a series of units, or stages where each sought to promote definite progress towards functional literacy. An advantage of this plan was that many adults who hesitated to register at the outset for a long period of training had often registered for the first stage, which aimed at reaching simple reading activities in a relatively short period of time.

Stage one prepared for reading with personal interviews by the teacher with the prospective students. Stage two established the initial reading attitudes and skills and began as soon as it was clear that students were prepared to learn to read with reasonable ease. The chief goal was ability to read simple material with attention focussed on meaning, such as signs, notices, brief news items, and letters. Stage three built upon the basic reading attitudes and skills acquired during stage two and sought to prepare adults to read with ease and understanding any material within the range of their
everyday vocabulary. Seven hundred new words were introduced at this stage and repeated a minimum of 20 times and preferably 50 times. These words were related to events or activities of real interest to adults. The books that accompanied this stage were workbooks providing needed practice on word recognition and comprehension skills. Stage four was used to read any material limited to vocabulary of daily usage. Since Gray believed this was the stage at which the student acquired more mature reading habits, the amount of time devoted to this stage varied.

Gray suggested that during stage four, advanced training be provided for a minimum of 24 class periods during which help should be given. A careful study of the abilities of the students should be made to allow them to engage effectively in all the reading activities normally expected of literate adults in their community. Use should be made of the type of reading normally read by literate adults in newspapers, magazines, bulletins, books, and materials containing certain issues of interest to the group at the time, such as individual problems, social issues, literacy interests, or spiritual needs.

As students showed capacity to engage independently in the various types of reading normally expected of literate adults, they would be granted a final certificate. Gray felt their achievement was of sufficient
importance to merit distinct social recognition.

Kenneth M. Ahrendt (1971) offered a program for adult reading improvement at the University of British Columbia which started with Form A of the Nelson-Denny Reading Test as a pretest. The goal of his reading improvement course was to make the student an independent reader in ten sessions. This was done by improving concentration, retention, and thinking before reading. Techniques of scanning, skimming, and the use of previewing techniques were taught. Classes were conducted in two hour sessions and Form B of the Nelson-Denny Reading Test was administered as a posttest. Laboratory sessions were included to allow the participant outside class practice under supervision.

Findings as to the success of the program were inconclusive at this time. They have found it impossible to have participants return after completion of training to be tested again to determine the amount of gain that had been maintained.

Linguistics and syntactical features can be a problem for the reading teacher. Adults who have learned the syntax of another language or of a non-standard dialect of English found that from the basal level to a more advanced level of reading, they were not properly prepared to read at expected levels.
A study was conducted that found a pattern of sub-standard English usage by the majority of inadequate students in the Bennett College Reading Study Skills Center (Newton, 1960). Case studies of ten seriously retarded students were made and the findings revealed all were residents of the Southeastern region of the country. Half lived in rural areas or in towns of fewer than 5,000 and their communities offered no cultural experience except for occasional programs sponsored by the Church or school.

Parents were of lower economic strata and had language patterns similar to those of students, and the language patterns of other adults in the environment were primarily sub-standard English.

Practices found to be valuable in working with verbally destitute students included classroom instruction free from derision and deprecation, and learning experiences that were specific, concrete, and meaningful. Opportunities were provided for students to hear standard English usage. The most successful teachers were energetic, encouraging, buoyant, and optimistic. They pointed out to the student where apparent growth was being made and used techniques of synonymity which restated a difficult term in many different, familiar ways.
Summary

Adult basic education teachers found difficulty in getting the introductory stage of their program started. They indicated the importance of impressing the seriousness of the reading program upon their students by introducing some instruction at the first session.

Research indicated that prospective adult education students were administered pretests with some standardized test. The most commonly used standardized test was the Stanford Achievement Test.

Race was not found to be a factor in illiteracy. Interracial comparisons indicated illiteracy was approximately the same for Negroes and whites from the same geographical section of the United States.

A great many of the basal reading materials for adults had a phonic orientation. Most teachers felt that it was one of the most successful approaches. Other approaches used were word attack skills and sight vocabulary.

Time was found to be an important factor when instructing adults as they were easily discouraged. They want to learn fast and programs that move along rapidly were recommended.
CHAPTER III
RESEARCH

Design and Procedure

A survey was conducted in the Los Angeles area to determine what methods and approaches were used to teach reading to adults. The intent of the survey was to indicate which reading approach was most successful and had finally been adopted.

Methodology

The research methodology employed was a personal interview survey conducted by the writer.

Instrumentation

The instrument used was a questionnaire containing 24 questions grouped around four areas of interest.

The first section of the questionnaire consisted of seven questions covering the objectives of the reading program, the classification criteria used to determine who was considered an adult, the approximate age span of the student body, the average age, how often classes were held, how regular was pupil attendance, and if there was any relationship between attendance and achievement.
The second section dealt with the teaching methods and practices used and implemented in the individual respondent's program as well as those which were discarded. The section dealing with teaching methods and practices contained questions pertaining to administering pretests (and the names of tests used, if any), the structure of the course, provisions made for meeting individual needs of students, as well as questioning if any portion of the program had been programmed. Also included in this section was the question of whether any attempts were made to correct pronunciation during oral reading.

The third section dealt with questions pertaining to the materials used in the reading program. Questions asked were what material was found to be effective, if they were readily available commercially, what materials had to be prepared by the respondent, if the lessons that had been prepared accounted for the different concentration spans of the student, and how long it took for students to go from one learning step to another.

The fourth section raised questions that specifically covered the approaches used to teach adults reading as opposed to those approaches used to teach children to read, what the most effective approaches were in teaching adults to read, what evaluation tests were used and the terminal objectives of the individual reading programs.
The final question dealt with the advice the respondent would give a new teacher entering the adult education field.

**Field Samples**

A full spectrum of adult educational institutions in the Los Angeles area were contacted and a representative sampling of each level of education was obtained.

The subjects questioned were selected as representative of the level of adult school included in the survey. The sampling included administrators, teachers who were engaged in the various reading programs, and professors who taught reading methods to teachers.

The survey was conducted on the following levels:

- Level A - Adult Basic Education
- Level B - Continuation High School
- Level C - Junior College
- Level D - State University College
- Level E - University of California

All respondents contacted were cooperative and helpful, as well as encouraging. Although, the writer first attempted to tape all responses, this method was quickly abandoned as it was found to be inhibiting when obtaining responses to questions. Each respondent was asked the same 24 questions contained on the questionnaire used in the survey in an effort to insure uniform-
ity. All schools contacted, as well as the interviews held, were in the Los Angeles City area.

The interviews were obtained to determine not only the best remedial methods used in teaching adults how better to read, but also to determine any possible patterns that may have emerged in the adult reading field.
CHAPTER IV
SURVEY RESULTS

The following answers are paraphrases based on 24 questions contained in a questionnaire used in a survey conducted in the Los Angeles City area. The survey was conducted among a representative sampling of reading teachers and reading directors in selected adult reading programs.

The following school levels were included in the survey:

Level A - Adult Basic Education
Level B - Continuation High School
Level C - Junior College
Level D - State University College
Level E - University of California

Question #1: What were the teaching objectives of your adult reading program?

Level A: Two-fold; main objective, to give the student enough reading to become employable, or if employed to advance. Second objective, to give adequate mechanics of reading to pass GED tests and to permit applicability to daily living.
The application to daily living that the respondent meant was to know enough about reading to permit the student to go to a library, or make out a check book, or be able to find one's way about the city in relation to written directions.

Level B: Reading improvement and reading enjoyment.

Level C: Test skills, set up individual programs to meet pupil's needs.

Level D: Four-pronged thrust of developmental and remedial reading designed to (1) improve reading, (2) permit power reading, (3) develop study skills, and (4) use appraisal instruments to take the students and help them achieve their potentials.

Level E: Develop flexibility of reading ability and independent learners.

Question #2: Whom did you classify as an adult?

Level A: Students 18 years of age.

Level B: Students 18 years of age.

Level C: Students 18 years of age.

Level D: Students 18 years of age.

Level E: Students 18 years of age.
Question #3: What was the approximate age span of your student body?

Level A: 17 to 86 years of age.
Level B: 16 to 18 years of age.
Level C: 16 to 84 years of age.
Level D: 18 to 22 years of age.
Level E: 18 to 23 years of age, undergraduate.

Graduate students, about 25 years of age.

Question #4: What was the average age?

Level A: Early 20's.
Level B: Age 17.
Level C: Early 20's.
Level D: Age 19.
Level E: No average age.

Level E reported grade levels as being more significant than age. They found freshmen, junior college transferees, and first year graduate students made up the bulk of their classes.

Question #5: How often were classes held?

Level A: Monday through Friday, six hours each day.
Level B: Daily classes, four hours each day.
Level C: One hour classes three times each week for remedial reading, two times per week for developmental reading.
Level D: No regular classes, classroom time arranged as needed by the individual student.

Level E: Marathon study sessions of three to four hours are held for one day with student returning as additional study may be needed.

Question #6: How regular was attendance?

Level A: 75% to 80% of students report regularly.

Level B: 50% attend regularly.

Level C: Remedial programs do not have regular attendance but advanced classes have regular attendance.

Level D: Attendance depended upon contract.

Level E: Program is one-shot situation, after that independence is encouraged.

Question #7: Did you find any relationship between attendance and achievement?

Level A: Students work at their own rate of speed, but a 60% to 80% improvement in performance is shown when attendance is regular.
Level B: Students work at own rate of speed, but the greater the attendance, the greater the achievement.

Level C: There is a relationship between attendance and achievement.

Level D: No notable relationship. This level reported their students were self-motivated and the relationship between attendance and achievement was, therefore, not a factor.

Level E: No reply. This level's program is not held with any continuity.

Question #8: What teaching methods which were successful did you use to implement the program? Discard?

Level A: Audio-visual and constant repetition of material. (50 to 90 times) Discarded preconceived notions.

Level B: Signing work contracts. Discarded uniform contracts, now individualize.

Level C: Individualize reading, individual conferences and small group conferences. Discarded point system for attendance.
Level D: No one successful teaching practice, it depends upon student. Discarded use of just machine oriented programs and now use machines only as support of other printed materials.

Level E: Discarded meeting in eight sessions, two hours twice a week in favor of one group meeting for four hours with option to return. Discarded working with students individually and prefer working with groups. Also discarded use of manuals in favor of student's own material.

This level reported that group work proved to be more stimulating as students can then compare their own performance to others in the group.

Question #9: Did you pretest? If so, what test did you use?

Level A: Yes, Wide Range Achievement Test.
Level B: Yes. Use placement test put out by their school.
Level C: Yes. Nelson-Denny.
Level E: Yes. Education Development Laboratories Test.

This level felt the Educational Development Laboratories Test held many weak spots and they supplemented the test with their own informal testing. They also used the student's reading versatility as a guide to his development.

Question #10: What was the structure of the course?

Level A: Classes are conducted in four hour blocks. Subject matter is broken down into three areas of 20 minute intervals of various kinds of instruction.

Level B: Contract method is used and composed of class assignments individualized for student's needs. Contracts are negotiable and can be changed or modified if student cannot get along doing the work outlined. Alternatives are presented.

Level C: Vary structure from semester to semester but structured basically around text.

Level D: Course structured on individual's needs.
Level E: Scale work to student's needs of moment. Attempt to convey idea of what a good reader does and give lifetime approach to reading.

Question #11: What provisions did you make for meeting individual needs of students?

Level A: Permit students to pull out of class and proceed to work at own pace until they feel confident to go on.

This level had designed their program specifically to permit a student to enter into the instruction being conducted at any time during the semester.

Level B: The contract system and alternative books.

Level C: As many approaches as possible including Science Research Associates, Inc., text books, individual conferences and Educational Development Laboratories Test.

Level D: Individual student's needs are met by diagnosing and screening the student.

Level E: Listen carefully to the student.

Question #12: Did you have any portion of the program that was programmed?

Level A: All programmed material from Educational Development Laboratories Test.
This level felt very strongly that it is imperative to have an aide correct papers when using programmed materials and that teachers, with their expertise, should be free to handle problems and give personal support and examples of subject matter.

Level B: Used only one book for one student that was programmed, Sullivan Associates Program.

Level C: Almost all programmed material from Science Research Associates, Inc. and Educational Development Laboratories Test.

Level D: Study skills are programmed and are using the Sullivan series and Mott basic adult books.

Level E: Depended upon the individual student. If it should be used, they confined it to exercises on the controlled reader and vocabulary development.

Question #13: Was there any attempt made to correct pronunciation during oral reading?

Level A: Do not make a practice of correcting pronunciation if it would interfere with the flow of reading, but when an important pronunciation rule was infringed, they corrected the pronun-
This level did not permit the reader to make over 40% pronunciation errors.

Level B: No attempt is made to correct pronunciation errors.

Level C: Pronunciation is corrected during choral reading.

This level did not want the student to go home and study an incorrect pronunciation. To forestall this, they attempted to make a game of catching errors.

Level D: Doubted whether any attempt was made to correct pronunciation at any time.

Level E: Made no attempt to correct pronunciation.

Question #14: What materials have you found to be effective?

Level A: Educational Development Laboratories Test and Steck Vaughn materials.

Level B: High interest, low reading ability material.

Level C: Educational Development Laboratories Test, Listen and Read, Reading for Understanding cards, and the dictionary.

Level D: Use what is effective for the individual, an eclectic approach most often.

Level E: Educational Development Laboratories
Test and student's own assigned classroom material.

Question #15: Were the materials you used readily available commercially?

Level A: Yes.
Level B: Yes.
Level C: Yes.
Level D: Yes.
Level E: Yes.

Question #16: What materials did you have to prepare for use in instruction yourself?

Level A: Charts of most vocabulary and spelling words.
Level B: Dictionary and phonics exercises.
Level C: Tapes, charts, supplementary drill material and tests.
Level D: None.
Level E: Principles of 3SQR applied informally to own program.

Question #17: Did you prepare lessons which accounted for different concentration spans?

Level A: All lessons are prepared beforehand by Educational Development Laboratories Test, except for educationally handicapped students. Lessons are specially prepared for them with their limited concentration span in mind.
Level B: Yes.
Level C: Yes.
Level D: Yes.
Level E: Did not feel this was a concern of theirs, as students normally came for only one reading session.

Question #18: How long did you find it took your students to go from one learning step to another?

Level A: Students are not placed into a step situation, only count the amount of time in hours to finish a five unit course.

Level B: Program too individualized to tell.

Level C: Program varies too much to determine size of step. Lessons overlap.

Level D: One segment flows naturally into another, can't distinguish as there is an overlap.

Level E: Varies.

Question #19: Were there any special approaches you used in teaching adults to read that differed from the way the subject was taught to children?

Level A: Yes, a big difference, adults are oriented to their jobs. They want
true stories about people and places in their reading material.

Level B: Did not teach lower levels.

Level C: Not aware of difference as did not teach lower levels.

Level D: Teaching adults would start with specific interest areas in opposition to the way children are taught.

Level E: Did not teach children.

Question #20: What did you find were the most effective approaches in teaching adults to read?

Level A: Repetition and don't insult their intelligence by using basic elementary test.

Level B: Stimulate interest, reading level goes up with interest in material.

Level C: Many different approaches, some are responsive to one type of teaching others don't respond at all.

Level D: Independent programming, and one to one basis.

Level E: Motivation, enthusiasm and assumption that they can improve. Positive approach.
Question #21: What would you say was the biggest problem in teaching adults to read?

Level A: Lack of confidence. Erasing bad habits and eliminating misconceptions.

Level B: Lack of high interest material at low ability level.

Level C: Lack of self-image and poor opinion of ability to learn.

Level D: Overcoming improperly learned skills in previous years or any perceptual problems they may have.

Level E: The problem of synthesizing and integrating the material into another aspect also thinking about and creating ideas of what they have read.

Question #22: What evaluative tests did you use?

Level A: McGraw-Hill Test for adult basic education as well as teacher prepared tests.

Level B: None after pretest. Testing is done on work assigned.

Level C: No standardized tests.

Level D: Gates MacGinite, Nelson-Denny.

Level E: Questionnaire is distributed for evaluation of how helpful program
was for them.

Question #23: What was your terminal objective?

Level A: 8th grade diploma, GED and HS diploma, employability.

Level B: High school diploma.

Level C: Objectives differ, for one student it may be to read one sentence aloud, for others it may be to increase vocabulary and composition.

Level D: Be a self-sufficient reader and at least realize own potential.

Level E: Meet students needs of grade level achievement.

Question #24: What advice would you give a new teacher entering the adult education field?

Level A: Attitude is important, give understanding, heart qualities, caring about individual, sensitivity to student, almost a social worker, social precedes learning. Let student have a say in what is taught and how it is taught. Get lesson plans and objectives laid. Be organized.
Level B: Be prepared to see expectations differ from what you get. You have to accept kids for what they are, if you have high expectations you could be disappointed in what they will perform. Praise them in order to make them see they are improving and not always correcting them.

Level C: Take enough time in the beginning to keep stopping along the way to remind students that they can lick this reading problem. Once they become interested that they can, or believe that they can, do something simple with students in order to give them a sense that they can do whatever needs to be done.

Level D: Read everything published on adult reading in order to get background for wide range of methods and material.

Level E: Forget everything you learned in graduate school and don't get hung up on machinery and materials. Re-
member your own humaness and that of your student. Look for good and the positive in your approach.

Findings and Analysis

The major questions asked in this study were: What are the methods and approaches used in adult reading, and which methods and approaches were most successful.

The findings indicated that practice used at all levels of adult reading was to administer pretests to students entering a reading program. However, not all levels administered posttests. No one set method of class structure emerged at any level but an analysis of the data revealed that the lower the reading ability, the more formal the method by which the content material was offered. An unanimous recommendation of teaching methodology was to individualize as much of the reading program as possible to suit the student's needs.

An analysis of the findings further indicated that no one teaching approach was recommended as opposed to another. The teachers interviewed favored an eclectic approach. This recommendation was based on their experience that not all students responded to the same approach.

One of the objectives of the adult reading programs surveyed in the study was to provide a means whereby
students could more successfully function in their environment when seeking to raise their reading level. In the opinion of some teachers, the student's economic level could be raised from one level to another by providing the necessary literacy skills needed to become employable.

The reading program surveyed in the adult field were servicing the reading needs of students from 17 years of age to 86 years of age.

Teacher respondents interviewed indicated that generally no concentrated attempts were made to correct pronunciation.

The respondents indicated that materials used in their reading programs were largely commercially prepared and readily available. This was a departure from commentary made in the adult reading field in former years (Christian, 1970). At that time, there were complaints that adequate adult reading material was not available commercially. Teachers had to prepare their own materials with an emphasis on content to insure that the adult student would find interesting, relevant, and suitable reading material scaled to their needs.

The advice that teacher respondents gave to new teachers entering the adult reading field reinforces the findings of a study conducted at the Bennett College Reading Study Skills Center (Newton, 1968). The study
found that the most successful teachers were encouraging and optimistic. The survey just completed indicated that the most common advice given to teachers entering the adult reading field was to show concern for the student by praising them, encouraging them, and looking for the good and positive traits they possess. These attitudes were stressed to offset the poor self-image reading students had of themselves.

The basic premise made when the survey was undertaken was that adult students have peculiar problems of learning; therefore, special teaching methods and approaches would be applied when working with adults.

Only two of the teacher respondents had taught both children and adults and were able to contrast the teaching methods and approaches they used to teach reading to adults. Both respondents indicated that adult reading classes should encompass specific interest areas, oriented to the adult student's interests.
CHAPTER V
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

A study was conducted in the Los Angeles area of the problems involved in teaching reading to adults. These problems encompassed the overall maturity of the adult whose literacy skills were at the same level as children. An additional problem was the poor retention of memory that is characteristic of adults.

The study was designed to survey the different methods and approaches used in teaching adult remedial and improvement classes. This was conducted to determine the most effective methods used to raise adult literacy levels and to determine what approaches were the most successful under the guidance of a reading teacher.

The questions to be answered were:

1. What were the methods used in adult reading?
2. Which approach was the most effective in raising adult literacy levels?
3. Which approaches were the most successful under the guidance of a reading teacher?

A section containing the definitions of terms used
in the survey was listed. The limitations of the survey conducted in the Los Angeles area were indicated and the levels of educational institutions contacted were enumerated.

A review of the literature in the adult reading field contained information of early United States Army remedial reading programs, interviews with adult basic education teachers, initial informal reading inventory tests, and reviews of materials, methods and approaches. Also reviewed were some broad objectives reading teachers thought should be included in a reading program when correcting functional literacy.

The review of literature indicated that a great many of the basal reading materials used for adults had a phonic orientation with teachers favoring this particular approach.

The research design was outlined and procedures used to conduct the survey to determine what methods and approaches were used to teach reading to adults were described. The personal interview approach method used by the writer was delineated.

The instrument used in the survey was a questionnaire containing 24 questions grouped around four areas of interest. The first section consisted of seven questions covering the questions on the objectives of
the reading program, classification of the student body, attendance, and relationship between attendance and achievement.

The second group of questions dealt with teaching methods. The third section dealt with questions regarding the materials used in the reading program and what materials were found to be effective.

The fourth section raised questions pertaining to teaching approaches used to teach reading to adults as opposed to those approaches used to teach children. What the terminal objectives of the individual reading program was asked and the final question dealt with the advice the respondent would give new teachers entering the adult education field.

The findings of the survey indicated that all respondents questioned administered a pretest to entering students but not all respondents administered a posttest. One successful method used to structure a program was to individualize the reading program to suit the student's needs. No one approach was recommended but an eclectic reading approach was suggested. The survey indicated that adults responded best to materials directed to their level of needs and interests.

Conclusion

There were several patterns that emerged during the
course of conducting the survey. One pattern indicated that the lower the reading grade level of material taught, the more uniform the method of presentation. Lower grade levels used programmed machinery with regular systematic sequences of learning. The higher reading levels used student's materials or supplemented the type of material the individual student had difficulty with and individualized the reading program.

Another pattern that emerged was the attempt made to correct pronunciation. The lower levels consciously watched and monitored pronunciation errors. The higher the grade level progressed, the less monitoring of pronunciation and the highest grade levels made no attempt to correct speech or pronunciation.

Motivation was found to be a great impetus in reading. On the E level, student's were motivated by a furtherance of the competitive spirit prevalent on their campus. Previous practices of individualizing reading improvement course work were discarded in favor of a marathon study-in. Competition in reading performance was encouraged at this level as opposed to discouraging all competition on the lower reading levels and permitting a student to progress at their own rate of speed.
Recommendations

The results of the study indicated that most adult reading programs were conducted in isolation. There was no contact between members of one reading level with the other levels of reading programs being conducted in the city of Los Angeles.

It is recommended that an adult reading clearing house of information consisting of all levels of reading grades be established to:

A. Permit exchange of successful reading methods.
B. Exchange information on successful approaches used to implement adult reading programs.
C. Encourage further research in the adult reading field.

The participants of the organization that would comprise this clearing house of information could gather all data related and uniquely suited to the adult reading field.
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APPENDIX A

METHODS AND APPROACHES USED IN TEACHING ADULT REMEDIAL READING

1. What were the teaching objectives of your adult reading program?
2. Whom did you classify as an adult?
3. What was the approximate age span of your student body?
4. What was the average age?
5. How often were classes held?
6. How regular was attendance?
7. Did you find any relationship between attendance and achievement?
8. What teaching methods which were successful did you use to implement the program? Discard?
9. Did you pretest? If so, what test did you use?
10. What was the structure of the course?
11. What provisions did you make for meeting individual needs of students?
12. Did you have any portion of the program that was programmed?
13. Was there any attempt made to correct pronunciation during oral reading?
14. What materials had you found to be effective?
15. Were the materials you used readily available commercially?

16. What materials did you have to prepare for use in instruction yourself?

17. Did you prepare lessons which accounted for different concentration spans?

18. How long did you find it took your students to go from one learning step to another?

19. Were there any special approaches you used in teaching adults to read that differed from the way the subject was taught to children?

20. What did you find were the most effective approaches in teaching adults to read?

21. What would you say was the biggest problem in teaching adults to read?

22. What evaluative tests did you use?

23. What was your terminal objective?

24. What advice would you give a new teacher entering the adult education field?