

A STUDY OF METHODS OF TEACHING ADULTS
TO READ AS DEVELOPED FOR LITERACY
CAMPAIGNS BY SOME MEMBER
NATIONS OF UNESCO



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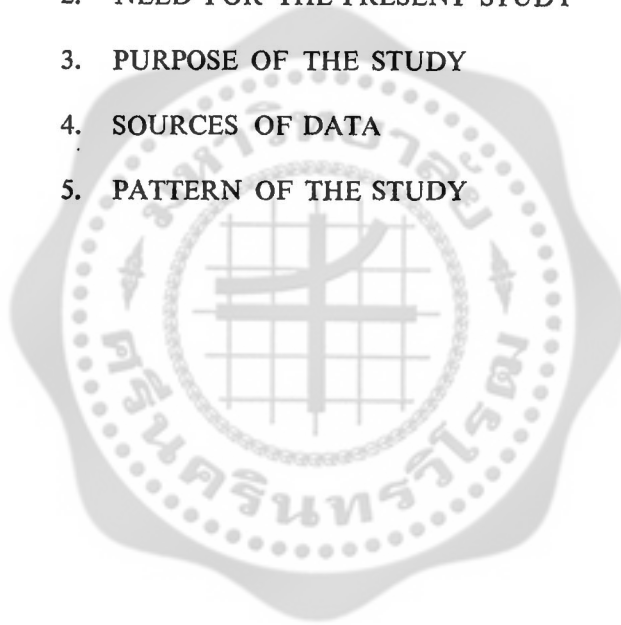
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CHAPTER I

THE NATURE OF THE STUDY

1. INTRODUCTION
2. NEED FOR THE PRESENT STUDY
3. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY
4. SOURCES OF DATA
5. PATTERN OF THE STUDY



CHAPTER I

THE NATURE OF THE STUDY

Introduction

The preamble of the constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) declares in part:

that since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed.¹

A dispute as to exactly where wars begin immediately arises as a result of the differences that exist in the interpretation of the term "mind." However, the implication suggested by the declaration is somewhat clear, and that is, intelligence, both scientific and social, is greatly needed by the masses of the people in the world of today. This need is also reflected in the following passages from the same preamble:

that the great and terrible war which has now ended was a war made possible by the denial of the democratic principles of the dignity, equality and mutual respect of men, and by the propagation, in their place, through ignorance and prejudices, of the doctrine of the inequality of men and races;

that the wide diffusion of culture, and the education of humanity for justice and liberty and peace are indispensable to the dignity of man.....

¹ UNESCO: *Constitution of UNESCO*. Paris, France: UNESCO Office, (Nov. 1945), p. 3.

that a peace based exclusively upon the political and economic arrangements of governments would not be a peace which could secure the unanimous, lasting and sincere support of the peoples of the world, and that the peace must, therefore, be founded, if it is not to fail, upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind.....

It is true, therefore, that peace founded on justice, and thus on the intellectual and moral sense of mankind is a pressing need in the tumultuous world of today. To satisfy this need, education for intellectual and social intelligence is extremely desirable, through which the constructively active attitude necessary for the achievement of participation, co-operation and a true respect for individuals on a world-wide basis may be created; and it is here assumed that literacy is a first step towards that end. Being able to read and to express oneself in writing is the most elementary means of participating in the life of the modern world. Peaceful and democratic attitudes could be more effectively built when the people are literate.

Yet, statistical figures² relating to literacy show that, taking the world as a whole, a large number of adults have not yet learned to read and write, and are living in a state of abysmal ignorance, enduring consequent poverty and disease. James Yen, a great leader of the Chinese literacy campaign, sums up the situation in his widely quoted remark: "Three-fourths of the world's population are under-housed, under-clothed, under-fed, and illiterate."³

Realizing that social intelligence cannot very well grow in lands where illiteracy is widely prevalent, governments of many countries, private organizations, and finally UNESCO itself have started several literacy campaigns as essential parts of their fundamental education programs. How effective and successful those

² UNESCO: *Literacy Statistics From Available Census Figures* (UNESCO/Ed./Occ./6). Paris, France: UNESCO Office, (April, 1950), P. 14-24.

³ UNESCO: *Fundamental Education*, (Description and Program), Paris, France: UNESCO Office, (1949), p. 9.

campaigns will be depend upon several factors, basic among which, undoubtedly, is the methodology that is being developed or applied in the campaigns designed to teach adults to read.

Evidences have shown that UNESCO has a strong desire to supply its member-nations with a sound method of literacy teaching that will bring the surest result in the shortest possible time. In the Twelfth International Conference on Public Education convened by UNESCO and the International Bureau of Education (I.B.E.) in 1948, the methods of teaching reading in 45 countries as described by their governments were assembled in one volume.⁴ However, only the classroom practices are given, while the underlying principles or assumptions of those methods are not discussed. According to the method exemplified in *Nature of Proof*,⁵ which is very akin to the "method of intelligence" or the "scientific method," the practices or methods will not be more effective than their basic assumptions. Hence, a study of a method of teaching reading without going into its philosophical, psychological and pedagogical postulates and their interrelationships can only lead to superficial conclusions and, probably, to relatively ineffective procedures and results.

In 1949 a UNESCO seminar, which has a bearing on the methods of teaching reading to adults, was held in Brazil. It was called the Inter-American Seminar on Illiteracy and Adult Education. In the official report submitted by this seminar, a brief statement on methods of teaching reading is made. In part, it says:

Concerning the problem of methods, the Seminar wishes to go on record that it accepts the scientific evidence in favor of the sentence or global method for teaching children to read. On the basis of objective data and corroborative evidence of the psychology of adults, of

⁴ UNESCO: *The Teaching of Reading* (Publication No. 133), Paris, France: UNESCO Office, (1949).

⁵ Fawcett, Harold P. *Nature of Proof*, Thirteenth Yearbook, National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1938.

their interests and ways of learning, the Seminar recommends the same method for the teaching of adult illiterates until such time as the results of research and controlled experiments prove the contrary.⁶

Also, late in 1949, another UNESCO seminar was called in Mysore, India, to study the problem of adult illiteracy in rural districts. It was called The Asian Seminar on Rural Adult Education, in which

methods of teaching illiterates in India, as well as in some other countries were exhaustively scrutinized. The following methods were examined: Laubach Method, Utility Method, Rhythmic Method, Chorus - Keyword Method, Individualistic Method, Phonetic Method, Word-Sentence Method, and Sentence or Global Method.⁷

As a result of the study made by this seminar, a recommendation was made as follows:

The group considered that each country should work out the method or methods best suited to its particular needs, but hoped that due consideration would be given to the following scientific principles which apply to any sound method used for teaching illiterates in any language:

1. The starting point in any lesson should be what the adult is interested in and not what teachers want to talk about.
2. As the adult perceives in wholes and then passes to analysis, he should be taught reading through perception of whole thought units.

⁶ UNESCO: *Inter-American Seminar on Illiteracy and Adult Education*. (UNESCO/Ed./Occ./2) Paris, France: UNESCO Office (May, 1950), p. 20.

⁷ UNESCO: *Methods of Literacy Teaching*, UNESCO/Mysore/71, Revised), Paris, France: UNESCO Office (1949), p. 7.

3. To facilitate fixation, the teacher should provide a variety of repetitions of the word in different sentences.
4. The vocabulary burden should be light. Too many new words should not be introduced on any one page of a reader.
5. Physiological factors such as the degree of development of the faculties of seeing and hearing must be taken into consideration.
6. The teacher should not be bound by fixed methods of approach, but should be ready to adapt himself to meet varying needs of different environments.⁸

A proposition is said to be sound or otherwise, when it is considered in terms of criteria or definitions. A proposition cannot be good or sound in itself, or in any absolute sense. In the same manner, a method of teaching reading may be deemed sound when its basic assumptions satisfy the conditions contained in an adopted definition of what reading is, or in any other kind of criteria agreed upon.

Thus, the recommendations made in these two UNESCO seminars may be questioned on the grounds that they actually may not make functionally applicable contributions, since neither of the seminars defined "reading." Consequently, they could not discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the postulates underlying the method or methods they recommended in terms of any accepted definition of reading. The recommendations were, therefore, made on an unfirm basis. In other words, the same recommendations were made for different and incongruent conceptions of "reading."

It must be admitted, however, that admirable attempts have been made by UNESCO in collaboration with the Ministries of Education of many member-countries in bringing together and sharing with one another some broad information about the current practices in teaching reading in each country. But so far no systematic study has been made by UNESCO concerning the basic

⁸ UNESCO: *Methods of Literacy Teaching*, op. cit., p. 20.

assumptions of each of those practices. It is assumed, as a basis for this dissertation, that a study of this nature will promote clear thinking in many countries, relating to effective methods of teaching reading, and hence, help combat illiteracy in an ever more efficient manner.

Need for the Present Study

With reference to the discussion made in the foregoing pages, there arises a need to investigate, in terms of their underlying principles, the major current methods of teaching adults to read as they are employed in countries where literacy campaigns are being actively conducted, or where the campaigns have recently ended; and to examine the advantages and disadvantages of these principles with respect to a functional concept of reading, and all its implications, in such a way that reconstruction of methods may take place.

Theoretically, this need for the study is in line with the principles of continuity and reconstruction of experience, and also is in accord with the belief that "laissez-faire," or an attitude of complacency regarding any existing method of teaching reading, is a repudiation of the growth of methods.

Practically, the study realizes that much has been learned in recent years about the teaching of reading, and that this knowledge is not yet in full use even in schools for children because of old teaching habits. The study recognizes also that in this new venture, literacy education for adults, it is important, since time is short, to use the best that is known right from the start before any undesirable habit is formed.

Purpose of the Study

It is a good practice in setting up any functional program of instruction, first to specify the needs of the situation, and then, out of the needs, to state objectives or purposes, the achievement of which will resolve the situation. This will be followed in the present study. In accordance with the need, namely, to analyze the basic assumptions underlying the current major methods of teaching adults to read, the following objectives are in order:

1. To identify and describe briefly the current practices.
2. To set up evaluative criteria by which the practices identified may be evaluated in terms of their basic assumptions.
3. In light of the advantages and disadvantages obtained from 2, to make a general recommendation, which may be considered as a general criterion for reconstructing the current methods of teaching adults to read, with reference to a functional definition of reading. This, in fact, is the ultimate aim of this study.

In stating the need for, and the purpose of, the present study the following fundamental postulates are taken for granted:

1. That change is normal in all things, including the methods of teaching adults to read.
2. That reconstruction of methods is a form of change, and is desirable.
3. That methods of teaching may be reconstructed through the process of setting up hypotheses, analyzing their implications and checking them against facts.
4. That criteria for reconstructing methods of teaching are possible.

Sources of Data

In making the present study, general literature pertaining to the problem of reading and the problem concerning the methods of teaching reading is examined. Outstanding among the writing explored in the English language, are the pertinent yearbooks of the National Society for the Study of Education (N.S.S.E.), and the Proceedings of the Annual Conferences on Reading held at the University of Chicago. Works of authorities on methods of teaching reading, various publications on the problem of reading, as well as teaching materials such as the pre-primers and primers used in teaching adults to read in countries concerned, were also studied. In the French language, some works by authors who

deal with the Global Method (Méthode Globale) or the so-called La Méthode Decroly, currently popular in Europe,⁹ were investigated.

In addition, UNESCO publications concerning the teaching of reading in many countries as described by their governments and private agencies, and reports of progress on UNESCO fundamental education projects from the official files kept at the UNESCO office at Lake Success, New York City, have been made accessible through visits with the officials of that office. The UNESCO Educational Clearing House in Paris also sent some documents and reports to the writer. Prominent among the UNESCO publications are the *Occasional Papers in Education* (UNESCO/Ed./Occ.), the *Fundamental Education Abstracts*, and the *Quarterly Bulletin of Fundamental Education*.

The third important source of data is the conversations and correspondence with people actually working in the field of UNESCO projects. Direct and indirect contacts were made with outstanding workers in literacy campaigns, such as:

1. A conference with Dr. Frank C. Laubach, the most well-known literacy campaign worker in the world. He has worked to teach the illiterate adults to read in almost all countries in Asia, South America, Africa and the Middle East.
2. A conference with Dr. F. J. Rex, the former consultant to UNESCO in the field of literacy education, now the consultant to the Committee on World Literacy and Christian Literature, Foreign Missions Conference of North America, New York City.
3. A conference with Mr. Marcel Desroches, Director of the Demonstration School in the UNESCO Pilot Project, Haiti.
4. Correspondence with Miss Ella W. Griffin, who is associated with the Literacy Education Project conducted by the U. S. Office of Education, and who is now preparing advanced reading materials for the UNESCO Haitian Pilot Project.

⁹ UNESCO: *Literacy Education* (UNESCO/Ed./Occ./5: L'apprentissage de la lecture par la méthode globale), Paris, France: UNESCO Office (1950), p. 5.

5. Correspondence with Dr. Lourenço Filho, Minister of Education of Brazil, who is now conducting the greatest literacy campaign in South America, and who was Director of the UNESCO Seminar on Illiteracy and Adult Education in Rio de Janeiro in 1949.

6. Correspondence with M.L. Pin Malakul, Director of the Mysore Seminar in India, who is also Permanent-Secretary of Education for Thailand.

Pattern of the Study

In line with the purpose of the study, the investigation, analysis, interpretation, and conclusions follow the following pattern:

a. A general discussion of reading and its problems are made. This leads to a definition of reading, and its implications in a teaching-learning situation. The basic assumptions relating to the definition of reading are also stated.

b. As a result of the above discussions, evaluative criteria are set up in order to evaluate the current practices in teaching the adults to read in some member-nations of UNESCO.

c. A brief survey of the major existing methods of teaching reading is then made.

d. Using the criteria, the current practices in those countries are evaluated.

e. General recommendations in the form of formulae for reconstructing methods of teaching adults to read are made after the advantages and disadvantages obtained from the evaluation have been considered.

CHAPTER II
A FUNCTIONAL CONCEPT OF READING AND ITS
IMPLICATIONS

1. A GENERAL DISCUSSION OF READING
2. A DEFINITION OF READING
3. WHAT THE PRECEDING DISCUSSIONS MEAN IN A
TEACHING-LEARNING SITUATION
4. WHAT THIS TEACHING - LEARNING PRACTICE
MEANS IN TERMS OF PRINCIPLES
5. EVALUATIVE CRITERIA.

CHAPTER II

A FUNCTIONAL CONCEPT OF READING AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

As has been stated before, any study of a method of teaching reading should be made in light of a certain definition or conception of the term "reading." Traditionally, "teaching reading is hearing pupils read."¹ This is because reading is identified with pronouncing words from printed or written pages in the belief that the meaning of what is read is embedded in the words. The present tendency is towards the idea that the meaning arises in the relationship of the individual and the words in terms of the nature and character of experience the individual has had. "When we say that a word has or possesses such and such meanings, we are really saying that it has evoked or caused those meanings to arise."² So the methods of teaching reading are accordingly changed.

It thus follows that in order to make an effective investigation of the methods of teaching adults to read, employed by some membercountries of UNESCO, an acceptable concept of reading must be built-up first that is consistent with what is already known in the fields of philosophy, psychology and pedagogy. The definition, then, will serve as a criterion of evaluation of those methods, and also as a guide for recommendations for reconstruction.

I. A General Discussion of Reading

In a reading situation there is, on the one hand, the organism or the person who is doing the reading. This organism is a

¹ Gray, William S. (Editor). *The Appraisal of Current Practices in Reading*, (Proceeding of the Annual Conference on Reading Held at the University of Chicago), Vol. VII. No. 61, (Dec. 1945), p. 17.

² Strang, Ruth. "The Contribution of Psychology of Reading to International Co-operation." *School and Society*, Vol. 67, No. 1727 (Jan. 31, 1948), p. 65-8.

dynamic self with needs, problems and goals. It is a goal-seeking self ever attempting to maintain equilibrium. This self consists of ideas, values and meanings all derived from the experience it has had. Again the organism will direct its attention most to the things or situations that will contribute to the solution of its problems, that will meet its needs, or achieve its goals. Furthermore, whatever interacts with the organism will be interpreted in terms of its reserve of values and meanings.

On the other hand, there is the printed or written page which consists of symbols, "each symbol being drawn from an image, idea, emotion, or experience of the writer."³ To what extent the organism or the reader will get the ideas or meanings intended by the writer of the symbols depends largely upon the problems, the goals and the experiential background of the organism itself. "The reader with a biased or distorted mind-set may be blind to other point of view, give over-potency to parts of the passage in accord with his preconceived ideas, and make false assumptions."⁴ But one thing is clear. The reader is looking for the meanings or informations that lead him towards the solution of his problems or the meeting of his needs.

In this manner, the act of reading is part of a total situation, involving the person, his environment and the reading material. The person's past experience, his present needs, and his future goals, plus his accuracy and independence of interpretation will determine the failure or success of his reading.

In more concrete terms, meanings of what is read arise as the organism interacts with the printed symbols in its effort to find informations leading to the solution of a certain problem, to meet

³ Durrell, Donald D. "Development of Comprehension and Interpretation." *Reading in the Elementary School*, 48th Yearbook, Part II, (N. S. S. E.), p. 193.

⁴ Strang, Ruth. "The Contribution of Psychology of Reading to International Co-operation." *School and Society*, Vol. 67, No. 1727 (Jan. 31, 1948), p. 65-8.

certain needs, or to develop desired skills. The interaction is the getting of the meanings. It involves the following elements:—

1. Recognition of word-configurations.
2. Recognition of speech-sounds representing the printed or written words, which need not be pronounced.
3. Recognition of what is intended in the context.

1. *Recognition of Word-Configurations.* The act of reading starts when the reader sees the words and recognizes their appearances. The reader as a rule sees and recognizes the words as wholes. He does not, in the process of reading, look for all the different letters in each word, and then put them together to form the word. Research confirms this statement. "Cottell used the tachistoscope and exposed letters, phrases and sentences. His results showed that when sentences or phrases were exposed, they were either grasped as wholes or not at all."⁵

The recognition of words or sentences no doubt has to rely on familiarity with those words in the spoken language, which means that actual experience with those words in the ongoing everyday life is a necessary condition. It supplies meanings, and facilitates recognition. Furthermore, the context of the reading also promotes recognition. In fact, these three factors, namely, word-configurations, background experiences, and context cannot be separated from one another. They are integral parts of the process of reading, or the getting of the meanings. They are separated here for discussion purposes only.

2. *Recognition of speech-sounds representing the printed or written words.* The recognition of the word-configurations as described in 1 is facilitated when the words are in the reader's spoken vocabulary. The words that the reader has pronounced and used in his everyday language are known and meaningful to him. When they appear again in a written form, they serve to

⁵ Gray, William S. *Principles of Method in Teaching Reading As Derived from Scientific Investigation*. (18th Yearbook of the N.S.S.E.) 1919, p. 31.

reinforce his previous experience, and are thus easily remembered, and recognized on later occasions. It is true to say that what a man gets from a situation depends upon what he brings to it. In the case of reading, a reader brings with him his previous experience in the form of spoken words, so that he can get the meaning or familiarize himself with the written words. He does not have to utter them in the process of recognition; but the knowledge of the speech-sounds belonging to those symbols makes recognition possible. Nevertheless, he must be able to pronounce them correctly and immediately, whenever he is required to do so. The words that are part of a man's experience are recognized and retained more easily than those that are foreign to him. In very simple terms, the language background-experience is essential to reading.

3. *Recognition of what is intended in the context.* A word usually carries with it one or more ideas depending upon its usage. When it is used in a certain place or context, it evokes one meaning; but when it is used in another place, it can evoke another meaning. The word "fire" is a case in point. When words are put together in an organized order, as in a phrase or a sentence, a certain definite meaning is intended. It is the purpose of the reader to get this intended meaning. This implies that he must be figuring out, while he is reading, what meaning is being presented. Hence, in reading one must be thinking all the time. If the meaning is familiar, recognition of the words and sentences becomes accurate and easy. If the words are not in the reader's vocabulary and thus unfamiliar, recognition or grasping of meaning becomes slow and difficult. Althea Beery said.

Recognition and meaning are two interrelated aspects of the problem of reading vocabulary. They are discussed separately....., although in actual teaching no sharp division exists. Meaning aids recognition and in turn, rapid recognition of familiar words assists in securing the meaning of a new word in a sentence.⁶

⁶ Beery, Althea. "Development of Reading Vocabulary and Word Recognition. *Reading in the Elementary School*, 48th Yearbook, part II, (N. S. S. E.) 1949, p. 172.

While the above statement is none too correct, it is widely accepted today that recognition is meaning functioning in a particular way. For instance, the word "mink" may be recognized to mean animal or fur coat. To recognize is to have meaning enter experience immediately; where it does not do so, then inference, which is meaning functioning in another way, is available; and it is here that thinking enters the picture.

It can be said, then, that the getting of the intended meaning of the passage or sentences read is the interaction of three forces, namely, the reader's background of experience concerning the topic in the reading material, represented by his spoken vocabulary; the configuration of the written words representing the writer's idea; and the context of the passage or sentences. An effective method of teaching reading will have to consider these three forces, and the manner in which they are related to the act of reading. It would be a mistake to over-emphasize or to ignore any one element, since the securing of the meaning is the interaction of the three. To put it in another way, the meaning intended is grasped when three interacting types of recognition are accomplished: recognition of word-configurations, recognition of the speech-sounds involved, and recognition of what is intended in the context. Lastly, the three forces also determine one another. To think of just one of them in isolation will serve no purpose in the reading process.

II. A Definition of Reading

When a person reads a piece of writing, it is his purpose either to secure some information that will lead him to the accomplishment of some aims, or just to enjoy himself or get satisfaction from what is said in the writing. Either way, it is his basic assumption that he can derive meanings from the printed or written pages he is looking at and get satisfaction from them. It is possible to say simply, then, that reading is the getting and using of meanings.

In the preceding general discussion it was noted that while a person is reading, one of his chief activities is figuring out or thinking all the time what meaning is being presented or intended. This statement will be further clarified when this definition that

reading is getting and using of meanings is compared with Boyd H. Bode's statement that thinking is "the finding and testing of meanings."⁷ Putting the two equations together:

Thinking = finding and testing of meanings

Reading = getting and using of meanings, a certain conclusion can be drawn. Finding and getting are continuous with each other. When something is found, it is gotten. Testing is one form of using. When something is being tested, it is being applied or used. The deduction, then, is that thinking is continuous with reading and vice versa, or

∴ Thinking is approximately equal to reading. Thinking is not exactly equal to reading because, as has been noted, where recognition is swift or where meaning enters experience immediately, thinking or reflective activity is reduced to a minimum effort. However, in support of the above equation, certain statements made by authorities in reading are in order:

Reading should be regarded as an activity of thought, requiring the use of the creative intelligence and making an effective contribution to the development of the personality as a whole. Recognition of the symbols, understandings of their value and rapidity of perception are insufficient. The most important thing is the individual's reaction to what is read--reflection on the significance of ideas, their critical evaluation, and awareness of the inter-connexion of these ideas--in a word, reading is thinking.⁸

The child (or adult) should think actively while reading. The first reading lesson is not too early for him to recognize reading as a process of thinking rather than as

⁷ Bode, Boyd H. *Fundamentals of Education*, New York: Macmillan Co. 1921, p. 114.

⁸ Bou, Ismael Rodriguez. *Suggestions of the Preparation of Reading Matter*. (UNESCO/Ed./Occ./2) Paris, France: UNESCO Office, (Dec. 1949), p. 9.

an exercise in calling words. He should form the habit of seeing a group of words as the expression of an idea rather than as a group of individual letters or unrelated words. Therefore, he should be taught to see the phrase and short sentences as unit of thought from the very beginning of his instruction in reading.⁹

Experience, thinking, language and reading are intimately related. Progress in any one of them parallels closely, and is dependent on progress in the others.¹⁰

These relationships should supply the whole clue to setting up a functional method of teaching reading.

Since experience, thinking and language grow continuously as a man progresses, it follows that reading is not a finished product. It is not learned and mastered once and for all time. As new ideas are developed, new words are built, and new experiences involved, new ability in reading are developed accordingly. A modern man finds it difficult to read old books, like *Beowulf* or the *Canterbury Tales*, because ideas and words have changed so much since that time. If a man possesses the same amount of ability in reading as existed in the olden days, he finds it extremely hard to read the newspaper of today. Thus, to be able to set up a good reading program, this idea of continuity of reading will have to be considered. Mary D. Reed¹¹ identifies four stages of continual progress in reading:

1. The period of reading readiness, or preparation for reading, in which physical, intellectual, social and emotional growth of a person prepares one for the

⁹ Stoddard, George D. "Basic Issues." *The Appraisal of Current Practices in Reading*, (Proceeding of the Annual Conference on Reading Held at the University of Chicago) Vol. VII, No. 61, (Dec. 1945), P. 8.

¹⁰ Gray, William S. *The Appraisal of Current Practices in Reading*, op. cit., p. 17.

¹¹ Reed, Mary D. "Promoting Development in Interpreting What Is Read in the Primary Grades." *The Appraisal of Current Practices in Reading*, (Conference of Reading, Chicago University, (Dec. 1945), p. 157.

reading process. A rich social experience background is the most outstanding feature of this period. Physical and emotional obstacles are to be reduced to a minimum, so that intellect can function effectively.

2. The period of beginning reading, in which a person is introduced to some basic reading skills, and appreciation of some of the values in reading.
3. The period in which a person learns to engage in the continuous meaningful reading of simple material and acquires an interest in independent reading.
4. The period of rapid growth in the attitudes and habits involved in meaningful reading.

In concluding this section, it is well to say again that reading is thinking, or the getting and using of meanings from what is read, which, in turn, implies that reading is a means to an end.

III. What the Preceding Discussions Mean in a Teaching-Learning Situation

As a consequence of the preceding general discussion on reading, and the discussion concerning a definition of reading, certain points may be pinned down that may serve as steps to be taken in the process of teaching and learning to read:

1. Acquisition of General Readiness for Reading.

a. *Language Readiness*: In the beginning, recognition of words and their meanings can hardly be expected unless those words are already a part of the oral language of the reader. That is to say until he had meanings for the words, and can use them in actual situations, he will find reading less meaningful and thus difficult. In teaching an adult to read, the problem of language readiness is very much simplified, since a grownup person can speak his own language rather well and has a greater amount of experience in life than that of a child. The necessary preparation would thus be directed towards clarifying the goals, or stating clearly what he wants to accomplish. Then an oral discussion

on that particular topic will put the adult in readiness to learn to read his own experience concerning that topic. This means, of course, that the first reading materials to be presented to the reader should be about his own direct experience, because, as Gates said, "words mean only what they represent in our experience."¹²

b. *Visual Readiness*: Persons with sight defects will have difficulty in noticing the differences in word-configurations, and hence, in learning to recognize their meanings. The difficulty will increase when they come to word-study or word-analysis, which is also an important phase in the process of learning to read. Therefore, a person who wants to read accurately and independently must have good eyesight.

c. *Auditory Readiness*: Language is a two-way process. The outgoing process includes speaking (or oral expression) and writing, while the incoming process refers to listening and reading. These four activities are interrelated. Progress in any one will promote, and depend on progress in the others. It is true that in reading, a person does not have to pronounce any word, since reading is the incoming process; and, in fact, he should not pronounce the words he is reading, except on special occasions as when reporting, or reading to an audience. Yet to be able to listen and hear well is an asset in learning to read, for reading has its foundation in the oral language, which consists of hearing and speaking. In order to hear well and speak well, and thus read well, an adult must possess a certain amount of auditory ability.

2. Acquisition of initial sight vocabulary based on the reader's experience.

Relaying on the fact that words or sentences are recognized and grasped when they are presented as whole words or whole sentences, the first thing to do in the act of reading is to look at a whole word, or words, from left to right, recognize them and get the meanings intended by the writer. How can this be achieved? This can be achieved by building up a good collection of

¹² Gates, Arthur, et al. *Educational Psychology*, New York: Macmillan Co., 1942, p. 429.

meaningful sight words. Sight words are those words that are recognized on sight. That is to say, as soon as a word, which is a symbol of experience, is viewed, certain meanings are grasped immediately; and this is made possible when the sight words are drawn from the stock of words that represent some vivid direct experience of the reader. It is very possible that different readers get slightly different meanings from the same word or group of words, depending upon their background of experience and their thinking ability.

It is desirable to remember that from the very beginning reading should be made as meaningful, satisfying and successful as possible, to encourage progress and future accomplishment; and in order to center attention on the meaning of what is being read, it is necessary to refrain from detailed analysis of the component parts of the words. The word-analysis comes later on as a help to word recognition as the collection of sight words grows.

Furthermore, as the background experience of each person is different from that of every one else, a man's possession of sight words is not necessarily the same as others'. There is a great probability, however, that many common sight words exist in the vocabulary of many readers; but this is no indication that learners must start with a common pre-determined word-list. To encourage learning, certain individual differences should be recognized and provided for from the primary stages of reading.

In an adult classroom situation, all the above statements, when translated into action, mean:

a. *Building experience charts:* At first, the class and the teacher decide upon the topic they are interested in discussing. Most probably, the subject will concern the immediate needs of the adults in that community, which will very likely be related to the problems of health, vocation, recreation, family life and so on, which are actually being dealt within the fundamental education project of the community. The discussion that follows will sharpen the thinking of the class about the problem, and will supply the class with a common experience background. Next, the teacher draws "from the group an oral expression of the common ideas

on the chosen subject. The teacher should write these sentences on the board as the group agrees that the sentences are the ideas and expressions they wish to use".¹³ Two or three short meaningful sentences will be sufficient for the first lesson. Since the class knows the context of what the teacher is writing in big letters on the board, as soon as the teacher reads those sentences back to them for a sufficient number of times, they gradually recognize the words, and the accompanying speech-sounds, the meaning being already very clear. In other words, they learn to match the visual forms to the familiar spoken words and their meanings; and when the class themselves are asked to locate some words written on the board, and to read them to the group, a sight vocabulary is being firmly established. The sentences will, at the end of the class, be copied on chart paper by the teacher. The class will read from the chart when they next meet. Several charts may be built around a topic, since the adults are rich in words and experiences. Step by step, the charts should contain more and more ideas and numerous sentences representing them.

b. *Reading from the experience charts:* As progress in building up sight vocabulary is made, the experience charts on the same topic can be put together in the form of a book. Practice in silent reading can then be made by individual adults from the book-form charts. These so-called books serve as a transitional step towards reading from primers, or first readers, or actual books.

c. *Individual Attention:* In building up his store of sight words, and individual adult may need the following helps: oral reading with the teacher from the charts, reading of sentences using familiar words in new contexts, pronouncing a list of words, selecting the word pronounced by the teacher from a group of words, etc. Though the words are imbedded in phrases and sentences, an adult should be helped to recognize the appearance of each one by noticing significant details of the configuration.

d. *Keeping records of the sight words:* The repetition of familiar vocabulary in new situations will aid in retaining the

¹³ Lamoreaux, and Lee. "Building Experience Chart," *Learning to Read through Experience*, New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, (1943), p. 123.

words thus gained. A complete record of the sight words mastered should be kept by the class, as these are the tangible result of their work at this stage. They will also partly indicate what kind of reading materials should be supplied to the class at later stages in such a way that progress will be smooth.

3. Word analysis to help recognition.

Building and reading from the experience charts quickly builds up the adult's store of sight words. This work should be kept up right through the process of teaching and learning reading, or at least until the adult has gained speed, accuracy and independence in recognition of the known words. However, along with the charts, primers containing words that are mostly known can be introduced. Materials specially prepared in connection with the fundamental education project that is going on will serve this purpose very well, since the topics discussed in the materials will be somewhat similar to what the class has talked about in the process of building its experience charts.

As more and more sight words are acquired, errors in recognition may increase, as many words look similar in appearance. Thus, ways to distinguish among words will have to be learned. Four ways of word analysis have proved very useful:

a. *Context Clues:* As a person is reading, the context of what is read gives a clue to word-recognition. In fact, only the first syllables of a word need to be seen; its meaning will supply the rest. As has been stated earlier, the act of thinking will supply what the eyes fail to see, indeed, do not need to see. Thus, adults must be on the lookout for the meanings of the words that are read.

b. *Configuration Clues:* The habit of looking at whole words to note the general shapes and distinguishing characteristics will help the adult reader gain skills in comparing words, and thus sharpens his sense of recognition.

c. *Word-Structure:* At about this time, it can be pointed out to the adult that a word is composed of separate elements

called letters. Many adults, no doubt, have found this out already. It is their job now to learn the names of the letters, so that talk about what letters go to make up a particular word will be possible. They also need to know the alphabetical order of the letters, so that the use of a glossary or a dictionary may be possible.

With the knowledge of the letters gained, words can now be compared and recognized with respect to their structure. The endings, the pre-fixes, the syllables and the roots of the words all aid in identifying them.

d. *Phonetic Analysis*: For an adult, who is more determined than a child and who has more ability in reasoning, a knowledge of sounds may be of some help in recognizing words and their meanings, especially in a language which is strictly phonetic. The ability to sound out a word may be used when other methods fail, or it can be used in conjunction with other methods of word analysis.

It is wise to avoid over-dependence upon any one technique, since versatility and flexibility of attack on words is more desirable than any fixed method. At this time, to promote rapid success in reading, primers and readers, with pictures to supply clues to meanings, and whose vocabulary is not totally unknown, should be introduced. With a good knowledge of word analysis, and with the help from the teacher, good reading habits and reading skills may be firmly established.

4. A rich supply of reading materials.

Reading skills are gained and maintained not through mechanical repetition, but through constant practice in various new situations. Thus, a rich supply of easy reading materials that give pleasure and enjoyment, that contribute to the solution of daily problems and which stimulate thinking, must be made available to the learners. Usually, in a fundamental education project, special materials are prepared for this purpose, in the form of newspapers, handbooks for farming, pamphlets and so on.

The preceding general discussions of reading, and a definition of reading, have attempted to translate principles into actions appropriate to a teaching-learning situation, or, in short, into a method of teaching reading. It is desirable, however, to see to what extent these actions—the building up of concepts through experience, the learning of sight words which have their foundation in the learner's experience background, the experience-charts, and so on—comply with the principles of learning and the theory of knowledge.

IV. What This Teaching-Learning Practice Means in Terms of Principles

Systematic practices and actions can be traced back to some underlying assumptions. For instance, in a traditional school, various subjects like mathematics, Latin, geography, and so on, are taught in isolation, due to the belief that these subjects will train the pupil's mind. Mathematics will train his thinking, Latin will train his memory, geography will train his observation, etc. This practice is advocated because of the basic assumption that the human mind consists of various faculties such as memory, thinking, imagination, observation and so forth. And when the basic assumption is changed to the statement that the human mind is a collection of S-R bonds, the procedure of teaching and learning is accordingly switched over to learning through repetition or habit formation in order to strengthen the bonds. Today, the integrated program of instruction is adopted. One of the assumptions basic to it is that the human mind is the relationship involving a store of integrated meanings as they function in the interaction between the human organism and its environment. Again in the field of mathematics, when it is assumed that only one parallel can be drawn to a given line through a point outside the line, the result is Euclid's geometry, in which the sum of the angles of a triangle is equal to 180° . But when it is assumed that two or more such lines can be drawn, Lobachewsky's geometry is evolved, in which the sum of the angles of a triangle is less than 180° . And when the basic assumption is that no such line could be drawn at all, Riemann's geometry is advocated, in which the sum of the angles of a triangle is greater than 180° .

The above statement is to show that all good practices are based on certain fundamental assumptions, and that the degree to which the practices are good depends upon the effectiveness of their postulates. If the assumptions are false, the practice will reflect the weaknesses.

The same principle applies to practices in teaching and learning reading. In order to determine how sound and effective the practices discussed in this chapter are, therefore, their basic assumptions have to be identified. In the field of education, basic assumptions are made in three areas: philosophy, psychology and pedagogy. This fact was pointed out by Lowry W. Harding when he stated: "Methods of teaching beginning reading need to be considered in terms of the assumptions that support them. The assumptions basic to those methods are philosophical, and psychological, as well as pedagogical."¹⁴ The practices in teaching and learning reading which are built up in this chapter will now be studied in light of their basic assumptions

1. Philosophical Assumptions:¹⁵

a. It is assumed in this case that a store of meanings is being continuously built up by an individual as he interacts with his en-

¹⁴ Harding, Lowry W. "Assumptions Underlying Methods of Beginning Reading." *Educational Administration and Supervision*, 37:25-37 (Jan., 1951).

¹⁵ Childs, John L. *Education and the Philosophy of Experimentalism*, New York: The Century Company, 1931, p. 9.

Dewey, John. *Experience and Education*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1938.

———: *How We Think*, New York: D. C. Heath and Company, 1933.

Hopkins, L. T. *Integration: Its Meaning and Application*, New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., 1937.

Bode, Boyd H. *How We Learn*, New York: D. C. Heath and Company, 1940.

National Society for the Study of Education. *Philosophy of Education*, Forty-first Yearbook. Part I, Chapter II: Bloomington, Illinois, Public School Publishing Company, 1942.

vironment. As an outgrowth of this assumption, reading is interpreted as a process of getting meanings from printed pages, and not a process of unlocking sounds. That is to say, when the individual brings his background of experience or his store of meanings to bear upon the printed pages, he is to comprehend and integrate into his store of meanings the new meanings that he and he alone has grasped. He is not to call the words, but to get the meanings conveyed by them, and incorporate the meanings into the system of meanings that is already his.

b. As a consequence of the above statement, it is further assumed that the meanings arise in the relationship of the individual and his environment, and not in the words. The symbols simply evoke the thinking process and cause meanings to arise. Thus, a person who is in a good position to learn to read is one who has had enough background of experience or a store of meanings to think with, which implies that he must have a certain amount of reading readiness with reference to language, sight and hearing. Thus, all through the reading lessons, the emphasis is on the thinking of the individual as he interacts with the words.

c. It is also assumed that the meanings evoked are not fixed, or the same for all time. As new experiences are involved, the individual's store of meanings becomes richer, and his power of understanding becomes greater. When a man re-reads a book that he read some time ago, it is not unusual to find that he has a new understanding of it, gains new insight, and gets new meanings from it. The same symbols do not necessarily give the same meanings to the same person when they are read on different occasions. It follows also that different persons may not get the same meanings from the same pages. That is, the occurrence of knowledge depends largely on the background experience of each individual. Therefore, reading is introduced to the learners through their own experience. Experience charts are used to present words that are drawn directly from their experience. The learners read their own experience from the charts. In this manner, reading becomes a matter of getting of meanings from the very first lessons. Furthermore, learning to read becomes easy. It is based on something familiar and meaningful and not on a mechanical process which treats words as symbols having fixed meanings.

d. It is further assumed that meanings are not ends in themselves, but are means to an end. Meanings obtained are used as tools to improve further interactions, or to solve other problems. In such a case, meanings become values, and values are not independent of the organism. Because of this postulate, learning to read is accompanied by a definite statement of objectives. An adult learns to read because he wants to get information that would help him to increase his income, to be able to read letters from his son, to be able to read newspapers, etc. These motives or interests are thus capitalized upon. They are used as starting points in learning and teaching reading. Experience charts and reading materials employed will concern those topics. So, according to this assumption, at no time is reading considered good in itself, or is it considered that values reside in reading. Traditionally, it used to be held that it made no difference what a man read, or whether he liked reading or not, so long as he did read. This old postulate led to teaching reading through a mechanical process, to the employment of nonsense syllables and materials not meaningful to learners.

With the major assumptions in the area of philosophy stated, it is seen that they are clustered around the question: What is the place of meaning in the reading process? The effectiveness of a method of teaching reading will depend much upon the way this question is answered.

2. Psychological Assumptions:

In the area of psychology, assumptions are made around the following problems: What is mind? How do we learn? And

¹⁶ Bode, Boyd H. *How We Learn*, op. cit.

Hullfish, H. Gordon. *Aspects of Thorndike's Psychology in Their Relation to Educational Theory and Practice*, Columbus, The Ohio State University Press. 1926.

Wheeler, R. H., and Perkins, F. T. *Principles of Mental Development*, Chapter VI, New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1932

Race, Henrietta V. *Psychology of Learning Through Experience*, Boston: Ginn and Company, 1938.

what then should the procedure in teaching be? These three questions are closely interrelated. As soon as mind is defined, how a man learns can be determined; and hence, in compliance with the rules of learning, the procedure in teaching can be established.

The conception of reading and its implications as described in this chapter have been an outgrowth of the following assumptions:

a. It is assumed that mind is the total relationship between an individual and his environment, involving the functioning of his store of meanings as he interacts with his environment in an effort to solve his own problems or to achieve his goals. The interaction, which also causes meanings to arise, is the man's experience. Reading interpreted in light of this assumption is a process of getting meanings as a man's experience interacts with the pages. Consequently, reading is much, much more than being able to call the words. It involves the functioning of a man's experience from the very beginning. Other devices represented by the word-analysis process are auxiliary.

b. Taking the first assumption as a clue, it is further assumed that learning takes place through experience. When a man meets a problematic situation, he brings his store of meanings to bear on the problem. As a result of the interaction, new meanings arise, and are incorporated into the previous configuration. Thus, he learns. Reading, viewed in the light of this assumption, requires first that there must be a problem, which is translated into aims, or purposes or objectives. By enriching previous experiences through reading, the objectives may be achieved. It is a truism to say that reading starts from experience, then goes back to enrich

Alberty, H. B. (et al). *Progressive Education: Its Philosophy and Challenge*, Yearbook Supplement, New York: Progressive Educational Association (May, 1941).

National Society for the Study of Education: *The Psychology of Learning*, Forty-first Yearbook, Part II, Chapters V and VII: Bloomington, Illinois, Public School Publishing Company, 1942.

Hilgard, Ernest T. *Theories of Learning*, New York: Appleton-Century Crofts, Inc., 1948.

it. So the experience chart is used to draw heavily upon an individual's store of experience, and as soon as he can read independently, what he gets will go back to, or be incorporated within what he already has.

c. Again learning by experience is assumed to imply two things: interaction with the environment, and intellectualization of the consequences of the interaction. Basing the practices on these principles, learning to read is found to consist of two phases:

First, the interaction phase, in which the learner interacts with the pages, in this case, the experience charts, and gets meanings as a result of it.

Second, the intellectualization phase, in which the learner discovers what actually happens when he reads, and thereby tries to improve his word-recognition by means of word-study. This involves such techniques as using the context clues, the phonetic analysis, studying the word-structure, and employing a rich supply of easy reading-materials to secure the reading skills.

d. It is also assumed that learning occurs in fields or configurations, each configuration being an arrangement of parts. In other words, to be meaningful, a thing has to be seen as a whole. In accordance with this theory, learners start their first reading lessons by reading whole words and whole sentences. They do not start with learning the letters of the alphabet and then putting them together to form a word.

e. Again, the learner himself is also considered as a whole or unitary organism. He is not divided into body and soul, or mind and body, as he used to be. He is regarded as an integrated whole interacting with the environment. Subsequently, reading is introduced as it relates to actions and objects in the individual's environment. Different individuals acquire somewhat different vocabularies as their environments differ. So a pre-determined list of common words cannot be imposed upon the learner. But it is quite possible that with good guidance a learner will eventually, in the course of the various interactions, come to know all words that are supposed to be known. In this manner, the word lists are

used as a means for checking against the list of words learned, and built up by the learners themselves. Words are learned as an individual needs them to achieve his purpose in the environment. They cannot be retained without difficulty if they have no connection with a purpose, or when they are introduced in isolation.

f. Finally, it is assumed that the learner seeks the easiest and best route to his goal. Therefore, the reading task must be simplified. Hence, it is unwise to start learning to read by engaging in some involved system of phonics and word-study. By assuring success and satisfaction in and through reading, the learner will increase his understanding and skills. Moreover, a favorable attitude will be created toward the next reading stages.

3. Pedagogical Assumptions:¹⁷

Assumptions in the field of pedagogy have to do with a number of educational problems such as the type of the curriculum, the purpose of the school, the materials of instruction, the provision of individual differences and the appraisal of progress. In the case of the illiterate adults who come to classes for the main purpose of learning to read, the problem is reduced to a minimum. Yet certain principles or assumptions of an educational nature are necessary, for the very simple reason that reading is one of the most important elements in a man's progress in his education.

a. The reading program must be set up in connection with the problems that are most prevalent, or which are being attacked in that community, or, if there is one, with the fundamental education program that is going on in the community. For example, if the community is trying to stop the spread of malaria fever, the reading program should be directed towards that aim. After a

¹⁷ Burr, J.B., Harding, L. w., Jacobs, L. *Student-Teaching in the Elementary School*. New York: Appleton-Century Crofts, Inc., 1950.

Otto, Henry J. *Elementary School Organisation and Administration* (Revised), New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1944.

Alberty, H.B. *Reorganizing the High-School Curriculum*, Chapters 5, 6, 7. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1950.

general discussion about malaria, the class can help set up a series of experience-charts about malaria, mosquitos, prevention of malaria, etc., which can be used as good reading materials in the beginning stage of learning to read. In later stages, pertinent, simple reading materials, pictures, charts, etc., produced in the health campaign should be made available to the class in great quantity to step up the gaining of skills in reading, and the understanding concerning the way to combat this dreadful disease. In this way, reading becomes functional, and thus more meaningful and easier to master. As the interests of the adults are wide and varied, success in reading about malaria will lead them to other topics that most satisfy their needs. Through the process of seeking answers to problems that are facing them in real life, skills in reading will be developed and become deeply rooted. Since reading is a continuous process, and not a finished product, this process must be kept up until self-confidence in reading is won.

b. As the adult is making progress in reading, some kind of appraisal is always necessary as a means of helping him to locate his weakness and eliminate it. The appraisal can be in the form of a test, or any situation in which the adult can display all the skills he has accumulated. Through the showing of his abilities, his weakness and strength will be exposed, and thereby necessary help may be rendered.

c. Provision for individual differences is always very important. The adult will profit most from the kind of service and attention that helps him secure confidence and success. Phonetical analysis of words may be extremely helpful to one person, while it could be a serious drawback to another, whose need is help in contextual clues. Thus, care should be taken that individual needs are met and that nothing is imposed upon a person who does not need it. The each-one-teach-one technique is a good way of giving individual attention to the learners.

Thus, all the chief principles or assumptions used in the teaching-learning practices suggested earlier in this chapter for helping the adults to learn to read have been stated. It is obvious that there is a certain degree of over-lapping in the principles from each of the three fields. This is because the method is not founded

on any one of the three fields of knowledge—philosophy, psychology and pedagogy—but on the interaction of the three. Any method that disregards the interaction of these three fields of knowledge will tend to “emphasize the differences between theories and between fields of knowledge rather than the interrelationship.”¹⁸ As a result, methods of teaching reading that are based entirely on phonetics, on letters of the alphabet, or on sounds are established. As the principle of isolation gives way to the principle of integration, methods of teaching reading from parts will gradually fade away from the educational scene.

In line with the principle of integration, it is well to note in passing that the four phases of the language arts, namely, reading, writing, listening and speaking, are inter-dependent. As the adult learns to write, his skills in word-recognition will be considerably strengthened. A good reading program must take into consideration all the ramifications of the reading problem. Even though in the present study emphasis is laid on the reading phase of the language arts, the other phases are always present in the thinking of the writer.

V. Evaluative Criteria

The writer believes that a summary of the important points of this discussion can be used as criteria or standards of measurement with which the current practices in teaching adults to read employed by the various member-countries of UNESCO may be evaluated. For evaluating purposes, the criteria will be put in the form of questions containing two alternatives, the first of which indicates the desirable ends. The criteria will also be classified into three groups, corresponding roughly to the fields of philosophy, psychology and pedagogy.

Group I

1. Is reading defined as the getting and the using of the meanings derived from the written or printed pages, or is it thought of as the pronouncing of the words that appear on the pages?

¹⁸ Harding, Lowry W. “Assumptions Underlying Methods of Beginning Reading”, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

2. Are the meanings derived from reading considered as being aroused in the thinking of the learner as he interacts with the pages in terms of his background of experience, or are the meanings considered as being embedded in the words, to be unlocked by their pronunciation?
3. Are the meanings of the words considered to be changing as the learner's background of experience is affected by new experiences, or are they considered as fixed and unaffected by the new experiences?
4. Is reading interpreted as being intimately related to experience, language, and thinking, the progress in any one of which parallels and depends on progress of the others, or is it considered as some absolute and independent quality?
5. Is reading considered as a continuous process which may be divided into at least these four stages, (1) the period of reading readiness, (2) the period of beginning reading, (3) the period of continuous meaningful reading of simple materials, and (4) the period of rapid growth in the attitudes and habits in independent reading, or is it considered as a finished product which can be learned once and for all time?
6. Is reading considered valuable because it is a means to an end, or is it considered valuable because it has a value in itself?

Group II

1. Is the method based upon the assumption that the human mind is the functioning of the total human organism in using its store of meanings as the individual interacts with his environment, or is it based on the assumption that the human mind is a collection of S-R bonds?
2. Does the method assume that learning takes place as a result of the interaction, with a problematic situation involved, or does it assume that learning takes place in any isolated situation through the medium of repetition?

3. Is the method based on the assumption that words are learned as wholes as they represent some meanings in the background of experience, or is it based on the view that words should be learned through their separate parts, such as the letters or the sounds of the letters?
4. Does the method consider the fact that skills in reading are gradually developed and firmly established through constant use in different types of situations, or does it consider that skills should be developed through a system of mechanical drills?
5. Is the method emphasizing both the meanings of the materials read and the development of skills in reading, or just one of them?
6. Does the method consist of the following steps: (1) acquisition of general readiness, (2) acquisition of sufficient sight vocabulary based on the learner's experiences, (3) word analysis, and (4) reading a great quantity of simple and meaningful materials; or does it consist of only some of them?
7. Is reading considered as involving the interaction of the following elements, (1) recognition of word-configurations, (2) recognition of speech-sounds representing the printed or written words even though they are not pronounced, and (3) recognition of what is intended in the context; or is reading considered as dealing with just some of them?
8. Does the method utilize any kind of word-list as a means of checking the words that the learner has accumulated, or does it consider the word-list as a source from which the words to be learned are drawn?
9. Does the method consider the fact that the learner seeks the easiest and best route to his goal, or does it advocate the hardship of drill as a sure means of success?

Group III

1. Is reading taught in terms of some social aims and purposes, such as in connection with a fundamental education program or a project of some sort, or is it taught as a separate academic subject by itself?
2. Are words introduced in connection with needs and purposes of the learner, or are they pre-determined by some outside authority?
3. Does the method offer some kind of appraisal to reconstruct learning, or does it consider it in terms of examinations and tests that have to be passed?
4. Does the method consider provision for individual differences, or does it advocate everybody engaging in the same activity?

In reality, these three groups of criteria may be summed up in just one question, "Is the method based on the interaction of the known facts from the fields of philosophy, psychology, and pedagogy?"

In any case, these criteria as stated were used to evaluate the methods of teaching adults to read now current in some member-nations of UNESCO.

CHAPTER III

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF EXISTING MAJOR METHODS OF TEACHING READING

I. THE METHODS OF TEACHING READING AS IDENTIFIED AT THE 12th INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PUBLIC EDUCATION, CONVENED BY UNESCO AND THE INTERNATIONAL BUREAU OF EDUCATION, GENEVA, 1948.

- The Place of reading in schools in 45 countries
- The methods used for teaching of reading in schools
- The methods used for teaching adults to read
- The three groups of methods of teaching
 - a. Synthetic Methods
 - b. Analytic Methods
 - c. Analytic-Synthetic Methods

Descriptions of eight identifiable methods as a basis of general understanding

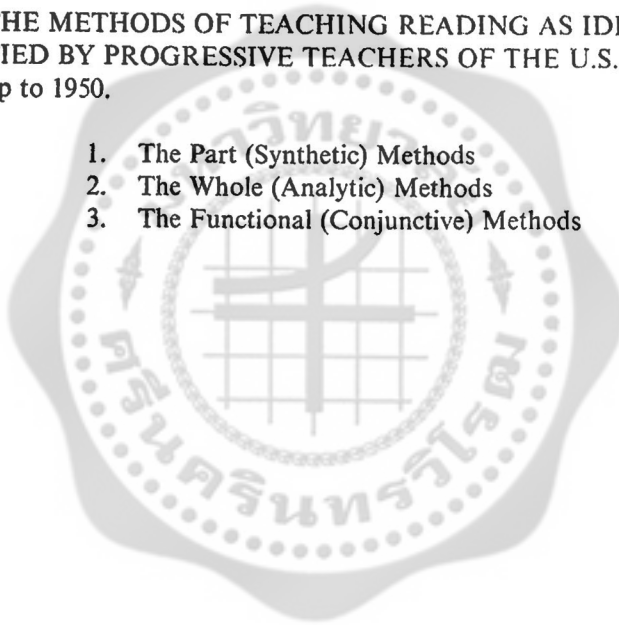
1. Global Method (La Méthode Globale)
2. Story Method
3. Phrase-Reading Method
4. Look-and-Say Method
5. See-and-Do Method
6. Thought-Unit Method
7. Alphabetical Method
8. Phonetic Method.

II. THE METHODS OF TEACHING READING AS IDENTIFIED AT THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON READING HELD AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO, 1945.

1. The Ideational Methods
2. The Phono-Analytical Methods
3. The Eclectic Methods

III. THE METHODS OF TEACHING READING AS IDENTIFIED BY PROGRESSIVE TEACHERS OF THE U.S.A., up to 1950.

1. The Part (Synthetic) Methods
2. The Whole (Analytic) Methods
3. The Functional (Conjunctive) Methods



CHAPTER III

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF EXISTING MAJOR METHODS OF TEACHING READING

In the previous chapter, criteria were set up for the purpose of evaluating certain specific methods of teaching adults to read that are in current use in some member-nations of UNESCO. These criteria were constructed in light of the best that is known today concerning reading. But before actually evaluating these particular methods, it is necessary, if the evaluation is to be accurate, to identify the characteristics of the major methods of teaching reading that exist in general. It is the many principles found in these general methods that are adopted, reconstructed and used to advantage in serving as a basis on which specific methods suitable to the needs of each country are built. To consider any one specific method without knowing what has gone on before it or what is likely to be its future development, is a violation of the principle of continuity.

John Dewey has said that learning or progress implies reconstruction of experience. A question may then be raised: What is the basis of reconstruction? It is widely accepted that the ongoing experience is the basis of reconstruction, since it is the birth-place of all meanings and values. Whether a concept is true or not is tested and found out in the ongoing experience. In the case of methods of teaching reading, the ongoing experience certainly includes all pertinent knowledge concerning the general principles and practices as regards the teaching of reading. This means that an over-all picture covering the outstanding methods of literacy teaching is desirable. Equipped with a set of criteria and a knowledge of the general methods of teaching reading, one will be in a position to make an evaluation of a particular method in a specific situation.

Many attempts have already been made to pull together the scattered knowledge of the general principles and practices in the teaching of reading. To present a vivid and complete picture, three such attempt will now be described. They are chosen because they seem to be complementary to one another. An integral picture of the entire field of literacy teaching will be brought into view, when these three studies are considered together. They are:

1. The methods as identified by UNESCO and the International Bureau of Education, Geneva, 1948.
2. The methods as identified at the Annual Conference on reading held at the University of Chicago, 1945.
3. The methods as identified by practices of progressive teachers of the United States up to the year 1950.

Each group of these methods will now be presented individually as it is actually found, without any comment or criticism.

I. The Methods of Teaching Reading as Identified at the Twelfth Inter- National Conference on Public Education, Convened by UNESCO and the International Bureau of Education, Geneva, 1948.

The International Bureau of Education sent out a questionnaire consisting of three main groups of questions concerning reading to all the member-nations of UNESCO. They are:

1. Questions relating to the place given to reading in schools.
2. Questions relating to the methods used for the teaching of reading.
3. Miscellaneous questions relating to teaching illiterate adults to read.

The details of the questions, and the replies sent back by forty-five countries are given in Publication No. 113 of the International Bureau of Education.¹ It will be sufficient for the purpose of this

¹ International Bureau of Education. *The Teaching of Reading* (Publication No. 113), Geneva: International Bureau of Education, (1949), p. 7-43,

study to mention only the most outstanding features as gathered from the different reports of the 45 countries. The following are condensed from the reports appearing from pages 7—43 of Publication No. 113;

The place of reading in the schools

Reading is dealt with as a separate subject in many countries. In Australia, reading as a separate subject is taught throughout the primary school, and more emphasis is placed on reading aloud in the lower grades. In Canada, silent reading has a place in the curriculum; though still remaining a separate subject, it forms part of the curriculum termed "English." In France, special hours are set aside for reading in the preparatory, elementary and middle grades of the primary school. In the Union of South Africa, only oral reading is given as a separate subject termed "reading," with silent reading being taught in connection with other subjects.

Reading is taught in correlation with other subjects in 19 countries. In Belgium, for example, reading is intergrated with "the study of the surroundings." In Poland, "Reading and writing are taught as the occasion arises in the course of lessons on the mother tongue."

Reading is taught partly as a separate subject and partly correlated with other subjects in many countries. In Luxemburg, Hungary, Switzerland and England, reading is taught by itself in the first two or three years, and then is linked up with literature and other subjects in the upper grades.

An exactly opposite position is taken in Finland and Czechoslovakia, where "reading is closely linked in the lower classes with the mother tongue, and taught as a separate subject in the higher classes."

In Holland, Salvador and Natal (Union of South Africa), reading is taught at one and the same time as an independent activity, and in correlation with the mother tongue for the first two years, and from then on in conjunction with other subjects,

The Methods used for the Teaching of Reading in Schools

In 34 countries there are definite official instructions, recommendations or suggestions as to the methods to be used in teaching reading. For example, it is specified in Belgium that the old method of building letters into syllables and syllables into words must be abandoned and that the "sentence" method must be used. In Switzerland (Cantons of Geneva and Valais), either the phonetic method or the "sentence" method is to be used. In India, a choice from three, namely, the phonic, look-and-say and "sentence" methods is suggested; and in the Union of South Africa (Transvaal), the Global or "sentence" method is used. In the case of Portugal, Iran and Argentina, it is definitely laid down that the phonetic method must be used.

In a number of other countries, such as Denmark, Mexico, Norway, Thailand, United Kingdom and the United States, neither instructions nor official recommendations concerning the methods to be used are issued by the central authorities.

The methods used for Teaching Adults to Read

It was found from the different reports sent in by the 45 nations that all the main methods used in the elementary schools for teaching children to read are also used for teaching adults. For instance, Laubach's sentence method is used in Ecuador, India, and Finland; the global or "sentence" method in Bulgaria; the "Experience method" in the United States; and the "common-words" method in Salvador.

As a result of this survey of the teaching of reading in the 45 countries which replied to the questionnaire, the International Bureau of Education, at the Twelfth International Conference on Public Education, classified all the methods of teaching reading that are mentioned by the 45 member-states into three main groups,² namely:

² International Bureau of Education, *The Teaching of Reading*, Op. cit., p. 24-35.

1. *The Synthetic Methods.* In these methods, the learner first learns the elements of the language, such as the letters or the sounds taken in isolation, or as integral parts of the syllables. He then learns to put the elements together to form the entire words, and later on to combine words into sentences. To this group belong the alphabetical method, and the phonic or syllable method, and their variations.

2. *The Analytic Methods.* In these methods, the learner begins in much the same way as he learns to understand and speak his mother tongue. That is to say, he starts reading words, sentences and passages connected with his activities, interests and needs, without first learning about the constituent elements of each word.

The teacher is, therefore, concerned in the beginning with the technique of reading, which is acquired by practice and perfected in a few months by the analyses which the child himself begins to take an interest in,... once he has mastered 'globally' sufficient associated words and passages.³

To this group belong also the ideo-visual or global or "sentence" method, the word method, and the sentence or story method, and their variations.

3. *The Analytic - Synthetic Methods.* These methods are also based on the words or sentences. But the words are very carefully selected and graded. The learner analyzes, compares and synthesizes these words or sentences more or less at the same time right from the beginning of learning to read. In so doing, he becomes acquainted with the elements of the language in the desired order, while learning the technique of reading - These methods are really a combination of two or more methods previously mentioned. In Uruguay, one analytic-synthetic method is used uniformly throughout the country, namely, the combination of the phonic and the look-and-say methods.

³ International Bureau of Education, *The Teaching of Reading*, Op. cit., p. 24.

The report concludes that "the official documents on which this inquiry is based show that all the three types of reading method discussed above are still in use at the present time."⁴

The Twelfth International Conference on Public Education did not give a description of each method included in each group. The method was mentioned only by name, such as the global method, the phonic method, the story method, and so on. Probably, it took for granted that each method was well-known. Nevertheless, since this is a survey of the major methods which is going to serve as a general basis for further study, it is essential to touch upon the characteristic features of each one of them, prior to proceeding to the investigation of the methods as grouped by the Chicago Conference. Furthermore, the descriptions that follow will create a mutual understanding as to what is meant by such and such a method.

There are about eight major identifiable methods of teaching reading that are still in use with different degrees of popularity, both with the children and the adults in the different countries of the world. The essential characteristics of each one will now be considered.

1. The Global Method (*La Méthode Globale*)

This method was originated in Belgium by Decroly and was adopted and used to great advantage by two Swiss educators, Dottrens and Margairaz, in the years around 1947.⁵ This method is also known by the names of the Ideo-Visual Method, and the "Sentence" Method. Generally, it is based on the assumptions that:

1. Individuals perceive the whole before they analyze into parts.
2. Whole sentences are easier to read than syllables or words.

⁴ International Bureau of Education. *The Teaching of Reading*, Op. cit., p. 25.

⁵ Dottrens, Robert, and Margairaz, Emilie. *L'apprentissage de la lecture par la méthode globale*, Paris: Delachaux et Niestle, 1947.

3. Reading should be centered around the interests of the learner and based on his level of comprehension.
4. Reading by meaningful units increase both speed and understanding.⁶

Furthermore, it is also recognized by this method that

1. Reading is a visual function.
2. Sight is developed much sooner than hearing.
3. Seeing gives more numerous and more precise notions than hearing.⁷

Mlle. Amélie Hamaide, who was a colleague of Decroly's at Brussels, made the following statement (*translated in parts from the French text*):

This method is called ideo-visual because it has a definite idea as a starting point, and reading is closely connected with it.

This method is justified from three points of view: psychology, methodology and especially pedagogy.

Psychologically, reading is a visual phenomenon. We see a page, understand it, and carry out the order given in that page, without having to utter a single word. Reading is, in fact, a mental process, involving ideas, phrases and concrete words, which are whole units.

Methodologically, we all know that in learning, we go from the simple to the complex, and from the concrete to the abstract. A phrase or a sentence represents something which is more concrete, more real, and simpler than a letter, or a syllable.

From the point of view of pedagogy, it is necessary to observe two principles:

⁶ UNESCO. *Literacy Education* (UNESCO/Ed./Occ./5) Op. cit., p. 5

⁷ Segers, Jean E. *La Psychologie de la Lecture et L'initiation à la lecture par la méthode globale*, Paris: Delachaux et Niestle, (1930), p. 157.

- a. Associate the written symbols with the things or the facts that are represented by the symbols, and associate reading with other phases of learning.
- b. Analyze or decompose the written symbols into parts to help recognition.

Thus, the different steps of presentation will be in the following order: the objects, the phrases, the words, and finally, the letters. Actually, this is a total method. (méthode de totalité)⁸

As a method, these points of view are translated into four well-defined steps, which are briefly described by Julien Melon in his book "Documentation pour S'initier à L'enseignement de la Lecture Élémentaire par la Méthode Idéo-Visuelle ou Globale,"⁹ in the following manner.

Step I. Recognition of simple words or sentences written on cards in big letters.

For instance, as the class is discussing about the fruits, the teacher may write down on the board: (and later on cards)

Bring me that peach.

Put it on the table.

Cut it in two.

etc., etc.

At this stage, the student is to look at the written symbols, and carry out the orders to show that he understands them. In the same manner, names of the objects in the class as well as names of the students may be added.

⁸ Hamaide, Amélie. *La Méthode Decroly*, Paris: Delachaux et Niestlé, (1922), p. 67-79.

⁹ Melon, Julien. *Documentation pour S'initier à L'enseignement de la Lecture Élémentaire par la Méthode Idéo-Visuelle ou Globale*, (Deuxième édition, revue et augmentée), Tamines, France: Duculot-Roulin, (1936), p. 1-25.

Step II. Strengthening the power of word-recognition by means of educative games. For example, the class is given a number of cards on which are written names of objects, or orders which are already known to it. The teacher then reads out an order, or the name of an object from her own collection of cards. The class is expected to search for the right card among their own collections. Various kinds of games of this nature are employed.

Step III. Decomposition of sentences or phrases into words. The cards containing sentences or phrases are then cut into smaller cards containing just one word on each. The class is then expected to put the smaller cards back together to form the correct sentence. This exercise is repeated several times involving a great number of known sentences.

Step IV. Decomposition of words into letters. Mlle. Hamaide said that an intelligent learner makes the decomposition himself, since it is a natural and necessary process; and that decomposition occurs through similarity. So the attention of the class must be called to the similarities found in the letters of the known words.

Usually, the known words are listed on the board by the class with the help of the teacher in such a manner that words containing the same vowels are put in one row; then, by means of comparison, similar vowels will be indicated by lines drawn under them, or having them written in red or some attractive colors:

a	i	u
la	lit	voiture
table	petite	ruban
maman	livre	prune
Paula	souris	rue
papa	pupitre	pendule

In the same manner, all the vowels and the consonants will be learned. Primers containing known words will be introduced as soon as the learner has mastered a sufficient degree of recognition.

It is interesting to note that this method was recommended at the UNESCO Seminar on Illiteracy in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and hinted at in the UNESCO Seminar in Mysore, India. Both seminars were held in 1949.

2. The Story Method *(Also known as the sentence method. It must not be confused with the global or "sentence" method.)*

It is assumed that learning to read may be achieved by means of memory. So the teacher has the learner memorize the sounds of a set of words or sentences, such as rimes, favorite poems or proverbs. Then the learner has to match these speech sounds to the visual appearances of the words involved, as they are arranged in the same way on the page. That is, the learner "reads" by matching the sounds to the printed words, in other words, matching the sound-words to the right sight-words.

To help word-recognition, some type of training in word analysis is provided.

3. The Phrase-Reading Method.

It is claimed in this method that a good reader reads several words at a time; that is, he reads by phrases. Therefore, it is proper that a beginner should start by learning phrases rather than words. So phrases are presented to the class on flash cards, until they could be recognized on sight. It is also claimed that teaching phrases widens the attention span. The next step of progress is to break up the large units into words of which they are made. This is supposed to be in accord with the principles of growth in recognition, which say:

- a. The individual must gradually become more and more aware of details of appearances.
- b. Then, awareness of the details will function unconsciously, and quicker recognition will result.

The individual letters of the alphabet are learned later when the learner shows sufficient progress in word recognition.

4. The Look-and-Say Method.

This method is also known as the sight method, or the word method, because it takes up individual words separately, one at a time. (In the story method, a large group of words is taken up, while in the phrase-reading method, a smaller group of words or a phrase serves as a point of departure.)

It is assumed in this method that an individual sees the word as a whole. Therefore, the teacher pronounces the word, points to the word form, while the learner looks hard at the word. He then pronounces or names the word after the teacher. Thus, the whole word-sound is said to be associated with the whole word form, and in this way, word recognition is supposed to be made more simple and more rapid.

For quick and accurate recognition, much use is made of flashcards. A card with one word printed on it is "flashed" before the eyes of the class, and they must be able to name instantly the word shown.

To aid the learners in becoming adept in word recognition, the letters of the alphabet are learned as soon as a few "sight words" have been learned.

5. The See-and-Do Method.

This method centers attention upon the meaning of the words read, somewhat similar to the beginning part of the global method, in which learners do or carry out what the words say, such as cutting a peach into two halves, shutting the door, sitting on a chair, and so on. In accordance with this idea, all objects in the room are labeled: "table," "locker," "sink," etc.; words and sentences in the reading material must include those that refer to the objects in the classroom. When the learner sees the words and sentences in the text, he must show his understanding by doing what they indicate.

6. The Thought-Unit Method.

In this method, it is assumed that reading is a thought-getting process. The unit that is taken up as a point of departure is not a passage, a sentence, a phrase, a word or a sound, but a thought.

So the learner is introduced to reading in terms of whole thoughts and ideas. From the start, the learners will read their own verbal reports of experiences, which are phrased into nice, compact sentences or thought-units by the teacher.

The emphasis is on the comprehension of the thought content of what is read, and not so much on pronunciation, spelling and verbalizing. The letters of the alphabet will, of course, be learned as the needs arise. The learning of the letters of the alphabet is encouraged *after* the learners have understood reading to be a thought-getting process, have developed a small working vocabulary for reading, and have achieved some success in reading.

7. The Alphabetical Method.

This method is also known as the letter-method, since the letters of the alphabet are used as the point of departure in learning to read. The basic assumption is that since all words are built of letters, one should learn the letters first; then these letters may be put together to form syllables, words, and so on. Essentially, the method requires the learner to learn how to spell a word before he can read it.

Even though this is the oldest method of them all, it is still used in many countries of the world. Reading, by this method, is primarily "word-calling" or "naming" the printed symbols; and it is quite possible that a learner pronounces words without getting their meaning.

8. The Phonetic Method.

It is claimed in this method that words are composed of sounds, and, therefore, the starting point for learning to read should be the study of the sound of each letter of the alphabet.

Then the sounds of two or more letters can be blended together to form a word-sound. The popular practice is to have the learner sound the separate letters of the unknown word and then say them closer together and more quickly until the whole word-sound appears. Thus, a learner is taught to read through a series of drills on vowel sounds, sounds of the consonants, blendings of those sounds, pronouncing syllables separately, and sometimes through learning word-families. As an example, the word "Can" may be taught two ways:

- a. It can be taught as c-a-n-; or
- b. It can be taught as c-an (in the -an family).

This method is also known as the syllable method, since the most basic kind of blending results in a syllable.

Thus, the outstanding characteristics of the eight most popular methods of teaching reading have been presented. According to the reports of the 45 governments to UNESCO, it is found that a combination of methods is preferred to a single method. This can be explained by the fact that each method has its own advantages and disadvantages; and consequently any other method that offsets the disadvantages is readily adopted.

II. The Methods of Teaching Reading as Identified at the Annual Conference on Reading Held at the University of Chicago, 1945.¹⁰ (As grouped by William Kottmeyer)

According to William Kottmeyer, the various methods of teaching reading and their variations fall under three general groups:

1. The ideational methods, which emphasize a direct connection between printed symbols and the thought or idea represented by them, which may be illustrated by the following diagram:

¹⁰ Gray, William S. (Editor). *The Appraisal of Current Practices In Reading*, (Proceedings of the Annual Conference on Reading Held at the University of Chicago) Vol. VII, No. 61, (Dec. 1945), p. 182-188.

symbols $\longleftrightarrow$ thought.

2. The phono-analytical methods, which stress the intermediate step, namely, the sound that comes between the symbols and the thought. This is represented by the diagram below:

symbols $\longleftrightarrow$ sound $\longleftrightarrow$ thought.

3. The eclectic methods which combine certain features of each of the other two groups.

Each group will now be considered in some detail in order to make more clear the general concept represented in it.

Ideational Methods

It is found that when a learner is shown the printed form of a word, he can often establish association between the configuration or pattern of the symbol and the idea represented by the word. For instance, he can give evidence of the mastery of this association by saying "book" when he again sees the printed form. Of course, if he does not look at the symbol discriminatingly enough, he may confuse it with a similar word pattern. But this situation may be corrected by exposing the word to him a sufficient number of times. This method of learning to read through repeated direct association is generally referred to as the "look-and-say" method, and it is most characteristic of the ideational group.

It is also found that for the purpose of making the connections between words and meanings more direct, the words to be presented must be drawn from the learner's experience. Thus, the experience-chart activities, and the presenting of reading materials in larger units than single words, are advocated. Reading his own experience, or reading for thought as he does, the learner naturally makes use of the clues from the context and is able to guess words with which he is not familiar. In this manner, he can independently form new associations, habituate them, and build a sight vocabulary which he recognizes instantaneously and associates directly with meanings.

The assumptions underlying the ideational group are:

1. The fundamental purpose of reading is to derive meaning from the printed page, and not just to pronounce the words.
2. Words are meaningful when they represent ideas and concepts within the experience of the reader.
3. In order to center attention on meanings, it is necessary to refrain from detailed analysis of the component parts of words.
4. When interest is genuine, learners will observe likenesses and differences of word forms.
5. Thus, reading instruction is based on vivid, meaningful experiences, encourages provision of easy interesting materials, and guides the learners to the sources of materials which meet their widening needs.

Belonging also to the ideational group are the non-oral method and the kinaesthetic method, which are variations of the usual pattern of the look-and-say procedure.

In the non-oral method, it is believed that a connection between the printed word and the spoken word, that is, the sound, does not bring meaning, because the spoken word is "not meaning in itself but a symbol, full of meaning only when functioning." Thus, the emphasis is placed on understanding rather than verbalizing. Word groups that bring meaning rather than isolated words are used. After appropriate introductory activities which involve games, projects, and discussions of what is expected in the reading material, the learners begin individual silent reading, concentrating upon the acquisition of the meaning of the words. The idea is to look at the words and understand them without having to pronounce them.

In the kinaesthetic method, the following steps are taken:

1. Have the learner select any word that he wishes to learn regardless of difficulty or length.
2. The word is then written in big letters for the learner.
3. The learner then traces the word through finger contact, saying each part of the word,

4. He does this as often as is necessary to enable him to write the word without looking at the model. That is to say, he begins almost immediately to learn to write, and to write his own stories.

5. What he writes is then typewritten for him within 24 hours.

6. He then reads the typewritten copy orally.

7. Words are regarded as units; they are never analyzed by parts, always used in context and are always drawn from the learner's spoken vocabulary.

8. Finger tracing is gradually eliminated as the learner learns the printed word directly.

9. The learner begins to generalize and to make out new words from their resemblances to the words he already knows.

10. He recognizes many new words without being told what they are. "This recognition is immediate and not a slow sounding-out of the word. As he looks at the word, the simultaneous association by similarity with words he already knows, together with the meanings inferred from the context, gives him an instant perception of the word." Thus, the establishment of a liaison between the printed symbol and the thought represented by it is supposed to be accomplished.

In concluding this description of the ideational methods, the following points need to be emphasized:

1. The methods aim to teach the illiterate to read through the establishment of direct associations of meanings with word-configurations.

2. The initial reading experiences consist of acquiring a sight vocabulary by means of whole-word patterns in a meaningful, purposeful context.

3. The use of contextual clues is an important means of aiding word perception.

Phono-Analytic Methods

Instead of going direct from the symbol to the thought as in the ideational methods, the phono-analytical methods stress the sound of the symbol; the sound forming an intermediate step between the symbol and the idea. It is assumed in this group of methods that language is basically phonetic; that the mastery of the phonetical principles will unlock the sounds of most of the words; and that independence of word recognition will be thus achieved.

Outstanding in this group are the phonetic method and the linguistic method. In its extreme form, the phonetic method usually initiates instruction by the presentation of individual letter-sounds, and then "speech blends." This procedure can be broken down into three steps of progress:

1. Consonant sounds are blended with the vowel sounds in the numerous syllabic combinations which are possible.
2. Attention is then directed to word-families in order to enlarge recognition units; word drills on family groups then follow.
3. When mastery over the drills is obtained, applications are made to reading materials containing the phonetic elements previously taught. These materials generally do not consider the learner's interests and experiences.

In the linguistic method, it is claimed that:

1. Learners, when struggling with problems of word perception, are unable to read for meaning.
2. Learners should, therefore, be trained to recognize the phonemes or the units of speech sounds first.
3. "We need not fear to use disconnected words and even senseless syllables, and, above all, we must not, for the sake of a story, upset the learner's scarcely formed habits by presenting him with irregularities of spelling for which he is not prepared."¹¹

¹¹ Bloomfield, Leonard. "Linguistic and Reading." *Elementary English Review*, Vol. XIX (April and May, 1942), p. 125-30, 183-86,

Under this system of assumptions, letters of the alphabet are first introduced in only one phonetic value. Then come regular spellings with double consonants, semi-irregular spellings, two-syllable words with consistent spelling, and then the irregularly spelled words. It is maintained that, through this training, the learners will learn in a much shorter time, and that they will read more accurately, more smoothly, and with better understanding of the content.

Eclectic Methods

The eclectic methods are efforts to strike a happy balance between the ideational and the phono-analytical methods. The building up of sight vocabulary and the phonetic analysis are gradually and naturally combined throughout the reading activities. For instance, some beginning consonant sounds may be brought to the learner's attention after he has learned some sight-words and the use of contextual clues. Then the uses of these two techniques are combined and habituated to start a complex process of further phonetic skills which are needed to assure independence of word recognition.

As a consequence of these eclectic practices, the intrinsic method came into being. Two major steps followed in the method are:

1. The vocabulary is presented in carefully planned settings in such a way that context clues can easily be utilized. Learners are conditioned for their basal reading activity by preparatory exercises which introduce new words slowly, review them, draw attention to distinguishing feature of word form, and stimulate interest in the subject dealt with in the reading text-book.

2. The phonetic elements are incorporated by the use of poems, rimes, word-picture dictionaries, as well as by comprehension exercises in which multiple-choice answers require careful phonetic discrimination, and other devices.

III The Methods of Teaching Reading as Identified by Practices of Progressive Teachers of the United States of America up to the year 1950.

(As grouped by Lowry W. Harding of The Ohio State University.)¹²

Many progressive American teachers have given a great deal of thought to the problems concerning reading and the methods of teaching reading, especially the teachers engaged in elementary education. This is evidenced by their work in the 48th yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education and the work of independent teachers like Lamoreaux, Lee, Gates, Gray, Bond, Russell, Witty, Harding, etc.

According to Lowry W. Harding, the several methods of teaching reading fall under three categories:

1. The Part (Synthetic) Methods
2. The Whole (Analytic) Methods
3. The Functional (Conjunctive) Methods.

The Part (Synthetic) Methods

All the methods which emphasize the primary elements of the language as a starting point for learning reading, such as the letters of the alphabet, the sounds of the letters, or the syllables of a word, fall under this category. In this group of methods, the parts are first studied in isolation, without reference to any meaning, and then are put together to form a whole. Belonging to this group are obviously the alphabetical method, the phonetic or phonic method, and the linguistic method. Many drawbacks have been pointed out by Harding of the practice of employing these methods separately. Prominent among these are:

1. Letters or words seen in isolation, or in a single perceptual field, or at one fixation, suggest no meaning, the meaning being

¹² Harding, Lowry W. *Methods of Beginning Reading* (Pamphlet in connection with Ed. 516), College of Education, The Ohio State University, (1950), p. 1-7.

derived from the mental blending of the suggestions of a previous perception with each new perceptual field.

2. Great difficulty in understanding is caused, when there is no personal concern for the meaning of what is being read, and when the reading material does not carry any real meaning.

3. These methods favor mechanical drills, which look upon reading as if it is for its own sake, and as if the meaning resides in the words, and, above all, as if the learners are passive beings with no drives, problems and purposes of their own.

The Whole (Analytic) Methods

Contradictory to the part methods, the whole methods start out with a whole unit such as a word, a thought, or an entire story, as a point of departure for learning to read. Characteristic of this group are the story method, the phrase method and the word method. The non-oral method as well as the intrinsic method is also included.

It may be said that these methods show marked progress over traditional thinking concerning methods of teaching reading, which used to advocate the letters of the alphabet, the sounds and so forth. This change is a direct result of an increased understanding of the nature of learning and of the reading process. Through these methods, reading becomes more meaningful and subsequently easier. A few things, though, have to be considered :

1. These methods, by their very nature, still assume that the meaning resides in the words read, rather than in the persons who are reading.

2. The methods are employed as if learning to read is entirely a mental process which can go without physical activity. This, of course, reflects the false dualism that reality consists of mind and body.

3. The methods do not stress the fact that interest is basic to effort; they should consider that individuals learn best as they

apply their abilities and drives, which in turn means that the business of beginning reading should be with the individual and his concerns, rather than with a story, a sentence or a word.

The Functional or Conjunctive Methods

The conjunctive methods aim at offsetting the disadvantages found in the former methods. So the first thing in this approach is to consider and study the individuals who are going to learn to read. It is they, as they interact with their environment, who are the source of all meanings and values. According to Lowry Harding, the word "conjunctive" is coined to "designate procedures which are designed to merge, join or connect the learner's work in reading with his work on his own problems, and activities in achieving his own goals. 13

The "experience method," or the "purposeful method" is typical of this category. Prominent in this approach are the following characteristics:

1. Reading is to be based on the individual's own interest, problems and needs.
2. Multi-sensory aids are used increasingly to involve the entire organism in the reading process, and to provide more "avenues to the central nervous system."
3. Materials for beginning reading are built upon the learners' personal or group experiences. The "experience-charts" are characteristic of these materials. In order that the learners may have an opportunity to read their own experiences in the first reading lessons, the reading materials must necessarily be built in connection with their goal-seeking, or purposeful activities.
4. The skills in reading cannot be acquired in isolation, such as by meaningless mechanical drills, but must be sought in their natural environment, namely, in the content fields or in the projects or activities in which the learners are engaged. In other words, reading skills are gained as the learners need them to accomplish their purposes in the solution of their own problems.

¹³ Harding, Lowry W. *Methods of Beginning Reading*, op. cit. p. 1-7.

5. From the very first lesson, reading is a process of finding such facts and ideas from the printed pages as will help answer some questions or solve some problems. Reading is not a process of pronunciation, symbol-naming or word-calling.

The global method, as described earlier in this chapter, which is in vogue in some countries in Europe, and which is favored by at least two big UNESCO seminars, seems to belong more to the "whole" group than to the "conjunctive" group. It does stress the fact that reading must be taught in association with a so-called "center of interest," but it has nothing to say about the fact that beginners must read their own experiences, or that reading materials in the first stages must be self-constructed or "raw" and in later stages must be those that have direct bearings on the problems that are being solved by the learners. In other words, the global method does not emphasize in practice the important fact that reading is just a tool of learning, a means to an end.

A brief survey of the entire field regarding the methods of teaching reading has now been made. One important observation to make in consequence of this survey is that methods of teaching reading should come out from the needs and problems of the situation, and then go back into the situation to get those problems solved. That is to say, the limit, or boundary, of each method is the kind of situation in which it originates. Each situation or field consists of the learner, his environment, and the interaction between these two factors. Any method of teaching reading which fails to take into consideration any one element of this triple pattern deals only with a fraction of the whole scheme of things, and, therefore, causes difficulties and ineffectiveness.

A general survey in the field of methods having been made, and a set of acceptable criteria having been established, it is now possible to evaluate the methods of teaching reading currently used in the literacy campaigns conducted by some member-nations of UNESCO and by some outstanding private agencies associated with UNESCO.

CHAPTER IV
THE METHOD OF TEACHING READING AS ADVOCATED
BY THE PROJECT FOR EDUCATION, U. S.
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
(A UNESCO ASSOCIATED PROJECT)

A. BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT

Four phases of the Project
Recommendations from the Army Program

**B. IDENTIFICATION OF THE METHOD OF TEACHING
READING USED IN THE PROJECT**

Description of the lesson plans
Description of the techniques involved

**C. EVALUATION OF THE METHOD OF TEACHING
READING**

D. SUMMARY

Advantages of the Method
Disadvantages of the Method

CHAPTER IV

THE METHOD OF TEACHING READING AS ADVOCATED BY THE PROJECT FOR LITERACY EDUCATION, U.S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION

(A UNESCO Associated Project)

A. BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT

It has been found out that there are approximately 10,000,000¹ adults in America today who are handicapped by the lack of ability to read and write. This means that these people cannot fully share and participate in the life of the society, which in turn implies that the principles of democracy have been neglected in one way or another. Realizing the gravity of the situation, the U.S. Office of Education, with the financial assistance of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, started a project in 1946, in an attempt to find out a way or method by which illiteracy in this country can be eliminated as rapidly as possible. This project consists of the following phases:²

1. Conferences attended by experts from all over the nation.
2. A workshop or institute on adult education of Negroes held at Hampton Institute, August 12-September 14, 1946. It was the purpose of this institute
 - a. to prepare personnel for the training and supervision of teachers of adults in the fundamental processes.

¹ Griffin, Ella Washington. *Let's Help The Ten Million* (Teacher's Manual), Produced by Project for Literacy Education, Washington, D.C.: Educator's Washington Dispatch, (1950), p. 7.

² U. S. Office of Education. "Project in Adult Education." *School Life*, Vol. 29, No. 1, (Oct. 1946), p. 27.

- b. to demonstrate the effectiveness for civilian use of certain teaching techniques developed by the Army
- c. to collect and to evaluate resource materials for the teaching of adults
- d. to identify and classify the major problems of Negroes that are amenable to adult education on the elementary level
- c. to formulate a tentative curriculum and instructional guide on the elementary level for teachers of Negro adults.

3. A follow-up program conducted in four areas of the country: Georgia, Virginia, etc. It was proposed that the activities of the follow-up program include:

- a. Testing and evaluating the *Teaching Guide* produced during the Institute period.
- b. Preparing teachers of adult education through regularly organized classes.
- c. Organization and supervision of five or six demonstration classes for adults in the area surrounding the centers of experimentation.
- d. Assisting the schools and colleges in working out better co-operative relations with established community organization with a view to reducing illiteracy and raising the general educational level of adults.
- e. Collecting and distributing materials.

4. Regional institutes during the summer or fall of 1947 in the four participating areas.

As has been said, the Project for Literacy Education aims at capitalizing on the knowledge gained by the Armed Services in their attempt to deal with the illiterate inductees during World War II. Undoubtedly, variations were made to suit civilian groups, but

the Project followed the general pattern of the G.I. way of teaching. And through these Project-adapted methods, it was demonstrated that an individual can be raised from a state of absolute illiteracy--complete lack of the know-how of reading and writing--to functional literacy--ability to read and write up to the equivalent of the fourth grade of elementary school--in approximately 250 classroom hours.³

At the present moment, the Project has become so successful, and has received so much praise from many adult education authorities of several nations, that it is nominated to be an associated project of UNESCO, which means that all the facilities in terms of money, advice and personnel that UNESCO can give will be made available to the Project for future development. Moreover, UNESCO will make available any information concerning literacy education evolved out of this project to its member-nations for the benefit of mankind as a whole.

Before identifying the method of teaching reading developed in this project, it is necessary to examine the recommendations made by the Army Program, its predecessor. The information that follows was gathered from a report of the American Council on Education:⁴

1. Definite objectives of instruction were set up, such as to teach the men to read at a fourth-grade level in order to enable them to comprehend bulletins, written order, directions and basic army publications, and to give the men sufficient language skill to enable them to use and understand such everyday language as is necessary to get along with officers and men in the army, and so on.

2. No single method was recommended for the teaching of reading. Several different approaches were suggested, and selection was left to the discretion of the instructor. However, it was recommended that the men be given a basic stock of vocabulary by means of sight-recognition techniques and a mul-

³ Griffin, Ella Washington. *Op.cit.*, p. 8.

⁴ American Council on Education. *Educational Lessons from Wartime Training*, p. 52-57.

multiple sensory approach, and that rich associated meanings be developed in connection with words and phrases. The use of exercises and flash cards containing, first, words, then phrases, and then sentences was recommended to increase the recognition span of the beginning reader. Word-blending and phonics in general were not excluded. Their use, however, was recommended more for third and fourth-grade men than for beginners. Written language exercises were always preceded by periods of oral expression. In this way, adequate opportunity was provided for the development of rich ideas and associations. Men were taught to spell only those words which they were to use in writing. Inaccurate spelling was tolerated if a word was recognizable.

3. All literacy training materials were intimately related to a man's army experience. The contents were checked against standard word lists, and properly graded according to level of difficulty.

Paul Witty, reporting on the Army experiences to the Annual Conference on reading held at the University of Chicago, December, 1945,⁵ noted the following points:

1. In the beginning of the program, tests were employed to classify men into four groups for instruction purposes.

2. Functional materials were used. Film strips and other visual aids were used to present the simple sight and speaking vocabulary which the men need in camp. This served a readiness function. The readers and work-books all dealt with life in the army camp.

3. The whole literacy program was integrated with other activities of the military training program, and thus became very functional.

4. About 1,000 out of the 1,475 words in the W.P.A. list were used. The words were grouped on four levels for presentation purposes.

⁵ Gray, William S. (Editor). *The Appraisal of Current Practices in Reading*, (Proceeding of the Annual Conference on Reading, University of Chicago), Vol. VII, No. 61, (Dec. 1945), p. 12-14.

5. Forty lesson plans were constructed, which proceeded according to the following steps:

- a. Reading the textbook and studying the illustrations
- b. Using flash cards and other devices for presenting new words
- c. Using the practice book.

That is to say, in the beginning of each lesson plan, each picture was studied in detail to arouse interest and aid in vocabulary development. After the text of the lesson was read, flash cards were used to develop accurate and rapid recognition. After this the practice-book was used. It provided five repetitions for each of the words. The following reading skills received emphasis in the practice-book;

1. Recognizing and understanding a basic stock of sight words.
2. Deriving meaning of new words from context.
3. Developing and enriching word meaning.
4. Reading to follow directions.
5. Reading to note details.
6. Reading to get specific information.
7. Reading of related items in whole meaningful episodes.
8. Analyzing words and building concepts.

Again, according to Witty, an analysis of significant features of the Army Program reveals the following points:

1. It demonstrated the validity of employing functional methods and materials of instruction.
2. It showed the value of visual aids in accelerating the learning process.
3. It showed the importance of strong interest and motive in fostering learning. (Learning to read and write provided each man with a means--often the only means--of communicating with

his family. This was a very powerful incentive, and one which served intrinsically to stimulate the men).⁶

4. It has demonstrated the value of clear objectives and specific purposes. (Objective tests were used to check progress at regular intervals.)

5. It has shown the advantage of integrating and correlating all activities.

6. It has shown the value of small classes, and need for adequate instructional materials for all students (12-15 men).

7. Supplementary materials are means of fostering rapid growth in reading ability.

8. Two methods of instruction have proved useful.

a. Demonstration

b. Applicatory exercises.

The values discovered by the Army approach were used to great advantage in the Project of Literacy Education, whose method of teaching reading will now be identified.

B. IDENTIFICATION OF THE METHOD OF TEACHING READING USED IN THE PROJECT

The whole procedure of literacy development in this project can be revealed through a study of its basic readers and their accompanying lesson plans, and the workbooks. Up to the present moment, four basic readers have been developed:

1. Reader One: A Day With the Brown Family

2. Reader Two: Making A Good Living

3. Reader Three: The Browns at School

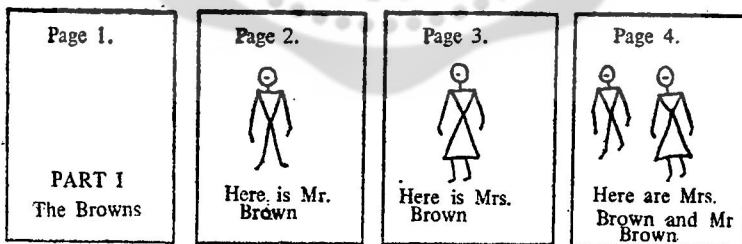
4. Reader Four: The Brown And Their Neighbors, which together form one complete unit or series known as the *Home*

⁶ American Council on Education. Op. cit., p. 57.

And Family Life Series. In addition to these, there is the *Workbook In Learning To Read Better* which provides exercises in word recognition, phrase recognition, visual perception, sentence comprehension and recognition of known words in new context. There is also the *Language Workbook*, which deals with the problems of learning to write as related to the day-to-day language experiences and needs of the home and community, such as writing one's signature, writing a friendly or business letter, writing out a check, and so on. There are also a set of definite lesson plans which give instructions as to how to proceed with each of the four basic readers. Finally, for the purpose of appraisal, the *Reading Placement* is provided. It is a brief and informal type of reading placement test to be used "as a means of helping teachers judge somewhat objectively the reading level of each student in the literacy training class so that individuals may be grouped for effective teaching and learning."⁷

The chief characteristics of the method as gathered from the above-mentioned readers and their workbooks and lesson plans may be illustrated by the following three lessons with their lesson plans.

Illustration I. Lesson One, from Reader One: *A Day With the Brown Family*⁸



⁷ Griffin, Ella Washington. *Reading Placement*, Home and Family Life Series, Project for Literacy Education, U.S. Office of Ed., (1950), p. 1.

⁸ Bright, E. L., and Mitchell, E. C. *A Day With The Brown Family*, Home and Family Life Series, Project for Literacy Education U.S. Office of Ed., (1950), p. 1-4.

The Lesson Plan:

Part I. Lesson-Plan 1. (To be used with p. 1-4 Reader One)
(The passages that follow are quoted or adapted in parts from the manual: **Three Instructional Tools for Teachers**, by Ella W. Griffin.)⁹

Introduction

The first lessons are very important. Since adult interest and curiosity are extremely high at first; great care should be taken to see that in the first lessons students get the feeling of succeeding from the very beginning.

The first two lesson plans are presented in much detail, including suggestions for the use of flash cards. The remaining lesson plans appear in a somewhat more condensed form. However, it is suggested that the same procedure be followed for teaching all of the lessons, and that the same pattern be followed for the flash card drill in each of the succeeding lessons.

Suggested Motivation

- Showing pictures of family.
- Discussing the activities of adults in family life.
- Talking about the pictures.
- Listing and discussing family needs and problems.
- Introducing Reader One, *A Day With The Brown Family*.

General Procedures For Teaching

- The following materials will be needed:
- Pictures illustrating the Brown family
 - Pictures of similar families in the local community
 - Textbooks, workbooks, sentence cards, phrase cards, and word cards.

⁹ Griffin, Ella W. *Three Instructional Tools for Teachers*, Home and Family Life Series, Project for Literacy Education, U. S. Office of Ed., (1950), p. 25-28.

1. *Presenting The sentences*

Teacher: ".....Turn to the first picture in your book. Under the picture it says: 'HERE IS MR. BROWN.' I will write what it says on the board. Now, we will read it from the board as I move my pointer under it."

Teacher and pupils read from the board: HERE IS MR. BROWN. The teacher will call on several students to read the sentence from the blackboard and from their books.

Teacher: "The next picture shows Mr. Brown's wife. Look at it. Can you guess what it says? (Some may guess the sentence.) Yes, it says, 'HERE IS MRS. BROWN.' I will write it on the board while you read it silently."

The teacher writes the sentence on the board. The two sentences to be read from the board now are:

HERE IS MR. BROWN.
HERE IS MRS. BROWN.

The sentences are read and matched line by line as a whole.

2. *Presenting the Phrases.*

The sentence cards may be folded and used, or the teacher may develop phrase-reading activities from the blackboard as follows:

Teacher: "I am going to draw a line under a part of the first sentence. You may read the part that is underlined":

HERE IS MR. BROWN

etc. etc., etc.

Students practice reading the underlined phrases. They may also match the underlined phrases with phrase cards:

HERE IS MR. BROWN.

MR. BROWN

Here is MRS. BROWN.

HERE IS

etc., etc., etc.

Then the teacher shows a phrase card for the students to read. They can also read the phrase on the board to which the teacher points.

3. *Presenting the Words*

In order that the students may become familiar with the phrases and sentences, they practice reading from the cards, the board, and from the books.

Then the teacher says:

"I am going to separate the words in your sentences about Mr. Brown, and write them on the board. See if you can tell what they are as I write them."

Here MRS. MR. ARE
Is BROWN BROWN AND

Each of these words is prominently listed on the board.

Next, a set of word cards containing the above known words:

AND

HERE

BROWN

etc., etc., etc.

are drilled upon in order to promote word recognition.

4. *Word Exercises*

To develop skills in word recognition, a story can be built up with those word cards. e. g.

IS	MR.	BROWN	HERE ?		
MR.	AND	MRS.	BROWN	ARE	HERE.

etc., etc., etc.

(End of Lesson 1)

Illustration II: Lesson Two, the next three pages in the same reader.

Page 5. (Picture of a girl and a boy) Here are Mary Brown and John Brown	Page 6. (Picture of a little girl) Here is little Sally Brown	Page 7. (Picture of parents and children) Here is Mr. Brown Here is Mrs. Brown Here is Sally Here is the Brown family.
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The Lesson Plan:

Part I Lesson-Plan. 2 (To be used with p. 5-7 of Reader One)¹⁰
Materials Needed:

Textbooks, workbooks, sentence strips, phrase cards, and word cards for the new lessons.

The following new words should be on flash cards:

JOHN	MARY	LITTLE	SALLY	FAMILY
------	------	--------	-------	--------

¹⁰ Griffin, Ella W. *Three Instructional Tools for Teachers*, op. cit., p. 28-31

Methods and Techniques:

1. *Review.* Have students read pages 1-4 in the textbook silently and then orally. The teacher gives a rapid flash card drill on phrase cards and word cards of the words learned from the first lesson.
2. *Discussion.* The students will then turn to page 5 in their books. Tell them what they are going to meet and read about Mr. and Mrs. Brown's children.
3. *Presentation of New Lesson.* Tell them that the two oldest children are MARY BROWN AND JOHN BROWN. The teacher may show this phrase on a phrase card.

Then the teacher writes this sentence on the board:

HERE ARE MARY BROWN AND JOHN BROWN.

Individuals try reading the sentence orally as the teacher moves her finger under the words. Several students read the sentence aloud. Volunteers read the sentence from their books, first silently, then orally.

Next, the teacher shows flash cards with the new words on them:

MARY BROWN

JOHN BROWN

She then writes the words on the board. Students practice saying the words as they are called on to respond. Several students read the story orally from the book. The teacher and the student turn to page 6 in the reader.

Teacher: "We see the baby of the family in this picture. Her name is Sally."

The teacher reads the card: **HERE IS LITTLE SALLY BROWN.**
The teacher writes the sentence on the board. Several students read it. Then they read the sentence from their books. The sentences are on the board as follows:

HERE ARE MARY BROWN AND JOHN BROWN.

HERE IS LITTLE SALLY BROWN.

The following steps are then taken:-

- a. Students practice reading these sentences from the blackboard and from their books.
- b. Phrases are presented and matched with the sentences, as well as written on the board. Practice is given in finding and reading these phrases.
- c. Words are then listed on the board, and are practiced by flash card drills to strengthen word-recognition.

(End of Lesson 2.)

Illustration III: Page 21 in the same reader is as follows:

Picture of a woman and a girl
preparing dinner.)

It is five o' clock.
Dinner is ready.
Dinner is ready for Mr. Brown and
the children.

The Lesson Plan:

Part III. Lesson Plan2. (for page 21 in Reader One)

Discuss the fact that when one is busy time seems to go more quickly. If some students have difficulty in telling time, an opportunity is presented here.

Materials needed: Textbooks, workbooks, flash cards, and pictures pertinent to the "just-before-dinner" time in the typical household.

The following new words and phrases should be on flash cards:-

FIVE **READY** **FIVE O'CLOCK** **IS** **READY**

Methods and Techniques:

1. *Review.* Page 20 should be read silently by all; then orally by one or two students.
2. *Discussion.* Have students study the picture on page 21. Lead them to observe the fact that it looks as if dinner is ready and that Mary has been trained to help her mother.
3. *Presentation of new lesson.* Present the new word and phrases first on flash cards; then on the black-board; then in the textbook.
4. *Silent and oral reading.* When all students seem to have mastered the new words, have the group read the whole page silently. Then several students may volunteer to read the three sentences on this page to the group orally.

(End of Lesson)

It should be noted that the lesson plans involve a method of teaching reading which follows consistently one definite pattern, namely:

1. Review of the previous lesson by means of silent reading, which is followed by oral reading, and maybe, flash-card drills.
2. Discussion of the picture on the page to be read.
3. Presentation of the new words first on the flash cards, then on the blackboard, and finally on the textbook; and the order of presentation is first the sentences, then the phrases, and lastly the words.
4. Silent and oral reading of the whole page.
This is true all through Reader One, as well as in the other readers of the series.

Complementary to this pattern, exercises in word recognition, and exercises in learning to write in order to make reading complete, are provided. Exercises in word recognition are found in the *Workbook in Learning to Read Better*, which is designed to be used in conjunction with Reader One, whereas exercises in learning to write are given in the *Language Workbook*, designed to accompany Readers One, Two, Three and Four. Some exercises in word recognition will now be cited from the *Workbook in Learning to Read Better*.¹¹

Find the Word

The	Brown
The	The
The	Browns
Browns	Browns
The	The
Browns	The
The	Browns

Students are to put a box around a word that is similar to the one already in the box in each row.

¹¹ Griffin, Ella W., and Mitchell, Eva Cornelia. *Workbook in Learning to Read Better*, Home and Family Life Series, Project for Literacy Ed., U.S. Office of Education, (1950), p. 5—15.

Find the Phrase

Here is	Mr. Brown
Here is	Mr. Brown
The Browns	The Browns
Here is	Mr. Brown
Mr. Brown	Her is
Here is	Mr. Brown
Here is	Mr. Brown

Students are to do the same thing as in the first exercise.

Find the Sentence

<i>Here is Mr. Brown.</i>	<i>Here is Mrs. Brown.</i>
Here is Mr. Brown.	Here is Mrs. Brown.
Here is Mr. Brown.	Here is Mr. Brown.
Here is Mrs. Brown.	Here is Mrs. Brown.
Here is Mr. Brown.	Here is Mr. Brown.
Here is Mrs. Brown.	Here is Mrs. Brown.
Here is Mr. Brown.	Here is Mrs. Brown.

Students are to draw a line under the sentence similar to the one indicated on top of the row.

Find the Same Words

<i>Here is Mr. Brown.</i>	Here is
Here are John and Mary.	Here are
Here is Mrs. Brown.	Mrs. Brown
Here is Mr. Brown.	Mr. Brown
Here is Mrs. Brown.	Here is
Here are the Browns.	Here are
Here is John Brown.	John Brown
Here are Mary and John.	Mary and John
The Browns are here.	The Browns.

Students are to draw a line under the phrase in the sentence on the left hand side that is the same as that beside it.

Find the Same Phrase

She <u>cooks breakfast</u>	She cooks <u>for her family</u>
She cooks all day	She cooks for her family
She cooks breakfast	She cooks and cooks
She cooks breakfast	She cooks for her family
She cooks all day	She cooks and cooks.

Read the first line in the column at the left. Read the phrase in it that is underlined. Draw a line under each phrase in the column that is like it. Do the same in the column at the right.

In the *Language Workbook*, students have the opportunity to learn the letters of the alphabet by learning to write them. The adult learner starts with the alphabet and progresses step by step in writing until he becomes functional in writing this name and address, the names and addresses of his relatives and friends, friendly letters, and so on.

Informal tests are also devised to accompany the Readers. The purpose of the tests is to help teachers determine the reading level of each student in grouping for effective teaching and learning. Examples of the tests will now be taken from the *Reading Placement*,¹² a workbook of informal tests.

1.	store	work	money	go	age
	all	cook	are	mother	market
	play	morning	walk	wash	must

(Teacher names a word, and student draws a line under it.)

2.	Store
	family
(Picture of a dog.)	dog
	dish
	egg.

¹² Griffin, Ella Washington. *Reading Placement, Home and Family Life Series*, Project for Literacy Education, U.S. Office of Education, (1950) p. 1—2.

The student is to underline the right word.

3. Working on his car
eating his dinner
(Picture of a writing in his book
man writing.) cleaning the house
washing the clothes

The student is to draw a line under the right phrase.

4. She is singing in church
She is buying food
(Picture of a She is working in the garden
woman working She is cooking dinner
in a garden.) She is taking a book to school.

The student is to draw a line under the right sentence.

The same techniques involving discussion of the topic indicated by the picture on each page of the book, presentation of new words on flash cards, and finally practice in silent and oral reading are used all through the series (Home and Family Life Series) from Reader One to Reader Four. So that a clearer picture of the reading materials used in this project may be presented, it is deemed appropriate at this point to cite a passage from Reader Four, *The Browns and Their Neighbors*:

PART I

AT CHURCH

(Picture of a church)

Every Sunday the Browns go to church. They see many friends and neighbors there. They do not get together often. But they know they will meet every Sunday. They do not want to miss Rev. Jenkins' sermons. Each sermon makes them think a long time.

One Sunday the text was "Love your neighbor as yourself."

"That was a good sermon," said Mr. Brown.

"Rev. Jenkins always preaches good sermons. He is a good man."

"Yes, he is," said Mrs. Brown. "And we needed to hear him say, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' It's a thing we need to think about."

"I'm going to be a minister when I grow up," said John.

"I like Mrs. Jenkins, too," said Mary. "I want to be a minister's wife."

"I, too, said Sally. "I want to be a minister's wife."

(The method of presentation of this lesson follows the same pattern.)

The description of the method advocated by the project is now complete. It is strange to see that the method is somewhat similar to the global method described in Chapter III of this study. Furthermore, the lesson plans are reminiscent of the old Herbartian Five Formal Steps of Teaching. Anyway, the stage is now set for an evaluation of this method of teaching reading. The evaluative criteria developed in Chapter II will now be applied to it in terms of its basic assumptions.

C. EVALUATION OF THE METHOD OF TEACHING READING USED IN THE PROJECT

Group I: *Criteria relating to knowledge in the field of philosophy.*

1. Is reading defined as the getting and the using of the meanings derived from the written or printed pages, or is it thought of as the pronouncing of the words that appear on the pages?

Even though it is stated in many places, such as in the preface of the *Three Instructional Tools For Teachers* which contains all the lesson plans to be used with the four readers, that reading includes activities in "reading units of phrase recognition, visual perception, sentence comprehension, review of sight vocabulary, meaning in context, association of ideas, and recognition tests,"¹³ in no place is it emphasized that the action of reading is to be interpreted as derivation and using of meanings from the printed or written symbols in the reading materials. However, a general belief that reading has to do with meanings seems to prevail, as may be seen from the following evidences.

In the first place, in the beginning of each lesson there is a general discussion about the problems and needs concerning home and family life. This, of course, serves to organize the experience background of each student along this line, and consequently serves to prepare a foundation on which meanings can be evoked or caused.

Secondly, there is a picture on top of every new lesson. This picture is a semi-concrete representation of what the written symbols below it are trying to say. Before attempting to read the written symbols, students always engage in a discussion concerning the picture and its meanings. The picture thus suggests what will be met with in the lines of the written symbols below it.

¹³ Griffin, Ella W. *Three Instructional Tools For Teachers*, op. cit., p. 5.

Thirdly, judging from the kind of test that is given to the students, it is rather plain that the students must be able not only to pronounce the words but also to get their meaning in order to succeed in the test. For instance, take the following test given in the book *Reading Placement*, which is similar in nature to the one described earlier in this chapter:

(Picture of a boy running.)	a man working
	a boy running
	a girl reading
	a woman cooking
	a dog eating.

The students are asked to indicate the right phrase. Most certainly, the meaning element is involved in this kind of test.

In spite of all this, it still can be said that the idea of reading as a process of getting and using meaning is not upper-most in the mind of the advocate of this method. If this idea is really advocated, first reading lessons will most properly consist of experience-chart activities. That is to say, after the general discussion of the needs and problems, short and meaningful sentences relating directly to the topic of the discussion, *phrased by the students themselves*, should be put on the board. The students then read these sentences. Thus, they read their own experience, and what they read becomes meaningful to them. These sentences can then be copied on a chart later; and several charts of this type, when bound together, will serve as the first reader, a book which will offer some truly meaningful reading. The meaning can also be used in a real life situation, since it has been discussed in the classroom, and certain conclusions have been reached in the course of the discussion. In this way reading becomes getting and using meanings right from the beginning.

As may be seen in all the lesson plans, use is not fully made of the discussion. For instance, in the first lesson of Reader One, discussion is made concerning family needs and problems; but instead of introducing such a sentence as "To grow is good for children," or "Children need good food to grow," which are likely

to come up in the discussion, the sentence "Here is Mr. Brown" is given. There is little connection between the topic under discussion and Mr. Brown, who is an imaginary person. The other sentences that follow are also of the same type. Here they are:

Here is Mrs. Brown.

Here are Mrs. Brown and Mr. Brown.

Here are Mary Brown and John Brown.

Here is little Sally Brown.

"Work, work, work!" says Mrs. Brown.

"Work, work, work! Morning, noon, and night, I work all day."

etc., etc., etc.

They may be very simple, but they are far from being very interesting. They may be related somewhat to activities in a home, but they do not try to get at any problem of the student reading the lines. In other words, they are not functional. Sentences that are too simple tend to carry too little meaning with them. It is always more appropriate to start with a sentence that carries much meaning than to start with a sentence that is too simple as to seem childish.

Again, it is desirable that reading be properly defined and made known in the same way as other intentions are, since the whole process of teaching reading depends upon it. It is also recommended that the reading materials used in the early stage of learning to read be co-operatively constructed by the students and the teacher. These materials should be based directly on the students' common experience centering around their needs and problems.

2. Are the meanings derived from reading considered as being aroused in the thinking of the learner as he interacts with the pages in terms of his background of experience, or are the meanings considered as being embedded in the words, to be unlocked by their pronunciation?

The general discussion on pertinent topics before each lesson, the discussion about the picture on top of each lesson, the practice of silent reading from time to time, and the fact that phonics and phonetics are not at all used, all point to one thing: that reading is not believed to be the unlocking of meanings through pronunciation.

It is not emphasized anywhere that the meanings are considered as being evoked in the thinking of the students. To do this, reading must capitalize on the experience of the learner, which implies that he must learn to read by reading his own experience. This, of course, refers back to the fact that learning to read should begin with experience-chart activities.

3. Are the meanings of the words considered to be changing as the learner's background of experience is affected by new experiences, or are they considered as fixed and unaffected by the new experiences?

The philosophical and psychological principles underlying the method under discussion are stated in the teacher's manual, *Let's Help the Ten Million*,¹⁴ in which problems concerning reading readiness, how adults learn, reading materials, and so on are examined. However, the problem raised by the above criterion is not touched upon. It is quite possible that the whole question has been overlooked, judging by the way the learner's background of experience is not fully utilized in the construction of the reading materials for beginners. Again, on one occasion the manual suggests that in preparing materials for adults who are learning to read, "good vocabulary guides are the WPA word list and the Dale list of 769 easy words,"¹⁵ and that "you should use on the average not more than about 8-16 different hard words per hundred, 15-60 different words, and 6-10 prepositional phrases Hard words may constitute those which do not appear on the Dale Word List."¹⁶

¹⁴ Griffin, Ella W. *Let's Help the Ten Million*, Home and Family Life Series, Project for Literacy Education, U.S. Office of Education, 1950.

¹⁵ Griffin, Ella W. *Let's Help the Ten Million*, op. cit., p. 26.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

It should be that good vocabulary guides are words connected closely with the experience of each adult learner. It should also be taken into consideration that hard or easy words are relative terms. A word that is deemed difficulty for one person with a particular background of experience may be very simple for another person who is from a different environment. Therefore, to depend entirely on a pre-determined word-list, constructed by a person not connected with the situation concerned, is to reflect the concept that the meaning of each word is fixed, unchangeable, and unaffected by new experiences.

It is recommended, therefore, that the factor of experience be carefully considered in the choice of the vocabulary to be used in the readers for a particular group of adults, and that word-lists not be imposed upon vocabulary growth.

4. Is reading interpreted as being intimately related to experience, language and thinking, the progress in any one of which parallels and depends on progress of the others, or is it considered as some absolute and independent quality?

Though no discussion is made in the teachers' Manual in connection with the problems of experience, language and thinking as they are related to reading, there is evidence that understanding concerning this viewpoint is present. In the general discussion before each lesson and in the discussion about the picture on top of each lesson, students have ample opportunity to think, to improve their language ability and to share and participate in group activities. If practical association is made between progress in group experience, and the construction of reading materials and reading activities, the present criterion will be fully met. As it is, the group discussions have not been directly drawn upon to build the reading materials.

To be functional, it is recommended that a social problem, or an immediate need of the group or the community be chosen to serve as a basis of discussion. The discussions should then center

around the attempt to solve this problem; and reading activities in all stages must be based on the solution of the problem. In the beginning stages, what is discussed will constitute the content of the experience-charts. In later stages, readers and books to be used will be those that help the students to solve the problem.

5. Is reading considered as a continuous process which may be divided into at least four stages, namely, the period of reading readiness, the period of beginning reading, the period of continuous meaningful reading of simple materials, and the period of rapid growth in independent reading, or is it considered as a finished product which can be learned once and for all time?

The fact that the *Home and Family Life Series* is built up shows that reading is considered to be a continuous process. The problem of reading readiness for adults is discussed at some length in the Teachers' Manual; and the general discussion before each lesson is intended to serve the purpose of educational readiness, since "especially in the case of adults, instruction must lean heavily on the backgrounds of experience which the students bring"¹⁷

The *Home and Family Life* series serves to meet the needs in the period of beginning reading. More materials on a higher level of difficulty are being now developed in the project. They will, of course, meet the needs of the other stages of reading. It should be clear that if the series is built around a certain problem or need, progress from one stage to another in the construction of materials will be much more facilitated.

6. Is reading considered valuable because it is a means to an end, or is it considered valuable because it has value in itself?

Most of the reading programs in the world today have moved away from the belief that reading has a value in itself. The fact that literacy campaigns are set up to help people to help themselves to better participate in the community life supports the above

¹⁷ Griffin, Ella W., *Let's Help the Ten Million*, op. cit., .

statement. *The Teachers' Manual* expresses this belief very clearly when it says: "Most adults are concerned with a need for reading instructions for completing forms, for sending money orders, telegrams and the like. They need to read children's school report cards, labels in stores, shopping guides, and scores of other things....."¹⁸

This all the more emphasizes the fact that learning to read must start with a well defined need, or problem of the group. Learning to read must simultaneously aim at solving the problem. This concept is somewhat reflected in the project when learning to write a check, to write one's signature, to write a business letter, etc., are included in the *Language Workbook*.

Group II: *Criteria Relating to knowledge in the field of psychology.*

1. Is the method based upon the assumption that the human mind is the functioning of the total human organism in using the store of meanings as the individual interacts with his environment, or is it based on the assumption that the human mind is a collection of S-R bonds?

If the first alternative is advocated, the following line of action may be observable. Words and sentences will be introduced as the learner needs them in the course of his attempt to cope with the situation. In case he is dealing with a problem related to a home or a family, words like "home," "family," "children," "food," "mother," etc. will appear in the discussion. Then, these words are written on the experience chart, and are read. In this manner, they are expected to remain deep in the learner's thinking without having to present them on flash cards, and without having to drill them through mechanical means later on. This is possible because through actual experience with the problems of home and family, and through a discussion by which thinking is clarified, those words have become a part of the learner's thinking.

If the second alternative is the case, words distantly related to the learner and his problem, or non-related to him at all are

¹⁸ Griffin, Ella W, *Let's Help the Ten Million*, op. cit., p. 12.

introduced through mechanical means such as sentence cards word cards and so on. Then a drill on those cards follows, believing that each time the card is "flashed" the connection or the bond between the words and the mind of the learner is strengthened; and thus the words are learned.

It is clear, therefore, that the method under study has a strong tendency towards the belief in the S-R bonds. The flash cards are used very intensively, and the pre-determined word lists are looked up as guides. As has been pointed out before, the main techniques employed are in the following order:

1. Review through silent and oral reading, and flash cards.
2. Discussion in connection with the picture on the page.
3. Presentation of a new lesson, in which new words and phrases are introduced first on flash cards, then on the blackboard; and then in the textbook.
4. Silent and oral reading: When all the students seem to have mastered the new words, have the group read the page.

These clear-cut steps seem to remind one of the older formal approaches to learning retracing somewhat the steps of the Herbartian lesson plan. It is recommended, therefore, that words be introduced in a functional manner rather than in an additive way. It is expected that through a functional means, the hardship caused by drilling can be reduced to a minimum.

2. Does the method assume that learning takes place as a result of the interaction between an individual and his environment, with a problematic situation involved, or does it assume that learning takes place in any isolated situation through the medium of repetition?

The method under study does associate its reading activities with a presumed life situation, in this case the home and family life; but they are not actually based on any particular problem peculiar to a home or family situation. In other words, no real

problem is located and used as a starting point for learning. It may be a little bit better than learning to read by starting with isolated letters or sounds of the alphabet, but it is not good enough.

It is, therefore, recommended that a definite problem first be located. It can be "How to decorate a living room," "How to make a good buy," and the like. Reading activities will then proceed from this problem. Discussions, experience-charts, and reading materials will all unite in attacking the problem. As the interest is real, learning will become less difficult; and skills in word recognition will be developed through extensive reading in real attempts to get the problem solved.

3. Is the method based on the assumption that words are learned as whole as they represent some meanings in the background of experience, or is it based on the view that words should be learned through their separate parts, such as the letters or the sounds of the letters?

It is good to see that the method treats a word as the smallest unit of recognition. It first starts with a sentence representing a thought unit, then virtually breaks the sentence into phrases, and the phrases into words. To help word recognition, writing is taught at this point, through which the letters of the alphabet are learned. This is in fact the brightest spot in the whole picture.

4. Does the method consider the fact that skills in reading are gradually developed and firmly established through constant use in different types of situation, or does it consider that skills should be developed through a system of mechanical drills?

As this method has a strong tendency towards strengthening the S-R bonds involved, mechanical drills by means of the flash cards stand out rather prominently. They are used in the review step, and they constitute the main technique of presenting new words and sentences. However, it is indicated in the *Teacher's Manual* that in developing reading materials for the learners "each important new word should be used at least four times".¹⁹ Of

¹⁹ Griffin, Ella W, *Let's Help the Ten Million*, op. cit., p. 26.

course, if a word can be used several times and in various situations, it will be much better for the learners, and the drills can be cut down to a minimum. It is, therefore, recommended that pertinent literature be supplied to the learners so that they will be provided with opportunities to come across similar words in sufficiently various situations. It becomes true that pertinent literature can be easily supplied only when a problem has been specified. This leads back to the point already made that a problem has to be selected as a point of departure.

5. Is the method emphasizing both the meanings of what is read and the development of skills in reading, or just one of them?

The general discussion and the discussion about the picture are intended to supply a common background of experience which in turn is meant to help make reading meaningful. The drills on the flash cards, of course, are meant to build up the reading skills. Even though the intentions are good, the means are not effective. To be really meaningful, reading must be based on the needs and problems of the learner and not just related to them. Again, it is much less painful to develop the desired reading skills through constant usages of words and sentences than to undergo the hardship of mechanical drills.

6. Does the method consist of the following steps: Acquisition of general readiness, acquisition of sufficient sight vocabulary based on the learner's experience, word analysis, reading a great quantity of simple and meaningful materials, or does it consist of only some of them?

The method certainly places an emphasis on reading readiness. According to the *Teacher's Manual*, the teachers are to consider mental readiness, physical factors, personal and emotional readiness, and education readiness.²⁰ The reading placement tests and the general discussions help the teacher a great deal to get the students in readiness for learning.

²⁰ Griffin, Ella W. *Let's Help the Ten Million*, op. cit., p. 19—22.

Sight vocabulary is built up by means of the flash cards. Of course, it can be more effectively done by means of the experience charts.

As regards word analysis, it is the policy of this method to advocate the study of word-structure by connecting learning to write with learning to read. This is, of course, an excellent idea, because it has been generally accepted that learning should involve the whole individual. In other words, the greater number of channels to the central nervous system, the better it will be for the learner. The context clues are also made use of as can be seen from the fact that simple, accurate sentences representing a particular topic or thought-unit are always used. It is stressed in the *Teacher's Manual* that "the ability to handle ideas in simple, accurate sentences is an important requisite of learning to read. This is especially true when the method of instruction leans heavily upon context clues and meaningful reading."²¹

Of course, the technique of phonetical analysis can be of great help in recognizing words and their meanings, especially in a language which is strictly phonetic.

It is doubtful if reading a great quantity of simple and meaningful materials has been greatly encouraged. It is known that more materials are being prepared by the project. It will be very helpful if several sets of reading materials, each dealing with a definite problem that is rather common to all, can be written. The adult learners can then draw heavily upon this supply of materials, taking the one that is pertinent to the particular problem they are attacking.

7. Is reading then considered as involving the interaction of the following elements, namely, recognition of word-configurations, recognition of speech-sounds, and recognition of what is intended in the context, or is reading considered as dealing with just some of them?

²¹ Griffin, Ella W. *Let's Help the Ten Million*, op. cit., p. 22.

It is true, as has been pointed out earlier, that the method starts with the building up of sight words by means of flash cards, stimulates recognition of speech-sounds by encouraging discussions and oral-expressions in meaningful situations, and introduces to the students whole words and sentences carrying clear meanings. All these three factors point to the fact that the first alternative mentioned in the criterion has been advocated.

The use of flash-card drills may be greatly reduced, if experience charts are used to build up the sight words. As evidence shows, the latter have proved to be more effective in several ways.

8. Does the method utilize any kind of word-list as a means of checking the words that the learner has accumulated, or does it consider the word-list as a source from which the words to be learned are drawn?

As the reading materials are not "raw," that is to say, not constructed by the learners themselves, there is a great tendency on the part of the writer of the readers towards dependence upon the WPA word-list and the Dale word-list. This leaning is indicated in the *Teacher's Manual* which says on page 26: "Good vocabulary guides are the WPA word list and the Dale list of 769 easy words." To be functional, all words regardless of whether they are "difficult" or not can be introduced if they are needed as the learner attempts to achieve his purpose. The word-list should not be looked upon as the main source of words needed to be learned. It is the belief of the author of the present study that where word-list are strictly used one can be sure to find that no specific problem of real import to the learners has been chosen as a starting point for learning. If word-lists contain words that are most frequently used in our every day life, then those words are all the time found in our every day problem, since our every day life consists of a series of problems. Now, if a problem is taken as a point of departure in learning to read, the words contained in the word-lists will automatically be involved and dealt with. Therefore, it is hard to see how a word-list can be an important factor in teaching and learning to read. Surely, it can be used as a means of checking whether some useful words have been left

out; but in an actual teaching-learning situation, it cannot be regarded as an all-important factor.

9. Does the method consider the fact that the learner seeks the easiest and best route to his goal, or does it advocate the hardship of drill as a sure means of success?

It cannot be denied that the method has relied rather extensively on the use of flash cards and drills in building up the sight-vocabulary. Actually, it is the main technique employed. The experience-chart technique involves much less drills, and is thus easier and more desirable. The time used on flash-card drills may be more profitably spent on constantly reading the learner's own experience on the experience chart. This should be a surer way of establishing a sight vocabulary as each chart contains a complete unit of thought, and is thus much more meaningful than a little word or a short sentence or phrase on a card. So it is necessary to recommend that in order that the easiest route may be taken, more emphasis should be placed on experience-chart activities, which ought to be carried on until the time the learner has achieved a certain degree of independence in reading.

Group II: *Criteria relating to knowledge in the field of pedagogy.*

1. Is reading taught in terms of some social aims and purposes, such as in connection with a fundamental education program or a project of some sort, or is it taught as a separate academic subject by itself?

As has been stated at the very outset, this is a literacy education project; thus, the main purpose is to teach the illiterate adults to read and write, and to have sufficient knowledge of practical arithmetic. By itself, the purpose may very well lead the action towards a separate academic series of activities. To prevent this, learning to read has been tied up with a topic which has immediate social implications. In this case, it is the home and family life. But as has been previously pointed out, the reading activities in this project are only associated with a broad, general

description of family life. This is definitely not sufficient to rouse a real, deep interest on the part of the students in such a way that learning to read may become a means to an end, namely, the solution of some specific problems, however small, in their home and family life.

Thus, it will be very helpful if the students at the very beginning agree to work together on some small significant social or personal problem, and then base all their reading activities on this chosen topic. Reading will then become getting and using of meanings; and consequently, the adult learners will find it much more simple to learn to read; and as they get information leading to the solution of the problem, they will begin to see and feel that reading is something real, meaningful and extremely useful to their life.

2. Are words introduced in connection with needs and purposes of the learner, or are they predetermined by some outside authority?

It is plain that words have not been introduced in connection with needs and purposes of the learner, since no definite problem has been decided upon. Yet they are not entirely pre-determined by some outside authority, because they are associated with activities in the home and with family life. It can be extremely helpful to the students, though, if they prepare their own reading materials co-operatively with their teacher, and thus use and read words from their own spoken vocabulary in terms of their own needs and problems.

3. Does the method offer some kind of appraisal to reconstruct learning, or does it consider it in terms of examinations and tests that have to be passed?

The tests found in the workbook, *Reading Placement*, are informal and good. They help a great deal in checking the students' level of reading ability and aid in the reconstruction process of learning. More tests of this type should be constructed and offered to the students from time to time so that the students can find out

more about themselves, and their growth towards independent reading.

4. Does the method consider provision for individual differences, or does it advocate everybody engaging in the same activity?

According to the workbook, *Reading Placement*, tests are given in order that the teacher may have a fair idea of "the ability of each student to recognize words, phrases and simple sentences." Furthermore, "the level of performance on the test workbook should, therefore, serve as a basis for initial grouping of students within a class as a means of facilitating the selection of reading materials in accordance with the reading ability of each student, or each group of students." This statement leads to a conclusion that a certain amount of attention is given to the individual differences of the students. However, due to the somewhat rigid nature of the lesson plans used in this method, flexibility in the introduction of words and sentences is more or less hampered.

If experience charts were employed, different groups of students would deal with different sets of words and sentences, depending upon the kinds of problem they have taken up. That is to say, it is possible to make provision for individual differences on a much wider basis. Insofar as the lesson plans are concerned, provision for individual differences can be made only with reference to the time factor. That is, a student can take as much time as he wants, but he is required, through the rigidity of the lesson plans, to engage in similar activities involving the same words and sentences. It is, therefore, recommended that different words and sentences be introduced to the students as they need them for their various problems.

D. WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF THIS METHOD?

As a result of the foregoing evaluation, a summary dealing with possible advantages and disadvantages caused by this method of teaching reading may be drawn. Referring to the description

of the various major methods of teaching reading given in Chapter III, it is quite discernible that the method includes many techniques that are found also in the global method, the look-and-say method, the phrase-reading method, and probably the thought-unit method. It is thus true that the people who are responsible for the literacy campaign in this project are trying to capitalize on the advantages of some important methods and at the same time to offset the disadvantages that those methods may bring. The general pattern of this method is as follows:

1. Sight reading is used in the beginning stages to build up the habit of matching sight words to the proper spoken-words.
2. Training in word recognition then follows. Sentences and phrases are broken into word units and later on into letter units. Learning to write constitutes the main technique of studying the letter units.
3. Sight reading continues while the process of studying the smaller units goes on.

It is proper at this point to list the advantages and the disadvantages that arise as a result of the use of this pattern.

Advantages

1. The adult learns to "read" rather soon as he has a sense that he is getting some meaning out of the printed lines almost from the first day of his study.
2. The appearance of words is emphasized rather than spelling or vocalizing. It is true that a certain amount of vocalizations is advocated. But on the whole, recognition of word-configuration is stressed; and this is one of the major needs in silent reading, that is, to be able to recognize words as they are seen in the eye's movement across the printed line.
3. As in the global method, the reading activity is based almost entirely on the visual process. Thus, the bad effect of lip-movements, and numbling or vocalizing in silent reading are avoided.

Consequently, the adult can read more rapidly and with greater comprehension.

4. The adult is introduced to reading in terms of whole thoughts and ideas. This definitely aids comprehension, and increases speed in reading. Subsequently, speed in reading and especially ability to comprehend the written symbols helps the adults to remember the content of what is being read in a tenacious manner.

5. Reading and writing are integrated into one complete unit. This admirable technique promotes recognition of the known words as well as development of a habit of correct spelling.

Summing up, it can be said in a general way that this method does not develop "word-callers," who finish a sentence without having an idea of what it says. By this method, the adult does not develop a habit of vocalizing when he is supposed to be reading silently; that is, he does not "spell-out" words to himself, nor does he pronounce them silently to himself, a practice which gives rise to lip-movements. Furthermore, the concept that reading is a process of "naming" the printed symbols is completely done away with. This makes reading rather more pleasant and easier, as it does not require a learner to go through some hard, mechanical and meaningless preliminary exercises.

Disadvantages

1. The serious mistake of not basing the reading activities on some well-defined problem, either personal or social, brings about the general ineffectiveness of the method, in the sense that the reading process becomes less meaningful and does not capture the drive and interest of the learners the way it should. Effective learning as has been widely acknowledged, starts with a problematic situation.

2. The development of sight vocabulary by means of the flash cards is certainly less effective than the experience-chart technique.

3. As the flash cards are relied upon to a considerable degree, there is a tendency for the adults to guess at the words that are "flashed" to them. This happens as a result of the fact that the words or sentences that are "flashed" to the class are not actually suggested or phrased by the adults themselves. In other words, they are not from the experience of the students themselves. If the experience-chart technique is applied, this weakness can be considerably corrected.

4. As more attention is given to the appearance of words, it is quite possible that students can turn out to be weak spellers. This drawback may be remedied, though, by paying equal attention to word study and practice in writing.

5. Some adults may need a certain amount of training in phonics or phonetics in the later stages of their study in order that they may be furnished with a means of attacking totally unfamiliar written words.

6. Some adults may be unable to cope with short sentences or whole phrases that are "flashed" to them, while they can recognize the word units.

7. There is no guarantee that a sentence or a word learned in that particular situation or lesson will be recognized quickly again in a new situation, since it is not built or phrased by the students themselves. Therefore, there is a danger that a great confusion may occur as words of somewhat similar appearance are encountered. Of course, training in looking for context clues can offset this difficulty. This, though, is not sufficiently emphasized.

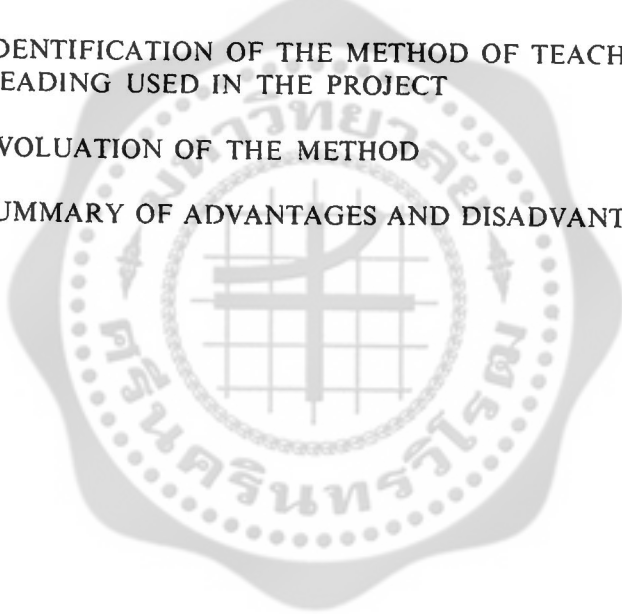
The method of teaching reading as advocated by the U.S. Office Project of Literacy Education may be said to be fair according to the standard established in Chapter II. It may be made much more effective, if its authors and practitioners reconsider its basic assumptions in the way herein discussed and adopt as its foundation the interaction of the knowledge in the fields of philosophy, psychology and pedagogy. It is a mistake to base a method of teaching on any one or two fields of knowledge. The interaction of the three is essential, as far as modern thinking is concerned.

CHAPTER V

THE HAITI PILOT PROJECT IN FUNDAMENTAL EDUCATION

(A UNESCO PILOT PROJECT)

- A. BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT
- B. IDENTIFICATION OF THE METHOD OF TEACHING
READING USED IN THE PROJECT
- C. EVOLUTION OF THE METHOD
- D. SUMMARY OF ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES



CHAPTER V

THE HAITI PILOT PROJECT IN FUNDAMENTAL EDUCATION

(A UNESCO PILOT PROJECT)

A. BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT

Alfred Metraux, Department of Social Science, UNESCO, in his 1947 report to UNESCO on the general living condition of the people in Haiti said,

French is the official language of the country, but the majority of the people speak only Creole, a language derived mainly from French. Haiti was once the richest of the French colonies. However, during the past century, conditions have changed, and Haiti is now facing acute agricultural and economic problems--over-population, soil erosion, malnutrition and poverty. The percentage of illiteracy is high and reaches almost 90 per cent.¹

The government of Haiti organized a literacy campaign for adults in 1943. During this campaign, Creole, until then a spoken language, was translated into a written language. According to Frank C. Laubach, who helped the Haitian Government organize the campaign,

In that year they adopted a perfect alphabet based upon French phonetics, by leaving out all the silent French

¹ Metraux, Alfred. *Report on the Marbial Project*, Haiti, 1947, a pamphlet kept in the Haiti File, UNESCO Office at 405 E. 42nd St., New York City, p. 1.

sounds. It is very easy to go to French immediately after learning Creole without having to relearn the sound of any letter.²

After carefully examining some French words and the corresponding Creole words, it was found that the Creole letters are strictly phonetic. This is, each letter represents just one sound. There is a complete one-to-one correspondence between each letter and the sound it represents. For instance, the word "hat" in French is "Chapeau," read "chapo." In Creole, it is "Chapo," read "Chapo." Again, the word "project" is spelled the same way in French as it is in English, but pronounced "projé." In Creole, it is written "projé" and pronounced "projé," exactly the same as it is spelt; and this is true of every word in the newly adopted Creole written language.

How effective this government literacy campaign proved to be is not officially known. Most probably it did not turn out the way it was expected to be for lack of funds, trained personnel and materials. Four years later, in 1947, recognizing the fact that Haiti might prove a valuable laboratory for a venture in fundamental education, UNESCO launched a pilot project in the region of the Marbial Valley. This UNESCO project, like any other fundamental education program, consists of three important features: a health campaign, an agricultural campaign and a literacy campaign. According to Miss Ella Griffin, who, as may be remembered from previous references in this study, was closely associated with the Literacy Education Project described in the previous chapter, and who had been invited by UNESCO to help in the Haiti Pilot Project, "the whole project is based on the necessity for an educational campaign, which, in turn, begins with literacy education."³

² Laubach, F. C. *Teaching the World to Read*, New York City: Foreign Missions Conference of North America, (1947), p. 84.

³ Griffin, Ella W. *Report on the Preparation of Sample Textbooks In Creole and French for the Haiti Pilot Project in Fundamental Education*, (March, 1950) (Her private copy kept at U.S. Office of Education), p. 3.

To give a clearer picture of what this pilot project is like the following statement, taken from the Report of the Director General of UNESCO to the General Conference convened in Florence, May-June, 1950, is presented:

An agreement was signed on September 6, 1949, between UNESCO and the Haitian Government, under which an independent service (Pilot Project Service) will be in charge of the experiment in the Marbial Valley. The contract also specified that the officer in charge of the project, who is appointed by UNESCO in agreement with the Haitian Government, shall be given the necessary powers by the Government to carry out the work. The project is financed from a joint fund to which each of the two parties has to pay a contribution.

The new Director, Mr. C. J. Oppen (United Kingdom) took up his duties at the end of December. M. Emmanuel Gabriel (Haiti), formerly a member of the UNESCO Secretariat, has been appointed Deputy Director..... A scheme for the study of agricultural resources has been drawn up in co-operation with the Ministry of Agriculture..... The World Health Organization is taking part in the project..... It proposes to set on foot measures to deal with Yaws, a tropical disease which is common in Haiti.....

Lastly, under the guidance of M. Gabriel, a team of specialists chosen by UNESCO has undertaken the preparation of textbooks and teaching materials in Creole. These specialists have already produced four reading-books and various more advanced works describing the effects of fundamental education on the life of a peasant family....."⁴

As a result of the launching of the literacy campaign which is still going on at the present moment, three primers in basic Creole

⁴ UNESCO. *Report of the Director General Presented to the Fifth Session of the General Conference*, May-June, 1950, Paris: UNESCO Office, (1950), p. 28,

were prepared by M. Gabriel to be used in the beginning reading stage. For later stages in learning reading, Miss Ella W. Griffin of the U. S. Office of Education is now in the process of preparing a set of advanced reading materials, including:

1. A series of four reading texts developed in the form of picture-stories with themes centered around the life and problems of a typical Haitian peasant family.
2. Supplementary textbooks concerning problems of vital importance to the masses of the Haitian people--these materials to be brief, attractive, and appealing to newly literate adults.
3. At least one supplementary booklet suitable for children as well as for adults, and especially adaptable to simple French as well as simple Creole.

It was understood that the plots for all the reading texts should be planned to contribute to the basic purposes of Fundamental Education as they relate to Haiti: to help people to help themselves through an understanding of their most pressing needs, better housing, better health, improvement of the land, literacy education, and an emphasis on co-operative endeavor."⁵

B. IDENTIFICATION OF THE METHOD OF TEACHING READING USED IN THE CAMPAIGN

According to the report sent from the Haiti Pilot Project to UNESCO, for August 1949, I. A. Richards' method of literacy development was used, and the materials for teaching (the three primers in *basic Creole*) were developed by M. Gabriel. The pictures appearing in the primers were drawn by M. Remponeau

⁵ Griffin, Ella W. *Report on the Preparation of Sample Textbooks in Creole and French for the Haiti Pilot Project*, (March 1950) (Her Private Copy), p. 4.

who made an effective use of stick-figure drawings. Again, according to the information given by Marcel Resroches, Principal of the Demonstration School in the Project, certain techniques in the global method, which is currently popular and successful in Europe, were also adopted.

Putting these two important pieces of information together, the method of teaching reading that is used in the Haiti Project becomes clear. Whereas, the techniques in the global method have been explained in details in Chapter III, a word about the technique developed by I. A. Richards of Harvard University is now necessary.

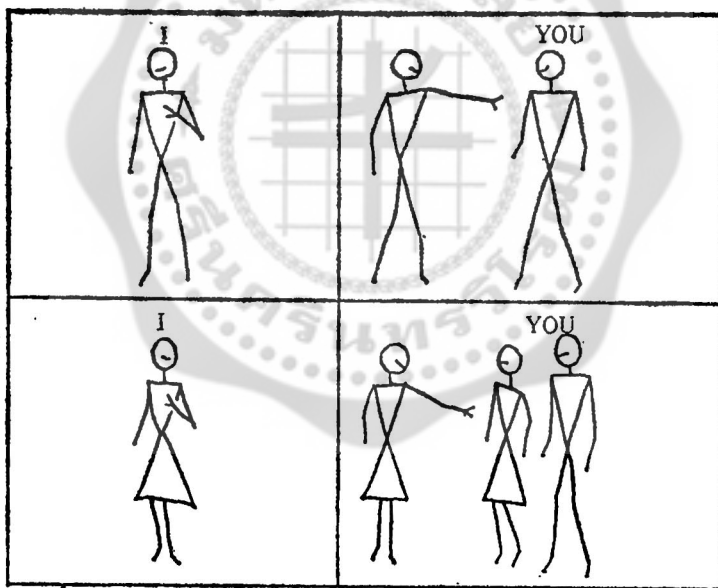
Richards has invented a quick and easy way of learning the English language—through pictures. Ideas and meanings represented by the written symbols are suggested by drawings or pictures that accompany each sentence or a group of sentences. But the kind of English presented is Basic English, which contains only 850 words. According to the originator of Basic English, one can say almost anything with these 850 most useful words. That is to say, the Basic word-list is the one and only source from which words are drawn and presented to the learners. In the book *English Through Pictures*⁶ by Richards, which can serve a double purpose of learning the English language, and learning to read English, only 500 words from the Basic word-list are used, but quite a number of topics are covered. The outstanding principle underlying this method is “direct pictorial explanation of key sentences or words arranged in a sequence from simple to complex”.⁷ This means that words, sentences, and topics are first determined arbitrarily by the author of the textbook, and then pictures are drawn to accompany each word, or sentence, or topic in order to carry the meaning through. The text is carefully graded.

⁶ Richards, I.A. *English Through Pictures*, New York City: Pocket Books, Inc., (August 1950) p. ix.

⁷ Richards, I. A. *French Self-Taught With Pictures*, New York City: Pocket Books, Inc. (January 1950), p. 5.

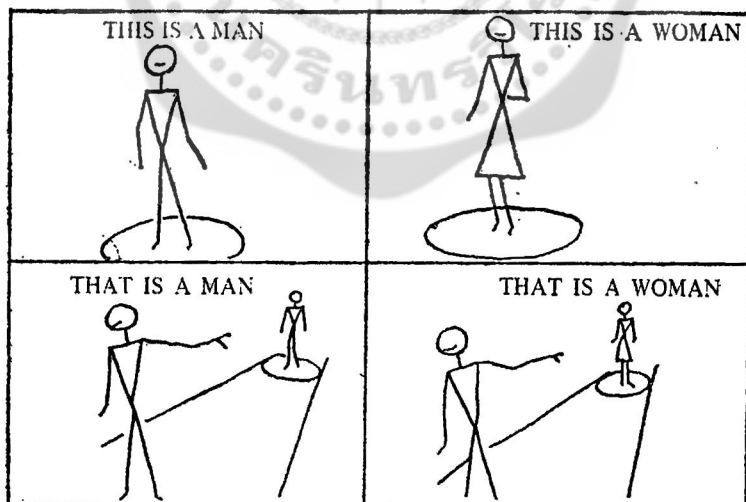
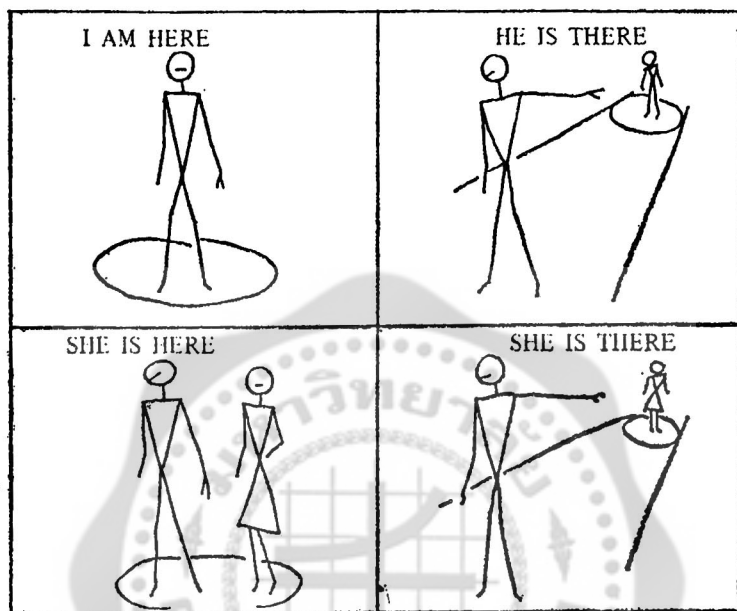
Its design, word by word, sentence by sentence, is planned and controlled to smooth and support first steps in the language. A continuous pictorial commentary in stick-figure drawings supplies an adequate running explanation for the meanings of the earlier sentences. As ideas as well as objects are discussed in the later pages, words already made clear are brought back to help explain the new. The sequence is self-reviewing.⁸

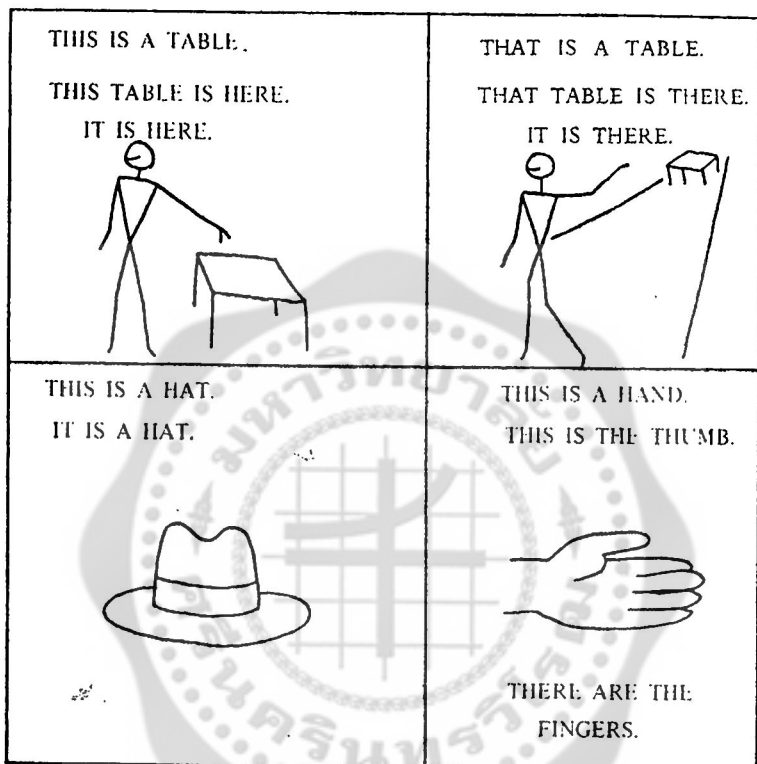
To illustrate what has been said, samples will now be taken from *English Through Pictures*.⁹



⁸ Richards, I.A. *French Self-Taught With Pictures*, Pocket Books, Inc.: New York City, (January, 1950), p. 6.

⁹ Richards, I.A. *English Through Pictures*, Pocket Books, Inc.: New York City (1946), p. 1—10





How to Read Them: Each picture is studied carefully before each word or each sentence is read. Words are first presented. Then they are put together to form a sentence. Each word appears several times with different accompanying pictures in the sentences that follow. Thus, every word is carefully guided in its order of presentation. This could be seen from the list below:

- On page 1, the following words appear: I, You.
 On page 2, the following words appear: He, She, It, They.
 On page 3, the following words appear: He, They, It, They.
 On page 4, the following words appear: I am here. He is there.
 She is here. She is there

On page 5, the following words appear: It is here. It is there.
They are here. They are there.

On page 6: You are there. You are there. You are here. We are here.

On page 7: It is there. They are there. We are here. They are here.

On page 8: This is a man. This is a woman. That is a man. That is a woman.

On page 9: This man is here. That man is there. This woman is there. That woman is there.

etc., etc., etc.

As the purpose of Richards' method is to teach an adult to learn a language rather than to learn to read, the problems concerning word study, the alphabet, and phonetics are naturally not included in it. Yet, realizing that a combination of Richards' method with any kind of word study will result in a method of teaching reading, the Haiti Pilot Project adopted the techniques of word study as found in the global method to supplement the method of Richards'.

At this point, it is proper to examine the first primer used in the Project, remembering that, like its English model, the primer contains only words taken from the Creole Basic word-list; and that the Creole letters are strictly phonetic.

First Primer in Basic Creole¹⁰

Page 1

(For the sake of convenience the English translation will be given under each sentence. Actually, there is not translation of any kind in the primer.)

Sa sé yoũ nỗm
(This is a man.)



Sa sé yoũ liv
(This is a book.)



Sa sé liv li
(This is his book.)



Techniques. No manuals, workbooks or tests of any kind have been produced by the Project so far. The information concerning the techniques used in presenting the lessons which follows was gathered from a long conversation with Marcel Desroches, Principal of the Demonstration School in the Project:

¹⁰ Gabriel, Emmanuel. *First Primer in Basic Creole*, UNESCO Pilot Project at Haiti, Port-au-Prince, (April 1950), p. 1—60.

1. The students look at the first picture on the right hand side of the page and study it. Discussions about the picture may follow as needs arise.
2. In the earlier stages, the teacher copies the sentence describing the picture down on the board in big letters. Pointing under each word, he then reads the sentence slowly for the class.
3. The class, looking at the sentence on the board, read it with the teacher orally.
4. The students then look at the sentence in the book and read it first silently, then orally.
5. A new picture and a new sentence are then taken up in the same way. Since just one new word is added in a new sentence, the students do not have any great difficulty in learning it.
6. At the end of each page which contains only three sentences, the sentences are broken by the teacher into words put in boxes as shown in the primer.
7. The students try to read each separate word in the boxes.
8. After having recognized the words in the boxes, the class again read the sentences on the page.
9. Flash cards containing the words and the sentences are also used during the lesson.
10. The same procedure is used throughout the first primer.

To give a better idea of the primer, and of the way in which new words are added and new sentence patterns are graded, a few more pages will be cited.

Page 2

Sa sé yôu bâ
(This is a bench.)



Sa sé yôu nôm
(This is a man.)



Sa sé bû bâ li
(This is his bench.)

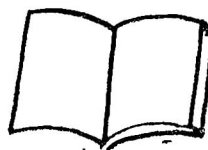


New word:



Page 3

Sa sé yôu liv
(This is a book.)



Sa sé yôu nôm
(This is man.)



Sa sê yôu mé
(This is a hand.)



New word:

mê

Page 4

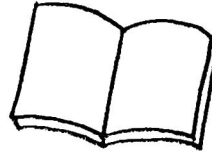
Sa sé yôu nôm
(This is a man.)



Sa sé mê lit
(This is his hand.)



Sa sé liv li
(This is his book.)



Liv li nâ mê li
(The book is in his hand.)



New word:

nû

Page 5

Sa sé yôu nôm
(This is a man.)



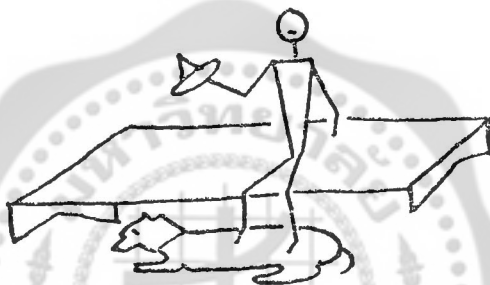
Sa sé yôu mê
(This is a hand.)



Sa sé mē li
(This is his hand.)



Page 15



Pê	li	nâ	mê	li
chê	li	âba	bâ	li
Nôm	ia	sou	bâ	li
Liv	li	sou	bâ	li

The first primer contains 60 pages of words and pictures exactly as quoted. There are, altogether, three primers in the series. The second and the third primers are written in the same style as the first one, except that more new words taken from the Creole Basic Word-list are added. As may have been noticed, the technique described so far is comparable to that of Richards' as described in the book *English Through Pictures*.

At the end of the first primer, when the students have mastered a certain amount of sight words, word analysis is introduced. As in the global method, words on the same page are first compared. The similarities and dissimilarities of the details that go to build up each word are pointed out. In other words, the letters of the

alphabet are presented to the class as they appear in the sight words which are already learned and mastered by the students. When all the letters are recognized and learned, they are arranged in the usual alphabetical order.

As the Creole letters are strictly phonetic, there is a one-to-one correspondence between each letter and the sound represented by it. To facilitate word recognition and to speed up success in reading, the sounds of each consonant and each vowel are taught. The known sight words are each taken apart into letters; these letters are then put back together in terms of their sound values to form the words.

With the knowledge of some sight words, and some phonetic skills, the second and the third primers are easily read. To provide the adults with easy reading materials which deal directly with what is being done in the health campaign and the agricultural campaign of the Project, Miss Ella W. Griffin is now in the process of preparing a set of four readers dealing with the improving of peasant life in Haiti.

Learning to write is also introduced at about the time of the third primer. It is intended partly to help the students in word recognition, and partly to help them to be able to communicate in writing.

C. EVALUATION OF THE METHOD OF TEACHING READING USED IN THE HAITI PILOT PROJECT

It is readily seen that the materials used for beginning reading purposes are not "raw," and that the writers of the materials are not capitalizing in any sense on the fundamental education program (the health campaign and the agricultural campaign) going on in the Project. Nor do the materials have any real connection with the everyday life experiences of the learners. All this is not possible because of the fact that words used in the primers are drawn only from the Basic word-list of the most useful or frequent words in the Creole language. What an opportunity for functional learning is being lost?

**Group I: Criteria in Connection with knowledge
in the Field of Philosophy**

1. Is reading defined as the getting and the using of the meanings derived from the written or printed pages, or is it thought of as the pronouncing of the words that appear on the pages?

There is evidence which indicates that reading is not identified with the pronouncing of words. Pictures or drawings are relied upon as a method of supplying meanings and content to what is read. Through the pictures and the discussion about them, a background of meaning is built up; and thus a certain amount of meaning will be evoked as the learners look at the written symbols corresponding to each picture. Yet, whatever meaning is obtained by the students cannot be of any real value to them, as what they are reading has no appreciable connection with what is going on in their every day life. No personal or social problem has been located, and thus reading is not directed towards the solving of any real problem. No definite objectives have been set up for the reading program. In this manner, reading is more or less the getting of the meanings, but definitely not the using of the meanings. If both are advocated, reading can be much more effective.

2. Are the meanings derived from reading considered as being aroused in the thinking of the learner as he interacts with the pages in terms of his background of experience, or are the meanings considered as being embedded in the words, to be unlocked by their pronunciation?

Like its English model, *English Through Pictures*, the Creole adaptation depends entirely upon drawings or pictures as a means of evoking meanings in the thinking of the learner. A better way of doing it is, of course, to depend upon the learner's actual experience instead of a picture which really represents a very small and isolated unit of experience. However, in spite of the limitation caused by reliance upon the pictures, the method has profited from those pictures tremendously in that they steer it away from the traditional belief that meanings are embedded in

words and are to be unlocked by their pronunciation. Since attention is shifted to pictures, the danger of depending upon pronunciation as a method of getting meanings is avoided.

Anyway, it is recommended that the learner's vast store of experience should replace the pictures as source of meanings. This implied that the adults should be engaged in experience-chart activities from their first reading lesson. Pictures, undoubtedly, have a prominent role to play in the construction of an experience chart, as they help to illustrate the learner's experience that is being translated into written symbols. The meanings represented by the pictures and the written symbols on the chart will then be absorbed back by the learners as they read the chart.

3. Are the meanings of the words considered to be changing as the learner's background of experience is affected by new experiences, or are they considered as fixed and unaffected by the new experiences?

As the method relies almost entirely upon some crude drawings which are static things, and not upon the learner's experience which constantly changes, there is a tendency that the question has not been considered by this method at all. If the meanings of words are considered as changing as the learner's background of experience is reconstructed, theoretically static pictures representing only one pre-determined meaning could not be used to represent a changing situation. Furthermore, the use of the list of basic words more or less reflects the idea that the meanings of the words have been fixed by the authority who compiled them. Actually, men from different locations or with different background of experience use different words or attach somewhat different meanings to the same words. For this reason, it is recommended that words be introduced to the learners in the primers as the learners want them. This brings up the fact that the primers vary directly as the experience of the learners. No one primer is good for all, nor a word-list suitable to all. What kind of a primer, then, can satisfy the requirement of a situation like this? The answer is the experience-chart, co-operatively constructed by the students and their teacher.

4. Is reading interpreted as being intimately related to experience, language and thinking, the progress in any one of which parallels and depends on progress of the others, or is it considered as some absolute and independent quality?

The way reading is so tied up with pictures, and limited by the basic words, it can hardly be said that the method considers learning to read as closely related to experience, language, and thinking. Of course, discussions by the students concerning the drawings they are going to read about help them to concentrate their thinking upon some definite point, and hence, facilitate the reading process somewhat. But insofar as those drawings represent something that does not concern the learner or his problems in the least, they tend to become uninteresting and meaningless. For instance, conversations about a bench, a dog and a book independently of any real problem may be extremely cumbersome. Consequently, quick progress in reading becomes rather difficult.

It is, therefore, recommended that the pictures and the word-, list be considered not as the main thing on which the entire reading process depends, but as important auxiliaries that help promote success in reading. The learner's whole field of experience in relation to his personal and social problem should serve as a solid basis upon which the reading process is constructed. In such a case, learning to read will be achieved in a swifter and more effective manner as it will be connected with the adults ability in language and thinking. And the adults, as is generally known, have had a great deal of experience in this direction.

5. Is reading considered as a continuous process which may be divided into at least four stages, namely, the period of reading readiness, the period of beginning reading, the period of continuous meaningful reading of simple materials, and the period of rapid growth in the habit in independent reading, or is it considered as a finished product which can be learned once and for all time?

There is little indication that reading readiness has been advocated. But as the adults have a great amount of background experience, the lack of the readiness phase in the reading program is more or less compensated for by the high maturity level of the students. Probably, studying the stick-figure drawings, and discussing about them provide the students with a certain kind of readiness. But this is all that is being done in the way of reading readiness in the entire reading program.

The reading program seems to start immediately with the beginning reading phases; and as the primers are strictly based on the basic list, and not on the experience, or the personal and social problems of the learners, beginning reading cannot really be functional and interesting. Words that students need to read but which are not included in the word-list have to be abandoned. Surely, this is not a good way to encourage progress; it only reflects a strong belief in transfer of training. This method of teaching reading, presumably, asserts that once a person has read all the words contained in the basic list, he will be able to read all the other words that are involved in his actual every day life.

As a series of functional readers and some advanced reading materials are being prepared by the project for use by the students, it can be concluded that reading has not been considered as a finished product which can be learned once and for all time. Undoubtedly, if these functional materials are used from the very beginning of the program in the form of experience charts, things can be made much easier and much more interesting for the learner.

6. Is reading considered valuable because it is a means to an end, or is it considered valuable because it has a value in itself?

As the Haiti Pilot Project is initiated to help the people to help themselves in the way of health, and agriculture, and general education, it is rather clear that literacy or the ability to read and write has been conceived of as a means to an end, that is, to help the people deal effectively with the every day problems of life, and thereby to achieve a higher standard of living. This should mean that all the steps to be taken in this great process must be

those that will contribute most to the solution of the problems. Yet, the method by which literacy is developed is by no means related to the problems. Instead of immediately adopting the every day life problems of the adults as the starting point in learning to read, some distant, isolated and insignificant topics are taken. It is clear, therefore, why the process of literacy development is being hampered in speed and effectiveness.

Group II Criteria in Connection with knowledge in the field of Psychology.

1. Is the method based upon the assumption that the human mind is the functioning of the total human organism in using the store of meanings as the individual interacts with his environment, or is it based on the assumption that the human mind is a collection of S-R bonds?

As in the global method after which the Haiti method is patterned, presentation of words and word study depend to a great extent upon flash cards and games in order to break the sentences into phrases, and phrases into words. This means a certain amount of drill on flash cards is involved. However, as the drills are not entirely mechanical but include educational games like finding the right words, matching word cards with the right words and so on, it cannot be said that the method is attempting to strengthen directly any S-R bond. On the other hand, the Haitian method does not introduce words as the individual interacts with his environment, but derives the words from a pre-determined word list so it cannot be said either that the method is based upon the conception that the human mind is the functioning of the human organism in using its store of meanings as the individual interacts with his environment. As a matter of fact, it seems that the problem of the human mind and thus the problem of how we learn have not been very deeply contemplated. As a consequence of this over-sight, the tendency towards drills on the flash cards and drills on the phonics of the language (as the Creole letters are strictly phonetic) can obviously be seen. If words are introduced as there are needs for them, or as the learner tries to solve his problem, these drills can be reduced to a minimum.

2. Does the method assume that learning takes place as a result of the interaction, with a problematic situation involved, or does it assume that learning takes place in any isolated situation through the medium of repetition?

It is manifest that the Haiti method does not assume that learning takes place as a result of the interaction between the individual and his immediate environment. This is clearly seen from the fact that the method does not utilize the immediate personal and social problems of the learner as a starting point for learning. The method does not capitalize on the situation which abounds in problems. For instance, the health and agricultural problems which are being dealt with in the Project can be easily chosen and adopted as a point of departure from the first day of the literacy class. But this great opportunity has been ignored. A problem, of course, arises as a result of the interaction between the individual and the forces in the environment as he is attempting to adjust himself to them, or to adjust them to suit himself; and, as is generally accepted, effective learning takes place in the process of solving a problem. The Haiti method seems to sever the learner from his natural surrounding, and puts him in a less real situation where only the Basic words are used. Thus, it becomes rather evident that this method believes that learning can also be effective in a situation other than a realistic and true to life one. Behind this conviction is lurking, no doubt, the so-called principle of transfer of training.

3. Is the method based on the assumption that words are learned as wholes as they represent some meanings in the background of experience, or is it based on the view that words should be learned through their separate parts such as the letters or the sounds of the letters?

As in the global method, the Haiti method recognizes the fact that words are learned as wholes and not through their separate parts. It also believes that the first step towards reading is to

build up a certain amount of sight words to be followed by word analysis. This principle is certainly sound in terms of the best that is known today regarding teaching and learning to read. However, the whole procedure would be much more effective, as has been pointed out earlier, if the words that are learned as wholes are those that are connected with what the learner is actually doing. Such words, arising out of the experience of the adult learner, are extremely meaningful, and thus easily recognized and read.

4. Does the method consider the fact that skills in reading are gradually developed and firmly established through constant use in different types of situation, or does it consider that skills should be developed through a system of mechanical drills?

As may have been observed in the first primer, the same words or sentences (such as *Sa sê yoû nôm*, and others) appear again and again several times on the pages that follow after they have been presented. This should indicate, despite some mechanical phonic drills advocated in the word-analysis phase, that the method also considers that skills are developed through constant usages in different types of situations. The only objection seen is that as words and sentences introduced are distantly related to a real life situation, it will by no means be easy to make use of them when a realistic situation is concerned. It is known that advanced reading materials which are really connected with real life problems of Haitian peasants are being prepared for use in the later stages of the literacy campaign. It is almost certain that very few of the words that have been learned in the three primers will again appear in the new materials. As a result, these materials will present undue difficulties to the students. If the experience charts are used in the beginning stage, this kind of difficulty will hardly arise.

5. Is the method emphasizing both the meanings of the materials read and the development of skills in reading, or just one of them?

Evidently, the method is attempting to emphasize the element of meanings in the reading process. Pictures and discussions are

the major means of achieving this end. But, according to modern thinking, this good intention has not been given a good enough opportunity to materialize. The chief obstacle is that the sentences used do not carry significant meanings. The sentences like "This is a man," or "This is a bench" do not help too much to make reading meaningful and interesting. To be meaningful, sentences having direct relation with what the adult learner is doing in his every day life must be introduced from the first lesson. This means also that those sentences or words must be phrased by the learner himself or with the help of the teacher. In other words, in order to lay any significant emphasis on the element of meanings in the process of learning to read, the reading materials need to be "raw" —constructed by the learners themselves.

Insofar as development of skills in reading is concerned, the method is relying on the flash-card drills, and training in phonics. As Creole is a strictly phonetical language when it is written, the training in phonics is justified if it is not used alone. Training in phonics alone suggests the idea that meanings of words are embedded in the words, and they could be unlocked by means of pronunciation. Real skills in reading are developed when the adults have continuous opportunities to read materials that have direct bearing on the kind of life problems that are facing them. Flash cards and phonics can be of some help to some adults if the reading materials are functional. If the materials are of the isolated type, and independent of what the adults are meeting in their real life situation, reliance upon phonics and flash-cards is equivalent to reliance upon transfer of training. It is good to see, nevertheless, that the method takes into consideration both the emphasis on the element of meanings in the reading process, and the skills in reading, though in its own fashion.

6. Does the method consist of the following steps: Acquisition of general readiness, acquisition of sufficient sight vocabulary based on the learner's experience, word analysis, and reading a great quantity of simple and meaningful materials, or does it consist of only some of them?

The idea of reading readiness is more or less neglected. Assuming that all adults are ready to learn to read, the method starts out with the beginning reading stage. This may be all right in the case where the adults have had enough experience in thinking and language. There are many instances in which the adult learners have difficulty in thinking and speaking. In such cases, reading readiness become extremely necessary. More discussions regarding simple stick-figure drawings on each page will not be sufficient.

It is easy to see that the method is aiming at the acquisition of sufficient sight vocabulary. It is also not difficult to notice that the sight vocabulary has been pre-determined by an outside authority, who appears to believe that the basic words would constitute a most appropriate sight vocabulary for any beginner regardless of where the comes from, or what his problem is. This practice, as has been pointed out previously, is less effective than that in which the sight vocabulary is built up from the learner's own experience.

As in the global method, whole sentences are broken down into words by means of games and flash-card drills. Word analysis from then on depends upon phonetic drills, learning to write, and context clues. This is pretty efficient; but to be more effective, one needs to start with a more effective approach. If experience-chart activities are advocated, a great deal of difficulties in drilling can be done away with. The study of word-structure and a rich supply of functional reading materials will help the adult learners attain quickly competency in word recognition.

Reading a great quantity of simple and meaningful materials has not been possible, since such materials have not been made available. A set of readers dealing with a peasant's life are now in the stage of preparation. Whether these readers are to be written in Basic Creole or not has not been made known. One fact remains, though, and that is the adults are taught to read in Basis Creole. They may have some difficulty in reading passages that are written in non-basic Creole, since thire sight vocabulary consists entirely of basic words. Thus, the non-basic materials must, of necessity , deal with some real, common, pressing problems

that are facing the adults, so that they may not become discouraged with the "new" language they are encountering. If this precaution is not taken, there is a danger that the adults may come to a point where they will believe that reading materials written in non-basic Creole is a difficult and unnecessary thing. Who, then, will be able forever to supply them with materials written only in basic Creole?

7. Is reading then considered as involving the interaction of the following elements: recognition of word-configurations, recognition of speech-sounds representing the printed or written words even though they need not be pronounced, and recognition of what is intended in the context, or is reading considered as dealing with just some of them?

It is evident that the first alternative has been chosen. Sight words are accumulated. Discussions and oral expressions are encouraged. Recognition of what is intended in the context is also promoted, first by the drawings and later on by the contextual clues. The only objection that can be raised is that all this is done on a limited scale, that is, as far as the basic words are concerned; and there is no guarantee that a good reading knowledge in basic Creole will make a man equally competent in ordinary Creole. In other words, it is hard to depend on transfer of training.

8. Does the method utilize any kind of word-list as a means of checking the words that the learner has accumulated, or does it consider the word-list as a source from which the words to be learned are drawn?

It is plain that the Creole basic-word list is looked upon as the sole source from which the words to be learned are drawn regardless of the learner's experience background or problems. Since the words, and the topics are so far removed from the learner's present needs and future goals, learning to read becomes very uninteresting, unfunctional and thus ineffective. It is strongly recommended that words be learned as they are needed; and to

be able to do this, the experience-chart activities should be adopted. Doubtlessly, the words that are not needed can be learned by sheer force of will, and through repetition and drills; but they will, not stay. The word-list is good insofar as it helps to check if some useful words have been left out.

9. Does the method consider the fact that the learner seeks the easiest and best route to his goal, or does it advocate the hardship of drill as a sure means of success?

It is true to say that the author of the method is not aware of the fact that the easiest and best route towards success in learning to read is not through reliance upon drawings, sentences and topics which carry very little meanings and which are so far removed from a learner's experience background. The truth of the matter is that the best route is through the learner's past experience, present needs and future goals, and not through a system of drills, however competent.

It is, therefore, very strongly recommended that the learner's common needs and problems be located, and objectives be set up. These objectives, then, will constitute the foundation on which the experience charts are built co-operatively by the students and the teacher for teaching and learning purposes.

Group III: Criteria in connection with knowledge in the Field of Pedagogy.

1. Is reading taught in terms of some social aims and purposes, such as in connection with a fundamental education program or a project of some sort, or is it taught as a separate academic subject by itself?

The teaching of reading here is an integral part of the fundamental education program which consists of a literacy campaign, a health campaign and an agricultural campaign. But it is surprising that beginning reading is not at all related to any one of the various activities that are going on in the campaigns. It is

more or less taught as a separate subject. Instead of learning to read about things and problems that are being attacked by the campaigns, which will make learning very functional and thus effective, beginners start with sentences like "This is a man," "This is a dog," and "This is a bench," as if "man," dog" and "bench" are something very important. It is clear that the principles of interaction and integration do not exist in the thinking of the authors of the Haitian method of teaching reading.

2. Are words introduced in connection with needs and purposes of the learner, or are they pre-determined by some outside authority?

As needs and purposes of the learner are not determined and stated, the objectives to be achieved through reading are not set up; and thus there is no central theme that co-ordinates the reading activities. Consequently, words and sentences are aimlessly introduced. To reduce the embarrassment of this aimlessness, order is sought through the basic words. Only the basic words are to be used in the beginning reading stage. This, however, does not rectify the aimlessness of the situation. As has been said again and again in the previous chapters, objectives must be set up. Words are then introduced as they are needed in the achievement of the objectives. The flexibility in the introduction of words is possible through the use of the experience charts which are constructed by the students and the teacher.

3. Does the method offer some kind of appraisal to reconstruct learning, or does it consider it in terms of examinations and tests that have to be passed?

It is not known that informal types of appraisal that help in the reconstruction of learning have been used. It is quite possible that examinations and tests of the knowledge of the basic words are given from time to time to determine the accuracy in word recognition. It is recommended, therefore, that informal tests similar to those used in the Literacy Education Project, sponsored by the U.S. Office of Education as described in the previous chapter be adapted.

4. Does the method consider provision for individual differences, or does it advocate everybody engaging in the same activity?

Because of the rigidity caused by the use of the basic-word list as the sole source of words to be read, provision for individual differences becomes rather difficult. Everybody has to read the same words whether he needs to read them or not. The most effective kind of activity that provides for individual differences is the experience-chart. Needed words can be introduced at will. The weak group of students will read the kind of materials that suit them most. The strong group similarly will construct the kind of charts that are suited to their level of maturity and progress.

D. WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF THIS METHOD?

As has been stated before, the method is a combination of I. A. Richards' method of learning a language, and the global method of teaching reading which is currently popular in Europe. There are some points that are laudable, and there are also some serious drawbacks.

Advantages

1. As whole sentences and whole words, together with the drawings representing what the words and sentences are supposed to say, are presented, the adult learners find that they get some meaning out of what they read from the very first reading lesson. Traditionally, students are first engaged in reading separated syllables like - ad, - ab, etc., before they can go on to read a word that makes sense. The global method thus gives a certain amount of satisfaction and security to the learners who feel that they are really achieving something.

2. As word-configuration is emphasized rather than spelling and pronouncing senseless syllables, the bad effect of lip-movements and mumbling in silent reading is avoided. This advantage in the long run promotes rapidity and comprehension in

reading. It is very common to see people reading a passage loudly and gracefully to themselves, and at the end of the passage do not remember what has been read. This is because attention is centered on vocalizing rather than on the meaning of the passage.

3. The adults are introduced to reading in terms of whole thoughts and ideas. Even though the idea presented does not carry much meaning (as in the sentence: This is a dog.), yet it is an entity; and it offers the learner an opportunity to make some sense out of the written symbols. Continuous practices in reading whole thoughts and ideas silently will promote the ability to remember the content of the materials read.

4. As in the global method, reading and writing are integrated into one complete unit. This practice considerably encourages word-recognition and correct spelling.

5. On the whole, the method does not develop "word-callers," but promotes to a certain extent comprehension in reading. It also makes reading much less painful, as unnecessary drills have been reduced to a minimum. Only the appropriate drills in phonics are advocated. This should be justified since Creole is strictly phonetical.

Disadvantages

1. The mistake of not relating the reading activities to the agricultural and health campaigns that are being carried out in the project is very serious. The adults are instructed to do certain things insofar as the matter of health and agriculture is concerned, but they are learning to read about a dog, a bench, a hat and so on, which are so far removed from the central theme of the project. This is positively contradictory to the principle of integration; and thus learning in general becomes not as effective as it can be made to be.

2. The fact that the method depends entirely on the basic-word list contributes greatly to the general ineffectiveness of the whole process of learning to read. Adults who should be reading words prominent in their experience background, but who cannot

do so because the words are not in the list, will find that reading is rather uninteresting. They are bound to feel that reading does not appeal to their nature, and so tend to neglect it. If words can be freely introduced to cope with the zeal of the adults, deep interest in learning will certainly be cultivated; and success in reading will swiftly follow.

3. The fact that the experience-chart technique is not known and thus not employed by the authors of the method brings about the kind of rigidity that hampers quick progress in reading. Both the teacher and the students have to stick close to the primers whose pages must be covered according to plan. This finally renders provision for individual differences with reference to the learner's background of experience, present needs and future goals impossible.

4. The maximum number of the sight words developed will not exceed the number of the words in the basic list. Equipped with this limited sight vocabulary, the adults will not find it easy to go from the primers to the reading materials that deal with a real life problem, written in ordinary Creole.

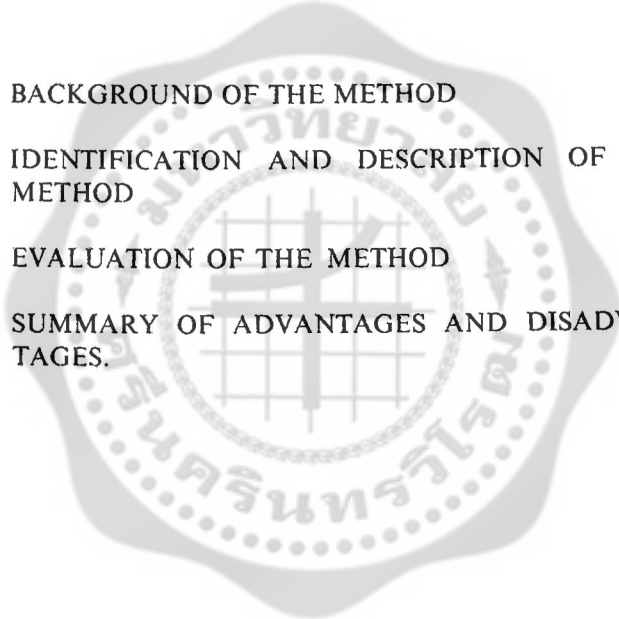
5. The development of sight vocabulary by means of games and flash cards is certainly much less effective than the experience-chart technique. Some adults may be unable to cope with whole sentences or phrases that are "flashed" to them. Furthermore, it is quite possible that a sentence recognized on a flash card may not be recognized again when it is found in a new situation, such as when it is mixed with other sentences on a page.

Compared to the method used by the U. S. Office of Education Project, the Haitian method is obviously less effective. The rigidity caused by relying entirely on the basic words, the mistake of not having set up definite aims in connection with the pressing needs of the adult learners, and the inability to provide for individual differences with reference to the experience background of each student, are the chief weaknesses of the method. These weaknesses arise as a result of the lack of understanding of the principle of integration and because some very basic questions, such as "How we learn?" and "What should we learn?" are not raised.

CHAPTER VI

THE METHOD OF TEACHING READING DEVELOPED BY F.C. LAUBACH OF THE COMMITTEE ON WORLD LITERACY AND CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

(Foreign Missions Conference of North America, New York City)

- A. BACKGROUND OF THE METHOD
 - B. IDENTIFICATION AND DESCRIPTION OF THE METHOD
 - C. EVALUATION OF THE METHOD
 - D. SUMMARY OF ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES.
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CHAPTER VI

THE METHOD OF TEACHING READING DEVELOPED BY F.C. LAUBACH OF THE COMMITTEE ON WORLD LITERACY AND CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

(Foreign Missions Conference of North America, New York City)

A. BACKGROUND OF THE METHOD

Frank C. Laubach is a great American missionary. He for quite some time has been spending six months of each year in the U. S., and the other six in foreign countries. While in foreign countries, he devoted most of his time in teaching the illiterate people to read and write. He invented alphabets for the Maranaw¹ people in the Philippines, and also for many tribes in Africa;² and then he invented appropriate methods to teach these people to read and write their own languages newly translated into written symbols. He also did a most admirable work in literacy education for the mass of the illiterate people on the sub-continent of India, in Mexico and in some other Spanish-speaking Latin American countries, as well as in Egypt, Iran and Ethiopia.³ He and his work are widely known and recognized outside the United States, so much so that UNESCO asked him on several occasions to initiate and work with literacy education projects in a number of its member-nations.

Among the various methods of teaching reading developed by Laubach, the most successful and most effective has been what is called the "picture-word-syllable" method.

¹ Laubach, F.C. *Teaching the World to Read*, pl. 33—34.

² Committee on World Literacy. *Africa Newsletter*, Foreign Missions Conference of North America, New York City, Vol. IV, No. 8, (1950), p. 1—4.

³ Laubach, F. C. *Teaching the World to Read*, op. cit., p. 30—95.

It is a tragic fact that in this twentieth century, about three out of five of the human race cannot read or write..... Haunted by this tragedy, and burning to do something about it, Dr. Laubach invented a way as quick as it is effective of teaching adults to read. The system makes use of picture-word-syllable charts..... The method is an inspired one, and an essential point in it is that the teaching is done in the spirit of love.⁴

This method was used with very satisfactory results in the great literacy campaigns of Hyderabad and Bombay in India in 1939.⁵ It was also applied with great success in Northern Rhodesia in 1945.⁶ In Mexico, "Baez-Camargo, after a visit to the United States, prepared a set of lessons following this picture-word-syllable method. This set of lessons was sold and used extensively in Mexico and the rest of the Spanish-speaking countries."⁷

Around 1945 Laubach applied this method to the English language. He prepared a set of lessons intended for the English speaking illiterates. These lessons are found in the book *Streamlined English Lessons: The New, Easier Way To Learn to Read*,⁸ written by Laubach. In 1946, the *Teacher's Manual*⁹ for use with *Streamlined English Lessons* was prepared and published.

⁴ Committee on World Literacy. *Literacy*. (a leaflet), New York: Foreign Missions Conference of North America, 1950, p. 3.

⁵ Laubach, F.C. *India Shall Be Literate*, Jubulpore, India: The Mission Press, 1939, p. 26—31.

⁶ Hay, Hope. "Mass Literacy in Northern Rhodesia." *Quarterly Bulletin of Fundamental Education*, UNESCO Office, Paris: Vol. I, No. 3 (July 1949), p. 11—13.

⁷ Laubach, F.C. *Teaching the World to Read*, op. cit., p. 30.

⁸ Laubach, F.C. *Streamlined English Lessons*, New York City: King's Crown Press, 1945.

⁹ Laubach, F.C. *Teacher's Manual*, New York City: Macmillan Company, 1946.

Therefore, to get acquainted with Laubach's "Picture-Word-Syllable" method, one can either examine the Indian primers used in the great drive of 1939, or the North Rhodesian primers of 1945, or the Spanish primers prepared by Baez-Camargo, or the *Streamlined English Lessons*. As English is most convenient for purposes of this study, the English lessons will be described and evaluated; and it is assumed that the evaluation of the English version will hold true for the Indian, Northern Rhodesian and Spanish versions.

B. IDENTIFICATION AND DESCRIPTION OF THE "PICTURE-WORD-SYLLABLE" METHOD.

The entire idea behind this method is fully explained in the *Streamlined English Lessons* and the *Teacher's Manual*. According to this method, each study period which consists of one hour is divided into two sections:

1. *The first- half hour:* In this period, the students must be engaged in a conversation or a discussion of some sort during which the first thousand highest-rating words from the 7500 Thorndike-Lorge most-useful-words book, and the 850 English Basic words will be gradually stressed and made familiar to the students.

2. *The Second half hour:* During this period, the following activities will be carried out:

- a. *Chart Work:* There are altogether 18 ready-made charts containing pictures, words and syllables. The charts are meant to serve as a means of introducing the letters of the alphabet and their sounds. Each chart is to teach only one vowel sound.

- b. *Reading Lesson:* For each chart, there are four or five accompanying reading lessons all ready-made. The words used in these lessons are no doubt taken from the first 1000 words of the Thorndike-Lorge word-book, and the 850 Basic word-list, which really overlap.

- c. *Phonetic Work:* The sound of each letter, and especially the regular and irregular vowel sounds are practiced on.

d. *Practice in Writing:* In order that the students may become well acquainted with the words in the charts and in the reading lessons, and in order that they may easily recognize those words on sight, practice in writing them is advocated.

An examination of the charts and the reading lessons is necessary to get the full import of this method. One reading chart together with an accompanying reading lesson will be considered. (see pages 177-178 before going on from here.) -

C. PHONETIC PRACTICE ON VOWEL SOUNDS (ACCOMPANYING CHART I)

To help the student distinguish the difference between "i" and "ee," have him point to the correct words below as the teacher pronounces the words:

it	eat
bit	beat
fit	feet
lid	lead
sit	seat
fil	feel

D. WRITING PRACTICE (ACCOMPANYING CHART I)

Then the student is taught to print the syllables in column three of Chart I in his copy book, he is also shown to play a game with flash cards to "give him a fair grasp of the consonants."

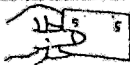
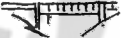
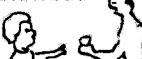
Having seen the chart and the lesson, it is appropriate next to examine the *Teacher's Manual* in order to find out just exactly what happens in the presentation of this lesson.

The following are quotations or adaptations from the foreword, and pages 1-4 of the *Teacher's Manual*,

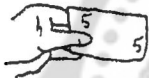
A.

CHART 1

(PRESENTING THE VOWEL SOUND (i))

	ink	i	il	(iz) is	in
	bill	br	br	bib	
	kiss	ki	(ik) ick	(kik) Kick	
	dish	di	id	did	
	fish	fi	if	gift	
	giving	gi	ig	big	
	hill	hi			
	Jim	ji	(ij) idj	(bridj) bridge	
	Lily	li	ill	fill	
	milk	mi	im	him	
	(nikil) nickel	ni	in	chin	
	picture	pi	ip	lip	
	ring	ri	irr	(irr) eur	
	singing	si	iss	kiss	
	(tikit) ticket	ti	it	sitting	
	(viziting) visiting	vi	iv	giving	
	window	wi	with	think	

B. READING LESSON (*i=y, irr*) (ACCOMPANYING CHART I)
BILL, LILY AND LITTLE BILLY

	(iz) This is ink.
	This is Bill.
	This is big Bill.
	This is Bill's ink.
	This is Bill's bill.
	This is Lily.
	This is Lily with Bill.
	This is Billy.
	Billy is kissing Bill.
	Bill is kissing Billy's chin.
	Bill is kissing Lily's lips.
	This is Lily's dish.
	Lily is giving Bill this dish.

From the Foreword :

The teacher must have one principle in mind: these lessons teach two vocabularies. One is for use in conversation, and the other is to be understood when it is met in reading. This recognition vocabulary will be taught by introducing each word five or more times in rather rapid succession.

Streamlined lessons spend the first half hour of each period in conversation with these high priority words which everybody uses and hears in daily conversation.

Streamlined lessons spend the second half hour in teaching other words needed in reading, and in teaching phonetics.

We concentrate upon the vowels, and teach thoroughly one vowel at a time. We employ the spelling of the Simplified Spelling Society of England, and the Simplified Spelling Association of the United States. In 1946 these two societies agreed upon a spelling which makes every English word pronounceable on sight.

We employ the method which we and others have developed in over a hundred languages for teaching phonetics: *pictures*, which explain *words*, which illustrate *syllables*.

From Pages 1-4:**LESSON I**

If possible, sit around a table. If possible, have a real bottle of ink, a dollar bill, a dish, a nickel, and a ring on the table.

First-Half Hour (Conversation Without Reading)

The aim is to have students learn to speak more naturally, and to provide opportunities for students to engage in oral expression involving interesting topics, and current events, in such a manner that words of highest priority as classified by the Thorndike-Lorge word-list may be uppermost in the thinking of the students.

(This section of the lesson may be omitted entirely, though, if the students have no difficulty in using common words, or expressing themselves in conversation.)

Second Half Hour (Reading Chart, and reading lesson)

Aim: To teach the short sound of "i" and of "y" (as in lily)

CHART I

How to Teach Columns 1 and 2:

Teacher: What is in this bottle?

Student: Ink.

Teacher: This is the word *ink*.

Teacher: What is this?

Student: A bill.

Teacher: This is the word *bill*.

And so down to the bottom of the chart—just Columns 1 and 2.

How To Teach Column 3 (in relation to Column 2)

Teacher: What is this word?

Student: Ink.

Teacher: The first sound of *ink* is *i*.

Teacher: What word is this? (points to *bill*)

Student: Bill.

Teacher: *Bill* begins with *bi*.

Teacher: Begin to say *Kiss* by say only *ki*.

Student: *Ki*

Teacher: Now say each sound down this third column.

Student: di, fi, gi, hi,.....

(Teacher will help only when needed.)

How to Teach Column 4: (in relation to Column 3)

- Teacher: Now *i* is in front. This word is *it*.
What is the next sound? (points to *ib*)
- Student: Ib
- Teacher: Read them down the column. They are just
sounds, not words.
- Student: ik, ick, id, if, ig,.....

How to Teach Column 5 and 6:

- Teacher: These are words and pictures. Read them.
- Student: is, ink, bib, kick, did, gift, big, bridge,.....
(and so on down to the bottom of the chart.)

After sometime, the students may want to read across the page
from left to right.

READING LESSON
(ACCOMPANYING CHART 1)

- Important: Let the student read alone; he will love that.
Help only when needed—then praise him.

How To Teach The Reading Lesson:

- Teacher: This is a story of a family-, Bill, his wife Lily,
and their little boy Billy.
- Teacher: What is this in this bottle?
- Student reads answer: This is ink.
- Teacher: Who is this?
- Student reads: This is Bill. This is big Bill.

Read thus for half an hour, and mark the place where you
stopped. Begin next lesson here. Then,

Teacher: Here in your notebook are words and sentences that you want to copy to help you recognize them.

The same pattern is followed with the remaining 17 charts and their accompanying reading lessons. At the end of this series of charts and reading lessons, students will be able to read and write 791 words, of which 595 are in the Thorndike-Lorge list of the first thousand high priority words, whereas the remaining 196 words are included because they are highly functional in home life.

Then, to provide opportunities for students to improve their reading skills, a number of second readers have been prepared. These readers "introduce gradually words from the Thorndike-Lorge list of most useful words, plus the 850 words in the Basic Word List." The following are the names of some of the second readers:

1. *Story of Jesus*: a set of twelve illustrated booklets.
2. *Making Everybody's World Safe*: A story based on the ideals of the United Nations told in words easy to understand.

In all the second readers, "new words are introduced very gradually, each word appearing at least five times in the same lesson in which it first appears. Employed here are the Thorndike-Lorge list of 1,000 highest rating English words and in addition a list of 850 essentially useful words. These two lists overlap, making a total of about 1,500 words--those most used in the English language. With this vocabulary mastered, a reader can:

1. *Recognize* about 89 Per cent of the words on an ordinary newspaper.
2. Express *all* ordinary ideas he may desire to put into words."¹⁰

¹⁰ Laubach, F. C. *Teacher's Manual*, op. cit., p. 50.

C. EVALUATION OF THE "PICTURE-WORD-SYLLABLE" METHOD

At the very first glance, it becomes obvious that this method is actually the ordinary phonetic method, slightly modified. Instead of beginning with the sounds of the letters in its usual way, it introduces a picture which, in turn, introduces the written symbols representing that picture. Then these symbols or words are broken down into their separate parts or letters. The sound of each letter is then examined and remembered. In the next step, the letters with their sounds are put together to form syllables, meaningless syllables most of the time; and then the syllables into new words which are also accompanied by pictures. In other words, the method starts out with a sound unit; and breaks it down into its separate parts, and then puts the parts back into the former whole unit. Really, there is nothing very significant gained by this device. It is only a means of introducing the separate parts of a word, in this case the sounds of the letters in each word.

It is also evident that this method has overlooked the element of meaning in the reading process. Not a word is said in the *Teacher's manual* or in the *Streamlined English Lessons* about how to obtain effectively the meaning of what is read. It seems to assume that once the sound of a word is correctly pronounced, the meaning of the word will be grasped. It, in this manner, disregards the fact that the kind of meaning obtained from a word or a group of words will depend very largely on the background of experience of the person. Thus, the "picture-word-syllable" method is neglecting the vast field of experience possessed by the adult learner, and is unnecessarily confining the student to a limited number of words.

With these facts in mind, one can now evaluate the method in terms of its underlying principles.

Group 1: Criteria in connection with knowledge in the field of Philosophy.

1. Is reading defined as the getting and the using of the meanings derived from the written or printed pages, or is it thought of as the pronouncing of the words that appear on the pages?

It is very clear that reading is identified with pronouncing. For example, the student first learns to pronounce the syllable *bi*; then *ib*. Next he pushes the two syllables so close together that they become *bib*. To help the student check the pronunciation, the picture of a bib is placed next to the word *bib*. If the pronunciation corresponds to the picture, it means the word has been correctly read. This is the sole technique used all through the method. Whether the pronunciation carries the intended meaning or any meaning at all is disregarded. As has been said before, the element of meaning is overlooked. It is probably assumed that the pronunciation carries the meaning, and the meaning is the same to everybody.

2. Are the meanings derived from reading considered as being aroused in the thinking of the learner as he interacts with the pages in terms of his background of experience, or are the meanings considered as being embedded in the words, to be unlocked by their pronunciation?

It is also evident that the vast store of the learner's experience is not capitalized upon. Instead, some isolated pictures, like the pictures of a bib, an ink bottle, a dollar-bill and so on, are relied upon as a source of meaning. So, the meanings will come out of the picture. It is a great mistake not to recognize that meanings are derived from the background of experience of the learner; and that thinking, and experience, and language and reading are very closely interrelated. It will be very ineffective to learn to read without considering the elements of experience and language and thinking. It is quite true that pictures represent some meaning,

and are a part of a man's experiences. But they are just a very small particle in the vast field of a man's experience; thus to depend upon the pictures as a major source of meaning will be extremely inadequate. In the case of the "Picture-Word-Syllable" method, pictures are used to help the students pronounce the words. This is, no doubt, a very ingenious employment of pictures; but it serves to show all the more that reading is pronouncing and that the meanings, if they are considered at all, are considered as being embedded in the words, to be unlocked by their pronunciation.

3. Are the meanings of the words considered to be changing as the learner's background of experience is affected by new experiences, or are they considered as fixed and unaffected by the new experiences?

As the method is mostly concerned with the sounds of the words and not with their meanings, there is every likelihood to believe that the above question has not been considered; and as the pronunciation is supposed to unlock the meaning, it is quite possible also that this method is assuming, quite unconsciously, that the meaning of each word is fixed, and probably unchangeable. This is, undoubtedly, in contradiction to the fact that things are constantly changing, and reconstructing themselves to cope with the ever changing situations. Furthermore, the fact that the word-lists are strictly adhered to points to one thing, and that is the meanings of the words in the lists have been well determined and fixed, so well that they could be considered as the most useful or the highest-priority words. In fact, it is quite correct to regard the meaning of a word as relatively fixed; but to think of it as fixed and final is to be unrealistic.

4. Is reading interpreted as being intimately related to experience, language and thinking, the progress in any one of which parallels and depends on progress of the others, or is it considered as some absolute and independent quality?

The "picture-word-syllable" method considers reading as largely pronouncing, and disregards the fact that reading is closely related to experience, language and thinking. This statement is evidenced by the fact that the method, as its name indicates, relies upon pictures. It pays very little attention, or none at all, to the learner's experience. In the first half hour of the lesson, students are engaged in conversations during which certain predetermined words from the word lists are stressed. This should be looked upon as a readiness step for teaching reading. That is to say, the topic of the conversation as well as the words used may readily serve as a starting point for learning to read. An experience chart can be easily built as a result of the conversation. But look at what the method does. It requires the students to engage in a discussion, and all of a sudden turns to a "pronouncing" chart, which has nothing whatever to do with the conversation part of the lesson. The chart has nothing to do with anything except sounds and combination of sounds, regardless of their meanings. Why? It must be because the method assumes that if the sounds are mastered, everything else will be taken care of. No action advocated by the method shows that the element of meaning in the reading process is given any consideration.

5. Is reading considered as a continuous process which may be divided into at least these four stages, namely, the period of reading readiness, the period of beginning reading, the period of continuous meaningful reading of simple materials, and the period of rapid growth in the habit in independent reading, or is it considered as a finished product which can be learned once and for all time?

There is no indication that the concept of reading readiness is understood. The conversation part of the lesson is conducted for the sake of oral expression and stressing of some words. This can and should serve as a reading readiness stage. But as the idea does not seem to exist in the thinking of the authors of this method, no attempt has been made to relate the conversation, which really a very precious move, to the beginning reading stage. However, the conversation can still be regarded as a vague and distant kind

of readiness: it helps the learners to be mindful of some words intended for them by the teacher.

Like all the other conventional methods, the "picture-word-syllable" method starts right off with the beginning reading stage, assuming that all adults are ready to learn to read. the beginning reading stage, however, consists of practices on reading completely meaningless sounds, like ib, ig, gi, fi, id, etc., etc. This is the most uninteresting thing a man can ever be engaged in; and as the interest of the learner is far from great, it is hard to see how learning can become effective. It is true that many people have learned to read successfully by this method, but they learn it the hard way. Other methods, especially the one making use of the learner's experience, provide a much more effective, essier and quicker way of learning.

It is manifest, though, that the author of this method has a great understanding that reading cannot be a finished product which is learned once and for all time. He hastened to produce a great number of simple reading materials introducing gradually words from the Thorndike-Lorge word-book. Of course, the books are not produced with the intention of coping with any specific problem, but to give general information concerning religion and the United Nations. Whether the new literates need to be informed about these two subjects or not will depend upon many factors.

6. Is reading considered valuable because it is a means to an end, or is it considered valuable because it has a value in itself?

It is the chief aim of the author of this method and of the Committee on World Literacy and Christian Literature with which he is closely associated to teach the people of the world to read and write so they may unlock the Bible. In this connection, it is plain that reading has been deemed a thing of value because it is a means to an end.

Group II: Criteria in Connection with knowledge in the Field of Psychology.

1. Is the method based upon the assumption that the human mind is the functioning of the total human organism in using the store of meaning as the individual interacts with his environment, or is it based on the assumption that the human mind is a collection of S-R bonds?

It has been pointed out that the method does not seem to consider the element of meaning in the reading process at all; and as the words are not introduced as there are needs for them, or as the individual interact with his environment, it cannot be said that the first alternative in the criterion has been thought of. On the other hand, the method places a great emphasis upon drilling on meaningless syllables like id, di, if, fi, ig, gi, etc. Drilling of this type is mechanical and does not involve meaningfulness. So the tendency is towards the belief that the human mind is a collection of S-R bonds. But it is also very probable that the method is established without taking into consideration questions relating to the human mind, how a person effectively learns, and so on. It is characteristic of the conventional methods to lay very great emphasis on the materials to be learned, and to neglect the conditions of the learner. This is very true of the "Picture-Word-Syllable" method. It takes a great deal of trouble cutting up the words into their separate parts and putting them back again, forgetting a very simple but very important fact that the materials are learned best when they are meaningful, and purposeful; in other words, when they do make sense and are related to the learner's needs and problems. After all it is the learner that matters.

2. Does the method assume that learning takes place as a result of the interaction, with a problematic situation involved, or does it assume that learning can take place in any isolated situation through the medium of repetition?

As may have been observed, the method plunges into the midst of the word-study process right from the very beginning. It does not seem to have any idea about the building of a sight vocabulary; and it certainly does not have any regard concerning a problematic situation or the interaction between the learner and his environments. Words are just introduced at random from the first thousand in the Thorndike-Lorge list, regardless of whether the learner needs to learn them or not. Since those words are considered to be most useful by somebody, they must be good for anybody at any time! So it becomes clear that this method believes that learning can take place effectively in any isolated situation. Of course, it is again mostly probable that the question raised in this criterion is not at all examined when the method is contemplated. It just follows the conventional pattern of "pouring" a body of "good," tested, pre-determined knowledge into the learner's mind, regardless of what kind of problem the learner is having or what kind of condition he is in.

3. Is the method based on the assumption that words are learned as wholes as they represent some meanings in the background of experience, or is it based on the view that words should be learned through their separate parts such as the letters or the sounds of the letters?

The "Picture-Word-Syllable" method presents first a picture which introduces a word. But this word is not intended to be studied as a whole. It is immediately broken down into syllables, meaningless syllables, whose meaningless sounds are then studied. These sounds are then put together in a new way to form a new word. Thus one more new word is introduced, with a picture that serves to check the sound. So it is plain that the words are introduced at random, and are learned in isolation, and through their separate parts, namely, the sound elements. There is no understanding that a sight vocabulary should first be built up consisting of words that are prominent in the learner's experience, and later on to help recognition, words may be broken down into letters. There is no necessity for a rigid and systematic study of the sounds of the letters. Of course, there is no harm done in a study

of that type at that point, especially in a language which is strictly phonetic. Thus, insofar as the beginning reading stage is concerned, the "Picture-Word-Syllable" method is rather a poor approach based upon the old theory of connectionism, or learning through parts.

4. Does the method consider the fact that skills in reading are gradually developed and firmly established through constant use in different types of situations, or does it consider that skills should be developed through a system of mechanical drills?

As is found in the reading lessons accompanying each chart, a word is repeated at least five times in different sentences. This can mean two things: either mere repetition to be sure that a word is firmly stamped in the mind of the learner, or provision for different situations in which the same word may be used. But as the reading lessons consist of non-related sentences having no bearing on any topic or problem in particular, the chances are that the recurrence of the words is just mere repetition meant to strengthen the S-R bonds. For instance, consider lesson 3, accompanying Chart I:

This is Jim.
 Jim is thin.
 This is Jim's chin.
 Jim's chin is thin.
 This is Jim's ear.

etc., etc.

The sentences do not carry significant meaning. So, even though the words like, "this," "Jim," "is" appear in complete sentences, actually they are more or less isolated, isolated from any real center—a main theme, or a problem. This gives the impression that the words are just being repeated mechanically.

Anyhow, the author has provided the learners with a great number of simple reading materials, carefully graded in the degree of difficulty and in the introduction of words, which are mainly

derived from the high priority-Thorndike-Lorge word list. It is very probable that these reading materials may help the learners to achieve their reading skills to quite a great extent, especially those students who are interested in things about religion and the United Nations, since those are the only two topics that are dealt with.

5. Is the method emphasizing both the meanings of the materials read and the development of skills in reading or just one of them?

As this method emphasizes pronouncing words rather than getting meaning out of the interaction with words, there is a very strong tendency towards neglecting the meaning element in the reading process, and dwelling too much upon the attempt to pronounce a word. It looks as if the author of the method believes that "once you can pronounce the words, you know them." The fact that the meaning of a word or a sentence is fully understood only when it represents something in a man's experience, has been overlooked; so also is the fact that the meaning that a man gets from his reading does not reside in the words but is caused or evoked in his own thinking, which, in turn, is largely dependent upon his experience.

There is, therefore, a very strong need for this method to re-examine why a man wants to read, to get some meaning out of reading, or to be able to pronounce words; how a man learns to read effectively, through drilling on meaningless syllables, or through recognition of words that carry meaning; etc.

6. Does the method consist of the following steps: acquisition of general readiness, acquisition of sufficient sight vocabulary based on the learner's experience, word analysis, and reading a great quantity of simple and meaningful materials, or does it consist of only some of them?

The idea of reading readiness is non-existent. The method plunges into the beginning reading stage at once, assuming, perhaps, that all students are ready for anything, and probably

forgetting that the background experience of each student is different from that of everyone else. Thus there is no conscious attempt whatever to secure a common ground on which every student is in readiness to act, if they are to learn together as a group.

The method tries to introduce words through the medium of pictures. But they are by no means intended to be sight words, to be recognized on sight; they are introduced so that they can be broken down into consonants and vowels whose sounds are to be studied and memorized. Furthermore, the words are not coming from or based on any learner's ongoing experience, but are taken direct from a word-list of high-priority words. These words, however common or useful they may be, cannot contribute fully to the learning of reading since they are introduced willy-nilly, unrelated to any significant aim or purpose. It is known today that effective learning takes place when learning activities are integrated with some well defined aim or problem. Therefore, it is becoming clearer and clearer that the "picture-word-syllable method is not based on a very sound system of fundamental assumptions.

Actually, there is no word analysis or word study involved. The words are not broken down into parts so that the whole words may be better recognized in the future, but are broken down so that the sound of each individual part may be studied. This is very characteristic of the old phonetic, or phonic method. It is the sound, not the word, nor the meaning of the word, which constitutes the main concern of the method. It is the sound analysis and not word analysis that is considered by this method as the heart of learning reading.

It is true that the author of the method realizes that a rich supply of easy reading materials must be constantly made available to the learners so that as they read them continually, their reading skills will be strengthened. The author, as has been said before, sees to it that the words from the word-list are gradually introduced into the materials that are prepared for this phase of reading. The intention is doubtlessly good and sound. A question may be raised, though. It is;

“Is there a guarantee that the words that are learned in isolation and from the standpoint of sound, as in the charts, will be accurately recognized again when they are found among a vast number of other words; and, if recognized, will they convey the meaning intended by the writer of the text?”

It seems that the “Picture-Word-Syllable” method is depending too much upon transfer of training. Words, to be learnt well, and in a meaningful manner, are learned, as is accepted today, in their natural habitat, that is as they are needed in a real life situation in connection with a real problem, and not as they are found in any pre-determined word-list.

7. Is reading then considered as involving the interaction of the following elements: recognition of word-configuration, recognition of speech-sounds representing the printed or written words even though they need not be pronounced, and recognition of what is intended in the context, or is reading considered as dealing with just some of them?

It is very clear from the foregoing descriptions that the “picture-word-syllable” method is dealing only with the recognition and pronunciation of word-sounds. It pays very little attention to the meaning of what is read or the recognition of word-configuration. It concentrates particularly on the sound elements that go to build up a word. The main purpose is to unlock the sound out of a word. It is true to say that this method has a rather limited conception of reading.

8. Does the method utilize any kind of word-list as a means of checking the words that the learner has accumulated, or does it consider the word-list as a source from which the words to be learned are drawn?

It is the policy of the method to depend upon the Thorndike-Loge list of high-priority words as the main source from which the words to be learned are drawn regardless of the learner's

experience background, needs, or problem. It is, probably, assumed that if a man could read, meaning pronounce, all the words or most of the words in the list, he will be able to read and understand most of the things that are going on in his everyday life surroundings. This is plainly depending upon transfer of training. It is rather very difficulty, as is known today, for a man taught in one situation to function affectively in another situation. If a man is struggling to lead a successful life, why should he not be taught as he struggles along, simultaneously overcoming his difficulties? Why should he be taught in a strange and unreal word, and then let out into the ongoing world, trying to cope with the situation different from the one in which he has been trained?

In short, it is strongly recommended that needed words, words used in the ongoing experience, whether they belong in the list or not, be introduced to the learners as they try to solve their personal-social problems. This surely means that a problem or problems must be located, so that words may be introduced in connection with their solution. That is to say words must be taught and learned in terms of purpose. They must not be introduced aimlessly as they are in the "picture-word-syllable" method. It is true that finally the words that are introduced as the individual interacts with his environment will mostly be those in the list; but they will be learned with much less difficulty and with a greater degree of effectiveness and success. It is, therefore, recommended also that the Thorndike-Lorge word-list be used as a means of checking if there are words that have not been introduced. Since the words in the list are of high priority, it is very possible that all of them will be covered as problem after problem is being attacked.

9. Does the method consider the fact that the learner seeks the easiest and best route to his goal, or does it advocate the hardship of drill as a sure means of success?

As has been observed, every reading chart employed in this method involves a series of boring, meaningless drills. Students have to be drilled intensively on syllables like *boa*, *obe*, *coa*, *oke*,

soa, oze, doo, poo, roo, daw, taw, etc., etc. Certainly, this is not making it easy for the learners. The easiest and best route to success in learning to read is, of course, not to read syllables that carry no meaning; but to start with a real reading situation in which real words and sentences are involved. It is meaningfulness and purposefulness that constitute the easiest and best route to learning to read.

Group III: Criteria in Connection with knowledge in the Field of Pedagogy

1. Is reading taught in terms of some social aims and purposes, such as in connection with a fundamental education program or a project of some sort, or is it taught as a separate academic subject by itself?

Like all the conventional methods of teaching reading, the "picture-word-syllable" method conducts reading activities independently of any specified aim or purpose. Reading is taught as a separate academic subject in an isolated situation; and it is vainly hoped that the skills gained in isolation can be made to function in a real life situation where all things meet and are integrated into one big configuration of problems.

Subsequently, it is highly recommended that a problem first be located, and then reading be taught as attempts are made to get the problem solved. This means, therefore, that words that are to be introduced to the learners in the beginning stages must be those that have direct bearing on the problem that is being attacked. In this manner, reading activities become purposeful, and integrated with life's ongoing experience.

2. Are words introduced in connection with needs and purposes of the learner, or are they pre-determined by some outside authority?

As the principle of integration is unknown to this method, it follows that no central theme or problem to be solved is set up;

and naturally, it is not possible to introduce words in terms of anything. As it is, words are taken willy-nilly from the first thousand of the Thorndike-Lorge word-list, and are introduced to the learners in a purposeless manner. It is not incorrect to say that in introducing words to the students, the method does not have any guiding principle. Not knowing which words to be used first, it simply picks up words at random in a most unintellectual manner.

3. Does the method offer some kind of appraisal to reconstruct learning, or does it consider it in terms of examinations and tests that have to be passed?

The idea of appraisal is not indicated by this method. It seems to concentrate on the phonetic phase so much (such as how to pronounce the th-sound, how many ways the sound "shun" can be written, when are consonants silent, etc.), that it ignores everything else. It ignores the important fact that learning is reconstructing, and that appraising is a means towards reconstruction.

It is strongly recommended here that appraisal exercises like those employed by the U. S. Office of Education in the Literacy Education Project be adopted and applied. This type of exercises reveals the degree of understanding the students have concerning the sentences that are read, and exposes difficulties in word-recognition.

4. Does the method consider provision for individual differences, or does it advocate everybody engaging in the same activity?

Since the reading chart is not constructed co-operatively by the students and the teacher, but by the author of the method or the teacher alone, individual differences are neglected from the very beginning. If the experience chart is used instead, and constructed by the learners themselves with the help from the teacher, individual needs and difficulties may be discovered and attended to. Furthermore, words that the students desire to use may be put on the chart and studied, and read by the students. In the "picture-word-syllable" method, only words from the word-list are used in

the reading chart, assuming that the words are needed at all time by any student. In the long run, this may be true. But in the beginning reading stage, learners should be allowed to read words that are close to them, words they want to know then and there. Needed words of this type will, undoubtedly, make reading interesting and real, and hence, facilitate the learning process. This reasoning also points back to the fact that learning to read by unlocking the sounds of non-sense syllables is just making things unnecessarily difficult for the learners. If there is a need for such a step, it can be postponed to the word-analysis stage. But in the beginning reading stage, where a sense of security and swift success are desirable, any meaningless mechanical activity should be avoided.

D. WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF THIS METHOD?

As has been pointed out all along during the process of evaluation, the "picture-word-syllable" method has, according to present day thinking, many deficiencies. In the first place, it is found that reading is identified with pronouncing. This inefficient basic assumption determines all the reading activities that follow. Furthermore, it has no understanding of the desirability of a sight vocabulary, and how to effectively build it up. It does not consider that words are better learned as whole units. Above all things, it utterly fails to utilize a learner's experience as a basis of learning. It does not seem to think that a learner is constantly in a state of need; and thus a need or a problem should be adopted as a starting point for learning to read. It, among other things, teaches reading in an isolated, meaningless situation; and depends entirely on transfer of training when the time comes for a student to face the ongoing, real life situation. In fact, transfer of training occurs when meanings are involved; that is when an old meaning functions in a new situation. All these and others indicate very clearly that the "picture-word-syllable" method is not built on a sound basis of knowledge. In other words, it is not based on the interaction of the knowledge from the fields of philosophy, psychology and pedagogy. The advantages and disadvantages of the

method as they may affect success in learning to read will now be pointed out.

Advantages

1. As this method requires a large amount of word-drill and oral reading, and as the learner is taught by *sound*, rather than by the appearance of words, it is very probable that the learner has a great capability in attacking long words by breaking them down into syllables. This ability, of course, helps the students to a certain extent in word-recognition.

2. He also learns rather early that letters have sounds that can be used in various combinations. This ability helps in correct spelling insofar as words having silent letters are not concerned.

3. He will also develop a keen sense for sounds, which helps in listening and oral expression.

Disadvantages

1. In languages where the same letters or combinations of letters have several different pronunciations, dependence upon sounds will cause a great deal of confusion. Unless the words to be read are in the spoken vocabulary of the student, he will not be able to give a correct pronunciation despite his keen knowledge of sounds.

2. It is rather obvious that progress in reading becomes slower due to the great amount of oral work.

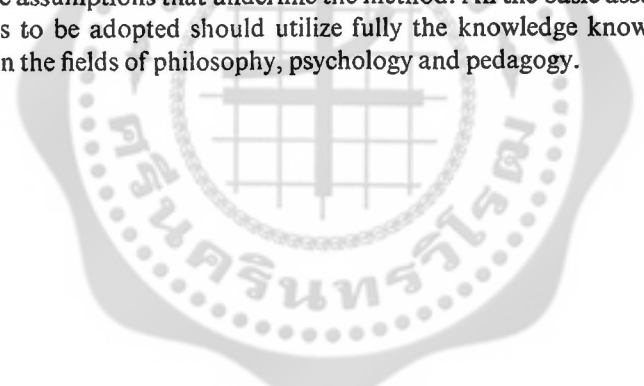
3. It is also apparent that extensive drills on meaningless syllables do not encourage development of quick comprehension which is the main objective of reading.

4. The method has a tendency towards developing learners who are good oral readers in audience situation, but who are slow silent readers with limited comprehension.

5. As pronunciation is emphasized instead of word-configuration, the bad effect of lip-movements and mumbling is not avoided.

6. The mistake of not relating the reading activities to a social aim or purpose, the mistake of depending too much upon a word-list instead of words that the student needs, the fact that the experience-chart technique has not been used in the building up of a sight vocabulary, and finally the mistake of relying too much upon the kind of transfer of training where the element of meaning is absent, all go to obstruct swift success in learning to read in the manner that has been previously described.

Compared to the "Experience Method" advocated by the U. S. Office of Education project, and even to the global method used by the UNESCO Pilot Project in Haiti, the "picture-word-syllable," method is rather inferior in terms of the principles established in the criteria. It is appropriate to say again that all these mistakes arise as a consequence of not considering carefully the basic assumptions that underline the method. All the basic assumptions to be adopted should utilize fully the knowledge known so far in the fields of philosophy, psychology and pedagogy.

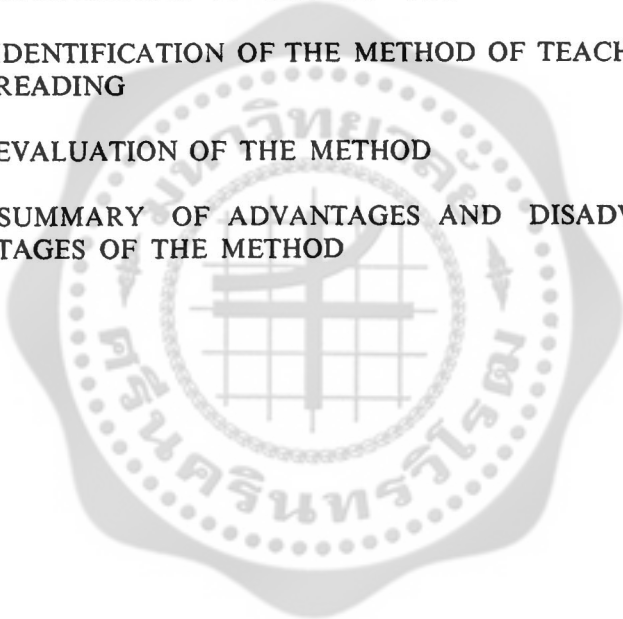


CHAPTER VII

THE BRAZILIAN CAMPAIGN OF ADULT EDUCATION

(Campanha da Educacao de Adultos)

1947

- A. BACKGROUND OF THE CAMPAIGN
 - B. IDENTIFICATION OF THE METHOD OF TEACHING READING
 - C. EVALUATION OF THE METHOD
 - D. SUMMARY OF ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF THE METHOD
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CHAPTER VII

THE BRAZILIAN CAMPAIGN OF ADULT EDUCATION

(*Campanha de Educacao de Adultos*)

1947

A. BACKGROUND OF THE CAMPAIGN

In a long letter dated October 13, 1950, Lourenco Filho, Minister of Education, Brazil, told the writer that at the present moment there was a great educational campaign for adults going on in that vast country. It was initiated in 1947 and will go on until the final aim, namely, literacy, is achieved for all the people of Brazil. The campaign consists of projects in literacy education, and also in health education. Filho, in his letter, gives a general picture of the method as follows: 1

(1) We employ what may be called the "Sonic Method" (*metodo sonico*) which teaches basic sounds taken from some "root-words," or words which are most commonly found in the language.

(2) The procedure of this method is given in full in the teacher's manual: *Instrucoes aos Professores de Ensino Supletivo*. 2 As a rule, the method consists of the following steps:

With the help of a reading chart, present the pictures which, in turn, present the "root-words." The words are read and remembered by the students. The first letter of each word is then removed from the word, and is

¹ A translation in part from the letter which is written in Portuguese, dated October 13, 1950, from Dr. Lourenco Filho, Minister of Education, Brazil.

² Ministry of Education and Health. *Instrucoes aos Professores de Ensino Supletivo*, (Publication No. 4), Department of National Education, Rio De Janeiro, March 1948.

combined with the five vowels to form five different syllables. New words and short phrases may also result from the combinations.

The Portuguese language as it is spoken in Brazil is a phonetical language. The sonic method is thus a natural method for a language language of this type.

(3) In the first reader *Ler - Primeiro Guia de Leitura*,³ the elements of the language are divided into three parts: the vowels, the consonants, and their combinations. Knowing these three elements as presented in the book, it is possible for a person to be able to read a short story in a very short time.

Pictures, charts, wall newspapers, and games are used to encourage quick progress.

Four years' experience shows that the sonic method is most convenient. It takes 12 weeks for adults to be able to read by themselves, and only six weeks for gifted people.

Finally, we want to say that it does not matter very much whether the most modern medicine is being used or not when the patient is already dying.

In the course of the campaign, the following materials have been produced and published by the Ministry of Education and Health in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil:

1. *Ler* (A first reader)
2. *Saber* (A second reader)
3. *Viver* (A third reader)
4. *Instrucoes aos Professores de Ensino Supletivo*, (A teacher's manual for teaching the three readers).

³ Ministry of Education and Health. *Ler* (A first reader), Department of National Education, Rio De Janeiro, Brazil, 1947.

5. A large size two-page monthly publication, *jornal de Todos*, 4 which was started in 1949, and is still going strong.
6. A series of film strips concerning the problems of health in general.

B. IDENTIFICATION OF THE METHOD OF TEACHING READINGS IN THE CAMPAIGN

1. **Presentation of the five vowels** (a, e, i, o, u), by means of a standard vowel-chart:

	asa	a	A a a
	elo	e	E e e
	ilha	i	I i i
	Ovo	o	O o o
	Uva	u	U u u

a e i o u
eu ia a ilha

The purpose of the vowel-chart is to teach the five basic vowel sounds as they appear as the first syllables in these five common words: *asa*, *elo*, *ilha*, *ovo*, and *uva*.

The students are to look at the picture of the wing in the chart, which is “asa” in Portuguese. The picture suggests the word; so the teacher tells them that the word that follows the picture is read “asa.” The students pronounce it and study the appearance of the word. The teacher points out to the class that

⁴ Ministry of Education and Health. *Ler.* (op. cit), p. 2.

the first letter of the word represents the sound "a"; and for the sake of convenience, it is removed from the word and placed separately in the third column of the chart. In the last column, the vowel "a" is presented in different-sizes so that the student may better recognize it. The teacher then tells the class that whenever they see the letter "a," and do not remember what sound it represents, just think of the first syllable of the word "asa" (the wing).

Similarly, the other four vowels are presented to the class. It is plain that any average adult can easily remember the appearances and the sounds of the five vowels in a rather short time as a result of the association established between the pictures and the words.

The students can next practice pronouncing the vowels that are spread out below the chart.

2. **Presentation of the most frequent consonants** (b, l, t, v, n) and their combinations with the five vowels.

First take the consonants b and l:⁵



bo	be	bi	bo	bu
la	le	li	lo	lu

⁵ Ministry of Education and Health, *Ler.* (op. cit.), p. 3

bo la	be ba	bala
bo le	be be	bela
bo lo	be bi	bule
bo a	be bo	buli
boi	be beu	baile

aba	ala	clo	ele	ela
eu	ia	ac	baile	

The key pictures and the five vowels are placed on top of the second chart to help the students recognize the vowel sounds that have been previously presented.

The students will, of course, recognize the picture of the tennis ball (bola). The teacher tells the class that the word that follows the picture is the word "bola." The students pronounce it and are expected to recognize the vowels O and A in the word "bola." Then the teacher tells them that the first letter in the word represents the sound "b," and the third one represents the sound "l." The word "bola" then is separated into two syllables "bo," and "la," so that the students will see how the consonant and the vowel are combined to form a syllable, and how the two syllables are combined to form a word.

Knowing the sounds of the letters b and l and the five vowels, the students next practice pronouncing the syllables (meaningless) and the words (some of them meaningless) that are found on the chart.

In exactly the same manner, utilizing charts involving the words "lata," "vela" and "navio," the letters t, n, and v are presented to the students.

Then to be doubly sure that the students know the appearances and the sounds of the letters: b, l, t, v, n, and the five vowels, a key-chart is set up for the students to practice on extensively:

	a	e	i	o	u
 bola	ba	be	bi	bo	bu
 lata	la	le	li	lo	lu
 tatu	ta	te	ti	to	tu
 vela	va	ve	vi	vo	vu
 navio	na	ne	ni	no	nu

3. **Presentation of the less frequent consonants and their combinations with the five vowels.**

Utilizing the same technique, the rest of the letters in the alphabet are taught to the class. The next letters taken up are: s, r, ch, lh, nh, br, bl, etc., depending upon the frequency of the usages of these letters and their combinations as found in the Portuguese language.

4. Reading of Short Stories

It is found in the first reader *Ler* that as soon as the consonants and the vowels have been learned, students will begin to read a series of short stories like "A saude," "A Familia," "Nossa Patria," "O Brasil," etc. Since the students are well acquainted with the sound of each consonant and each vowel, and as the language is strictly phonetic, they should not have any serious trouble in reading them. They may go slowly trying to put the sounds together at first; but after a while, as the adults all know the language, they will develop a skill in reading quickly.

5. Reader II, Reader III and the Newspaper

More short stories, short poems, general topics, fables, informations about health and farming, etc., are found in Readers II and III. In addition to these, the monthly two-page newspaper especially designed for new literates reporting on the progress of the Campaign throughout the country, general information, current events, etc., are made available to the adults.

It is expected that at about the end of this period the adults will be well on their way towards literacy.

C. EVALUATION OF THE METHOD

It is easy to see that the so-called sonic method is really the conventional phonetic method with just a slight modification brought about by the introduction of vowel and consonant charts. The charts, by virtue of the various associations established between the pictures and the initial letters of their corresponding words, simplify the task of memorization. Beyond the charts, the ordinary practice found in the phonetic method is advocated, that is to say the study of sounds is the base for and precedes reading. The adult is taught to read through a series of drills on vowel sounds, sounds of consonants, blendings of letter sounds, pronouncing separate syllables and so on. Furthermore, like all the other conventional methods, the sonic method:

1. Does not set up specific objectives or aims to be achieved in connection with the reading program.

2. Does not capitalize on the experience of the learners during the beginning reading stage.
3. Does not produce "raw" reading materials.
4. Does not possess an understanding concerning the building up of a sight vocabulary, (i.e. the method starts off with the word-study stage.)
5. Does not have an understanding as regards the principle of interaction, in accordance with which words are introduced to the learners as they interact with their immediate environments, or as they make an attempt to get their problems solved and to achieve their aim.

With these major facts in mind, the sonic method may now be evaluated in terms of its basic assumptions.

Group 1: Criteria in connection with knowledge in the field of philosophy.

1. Is reading defined as the getting and the using of the meanings derived from the written or printed pages, or is it thought of as the pronouncing of the words that appear on the pages?

There is a very great tendency, as may have been observed, towards the fact that reading has been identified with pronouncing. As is characteristic of the phonetic method, it is more or less assumed that once the correct pronunciation is obtained, the meaning of the word or words is automatically there, since the sound causes meanings to arise. Thus the element of meaning in the reading process is regarded to be of secondary importance, and becomes somewhat neglected. Consequently, it is quite impossible to expect that the sonic method will define reading as something that has to do with meanings. Because of this belief in learning to read through sounds, all the reading activities are directed towards pronunciation; and this inclination leads the method away from all other factors that may help to make learning reading

more effective. Such factors as the learner's background of experience, his present need, his future goal, the building up of a sight vocabulary, the introduction of works that are meaningful and needed, etc., are all forsaken. There is always a danger of concentrating attention upon just one phase of a thing to the exclusion of all other phases. The sonic method is an example of a situation like that.

2. Are the meanings derived from reading considered as being aroused in the thinking of the learner as he interacts with the pages in terms of his background of experience, or are the meanings considered as being embedded in the words, to be unlocked by their pronunciation?

The method pays very little attention to how the meaning is derived. It simply believes that pronouncing will cause the meaning to arise. But from where will the meaning arise? What should be done to the birth-place of meanings so that they may arise effectively? In what manner will the meaning arise best? All these questions and others have never been considered by the sonic method, or any other conventional method. It is known today that experience, language and thinking are the major factors that help the meanings to arise best as the learner interacts with a written or printed page; and thus everything that can be done to improve the quality of these three factors in such a way that reading can be better taught should be done.

3. Are the meanings of the words considered to be changing as the learner's background of experience is affected by new experiences, or are they considered as fixed and unaffected by the new experiences?

As the method does not center its activities on the fact that experience is the mother of learning, it is very probable that the question has not been considered; and like in any other traditional method, in which everything is supposed to be fixed, absolutely sure and very definite, it follows that the meanings of the words to be presented to the class must have been thought of as something absolute regardless of the learner's background, where they come

from, what kind of experience they have had, etc. All these factors, as is generally accepted at present, may attach different connotations to the same words when different persons are concerned.

Furthermore, since the sonic method concentrates on sounds alone regardless of whether they carry meaning or not, any consideration that has to do with meanings in the beginning reading stage seems to be neglected.

4. Is reading interpreted as being intimately related to experience, language and thinking, the progress in any one of which parallels and depends on progress of the others, or is it considered as some absolute and independent quality?

The sonic method pays almost all of its attention to the element of sound in the reading process, and very little or none at all to other elements. The interrelationship between experience background, language and thinking on the one hand, and reading on the other hand has not been recognized. It is probably assumed that an adult ought to be able to think effectively and to use his own language in an advantageous way, and must have had a sizeable amount of experience. Granting that all this is true, it becomes all the more clear that reading should be intimately related to experience, language and the ability to think, since they are the only things that the teachers have to start with. This is in line with a modern educational slogan. "We must start from where they are."

Again, sounds are actually just a part of any one of the three so-called "given" things, and not an independent quality. In the case of an adult who does not have the expected ability in thinking, language and the expected amount of experience to start with, he needs a readiness program.

5. Is reading considered as a continuous process which may be divided into at least these four stages, namely, the period of reading readiness, the period of beginning reading, the period of continuous meaningful reading of simple materials, and the period of rapid growth in

the habit of independent reading, or is it considered as a finished product which can be learned once and for all time?

It is good to see that reading has been treated as a continuous process and not a finished product which can be learned once and for all time. With the exception of the reading readiness period, the other important stages have been included in the method.

It is extremely desirable that readiness on the part of the adult learners in the direction of experience, language and thinking be made. This readiness will make it easy for the adults to participate in the reading activities. For instance, the adults equipped with language readiness, and having had a problem located for them, will find great interest in building an experience chart and in reading it.

The main feature of the beginning reading period in this method is, of course, the study of sounds, the blending of the sounds of the consonants and the vowels, and so on. It will be much more effective if the experience-chart technique is adopted in which whole words and sentences are introduced by the learners themselves, and in terms of the needs or problems that they have in mind. As soon as a number of sight words have been accumulated, word study can be initiated, in which the study of sounds, as the Portuguese language is phonetical, may become a main feature.

The second and the third readers are sufficient for the purpose of supplying the learners with simple materials. They will serve a much better purpose, though, if they are written with an eye on particular problems that are being attacked in the campaign for adult education as a whole.

The monthly publication *Jornal de Todos* will aid the learners in developing the habit of independent reading. This is really an admirable move which should be continued as long as possible.

6. Is reading considered valuable because it is a means to an end, or is it considered valuable because it has a value in itself?

Reading is taught as a part of the over-all program of adult education. Hence, it is considered valuable because it is a means to an end, namely, ability to participate fully in the adult life of the community and the country. Certainly, it must have been found out that the people who are illiterate cannot contribute fully to the improvement of the plight of themselves and the country, and also hamper progress of others who are willing to go ahead.

Group II: Criteria in connection with knowledge in the field of psychology.

1. Is the method based upon the assumption that the human mind is the functioning of the total human organism in using the store of meanings as the individual interacts with his environment, or is it based on the assumption that the human mind is a collection of S—R bonds?

There is a very strong tendency that the human mind has been thought of as a collection of S-R bonds. This statement is supported by the following facts:

- a. Words have not been introduced as the learner interacts with his environment. It is very possible that the idea concerning the principle of interaction has not been understood; and hence, the idea that the human mind is the functioning of the meaning as individual interacts with his surroundings is positively overlooked.

- b. The sonic method is a "part" method. It starts out with a separate part of a word, like the sound of a consonant or a vowel. The learner is drilled upon each sound until he can recognize it at sight. Then two or more sounds are blended to form a syllable or a word. Each sound resulting from the blending is then drilled upon again until the learner knows it. Then relying upon the magic of transfer of training, the learner is expected to be able to read words or rather pronounce them as they are found in a real-life reading situation. This pattern of action is a typical pattern based on the S-R bond theory.

c. The use of experience, which is the element that will reflect clearly that the new concept of mind has been used as a basis for the learning process, has not been considered in the beginning reading stage of the sonic method.

2. Does the method assume that learning takes place as a result of the interaction, with a problematic situation involved, or does it assume that learning takes place in any isolated situation through the medium of repetition?

The sonic method does not recognize that effective learning take place as a problematic situation is involved. It starts out with the sounds of the letters of the alphabet without considering the condition of the learners. It just overlooks what the needs or problems of the learners are, and does not seem to recognize that the needs or the problems that are facing the learners can and should serve as a starting point for learning to read. That is, the learner will learn to read as they learn to solve the problems. By doing this, the learners will be learning in a real life situation. All the skills that may be developed are those that grow out of the situation, and are ready to be taken back into the situation to help solve the problem or meet the needs.

By depending upon the sounds of the letters as a starting point for learning, the sonic method confines itself unnecessarily to a situation that is isolated from the needs and the problems of the learners. Isolation causes lack of interest, determination and purpose in learning. Consequently, the method has to resort to drill, hoping that skills developed through repetition could be transferred to function effectively in any real-life situation.

3. Is the method based on the assumption that words are learned as wholes as they represent some meanings in the background of experience, or is it based on the view that words should be learned through their separate parts, such as the letters or the sounds of the letters?

It is rather discouraging to see that the Brazilian campaign is using a part method. Words have not been learned as wholes. Some common words are presented with the purpose that certain sounds may be pointed out, and not with the purpose that they may be learned as whole words. Thus, during the early period of the beginning reading stage, students have to read or rather pronounce a great number of meaningless sounds, such as ba, be, bi, bo, bu; va, ve, vi, vo, vu, etc. It is easy to imagine what a tiresome process this practice is to the learners, especially when they are adults.

On the other hand, if words are learned as they actually are, that is as a whole unit, this painful and uninteresting procedure can be avoided, or postponed, till an adequate number of sight words is accumulated. At this point, words may be taken apart so that word-recognition may be made less difficult.

4. Does the method consider the fact that skills in reading are gradually developed and firmly established through constant use in different types of situation, or does it consider that skills should be developed through a system of mechanical drills?

In the earlier part of the teaching-learning procedure, mechanical drills are advocated. That is when the students are engaged in drilling on the pronouncing of those nonsense syllables. Later on, the skills developed at this stage are painfully transferred to an actual reading situation in which short sentences or short stories are involved. This is about the time of the first and second readers. Maybe it is more correct to say that new skills are developed by the students themselves as they attempt to read whole words found in materials that do carry some meaning, rather than to say that the skills developed in the first stage are transferred to the second stage.

What pain and hardship may have been saved if whole words are presented and learned as whole units since the very beginning of the procedure.

5. Is the method emphasizing both the meanings of the materials read and the development of skills in reading, or just one of them?

In the first part of the teaching-learning procedure, it is found that the materials consist of meaningless syllables, vowel-charts and sound-blending exercises. Throughout the whole process, it is rather clear the assumption has been that sounds pronounced correctly will bring meanings and understanding. Thus, the element of meaning is almost entirely disregarded. The emphasis is always on developing skills in pronouncing sounds represented by written symbols. Therefore, the sonic method should pay more attention to the fact that skills in reading are the things to be developed, and not just skills in pronouncing. Furthermore, skills in reading are much less painfully developed when the reading materials carry meanings or are meaningful to the learners than when they just consist of some isolated, uninteresting and meaningless syllables.

6. Does the method consist of the following steps: acquisition of general readiness, acquisition of sufficient sight vocabulary based on the learner's experience, word analysis, and reading a great quantity of simple and meaningful material, or does it consist of only some of them?

The idea of reading readiness is completely overlooked by the sonic method. Whether an adult has had a good enough quality of experience, is able to use his language effectively, and can think in an effective manner, has never been well considered. It is probably taken for granted that all or almost all adults are equipped with such qualities. For those who do not happen to possess these desirable qualifications, nothing has been done.

The concept of a sight vocabulary is non-existing as far as the sonic method is concerned. The ability to master the sound element is supposed to enable a man to read all words regardless of whether they are sight words or otherwise. So, in this method there is no place for a sight vocabulary.

Word analysis mainly occupies the attention of the practitioners of the method. In fact, learning to read is more or less identified with phonetical analysis of words. According to modern

conception of reading, word analysis is just one of the many techniques that may help a student recognize words. The narrow conception regarding reading as held by the sonic method is the most serious weakness.

The most brilliant spot found in this method is created by the fact that in later stages of learning to read, quite a sizeable amount of simple reading materials are made available to the students. It is quite possible, therefore, for some students who are seeking answers to their problems, to explore the materials that happen to suit their needs. By doing this, they not only get their answers, but also functionally develop their reading skills and habit.

7. Is reading then considered as involving the interaction of the following elements: recognition of word-configuration, recognition of speech-sounds representing the printed or written words even though they need not be pronounced, and recognition of what is intended in the context, or is reading considered as dealing with just some of them?

As has been pointed out previously, the principle of interaction has not been brought to the attention of the sponsors of the sonic method. Consequently, things are given emphasis independently of one another. In this particular case, only the sound element is stressed, while word-configuration and the meaning of the context are completely ignored.

Negligence or ignorance of the important principle of interaction constitutes one of the serious drawbacks sustained by this method.

8. Does the method utilize any kind of word-list as a means of checking the words that the learner has accumulated, or does it consider the word-list as a source from which the words to be learned are drawn?

No word-list of any kind has been made or used in the Brazilian literacy campaign. While there is the advantage that avoidance is made regarding using it as the sole source from which the

words to be learned are drawn, there is the disadvantage of having no definite means of finding out what most frequent or most useful words have been included or left out. This disadvantage becomes greater as the words are introduced independently of the main problems that are being attacked in the over-all campaign. If the principle of integration is observed, whereby reading activities are closely associated with the social aim set up by the campaign, then the problem as regards the purposelessness in the introduction of words will be much simplified.

9. Does the method consider the fact that the learner seeks the easiest and best route to his goal, or does it advocate the hardship of drill as a sure means of success?

It is quite true that the method is trying to find the easiest way for the learners, judging from the manner it sets up so many vowel charts, and the way the pictures are brought in to simplify the situation. Yet, it is also true that the method does not know how to make things easier for the adults. Instead of training them to read immediately words drawn from their own experience, and thus building up a sight vocabulary as a point of departure for further progress, it is stuck with the mechanical process of drills. Students are drilled very extensively on combinations of vowels and consonants, and on meaningless syllables and sounds, until they become so bored and tired, before they are allowed to start reading words and sentences that carry some meaning. Surely, if the element of meaning is the point of focus from the beginning of the reading lessons, much more unnecessary hardship can be reduced.

Group III: Criteria in connection with knowledge in the field of pedagogy.

1. In reading taught in terms of some social aims and purposes, such as in connection with a fundamental education program or a project of some sort, or is it taught as a separate academic subject by itself?

The Brazilian reading program is an integral part of the adult education campaign which aims at eliminating illiteracy among the adult population, and also at providing the adults with information concerning the problems of health and general welfare. Reading can be made effective by associating itself with this social aim, or the problems that are immediately facing the adults. But the sonic method rather teaches reading as a separate academic subject. Beginning reading is treated as juggling of sounds, completely severed from social problems and needs of the adult learners. This action doubtlessly reflects the lack of understanding in the principle of integration.

2. Are words introduced in connection with needs and purposes of the learner, or are they pre-determined by some outside authority?

In the beginning reading stage, words are neither introduced in connection with needs of the learners since the needs have never been determined, nor are they pre-determined by some outside authority like a word-list or anything else; but the words are chosen at will from among the obvious most commonly used words.

This practice is less effective than when the learners are allowed to choose their own words in relation to what they want to accomplish in meeting their immediate needs. Words of this sort are meaningful and useful to the adults, and are thus easy to learn as wholes, and later on when they are taken into their separate parts.

3. Does the method offer some kind of appraisal to reconstruct learning, or does it consider it in terms of examinations and tests that have to be passed?

At the end of each lesson in the first reader *Ler*,⁶ is found an exercise in pronouncing sounds. In these exercises, 6 various combinations of consonants and vowels are presented, and the students are expected to be able to pronounce them correctly regardless of whether they carry any meaning or not.

⁶ Ministry of Education and Health, *Ler* (op. cit.) p. 7, 15, 23

Beside this kind of test, no other forms of appraisal that do contribute to reconstruction in learning are offered. It is highly recommended here, therefore, that the kind of informal test that is devised by the U. S. Office of Education for use in the Literacy Education Project be adapted.

4. Does the method consider provision for individual differences, or does it advocate everybody engaging in the same activity?

Due to the rigidity of the sonic method, it is rather difficult to allow for individual differences.

As the reading readiness stage is completely overlooked, the opportunity to take care of the different kinds of difficulties as regards the problems of language, thinking and experience which may be sustained by each individual, becomes very slim.

In the beginning reading stage, only vowel charts or picture-vowel charts are used; and every student uses the same standardized charts. In this manner, provision for individual differences is quite difficult except when time is concerned. That is, one student may take one week to master the charts, while another student is allowed two weeks to do it. But this kind of provision is a poor one, since it does not consider the needs and the difficulty of the learners. It is the varied problems that are facing the individuals that call for provision of differences.

If the experience-chart technique is adopted, each student will contribute in building the chart, and each student will be reading more or less his own experience. Through this process, his difficulty will be revealed, and taken care of by the teacher. Furthermore, each student will be building up his own collection of sight words that suit his own purpose.

It is recommended, therefore, that these two steps, namely, provision for individual differences in the reading readiness stage, and provision for individual differences in the beginning reading stage, be seriously considered.

D. SUMMARY OF ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF THE METHOD

The above discussion reveals that the sonic method belongs to the group of methods based on psychological assumptions alone, disregarding somewhat ideas in the fields of philosophy and pedagogy. It seems to depend entirely on the supposition that the key to literacy is the mastery of sounds represented by the written or printed symbols, and the mastery can be achieved mostly through drills. This reflects the old atomistic theory of learning which holds that learning is largely mechanical and additive, and that it is a process of building knowledge by having new units added, with little disturbances or changes in what has already been accumulated.

The fact that the method is based only on psychological postulates shows that the interrelationship of things has not been appreciated. In other words, the role played by the principles of interaction and integration has been disregarded. As a result of this, it is found that serious mistakes are made. For instance, words are not introduced as the individual interacts with his environment; and the reading activities are not integrated with activities in other fields or programs, though each one of them is working towards the same social end. As a consequence of all these, the sonic method teaches reading in a separate, academic and thus inadequate manner. It is true that by means of this method, an average student may learn to read in 12 weeks; but it can be also true that by means of a method that considers facts in all pertinent fields of knowledge, an average student may learn to read in an equal amount of time or even less, and with a more effective result.

Advantages

1. The students know rather early that letters have sounds that can be combined to form syllables and words.
2. They also develop skills rather soon in attacking long words by breaking them down into syllables.
3. Since the students are keen on sounds, spelling will be made easier for them, especially in the Portuguese language which is a phonetical language.

Disadvantages

1. As can be easily seen, progress in reading is rather slow due to the large amount of oral work that precedes actual reading.

2. Such extensive drills on vowel and consonant sounds seem to retard the development of comprehension, especially when the method pays no attention to the getting of the meanings of what is read, assuming that the sounds convey the meanings.

3. The method has a tendency to encourage the bad effect of lip-movement, as the learners try to pronounce the sounds of the individual letters and to put them together to form the words.

4. The method, concentrating all the time upon sounds, naturally develops good oral readers in audience situations; but it also develops a slow silent reader with limited comprehension who mumbles to himself when he is supposed to be reading quietly. Now, in a real life situation, people usually do not read as if they are reading to an audience; they read silently to get meaning for themselves.

5. The fact that the method has no understanding in reading readiness, in using the learner's experience as a foundation for learning, in building up sight words, in applying the experience-chart technique during the beginning reading period, and in other pertinent factors, makes reading much less effective than it could be made to be.

CHAPTER VIII

THE METHOD OF TEACHING READING AS DEVELOPED BY THE THAILAND LITERACY CAMPAIGN OF 1949

(A UNESCO Associated Project)

- A. BACKGROUND OF THE CAMPAIGN
- B. IDENTIFICATION OF THE METHOD OF
TEACHING READING
- C. EVALUATION OF THE METHOD
- D. SUMMARY OF ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

CHAPTER VIII

THE METHOD OF TEACHING READING AS DEVELOPED BY THE THAILAND LITERACY CAMPAIGN OF 1949

(A UNESCO Associated Project)

A. BACKGROUND OF THE CAMPAIGN

In 1949 two pilot projects in fundamental education were initiated and completed by the Ministry of Education of Thailand (formerly known as Siam) with technical helps from UNESCO in the persons of F. C. Laubach and his team. The UNESCO Education Mission to Thailand which consisted chiefly of Sir John Sargent and Pedro T. Orata were also on hand to make observations and recommendations regarding the fundamental education problems of the nation. The projects were largely concerned with literacy education. There are still quite a number of older people especially in the rural areas of the country who do not read and write; and it is the intention of the government to stamp out the curse of illiteracy as quickly as possible. The findings obtained and the materials produced as a result of the projects are now being used to advantage in the nation-wide literacy campaign.

The gist of the idea concerning the method of teaching reading employed by the projects is given in the report submitted by Laubach to UNESCO as follows:

Upon the arrival of our literacy team on January 5, 1949, we immediately set to work with our host, Mr. Boon C. Sombongs, Director of the Adult Education Department, to prepare a primer for adults. Mr. Sombongs had already prepared a set of lessons using the direct method—teaching words as a whole. As my experience during the last few years has indicated the

strength and swiftness of the phonetic method, I suggested we attempt to combine the best elements of both methods.

In about two week's time we had developed a reader of nine lessons, each on in two parts. The first part of each lesson utilizes the direct method (a whole method) teaching the words in very well-known proverbs, while the second part teaches the letters found in those words, and then combines the letters to form new sentences.

For example, lesson One begins with a very common saying which is used by the Siamese people to describe their country: "Nai nam mi pla, nai na mi kow," meaning: "There are fish in the water, there is rice in the field." The illiterate, knowing the saying by heart, can 'read' it, once it is repeated by the teacher.

Part Two of Lesson One then teaches the shape of the six consonants used in the saying by means of visual association with objects for which those consonants happen to be also the names. The four vowels used in the first saying are taught by associating them with the shape of the face while saying the vowels.

Then follows a page of new simple sentences made up of combinations of the consonants and vowels already learned, the first real phonetic reading the illiterate does, right in the first lesson.

As the student is taught the shape of the letters in the first and succeeding lessons, he is shown how to print them, following simple instructions by the teacher.

In the first reader a total of 165 words is taught in this manner, using 28 consonants and 21 vowels, the most common letters in the total of 44 consonants and 32 vowels in the Siamese alphabet.¹

¹ Laubach, F.C. *Report on Combat against Illiteracy in Thailand*, Bangkok, Thailand: Teachers Institute Press, (March 10, 1949), p. 1—2.

The term "direct method"² which is found in the above passage was first used by an Englishman named Michael West who devised an effective method of teaching English as a foreign language to the people of India, at that time a colony of England. The method can be said to belong to the family of the "whole method." It is really a combination of the "look-and-say" method and the "see-and-do" method plus vocabulary control. Thus, the student learning by means of the direct method looks at a word while the teacher pronounces or "names" it, then pronounces the word after the teacher. Then whenever possible, learning is assisted by "doing what the words say," such as standing up, shaking hands, going to the chalkboard, etc.

Bearing in mind that certain elements of the direct method and the phonetic method have been combined in a certain fashion, the method adopted by the Thailand literacy campaign will now be examined in greater detail.

B. IDENTIFICATION OF THE METHOD

The few techniques used in this method will be clearly revealed if a lesson or two in the first reader is examined and explained.

LESSON ONE

Page 1



² West, Michael. *First Direct Method Reader*, New York: Green & Co., 1930.

ใน น้ำ มี ปลา

Nai nam mi pla

(There are fish in the water.)

ใน นา มี ข้าว

Nai na mi kow

(There is rice in the field.)



มี ปลา

mi pla (There is a fish.)



มี ข้าว

mi kow (There is rice.)

มี ข้าว ใน นา

mi kow nai na (There is rice in the field.)

มี ปลา ใน น้ำ

mi pla nai nam (There are fish in the water.)

ใน นา มี น้ำ

nai na mi nam (There is water in the field.)

มี ข้าว มี ปลา

mi kow mi pla (There is rice; there is fish.)

Words used in this lesson:

ปลา	นา	น้ำ	ข้าว	มี	ใน
pla	na	nam	Kow	mi	nai
(fish)	(field)	(water)	(rice)	(there)	(in)
				is)	
				are)	

The above are excerpts from the *First Reader for Adults*,³ which is the first primer used in the projects of 1949, and still in current use in the present nation-wide campaign. For the sake of convenience, English translation has been given under each word or sentence involved. Also, how the words are pronounced in the Siamese language has also been indicated immediately below them. There are only six consonants and four vowels involved on page 1. The consonants are:

ก	ป	ม	น	ว	ล
(kaw)	(paw)	(maw)	(naw)	(waw)	(law)
K	P	M	N	W	L

The name of each letter is indicated below it. Then comes the most surprising thing of all, and that is the sound "kaw" also means "a hook," the sound "paw" means "a piece of rope," and so on. Almost all the letters in the Siamese alphabet behave in this manner. This kind of phenomenon also exists in the English alphabet. For instance, the letter "b" has the sound which also means "a bee"; or the letter "u" has the sound which also means "you," or the letter "c" has the sound which also means "see" and so on. It will be seen later that this incident is capitalized upon when the teaching of the consonants is concerned.

The vowels used on page 1 are:

า	อ	ิ	ใ
(—a)	(—am)	(--i)	(—ai)

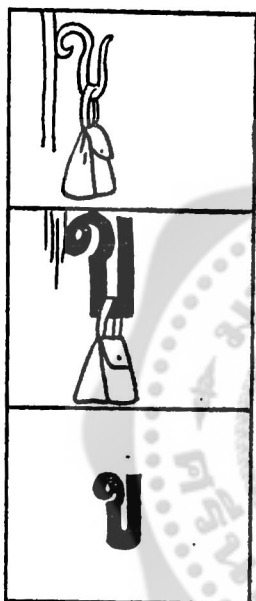
Page 2 of Lesson One will now be considered. Its purpose is to teach the six consonants involved on page 1. For illustration purposes, only two out of the six consonants will be taken up here.

³ Department of Adult Education. *First Reader for Adults*, Ministry of Education, Bangkok, Thailand, (March 4, 1949), p. 1—5.

LESSON ONE

Page II

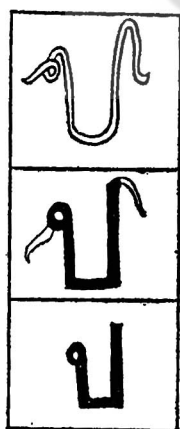
HELPING THE STUDENTS TO REMEMBER THE CONSONANTS.



The picture of a hook (kaw) with a hand bag hanging from it.

The picture of the hook (kaw) is stressed.

The consonant ข = k (read "kaw") is obtained.



The picture of a piece of string (paw).

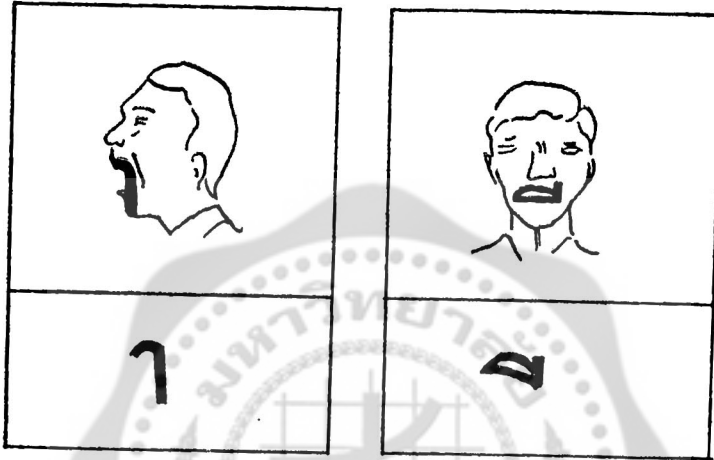
The loop of the string (paw) is stressed.

The consonant ป = p (read "paw") is obtained.

LESSON ONE

Page III

HELPING THE STUDENTS TO REMEMBER THE VOWELS.



๑ = (—a)

๓ = (—i)

(the sound—*a* is produced when the mouth is open wide, and the vowel ๑ looks similar to the shape of an open mouth; the vowel —*i* ๓ looks similar to the shape of the mouth when smiling.)

Reading Exercises

๑	กา	ปา	มา	นา	ลา
(—a)	(ka)	(pa)	(ma)	(na)	(la)
๑̂	ก้า	น้า	ล้า		
(—am)	(kam)	(nam)	(lam)		
๓	ปี	มี			
(—i)	(pi)	(mi)			
๑̇		ไน			
(—ai)		(nai)			

(all the words on the page convey meanings.)

LESSON ONE

Page IV

(Exercises in Reading)



เข
(kow) = He



เข มา
(kow ma) = He comes

เข มา ใน นา
(Kow ma nai na) = He comes into the field.



เข มี นา
(Kow mi na) = He has a field.



เข มี ลา
(Kow mi la) = He has a mule.

Kow = he
ma = comes
nai = in; into
na = field
mi = has; there is; there are
la = a mule

HOW TO TEACH LESSON ONE⁴

Lesson One, Page 1. (Following the steps of the so-called direct method.)

1. Ask the class to study the picture on the left hand side. Talk about the fact that in the picture one sees some fish in the water. This reminds the students of the old Siamese saying: "There are fish in the water, and there is rice in the field."
2. The teacher, pointing along the line below the picture, reads: "Nai nam mi pla" (There are fish in the water), and asks the students to repeat it after him. The process is to be repeated until the students are familiar with the sentence.
3. The same process is applied to the picture on the right hand side. The students will finally be able to read "Nai na mi kow" (There is rice in the field).
4. Ask the students to observe that the last two words of the first sentence (mi pla) will now be considered. A picture is also provided to illustrate the meaning of these two words.
5. The students are to study the picture (a man with a fish in his hand) and try to read the words ("mi pla.")
6. Ask the students to observe that the last two words of the second sentence (mi kow) have also been brought down, and they also have a picture to illustrate their meaning.
7. The students are to look at the picture (a woman with a bundle of rice stalks) and try to read the words "mi kow."

⁴ Department of Adult Education. *First Reader For Adults* (op. cit.) foreword.

8. In the sentences that follow, all the words that have been read are put together in several combinations. By comparing each word with those in the sentences already learned, the students will find that it is not difficult to read them.
9. Point out to the students that actually only six words have been learned. Ask the students to try to read them as they are written out separately at the bottom of the page.

Lesson One, Page 2 and Page 3 (sound training)

The students with the help of the teacher find out how each of the consonants which form the words that they have just learned is derived; and since each consonant has a shape similar to a real object, it will be rather easy for the student to learn it. At the same time, the sound represented by each consonant will also be pointed out.

Similarly, the shape and the sound of each vowel will be explained and learned.

Then the students try to put one consonant and one vowel together to form a new word, and read it. A few words on page 3 will provide an opportunity for the students to practice reading new words formed by the six consonants and the four vowels.

To encourage recognition and memory, the students are taught to write these consonants and vowels in their exercise books.

Lesson One, Page 4 (Exercises in reading)

As only one new word, ກົວ (kow) = He, is introduced on this page, the teacher tells the class what it is. Then the students will be asked to read the sentences on this page by themselves either orally or silently. They will have no difficulty in reading them since they are all known words and the students know what sound each letter represents and also as there is an accompanying picture to help them understand the meaning of each sentence.

The first reader for adults contains nine lessons of this type. Each new lesson starts with a new popular saying or proverb, which, like in Lesson One, serves to introduce new consonants, vowels and words. Altogether, the first reader teaches a total of 165 words.

Then there are about 70 articles on different topics concerning the life of a farmer, and some general knowledge, written in very simple language by teachers who participated in the projects. Here are some of the titles of the articles: Soy Beans, Clean drinking water, Mosquitoes are more dangerous than tigers, Siam and her neighbors, etc., etc.

These articles serve as second readers. Laubach reported:

The articles are so graded that the average students can easily read one during the class period. In fact, a number of the students in the two pilot projects read two or three articles each day. The average student should take five to six weeks to finish all the second readers.⁵

During the time of the second readers, the students learn to write all the new consonants and vowels that are found. Learning to write in general persists all through the period of the project.

C. EVALUATION OF THE METHOD

At the first glance, the following facts are seen:

1. No specific objectives or aims have been set up for this reading program.
2. The learner's background of experience is not fully utilized.
3. The materials used in the beginning reading stage are not "raw," that is, they are not constructed by the students themselves.

⁵ Laubach, F. C. *Report on Combat against Illiteracy* (op. cit.) p. 23.

4. There seems to be too much ado about nothing concerning how the shapes of the consonants and the vowels are derived. There is no need to go through all that trouble just to learn a few letters. When whole words that are well learned are broken down into their separate parts, the letters can be compared with one another. As in the global method, the consonants and the vowels may be effectively recognized and learned by means of comparison; that is through the principle of similarity and, besides, they may be recognized without having to have their names learned first. It is true that by associating the shape of a consonant with an object, that consonant may be more easily recognized. But the main point is that recognition of a whole word is much more desirable than recognition of the consonants, during the beginning reading stage. For instance, take the word "people." A man who learns to recognize whole words will get the meaning of the word "people" right away as soon as he sees it. But a man who learns to recognize words through their separate parts will first have to think of the name and the sound of each of the letters: p, e, o, p, l, e, then put sounds together to form the word-sound. This procedure is, of course, much slower than the first one, and hence, impedes quick comprehension.

5. Furthermore, words that are introduced in the form of a saying or a proverb in the beginning of each lesson are not meant to be sight words at all, but are meant to serve as a basis on which certain consonants and vowels corresponding to those appearing in the words may be introduced. Mind that the words have not been broken down into their separate parts; on the contrary, separate consonants are introduced from the outside to match those found in each word.

With these facts and others in mind, the method may now be evaluated in terms of its basic assumptions.

Group I: Criteria in connection with knowledge in the Field of Philosophy.

1. Is reading defined as the getting and the using of the meanings derived from the written or printed pages, or is it thought of as the pronouncing of the words that appear on the pages?

If some objectives, however small, are set up, and if the reading activities are conducted with an eye on achieving those objectives, then it can be said that reading is conceived of as getting and using the meanings obtained to solve the problem. But in the method developed in the Thailand campaign, the reading program has no specified purpose.

It seems that a great deal of emphasis is placed on the attempt to pronounce the sound of each vowel, consonant and finally the word that is made up of those letters. The method goes so far as to study the shape of each letter in great detail, by associating it with an object which happens to have the same name as the letter. No doubt, this helps a learner very much in recognizing the shapes and the sounds of the letters of the alphabet. But will this help him to recognize the words and the meanings? Upon seeing a word, the learner will have a tendency to think in terms of the shapes and the sounds of the letters found in that word, and then try to put the sounds together to form the required word-sound. This word-sound offers no guarantee that the meaning of the word or words has been grasped, because meaning, as has been discussed in previous chapters, depends largely upon experience background, present needs and future goals, as well as language and thinking ability.

All this goes to show that reading in the Thailand campaign is not so much identified with a process of getting and using meanings as with a complicated attempt to get words pronounced correctly.

2. Are the meanings derived from reading considered as being aroused in the thinking of the learner as he interacts with the pages in terms of his background of experience, or are the meanings considered as being embedded in the words, to be unlocked by their pronunciation?

As the method centers all its efforts upon the sounds of the consonants and the vowels, assuming perhaps that the meaning and the sound are identical, there is every reason to believe that it sponsors the idea that it is the correct pronunciation which

unlocks the meaning of what is read. The method certainly overlooks the fact that the meaning of what is read can be correctly obtained without having to pronounce a single word; and this is done everyday in silent reading.

As far as the background experience of the learner is concerned, only his knowledge about the old Siamese proverbs is being drawn upon. This is no doubt a good move, but it is not enough. His vast store of experience should be brought to bear on reading; and this can be effective only when a specific aim has been established. This ineffective use of a learner's background of experience leads one to believe that the problem whether the meaning of the word is evoked in the thinking of the learner or embedded in the word itself, has not been well considered. Like any other conventional method, this method depends upon unlocking of meaning through sounds for its success in learning reading.

3. Are the meanings of the words considered to be changing as the learner's background of experience is affected by new experiences, or are they considered as fixed and unaffected by the new experiences?

As this method of teaching reading is not founded upon the theory of experience, it is very probable that the question raised by the criterion is not thought of. In a conventional manner, the meaning of each word is fixed; and what the proverb said a hundred years ago is regarded as true and the same as it used to be.

If the authors of the method are mindful of the fact that new experiences do affect the meanings of words, they will not have depended upon the old proverbs alone. Topics concerning the everyday problems of life would have been included. But the way it is, they seem to take pleasure in anything that is old and established, no matter how things have changes.

4. Is reading interpreted as being intimately related to experience, language and thinking, the progress in any one of which parallels and depends on progress of the others, or is it considered as some absolute and independent quality?

As has been pointed out the method seems to concentrate on the sounds, or the phonetic side of reading to the exclusion of other related problems. It does not even make use of the learner's background of experience, let alone the idea of the interrelationship among language, thinking and experience. It is recommended very much, therefore, that the method consider all the pertinent questions concerning reading, and not just be satisfied with the successful unlocking of sounds. The kind of training that encourages language ability such as oral expression, a wide range of spoken vocabulary and discussion about a specific problem will aid in making learning to read swift and effective.

5. Is reading considered as a continuous process which may be divided into at least these four stages, namely, the period of reading readiness, the period of beginning reading, the period of continuous meaningful reading of simple materials, and the period of rapid growth in the habit of independent reading, or is it considered as a finished product which can be learned once and for all time?

Reading has not been considered as a finished product which can be learned once and for all time. In fact, it consists of the first reader period, and the second reader period. The former may be identified with the beginning reading period, while the latter with the period of continuous meaningful reading of simple materials.

Like all the older methods, the reading readiness period has been omitted. According to any method of teaching reading that is based on the theory of experience, in order to assure swiftness and effectiveness in learning, an adult has to be ready at least in his language ability before he can actually be engaged in the beginning reading stage. Whether he has enough spoken vocabulary, can express himself well orally, has any speech defect, or has a rich enough background of experience are the major questions that have to be taken care of before beginning reading is introduced.

It is not too wise to assume that adults are always ready to learn because his level of maturity is high. Many adults have

been found to possess a poor spoken vocabulary, and a very limited amount of experience.

6. Is reading considered valuable because it is a means to an end, or is it considered valuable because it has a value in itself?

This literacy campaign was carried out in connection with a nation-wide fundamental education program. Its main purpose is to help the illiterate people to be able to read and write so that they may help themselves in raising their standard of living. Thus, it is evident that reading has been considered a valuable thing because it is a means to an end, and not because it is something sacred, with a value in itself. It is regrettable, though, that reading has not been taught in closer relation to the desired end. In fact, learning to read, is so far removed from the aim of fundamental education, which is to train adults in matters concerning health, agriculture, literacy and other vocational activities, that it appears to be functioning in complete isolation. In beginning reading stage, attempts are made to related reading to a number of old saying or proverbs. In the next stage of continuous reading of simple materials, various general topics are offered. Now the proverbs and the general subjects are not directly concerned with better living which is the aim of the project. Why has the method not taken up topics about health, agriculture and other vocational activities as its point of departure? It seems that lack of understanding of an integrated program of teaching and learning in one of the most serious defects of the method.

Group II: Criteria in connection with knowledge in the Field of Psychology.

1. Is the method based upon the assumption that the human mind is the functioning of the total human organism in using the store of meanings as the individual interacts with his environment, or is it based on the assumption that the human mind is a collection of S-R bonds?

It is known that the fundamental education project is trying to impart to the adults some knowledge about health and agriculture yet the reading program is not conducted along this line. Words and sentences are not introduced in conjunction with the attempts of the adults to obtain the desired knowledge. In other words, the ongoing experience of the adult as he interacts with his immediate environment, in this case the fundamental education project, has not been adopted as a starting point for learning. All this points to the fact that there is a lack in the understanding of the concept of interaction; and hence, it becomes certain that the human mind has not been assumed to be the functioning of the organism as it interacts with the environment. In fact, it is very probable that the question concerning the mind and "how we learn" has not been uppermost in the mind of the authors of this method; and this is characteristic of any other traditional method.

There is, however, a trace of the old theory of the S-R bond as usual. Vowels and consonants and finally words are presented and repeated in separate units as is clearly seen on page 3 of the first primer; then new words are formed from the known vowels and consonants. These new words, of course, have no connection whatever with what the adults are trying to learn in the project. The new words are then scrutinized with care by the students to be sure that they know how the sounds of the vowels and the consonants are fused together; and since the words are presented in separation, they do not carry very much meaning. So, as usual, the method has to resort to repetition and drills. These and others are indications of the traces of the old S-R theory and the old principle of connectionism.

2. Does the method assume that learning takes place as a result of the interaction with a problematic situation involved, or does it assume that learning takes place in any isolated situation through the medium of repetition?

As the reading program is not associated with the project, nor with any specified activity, it is clear that the method has overlooked the important fact that learning takes place most effectively in a problematic situation as the learner is attacking it. The method,

like any other traditional method, teaches reading as a separate subject independently of a real life problem, and then hopes that the students will be able to read the materials that are found in the everyday life situation. In other words, the method depends to a great extent on the old belief of transfer of training that does not involve the element of meanings.

3. Is the method based upon the assumption that words are learned as wholes as they represent some meanings in the background of experience, or is it based upon the view that words should be learned through their separate parts, such as the letters or the sounds of the letters?

In is true that whole wrds are presented as found in the old proverbs which are adopted in the beginning of each lesson; but they are not presented with the intention of building up sight-vocabulary. Neither are they presented so that they later on may be broken down into letters. They are introduced as whole so that consonants and vowels contained in the words may be presented from the outside. For instance, if the word "people" has been learned, the letters e, o, l, and p will be taught separately from the word, hoping that they will be recognized immediately as the word "people" is seen again. It is strange the word "people" is not broken down into letters; and then by comparing them with the same ones found in other words, they may be remembered.

So the real purpose of the method is to come to grips with the letters of the alphabet, believing that once the sounds of all the letters are remembered, all words can be attacked and read. The introduction of the words from the proverb is just a round about way of getting at the alphabet; and thus actually the method is accepting that words are learned through their separate parts, namely, the sounds.

One thing is clear; method neglects the most important factor in reading, namely, the element of meaning in the reading process. What is the use of being able to pronounce a word without knowing what it means?

4. Does the method consider the fact that skills in reading are gradually developed and firmly established through constant use in different types of situation, or does it consider that skills should be developed through a system of mechanical drills?

As the method has a strong tendency towards teaching words through their separate parts, the presence of a rather large amount of drilling, as is seen on page 3 in the primer, is quite natural. Though the words involved in the drills carry meanings, and even though non-sense syllables are excluded from the drill, yet the purpose of the drill is still the same, namely, to have the students establish skills in pronouncing words, expecting that skills and ability developed in this isolated situation can be transferred and utilized when the students find themselves in actual reading situations. But it is a fact that in actual reading situations, the element of meaning is the most important thing. People do not generally read for sounds, but for meanings. If the students are trained only to pronounce, it is rather difficult to expect them to be able also to read for meanings.

The severity of the mistake, however, is more or less reduced by the fact that the students are supplied with a great number of simple reading materials. It is very possible, that some adults may build skills in reading for meanings as they read the kind of materials that happen to suit their needs.

It is strongly recommended, therefore, that skills in reading for meaning be developed as early as in the beginning reading stage. As experience has shown, the experience-chart technique is a satisfactory measure for this purpose.

5. Is the method emphasizing both the meanings of the materials read and the development of skills in reading, or just one of them?

As previous discussions have shown, the method seems to lay a strong emphasis on development of skills in an isolated situation, depending on transfer of training when actual situations are involved. The meaning of what is read is not stressed till very late

when the simple reading materials are made available to the adults. At that point, the students are urged to read for meaning; but how to do it has never been made clear to them.

It will be much more effective if reading is interpreted as reading for meaning instead of pronouncing, from the very beginning. In this manner, skills in getting meaning out of reading materials will be developed in their natural habitat, that is, as the learners overcome one difficulty after another in obtaining the meaning that is carried in the materials, and in using it to better his manner of living.

6. Does the method consist of the following steps: acquisition of general readiness in reading, acquisition of sufficient sight vocabulary based on the learner's experience, word analysis, and reading a great quantity of simple and meaningful materials, or does it consist of only some of them?

The concept of reading readiness is not recognized by this method. This is quite understandable as the method overlooks the importance of the experience of the learner, and reading readiness generally has to do with organizing and enriching the experience background of each learner.

It is true that the method tries to build up a reading vocabulary by introducing familiar sayings and proverbs. But the words are not meant to be sight words, or words to be recognized as whole on sight. They are intended to serve as a means through which the letters of the alphabet and their sounds are introduced, and drilled upon.

Word analysis, especially training in phonetics, forms the major part of the method. Little or no attention is paid to word-structure and contextual clues. Besides, it should be easier for a learner to analyse a word that he knows on sight than a word that is unfamiliar to him.

It is good to see that the method realizes the value of having the learners read a great quantity of simple and meaningful materials. It is wished very much that "raw" and meaningful materials are introduced since the first day of the campaign.

7. Is reading then considered as involving the interaction of the following elements: recognition of word-configuration, recognition of speech-sounds representing the printed or written words even though they need not be pronounced, and recognition of what is intended in the context, or is reading considered as dealing with just some of them?

In the first place, the concept of interaction has never been grasped by this method, as can be seen from the fact that words have not been introduced to the learners as they interact with their environments at that particular period. Furthermore, experience which is the direct consequence of the interaction is not made a basis for learning. In fact, it is neglected all the time. The idea of making an experience-chart, for instance, never occurs to the practitioners of this method.

Recognition of the sounds of the consonants and the vowels is the chief concern of the method. It pays very little attention to recognition of word-configuration; and very late in the reading process after the learners have formed a habit of reading isolated words or sentences, it expects the learners to transfer this ability or habit to a new situation, in which materials that carry real meanings are involved, and in which recognition of what is intended in the context is necessary. No doubt, a certain amount of success is possible through strong efforts; but this is not a swift and effective way to do it, as transfer of training is highly undependable.

8. Does the method utilize any kind of word-list as a means of checking the words that the learner has accumulated, or does it consider the word-list as a source from which the words to be learned are drawn?

Since no word-list of most useful words has been constructed in the Siamese language, the danger of adhering to the word-list as

the sole source of words to be learned is avoided. It must be admitted, though, that the absence of the word-list gives rise to at least one disadvantage, namely, it is not possible to readily check how many high frequency words have been learned and how many are left out.

Word-list or no word-list, the way the words are introduced to the learners is far from being functional. Instead of bringing in words that are being used by the learners in their everyday living as they try to cope with the health and agricultural situation, old hackneyed proverbs are used. It is true that the words are familiar, but they are not interesting and do not have anything to do with the actual problems that are facing the adults.

9. Does the method consider the fact that the learner seeks the easiest and best route to his goal, or does it advocate the hardship of drill as a sure means of success?

It should be plain that the authors of the method are trying their best to make reading as simple and pleasant as possible. They make use of proverbs and familiar sayings as a starting point, expecting that the learner will be able to read something with meaning right away on the very first day of his learning. Again, in the attempt to reduce the difficulty to a minimum, only the letter of the alphabet that are found in those words are first introduced. All these and others indicate that the easiest route has been sought for the students. It is only unfortunate that the knowhow is lacking. So the method one way or another relapses to the old practice of drilling, right in the first reading lesson, as is seen on page 3 of the first primer.

It will be easier for the students if they are allowed to introduce the words that they desire to learn themselves, and hence, build up their own sight vocabulary. As the sight vocabulary grows larger, the students may start their word-study in which the alphabet may be learned, and writing introduced.

Group III: *Criteria in connection With knowledge in the Field of Pedagogy.*

1. Is reading taught in terms of some social aims and purposes, such as in connection with a fundamental education program, or a project of some sort, or is it taught as a separate academic subject by itself?

The Thailand literacy campaign is part of the fundamental education program of the country, in which a health program and an agricultural program are also jointly conducted. But it is regrettable that at the present moment beginning reading is taught independently of the social aims that have been set up. It seems to be that these three campaigns, though they constitute one big program, are viewed as three independent projects. Literacy is treated as a separate academic subject. It has not been realized that if learning to read is integrated or associated with the work that is being done in the other projects, reading may become easier and more interesting to the learner. This is a clear case of lacking of comprehension of the principle of integration. It also shows that the influence of the old idea of transfer of training is still strong.

2. Are words introduced in connection with needs and purposes of the learner, or are they pre-determined by some outside authority?

Words are not introduced in connection with needs and purposes of the learner at all. In fact, the idea of adopting the learner's need as a point of departure in learning and teaching has not been recognized; so the needs are not determined, and no definite aim or purpose is established accordingly. This is, of course, one of the most serious faults of the method. As has been stated many times before, words are introduced from a collection of old proverbs and sayings which have been found to be familiar among adults. While it cannot be said directly that the words introduced are pre-determined by an outside authority, they are positively not introduced in terms of needs. According to modern thinking words are introduced, in this beginning reading stage, in connection with what the students are doing in their everyday activities,

If the students are being given explanations concerning problems of health and agriculture, it is deemed advisable that in their reading lessons the same problems should be attacked. Reading materials pertinent to the problems must be made available. The students reading these materials will not only develop skills in reading, but also get information leading to the solution of the problems that are being dealt with in the project.

Insofar as the beginning reading stage is concerned, words used during the discussion about health and agriculture are capitalized upon in making reading charts. As a matter of fact, it is the students themselves who, as a result of the discussion, put down on the chart in their own words the content of the discussion. So the chart becomes "raw," and the learners are simply reading their own words and their own experiences. In this manner, it is believed that beginning reading will be made easier and more effective for the learners.

3. Does the method offer some kind of appraisal to reconstruct learning, or does it consider it in terms of examinations and tests that have to be passed?

It is stated in Laubach's report to UNESCO that formal examinations were given to students to determine their success or failure at the end of each stage of reading. In the exact words of the report,

By February 4, 22 students had finished the first book and had been formally examined by Mr. Boon C. Sam-bongs, and were considered eligible to receive diplomas. Those who passed the examination continued their studies in the second book. Those who had not qualified for their 'diplomas' continued studying the first book in anticipation of another examination.⁶

Evidently, this kind of examination is not an appraisal to reconstruct learning, but a means of determining whether a certain person should go forward or should stay behind. According

⁶ Laubach, F. C. *Report on Combat against Illiteracy* (op. cit.) p. 24, 27,

to modern thinking, the periods of the first reader and the second reader should be considered as a continuum, or one long continuous unit; and continual appraisals for the purpose of reconstruction of learning should be given. This practice is favored because of the belief that everybody should be helped to go forward as much as he can. The fact that he is left behind is not going to help him to go forward. In a unit covering a longer period of time, and with help in the form of appraisals that reconstruct learning similar to those used by the Literacy Education Project (U. S. Office of Education), an adult will have a greater chance of success.

4. Does the method consider provision for individual differences, or does it advocate everybody engaging in the same activity?

It is obvious that everybody has to read the same words, on the same page, from the same book, and if possible, at the same time. This is strictly according to the traditional principle that knowledge is the same everywhere, and, therefore, anybody who wishes to learn must be engaged in doing the same thing that has been recognized as being knowledge.

But according to modern thinking, every man's knowledge is his own. He will create it for himself as there is a need for it; and as each man's need is mostly different from everyone else's, he will do things that others do not need to do, and vice versa. With this frame of mind, modern teachers advocate the experiencechart technique by which students can read what they actually need to read, such as materials that are drawn from their own experience or the materials that have direct bearing on the problem that is facing them, all constructed by themselves with the help of the teacher.

Like all other traditional methods, the method developed and used in the Thailand literacy campaign lay a great stress on the materials that are to be given to the learners, whereas the modern approach has a tendency to first consider the learners themselves, and then to construct the kind of materials that will suit the need and the goal of each individual learner.

It is recommended, therefore, that the modern approach be adapted as far as possible so that the students will be given more individual attention.

D. SUMMARY OF ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

The method is based on assumptions that are mostly rejected by modern thinkers. It may have some value when applied to languages that are very strictly phonetic. But even in languages of that type, the value of this method lies in the fact that it encourages correct pronunciation. There is no guarantee, though, that the method will develop ability in comprehension, or in the getting of the meanings involved in the reading materials, since the getting of meanings implies thinking, language and experience. None of these three interrelated elements is emphasized. In fact, the method is chiefly concerned only with the sounds of the words, and not with the meaning of what is read. Therefore, whatever advantages it may have will mostly be in terms of sounds and pronunciation.

Advantages

1. Since the method focuses its attention on the letters of the alphabet which are 44 in number in the Siamese language, the adult is partly taught to read through spelling. So one of the advantages that stand out prominently is the fact that the adult learner develops ability in correct spelling.

2. Since the adult is also partly taught to read through sounds and the blending of sounds, he develops ability to attack long words by breaking them into syllables. He will also develop "an ear for sounds"⁷ which again aids in spelling. He also has a great ability in correct pronunciation.

⁷ Harding, Lowry W. *A Summary of Methods of Beginning Reading*, (a mimeographed pamphlet), The Ohio State University, Ed, 516, 1959, p.1.

Disadvantages

1. Since the method concentrates so much upon the sounds of the letters and upon how these sounds can be combined to form new words, it tends to deceive adults as to the real purpose of reading. They may think that "word-calling" or "naming" the printed symbols is "reading," whereas reading should be getting meaning from the printed or written pages. By relying solely upon the sound element in the reading process, it may become possible that the adult pronounces words in a gracious manner, but without having the thought or the meaning intended by the passage.

2. It is very possible that the learners will develop a habit of vocalizing when they are supposed to be reading silently; and lip movements become prevalent as the adults try to "spell-out" the words to themselves.

3. Before the adult can actually read a word, he has to hesitate to put the sounds together and "spell out" the letters to himself; this practice then is to develop slow, ponderous readers. It is generally found that children taught by this method, teach themselves a more efficient method in later years.

4. Because of the large amount of oral work on sounds and combination of sounds, progress in reading becomes slower. The adult may read well orally, but in silent reading, he may read with limited comprehension.

5. The Siamese language is far from being a phonetical language. The spelling is chaotic. There are so many silent letters in an average word. The phonetic method may be effective only with simple, one-syllable words as found in the first few pages of the first primer. With an average word, or a more difficult word containing about 2—3 silent letters, the adults will be more or less confused, since there will be more exceptions in the rules of sounds than there are rules themselves.

6. The lack of understanding in the newer precepts concerning the teaching and learning of reading adds to the inefficiency of the method. The fact that the method does not set up an aim for the

reading program, does not let the students build their sight vocabulary for themselves, does not use other techniques in word-study other than training in phonetics, does not capitalize on the learner's experience, etc., all tend to make the method weak and inefficient.

On the whole, it can be said that the method is based only on very few basic assumptions, mostly concerned with reading as the unlocking of sounds. The method can much improved, if it pays greater attention not only to the reading charts and materials, but also to the persons who are going to read them. There are two great factors that make reading possible, namely, the person and the material. Emphasis on any one of them will result in a defective method. Emphasis on the interaction between the two should furnish the teacher with a better starting point.



CHAPTER IX

RECOMMENDATIONS AS A RESULT OF THE STUDY

A. ANALYTICAL SUMMARY

How much ground has been covered?

Desirable trends in a “good” method of teaching reading.

B. THE MOST RECENT FINDINGS

From the Brazilian Seminar

From the Mysore Seminar

C. GUIDE LINES FOR RECONSTRUCTION

D. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RECONSTRUCTION

E. WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE?

CHAPTER IX

RECOMMENDATIONS AS A RESULT OF THE STUDY

In the last five chapters of this study, major methods of teaching reading to adults that are currently in practice in the world are described and evaluated. Their weak points and strong points have been pointed out in terms of the criteria that are set up in Chapter II. Of course, if other sets of criteria had been used, it is possible that different types of advantages and disadvantages would have been found. Therefore, it is understood that any recommendations proposed on the basis of this study will be made in agreement with the principle advocated in the criteria.

A. ANALYTICAL SUMMARY

Before making a recommendation, it is necessary to pull together the important points that have been reached during the course of the evaluation. These items, when put in a compact form, will serve as a point of departure for further steps of action.

1. How Much Ground Has Been Covered?

In the first place, the method of teaching reading as developed by the U.S. Office of Education in the Literacy Education Project is described and evaluated. The method of literacy development used in this project is not only recognized by some people in this country, but has been recommended to other member-nations by UNESCO. It has been termed the "experience method"¹ UNESCO, and very often referred to as an analytic method par excellence by the UNESCO Education Department. It can be said at this point, then, that the method of teaching adults to read as developed and used in the *United States of America* has been covered.

¹ UNESCO. *The Teaching of Reading*, op. cit., p. 43.

Next, the method used in the UNESCO Pilot Project at Haiti is taken up. This method is really the global method which is now popular in *Europe and Australia*.

Then the Laubach method is considered. This method is used intensively and with considerable degrees of success in many countries in *Asia, Africa, the Middle East*, and in many Spanish Latin-American countries, especially *Mexico*.

Next, the method of teaching reading used in the great literacy campaign of *Brazil* is studied. The campaign is still going on vigorously at this very moment; and, according to the words of the Minister of Education of Brazil, considerable success has been achieved. Finally, the method developed in the literacy campaign of Thailand, a country in *South East Asia*, is described and evaluated.

Thus, the whole democratic world, where there is a literacy campaign going on, is more or less covered. An effort was made to study the method developed by the UNESCO Associated Project in China. But at the present moment, due to the turn of events in the political situation in that country, the project has been abandoned, and thus no data are available.

2. Desirable trends in a "Good" Method of Teaching Reading.

As the strengths and weaknesses of the various methods of literacy development all over the democratic world have now been made known in terms of a certain set of principles or criteria, it should be possible to make certain recommendations accordingly, so that these methods may be improved or reconstructed. Again, for the purpose of reconstruction, it is possible that a certain flexible pattern of activities may be adopted, which may be looked upon as *common elements* to be expected in any functional method of teaching reading anywhere in the world.

For the sake of convenience, the most important points raised in the previous chapters are presented in the form of a table of data. The data are gathered from the various evaluations.

Desirable Trends in an Acceptable Method of Teaching Reading Lie in The Positive Answers	U.S. Office of Edu. Method	UNESCO Haitian Project Method	Laubach Method	Brazilian Method	Thailand Method
1. Is reading functionally defined?	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
2. Are reading activities integrated with the social aims?	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
3. Are words introduced in relation to the interaction between the learner and the environment as he attempts to achieve his aim ?	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
4. Is there an understanding concerning reading readiness for reading?	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO
5. Are whole words presented for purposes of establishing sight words?	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO
6. Is word-analysis considered only a part of the whole reading process? (Many methods consider word-analysis as the main activity)	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO
7. Is there a rich supply of meaningful materials so that reading skills may be firmly established?	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
8. Does the method consider as equally important both the learner with his problems and the reading materials? (Many methods consider only the reading materials.)	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO
9. Are individual differences sufficiently provided for?	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO

The many negative answers found in the table suggest how far behind the world is, both in principle and practice, in the methods of teaching reading that are now used. Improvement or reconstruction is, therefore, imperative. *In a general manner, it can be said that reconstruction should be made wherever the answer "no" is located in the table, in such a way that the situation caused by that particular obstacle may be reversed.*

Before making recommendations in particular, it may be helpful to find out more about the two most recent sets of findings that have been gathered in this direction. These findings were accumulated by the UNESCO Seminars in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and in Mysore, India, both held in 1949. They were roughly described in Chapter I, but it is now appropriate to look at them in greater detail.

B. THE MOST RECENT FINDINGS

1. From the Brazilian Seminar

Between July 27 and September 3, 1949, a number of leading educators from 19 Latin American countries, and also from the United States, France, Great Britain, India and Holland, gathered together at Quitandinha, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, at the joint invitation of the government of Brazil and UNESCO. The gathering was called the Inter-American Seminar on Illiteracy and Adult Education. The delegates to this seminar were divided into five working groups to work on the following problems.

1. The State of Illiteracy in the Americas.
2. Organization of campaigns against illiteracy.
3. Objectives, Methods and Materials for Literacy teaching.
4. The Primary School and Literacy.
5. Literacy and Adult Education.

At the end of the seminar, each working group presented its findings and recommendations regarding the problems. The following is the recommendation made by Working Group III.² It has to do directly with the problem being studied in this dissertation, namely, the methods of teaching reading to adults.

METHODS

(a) Analysis of different methods which have proved useful in literacy teaching in rural, urban and sparsely settled areas.

1. The central purpose of literacy teaching is the comprehension of the written or printed page as one of the most efficient means to secure experience, knowledge, skills, and desirable and useful habits.

2. Laboratory psychology has demonstrated clearly that the child learns through the syncretic, global, process before understanding the parts of which the whole is composed. The child sees and grasps first the whole, and analyses afterwards. The adult seems to learn in the same way, except that his wider experience enables him to analyse more rapidly and more unconsciously.

3. The sentence is the representation of a thought or an idea. The global, or sentence and story, method is preferable for the adult learner also, since it is more interesting for him and accords with accepted principles of learning.

4. The sentence method has another advantage. It is applicable to group as well as to individual teaching, and is therefore economical and efficient in adult literacy classes.

² UNESCO, *Inter-American Seminar on Illiteracy and Adult Education*, op. cit., p. 20.

5. In literacy classes for occupational groups the sentence method can be used, as has been successfully demonstrated in the literacy classes of the United States and British armies. The adaptation of the method and of the basic materials must satisfy the special needs, interests and intellectual capacities of the particular groups.

6. A very important consideration is the fact that the method used *initially* will have a permanent effect on the rapidity of progress and on final results. The approach to reading should, therefore, be made through a method which will:

- follow the scientifically proved principles governing the teaching of reading
- give immediate meaning to the work
- lead to rapid comprehension
- arouse and retain interest
- be suitable for use as an individual method
- give the pupil a sense of real achievement.

Any method not fulfilling these conditions should be suspected. Once a sound and scientific approach has been made the teacher can - according to circumstances - expand his method by the judicious use of more than one method.

7. Concerning the problem of method, the Seminar wishes to go on record that it accepts the scientific evidence in favour of the sentence or global method for teaching children to read. On the basis of objective data and corroborative evidence of the psychology of adults, of their interests and ways of learning, the Seminar recommends the same method for the teaching of adult illiterates until such time as the results of research and controlled experiments prove the contrary. This preference does not in any way imply the inadvisability of extensive experiments to strengthen, modify, or change the methodological position expressed by the Seminar.

As has been stressed throughout this study, an effective method of teaching reading needs to be based on the interaction of knowledge in three fields: philosophy, psychology, and pedagogy. It seems that the Rio recommendation has a very strong tendency towards facts about psychology alone, that is, that words are learned as wholes and, hence, the method of teaching reading (the global method) must provide activities accordingly. Facts concerning experience, thinking and meanings, and facts about the integrative nature of a reading program have been overlooked. Thus, according to the criteria set up in Chapter II, the Rio recommendation becomes rather inadequate.

2. From the Mysore Seminar

The following excerpt is taken from the *Report of The Director General*, which is the report on the Activities of UNESCO from October 1949 to March 1950, presented to the Fifth Session of the UNESCO General Conference, May-June, 1950, in Florence, Italy:

Mysore (India)

Closely connected with that at Quitandinha, the seminar on *adult education in rural communities* in Asia, organized jointly by the Indian Government and UNESCO, opened at Brindavan Gardens, near Mysore (India), on 2 November 1949 and completed its work on 14 December. The opening ceremony was presided over by the Indian Minister of Education. This seminar, under the direction of M.M.L. Pin Malakul, Permanent Secretary for Education in Thailand, was attended by 62 experts from 19 countries and by observers from the United Nations, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the International Labour Organization and the World Health Organization. We sent three experts to Mysore: Dr. Speneer Hatch (United States of America), Director of the Agriculture College at Turrialba (Costa Rica), who was in charge

³ UNESCO. *Report of the Director General*, UNESCO Office, Paris, 1950, p. 31—2.

of the work of the group studying the economic aspects of adult education; Dr. Rodriguez Bou (Porto Rico), a specialist on the linguistic problems of fundamental education; and Dr. F. Rex (Secretariat). The last two had attended the seminar in Brazil and were thus able to give their Asian colleagues a firsthand account of experience in Latin America. We also supplied the seminar with the services of a librarian from our Clearing House, Miss D. Williams, who is a specialist on documentation concerning fundamental education. The Indian Government, for its part, chose three group leaders: Mr. S. Y. Chu (China), M. H-H. Salman (Iraq) and Mr. A. N. Basu (India); the last named had already attended our seminar at Sevres on education for international understanding (1947). The members of the Mysore seminar were divided into four groups, which studied, in relation to adult education in rural communities, literacy campaigns; training for domestic life and health education; local economic activities; and education for citizenship. Each of these groups produced some very interesting documents, which will be published either by the Indian Government or by UNESCO. The reports of the four study groups will provide material for one of the "Occasional Papers in Education" which we propose to publish this year, and I very much hope that several working papers, revised and supplemented by various experts, will later on be collected in one volume, which will give a general picture, for the first time, of the social and economic aspects of adult education in Asia.

The specialized missions which various Asian countries have asked us to organize are largely the sequel to this seminar.

According to the report of the study group which took up the problems of literacy campaigns, the following conclusion was reached:

The group after examining the different methods which indicated that certain countries and Provinces had made considerable efforts to evolve methods to teach their illiterate adult, decided that it was advisable *not to recommend any one method for use in all the countries concerned.*

The group considered that each country should work out the method or methods best suited to its particular needs, but hoped that due consideration would be given to the following scientific principles *which apply to any sound method used for teaching illiterates in any language:*

1. The starting point in any lesson should be what the adult is interested in and not what teacher wants to talk about.
2. As the adult perceives in wholes and then passes to analysis, he should be taught reading through perception of whole thought units.
3. To facilitate fixation, the teacher should provide a variety of repetitions of the word in different sentences.
4. The vocabulary burden should be light. Too many new words should not be introduced on any one page of a reader.
5. Physiological factors such as the degree of development of the faculties of seeing and hearing must be taken into consideration.
6. The teacher should not be bound by fixed methods of approach but should be ready to adapt himself to meet varying needs of different environments.

The group urges the necessity of making a thorough scientific study of the relevant problems - linguistic, social, economic or others relating to each language

group. This study should be initiated by the government of the country concerned and should precede the evolving of any particular method.⁴

The Mysore recommendation, though short, makes two important points: (1) that any one method cannot be used in all countries; and (2) that consideration must be given to principles which apply to any sound method used for teaching illiterates in any language. The second point comes rather close to what the writer termed "common elements" a short while ago. This will be elaborated on later as recommendations are made.

As regards the six minor points given in the Mysore recommendation, it is rather plain that they are given only in general terms. For instance, point No. 2 says: "As the adult perceives in wholes and then passes to analysis, he should be taught reading through perception of whole thought units." But how this can be done effectively is not given, or even hinted at. It is quite true that in some methods words have been learned as wholes, but they have been learned in isolation, without any relation to the goals of the learner. This is seen clearly in the cases of the U.S. Office of Education Project, and the UNESCO Pilot Project in Haiti.

Thus, both the Rio and the Mysore recommendations appear too broad and too general in terms of the criteria set up in this study. Suggestions concerning *specific reading activities* are the things that are actually needed by those countries that attended the seminars.

C. GUIDE LINE FOR RECONSTRUCTION

It is the opinion of the writer that a lesson in methodology should have been learned from the practices in curriculum organization in a modern secondary school. Usually, the curriculum consists of a "core" which is required of all students since it deals with problems that are common to all, and of "special areas"

⁴ UNESCO. *Methods of Literacy Teaching*, (UNESCO/Mysore/71, Revised), Paris, France: UNESCO Office, (1949), p. 7.

which are open for those who need them. This line of action leads one to believe that any good method of teaching must provide for activities covering both the common elements and the individual elements in the whole configuration of activities. In the same manner, a good method of teaching reading should consist of:

1. A series of actions or activities which is required to be present, no matter what language is being dealt with; these activities may be referred to as the "common elements."
2. Activities that each particular language may need in order to facilitate the teaching-learning process; they may be referred to as the "individual elements."

Thus, in reconstructing a method of teaching reading, the aspect deserving the particular attention is whether or not it contains the so-called "common elements." If it does not, then action must be taken to insure that it does. What, then, constitutes the "common elements?"

As a result of the study and the evaluation that have been made in the previous chapters, it becomes known that the "common elements" should be the activities that accompany the desirable trends which have been gathered together in the table of data presented earlier in this chapter. The activities accompanying each desirable trend, in other words the "common elements," will now be given.

1. Desirable Trend:

Reading must be functionally defined.

Specific Accompanying Activities:

The teacher must help the adults, by means of discussion and illustration, to understand from the very beginning that reading is not just pronouncing or "naming" the printed or written symbols, but is the getting and using of the meanings that may be evoked by the symbols; and that how much meaning is evoked

depends upon how much meaning is stored in the learner's thinking or experience. How can this be illustrated? The teacher can tell of a man who can pronounce the words very quickly and gracefully, but does not know what they are all about at the end of the passage. He can also tell of a person who reads materials that carry very little meaning and are not immediately needed, and finally becomes disgusted as he wastes so much of his precious time. For instance, a man who actually wants to read something about personal hygiene may be directed first to read about the "Brown Family," or how "Annie jumps, jumps, jumps," etc. When this happens, reading has not been properly defined.

2. Desirable Trend:

Reading activities must be integrated with the social aims.

Specific Accompanying Activities:

According to the principle of integration, a man is always seeking to maintain his state of equilibrium. When his equilibrium is upset, there arises a state of need; and as soon as he is able to meet the need, he regains his state of equilibrium, or becomes integrated again.

Human needs originate the social aims. For example, take a man who is living in a place which is infested with malaria. In order to remain alive, he needs to know how to keep himself free from the fever and how to stamp out the disease from the whole area. This becomes one of the social aims of his community. Once this aim is achieved, a certain degree of collective integration is obtained.

To help achieve this, learning to read must adopt that social aim as a point of departure, or must be integrated with the aim, so to speak. How can this be done? This is where the experience-chart technique comes in. Briefly, the teacher and the class discuss about malaria, how it is caused, how to prevent it, etc. The class then tells the teacher to write for them on the board what they think about malaria. The teacher, of course, writes in big letters

the students' own words on the board. The whole class then practice reading their own words which are written on the board, and which are consequently very meaningful to them. What is written on the board can later be copied down on a big piece of paper, and becomes a chart. As time goes on, several charts will be made. They can then be typewritten on regular paper, and bound together in book form. In a few days, the adults will be reading a book written by themselves, a book full of their own experience and thinking.

The reading-chart activities should be kept up, even though the students have progressed so far as to be able to read actual readers or advanced materials.

3. Desirable Trend:

Words to be read must first be introduced in relation to the interaction between the learner and the environment, as he attempts to achieve that social aim.

Specific Accompanying Activities:

According to the principle of interaction, as a man interacts with his environment, meanings are developed. The meanings are, of course, represented by words. Words that are evolved out of a man's own interaction are much more meaningful to him than those that are foreign to his experience.

Thus, in learning to read, words to be introduced to the students must be those that are known or that exist in the students' spoken vocabulary, and furthermore, that arise out of the problematic situation they are in. That is to say, as the teacher and the class discuss about their problem, say malaria fever, the students' own words arising from the discussion will be put down on the board for them to read. The class should not begin with any pre-determined material written by a person out of the field of interaction,

4. Desirable Trend:

There should be readiness for reading on the part of those who have meager experience.

Specific Accompanying Activities

As has been said in Trend No. 1, the meaning to be obtained through reading will depend upon the store of experience the man possesses. So, for those whose store of experience is rather meager in terms of what will be discussed in class, a readiness program is desirable. General discussions involving oral expression must be conducted by the students and the teacher regarding the social aim that has been adopted as a point of departure for learning to read. In case malaria fever is the chosen topic, trips can be made to places where an anti-malaria project is being carried out. Movies, film-strips, talks concerning malaria and the prevention of malaria may be shown and given. A general discussion by the students must follow the showing of the film or the talk. This general discussion may, of course, result in the making of the experience-charts.

5. Desirable Trend:

Whole words must be presented as meaningful wholes and not as broken into their separate parts; and they must be presented for the purpose of establishing sight words.

Specific Accompanying Activities:

As already seen, Laubach's method, the Brazilian method and the Thailand method all seem to start with a whole word. But the word is not intended to be a sight word, to be recognized on sight. It is presented as whole so that it can be broken down into parts immediately.

The teacher must help the students, by means of reading the experience-charts, to build up a list of words which the students can read on sight. The sight words will further help the students to read easily any material that are connected with the topic under

discussion. When the class move forward to the stage where word-study becomes necessary, then these words may be broken down for that purpose as is done in the global method, i. e. through comparison of similar elements.

6. Desirable Trend:

Word-analysis is just part of the whole reading process.

Specific Accompanying Activities:

It is seen that the Brazilian method identifies the whole reading process with just one phase of word-analysis, namely, the study of sounds. The same is true of the Thailand method which has the study of the shapes of the letters of the alphabet and their sounds as the main activity in learning to read.

To facilitate word recognition, word-study of some kind is necessary, depending upon the nature of each language. In one case, after having had a number of sight-words accumulated, the study of sounds is convenient, while in another case, like in the Chinese language, the study of word structure is necessary. In all cases, great attention must be paid to contextual clues. Also in all cases, learning to write will facilitate learning to read. But in no case is word-analysis to be looked upon as constituting the whole process of learning to read.

7. Desirable Trend:

There should be a rich supply of meaningful materials so that reading skills may be firmly established.

Specific Accompanying Activities:

The teacher must see to it that the materials, in this beginning stage of reading, are pertinent to the problem that is being attacked by the class. If the class are working on a "unit," so to speak, on malaria, various reading materials concerning all phases of malaria and its prevention should be made available.

Of course, in later stages, when the students have become advanced in their reading skills, the reading materials should become as wide as life itself.

8. Desirable Trend:

The learner with his needs and problems are as important as the reading materials.

Specific Accompanying Activities:

Many traditional methods pay so much attention to what the students should read, what vowels should be presented first, what words from the word-list must be introduced, etc., as to be unmindful of the learner.

It is in him that all growth, success and progress reside, and not in the graded reading materials. Thus, continuous appraisal in an informal way must be made. Any error in understanding on the part of the students revealed through the informal tests like those put out by the U. S. Office of Education Project may be corrected with the help of the teacher.

9. Desirable Trend:

Individual differences must be sufficiently provided for.

Specific Accompanying Activities:

Conventional methods use the same vowel-charts, the same readers and the same materials for every student. The only way through which individual differences have been provided for is through the medium of time. This is far from being sufficient.

Individual differences may be pretty much taken care of through the experience-chart. Different groups of students may set up their own charts containing words that suit their needs most. Each student may have his own stock of sight-words, and he may choose the reading materials that are best suited to him,

The "accompanying activities" are the "common elements" which are required to be present in every method of teaching reading, no matter in what language it may be. Outside of these activities, a method may adopt other measures to suit its own needs. These other measures constitute the "individual elements."

Subsequently, when it is said that a method of teaching reading is being reconstructed, what actually happens should be that the "common elements" which are lacking are being installed or adapted in that method. This means also that the "common elements" are to be regarded as criteria for reconstruction. As will be recalled, it is stated in Chapter I that the final aim of this dissertation is to evolve for purpose of reconstruction a set of criteria that may be used in improving a method of teaching reading when there is a need to do so. The body of activities which has been termed "common elements" is the desired criteria for reconstruction.

D. SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RECONSTRUCTION

Finally, as a result of the study which has been made in this dissertation, the following recommendations are made:

1. As all the five methods of teaching reading that have been evaluated indicate very clearly the absence of some or almost all of the desirable "common elements," and thus, need to be reconstructed, the practitioners of each of these methods need to consider the table of data given on page 277 in this chapter, and adopt for ever "no" appearing in the table the line of action already laid out in the "accompanying activities." For example, an examination of the method adopted by Thailand, according to the data in the table, shows that it has only one "Yes" and eight "No's." This means that at least eight more things can be done in order to reconstruct this particular method, namely:

- a. The authority in charge of the literacy campaign, the teachers involved and the adult learners must come to an understanding that reading is not verbalizing but getting and using of meanings. This can be done by means of discussions and illustrations as indicated in Desirable Trend 1.

b. The experience-chart activities must be adopted as indicated in Desirable Trend 2, so that initial reading activities can be closely integrated with the social aims which have been specified by the authority in charge of the total campaign of fundamental education, and hence, the reading activities can be made useful and meaningful immediately.

c. The use of the present readers which deal mainly with the teaching of the letters of the alphabet and the sounds of the various vowels, and the combinations of the sounds of the consonants and the vowels may be postponed till a later stage, especially till the stage of word-analysis, after sufficient sight-vocabulary has been built up through the experience-chart work.

d. A list of the most useful words or the most frequent words can be constructed for the purpose of checking the numerous words that have been accumulated through the chart work. Words appearing in the list but not yet learned through chart work can then be dealt with, if necessary.

e. A reading readiness program consisting of field-trips to different centers of activities in the total campaign (such as the malaria-prevention center, the agricultural-instruction center, the recreation center, and so on), may be set up. This would lead to discussions concerning what is seen and done during the trip, the showing of films or film-strips concerning the problem that is being dealt with in the different centers, etc. On all these occasions, adults will be encouraged to think and express themselves orally as much as possible. Some of the health problems, agricultural problems and others may be solved in principle during this reading readiness period. These experiences will become a very firm basis for beginning reading.

f. With the experience-chart activities being advocated from the very beginning, whole words are taught, learned and accumulated. The teacher must inform the adult learners that they are expected to recognize these words on sight. Furthermore, the teacher must keep a careful record of the sight-words that have been learned. From time to time, the list of the sight-words may

be compared with the standard list of the most frequent words. It is natural that the sight-word list will contain a great deal of words that are not included in the standard word list.

g. In the word-analysis stage, the present readers that deal with the shape of each letter of the alphabet, the sounds represented by each consonant and each vowel, and the five tonal marks used in the language may now be introduced and used to a great advantage. At this point of the reading process, it will be found that the students have been able to read quite a number of words; consequently, the study of the consonant-sounds, the vowel-sounds, their combinations, etc. that go to build up those words becomes less tedious and even interesting and revealing.

h. Acceptable informal tests should be continuously given in order to find out about the student's ability in reading comprehension, his recognition skill, and his reading speed. Help on individual basis then becomes possible.

This recommendation, which is the first one, actually consists of steps that can be taken immediately by any literacy campaign anywhere.

2. As the "desirable trends" which are mentioned in the table of data are woven into one pattern, complete with their "accompanying activities," a method of teaching reading is derived. If UNESCO is looking for a method of teaching reading that will bring a surer and quicker result, this may be it; and with its reading activities all laid out, this new method is ready for use by any country at any time. Therefore, in the future UNESCO seminar on fundamental education, the delegation from Thailand (with whom the author of this dissertation will be in close contact) should make it a point that the knowledge concerning this method of teaching reading and the facts revealed as a result of the evaluation made in this dissertation be shared with delegates from other countries in any one of the several working-groups.

3. In the meantime, Thailand, with its fundamental education campaign in progress, should also apply this method in teaching new groups of adults to read, side by side with the old method in order not to interrupt seriously the progress that is being gained.

As better results are obtained through the new method, the old method will gradually be eliminated. To initiate this campaign within the on-going campaign, a new group of teachers can be easily trained to teach in accordance with the techniques of the new method. In the same way as the present campaign was started, so will the proposed campaign within the campaign be initiated. Again a seminar on the new method of teaching reading may be called, and attended by the teachers who are already engaged in teaching adults in the on-going campaign. As the new method is a functional method, its values will be quickly appreciated. These teachers will adopt the new method without much difficulty, as the "reading activities" of the new method have been clearly laid out for them. Any swift result gained by using the new method have been clearly laid out for them. Any swift result gained by using the new method should be carefully recorded, and must be submitted as evidences to the future UNESCO seminar.

4. In countries where fundamental education, which usually involves activities regarding matters of health, agriculture and literacy development, is a necessity, colleges of education and teacher-training institutions should offer courses dealing with principles and methods of fundamental education. Among the courses to be given, one on the methods of teaching reading to adults must be certainly included. In such a case, the new method as proposed in this dissertation can be readily inserted into the program. It is good to note in passing that principles and methods of fundamental education so far have not been organized into courses of study, and offered by any known educational institutions.

5. Finally, it is strongly recommended that UNESCO, with all its resources and facilities and with its intention to experiment with new ideas and practices in a constant search for a more efficient method of teaching reading, adopt this new method of literacy development in its next project of fundamental education.

E. WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE?

One very important point has to be made before the close of this dissertation. This study must be viewed as one of the scientific experiments that were planned and successfully carried out in a laboratory. As a result of this investigation, certain “trends” or principles have been deduced and stated. Furthermore, in order that application of these principles may be possible, certain lines of “activities” have been suggested. The latter makes the study complete. It is now up to UNESCO, individual governments, teachers and the illiterate adults to achieve on a larger scale the success which has been gained in the laboratory.



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Autobiography

I, Saroj Buasri, was born in Bhuket, Thailand (Siam), September 16, 1916. I received my secondary school education in the public schools of the City of Bangkok, Thailand. My undergraduate training was obtained at the Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, from which I received the degree of Bachelor of Arts in 1939, and the Diploma in Education in 1940. From The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, I received the degree Master of Arts in 1948. While in residence at tThe Ohio State University, I was appointed by the Government of Thailand to represent that country at the UNESCO Seminar held at Adelphi College and at Lake Success, New York City, in 1948; I also acted in the capacity of graduate-assistant to Dr. Lowry W. Harding during the year 1949—50. During the year 1951, I have completed the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

