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ABSTRACT

This collection of abstracts is part of a continuing series providing information on recent doctoral dissertations. The 11 titles deal with the following topics: a mature reader's use of consciously employed strategies to facilitate comprehension; contextual and acontextual approaches to teaching vocabulary to adult students; methods for teaching reading and study skills to specially admitted college freshmen; effects of an affectively oriented curriculum-centered college reading course on reading achievement and attitude toward reading; self-perceived reading status of college freshmen; effects of knowledge of vocabulary and syntax on the reading comprehension of high risk college freshmen; reading programs at New Jersey state colleges; the effects of Sustained Silent Reading on college students' reading and study skills habits; the matching of prescriptions in an individualized reading program to community college students' learning styles; the two-year college reading program; and the effect of questioning strategies on drawing inferences in reading. (GW)

Reading and Study Skills Instruction: College and Adult:

Abstracts of Doctoral Dissertations Published in Dissertation Abstracts International, January through June 1978 (Vol. 38 Nos. 7 through 12)

Compiled by the Staff of

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This bibliography has been compiled as part of a continuing series designed to make information on relevant dissertations available to users of the ERIC system. Monthly issues of Dissertation Abstracts International are reviewed in order to compile abstracts of dissertations on related topics, which thus become accessible in searches of the ERIC data base. Ordering information for the dissertations themselves is included at the end of the bibliography.

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Brown, Robert Charles

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THE EFFECT OF QUESTIONING STRATEGIES ON DRAWING INFERENCES IN READING

CLINICAL DIAGNOSIS OF COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES: A CASE STUDY Order No. 7809575

BIGGS, Shirley Ann, Ed.D. University of Pittsburgh, 1977. 124pp.

The purpose of the investigation was to explore a mature reader's use of consciously employed strategies that may facilitate comprehension. Of specific interest was the illustration of the integrated use of standard procedures to clarify 1) the effect of reader knowledge and a period of practice on comprehension, 2) the quantity and quality of strategy shift that knowledge and practice of strategy may influence, and 3) the determination of productive strategies for a specific reader.

The method used in the investigation emerged from interaction with and observation of the population in instructional settings and as a result of examination of reading comprehension process literature. The length and number of work sessions as well as appropriate interest and difficulty levels of the reading materials used were determined primarily through pre-investigation interaction and observation. Information gained through interaction and observation also prompted a search of the literature for viable alternative diagnostic and instructional procedures. The search yielded several procedures which were used informally with interested students to determine useability. Thus the basis for designing the method employed in the investigation was established.

The subject of the investigation was selected from the population of two hundred forty-six special freshmen students enrolled in a program at a major western Pennsylvania university designed to offer intensive academic counseling and specially designed courses to insure student success no matter what the academic background. On the basis of score patterns earned on Form A of the Carver-Darby Chunked Reading Test, More Able and Less Able readers were identified. From the pool of each of the above mentioned type readers, four of each type were selected and assigned. From the eight case studies one illustrative case study was presented in detail to demonstrate the use of the various procedures.

The subject participated in three investigator-directed sessions and engaged in two weeks of independent silent reading. During the sessions he produced miscue analysis, cloze, introspection and retrospection data which were analyzed for evidence of strategies and strategy use as a reflection of the functioning of the reading comprehension process. Form B of the Carver-Darby Reading Test was administered at the end of the independent silent reading period.

A description and analysis of the data produced through integration and synthesis of miscue analysis, cloze, introspection and retrospection procedures formed the basis for generating speculations associated with clinical diagnosis of a reader's comprehension strategies.

It can be concluded from the investigation that: 1. Using the clinical procedures outlined, the subject was diagnosed as using the strategies of testing, predicting, seeking and relating information, analyzing words, responding automatically and adjusting rate. 2. The various single techniques within the procedure appeared to have less diagnostic value than the total procedure or special combinations of two or three techniques. For example, data gathered using the traditional cloze technique proved useful for estimating the degree of comprehension gained. However, with the addition of introspection data, a new dimension (knowledge of specific strategies used to comprehend) was added. 3. Strategy shifts appeared to occur with knowledge of strategies and deliberate practice of those strategies. 4. Comprehension appeared to change as a result of knowledge and practice of strategies. Analysis of introspection data indicated that knowledge and practice of available strategies had immediate positive impact on comprehension.

VOCABULARY ACQUISITION IN THE TWO-YEAR COLLEGE: A COMPARISON OF CONTEXTUAL AND ACONTEXTUAL INSTRUCTIONAL APPROACHES Order No. 7801216

BROWN, Robert Charles, Ed.D. Oklahoma State University, 1976. 155pp.

Scope of Study: Focusing upon the comparison of contextual and acontextual instructional approaches of teaching vocabulary to adult students, this study hypothesizes that there is no statistically-significant difference between the language-acquisition change scores of adult students when new words are introduced organically and develop contextual relationships or when they are introduced inorganically and develop no contextual relationships. For experimental analysis, the change scores are grouped for comparison by sex, age, and general-ability levels. This study is limited to adult students enrolled in English Composition I classes in an urban two-year college. These students were divided into three groups; two groups were taught a sampling core of words by using different methods, while a third group received no instruction in vocabulary. The same pre- and posttest measurements were administered to all groups; then an analysis of variance was used to determine the amount of change present in the scores of, and among each group.

Findings and Conclusions: Statistical analysis of the experimental data produced in the study revealed that there was great statistically-significant difference between the language-acquisition change scores of adults taught by the two different methods. Those taught new words directly through inorganic methods demonstrated greater change in pre- and posttest measures. Analysis also revealed that female adults demonstrated greater vocabulary acquisition than male students and that those students classified as average and high in general mental ability demonstrated greater gain than those of lower ability. There was no statistically-significant difference in the change scores of students when compared on the basis of age. These findings allowed the experimenter to reject three of his four hypotheses and to conclude that adult students can increase their recognition vocabularies through the direct study of instructor-prepared wordlists which have essentially no relationship to the remainder of the classwork.

Inferences that have possible application to future research are: (1) A population more representative of the two-year college would contain significantly greater percentages of Black and other minority representation. (2) In several cases, the sampling of vocabulary words introduced for study might include words more immediately applicable to the average adult. (3) While the experimenter chose two methods of vocabulary instruction with rather broad bases and inherent in several popular methods of stimulating vocabulary acquisition, perhaps other studies utilizing different methods might provide more comprehensive comparison data. (4) There is a possibility that with the same experimenter directing vocabulary study in both groups, some degree of instructor bias is operative on the results obtained through the experiment.

AN INVESTIGATION OF TWO METHODS OF TEACHING READING AND STUDY SKILLS TO SPECIALLY ADMITTED FIRST-YEAR COLLEGE STUDENTS

Order No. 7730780

BUTTON, Jay Merle, Ed.D. Syracuse University, 1977. 168pp.

This study investigated the effects of two methods of teaching reading and study skills to specially admitted first-year college students. Effects on student's reading achievement, their achievement in an introductory psychology course, their attitude toward reading and their grade point average were studied. The two methods were the Affectively Oriented Method (AOM) which was a counseling oriented, student-centered approach and the Cognitively Oriented Method (COM) which was a traditional, teacher-dominated approach. Both approaches included similar strategies for helping students become more effective with reading and studying. This study also sought to generate descriptive materials about the methods (AOM and COM) and to present information describing the organizational approach used.

The following hypotheses were posited: H_1: Treatment group mean scores will not be different from the control group on reading achievement. H_2: Treatment group mean scores will not be different from the control group on achievement in psychology. H_3: Treatment group mean scores will not be different from the control group on attitude toward reading. H_4: Treatment group grade point averages will not be different from the control group.

Forty-two Office of Special Programs students who volunteered to participate in a six-week summer program were the subjects of this study. These 42 students were randomly assigned to two experimental groups and one control group. The reading and study methods (AOM and COM) were delivered to the experimental students within the context of a three credit hour course, each taught by the instructor who developed the method. The control group students did not take a reading and study skills course. Instead, they enrolled in some other three credit hour course. All students took the same introductory psychology course, at the same time, from the same professor. The psychology class met first each day and was followed by the reading and study skills class for the experimental students. The control group students may have attended their second class either before or after the psychology class. Each class required six and one-quarter hours of weekly contact with the instructor.

A factorial ANOVA (repeated measures) was used to test the first three hypotheses. A comparison of scores indicated no significant differences among groups on any of the variables investigated, thus failing to reject each of the null hypotheses 1, 2 and 3.

A factorial ANOVA was used to test the fourth hypothesis. Comparison of scores indicated no significant difference among groups, thus failing to reject the null hypothesis.

Hypothesis two dealt with achievement in an introductory psychology course. It was found that the three groups, when considered together, made significant improvements from pre to posttesting.

It was discovered that it was difficult to locate detailed descriptions of treatment procedures within the literature. It was not an easy matter to provide the details of the treatments within this study. The organizational approach to this study resulted in effective deployment of staff and facilities. In large part, this was possible because of prior cooperative successful endeavors of the parties involved.

It was concluded that the effects of the affectively and cognitively oriented methods were about the same as one another and no method when scores related to reading achievement, achievement in psychology, attitude toward reading and grade point average were considered.

A STUDY OF THE EFFECTS OF A CURRICULUM-CENTERED COLLEGE READING COURSE AND AN AFFECTIVELY ORIENTED CURRICULUM-CENTERED COURSE ON READING ACHIEVEMENT AND ATTITUDE TOWARD READING

Order No. 7806160

GRIFFIN, Edward Joseph, Ed.D. Hofstra University, 1977. 124pp.

There were two major purposes in this study. The first, was to examine the effects of college freshmen's verbalized attitudes toward reading on reading achievement; the second, was to compare the effects of two similar curriculum-centered instructional approaches on reading achievement and verbalized attitude toward reading. The experimental curriculum-centered approach differed from the control group approach in that it utilized an affective treatment, consisting of multiple teacher-initiated, individual student contacts designed to present the instructor as a genuine, caring, and empathic person. To this limited extent, the experimental treatment reflected the thinking of Carl Rogers as to the kind of teacher-student relationship that best facilitated learning.

The sample consisted of four intact class sections of Reading 100 (N=68), assigned to the investigator as part of his fall, 1976 teaching schedule at Nassau Community College. All of these students had scored between the 10th and 20th percentile on the reading section of the college placement test and had registered for Reading 100 after having been strongly counseled to do so.

The four intact class sections were randomly assigned to the experimental and the control treatment groups and then pretested in verbalized attitude toward reading (Estes Attitude Scale) and reading achievement (Diagnostic Reading Test: Survey Section, Upper Level, Form A) in order to determine group equivalency. The experimental and control treatment groups were again tested at semester's end in order to determine mean group differences in attitude toward reading and reading achievement. Both groups were also posttested to determine mean group differences in final class grade and student perception of the instructor's affective approach (Relationship Inventory).

Eleven null hypotheses were established to implement the purposes of the investigation. All hypotheses were analyzed through the use of a two group, experimental-control group design which utilized a t-test of the significance of the difference between means. Rejection of the null hypotheses required a mean difference with a level of significance of .05 or better.

Analysis of the data generated by this investigation resulted in the following findings: 1. The experimental and control groups did not differ significantly in either verbalized attitude toward reading or reading achievement as measured by the Estes Attitude Scale and the Diagnostic Reading Test. 2. The experimental treatment group perceived the instructor to be significantly more affective in his instructional approach than did the control treatment group. 3. There were no significant differences between the experimental treatment group and the control treatment group in either verbalized attitude toward reading or reading achievement as measured by the Estes Attitude Scale and the Diagnostic Reading Test: Survey Section, Form B, given as posttest. 4. When treatment was disregarded, however, students scoring in the top 25 percent on the Estes Attitude Scale, given as posttest, scored significantly higher in reading achievement and final class grade than students scoring in the bottom 25 percent. 5. When treatment was disregarded, students scoring in the top 25 percent on the Relationship Inventory, given as posttest, did not score significantly higher in reading achievement or final class grade, than students scoring in the bottom 25 percent. They did, however, score significantly higher in verbalized attitude toward reading.

The following conclusions follow from the findings of this investigation: 1. An affectively oriented curriculum-centered instructional reading approach, based to a limited degree on Rogerian principles of effective inter-personal relationships, was not significantly more effective in producing positive attitude toward reading and higher reading achievement than a similar curriculum-centered instructional approach without the affective input. 2. When treatment was disregarded, attitude toward reading appeared to be positively related to achievement in reading. 3. When treatment was disregarded, student perception of the instructor's affectiveness appeared to be significantly related only to attitude toward reading. How students perceived their instructor in terms of his genuineness, caring, and empathy did not appear to significantly affect performance in reading.

SELF-PERCEIVED READING STATUS OF ENTERING COLLEGE FRESHMEN, CENTRAL COLLEGE, PELLA, IOWA, 1976

HUIZER, Joyce Baarda, Ed.D.
Drake University, 1977

Adviser: Dr. Paul Blakely

A survey of current literature indicated clearly that there was a nationwide decline in reading achievement levels for entering college freshmen. It was considered appropriate to conduct a study contributing to better understanding of college reading improvement programs. The aspect of such programs chosen for study was the selection and motivation of students entering them.

The question. The question investigated in this study was: Is the entering Central College freshman's self-perception of his/her status in reading abilities and needs valid as related to a standardized measurement of reading performance?

Procedure. Data collection included information from the American College Test (ACT), the Nelson-Denny Reading Test, and a non-standardized Survey of Reading Skills (SRS). The subjects were divided into two groups for comparative purposes. The Self-Referral Group consisted of subjects who had responded positively to the ACT Statement 21, "I need help in reading speed and comprehension." The Non Self-Referral Group had responded negatively to the above statement. Matched pairs were sectioned into subgroups according to self-rating ranges on the SRS. A two-way analysis of variances, with the Nelson-Denny Reading Test scores serving as the dependent variable, was selected as the most appropriate statistical model for the data.

Findings. The findings include: 1) There was a significant difference between Nelson-Denny composite raw scores for the Self-Referral Group and the Non Self-Referral Group. 2) There was a statistically significant difference in mean Nelson-Denny Reading Test scores for students who self-rate at the "high," "middle," and "low" ranges on the Survey of Reading Skills. 3) Considering the Nelson-Denny composite raw scores, there was not a statistically significant interaction between the American College Test Self-Refer:Non Self-Refer and the responses on the Survey of Reading Skills.

Conclusions. The conclusions from the study follow: 1) Students who did not self-refer for help on the Student Profile Section of the American College Test scored significantly higher on the Nelson-Denny Reading Test than the self-referrals. 2) The group which self-ranked "high" on the SRS scored significantly higher on the Nelson-Denny Reading Test than those who self-ranked in the "middle" and the "low" ranges of the SRS. The group which self-ranked at the "middle" level of the SRS scored significantly higher on the Nelson-Denny Reading Test than the group which self-scored "low" on the SRS. 3) Both the ACT Self-Referral Group and the ACT Non Self-Referral Group scored from "low" to "high" ranges on the Survey of Reading Skills and on the Nelson-Denny Reading Test. Therefore, it was not concluded that all students who say, "Yes, I need help in reading speed and comprehension," will achieve at low levels on a standardized reading achievement test or on a non-standardized self-evaluative instrument.

Recommendations. Recommendations resulting from the study are: 1) Corroborative investigations involving the validity of American College Test Student Profile Section data are needed. 2) Further validation of the Survey of Reading Skills appears appropriate. 3) In the survey of literature, the investigator found documented evidence that reading scores of entering college students have declined in recent years. However, studies which assess the specific reading needs of college freshmen are lacking. 4) Since the investigator found data in the literature which challenge the effectiveness of the reading lab on the college campus, other methods for teaching reading skills at the college level need to be researched. 5) Although the study has shown a high degree of validity in students' self-referral on the ACT, there are nevertheless some students having low reading achievement scores who do not self-refer on the ACT. The reasons for this phenomenon warrant exploration. Order No. 77-28,815, 109 pages.

EFFECTS OF WORD KNOWLEDGE AND SYNTAX ON THE READING COMPREHENSION OF HIGH RISK UNIVERSITY FRESHMEN Order No. 7804278

KOWAL, Patricia D., Ph.D. Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, 1977. 95pp. Chairman: Dr. Margaret Hill

This study was designed to test the following hypotheses: 1. Students instructed in difficult vocabulary contained in a standardized test of reading comprehension will perform significantly better in reading comprehension than students not receiving that instruction. 2. There will be a positive correlation between scores on a test of English syntax and scores on a standardized test of reading comprehension.

One hundred fifty-three high risk university freshmen, enrolled in University 101, spring semester, 1976 were included in the study.

All students took Parts 1 and 3 of the McGraw-Hill Basic Skills System, Reading Test, Form B; a vocabulary pre-test testing words identified as ninth grade or higher according to the Thorndike-Lorge frequency count which appeared on the alternate form of the McGraw-Hill test; and a syntax test similar in format to the Test of English as a Foreign Language. Students in the experimental group (N=100) then received instruction in the words on the vocabulary pre-test while students in the control group (N=53) received instruction in skills not related to reading (writing and library research).

Following completion of the instructional period, all students were administered the vocabulary post-test covering the same words as the pre-test and the McGraw-Hill Basic Skills System, Reading Test, Form A.

The testing program was analyzed with the following results: 1. Students in the experimental group scored significantly higher on the vocabulary post-test than did the control group. 2. There was no difference between the experimental and control groups on the reading comprehension post-test. 3. There was no significant difference between pre- and post-test gains in vocabulary and pre- and post-test gains on the reading comprehension sub-tests. 4. There was no significant correlation between reading comprehension scores and scores on the test of English syntax.

Based on these results, the investigator concluded that students in the experimental group did learn the difficult vocabulary taught during the experimental sessions but this learning did not produce an increase in the reading comprehension of this group.

In addition, the experimenter concluded that the syntax test was not suitable for high risk college freshmen although six constructions appeared on the test which caused difficulties for at least 20% of the students taking the test.

A SURVEY OF NEW JERSEY STATE COLLEGE READING PROGRAMS AND RESULTING RECOMMENDATIONS

Order No. 7732777

LYNN, Jo-Ann M., Ed.D. Boston University School of Education, 1977. 129pp. Major Professor: Thomas E. Cuilton, Jr.

Purpose

The purpose of this investigation was to develop recommendations reflecting the beliefs and preferences of reading personnel in conjunction with the literature in the field in relation to selected aspects of college reading programs. The areas considered were student selection; voluntary, advised, or mandatory participation; academic credit; grading systems; evaluation of student performance; major objectives; major components; and suggested areas for improvement of the reading program.

Procedure

The investigator conducted an interview at each of the eight colleges comprising the State College System of New Jersey. The participant at each institution was questioned in terms of the current status, the ideal situation, and the rationale for the ideal situation for each of the areas being investigated. The findings of these interviews, as well as the pertinent literature, were utilized to offer recommendations for the programmatic aspects included in the survey.

Results and Conclusions

The range of responses to the interview varied according to the areas of concern. There did not appear to be an awareness of other programs concerning the areas of investigation; there was also no indication of an awareness of the idealized goals of other institutions in relation to these areas. The investigator recommends that a standing channel of communication be developed to foster awareness between the involved personnel at the State Colleges of New Jersey.

Recommendations were based on the stated preferences of the polled faculty in concert with the relevant literature in the field. Programmatic decisions were made within the context of compatibility of individual segments with each other and with the total program.

The researcher recommends that student selection be made according to a combination of SAT scores, additional testing, and self-referral; the program be mandatory for those students scoring below a pre-determined level; academic credit be granted to students successfully completing the program; the program be graded on a pass/fail basis; student performance be evaluated according to individual growth as determined by teacher evaluation supplemented by examination; the major program objectives be improvement of reading and study skills and improvement of academic performance; the major components be improvement of comprehension and study skills; and that further individualization and greater incorporation of academic area materials be the primary areas for improvement.

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE EFFECTS OF THE USE OR NON-USE OF SUSTAINED SILENT READING ON READING SKILL PROFICIENCY AND SELF-CONCEPTS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS ENGAGED IN A TRADITIONAL DIAGNOSTIC PRESCRIPTIVE PROGRAM Order No. 7802927

PARDY, S.Sp.S., Sister Mary, Ph.D. University of Southern Mississippi, 1977. 131pp.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the effects of Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) on the reading-study skills habits of college students as a facet of a diagnostic and prescriptive reading skill development course. Specific purposes were: (a) to determine if students using the daily SSR showed a significantly different pattern in the specific skill areas of comprehension, vocabulary development, and reading rate than students not using SSR as a practice technique; (b) to determine if the students in the high, medium, and low achiever categories who engage in SSR scored differently than do high, medium, and low students not in SSR; (c) to determine if college students' self-concepts in several areas related to school study, and self differed after exposure and non-exposure to the SSR practice condition.

Methods

Fifty-four college students enrolled in the University of Southern Mississippi's Fall Quarter Reading Improvement Program (CIF 334) were administered the California Reading Test (CRT) and the Nelson-Denny Reading Test (NDRT) (pre- and posttests) and the Semantic Differential Self Concept Inventory (SDSCI). The three sections of students were divided into control and treatment groups. A probability level of .05 was required for establishing statistical significance of the hypotheses.

H_1, evaluating differences in control and SSR groups, was tested using a t test analysis on the generated series of reading skills in the form of their related subhypotheses. For H_2, a t test of significance between the group means of each subtest of total scores (CRT and NDRT) was computed for each treatment and control grouping (high, medium, and low achievers).

An ancilliary investigation was conducted to determine relative gain of both groups taken as a whole over a quarter of instruction and, also, to determine if no-gain might perhaps be masking treatment effect. To test H_3, each of the eight subcategories of self-concept as measured by the SDSCI was correlated and the correlation compared between treatment and control groups. NSSR and SSR group means t tests determined if differences in attitudes existed.

Results

(a) No significant difference existed between (SSR) and (NSSR) groups on each of the CRT and NDRT subtests and total scores; (b) No significant difference was found between the means of each group's subtest scores in 39 out of 42 possible comparisons. An exception to the overall research hypothesis was noted when the group mean comparison of the low achiever, NSSR group, surpassed the SSR experimental group on the NDRT total. The other two exceptions were misleading, since they actually reflected cells with no variance. Although the specific treatments of SSR and control appeared to produce no significant effect when posttest scores were considered, the reading skill development course itself seemed to reflect a pattern of significant gains throughout the quarter. In regard to H_3, SSR students reflected more positive stems on the SDSCI than did students in the control group as shown by a higher mean score of positive attitudes toward the program, Improvement of Study. Correlation analysis, however, indicated significance for the NSSR group with four semantic differential stems (myself, myself to be in college next semester, like myself to be, and when I am writing) and none for the SSR group total scores when they were correlated with the eight semantic differential variables and the CRT and NDRT subskills scores,

Conclusions

None of the 3 hypotheses was totally accepted. However, combined treatment and control scores indicated significant gain for the quarter.

While analysis of the data indicated no treatment differences between NSSR and SSR groups, subjective expressions from student evaluations indicated extremely positive affective change toward reading. A question still remains concerning the measurement of the reading process and the effect that SSR would have on an adequately measured process.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF STUDENT LEARNING STYLES FOR PRESCRIBING READING SKILL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS

ROBERTSON, Piedad F., Ed.D.
Florida Atlantic University, 1977

Major Adviser: Dr. Joe Cook

This study established the effectiveness of matching prescriptions in an individualized reading program to the learning styles of students at the Community College level. The study was made at Miami-Dade Community College (South) during the Winter Term, 1977. Two questionnaires were administered to measure the experimental and control group 1 students' perception of the learning experience and to measure the experimental and control group 1 instructors' perception of the students.

Several hypotheses were tested: (1) Would the experimental group have significantly higher posttest scores than the control groups? (2) Would sex, age, and ethnicity significantly influence scores? (3) Would the attitude of the experimental group toward the learning experience be significantly different from the attitude of control group 1? Instructors' perceptions of student progress in the experimental and control groups were examined but not included in a statistical analysis because of the small number involved.

The literature was reviewed before selecting a reading test and a learning style measuring instrument. Also examined were other studies that established affiliation, modality and content dimensions of a student's processing system as important individual learning characteristics.

The Nelson-Denny Reading Test (1974) was chosen to measure the effectiveness of the study in terms of pretest and posttest scores. Students with a mean score of 47 or below were assigned to Block 1 and those above 47 were assigned to Block 2. All diagnostic testing was done during the first weeks of the term.

The Learning Style Inventory (Canfield & Lafferty, 1974) was selected to determine the students' learning styles. Students were selected for this study whose learning style was teacher affiliation, with either an iconic or a listening mode of learning, and with a preference for numeric, qualitative, inanimate or people content. Subjects were classified according to six combinations of these styles.

Students enrolled in the college Reading Laboratory were randomly assigned to the experimental group (113 students) or to one of three control groups (302 students). For students in the experimental group, learning styles as well as reading levels were matched to reading materials that had been previously classified according to modality and content. Instructors were informed of the students' styles and were asked to establish a close-working relationship with the students including frequent opportunities to discuss progress, select goals and give personal encouragement. Learning styles of control group 1 students, although known by the researcher, were not shared with instructors, and, therefore, were not used in prescribing reading materials. Control groups 2 and 3 were not subjected to previously matched instructional strategy.

The major findings of this study showed the significant main effect of blocking as well as the significant interaction effect of blocking and matching of modality and content preference to materials. Sex was found not to have a significant influence on the scores of the students. On the other hand, the effect of ethnicity, as well as age, was significant in some instances. The experimental students responded more positively to their learning experience, as reported in the student questionnaire, than did control group 1 students. Instructors of the experimental students were positive about their students' progress but reported a need for more materials in their responses to the instructor questionnaire.

It was concluded that the tests selected were valid and reliable for this study. The results obtained by the experimental group students showed that matching produced higher means in posttest scores. The sex and age factors did not influence the students' final scores to the degree that the ethnic factor did.

It was recommended that further similar research be done in the matching of student learning style and reading materials.

Order No. 77-28,784, 349 pages.

THE TWO-YEAR COLLEGE READING PROGRAM: A RATIONALE, A REVIEW, AND A PROGRAM DESIGN

Order No. 7807381

SCOTT, Neil Anderson, Ph.D. The University of Texas at Austin, 1977. 180pp. Supervisor: Charles R. Kline, Jr.

This study had three objectives: (1) To establish the rationale that due to excessive heterogeneity in the two-year college student body, instructional needs of students are diverse and unique, necessitating specially-designed reading programs, (2) To identify common elements in current two-year college reading programs, and (3) To supply guidelines for designing and operating a two-year college reading program.

In compliance with the first of these objectives, a needs assessment study traced the origin and development of the two-year college to examine the nature and educational goals of two-year college students today.

To comply with the second objective, a review of current trends and practices in two-year college reading instruction establishes that certain common characteristics exist in two-year college reading programs. The review treated objectives and course descriptions, materials, teaching personnel, program evaluation, and instruction.

In achieving the third objective, the writer presents a prototype for a college reading program design which includes guidelines for the development and operation of a program from its inception. Features of the design include preliminary procedures, program planning, purchasing, physical layout, and implementation and evaluation of the program. The design is based on an actual two-year college reading program.

The study concludes with a discussion of benefits of a two-year college reading program such as the one designed here.

THE EFFECT OF QUESTIONING STRATEGIES ON DRAWING INFERENCES IN READING Order No. 7808492

SMITH, Evelyn D., Ph.D. New York University, 1977. 121pp.
Chairman: Josephine P. Ives

The first hypothesis predicted that there would be both main effects and an interaction effect for methods of instruction and level of vocabulary knowledge in the ability to make inferences in reading. A two-way analysis of variance was calculated with group and vocabulary as the independent variables, and the score on the Reading for Understanding Test as the dependent variable. The hypothesis was only partially confirmed. The F ratios for the main effects were significant, but the F ratio to test the interaction was not significant.

A series of multiple contrasts between the groups, using Scheffé's test with the regressed difference score as the dependent variable, were computed to test hypotheses 2, 3, 4, and 5. The second hypothesis, which predicted that the treatment groups considered as a whole would be more successful in their ability to make inferences in reading than the control group, was confirmed. The third hypothesis, which predicted that questions based on convergent production would produce more success in the ability to make inferences in reading than questions based on evaluation, was confirmed. The fourth hypothesis, which predicted that questions based on convergent production would produce more success in the ability to make inferences in reading than questions based on divergent production, was confirmed. The fifth hypothesis, which predicted the questions based on evaluation would produce more success in the ability to make inferences in reading than questions based on divergent production, was rejected.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of different kinds of written questions, used to stimulate specific kinds of inferential thinking, on inferential comprehension in reading. The study was conducted at York College, City University of New York, using entering college freshmen who were programmed for a basic reading skills course as participants. Five hypotheses were tested to determine the effect of different kinds of written questions on inferential comprehension in reading.

Using Guilford's theory of the Structure of Intellect, three treatment groups were formed to correspond to three of Guilford's operations -- convergent production, evaluation, and divergent production. The 183 participants were randomly assigned to the three treatment groups and the control group. Separate sets of questions were written for each treatment group. The questions for the convergent production group were structured so that thinking was directed toward the generation of one answer. The questions for the evaluation group were structured to encourage the making of a decision by checking the facts to determine the best conclusion from a group of alternatives. The questions for the divergent production group were structured to allow for the generation of a variety of responses. The materials were self-instructional accompanied by prepared answer sheets with no teacher intervention. The control group was given exercises related to the identification of topics; no inferences were involved in these exercises.

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn: (1) Reading for inferences is a teachable and a measurable skill. (2) Word knowledge does not appear to interact with methods of instruction. (3) Questions can structure the learning situation and guide students to make the correct responses in making inferences in reading. (4) A structured step-by-step procedure seems to produce success in making inferences in reading. (5) Self-instructional materials can be effective in teaching the making of inferences in reading when the instructions are explicit and feed-back is adequate.

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