ED 229 719   CS 007 058

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TITLE   Materials Centered Reading Instruction: A
                Naturalistic Study of a Summer School Reading
                Program.
PUB DATE   Apr 83
NOTE   37p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the
                American Educational Research Association (Montreal,
                Canada, April 11-15, 1983).
PUB TYPE   Reports - Research/Technical (143) --
                Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE   MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS   *Basal Reading; Case Studies; Classroom
                Communication; Classroom Observation Techniques;
                Classroom Research; Primary Education; *Reading
                Instruction; *Reading Materials; Reading Programs;
                *Reading Research; Reading Skills; Skill Development;
                Student Teacher Relationship; Summer Programs;
                *Teacher Behavior; *Teacher Role; Teaching Styles

ABSTRACT
        Two combined second and third grade classrooms were
observed throughout the five weeks of a summer school program to
determine what "reading instruction" was in the contextual reality of
classroom life. Observers viewed approximately 20 hours of reading
instruction per week. In addition, they interviewed the classroom
teachers informally as the study unfolded and formally at the
conclusion of the observation period. Other data analyzed included
classroom maps, samples of instructional materials, lesson plans,
student work, and informal interviews with principals and other
teachers. The findings revealed that reading instruction in the
summer school classrooms was materials centered, and that
implementing the reading series provided was the driving force behind
instructional activity in both classrooms. Instruction was
skill-based, product-oriented, reactive, and disconnected. Reading
lessons and the instructional behavior of teachers were profoundly
influenced by the basal materials. Teaching behaviors that dominated
instructional assistance, direct instruction, and attempts to do more
than assign practice activities and check them were conspicuous in
their absence. (FL)

MATERIALS CENTERED READING INSTRUCTION:
A NATURALISTIC STUDY OF A SUMMER SCHOOL READING PROGRAM

J. Amos Hatch
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What is reading instruction like in a remedial summer school program?
What do teachers do in these programs to help children who have been identified
as having difficulties learning to read? What kinds of activities and experi-
ences do teachers provide for these children? These were the questions with
which we began our investigation into reading instruction in a summer school
setting.

- The motivation for undertaking this study grew out of the researchers'
shared interest in trying to understand and describe what "instruction" is
like within the contextual reality of classroom life. Studying reading
instruction in a summer school offered the opportunity to make a careful
descriptive record and analysis of teaching behavior within a reasonably well
defined educational context. The intent was not to evaluate the effectiveness
of the program or to introduce and measure the effect of any particular inter-
vening variable. The intent instead was to use ethnographic research methods
to describe and analyze the reading instruction experienced by children in
two summer school classrooms. Our goal was to collect information about and
gather insight into the instructional methods used in remedial summer school
classrooms.

Durkin's (1978-79) observational study of reading comprehension instruction
called attention to the need for looking closely at instruction as it occurs
in the classroom context. Researchers who have pursued naturalistic studies
of reading instruction have found teachers behaving much as Durkin described:
teachers "mention" reading skills (give students just enough information so
that assignments may be completed) and "assess" skill mastery as they monitor
pupils through commercial materials (Durkin, 1978-79; Duffy & McIntyre, 1980;

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Duffy & McIntyre, 1982). Duffy and McIntyre (1982) studied six primary class-
rooms to determine how teachers helped students learn to read. Their goal was
to describe teachers' "instructional assistance," or "intentional efforts to
facilitate student learning of new content through the use of simple-to-com-
plex verbal progressions" (p. 16). In these classrooms, little instructional
assistance was observed. In its place, teachers assigned workbook pages,
listened to students recite from basal materials, and responded to their
incorrect answers. These "teaching" behaviors make sense in light of the
teachers' views that "'teaching reading' is 'coordinating,' 'pacing,' 'regu-
lating,' or 'overseeing' student progress through basal materials" (p. 19).

Reading instruction as described in such studies is less a matter of
explaining concepts and processes to students than it is giving them sub-
skill-oriented activities to do. According to Duffy and Roehler (1982), much
of what is referred to as "instruction" in the reading literature and research
is actually a version of practice:

> Whether it is the reading of connected text, repeated
> readings, sub-skill acquisition, the reading of basal
> texts, the completion of exercise pages, repetition of
> the teacher's modeling, or the answering of questions...
> instruction is almost universally uniform. It seems to
> be based on the expectation that all pupils, regardless
> of background and/or aptitude, will learn to do the
> selected task if exposed enough and that instruction is
> the process of providing this exposure. (p. 439)

In order to understand why instruction in classrooms seems to be an
"illusion," as Duffy and Roehler (1982) have called it, Duffy (1981)
encourages researchers to study teaching behaviors within the framework of
classroom complexities. Not only can we then be more precise in describing
what we mean by instruction, but we can identify the naturalistic conditions
of teaching which influence teachers' actions. By studying teaching within
the complex environs in which it takes place, perhaps we will be better

prepared to provide teachers with suggestions, strategies, and models for instruction which make sense inside the realities of classroom life.

Methodology

The participant observation research model as described by James Spradley (1980) provided the methodological framework upon which this study was designed. The study does not pretend to be an "ethnography," but does adapt some useful ethnographic methods to the study of instruction "in context." Field note records and ethnographic interviews (Spradley, 1979) provided the central data of the research. These data were analyzed according to the "Developmental Research Sequence" suggested by Spradley (1980). The choice of the participant observation methodology reflects our intention to understand and describe instruction as it is experienced by participants inside the context of a summer reading program. The methodological cycle of asking questions, making observations, doing analysis, and generating more questions provides the vehicle whereby contextual reality can be recorded and analyzed in a rigorous scientific way (Bondy and Hatch, in press).

The classroom observations for this study were made throughout the five week duration of the summer session being investigated. Observations were made by the authors in two primary classrooms (second and third grade combinations). The authors are Ph.D. candidates who have been trained in qualitative research methods and have each completed one other naturalistic study. One author has a background in reading and the other in elementary education.

The classrooms were located in different schools and observers divided their time between schools. Approximately 40% of the total time spent on reading instruction in each class, or about 20 hours per class, was observed and recorded in ethnographic field notes. Reading periods were observed

from beginning to end and observations scheduled so that each school day of the week would be equally represented in the data collection record. The teachers of the classrooms being observed were made aware of observation schedules and knew ahead of time when observers would be in their rooms.

Each classroom teacher in the study was interviewed informally as the study unfolded and formally at the conclusion of the observational cycle. The formal interviews were recorded on audio tape and transcribed into a typed record. Other data brought to the analysis of the study included classroom maps, samples of instructional materials, lesson plans, student work, and informal interviews with principals and other teachers.

Classrooms were chosen for participation based on the recommendation of the principals of the summer school cent rs in the study and the teachers' willingness to participate in the study. The researchers were careful to explain their intention to describe and analyze summer school reading instruction to participating principals and teachers prior to beginning the study. The researchers established that they would limit their movements and avoid direct interaction with students while recording classroom activity in field notes. When doing observations, the researchers typically sat in a place from which the instructional interactions could be seen and heard and remained in that spot throughout the instructional period.

The researchers made a decision going into this study to focus on instruction, and data collection strategies reflected this focus. Teacher talk and behavior represent the major content of the field note record. Following the completion of data collection, analysis was made using the Spradley (1980) model as a guide. Both researchers completed an independent analysis and this report represents the synthesis of these analyses.

Setting

The classrooms under investigation in this study were located in elementary schools identified as summer school centers for the 1982 remedial summer program. These schools are in an urban school district in the southeastern United States. The physical arrangements at both schools provided plenty of classroom space, adequate materials and furniture, and air conditioning. Children attended school from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. four days per week. Lunch was provided at school and each school day was equally divided between reading and math instruction.

Children in the observed classrooms were in summer school because their academic performance during the previous year did not merit their passage to the next grade level. Summer school provided an opportunity for remediation in reading and math so that they could, if successful in summer school, be promoted to the next level. At both schools, neighborhood students walked to school while others rode buses. Part of the bussing was to accomodate children who attended other schools during the regular year, and part was a function of the district's plan to achieve racial balance among its schools. The physical plants, the materials and facilities, and the kinds of children served in both classrooms were very similar in nature. Both were operating within the district guidelines and objectives for summer school, and both divided instructional time in a similar manner. Some of the particulars of each setting are outlined below.

Classroom A was a combination second and third grade class. In classroom A, there were eighteen children enrolled, and attendance averaged around fifteen or sixteen each day. Among the eighteen, twelve were boys (eight black and four white) and six were girls (four black and two white); six were second while twelve were third graders. Teacher A was a black woman with several

years of teaching experience, many of those years having been spent at school A. She had taught summer school in the past. She was recommended for participation in the study by her principal who described her as a good teacher and one who would not feel uncomfortable having participant observers in her room.

Classroom B was a second-third grade combination as well. Enrollment was seventeen and daily attendance averaged about thirteen or fourteen. Classroom B was more equally divided between black and white (nine and eight) and between boys and girls (ten and seven) than classroom A. Seven children were second graders and ten were third. Teacher B was a white woman who had just completed her third teaching year. This experience was her first summer teaching job. She was recommended for participation in the study as a "good teacher" by her regular school teaching colleagues and her summer school principal.

In the remainder of this paper, we will report the findings of our naturalistic investigation of reading instruction in two summer school classrooms and draw implications from this research for educational researchers and practitioners.

DESCRIPTION AND DISCUSSION

A casual observer of classrooms A and B would be likely to remark on the divergent natures of the two rooms. This observer would note the different organization and management plans, different teacher personalities and teaching styles, and different techniques of teaching reading. Indeed, casual observation of the two classrooms may result in the identification of more differences between the settings than similarities. However, hours of observation and careful analysis of observational data provide quite a different picture. Our analysis revealed that these two apparently disparate instruc-

tional settings shared the attributes which define the essential educational experience for students in the study. In fact, it was discovered that reading instruction in the two classrooms was shaped and driven by the same force-- the county adopted basal reading series.

Analysis of reading instruction data generated a description of the nature of instruction, a typification of the components of reading lessons, and an analytic description of instructional behaviors within the basal centered context of the studied classrooms. In the next three sections, these areas of analysis will be explicated and discussed. Surface differences in the appearance of instruction in the two rooms may be accounted for by the media- ting influence of classroom realities peculiar to each setting. These mediating influences will be considered in a fourth section.

The Nature of Instruction

The set of teacher behaviors constituting reading instruction in class- rooms A and B may be understood within the framework of the teachers' reverence to the reading series. Both teachers view the series as providing the structure and content of reading instruction. Says Teacher B of planning for reading, "Well, after the groups were formed it really wasn't that hard. Reading is very well set up for you. It's such a planned program in itself." Teacher A voiced a similar perspective: "The unit is spelled out in the teacher's edition. Although sometimes you have to gear in other materials, too. But it's a plan... And if you pretty well stick to that plan and add other materials, you come out pretty well with it." The two teachers expressed different opinions of the series, yet both allowed it to dictate instruction. While Teacher A remarked that the series was "great" because "it pinpoints a lot of needs of the students," Teacher B expressed some concern about being "locked into a

reading series." "I think it's a little too skills oriented," she remarked, and in addition, "the way the skills are set up, especially decoding skills, is very poor." Furthermore, "Up through level eight the stories are extremely boring. There's just nothing there that a child can get his teeth into." Despite Teacher B's concerns, the reading instruction she provided and decisions she made about reading were dictated by the basal series. What was the nature of reading instruction in the two classrooms? Our analysis revealed a typology which included the following characteristics: reading instruction is skill-based, product-oriented, reactive, and disconnected.

Teacher B captured the essence of the skill-based nature of instruction when she said to a reading group, "We won't do every page, just hit the highlights." The "highlights" refer to specific skills outlined in the teacher's manual and assessed by the criterion-referenced tests which follow each unit. In both classrooms a large portion of reading time was devoted to the skills of reading as defined by the reading series. During this time, skills were practiced by students, either orally or by completing written assignments. In classroom A, skills such as sequencing story details, using guide words, following directions, and using words beginning with consonant clusters were typically practiced by completing workbook pages. In classroom B, students completed workbook pages but also practiced specific skills orally during exercises conducted by the teacher. In both classrooms, teachers treated skills as through students were already familiar with them and required only practice in order to achieve mastery; these findings are consistent with those reported by Durkin (1978-79), Duffy and McIntyre (1982), and Duffy and Roehler (1982). In classroom B, the teacher occasionally preceded practice with a reminder about the skill. For example:

> Teacher B: We've been doing some work in our folders
> on main idea and we know that main idea means what
> the story is all about. On page 120 there are some
> paragraphs and you have to find the main idea. Let's
> do it together.

However, fuller explanations of the skills, the processes involved in performing them, and their relationship to the reading process were rarely observed. Skills were typically presented in conjunction with a workbook page. The reason for discussing skills, and they tended to be "mentioned" rather than discussed (Durkin, 1978-79), seemed to be to guarantee accuracy on the related assignment. These characteristics of skill-based instruction are demonstrated in the following example from a reading group:

> Teacher B: Now we're going to have some fun. You
> need a crayon.
> She passes the large crayon container around.
> As the students begin to color the next page,
> Teacher B says: Now wait, you're not following
> directions! Color only the spaces with words
> that end like <u>witch</u>. What does witch end like?
> Students: ich -ch -ch.
> Teacher B: Yes, so color the spaces with words
> that end in "ch." Just color them in quickly--
> we don't have that much time.

The materials embedded skills then, were ends in themselves rather than means to a more complex and meaningful end, such as improved reading ability or enjoyment of reading. The focus on skills and their demonstration in oral and written exercises suggests another closely associated feature of reading instruction in the two classrooms: its product orientation.

Both teachers focused on the products of reading as opposed to the thoughtful, language-centered process of reading. Teacher B's product orientation was manifested in her devotion to the mastery test. Her interactions with students were shaped by the goal of getting kids through the test. She verbalized her goal on the first day of summer school when she said to one reading group, "We're going to do unit 6 and do our best to get

you through the mastery test." References to the mastery test abound in this classroom. Comments such as the following are common:

> Teacher B: Look on page 102. This is a very important
> skill we have to learn. Know why? It's on your
> mastery test.

Teacher B's veneration to the test is a significant factor in understanding instruction in her classroom and will be addressed later in this paper. For now it is sufficient to point out the product-oriented nature of her instruction.

Teacher A also focused on products, but she was concerned with more immediate products than Teacher B. Teacher A stressed the importance of correct student responses. Correct responses were demanded in activities which included oral reading, oral answers to questions on story content and vocabulary, written assignments, and even reading-related artwork. Teacher A's concern for correct products is reflected in the predominance of teacher correcting behaviors in her classroom. "Checking out," as she called it, occupied a major portion of class time. The teacher called students up to her table and looked over the written work they were doing, most often sending them back to their seats with orders to fix mistakes ranging from inadequately spaced words, misspelled words, and omitted names and dates, to incorrect answers to questions. Most often Teacher A provided the correct answer, and the student's job was simply to "fix it." A similar pattern occurred during official reading group time, when the teacher instantly supplied the correct word when a student erred or hesitated in oral reading. Likewise, correct answers were supplied for questions on story content, for questions about vocabulary, and for workbook-related questions. The importance of correct products is illustrated in the following episode:

> Teacher A looks at Frank's completed workbook page.
> Teacher A: I told you there were two boys in the story.

> Stan didn't have a turtle so you wouldn't check
> Stan here. Okay, let's talk about the story.
> Teacher A proceeds to summarize the story.
> Teacher A: So the best title for the story would
> be "Fun in the Sun," not "Two Turtles," so let's
> check this one; let's be right.

As the materials which drive instruction in these classrooms consist of a scope and sequence of specific skills, it is not surprising that instruction reflects the teachers' concern for skills and the outcomes or products of skill mastery.

Another important and related characteristic of reading instruction in these classrooms is its reactive nature. Reactive instruction, a phrase coined by Duffy and Roehler (1980), may be understood as the teacher's corrective response to a student's error. When the student makes a mistake, the teacher may provide cues or reminders which either help the student self-correct or which directly correct the error. For example:

> Chuck is reading orally, and Teacher B stops him.
> Teacher B: Okay, stop there. When you get to the
> end of the sentence, whether there's a period, a
> question mark, or an exclamation point, you stop.

Another example of reactive instruction, this time related to a phonics skill, is the following:

> A student reads the word "veil" as "veal."
> Teacher B says: When you see ei together in
> a word, it takes the long a sound.

In Teacher A's room, reactive instruction most often took the form of supplying the correct response. For example:

> Teacher A tells a student in the reading group to
> read the next word in the list on the blackboard.
> Student: Proudly.
> Teacher A: Use it.
> Student: I am proudly.
> Teacher A: No, that's "I'm proud." There's an
> ending on that word. I did my work proudly.
> Next word?

Reactive instruction occurred frequently in both classrooms. Teacher B's reactive instruction more often took the form of providing a rule, a clue, or a strategy which helped the student correct him/herself. In the case of Teacher A, reactive instruction typically meant supplying the correct answer. In both classrooms, reactive instruction was far more common than proactive instruction, or instruction which takes place before practice and serves to explain a concept or skill before students attempt to use it. In fact, only one example of proactive instruction was identified in Teacher B's classroom and no examples were to be found in Teacher A's classroom. So, during approximately forty hours of observed instructional time, only one instance of proactive instruction was recorded. Durkin (1981) suggests that the absence of proactive instruction may be due to teachers' reliance on teacher manuals which provide more guidance in generating practice and assessing students' skills than in providing instruction. This suggestion finds support in the instructional behaviors utilized by Teachers A and B. That is, observed behaviors reflected the directions to teachers in the manuals. Perhaps it is also the case that the teachers believe, as Duffy and McIntyre (1982) have suggested, that instruction is handled by the materials and that the teacher's job is to pilot students through materials, checking the accuracy of student responses.

A final salient characteristic of reading instruction in classrooms A and B is that it is disconnected. Given its skill-based, product-oriented nature, this characteristic is hardly surprising. In their efforts to cover the skills as presented in the workbooks and manuals, the teachers seemed to be serving a smorgasbord of apparently unrelated skills. This smorgasbord approach reflects the teachers' reliance on the basal materials to provide the structure and content of reading instruction. Their approach strongly suggests, as well,

that those teachers have no clearly intended objectives other than to move students through the prescribed activities. They seem to have taken it on faith that moving students through the materials will have a desirable effect. Instruction is disconnected because the manual the teachers follow provides for few connections among activities and because the teachers apparently have no organizing objectives of their own which could provide unity and coherence.

The teachers were aware of the disconnected nature of instruction, as evidenced by Teacher B's comments to her reading group after they had read three pages silently, answered questions about the pages, corrected a workbook page the students had done for homework, completed a crossword puzzle, and discussed vocabulary from the story they had just finished:

> Teacher B: Okay, we're going to switch gears again and open our reading book to 153.

Many instances of disconnected instruction occurred in the two classrooms. Although the specific content shifted according to the story being read, all disconnected instruction had something in common: its pieces consisted of skills identified in the teacher's manual and assessed on the mastery test. Perhaps the most striking examples of disconnected instruction occurred on the day before Teacher B's students took their mastery tests. With one reading group, Teacher B conducted practice exercises on the short e and long i sounds, on finding the main idea in a paragraph, and on using guide words. With the next group, she covered using the table of contents, sequencing events, finding main ideas and identifying similarities and differences. Each skill was dealt with as an end in itself. There was no attempt to integrate them, to relate them to the reading process or to provide reasons for practicing them in the first place. After observing endless examples of this sort of instruction, one cannot help but wonder whether the students are learning

to read or to perform a "dis-array" of decoding, comprehension, and study skills.

Instruction in classrooms A and B has been shown to be skill-based, product-oriented, reactive, and disconnected. All of these features may be understood within the context of the explanatory theme of materials-centered instruction. Until now we have used the word "instruction" loosely to refer to the things teachers do when interacting with students during official reading periods. But what exactly does reading instruction look like in these two classrooms? That is, what specific teacher behaviors constitute reading instruction? In the next two sections the components of the official reading period in each classroom are identified and instructional behaviors are described.

Components of the Lesson

In Classroom B the reading lesson tended to replicate the lesson as it is outlined in the teacher's manual. Teacher B regularly included these components: providing background information, presenting new vocabulary, setting the purpose for each silent reading unit, having students read silently, asking questions following each silent reading unit, and presenting skills addressed in the story. For each component, she made frequent use of the suggestions in the teacher's manual. She always had the manual open on her lap when she conducted reading groups, and she usually read in the manual as students silently read or did workbook pages. Teacher A, on the other hand, rarely opened the manual when she conducted reading groups. Furthermore, her reading lessons did not adhere to the pattern outlined in the manual. Components of reading lessons which were observed at one time or another in classroom A include the following: presenting new vocabulary, having students

read orally, asking questions about story content, and presenting skills addressed in the story.

Official reading periods in the two classrooms appeared at first to be radically different. Teacher B seemed consistently to conduct organized lessons which included the elements of a lesson as described by her teacher's manual. Teacher A, however, seemed to be more haphazard in conducting reading lessons. The elements and the length of her lessons fluctuated, and there seemed to be no carry over from day to day, a quality which was observed in Teacher B's lessons. As we looked more closely at the teaching behaviors employed by the two teachers, we began to see that reading instruction in the two settings was more similar than different. Although the components of the two teachers' lessons were not the same, the teaching behaviors utilized were strikingly similar. The predominant instructional behaviors in both classrooms were identified to be the following: having students read, asking questions, prompting, correcting, and making assignments.

Instructional Behaviors

Teacher A had students read orally during reading group time. Never were students seen reading silently in the group. Teacher A believed oral reading to be important, as is clearly demonstrated in this episode:

> Six of the twelve children have read orally and
> have finished the story.
> Teacher A: Okay, you people get up and go to
> your seats. Get your words off the board.
> Just you ones who read.
> Six students remain at the table with Teacher A.
> Teacher A says to them: Okay, you were here, but
> you didn't read. No use keeping the rest of them.
> Teacher A has the remaining students read the
> story again aloud, round robin.

Students' oral reading was heavily peppered with corrective comments from the teacher. As soon as the reader miscalled a word, Teacher A intervened.

Most often her intervention was in the form of supplying the correct word,
although she was also observed spelling the word, providing a sound or sounds,
and saying "Look at that word." She did not tolerate other students supplying
the word, and when this occurred would remark, "Don't tell him 'cause you're
telling him wrong."

Teacher A's emphasis on oral reading and her attention to correct word
calling fit into a larger pattern of a skill-based, product-oriented perspective
on reading. In this classroom, correct responses--whether word calling,
answers to questions about story content, or written assignments--had priority
over strategies or processes involved in arriving at the response. When chil-
dren read aloud, the teacher was able directly to inspect verbalized reading
products. Silent reading does not permit the same degree of "checking out" as
does oral reading. In this classroom, silent reading was used as a time-filler,
an activity to keep kids busy until the teacher was ready to engage them in a
paper and pencil assignment or call them to reading group. Teacher A frequently
gave directions such as, "All right, second graders. Read in your readers til
I get to you," or "Get yourself a book til everyone finishes."

Teacher B, on the other hand, used silent reading techniques almost
exclusively in her reading groups. One group engaged in oral reading of a
play, and workbook pages were usually read aloud, but for the most part, read-
ing during the official reading period was silent reading of basal stories.
Teacher B was not able to check decoding products as was Teacher A, but she
did inspect products at another level: recall and comprehension of story content.
Following each silent reading unit, Teacher B fired a series of questions at
the group:

> Teacher B: Who were these little things who were helping?
> Students: Elves.
> Teacher B: How did they find out about them?
> Thomas: They stayed up.

> Teacher B: What did they find out that made them sad?
> Thomas: They wouldn't come back.
> Teacher B: No, not yet.
> Linda: They had no clothes.
> Teacher B: Do you think the people were kind?
> Students: Yes.
> Teacher B: How do we know? The story didn't tell us that.
> Linda: They made them coats.

A similarity between Teacher A and Teacher B's forms of product inspection is the requirement of precision in the student's response. In the episode above, Thomas provides an answer which is correct given the context of the whole story. Yet his answer was deemed wrong because it did not match the content of the preceding silent reading unit. Another similarity is that both teachers are quick to intervene when an incorrect response is given, and both tend to correct and/or extend student responses. The following episode illustrates Teacher B's correcting and extending tendencies:

> Teacher B: As they were running, they met some
> things, didn't they. I want you to tell me as
> many as you can without looking.
> Ted: Snake, cat, crow -
> Teacher B: No, not a cat.
> Ted: A dog.
> David: A needle -
> Teacher B: A box of needles, didn't they? And
> a pan of ashes, and a bowl of peas, and a cow.

Both teachers have students read during reading group time. Although Teacher A has students read orally and Teacher B has students read silently, the purposes for reading in the two groups appear to be similar: students read so that teachers can check the products of their reading. The other instructional behaviors already referred to--asking questions, prompting, correcting, and making assignments--extend and develop this image of the teacher as an inspector, concerned less with processes and long range outcomes and more with the quality of immediate products.

Asking questions in Teacher B's classroom typically took the form of posing content-related questions following silent reading units. As mentioned above,

this questioning seemed to serve the function of checking on students' story

recall and knowledge level comprehension. Another kind of question asked by

Teacher B was the story background question. Frequently before reading a

story, Teacher B would ask the students a question related to the theme of the

story. For example, before reading a story about pollution, she asked, "Have

you ever seen fish washed up on the shore?" Typically, the discussions follow-

ing such questions were dominated by teacher talk, as the pollution question

episode illustrates:

> Teacher B. Have you ever seen fish washed up on
> the shore? That's because the water is polluted.
> What about when you go for a ride in the country?
> What do you see?
> Student: Garbage by the road.
> Teacher B: Yes, garbage by the side of the road.
> What could you do about that?
> Student: Pick it up.
> Teacher B: Yes. Yesterday I asked you if there
> was anything you could do about pollution and
> some of you said no. Well, that's one thing we
> could do--pick it up. I've been riding down the
> road and I've seen people throw stuff out the
> window.
> Student: That's illegal to throw stuff out the
> window.
> Teacher B: And what about our air? We don't
> think about our air. In the northeast cities
> there are lots of factories and in California,
> too. You can even see it. Think of all the
> automobiles, trucks, and buses that give off
> exhaust. In Gainesville we have air pollution,
> too, but not as bad.
> Student: One time on Quincy there was a factory
> that was polluting the air.
> Teacher B: That's right. Okay, look on page 200
> and 201. What is being done to spoil the earth,
> the air, and the water? We've talked about some
> of this. Read to see what else there is.

Although the teacher seemed to believe she had just led a discussion ("We've

talked about some of this"), this episode is one of many examples of the

teacher asking and then answering her own questions. Students were not

required to engage in in-depth thinking because the teacher provided the

information she was seeking. When students did contribute to the discussion, their comments were often passed by, as happened above. Or, as above, the teacher provided an evaluative response ("Yes;" "That's right") and extended the student's answer. Questioning, as it was used by this teacher, served less to stimulate students' thought processes, than as a vehicle for the teacher to check reading products and to provide what the manual suggests to be important information.

Teacher A also used questioning to check reading products. Although she too asked story content questions, the majority of her questions were related to students' written work. Examples follow:

> What's this word?
> Where's the "e"?
> What's wrong at the top?
> What did Ms. A. tell you about this?
> What is this red line for?
> Are you through?
> Do you understand that?

As was the case with Teacher B, Teacher A asked many questions and more often than not provided the answers. Consider, for example, the question about the red line:

> Teacher A: What is this red line for? What does
> that red line tell you? See all the lines are
> blue except this red line coming down the paper?
> It's called your what? Your mar- (pause) margin!
> It tells you where to start. Now you start from
> right there. I don't care how many lines it takes
> you to write it, you start from inside this margin.

One wonders when confronted with the preponderance of teacher questions and teacher-supplied answers to questions, what the impact on students might be. What do children learn about themselves and about school when continuous questioning by the teacher is a fact of classroom life and when student thinking is too often short-circuited by teachers who insist on answering their own questions? It seems plausible to hypothesize that they learn to

value correct answers, more specifically the teacher's version of the correct answer. The next two instructional behaviors to be discussed, prompting and correcting, reinforce the value of getting the right answer in these classrooms. The abundance of questions, prompts, and corrections suggests that what is important in students' work is not thoughtful, considered responses but brief, simplistic phrases to match the rapid fire nature of teacher questioning. Furthermore, consideration of the effects of these instructional behaviors brings to mind Holt's (1964) powerful description of the "strategies" even young children develop as they try to "meet, or dodge, the demands that adults make of them in school" (p. 17). Children in classrooms A and B may be learning effective ways of dealing with the reality of continuous questioning, prompting, and correcting, but their strategies may have little relationship to what their teachers believe is being learned.

Prompting may be understood as a type of correction; and, both prompts and corrections fit into the pattern of reactive instruction in these classrooms. Following a teacher question, students either answer correctly, answer incorrectly, or don't answer at all. When the teacher provides a clue to lead the student to the answer, she is prompting the student. Teacher B utilized prompting more frequently than Teacher A. Her prompts related both to students' decoding and comprehension responses. Prompts typically took the form of asking a question, providing a hint, or telling the student to try again.

When Teacher B's students made decoding errors, she tended to provide a phonics-related hint to aid them in self-correction. For example, she might say, "Now wait a minute. That's a long a. What does that sound like?" She might also call attention to the error by asking a question, such as when a student read, "I thought," and Teacher B cut in, "I what?" Another sort of

prompt is illustrated here: Teacher B cuts the student off in mid-sentence
and says, "Slow down, now. Try it again." Teacher B delivered her prompts
immediately following decoding errors. She did not allow the reader to com-
plete the sentence before she intervened.

Teacher B's story-content related prompts were similar to her decoding
prompts. Frequently she followed a hesitation or an incorrect answer with
another question, which could serve as a clue to the correct response. For
example:

> Teacher B: Do you have any idea what made the
> coffee get cold and the milk get warm?
> Jack: The coffee cools off and the milk gets
> warmer.
> Teacher B: But what made it get that way?

Or, when there is no response to her question about what happened to a story
character, she says:

> He went into the bed and what happened?
> He looked up at the door and what happened?

These prompts helped students answer the questions correctly. Often,

Teacher B's question-prompts provided more than clues. Consider the following:

> Teacher B: Some of the stories you read in this
> book could really happen. Can you think of a
> story that could really happen? Michelle?
> Michelle: Someone could break into a house.
> Teacher B: Yes. Can you tell me a story in this
> book that could really happen?
> Silence
> Teacher B: How about the story about building
> roads? Could that really happen?
> Students nod and say yes.
> Teacher B: Can you tell me a story that's make
> believe?
> Chuck: Freckles.
> Teacher B: Well, Freckles could really happen.
> How about the story we read today. Could that
> really happen?

These questions served to supply the answers the teacher had in mind rather
than help the students figure out reasonable answers independently.

Although Teacher B also prompted answers to story content questions by having students try again, her most common prompts were clue- or answer-supplying questions. Other forms of correcting during reading instruction included calling on another student to answer the question and simply supplying the correct answer. Whatever the strategy used, students were relieved of extended thinking because the teacher could be counted on to provide clues or answers.

Teacher A's most common type of correcting behavior was to supply answers. Whether students erred in decoding or in answering questions, Teacher A reliably provided the correct responses. As mentioned earlier, she did provide prompts for decoding errors, including spelling the word, providing a sound or sounds, and telling the student to look at the word. However, most often she supplied the correct word.

During discussion of story content, Teacher A also supplied answers, as this episode illustrates:

> Teacher A: What's the moral of this story?
> No response.
> Teacher A: What did you learn from this story?
> What moral do you think the partridge learned
> from this story?
> Teacher A launches into a monologue about people
> being carried away by flattery. She concludes
> by saying: When people are talking, you have to
> ask yourself, 'Is there a good reason or is there
> a motive?'
> She then begins to talk about how children must
> be careful not to be picked up by strangers.
> Teacher A: Do you understand what I'm trying to
> tell you? All right, so the fox learned some-
> thing, too. What did the fox do that let the
> partridge get away? He opened his big mouth
> once too often. So that tells you, sometimes
> you open your what once too often? ·
> Students: Mouth.
> Teacher A: Now do you know what morals are?
> They teach you lessons.

Teacher A's monologue may have provided her with the opportunity for extended,

logical thought, but it doesn't seem likely that it did the same for her

students. All that was required of students was insertion of the word

"mouth" at the appropriate moment. We have little evidence that they have

learned anything about morals or flattery, or that they have recalled

specific story content.

Common to both teachers' prompting and correcting behaviors was a pre-

ponderance of teacher talk. As quality products were highly valued in these

classrooms, perhaps it makes sense that the response to student error was to

fix it as expediently as possible. Although Teacher B provided strategies

to help students self-correct decoding errors, she offered few strategies in

response to comprehension errors. Perhaps this is because the processes

involved in comprehending print are less clear to theorists and practitioners

than those involved in word recognition. Certainly, the basal manual presents

decoding skills in great detail but provides little insight into the processes

involved in getting the facts, identifying the main idea, sequencing story

elements, and the myriad other comprehension skills a teacher is supposed to

teach. If teachers are bound to materials, and the materials don't provide

insight into instruction, as Durkin (1981) has noted, it should not be sur-

prising that teachers rely on a reactive type of instruction which supplies

answers more than strategies or suggestions for thoughtful self-correction.

Of course, there are other facts of classroom life which influence the

nature of instruction (Duffy, 1981); the materials used are one, and the pre-

dominant one in these two summer school classrooms. We shall suggest other

possible influential factors later in the paper.

The final teaching behavior we have identified is making assignments.

In both classrooms, assigning workbook pages and presenting the directions

for completion of these pages comprised a significant portion of teacher talk

during reading periods. Typically, the teachers read the directions or had a student read them. Often the group would then complete a sample item together. The teacher's focus during these interactions was on the activity itself rather than the skill or concept involved.

The high frequency of assignment-giving in these classrooms is consistent with the notion of instruction as practice, as described by Duffy and Roehler (1982). Teachers A and B gave assignments without explaining the purpose of or processes involved in the skills being addressed. The assumption seemed to be that students already knew the skills and simply needed opportunities to practice them. Or, perhaps the assumption was that doing the workbook pages was in itself instructive. Teacher A, during an interview, referred frequently to the importance of materials and on the subject of basal series said, "Any series you have, you're teaching reading." She also commented that she pur- posely "went back through the study book...and over the skills books...all of this to try to improve students' skills." Her comments combined with her actions suggest that she may rely on the materials to do the teaching and that she believes learning occurs with repeated exposure to the materials.

As for Teacher B, although in the interview she described how she presents new skills, she too spoke of the importance of practice: "Unless you constantly go back and pick up skills and review, they forget so easily." She also stressed the importance of materials: "Some of the teachers have gotten together a file of worksheets that they thought were good and had worked." In this context "had worked" refers to getting students through the skills tests.

Certainly practice is an important element of the process of skill mastery. However, it is at least questionable whether practice that is not preceded by explanation is the most effective form of instruction. Nevertheless,

Teachers A and B made many assignments and in making them, tended to spend their time explaining the mechanics of completing the pages rather than on explaining the skills or concepts to be practiced. For example:

> Teacher B: Okay, page 124. The directions are simple, up at the top. What do they say, Kathy?
> Kathy: Read the story and answer the questions.
> Teacher B: And we talked about this in my class last year. What's a good thing to do when you have to answer questions?
> Student: Read twice.
> Teacher B: Yes, read the story twice. Once for the main idea and again for the details.

Such instructions are helpful only if students understand the concepts of main idea and details. Given their participation in a remedial program and judging by their observed performance on main idea and detail activities in the reading group, we are not convinced that this understanding can be assumed.

Teacher A also focused on the mechanics of completing assignments, as shown in this episode when we never do find out the skill involved:

> Teacher A: On page 15. You're not supposed to write in these books. Write on another paper. You're not going to draw the pictures at the top, so forget that. At the bottom you can do the sentences. You don't have to draw the pictures, but you do have to fill in the numbers. Now I want you to go back to your seats and start on that!

Making assignments, correcting, prompting, asking questions, and having students read are teaching behaviors which "make sense" when taken within the context of a materials-centered approach to reading instruction. Teacher A seems to believe in the instructive power of materials and is pleased with the particular basal series she is using. Perhaps these beliefs about reading and her satisfaction with the basal explain why instruction occurs as it does in her classroom. Teacher B, on the other hand, told us she didn't like the series and would prefer to use other, more interesting stories. Why then, is she a slave to the materials?

Considering the Realities of the Classroom

We have taken Duffy's (1981) advice to consider the facts of life in each classroom; that is, features of each situation which influence the nature of instruction and cause instructional practice to differ from instructional theory. It became clear both in observing and interviewing Teacher B that such a reality for her was the importance of the mastery test which each student had to take at the end of summer school. She clearly saw her mission as a summer school teacher as getting students to pass the mastery test. During each observed reading period in her classroom she referred to the test at least twice and as many as twelve times. A sample of her comments follows:

> "And that's what we're here for, to pass the mastery test and go on to level 9."
> "One of the reasons we're going to spend so much time on this is because it's on your mastery test."
> "People who pay attention to this will pass the mastery test, at least this part of it."
> "I want you to pass this test tomorrow. This took time. It's going to be worth your time tomorrow on this test."
> "This test is the most important work you will do today."

Teacher B's comments during the interview gave further support to the impact of the mastery test on her instruction. When asked if, in summer school, she was able to teach stories rather than skills, as she mentioned she liked to do during the year, she replied:

> Not as much. You're constantly aware of the skills that are going to be tested on the mastery test. You've got to get to that... I put a lot of pressure on the children without really meaning to because in the back of my mind I was constantly thinking we've got to get through, we've got to pass the mastery test.

Getting the children to pass their mastery tests was clearly an influential fact of classroom life in Teacher B's class. This was a significant element of difference between the classes. Teacher A told us in an interview

that it had been decided prior to the onset of summer school which children would be passed and which would not. This decision having been made, the mastery test did not carry the same importance for Teacher A.

It was more difficult to get a handle on any "fact of life" in classroom A which seemed to provide an explanatory construct in the same way allegiance to the mastery test did in classroom B. Teacher A's classroom was run in such a way that what seemed to be important was managing what each child was doing at all times. She kept close track of their academic activity through the process of "checking out" described above. She seated children in a large circle and located the reading group table, where she spent almost all of her time, inside the circle. She set up an assembly line type system wherein children took turns showing her their work and getting directions for correcting or moving to another activity. Student to student interaction was seldom observed and obviously not encouraged by Teacher A. Spontaneous activity generated by students in the classroom ran counter to Teacher A's expectations and when observed was quickly put down. It may be that having control over everything that happened in the classroom was a central "reality" for Teacher A.

It is interesting and important to note that although there appeared at first glance to be large differences in the educational experiences being provided in the two classrooms, an in-depth analysis revealed that the classrooms were very similar in purpose and in practice. This realization leads us to suggest that research into classrooms must be of the sort that takes contextual factors into account and provides the analytical power to strip away the surface level which has been the focus of classroom research in the past.

To briefly summarize the findings, we found that reading instruction in

the summer school classrooms we observed could be characterized as materials centered, that implementing the reading series was the driving force behind instructional activity in both classrooms. Instruction in this materials centered atmosphere was skill-based, product-oriented, reactive, and disconnected. Reading lessons and the instructional behavior of teachers were profoundly influenced by the basal materials. Teaching behaviors which dominated instructional time included having students read, asking questions, prompting, making assignments, and correcting. Conspicuous in their absence were such behaviors as instructional assistance (Duffy & McIntyre, 1982), or direct instruction techniques (Carnine and Silbert, 1979), or any recognizable attempt to do more than assign practice activities and check them.

Discussion: Teacher as Inspector

These findings suggest a powerful, if unsavory, image of teacher as assembly line inspector. If each skillsheet or reading lesson represents a station along an assembly line which is designed to provide each student with the skills necessary to pass to the next reading level, then the teachers in the studied classrooms behave very much like inspectors. They give enough information so that students can complete the assignments at each station, they react to student mistakes by prompting and correcting, and they move students from station to station when they are satisfied that the product to be filled in, circled, or underlined has been completed. In an industrial assembly line, parts viewed in isolation seem disconnected but eventually come together and become the entity they were designed to be. In our classroom assembly lines, skills and workbook pages and mastery tests all add up to something, but is it reading? Children are learning about themselves as learners and about the nature of learning from their experiences in these

assembly line classrooms, but what are the lessons we're teaching?

It is our view that "instruction" as it is provided in these classrooms distorts reading processes and purposes to the extent that children may never experience the meaning and joy that reading can provide. We believe reading taught via materials centered reading instruction is twice removed from the "purposive, non-random, contextualized activity" (Halliday, 1973, p. 18) that it ought to be. Rogers (1982) describes how instruction has been "trivialized" by breaking up subject matter into smaller and smaller steps and by isolating instruction from purpose. We see this trivialization pushed a step further when instruction becomes materials driven. Not only is reading broken into a group of fragmented subskills which may have very little to do with actual reading (Bussis, 1982), but in materials centered classrooms, the skills themselves get lost in the mania of getting through the materials. In the classrooms we studied, not only were the skills isolated from each other and from any meaningful "whole," but the skills themselves were not "taught." Worksheets and board activities were assigned, questions were asked, and work was checked but we observed almost no direct teaching of reading subskills. The goal of reading time seemed to be to fill in correct answers on workbook pages. It seems a giant leap from filling in the blanks; to experiencing reading as a meaningful communicative interaction. Perhaps Bussis (1982, p. 238) is correct when she asserts that "we are no longer certain of what it means to read."

IMPLICATIONS

We see several areas wherein implications are suggested by the findings of this research. Discussion of these implications will be divided between implications for researchers and implications for practitioners and program planners.

Implications for Reading-Biased Researchers

We agree with Shannon's (1982) assessment that direct investigation of why teachers are so dependent on commercial reading materials should be given a high priority in reading research. The findings of this study suggest the extent to which this dependence can influence teaching behavior in the classroom. We recognize that summer school is different in many important ways from regular school. Kinds of students, kinds of teachers, and kinds of goals may be quite different during the regular school year. It would be profitable to conduct more studies of reading instruction, using a similar research design, during the school year. We believe descriptive-analytic studies of the type reported here offer a valuable tool for understanding the relationships among materials, participants, and contexts in classrooms.

What are children learning during reading periods in classrooms across the country? This study suggests that reading for many children means turning to a page in a workbook, listening to an explanantion of how to complete that page, filling in the answers on that page, and having that page checked. It seems to us that a central goal of research in reading ought to be to get a handle on what children are actually learning via the reading instruction they receive in school. Our students are getting higher scores on the tests we use to measure reading ability; but does that necessarily mean they are better readers? It may be that we have embedded ourselves so deeply inside the technological-scientific mind-set that we have come to believe our own propaganda; that is, we have come to believe that doing well on reading tests is the proper goal of reading instruction. It seems important that we gain a clearer understanding of what we are saying about reading through the ways we teach it. A concerted effort to examine the hidden curriculum of reading instruction may be in order.

The study reported here was conducted in a summer school program which was provided for "failing" children. It seemed remarkable to us that children who had been documented as reading failures based on their performance in the basal series during the regular year would be expected to improve that performance by being exposed to an intense dose of "more of the same" in summer school. We saw very little recognition that different children might need different experiences to master certain skills. Just as purpose and meaningfulness were left out of instruction, so was consideration of individual differences left out. As has been repeated several times, the materials, not reading or children, were the driving focus of instruction. This seems especially troublesome when one considers the needs of children identified as requiring remediation. Perhaps more research into the structure, content, and effects of summer and remedial programs is called for.

Since basal reading programs dominate instructional practice, finding ways to help·teachers be more effective using these materials may be important. Our findings certainly suggest a need. Beck, Omanson, and McKeown (1982) have redesigned basal lessons and found that students' reading comprehension and recall performance was improved. Others (Crafton, 1982; Spiegel, 1981; Swaby, 1982) have developed and summarized strategies designed to build and extend cognitive structures and facilitate reading comprehension. These strategies can be used or adapted for use in teachers' manuals. Perhaps if the manuals were revised to guide teachers in providing instructional assistance to learners, reading instruction would be more effective than it currently seems to be.

Implications for Practitioners and Program Planners

The description of instruction which is the product of this study offers a construction of classroom reality which may provide helpful insights to

practitioners and program planners. The teachers we observed were dedicated people who worked very hard at their teaching. We are convinced, based on our analysis, that these teachers believed that the reading instruction they were providing was appropriate and effective. That is to say, they saw their responsibility as reading teachers as guiding their students through the basal materials. We believe that challenging this conception of reading instruction may be an important exercise for classroom teachers and other reading educators. It is hoped that reading teachers who have internalized the assumptions of the materials centered model might re-examine their own practices and programs in light of the findings of this study. Perhaps this re-examination will enable us to move closer to a reading model which recognizes the contexts, real-life purposes, and the joys of reading.

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