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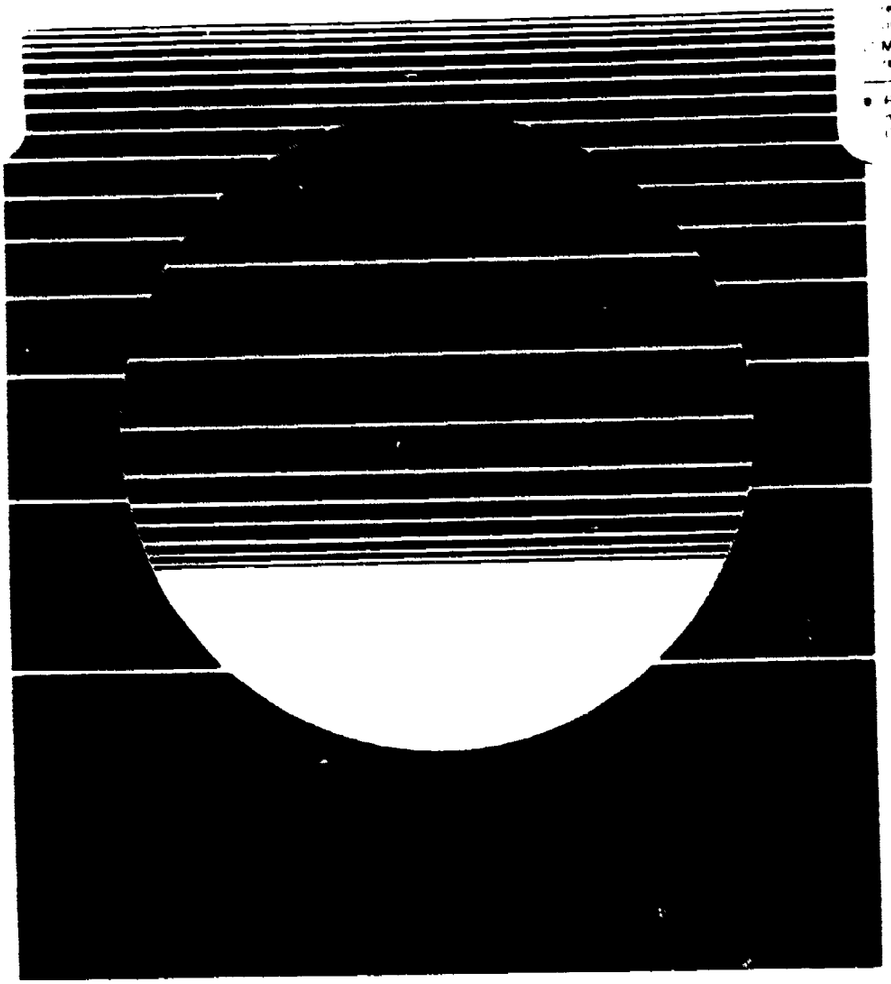
ABSTRACT

Five papers from a conference designed to examine current and emerging practices for promoting literacy among second language learners of English are presented. The unifying theme of cultural pluralism covers a variety of topics: positive attitudes toward reading, schema theory, teachers' verbal interaction strategies, the assumption that children can successfully acquire two languages simultaneously, and rhythmical structures of language. Papers and authors are: "Promoting Literacy in the Classroom: From Theory to Practice" (David L. Brown and Sheryl L. Santos); "Reading Comprehension Instructional Strategies: Aids for the Bilingual Reader" (Idalia Rodriquez Pickens); "Teachers' Questions During Reading Instruction to Limited-English-Speaking Students" (Michele Hewlett-Gomez); "A Framework for Developing Early Language and Reading Skills in a Bilingual Nursery Setting" (Irma Guadarrama); and "Oral Interpretation: A Metacognitive Strategy for Reading" (Marjory Brown-Azarowicz). (LB)

Teaching Reading to Minority Language Students

Rudy Rodríguez, Series Editor



NATIONAL CLEARINGHOUSE FOR BILINGUAL EDUCATION

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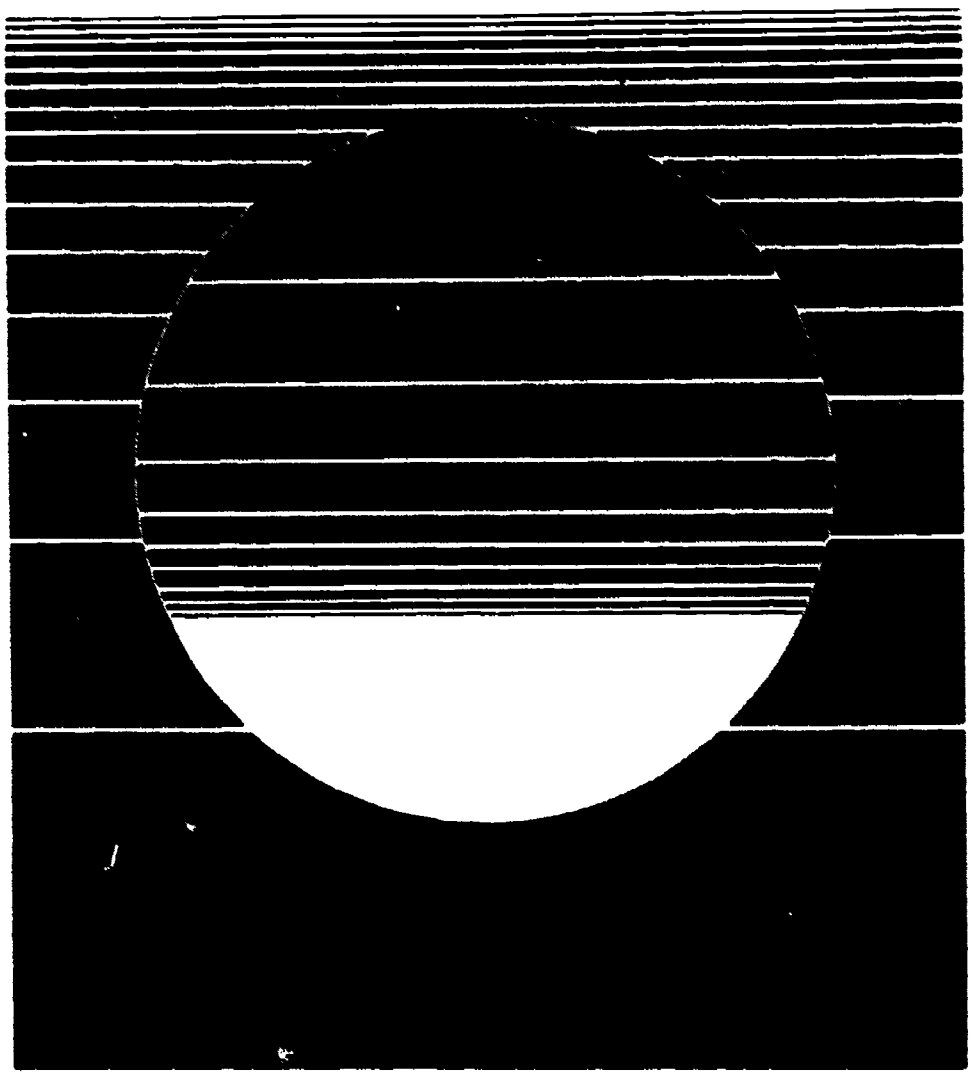

Papers presented at
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Contents

Preface

Teaching Reading to Minority Language Students is a collection of selected papers presented at the Teaching of Reading in Bilingual Education Conference held on June 13, 14, and 15, 1984 at Texas Woman's University, Denton, Texas. The conference was conducted to examine both current and emerging practices which focus on promoting literacy among second language learners of English. These articles, singularly and collectively, express the complexity and wide variation of methodology that surrounds the reading process for linguistically different students.

A central unifying theme of this anthology, apart from the broad scope of material associated with reading, can be found in the concept of cultural pluralism. Abrahams and Troike, in arguing the case for teachers to understand and respect linguistic and cultural diversity, explain the significance of the concept:

"If we expect to be able to teach students (from subordinate and stigmatized culturally different groups) effectively, we must capitalize upon them as a resource, rather than doing what we have always done...disregarding the differences or placing the students in the category of 'non-communicative,' thereby denigrating both the differences and the students." (Abrahams, R.D. and R.C. Troike [eds]. Language and Cultural Diversity in American Education. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1972, 5.)

Although these papers give special attention to promoting literacy in English, the writers recognize the value and utility of the native language in the instructional process. The first paper by Brown and Santos provides a general structure within which other features of reading instruction to minority language students can be discussed. The writers emphasize the importance of having a positive attitude towards reading as an indispensible condition for reading success. For second language learners of English, this positive view, according to Brown and Santos, can be fostered by first developing literacy in the student's stronger and more comfortable mode of communication.

In the second paper, Rodríguez Pickens stresses the need for teachers to understand "schema theory" to help culturally different students build bridges (or establish compatible links) between theirbackground experiences and the demands of the reading reading program. Particularly significant is the discussion of how educators can quite innocuously ignore cultural differences or values there-

by creating the impression of inadequacy among minority language students in dealing with the school curriculum.

Hewlett-Gómez's paper addresses the reading instruction of minority language students by considering the teachers' verbal interaction strategies during the discussion of stories. In her paper, Hewlett-Gómez encourages the use of teacher talk to stimulate growth in the students' communicative skills.

Guadarrama, in the fourth paper, considers critical questions surrounding bilingualism and early reading instruction within the context of a bilingual nursery setting. She presents persuasive evidence to support the assumption that children can successfully acquire two languages simultaneously.

The correspondence between comprehension of oral and silent reading and understanding of the oral, rhythmical structures of the English language is discussed in the last paper by Brown-Azarowicz. According to the author, for the second language learners to master the rhythmical structure of a new language, they must participate in a reading program that provides exposure to correct rythmical structures.

Taken together, these papers examine a range of possibilities in the school's response to bilingual or even multilingual realities. Each of the writers, moreover, implicitly or explicitly, recognizes the centrality of the teacher's role in actualizing effective programs of literacy development for minority language students. Especially prominent is the need for teachers of second language learners to be well informed about the reading process, the nature of language, and language variation.

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Majory Brown-Azarowicz is a Professor of Education at George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia. Her specialities are reading in the high school and study skills. Her recent books include Individual and Group Assessment Procedures in Reading for Grades 4-7, University Press of America, 1981; Analysis of the Individual, Nelson Hall Publishers, 1985; and Study for Success in Foreign Languages, National Textbook Co.,1985.

Irma Guadarrama is a Lecturer in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Texas at Austin, Texas. She previously taught in the Edgewood Independent School District's Bilingual Program in San Antonio, Texas. She was one of the writers of the AMANECER curriculum materials designed to help teachers meet cultural and linguistic needs of preschool and bilingual children.

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Promoting Literacy in the Classroom: From Theory to Practice

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East Texas State University

Literacy is one of the most important national educational goals. Researchers and practitioners alike strive to discover the mysteries of individual success or failure vis-à-vis the reading process. Unfortunately, the knowledge gained by educational researchers often does not reach those people who can benefit most--classroom teachers.

The purpose of this article is to present current research concerning the characteristics of fluent readers and to focus on the special instructional needs of limited-English-proficient (LEP) learners. Hopefully, knowing which skills and traits fluent readers possess will inspire teachers to implement successful reading programs.

Reading comprehension is a complex process involving the integration of many factors. Skilled and less skilled readers can be distinguished by the method by which each interacts with text material. Understanding the mental processess used by skilled readers is necessary in order to make assumptions concerning the nature of reading.

Most students in the primary grades are instructed in word attack skills and vocabulary. However, Durkin (1978-1979) found that adequate instruction was not being devoted to comprehension. Therefore, many students did not develop the advanced strategies needed for fluent reading. Several significant differences between fluent and less skilled readers have been identified and will be discussed in the following section.

Characteristics of Good Readers

Brown (1982) referred to effective readers as those students who have some awareness and control over the cognitive activities in which they are engaged during reading. Interviews with students about their knowledge of the reading process revealed vague and often inaccurate perceptions (Clay 1979). Less skilled readers showed little awareness that different reading purposes and text variations required different strategies. On the other hand, skilled readers used knowledge of structure and content to increase reading efficiency. Fluent readers often used the following techniques to increase reading effectiveness:

- Establishing a purpose for reading;
- Selecting appropriate reading strategies depending on the text;
- Monitoring their activities to determine whether comprehension is occurring;

- Developing positive attitudes toward reading.

Each of these techniques will be expanded upon in the following sections.

Establish a Reading Goal

Establishing a purpose for rea ing is a prerequisite for self-monitoring of the reading process and planning appropriate strategies for understanding the text. Thus, the students are able to activate prior knowledge to generate hypotheses and formulate expectations which will guide their reading comprehension. Anderson and Armbruster (1982) suggested that surveying the text and determining the goal can improve both comprehension and enjoyment. Stauffer (1969) also emphasized the importance of goal setting in his "directed reading thinking activity" approach. With a set goal in mind, students can begin to reorganize their knowledge to aid them in comprehension.

Reading is goal-directed in that good readers can utilize texts in various ways. These goals either implicit or explicit, specific or general, influence the reading process.

Select Appropriate Reading Strategies

Thorndike (1917, 329) stated that "understanding a paragraph is like solving a problem. The mind is assailed as it were by every word in the paragraph. It must select, repress, soften, emphasize, correlate, and organize all under the influence of the right mental set or purpose or demand." Therefore, children need to be taught various strategies that are appropriate for a given text.

Paris and Meyers (1981), in a study of fourth grade readers, found that successful readers asked more questions and used aids to comprehend text material; whereas less skilled readers usually asked only about the pronunciation of new words.

Strategies are essential in the comprehension of difficult text. Therefore, students should be taught when to skim for main points and when to scan for particular information. They must know when to apply strategies, such as reading quickly or slowly, carefully or curiously, silently or aloud (Kleiman 1982). Strategic reading is a skill that successful readers learn to utilize effectively and unsuccessful readers do not use often or at all.

Monitor Comprehension

Readers who successfully monitor their comprehension know when they understand, when they do not understand, and when they only partially understand the text (Baker 1979). Comprehension monitoring involves evaluating and regulating the reading process. Markman (1979) studied comprehension monitoring in third, fifth, and sixth graders by presenting them with passages containing incomplete or inconsistent information and assessing their awareness of problems in the passages. He found that younger students were less likely than older students to realize the extent of their understanding, in spite of missing information. Paris and Myers (1981) also surveyed a group of second graders to determine which strategies were utilized when an unknown word or sentence was encountered. The most common response was to skip it. Other responses included looking back at the text, rereading, and asking for assistance. Comprehension monitoring does not seem to be an ability that develops automatically. It tends to be highly dependent on knowledge of and experience in dealing with written texts. Baker (1979) found that many college students lacked this essential skill.

Successful monitoring of comprehension requires the detection of unknown or inconsistent information and the awareness of strategies that can be utilized to alleviate the problem. Effective readers are those who are able to monitor their own understanding and take measures to deal with any difficulties which may be encountered.

Establish a Positive Attitude toward Reading

Students' attitudes toward reading can influence their achievement and can often alleviate feelings of frustration and failure. Parents, teachers, and curriculum materials are significant factors in sustaining enthusiasm toward reading. Extensive research has been conducted on the influence of teachers in helping to foster favorable attitudes toward reading. Schofield (1980) posited that teachers who value teaching tend to produce positive attitudes and high achievement in their students. On the other hand, negative attitudes can also be transmitted to students. In general, students tend to model the reading behaviors of their teachers. Allington (1980) attributed students' successes and failures in reading to teacher behavior. He found that teachers are more likely to interrupt less skilled readers who err when reading aloud than skilled readers. Furthermore, the actual instructional time allocated for comprehension tasks was much less for the unskilled readers. Allington (1980) concluded that good and poor readers differ as much to differences in instruction as to differences in individual learning styles or aptitudes.

Unique Instructional Needs of LEP Learners

The optimal reading program for students who enter the U.S. educational system speaking a language other than English is one in which the students' native language is used as a medium of instruction (Thonis 1983). By introducing the students to reading in their native language, the teacher can implement instructional practices which will aid them in establishing a purpose for reading, selecting appropriate strategies, monitoring comprehension, and maintaining a positive attitude toward reading by fostering the confidence that accrues from being successful at a task.

Classroom Practices to Promote Literacy for LEP Learners

The classroom teacher should make use of native-language literacy skills when possible. Placement of the LEP student into a reading program with an appropriately trained bilingual professional who has adequate access to to native language reading materials, trade books, basal texts, and other instructional materials can be quite beneficial.

When this is not possible, however, the monolingual teacher can still incorporate certain practices which promote literacy into the classroom. The practices include:

- Collaborating with LEP students and devoting individual time and attention to them to be certain that they understand what is expected as well as the purpose or goal of each particular reading assignment.
- Developing specific lessons designed to help students strengthen reading strategy use, such as scanning, skimming, searching for facts, inferring information, and drawing conclusions.
- Providing a native-language version of the text as an aid to transferring literacy skills.
- Devoting time to the development of trust and rapport with LEP students and their families. This entails permitting students the luxury of being wrong and allowing them to ask questions and think aloud.
- Providing a resource library of bilingual trade books, picture books, taped stories, and native-language literature. This will help in developing a positive attitude toward reading.
- Call upon parents for assistance and input. LEP parents can help

build a resource library. Parents can also serve as surrogate teachers at home by reading to and with their children. The more students read in the native language, the better they will eventually read in English.

Conclusions

It is crucial to remember that literacy can be achieved in any language, not just in English, and once a person reads in one language, it becomes easier to read in a second. Conversely, people who never achieve native-language literacy have a more difficult time learning to read in a second language.

The strategies employed by successful readers are extremely helpful in achieving literacy. What do good readers do? Good readers are those who establish goals, select appropriate strategies, monitor comprehension, and display a positive attitude toward reading. Reading is a requisite skill for other academic tasks; instruction should prepare students to interact with a variety of texts in a meaningful manner. Good readers use various strategies to achieve comprehension including focusing their attention on the major ideas and incorporating metacognitive skills into the reading task. Therefore, good readers can be characterized as strategic readers who exhibit the necessary skills to learn from reading.

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Reading Comprehension Instructional Strategies: Aids for the Bilingual Reader

Idalia Rodríguez Pickens
West Texas University

Children, in general, are faced with many expectations when they enter school. And bilingual/ bicultural children confront even greater expectations. They are expected to function in a social setting that differs from that of their home and to speak and read in a second language, English. To further complicate matters these children are expected to read and comprehend a curriculum that, as a rule, reflects the values of the majority culture. This mismatch in cultural and linguistic factors often hinders learning.

During the past decade, research has suggested a relationship between cognition and comprehension (Rumelhart 1976). In addition cross-cultural studies dating from the 1930s (Bartlett 1932) to more contemporary studies (Kintsch and Greene 1978; Steffensen et al. 1978; Reynolds et al. 1981; Pickens 1982) have shown the pervasive influence of cultural background knowledge to reading comprehension. The implications of this body of research have suggested effective methods to help bilingual/bicultural children achieve academic success.

This search for effective methods has introduced instructional strategies that rely on the learner's repertoire of background experiences or schemata (Pearson and Johnson 1978). This paper addresses the application of a schema-theoretic instructional strategy as an attempt to improve the reading comprehension of bilingual/bicultural children. It briefly summarizes schema theory as a theoretical base to reading comprehension, compares the traditional and schema-theoretic views to reading comprehension processes, describes the relationship of vocabulary to reading comprehension, and discusses semantic mapping as a viable vocabulary building and reading comprehension skill.

Schema Theory: A Theoretical Framework

Schema theory is related to how information is stored in memory, how it is retrieved from memory, and how it is used to comprehend (Rumelhart 1976; Adams and Collins 1977). In recent years schema theory has become one of the most practical and commonly used theories in the area of reading. It has essentially become the reading "buzz" word in educational circles (Pearson and Spiro 1982). Why? Because the theory has contributed much to our understanding of how comprehension occurs. The underlying

supposition of schema theory is that everything an individual learns is stored in the brain in a "conceptual filing system" (Rumelhart 1976; Adams and Collins 1977). This storehouse of knowledge grows and modifies as the individual acquires new experiences. For example, one has schemata (background experiences) for events such as birthday parties, objects, actions, goals, people; even abstract ideas about feelings can be brought forward whenever one says, sees, or hears a triggering word (Pearson and Spiro 1982).

These schemata are considered to be building blocks of cognition (Rumelhart 1977) upon which the structure of comprehension is built. According to Johnson (1981, 351), comprehension involved "building bridges between the new and the known." Prior knowledge, he argued, is an ingredient necessary to understanding and remembering what is read. Our schemata guide our interpretations, inferences, expectations, and attention to detail. It is an organized, structured set of summaries including parts, attributes, and relationships that happen in our individual frames of reference.

Schemata, perceived as "conceptual filing systems," allow for the creativity and expansion of comprehension (Rumelhart 1976; Adams and Collins 1977).

Comprehension: Skills and Subskills

The ability to understand written discourse from a schema-theoretic perspective is defined as "an interface between the reader and the text, and/or an interaction between the reader's prior knowledge and the information on a page" (Pickens 1982, 37). Text comprehension, as reported from research (Bartlett 1932; Kintsch and Greene 1978; Steffensen et al. 1978; Reynolds et al. 1981; Pickens 1982), depends on the reader's ability to appropriately interrelate information. The premise underlying this view of comprehension is that background knowledge is crucial to understanding text material.

In examining the related literature, the teaching of reading comprehension can be divided into two positions: the traditional view and the schema-theoretic view. Traditionally, comprehension has been perceived as a major skill which is subdivided into a number of subskills. A comprehension taxonomy (Barrett 1972) modeled after Bloom's "taxonomy" (1956) has delineated the four major subskills: literal, inferential, evaluative, and critical comprehension. These four subskills are viewed as necessary for comprehending written discourse, and the teaching of these subskills are thought to result in better student understanding of text material. The rationale for this approach assumes that once children acquire comprehension skills, they can transfer these skills to actual reading situations. However, this approach has created problems for some students. Many are not able to understand the subskills or how to connect them to discourse. One reason may be that students are unable to transfer their knowledge of isolated reading skills to an actual reading experience. Another may be that although the students may have learned the isolated skills of comprehension, the skills alone do not add up to comprehension (Swaby 1984).

The schema-theoretic position views comprehension as much larger than the sum of its parts. The conceptual base for this view stems largely from the vast amounts of research on schema theory and, particularly, on cross-cultural studies in reading comprehension. These findings demonstrated the pervasive influence of background knowledge to text comprehension (Bartlett 1932; Kintsch and Greene 1978; Steffensen et al. 1978; Reynolds et al. 1981;

Pickens 1982). Thus, the role of the reader should become one in which the teacher relates new material to prior knowledge.

Some children bring schemata inadequacies to the reading task (Pearson and Spiro 1982). Schema availability concerns having or lacking the necessary background knowledge to make sense out of a text. Schema selection entails processing prior knowledge but failing to bring it into focus; whereas schema maintenance is a processing deficit rather than a knowledge deficit. The reader simply fails to maintain focal attention to the theme of a text because too much attention has been directed toward visual analysis of print or text structure (Pearson and Spiro 1982).

These inadequacies can be alleviated if the teacher takes the role of a facilitator. As a facilitator, the teacher would provide--prior to the reading task--the conceptual base necessary to understand print and would alert the reader that the information they already possess can be used to comprehend incoming information (Swaby 1984).

Vocabulary Proficiency

It is generally accepted that the larger the number of words the learner has mastered, the better the comprehension. The most common characteristics of bilingual readers have been a poor vocabulary and a lack of experiences upon which to relate the material read in academic activities (Gonzales n.d.). Limited-English-proficient (LEP) students often have an oral lexicon that is quite limited. Because of lexical problems, many teachers develop comprehension by bombarding LEP students with vocabulary drills--usually carried out in isolation.

Just how essential word power is to comprehension has not yet been established in spite of much debate by researchers. Three hypotheses concerning word power have been proposed. The aptitude hypothesis supports the view that a person who scores high on a vocabulary test does so because of their mental agility and that thinking ability is what enables them to comprehend well. The instrumental hypothesis suggests that knowledge of individual word meaning is the primary factor responsible for reading comprehension. Finally, the knowledge hypothesis supports the notion that a person who knows a word well knows other words and ideas related to it; this network of ideas enables one to comprehend (Johnson 1981; Au 1979).

Advocates of the knowledge hypothesis have examined closely the relationship of stored word knowledge to comprehension of written discourse. Word knowledge is viewed within the context of what a person knows and brings to the task of reading/comprehending a text. Word power reflects knowledge in general.

Basically, word knowledge supports the schema-theoretic notion that background knowledge is crucial to understanding text material. Word meaning is not acquired in isolation but within a conceptual framework. It is this general knowledge that interacts with the text to produce comprehension (Johnson 1981).

Vocabulary acquisition from a schema-theoretic viewpoint is an interactive process that focuses on the contributions of the learner's prior knowledge to the new word/concept to be learned. A vocabulary instructional strategy capable of such interaction is semantic mapping (Johnson 1981).

Semantic Mapping

The concept of semantic mapping is not new. The technique has been used to teach vocabulary for some time. It has also been called semantic network (Collins and Quillan 1969) and semantic webbing and plot maps (Hanf 1971), among others. Mapping is a technique of structuring information in graphic form. The idea stems from a flow chart or a sentence diagram. For the purpose of vocabulary expansion, semantic mapping extends knowledge by displaying related words in categories. The technique can be done with elementary-level students both as an oral reading activity during a nonreading task or as a prereading activity (Johnson and Smith 1980).

The rationale behind using semantic mapping as a prereading activity with bilingual students is simply to familiarize them with new words in relation to known words. The goal of this exercise is to improve comprehension. The orderly, graphic presentation of new words in relation to known words serves as a springboard for discussion.

Semantic mapping, then, offers an ideal vehicle for both word knowledge and reading comprehension. The following steps are suggested in using semantic mapping:*

1. Select the focal word/concept;
2. Write the word/concept on the chalkboard or on an overhead transparency;
3. Ask the students to think of as many words as possible that are related to the focal word/ concept;
4. As students contribute words, write them on the chalkboard and connect them to the focal term;
5. Allow for discussion as each new word is contributed;
6. Ask students to use the words in sentences;
7. When students cannot think of more words, help them by targeting words students should learn;
8. Expand discussion of the target words;
9. Use the target words in sentences;
10. Read the selection.

The semantic map in figure 1, for example, can be used for developing the vocabulary and conceptual framework necessary to better understand a text on "foods for a growing body." If teaching a group of bilingual students, predominantly from a Mexican American cultural background, this particular map could help them see similarities of foods consumed across cultures. In the discussion, they would be able to categorize "tortilla," "pita bread," "sweet bread," "pan de dulce," "white, sliced bread" under the broad term, breads. Likewise, for meats or foods with meat, they would be able to conceptualize that tacos and hamburgers differ only in the grain that holds them as a sandwich.

With this graphic representation bilingual students can learn to classify foods and comprehend that, regardless of cultural distinctions, foods bear some similarities and serve the same nutritional purpose, e.g., fueling a growing body.

With the food map displayed, the teacher can read the text on foods and ask students to relate what has been read to the categories in the semantic map. This type of discussion serves to direct students' attention to detail. Also, seeing familiar words (tortilla, taco, hamburger, quesadilla) in a new way will encourage them to remember the concepts/words as they read.

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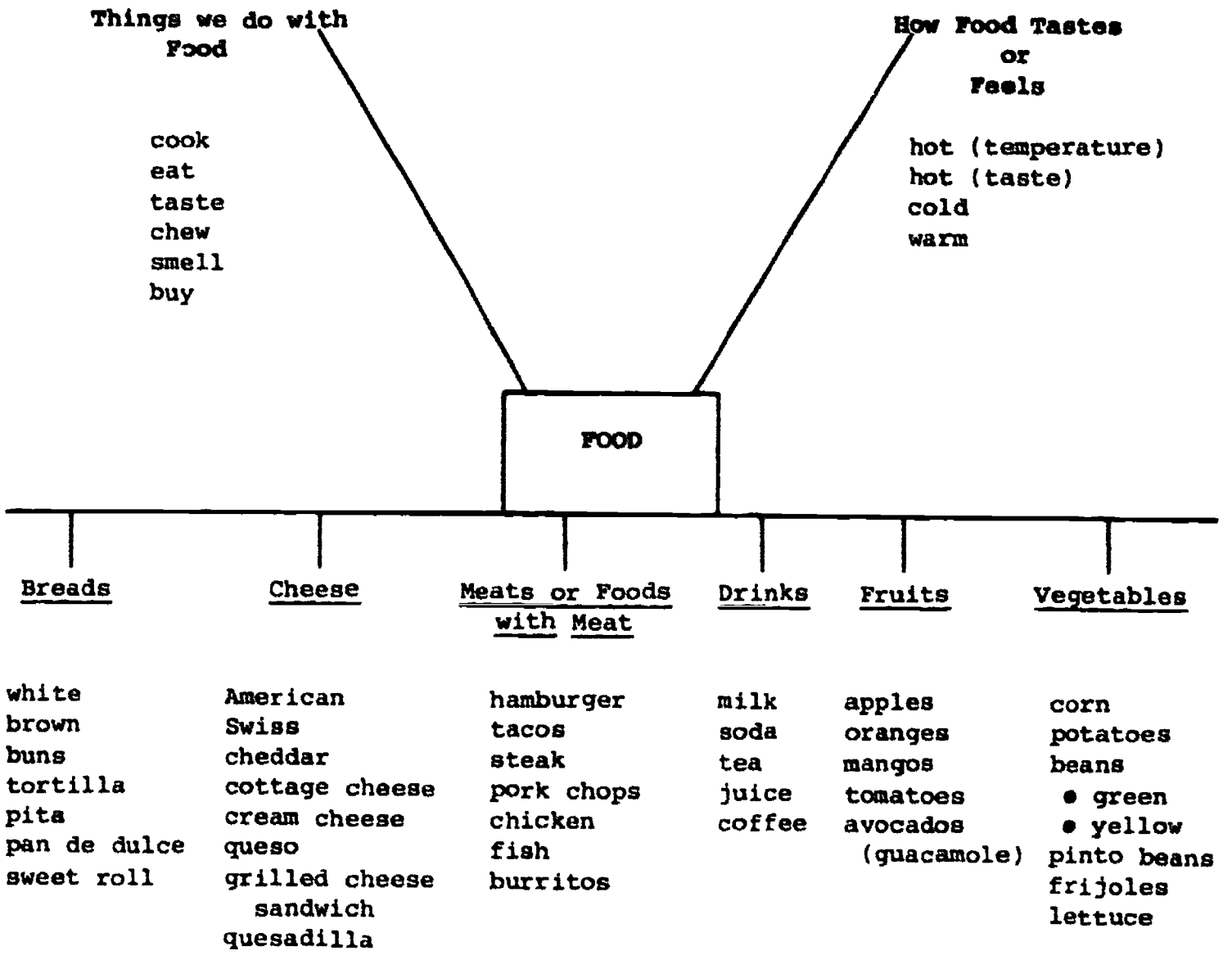
* Permission for the use of the semantic mapping concept and the procedural steps was granted by Dale D. Johnson, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1983.

Figure 1. Semantic Map of "Foods for a Growing Body"



Ultimately, this procedure will help bilingual children to realize that they possess words/experiences that are reflected in texts but appear removed from their cultural experiences.

The strength of the strategy is that it capitalizes on the reader's prior knowledge. If knowledge is limited, semantic mapping then allows for concept expansion. According to Johnson (1981) and Pearson and Spiro (1982) reading comprehension involved processing of textual material and integrating it into the experiences, prior knowledge, and attitudes already in the reader's mind--building bridges between the new and the known. Bilingual students need to be taught how to build these bridges if they are to become successful readers.

Many bilingual children face the dilemma of not comprehending written texts that reflect majority culture values. For them, bridges do not exist between the values reflected in texts and those brought from home. In this situation, bilingual students often experience the "Charlie Brown" syndrome (Pearson and Johnson 1978). That is, Charlie Brown gets a new book and notices that there are 625 pages. "I'll never learn all that." He feels defeated before he starts, not realizing that everything in the book

does not have to be learned and that the information is not all new. Likewise, many bilingual students experience an inability to interact effectively with the concepts and vocabulary found in school books. They, too, feel defeated before starting. They view activities in English as strange and incomprehensible.

Conclusion

Several reasons are given to explain the failure of bilingual students in reading programs. At the top of the list are a poor vocabulary and a mismatch between the values of the home and those reflected in school materials. These students fail to make connections between what they read and their accumulated experiences. Because of differences between their storehouse of experiences and experiences reflected in reading materials they often are unable to understand what they read, regardless of how well they learn other reading skills, e.g., phonics or structural analysis.

The schema-theoretic approach appears to be promising for the teaching of reading. Semantic mapping, particularly, allows for interaction between the child's prior knowledge and new material. This strategy acknowledges the symbiotic relationship that exists between the reader and written discourse (Swaby 1984).

The traditional view of teaching comprehension skills, on the other hand, has failed many bilingual students because reading skills are taught in isolation. Bilingual students have to make the connection between known and unknown and transfer these skills on their own. Because many children do not understand the comprehension skill to begin with, transferring it to written discourse becomes an inordinate challenge. For the bilingual child, the challenge is compounded in that reading is taught in a language that differs from their first language. The text contains cultural values that do not match their own. Therefore, a responsible reading curriculum should include text that matches the bilingual student's background experience (one story in a basal reader related to the bilingual student's culture does not constitute an adequate curriculum) and should incorporate alternative instructional strategies (e.g., semantic mapping) that build upon prior experiences.

The implications of this semantic theory suggest that strong emphasis should be given to building background knowledge. Activities need to be selected which develop cognitive structures; vocabulary knowledge remains a key factor in helping children comprehend more efficiently. A final implication is that comprehension can be taught if the teacher helps students build bridges between their background experience and the reading material.

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Teachers' Questions During Reading Instruction to Limited-English-Speaking Students

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The ability to listen and speak in English is viewed by most United States educators as foundation skills for learning how to read in English. For learners of English as a second language, these foundation skills are very important since the abilities represent the beginnings of learning another language. The teachers of second language learners quickly recognize that oral language development plays a crucial role in the reading process, and they alter instruction providing frequent oral language activities, to meet language development needs, such as discussions of stories with question and answer dialogues. This paper addresses the role of teachers' verbal interactions in the development of second language reading skills.

Questioning Techniques

How can teacher talk during the discussions of stories guide a child's second language learning? One way is through questions. Teachers have always asked questions and have always regarded questions as essential to the teaching process. This, in part, is due to the many purposes questions fulfill during instruction and learning. It is virtually impossible to perceive a teacher as interacting verbally with students without using questioning techniques.

When a questio is asked, it produces a particular line of thinking in the receiver. In defining a question, Hyman (1979, 1) said: "A question probes the respondent to think so as to supply a response and it directs that respondent to think about a particular topic." For example, suppose a teacher asks the following text-related question of a child who has read a story, "What effect did the school bus wreck have on Juanita?" Unless the student has a list of prepared responses, the question spurs the student to think about a school bus wreck and to express personal opinions. After the student's initial response, the teacher may probe further by asking connected questions (e.g., What else?, And?, and Why do you feel that way?). The teacher can also ask another student to comment on the same topic (e.g., What are your reactions to the topic, Pablo?) and supply additional information (e.g., Your response was correct. Now, please elaborate on what you meant by _____.) Most importantly, however, in using questioning techniques the teacher can get students to think and respond in a way that stretches their comprehension abilities, current knowledge, and language ability.

Purposes for Using Questions

In addition to a teacher's questions being used to check the comprehension and application of basic facts associated with story content, use of questioning has been advocated by educators for the following purposes as well (Wilen 1982):

- Stimulating student participation;
- Initiating a review of material previously read or studied;
- Initiating discussion of a topic, issue, or problem based on previous learning;
- Involving students in creative thinking;
- Diagnosing and evaluating abilities;
- Determining to what extent objectives have been achieved;
- Arousing student interest;
- Controlling student behavior;
- Supporting student contributions in class.

This list, by no means complete, illustrates the importance of questions during discussions. It is not difficult to imagine a teacher using numerous questioning techniques during a single lesson. Through the use of questioning strategies, teachers can encourage students to develop communication skills as they read and discuss stories.

Questions encourage critical thinking and language development by facilitating the intellectual process by which students integrate past experiences into new learning experiences. Classification systems developed by Bloom (1956) and Guilford (1956) can provide opportunities for formulating questions in accordance with higher level cognitive processes. Bloom's "taxonomy of educational objectives," a hierarchical system, encompasses six categories. These categories are knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. This system allows teachers to adapt questions for use at different hierarchical levels allowing for a range of cognitive experiences. With an understanding of Bloom's taxonomy, teachers can restructure closed questions (yes/no-form)into open questions (wh-form) to increase responses and direct students to expanded discourse on the topic of discussion. Wood and Wood's (1983) study of first and second language learners looked at the importance of teacher-student verbal interactions. Findings indicated that the length of children's responses increased with the use of open questions and especially with the use of phatics (e.g. Um, Oh, Yes!, and Ah) to sustain attention and responses.

Strategic Questioning

In addition to the use of multilevel questions, teachers can incorporate questioning strategies to direct verbal interactions. Hyman (1979, xiii) defined a strategy as: "a carefully prepared plan involving a sequence of steps designed to achieve a given goal." Questioning strategies serve as a guide for teachers to determine which questions to use within a particular context or situation. These strategies also provide a framework for interactions with students. Without a strategy, a discussion can become a series of single questions lacking cohesion and purposeful sequence. Hyman suggested that a teacher's effectiveness in strategic questioning is based on the ability to manage the interaction by combining an individual question into a pattern of questions designed to achieve an objective.

Yet before devising or selecting a questioning strategy, consideration should be given to the function of the strategy. Hunkins (1972) suggested four major functions for the grouping of questions into strategies:

- Center. Teachers focus students' attention on the learning material at a particular cognitive level.
- Expansion. Teachers help students extend thoughts at the same cognitive level or raise them to another level.
- Distribution. Teachers use the center and expand functions to encourage all students to talk.
- Order. Teachers physically manage and emotionally support students in order to maintain appropriate classroom atmosphere.

By considering Hunkins' suggestions for sequencing questions, the importance of questions in the development of thinking and language abilities through several levels of comprehension becomes apparent.

Besides the initial questions on a topic, teachers should follow-up on students' responses. The teachers can either foster or forestall a discussion. They are encouraged to foster discussion. Dillon (1983) directed educators to four appropriate discussion behaviors to stimulate students' thoughts and responses and to encourage their participation.

1. A declarative statement can be used in place of a question to express a thought that has occurred to the teacher in relation to what the student has said.
   Example. A student talks about making honey. The teacher thinks about the process of making honey and says "Yes, Juanita, I like honey, too, but honey bees make honey, bumblebees don't"; instead of saying "Where do bees make honey?".
2. A concise reflective statement illustrates a teacher's understanding of what the student just said.
   Example. "Pablo, I understand that you said...."
3. An invitation to elaborate is used to probe the feelings, experiences, and formation of students' views.
   Example. Teacher: "Victoria, I would certainly like to hear more information on the topic."
4. A deliberate silence can be used when a student pauses, falters, or has ostensibly finished speaking.
   Example. Teacher: "Explain why Cinderella's fairy godmother was important in the story" The student does not respond. The teacher after waiting three to five seconds repeats/rephrases the question. The student responds.

A deliberate, attentive, and appreciative silence can be crucial to a successful oral discussion. Rowe (1969) found that when teachers increased their waiting time from one-half second to three to five seconds, the length of children's responses increased, unsolicited but appropriate responses increased, and failure to respond decreased.

Lindfors (1980) expanded Dillon's discussion behaviors by suggesting that teacher-led discussions, which often stifle students' language, be minimized. She highlighted three common practices which restrict growth in language proficiency and which are prevalent in teacher-dominant, rather than teacher-responsive classrooms. These features are parroting, fishing, and limited questions. In parroting, the teacher repeats the students' answers word-for-word. This feature limits language growth, interferes with student self-confidence, and lessens opportunities for students to listen to each other. Fishing occurs when the teacher seeks and accepts only one particular answer to a given question; thereby, affecting the self-confidence of the student by denying the validity of other responses. Limited questions (closed or convergent questions) fail to invite students to think, wonder, justify, explore, explain, convince, or create.

Thus the quality and quantity of teacher interactions and the use of questions in reading instruction, especially discussions, must be carefully planned. Verbal interactions between teachers and students should include positive language learning experiences at all times.

Student Talk

Most students do not talk very often during discussions of stories and nonassertive second language learners talk even less often. The extent to which students play an active role in classroom discourse is of vital concern to teachers of second language learners. The frequency and quality of students' questions and their ideas and responses to teacher's questions are both important variables in the language process. Susskind (1979) divided "student talk" into three categories:

- Students answer questions initiated by the teachers;
- Students pose questions of their own;
- Students initiate declarative statements of fact or opinion, which are not answers to the teacher's questions.

Susskind emphasized that student questions and declaratives measure interest and curiosity about the instructional materials presented and reveal the extent to which students feel they have a right to influence classroom discourse.

The classroom atmosphere created by the teacher also affects student talk. Susskind (1979) found that students openly engage in such "adventurous thinking" only in supportive environments. In a safe atmosphere, students freely adapt to asking questions and giving responses which can facilitate language development. Students should feel able to ask questions when moments of wonder or uncertainty occur. And teachers who use a friendly conversational style and silence between student responses can actually enhance student thinking and language development.

Thus, reflective time together with a safe atmosphere allows students to become actively engaged in learning English. They can relax, mediate, reflect, punctuate an idea, and breathe before they speak.

Second language learners should be encouraged to develop and expand their general communication skills as they learn to speak and read in English. Teachers who stop to observe, plan, implement, and evaluate the curriculum and instructional objectives can assist in meeting the academic needs of LEP children. What are their academic goals? Their academic goals include learning how to listen, speak, and read in their second language, English.

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A Framework for Developing Early Language and Reading Skills in a Bilingual Nursery Setting

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As more and more mothers of young children join the workforce, a growing concern over the quality of childcare prevails in the minds of not only parents whose children are being served, but also others who fear the long-term, negative effects on the overall educational and emotional well-being of this nation's future adult population. The question of how childcare outside the home influences the development of bilingualism and biliteracy in children is important to a nation that values the linguistic resources of its population. Research points to the positive effects of early reading intervention (Andersson 1981; Durkin 1966; Doman 1964; Beck 1967); the Head Start programs of the 1960s and 1970s have proven to have long-lasting effects on the education of young children. It is not surprising that during the course of a state-level investigation on the problems facing the public school system, recommendations for early childhood education emerged in the forefront.

Quality programs for young children must address their total needs as much as possible. For bilingual children this may include a program that is culturally as well as linguistically responsive. Young children develop cognitively at a very fast rate; their periods of development are crucial. Cultural, linguistic, social, and psychological dimensions quickly shape the young child into a independent personality.

Learning Two or More Languages During Childhood

Even though scientific research attempts have not successfully documented the causal relationship between first and second language learning or the cognitive advantages to bilingualism, a substantial amount of evidence has been found to support three basic assumptions. These assumptions are that:

- Children can successfully acquire two languages simultaneously;
- In the long run, a second language is learned with more proficiency during childhood;
- Early childhood bilingualism does not have adverse effects on a child's linguistic and cognitive development.

Research on the successful, simultaneous acquisition of two languages is available, although limited. The voluminous and classic

study undertaken by Leopold (1939, 1947, 1949a, 1949b) offers substantial insight into the successful, simultaneous acquisition of two languages by his two daughters. Lenneberg's (1967) inquiry into the neurological functions of the nervous system led to his conclusion that any child can learn a second language under favorable conditions before the age of five, and that the ability to learn a second language diminishes with age. He further asserts that the optimal period for language learning is from birth to puberty and that after this period language learning comes to a standstill. Lenneberg's position has since been regarded as an extreme version in light of more recent research that has indicated that some language can be acquired after puberty (Curtiss et al. 1978).

In a review of the literature on the effects of age and second language acquisition, Krashen et al. (1979) found that among published studies, there exists a consensus that children who began natural exposure to a second language during their childhood (presumably, before puberty) achieved higher second language proficiency than those beginning as adults. Even though the same review included the generalization that adults develop their second language faster than children during the early stages of learning, the conditions under which learning takes place may actually put the adult learner at a disadvantage. Children, therefore, have a general tendency to out-perform adult learners in second language acquisition due to major psychological differences.

Ervin-Tripp (1968) pointed out major psychological differences between child and adult language learning:

- Children demonstrate fervent eagerness and readiness to learn the language(s) spoken in a new linguistic environment;
- Children enjoy rote memorization and learn new words through sensory-motor activities, while adults prefer using higher level intellectual and verbal skills to learn a new language;
- Children seem to be less subject to interference from their native systems than are adults.

Bilingual acquisition is perceived to be both similar to and different from monolingual development. Furthermore, empirical evidence has put forth several tentative conclusions concerning the simultaneous acquisition of two or more languages. Garcia (1983, 217) summarized these conclusions by stating:

- Children can and do acquire more than one language during early childhood;
- The acquisition of two languages need not hamper developmentally the acquisition of either language;
- The acquisition of two languages can but need not be parallel;
- Bilingual children have been found to score both higher and lower than monolingual children on specific and general measures of cognitive development, intelligence, and school achievement.

Dulay and Burt (1972) focused on how children acquired a second language at the syntactical level. In analyzing children's speech, they concluded that (1) children acquire their first language (L1) and their second language (L2) in a similar process, and (2) children learning a second language, English for example, will learn it in a similar way as the first language regardless of the previous language(s) learned.

At the heart of these conclusions is the premise that interference, the automatic transfer of the surface structure of the first language onto the surface structure of the second language, is rarely manifested in child second language acquisition. Instead of interference, or negative transfer, Dulay and Burt (1972) propose that the process by which

children learn L1 is transferred, thereby resulting in a developmental sequence of learning (or hierarchical ordering) common to all children. The speech constructions of second language learners may vary according to the learner's cognitive, developmental maturity. Older L2 learners may produce more creative constructions than their younger counterparts due to their having had more experience in the acquisition process. The creative construction process, which the authors say is present in L2 acquisition as in L1 acquisition, implies that children can best acquire language in an environment which allows them to express themselves freely and explore language in a variety of contexts. A bilingual nursery setting is especially conducive to nurturing the creative construction process in language learning and development.

A Case for Early Reading

Controversial issues in the teaching of reading to very young children focus primarily on two issues: (1) the age at which the child should be taught to read and (2) the manner in which the child should be taught, if at all. In bilingual early reading, the added decision of how the languages will be used in the reading process also has to be made.

Andersson (1981) analyzed several case studies of early bilingual reading. In each case, very young children learned to speak and read in two languages before beginning their formal education. The results reported from each case confirm the assertion made by Doman (1964) and reiterated by others, including Andersson, that very young children want to learn how to read; they can learn to read; and they will learn to read. Several favorable conditions existed in the cases reported by Andersson. First of all, the child who was taught to read received individual attention and, in most cases, was the only one receiving instruction. Secondly, the parents of the children were their teachers, and thus, had ample flexibility in managing the instruction. Thirdly, the parents of these children were quite educated and took a special interest in helping their children to read. Nevertheless, the success of these and other cases, strongly indicated that children have the potential to learn to read at a very early age, and what we do as teachers or parents determines the rate and accuracy at which they will acquire proficiency in reading in two or more languages.

Teaching reading to a group of children requires a slightly different strategy from teaching individual children. The instructional strategies may be similar; however, the teacher must plan for and implement time management strategies to allow for group and individualized instruction.

Developing a Curriculum Framework

In the process of developing a framework for an early language and reading curriculum, several key questions concerning bilingualism and reading must be addressed. They are listed below, followed by a brief discussion of each.

1. What role does bilingualism play in the development of early language and reading skills?

The most beneficial time for the acquisition of two or more languages is perceived to be childhood since the opportunity to become proficient in

each language is greater, and there is no empirical evidence which reveals that bilingualism alone adversely affects children's cognitive and linguistic development (Garcia 1983). Children who are able to utilize more than one linguistic system appropriately have the added advantage of widening their communicative abilities. The more abundant their linguistic resources, the more opportunity they have to increase their linguistic and communicative competences (Simões 1976).

The relationship between children's linguistic resources and reading has been explored to determine instructional implications. Goodman (1972) asserted that since children are users of language and reading is a language process, successful reading instruction should capitalize on children's language learning ability and their language competence. In this case, the opportunity to help bilingual children learn to read can be maximized by the presence of more than one linguistic system.

2. Which teaching strategies are used for first and second language learning?

During the course of an eight-hour daycare program, teachers and children are engaged in a variety of interaction exchanges. Four categories of interaction have been identified for the purpose of building a framework. Within these four categories are different teaching strategies that specifically focus on either first or second language learning. The categories and their corresponding teaching strategies are described in the following paragraphs.

Procedural Type I: Developing a Second Language. The objective of this procedure is to help children acquire a second language. The interaction instances are initiated by the teacher in the second language, using a modified version of the total immersion approach. To enhance the child's comprehension of the interaction instances, the teacher utilizes communication aids such as clear and deliberate voice intonations, an abundance of gestures, and repetitions. In every instance, the child is already familiar with the communication because it has already been conveyed in the first language. A modified version of the total immersion approach is appropriate in this category because it is used in the presence of nonthreatening, informal, and enjoyable conditions for short periods of time. When any of these conditions are lifted, the strategy for helping children learn a second language becomes ineffective, and a teacher may need to change linguistic codes accordingly. Examples of these interaction instances are:

- Greetings;
- Interaction associated with behavior toward materials such as toys;
- Interaction associated with self-help;
- Interaction associated with behavior toward peers.

Procedural Type II: Developing a First Language. These interaction instances are the same as those in Procedural Type I except that in this category the child's first language is used to communicate. Specific language development techniques are used by the teacher to help the child further explore language and, of course, develop it to the child's fullest capacity. Effective language development techniques have been observed in mothers' interactions with their young children. Two of these techniques, expansion and expatiation (Dale 1972), were observed in interactions between teachers and young children of two and one-half to three and one-half years of age. Expansion requires that the teacher respond to a child's speech by imitating the child; however, the utterances are not reproduced exactly. They reflect adult speech rather than child-like, telegraphic speech. Expatiation does not require the

teacher to repeat or reproduce the child's utterance; instead, the teacher carries out a conversation with the child using complete and meaningful utterances. In comparing the two techniques in a controlled situation, Cazden (1965) found that expatiation, which she initially called modeling, had more long-term positive effects on children's speech than expansion. Developing a child's first language, then, requires a teacher to be cognizant of the positive effects of using expatiation, as well as to know how to use it appropriately.

Instructional Type I: Conceptual Development in the Child's First Language. The interaction instances which fall under this category are teacher-structured. The teacher initiates the interaction and transmits knowledge about basic concepts commensurate with the abilities of each child according to age. When these concepts are new to children, who may be as young as 18 months, the most appropriate language to use is the child's first language. An example of a basic conceptual curriculum for very young children can be found in Weikart's (1971) cognitively oriented curriculum. This curriculum is based on Piaget's principles of learning and is divided into four groups of objectives: (1) grouping or classification, (2) ordering or seriation, (3) spatial relations, and (4) temporal relations. Some early childhood programs use the preacademic content areas, such as the family, school, plants and animals, ecology, and natural processing, to teach these objectives.

Instructional Type II: Conceptual Development in the Child's Second Language. The interaction instances in this category are similar to the Instructional Type I category, but the second language is used to reinforce the concepts already learned in the first language. Thus, besides the reinforcement of concepts, another objective here is to help the child acquire a second language. Like the Instructional Type I category, the interaction instances are somewhat structured in that they are preplanned. However, teachers of very young children need to capitalize, as much as possible on the "learning moments" to reinforce concepts in the second language.

3. Which reading skills should be taught or nurtured in a reading program for young children?

Within the realm of reading skills is a selection of skills which very young children can acquire if they are provided the opportunity. These skills do not require children to perform beyond their mental maturation stage. Skills which require phonetic analysis of words may not be appropriate for 18-month-old children, but a sense of appreciation for reading material may be appropriate. Essential and basic concepts about reading are critical to long-term, successful reading. When children bypass these concepts and are rushed into phonetic and structural analysis skills at the age of six, they are apt to view reading as a painful process with few rewarding results; whereas children who are read to on a daily basis from a very young age are apt to acquire an intrinsic desire to learn to read. This is because they learn about characters from favorite stories and share feelings about them with others. They should also learn why reading is important and how it can be enjoyable. To help children appreciate reading in as many different ways as possible, it is important to implement a reading appreciation component prior to and in conjunction with reading readiness and readiness comprehension components. A list of skills compiled by Guszuk (1978, 149) in the latter two areas can be used as a checklist for implementing a reading program for very young children. Not all of the skills are appropriate, of course, and some may need to be simplified to match the developmental level of the child. Table 1 briefly lists these skills.

Table 1

Implementing a Reading Program

Reading Skill Area	Skills
Reading Appreciation	• Handles books appropriately. • Understands the purpose of reading. • Understands the importance of literacy in our society. • Understands that letters and words represent meaningful units. • Appreciates being read to aloud.
Reading Readiness	• Visual discrimination • Auditory discrimination
Reading Readiness Comprehension	• Vocabulary development: space, time, number, value, size, color, conditions, cause and effect. • Comprehension: predicting, locating information, remembering, organizing, and evaluating critically.

The language of instruction should, of course, match the dominant language of the young child. However, some children have acquired two languages simultaneously, and one of the languages may slightly dominate the other. It may not be burdensome for bilingual children to receive instruction in two languages simultaneously; however, it is important that children be able to separate their linguistic codes (Kaminsky 1976). Therefore, a teacher must complete a lesson in either language and avoid mixing languages as much as possible. The more complex the concept to be learned, the more children need to rely on their dominant language for comprehension.

Basic Programmatic Elements

Six elements are basic to the implementation of a quality bilingual reading program in a nursery school. The rudiments of the program should be worked out by the childcare providers. The goals and philosophies should be consistent with providing quality childcare for young children who spend a good deal of their time away from their home and family. First and

foremost is the commitment toward meeting the basic emotional, physical, social, and educational needs of children. Beyond that, a well-balanced curriculum that emphasizes a bilingual early language and reading skills program should include the following:

- Clear and delineated goals and objectives concerning language use during structured and unstructured activities.
- Continuous staff training; teachers must learn how to develop a child's first and second languages, as well as how to teach young children. Planning and management skills are also essential.
- Parent involvement that includes an exchange of weekly and daily progress reports on every child. Teachers must convey to parents what their child is doing and encourage parents to reinforce learning at home; parents can then report on their child's progress to the teacher.
- An extensive language enrichment component that utilizes songs, rhymes, stories, dramatizations, and language games in both languages.
- An extensive reading program in both languages; the teacher, of course, is the most important element in the program, but the environment, materials, and activities are also crucial.
- The use of charts, posters, or word cards that label objects, and a variety of books are necessary ingredients. The activities should be fun for the child, and real life objects should be used as much as possible. The reading program should be an integral part of the total curriculum.
- An evaluation component that serves to monitor the ongoing program as well as to assess the entire program at the end of a specific time period. Since formal evaluation systems for this type of program may not be readily available, the staff may need to resort to informal means of evaluating.

Conclusion

Individuals involved in the process of change within our educational system must take into account the inevitable increase of young children in daycare situations and the expanding multicultural/multilingual resources in our society. The bilingual early language and reading program described in this paper provides opportunities for young children to learn their basic communication skills, and in some instances, to learn these skills in more than one language.

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Oral Interpretation: A Metacognitive Strategy for Reading

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Reading comprehension is a multifaceted process involving many components. If major components are missing, students are likely to have comprehension difficulties. Comprehension includes an understanding of the contextual meaning of most of the words; the grammatical structures used; the relationships of the parts of speech to each other; the concepts involved; and the oral, rhythmical structure of the selection being read. Each of these areas of comprehension should be addressed in bilingual classes.

The comprehension of oral and silent reading is facilitated by an understanding of the underlying rhythmical structure of the target language. The rhythmical structure of language can be used as a paralinguistic device to convey meaning. Without this paralinguistic knowledge, much of the meaning of oral and written discourse would be lost. Teacher- and peer-modeling procedures, such as story telling, discussion, and plays and choral speech, enhance formal instruction of the grammatical structures of English. These procedures form a basis for learning the rhythmical structures used in silent and oral reading. Without this knowledge, much of the meaning of oral and written discourse becomes, for the bilingual student, a confusing array of unrelated words and phrases.

Because bilingual students know the rhythmical structure of their primary language, they try to make sense of English by imposing their primary language's rhythmical structure on English. This method often does not provide meaning; so students experiment with a variety of rhythmical structures. These may include equal stress on every word, pausing between words, pausing on every second or third word, or pausing on words that seem of importance to the student. These pause points are the places in oral and written discourse where the reader pauses and thinks about the relationships between ideas. If students do not assign the proper pause points in the course of reading, the ideas are not properly related and are, therefore, without meaning.

Many students retain nonmeaningful pauses throughout their academic program. As they progress into high school and college, their comprehension problems are compounded as new subject areas are encountered. Each subject area has unique rhythmical structures that must be learned before content area information can be totally comprehended. This paper introduces the concept of enhancing reading comprehension through the use of oral interpretation of the rhythmical structures of a language.

As students read orally and silently in meaningful units of thought, their eye fixations move from one point to pause at another point. Good readers use these pause points to attach meaning to the words present between pause points and to think about the relationships among ideas. The markers for pause points are nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, connectives, and punctuation marks. These markers vary in importance as pause points according to the particular discipline. In the humanities, the noun is the most important pause point; whereas in mathematics, verbs, connectives, and nouns seem to be of equal importance. If a reader does not move thought meaningfully from noun to noun in the humanities, comprehension may not occur. For example, if a reader pauses on adjective or adverbs, instead of nouns, confusion of meaning may result.

Each discipline has a different rhythmical structure. Different rhythmical structures are used in reading poetry and mathematics:

> Water is a lovely thing
> Dark and ripply in a spring[1]

> The measure of an exterior angle of a triangle is the sum of the measures of its two opposite interior angles.[2]

Imposing the rhythmical pattern of poetry upon mathematics could cause comprehension difficulties. Bilingual students can benefit from knowing how to use the rhythmical structures of varying disciplines to enhance comprehension. The methodology of using oral interpretation of pause points to enhance reading comprehension follows six components. These are:

- Nouns are the cornerstones of rhythm and meaning;
- Punctuation marks are the second most important pause points in oral and silent reading;
- Connectives are usually the third level of importance;
- Verbs tie nouns together meaningfully;
- Adverbs and adjectives enrich the meaning of nouns and verbs;
- Prepositions lead thinking to the key ideas designated by noun pause points.

Each of these six components will be discussed for the remainder of the paper.

Nouns and Pronouns

Nouns are the cornerstones of rhythm and meaning and are the primary pause points in both oral and silent reading. Because English is a musical language, the rhythmical flow of the language between nouns aids the reader in the search for meaning. Bilingual students are word and dictionary conscious and, therefore, noun-oriented. Metacognition (the total comprehension of oral or written discourse) is based upon the relationships between nouns. When used with periods or commas, nouns mark the major, meaningful ideas in a reading selection. When reading meaningfully, one reads in a flowing manner, moving from one noun to another as

1. All lines of poetry have been taken from In Praise of Water by Nancy Turner (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1927).
2. All science and mathematics quotations have been taken from Biological Science: Molecules to Man by Claude Welch (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1974).

illustrated in the following excerpts from science and mathematical texts. The natural pause points are usually nouns or pronouns:

> A cell that is about to undergo division shows changes in the chromosomes.
>
> The measure of an exterior angle of a triangle is the sum of the measureof its two opposite interior angles.

If students read rhythmically from noun to noun, comprehension should improve. Discussion in science and mathematics classes should include the use of nouns in comprehension building. Teacher questions might include: How are the nouns related to each other?, Why do you pause longer on one noun than another?, Which noun is most important to meaning?

As pause points, pronouns may carry the same weight as do nouns. Bilingual students must know the noun referents for pronouns if they are to understand the total meaning of what they are reading. Discussion questions may include: In the following sentence, what does "they" refer to?--"Before cell division, the chromosomes are so fine, that they are practically impossible to see." Which noun pause point is the referent? By using the concept of nouns as structural pause points, bilingual students are able to find referents easily and logically. Thus the rhythmical structure of the sentence helps convey meaning.

Punctuation Marks

Punctuation marks are the second most important pause points in oral and silent reading. They mark large thought units. An important concept for bilingual students to understand is that words between punctuation marks are related to each other. In the following mathematical statement, "Prove: If a line is perpendicular to a plane,..." all the ideas between the colon and the comma are related. The ideas are so well related that the relationship can be diagrammed. Discussion questions to help develop this concept may include: What meaningful ideas are between the punctuation marks?, Why is a particular punctuation mark used?, and Demonstrate how you would read this sentence using the punctuation marks as pause points.

Connectives

Connectives are usually the third level of importance in the usage of pause points. They include words such as "and," "therefore," "however" and phrases such as "in spite of" and "one might say." Bilingual students need practice locating connective pause points, reading both sides of the pause points, and noting contrasts in meaning due to the meaning of the connectives.

In the statement: Today it is raining. In spite of the rain, I accomplished a great deal, the connective "in spite of" joins two ideas which may be interpreted in several ways. Discussion and interpretation questions may include: Which ideas are connected/contrasted? Which idea is most important to the meaning, the idea before the connective pause or the idea after? How does the connective pause change the meaning of the sentence?

Connective pauses are very important in mathematics. In the following statement, the connective is the pivotal idea, and all ideas are dependent upon it. "Prove: If a line is perpendicular to a plane, then, every plane that contains the line is also perpendicular to the given

plane." Oral interpretation includes pausing on the nouns, but the most important pause is placed on the connective "then."

Verbs

Verbs tie nouns together meaningfully. They are usually flow-through points--those places where the reader reads through the word to come to a pause point. In other words, verbs facilitate the meaningful flow of ideas from one pause point to another. However, in some types of writing, the verb is a more important pause point than the noun due to the impact of the meaning of the verb upon the ideas. In the following statement, the verbs tie the nouns together meaningfully: "Living cells contain similar components that operate in similar ways."

Adverbs and Adjectives

Adverbs and adjectives enrich the meaning of nouns and verbs. They are read silently and orally as part of the adjoining verb or noun. Discussion may center on the enriched meanings adjectives and adverbs supply to the metastructure of the concepts and ideas. Students may practice reading rhythmically from adjectives to nouns and from adverbs to verbs in order to enhance comprehension and interpretation. The following simple statement is enriched through the use of adjectives and adverbs: The cat sprang up the tree. The slinky, black cat sprang silently up the immense, darkly shaded tree.

Prepositions

Prepositions lead thinking to the key ideas designated by noun pause points. Prepositions point toward the meaning of the nouns. In the following excerpt from a poem, the repetition of the preposition leads thought to a variety of poetic images that are further enhanced by descriptive adjectives. Choral speaking would help students understand the usage of prepositions and noun pause points in depicting the poet's meaning by means of the rhythmical structure of the poem:

In a puddle brown and cool,
In a river blue and gay,
In a raindrop silver-gray;
In a fountain flashing white,
In a dewdrop crystal bright;
In a pitcher frosty cold,
In a bubble pink and gold.

Summary

The major ideas developed in this paper are:

- The rhythmical structure of English may be used as a basis for comprehension.
- Awareness of the flowing patterns of oral English is necessary for silent reading comprehension.
- A knowledge of the rhythmical, flow of oral English should be a part of reading instruction.
- Each content area or discipline such as English or mathematics has different patterns of language that are the structural components of comprehension.
- In order to ascertain an author's meaning, the reader must reconstruct the author's method of rhythmically structuring language.
- Competent usage of pause points and flow-through points enhances comprehension in the content areas.