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AUTHOR Mason, Ronald B.
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ABSTRACT

This paper presents a review of the literature that identifies the salient issues, trends, questions, and programs which bear upon the growth, development, and future professionalism of college reading improvement programs (CRIPS). The paper reviews the four broad areas of: (1) administrative concerns (including organizational structure, qualifications of instructors, credit for CRIPS, and cost); (2) instructional concerns (such as student population, instructional modes, instructional time factors, and curriculum materials); (3) assessment concerns (including testing and the diagnostic-prescriptive method); and (4) historical concerns (growth of programs and program descriptions). The paper concludes that both instructional and assessment concerns beg for further study, and that assessment concerns should be given attention first because they determine which students will receive instruction and by what means and in what manner. Contains 127 references. (RS)

TRENDS AND ISSUES IN COLLEGE READING IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS

Submitted by: Ronald B. Mason
November 1, 1994.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Since the 1970's remedial education has been the fastest growing area of the college curriculum FRSS Report # 19, (1986). Sharing in this growth are college reading improvement programs (CRIPS), an integral component of a remedial education program. Several studies highlight this increasing trend. In a national study of students entering as freshmen in undergraduate four year institutions, for example, 28% required assistance in reading (Lederman, 1983). Similar findings were also reported in a study which found that 29% of all entering freshmen needed a remedial reading course and that between 1979 and 1984 the number of students taking such courses increased 10% Dept. of Education FRSS Report # 19, (1986).

Further, in a study conducted by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Research and Improvement (1986), it was found that 8% to 10% more students needed remedial courses than had actually enrolled in them. Therefore one must logically conclude that the number of students needing remedial reading courses nationally may be placed more appropiately between 36% to 39% of all entering freshmen.

Given the proliferation of CRIPS, and the increasing number of students requiring remediation, college professionals will be called upon to grapple with the many issues that relate to the implementation, integration, and

evaluation of these programs. What issues will be in the forefront of discussion and debate?

The purpose of this review of the literature will be to begin to identify these salient issues, trends, questions and programs which bare upon the growth, development and future professionalism of CRIPS. To accomplish this four broad categories of exploration have been identified, they are: 1) Administrative Concerns, 2) Instructional Concerns, 3) Assessment Concerns and 4) Historical Concerns. Within each area of concern several issues emerge and will be discussed.

Finally, as a result of this review of the literature, this researcher hopes to identify several research questions that will provide the basis for future empirical study.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONCERNS

Administrative Concerns, as applied to college reading improvement programs, are defined as those policies and institutional supports which are vital to the function, maintenance, and continued development of these programs. Administrative concerns are essential because they help to create, organize, and control the environment in which these programs function. Therefore, an understanding of their impact is of paramount importance to professionals in the field. This judgment was confirmed when an informal survey was conducted among reading developmental educators at the 1989 New York Metropolitan Area Developmental Educators Conference to determine which issues were seen as most vital to the success of college reading improvement programs. The majority of respondents reported that issues concerning the "Administration" of programs were most pressing.

In the category of Administrative Concerns, several issues and questions will be in the forefront of discussion.

1) Within the overall college structure where should college reading improvement programs be placed and how should they be structured?

2) In what ways do the qualifications of reading professionals impact on college reading improvement programs?

3) Should universities or colleges grant credit for reading improvement courses?

4) Should college reading improvement courses be mandatory for those who demonstrate a need for them?

5) How cost-effective are these programs?

6) How does the level of administrative commitment detract or enhance program success?

The implications of these questions will be addressed in the following section.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE--ISSUE

What is the most efficacious organizational structure for CRIPS to facilitate the delivery of high quality reading services to students? This is an important consideration, and it has profound implications for reading improvement programs.

In Leedy's survey (1958) of 92 remedial programs, 46 were department allied and another 46 were not. This finding indicates that there were a number of remedial programs of which CRIPS are a part which existed as separate departments. This might imply a growing recognition of reading improvement programs as important enough to deserve a place beside writing and math in a separate remedial department. It also could imply an acceptance of the value of the service that reading programs perform. Subsequently, these programs continue to flourish whether as separate entities or as attachments to other departments.

When these programs are sponsored by other departments,

it has increasingly been the department of education and/or counseling and less and less increasingly the department of English which has been selected to oversee them. This finding is corroborated in the surveys of Buffone (1966), Huslin (1975) and Schantz (1976). Given the politics of academic institutions, CRIPS are susceptible to a type of hegemony when a department sponsors them, limiting their scope only to the reading demands of that discipline. This sometimes has the effect of compromising their mission.

Reading instruction should be as catholic as possible in the types of reading experiences to which students are exposed. The trend towards institutions organizing centralized departments to house remedial services, including CRIPS, is a move towards their more permanent establishment within higher education. However, with this development, the need for research in CRIPS is felt more strongly. In these tight budgetary times, there are limited ways to allocate funds. Therefore, this suggests smaller slices for everyone because CRIPS must, per force, have its share. This situation is likely to intensify the financial turf issue among colleagues in other disciplines. And in the ensuing debates questions could be raised which would necessitate hard research in the field of CRIPS in order to assure adequate levels of support.

Currently, the trend concerning the organizational structure of these programs seems to be away from a format in which an isolated teacher or counselor works on a particular

course, to one in which an integrated team of specialists offer complete services within a separate department or division. This finding is corroborated in a survey of the Department of Education (1986) which found that 33% of colleges have separate remedial departments or divisions. Roueche (1984) found that the larger the institution the more likely the services will be offered in a larger central unit. In another study by Roueche and Kirk (1973), it was found that one of the characteristics of a successful program was its centrality within the institution. This organizational structure suggests both the program's accessibility and its acceptibity within the institution.

QUALIFICATIONS OF INSTRUCTORS--ISSUE

What qualities, values, knowledge and background should a well qualified reading instructor possess? In a society which has become increasingly credentialized and specialized, one commonly accepted hallmark of quality education has been the academic credentials of instructional staff. Higher degrees in the field of reading have generally been assumed to result in better quality and delivery of instructional services.

Early reading programs did not have many instructional staff who were trained in reading. In 1941, Trigge in an article entitled, "Current Problems in Remedial Reading for

College Students," called for the training of supervisors of remedial reading at the college level as one of the pressing needs of the time. Trigg's article points towards the need for trained practitioners in the field of reading.

Leedy (1958) reported on degree level requirements of reading instructional staff at four year institutions. He found that more institutions required a Master's degree than any other. With this finding, one can note the beginning of a trend answering Trigg's call for more highly trained staff specializing in reading. Buffone (1966) reported based upon his survey of CRIPS more institutions requiring a doctorate than any other degree. This later study corroborates the trend among state univertities. However, Schantz (1976) reported that more instructional staff held Bachelors' and Master's degrees than doctorates. Given the research of Leedy (1958) and Buffone (1966), Schantz' finding appears contradictory but in fact reports what degrees instructional staff actually held rather than what institutional requirements for degrees were. She also noted that reading led the list of areas in which faculty members received their preparation. This fact reflects a clear response to Trigg's call. It is interesting to note that this issue is not directly addressed in any of the three national surveys of the 1980's.

If college reading improvement programs are to continue to grow, then the qualifications of instructional staff and their academic rank should be at a high level. The trend is

towards higher academic degrees in the field of reading. Since this movement has grown nationwide, it is now important for CRIPS to secure their positions within the university structure. One way to accomplish this milestone is for highly qualified, well trained instructional staff to deliver high quality instruction in the classroom, so that their products will be their best advertisement. Since the doctorate degree is in many ways the membership card for faculty, the attainment of that degree by instructional staff is important to the recognition of these reading programs. The prestige and integrity which faculty bring to their disciplines will go a long way towards advancing the cause of CRIPS.

The respect which faculty in other disciplines develop for reading faculty will be based upon the quality of their work, both in the classroom and in their area of academic interest. The nature of the research which reading faculty undertake should address such topics as the development of more effective teaching evaluation strategies, the preparation of better texts and laboratory materials as well as new approaches and solutions to old problems, as fundamental strategies to enrich this field. But commitment must go beyond this. It is essential that staff take advantage of every opportunity to present lectures, participate in panel discussions, and generally publicize the causes of these programs before professional organizations and beyond. All of these activities will also pave the way

for higher professional rank for faculty. Nonetheless, actual classroom teaching is the most important part of any reading improvement teacher's responsibility, this aspect of a teacher's work often seems secondary to the above mentioned activities. Every instructor must maintain a high level of instruction for his/her students. Part of this responsibliity is cognitive but equally important for this student population is the affective domain. Ammons and Hieronymus (1946) found, gains in the classes they studied at the University of Iowa were closely related to teachers expectations for their students not faculty degrees. Teacher attitudes toward students and teacher expectations for them should be considered as important a qualification as the doctoral degree. Educators in the field must keep foremost in their minds that the quality of the service they deliver to students should be educators' first priority.

Leedy,(1958); Buffone,(1966); Schantz,(1976) present the numbers of institutions requiring or having doctorates, masters, or bachelors degrees while Roueche (1977), by contrast, specifically states what qualities he has identified as essential for a good remedial teacher. Roueche's research tends to be qualitative rather than quantitative; therefore, unlike the data collected in the numerous surveys others have made, Roueche's work contrasts strikingly.

CREDIT--ISSUE

Should CRIPS be given for academic credit? If credit should be given, then what type of credit should it be? If grades and credits are motivators in college, and the research certainly suggests that they are, then aren't they sorely needed for this population? Concern about credit and grades is closely tied to that of student retention. Roueche (1977) found that colleges providing credit for remedial courses retain students more often than colleges not doing so. Since retention is a desirable goal from the point of view of both the student and the institution, it seems reasonable to offer these courses for credit. This finding is corroborated by Cross (1976) who stated, "The major 'reward' education has to offer these students is college credit." Contrary to present trends, the literature reveals that very few of the early CRIPS were offered for either a grade or credit. Beginning with the Geerlof and Kling study (1968), about one-fourth of the institutions contacted responded that they offered CRIPS courses for credit. Huslin (1976) reported that one-half of the colleges responding offered credit, and that the type of credit was either institutional or non-degree credit. This reflects a large increase in the direction of granting credit during an eight year period. This finding was also made in the U.S. Department of Education FRSS (1986) study. Additionally,

Roueche (1984) found that most institutions award institutional credit for basic skills courses.

The trend with respect to granting credit for these courses reflects a sharp change, with more and more institutions offering degree credit. However, the trend with respect to the type of credit granted lags. Certainly, a greater number of institutions are now awarding degree credit for basic skills courses than was true five years ago (Roueche,1984).

A survey conducted by the Department of Education (1986) corroborates Roueche's findings and adds that regional differences are apparent in response to the issue of credit for these courses. Thirty-five percent of the colleges in the North Atlantic region did not grant credit for remedial reading courses. Responses from colleges not granting credit in other regions ranged from 5 to 19 percent. This finding in the North Atlantic region probably reflects the more traditional view of higher education held in the area where higher education was first established in this country.

The issue of credit is important because it is inextricably bound to that of the academic prestige of the discipline since credit is granted contingent upon whether the faculty and administration deem the course taken to be academically rigorous, challenging and beneficial enough to deserve pursuit at the undergraduate level. Though most institutions nationwide award institutional credit, full academic credit for CRIPS courses is on the rise.

REQUIRED/OPTIONAL COURSES--ISSUE

Should the services of CRIPS be mandatory or voluntary? If the former, for whom should they be mandatory? Early CRIPS courses were almost exclusively voluntary, and at one point in their history it was prestigious for students to boast superior reading speed, but since that time much has changed. In 1968, Geerlof and Kling found that most schools offered reading courses as electives. Subsequently, in 1975, Huslin reported that CRIPS courses were optional in two-thirds but required in one-third of the institutions he surveyed. More recently, in 1986, the U.S. Department of Education reported on a survey it conducted that 51% of colleges offering reading courses required them for students who did not meet certain standards to enroll. The standard used was usually determined by standardized tests results. The study further revealed institutions requiring enrollment in CRIPS were more likely to be small college in the North Atlantic and the Southeastern regions of the country.

Another interesting related issue is that of mandatory assessment. Roueche (1984) found that more institutions regardless of type were more committed to mandatory assessment than to mandatory placement. This has implications for both the student population of CRIPS and the diagnostic-prescriptive method both of which are considered

in this study. Why should an institution mandate reading assessment for students when it is not willing to mandate placement in CRIPS classes? Perhaps the answer partially lies in the present state of assessment.

With improved assessment, test instruments, techniques and procedures, CRIPS would do a better job of providing services to those students who are in need. Once matters of assessment are resolved, the issue of whether these programs should be required and of whom, can depend upon test scores, self-referral, and faculty recommendation. When considering this issue of optional/required courses, remedial and developmental courses need to be considered separately. It seems obvious that remedial courses need to be required usually as the result of responsible assessment for anyone who demonstrates need at that level. But a much more contentious issue arises with regard to requiring students to take developmental reading courses. It is the mission of colleges and universities to prepare people for life, and consistent with that goal are the aims of any developmental reading program. At some future date developmental reading for all students will be a feasible goal. Since many freshman texts are written at the 15th grade level and beyond, it is a reasonable expectation that developmental courses will eventually be required for all freshmen. With ever higher standards for reading skills at the college level (Whimbley, 1988), it is reasonable to expect higher test cutoffs and changes in other criteria

which will effect the required/optional status of these courses.

Mandatory placement in developmental courses seems more effective than voluntary enrollment. Many students who are advised to take these courses do not enroll in them (Dept. Education, 1986), and they later fail or withdraw from their regular classes (Dept. of Education, 1986). The negative effects of mandatory placement can be overcome partially with the help of a guidance counselor and by pointing out to students that there are hundreds of other students taking these courses.

COST--ISSUE

Who should pay for CRIPS?

In these belt-tightening times, the major hurdle to CRIPS is their cost to institutions and to states. Georgia spent more than six million dollars in 1981 on developmental programs, and the University of California spent between ten and twelve million in 1982 (Austin, 1985). In an article which appeared in the New York Times (March, 1976) entitled, "Rise in Remedial Work Taxing Colleges," the Ohio Board of Regents refused to reimburse state colleges and universities for their remedial programs, arguing that the taxpayers should not be charged a second time for something they had already paid the high schools to accomplish. Ohio State University enrolled 350 sections of remedial freshman

English at a cost of about $500,000 which it had to cover out of other funds, since the Regents would not fund these courses. This type of action on the part of states is not peculiar to Ohio and has serious implications for CRIPS.

Developmental programs in higher education are expensive, and many educators are concerned that they are not effective. Special materials, equipment, space and administrative services are needed. The pupil-teacher ratio should be kept relatively low, and many hours must be spent tutoring students outside of the regular class. On the other hand, in the long run it may be cost effective to provide these programs in order to retain students. By keeping students in school, institutions continue collecting student fees, and many also benefit from the full time employment (FTE) reimbursement. Adjustment in funding formulas could make developmental programs more cost effective (Austin, 1985). Also in a period of decreased enrollment, institutions with developmental programs can recruit students who would otherwise be ineligible for higher education. It may be argued, therefore, that these schools can divert some of their resources to helping high-risk students and also increase enrollment in regular classes after students have attained the necessary skills.

Most institutions from the very beginning have offered these programs gratis (Leedy, 1958). To offer such programs at additional cost could be interpreted as a punitive act by students who need to take these classes. Further, those

students in greatest need of the type of services these courses offer, are usually those who are least in a position to afford them. Although most institutions have not charged students special fees to help defray program costs, they have charged for other supportive services Linquist (1949). It seems reasonable to have students share expenses in this way.

The cost for CRIPS must be borne by everyone (federal, state, city, school and student). The early literature suggests a partial payment for these services by students at some institutions. However, the cost for these services during these inflationary times in higher education has become prohibitive. This has, therefore, become an issue for state legislatures. Who should bear the cost? The student? The institution? The taxpayer? The U.S. Constitution delegates the responsibility of education to the state. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the state to make these services available. However, institutions also have a responsibility to make these programs part of their regular offerings and to consider them to be part of their general mission. The cost for these programs could be absorbed in general tuition costs and increased state revenues.

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITMENT--ISSUE

If CRIPS are to survive and thrive in our colleges and universities, they will need unflinching administrative commitment. What is commitment? There are basic similarities

with some variations in the definition of this concept. Porter (1968) and Sheldon (1971) viewed commitment as an affective attachment to the goals and values of an organization. Buchanan (1974) determined that commitment consisted of three components: identification, adoption of the goals and values of the organization as one's own; involvement, the psychological immersion or absorption in the activities of one's work role; and loyalty, a feeling of affection for and attachment to the organization.

If the above definitions are viable, there is significant evidence of deficiency in this area. Reading programs are frequently targets of faculty complaints. Quite often the faculty simply does not believe the college should be devoting its resources to students who have not already obtained their basic skills. In this environment, administrators who are ambivalent about their own commitment to developmental programs may very well add to the nemesis.

Commitment or lack of it may also be reflected in the level of professional support and resource allocation. In a national survey conducted by Roueche (1984), it was found that the larger the institution, the more likely the position of the program administrator would be a full time or a primary duty. This study also found that the majority of large institutions use full time adminisrators in their programs. However, a large number of doctoral degree granting institutions and comprehensive colleges assign larger numbers of instructors on a part-time basis than do

other types of institutions (Dept. of Education, 1986). There is irony in this fact because one would suspect that generally speaking the larger universities could better afford to hire full-time faculty for their reading programs than smaller institutions. There is reason to believe that the large doctoral institutions are in fact hiring graduate assistants as their part time instructional workforce (Dept. of Education, 1986) which again raises some question about the level of administrative commitment of this type of institution to reading improvement programs. Lack of administrative commitment has implications for the program evaluation of student satisfaction, instructional research, and the follow-up on students who have been enrolled in CRIPS. Administrative support might take the form of release time or leave for faculty development.

A college reading improvement program is only as effective as the administrative support it receives. Administrative support is most effective when such support is politically, philosophically, and financial based. To discuss administrative commitment is to consider the institutional environment for these programs.

The university officials set the tone for their acceptance and smooth operation within the college or university community, and presents the case for the need for CRIPS to the Board of Trustees as well as to the state legislatures and the larger community. University administrators at all levels must firmly believe that such

programs belong and need to be integrated into the present college structure. Support must be obtained at the highest levels to insure that other supports will be made possible.

CONCLUSION

If CRIPS are to be successful, they must have strong administrative support. One aspect of this support is the organizational structure of these programs within the institution. CRIPS should be housed within the university structure in such a way that they are not subject to the demands of any one academic department. More frequently, this has come to mean that they are part of a centrally located independent department whose mission it is to provide remedial instruction in math, writing and reading. Within the larger institutions, this organizational structure has been found to facilitate efficient delivery of educational services.

The college administration must set high standards for the program which will translate into requiring a high level of instruction and training for staff. The degrees held by reading professionals are tied to the prestigue of the department. A doctoral degree in the field of reading is more frequently recognized as the required degree. Additionally, in CRIPS courses, dedicated and inspired instructors who are engaging and resourceful are seen as vital to success. The trend is towards higher degrees and greater sensitivity on the part of reading professionals.

Another trend is noticed with regard to the granting of credit. For reasons of motivation, it is very important that credit be awarded for CRIPS courses. The preponderance of programs presently award institutional credit, which is considered for purposes of calculating the student's course load and for financial aid purposes only, but gradually more and more are offering full credit towards a degree.

CRIPS courses should be required of those students who on the basis of some assessment instrument reflect skill levels which warrant their enrollment in them. Presently remedial courses tend to be required while developmental courses tend to be optional. Both the screening and placement of students in these courses should be mandatory. Finally, the issue of the cost effectiveness of these programs was reviewed. At first glance, these courses may appear to be a drain on the institution's resources, but in the long run they may not be cost effective because of such factors as high student retention, resulting in the collection of more student fees and higher FTE reimbursement.

Strong administrative support and commitment is essential to program success. The level of commitment is reflected in administrative support with regard to the foremention ed issues.

INSTRUCTIONAL CONCERNS

Instructional Concerns as applied to college reading improvement programs, are defined as those factors which impact upon the effectiveness of instruction included in this are some significant pedagogical and curricular variables including such issues as the student population, instructional mode, instructional time factors, study skills/reading skills and materials.

Instructional concerns essentially speak to the heart of the charge of CRIPS to deliver as efficiently and effectively as possible needed instruction to a targeted segment of the student population.

In the fulfillment of this mission, several issues and questions stand out as most significant. They are:

1) What population is CRIPS targeted to?
2) Which instructional mode is most effective for this population?
3) Is any configuration of instructional time more conducive to improving reading for CRIPS students?
4) Should study skills be taught separately from reading skills?
5) What guidelines should be used for materials selection?

The implications of these questions will be addressed in the following section.

STUDENT POPULATION--ISSUE

What student groups should be targeted for services? Very few CRIPS have focused upon student populations other than freshmen. The exceptions to this have been the early programs at Harvard (1915) and the University of Minnesota (1920). But even these programs changed to predominately freshmen programs shortly thereafter. The student population of institutions cuts across age, race, religion, ethnic group, sexes, nationality and socio-economic groups. And this rich diversity is represented in the college reading improvement programs in this country. It has become increasingly evident that the lack of a clear definition of remediation involving testing and test cut-offs, has resulted in a lack of our ability to accurately define the CRIPS student population. The U.S. Dept. of Education (1986) found that the identification of students lacking skills necessary to perform college level work is a function of the standards of the institution and not a uniform standard. What is considered remedial in one institution may not be so identified in another. And this situation exists for a CRIPS student population which is increasing (Roueche,1984).

There are certain categories of students who tend to need developmental programs. These include: international students, athletes, minority students, and handicapped students. Of course, some students fit into more than one of these categories, which only compounds their difficulties.

The international student, often have inadequate English communication skills. The idiomatic English used in class lectures, discussions, and even in textbooks can confuse these students. This language barrier is even greater for refugees, who usually have had less preparation in English than other international students. They are often also unfamiliar with the culture. A mandatory English proficiency screening for international students can identify those who need to be in the developmental program (Aikman, 1982).

Many foreign students face a problem in reading comprehension because they lack sufficient background knowledge (Obah,1983). This fact is often reflected in their test results.

Scholarship athletes are often well represented in these courses. Recruited by coaches on the basis of their high school athletic records, many of these students arrive at college with serious deficiencies in the skills needed for their academic courses. As high school athletes, many of these students enjoyed special status and are often allowed to graduate without a good preparation for the demands of a college curriculum.

Some minority students also face language barriers. Although they understand standard English, they often are unable to use it correctly in their written and spoken communications because they have grown up speaking a variant dialect (Labov,1970). In classes in which standard English

is necessary, these students are at a distinct disadvantage. They may see insistances of the use of standard English as discriminatory rather than an effort to prepare them to succeed in the world of work. Their instructors must teach them standard English usage as well as convince them that fluency in standard English will help them compete in the marketplace, though their dialect serves them well in appropiate circumstances.

Many handicapped students have gaps in their academic backgrounds because of particular disabilities. For example, hearing impaired students may have had difficulty in high school classes because they missed or misunderstood points made by the teacher. Their word recognition skills may be weak perhaps because their hearing impairment did not allow them to master phonics. Visually impaired students may have fallen behind because the textbook reading load may have been too heavy or because they missed details when information was presented visually. In many cases, the only things handicapped students may need are accomodations that take their disabilities into account. These may include special seating arrangements, amplifiers, large print sources, extending test time, and special teaching techniques.

Many other students are underprepared simply because of inadequate educational opportunities in the past and because of their failure, for various reasons, to take advantage of opportunities that exist. Some of the reasons for underpreparation are the result of inadequate school systems

from which these students come. Others are the result of negative attitudes within the students themselves, and some are the result of home conditions.

For example, moving from school to school could result in some students missing skills that are not taught in the same sequence in all schools. Students can also miss school instruction by being absent frequently because of illness or truancy. Other students may fail to learn basic skills because of emotional problems that make it difficult for them to concentrate. In cases such as these, developmental courses can fill the gaps so that students can progress normally in the regular college curriculum.

Each of these groups, the international student, the athlete, the minority student, the handicapped student and others present special challenges for good assessment and remedial instruction. Standardized tests often serve to lower self-esteem for this population.

INSTRUCTIONAL MODES--ISSUE

Which instructional mode is most effective for this population?

Instructional mode is defined as the arrangement or ordering of the instructional setting. The instructional settings cited here include: laboratory, clinical, and classroom. Each of these settings requires a different relationship between the learner and the

facilitator. This provides ample opportunity for creativity and innovation when matrixed with the different methods, approaches, organizational arrangements, learning systems, materials and aids which are available to choose among. (see chart # B in index)

Within these three instructional modes, numerous variations are possible. The laboratory modes at Chicago University (1920) involved students working independently in reading based on a prescription which was kept in the students' folders from which students worked. Instructional support was achieved with the use of college students who served as peer tutors and who worked under the supervision of an instructor in the English department.

Yale University (1940), espoused the philosophy that learning should be therapeutic therefore utilized a more clinical mode. The focus was on the well being of the whole person. Instruction was almost exclusively one-to-one. By contrast, the clinical mode at the University of Pennsylvania (1937) utilized the small group approach. In this mode the dynamics of the individual in group was seen as motivational in the learning process. This approach is seen as particularly effective with students who need intensive work to overcome severe reading disabilities. However,not necessarily productive for the general population.

Unlike the program at Yale, Amherst used the classroom as a forum for lecture, activities and discussion around topics

forming a course of study. There was innovation even with this approach at Amherst College (1920) using a reading program which treated themes involving the history of an idea such as capitalism or socialism. This program was interdisciplinary and from its description quite interesting and stimulating. By and large, over the years, instruction in CRIPS classes has taken place using a classroom approach. This finding is still true. Roueche (1984) found that basic skills classroom courses were typically used to address the needs of underachieving students.

The classroom (lecture-laboratory) approach has been identified by Buffone (1966) and is likely to continue to be the most frequently used. Classroom work tends to be more cost effective.

INSTRUCTIONAL TIME FACTORS--ISSUE

Is any configuration and frequency of time more conducive to improved reading for CRIPS students than another? Time refers to the length of a class session, number of times a class meets per week, and number of times a class meets per course. The literature concerning time factors reveals a woeful paucity of research in this area. The basic concern is this. Would a greater number of classes per week for shorter time periods per session, or a fewer number of classes per week for longer time periods result in

significant improvement in reading achievement for CRIPS students given a standard class size of no more than twenty students (Schantz, 1976)? Early literature on CRIPS reveals that programs vary widely with respect to the number of times classes meet, and class size. However, the actual length of those classes revealed little variation. The U.S. Department of Education (1986) reported that the average length of classes is held for fifty minutes, two or three sessions per week. An important related issue is attendance. Roeuche (1984) found that the majority of institutions reported a mandatory attendance policy. Time on task is a very critical factor in reading improvement. Improvement, after all, can only be brought about over time (Harris & Sipay, 1975). The point in a students development at which he/she takes CRIPS courses is an important variable. Reading improvement is a factor of personal maturation and development and these components too are factors of time. Assuming a class size of less than twenty, the more contact students have with reading teachers the better, 3 one hour, meetings per week for sixteen weeks is perhaps a more conducive arrangement than fewer contact hours. This issue needs further study. It is too important to ignore. It is encumbent upon CRIPS to make possible those schedules of classes which results in the greatest improvement for this population. Certainly, arrangements of time are curcial to the success of CRIPS.

CURRICULUM: STUDY SKILLS/READING SKILLS--ISSUE

Should study skills be taught separately from reading skills? Are they interrelated and/or interdependent disciplines? The first course in the remediation of academic skills (study skills) was instituted at Wellesley College in 1894. This course focused upon the poor study habits of students in college. Later remedial reading courses spread and were introduced and added to the how-to-study ones. Almost from the very beginning, courses which dealt with how-to-study (study skills) courses took on the nature of courses in techniques of better reading (how to extract meaning from print) Cross (1976). Reading was generally recognized as the most important phase in the act of study. It is no surprise then that many of the early reading programs and others subsequently have made reference to reading skills in their titles (Leedy, 1958). The literature of CRIPS in the 1970s and 1980s is surprisingly rarely addresses this issue.

Study skills and reading skills are siamesed disciplines. They can be conceived of separately, and some aspects of each may function independently of the other. However, their basic nature is interdependent. There is a complex nexus of relationships between these two areas of study.

The trend today is away from the old predominance of study skills in the direction of reading skills. The

dominance of reading is to be expected in our process oriented society. Reading is also the central activity of any study skills program because of the nature of study.

CURRICULUM: MATERIALS--ISSUE

What factors need to be taken into consideration for the selection of materials and equipment for CRIPS?

Materials are an important component of any reading improvement program. Mimeographed or photocopied sheets, textbooks, manuals, workbooks and machinery have provided the principle instructional materials for reading improvement programs. As is the case in some other fields, reading improvement textbooks should not dictate the curriculum. There is an abundance of supplemental material to choose from, and some are as readily available as one's favorite magazine daily newspaper. Exercises, reading passages, dictation, computer software, reading kits, and other types of instrumentation support the reading instructor in his/her goal. Reading improvement classes can therefore be very eclectic in their use of materials. The quality of the reading materials which students use is much too important a matter to leave to chance.

Reading improvement educators should exercise their influential right to select reading materials. What factors need to be taken into consideration for the selection of materials and equipment for CRIPS? In a book entitled,

Choosing Materials to Teach Reading (1966), by Kenneth Goodman and others, five principles are considered in the selection of reading materials. These principles are: psychological, sociocultural, educational, linguistic, and literary. When considering psychological principles, instructional faculty should consider: student development and textbook organization, personality growth, individual difference, motivation and interest. Sociocultural principles encompass: what students like to read, social class and experience, dialect differences, role development, and values. Educational principles include: controls, legibility, associated learning, suitability and teachability. Linguistic principles include: syntactic considerations, and dialect considerations. Literary principles include: matters of content and artistic quality. A list of critical questions adopted from Kenneth Goodman's book, Choosing Materials to Teach Reading is included in Appendix C.

CONCLUSION

If CRIPS are to be effective, they must address important instructional concerns. Students with different needs require different instructional modes and these modes may vary depending upon the skills of students. These modes are: the classroom, laboratory and clinic.Present practice suggests that one is more or less appropiate than the other depending upon the remedial needs of the students. Unfortunately, there has been little research to determine

which of these three instructional modes is most effective for which portion of the CRIPS population. Time is a crucial factor for CRIPS instruction. But, to date, there appears to be a dirth of research available on instructional time factors. This is an area which needs study.

Study skills and reading skills have evolved separately as disciplines but are sometimes taught as one integrated course and other times taught as two separate courses of study. More research is needed to determine which approach is most effective and why?

Material selection is crucial for CRIPS. Materials should be selected by matching appropiate materials to students' reading levels. Materials should be high interest. The socio-economic, ethnic and cultural diversity of the student population should be taken into account. It may be helpful to consult other CRIPS programs for suggestions about materials which they have used with success.

ASSESSMENT CONCERNS

Assessment concerns, as applied to college reading improvement programs, are defined as those instruments, practices, and procedures which are vital to the analysis of student reading behavior. Assessment concerns are basic to college reading improvement programs because they direct curriculum, guide instruction, and facilitate appropiate placement.

In the category of Assessment Concerns, several issues reflected in the following questions will be discussed.

1) How should CRIPS students be placed and exited?

2) What is more important rate or comprehension?

3) Is the diagnostic/prescriptive method appropiate for CRIPS?

The implications of these questions will be addressed in the following section.

TESTING--ISSUE

Have standardized tests been an effective means of assessing CRIPS students reading?

How should CRIPS students be placed? There are several means for assessing entering college students to determine who needs reading improvement services. These include: high school grades, self-referral, referral by an administrator, a faculty member or a counselor. However, overwhelmingly, it has been standardized tests which have been used most frequently Lederman (1984).

Since the early days of the CRIPS movement, standardized tests have been administered for purposes of placement. Leedy (1958) reported that 88 of the 92 institutions used standardized tests. Geerlof and Kling (1968) found 83% of the higher education institutions surveyed used these tests, and Schantz (1976) made a similar finding. Lederman

(1983) found that 97% of the responding institutions in a national survey she conducted studied the frequency and impact of using standardized instruments to test the reading skills of entering freshmen. As indicated by the preceding authors, standardized tests have been used more frequently than any other means to place students into CRIPS classes. But while standardized testing is the most common method of placement into basic skills courses, there is little agreement on which specific tests should be used (Lederman, 1983). This fact is also corroborated in the Department of Education FRSS survey # 19 (1986).

Testing appears to be the weak link in the delivery of quality services to college reading improvement students and therefore must be improved. Since, at least in part, CRIPS are dealing with culturally and linguistically different students, cultural bias in test instruments must be eradicated. This means, of course, that placement test instruments must be above reproach. However, this seems an unlikely possibility in the short term. One specific area of test bias that has not been sufficiently explored is the effect that timed testing may have on students' performance. Deem (1980) stated, "Timed reading tests specifically may be culturally biased against culturally and linguistically different students, especially if the students place different values on the time factor in testing than the test-giver or test-maker." This fact is taken a step further by Chall (1970) who provided evidence to conclude that timed

reading tests may result in inaccurate reflections of a student's ability. Testing is a very serious issue for CRIPS. First, testing and test cut-offs define the population. The single most important activity in education is the identification of the student population. Second, when different institutions and states use different instruments and standards, they in effect actually define their populations differently so that what might be a CRIPS student in one situation might not be so in another. These blatant inconsistencies serve to undermine the credibility of CRIPS. Testing is a very imperfect science.

There is some question as to what reading tests really measure. This has been drawn into question because subjects have been able to guess correct answers on multiple choice reading tests questions and score at a level considerably above the level of sheer chance. Edward Fry (1970) wrote about this phenomenon in an article entitled the "Orangutan Score." Testing is too important a step in reading instruction to leave to chance. This situation is further exacerbated by the fact that depending upon what the floor of these tests are, the testee can be assigned a certain reading level for just signing his/her name. These anomalies of testing undermine their credibility and by extension the credibility of CRIPS.

Another complaint about standardized reading tests is that they are biased against nonstandard English speaking students. There have been calls for "dialect free" tests

(Harris & Sipay, 1976). The counter-argument to this position is that in fact reading tests should measure pupils' ability to deal with the materials he/she would be most likely to read in class. Needless to say, these materials would be in standard English. It seems reasonable to expect students to master the dominant dialect, standard English, while encouraging them to retain their own.

Both students and the society at large are enriched from the diversity of multi-dialects. Reading improvement programs should encourage and expect students to either be in command of standard English or at the very least be actively working towards that goal. The issue of testing in reading is inextricably bound to issues of language and politics.

The important yet controversial issue of testing remains the subject of much discussion. Testing in reading is a necessary activity because it identifies who needs what. However, serious questions have arisen because many of the test instruments are believed to be seriously flawed, thereby interfering with accurate assessment. Currently, some of these tests are being restandardized based upon a more representative norming sample. These samples must be more representative racially, ethnically, and geographically as well as across socio-economic groups. Some test items have been considered to be flawed or biased etc. (Taylor, 1976). Test procedures need to be reassessed in light of the scant but nonetheless compelling research on the effect of the time factor on certain socio-economic and ethnic groups. These

matters are significant because quality assessment is an absolute necessity if reading improvement programs are to improve. Efforts are being made to bring positive changes about. However, until this becomes a reality (and the nature of assessment is so complex that that day remains in the distant future) it is necessary that instructional staff in reading programs ensure the accuracy of these instruments by supplementing them with any of a variety of informal assessments as well as through the implementation of new testing procedures. In the meanwhile, social and political pressure must be consistently applied upon the companies that produce these instruments to create even more valid and reliable means of assessment. For example, in 1976 the NAACP declared a moritorium on standardized testing because after considerable study it was determined that these tests were unfair to members of certain groups.

A sub-issue of the testing issue is the matter of rate and comprehension in reading. Reading rate refers to the speed at which eye movement is sustained in the reading process. Reading comprehension is the complex nexus of mental processes which enables the reader to extract meaning from print. The debate over which of these two processes deserves precedence continues in college reading improvement programs (Harris & Sipay, 1975). Rate has historically developed as an integral part of assessment in this country (Harris & Sipay, 1975). That one's rate should be adjusted to accomodate the material being read encapsulizes the level of our present wisdom in this area. There are circumstances which place demands other than those which the test situation places upon the reader. However, timed standardized tests present readers with a situation which may very well necessitate utilizing different strategies.

What is more important, rate or comprehension? If one's reading rate is too slow, it interferes with comprehension. If one's comprehension is poor, rate becomes a secondary matter. Goodnow (1979), Chall (1970) and Deem (1980) have all found that timed tests may be biased against culturally and linguistically different students. If this is so and there is good reason to suspect it is, the issue of rate vs. comprehension in CRIPS becomes one which needs greater clarity. There are two possible alternatives. One, lengthen the time limit on tests or do away with limits all together. Two, do not alter the time allocation, but train students in

the most vulnerable groups (those which have been identified through the research to be effected by the time factor) in strategies and skills which will rapidly accelerate their rate. It is this researcher's view that for purposes of placement and diagnosis in CRIPS, reading rate should be considered as a separate factor since the purpose of such tests is to ascertain information about a student's reading skills. With our present testing practices, reading rate interferes in the process of accurate assessment of skills. A separate test for rate can be easily administered using either a formal or informal instrument by the instructor of examiner. This is suggested in the interest of placing the issue of rate in its proper place and obtaining more accurate assessment on placement and diagnostic tests. However, since reading comprehension and speed have evolved as an integral part of our cultural definition of intelligence, it seems reasonable for time to remain an integral part of our assessment on achievement tests. It would therefore be necessary for students who have reading skill deficiencies to enter classes for remediation of those skills. If, however, a student is proficient in reading skills but deficient in rate only, he/she should enroll in a developmental reading course which could give more focus to concerns of rate.

In the early years, there were frequent references in the literature to improving students' reading rate and much less emphasis upon comprehension (Leedy,1958). Reading rate was a major consideration in most of the early programs. Perhaps no

other program symbolized the national concern with rate more than the Harvard Program. The Harvard Reading Film with its emphasis upon eye span, phrasing and rate was used by a great number of programs across the country as a major part of the course curriculum. Leedy (1958) studied program titles and concluded that they reflect this tension between rate and comprehension. In the titles of programs reported in the Leedy (1958) survey, there was a noticeable shift in emphasis from speed of reading towards reading comprehension. Both Buffone (1966) and Schantz (1976) reported curriculum emphases which rank comprehension as the most important skill, and reading rate as the least important. In the literature of the 1980's there is no mention given to the rate-comprehension instructional emphasis. For purposes of classroom instruction the emphasis is still upon comprehension.

To perform well on standardized tests, rate and comprehension require almost equal attention. This fact of life has become even more ingrained in recent years despite the fact that the pendulum in the rate-comprehension debate is presently very much on the side of comprehension. The unspoken expectation of these tests seems to be achievement of a high level of comprehension at a reasonably fast rate. However, the rate-comprehension debate continues in college reading improvement programs.

Our society has become more process oriented society and as such the thought processes involved in the areas of

reading comprehension and writing have taken precedence. This orientation seems here to stay. But, this should not be construed to mean that the rate issue is dead. Given the ever increasing volumes of information which students must process, accuracy and speed are the twin goals towards which they must aim. It is, therefore, important that instructional staff for reading improvement programs have the role of rate in the reading activity in good perspective.

Rapid reading is a distinct advantage, but it is important to remember that for students to go through material without understanding it and without being able to remember it, is a waste of time no matter what the reading speed.

DIAGNOSTIC-PRESCRIPTIVE METHOD--ISSUE

Has the diagnostic-prescriptive method been a useful tool for CRIPS?

Closely related to this issue of testing is the diagnostic-prescriptive method. This method has been the means by which discreet skill weaknesses can be determined and once identified strengthened. It enables the reading instructor to work in tandem with content area teachers towards the goal of strengthening students' reading skills to help bring about the maximum improvement in reading in the least possible time. The diagnostic prescriptive method is

very important for remedial reading courses, but somewhat less so for developmental classes because of the different degrees of help needed. To be effective, this method presupposes good assessment and good materials. Its use is so ingrained in the reading improvement movement as to deserve the status of the traditional. In most types of reading programs the diagnostic-prescriptive method is essential to their effective functioning.

The diagnostic-prescriptive method is also used to help determine the best instructional approach for students. Several types of reading modes have been cited in the literature: clinics, laboratories, and classes (remedial, or developmental).

This method is almost ubiquitious among CRIPS. But the faithful should be alerted that this method is only as good as the test and the judgment of the instructor. Its two weaknesses are that it is dependent upon flawed assessment instruments, and that test results are open to human error in their interpretation. Therefore, intensive training in the area of educational test measurements is vital in the preparation of reading instructors because good assessment is vital for accurate diagnosis and appropiate prescription.

The diagnostic-prescriptive method gives the illusion of being completely objective and beyond question. It is this very appearance which makes its implementation important to understand. Practitioners can be lulled into feelings of confidence and even self-righteousness about their diagnoses

and prescriptions which can serve to undermine the process. The use of the concept of probability, which the diagnostic-prescriptive method involves, does not eliminate uncertainity about the student. In actuality, probability should serve to reduce the practitioner's "uncertainity about uncertainity" (Sox,1988). Making wise choices despite the uncertainity inherent in most testing information is an important aspect of the art and science of teaching in CRIPS.

A good prescription presupposes good diagnosis, and good diagnosis begins with a marshalling of all the facts. But, knowing which ones to collect and how to analyze them accurately are two "bete noires" of the diagnostic-prescriptive method. In short, they are both problems in gathering information.

The difficulties in gathering diagnostic-prescriptive information are of three types: those involved in generating hypotheses, those inherent in the diagnostic procedures, and those located in the observer. First, in order for a diagnostic system to work there must be some testable hypothesis (hypotheses). Studies (Bella, 1980; Elstein, 1978) of expert medical diagnosticians have found that the process used by those highly skilled in this area involved their generating a small set of hypotheses early. These hypotheses were usually based on very limited data. Then data was gathered that would either support or refute these hypotheses. In this way, the diagnostician generally narrowed down the possibilities. Is this method applicable

to the field of reading diagnosis? Is a kind of mass diagnosis possible when dealing with several CRIPS classes as most instructors do?

As mentioned in connection with the discussion of the testing issue, for a number of reasons, reading tests rarely yield perfectly accurate data. Test validity and reliability are sources of uncertainity in diagnostic procedures. Unreliable information makes the reading diagnostician's task difficult.

A student's reading history is yet another source of uncertainity and inaccuracy in reading data. A reading history encompasses data on the student's reading habits and his/her access to reading materials. The reading specialist typically ascertains this information from the student by means of questionnaire survey or face-to-face consultation. The student's own attitudes toward reading and remediation can affect the quality of the data the specialist gathers.

Third, in order for a diagnostic system to work, there must be an understanding of factors which could interfere in the quality of data recorded by the observer. In reading as in other disciplines, instructors use three types of heuristics, which account for the cognitive processes involved in their endeavor, to make this determination. They are: representative, availability and anchoring, and adjustment (Sox, 1988).

When practitioners use the representative heuristic to judge probability, they are in fact comparing a student to

their (the practitioner's) professional experience. In doing so, practitioners usually do not take into consideration the size of their professional experience. From statistical theory, we know that a small sample is more likely to deviate from the population under study than a large sample (Sox, 1988). A small personal experience, therefore, is more likely to be quite unrepresentative of the parent population. A diagnosis therefore can be affected by the limited repertoire of experiences and the interpretation of the experiences by the diagnostician.

The second diagnostic heuristic for using one's professional experience to determine probability is availability. Availability is the process by which recall is enhanced by repetition (Sox, 1988). Therefore the availability of an event is judged by the ease with which the event is remembered. When the availability heuristic is used, an easily remembered event is thought to have a higher probability than an event that is difficult to recall. There is experimental evidence that frequent events are easier to remember than infrequent events. Availability in memory is affected by other characteristics of an event in addition to its frequency. These include vividness, recentness and rarity. Therefore, a practitioner's diagnosis may be influenced be several external factors.

The third heuristic is called anchoring and adjustment and involves special characteristics such as: socio-economic, ethnic and cultural background of the student being assessed

in an attempt to estimate probability. Reading teachers often make a probability assessment by starting from an initial estimate (the anchor) and arriving at a final estimate by adjusting to take account of the individual features of a student under consideration. The principal error in judgment made using this heuristic occurs because people tend to set the anchor incorrectly. Psychological experiments have shown that people's initial probability estimates tend to either overestimate or underestimate.

In conclusion, an area which receives little or no attention in the reading literature but considerably more in the medical literature is cognitive heuristics which is the mental process used to learn, recall, or understand knowledge. For obvious reasons, it is an important area of concern when considering the diagnostic-prescriptive method. A full consideration of this approach should first include a discussion of heuristics as used by students in answering questions (Gladwin, 1970) and second that of practitioners in the field in determining the nature of the students' level of function with respect to specific reading skills and/or subskills.

Unfortunately, very little work has been done on the heuristics employed by this student population (Glasgow, 1970). Therefore the focus here has been upon the heuristics used by reading instructors in their role as diagnosticians.

CONCLUSION

If CRIPS programs are to be efficient, assessment concerns must be addressed. CRIPS students are most frequently placed based upon the results of timed standardized tests. These instruments have weaknesses and as such results should be confirmed with the use of other types of assessment. The issue of time emerges as a factor in test assessment. Whether time should be excluded for purposes of CRIPS screening and placement needs further research. When assessing students it is imperative that evaluators be aware of the limitations of testing and the diagnostic-prescriptive method, so that the integrity of the method can be maintained, and it can remain a useful tool.

HISTORICAL CONCERNS

Historical Concerns, as applied to college reading improvement programs, are defined as a review of those trends in the growth of CRIPS and case studied of selected programs. This review illuminates an understanding of the issues raised earlier in this study and their inter-relatedness.

In the category of Historical Concerns, two questions will be in the forefront of the discussion.
1) What is available in the literature to document the growth trends of CRIPS programs? 2) What can we learn about college reading improvement from descriptions of selected programs?

GROWTH OF PROGRAMS--ISSUE

What is available in the literature to document the growth trends of CRIPS programs?

All of the concerns and issues raised in this study are heightened in their importance due to the increasing numbers of students affected.

College Reading Improvement Programs have become increasingly significant because there has been an increased need for these services in our nation's colleges and universities.

To explore the proliferation of CRIPS programs two questions must be asked. First, does the literature truly show that the numbers have been increasing or decreasing? Second, has this movement permeated undergraduate four year institutions of different levels and types?

The number of CRIPS is of interest because it traces the pattern of growth of these programs. The rapid increase in their sheer numbers took precedence over most other considerations in the literature from the 1920's until the mid-fifties. The Yearbooks of the Southwest Reading Conference (Texas), later renamed the National Reading Conference (Milwaukee) reflects consistently high interest in the numbers of CRIPS reported in the many surveys conducted. Less attention was devoted to other concerns such as the types of materials used, staff training, instructional time factors etc. than to the growth in such programs.

In this countries' first survey, Parr (1929) studied 40 state universities. Of the nine institutions which responded, seven reported making an attempt to identify poor readers among their freshman class members. Details relating to the type of help given students were not included in this survey.

Strang (1937) conducted a survey of 158 colleges and received responses from 82 programs for a response rate of 52%. The following year, Traxler (1938) reported that of the 656 colleges and universities which he surveyed, 76 or 11.6% reported having reading improvement programs. Three years after Traxler, Charter (1941) surveyed 676 institutions with 106 (15.7%) indicating they had programs. The next year, in 1942, Triggs surveyed 1,528 institutions of which 185 (12.1%) reported having such programs, and 73 additional institutions indicated they were planning to institute such programs the following year. In 1955, Causey reported 418 colleges with reading improvement programs in existence.

From 1956 to the present, surveys confirmed a marked increase in the number of college reading improvement programs (Loew, 1967). In 1960, Shaw contacted 505 schools and received responses from 350 of them. 242 or 47.9% reported reading improvement programs. The total number of colleges contacted by Shaw represented about 25% of the schools in existence at that time. In 1968, Geerlof and Kling conducted a survey in which 336 questionnaires were sent out to colleges and universities. Of the 246

institutions responding, 210 (62.5%) reported that they were operating college reading improvement programs. Huslin (1975) conducted a survey of 280 four-year colleges and universities. 177 institutions responded to a questionnaire. 157 (56.1%) reported having CRIPS. In 1976, Schantz conducted a survey of 100, four year institutions. 70 schools or about 70% reported having college reading improvement programs. In a national survey in 1984 conducted by Roueche, of the 1,452 institutions contacted only 160 confirmed that they had no basic skills programs, courses or alternatives for meeting students' literacy needs. In another survey conducted in 1986 by the Office of Education, questionnaires were sent out to 100 colleges and universities. It was found that nationwide, 90% of institutions offered some type of remedial support. According to this study, 66% of colleges and univeristies in academic year 1983-84 provided remediation in reading.

In a national survey conducted by Lederman (1983), with 1,269 institutions reporting, it was found that 85% of responding institutions perceived poor academic skills among freshmen to be either "very much of a problem" or "somewhat of a problem." Nonetheless, there are strong indications especially in the earlier surveys that many more colleges and universities sponsored reading programs than the responses suggest. Several of the researchers advanced the thesis that low response rates were due in part to a reluctance to reveal or confirm the existence of these relatively "low-status

remedial" reading programs on their campuses.

The numbers of CRIPS in existence is an important indicator of the need for these programs. However, this matter is not that clear cut. The sources used to ascertain this information were surveys, but the institutions contacted in these surveys varied. As a matter of fact, the types of institutions contacted in different surveys also varied. (Institutions of higher education in this country may be thought of in a ranked or hierarchical order referred to as tiers.) Barron (1988) identifies seven tiers among institutions of higher education in this country. They include: most competitive, highly competitive, very competitive, competitive, less competitive, noncompetitive and special. For example, in some surveys such as those of Leedy (1958) and Linquist (1949) only first and second tier institutions were contacted while Buffone (1966) and Geerlof (1968) used mostly third and fourth tier institutions. This is significant because the CRIPS movement started among first tier institutions. So if a survey were conducted of mainly first and second tier institutions, higher rates were more likely to be reported among those tiers (relative to the time the survey was conducted) than among the third and fourth tier schools within whose ranks the movement took longer to penetrate. It is also interesting to note that many private colleges and universities and fewer public institutions nursed the earliest programs. Yet, the Parr study was conducted using only some major state universities. The

results of this survey was no surprise. Therefore, the literature on CRIPS documents the growth of these programs in two ways. It records the numbers of programs in existence, and it also records depth of the movement through different types and levels of institutions as they developed over time. A critical look at this literature also reveals that the demand for such programs was not limited to any one geographic region of this country. Demand for these services seems to have been ubiquitious in terms of geography.

The college reading improvement movement in the United States first developed in the leading institutions in this country. These institutions are highly selective and therefore admit only the most highly qualified students. One may conclude then that even well qualified students with good backgrounds can benefit from work in reading improvement. It is fair to assume that at least a percentage of this need for improvement has come about as a result of higher national expectations for literacy as Resnick and Resnick (1980) and Whimbey (1987) effectively argue.

Through a critical look at the literature on CRIPS, one can gain much needed insight into where college reading improvement programs are headed. Discerning the important issues and trends gives one fodder upon which to ruminate on these patterns.

One clear trend is in the number of programs. The fact that these programs have mushroomed in schools across the country is a strong indication of the need for them. The

first reading experiment with college students was performed by Abell (1894) on a Wellesley College psychology class. Subsequent to this, as CRIPS burgeoned nationwide, students were first tested then treated.

It is apparent, therefore, that there was an attempt to be scientific in the identification of needy students. However, more work is needed in this area. It is significant that interest in reading first developed as a branch of psychology and that there has been consistent effort to be scientific in approach in every aspect of these programs.

One can assume that these programs have increased in number out of a strong demand for them. Administrators and some educators as well as students and their parents have recognized the need for these programs. Such was the case with the first program of its type which was instituted at Harvard University in 1915. The increase in the numbers of these programs is a testament to the institution's reaction to those demands in response to a changing world in which the amount of information has constantly increased. This has necessitated that students be exposed to much more information during the same four years. Institutions are under pressure to produce better informed and more highly skilled students. Professors are therefore under pressures, due to their sense of professional ethics and responsibliity to their students as well as to society, to give students the best possible preparation to enable them to have successful lives and careers.

In response to this situation with improved assessment, it is likely that a reading improvement program will eventually exist in every institution of higher education in this country. In effect, these programs will become fully institutionalized and will become as central to the college as English Departments are today.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

Descriptions of selected college reading improvement programs reveal that with the exception of increased standardization in the areas of administrative concerns little seems new.

As previously mentioned, the organizational structure of CRIPS was typically that of a service offered under the auspices of some academic department, most frequently psychology, education or English (Leedy, 1958), Schantz (1976). Programs were sponsored typically by only a few academic departments and atypically through a mandate by special college committees and/or the consensus vote of the college faculty. However, the qualifications of instructional staffs of early CRIPS varied widely among programs. Early program descriptions reveal that instructional staff had little or no background in reading instruction. The programs at Harvard and Amherst are cases in point. Descriptions of selected early programs reveal wide variations in class size, length of class

sessions, and the number of times classes met as well as the type of instructional materials used.

Numerous assessment instruments were used with varying cutoff scores among programs, even for those institutions using the same tests. Reading test instruments used in early CRIPS varied from those which used no reading tests to those using the Cooperative English Test, the Iowa Silent Reading Test or the Bloomers Reading Test. Based upon the students' test results on these instruments, the diagnostic-prescriptive method was used to help determine the best instruction for them.

The following seven cases of college reading improvement programs have been chosen to demonstrate the contrasts and similarities between them. They include: Harvard, Hamline, Amherst, Univ. of Chicago, Syracuse Univ., Univ. of Penn., and Univ. of Iowa.

The Harvard Program was initiated in 1915 and was non-credit bearing. Although it did not have an official name Moore (1915), this program is continuously cited in the literature as the first of its type at the college level. However Cross (1976) reports a study skills program that predates it at Wellesley College, that program was initiated in 1894. The significant difference between these programs seems to be that the emphasis in the Harvard Program leaned more toward reading, while the Wellesley Program focused on study skills. The Harvard Program had an interesting beginning. It came about as a result of concerns and

complaints from parents whose sons were not doing well in their college work at Harvard. The parents observed that "the reason their sons were failing was because they did not know how to study" Moore (1915). In response to this parental concern and the recognition on the part of the institution, that, indeed students did not know how to study, study skills classes were offered to all seniors. One section of 120 students using a classroom approach was taught five times per week for a total of four weeks. The instructors in this program were professors of psychology, clinical psychology and social science. Later, the Division of Education instituted a course running through the entire freshman year. Students were tested using the College Entrance Board Examination--Reading Comprehension Section. The material for this course was generated from students' suggestions since no text was available. Later, the Harvard Reading Films were developed by Dearborn (1938) for use in this program.

The reading improvement effort at Hamline University in Minnesota as reported by Breyer (1923) was noteworthy because it was a non-credit, non-conventional reading improvement mentor program. The institution determined that its college seniors did not know how to read and did not attempt to read "good books." Hamline, therefore, set up a "general reading" plan which required that every candidate for graduation read ten books selected from a list, with faculty members from different disciplines serving as mentors. This list was made

up of those books generally considered to be classics. Successful completion of this requirement was granted upon receiving a passing grade on an essay type comprehensive examination. This program was interesting because it was an institution-wide attempt on the part of the faculty and administration to mandate standards regarding reading and to tie those standards to graduation requirements. This program was therefore different from the Harvard Program in both its scope and approach.

Breyer (1923) also reported on a reading program at Amherst College entitled, "Social and Economic Institutions," which enrolled two-thirds of the freshman class using a classroom approach and had as its principal aim to teach students to use the library, read newspapers and magazines, make reports and carry on discussions. Typically, class size was twenty to thirty students. One hour out of three was devoted to reports by students on their reading and discussion of current events. This was one of the first credit bearing courses. Unlike other early reading classes, this course was an attempt to approach reading in a content area.

The reading improvement program at the University of Chicago was sponsored by the Department of English in 1930. All entering freshmen were required to take the Cooperative English Test as a screening instrument to determine which students should be mandated to take a specially designed, non-credit course entitled, "English 1R" for a full academic

quarter. The reading instructor held a Masters Degree in Reading. This program is of particular interest because as early as 1930 it employed an individualized laboratory approach for reading instruction. Using this method the students worked in their folders on the practice materials which had been prescribed. The materials were largely mimeographed by the instructor. Classes lasted for sixteen weeks and met three times per week.

In 1934, the Reading Improvement Program at Syracuse University was offered for the first time under the joint sponsorship of the Departments of Education and Psychology. The title of the course was "Academic Methods" and was offered on a non-credit basis, three times per week for fourteen weeks during sixty minute sessions. The Cooperative English Test was the screening instrument used. Syracuse University has long been one of this nation's major centers for graduate training in reading. As such, a reservoir of inexpensive aspiring professionals in the field, graduate assistants, were enlisted to teach in this program under the supervision of a faculty member. Syracuse's early program is noteworthy for this administrative arrangement.

The program at the University of Pennsylvania was initiated in 1937, sponsored by the Department of Education without no credit. Those students selected for training were administered the Iowa Silent Reading Test as well as psychological and physiological diagnostic examinations. The classes were not titled, carried no credit, and met for one

hour, three times per week for twenty-five sessions. Reading instruction was offered in small groups of three to four students. Class size therefore allowed instruction to be adapted to the individuals' needs. The methods and materials used varied depending upon the diagnosis. This program differs from all the forementioned in its extensive diagnosis and highly individualized instructional approach.

In 1946, Ammons and Hieronymus studied the reading program at the University of Iowa. The Communications Skills Committee of the university outlined a broad, compulsory, credit-bearing communications program which included reading instruction. All students were screened using the Bloomers Reading Test. Each class met for twenty weeks, four days a week for fifty minute sessions. Classes were taught by graduate assistants chosen because of their interest in reading problems. Class size was between 8-25 students each. The researchers cautioned against low level goals for students. Researchers found that gains in their classes were closely related to teachers' expectations. The Iowa program is important because it appears to be one of the earlier programs to offer credit for work done in reading improvement; though the argument could be effectively made that credit is granted in this program for language arts generally, not for reading improvement in particular. This program is worth noting, nonetheless, because it is holistic in its approach.

Through description of reading improvements programs,

one can only conclude that there is not very much that is new. Early practitioners in the field explored a variety of instructional approaches: classroom, small group, and individualized reading laboratory as well as individualized clinical. Programs were sponsored typically by only a few academic departments and atypically through a mandate by special college committees and/or the consensus vote of the college faculty. A number of assessment instruments were used with varying cutoff scores among programs, even for those employing the same tests. Reading instruments used in early CRIPS vary from those which use no reading test at all to those using the Cooperative English Test, the Iowa Silent Reading Test or the Bloomers Reading Test.

The qualifications of instructional staffs of early CRIPS also varied widely from one program to another. Early descriptions identify professors with little or no background in reading instruction in these programs. Both the professors at Harvard and Amherst are cases in point.

These descriptions reveal wide variations in class size, length of class sessions, and the number of times classes meet as well as in the type of instructional materials used.

For the most part, grades and credit were not granted in these early programs. And with only a few exceptions, these courses were offered to college freshmen. (See Appendix B)

CONCLUSION

College Reading Improvement Programs should be understood in an historical context. Convincing evidence of the need for these programs can be traced in the pattern of their growth. The spread of these programs should be studied on two levels. their breadth and depth within higher education. This macro view of CRIPS is supplemented with a micro perspective in the form of descriptions of selected college reading improvement programs. This holistic view of particular CRIPS emphasizes the "nuts-and-bolts" of their operations.

SUMMARY

The focus of this study is upon administrative, instructional and assessment concerns of college reading improvement programs. Each of these involves a number of issues. Administrative concerns involve the organizational structure, the qualifications of instructional staff, credit offered for CRIPS courses and all are measures of an institution's commitment.

If CRIPS are to be successful, they must have strong administrative support. The administration must set high standards for these programs which can translate into demanding a high level of instruction for teaching faculty. The organizational structure must make the services easily accessible to the institution at large as well as affirm the

acceptibility of the program. Credit should be granted to motivate and retain students enrolled in CRIPS courses. The cost for these services should be shared by all, both students and the government. These courses should be required for those students who are deficient in skills on the basis of reliabile assessment which reflects skill levels which warrant their enrollment.

Instructional concerns include a study of the composition of the student population, a consideration of which instructional mode is most effective for targeted portions of this population, a study of time factors with respect to CRIPS courses, a consideration of curricular emphasis and principles to be considered in material selection for CRIPS students.

Instructional issues play a vital role in the administration of CRIPS programs. They establish the rules and regulations which in turn have a profound effect upon their internal climate and function. When considering instructional concerns, the characteristics of the student population must be considered in order to determine how best to address their needs. Instructional concerns involve both pedagogical and curricular factors. Pedagogical factors include instructional modes and instructional time factors. Curricular factors include whether emphasis should be upon study skills, reading skills or both as well as matters involved in materials selection. Instructional concerns are involved directly in the delivery of CRIPS services. These

issues are concerned with who the learner is, what he/she (the learner) is to learn and how these things are to be learned.

Assessment concerns include the use of standardized tests in CRIPS and the use of the diagnostic-prescriptive method.

Testing is a very broad term because it can be used to refer to personal reading inventories, locally designed tests or standardized tests. The latter are by far the most frequently used and therefore demand the focus of attention. Tests are very imperfect measures, and as such, in there present state, are the weakest link in CRIPS. Because of anomalies in the test instruments, in test procedures, and in test policies whether as screening, placement or exit instruments, their exclusive use leaves much to be desired.

Standardized tests are also a source of concern because test results are used in the diagnostic-presciptive method to determine the nature of the reading problem and to recommend treatment for their improvement. This method is dependent upon reliable and valid test results.

When an investigation such as this studies how specific issues are repeated in different institutions over time, then it can be important for pointing out trends. There is a movement towards the establishment of CRIPS in institutions across the country, and towards the standardization of instructional time for these courses. There is a propensity towards hiring instructional faculty who hold higher degrees

in the field of reading, towards offering some type of credit and grade for instruction and for requiring such courses for certain students. There was an early trend to have academic departments sponsor CRIPS and a later tendency towards a centralized, comprehensive department responsible for remedial services. There is an increased tendency to emphasize comprehension and to give less attention to reading rate.

Standardized tests have been used to sort students for CRIPS, to provide crucial information in the diagnostic-prescriptive method, and to select the CRIPS student population. Greater standardization is needed in the areas of testing, the diagnostic-prescriptive method, and student population. Improvements in testing should be in the areas of the test instruments used, test cut-offs, and test procedures. Better assessment will result in a more clearly defined student population within as well as across institutions and states. As a result of improved testing it would be easier to determine which students should be required to take these courses and which should take them as an option or not at all. Sound assessment is crucial for better instruction.

The administrative, instructional, assessment and historical concerns of college reading improvement programs provide the schema upon which to generate a clearer understanding of those elements which shape the future of this movement in higher education.

Nationally, there are three regional Boards of Higher Education. They are: the New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE), The Western Interstate Commission of Higher Education (WICHE), and The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB). Each of the above have recently published a position paper on higher education for minority populations for the region which they represent (NEBHE, 1989; WICHE, 1987; SREB; 1988). Each document argues the economic and moral imperative of enrolling the disenfranchised in our institutions of higher education.

Skilled labor in all regions of the country is expected to be in short supply. This shortage is expected to intensify because of a decrease in the number of young entry-level workers, and a continued increase in the demand for skilled labor needed by knowledge-intensive businesses and services. This shortage creates the economic necessity for a large number of the presently disenfranchised to move into the ranks of skilled and educated labor.

Each of these papers addresses the importance of higher education for this group. The importance and the value of remediation therefore is a major theme in each study. One study makes reference to education for a multi-cultural society. It involves getting this population enrolled in higher education institutions and keeping them there. Remediation is the key. And reading remediation is the most basic of the three disciplines (reading, writing and math). College reading improvement programs will be needed to help

meet the tremendous demand. It is vital that these programs be both effective at the delivery of services and efficient at screening and assessing their population.

Towards this end an investigation such as this is useful because it identifies those aspects of CRIPS which could benefit from further research. What this study has revealed is that both instructional and assessment concerns beg for further study. Assessment concerns, however, must be given attention first because they determine which students will receive instruction and how they will be instructed.

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