**DECADES x 2: 1960-1980- J. Sheehan**

**1960s**

1. **MAJOR ISSUES/INFLUENCES/PHILOSOPHIES:**

A. Reading Process Philosophy: 1935-1965- continued throughout the 60s

* **Reading= a perceptual process (Pearson, 2002), a visual skill of discriminating letter shapes, names, and the sounds associated with the letters (van Kleeck & Schuele, 2010)**

 **Reading comprehension = decoding + listening comprehension (RC=Dec \* LC)-**

* **Reading = translation of written to oral code (Pearson, 2002).**
* **Reading readiness- the belief that maturation was key to reading, starting at 6 ½** (van Kleeck & Schuele, 2010)

B. Global Politics of the 1950s-mid-60s: Cold War/ Russian launching of Sputnik spurned an interest in reading (Smith, 2002)

-1950-1965- reading as necessary to expand knowledge in an era of technology

-connected to maintaining world status and a holding on to a way of life.

-Therefore, it became needed to be accessible to more U.S. citizens as fast as possible (Smith, 2002; Sears, 2013).

 **-Inspired intense studies and methodical work on reading- see Reading Scholarship below.**

C. Federal Domestic Policies/ Programs: **CHANGING READING ACCESS=CHANGING DEMOGRAPHIC**

* 1965-LBJ’s Great Society: Title I: Elementary and Secondary Education Act initiative : resources to serve children of lower socioeconomic status (Pearson, 2002; Sears)
* Federal Right to Read Program- guaranteeing each children this essential right (Pearson, 2002; Sears)

-Federal recognition of the need for early literacy experiences esp. for the underprivileged

Project Head Start (1964) – preschool program for lower income population- serving ½ of eligible children

Sesame Street (1969)- educational tv w/preschool curriculum aimed at inner-city children (van Kleeck & Schuele, 2010)

D. Reading Scholarship -rigorous in the 1960s -emerged to answer: What is the best way to teach beginning reading?

* “First Grade Studies”(federally funded) : Findings: any alternative to the basal had equal or greater reading performance; therefore, focus switched to the teacher
* Emerging Literacy- New Zealander, Marie Clay’s theory- taught at home and in school through natural, playful literacy experiences- **not implemented into preschools fully until 80s**

-Early Curriculum of Headstart: Highscope (Piaget-influenced literacy with focus on children’s cognitive development w/ children as active participants in their own learning) v. direct instruction (programmed, teacher-directed, skills instruction with a focus on phonics based on Flesch’s *Why Johnny Can’t Read* (van Kleeck & Schuele, 2010)

-**HIGHLIGHTS THE CONFLICT W/HOW EARLY READING SHOULD BE TAUGHT**

**PUBLIC PERCEPTION V. RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES**

* Chall’s work, *Learning to Read: The Great Debate* (1967)- critical review of empirical research, basal readers’ content, and excellent teaching practices; Findings: importance of early attention to code in early reading instruction
* Bloom and Carroll’s early mastery movement- complex domain decomposed into subcomponents –taught and mastered—leading to knowledge and skills mastery in a given domain
* Then/Now Studies: test-score decline starting in the late 1960s (Kaestle, 1991)-probably due to the desegregation of schools, inclusion policies, Great Society reforms-undereducated students part of the demographic, needed to “catch up”(Gordon and Gordon, 2003)- decline ended by the late 70s (Kaestle, 1991)
* Linguistics: Charles Fries’ research- not everything needs explicit teaching b/c some things are acquired from oral language; Chomsky- humans are born with the ability to acquire community language of their community

**-BASIS OF 70s ATTEMPTS BY PSYCHOLINGUISTS TO MAKE A MODEL OF LANGUAGE PERFORMANCE AND SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM MOVEMENT AND ITS EFFECT ON READING**

* Psycholinguistics: Brown & Goodman-found that children learn actively, infer rules, and test them. Findings lead educators to assume reading and writing could be acquired naturally – tested empirically in later decades; Goodman & Smith- oral reading errors=view of reading comprehension, use of cues to construct meaning (Pearson, 2002).
1. **CURRICULUM/APPROACHES/TIES TO THE PAST:**
2. 1960- 1965 (continued from the 1930s but elaborated): Vocabulary control, more skills lessons/practice-separate and tested, reading of stories, silent reading in areas interest/experiences; frequency principle paralleled look-say approach of the words-to-reading method, elaborated teachers’ manuals (Pearson, 2002)
3. **CURRICULA CHANGES**: **based on Chall’s set of principles- grade 1 goals of comprehension, interpretation, and contextualization of phonics instruction: analytic phonics earlier, change in content- adaptations of children’s literature, single-component testing, criterion-referenced tests, curriculum-embedded assessments, skills management systems- basals comprised of two parallel systems: graded anthologies with stories, nonfictions for oral and silent reading/discussion and embedded skills- phonics, comprehension, vocabulary, and study skills, teacher manuals= student text surrounded by teacher’s guide w/ suggestions/questions (Pearson, 2002)**
4. APPROACHES (until 1965): Look-say approach continued=high frequency sight words, practiced in formulated stories, teach phonics on known words, readiness program- learning with a slow, easy beginning, importance of meaning, small group instruction, teacher as mediator, students as recipients (Pearson, 2002), interest in reading disabilities/remediation (Smith, 2002).
5. **NEW APPROACHES-late 60s: readiness activities started to cease in favor of emerging literacy, informal assessment strategies, instructional strategies, such as SQ3R, Directed Reading – developmental reading, advance organizers (Sears)**
6. **GROUNDWORK FOR THE FUTURE:** Early 70s- more difficult texts, more phonics, and a new skills development program; end of the look-say basal but rise of the altered basal of the 70s-80s (Pearson, 2002)= in a sense of blending of the older approaches with newer ones; work of linguists/psycholinguists=basis for constructivism of the later decades; emerging literacy in 80s preschool curriculum; backlash of NCLB may bring back the RC=Dec\*LC of the 50s and 60s (Pearson, 2002)
7. **LITERACY DEVELOPMENT- MAJOR CHANGES -50s-60s**
* **1950-** over 10 million Americans had never attended school or had less than 5 yrs. of formal education

**=FUNCTIONALLY ILLITERATE**

* Segregation of African-Americans- the public common-school literacy policy of the 1920s in which all boys and girls had a right to a comprehensive and advanced education was ignored re: black children

-schooling tended to be inferior and underfunded or non-existent in some regions for black children

-Many highly educated, skilled African-Americans emerged in the 1950s in spite of lack of educational opportunities

* Rise of private school education- peaked in the mid 1960s-5.6 Catholic school children out of approx. 40 million (combined with other religious schools- totaled 6.4 million in 1964)—attributed to the literacy development of immigrants and/or urban students.
* By 1970s- at least a 9th grade reading level was necessary for 20th adults to function

-1969 U.S. Census- 39 million lacked 9th grade education (Gordon & Gordon, 2003).

**1970s**

1. **1970s- MAJOR ISSUES/INFLUENCES/PHILOSOPHIES:**
2. Reading Process Philosophy: Fundamental Shifts in the 1970s
* **conceptual revolutions in cognition, sociolinguists, and philosophy of the 1970s deeply affected reading curriculum and instruction of the 1980s-1990s**
* **Reading is more than individual words but the complex processing of grammatical information (Sears)**

**-a language-based skill consisting of: oral language skills (vocabulary, semantic-syntactic skills, and narrative development) and phonological awareness and knowledge of the alphabet (van Kleeck & Schuele, 2010)**

* **Reading as a constructive process with student involvement/background knowledge and experience as key ingredients (Pearson, 2002).**
* **Emerging literary perspective- challenged reading readiness- not really implemented until 90s (van Kleeck & Schuele, 2010)**
* Why did reading suddenly become a main topic of inquiry for scholars in various disciplines?

-Reading is central to life success AND the belief that “educationists had it all wrong” (Pearson, 2002, p. 429)

1. Reading Scholarship in Various Disciplines:
* Center for the Study of Reading (federally funded study): placed nat’l attention on comprehension

 - focused (along w/other studies) on strategies to improve comprehension through instruction, monitoring, organizers, etc.

* Linguistics paradigm shift in the 1960s-1970s from conventional structural linguistics to transformational generative grammars
* Psycholinguistics: Smith’s *Understanding Reading* (1971)

- reading is learned as a member of literate society, not taught- shift from focus on teacher to student, a constructive process with decision-making & predictions based on previous knowledge

* Cognitive Psychology: 70s-80s: Paradigm shift in psychology—from behaviorist to intellectual, cognitive
* -prominent studies in reading: basic processes such as text comprehension, story grammars, expository texts (text-analysis tradition) although these studies revealed important info. about reading, they FOCUSED ONLY ON STRUCTURE, NOT READERS’ KNOWLEDGE ( text approximation; Laberge & Samuels- 1976- speed of reading and word identification; Samuels’ repeated reading comprehension strategy (Sears, )

**NEW THEORIES**

* Schema theory=popular in the reading field -a credible view of reading comprehension: considers prior knowledge, explains interpretation differences due to various backgrounds and how lack of background knowledge limits understanding of new experiences or texts; developed side-by-side with psycholinguistics’ reading theory
* Sociolinguistics: Labov, Baratz, Shuy, Freire (major contributors to sociolinguistic reading theory)

Issues: Dialect (its own developed linguistic system) and reading (requires accommodating use of dialect)

* Contributions: expanding the meaning of context to include all literacy experiences, knowledge and language as socially and culturally constructed, school as only one literacy setting, expansion of our view of language and behavior
1. **TIES TO THE PAST /CURRICULUM/APPROACHES:**
2. Ties to Past Research/Curriculum/Approaches: continuance of Chall’s influence into the 80s; comprehension continued to be on center stage- 70s-80s (dating back to the 30s); dialects still viewed as oral language errors (Pearson, 2002). Essentially, 1970s produced new research (Sears) but a lot of carry-over from the 60s in terms of curriculum and approaches
3. CURRICULUM/MATERIALS/APPROACHES:

-phonics continued, children’s adaptations, less vocabulary control, translation and skills activities (Pearson, 2002).

-More advanced reading basals, rich with skills assignments (Sears)

-Approaches lost some professionalism with teachers relying on teacher’s manuals with their tedious materials and activities, more like managers than teachers (Sears )

1. PSYCHOLINGUIST INFLUENCE: meaning-making literacy experiences, devalued skills; value of natural language patterns/ texts for beginning readers-using own knowledge and prediction strategies; errors as a way to understand reading process/strategies, rethinking of what needed to be taught
2. EFFECTS OF SCHEMA THEORY: examination of texts from students’ view of with their knowledge and cultural background, promoted constructivist view of comprehension
3. SOCIOLINGUISTIC INFLUENCE on Reading Instruction: Holding off until oral language was standardized, recognition that children can translate a standard English text into a dialect, not making errors, recommended changes in the classroom- less competitive, learning from each other
4. **GROUNDWORK FOR THE FUTURE:**
* Set the stage for a social constructivist view of education/reading, literature-based reading, process writing (sociolinguistic influence=real audiences/purposes and psycholinguistic=focus on thinking/problem-solving), the child-centered pedagogy of whole language movement of 90s, emerging literacy in preschool curriculum in the 90s
1. **LITERACY DEVELOPMENT- MAJOR CHANGES -70s-80s-Present**
* GOOD NEWS ABOUT LITERACY

-Test score decline ended by the end of the 70s (Kaestle, 1991)

-By the early 80s, all young adults (18-35) were literate (Gordon & Gordon, 2003)

* CONCERNING NEWS ABOUT LITERACY

-Adults still have difficulty with complex tasks- using information effectively above a literal, concrete level

-Any “literacy crisis” is a result of the need for a larger group with increased fluency that has outpaced school’s ability to educate and train

-Even though, schools are performing at the same levels as the 50s and 60s re: test scores, fluency requirements for the late 20th-21st century require 12th level of reading competency Gordon & Gordon, 2003)

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