**American Reading Instruction: Nila Banton Smith Chapter 6**

**The Period of Emphasis on Scientific Investigation in Reading 1910 – 1925**

*Outline prepared by Bernadette Stockwell*

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| 1. **Influences That Called Forth Innovations** | | |
| 1910 | Dramatic period in reading history  First truly great break-through in American instruction | |
| 1909- 15 | Thorndike introduced his ***handwriting scale*** before a meeting of the *American Association for the Advancement of Science*.  Followed by many other tests including:  The Courtis arithmetic tests  The Hilligas composition test  The Buckingham Spelling Scale  The Gray Standardized Oral Reading Paragraphs  Other reading tests mostly silent reading tests, followed shortly after. | |
|  | First time possible to obtain scientific information due to the advent of instrument of measurement  Effectiveness of reading methods and material could be measure | |
| 1917-18 | World War I: discovered that thousands of U.S. soldiers could not read well enough to follow printed instructions used in connections with military life.  Urged that reading instruction be improved. | |
|  | Major innovation:   * Change from oral to silent reading * Rapid expansion of reading research * Development of remedial reading techniques | |
|  | Other firsts:   * Use of experience charts in teaching beginning reading * Introduction in individual instruction in reading * Growing concern about improvements of the teaching of reading | |
| 1. **The Transition From Oral to Silent Reading** | | |
| 1918-25 | Ever-increasing attention directed toward meanings in all phases of education. | |
|  | What brought about the change?  Specific Reading Aims   * 1. Social needs of former days required the teaching of **expressive oral reading**   2. Social needs of the present require the teaching of **effective rapid silent reading.** | |
| 1921 | **Francis W. Parker**: expression helps thought, and thought is necessary for expression.  Distinguished between speech, silent reading and oral reading.  Speech and oral reading—forms of expression  “ordinary reading” or silent reading NOT form of expression but rather a matter of attention  Gross errors in teaching evolved from not making this distinction | |
| 1915-18 | Mead, Oberholtzer, Pintner and Gilliland, Schmidt and Judd conducted studies that proved that silent reading had advantages over oral reading concerning speed and comprehension. | |
| 1915 | First standardized reading test  Chief elements in reading are:   * Comprehension of the matter read * Speed of reading * Correctness of the pronunciation   The first two were considered most important as they were most relevant to *practical life* | |
| By 1918 | Numerous silent reading tests.   * The Brown Silent Reading Test * The Kansas Silent Reading Test * Courtis’s Silent Reading Test * Monroe’s Standardized Silent Reading Test | |
|  | As soon as school officials begin to test some phase of instruction, teachers begin to emphasize that phase in their teaching. | |
| 1916-20 | William S. Gray reported in National Society for the Study of Education  Sixteenth yearbook-- The Relation of Silent Reading To Economy in Education  Eighteenth yearbook—Principles of Method in Teaching Reading as Derived from Scientific Investigation | |
| 1921 | Twentieth Yearbook, Part II  Entire report focused on the National Society for the Study of Education’s Committee on Silent Reading.   * Controlling Factors in the Measurement of Silent Reading * Individual Differences in Silent Reading * Development of Speed in Silent Reading * Motivated Drill Work in Silent Reading   W.W. Theisen summed up the situation in regard to silent and oral reading:   * “To what extent silent reading can be profitably substituted for oral in the primary grades is a matter that should be determined by careful experimentation. * “They know of no way to bring about improvement in oral reading except through oral reading, and they have not known how to conduct silent reading exercises. | |
|  | Teacher sought to find and create exercises to assess comprehension in silent reading  Publisher began to issue **seat work** that asked students to read passages then make some sort of response including:   * Draw a picture * Make something * Answer true- false and fill in the blank statements   Trend in public schools toward silent reading and developing ways in which to test its comprehension | |
| *Specific Reading Aims* | | |
| 1923 | Teaching efficient silent reading in order to enable the individual to meet the practical needs of life | |
|  | 1. The social needs of former days required the teaching of expressive oral reading 2. The social needs of the present require the teaching of effective rapid silent reading | |
|  | The Formed Need for Expressive Oral Reading   1. Reading material **was** scarce 2. Only a few **were** able to read 3. Communication **was** very slow 4. Spoken language **was** the chief means of communication | The Present Need for Effective Rapid Silent Reading   1. Reading material **is** abundant 2. Reading **is** universal; only a few **are** unable to read 3. Communication **is** very rapid 4. Written language **is** the chief means of communication. |
|  | Harry Grove Wheat – “The aim of reading instruction which should now prevail is to develop ability in effective rapid silent reading | |
|  | Focus on the **thought-getting processes**. | |
| 1919 | Rhode Island Normal School course  Move away from fanciful schemes of songs, stories, games, jingles, and dramatics… and have encumbered reading procedures and obscured reading purposes.  Toward efficient reaching… to interpret a printed page with reasonable accuracy and facility. | |
| 1921 | Mastery of the mechanics of reading was almost always given first place, as, for example, in a course in phonics and reading prepared in Mitchell, South Dakota  Aim:   1. The [thoro] mastery of the mechanics of reading 2. The ability to get the [thot] rapidly, accurately, and comprehensively   Fifth grade  Aim:   1. Mastery of mechanics of reading 2. Pupils should be able to read intelligently anything within the range of their experience 3. Cultivation of a natural reading tone 4. Rapid silent reading | |
| *Silent Reading Materials* | | |
|  | **Professional Books and Monographs** | |
| 1921 | J.A. O’Brien—*Silent Reading, With Special Reference to Speed* | |
| 1922 | C.E. Germane and E.G. Germane—*Silent Reading; A Handbook for Teacher to Teach Silent Reading to Beginners*  Action- response silent reading exercises that Watkins had used in teaching primary pupils.  Clarence R. Stone’s *Silent and Oral Reading* | |
| 1923 | Wheat—*The Teaching of Reading*  “Skillful silent reading for meaning being the art to be developed through reading instruction, succeeding chapter will describe its nature and trace its development through the grades.” | |
|  | Based on scientific studies: Reports presented objective evidence in photographic reproductions of eye movements, showing difference between the processes of silent and oral reading and the effect on reading habits of changes in the content of and purpose for reading.   * Guy T. Buswell-- *Fundamental Reading Habits: A Study of Their Development* * Charles H. Judd and Buswell*—Silent Reading: A Study of the Various Types* | |
| 1908-22 | Professional books included:   * *Teaching Children to Read,* Paul Klapper (1914) * *The psychology and pedagogy of Reading,* Edmund Huey (1908- revised in 1912 & 1915) * *The Reading Process,* William A. Smith * *The Materials of Reading,* Willis F. Uhl | |
|  | Shift toward LITERARY APPRECIATION   * *How to Teach Reading,* Mary E. Pennell and Alice M. Cusack * *Essential Principles of Teaching Reading and Literature,* Sterling A. Leonard | |
|  | **Courses of Study** | |
|  | *The Maryland School Bulletin* on “Silent Reading” giving practical suggestions to teachers for applying the new silent reading techniques.  Study in English contained composition, grammar, spelling, and penmanship as well as reading.  Some published separate courses entirely devoted to the subject of reading.  The St. Cloud publication—300 pages devoted to background, discussion of theory, scientific investigation, objectives, detailed procedures for each grade and testing matertials. | |
|  | **Teachers’ manuals** | |
|  | Publishers of texts provided instructions for use of materials  “The technique of teaching silent reading was so novel that authors evidently felt it incumbent upon them to furnish rather definitely prescribed instructions.” | |
|  | Manuals contained both content of the children’s readers and also instructions for teachers  Miss Bolenius’ first-grade manual for The Boys’ and Girls’ Readers (Houghton Mifflin) contained 511 pages. Provided “helps to teachers in the way of discussion of scientific investigations, suggestions for optional and supplemental work, directions for home-made equipment, and bibliographies. Such a wealth of material in a teachers’ manual was unprecedented at this time.” | |
|  | **Supplemental Materials** | |
|  | Buswell: In ORAL reading, the teacher’s attention is centered upon small details of pronunciation and the whole process is barren of intellectual interest for the child. | |
|  | New materials for silent reading focused on factual materials and variouis exercises in which the child made some response to his silent reading. | |
|  | George A. Mirick- Home Life Around the World  <https://archive.org/stream/homelifearoundw00mirigoog#page/n0/mode/2up>  Eleanor Hubbard- *Little American History Plays for Little Americans*  <https://archive.org/stream/littleamericanh00hubbgoog#page/n5/mode/2up> | |
|  | Seat work:   * Children read silently * Follow directions for drawing or construction work * Answer true-false questions * Complete sentences * Mark opposites * Classify words * Dramatize * Make some other silent reading response | |
|  | * Scientific movement prompted the creation of perception cards to increase eye span * Flashcards containing silent reading exercises * Remedial materials * Tests for both diagnostic and achievement | |
|  | **The New Readers** | |
|  | Content came to consist largely of factual and information selections | |
|  | Lewis and Rowland: content related to what children will inevitably read | |
|  | Buswell: Practically all the primary readers which are in common use at the present time (1923) are made up of fairy tales, folklore, myths, Mother Goose rhymes, and similar fanciful material. It has been assumed that such selections will stimulate the imagination of the child and also that they have literary value…. This series of readers provides selections which, with a very few exceptions, principally poems, are true to actual or possible experiences in the world in which the child lives. | |
|  | The Silent Reading Hour  Authors “dressed up” the content by “endowing object with life and linguistic ability, or by using fairies or other imaginative beings as a medium for transmitting the information.” (p. 164)  *New Readers* wanted children to “make some reaction that would furnish a check on their comprehension.” Taking the form of questions on the story, directions for drawing, construction work, or dramatization, true-false exercises, and completion sentences.  *Mixed up sentence:*   1. go gasoline fuel use automobiles 2. trees on grow oak apples 3. feet overshoes wet present | |
|  | Text included tests of comprehension often in the form of questions directly after the text. | |
|  | In primers, about eh same amount of space (30%) was devoted to pictures as in the literary readings fo the preceding period, but the upper readers showed a decrease in that only about 5 % of the space was occupied by pictures. | |
|  | Miss Bolenius’ *The Boys’ and Girls’ Readers* and Lewis and Rowland’s *The Silent Readers* <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/40369/40369-h/40369-h.htm#Page_29>  first textbooks to employ the silent reading techniques. | |
|  | ARE YOU QUICK TO UNDERSTAND? Series of instructions to test the reader’s understanding. To be performed rapidly to demonstrate both speed and accuracy. | |
| 1922-26 | *The Lincoln Readers*, Isobel Davidson and Charles J. Anderson  “Selection are predominantly informational and testable and are designed as directly preparatory to the reading of such informational material as that met in history, geography, and other informational courses of the elementary school. | |
|  | *Methods of Teaching Silent Reading* | |
|  | The practice of reading to oneself without saying the words aloud is probably as old as is the process of reading.  Buswell stated—“Silent reading is more than noiseless reading. Silent reading is not mere non-vocal reading. It is the complex process of getting thought from the printed page and involves an entirely new pedagogy. Silent reading objectives will never be attained by oral reading methods.” | |
| 1921 | Courtis and Heller report “Experiments Develop at Detroit for Making Reading Function.” | |
| 1924 | St. Cloud procedure for reading course using short action cards  Also a set of direction for drawing and construction word was a favorite technique used by beginners. | |
|  | Emphasis on utilitarian reading overshadowed the development of literary appreciation in the reading methods so widely used at this time. | |
|  | Maryland School Bulletin  “One of the principal aims in the teaching of reading is to develop appreciation and enjoyment of what is fine in classical and current literature.” | |
|  | Tests begin to appear  Intention to “reveal individual weaknesses and also the large number of publication of the subject of diagnostic and remedial work combines to direct attention to individual needs.” | |
|  | Frequency of errors   1. Lack of comprehension due to inadequate vocabulary 2. Lack of comprehension due to inability to understand difficult sentences 3. Careless expression of pupils’ answers 4. Preconceived ideas 5. Introduction of irrelevant facts and ideas 6. Overpowering suggestiveness of certain elements 7. Using words not synonymous, as if they were 8. Disregard of modifying elements 9. Failure to follow directions | |
|  | Ability groups in reading was recommended for the first time  Detroit First Grade Intelligence Tests for the purpose of grouping  “Seat work given them and the books used should be simple enough to be within their ability so that they will not be faced by failure and discouragement.” | |
|  | Miss Bolenius said,: The correlation of first-grade activities with reading: number work, hand work, language, rhythm, etc., -- all these are woven with the reading. In fact, the whole day is made to revolve around the reading exercises. | |
| 1. **Reading Research Expands Rapidly** | | |
| 1910-24 | * 1. Only 34 studies in reading had been reported in the English language up until 1910.   2. From 1910 to July 1924, a total of 436 accounts of reading studies had been published by investigators in the United States. (p. 175)   3. In 1923 alone- 63 investigations wer reported.   4. Did not begin until standardized tests were available.   5. First studies had to do with the tests.   6. 1914-15—2/3 of studies concerned themselves with the standardization and application of reading tests.   7. Remaining third dealt primarily with reading time- allotments, methods of primary reading, and phonics. | |
|  | Broader interest in problems chosen for investigation.  Principal topics were:   * Silent reading * Speed * Classification of pupils * Phonics * Methods in primary grades * Appropriate materials * Hygiene of reading * Uses of reading in school and adults life   New topics of study included:   * Diagnosis and remedial instruction * Correlations between reading achievement and achievement of other subject areas | |
| 1917 | First doctoral dissertation in reading  University of Chicago—*Studies of Elementary School Reading through Standardized Tests,* William S. Gray | |
| 1917-1924 | 13 additional doctoral dissertations on reading were reported.  Topics included:   * Readings interests * Silent reading * Speed * Content of readers * Measurement of reading ability * Sensory factors | |
| 1. **Practice in Speed Receives Initial Attention** | | |
| 1884-1916 | Laboratory studies of the preceding period called attention to differences in rates when reading silently and orally. Not until this period that rate was singled out as a special and an important reading skill that should be developed through classroom practice. | |
|  | Test of Wellesley College girls and found that some of them read six times faster than others, and Quantz tested 50 men students at the University of Wisconsin and found that the number of words per second that they read varied from 3.5 – 8.8.  1915 This led to a development of a “Standards in Rates of Reading.”  1916—“Speed can be encouraged by limited the amount of time given to the reading.” | |
| 1924 | Maryland School Bulletin on Silent reading   * Alternate reading and reproduction/ paraphrase and answering questions * Direct pupils to read the selection “as fast as you can. While reading, do not move your lips or tongue. Do not pronounce the words to yourself, as that will cause you to read more slowly than you otherwise would…. Each pupil should keep an account of the number of lines and pages he reads each day.” | |
| 1. **Remedial Readings Extends to Public School** | | |
| 1910-15 | Previously, reading disabilities handled in medical field. | |
|  | Psychologist Augusta F. Bronner and Leta S. Hollingworth began experimenting with deficient readers.  Hollingworth studied reading disabilities. | |
| 1920-24 | Standardized reading tests administered by superintendents to determine status of pupils’ achievements | |
|  | Term ***Remedial reading*** appeared  Previously called *inferiority in reading, reading disability and reading deficiency* | |
| 1923-24 | William S. Gray and Arthur I. Gates pioneers in developing diagnostic and remedial techniques | |
| 1917 | First master’s thesis on subject *Special Training and Tests for Elementary Pupils Deficient in Reading*  Katherine McLaughlin—University of Chicago | |
|  | Diagnosis in form of case study. Examining issues such as dyslexia, phonics and kinesthetics, instruction for ‘retarded readers’  Remedies included motor aspect of reading as inadequate eye movement, extraneous bodily movements, vocalization, improper breathing. | |
| 1921 | First clinic for remedial instruction at the University of California. Later became part of the psychology department. | |
| 1. **Experience Charts Are Initiated** | | |
|  | In preparing an experience chart, the teacher invited discussion of experience that the children might have had incidentally or which the teacher might have provided for them.  Having pupils use stories of their own composition based on firsthand experiences as beginning reading material was, indeed, a radical departure. | |
| 1. **Individual Instruction Is Introduced** | | |
|  | With the administration of newly developed tests, a very great fundamental truth became apparent with a violent impact—the realization that there were wide individual difference in the reading achievements of children, in the same grade, and in the same classroom. | |
|  | Adjustments had to be made in classroom.   * Ability grouping * Flexible promotion * Differentiated assignments | |
|  | Twenty-Fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II included a section on “Adapting Schools to Individual Differences.” | |
|  | Individualized instruction reported that allowed a child to work at his own rate through material that increased in small increments of difficulty. The important point to note is that attention to individual difference in reading received its first great impetus during this decade of remarkable progress. | |
| 1. **Teacher Improvement Is a Growing Concern** | | |
| 1918-24 | Specialization not yet present but it became apparent that teachers required better preparation. | |
| 1916 | Uhl recommended: “As a measure of economy of school pupils if not of money, unassigned teachers should be available for every superintendent’s use in giving individual attention to pupils who are or will soon be in the retarded group.” | |
| 1924 | Gray wrote: “There is urgent need for teachers who are trained to engage in diagnostic and remedial work more effectually.” | |