

STATEMENT OF PERMISSION TO COPY

In presenting this professional paper in partial fulfillment of the requirements for an advance degree at Montana State University, I agree that the Library shall make it freely available for inspection. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this professional paper for scholarly purposes may be granted by my major professor, or, in his absence, by the Director of Libraries. It is understood that any copying or publication of this professional paper for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Signature

Michael R. Thompson

Date

August 1, 1974

ANALYSIS OF PREPRIMER, PRIMER, AND
FIRST GRADE VOCABULARY

by

MICHAEL RODGER STIMSON

A professional paper submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

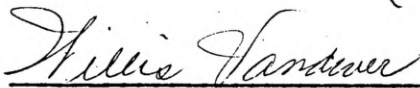
of

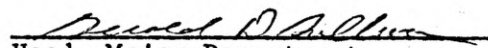
MASTER OF EDUCATION

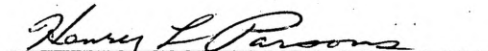
with concentration in

Elementary Education

Approved:


Chairman, Examining Committee


Head, Major Department


Graduate Dean

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
Bozeman, Montana

August, 1974

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author gratefully acknowledges the time, information, and friendship given him by Dr. Willis Vandiver. Special thanks to Dr. Gerald Sullivan for putting me in the hands of Dr. Vandiver. To Ron and Joyce Silvers who put up with me for the past year.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES.	v
ABSTRACT.	vi
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of the Problem	1
Purpose of the Study	2
General Questions to be Answered	2
General Procedure.	2
Limitations.	3
Definition of Terms.	3
Summary.	5
2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE	7
Nature of Word Identification.	8
Phonics and Sight Vocabulary	10
Summary.	13
3. ANALYSIS OF A PRIMARY VOCABULARY	14
Summary.	32
4. CONCLUSIONS.	34
LITERATURE CITED	36

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Word List Comparison.	18

ABSTRACT

The beginning reader is faced with the task of mastering a number of basic reading skills. All of these skills are essential to the development of reading.

A major skill to be developed by the beginning reader is that of word recognition. In order to determine the nature of the task of word recognition skills, an analysis was made of the preprimer, primer, and first grade words of the Harris-Jacobson Basic Elementary Vocabulary.

The vocabulary was analyzed according to physical structure and divided into categories of regular and irregular words. The regular words were classified according to phonics generalizations, visual clues, and syllabication patterns.

It was found that primary vocabulary is composed of 335 words: 58 preprimer, 62 primer, and 215 first grade. Of the 335 words, 86 were considered to be irregular. All visual clue patterns and three syllabication patterns are contained in the list.

Therefore, the beginning reader is confronted with memorizing irregular words, phonics generalizations, and visual clues, and these tasks must be overlearned to the point that they are automatic in response.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The debate over reading is probably here to stay, and anyone entering the arena of debate will feel the wrath or cheers of whichever side he happens to support. From the massive number of words written, spoken, debated, and argued, it would seem apparent that almost every adult who can read the English language judges himself to be an expert on the subject. It is unfortunate that such an essential skill as reading has become a battleground in education. Also, it is unfortunate that so much misinformation or little information is presented on particular problems in reading. One of these problems is the task of acquiring basic reading skills by the beginning reader.

At the onset of reading instruction, the child is doing little actual reading. In fact, the child is almost overburdened with the acquisition of skills and little comprehension or transference of information is taking place. The primary skills that the student must master to become a fluent reader are in the area of decoding or word attack. It is essential to remember that these are skills and only part of the actual act of reading.

Statement of the Problem

It would seem to be obvious and beneficial that the reading teacher be aware of the structural nature of the primary vocabulary and the nature of the task confronting the beginning reader in

acquiring the word attack skills necessary to master primary vocabulary.

Purpose of the Study

The investigator's purpose, through an analysis of the structure of preprimer, primer, and first grade phonics and irregular words was to describe the nature of vocabulary necessary to beginning reading.

General Questions to be Answered

A number of questions were anticipated concerning the structure of primary vocabulary.

How many words must the child master to begin reading.

How many words lend themselves to phonics analysis.

How many words are irregular in structure.

What are the types of phonics generalization that confront the beginning reader.

Does the structure of the vocabulary lend itself to support the use of synthetic or analytical phonics.

General Procedure

The data on the physical structure of the vocabulary was gathered by phonics analysis of the Harris-Jacobson Elementary Vocabulary list.

Other data was gathered by a research of contemporary literature available at the Montana State University Library at Bozeman, Montana

and the private library of Dr. Willis Vandiver, Professor of Education, Montana State University, Bozeman, Montana. Material was selected from professional journals in the field of reading and hard bound publications.

Limitations

The subject of this paper is the nature and structure of vocabulary confronting the beginning reader. Therefore, the study will be limited to the vocabularies of preprimer, primer, and first grade levels.

Also, because it is practically impossible to arrive at an exact number of words in the primary vocabulary, the study will be limited to the vocabulary as presented in the Harris-Jacobson Basic Elementary Reading Vocabulary.

Definition of Terms

For the study, the subsequent terms were defined in the following manner.

Analytic phonics. A system of word attack which begins with common words understood by the child. "The more common sound that recurs in words are first met within the framework of the total word, then through a generalizing process, the children learn to identify common recurring sounds in unfamiliar words (Dechant, 1970:210)."

Consonant blend. "A consonant blend is a combination, in one syllable, of two or three consecutive consonants, each of which retains its own sound when pronounced (Hall, 1968:8)."

Consonant Digraph. The consonant digraph is two consecutive consonants that produce one sound (Hall, 1968:11).

Decoding. The use of visual clues to recognize the sound the word represents.

Grapheme. The printed letter or letters that represent a sound (Hall, 1969:2).

Irregular word. A word that cannot be recognized according to visual clues.

Phoneme. A speech sound or the smallest unit of sound which distinguishes one word from another.

Phonetics. "The scientific study of speech sounds or phonemes, including their pronunciation, the action of the larynx, tongue, and lips in sound production and symbolization (Harris, 1973:72-324)."

Phonics. The study of the relationships between phonemes and graphemes and their use in pronouncing printed words.

Sight vocabulary. The words that the individual recognizes immediately without using any form of decoding process.

Synthetic phonics. The method of teaching word recognitions by starting letters and combining letters to make words, phrases, and sentences (Harris, 1973:61).

Visual clue. The positions of the letters dictate the sounds that the letters represent.

Vowel digraph. Two vowels appearing together making one sound constitute a vowel digraph (Hall, 1968:26).

Vowel diphthong. The combination of two vowel sounds within one syllable make a vowel digraph.

Word analysis. The way in which a reader may recognize the sounds represented by the letters of the word.

Word attack. This is a synonym for word analysis.

Summary

The beginning reader is faced with a massive task of acquiring a number of necessary skills before he can become a fluent reader. So important are these skills that many of them will be mastered to the point of overlearning, and they become an automatic response for the fluent reader.

Some of the clues as to the nature of the skills required by the beginning reader will be found in the study of basic vocabulary confronting the individual.

It is the basic vocabulary and the phonics of the vocabulary that must be mastered to produce the mature, fluent, and independent reader.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In the on-going debate over the nature of reading, there seems to be a few fundamental facts that are avoided. One of the most important facts is that the English language is not a phonic language; that is, there is not a one-to-one relationship between the letters and the sounds that constitute the language. There are twenty-six letters or graphemes in the language, and these letters or combination of letters account for forty-four sounds of phonemes. It is also unique that different letters may represent the same sound, i.e., the letters s and c may depict the same sound as in sent and cent. Another unique factor is that one letter may be symbolic of more than one sound, such as the letter a in lake, at, alone, and far. So the problem of having an alphabet of twenty-six letters representing forty-four sounds is compounded by having the letter sound relationship, in some cases, interchangeable with other letters and sounds.

The problem of phonics structure becomes more difficult when an individual listens to the language. Smith (1971:30) illustrated the problem by having an individual spell the words Mary, merry, and marry as another person speaks the words. If the words were not given in context, the speller would have a difficult time in distinguishing each word.

This hopefully should illustrate that it is simply too easy to

say that phonics is the only way to teach reading. Phonics are difficult and considering the lack of a one-to-one consistency in the sound symbol relationship, the problem is manifestly compounded. Also, a special feature of the language is that a number of high frequency basic words are irregular and do not lend themselves to phonics analysis.

Therefore, the beginning reader is faced with the task of mastering both phonics and non-phonics skills that make reading possible.

It is through an analysis of the structure of the first grade vocabulary that the type of skills necessary to preclude fluent reading could be identified.

Nature of Word Identification

Smith (1971:4-6) divides word identification into two separate parts: mediate and immediate word recognition.

Immediate word identification is the act of going directly from the print on the page to meaning or comprehension without the application of a decoding skill. It is not instantaneous but is direct and as fast as the act of visualizing the print and transferring the information to the brain.

For the skilled reader, mediate word identification takes place when the reader is confronted with a new word and the word is decoded by some form of word attack. The act is different from

immediate word identification in that some form of word attack skill is used between visual identification and comprehension of word meaning. This decoding process has a retarding effect on the reader's rate of fluency.

It would seem obvious that the beginning reader spends the majority of his time involved in mediate word identification for he is continually confronted with new words. The reader spends so much of his reading time decoding there is little time for actual reading comprehension to take place. Where the unskilled reader is forced to continually stop and decode new words, the skilled reader reads fluently from word to word, phrase to phrase, and thought to thought, breaking his reading pattern only when faced with a non-recognized word. There may be a qualitative difference between the statement that he cannot read the word and that he does not know the word (Smith, 1971:7).

The process of word identification is a process of categorization. Each particular letter or word may belong to a unique cognitive group or category. For example, a unique group may be attached to the letter "b" and all "b" letters or "b" letter words are placed in the category. The same may be applied to word or groups of letters (Smith, 1971:5-6).

The fluent reader will develop a list of words or a sight vocabulary that is made up of categorized words that the reader has

classified for himself. Immediate word recognition takes place when the visualized word is recognized as one of the words in the individual's word grouping. When the word is not on the reader's word list, or in his sight vocabulary, the word is not recognized and the reader must rely on some form of word attack to decode the word (Smith, 1971:5).

The distinction between knowing a word and "sounding out" a word is determined by whether the word is part of the individual's word list. It is a short cut for the reader to recognize the word immediately and that any time the reader is forced to stop and decode a word it is a hinderment to fluency.

Phonics and Sight Vocabulary

Even with the inconsistencies in the sound symbol relationship, phonics is essential to reading. This is perhaps the most important skill for the purpose of phonics, to help the child develop the ability to work out pronunciation of words which are not part of his sight vocabulary. "It is the most important skill to becoming a fluent reader (Heilman, 1971:246)."

The application of phonics are limited by the spelling patterns, phoneme-graphem relationship, found in the English language. The problem is compounded by the number of high frequency words that are of irregular spelling which result in the following problems.

1. The English language contains thousands of words borrowed from other languages which do not have a one-to-one sound symbol

relationship.

2. The language contains words with identical pronunciation which have different meanings, i.e., beat-beet, steel-steal, and week-weak.

3. Some words have the same pronunciation, one with a regular spelling and one with an irregular spelling, i.e., ate-eight, wood-would, and way and weigh (Heilman, 1971:263-64).

Yet, even with the problems phonics are necessary to the development of a fluent reader but should never be taught as reading (Durkin, 1972:357-58).

It seems to be a dilemma, yet it is stated by Heilman, "In essence word attack is the mortal enemy of the melody of language. Yet this tool must be used if one wishes to attain that melody (1972:72-77)."

It must always be remembered that learning to read is a long term developmental process involving a number of separate skills. Each skill in itself is not reading but combined it provides the equipment to allow the reading process to take place. This is the basis for the argument that reading is more than the sum total of its separate parts.

As phonics is one essential tool in word attack skills, the other is a development of a sight vocabulary or instant recognition of a word.

A sight vocabulary in itself is not reading. But, the development of a sight vocabulary must be systematic and concurrent with the

development of other skills that contribute to the act of reading.

The individual without a sight vocabulary is not a mature reader. A person who fails to recognize as few as five per cent of the words in a given passage is handicapped, one who fails at ten per cent is seriously handicapped and probably at frustration reading level (Heilman, 1972:477).

Along with the development of a sight vocabulary, the student will be using phonics and other word attack skills. A new word will be analyzed if it lends itself to phonics analysis; if irregular it should be memorized. After repeated exposure, the student should rely less on analysis as the word is added to his sight vocabulary and is recognized immediately. When a child fails to add new words to his sight vocabulary, he is not maintaining a normal vocabulary development (Heilman, 1972:422).

The failure to develop an adequate sight vocabulary creates future problems for the reader because:

1. The child must sound out too many words.
2. Irregular words that cannot be sounded out are not part of the child's vocabulary.
3. Continuous sounding out prevents fluent reading and causes the child to lose the meaning of what he is reading.
4. The child may attempt to substitute or guess at unknown words (Heilman, 1972:580-91).

Developing the sight vocabulary is one of the most important goals in the primary reading program. The student who fails to do so is in serious trouble as a reader (Heilman, 1972:346).

Summary

The task of sight vocabulary development seems almost monumental. Considering all forms of exposure to words, the first grade child must master between 300 and 400 words, the second grade child between 800 and a thousand, all of which must become a part of the child's sight vocabulary (Heilman, 1972:344).

A sight vocabulary is not a replacement for word attack. It is one of the major skills that should be developed in the early stages of reading. It should be developed concurrently with a recognition of a sound symbol relationship and the awareness of word meaning and that words represent speech.

Sight vocabulary, by avoiding the problem of sounding out words and having an automatic response, allows the reader to devote his full time to reading, thinking, and interpretation (Tinker, 157).

One technique alone is not sufficient enough to allow the student to unlock words. The child should have a variety of skills for word attack.

Chapter 3

ANALYSIS OF A PRIMARY VOCABULARY

The first major reading vocabulary was Thorndike-Lorge, published in 1944. The Dale vocabulary was published in 1948, followed by the Botel in 1962.

The Harris-Jacobson vocabulary list was developed by Albert J. Harris of the City University of New York and Milton D. Jacobson, of the University of Virginia. The word list was created in response to the authors' feelings that the basic elementary word lists then in use were out of date. The list was first published in 1972 and titled Basic Elementary Reading Vocabulary (Harris, 1972:2).

The structure of the list was to show which words were predominantly used at the various grade levels in the popular basal readers of the early 1970's. Also, computerization was available to the researchers; thus, the time-consuming and costly task of constructing the word list, grouping words, and deleting words was avoided. Another advantage of computerization was that the grade words were recorded on tape, providing for instant recall for further research.

The criterion for selection of words was as follows:

1. The word list would be developed from widely used textbooks. Thus, providing words that were being used in reading programs throughout the nation.
2. The textbooks would include basal readers and books in the content area of English, mathematics, science, and social science.
3. With exception of the first grade level, only root words would be utilized.

4. The list would be constructed in sequence of reading grade level and in alphabetical order.
5. The list would be divided into three categories of words, the core words, additional words, and technical words (Harris, 1972:2).

Fourteen series of textbooks were used to compile the unit. The section was further divided into two subgroups. The first subgroup was composed of six basal readers representing Allyn and Bacon, American Book Company, Ginn and Company, Houghton Mifflin Company, Macmillan and Scott Foresman. It should be noted that Lippencott Reader, which has the largest elementary vocabulary was not included in the study; no reason for the exclusion was given.

The second subgroup was composed of eight series of content books, two in English, two in mathematics, two in science, and two in social science. The total number of books from the fourteen series was 127, containing some 4,500,000 words.

The criterion for selection of the textbooks was as follows:

1. The series was in nationwide use.
2. The books were judged to remain popular.
3. The books were published during the previous five years. There was one exception to this rule, but the researchers were provided with a vocabulary list from a 1970 edition (Harris, 1972:2-4).

The Harris-Jacobson list was composed of three parts. The first section, the core list, was based on the combined vocabularies of the six basal readers. Any unique word that appeared in at least three of the six basal textbooks was also incorporated into the core list. The second section, the additional list, was composed of words

appearing in the content series but not in the basal readers. The third section, the technical list, was made up of words not on the core list but in the content series and judged to have technical meaning (Harris, 1972:4).

The vocabulary list was constructed in alphabetical order and at reading grade level. There are three levels for the first grade: preprimer, primer, and first grade. For the next five grades, two through six, there is one list per grade level. Each word was placed on the list at the lowest grade level that it appeared in three of the basal readers.

There were more than 80,000 words on the original computer readout. These were reduced by the machine according to the previously stated criterion. The result was a list composed of 7,613 words which were separated into the following groups: core list--5,167; additional list--1,699; and a technical list--805.

According to grade level, the list was composed as follows:

Preprimer	58 words
Primer	62 words
First grade	215 words
Total First Grade	335 words
Second Grade	577 words
Third Grade	1,012 words
Total Primary	1,924 words
Intermediate	4,942 words

This resulted in a general vocabulary of 6,866 words. Judging by the number of words, the vocabulary develops slowly through first grade, accelerates through second and third grade, and levels off to about 1,600 words per year through intermediate grades.

Two widely acceptable vocabulary lists were used in comparison with the Harris-Jacobson list. The Dale 3,000 word vocabulary was published in 1948. This list contained 2,946 words that were recognized by 80 per cent or more of the fourth grade students involved in the testing program. The Dale is widely used as one of the two components of the Dale Chall Readability Formula. The Botel Bucks County list was published in 1962. This vocabulary contains 1,185 words found in at least three of the six basal readers. The Botel was limited to grades one, two, and three.

In comparison, 93 per cent of the Dale words and 94 per cent of the Botel vocabulary appeared in the Harris-Jacobson list. The primary reason for the 7 per cent difference with the Dale list was the removal of archaic words such as fret, afar, and candlestick and the addition of new words such as TV, astronaut, and hamburger. The percentage difference with the Botel could indicate an increase in the number of words used in primary reading programs, particularly at the second and third grade levels (Harris, 1973:91-94).

Table 1
Word List Comparison

Dale list of 3,000 Familiar Words, 1948 Botel Buck County List of 1,185 words, 1962		
	Dale	Botel
Number of words	2,946	3,266
Number of words from the Harris-Jacobson in matching grade levels	2,744	3,095
Number of words not on the Harris-Jacobson	202	171
Percentage of words contained in the Harris-Jacobson list	93%	95%

The value of the Harris-Jacobson list is that:

1. The list is based on widely used basal readers.
2. It provides a list of basic elementary words.
3. The resource material is up to date.
4. The list is the most recent word count of new textbook material.
5. The list is provided in alphabetical order and in grade level.
6. Word placement is based on distribution, not frequency.

The following is a list of the preprimer, primer, and first grade words of the Harris-Jacobson vocabulary. Each list is divided into sections of regular and irregular words. The regular words are further categorized according to phonics generalization, visual clues, and syllabication patterns. Also provided is a listing of blends, digraphs, and diphthongs contained in the primary vocabulary.

PREPRIMER WORD LIST

a	go	ran
and	green	red
are	have	ride
at	he	said
ball	help	see
big	here	something
blue	I	stop
call	in	that
can	is	the
come	it	this
daddy	little	to
did	look	up
do	make	want
dog	me	we
down	mother	what
for	my	who
fun	no	will
funny	not	with
get	play	work
		you

PREPRIMER IRREGULAR WORD LIST

a	said
are	something
blue	the
come	to
do	want
have	what
here	who
I	work
mother	you
my	

CONSONANT BLENDS

bl,	gr,	nd,	pl,	st
-----	-----	-----	-----	----

CONSONANT DIGRAPHS

th,	wh
-----	----

VOWEL DIGRAPHS

ee	oo
----	----

VOWEL DIPTHONG

oy

PREPRIMER VISUAL CLUES

Vowel consonant (short sound)

<u>a</u>	<u>e</u>	<u>i</u>	<u>o</u>	<u>u</u>
at		in		
and		is		
		it		

Consonant vowel consonant (short sound)

ball	get	big	dog	fun
call	help	did	not	
can	red	this	stop	
ran		will		
that		with		

Consonant vowel (long sound)

he	go
me	no
we	

Consonant vowel consonant silent e (long sound)

make	ride
------	------

Consonant vowel vowel consonant (first vowel long sound)

play	see
	green

Consonant vowel r conditioner

for

Preprimer Visual Clues (Continued)

Syllabication

Vowel consonant/consonant vowel

Consonant/consonant le

daddy
funny
compound
something

little

PRIMER WORD LIST

about	his	say
all	home	she
around	house	show
ask	into	sit
away	jump	so
bike	know	some
birthday	let	soon
boat	like	take
book	man	thank
but	may	then
cake	new	they
car	now	too
eat	of	train
fast	on	free
father	one	two
fish	out	us
from	paint	went
goat	pet	word
good	put	yellow
has	run	yes
him	saw	your

PRIMER IRREGULAR WORD LIST

father

show

from

they

know

two

new

word

one

your

saw

Consonant Blends

fr

nd

mt

tr

st

sk

Consonant Digraphs

sh

th

Vowel Digraphs

ai

ay

ea

oo

oo

Vowel Diphthongs

ou

PRIMER VISUAL CLUES

Vowel consonant (short sound)

<u>a</u>	<u>e</u>	<u>i</u>	<u>o</u>	<u>u</u>
ask			of on	us

Consonant vowel consonant (short sound)

fast	let	fish	jump
has	pet	him	put
man	then	his	run
thank	went	sit	
	yes		

Consonant vowel (long sound)

she	so
-----	----

Consonant vowel consonant silent e (long sound)

cake	bike	home
take	like	

Consonant vowel vowel consonant (first vowel long sound)

paint	eat	boat
train		goat

Consonant vowel R conditioner

car	birthday
-----	----------

Primer Visual Clues (continued)

Syllabication

Vowel consonant/consonant vowel

compound
birthday

Vowel/consonant vowel

about
around
away

FIRST GRADE WORD LIST

after	cow	hear	or	talk
again	cry	hello	other	tell
airplane	cut	hen	our	than
along	dark	her	over	their
am	day	hill	own	them
an	didn't	hold	pan	there
animal	does	hop	party	these
another	don't	horse	peanut	thing
any	dress	how	penny	think
as	drop	hurry	picnic	those
baby	duck	I'll	picture	three
bag	fall	ice	pig	time
back	far	if	please	told
balloon	farm	it's	pocket	tomorrow
bark	fat	just	pony	took
barn	feet	kind	prize	town
be	fight	kitten	rabbit	toy
bear	find	last	race	truck
bed	fire	laugh	rain	try
bee	first	leg	read	turtle
before	five	letter	ready	TV
began	fly	light	right	under
behind	food	live	road	very
better	found	long	rocket	wagon
bird	four	lost	sang	walk
black	fox	made	sat	was
box	friend	many	school	water
boy	game	maybe	seen	way
bring	gave	men	shoe	were
brown	girl	met	should	wet
build	give	miss	sing	when
bus	gone	money	sister	where
by	good-by	more	sleep	which
cage	got	morning	sound	white
came	grass	must	stay	why
can't	guess	name	step	window
cat	had	never	still	wish
catch	hair	next	stopped	won't
children	hand	night	store	would
coat	happy	nothing	story	zoo
cold	hard	off	street	
color	hat	oh	sun	
could	head	old	surprise	

FIRST GRADE IRREGULAR WORD LIST

again	gone	ready
airplane	guess	right
any	hair	shoe
bear	head	should
before	hear	store
build	hold	talk
by	kind	their
cold	light	there
color	live	told
could	many	TV
does	money	very
fall	more	walk
fight	night	water
find	nothing	were
fire	oh	where
fly	old	why
four	our	window
friend	own	would
give		

FIRST GRADE CONSONANT BLENDS

bl br cr dr fl fr gr pl pr sch sl st str

Consonant Digraphs

ch gh ng sh th wh

Vowel Digraphs

ai ay ea ee oa

Vowel Diphthong

oo ou ow oy

VISUAL CLUES

Vowel consonant (short sound)

<u>a</u>	<u>e</u>	<u>i</u>	<u>o</u>	<u>u</u>
am		if	off	
an				
as				

Consonant vowel consonant (short sound)

bay	bed	hill	box	bus
back	dress	miss	drop	cut
black	her	pig	fox	duck
cat	leg	sing	got	just
catch	men	still	hop	must
fat	met	thing	lost	sun
grass	next	think		
had	step	which		
hand	tell			
hat	them			
last	wet			
pan	when			
sang				
sat				

First Grade Visual Clues (continued)

Consonant vowel (long sound)

aeiou

be

Consonant vowel consonant silent e (long sound)

cage
came
game
gave
made
name
race

these

five
ice
prize
time
white
wish

those

Consonant vowel vowel consonant (first vowel long sound)

rain

bee
feet
please
read
seen
sleep
street
threecoat
road

Consonant vowel r conditioner

bark
barn
dark
far
farm
hard
party

her

bird
first
girlhorse
morning
or
story

FIRST GRADE SYLLABICATION

Vowel consonant/consonant vowel

after
better
happy
hello
hurry
kitten
letter
penny
picnic
picture
pocket
rabbit
rocket
sister
surprise
stopped
under
window

Consonant/consonant le

turtle

Contractions and hyphens

can't
didn't
don't
good-bye
I'll
it's
won't

Compound

airplane
peanut

Vowel/consonant vowel

again
along
before
began
behind

Summary

The Harris-Jacobson vocabulary is the most recent list in publication. Since it is based on widely used basal readers, analysis of the Harris-Jacobson could serve as a guide to the type and structure of vocabulary that the beginning student must master to become a fluent reader.

The beginning reader must know the primary vocabulary to the point that all of the words become a part of the individual's sight vocabulary and word recognition is automatic.

In numbers alone the beginning reader is faced with a total of 335 words: 58 preprimer, 62 primer, and 215 first grade. Of the 335 words, eighty-six, or 25 per cent, are considered to be irregular. Some of the irregular words, old for example, are not actual irregular words but belong to word families with special sounds. Because there are so few of these words on the first grade list and because they are unique, they are being placed in the category of irregular words. The student must also learn to recognize thirteen consonant blends, six consonant digraphs, seven vowel digraphs, and four vowel diphthongs.

All of the visual clue patterns--vowel consonant (VC), consonant vowel consonant (CVC), consonant vowel (CV), consonant vowel-vowel consonant (CVVC), and consonant vowel consonant silent e (CVCE)--are represented on the list.

Also, the syllabication patterns--vowel consonant-consonant

vowel (VC/CV), vowel-consonant vowel (V/CV), and consonant-consonant
le (C/Cle)--are present.

The list also contains four compound words and six contractions.

Accepting the definition that reading is the transference of information from one person to another via the printed page and that the act of reading is greater than the sum total of its separate parts, the beginning reader is not reading. Rather, he is involved in a process of mastery of special related and at times unrelated skills. Generally, the skill involves phonics which gives clues to word pronunciation or to memory skills for irregular words which must be recognized on sight.

The child is not actually reading, but he is participating in the process that will allow him to read. It is a process that must be learned to the point of over learning until it is automatic in response. It is not reading, yet without it the child cannot read.

Chapter 4

CONCLUSIONS

The beginning reader is faced with a monumental task of mastering a number of reading subskills. Separately none of the skills are reading, combined they make the reading process possible.

The primary skill required of the new reader is the skill of word recognition or word attack. Word recognition is divided into two subgroups. Immediate word recognition which involves no form of decoding skill and mediate recognition which requires the reader to use a type of word attack or the act of decoding.

Word attack or word recognition is divided into two separate parts. The first involves phonics analysis where the word is analyzed according to a sound symbol relationship and the structure or phonics arrangement of the letter. The second form of word recognition involves irregular words or words that do not lend themselves to phonics analysis. These words, because they are irregular, must be memorized.

Of course, the objective of both forms of word attack is to develop the individual's sight vocabulary. Once a word has become a part of the individual's sight vocabulary, the word is recognized immediately and no form of decoding process is necessary.

Analysis of the first grade word list of the Harris-Jacobson vocabulary was used to determine the number and type of phonic rules

and patterns that will confront the new reader. Also, a count and listing of irregular words was made. All words were listed according to phonic rules, syllibication patterns, or if the word is irregular.

It is a massive task that confronts the beginning reader and the primary reading teacher should be aware of the nature and the structure of the task confronting their students.

LITERATURE CITED

LITERATURE CITED

Books

- Dechant, Emerald V. 1970. Improving the Teaching of Reading. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Durkin, Dolores. 1972. Teaching Young Children to Read. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc.
- Harris, Albert J. 1973. How to Increase Reading Ability. New York: David McKay Company, Inc.
- Heilman, Arthur W. 1972. Principles and Practices of Teaching Reading. Columbus: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company.
- Hall, Mary Anne, and Robert M. Wilson. 1968. Program Word Attack for Teachers. Columbus: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company.
- Hull, Marian A. 1969. Phonics for the Reading Teacher. Columbus: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company.
- Smith, Frank. 1971. Understanding Reading. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.
- Tinker, Miles A., and Constance McCullough. 1968. Teaching Elementary Reading. New York: Appleton-Century Croft.

Papers

- Harris, Albert J. May 1973. Rationale and Description of "Basic Elementary Vocabularies," paper presented at the International Reading Association, Detroit, Michigan, May 1972.
- Heilman, Arthur W. May 1972. Developing Word Analysis Skills, paper presented at the International Reading Association, Detroit, Michigan, May 1972.

Journals

- Harris, Albert J., and Milton D. Jacobson. 1973-74. "Some Comparisons Between Basic Elementary Reading Vocabularies and Other Word Lists," Reading Research Quarterly, Vol. IX, No. 1, Delaware: International Reading Association.
- 28 5511 27