THE USE OF THE REBUS AS AN
INSTRUCTIONAL DEVICE IN
BEGINNING READING INSTRUCTION

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DEVICE IN BEGINNING READING INSTRUCTION

by

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Abstract

This study examines the feasibility of the rebus interspersed in context as an instructional tool to teach sight vocabulary to the beginning reader. The rebus is presented in four categories: 1) noun, 2) verb, 3) adjective, 4) adverb. A pre-test - treatment - post-test design was implemented and the results are reported in terms of Gain Scores. This examiner found that the order of difficulty from easy-to-hard was as follows: 1) nouns, 2) verbs, 3) adjectives, 4) adverbs. In addition, it was found that all students benefited from this method including those classified as slow learners.

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CHAPTER I

THE REBUS PHENOMENON

The word "rebus" is derived from the Latin word "res" which means thing. The editors of the Standard Dictionary (International Edition, 1976) define the rebus as:

> a puzzle representing a word, phrase,
> or sentence by letters, numerals,
> pictures, etc., often with pictures
> of objects whose names have the same
> sounds as the words represented.
> (p. 1052, 1976)

The rebus is in fact a type of logographic system which can be used to communicate thought or concept visibly. A logographic system is a graphic system, much like traditional orthography is a graphic system; however, it is unlike traditional orthography in that it does not utilize a phonetic alphabet to represent speech sounds. Rather, it will use some other means to characterize a word or an idea.

The word "logogram" is derived from two Greek words, "logos" which can mean "word", and "gramma", which means "a letter". The Standard Dictionary (International Edition, 1976) defines a logogram as:

1. an abbreviation or other sign
   representing a word

2. a form of versified word puzzle.
   (p. 749, 1976)

Woodcock (1968) states:

> In linguistic sense, rebuses are
> symbols which represent entire words,
> or parts of words, whereas, by contrast,
> letters represent sounds. A rebus may
> be pictorial, geometric, or even
> completely abstract. (p. 2, 1968)

Clark views the rebus as being:

> a representation of words or syllables
> by pictures of objects or by symbols
> whose names resemble the intended words
> or syllables in sound. (p. 35, May 1977)

Today there are many types of logographic or rebus systems in use. In most English-speaking societies they are used mainly with handicapped individuals in situations where traditional orthography has proven to be unsuccessful as a means in written communication. In societies such as the Chinese, a logographic written system has proven to be the principal means whereby written communication is made possible. A number of such systems presently in use are as follows:

1. The Various Sign Language Systems

These are systems of gestures used to communicate thought to a deaf person. Corinne Klein Jensema in her article, "A Review of Communication Systems Used by Deaf-Blind People" states:

> Many gestures seem to be anthropologically
> determined and are derived from natural
> movements. Because they closely represent
> the feeling they are construed to convey,
> deaf people, especially those of low abilities,
> are able to assimilate gestures. (p. 75, Oct.
> 1979)

If gestural communication is anthropologically deter-
mined, this may well be the reason why most North American
Indians developed smoke signals as well as elaborate sign
languages in order to communicate with others outside their
own immediate culture.

Thus the sign representing a word or an idea, when
acted out in the form of a gesture, becomes a mode by which
communication may take place.

2. Carrier-Peak Symbols

This system developed from Premack's work which
centered around the teaching of Sarah, a chimpanzee, to
communicate nonvocally with her trainers. Sarah was taught
to associate movable abstract plastic shapes with a one
hundred and thirty word lexicon and to utilize these shapes
on a magnetic board to form vertical sentences.

Carrier and Peak further developed Premack's ideas to
aid in a pre-language training program which became known as
the "Non-Slip Program". This program was designed for use
with autistic or severely retarded non-oral children. Using
plastic symbols and a sentence tray, children were taught to
place a vocabulary consisting of thirty-four words in various
syntactical patterns.

3. Bliss Symbols

This communication system was developed by Charles
Bliss and is used with nonvocal, motorically impaired

children such as cerebral palsied children who have near-normal or above average intelligence but have difficulty with the high level abstraction of traditional orthography. It is a system of approximately one hundred basic idio- and picto-graphic symbols which when combined on a language-board, according to certain rules and procedures, will permit an individual to communicate in a very limited way.

4. The Chinese Written System

The traditional Chinese written language is a comprehensive rebus system whereby each character or logogram represents a meaning or a word. This is different from English orthography in that the twenty-six characters of the English alphabet are based on phonetic sounds. English letters do not carry morphemic reference unless they are used as a prefix, a suffix, or a word. However, in written Chinese, all its characters carry morphemic reference. Each character denotes a monosyllable and expresses no relationship to the many sound systems of spoken Chinese. Consequently, the idiom, vocabulary, and style of written Chinese varies greatly from that of spoken Chinese.

As China is a country in which many different dialects are spoken, a system such as this serves its needs well. It then becomes a vehicle whereby Chinese people of one dialect may communicate with Chinese people of another dialect. While their oral speech may sound different (be it Mandarin,

Cantonese, Wu, or Min dialect), all Chinese people use the same written rebus-type system to communicate graphically. It is understood in much the same way that written music is understood. When a musician writes his music it can be read and played internationally, but when he begins to verbalize his music he can only be understood by those who speak his phonetic system.

5. The Rebus System

Pictographic writing has been found in Europe dating back to the Neolithic and Bronze Ages. According to language historians all graphic writing developed from a rebus base as primitive man attempted to fulfill his need to communicate with others as well as his need to preserve his communication over time.

Greb states:

> Just as speech developed out of
> imitation of sound, so writing developed
> out of imitation of the forms of real
> objects or beings. At the basis of all
> writing stands the picture. This is
> clear, not only from the fact that all
> modern primitive writings are pictorial
> in character, but also because all the
> great Oriental systems, such as Sumerian,
> Egyptian, Hittite, Chinese, etc., were
> real picture writings. (p. 27, 1952)

However, it was not until the 19th century that rebuses interspersed with traditional orthography were used in reading texts of children's books. Writers of such books believed it to be a method whereby the reading vocabularies of children could be expanded (Clark, 1977).

Huey in 1908/1968 supported this method, for he writes:

>   The pictures (rebuses) usually suggest
>   enough of meaning to help the child guess
>   the meaning of the printed words, and his
>   knowledge of words grow apace, while in the
>   fact that he must always attend to the
>   meanings to get the words develops reading
>   for thought.... It is a stage of reading
>   and writing that is a natural one for the
>   child, and he will make much use of it if
>   encouraged a little. (p. 326, 1908/1968)

This partial utilization of the rebuses has continued beyond the middle of the 20th century. In 1962 a book was published titled, Mother Goose in Hieroglyphics (1962). Here Mother Goose rhymes were written in traditional orthography interspersed with pictorial rebuses. Then in 1966, two reading series, Harper and Row Basic Reading Program by O'Donnell and the Initial Teaching Alphabet Series by Tanyzer and Mazurkievicz both made use of rebuses interspersed with traditional orthography in beginning textbooks (Clark, 1977, p. 36).

However it wasn't until 1965, when Woodcock developed The Rebus Reading Series, that a basal reading program using an entire rebus text was published. In this program, children began their readiness program completely with rebuses, but gradually, in the primer levels, transferred over to traditional orthography.

In 1968, Woodcock, Clark and Davis developed and published the Peabody Rebus Reading Program, which is a reading readiness program. Also in 1974, these same authors

published a rebus glossary titled the <u>Standard Rebus Glossary</u> which contains eight hundred and eighteen different rebuses representing approximately two thousand words. <u>Part I</u> of this glossary gives a brief history of rebuses and then offers some suggestions for rebus-related activities in language instruction, reading instruction and speech therapy. In <u>Part II</u> of the glossary is found an alphabetical listing of all the rebuses as well as a listing denoting all the language categories from which the chosen words could be developed.

In 1975, Clark, Moores, and Woodcock developed a program for the hearing-impaired child. This program utilized a multimodality approach and was titled the <u>Minnesota Early Language Sequence</u>. It combines the American Sign Language with the use of rebuses to promote receptive language development in the child. Its aim is to promote comprehension and growth in vocabulary and sentence patterns for hearing-handicapped children.

Thus the use of the rebus as a vehicle for communication is not a new concept but rather an old one that has been with us (though somewhat dormant) for many, many years. Anthropology and language historians teach us that it was this avenue through which most written languages developed (Greb, 1952). For many years it has been successfully utilized to communicate with and/or teach disabled individuals, possibly because it seems to get at the essence of the language, which is <u>meaning</u> (Clark, 1977).

It was Huey in the early 1900's who recognized its value as a teaching tool to help increase the sight vocabularies for normal beginning readers. He proposed that the rebus be included in their reading and writing texts.

The use of the rebus does not appear to have been a popular topic in the reading literature and therefore not much was written about it until the early sixties. Since 1960, O'Donnell (1966), Tanyzer and Mazurkienvicz (1966), Woodcock (1965), Woodcock, Clark and Davis (1968, 1974), Clark, Moores, and Woodcock (1975), and Clark (1977) have been promoting its use.

In use today, one may find puzzles that have been made with rebuses. Rebus puzzles are word pictures connected by plusses and minuses which result in a sentence when correctly solved.

For example:

ice minus refrigerator equals water puddle
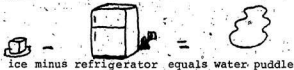
(Example taken from: Picture Language Equations, by B. Cohen, Learning 10: 76, November 1981).

In addition, rebuses have traditionally been utilized as international symbols for equipment controls, road signs, and signs in public places.

For example:

meaning "male"   meaning "female"
placed on the entrance to bathroom doors
to public washrooms.

Also:

means a crossing of some sort, i.e., a
railroad crossing.

The Boy Scouts and Girl Guides make use of rebuses
for their trail marks, and we are all familiar with the
pointing arrow ➡ or the pointing hand 👉 to
indicate direction.

Abstract ideas can also be represented in concrete
type rebus signs. For example:

1. pipe to represent peace;

2. the index finger plus the finger adjacent to it,
   pointing upwards and spread apart while the
   other fingers of the hand are bent over to
   represent defiance or victory, depending upon
   the context in which it is used or displayed.

Therefore, the use of the rebus is not a new concept
but rather one that is very rich in history and one that has
at its roots the very essence and foundation of all writing
systems, including that of the Roman alphabet used in the
printing of English.

CHAPTER II

THE NATURE OF BEGINNING READING

Reading acquisition is very much tied to language acquisition. Both require the user to have obtained a certain amount of knowledge about the symbols being used; that is, whether they are graphic, phonemic, or graphophonemic, what they are, and how they differ from each other. Both require an understanding of the syntax of the language; that is, the grammatical arrangement of sentence construction according to the norms of the individual group and established by its usage over a period of time. Both involve semantic development in that obtaining meaning or making sense are their ultimate and over-riding concerns. Both require a certain amount of practical experience with the actual language or reading material before substantial acquisition can take place.

By the time children arrive at school in Kindergarten, they already have experienced five or six years of living which has enabled them to be involved in many and varied meaningful situations. For the vast majority of the children these experiences included learning and speaking whatever language that was spoken in the home. Consequently, by school age (five or six years old) each child already realizes that language is a tool for making sense out of his/her world. Frank Smith, in his paper "The Language Arts and the Learner's Mind" states the following:

> Obviously no one can tell an infant how
> language works or what it can do; children
> have to find out about language themselves
> by making sense of it. And this is the way
> that children learn about the world in
> general, about everything in their
> experience - by hypothesizing what must be
> going on, anticipating what might occur,
> and observing to see if they are right.
> Always children learn by relating what is
> new to what they understand already.
> (p. 119, Feb. 1979)

Goodman, in his article "Effective Teachers of Reading

Know Language and Children" states:

> All children have immense language
> resources when they enter school. By
> understanding and respecting and
> building on the language competence of
> kids, we can make literacy an extension
> of the natural language learning of
> children. (p. 823, Sept. 1974).

A certain amount of information from every experience

an individual participates in is stored in his/her memory,

and as such it might be used by the mind as a building block

on which to enlarge one's perception of successive experiences.

In his book, Understanding Reading (1978), Frank Smith

refers to the sum total of one's learning experiences as being

"the theory of the world in our heads". Herein lies the

essence of all one's perceptions and the basis of all one's

learning. By ordering and categorizing the ideas and events

that have happened to himself and by storing them in his

memory, an individual is able to distinguish between nonsense

and reality and thus obtain meaning for himself. In much of

the literature this is referred to as being the "deep

structural meaning" or the "semantics" of the language. An

individual obtains this intuitively as he/she practices the language.

By using the language one also learns intuitively about another important factor; this being the ordering of the syntactical structure of the language. Just through usage in his/her day-to-day activities, he/she will learn the inflectional endings and the various grammatical positions and relationships that exist in the sentences for whatever has been the socially acceptable dialect presented.

Carol Chomsky states:

> What children have to learn in acquiring language is this implicit system of rules (grammar). No one teaches children this system of rules; indeed speakers are not at all aware of them as they use the language. They are implicit rather than explicit. Nevertheless, children construct their own set, based on the language they hear in their environment. Children's rule systems end up matching the systems of those around them. (p. 113, 1979)

It is the syntactical, semantic, and pragmatic components of the reading process that the average child brings with him when he arrives in school for the first time. This is a wealth of information each child can rely on whenever he/she is being taught to read. The syntactic and semantic factors are the two sources of redundancy which most children have internalized before their schooling and which should serve as stepping stones to help them process the print-related text. It is a natural way for them to leap from their <u>known</u>, (which is oral language) to their <u>unknown</u>,

which is visual language or reading. This should help them
make sense out of the squiggles that appear before them on
the printed page.

Goodman, in his article "Behind the Eye: What Happens
in Reading", points out that:

> He (the child) acquires strategies as
> a language user that enable him to select
> only the most productive cues. His user's
> knowledge or language structure and the
> redundancy of that structure makes it
> possible for him to predict and anticipate
> the grammatical pattern on the basis of
> identifying a few elements in it. The
> context in which the language occurs,
> created by the previous meanings he has
> gathered, allows him to predict the
> meaning of what will follow. (pp. 477-478,
> 1970)

Thus an individual is able to reduce his uncertainty
about the message coming at him from the print by guessing
psycholinguistically. This is not just wild chance guessing
on the part of the reader, but rather a logical elimination
of alternative decisions based upon the linguistic knowledge
available to him from all his past experiences with language.

What is new to the child, which for some becomes a
real stumbling block, is another component of the reading
process. This is the graphophonic information. It carries
a certain amount of redundancy, especially with regard to the
consonant sounds. The graphophonic information includes all
the information about the alphabetic code. This includes an
internalizing of the distinctive features of the twenty-six
letters of the alphabet with all their visual variations

(i.e., A , a , a, etc.) as well as an internalization of the forty-five phonemes of the English language.

This information also includes the way the letters are organized orthographically to form words and all the distinctive features for recognizing these words. These words are then visually represented in the sentence structure or syntax of the language by utilizing gaps or spaces in the print. Also incorporated in the graphophonic information is the way that sentences are cued visually for the reader. Thus it is helpful for the reader to know that a sentence begins with a capital letter, that it ends with some sort of punctuation, but that sandwiched between these cues he/she will find individual sight words separated by spaces, that carry some sort of deep-structural message. Thus the reader needs to be aware of the surface structure of the language and have some idea of how it is cued visually to him as he reads.

Goodman's article, "On the Psycholinguistic Method of Teaching", reveals that:

> Linguistic analysis also shows that
> language has two levels - a surface of
> structure, that is, the sounds or
> written representation of the language -
> and a deep structure - that is meaning.
> These two levels of language are related
> in a complex way through the system of
> rules that is grammar, or syntax.
> (p. 179, 1971)

To be a proficient reader one needs to rely less on the visual graphophonic cueing system and increase the use of the nonvisual syntactic and semantic cueing systems.

Thomas Wheat and Rose Edmond believe that:

> The proficient reader is the one who makes the most out of the redundancy of written language and relies more on the syntactic and semantic processes than on the graphophonic process in reading. (p. 525, 1975)

All these factors indicate that the reader's mind must be alert and active rather than passive when involved in the reading act. Continually, when reading the mind must be involved in attempting to predict the graphic display of the writer. Goodman notes:

> The meaning that the reader will eventually derive originates in his head rather than on the page and he utilizes only as much visual information as he requires to confirm a correct prediction. (p. 22, 1970)

All of these factors are especially important when one considers the beginning reader. This individual has not as yet internalized the reading act and therefore does not have the automation that comes with practice and maturity.

In a sense, the beginning reader is handicapped when first asked to process the message presented to him in the visual code. This is not necessarily because there is something wrong with his innate abilities but mainly because he has had little or no practical experience with print. The beginning reader is not in the habit of attending to letter

or word units and therefore has had no reason to categorize their distinctive features in his long-term memory for future reference. This will take a certain amount of time, practice, and experience with actual words and sentences in context before fluency occurs. Consequently, a beginner's sight vocabulary is smaller than his speaking vocabulary and his rate for processing the print is slow.

Added to this, the beginning reader has few, if any, word identification skills, and few writing skills at his/her disposal; generally he/she is an immature logical thinker, and has less prior knowledge to aid him in this new situation. He needs help until such time as he obtains the information and experience necessary for mature reading. He needs help so as to prevent overloading the learning task. Consequently, at this stage, there is a greater tendency to read word-by-word rather than reading in chunks of phrases or sentences.

The effect this has on the beginning reader is that it limits his ability to get meaning from the print and inhibits his ability to get the practice in sentence form that he so desperately needs.

It is the opinion of this writer that what such a reader needs is for supports to be built into the reading act that take into account the beginning reader's assets as well as his specific needs. This writer believes that some of this support could be accomplished by interspersing picture rebuses with traditional orthography to help increase the following:

1. reading for meaning;

2. predicting new words in context;

3. increase vocabulary development that would
   otherwise present difficulty in learning
   through the traditional method of total
   alphabetical writing.

CHAPTER III

PHONICS VERSES SIGHT

In the past two decades of initial reading instruction, the major support built into the beginning reading act has centered around the use and misuse of phonics. This approach was spearheaded by Jeanne Chall in her book, Learning to Read: The Great Debate (New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1967), and also by the research work of R.G. Stauffer ('The First Grade Reading Studied: Findings of Individual Investigations', Newark, Delaware, International Reading Association, 1967). Both of these widely published researchers implied that a code-emphasis approach such as phonics was a superior method to teach reading in Grades K - 4 than a meaning emphasis approach such as look-say or sight. However, due to the fact that all of this research was carried out via classroom studies, the internal validity of their work is questionable. According to Elizabeth Goetz and Barbara Etzel three major threats exist in this research and they are as follows:

1. The Hawthorne Effect was present in that the teacher's preferred personal technique was not controlled across the method under examination.

2. Sometimes the methods themselves were confused in the actual implementation of the studies in that some whole words and some phonics words were taught within an individual method.

3. Possibly the standardized reading tests used
   at that time may not have assessed the
   complete reading act adequately. (pp. 3, 4,
   Aug. 1978)

While these researchers acknowledged the problems of
their research many pro-phonics, band-wagon enthusiasts
didn't, and thus propagated heavily this research and others
done in the same vein as evidence for the superiority of the
phonics method over the look-say or whole-word approach.
Consequently, 'The Great Debate', as Chall dubbed it, took
off. Since 1967, however, the phonics approach has undergone
the test of time and researchers have been able to scrutinize
this approach closely. In the light of recent practice and
theory, a heavy phonics approach has been weighed in the
balance and has been found wanting by a majority of
interested persons. As Emmet Betts states:

> In short, phonics — long a magic
> ubiquitous word -- is fast losing
> its glamor under the spotlight of
> reality. (p. 20, May 1976)

To observe the problems that exist with the phonics
approach one must understand the role of English orthography
and also the role of word perception.

The Role of English Orthography

Written English is phonemically based but in a lot of
cases it does not have a one-to-one correspondence between
the sound of the letters and their visual orthographic form.

This is evident in the following words whose underlined letters are silent:

bomb   autumn

come   debt

In fact, for some sounds such as the 'ph' in phone and the 'gh' in laugh, there is no correspondence at all between the sound of the letters and their visual form. This is due to three basic reasons:

1. Many of our English words are borrowed from other languages such as Greek, Latin, French, and Indian.

2. English dialects are continuing to change over time and through usage from country to country.

3. The English alphabet has not kept pace with the actual changes in sound.

Written English has evolved through three major cycles: Old English (which is dated from 500 – 1066 A.D.), Middle English (which is dated from 1100 – 1500 A.D.), and Modern English (which is dated from 1500). For an individual who wishes to read Old and Middle English, both must be studied as foreign languages due to the fact that their sounds are so far removed from present pronunciations. It is not just mere coincidence that Caxton introduced his printing press in 1477 and that Modern English is dated by language historians as beginning shortly thereafter in 1500, for Caxton is believed to have standardized his visual alphabet to the

London dialect of his day. This visual form gradually became the dialect of the educated upper class in England. However, with the rise of an educated middle class and with industrialization's need for an educated lower working class, the relationship of print to sound has been eroded with usage. The sound or speaking of the language has been changing while the visual printing of the language has remained stationary, thus enshrining its archaic spelling patterns into its visual form.

Since this standardization of the language in 1500, Modern English has undergone two major changes. First, its word order rather than its spelling became the most important feature for signalling meaning; and second, a great vowel shift occurred in usage without a shift in the actual spelling form. Consequently, in the English language we find irregular vowel changes in verbs such as the following:

    (i)   sing, sings, singing, sang, sung

    (ii) swim, swims, swimming, swam, swum

   (iii) swing, swings, swinging, swang, swung

   (iv) lie, lies, lying, lay, lain.

Also we find irregular changes in the forming of plurals of nouns as seen in the following:

box - boxes	lady - ladies
man - men	child - children
deer - deer	leaf - leaves

Dialect, too, can create a mismatch between speech and writing. The English African speaker will pronounce 'law' as 'low' changing the short vowel sound. The English British speaker will pronounce the word 'ladder' as 'latter' changing the double consonant sound in the middle of the word. However, this writer's own Newfoundland dialect is also noted for such irregularities. Some examples are as follows:

      (i)   'caught is pronounced as 'cot'

     (ii) 'butter is pronounced as 'budder'

   (iii) 'hot' is some areas is pronounced as 'ot'

    (iv) 'this,' that, these, those', in some areas are pronounced as 'dis, dat, deeze, and doze'.

Role of Word Perception

Each of these previously mentioned factors can have the combined effect of making it perceptually difficult to learn to read such an orthographic system, especially if it is taught through a strict phonetic approach. The reader may depend upon the visual print information too much and thus feel deceived when the phonic rules just don't apply. Reading, in this manner, then becomes an exact outside-in process where one has to know the sound and decode to sound in order to obtain meaning. This type of an approach can lead to auditory discrimination problems, blending problems,

as well as the developing of readers who are word callers -
that is, readers who can pronounce all the words but who
have very little comprehension of the meaning being expressed.
For some readers, the fact that the same visual representation
can represent totally different sounds (as the oo in moon and
look) and the fact that many different visual representations
may be used to represent the same sound (as the er sound in
her, bird, heard, hurt, word) throws them into a decoding
nightmare, especially if these words are presented in
isolation. Added to this, there are some words that absolutely
defy even the most basic phonic vowel rules and so must be
learned as sight words if they are to be learned at all.
Some examples of this problem are as follows:

    (i)   have versus gave, said versus aid, you

       Vowel Rule:

       If there are two vowels in one syllable, the

       first is long and the second is silent. (So

       what does the reader do with have, said, and

       you?)

    (ii)   One versus on

       Here the vowel sound changes completely to

       the consonant sound of w.

      (iii) laugh sounds like <u>f</u>

         phone sounds like <u>f</u>

         was sounds like <u>z</u>

         come, cent sounds like <u>s</u> or <u>k</u>

         gave, gym sounds like <u>guh</u> or <u>j</u> even though

             the alphabet calls this letter <u>jee</u>.

      (iv) some letters must be perceived in combinations

         in order to obtain their proper sound, for

         example <u>sh</u>, <u>th</u>, <u>ch</u>, <u>wh</u>.

To make matters even worse, it is our most common printed words that contain these irregular spelling patterns, and these are the words most often used in beginning basal readers. Jana M. Mason in "Refining Phonics For Teaching Beginning Reading" states:

> An analysis of the 200 Dolch List indicates that at least 40 percent of the words cannot be pronounced by using the most frequently occurring sound of the vowel. In that sense, the words are not regular. (Reading Teacher, Nov. 1977, p. 1)

What, then, is the value of phonics at all? It is the opinion of this writer that phonics, at its best, can only act as a relatively minor cueing system to a word, with the others being sight words, context clues, and structural analysis. If used as a word recognition strategy for some beginning readers, it should only be resorted to after they have tried a sight approach and have applied the use of context clues. Even then a heavy emphasis on phonics is not

recommended. Patrick Groff in his article "Views on Phonics of Reading Clinicians" (Reading World, Dec. 1977) points out the fact that some children can read very well but do poorly on phonics and vice versa, that some children will score well on phonics tests but are very poor readers. This is because reading is an inside-out process where the reader quickly samples the visual cues looking for redundancy of the letters or words and the stability of the sounds. He then checks this information quickly with previous information stored in the long-term memory thus assimilating it directly. Consequently, the brain does not depend upon one or two factors but rather uses a network of interrelations, selecting only those factors which are critical for determining meaning. Thus a reader may or may not need phonic information. If phonic information is used, it usually is the consonant information rather than the vowel information. Bette Leeds determined from her study of the distractor errors in her research on the factors influencing word recognition that: "the letters in the initial position are the most frequently used letter cues" (July-Sept., 1977, p. 4).

Patrick Groff confirms this fact in his article, "Sight Words: The Humpty Dumpty of Reading Instruction", but he includes the information found at both the beginning and ending of the word (Reading World, Dec. 1977).

Martha Williams and June Knafle in their research titled "Comparative Difficulty of Vowel and Consonant Sounds

For Beginning Readers" found that consonants were easier
than vowels to learn to utilize in the reading act. This
they feel is because "Consonants have also been found to
carry more information than vowels in speech and in reading"
(Reading Improvement, Spring, 1977).

Some children have been known to learn to read
through the sight method. This method is also referred to
as the look-say method or the whole word method. It is for
some children a quicker and a more efficient method for
learning to read. Michele Guillemette did research titled
"A Study of the Effectiveness of Sight Reading Verses
Phonetic Instruction For Children With Auditory Learning
Disability" (Jan. 1979). This is an excellent study in that
sample bias with regard to age, intelligence, reading
achievement, and self-concepts were strictly controlled.
Added to this, the population for this research were studied
over a three-year period as they progressed from Kindergarten
to Grade Two. At the time of termination all auditory
learning disabled children involved in this study were given
phonics testing. Guillemette states that:

> Phonics testing at that time indicated
> that the sight children were, in fact,
> not behind but slightly ahead of the
> phonetic group in this skill. (Jan. 1979,
> p. 12)

However, the difference was not significant at the .05
statistical level. This led Guillemette to recommend that:

> Given a child with auditory perceptual
> difficulty, he be placed in a sight
> reading program where he will not
> experience the frustration which leads
> to a poor self-concept. (Jan. 1979, p. 14)

She also suggests that:

> Daily phonic instruction for such a
> child does not produce the desired gains
> in this skill but merely causes the child
> to develop a poor self-image. (Jan. 1979,
> p. 14)

What, then, is the sight method? It is a method
whereby the reader looks at a word and immediately perceives,
thinks, or says this word without going through any type of
analysis. Rather, meaningful context and syntactical
information are utilized to trigger recognition. Goodman,
in his article, "The 13th Easy Way To Make Learning To Read
Difficult", (Summer, 1973) asks the question:

> If one can learn speech without a
> fully developed phonemic organization
> why can't one learn reading without
> it? (Reading Research Quarterly, 8,
> Summer, 1973, p. 489)

Harriet Fayne and Maribeth Gettinger, from their
research titled "Narrowing the Gap Between Research and
Practice in Sight Word Reading Instruction", report that:

> The results indicate that the
> procedures were effective in teaching
> children to read, on the average,
> between 92% and 96% of the sight words
> taught and to discriminate and reject
> correctly between 78% and 89% of the
> miscue words. (Psychology in the
> Schools, April, 1981, Vol. 18, No. 2,
> p. 243)

In this research approximately 740 learning disabled children were taught to read ten new sight words and also to read stories containing words.

Margaret Richek (1977-78) examined both the sight-word and sound-symbol methods of instruction in her research titled "Readiness Skills That Predict Initial Word Learning Using Two Different Methods of Instruction". She found that the specific factors necessary for predicting success for the sound-symbol method were first, the ability to produce letter sounds and second, the ability to blend words together. Also she found that the specific factors necessary for predicting success in a sight-word method were visual discrimination and digit span memory. However, it was her third conclusion that is the most impressive. Here she states that:

> Most children in this sample exhibited a marked preference for learning words by a sight-word method. (Reading Research Quarterly, No. 2, 1977-78, p. 221)

Danny Steinberg, in a paper presented to the American Psychological Association at its 1978 annual meeting in Toronto, favoured a whole-word first approach for reading instruction. From his research with preschool children, he found meaning to be a more influential variable than visual perceptual complexity, thus confirming the fact that meaningful items are easier to learn than nonsense ones. His results also suggest that the optimum teaching methodology is to teach via whole words first. If the sounds of

the letters are not learned by way of induction, he feels they may be taught at a much later date so as not to inhibit reading acquisition. (August, 1978, "Why Children Can't Read: Meaning, The Neglected Factor")

Robert Marzano in his research titled "Elements of the Word Recognition Process: A Two Part Study" (Oct., Dec. 1975) examined the strength of sound/symbol and whole-word characteristics as predictors of word recognition difficulty for both beginning and adult readers. From a multiple-regression analysis it was determined that whole-word characteristics were strong predictors of recognition at all levels of reading. His beginning readers were found to use both sound/symbol and whole-word cues and that they became less reliant on the sound/symbol cues as they progressed in their reading ability. Marzano states that:

> Up to the third or fourth level of difficulty, the more a word is composed of vowels (the less of consonants) the harder it is to recognize. Beyond that point (roughly third or fourth grade) readers do not key on sound/symbol cues and hence, vowel complexity is not a factor. (Oct., Dec. 1975, p. 10)

Marzano found experience and exposure to the word to be a very significant aspect of the word recognition process. Indeed, in his concluding paragraphs he makes a very strong statement that "Indeed a heavy emphasis on phonics is questioned by the results of this study." (Oct., Dec. 1975, p. 15).

Finally, Elizabeth Goetz and Barbara Etzel in a study titled
"Functional Analyses of Acquisition, Maintenance and
Generalization by Reading" examined three reading procedures
for learning isolated words. They were a whole-word approach,
a syllable-blending approach, and a phonics-blending approach.
They report that

> the whole-word procedure resulted in the
> most rapid acquisition for recall, fewest
> training errors and most frequent recall
> of trained words in compound words, and
> in sentences and stories read to the child
> by the experimenter. (August, 1978, p. 8)

Conclusions

As can be seen from the previously stated information,
children do not have to be proficient in phonic instruction
in order to learn to read. In fact, for some learning
disabled children, phonics is actually a hindrance to their
reading act and therefore they should be encouraged virtually
to ignore phonic instruction if they are to succeed in
reading.

It is felt by this writer that use of the rebus
device might be an excellent mode for developing the sight
method, especially for very young children. Brenda Kolker
and Paul Terwilliger in their research report titled "Sight
Vocabulary Learning of First and Second Graders" state:

The imagery system contains the
semantic information, whereas, the
linguistic system has to tap or probe
the imagery system for relevant
meaningful information. Since
activity in one system can activate
the other, and an apparent inter-
connection between the two exists....
The research on imagery implies, in
part, that when children begin to
learn a new task they use established
memory devices such as imagery.
(Reading World, May 1981, p. 252)

These two people also note that:

Huey proposed that adults probably
think mainly in terms of words, whereas,
the young child's learning involves more
substantially the imagery aspect.
(Reading World, May 1981, p. 252)

This writer sees the rebus not only for its imagery
value but also for its potential to reinforce the psycho-
linguistic goals. If placed in a sentence construction,
this writer feels that the rebus would:

1. Encourage young children to develop the important
   strategy of generating predictions.

2. Be an aid for word recognition development.

3. Encourage young children to make use of the
   cloze procedure, which is so essential for
   comprehension development.

4. For the child who can utilize phonic information
   without experiencing problems, he can zero in on
   the most critical part of the word for recognition
   purposes, namely the initial consonants. In this
   way the phonic information will not be taught in
   isolation.

It is in the light of these assumptions that this writer decided to work with two groups of Grade 1 students attending a local school within the area of St. John's.

CHAPTER IV

THE EXPERIMENT

A. Preparation and Administration

This writer selected the bottom reading group from each of the Grade One classrooms at Eugene Vater's Academy to conduct an examination of the rebus technique. This school was chosen because its students were readily available to this examiner and also because they fitted the criterion needed for this study, namely, that they were at a beginning reading level. Both Grade One classroom teachers were equally co-operative in this venture and both were willing to adjust their schedules to the convenience of this study.

The bottom reading groups in each classroom were selected because this examiner felt they would present an adequate test to the ideas being put forth and therefore, if the material succeeded with this type of student, it would give more credence to the argument. These children were placed in each bottom group based upon the kindergarten teacher's professional opinion and therefore entered their Grade One classes already grouped.

This examiner tested each of the children in these bottom groups individually using the Peabody PVT and the Peabody Individual Achievement Test, Subtest 2: Reading Recognition and Subtest 3: Reading Comprehension to insure

that these children were indeed grouped properly and were
at the reading level in which they were assigned.

This examiner found both groups of students to be
very accurate in their group placements. The PPVT was
included to ascertain whether intelligence (as measured)
rather than reading might be a contributing factor as to
why these children were not reading at a moderately average
pace.

Each student was tested early in the morning within
the testing time ranging from 8:45 a.m. to 9:45 a.m.. This
was to insure that other factors such as fatigue or mental
and physical exhaustion did not interfere with the test
results. To the best of this examiner's knowledge, all
children approached the testing situation with eagerness and
in no testing situation (including both the pre-testing and
the post-testing situations) did this examiner encounter
fearfulness or any other form of anxiety from any of the
subjects selected for this study. Credit for this fact
must go to the classroom teachers for the excellent way they
prepared their students to participate in this study and for
the keen interest and motivation they were able to create on
the part of each student.

The first class to be tested contained twelve students
in the bottom reading group while the second classroom tested
contained only seven students in the bottom reading group.
The first class was chosen to be the "Treatment Group" simply

because they were more in number while the second class was chosen to be the "Control Group". It was felt that it would be better to have the group with the greater number as the Treatment Group as some may have to be deleted due to the normal threats to any study's population.

The results are as follows.

Subjects	M.A.	C.A.	I.Q.	Peabody Testing Reading Recognition	Reading Comprehension
1. Jody	5.9	6.7	82	1.1	1.1
2. Tanya	4.4	5.11	80	1.3	1.3
3. Cory	4.7	5.7	87	1.3	1.3
4. Nichole	4.11	5.11	88	1.1	1.1
5. Laila	6.0	6.4	96	1.0	1.0
6. Karen	5.4	5.7	97	2.2	2.2
7. Heather	5.7	5.11	97	1.4	1.4
8. David	5.8	6.0	98	1.8	1.8
9. Lori	5.11	6.0	99	1.1	1.1
10. Stephen	6.0	6.0	100	1.3	1.3
11. Roger	6.6	6.7	100	1.3	1.3
12. Gregory	7.1	6.5	109	1.1	1.1

Treatment Group

Subjects	M.A.	C.A.	I.Q.	Peabody Testing Reading Recognition	Reading Comprehension
1. Kimberly	4.10	6.4	80	1.3	1.3
2. Dion	5.6	6.7	87	1.4	1.4
3. Peggy	5.2	6.0	89	1.1	1.1
4. Scott	5.7	6.3	93	1.2	1.2
5. Roberta	5.11	6.0	99	1.4	1.4
6. Richard	6.7	6.4	104	1.3	1.3
7. Lisa	6.4	5.10	106	1.4	1.4

Control Group's Activities

It was decided that while the treatment group was receiving the experimental instruction, it would be "school as usual" for the control group. This group only participated in the testing procedure and a conscious effort was made to keep all experimental instruction outside of their experience. To the best of this examiner's knowledge the classroom teacher co-operated with this examiner in obtaining this goal.

The students participating in this study came from homes ranging from low-to-middle socio-economic situations. Generally all parents show an active concern for their child's well-being and no child could really be classified as being neglected. However, some of these children had varied amounts of books and toys and consequently they had varied amounts of book-related or language and reading experiences to draw from. (Source: Cumulative Records)

For the treatment group, the subjects' chronological ages ranged from five years, seven months (5.7) to six years, seven months (6.7) while their mental ages ranged from four years, four months (4.4) to seven years, one month (7.1) thus relating an I.Q. range from eighty-two (82) which is a slow learner category to one hundred and nine (109) which is the average category. The reading scores ranged from Grade One, the first month (1.1) to Grade One, the fourth month (1.4).

For the control group, the subjects' chronological ages ranged from five years, ten months (5.10) to six years, seven months (6.7), while their mental ages ranged from four years, ten months (4.10) to six years, seven months (6.7) thus relating an I.Q. range from eighty (80) which is a slow-learner category to one hundred and six (106) which is the average category. The reading scores ranged from Grade one, first month (1.1) to Grade one, the fourth month (1.4).

As can be seen, the treatment group and the control group have some areas in common and some areas in which they differ. With respect to the chronological ages, the treatment group had some subjects who were younger than the control group by two months. In terms of their mental ages, the Treatment Group had some subjects that were younger mentally than the control group by six months and some subjects that were older than the control group by four months. Also the range of mental ages within the Treatment Group was two years, nine months (2.9) whereas the range of mental ages within the control group was only one year, nine months (1.9). However, the I.Q. scores of both groups were similar in that both groups ranged within the slow learner to average I.Q. categories. Also, both groups were equal in reading ability owing to the fact that both groups ranged the same, from Grade one, first month, to Grade one, fourth month (1.1 - 1.4).

Thus, in summary, both groups were equal in I.Q. potential and reading ability but differed in the chronological and mental ages.

Comparison of Groups

Groups	Chronological Age Range	Mental Age Range	I.Q. Range	Reading Range
Treatment Group	5.7 - 6.7	4.4 - 7.1	82 - 109 Average, Slow Learner	1.1 - 1.4
Control Group	5.10 - 6.7	4.10 - 6.7	8 - 106 Slow Learner Average	1.1 - 1.4

To select the words to be used as rebus words this examiner used the following procedure:

This examiner checked the Grades 1 and 2, of the Nelson Reading Series presently in use in the school curriculum for random words to be used as target words. These words were then categorized as to whether they would be used as a noun, a verb, an adjective, or an adverb. These same words were then cross-referenced with the words found in The Standard Rebus Glossary to determine if a rebus was readily available for each word. For any words that did not appear in The Standard Rebus Glossary this examiner made up her own. No words were selected from the reader, Surprise! Surprise! which the students were presently being instructed in and neither were any words selected from the next reader, Kittens and Bears, which the classroom teachers said they might get into during the duration of this study. If a target word chosen was found to be present in either of these readers, it was taken from the list so as to insure that the list word being taught was an unknown sight word and not one they would likely be taught via classroom instruction during the treatment period. The books from which the list words were chosen are as follows:

Grade 1 Books	Grade 2 Books
Whiskers	Magic Story-box
Toybox	Saturday Magic
	Heads & Tails
	Make-Believe Time

The list words chosen at random are as follows:

Grade 1 Words Chosen At Random From Readers

Nouns	Verbs	Adjectives	Adverbs
house	paint	old	away – (Place)
book	get	bad	good – (Manner)
elephant	work	happy	far – (Place)
giraffe	laughed	long	first – (Place)
car	take	small	well – (Manner)
apple	eat		
cow	stopped		
hens	milked		
barn	rides		
horses	time		
hill	sad		
girl	riding		
day	lived		
fox	hear		
coat	open		
eyes	sleep		
ears	slept		
attic	cried		
elf	tell		
children	blew		
boy	talk		
bird	walk		
camera	got		
door	ate		
frog	give		
bee	blow		
class	put		

Grade 2 Words Chosen At Random From Readers

Nouns	Verbs	Adjectives	Adverbs
snow	show	hungry	**Adverbs of Manner**
windows	watch	warm	
mittens	hop	pretty	sadly
owl	fly or flying	cold	noisly
wings	write	juicy	quietly
leaves	roared		afraid
forest	crawled		high
apples	shouted		
store	pick		**Adverbs of Place**
claws			
stars			out
flowers			outside
cart			upstairs
mountain			indoors
			outdoors
			there
			everywhere
			somewhere
			nearby

Adverbs of Time

yesterday
today
tomorrow
now

A selection of four words were then chosen from each category of the Grade One list of words and four words from each category of the Grade Two list of words. These words were then printed on individual 2 x 5 inch white cards and then used to pretest individually each child in both the Treatment and the Control Groups. This was to insure that the target rebus word was not already known to an individual child as a sight vocabulary word.

The words selected for pretesting are as follows:

Grade 1 Words Chosen At Random To Pretest

Nouns	Verbs	Adjectives	Adverbs	
book	laugh	old	away	(Place)
house	ride	happy	good	(Manner)
giraffe	eat	long	first	(Place)
car	sleep	bad	well	(Manner)

Grade 2 Words Chosen At Random To Pretest

Nouns	Verbs	Adjectives	Adverbs	
window	fly	warm	quietly	(Manner)
mittens	write	pretty	there	(Place)
stars	crawled	juicy	today	(Time)
flowers	pick	hungry	yesterday	(Time)

The instructions for pretesting were as follows:

"I am going to show you a word on each of the cards that I have in my hands. If I come to one that you know or can read, I want you to tell me what it is."

A record sheet similar to the one included was kept on each individual student. If the child could read the word a mark was placed beside the correctly read word.

From the pretesting, it was discovered that the words "book", "house" and "car" listed in the noun category of Grade One words were already known to some of the students. In addition, subject 6, (a girl) and subject 8 (a boy) of the Treatment Group knew most of the words in each of the other categories.

To overcome these problems, it was decided by this examiner to disqualify subjects 6 and 8 from the study and to delete the nouns 'book, house, and car'. In their place were chosen the words 'barn', 'hens', and 'apple'.

All the remaining children in both groups were again pretested to insure these new words were not already known as sight words. The results of this testing was that no child in either the Treatment or the Control Group was able to read any of the words selected.

Again an individual record sheet similar to the one included was kept on each student and the same procedure as before was repeated. It was from this final pretest list that the words to be used as rebus words were selected. Two

Name: _____   Date: _____

Grade 1 Words

Nouns	Verbs	Adjectives	Adverbs	
book	laugh	old	away	(Place)
house	ride	happy	good	(Manner)
giraffe	eat	long	first	(Place)
car	sleep	bad	well	(Manner)

Grade 2 Words

Nouns	Verbs	Adjectives	Adverbs	
window	fly	warm	quietly	(Manner)
mittens	write	pretty	there	(Place)
stars	crawled	juicy	today	(Time)
flowers	pick	hungry	yesterday	(Time)

Individual Student Record Sheet 1

Name: _____   Date: _____

Grade 1 Words

Nouns	Verbs	Adjectives	Adverbs	
barn	laugh	old	away	(Place)
hens	ride	happy	good	(Manner)
giraffe	eat	long	first	(Place)
apple	sleep	bad	well	(Manner)

Grade 2 Words

Nouns	Verbs	Adjectives	Adverbs	
window	fly	warm	quietly	(Manner)
mittens	write	pretty	there	(Place)
stars	crawled	juicy	today	(Time)
flowers	pick	hungry	yesterday	(Time)

Individual Student Record Sheet 2

words were selected from each category of the Grade One words
and two words were selected from each category of the Grade
Two words. The reason why the words were chosen in this
manner was to enable this examiner to observe whether or not
Grade One words were any harder to learn than Grade Two words.
If they were, then in what areas would they be more difficult;
that is, would it be in the category of the noun, verb,
adjective, or adverb?

The final words selected to be the target rebus words
were as follows:

Final Words Selected as Rebus Words

Grade 1 Words

Nouns	Verbs	Adjectives	Adverbs	
barn	laugh	happy	away	(Place)
apple	sleep	old	good	(Manner)

Grade 2 Words

Nouns	Verbs	Adjectives	Adverbs	
mittens	pick	warm	today	(Time)
window	write	pretty	there	(Place)
			quietly	(Manner)

The next thing this examiner did was to have a rebus picture for each of the target words chosen reproduced on a duplicating stencil. Then a second duplicating stencil was made out similar to the first but this sheet also contained the English word along with the rebus. Following this a third duplicating stencil was made out and this sheet contained only the orthographic English words for the rebus being presented. For each of the three stencils made up, one copy was then duplicated for each of the students in the treatment group to work with.

Following this, sentences were made up by the examiner so as to contain the rebus word. These sentences were then placed on a duplicating stencil in such a manner as to include only one category (i.e., nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs) on each stencil. A black line was left in place of where the target rebus word should have been. One copy of each stencil per lesson was then duplicated for each of the subjects to work with.

Following this, a schedule was set up whereby the actual treatment could begin. It was agreed with the classroom teacher that the treatment group would be seen by the examiner three times per week on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays for forty-five minutes commencing at 9:00 A.M. and continuing until 9:45 A.M. It was felt by this examiner that this indeed was an optimum time, as most young children are receptive to learning at the very beginning of the school day.

These subjects were exposed to a treatment period totalling four weeks. During the first week the rebus was used in the position of a noun, during the second week, it was used in the position of the verb, in the third week it was used in the position of an adjective, and in the fourth week it was used in the position of an adverb. At the end of the fourth week all children, both the Treatment Group and the Control Group were retested individually to find out which of the target words each child could read from sight.

Generally the procedure was the same for each week of teaching. Lesson One of each unit was presented on Mondays, Lesson Two on Wednesdays, and Lesson Three on Thursdays.

During Lesson One, the students received their duplicated sentences for the day as well as a copy of their rebus pictures, a pair of scissors, a small bottle of glue, and a paper towel. The rebus pictures were discussed so as to make sure that everyone would use the correct target word for each picture. The children were then asked to read the sentences before them, to cut out the picture that made the best sense for each sentence and to paste it on the blank line in each sentence.

For Lesson Two, the students were required to bring along a pencil and an eraser if they had one. Again they received their duplicated sentences for the day and a copy of their rebus pictures but this time each rebus was accompanied underneath with its orthographic word. The children were asked to read the sentences placed before them

and to print in the word that made the best sense for each
sentence.

For the Third Lesson, the children were again
required to bring along their pencil and eraser. As usual
they received their duplicated sentences for the day but
this time they received only the orthographic printed words.
This time they had no picture to help them. All students
were asked to read the sentences before them, to choose the
word that made the best sense in each sentence, and to print
it on the blank space provided.

At the end of each lesson all worksheets were
collected by the examiner to insure that none of the
activities were exposed to the control group and also to
insure that where possible all children in the Treatment
Group received the same amount of exposure to the target
words.

During all the lessons, emphasis was placed on the
sentences making sense to the individual and that if they
didn't make sense then this was a clue to the subjects that
they had chosen wrongly or had made a mistake. This examiner
circulated the classroom helping children to develop the
correct strategy.

At the end of each session when the whole group had
finished, all the sentences were read orally as a group in
choral fashion. This was done so as to present a gestalt to
the seatwork activities and to provide practice as well as
reinforcement to whatever learning that had taken place.

Nouns

1. Jill looks out the <u>window</u>.

2. A big red <u>apple</u> is good to eat.

3. The cow is in the <u>barn</u>.

4. Ted said, "Come and see my new blue <u>mittens</u>".

1. I can see the <u>window</u> in the house.

2. Jack said, "I see a red <u>apple</u>".

3. Kim sees something in the <u>barn</u>.

4. Ted said, "Look at my new blue <u>mittens</u>".

Verbs

1. Jack and Jill <u>pick</u> the flowers.

2. Jack and Ted <u>laugh</u> at the funny cat.

3. I like to <u>sleep</u> in a new bed.

4. I can <u>write</u> my name here.

1. I <u>pick</u> one flower for Kim.

2. Jill and Kim <u>laugh</u> at Sandy.

3. "I can <u>sleep</u> here", said Jack.

4. I can <u>write</u> my name in the book.

Adjectives

1. Here is a <u>pretty</u> girl.

2. Jack said, "Come and see the <u>warm</u> fire".

3. The <u>happy</u> boy sees the surprise.

4. The <u>old</u> man sees something funny.

1. I can see a <u>pretty</u> girl here.

2. Kim said, "I can make a <u>warm</u> fire".

3. Ted is a <u>happy</u> boy.

4. "Come and see", said Jill. "I can draw an <u>old</u> man".

Adverbs

1. <u>Today</u> I can make something.

2. Ted reads <u>quietly</u>.

3. Kim colours <u>good</u>.

4. "Oh Look", said Kim, "<u>There</u> it is."

5. Jack runs <u>away</u>.

1. I can draw it <u>today</u>.

2. Jack jumps <u>quietly</u>.

3. Jill can draw <u>good</u>.

4. "The new dog is <u>there</u>", said Ted.

5. The funny man runs <u>away</u>.

B. Journal Reports of Units

Journal

Report

of

Noun

Unit

Day 1

> The children entered into this activity with quite
a bit of enthusiasm, were very relaxed and many expressed
the fact that "this is fun" or "this is easy".

Day 2

> Again the children entered into this activity with
the same type of motivation and generally had no problem
with the work being presented.

Day 3

> There was a hum of activity when the material was
passed around and the children realized that this time they
had no picture clues to refer back too. Anxiety was definitely
raised to a small degree, however this examiner explained to
the group that by now they didn't really need the pictures
and that they were to approach this page using the same method
that was presented to them in the other two lessons; that is,
they were to choose the word that makes the best sense in the
sentence.

> One child called this examiner to his desk because he
appeared to have a problem. He felt there were two words that
could fit in the one sentence and make sense. He said: "Kim
sees something in the <u>window</u> when it should of been '<u>barn</u>'".
This examiner complimented him on the fact that his choice
was indeed a good meaningful one and that it did make sense,

however she also pointed out the fact that he had already used the word "window" in another sentence and that he was to use each word only once, therefore the issue was which other of his rebus words could possibly fit in its place. This student self-corrected without any further help.

Fearing that this might be a problem with some other children this examiner brought this situation to the attention of the whole group. She explained it in similar fashion to the whole group and then circulated to observe whatever she could. Another student had chosen 'mittens' for number one but had a problem when he got to number four because the only word he had left was "window" and that didn't seem to fit his understanding very well. Consequently, this child completely self-corrected his seatwork without requiring any interference from this examiner. Rather, this examiner just quietly watched behind him as this problem solving was taking place.

All three lessons were completed correctly with no errors to report.

Journal

Report

of

Verb

Unit

Day 1

This lesson was conducted in the same manner as day one of the previous week. However, three of the students made errors with sentences three and four which used the target words 'sleep' and 'write', sentences three and four read: 3. "I can _____ here", said Jack. 4. I can _____ my name in the book.

While it is true either word 'sleep', or 'write' would fit in number three, this is not so for sentence four and therefore if the subject had been reading for meaning, he/she should have observed this fact and should have self corrected. None of these subjects observed their error independently. Rather it had to be pointed out to them by the examiner as she was about to collect in the papers. All three subjects immediately perceived the error once it was pointed out and immediately were able to rectify it.

This examiner feels that there was also another factor operating which tended to cut down on the student's ability to concentrate on the task at hand. When the subjects filed into the room to begin the lesson they appeared to be unusually noisy. As the lesson began there was a general hum of activity and the examiner had to speak to several of the subjects to stop talking to their neighbour and to get on with their own work. On this particular morning the ground outside was sprinkled with snow and while the lesson was going on it was lightly snowing outside.

In addition to this, the local Santa Claus Parade was held
on the Saturday before this Monday and many of the children
seemed to want to talk about this to their neighbour. It
appeared to this examiner that the overflow of excitement
from the parade coupled with the excitement of the first
snow-fall for the season, tended to interfere with the
progress of the lesson. The result of all this was that
some children did not attend as carefully as they should
have to the meaning of their sentences.

Day 2

This lesson went along much more smoothly. The
subjects were much more attentive than in the previous lesson
and definitely worked more independently. All subjects
utilized their context clues and all seemed to be attending
to meaning. No errors were made on the worksheets.

Day 3

As the examiner circulated among the students during
the lesson she observed two children who were doing their
worksheets incorrectly. As she observed these children she
noticed that neither of these subjects was even bothering
to read the sentences but rather they were just putting
down any old answer they happened to see. Rather than have
these children take the time to erase their work, the examiner
took their papers away and gave them a fresh start with

another blank copy. This examiner explained to these
students what she had observed and explained to them that
just putting down any old answer wasn't good enough; rather,
they must read and understand their sentences and choose the
correct word from the ones given them. This examiner then
observed both of these students redo their worksheets without
any further interruptions, error free.

Journal

Report

of

Adjective

Unit

Day 1

      All children found this lesson relatively easy but
it did require them to put more thought into their choice as
the distinctions were more subtle. For example, a subject
could have the 'old man' and the 'happy man', however if he
used the word 'happy' to modify the word 'man' he must then
ask himself if the word 'old' could be used to modify the
word 'boy' in the sentence 'Ted is a _____ boy." To this
examiner's surprise no subject made this type of error in
this lesson which seems to indicate that each subject
intuitively felt the word 'old' was a better modifier for
the word 'man' and that 'happy' was a better modifier for the
word 'boy'.

Day 2

      In this lesson one subject did make the obvious
error and chose 'old' to modify 'boy' and 'happy' to modify
'man' in sentences three and four. This subject stated:

3. Ted is a <u>old</u> boy.

4.ᵃ I can draw an <u>happy</u> man.

      This particular individual was not able to self-correct
because she was not drawing on the intuitive knowledge that
in the English language one uses 'a' as a determiner if it
precedes a word that begins with a consonant and 'an' as the
determiner if it precedes a word that begins with a vowel.
For most of the subjects this did not present a problem,

however, at this particular time and for this particular
subject it did. On the basis of this, this examiner was
led to feel that presenting vocabulary in this manner might
not work for a group whose dialect or word order would be
slightly aberrant to the one being presented in the rebus
technique. This question could well be another topic for
some future research.

Day 3

This lesson presented a challenge for the subjects
but all managed to complete their worksheets correctly
including the one student who experienced such difficulty
the lesson before.

Journal

Report

of

Adverb

Unit

Day 1

Most of the subjects experienced difficulty with this activity. As usual, this examiner went over each picture and identified the correct target word to use for each picture. However, when this examiner began to circulate she observed that some of the subjects were substituting their own words for the pictures. For example:

For the rebus picture of the word 'good' some were substituting the word 'yummy'. This error wasn't too bad because when this word was put in the context of the sentence the error could be cleaned up. However, this was not so for the error being made with the rebus picture for the word 'away'. Some of the subjects were substituting a new word 'fast' for this particular picture, and to make matters even worse, when they placed it in the context of the sentence it also made a good meaningful sense. For this type of error the examiner did not call the subjects wrong but rather complimented them on the fact that their new word made sense. However, this examiner repeated the correct target word for the picture and had each subject read the word in context aloud to her. The reason for this was to avoid the wrong association from taking place with the rebus picture of the word away and the actual target word being taught. This problem seemed to indicate that where the meaning of the picture clue is not precise then maybe the rebus method might not be the best mode to present the

vocabulary word. Also this problem might indicate that possibly the function of the adverb may be too abstract a concept for children to handle at this point of their conceptual development. This too could be another question to be asked in future research.

Day 2

Most subjects were still having trouble predicting the words properly. Generally they needed a lot of individual help and most had to be prompted or guided into making the correct selection by asking them the questions when? where? and/or how?

Day 3

Most subjects had difficulty remembering what the target words were without their pictures. Most could not utilize the process of elimination as they had with the other sentences and the fact that some words could fit in several places and others in only one place tended to make this activity even more difficult. It seemed to this examiner that this activity was conceptually beyond them and she felt that it was a degree of abstraction for which these individuals were not ready.

C. Report of Results

In this particular experiment, a Gain score is derived from the difference between Pre-test and the Post-test Errors found on the testing developed by this examiner. This difference is believed to be the result of learned sight words and is therefore a gain to each subject. Consequently, the higher the Gain Score, the stronger the relationship expressed, as construed here for purposes of this study.

The total Gain Score for the Treatment Group was 122 while the total Gain Score for the Control Group was only 6. There exists quite a strong impressive difference between these two scores and this tends to indicate to this examiner that the method of using a rebus interspersed in context could indeed be considered as a serious instructional tool to teach sight vocabulary especially to beginning readers. All subjects including those considered to be slow learners benefited from this method, and, as evidenced from each subject's Gain Score, learning did take place. In addition, each subject, for the most part, enjoyed what he was doing and tended to get a certain amount of satisfaction from it.

In examining the relationship of the Gain Scores to I.Q. this examiner did not observe any direct relationship between these scores. However, because the numbers used in both the Treatment and Control groups were unusually small, they may not be truly representative of the total population. It is impossible that the small number used in this sample may

have skewed this relationship to some degree. Consequently, this examiner is unable to generalize to any greater boundary than this particular sample.

In examining whether Grade 2 words were harder to grasp than Grade 1 words, this examiner did find this to be so for both the Treatment and the Control Groups. In the Treatment Group the Gain Score for the Grade 1 words was 63 while the Gain Score for the Grade 2 words was 59. In the Control Group, the Gain Score for the Grade 1 words was 4 while the Gain Score for the Grade 2 words was only 2. Because the difference in each group is small, it is quite possible that the argument of Grade 1 verses Grade 2 vocabulary may not be too severe nor significant. Although the evidence for these Gain Scores tend to indicate it might be, the argument is certainly not conclusive when reading from these scores. Consequently, this examiner feels that this could be a topic for further research at another time.

As can be seen from examination of the Category Gain Scores the order of difficulty that exists (from easy to most difficult) is as follows:

1. Nouns 2. Verbs 3. Adjectives 4. Adverbs

As already reported under the Unit Reports, the adverb was the most difficult area for the subjects to deal with. This examiner feels this is because the adverb contains the greatest degree of abstraction and also because it is the last of the four categories to develop in speech and writing. It is rather interesting to note that this

order of difficulty follows the same pattern as does the
development of normal conceptual speech and language. This
too could be a topic for further consideration in another
piece of research.

Treatment Group – Pre-test
Report Sheet

Subjects	Nouns		Verbs		Adjectives		Adverbs		Total Errors
	Grade 1 Level	Grade 2 Level	Grade 1 Level	Grade 2 Level	Grade 1 Level	Grade 2 Level	Grade 1 Level	Grade 2 Level	
1. Jody	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	17
2. Tanya	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	17
3. Cory	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	17
4. Nichole	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	17
5. Laila	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	17
6. Disqualified									
7. Heather	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	17
8. Disqualified									
9. Lori	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	17
10. Stephen	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	17
11. Roger	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	17
12. Gregory	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	17
Total Errors	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	30	170
	40		40		40		50		

Treatment Group - Post-test

Report Sheet

Subjects	Nouns		Verbs		Adjectives		Adverbs		Total Errors
	Grade 1 Level	Grade 2 Level	Grade 1 Level	Grade 2 Level	Grade 1 Level	Grade 2 Level	Grade 1 Level	Grade 2 Level	
1. Jody	0	1	0	1	1	1	2	3	9
2. Tanya	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	6
3. Cory	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	2	6
4. Nichole	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	3
5. Laila	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	4
6. Disqualified									
7. Heather	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8. Disqualified									
9. Lori	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
10. Stephen	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	4
11. Roger	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	4
12. Gregory	0	0	1	1	1	2	2	3	10
Total Errors	0	1	1	4	4	8	12	18	48
		1		5		12		30	

Control Group – Pre-test

Report Sheet

Subjects	Nouns		Verbs		Adjectives		Adverbs		Total Errors
	Grade 1 Level	Grade 2 Level	Grade 1 Level	Grade 2 Level	Grade 1 Level	Grade 2 Level	Grade 1 Level	Grade 2 Level	
1. Kimberly	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	17
2. Dion	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	17
3. Peggy	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	17
4. Scott	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	17
5. Roberta	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	17
6. Richard	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	17
7. Lisa	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	17
Total Errors	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	21	119
	28		28		28		35		

Control Group - Post-test

Report Sheet

Subjects	Nouns		Verbs		Adjectives		Adverbs		Total Errors
	Grade 1 Level	Grade 2 Level	Grade 1 Level	Grade 2 Level	Grade 1 Level	Grade 2 Level	Grade 1 Level	Grade 2 Level	
1. Kimberly	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	17
2. Dion	2	1	2	2	1	2	1	3	14
3. Peggy	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	3	15
4. Scott	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	17
5. Roberta	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	17
6. Richard	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	3	16
7. Lisa	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	17
Total Errors	14	13	14	13	11	▶14	13	21	113
	27		27		25		34		

Gain Score Report Sheet for Subjects

Treatment Group

Subjects	Pre-Test Errors	Post-Test Errors	Gain Score	IQ
1. Jody	17	9	8	82
2. Tanya	17	6	11	80
3. Cory	17	6	11	87
4. Nichole	17	3	14	88
5. Laila	17	4	13	96
6. Disqualified				
7. Heather	17	0	17	97
8. Disqualified				
9. Lori	17	2	15	99
10. Stephen	17	4	13	100
11. Roger	17	4	13	100
12. Gregory	17	10	7	109

Total Gain Score   122

Gain Score Report Sheet for Subjects

Control Group

Subjects	Pre-test Errors	Post-Test Errors	Gain Score	IQ
1. Kimberly	17	17	0	~80
2. Dion	17	14	3	87
3. Peggy	17	15	2	89
4. Scott	17	17	0	93
5. Roberta	17	17	0	99
6. Richard	17	16	1	104
7. Lisa	17	17	0	106

Total Gain Score 6

Category Gain Score Report Sheet
(Based on Treatment Group Scores)

Categories	Total Pre-Test Errors	Total Post-Test Errors	Gain Scores
Nouns: Grade 1	20	0	20
Verbs: Grade 1	20	1	19
Adjectives: Grade 1	20	4	16
Adverbs: Grade 1	20	12	8
Total Grade 1	80	17	61
Nouns: Grade 2	20	1	19
Verbs: Grade 2	20	4	16
Adjectives: Grade 2	20	8	12
Adverbs: Grade 2	30	18	12
Total Grade 2	90	31	59

Category Gain Score Report Sheet

(Based on Control Group Scores)

Categories	Total Pre-Test Errors	Total Post-Test Errors	Gain Scores
Nouns: Grade 1	14	14	0
Verbs: Grade 1	14	14	0
Adjectives: Grade 1	14	11	3
Adverbs: Grade 1	14	13	1
Total Grade 1	56	52	4
Nouns: Grade 2	14	13	1
Verbs: Grade 2	14	13	1
Adjectives: Grade 2	14	14	0
Adverbs: Grade 2	21	21	0
Total Grade 2	63	61	2

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this examiner wishes to state that while some interesting insights and questions were raised in this research, caution is also recommended to the reader for consideration to be given regarding the limitations of this study. This examiner feels that the Control Group did restrain to some degree the effects of history and maturation in that they were equally manifested in both groups. Instrumentation was controlled in that all testing was relatively the same and took place within the same time span of the one hour scheduled for the study. Also whenever and wherever possible, contamination was controlled even though a pretest was issued. This examiner feels that the pretest did not influence the results in any way because whatever influence did exist, it manifested itself equally in both the treatment and the control groups and therefore should present no problem.

In spite of this, there are some serious limitations to this design. First, the children used in this study were not randomly selected and neither were they randomly assigned to their groups. Instead, they were taken as intact units within each Grade One classroom. This may have created a bias in the outcome of this study. In addition the sample population used was very small and it may or may not be

truly representative of the general population. Consequently, it is difficult to generalize beyond the boundaries of this particular school. Also this experimenter did not introduce specific measures to guard against the threats of different socio-economic backgrounds and the Hawthorne effect.

However, it is felt by this examiner that replication of this study, with greater rigor and improved statistical design, produced on a larger scale, could generate greater insight into the questions posed in this study and may prove more conclusively some observations expressed by this examiner.

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APPENDIX A

window   barn   mittens   apple

pick   laugh   write   sleep

warm   happy   old   pretty

today   good   away   quietly

t ere

| window | barn | mittens | apple |

| pick | laugh | write | sleep |

warm	happy	old	pretty
today	good	away	quietly
	there		

1. Jill looks out the _____.

2. A big red _____ is good to eat.

3. The cow is in the _____.

4. Ted said, "Come and see my new blue _____."

1. I can see the _____ in the house.

2. Jack said, "I see a red _____."

3. Kim sees something in the _____.

4. Ted said, "Look at my new blue _____."

1. Jill looks out the _____

2. A big red _____ is good to eat.

3. The cow is in the _____

4. Ted said, "Come and see my new blue _____"

| window | barn | mittens | apple |

1. I can see the _____ in the house.

2. Jack said, "I see a red _____."

3. Kim sees something in the _____.

4. Ted said, "Look at my new blue _____."

window	barn	mittens	apple

1. Jill looks out the _____.

2. A big red _____ is good to eat.

3. The cow is in the _____.

4. Ted said, "Come and see my new blue _____."

| window | barn | | mittens | apple |

1. I can see the _____ in the house.

2. Jack said, "I see a red _____."

3. Kim sees something in the _____.

4. Ted said, "Look at my new blue _____."

window	barn		mittens	apple

APPENDIX B

1. Jack and Jill _____ the flowers.

2. Jack and Ted _____ at the funny cat.

3. I like to _____ in a new bed.

4. I can _____ my name here.

pick   laugh   write   sleep

1. I _____ one flower for Kim.

2. Jill and Kim _____ at Sandy.

3. "I can _____ here," said Jack.

4. I can _____ my name in the book.

1. Jack and Jill _____ the flowers.

2. Jack and Ted _____ at the funny cat.

3. I like to _____ in a new bed.

4. I can _____ my name here.

| pick | laugh | write | sleep |

1. I _____ one flower for Kim.

2. Jill and Kim _____ at Sandy.

3. "I can _____ here," said Jack.

4. I can _____ my name in the book.

| pick | laugh | write | sleep |

1. Jack and Jill _____ the flowers.

2. Jack and Ted _____ at the funny cat.

3. I like to _____ in a new bed.

4. I can _____ my name here.

| pick | laugh | write | sleep |

1. I _____ one flower for Kim.

2. Jill and Kim _____ at Sandy.

3. "I can _____ here," said Jack.

4. I can _____ my name in the book.

| pick | laugh | write | sleep |

APPENDIX C

1. Here is a _____ girl.

2. Jack said, "Come and see the _____ fire."

3. The _____ boy sees the surprise.

4. The _____ man sees something funny.

1. I can see a _____ girl here.

2. Kim said, "I can make a _____ fire."

3. Ted is a _____ boy.

4. "Come and see," said Jill. "I can draw an _____ man"

1. Here is a _____ girl.

2. Jack said, "Come and see the _____ fire."

3. The _____ boy sees the surprise.

4. The _____ man sees something funny.

| warm | happy | old | pretty |

1. I can see a _____ girl here.

2. Kim said, "I can make a _____ fire."

3. Ted is a _____ boy.

4. "Come and see," said Jill. "I can draw an _____ man."

warm	happy	old	pretty

1. Here is a _____ girl.

2. Jack said, "Come and see the _____ fire."

3. The _____ boy sees the surprise.

4. The _____ man sees something funny.

| warm | happy | old | pretty |

1. I can see a _____ girl here.

2. Kim said, "I can make a _____ fire."

3. Ted is a _____ boy.

4. "Come and see," said Jill. "I can draw an _____ man

| warm | happy | old | pretty |

APPENDIX D

1. I can draw it _____.

2. Jack jumps _____.

3. Jill can draw _____.

4. "The new dog is _____," said Ted.

5. The funny man runs _____.

1. _____ I can make something.

2. Ted reads _____.

3. Kim colours _____.

4. "Oh look," said Kim, "_____ it is."

5. Jack runs _____.

1. I can draw it _____.

2. Jack jumps _____.

3. Jill can draw _____.

4. "The new dog is _____," said Ted.

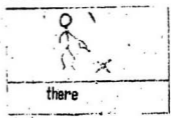there

5. The funny man runs _____

| today | good | away | quietly |

1. _____ I can make something.

2. Ted reads _____

3. Kim colours _____

4. "Oh look," said Kim, "_____ it is."

there

5. Jack runs _____

today	good	away	quietly

1. I can draw it _____.

2. Jack jumps _____

3. Jill can draw _____.

4. "The new dog is _____" said Ted.

5. The funny man runs _____

			there
today	good	away	quietly

1. _____ I can make something.

2. Ted reads _____.

3. Kim colours _____.

4. "Oh look," said Kim, "_____ it is."

5. Jack runs _____.

today	good	away	quietly

there