A STUDY OF TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS' PERCEP-

TIONS OF DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED IN

TEACHING READING BEFORE AND

AFTER STUDENT TEACHING

By

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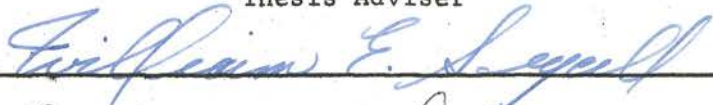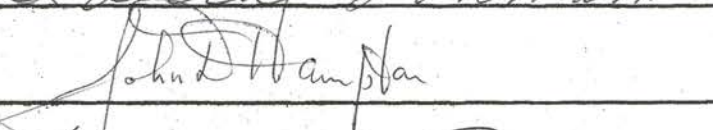DOCTOR OF EDUCATION
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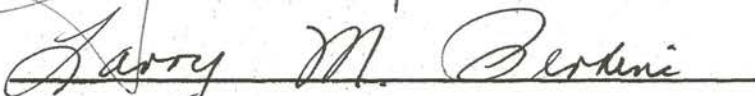
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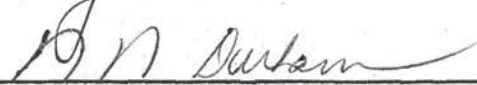
AFTER STUDENT TEACHING

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CHAPTER I

PRESENTATION OF THE PROBLEM

Introduction

Methods courses for prospective teachers are expected by professors
and teacher education students to present to the prospective teacher
a realistic picture of what he or she will encounter as a teacher.
Methods courses which do this help make it possible for the teacher
education student to prepare himself for teaching.

There is some doubt that such courses prepare future teachers for
the problems that they will face in an actual teaching situation. This
is evidenced by the fact that many recommendations have been made that
colleges and universities establish follow-up programs to determine to
what extent teacher education has prepared the student for what he faces
in an actual teaching experience (28, p. 20) (32, p. 87) (43, p. 325)
(11, p. 66) (3, p. 157).

It would seem that the prospective teacher's general experiential
background and the knowledge that he had gained through his teacher
education program would have led him to expect certain difficulties in
teaching reading If these perceived difficulties have changed signif-
icantly after the student teaching experience, perhaps teacher education
should be changed in some manner so that the teacher education student's
expectations of what he will face in student teaching are more realistic.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study was to determine teacher education students' perceptions of difficulties inherent in the teaching of reading and changes occurring in such perceptions from before student teaching to following student teaching. Information was sought as to which teaching tasks were perceived as difficult and whether or not such perceptions changed from before to after student teaching. The purpose of the study was to provide data that might be of aid to instructors of reading methods courses and supervisors of student teachers.

Questions Under Consideration

This study attempted to aid in answering the questions:

In what specific teaching tasks inherent in teaching reading do student teachers perceive difficulties?

If student teachers' perceptions of the difficulties encountered in teaching reading are measured before and after student teaching, will there be significant change in these perceptions of difficulties?

If such changes occur, to which specific teaching tasks will the changes occur?

If such changes occur, will the student teacher perceive these teaching tasks as more difficult or less difficult following student teaching?

Do such changes occur more frequently among primary grade student teachers or among intermediate grade student teachers?

Assumptions

This study was based on the assumptions that there are teaching
tasks inherent in the teaching of reading that can be identified and
judged as to their difficulty, that such tasks have been identified
for this study, and that the subjects of this study understood what
was being asked in the questionnaire and answered with honesty.

Limitations of the Study

A major limitation of the study was the recognized limitation of
the instrument used for obtaining data. The validity of the responses
to a questionnaire is contigent on the honesty and willingness of the
respondents. Also, questions may have been misunderstood and incorrect
answers inadvertently given. The wording of a question may have engen-
dered bias or a respondent may have replied with what he thought was
an "acceptable" answer rather than reflecting his actual perceptions.

The list of teaching tasks selected for consideration in this study
may not have been adequate. The list of items was drawn from the
writings of authorities in the field of teaching reading, but there is
a lack of research to establish these as the essential tasks involved
in the teaching of reading.

The results of the study are limited to those student teachers
participating and cannot be generalized beyond those student teachers.

Need for the Study

The methods courses for teaching of reading should do as much as
possible to prepare the future teacher for what he will experience in

an actual teaching situation. There is some evidence that these courses do not do this. Austin and Morrison (3, p. 100) reported that eighty-four per cent of the respondents to their questionnaire regarding the preparation of teachers of reading replied that reading instruction in the public school is not consistent with theoretical concepts taught in reading methods courses. They stated that these ". . . discrepancies so impair the performance of the student that she is unable to maximize her teaching potential." Durkin (12, p. 293) says that reading methods course instructors ". . . could wear themselves out trying to make these courses maximally useful only to discover that their efforts lack meaning."

Recommendations that attempts be made to determine in what areas student teachers find themselves inadequately prepared to deal with the realities of the classroom situation and that methods courses be examined in an effort to find ways to meet these needs of the student teacher come from several sources. The Report of the Fifteenth Anniversary Conference of the Association for Student Teaching presented a list of priority needs for teacher education in the future. One of these needs was given as: "Teacher education will need to more closely relate the theory of instruction to practice in the schools" (32, p. 87). Austin and Morrison (2) (3) in both of their extensive studies dealing with reading in the elementary schools and the preparation of teachers of reading recommend such efforts be made specifically in the area of reading.

There is evidence that studies of this type are desired in Oklahoma. The State Department of Education, the Oklahoma Education Association's Teacher Education and Professional Standards Commission and the colleges

and public schools of Oklahoma cooperated in a questionnaire study

during the 1970-71 school year which surveyed student teaching in the

state. The report revealed: (1) recommendations from student teachers

that methods courses be made more practical and realistic, and that the

student teachers have more chances to interact with college instructors

regarding relating theory to practice following student teaching,

(2) recommendations from principals that teacher education programs be

more realistic, and (3) recommendations from college directors and

supervisors of student teaching that student teachers receive greater

preparation for the practical problems that they will encounter. In

addition to these specific recommendations in answer to the question,

"What do you feel most needs to be done to improve your student teaching

program?" other comments by the respondents can be interpreted as the

need for revising methods courses based on student teachers' perceptions

of difficulties. A few examples of such comments are: more help with

how to grade children, more experience in preparation and use of audio-

visual equipment, specific help in setting up a classroom, more in-

struction on individual differences and how to instruct "different"

children, more thorough coverage of lesson planning, etc. (7).

Efforts to determine the areas in which student teachers feel that

they have more or less difficulty in actual classroom teaching situations

than they expect before student teaching should aid in the planning

of effective and realistic methods courses. Also, since some of the

difficulties in the teaching of reading anticipated by prospective

teachers probably stem from information they receive in methods courses,

it should be helpful to methods course instructors to know what these

anticipated difficulties are and if they do or do not in fact become problems in an actual classroom situation. This study attempted to aid in providing data relative to these problems.

Summary

Teacher education should prepare future teachers of reading to cope with actual teaching difficulties as encountered in a teaching situation. In order to do this, it is necessary for teacher educators to know what student teachers perceive such difficulties to be.

The problem of this study was to aid in determining teacher education students' perceptions of difficulties encountered in the teaching of reading and if change occurs from before student teaching to after student teaching. Assumptions were made that important tasks inherent in the teaching of reading had been identified for this study and that the instrument developed for use in this study presented these tasks for consideration as to difficulty in a manner that was understandable by the subjects.

A limitation of the study was inherent in the use of the instrument employed to gather data. Other limitations included possible incorrectness or incompleteness of the list of teaching tasks used to construct the instrument and the lack of generalizability of the results.

The need for the study rested on the frequent calls for follow-up studies to determine student teachers' feelings regarding the relevancy of their teacher education experiences.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND FOR THE STUDY

Introduction

The preparation of effective teachers of reading is a highly
desirable goal and one that has been of concern for many years. From
the time of Basedow, 1723-1790, who recommended that children be taught
to read from books made of gingerbread so that learning might be
pleasant (24, p. 241), until the present day, advice on how to teach
reading has been available. A review of the literature regarding how
the teacher was to receive such advice reveals that teachers until
this century relied upon sources such as the instructions in early
readers and books on pedagogy rather than upon methods courses. There
is much discussion of these early readers in the literature, but little
information relating to the beginning of reading methods courses. This
chapter presents some of the history of teacher education in reading
and describes some recent efforts to find ways of improving such teacher
education.

Teacher Education in Reading

Requirements that teachers of reading complete a formal methods
course in reading are quite recent. No such requirements were demanded
of teachers in the early schools of the United States. Teachers taught

reading as they were taught or following the alphabet-spelling method as presented in the New England Primer and Webster's American Spelling Book, (more widely known as the "blue-backed" speller) (34, pp. 4-5).

The first systematic efforts to prepare teachers seem to have occurred in 1806 when the Lancastrian method of teaching was brought to New York and model schools to demonstrate the method were opened (15, p. 177). Seminaries for the preparation of teachers were opened in Vermont in 1823 and in Massachusetts in 1830 by Reverend Samuel Hall. These private schools are sometimes considered forerunners of the public normal school (15, p. 177).

The first state-supported school for the training of teachers opened at Lexington, Massachusetts, in 1839 (21, p. 9). Many other "normal schools" were to follow due to the efforts of such men as Horace Mann and Henry Barnard (21, pp. 20-22, 49). However, there was little standardization among such schools regarding curricula or length of course, and the teaching of "method" was usually limited to a general course on pedagogy (21, p. 181) (37, pp. 836-903). Also, only a small portion of the teachers actually teaching had attended a normal school. Elsbree (15, p. 183) says that the number of teachers graduating from normal schools in 1896-7 was less than one-sixth the number of teaching vacancies.

From 1840 to 1880 a number of readers were published advocating several different methods of teaching reading. Teachers using these relied for the most part upon the brief discussion of method often included in the preface of such readers (42, pp. 38-114).

Professional books in reading first became available in the last two decades of the nineteenth century as did courses of study for the

public schools (42, pp. 121-124). Early in the twentieth century,
through publications such as the various _National Society for the Study
of Education Yearbooks_ devoted to reading instruction (1) (10) (25)
(35) (36) (38) (39) (46) and books and articles by such pioneers of
reading instruction as Edmund Burke Huey, William S. Gray, and others,
attention was drawn to the need for training to develop competent
teachers of reading. Organizations such as the National Council of
Teachers of English and the International Reading Association through
publications and conferences have concerned themselves with the improve-
ment of teacher education in reading.

The establishment of teacher certification requirements and the
pressure of accrediting agencies have played a role in the development
of courses in the teaching of reading (15, p. 187). Durrell (14,
pp. 187-188) is encouraged by the interest in such courses. He says,
"No subject in the elementary school curriculum attracts more teachers
in university courses and professional meetings."

Others are less satisfied with the current status of teacher edu-
cation requirements. Sheldon (40, pp. 55-57) points out that some
states do not require methods courses in reading be included in teacher
training programs and predicts that the trend is away from support for
methods courses. Gray (20, p. 145) and Austin and Morrison (3, p. xiii)
found a number of states do not require specific courses in the teaching
of reading be completed before teacher certification is granted. Some
who do have such requirements allow a general methods course in all of
the language arts, for which only two or three college hours of credit
is given, to satisfy the requirement.

Many professionals in the area of reading are working toward the
adoption of certification requirements including methods courses in
reading as is the International Reading Association which has adopted
a set of minimum standards for teachers (33).

Adequacy of Methods Courses in Reading

If we are to justify requiring prospective teachers to complete
methods courses in reading, we must see that such courses present a
realistic picture of what teachers find their teaching tasks to be.
Methods courses of all types, not just methods courses concerned with
the teaching of reading, are frequently criticized for not relating
adequately to actual classroom problems.

Wiles (48, p. 267), Zahorik (49, p. 197), and Sorenson (44, p. 177),
accuse methods courses of being too theoretical and impractical.
Haubrich (22, p. 51) says that there is an ". . . unbelievable gap
between practices in the schools and theorists in the colleges".
Sorenson (44, p. 177) mentions in the conclusion of his study of stu-
dent teachers at the University of California at Los Angeles that the
". . . only mention of the application of theory to student teaching
was by students who told their friends not to attempt to apply it".

A study of the problem of determining student teachers' per-
ceptions of difficulties in teaching in all subject areas, not just
reading, has been made by Hoover, Kaiser, and Podlich (23, pp. 324-328).
They found significant change at the .01 level of confidence in nine
of twenty-five areas they studied in regard to student teachers' ex-
pressed teaching strengths before and after student teaching. In four
areas--utilizing instructional resources, leading panel discussions,

organization and direction of role-played activities, and supervising

club and extra-curricular activities--student teachers felt less compe-

tent after student teaching then they did before. In five areas--

teacher-led class discussions; establishing goals or objectives in

terms of student behavior; construction and administration of classroom

tests, rating scales, and checklists; managing behavior problems; and

directing classroom study activities--student teachers felt more con-

fident after student teaching than they did before.

Fish (17) and Marks (29) report studies wherein beginning teachers

were surveyed as to which teaching tasks they found most difficult.

Fish found providing profitable seatwork for retarded and superior

readers and teaching reading to the physically handicapped or mentally

retarded child to be most difficult. Marks found organizing the class

for instruction, teaching the study skills, and providing for the child

with learning disabilities to be the most difficult.

Marks (30, pp. 165-166) also analyzed a number of studies to try

to determine problem areas in teaching reading for both beginning and

experienced teachers. She says:

> Any synthesis of the results of various studies de-
> signed to discover problems in reading instruction encoun-
> tered by beginning teachers is extremely difficult, not
> only because of the diverse nature of the various studies,
> but also because of the variations in thoroughness with
> which the studies were carried out. However, over a long
> period the following 'problems' have been repeatedly men-
> tioned. . . for both beginning and experienced teachers:
>   1. Difficulties in providing for individual differ-
>   ences.
>   2. Difficulties in classroom control.
>   3. Difficulties of motivation.
>   4. Difficulties in diagnosing or correcting pupil
>   deficiencies.
>   5. Difficulties in testing and evaluation.
>   6. Difficulties in directing study.
>   7. Difficulties in the use of materials and equip-
>   ment.

The most extensive and best known investigation into college and
university preparation of teachers of reading is that of Austin and
Morrison (3) which has been published in book form as The Torch Light-
ers: Tomorrow's Teachers of Reading. This study involved a question-
naire survey of 371 colleges and universities and in-depth interviews
with methods course instructors at 74 of these institutions. Recom-
mendations from this study include:

> The results of the field study make it very clear
> that in many instances a dichotomy exists between the
> theory of reading advocated at the college level and the
> practices involved in the teaching of reading in the ele-
> mentary classroom. . . One reason. . . may be that about
> half of the reading instructors queried during the field
> study did not supervise their students during the practice
> teaching experience. . . it is recommended that instructors
> participate in the supervision of their students during
> the apprenticeship program.

and:

> . . . it is recommended: that colleges establish a pro-
> gram to follow-up their graduates with a view toward
> determining to what extent their preparation has been ade-
> quate and what weaknesses, if any, exist in the students'
> training.

Techniques of the Study

Use of the Questionnaire Technique

A questionnaire was developed for use in gathering data for this
study. Good (19, p 213) says:

> . . . the questionnaire extends the investigator's powers
> and techniques of observation by reminding the respondent
> of each item, helping insure response to the same item
> from all respondents and tending to standardize and ob-
> jectify the observations of different enumerators. . .

The questionnaire was designed to determine the perceptions of
student teachers as to the difficulties inherent in the teaching of

reading. Statements of possible areas of difficulty were drawn from a number of textbooks commonly used in undergraduate methods courses in the teaching of reading (4) (5) (8) (9) (12) (26) (31) (45) (47).

Use of the Jury Technique

The jury technique involves submitting to a group of experts the instrument to be used to gather data and pooling their independent judgements and is a frequently used technique for the validation of questionnaires. Kerlinger (27, p. 447) says, "In many cases, other 'competent' judges must also judge the content of the items." Engelhart (16, p. 101) states, "The first draft of a questionnaire should be submitted to competent persons for criticism. . ."

Two juries were used in this study. A jury of experts in the field of reading who are instructors of methods courses were asked to critique the questionnaire. A group of teacher education students was asked to critique the questionnaire and to select one of two forms as preferable for use in the study.

Summary

Teachers in the early schools in the United States received no formal preparation for the teaching of reading. In the nineteenth century Lancastrian "model" schools, private seminaries, and public normal schools began pioneer efforts to train teachers. The beginnings of professional publications and organizations and the proliferation of readers designed to be used with certain teaching techniques spurred interest in methods of teaching reading and preparing teachers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The establishment of

certification requirements and accrediting agencies also played a role, although even today many are unsatisfied with teacher education in reading.

Several attempts have been made recently to try to determine areas in which methods courses, including methods courses in reading, are not adequately preparing teachers. Some of these investigations attempt to determine areas of difficulty for student teachers or beginning teachers.

The use of the questionnaire technique for gathering data and the use of the jury technique for validation of the questionnaire are accepted methods for use in the type of research done in this study.

CHAPTER III

GENERAL PROCEDURES OF THE STUDY

To obtain the information needed for this study a questionnaire
was developed. Because of the type of data that was needed and the
population being studied, a questionnaire was deemed appropriate. The
questionnaire in its final form presented a list of teaching tasks that
a student teacher might possibly perceive as difficult.

Development of the Original Questionnaire

The items included in the original form of the questionnaire were
drawn from a number of textbooks commonly used in undergraduate reading
methods courses (4) (5) (8) (9) (12) (26) (31) (45) (47). A listing
of the main topics covered in each textbook was compiled, and these
lists compared. Topics appearing in several textbooks were put into
the form of statements of teaching tasks. (Rewording of the statement
was done where necessary to make the item conform to the format of the
questionnaire.) This search of the literature produced nineteen topics
which were reworded in such a way as to form questionnaire items. Each
item was designed to present a teaching tasks that a teacher of reading
might perceive as difficult to accomplish. Instructions for the
questionnaire required the respondent to indicate with a check those
items that he considered particularly difficult teaching tasks.

The original form of the questionnaire contained nineteen items with two sets of directions, one for use in eliciting responses before student teaching and one for use after student teaching. The original form of the questionnaire is given in Appendix A.

Validating the Questionnaire

The questionnaire in its original form, together with a cover letter explaining the study, was sent to seven professional educators who are involved in the teaching of methods courses in reading. These jurors were requested to indicate any flaws they might find in the items and to suggest any items that they felt should be included. They were also asked to critique the questionnaire in regard to clearness of directions. Responses were received from four of the seven experts. Jurors judged the instrument valid for the purposes of the study.

Juror responses to the questionnaire including suggestions for revisions, new items, a change in the directions, and general comments are presented in Appendix C.

Revisions Made Due to Jury Response

In response to juror comments regarding the possibility of expanding certain items to include explanatory or example material, two forms of the questionnaire were developed. On one form (Form A) explanatory or example material was added to those items not containing such information. On the other form (Form B) explanatory or example material was deleted from those items on the original form of the questionnaire that contained such information. For example item four on the original form and on Form B read:

4. Developing an adequate and flexible rate of reading in stu-
    dents.

On Form A item four read:

4. Developing an adequate and flexible rate of reading in stu-
    dents through teaching students to adjust rate to purpose,
    to skim and scan for information, through use of pacing devices,
    etc.

Item five on the original form and on Form A read:

5. Teaching students reading-study skills (locating, summarizing,
    and organizing information; following directions; using maps,
    graphs, charts; etc.).

On Form B item five read:

5. Teaching students reading-study skills.

Both forms were expanded to include additional items derived from
suggestions made by the jurors. Items 20 through 23 were added to
cover areas that the jurors felt should be included. Item 14 was ex-
panded. In item 18 student's was changed to students'. The suggested
change in directions from "when you are. . ." to "when you begin. . ."
was made.

Evaluation of Form A and Form B by Students

Forms A and B of the questionnaire were submitted for evaluation
to a group of fifteen teacher education students who had completed a
course in methods of reading but who had not yet student taught and
who would not be involved in the final study. The students were told
about the study and were interviewed with regard to which form of the

questionnaire they preferred and why and were asked to make any sug-
gestions that they could regarding how the questionnaire might be
improved.

Of the fifteen students, three preferred the long form (Form A)
and twelve preferred the short form (Form B). Comments made by these
students are found in Appendix C.

Reliability of the Questionnaire

Although establishment of a reliability coefficient is impossible
with nominal level data, an attempt was made to determine the test-
retest reliability of the instrument by administering it to a group of
teacher education students similar to the group used in the final study.

The questionnaire was administered to a group of thirty-three
students who had completed a course in reading methods but who had not
yet student taught and who would not be involved in the final study.
The questionnaire was administered prior to mid-term recess (December 15,
1972) and administered again immediately following mid-term recess
(January 18, 1973).

McNemar's test of significance of change (41, pp. 63-67) was used
with each item to determine if there was significant change in the
students' perceptions of the difficulties to be encountered in the
teaching of reading. No significant difference at the .05 level of
confidence was found on any item. Data relative to the reliability
check can be found in Appendix D. Forms A and B of the questionnaire
are also included in Appendix A.

Subjects

Subjects of this study were elementary student teachers who student taught in grades one through six during the second semester of 1972-73. The institutions whose student teachers were chosen to participate were ones that do not include the methods courses in reading as a part of the student teaching semester, who require that the methods course in reading be taken before student teaching, and who have a student teaching experience of approximately eight weeks.

Institutions whose student teachers participated were: Southwestern State College, Central State University, and Cameron College. A portion of the student teachers at Oklahoma State University also participated. (Some of the student teachers at Oklahoma State University complete their methods course in reading prior to student teaching and some do not. Only those student teachers who completed the course before student teaching participated. All elementary student teachers from the other institutions participated.)

A total of 108 student teachers participated, 30 from Southwestern State College, 33 from Central State University, 27 from Cameron College, and 18 from Oklahoma State University.

Collecting the Data

Letters describing the study and requesting permission for the participation of student teachers in the study were sent to the directors of student teaching at several colleges and universities in Oklahoma that met the criteria described above. Those institutions agreeing to participate were asked to designate convenient times just prior to the beginning of student teaching and immediately following when the

questionnaire might be administered. At all schools, the first ad-
ministration was done during the seminar held for student teachers just
prior to the beginning of student teaching. The second administration
was done at seminars following student teaching at all schools except
Oklahoma State University where no such seminar is held. These stu-
dent teachers received and returned the second questionnaire by mail.
In all instances administration of the questionnaire was done by per-
sonnel not directly involved with the teacher education program of the
school participating.

Treatment of the Data

Data from the questionnaire was tabulated item by item as to
frequency of response. Responses to each item were cast in a four-fold
table with cells for the following responses: A. yes before, no after
student teaching; B. yes before, yes after student teaching; C. no
before, no after student teaching; D. no before, yes after student
teaching. McNemar's test of significance of change was used to test
for significant change. (In those instances where there were less than
ten changes from before to after student teaching, the binomial test
was used.)

The test for significance of change was made on each item for the
entire group, for the primary grades (one through three) student
teachers alone, and for the intermediate grades (four through six)
student teachers alone.

Responses to the questionnaire were also arranged in table form
presenting responses in a manner that indicates teaching tasks seen

as difficult or not difficult both before and after student teaching
as well as teaching tasks where changes in perceptions occurred.

Summary

A questionnaire listing teaching tasks inherent in teaching reading
was developed for use in this study. The original form of the question-
naire was developed through drawing items from the literature. Re-
spondents were asked to check those items which they perceived as es-
pecially difficult. The questionnaire was designed to be given preceed-
ing and following student teaching.

A jury of professionals in the field of reading were asked to
critique the original form of the questionnaire and revisions were made
on the basis of juror responses. Upon recommendations from these
jurors, four items were added, one item was expanded, a change in the
directions was made, a grammatical error was corrected and two forms
were devised. One form (Form A) included explanatory or example mate-
rial for each item while the other form (Form B) did not.

Form A and Form B were submitted to a group of teacher education
students who were asked to critique the questionnaire and to indicate
which form they preferred. On the basis of their responses, Form B
was chosen as the form of the questionnaire to be used in the final
study.

A check of test-retest reliability was made by administering the
questionnaire to a group of students similar to those used in the final
study.

A group of one hundred eight elementary education student teachers
from four colleges and universities in Oklahoma participated in the study.

Data from the questionnaire was tabulated in terms of before and after responses. McNemar's test of significance of change and the binomial test were used to test for significance in change of responses.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Introduction

When the questionnaires were returned, the data were tabulated
item by item in terms of whether or not each teaching task was per-
ceived as difficult and whether or not this perception changed follow-
ing student teaching. McNemar's test of significance of change was
used to determine the significance of the changes in response to the
statements of teaching tasks.

Siegel (41, p. 63) says:

> The McNemar test for the significance of changes is
> particularly applicable to those 'before and after' designs
> in which each person is used as his own control and in
> which measurement is in the strength of either nominal or
> ordinal scale.

Since McNemar's test of significance of change is inappropriate
when the number of cases of change is less than ten, in those instances
the binomial test was used (41, pp. 66-67).

Change was considered significant for the purposes of this study
and not due to change whenever P (probability) is .05 or less. Since
McNemar's test of significance of change is a form of chi square, this
significance is determined by comparing the obtained X^2 with the table
of significance of X^2 as given by Fisher and Yates (41, pp. 67, 249).

Garrett (18, p. 258) says:

> The chi-square test represents a useful method of
> comparing experimentally obtained results with those to
> be expected theoretically on some hypothesis, . . . The
> results may be marked 'significant' at the .05 level,
> therefore, on the grounds that divergence of observed
> from expected results is too unlikely of occurrence to
> be accounted for 'solely' by sampling fluctuation.

Table I presents each item, responses to the items, and an anal-
ysis of the significance of change relative to each item.

Analysis of the Data

A study of the data recorded in Table I reveals:

A significant change occurred at the .01 level on item 11, assign-
ing grades for reading, with the total group of student teachers and
the primary grade student teachers perceiving this task as difficult
before student teaching and as not difficult after student teaching.
When the responses of the intermediate grade student teachers are con-
sidered separately, there is no significant change for this group.

On item 13, planning a comprehensive reading program which gives
attention to all aspects of the reading process, there was significant
change at the .05 level in the perceptions of difficulty by the total
group and by primary grade student teachers with the direction of change
being from difficult before student teaching to not difficult following
student teaching. There was no significant change in the perceptions
of difficulty of the intermediate grade student teachers.

Significant change at the .05 level occurred for item 14, obtain-
ing reading material that meets the individual student's needs and
interests and is on the appropriate reading level, for the total
group and for the intermediate grade student teachers. Change

TABLE I

RESPONSES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF CHANGE
IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONNAIRE

	No.	YN	YY	NN	NY	x^2
Item 1						
Total	108	34	20	24	30	.141
Prim.	69	23	15	16	15	1.289
Inter.	39	11	5	8	15	.346
Item 4						
Total	108	22	16	51	19	.098
Prim.	69	14	8	36	11	.16
Inter.	39	8	8	15	8	.063
Item 7						
Total	108	19	7	73	9	2.89
Prim.	69	12	6	45	6	1.389
Inter.	39	7	1	28	3	.9
Item 10						
Total	108	23	17	52	16	.923
Prim.	69	15	13	28	13	.036
Inter.	39	8	4	24	3	1.455
Item 13						
Total	108	33	43	17	15	6.021**
Prim.	69	21	28	11	9	4.033**
Inter.	39	12	15	6	6	1.389
Item 16						
Total	108	33	13	52	10	11.256****
Prim.	69	27	9	26	7	10.618***
Inter.	39	6	4	26	3	p=.508*
Item 19						
Total	108	12	9	73	14	.038
Prim.	69	9	7	45	8	0
Inter.	49	3	2	28	6	p=.508*
Item 22						
Total	108	39	16	44	9	17.521****
Prim.	69	32	8	24	5	18.27***
Inter.	39	7	8	20	4	.364

	No.	YN	YY	NN	NY	x^2
Item 2						
Total	108	10	7	74	17	1.333
Prim.	69	6	5	48	10	.563
Inter.	39	4	2	26	7	.364
Item 5						
Total	108	30	15	47	16	3.674
Prim.	69	18	9	30	12	.833
Inter.	39	12	6	17	4	3.063
Item 8						
Total	108	19	10	63	16	.114
Prim.	69	16	7	37	9	1.44
Inter.	39	3	3	26	7	.9
Item 11						
Total	108	37	38	20	13	10.58***
Prim.	69	27	25	10	7	10.618***
Inter.	39	10	13	10	6	.563
Item 14						
Total	108	13	15	52	28	4.781**
Prim.	69	9	12	34	14	.696
Inter.	39	4	3	18	14	4.5**
Item 17						
Total	108	13	19	55	21	1.441
Prim.	69	7	12	35	15	2.427
Inter.	39	6	7	20	6	.083
Item 20						
Total	108	11	7	79	11	.045
Prim.	69	5	6	50	8	.308
Inter.	39	6	1	29	3	p=.508*
Item 23						
Total	108	33	5	56	14	6.894***
Prim.	69	26	4	29	10	6.25**
Inter.	39	7	1	27	4	.364

	No.	YN	YY	NN	NY	x^2
Item 3						
Total	108	19	27	41	21	.025
Prim.	69	16	15	28	13	.138
Inter.	39	3	15	13	8	1.454
Item 6						
Total	108	17	8	62	21	.237
Prim.	69	9	7	42	11	.05
Inter.	39	8	1	20	10	.051
Item 9						
Total	108	15	3	81	9	1.042
Prim.	69	9	2	52	6	.267
Inter.	39	6	1	29	3	p=.508*
Item 12						
Total	108	20	27	43	18	.026
Prim.	69	14	20	29	6	2.45
Inter.	39	6	7	14	12	1.389
Item 15						
Total	108	21	26	39	22	0
Prim.	69	17	16	21	15	.031
Inter.	39	4	10	18	7	.364
Item 18						
Total	108	20	3	73	12	1.531
Prim.	69	10	3	47	9	0
Inter.	39	10	0	26	3	2.769
Item 21						
Total	108	30	11	56	11	7.902***
Prim.	69	20	6	36	7	5.333**
Inter.	39	10	5	20	4	1.643

YN yes before, no after student teaching
YY yes before, yes after student teaching
NN no before, no after student teaching
NY no before, yes after student teaching

*binomial test
**Significant at .05
***Significant at .01
****Significant at .001
Tab. x^2 at .05 3.84 df 1
Tab. x^2 at .01 6.64 df 1
Tab. x^2 at .001 10.83 df 1

was from not difficult before student teaching to difficult after student teaching. Change for primary grade student teachers was not significant on this item.

A study of the data for item 16, effectively grouping students for reading instruction, reveals significant change at the .001 level for the total group and at the .01 level for the primary grade student teachers. They perceived this task as difficult before student teaching and not difficult after student teaching. The change is not significant for intermediate grade student teachers.

A significant change occurred on item 21, motivating students to read. The change was from difficult before to not difficult following student teaching. Change was significant at the .01 level for the total group and at the .05 level for the primary grade student teachers. Change was not significant for intermediate grade student teachers.

On item 22, deciding upon the appropriate level of reading material for each student, there was significant change at the .001 level in the perceptions of difficulty for the total group and for the primary grade student teachers. These student teachers saw this task as difficult before student teaching and not difficult after student teaching. Change was not significant for intermediate grade student teachers.

Significant change occurred on item 23, relating information in teacher's guides and manuals to individual student's needs and interests, for the total group and for primary grade student teachers. Significance was at the .01 level for the total group and at the .05 level for the primary grade student teachers. Change was from difficult before to not difficult after student teaching. Change was not significant for the intermediate grade student teachers.

Table II presents a tabulation of the items found difficult on the first administration of the questionnaire, and Table III presents such a tabulation for the second questionnaire administration. Items are ranked for difficulty according to the number of student teachers indicating the item was difficult.

A study of the data from Tables II and III shows:

For the total group the mean number of tasks perceived as difficult declined from 8.194 to 6.796 from before student teaching to after student teaching. Similarly, the mean for primary grade student teachers declined from 8.725 to 6.754 and the mean for intermediate grade student teachers from 7.256 to 7.103.

Item 11, assigning grades for reading, was the second most frequently selected item for the total group and the intermediate grade student teachers and the item most frequently selected by the primary grade student teachers in the first administration of the questionnaire. On the second administration of the questionnaire this item was second most frequently selected by the total group and by the primary grade student teachers and was in a tied ranking for fourth most frequently selected by intermediate grade student teachers.

Item 13, planning a comprehensive reading program which gives attention to all aspects of the reading process, which was the item most frequently perceived as difficult before student teaching for the total group and for intermediate grade student teachers and was the second most frequently perceived as difficult by the primary grade student teachers, remained after student teaching as the teaching task perceived most frequently as difficult by the total group. For the primary grade student teachers it became the item most frequently

TABLE II

QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES BEFORE STUDENT TEACHING

Item No.	Total Group * Yes	** No	Rank	Primary * Yes	** No	Rank	Intermediate * Yes	** No	Rank
1	54	54	4	38	31	4	16	23	5.5
2	17	91	23	11	58	22	6	33	21.5
3	46	62	7.5	28	41	9.5	18	21	3.5
4	38	70	12.5	22	47	14	16	23	5.5
5	45	63	9	27	42	11	18	21	3.5
6	25	83	18	16	53	18.5	9	30	15
7	26	82	17	18	51	17	8	31	16.5
8	29	79	15	23	46	13	6	33	21.5
9	18	90	21.5	11	58	22	7	32	19
10	40	68	11	28	41	9.5	12	27	12
11	75	33	2	52	17	1	23	16	2
12	47	61	5.5	34	35	6	13	26	10.5
13	76	32	1	49	20	2	27	12	1
14	28	80	16	21	48	15	7	32	19
15	47	61	5.5	33	36	7	14	25	9
16	46	62	7.5	36	33	5	10	29	13.5
17	32	76	14	19	50	16	13	26	10.5
18	23	85	19	13	56	20	10	29	13.5
19	21	87	20	16	53	18.5	5	34	23
20	18	90	21.5	11	58	22	7	32	19
21	41	67	10	26	43	12	15	24	7.5
22	55	53	3	40	29	3	15	24	7.5
23	38	70	12.5	30	39	8	8	31	16.5
	885			602			283		

Mean per student 8.194   Mean per student 8.725   Mean per student 7.256

*Yes--was difficult
**No--was not difficult

TABLE III

QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES AFTER STUDENT TEACHING

| Item No. | Total Group | | | Primary | | | Intermediate | | |
	* Yes	** No	Rank	* Yes	** No	Rank	* Yes	** No	Rank
1	50	58	3	30	39	4	20	19	3
2	24	84	15	15	54	15.5	9	30	14.5
3	48	60	4.5	25	44	9	23	16	1
4	35	73	9	19	50	11	16	23	8
5	31	77	11	21	48	10	10	29	12.5
6	29	79	12	18	51	12	11	28	11
7	16	92	21	12	57	21.5	4	35	21
8	26	82	13	16	53	13.5	10	29	12.5
9	12	96	23	8	61	23	4	35	21
10	33	75	10	26	43	7	7	32	17.5
11	51	57	2	32	37	2	19	20	4.5
12	45	63	6	26	43	7	19	20	4.5
13	58	50	1	37	32	1	21	18	2
14	43	65	7	26	43	7	17	22	6.5
15	48	60	4.5	31	38	3	17	22	6.5
16	23	85	16.5	16	53	13.5	7	32	17.5
17	40	68	8	27	42	5	13	26	9
18	15	93	22	12	57	21.5	3	36	23
19	23	85	16.5	15	54	15.5	8	31	16
20	18	90	20	14	55	17.5	4	35	21
21	22	86	18	13	56	19.5	9	30	14.5
22	25	83	14	13	56	19.5	12	27	10
23	19	89	19	14	55	17.5	5	34	19
	734			466			278		

| Mean per student | 6.796 | | Mean per student | 6.754 | | Mean per student | 7.103 |

*Yes--was difficult
**No--was not difficult

selected as difficult and for the intermediate grade student teachers
it was the second most frequently selected item.

The item most frequently selected as difficult by the total group
and by the primary student teachers on the first administration of the
questionnaire was item 1, <u>developing student's word analysis skills</u>.
This item was in a tied ranking for fifth for intermediate grade stu-
dent teachers. On the second administration of the questionnaire it
was the third most frequently selected item by the total group and by
intermediate grade student teachers and fourth most frequently selected
by primary grade student teachers.

Below is a listing of the items ordered according to the number of
student teachers in the total group who saw the task as difficult.
Following each item is the number of student teachers who checked the
item as difficult.

1. Planning a comprehensive reading program which gives attention
    to all aspects of the reading process. (58)
2. Assigning grades for reading. (51)
3. Developing students' word analysis skills. (50)
4. Developing the students' ability to get meaning from what they
    read. (48)
5. Providing special help for children with reading problems. (48)
6. Diagnosing each student's specific reading strengths and weak-
    nesses. (45)
7. Obtaining reading material that meets the individual student's
    needs and interests and is on the appropriate reading level.
    (43)
8. Finding adequate time in the school day to teach reading ef-
    fectively. (40)
9. Developing an adequate and flexible rate of reading in stu-
    dents. (35)
10. Evaluating students' reading ability. (33)
11. Teaching students reading study skills. (31)
12. Providing meaningful oral reading experience for students.
    (29)
13. Helping students with their reading in the content areas.
    (26)
14. Deciding upon the appropriate level of reading material. (25)
15. Building the students' sight vocabulary. (24)

16. Effectively grouping students for reading instruction. (23)
17. Achieving classroom control adequate to teach reading effectively. (23)
18. Motivating students to read. (22)
19. Relating information in teacher's guides and manuals to individual student's needs and interests. (19)
20. Effectively using audio-visual aids to teach reading. (18)
21. Promoting recreational reading on the part of students. (16)
22. Developing students' reading readiness skills. (15)
23. Integrating the teaching of reading into teaching in the content areas. (12)

Below is a similar ranking for the responses of the primary grade

student teachers.

1. Planning a comprehensive reading program which gives attention to all aspects of the reading process. (37)
2. Assigning grades for reading. (32)
3. Providing special help for children with reading problems. (31)
4. Developing students' word analysis skills. (30)
5. Finding adequate time in the school day to teach reading. (27)
6. Evaluating students' reading ability. (26)
7. Diagnosing each student's specific reading strengths and weaknesses. (26)
8. Obtaining reading material that meets the individual student's needs and interests and is on the appropriate reading level. (26)
9. Developing the students' ability to get meaning from what they read. (25)
10. Teaching students reading study skills. (21)
11. Developing an adequate and flexible rate of reading in students. (19)
12. Providing meaningful oral reading experience for students. (18)
13. Helping students with their reading in the content areas. (16)
14. Effectively grouping students for reading instruction. (16)
15. Building the students' sight vocabulary. (15)
16. Achieving classroom control adequate to teach reading effectively. (15)
17. Effectively using audio-visual aids to teach reading. (14)
18. Relating information in teacher's guides and manuals to individual student's needs and interests. (14)
19. Motivating students to read. (13)
20. Deciding upon the appropriate level of reading material for each student. (13)
21. Promoting recreational reading on the part of students. (12)
22. Developing reading readiness skills. (12)
23. Integrating the teaching of reading into teaching in the content areas. (9)

Below is a similar ranking for the responses of intermediate student teachers.

1. Developing the students' ability to get meaning from what they read. (23)
2. Planning a comprehensive reading program which gives attention to all aspects of the reading process. (21)
3. Developing students' word analysis skills. (20)
4. Assigning grades for reading (19)
5. Diagnosing each student's specific reading strengths and weaknesses. (19)
6. Obtaining reading material that meets the individual student's needs and interests and is on the appropriate reading level. (17)
7. Providing special help for children with reading problems. (17)
8. Developing an adequate and flexible rate of reading in students. (16)
9. Finding adequate time in the school day to teach reading effectively. (13)
10. Deciding upon the appropriate level of reading material for each student. (12)
11. Providing meaningful oral reading experience for students. (11)
12. Teaching students reading study skills. (10)
13. Helping students with their reading in the content areas. (10)
14. Building the students' sight vocabulary. (9)
15. Motivating students to read. (9)
16. Achieving classroom control adequate to teach reading effectively. (8)
17. Evaluating students' reading ability. (7)
18. Effectively grouping students for reading instruction. (7)
19. Relating information in teacher's guides and manuals to individual student's needs and interests. (5)
20. Promoting recreational reading on the part of students. (4)
21. Integrating the teaching of reading into teaching in the content areas. (4)
22. Effectively using audio-visual aids to teach reading. (4)
23. Developing students' reading readiness skills. (3)

Summary

Responses to the questionnaire on difficulties in teaching reading were arranged in table form and an analysis of the data given.

The tabulated responses were analyzed to ascertain the significance of change in responses from before student teaching to after student

teaching. Tables were also constructed which show the number of student teachers selecting each teaching task as difficult, the mean number of items selected per student teacher, and the ranking of difficulty of the items based upon the frequency with which the items were chosen.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, OBSERVATIONS,

AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

An important goal of teacher education is to prepare competent
teachers of reading. As an aid to achieving this goal, this study was
concerned with the collection and analysis of data useful to those in-
volved with this aspect of teacher education.

The problem of this study concerned determining teacher education
students' perceptions of difficulties inherent in teaching reading and
changes occurring in such perceptions from before student teaching to
following student teaching.

The study was based on the assumptions that teaching tasks inherent
in the teaching of reading have been identified for this study and that
the subjects of this study were presented with an instrument which listed
these tasks for consideration as to difficulty which they could under-
stand and which they answered honestly.

A questionnaire was developed for use in this study by drawing items
from the literature and submitting those to a jury of teacher education
professionals in the field of reading. Revisions were made in accordance
with juror suggestions and two forms devised. (Forms A and B in Ap-
pendix A.) A group of teacher education students aided in the selection

of Form B for use in the final study. Pre-testing for test-retest re-
liability was also done with a group similar to the group used in the
final study.

Subjects for the study were student teachers from four colleges
and universities in Oklahoma. A total of 108 student teachers, grades
one through six, participated. Sixty-nine student taught in the primary
grades and thirty-nine student taught in the intermediate grades.

Responses to the questionnaire were tabulated as to teaching tasks
perceived as difficult before or after student teaching and as to
changes in such perceptions of difficulty from before to after student
teaching. McNemar's test of significance of change and the binomial
test were used to test for significance of change.

Conclusions and Observations

From the data of the study, presented in Chapter IV, certain con-
clusions are drawn. Also, although the findings of a study of this
nature are not generalizable beyond the group being studied and do not
carry implications as would a strictly controlled experimental study,
there arise as the result of such investigations as this certain ob-
servations that might generate more thought or further study in the
area. Such observations, which might be of interest to teacher edu-
cators, are presented below in conjunction with the conclusions drawn
from the data of the study.

Conclusion 1. There were fourteen instances of significant change
in perceptions of difficulty of teaching tasks. Seven of these changes
were for the total group of student teachers. (Items 11, 13, 14, 16,

21, 22, and 23 on Table I.) Six of these changes were for the primary

grade group. (Items 11, 13, 16, 21, 22, and 23 on Table I.) One

change was for the intermediate grade group. (Item 14 on Table I.)

Twelve of the changes were from difficult before student teaching to

not difficult following student teaching. (YN on Table I.) Two of the

changes were from not difficult before student teaching to difficult

following student teaching. (NY on Table I.) In regard to each item

on the questionnaire where significant change occurred, change was for

the total group and the primary grade student teachers or for the total

group and the intermediate grade student teachers. In no instance did

significant change occur for both primary and intermediate grade groups

on the same item. Also, in no instance did significant change occur

with the primary group or the intermediate group without significant

change in the same direction also occurring for the total group.

Observation. When the student teachers' responses were measured

as two groups--primary grades and intermediate grades--there emerged a

picture of two different sets of perceptions. Although some items were

frequently perceived as difficult by both groups, some items were more

frequently seen as difficult for one group as compared with the other.

On no item where significant change occurred was this change significant

for both primary and intermediate groups when the two are considered

separately. Perhaps methods courses should do more to convey to stu-

dents the possibility that there may be different sets of concerns in

teaching reading depending upon the grade level taught.

Conclusion 2. For the total group, perceptions of less difficult

after student teaching than before student teaching (YN) were observed

for: assigning grades for reading, planning a comprehensive reading

program which gives attention to all aspects of the reading process,

effectively grouping students for reading, motivating students to read,

deciding on the appropriate level of reading material for each student,

and relating information in teacher's guides and manuals to individual

student's needs and interests.

Conclusion 3. For the total group, obtaining reading material

that meets individual student's needs and interests and is on the ap-

propriate reading level was seen as not difficult before but difficult

following student teaching. (NY)

Conclusion 4. For the primary grade student teachers, significant

change from difficult to not difficult after student teaching (YN) was

measured for: assigning grades for reading, planning a comprehensive

reading program which gives attention to all aspects of the reading pro-

cess, effectively grouping students for reading, motivating students to

read, deciding upon the appropriate level of reading material for each

student, and relating information in teacher's guides and manuals to

individual student's needs and interests.

Conclusion 5. For the intermediate grade student teachers, signifi-

cant change from not difficult before to difficult following student

teaching (NY) was recorded for obtaining reading material that meets the

individual student's needs and interests and is on the appropriate

reading level.

Observation. This is the one area in which significant change from not difficult before student teaching to difficult following student teaching was measured. Methods course instructors might consider the possibility that the student is led, through the availability and abundance of materials provided for their study by their instructors and by curriculum laboratories, to expect the public school to have available more teaching material than they actually have.

Conclusion 6. The tendency was for student teachers to perceive fewer tasks as difficult following student teaching than they saw as difficult prior to student teaching.

Observation. Student teaching seemed to be a reassuring experience for the student teachers participating in this study. The mean number of teaching tasks perceived as difficult declined. In regard to those tasks where significant changes in perception occurred, in every case but one changes were in the direction of less difficult following student teaching.

Conclusion 7. When teaching tasks are ranked for difficulty on the basis of the number of students responding after student teaching that the task was difficult, some tasks are ranked highly by both primary and intermediate grade student teachers and some by only one group. Planning a comprehensive reading program which gives attention to all aspects of the reading process, assigning grades for reading, developing students' word analysis skills—all of these rank in the four items most frequently found difficult by both groups. Evaluating students' reading ability which ranked sixth by primary grade student teachers ranked

seventeenth in frequency of response by intermediate grade student

teachers. First for intermediate grade student teachers ranks develop-

ing the students' ability to get meaning from what they read. For

primary grade student teachers, this item ranks ninth in frequency of

selection. Deciding upon the appropriate level of reading material

for each student ranked tenth in frequency of selection as difficult

for intermediate grade student teachers but twentieth for primary grade

student teachers.

Observation. Certain reading skills have traditionally been seen

as more important at the primary or at the intermediate grade level.

The frequency of response as to difficulty in this study tended to sup-

port some of these ideas. For example, developing the students' ability

to get meaning from what they read was the item most frequently selected

as difficult by the intermediate grade student teachers but ranked ninth

with primary grade student teachers. Developing an adequate and flexible

rate of reading in students in another area ranked higher in difficulty

by intermediate grade student teachers which is traditionally thought

of as primarily a skill developed in those grades.

Observation. Certain teaching tasks tended to rank high in fre-

quency of selection as difficult on both administrations of the question-

naire and with both groups of student teachers. This might indicate

that methods course instructors are alerting students to the diffi-

culties of these tasks and that they are indeed areas of difficulty for

student teachers. Assigning grades, planning a comprehensive reading

program, and developing students' word analysis skills are examples of

teaching tasks of this type.

Recommendations

The following recommendations for further study in this area are made by the investigator:

1. Because of the considerable variation in responses between the primary grade student teachers and the intermediate grade student teachers, it is recommended that attempts to determine student teachers' perceptions of difficulties in the teaching of reading should classify student teachers as to grade level in which student teaching is done.

2. Similar studies should be carried out among beginning and experienced teachers to aid in determining if they perceive difficulties in teaching reading to be similar to the difficulties perceived by student teachers.

3. Studies wherein perceptions of student teachers are measured including a follow-up of the same student teachers to determine if change occurs after a period of teaching experience are recommended.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

FORMS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Original Form of the Questionnaire

Directions for the Pre-Student Teaching Administration.

Name_____

College or University_____

When you are teaching reading, you may find some teaching tasks

to be especially difficult. While many or all teaching tasks may seem

to be somewhat difficult, certain tasks may seem to you to present

special difficulty. Please check (✓) those tasks below which you feel

will be especially difficult.

Directions for the Post-Student Teaching Administration.

Name_____

College or University_____

Grade Level in Which Student Teaching Was Done_____

When you were teaching reading during your student teaching ex-

perience, you may have found some teaching tasks to be especially dif-

ficult. While many or all teaching tasks may have been somewhat dif-

ficult, certain tasks may have presented special difficulty. Please

check (✓) those tasks below which you found to be especially difficult.

Original Questionnaire Items.

_____ 1. Developing students' word analysis skills (through context,
            configuration, phonics, structural analysis, and use of the
            dictionary).

_____ 2. Building the students' sight vocabulary.

_____ 3. Developing the students' ability to get meaning from what
            they read.

_____ 4. Developing an adequate and flexible rate of reading in students.

_____ 5. Teaching students reading study skills (locating, summarizing, and organizing information; following directions; using maps, graphs, charts; etc.).

_____ 6. Providing meaningful oral reading experiences for students.

_____ 7. Promoting recreational reading on the part of the students.

_____ 8. Helping children with their reading in content areas (social studies, science, etc.).

_____ 9. Integrating the teaching of reading into teaching in the content areas.

_____10. Evaluating students' reading ability.

_____11. Assigning grades for reading.

_____12. Diagnosing each student's specific reading strengths and weaknesses.

_____13. Planning a comprehensive reading program which gives attention to all aspects of the reading process.

_____14. Obtaining reading material that meets the individual student's needs and interests.

_____15. Providing special help for children with reading problems.

_____16. Effectively grouping students for reading instruction.

_____17. Finding adequate time in the school day to teach reading effectively.

_____18. Developing student's reading readiness skills.

_____19. Achieving classroom control adequate to teach reading effectively.

Questionnaire (Form A)

Directions for the Pre-Student Teaching Administration.

Name_____

College or University_____

    When you begin teaching reading, you may find some teaching tasks

to be especially difficult. While many or all teaching tasks may seem

to be somewhat difficult, certain tasks may seem to you to present

special difficulty. Please check (✓) those tasks below which you feel

will be especially difficult.

Directions for the Post-Student Teaching Administration.

Name_____

College or University_____

Grade Level in Which Student Teaching Was Done_____

    When you were teaching reading during your student teaching ex-

perience, you may have found some teaching tasks to be especially dif-

ficult. While many or all teaching tasks may have been somewhat dif-

ficult, certain tasks may have presented special difficulty. Please

check (✓) those tasks below which you found to be especially difficult.

Questionnaire Items (Form A).

_____ 1. Developing students' word analysis skills through context,
configuration, phonics, structural analysis, and use of the
dictionary.

_____ 2. Building the students' sight vocabulary through their re-
peated exposure to an increasing number of words.

_____ 3. Developing the students' ability to get meaning from what they read through such techniques as setting purpose for reading, skillful questioning after reading, etc.

_____ 4. Developing an adequate and flexible rate of reading in students through teaching students to adjust rate to purpose, to skim and scan for information, through the use of pacing devices, etc.

_____ 5. Teaching students reading study skills such as locating, summarizing, and organizing information; following directions; using maps, graphs, charts; etc.

_____ 6. Providing meaningful oral reading experiences for students through such techniques as providing an interested audience, preceeding oral reading by silent reading, etc.

_____ 7. Promoting recreational reading on the part of students through such techniques as allowing time in the school day for recreational reading, encouraging students to interest each other in books, etc.

_____ 8. Helping students with their reading in the content areas through such techniques as providing reading-study guides for textbooks, providing tape-recordings of content material, etc.

_____ 9. Integrating the teaching of reading into teaching in the content areas such as science, social studies, mathematics, etc.

_____10. Evaluating students' reading ability through standardized and teacher-made tests, informal reading inventories, observation of classroom performance, etc.

_____11. Assigning grades for reading through determining and applying criteria based upon levels of achievement and/or effort.

_____12. Diagnosing each student's specific reading strengths and weaknesses in such areas as word attack, sight vocabulary, comprehension, reading rate and flexibility, reading study skills, etc.

_____13. Planning a comprehensive reading program which gives attention to all aspects of the reading process: word attack, sight vocabulary development, comprehension, development of a flexible and adequate reading rate, reading-study skills, oral reading, reading in the content areas, recreational reading, motivation to read, etc.

_____14. Obtaining reading material (both instructional and recreational) that meets the individual student's needs and interests and is on the appropriate reading level.

_____15. Providing special help for children with reading problems such as obtaining the services of other professionals (psychologists, physicians, clinicians, special reading teachers, etc.); providing tutors; obtaining special materials; etc.

_____16. Effectively grouping students for reading instruction including determining the number of groups needed, deciding when to move a student from one group to another, grouping on the basis of interest as well as ability, etc.

_____17. Finding adequate time in the school day to teach reading effectively.

_____18. Developing students' reading readiness skills such as visual and auditory discrimination, left-to-right orientation, alphabet knowledge, general language development, etc.

_____19. Achieving classroom control adequate to teach reading effectively.

_____20. Effectively using audio-visual aids (such as tachistascopes, pacers, overhead projectors, filmstrips, tapes, etc.) in the teaching of reading.

_____21. Motivating students to read through provision of a wide variety of reading materials, student and teacher book reviews and reports, oral reading to and by students, etc.

_____22. Deciding upon the appropriate level of reading material for each student based upon evaluation of the students' abilities and the relationship of these abilities to reading material at a particular level.

_____23. Relating information in teacher's guides and manuals to individual student's needs and interests, knowing when to deviate from these guides and manuals, and how to adjust them to meet individual needs and interests.

Questionnaire (Form B)

<u>Directions for the Pre-Student Teaching Administration.</u>

Name_____

College or University_____

When you begin teaching reading, you may find some teaching tasks
to be especially difficult. While many or all teaching tasks may seem
to be somewhat difficult, certain tasks may seem to you to present
special difficulty. Please check (✓) those tasks below which you feel
will be especially difficult.

<u>Directions for the Post-Student Teaching Administration.</u>

Name_____

College or University_____

Grade Level in Which Student Teaching Was Done_____

When you were teaching reading during your student teaching ex-
perience, you may have found some teaching tasks to be especially dif-
ficult. While many or all teaching tasks may have been somewhat dif-
ficult, certain tasks may have presented special difficulty. Please
check (✓) those tasks below which you found to be especially difficult.

<u>Questionnaire Items (Form B).</u>

_____ 1. Developing students' word analysis skills.

_____ 2. Building the students' sight vocabulary.

_____ 3. Developing the students' ability to get meaning from what they read.

_____ 4. Developing an adequate and flexible rate of reading in students.

_____ 5. Teaching students reading study skills.

_____ 6. Providing meaningful oral reading experiences for students.

_____ 7. Promoting recreational reading on the part of students.

_____ 8. Helping students with their reading in the content areas.

_____ 9. Integrating the teaching of reading into teaching in the content areas.

_____ 10. Evaluating students' reading ability.

_____ 11. Assigning grades for reading.

_____ 12. Diagnosing each student's specific reading strengths and weaknesses.

_____ 13. Planning a comprehensive reading program which gives attention to all aspects of the reading process.

_____ 14. Obtaining reading material that meets the individual student's needs and interests and is on the appropriate reading level.

_____ 15. Providing special help for children with reading problems.

_____ 16. Effectively grouping students for reading instruction.

_____ 17. Finding adequate time in the school day to teach reading effectively.

_____ 18. Developing students' reading readiness skills.

_____ 19. Achieving classroom control adequate to teach reading effectively.

_____ 20. Effectively using audio-visual aids to teach reading.

_____ 21. Motivating students to read.

_____ 22. Relating information in teacher's guides and manuals to individual student's needs and interests.

APPENDIX B

CORRESPONDENCE REGARDING

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Letter to the Jurors

Dear _____:

At the present time, I am attempting to develop a questionnaire that
would be useful in a study designed to determine student teachers'
perceptions of difficulties in teaching reading and changes in these
perceptions when they are measured before and after student teaching.
The questionnaire will be used next semester in a study which is part
of my doctoral studies at Oklahoma State University.

Enclosed is a copy of the questionnaire in its present form. I would
appreciate your opinion as to flaws that you find in the items and
would welcome suggestions as to items that you feel should be included
in the questionnaire which are not presently there. Also, please eval-
uate the clearness of the directions. (You will note that there are
two sets of directions, one to be used preceding student teaching and
one to be used following student teaching.)

A copy of the questionnaire in its final form and the results of the
study in which it is used will be sent to you.

I will be most grateful for any help that you can give me.

Yours truly,

(Ms.) Karen McKellips

Letter to Directors of Student Teaching

Dear _____,

As a part of my doctoral studies at Oklahoma State University, I am
conducting a study attempting to determine student teachers perceptions
of difficulties in teaching reading I am interested in securing the
cooperation of a number of colleges and universities in Oklahoma and
would like to include your elementary student teachers in my study.

Elementary student teachers (grades one through six) who student teach
during the second half of next semester will be required to respond
to a questionnaire regarding difficulties in teaching reading. This
questionnaire will be administered just prior to and immediately fol-
lowing student teaching.

If you would like to see the entire proposal for my study as it was
submitted to the Graduate College at Oklahoma State University, I would
be happy to send you a copy.

If you can assist me in this matter or if you have questions concerning
the study, please return the enclosed envelope with your reply. A
copy of the completed study will be furnished to you.

Thank you for any help that you can give me.

Yours truly,

(Ms.) Karen McKellips

APPENDIX C

JUROR RESPONSES

Suggestions from the Jury of Experts

Item 1   Original Statement

Developing students' word analysis skills (through context,

configuration, phonics, structural analysis, dictionary).

Comment

Would it be possible for you to break up items such as 1 and

5 into the individual components in order to determine what

special problems were encountered while student teaching?

Item 3   Original Statement

Developing students' ability to get meaning from what they

read.

Comment

Might give examples here such as you have done in 1.

Item 5   Original Statement

Teaching students reading study skills (locating, summarizing,

and organizing information; following directions; using maps,

graphs, and charts; etc.).

Comment

. . . break up items such as #1 and #5 into the individual

component parts.

Item 8   Original Statement

Helping students with their reading in the content areas

(social studies, science, etc.).

Comment

Add mathematics so the intern may recall possible difficulties

with written problems.

Item 14   <u>Original</u> <u>Statement</u>

Obtaining reading material that meets individual students'

needs and interests.

<u>Comment</u>

The question comes to my mind here as to whether they might

experience some problems in helping the individual child

<u>relate</u> to the material that they were able to obtain.

Add: and is on the proper level.

Item 18   <u>Original</u> <u>Statement</u>

Developing student's reading readiness skills.

<u>Comment</u>

students' not student's

<u>Suggestions for Additional Items</u>.

Add: Effective use of audio-visual aids to teach reading.

I would suggest an item concerning the motivation of children

to want to read, a very essential element in the teaching-

learning process.

Group management is often a problem, but you have probably

included this with items 13, 16, and 18.

Most teachers appear unable to determine the appropriate

grade level of reading materials for each pupil. Could a

question be formulated for this problem?

Is it possible for the intern teacher to relate the information

in the teacher's manuals to the individual student's needs

and interests?

Did the intern teacher receive assistance in the reading pro-

gram from other professionals?

Suggested Change in the Directions for the Questionnaire.

Change "when you are teaching reading" to "when you begin

teaching reading" in the directions used in pre-testing.

General Comments of Jurors.

You have constructed a good checklist, and basically it should

serve your purpose well.

The questionnaire seems to cover all the components I can

think of. Good luck on your research. I think it is most

worthwhile.

I think your study has merit and is a much-needed study.

Wish you all kinds of success in this venture and will be in-

terested in your outcome.

Student Statements Regarding

Choice of Form

Statements Favoring Form A.

The long form leaves no question unanswered as to what the

questions ask and would inspire a more thoughtful answer.

The short form might not explain well enough for a person with

one course in reading.

The long form would help to refresh a student's memory if he

has forgotten something. It might even help him get ready

for student teaching.

Statements Favoring Form B.

It is easier to read and understand.

If I were asked to do this, I would look at the length of the
long form and rush through it without too much thought.

The short form is more general and I feel that as a beginner
I have only general knowledge.

I might get confused with the long form.

On the long form I would have trouble because I might want
to answer yes to parts of questions like number one and
number three.

The long form took me a long time just to read. I wanted to
stop and think about each question. I'm afraid if I had just
finished student teaching, it would take me a long time to fill
it out.

Unless a grade or something depended upon it, I wouldn't take
the time to fill out the long one.

I think if you use the long form, students would tend to con-
centrate on one part of each statement.

The short form is simpler to read and says the same thing.

I don't see that there is any difference in what they're
asking so why not use the short one?

The long form looks too much like a test.

Anyone would prefer something like this to be as short as
possible.

APPENDIX D

TEST-RETEST RELIABILITY OF

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

TABLE IV

DATA RELATING TO THE RELIABILITY
OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Item No.	YN	YY	NN	NY	x^2
1	6	14	5	8	.071
2	5	0	19	9	.643
3	8	6	14	5	.308
4	5	5	15	8	.308
5	11	12	7	3	3.5
6	6	5	18	4	.1
7	4	4	19	6	.1
8	3	4	19	7	.9
9	5	0	20	8	.308
10	5	20	0	8	.308
11	4	18	5	6	.1
12	4	16	5	8	.75
13	5	17	2	9	.643
14	5	5	16	7	.083
15	6	14	5	8	.071
16	4	12	10	7	.363
17	6	10	8	9	.267
18	7	1	20	5	.083
19	7	0	22	4	.363
20	5	3	18	7	.083
21	7	4	18	4	.363
22	6	14	2	11	.941
23	4	7	16	6	.1

Tab. X^2 at .05 3.84 df 1

YN--yes, no   YY--yes, yes   NN--no, no   NY--no, yes

VITA

Karen Kay McKellips

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: A STUDY OF TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF DIF-
FICULTIES ENCOUNTERED IN TEACHING READING BEFORE AND AFTER
STUDENT TEACHING

Major Field: Elementary Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Thomas, Oklahoma, March 31, 1940, the
daughter of Kenneth and Lorene Sweeney. Married, September 7,
1958, to Terral McKellips. Two children: Marty and Bret.

Education: Graduated from Thomas High School, Thomas, Oklahoma,
in May, 1958; received Bachelor of Science in Education degree
in Elementary Education from Southwestern State College in
1963; received Master of Science in Elementary Education from
Oklahoma State University in 1968; completed requirements
for the Doctor of Education degree at Oklahoma State Uni-
versity in December, 1973.

Professional Experience: First grade teacher, Fay Public School,
Fay, Oklahoma, 1965-66; graduate assistant in the Reading
Center, Department of Education, Oklahoma State University,
1966-68; instructor, then assistant professor of education,
Cameron College, 1968-present.