REPORT NO. 1

Closed-Captioned Prompt Rates: Their Influence on Reading Outcomes.

Meyer, Martha J.; Lee, Yung-bin Benjamin

Abstract: Regulating closed-captioned videotape prompt rates as a technological approach to improve reading comprehension/retention skills in "at risk" elementary school students is addressed. It is a within factor experimental design which examines retention of learning from closed-caption videotape with regulated prompt rates. Two groups comprised of 158 fourth, fifth, and sixth grade reading deficient students participated in a pilot study (18 students) and experimental study (140 students). Students were randomly assigned to either an average-paced closed- caption video, a slow-paced closed-captioned video, or printed text with no video, serving as a control measure. Results indicate significantly more learning occurs for those students using captioned video compared to those having traditional print materials. Additionally, students assigned to the slow-paced prompt rate retained significantly more information than those having the average- paced captioning. Results suggest that educators can better help reading deficient students by choosing captioned video curriculum rather than traditional print materials. Results also suggest that video producers should take into consideration the prompt rate of their captioned video materials and implement caption prompt rates that are appropriately paced for use in inclusive classroom environments. Data is illustrated in three tables and three figures. (Contains 21 references.)

REPORT NO. 2

Closed Captioned TV: A Resource for ESL Literacy Education.

ERIC Identifier: ED372662
Publication Date: 1994-07-00
Author: Parks, Carolyn
Source: Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse for ESL Literacy Education Washington DC.

It has been four years since the publication of "Closed Captioned Television for Adult ESL Literacy Learners" (Spanos & Smith, 1990). Since that time, interest in the subject has been growing among teachers, students, and researchers. What is new in closed captioned television (CCTV)? Recent technological, pedagogical, and regulatory developments have heightened awareness and appreciation of the medium's educational potential. This digest reports on new captioning legislation that increases access to captioned programs and on new research, technology, and uses of closed captions in the field of adult ESL.

INCREASED ACCESS TO CAPTIONED PROGRAMMING

In 1990, Congress passed the "Television Decoder Circuitry Act" mandating that all new TV sets 13 inches or larger manufactured for sale in the United States have a built-in computer chip that decodes captions. This eliminates the necessity of buying a separate decoder (about $150) for this purpose. Sets with the built-in decoder offer a menu with a "caption option." When this is selected, a written version of a program's audiotrack is displayed at the bottom of the TV screen. The law went into effect in July 1993, and the National Captioning Institute (NCI) estimates that by the end of 1994, 40 million households will have these new "caption-ready" sets, that will provide free access to the educational benefits of captioned TV and video ("National Captioning Institute," 1993).

MORE CAPTIONED PROGRAMMING

Educators and learners now have many captioned programs from which to choose. More than 800 hours of captioned programming per week (up from 400 in 1990) are broadcast by the major networks, both public and commercial, and by the cable networks ("National Captioning Institute," 1993). Almost all primetime TV programming--news, dramas, documentaries, situation comedies, children's fare, sports events, movies, commercials, and special reports--is captioned. In addition, thousands of video programs for home and school viewing are being captioned every year. The level of language used, age appropriateness, sophistication, and overall quality of these programs vary widely. The captioning also varies in pacing and in the degree of correspondence with the spoken text, from verbatim to paraphrased. Like a new wing in a library, closed captioning provides a new body of reading material that offers teachers a rich resource and new options for instruction.

RESEARCH RESULTS

The latest research studies on the benefits of using CCTV with second language learners of all ages continue to confirm the findings of earlier years (Bean & Wilson, 1989; Goldman & Goldman, 1988). Students using captioned materials show significant improvement in reading comprehension, listening comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, word recognition, decoding skills, and overall motivation to read.

Thomas Garza (1991) used verbatim captioning with adult ESL learners and adult Russian language learners to explore the language learning benefits of merging spoken and printed text in one medium. He chose short (2-4 minutes), verbatim, captioned segments from actual Russian and American TV programs which provided a kind of visual glossary for difficult vocabulary. When, over time, he tested students' ability to use specific vocabulary from the segments in retellings of their content, he found significant increases in comprehension of the segments, as well as recall of the language used in them.

In a study commissioned by the National Captioning Institute, Neuman and Koskinen (1992) found that using captioned science materials from the television program "3-2-1 Contact" with Asian and Hispanic seventh and eighth grade ESL students resulted in higher scores on tests of word knowledge and recall of science information. These results support the theory that multisensory processing of the audio, video, and print components of captioned TV enhances language learning and content.

ESL CLASSROOM APPLICATIONS

Several technological advances have made the use of captioned materials a less time-consuming activity for teachers and a rich experience for students. It is now possible to capture the captions, i.e., transfer them directly to a printer or computer as they appear on the TV screen. The Scriber system (Pacific Lotus Technologies, PL100 hardware and software packet) enables the viewer to either print out the captions as they appear on the screen or save them on the computer in a word processing program where classroom activities such as the following can be developed: accessing key words, generating cloze exercises, changing the font and spacing, and converting upper case letters to lower case (all captioning is done in capital letters).

For example, Tim Rees (1993) at the International Language Institute of Massachusetts reports success with Chinese and Japanese students of ESL using CCTV news programs and situation comedies to expand vocabulary, improve listening comprehension, increase knowledge of current affairs and U.S. culture, and stimulate class discussions. Rees transcribes the captions on a word processor and uses the printed-out script of programs students have viewed in class for classroom and homework reading. He also designs cloze and other vocabulary activities from TV programs the students view together in class.

Todd Ellsworth (1992), teaching at the Benjamin Franklin Institute in the Mexican state of Yucatan, where students have little exposure to real English, uses captioned TV programs received via satellite from the United States. He divides his classes into three groups to view the same program: The first views the program without captions; the second with captions; and the third with audio only (without video or captions). From issues arising during full-class discussions after the group viewings, Ellsworth

designs lessons on grammar and vocabulary, including idioms and slang; on U.S. cultural expectations and social etiquette; and on the effects of emotion on stress patterns and pronunciation. He finds the in-class study of closed captioned programs motivates the learners to use their second language, English, with greater ease and confidence.

Salvatore Parlato, who works with deaf and hearing ESL students in Rochester, NY, uses in-class captioned TV viewing as a group activity that provides a common frame of reference or talking point from which to build vocabulary and concepts (Parlato, 1986). He focuses the students' attention on the job of the captioner, who often paraphrases and simplifies what is being spoken to make captions short and slow enough for easy readability. His students view programs, looking for differences between captions and dialogue, and discuss these differences after the viewing. Parlato turns the volume off during a second viewing and either he or a student reads the captions aloud while the rest of the class reads along silently. This activity helps develop reading fluency and metalinguistic knowledge about how language can be used and manipulated.

Webb, Vanderplank, and Parks (1994) suggest using certain closed captioned children's programs, such as "Sesame Street," "Reading Rainbow," and "3-2-1 Contact," with adult ESL learners. The content, speed of captioning, and vocabulary make these programs suitable for use in the adult ESL classroom and many adult activities can be designed around them. (See Smallwood, 1992 for a discussion of ways to use children's literature with adults.) "Rescue 911" and "NOVA" are two adult programs that are also suitable for the ESL classroom.

CONCLUSION

Through training in the use of CCTV and sharing of experiences with each other, educators will continue to discover ways in which captioning can transform the medium of television into a powerful and effective literacy and language learning tool for all ESL students, including adult learners.

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Webb, M., Vanderplank, R., & Parks, C. (1994, April). "Developing ESL materials for closed-captioned video programs." Paper presented at the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages annual convention, Baltimore, MD.

Bottom of Form

The Caption Center, 125 Western Avenue, Boston, MA 02134 (617) 492-9225. (For information on how to make your own captions)

The National Captioning Institute, Inc., 1900 Gallows Road, Vienna, VA 22182. (703) 917-7600. (For information about decoders and research studies)

Pacific Lotus Technologies, 1 Bellevue Center, 411, 108th Avenue NE, Suite 1970, Bellevue, Washington, 98004. (206) 454-7374. (For information about decoders and computer software for transcribing)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: WHAT IS CLOSED CAPTIONING?

The symbols (registered trademarks of the National Captioning Institute and of the Caption Center) and "CC" identify, in TV program listings, television programs and videotapes that are closed captioned. These programs have captions, or printed text, at the bottom of the screen, which can be accessed with a decoder. The captions are synchronized with the dialogue or narration of the program's audiotrack.

WHAT KIND OF EQUIPMENT IS NEEDED TO SEE THE CAPTIONS ON A REGULAR TELEVISION SET?

When a captioned program is broadcast on TV or played on a VCR, the captions are visible on sets that have a separate or built-in "caption decoder."

HOW ARE THE CAPTIONS ADDED TO A VIDEOTAPE?

Captioners, somewhat like court stenographers, spend many hours at specialized computer work stations watching and listening to programs and typing a transcript of the words being spoken.These words are then encoded on the videotape as closed captions.They cannot be read until they are decoded.

HOW FAST DO THE CAPTIONS MOVE ACROSS THE SCREEN?

Programs are captioned at different speeds depending on the sophistication and speed of delivery of the language of the spoken text. "Sesame Street," for example, is captioned at 60 words per minute, "Reading Rainbow" at 120 wpm, and the "ABC Evening News" at up to 250 wpm.

DO THE CAPTIONS MATCH THE SOUNDTRACK EXACTLY?

Some programs are captioned almost verbatim; others are paraphrased for ease of readability.

REPORT NO. 3

Closed Captioned Television for Adult LEP Literacy Learners.

From an ERIC digest.

ERIC Identifier: ED321623
Publication Date: 1990-08-00
Author: Spanos,George - Smith, Jennifer J.
Source: Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on Literacy Education for Limited-English-Proficient Adults
Washington DC.

Closed captioning is the process by which audio portions of television programs are transcribed into written words that appear on the television screen at the same time as the program. Captions are similar to the subtitles used for foreign language films, but differ in that they can be received only through the use of an electronic decoder, or "black box." In addition, live programs, such as the evening news and sports events, can be simultaneously captioned.

Closed captioning technology was originally devised for the benefit of the deaf, but there has been recent interest on the part of reading and literacy specialists in the use of closed captioned television (CCTV) with hearing audiences as well. A wide variety of public and commercial television programs of potential use in reading instruction are closed captioned, including news, documentaries, dramas, movies, sitcoms, and advertisements. The major networks (ABC, CBS, NBC, PBS, and the Fox Television Network) offer more than 400 hours of captioned television per week. Almost 100 percent of all major network primetime programs are closed captioned, as are a large percentage of sports and children's programs. Thus, educators may choose from an abundant supply of programs of potential use with language learners of all ages and interests.

According to guidelines approved by Congress in 1981, non-profit educational institutions are permitted to record and use television programs for instructional purposes so long as certain conditions are met:

- Only public and commercial programs may be used;
- Individual teachers (not media librarians or other support personnel) must initiate the recording;
- Recordings must carry the copyright notice;
- Recordings may be used for instructional purposes only;
- Recordings must be used within ten consecutive school days of the time the recording was made;
- Recordings may be shown only once within this ten-day period although the showing may be repeated once if required for instructional purposes;
- Parts of programs may be shown, but these may not be edited to produce anthologies; and
- Tapes must be erased within 45 days of the original recording.

EDUCATIONAL USES OF CLOSED CAPTIONED TELEVISION

Educators have begun to investigate the use of CCTV as a language and literacy learning tool. Studies to investigate the potential uses of CCTV in teaching reading to members of the hearing community have been commissioned by organizations such as the National Captioning Institute (NCI) in Falls Church, VA,

and the Caption Center in Boston, MA. These studies have focused on students learning English as a second language (ESL), students in remedial reading programs, students who are learning disabled, and adults who are functionally illiterate.

Probably the most widely used educational application of CCTV is with students learning English as a second language. In many school districts, ESL students are taught in special classes until their test scores indicate their potential to succeed in the regular classroom. Educators are seeking innovative approaches that will enable ESL students to participate in mainstream content classes while continuing to develop their English language skills.

Video technology provides just such an innovation. People of all ages and educational backgrounds seem to be attracted to television, and numerous captioned television programs and tapes can be used in conjunction with specific curriculum topics and objectives. For example, CCTV has been found to improve the sight vocabulary of adult literacy students (Bean & Wilson, 1989), and to provide reinforcement for new vocabulary in the second language class by providing a context for its use (Gillespie, 1981). CCTV has also been shown to facilitate listening comprehension and the acquisition of native-English speech patterns in ESL learners (Price, 1983). Studies also report the motivating influence of captioned television, and extremely positive attitudes on the part of students toward this medium (Bean & Wilson, 1989). The use of closed captioned primetime television programs with high school ESL students and students in remedial reading programs increased the students' motivation, and resulted in an improvement in their English vocabulary, reading comprehension, and word analysis skills (Goldman&Goldman, 1988).

Other studies that cite the benefits of captioned programming and films for nonnative English speaking and remedial students are Maginnis (1987); Parlato (1985); Koskinen, Wilson, and Jensema (1986); and Huffman (1986).

CCTV FOR ESL ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

A study conducted with fourth- through sixth-grade ESL students in Prince George's County, MD (Center for Applied Linguistics, 1989), revealed a variety of potential benefits of CCTV:

- CCTV provides speech, writing, and supportive visual context simultaneously, making lessons accessible to students who use different types of learning strategies.
- Second language learners generally like CCTV and demonstrate a strong sense of achievement when they are able to comprehend the information presented through CCTV.
- CCTV can be used with heterogeneous groups of students. Less proficient students may be able to understand individual words from either the audio or visual track, while more proficient students may be able to process language from both tracks, perhaps even noticing discrepancies between the two, and thereby becoming more conscious of language use and form.
- Language use in CCTV classrooms is rich in terms of the variety of speech acts generated by the students. One observer noticed, for example, that students were eager to initiate questions and comments about the CCTV instruction.

Classroom teachers involved in the study identified a number of other advantages provided by CCTV, including the following: a variety of language and literacy activities; increased opportunity for students to read; visual reinforcement of word/image associations; a challenge to read quickly and to pick out key words; an opportunity for auditory discrimination through comparison of captions and audio; an opportunity to study the correspondence between spoken and written language; a means of checking or reinforcing listening comprehension; and novelty, which serves as a motivator.

Evidence of the effectiveness of CCTV instruction with the students included the following: increased oral participation on the part of the students; increased awareness of language as evidenced by requests for clarification; and the regular use by students of expressions learned from the videos, such as "Get out of here!" and "Happy landing!" from Sesame Street episodes.

CLOSED CAPTIONED TELEVISION FOR ADULT ESL LEARNERS

A recent action research project conducted by Smith (1990) investigated how CCTV could be used to help teach ESL to adults enrolled at the Arlington County, VA, Refugee Education and Employment Program. This program serves students from all over the world who speak a wide variety of native languages. They provide a remarkably diverse laboratory for investigating the effects of any educational innovation focusing on adult learners of English. Smith found corroboration of many of the findings of the elementary school study discussed above. She found that students were immediately attracted to the CCTV technology. They paid rapt attention to the screen and worked hard to decipher the language. They spontaneously wrote down the unknown words they saw on the screen. Thus, the captions enabled students to identify the written forms of familiar vocabulary, and reinforced the meaning in an audio and video format.

Students often repeated phrases from the captions over and over to themselves while watching. On subsequent viewing of a program, they paid greater attention to the captions, anticipating the spoken text by saying the phrase aloud as soon as it appeared on the screen, even before it was spoken on the audio track. In addition, students used vocabulary from the program in follow-up discussions and written exercises. Smith hypothesized that seeing and hearing the words used repeatedly in the context of a coherent story with video cues made them appear more real--words students could actually use in everyday conversations.

Smith concluded that CCTV has great potential for teaching adult ESL students. Captioning transforms the seductive medium of television into a literacy and language learning tool and helps introduce newcomers to an important conveyor of culture and information. Smith warns, however, that care must be taken in identifying suitable programming. Students approach programs with varying degrees of linguistic proficiency and familiarity with the cultural contexts involved. Because many of the captioned programs most suited for classroom use, e.g., Sesame Street, 3-2-1 Contact, and Reading Rainbow are intended for young viewers, special preparations are necessary to avoid insulting adult learners, if such programs are to be used with that population.

IDENTIFYING, SELECTING, AND ADAPTING CCTV MATERIALS FOR USE WITH ADULT ESL LITERACY LEARNERS

Parks (1986) urges that teachers exercise care in the selection of CCTV programs for classroom use. Both suitability and familiarity of subject matter need to be considered, and the level of difficulty of both the captions and the audio must be taken into account. In developing exercises and lesson plans, Parks recommends that the teacher do the following: - Prepare manageable tasks that match students' ability levels; - Promote active and full participation of students; - Control the length of the lesson to ensure maximum concentration and interest; - Provide for student control of the presentation by giving students opportunities to operate the television and VCR; and - Give students ample opportunities to review.

Koskinen, Wilson, and Jensema (1986) provide ideas for developing reading lessons using captioned materials with adults, with lesson outlines and sample lesson plans. Ideas for lesson plans are also provided by Parks (1986) and Parlato (1985).

The Caption Center has developed CC Writer, for creating closed captions and subtitles, and CC Jr., which produces open captions using an ordinary videocassette recorder, an IBM PC, a standard word processor, and a specially-modified adapter. These products make it possible to develop tailor-made texts for video programs, matched to the specific proficiency levels and needs of particular groups of students.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The Caption Center, 125 Western Avenue, Boston, MA 02134, (617) 492-9225.

The Center for Applied Linguistics, 1118 22nd St. N.W., Washington, DC 20037, (202) 429-9292.
The National Captioning Institute, Inc., 5203 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22041, (703) 998-2400.

The Arlington Refugee Education and Employment Program, Wilson School, 1601 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22201, (703) 358-4200.

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ESL Literacy for a Linguistic Minority: The Deaf Experience.

An ERIC digest.

ERIC Identifier: ED353861
Publication Date: 1992-07-00
Author: Holcomb, Tom - Peyton, Joy Kreeft
Source: National Clearinghouse on Literacy Education Washington DC., Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on Literacy Education for Limited-English-Proficient Adults Washington DC.

Learning to read and write effectively is a challenging task for many adults, particularly for those who are deaf. (The term "deaf" is used here to refer to both deaf and hard-of-hearing people.) In spite of concerted efforts by educators to facilitate the development of literacy skills in deaf individuals, most deaf high school graduates read English at roughly a third or fourth grade level as determined by standardized reading assessments (Allen,1986; King & Quigley, 1985). In their writing, they often make vocabulary and structural errors that include omitting or confusing articles, prepositions, and verb tense markers, and they have difficulty with complex structures such as complements and relative clauses (Swisher, 1989).

Having limited literacy skills acts as a barrier for deaf people in the workplace. They often have had limited opportunities at school for vocational training. They also may have difficulties communicating with hearing co-workers and poor performance on work-related reading and writing tasks. Because of these factors, deaf adults in the workplace often find themselves confined to low-level jobs.

This digest offers possible explanations for these difficulties and describes new approaches in deaf education that show promise for improving the literacy skills of deaf adults.

REASSESSING SOURCES OF LITERACY DIFFICULTIES

For centuries, deafness was considered a pathological condition. Deaf people were considered mentally and educationally deficient due to their inability to hear and in need of special education and social services to minimize and correct those deficiencies (for a summary, see McAnally, Rose, & Quigley, 1987). However, following the groundbreaking work of William Stokoe (1960)and others, there has been a growing trend away from a pathological definition of deafness (Wixtrom, 1988; Woodward, 1982). Most educators and researchers in the field of deafness now believe that deaf people share similar language backgrounds and literacy challenges with other linguistic minority groups. Their difficulties with acquiring literacy in English are considered to have linguistic, cultural, and educational rather than pathological roots (Charrow, 1981; Johnson, Lidell, & Erting, 1989; Padden & Humphries, 1988).

LINGUISTIC DIFFERENCES

One of the primary causes of difficulty with English literacy is that English is a language that deaf people have not heard or have heard only in a limited way. Thus, for them, American Sign Language (ASL) or

another form of manual communication is the most accessible language because of its visual properties. As Charrow (1981) points out:

It is not the inability to hear that causes the most persistent problems of prelingually deaf persons, but the enormous constraints that that inability puts upon the learning and use of the societal language. (p. 187)

Because deaf learners do not have access to English in its spoken form, the challenge for them of developing literacy skills is much greater, in some ways, than it is for hearing nonnative English speakers.

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

A growing body of literature brings a social/cultural perspective to the literacy issues concerning deaf people. American Sign Language, the primary language of many deaf people, is now recognized by linguists as a complete, legitimate language with complex grammatical structures and extensive vocabulary. However, ASL is clearly a minority language in a majority culture that tends not to understand or respect sign language. (Swisher, 1989).

Despite the legitimacy of ASL, many deaf people grow up with ambivalent attitudes toward their own language, often feeling "inferior to hearing persons" (Kannapell, 1976, p. 11). Padden (1987) reports that deaf people's attitudes toward ASL vary between "intense pride" and "a great deal of confusion and shame" (p. 44; quoted in Swisher, 1989). This ambivalence extends to English as well. Because of the need to communicate with the non-signing public and to function in an English-literate society, most deaf adults believe that English literacy is important. Still, many hold an equally strong belief that they are unable to master it.

EDUCATIONAL DEFICIENCIES

Since the early 1500s, when educators began to realize that the "deaf and dumb" were capable of being educated, a variety of approaches have been used to develop deaf people's literacy. (For a summary, see McAnally et al., 1987.) Many educators today, however, argue that these approaches have been woefully inadequate (e.g., Johnson, Liddell, & Erting, 1989). Oral/aural and phonics-based approaches, for example, have not proven effective, since for deaf learners, printed words are not connected with sounds. Forms of Manually Coded English such as SEE (Signing Exact English), developed by educators to represent English on the hands, are cumbersome to use, do not adequately represent either English or ASL (Kluwin, 1981), and have had limited success. Remedial approaches, which have focused on pattern practice, vocabulary lessons, and teaching explicit rules (Charrow, 1981), break language into parts and do not allow English to be used in the natural way that it is acquired by hearing individuals. By adulthood, many deaf learners have had years of failure and frustration with learning to read and write in English.

CURRENT APPROACHES TO LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

At the same time that they may experience frustration and failure, most deaf adults understand the need to be literate in English. As well as being crucial to success in the work world, written English is

often the only way they have to communicate with a non-signing public. Recent, innovative educational approaches show promise for reversing the cycle of failure. Space allows only mentioning these approaches briefly, but the references cited provide ample information about them. Some have been used so far primarily with children, but may be effective with adults as well, with appropriate modifications.

* Bilingual/bicultural approaches, which integrate ASL and English and include using videotaped stories in ASL as a precursor to writing compositions in English (Humphries, Martin, & Coye, 1989; Mozzer-Mather, 1990; Paul, 1987; Quigley & Paul, 1984)

* Whole language and writing process approaches, which focus on problem-solving skills needed in the workplace and avoid overt correction of errors and breaking language into parts (Heald-Taylor, 1989)

* Interactive writing, in which deaf learners and teachers converse in written English on teletypewriters (Lieberth, 1988; Nash & Nash, 1982), on local- and wide-area computer networks (Peyton & Batson, 1986; Ward & Rostron, 1983), and in dialogue journals (Staton, 1990; chapters in Peyton, 1990)

* Interactive videodisc, in which computerized ASL video and printed English text are used simultaneously to help deaf learners develop their English skills (Copra, 1990; Hanson & Padden, 1989)

* Closed captioned TV programs, which allow extensive exposure to English through a recreational medium (Bean & Wilson, 1989; Spanos & Smith, 1990)

CONCLUSION

Mastering written English is a lifelong struggle for many deaf people. Deaf adults develop literacy differently than do their hearing peers. The above instructional approaches, which (a) are student-centered, (b) require meaningful use of both ASL and English, (c) incorporate and build on the language and cultural backgrounds and actual home and workplace issues facing deaf adults, and (d) use creative visual means to teach reading and writing, promise to make the educational process more meaningful, positive, and successful for deaf learners. The use of these approaches for developing the literacy skills of deaf adults needs to be carefully documented and the degree of success determined.

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REPORT NO. 5

Literacy Instruction through Communicative and Visual Arts.

An ERIC Digest.

The purpose of this Digest is to explore the evidence suggesting the effectiveness of literacy instruction through communicative and visual arts. According to Flood, Heath, and Lapp (1997), visual arts includes everything from dramatic performances, comic books, to television viewing. The communicative arts, such as reading, writing, and speaking, exist as integrated elements in the visual arts. These authors argued that using visual arts in literacy instruction motivates students to become involved in the communicative arts. By taking visual arts away from the communicative arts in the classroom, schools would grow away from the fundamental skills that adults need to function in society.

TELEVISION AND MULTIPLE MEDIA AS INSTRUCTIONAL TOOLS

Television viewing occupies a significant portion of students' lives. Starting from preschool, American children spend more time watching television than any other activity (Anderson, Field, Collins, Lorch, & Nathan, 1985, as cited in Broek, 2001; Huston, Wright, Rice, Kerkman, & St. Peters, 1987, as cited in Broek, 2001). Despite various negative effects associated with television viewing, several studies demonstrate that TV can be an effective tool in literacy instruction.

For very young children, some studies suggest there is an overlap between children's pre-reading television viewing and their later reading skills. The results reveal that children who were good at comprehending materials presented via TV were also good at comprehending materials presented aurally (Broek, 2001). Research also showed that viewing educational television programs may be beneficial to young children's literacy learning. The evaluation of the television series "Between the Lions" on Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) indicated that the kindergarteners who watched this series significantly outperformed their non-viewing peers on the tasks of word knowledge, concepts of print, phonemic awareness, and letter-sound knowledge (Strickland & Rath, 2000).

For older students, incorporating TV into reading instruction may motivate reluctant readers and result in improved reading fluency. Koskinen, Wilson, and Jensema (1985) used closed-captioned television programs with 35 second through sixth grade remedial readers in an exploratory study. The anecdotal evidence indicated that closed-captioned programs were effective in promoting the learners' reading fluency. In Goldman and Goldman's study (1988), the audio portion of TV programs were turned off and the high school remedial students were motivated to read the captions in order to understand the story. Two recent studies show that multimedia can also be an effective instructional tool in the language arts classroom. One fourth grade teacher used television/videos in conjunction with texts, using computers for information and writing, and other reading/writing instruction (e.g., book clubs) to engage students

in a language arts unit (Lapp, Flood, & Fisher, 1999). Students' reading comprehension and attention span increased, content knowledge was reinforced, and students had more aesthetic responses. Jester (2002) incorporated reading, writing, and grammar lessons with multimedia for a book report presentation in a sixth grade language arts classroom. The multimedia presentation helped students organize ideas more clearly, provided students with easier methods for revision and editing, allowed students to differentiate between words and ideas through the use of color and fonts, and sustained students' attention longer than traditional media.

USING DRAMATIC ACTIVITIES IN LANGUAGE ARTS CLASSROOMS

Using dramatic activities as an instructional tool in the language arts classroom is based on the principle that drama directly involved the child, and an involved child would be interested in learning (Smith, 1972). The following studies document the effectiveness of incorporating dramatic activities into the language arts curriculum.

McMaster (1998) reviewed research studies regarding the use of drama in literacy education and found that drama is an effective medium for literacy development in nine areas. First, students develop affect through drama. Drama creates motivation for students to participate and facilitates students' responses in reading instruction. Second, dramatization is a source of scaffolding for emergent readers by providing rich background experiences for future reading. Third, dramatization leads students to develop symbolic representation, which is the same concept children require in order to understand the alphabetic principle. Fourth, dramatic activities provide students a meaningful environment where they can practice oral reading repeatedly to develop fluency. Fifth, new vocabularies presented in the drama context provide students opportunities to acquire the meanings visually, aurally, and kinesthetically. Sixth, drama helps students acquire the knowledge of word order, phrasing, and punctuation that contribute to the meaning of a written sentence. Seventh, drama activities help students read different forms of discourse, especially in familiarizing children with nonfiction. Eighth, students monitor their own comprehension in drama and develop effective reading strategies. Ninth, teachers can use drama as an assessment tool since it provides immediate feedback about students' understanding of new reading materials.

For adolescents, dramatic activities provide meaningful contexts and motivation to practice literacy use. Worthman (2002) explored the writing done by a teen theater ensemble and showed that the aesthetic activities provided adolescents opportunities to see writing as a means for communication other than solitary practice. Ferree (2001) documented how two British secondary language arts teachers engaged students with literature by producing soap operas. During the production, teachers engaged students in various language usages, spelling and writing instruction. Students were motivated to participate because they had ownership over the product. Students also had opportunities to study realistic materials, use technology, learn actively, and to collaborate with peers in the production process.

Dramatic activities also provide scaffolding for effective literacy instruction in elementary and English-as-a-second language classrooms. O'Day (2001) wrote that scaffolded play with elementary students allowed them to participate actively in their language learning. Students were motivated to organize, rewrite, discuss and perform the play. Morado, Koenig, and Wilson (1999) interwove literature, drama, music, and movement together into miniperformances for at-risk kindergarten, first-, and second-grade

students. Teachers engaged students with literature, explored and experimented with story elements in the class, and affirmed children's language while deciding with students on words to use in the performances. Rossi (2000) examined the use of an opera project with Spanish-English bilingual first graders. Children's own cultural experiences were valued in the project and many multi-model contexts were provided for children to learn language and develop literacy in supportive and meaningful environments.

TEACHING LANGUAGE ARTS THROUGH COMICS

Comic books have been the reading materials for children since the 1930s (Morrison, Bruan, & Chilcoat, 2002), and because of their popularity among students, several researchers investigated the effectives of using comic books to engage students in language arts classroom.

Wright and Sherman (1999) argued that teachers should use comic strips in language arts classrooms for three reasons. First, their study revealed a high level of interest in the genre. Second, the wide circulation of comic strips makes them an economically viable source of material. Third, most comic strips have low readability levels, with words and sentences which are linguistically suitable for elementary and middle school readers. In an earlier study, Goldstein (1986) described a project using cartoons and comics in vocabulary instruction. Transparencies were made of the cartoons and comics to share with students. Students kept notebooks, journals, or vocabulary cards for the new vocabularies they learned from the comic and cartoons. Positive results were indicated by teacher and parent observation and students' improvement in standardized test scores.

CONCLUSION

As technology advances, new ways of transmitting knowledge are developingrapidly. When we expand our methods of literacy instruction by includingTV, drama, multimedia, comics, and other formats, we may be able to reachmore students in the language arts classroom and meet students' differentlearning styles than would be the case using purely traditional teachingmethods.

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REPORT NO. 6

ESL Instruction for Learning Disabled Adults.

An ERIC Digest
ERIC Identifier: ED477612
Publication Date: 2003-12-00
Author: Lin, Chia-Hui
Source: ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading English and Communication Bloomington IN.

The lack of Success some adults experience in learning may be due to learning disabilities (Lowry, 1990; Osher & Webb, 1994). An Interagency Committee on Learning Disabilities identifies persons of average or above average intelligence who encounter significant difficulties with listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning, or mathematical abilities or with social skills as learning disabled (Langner, 1993, Osher & Webb, 1994). Little is known about how these disabilities affect adults studying English as a second language (ESL).

This digest looks at what "is" known about learning disabilities and adult ESL learners, and addresses the following questions: How do learning disabilities affect the progress of adults learning English? How can learning disabled adults be identified and assessed? What kinds of instructional methods work best with this population? What kind of preparation is needed for teachers who work with them?

LEARNING DISABILITIES AND SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING

Learning disabilities can affect every aspect of learning. They may impair multiple skills and abilities or they may impair only one. For example, difficulties with spelling may affect learners' writing skills, but not their reading skills. Learners may show learning disabilities in their second language yet not in their first. Often a subtle learning disability in the first language is masked by an individual's compensatory strategies (e.g., getting general information about what is said or written through the overall context when specific words or concepts are not understood or substituting known words for words that cause difficulty). However, these strategies may not be available to the learner in the new language (Ganschow & Sparks, 1993; Lowry, 1990).

IDENTIFYING ESL ADULTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

It is difficult to determine how many adult ESL learners have learning disabilities. Estimates of the total U.S. adult population who are learning disabled range from as low as 3% to as high as 80% (Langner, 1993; Lowry, 1990; McCormick, 1991; Osher & Webb, 1994). The percentage of learning disabled students in adult education classes may exceed that of the population as a whole (Lowry, 1990). It is not known, however, if this is true in adult ESL classes.

The process of identifying anyone--adult, child, native English speaker, or ESL learner--as learning disabled can be stigmatizing (McCormick, 1991). Therefore, educators stress weighing the advantages of identifying adults as learning disabled (making them eligible for special instruction, resources, and services) against the possible stigma of the label (Lowry, 1990).

Before identifying an adult as learning disabled, other reasons for lack of expected progress should be considered.

1. Limited previous educational experience may hinder progress in learning, that is, lack of exposure to classroom behaviors (using a pencil, repeating after a teacher, "reading" from a chalkboard, etc.) may be new and difficult for the learner with little or no prior schooling.

2. The lack of effective study habits may cause problems in learning.

3. The interference of a learner's native language may complicate the process of learning English. (For example, the spelling problems of an Arab student might be explained by the change in alphabet from Arabic to English; his slow reading by the change of direction in reading.) In fact, some of the problems of learning disabled language learners may be similar to those of all students beginning to learn a second language. However, with the non- disabled learner, these problems should lessen over time.

4. A mismatch between the instructor's teaching style and the learner's expectations of how the class will be conducted may slow progress in learning the language.

5. External problems with work, health, and family may account for lack of progress in the second language classroom.

ASSESSING THE LEARNER

Using standardized tests to identify learning disabilities presents problems: First, instruments designed to diagnose learning disabilities are usually normed on native English speakers. Therefore, the results cannot be reliably used with learners whose first language is not English. Portions of some tests can give a clear idea of a learner's strengths and weaknesses, but simple scores based on a whole test are not always reliable. Because the concepts and language being tested may have no direct translation, the validity of tests translated into the native language is questionable. Second, the tests are primarily designed for and normed on "younger" students and may not be suitable for adults (Lowry, 1990). Finally, since no single assessment technique is sufficient to diagnose a learning disability, multiple assessment measures (including the following) are necessary.

1. An interview in the native language can provide invaluable information about the learner's previous educational experience in English and in the native language, it can alert programs to learner expectations for classroom instruction, and it can provide insight into the learner's functioning in the first language (Ganschow & Sparks, 1993; Learning Disabilities Association, 1994).

2. Portfolio assessment--in which measurements of learner progress in reading and writing are considered along with attendance data, writing samples, autobiographical information, and work on class assignments--is favored in many programs because its variety of input provides a broad picture of the learner's performance (Wrigley, 1992).

3. Phonological tests (that could include auditory discrimination exercises assessing the learners ability to distinguish between vowel sounds or between nonsense words) may suggest difficulties the learner could experience with sound-related aspects of the language (Ganschow & Sparks, 1993).

4. Visual screening and routine hearing tests may prove that what appear to be reading or listening and speaking disabilities may be due, in part, to correctable auditory or visual problems (McCormick, 1991).

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND MATERIALS

Learning disabilities affect learning in any language and must therefore be a guiding factor in designing instruction for adult learners with disabilities. Educators of learning disabled children and adults (Baca & Cervantes, 1991; Ganschow & Sparks, 1993; Lowry, 1990) give the following suggestions for providing instruction.

1. Be highly structured and predictable.

2. Include opportunities to use several senses and learning strategies.

3. Provide constant structure and multisensory review.

4. Recognize and build on learners' strengths and prior knowledge.

5. Simplify language but not content; emphasize content words and make concepts accessible through the use of pictures, charts, maps, timelines, and diagrams.

6. Reinforce main ideas and concepts through rephrasing rather than through verbatim repetition.

Technology can help adult learners with learning disabilities to acquire a second language, but its use is not well documented. Raskind and Scott (1993) discuss the use of electronic aids for this population. Devices such as personal computers, hand-held translators and dictionaries, personal data keepers, and cassette recorders are useful as are more sophisticated learning tools such as speech synthesizers and reading machines that allow learners to hear as well as see what is displayed on the computer. Also recommended are televisions with closed-caption capabilities and VCR decoding devices that transcribe and project spoken dialogue on the screen. (See Parks, 1994, for discussion of the use of VCR decoding devices with adult ESL learners.)

TEACHER TRAINING FOR INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT

In elementary and secondary level ESL programs, the need for teachers trained in both ESL and special education has been recognized for some time, and various teacher training models team ESL instructors and special education instructors (Baca & Cervantes, 1991). In adult basic education and adult ESL, where less time and money are available for program capacity building through research and teacher training, there are fewer models to look to. However, two programs have been funded to do research on adult ESL learners with learning disabilities.

1. The Arlington Education and Employment Program (REEP) has received a grant from the Virginia Adult Educators Research Network to explore ways teachers can assist adult ESL students who may be learning disabled to acquire and retain basic literacy in a learner-centered classroom or computer lab. Through the use of a combination of standardized assessment tools, portfolio assessment, and narrative case studies of students who do not make expected progress, REEP hopes to find a few specific techniques that benefit not only students with learning disabilities, but all students in the program (L. Terrill, personal communication, January 3, 1995).

2. The Learning Disabilities Association (LDA) in Minneapolis, in a project funded by the Minnesota Department of Education and Medtronics, Inc., used a combination of measures at the Lehmann ABE center to assess adult ESL learners who were suspected of having learning disabilities. The assessment included some standardized tests--the Basic English Skills Test (BEST), the Learning Styles Inventory, a phonics inventory, and the Test of Non-verbal Intelligence-R (Toni-R)--as well as some alternative assessment--learner observations by teachers and learning disabilities specialists, and native language writing samples and interviews. Project findings suggest that learning disabled adult ESL students benefit most when learning disabilities specialists and ESL teachers work together to plan instruction that is individualized, multisensory, phonics-based, and delivered in an environment where the learner is comfortable--generally the regular classroom (LDA, 1994).

CONCLUSION

As the extent of learning disabilities in the adult ESL population becomes more evident, training in issues and instructional methods related to learning disabilities will need to be part of professional development for all adult ESL educators. Research leading to the development of guidelines for assessment and instruction must be funded. Broader cooperation among the fields of ESL, adult education, and special education should ensure that the instructional needs of learning disabled ESL adults are being met.

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REPORT NO. 7

Using the Technology of Closed-Captioned Television To Teach Reading to Handicapped Students: Performance Reports

Abstract:

This project investigated the effectiveness of using closed-captioned television in the teaching of reading to learning-disabled and hearing-impaired students. Seven teachers of learning disabled students, and 45 students ranging in age from 8 to 13 years, from a large Maryland public school system participated in this study. The first two of nine studies focused upon the identification of appropriate program materials to be used in the seven subsequent studies. These preliminary investigations dealt with determining the readability of available captioned programs, and determining whether the readability level of the captions corresponded to student success in reading captions. Three studies then investigated the effects of captioned television viewing on the vocabulary and comprehension skills of both hearing/learning-disabled and hearing-impaired students. Four additional studies were conducted with teachers of learning-disabled and hearing-impaired students to determine their skill in using model captioned television reading lessons and their skill in developing and teaching captioned television reading lessons. Results suggest that the addition of captions to conventional television is an effective means of enhancing the sight vocabulary and comprehension skills of both learning-disabled and hearing-impaired students. Teachers effectively developed their own captioned lessons and were enthusiastic about their use in the teaching of a variety of reading skills. The appendices include sample researcher lessons, sample model lessons, and teacher evaluation forms. (JDD)

REPORT NO. 8

Using Captioned TV for Teaching Reading: FASTBACK 359

ERIC #: ED366935
 Authors: Goldman, Milton E.;
 Descriptors: Copyrights; Elementary Secondary Education; English (Second Language); Lesson Plans; Mass Media Use; Reading Improvement; Reading Instruction; Remedial Programs; Television;
 Publisher: Phi Delta Kappa, P.O. Box 789, Bloomington, IN 47402-0789 ($1 each for members, $1.25 nonmembers).
 Publication Date: 1993-00-00
 Pages: 36
 Pub Types: Opinion Papers; Guides - Classroom - Teacher

Abstract:

Suggesting that captioned television is a powerful motivator for teaching reading comprehension, this fastback offers a procedure for teaching with captioned television, including taping captioned programs off the air. The fastback notes that captioned television is useful in intermediate and advanced English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) programs, students in grades 5 to 12 and adults whose reading comprehension levels are significantly below expectations for their grade or age, and remedial programs, special education, reading, or English programs for students whose tested comprehension is between fourth- and eighth-grade reading levels. The fastback provides suggestions for choosing appropriate programs and explanations of copyright and off-air recording regulations. The fastback also provides two sample lesson plans for ESL students and advice for using captioned television in the content areas. A sample captioned television study guide is attached. (RS)

Identifiers: Closed Captioned Television; Content Area Teaching; Reading Motivation
Level: 1 - Reproducible in paper and microfiche; and, since 1993, in electronic format; materials issued from January 1993 - July 2004 are now available at no cost through this Web site
Institutions: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, Bloomington, IN.
ISBN: ISBN-0-87367-359-X
Audiences: Teachers; Practitioners

REPORT NO. 9

The Effectiveness of Television Captioning on Comprehension and Preference.

Kirkland, C. Eric; And Others

Abstract:

The educational and motivational benefits of captioning have been established for people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing as well as for students who have a learning disability or who have limited English proficiency. The primary goal of this study was to determine whether technological enhancements to captioning would benefit children with learning disabilities and the general population of students. An evaluation was conducted of the effects of the speed of captioning on comprehension and the secondary effects of advance organizers on comprehension and preference. Middle school students with learning disabilities were the focus of this study; 317 eighth grade students, 68 with learning disabilities or special education needs, were examined. Half of the classes were asked questions that served as advance organizers for videos on a science topic; the other half viewed videos without advance organizers. All classes were assigned three captioning levels: standard, edited, or highlighted. The use of videos enhanced by captioning and the use of advance organizers was shown to positively affect students' comprehension and attitudes. Irrespective of advance organizers and group identification (general or special education), students' comprehension dropped when captioning was withdrawn. Interest ratings did not correlate significantly to comprehension scores. (Contains 19 references.) (AEF)

Descriptors: * Advance Organizers; * Comprehension; Educational Benefits; Educational Technology; Grade 8; Junior High Schools; * Learning Disabilities; * Special Needs Students; * Student Attitudes; * Videotape Recordings
Identifiers: *Captioned Media