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## *Validating the construct of theoretical orientation in reading instruction*

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WHILE IT is generally accepted that the teacher is an important factor related to success in learning to read, studies exploring the teacher variable have resulted in more questions than answers. This is due partly to measurement problems; reliable instrumentation and research methodologies simply have not been developed. This study validated an instrument to determine a teacher's theoretical orientation to reading instruction. The instrument, the DeFord Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile (TORP), uses a Likert scale response system to determine teacher beliefs about practices in reading instruction. Three phases of data collection were utilized to evaluate the reliability of the instrument: (a) Administration to a sample of 90 teachers of known theoretical orientation; (b) comparison of responses by three judges from the field of reading as to their concordance on the profiles expected from phonics, skills and whole language respondents; and (c) observation of 14 teachers by trained observers who in turn predicted the responses of the teachers on the instrument. Through use of descriptive data, factor analysis and discriminant analysis, the TORP was proven a reliable, valid instrument for discriminating teachers as to their theoretical orientation to reading.

### *Validation du système d'orientation théorique en instruction de lecture*

BIEN QUE l'on accepte généralement l'idée que l'enseignant est un facteur important relié au succès de l'acquisition de la lecture, des études explorant la variable de l'enseignant ont fourni plus de questions que de réponses. Ceci est dû en partie à des problèmes de mesures; on n'a tout simplement pas encore développé des instruments sûrs et des méthodologies de recherche. Cette étude a validé un instrument pour déterminer une orientation théorique de l'enseignant à l'instruction de la lecture. L'instrument, l'orientation théorique DeFord au Profile de la Lecture (TORP), utilise un système de réponses à l'échelle Likert pour déterminer les convictions de l'enseignant concernant la pratique de l'instruction de la lecture. On a utilisé trois phases de collection données pour évaluer la crédibilité de l'instrument: a) Administration d'orientation théorique connue à un échantillon de 90 enseignants; b) comparaison des réponses par trois juges dans le domaine de la lecture quant à leur accord sur les profils prévus des phoniques, des compétences et des répondants de la langue en entier; et c) Observation de 14 enseignants par des observateurs formés qui ont prédit à leur tour les réponses des enseignants sur l'instrument. A travers l'usage de données descriptives, une analyse de facteurs et une analyse discriminante, le TORP s'est avéré être un instrument sûr, valide pour discriminer les enseignants quant à leur orientation théorique envers la lecture.

### *Validando el constructo de orientación teórica en instrucción de lectura*

MIENTRAS QUE generalmente se acepta la importancia del factor maestro/a en relación al éxito del aprendizaje de la lectura, estudios que exploran la variable maestro/a han dejado más interrogantes que respuestas. Esto se debe en parte a problemas de medición; instrumentación y metodologías de investigación confiables no han sido aun desarrolladas. Este estudio validó un instrumento para determinar la orientación teórica que tiene un/a maestro/a hacia la instrucción de lectura. El instrumento, DeFord Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile (TORP), usa una escala de respuestas tipo Likert para determinar las creencias de los ma-

estros acerca de las prácticas de instrucción en lectura. Se utilizaron tres fases en la recopilación de datos que posibilitaron evaluar la confiabilidad del instrumento: (a) Se administró a una muestra de 90 maestros de conocida orientación teórica; (b) tres jueces del campo de lectura compararon las respuestas en cuanto a concordancia con los perfiles esperados de sujetos con orientación fonética, de destrezas y global de lenguaje, y (c) observadores adiestrados observaron a 14 maestros y predijeron las respuestas de los maestros en el instrumento. Mediante el uso de datos descriptivos, análisis factorial y análisis discriminatorio, se probó que el TORP es un instrumento confiable y válido para discriminar entre las orientaciones teóricas de los maestros hacia la lectura.

There is a mass of literature which reports on investigations into the influence of instruction on learning to read (Barr, 1972; Bawden, Buike & Duffy, 1979; Bond & Dykstra, 1967; Brophy & Good, 1970; Chall, 1967; Cohen, 1974-75; DeLawter, 1970; Dunkin & Biddle, 1974; Elder, 1971; Gove, 1981; Mitchell, 1980; Ramsey, 1962). Much of this research has examined how teachers or learners act or perform. Others abandoned this focus on behavior to explore the cognitive processes, or decision making aspects of teaching (Shavelson, 1983; Shulman, 1975; Shulman & Elstein, 1975). The common thread throughout this literature is the belief that teachers are decision makers who process information and act upon these decisions within complex environments. These investigations have pointed out that research on teaching must examine not only teachers' behavior but also their judgments, plans and decisions in relation to that behavior (Shavelson, 1983). Harste and Burke (1977) hypothesized that teachers make decisions about reading instruction in light of the theory, or assumptions they hold about reading and learning. They propose that a teacher's theoretical orientation establishes expectancies and influences goals, procedures, materials and classroom interaction patterns.

This model of rational decision making is compelling, but researchers who have sought to explore the relationship between the theories teachers hold about reading instruction and their classroom practices have reported mixed results (Buike & Duffy, 1979; DeFord, 1981; Harste & Burke, 1977; Kamil & Pearson, 1979; Martoncik, 1981; Mitchell, 1980). In an ethnographic study of three kindergarten teachers, Ross (1979) found four factors to be important

in the ability of teachers to implement their beliefs: (a) clarity of beliefs, (b) the ability to perceive a connection between beliefs and practices identified previously as important, (c) an awareness and thorough understanding of possible alternative practices, and (d) the teacher's perceptions of the beliefs of school system officials. However, the extent to which teachers' behaviors are influenced by their theoretical orientations has been difficult to demonstrate. This has largely been due to methodological reasons (Pace & Powers, 1981). Researchers have depended on word of mouth, lengthy observation periods, expert opinion or assumptions about teacher beliefs based upon classroom materials; in short, precise and reliable instrumentation and research methodologies have not been developed. Reading research and teacher education both need a consistent measure that will profile teacher held belief systems accurately and reliably. This paper describes attempts to validate an instrument developed in order to classify a teacher's theoretical orientation to reading instruction and sets forth procedures for using it in educational research.

### *Instrument Development*

#### Rationale

A constructivist perspective (Magoon, 1977) holds as its chief assumption that the "subjects" being studied are knowing beings, and that the knowledge they possess has important consequences for how behavior or actions are interpreted. It also follows that the knowledge they possess influences their actions. Knowledge, then, forms a system of beliefs and

attitudes which direct perceptions and behaviors. In Smith's (1982) words:

What we have in our heads is a theory of what the world is like, a theory that is the basis of all our perceptions and understanding of the world, the root of all learning, the source of all hopes and fears, motives and expectancies, reasoning and creativity. And this theory is all we have. If we can make sense of the world at all, it is by interpreting our interactions with the world in the light of our theory. (p. 54)

Harste and Burke define (1977) theoretical orientation in reading as the particular knowledge and belief system held toward reading, that is, those deep philosophical principles that guide teachers to establish expectations about student behavior and the host of decisions they must make as they teach reading lessons. A difference in the theory model held, or theoretical orientation, will necessitate differences in practice (Steiner, 1977). Within the complex instructional setting, the decisions Harste and Burke suggest that are influenced by a teacher's theoretical orientation involve:

1. The goals that teachers set for the classroom reading program.
2. The behaviors teachers perceive as reflecting "good" reading behavior.
3. The procedures, materials and information teachers use for instructional diagnosis.
4. The weighting teachers give to various pieces of diagnostic information.
5. The materials teachers select and use for instruction in the program.
6. The environment teachers perceive to be most conducive to reading growth.
7. The criteria teachers use to determine growth in reading.

This hypothesis is supported by the work of Andrews (1976), Barr (1974-75), DeFord (1981) and DeLawter (1975). In studying readers taught by a particular method of beginning reading instruction, these authors found consistent strategies in word attack and in uninterrupted reading samples within the orientations examined. The similarities across studies for children taught by a code emphasis approach and a word recognition approach might suggest

that teachers of the same theoretical orientation have similar behaviors and expectations. If there are similarities within, and differences across orientations that can be measured, a reliable means of differentiating teachers for purposes of research is possible. A pilot version of the TORP was developed with this idea in mind.

Instructional programs in reading were examined and categorized according to basic distinctions in theoretical orientations each assumes. Three clusters of theoretical orientations were apparent in these classifications. One grouping initially emphasized smaller than word level language units, with gradual movement toward word units and attention to comprehension. The texts used in these programs were controlled for phonemic consistency and systematic introduction of consonant-vowel combinations. The teachers' manuals suggested large segments of time for the practice of decoding isolated letters and letter combinations. Once a foundation in sound/letter correspondence was built, texts became more complex and instructional activities centering around fluency and comprehension were increased. "Sight word" instruction was utilized only for those words which did not lend themselves to use of phonics. This cluster of programs was labeled phonics, with McCracken and Walcutt, *Basic Reading Series* (Lippincott, 1975) serving as an exemplar.

The second cluster of initial programs placed their emphasis on building an adequate sight word vocabulary for the children to use in reading. These vocabulary items were usually introduced in context, with multiple opportunities provided for practice. Instruction in sound/letter correspondence was also found in these materials, but seemed to concentrate on initial and ending consonant sounds from the vocabulary items that had been introduced. Exercises on short and long vowel sound distinctions were dealt with in a less systematic manner than in the phonics programs. Many word attack skills were introduced, often in a hierarchically arranged sequence (e.g., use of affixes, word configuration, root words, compound words, context clues). The texts were generated for further practice of sight vocabulary. Story quality

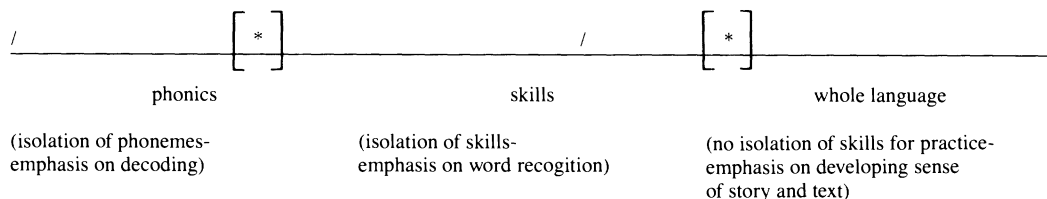
improved as a greater number of vocabulary items were incorporated. Clymer, Bisset and Wulfing, *Reading 720* (Ginn & Company, 1976), represents the cluster hereafter referred to as skills.

The third orientation found in instructional programs provided readers with quality literature from the outset of instruction. Initially, the emphasis was on developing sense of story/text as a framework for dealing with smaller units of language. Activities that focused on words or letters were integrated into the reading experience (e.g., circle all the occurrences of “and,” draw a line under all the words that start with “d”), with student/group generation of stories strongly recommended. Student writing and shared reading experiences were integral to these instructional programs. The Martin and Brogan *Sounds of Language Program* (Holt, 1972) is an example of this whole language orientation.

While these characteristics were clearly different among the set of three exemplars cited so far, most instructional programs fall along a continuum of practices (see Figure 1), rather than three distinct categories, emphasizing increasingly larger units of language. There were points of overlap in instructional practices (see \* in Figure 1), particularly in areas of proximity to another orientation. That is, the phonics and skills orientations tended to share practices, as did the skills and language orientations, but there was little sharing between phonics and language. Those systems characterized as “eclectic” fall in the middle of the continuum.

The pilot Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile (TORP) reflected beliefs and practices outlined in the various basal series representing each of the orientations of Phonics, Skills, and Whole Language. This instrument consisted of 36 statements about reading and reading instruction with a five degree Likert scale response system from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The group responses to specific items were expected to differ in predicted ways (see Table 1). In response to the items in Table 1, the phonics group was expected to strongly agree, the skills group to register moderate agreement to moderate disagreement, and the whole language group to strongly disagree with rule memorization. As sight vocabulary is most important to the skills orientation, the skills group was expected to agree most strongly to practicing sight words, the phonics group to be more moderate, and the whole language group to strongly disagree with the need of sight word drill. In response to the statement about miscue production, the phonics group was expected to strongly disagree, the skills group to exhibit mixed agreement, and the whole language group to strongly agree with this practice. A scoring system based upon the expected profiles was developed, with a total of 36 (one point for each response expected of a phonics orientation) and 180 (five points for each response expected of a whole language orientation) defining the test score range. This requires a transformation of some item scores (depending on which end of the continuum they are believed to characterize) to obtain a total score.

Figure 1  
Continuum of Instruction



*Table 1* Expected group responses

A child needs to be able to verbalize the rules of phonics in order to assure proficiency in processing new words.					
Phonics	1	2	3	4	5
	SA				SD
Skills	1	2	3	4	5
	SA				SD
Whole language	1	2	3	4	5
	SA				SD
It is important for a word to be repeated a number of times after it has been introduced to insure that it will become a part of sight vocabulary.					
Phonics	1	2	3	4	5
	SA				SD
Skills	1	2	3	4	5
	SA				SD
Whole language	1	2	3	4	5
	SA				SD
If a child says "house" for the written word "home," the response should be left uncorrected.					
Phonics	1	2	3	4	5
	SA				SD
Skills	1	2	3	4	5
	SA				SD
Whole language	1	2	3	4	5
	SA				SD

### The Pilot Study

The purpose of the pilot study was to evaluate and strengthen the discriminatory power of the items. Experts in the field and teachers of known orientation ( $N=47$ ; phonics=12, skills=20, whole language=15) responded to the pilot instrument and commented freely about each statement. These comments were used to create a revised version of the TORP for the final validation process. The goal was to create an instrument that would capture profiles of responses (systematic agreement with some systematic disagreement with other items) prototypic of each of the three orientations. The basic statistical tests to be used in the final validation process were also applied as an initial test of validity. The tests used were Cronbach alpha, an index of internal consistency, and fac-

tor analysis. Group means and standard deviations provided descriptive data.

The results of the pilot study indicated the instrument was discriminating group responses and was reliable (alpha,  $r = .80$ ). The items that were directed specifically to each orientation were separated (see Table 2) in order to compare group performance. There was general response by the groups in the intended direction. The item correlation to the total subtest score was used to select items for the final instrument, and indicate which items should be rewritten. The criterion level for a population of 47 is recommended as  $r > .37$  ( $p < .05$ ). Items with an  $r > .65$  were included in the final instrument, and those items with correlations between .50 and .65 were considered for rewrite, making a total of 28 items. The factor analysis

*Table 2* Mean item response per group oriented items

Group	Items					
	Phonics <sup>a</sup>		Skills		Whole language <sup>b</sup>	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Phonics <sup>c</sup>	2.0	.59	3.0	.87	3.3	.70
Skills <sup>d</sup>	2.6	.86	3.1	.80	3.0	.90
Whole language <sup>e</sup>	4.6	.76	4.6	.83	1.7	.75

<sup>a</sup>Phonics and skills items numbered 13 apiece.

<sup>b</sup>Whole language items numbered 10.

<sup>c</sup>*n* = 12

<sup>d</sup>*n* = 20

<sup>e</sup>*n* = 15

produced one factor that accounted for 64.1% of the variation with an eigenvalue of 23.03. This factor divided the items generally into Phonics, Skills and Whole Language groupings, with high positive factor loadings on the phonics and skills items, and high negative loadings on the whole language items.

### *Validation Procedures*

The validation of an instrument such as the TORP (see Appendix A) necessitates using a construct validity model to explore whether the test measures the theoretical positions it purports to measure. This validation process is not the validation of a test per se, but of the construct of theoretical orientation. Through a variety of situations from which theoretical orientation is hypothesized to operate, the data must converge to provide a symmetrical view of the instrument and the construct (Cronbach, 1971). The degree of construct validity reflected by the instrument is indexed by the proportion of test score variance that can be attributed to the construct being measured (Cronbach & Meehl, 1955).

Consequently, the TORP was administered to a sample of 90 teachers, *n* = 30 for each of three groups identified as holding phonics, skills, and whole language orientations. The teachers were identified by area reading coordi-

nators or professionals in the field who had observed them teach. The coordinators and professionals were asked to select teachers in the field who utilized either phonics, word recognition (skills), or language experience and children's literature as the basis of their reading program. The coordinators then asked these teachers to respond to the TORP and collected their responses. If the construct of theoretical orientation is reflected by the TORP, then this sample of teachers should respond consistently within their group designations, yet differently when compared to the other groups. Their test score variance should be lowest on those items directed at their own theoretical orientation, greater at points of shared practices with another orientation, and low in relation to those practices they oppose. This measure of homogeneity should be reflected through item-test correlations and reliability coefficients. Total score comparisons (28-140), group means, standard deviations, factor analysis and discriminant analysis were computed to offer descriptive data about the sample and the test.

If the TORP provides any predictive value for researchers and other professionals, then judges from the field of reading should agree on what responses are indicative of a phonics, skills, or whole language orientation. It should also be possible to determine teachers' orientations from observations of their teaching. Given these two logical deductions about how theoretical orientation operates if it is a viable con-

struct, two additional tests of the TORP were completed to provide converging perspectives on the construct of theoretical orientation and the TORP itself.

First, three judges who were professionals in the field having contact with classroom teachers were asked to fill out the TORP three different times. They were asked to model a phonics orientation, then skills, and finally whole language. If there is any validity to distinctions among models, then the judges' responses should concur. The consistency of their response to each of the models was evaluated with Kendall's coefficient of concordance as well as a chi-square test.

Second, it was hypothesized that if theoretical orientation affects behavior, the observations of the teachers should indicate the model from which they are operating. Three observers were trained to select salient features of theoretical orientation in videotapes of teachers. In three separate sessions, they viewed videotaped reading lessons which were analyzed for overt and covert indices of teachers' models of reading. Fourteen teachers involved in an evaluation project were asked to respond to the TORP. Each of the 14 teachers was then observed by one of the trained observers. Once the observation was complete, the observers responded to the TORP as if they were the teacher they had just observed. The degree of concurrence between the teacher and observer response were then evaluated using a Spearman Rho correlation procedure. These three procedures were used to evaluate the construct of theoretical orientation as measured by the TORP. The working hypotheses for the three different procedures in this validation process were: (a)

response to the TORP reflects theoretical orientation. That is, teachers with known orientations will exhibit response patterns more similar to one another than to teachers with other known orientations; (b) judges will concur on response patterns that indicate phonics, skills, and whole language models of reading; (c) the teaching practices recorded after observation by trained observers using the TORP reflect the teacher's theoretical orientation. There will be a strong correlation between the teacher/observer total scores.

## Results

### Descriptive Information

The results of the sampling of teacher responses indicated that the 26-item TORP is a reliable measure ( $r = .98$ ) of differences in theoretical orientation to reading. The phonics and whole language groups were separated by the greatest scoring differences (see Table 3), with the skills group exhibiting the greatest variance in total score. As expected, there was some overlap in total score between the phonics and skills groups.

The greatest differentiation between groups centered around three issues: (a) phonics—its importance, the way it should be taught, and the memorization of rules as a necessary component; (b) the amount of exactness expected in reading; and (c) how much drill is beneficial. Items 1, 10, 22, 6, 20, 27, 17, 26, 15, and 23 (see Table 4) brought out the points of departure between orientations. These items were most indicative of the phonics (first five) and whole language (last five) orientations, and produced

Table 3 Breakdown of total score by group

Group <sup>a</sup>	<i>M</i> <sup>b</sup>	<i>SD</i>
Phonics	61.5	6.67
Skills	70.4	12.36
Whole language	134.6	4.45

<sup>a</sup>*n* = 30

<sup>b</sup>Means are of Total Scores

Table 4 Descriptive data for items

Item by Orientation 1 <sup>a</sup> , 2 <sup>b</sup> then 3 <sup>c</sup>	<i>M</i>			<i>SD</i>			Total	
	1	2	3	1	2	3	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1. Verbalize rules	1.8	4.2	5.0	.55	.76	0	3.7	1.46
10. Correct miscues	2.0	3.0	5.0	.95	1.23	0	3.3	1.54
22. Importance of phonics	1.6	2.7	4.9	.62	1.17	.18	3.1	1.59
6. Instruct to sound out	1.7	2.4	4.9	.62	1.11	.25	3.1	1.55
20. Control text	2.1	3.0	5.0	.68	.78	0	3.4	1.35
9. Problem of reversals	2.5	2.8	4.8	1.07	1.24	.53	3.4	1.44
3. Syllabication	1.8	2.2	4.8	.75	1.07	.51	2.9	1.57
21. Formal instruction	1.6	1.8	4.7	.55	1.13	.58	2.7	1.62
12. Attend to punctuation	2.0	2.1	4.6	.83	.99	.74	2.9	1.47
2. Increase errors/less comprehension	2.3	2.4	4.4	.86	1.16	.72	3.0	1.33
19. Teach accent patterns	2.5	2.5	4.9	.97	1.10	3.3	1.43	
8. Must use glossary	2.5	2.8	4.9	1.07	1.11	.30	3.4	1.39
28. Probs. with endings	2.7	2.8	4.7	.16	.32	.16	3.1	.53
11. Repeat sight words	1.9	1.6	4.8	.66	.71	.48	2.8	1.57
16. Roots then inflected	2.2	2.0	4.9	.86	1.23	.18	3.1	1.59
13. Inefficient to repeat	2.9	3.1	4.7	.94	1.21	.58	3.6	1.24
4. Fluency = comprehension	2.3	2.6	4.6	.95	1.33	.72	3.2	1.45
25. Importance of skills	1.6	1.4	4.0	.67	.56	1.32	2.38	1.52
14. Label grammar	3.0	3.1	4.9	1.14	1.18	.25	3.7	1.29
24. Teach word shapes	3.1	2.7	4.8	1.02	1.29	.65	3.6	1.37
27. No word introduced	3.2	4.2	1.4	1.11	.92	1.07	2.9	1.29
17. Alphabet unnecess.	4.4	3.8	1.4	.77	1.28	.93	3.2	1.66
18. Flascards unnecess.	4.1	4.2	1.0	.62	.87	0	3.1	1.62
7. Read in dialect	3.5	3.5	1.0	.90	1.04	.18	2.7	1.42
5. Natural materials	3.9	3.7	1.3	.98	1.01	.59	2.9	1.49
15. Guess and go on	3.6	2.7	1.0	.89	1.31	0	2.6	1.42
26. Do not correct house	4.1	3.4	1.1	.68	1.33	.25	2.9	1.58
23. Initial focus on meaning	3.5	2.7	1.0	.97	.92	0	2.4	1.29

<sup>a</sup>Phonics, *n* = 30

<sup>b</sup>Skills, *n* = 30

<sup>c</sup>Whole language, *n* = 30

the most separation in mean scores with the smallest standard deviations. The items which made statements about shared practices (items 12, 2, 19, 8, 25, 14, 24) between phonics/skills and skills/whole language groups produced higher standard deviations. The skills group consistently exhibited less group unity.

For the purpose of illustrating how the separate groups responded, the items directed at each orientation were analyzed across group performance. It is apparent from this closer analysis that the response patterns are different within each group (see Table 5). Items 5, 7, 15,

17, 28, 23, 26, and 27 are the eight items representing the whole language orientation. The skills items are 4, 8, 11, 13, 14, 16, 19, 24, 25, and 28, and phonics items are 1, 2, 3, 6, 9, 10, 12, 20, 21, and 22. The score range for each subset of items is 8-40 (whole language), and 10-50 (phonics and skills). Generally, both the whole language and phonics groups responded with little group variability within subtest groupings (*SD* = 2.08, 3.06, 1.38; 3.34, 3.18, 2.59, respectively). The skills group exhibited consistently higher standard deviations (5.4, 5.6, 4.08) indicating the range of responses as

members of this group align themselves in closer proximity to the other orientations. These response patterns were similar to the ones exhibited in the pilot study, and are consistent with the points of overlap found in instructional programs.

The items were grouped into subsets by orientation to provide comparisons of subgroups on item subtests. The 10 phonics and 10 skills items point range for this comparison was 10 to 50 (strong agreement to strong disagreement), and the whole language was 8 to 40. A high mean on the item subset comparison would indicate strong disagreement from the subgroup on that series of items. Conversely, a low mean would indicate strong agreement from the subgroup on those items. The whole language group was the most unified in strong agreement with their own item grouping ( $M = 9.13$ ;  $SD =$

1.38) and in opposition to practices included in the phonics grouping ( $M = 48.4$ ;  $SD = 2.08$ ). The phonics group was consistently unified in agreement with practices reflected in its own item grouping ( $M = 19.47$ ;  $SD = 3.34$ ), and most strongly opposed to those of the whole language grouping ( $M = 30.37$ ;  $SD = 2.59$ ). The phonics grouped tended to register moderate agreement with the practices represented in the skills grouping ( $M = 24.37$ ;  $SD = 3.18$ ). The skills group registered strongest response in disagreement with the whole language items ( $M = 28.06$ ;  $SD = 4.01$ ), but were generally moderate in all responses.

The first order correlations among the three subset comparisons indicate the strength of the relationships across the three groups (see Table 6). The most homogeneous responses were exhibited by the skills and whole language

Table 5 Group performance on item subgroups

Group	Item subgroup					
	Phonics		Skills		Whole language	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Phonics	19.47 <sup>a</sup>	3.34	24.37	3.18	30.37	2.59
Skills	26.87	5.50	23.87 <sup>b</sup>	5.60	28.23	4.01
Whole language	48.40	2.08	47.50	3.06	9.13	1.38
Total	31.58	12.93	31.91	11.81	22.58	10.01

Note. Maximum for phonics and skills item subgroups was 50 points; whole language item subgroup maximum was 40 points (registering strong disagreement). Minimum for phonics and skills subgroup was 10 and whole language was 8 points.

<sup>a</sup>Phonics group response to their own item subgroup.

<sup>b</sup>Skills group response to their own item subgroup.

<sup>c</sup>Whole language group response to their own item subgroup.

Table 6 Correlations among three subgroup comparisons

Group <sup>a</sup>	Item comparisons		
	Phonics-skills	Skills-whole lang.	Whole lang.-phonics
Phonics	.19	-.05	-.64**
Skills	.64**	-.34	-.49*
Whole language	.67**	.19	-.12
Total <sup>b</sup>	.92**	.91**	-.95**

<sup>a</sup> $n = 30$

<sup>b</sup> $N = 90$

\* $p < .05$

\*\* $p < .01$

groups on the phonics-skills items ( $r = .64$  [skills],  $r = .67$  [whole language];  $p < .01$ ). The phonics and skills groups demonstrated a strong negative correlational pattern on the whole language-phonics items ( $r = .64$  [phonics],  $r = .49$  [skills];  $p < .05$ ). The other item comparisons did not reach levels of statistical significance due to the divergent responses of the groups to the practices in these comparisons.

These descriptive data explain the different response patterns of the sample of 90 teachers to practices associated with the three orientations represented within the TORP. This instrument does discriminate teacher responses consistently when the theoretical orientation of the teachers is known.

### Evaluation of Working Hypothesis 1

The first working hypothesis stated that response to the TORP reflects theoretical orientation. Data from a variety of analyses support this hypothesis. The descriptive data reported above indicate that items written to reflect practices associated with three different orientations to reading produce predictable responses in a sample of teachers of known theoretical orientation. The factor analysis (Table 7) offers even stronger data to evaluate this hypothesis. It can be inferred from the factor analysis that the TORP is a one factor test that is a measure of theoretical orientation in reading instruction. One factor accounted for 94.5% of the variance. It separated the whole language items from the phonics and skills items (see Table 7),

Table 7 Factor analysis

Item by factor rank	Factor Loading	Eigenvalue	% of Variance
11. Repetition-sight words	.91	24.46	94.5
20. Controlling text	.89		
6. Instruct to sound out	.89		
21. Formal instruction	.88		
3. Syllabication	.88		
22. Importance of phonics	.87		
16. Introduce roots first	.87		
28. Problem with endings	.87		
12. Attend closely to punct.	.86		
10. Correct miscues	.84		
19. Instruct in accent patterns	.83		
25. Importance of skills	.78		
8. Necessity of glossary	.78		
2. Increase errors/less comp.	.77		
9. Problems of reversals	.77		
13. Repetition ineffective	.72		
4. Fluency = comprehension	.71		
1. Verbalize rules	.71		
14. Label grammatical function	.70		
24. Teach word shapes	.65		
27. Not necess. to intro. words	-.65		
15. Guess and go on	-.78		
17. Alphabet instr. unnecessary	-.79		
23. Focus on meaning initially	-.80		
5. Natural material	-.81		
7. Read in dialect	-.82		
26. Leave miscues uncorrected	-.87		
18. Flashcard drill unnecessary	-.89		

suggesting support of differences in practice based upon theoretical orientation.

Discriminant analysis “clusters” cases within the sample in terms of their scoring profiles. The type of information in the profile of scores used in this analysis is the item responses which result in a description of the groups by level, dispersion and shape. Discriminant analysis measures the distinctness of the groups and checks the correctness of their original classifications of group membership. The resulting territorial map (see Figure 2) graphically portrays the distinctness of the groups on functions operating within the data. The base of this analysis, then, is the concept of variance. Because the whole language group exhibited total group agreement on Items 1, 7, 15, 20, and 23, these items were excluded from this analysis. The first discriminating function (see Table 8) accounted for 94.87% of the variance with a correlation of .97 ( $p < .001$ ). On this function, the group means – or group centroids – were -3.15, -2.99 and 6.15 for the phonics, skills and whole language groups respectively. Along this dimension (see Figure 2), the phonics and skills groups were separate from each other, but acting very different from the whole language group. This function discriminates the groups on instructional practice in much the same way as did the factor analysis, but indicates the distinctness of the phonics and skills groups.

The second function accounted for 5.13% of the variance with a correlation of .71 ( $p < .01$ ). The group centroids on this function were -1.23, 1.25 and -.02 for the phonics, skills and whole language groups. The skills group exhibited the most dispersion on this function, with

the whole language and phonics groups demonstrating more similarities. This dimension appears to represent group unity, with the skills group consistently responding with less unity than the other two groups. The graphic display pictured in Figure 2 describes the two groups in relation to shape, level and dispersion on the two functions found to be significant. The skills group shows the greatest dispersion, clustering around the whole language and phonics groups. These latter orientations are distinctly separate in terms of their instructional practices.

When group membership was checked as the final component of the discriminant analysis procedure, only 6% of the sample was incorrectly identified by the experts solicited from the field of reading. Three members of the phonics group were reclassified as skills, and one skills member was reclassified as phonics.

These data offer strong support for the first working hypothesis. Teachers of known orientation do exhibit response patterns more similar to one another than to teachers with other known orientations. The TORP reflects these differences in theoretical orientation in a manner consistent with a priori expectations. The greatest measurable difference in theoretical orientation to reading as evaluated by the TORP occurs between the phonics and whole language orientations. The orientation hypothesized to share practices and beliefs with both the phonics and whole language groups, the skills group, did in fact respond with a high degree of group variance. The whole language group responded with the most unity of group response, and was consistently different from the other two groups as measured by this instrument.

Table 8 Discriminant analysis

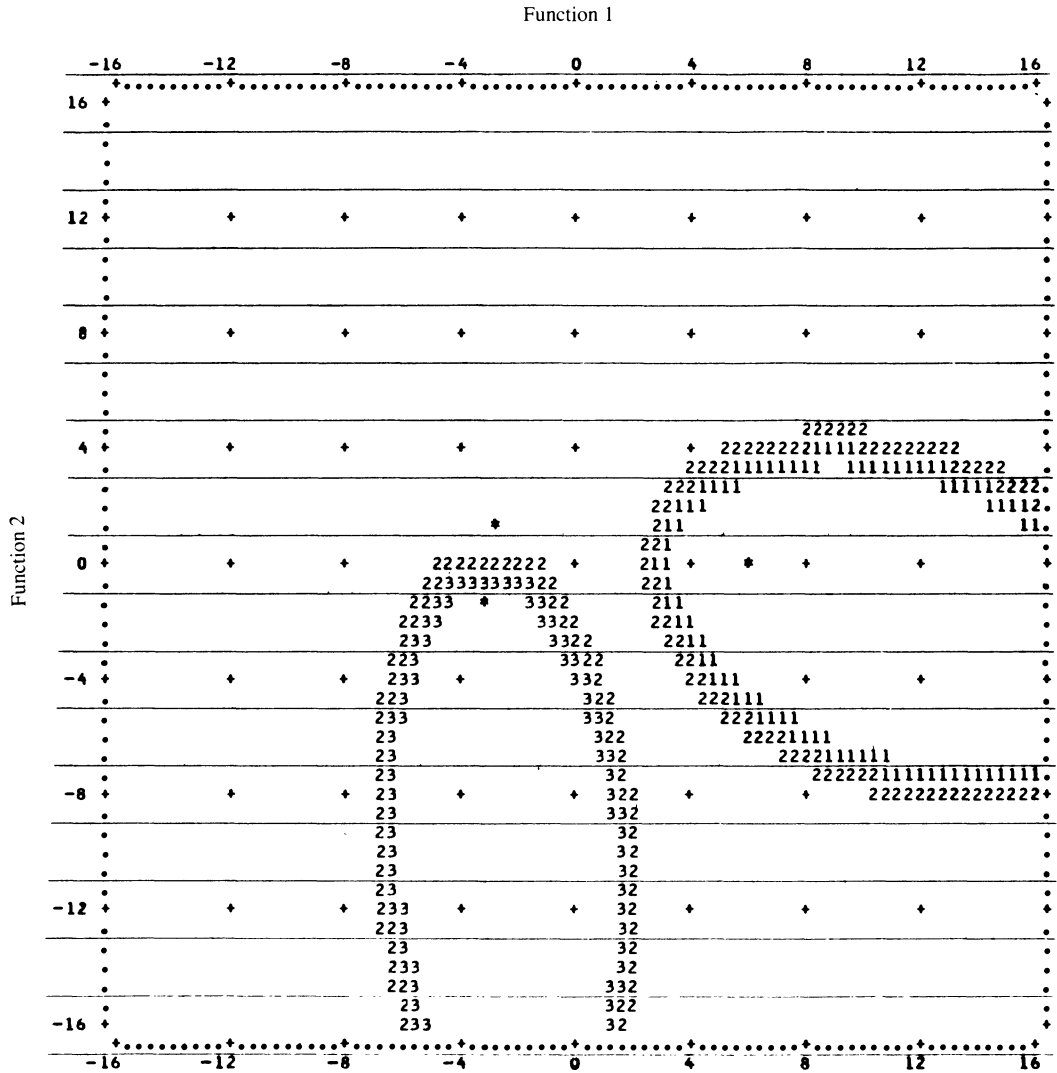
Function	Eigenvalue	% of Variance	Wilks' Lambda	Chi-square	df
1	19.56	.97	.023	286.52**	44
2	1.0	.71	.485	55.22*	21

Note. Items 1, 10, 15, 18, 20 and 23 were deleted from this analysis as the whole language group was unanimous in their responses. Discriminant analysis uses the group variance per item for calculations.

\* $p < .01$

\*\* $p < .001$

Figure 2  
Territorial Map of Discriminant Functions



Group	Group Means*	
	Function 1	Function 2
1. Whole language	6.15	-.02
2. Skills	-2.99	1.25
3. Phonics	-3.16	-1.23

## Evaluation of Working Hypothesis 2

Working Hypothesis 2 stated that judges will concur on response patterns that indicate phonics, skills, and whole language models of reading. The item responses for each model of reading (e.g., all of the responses on the phonics models) generated by the judges ( $N = 3$ ) were compared with a Kendall's coefficient of concordance, a technique that seeks to find similarity of responses among independent judges on some measure. Utilizing ordinal data, the percentage of agreement was computed and a chi-square test employed to determine the level of significance. A chi-square of 205.65 ( $df = .83$ ,  $p < .001$ ) suggests that the judges concurred on each of the profiles with sufficient consistency to support Working Hypothesis 2.

## Evaluation of Working Hypothesis 3

The third working hypothesis stated that teaching practices recorded after observation by trained observers using the TORP would reflect the teacher's theoretical orientation.

The population of 14 teaches from a school involved in a school-wide evaluation responded to the TORP. Each teacher was observed while teaching reading, and the observers ( $N = 3$ ) tried to predict teacher responses on the TORP. The total scores of the teachers were rank-ordered with their matched observer response, and the two sets of scores were correlated with a Spearman Rho correlation procedure. The correlation between teacher and observer responses was .86 ( $p < .001$ ). There was a significant match between teacher behavior/observer response as measured by total score on the TORP.

## *Discussion*

All facets of this research indicate the validity of the construct of theoretical orientation in reading as measured by the DeFord Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile. Teachers of known theoretical orientation responded in con-

sistent, predictable patterns to statements about practices in reading instruction. Judges from the field of reading concurred on the pattern of responses for each model of reading, and observers were able to predict teacher orientation from observations of their teaching.

Smith (1982) argues that everyone constructs a theory of the world and perceives and interprets future directions and events in light of this theory. New information is organized, reorganized and acted upon so as to create order—a unified, consistent description of the world. The Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile is an instrument developed to sample a teacher's theory of the world of reading. In this view of theoretical orientation, the theory acts as a filter in perceiving, understanding, organizing and acting upon experiences in that world.

Initial research into the nature of theoretical orientation in teaching settings (Barr, 1974-75; DeFord, 1981; DeLawter, 1975; Mitchell, 1980) suggests the need for further research which explores the relationship between teachers' belief systems and what students learn, and what other factors influence the practice of beliefs in school settings (Buik & Duffy, 1979; Kamil & Pearson, 1979). The TORP provides a consistent measure that may contribute to our understanding of theoretical orientation in teaching and learning settings. As with any other instrument used in educational settings, the TORP carries with it certain potentials and constraints that will govern its use.

There are data which indicate that teacher beliefs influence how readers respond in the learning setting. In Mitchell's study (1980), students seemed to understand what teachers valued, even in one hour of contact. The DeFord (1981) and Mitchell studies both noted that teachers' response to miscue behavior were significantly different due to orientation, and these teacher behaviors produced different reading strategies in the young children tested.

Andrews (1976) found that teacher behavior, verbal and non-verbal, influenced student behavior—sometimes in unexpected ways. In the classroom Andrews was studying, the teacher believed that word recognition strategies and accuracy were important in reading.

The behaviors that she used to underline these beliefs to her students were the introduction of isolated vocabulary before reading, use of words in oral and written contexts, practice through flashcards, pointing to each word as she read them, interrupting the students during their reading to remind them of new words, and responding to student reading with comments such as "perfect," "that's exactly right," and "go back and read that again." Student behaviors that were noted in response to these teacher behaviors were word-by-word reading, substitution of vocabulary list items for words with graphic similarity, skipping all unknown words, fingerpointing, head bobbing with each word, looking to the teacher for help, peer correction of miscues, reluctance in reading new material, long pauses during reading, crying, overcorrections and poor comprehension, even on familiar materials.

In research studies such as these, the TORP can be used to classify teachers for in-depth exploration of the teacher, learners, or classroom contexts that may be influenced by theoretical orientation. It is recommended, however, that interviews or observations be used in conjunction with the TORP to confirm teacher orientation and counter measurement problems. It is possible for teachers to respond to some items on the TORP one way, and in practice do something very different. There was just such a phenomenon in the teacher/observer component of this study. Although the overall determination of the teachers' orientation by total score was generally appropriate, there were some instances where the observers and teachers did not agree on some items. While this does not invalidate the total instrument, it does suggest caution in its interpretation from the total score without observations and/or interviews. The strength of teacher orientation determinations with this instrument rest on the pattern of responses made by individual teachers. Checks can be made against the mean scores generated within this study, but fine discrimination must be made with key items from each orientation in mind.

Buiké and Duffy (1979) found that teachers' conceptions of reading changed over time.

This may be due to evolution of theories in light of classroom experiences, life experiences in general, or possibly coursework or administrative decisions. Further research must be carried out to determine what factors will influence the long term makeup of theoretical orientation. It may be that if changes are noted in research settings, the existing profiles may need to be adjusted, or the model of reading checked again after a period of time.

Another area of research in which an instrument such as the TORP might serve a purpose is in matching teachers to materials. If publishers' materials embody particular models of reading, and if teachers hold a totally divergent point of view, a disharmony might result. Such a disharmony could be detrimental at worst, or an interesting study in decision making at best. Moore (1982) undertook an analysis of four texts in use in Australia by 63 teachers to determine if there was a match or mismatch in teachers and text books. While he found that there were definitely instances of mismatch, he did not follow the teachers into the classroom to see how this disharmony was resolved, or what happened to the learners in these settings.

Teacher decision making in light of theoretical framework is another area of needed research. Buiké and Duffy (1979) found that teachers made decisions differently from their stated conceptions of reading when the age of the learner and the proficiency of the reader was considered. Their definition of conception of reading and the models of reading on which the TORP are based are very different. It might be that the inconsistency between teacher conception and teacher behavior in the Buiké and Duffy study, and the apparent consistency of the teachers within the TORP study may be due to the differences in definitions set forth by the researchers. Further research with the TORP in relation to classroom decision making may increase our understanding of how teachers' assumptions influence the decisions made within the classroom.

Other uses for the TORP in preservice and inservice educational settings may facilitate the study of effectiveness in higher education. Stansell and Robek (1979) studied preservice teach-

ers throughout their undergraduate career with the TORP, and found that the students were strongly influenced by the teachers at the university—whatever their orientations—but this influence was countered by practicum settings in which the supervising teacher had a model other than the university instructor. This might have implications for practicum and student teaching placements, in terms of their effectiveness within the university's ongoing educational program.

Steinruck, (1976), using an instrument similar to the TORP, found that inservice teachers made few changes in responses to students' oral reading after one training session in a specific theoretical framework. However, if there was followup in their schools so that the teachers could ask questions and receive support, there was more impact on their teaching.

The most constructive use of an instrument of this nature is to help researchers and teachers alike examine the assumptions they hold, make their research and instruction as consistent and effective as possible, and develop comprehensive models of reading and instruction based upon clearly defined theoretical positions. An understanding of how theory is generated, modified and practiced will further our understanding of the instructional process.

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## APPENDIX

### The DeFord Theoretical Orientation To Reading Profile (TORP)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Read the following statements, and circle one of the responses that will indicate the relationship of the statement to your feelings about reading and reading instruction.

SA    2    3    4    SD

(select *one* best answer that reflects the strength of agreement or disagreement).

- |   |    |   |   |   |    |
|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. A child needs to be able to verbalize the rules of phonics in order to assure proficiency in processing new words.       | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
|   | SA |   |   |   | SD |
| 2. An increase in reading errors is usually related to a decrease in comprehension.   | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
|   | SA |   |   |   | SD |
| 3. Dividing words into syllables according to rules is a helpful instructional practice for reading new words.              | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
|   | SA |   |   |   | SD |
| 4. Fluency and expression are necessary components of reading that indicate good comprehension.                             | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
|   | SA |   |   |   | SD |
| 5. Materials for early reading should be written in natural language without concern for short, simple words and sentences. | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
|   | SA |   |   |   | SD |
| 6. When children do not know a word, they should be instructed to sound out its parts.                                      | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
|   | SA |   |   |   | SD |
| 7. It is a good practice to allow children to edit what is written into their own dialect when learning to read.            | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
|   | SA |   |   |   | SD |
| 8. The use of a glossary or dictionary is necessary in determining the meaning and pronunciation of new words.              | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
|   | SA |   |   |   | SD |
| 9. Reversals (e.g., saying "saw" for "was") are significant problems in the teaching of reading.                            | 1  | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
|   | SA |   |   |   | SD |

10. It is a good practice to correct a child as soon as an oral reading mistake is made.	1	2	3	4	5
	SA				SD
11. It is important for a word to be repeated a number of times after it has been introduced to insure that it will become a part of sight vocabulary.	1	2	3	4	5
	SA				SD
12. Paying close attention to punctuation marks is necessary to understanding story content.	1	2	3	4	5
	SA				SD
13. It is a sign of an ineffective reader when words and phrases are repeated.	1	2	3	4	5
	SA				SD
14. Being able to label words according to grammatical function (nouns, etc.) is useful in proficient reading.	1	2	3	4	5
	SA				SD
15. When coming to a word that's unknown, the reader should be encouraged to guess upon meaning and go on.	1	2	3	4	5
	SA				SD
16. Young readers need to be introduced to the root form of words (run, long) before they are asked to read inflected forms (running, longest).	1	2	3	4	5
	SA				SD
17. It is not necessary for a child to know the letters of the alphabet in order to learn to read.	1	2	3	4	5
	SA				SD
18. Flashcard drills with sightwords is an unnecessary form of practice in reading instruction.	1	2	3	4	5
	SA				SD
19. Ability to use accent patterns in multisyllable words (pho` to graph, pho to` gra phy, and pho to gra` phic) should be developed as part of reading instruction.	1	2	3	4	5
	SA				SD
20. Controlling text through consistent spelling patterns (The fat cat ran back. The fat cat sat on a hat) is a means by which children can best learn to read.	1	1	3	4	5
	SA				SD
21. Formal instruction in reading is necessary to insure the adequate development of all the skills used in reading.	1	2	3	4	5
	SA				SD
22. Phonic analysis is the most important form of analysis used when meeting new words.	1	2	3	4	5
	SA				SD
23. Children's initial encounters with print should focus on meaning, not upon exact graphic representation.	1	2	3	4	5
	SA				SD
24. Word shapes (word configuration) should be taught in reading to aid in word recognition.	1	2	3	4	5
	SA				SD
25. It is important to teach skills in relation to other skills.	1	2	3	4	5
	SA				SD
26. If a child says "house" for the written word "home," the response should be left uncorrected.	1	2	3	4	5
	SA				SD
27. It is not necessary to introduce new words before they appear in the reading text.	1	2	3	4	5
	SA				SD
28. Some problems in reading are caused by readers dropping the inflectional endings from words (e.g., jumps, jumped)	1	2	3	4	5
	SA				SD

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