

Today's topic:

- **Early reading education:
Implications and examples**

Background:

- Hanford podcast "[Sold a Story](#)," episode 6, "The Reckoning"

0. Course info and announcements

- Project proposal feedback / article confirmation in progress — hopefully done tomorrow
- **Workshop day** in class on Thursday
 - We'll talk about tips and strategies for writing an article summary
 - You can confer with me if you need to change your article
 - Work time to get started on your first article summary

0. Today's key points

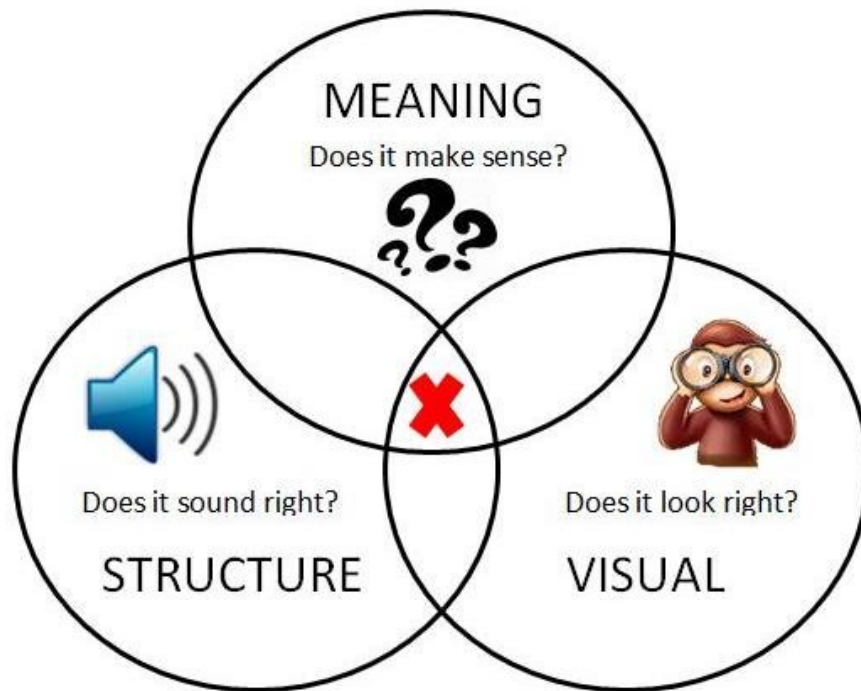
- The “three-cueing method” in teaching reading
 - Where did it come from?
 - How is it (not) useful in reading (education)?
 - What are some of the factors discussed in the Sold a Story podcast episode (#6) for why this method has persisted?
- Observation of a kindergarten reading lesson

1. The three-cueing system in reading ed

- What are the “three cues” in the **three-cueing** (also called MSV) teaching system?

1. The three-cueing system in reading ed

- What are the “three cues” in the **three-cueing** (also called MSV) teaching system?



graphic from Cindy Elkins

- Do any of you remember being taught to read this way?
- Did you feel like it worked well for you?

1. The three-cueing system in reading ed

- Let's look at one reading teacher's discussion about using the three-cueing system with students
 - Blog post by Cindy Elkins, "[Reading Fix-it Strategies: Part 1 'Does it make sense?'](#)"
 - How does Elkins suggest using the meaning cue?
 - What alternatives does she consider and reject?
 - Can we respond to any of her concerns?

1. The three-cueing system in reading ed

- From Hanford podcast “Sold a Story”, episode 2

“Another part of the cueing theory scientists started testing out is whether readers can use meaning and context to accurately identify words. If you cover the word with a sticky note, can you guess what it is?

“The answer is [...] you’ll be wrong a lot of the time.

“Experiments showed that even a well-educated, skilled reader could predict only about one in four words using contextual clues.”

1. The three-cueing system in reading ed

- From Hanford podcast “Sold a Story”, episode 2

“Reid Lyon [...] says what Marie Clay had described with her theory is the way that many poor readers read.

“People who have a hard time making sense of the relationships between letters and sounds come up with other strategies to figure out what the words say.

“They do things like – look at the first letter of a word, think of a word that makes sense. They guess a lot. Maybe getting the gist of what they’re reading. But often not enjoying reading much, because it’s slow and laborious, and kind of confusing. Reid Lyon [...] was seeing it in studies of real children.”

1. The three-cueing system in reading ed

Group discussion / Participation activity

- Form groups of about size 5 & sign in
- Make some notes and prepare to report:

What evidence have we seen in this course that **skilled adult readers** use these sources of information when they read and understand a text?

- meaning/context (semantics)
- structure (syntax)
- visual cues (letters, for alphabetic systems)

1. The three-cueing system in reading ed

- How do skilled readers use **context (meaning)**?

Stanovich (1993: 282)

“Although good readers employ contextual information more fluently in the **comprehension** process, they are not more reliant on contextual information for **word recognition**.”

Stanovich, Keith E. 1993. Romance and reality.
The Reading Teacher 47(4): 280-291. [[link](#)]

1. The three-cueing system in reading ed

- Where did the diagram come from?

P. David Pearson (1976). A psycholinguistic model of reading. *Language Arts* 53 (3): 309–314.

“Receivers of language input (listeners or readers) use a variety of sources of information **as they read** or listen. Most prominent and ubiquitous for the reader are **semantic-associational** information, **syntactic** information, and **symbol-sound** information.”

(emphasis added)

1. The three-cueing system in reading ed

- Some researchers contend that the three-cueing system is **actively harmful** as a word recognition strategy, even when combined with some phonics decoding instruction — **Why?**
 - Example: A 2019 essay by Mark Seidenberg addressing Calkins's updated curriculum: ["This Is Why We Don't Have Better Readers: Response to Lucy Calkins"](#)

2. Why does “three-cueing” persist?

Group discussion / Participation activity

- Make some notes and prepare to report:

What is a **key point** made in the podcast episode you listened to before class (episode 6), about one of these topics?

- the three-cueing method
- why it has persisted
- whether any prominent reading curriculum developers have changed their opinion

2. Why does “three-cueing” persist?

- Some strong proponents of the three-cueing method in teaching reading
 - Lucy Calkins / Units of Study
 - Recent revision to incorporate more phonics/decoding
 - Too little, too late?
 - Irene Fountas and Gay Su Pinell / Fountas & Pinnell Literacy
 - They are doubling down!
 - Wanting to get kids “to the good part” of the reading experience

3. Example: A kindergarten reading lesson

Kindergarten “reading and phonics” lesson, observed 2022.01.21 (remote learning, Carrboro NC)

- Look for examples of...
 - Decoding instruction and practice (phonics)
 - Vocabulary and concept learning (comprehension)
 - Strategies to engage students and encourage active learning

3. Example: A kindergarten reading lesson

- Teacher (T) asks students what animals they've been learning about, and what they've learned
- T reads aloud a science book about reindeer
 - Pauses a few times to ask some “why” questions
 - “We talked about the word *adapt* before...”
 - Discusses carnivores—then, “does anyone know the word for an animal that eats only plants?”

3. Example: A kindergarten reading lesson

- Video: How to draw a reindeer



3. Example: A kindergarten reading lesson

- 10-minute stretch break
- T asks students to share new things they learned about reindeer in the story
- T: “We’ve heard of rhyming words before. Now we will learn about *word families*. See if anyone can tell me what that means after we watch the video.”

3. Example: A kindergarten reading lesson

- Video: Examples of word families
 - *book, cook* both end with an OOK sound
 - *pick, kick* both end with an ICK sound
 - (etc. — words that rhyme and use the same rime spelling)
 - *slow* is in same WF as *crow* and *snow*, but *now* is in same WF as *cow* and *how*
 - Kid in video: “I can use word families to help me read a word I don't know” (shows examples)

3. Example: A kindergarten reading lesson

- T asks students about rhyme
- Emphasizes the difference:
 - “Word families still rhyme, but there's a difference between a rhyming word and a word family”
 - “Word families rhyme *and* they have the same spelling at the end”

3. Example: A kindergarten reading lesson

- T tells students they will work on the AT word family
 - T asks students what letters will spell this word family sound (soliciting "A – T")
- Video about "AT" word families
 - Shows sounding out: [æ] [t]
 - Picture of a hat, some letters; students pick "H"
 - Same for *rat, bat, cat*
- T asks if students have more AT family words
 - Students contribute *pat, mat, sat*

3. Example: A kindergarten reading lesson

- Did we see examples of...
 - Decoding instruction and practice (phonics)
 - Vocabulary and concept learning (comprehension)
 - Strategies to engage students and encourage active learning

4. Fun? With phonics?

Discussion

- In the [reading game video](#) (first ~6 minutes):
 - What actual reading-related content is being taught or practiced in this part of the video?
 - What other things are happening during the game play seen in this part of the video?
 - Do you think this game would be likely to appeal to kindergarten children?
 - Do you think it would be effective for practicing phonics?

5. Summary: Methods in early reading ed

- Today we've considered
 - What is the "three-cueing system" used in many whole-language or "balanced-literacy" systems?
 - Why is it not the best method for teaching children how to read words?
 - Can systematic phonics instruction be incorporated into fun lessons about reading that also develop vocabulary, engage student interest?