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THE ATTITUDES OF STUDENTS OF FULL-DAY AND HALF-DAY SESSIONS TOWARD TEACHERS' ORAL READING

by Jerry L. Johns

It was the purpose of this study to determine whether or not there were any differences in opinions regarding oral reading done by teachers to students on full-day sessions compared to students on half-day sessions.

The children who participated in this study consisted of 224 fifth- and sixth-grade students from two large public school systems located in suburban middle class communities. In one school district, the students attended school all day. In the other school district, students attended school only a half-day due to a millage defeat. There were 112 students from each school system in the study.

Each child in the eight classrooms was asked to respond to two questions on a questionnaire by circling either yes or no. The first question sought to determine student attitudes to their teachers' oral reading to the class. The second question attempted to discover if teachers read to their class. The two questions were:

- 1) Do you like to have your teacher read stories or books to you?
- 2) Does your teacher read stories or books to your class?

Both questions were read to the students so that their varying reading abilities would not directly influence their responses. Students responses to each of the questions were tabulated by school district and analyzed by a two-by-two contingency table using the chi-square technique with Yates' correction for continuity.

Table 1 shows the distribution of yes and no responses to the first

question by school district. Using these responses, the hypothesis of no significant differences between the attitudes of students on half-day sessions and full-day sessions toward reading by the teacher was tested. Of the 112 children on half-day sessions, 80 students indicated that they liked to have their teachers read to them while 32 students gave negative responses to the same question. Of the 112 children on full-day sessions, 96 students gave positive responses to the first question. Only 16 children on full-day sessions indicate that they did not like to have their teachers read to them. A chi-square of 3.84 was necessary for significance at the .05 level. A chi-square of 5.94 was obtained, thereby rejecting the hypothesis of no difference in the attitudes of students on full-day sessions and students on half-day sessions toward reading done by the teacher. The students in both school districts liked to have their teacher read to them.

Table 1. Students responses to the question, "Do you like to have your teacher read stories or books to you?"

Groups	Yes	No	Total
Half-day students	80	32	112
Full-day students	96	16	112
Total	176	48	224

$X^2_{.95} = 3.84$; $X^2 = 5.94$; significant at the .05 level

Table 2 shows the distribution of responses to the second question by school district. A pattern of responses quite different to that of the first question can be noted. Only eight of the 112 students on full-day sessions indicated that teachers did not read stories or books to their class. Of the 112 students on half-day sessions, 86 gave a negative response to the same question. The hypothesis of no difference between these responses was tested with the chi-square technique. A chi-square of 3.84 was necessary for significance at the .05 level. A chi-square of 108.70 was obtained indicating significant differences between the oral reading done by teachers to students on full-day sessions and students on half-day sessions.

Table 2. Student response to the question, "Does your teacher read stories or books to your class?"

Groups	Yes	No	Total
Half-day students	26	86	112
Full-day students	104	8	112
Total	130	94	224

$X^2_{95} = 3.84$; $X^2 = 108.70$; significant at the .05 level

This study indicates that, in the schools sampled, the vast majority of students liked to have their teachers read to them. Whether or not the students attended full-day or half-day sessions made little difference. Students on full-day sessions, however, were read to more often by their teachers than were students on half-day sessions.

The implications of these findings seem to suggest that teachers on half-day sessions do not take time to read to their students. Cautious interpretation of the foregoing results should be exercised because of the relatively small sample size and the large number of uncontrolled variables. The findings of this study seem to suggest that the teaching act must involve more than the development of skills. It must also consider the feelings and attitudes of the learners — even on half-day sessions.

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