

Historical and theoretical perspectives on teaching reading

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In addition, the findings would be related in terms of their impact on classroom instruction by providing specific and supportive evidence for each theme or issue from the readings and from one's personal experience, as required.

The whole language approach emerged in the 1980s more as a philosophy than a mere teaching methodology. According to *Today's-Learners* (2010, par. 19), "reading should not be taught, but rather acquired through trial and error". Promoters of this technique emphasize that students can substitute words with those that they commonly use as long as the idea remains the same. Correct spelling of words is not so much given priority for as long as the thoughts and concepts are appropriately ingrained (*Today's-Learners*, 2010, pars. 19 - 23).

The modernist perspective has been discussed by Serafini (2003, par. 16) through a review of various scholars' discourse on the subject; such as Street, De Castell & Luke, and Siegel & Fernandez, among others. This view contends that "reading is viewed as a cognitive, psychological process divorced from any of the forces that are inherent in social, political, or cultural institutions" (Serafini, 2003, par. 16) Children taught under this approach are given reading materials which are fluently read aloud and concurrently focusing on the main theme of the story or text. Teachers focus more on the diction and pronunciation of the texts as well as determining if the students are able to comprehend the main theme of the story.

One of the more contemporary approaches associated with this perspective is the balanced or eclectic approach that utilized phonics and skills instruction into the teaching of reading. Stoicheva (1999) cited Cunningham

and Hall (1998) describing “ a balanced framework for literacy where instruction is divided equally.