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THE TEACHING OF READING IN ENGLISH
TO SPANISH-SPEAKING CHILDREN
IN THE PRIMARY GRADES

AN ABSTRACT OF
A THESIS
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This study was intended to discover the methods, techniques, and materials currently employed in the teaching of reading to Spanish-speaking children. It was felt that a need existed to search for different instructional reading methods to use with non-English-speaking pupils. There has been a yearly influx of Spanish-speaking people to the United States, and their children come to school with little or no knowledge of the English language. When these children failed in reading, it was often because they did not speak or understand the English language, so they were not promoted in other subjects due to the reading failure. This research hoped to discover what was being done in the public schools of the United States, including Puerto Rico to help Spanish-speaking students in primary reading of the English language.

Correspondence and library research enriched with observations were employed in the study. Letters were mailed to the fifty Chief State Officers and to the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. The form letter requested information regarding any special program or materials being used in teaching reading to Spanish-speaking pupils in the primary grades.

Forty replies were received. Eighteen states were working in the area of teaching English as a second language,

with California, Connecticut, Florida, New York, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin being the most active. The audiolingual approach was used in most programs with special instruction being given each day to non-English-speaking children. The Spanish-speaking children were taken from their regular classroom for about an hour each day and received help with listening and speaking skills, and then, with reading and writing skills. The most popular textbook materials appeared to be D. C. Heath and Company's Miami Linguistic Readers, McGraw-Hill Book Company's Let's Speak English, and Houghton Mifflin Company's Introducing English.

In addition the study revealed that there is a need for continuous research and study in this area with the hope that the existing programs would better serve the non-English-speaking pupils and provide for the utilization of the most recent developments of linguistics.