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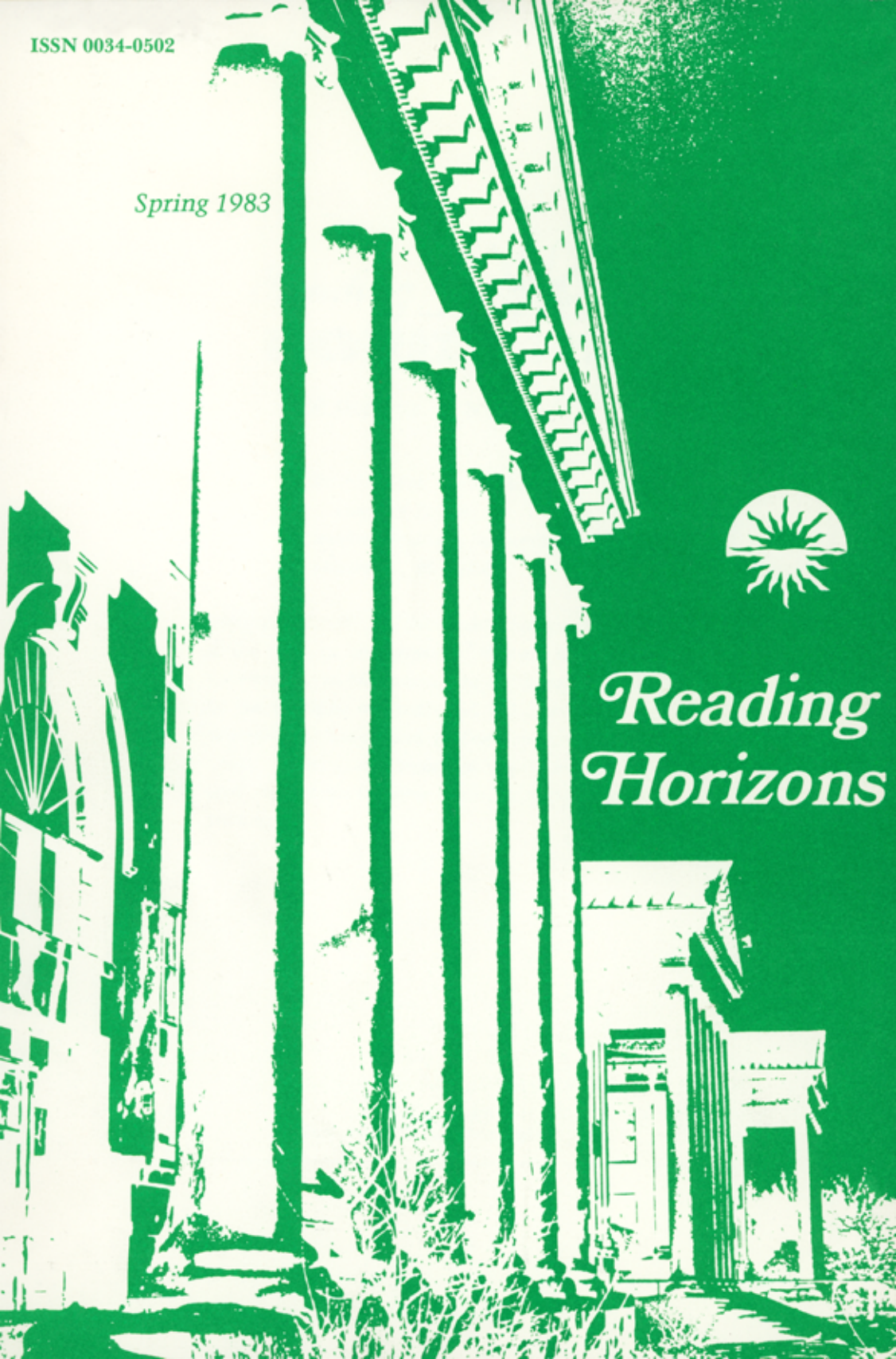


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DEVELOPING FLUENCY IN THE DISABLED READER

Barbara Johnson

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As a reading teacher, do you know of a third grader or older student exhibiting the following reading difficulties?

- (1) The student is unsure of high frequency words such as the Dolch words.
- (2) The student is a word-by-word reader.
- (3) The student reads connected discourse in a disjointed manner--ignoring punctuation, making abnormal pausal units, etc.
- (4) The student frequently repeats words and phrases.

In general, this type of student has difficulties comprehending text, and lacks the desire and motivation to pursue reading. These reading difficulties describe students who have trouble with fluency. If you are teaching students with fluency problems, the suggested strategies that follow can aid you in helping students overcome these problematic behaviors.

Why do these behaviors occur?

A student's inability to read fluently may be due to a number of reasons. Four possible explanations can be given; however, in most cases, there is usually a combination of reasons for lack of fluency in reading. One explanation may lie with the student's inability to respond immediately to words in print. The student is still unsure of word recognition and has to think about "what the word says" before s/he can attend solely to comprehension or fluent reading. Samuels (1976) states the brain can attend to only one thing at a time. The student whose reading behavior shows signs of poor phrasing, long hesitations, repetitions, and poor comprehension is probably attending to word recognition rather than fluency and comprehension. In order to become fluent, this student has to automatize his/her recognition of words. Samuels argues that the student has to be brought beyond an accurate reading of text, in which the student is still attending to word recognition, to an automatic or no thinking response to words in print.

A second cause for fluency difficulties can be attributed to the student's poor understanding of the natural rhythm of language. The student's inability to perceive language-rhythm may have resulted from a lack of good oral reading "models". Has the student been overly exposed to poor readers' reading aloud? Listening to poor oral reading often occurs in low ability grouped

classrooms where "Round-Robin" reading is frequently employed. During the "Round-Robin" fashion of oral reading, the poor readers are continually exposed to a slow halting type of reading that definitely lacks the natural rhythmic style of fluent reading. As a result, these poor oral readers probably never hear a good "model", and their poor oral reading habits are reinforced continually by the other peer models.

A third reason for nonfluent reading may be attributed to lack of practice. The first question to ask is how much time does the student devote to independent reading each day? If the answer is little or none, then your job as a teacher is to try to change the student's behavior. The only cure for poor reading is to read fluently. Smith (1979) states this same edict, "To learn to read children need to read. The issue is as simple and difficult as that" (p. 5). Both silent and oral reading need to be practiced.

A fourth reason for a student's inability to read fluently may be precipitated by continual reading of materials which are far too difficult for him or her. The student who is reading at frustration level is likely never to develop a natural flowing style to his or her reading. The difficulty of the material causes the student to continue poor reading habits; that is, reading slowly in a very disjointed fashion.

Developing Fluency

How can the teacher help the non-fluent reader? There are some specific strategies and suggestions enabling the teacher to develop a student's fluency. Most of the strategies and suggestions require some individual attention while other can be implemented with a group of students.

Three Minute Repeated Timings

The name of the first fluency strategy provides a clue to implementation. The student is given three minutes to read orally as much of the passage as possible. While the student reads a passage, the teacher notes all the student's miscues. A record of the student's miscues provides the teacher with clues for needed instruction such as gross mispronunciations in which the student produces a non-word and never self-corrects. Other instructional clues can be numerous repetitions as well as substitutions, omissions, and insertions which change the meaning of text. As soon as the student finishes the first oral reading, the teacher can quickly scan the major miscues made and provide instruction so a more fluent re-reading of the passage can occur. Instruction may include the teacher "modeling" portions of the passage which present difficulties to the student, or the teacher may refer the student to the passage, developing meaning of an unknown word. The instruction between the first and second readings should give the student a better understanding of the passage so that s/he can read it more fluently during the second reading. Instruction that develops textual meaning provides additional cues to the reader so fluent reading easily occurs. All instruction is short in duration and is followed by a re-reading.

During the second reading, the teacher again notes all miscues. Miscues for the second reading are noted on the same record sheet

as used for the first reading, but the miscues are noted with a different color pencil so that they can be easily differentiated from the notes of the first reading. This miscue procedure offers the teacher a quick comparison of the two oral readings. Improvement as well as lack of it is easily seen, and the teacher can detect whether the intervening instruction produces any positive changes in oral reading behavior. If the student's fluency improves, s/he also increases the number of words read during the three minute interval, and the student can immediately see improvement. The "instant" feedback creates student motivation, which in turn helps to continue the progress. Improvement is also seen easily by the student when the first and second readings are taped and played back. Taping is an opportunity to analyze the changes in reading performance in fine detail. Both forms of feedback are beneficial for student improvement.

A short period of instruction can again take place after the second reading, followed by a third trial, the use of which depends on progress shown in the second reading. In most cases, the student makes the greatest improvement between the first and second trial. The student improves on the third trial, but the improvement is not as dramatic. More than three trials does not seem to be beneficial.

Repeated Readings

The repeated reading strategy (Samuels, 1979) is similar to the three minute repeated timings, but specific differences do exist. Repeated readings require the student to read orally a very short passage (50-200 words) in which the student's goal is to reach the criterion of 85 words per minute. The student repeats the passage until s/he reaches this criterion. Significant miscues are noted along with rate, and both are charted to show the student's achievement and progress. After each reading, the student is to answer a question based on the reading, so that comprehension is seen as an integral part of smooth, continuous reading. Samuels reports that as the student repeatedly reads the same passage and increases his/her rate, the number of miscues also decreases. As the teacher continues this strategy over a period of time, students require fewer re-readings in order to reach the criterion of 85 wpm. In addition, he says, initial rates on new passages are faster for each successive passage that is used for instruction (Samuels, 1979).

Between each repeated reading, the student can practice the passage alone, with another student, or with a tape recorder. There is a disadvantage to practicing a passage alone, since no feedback can be given. Practicing with another student can be helpful in this and other ways. If classmates have discussed and agreed on the concept of constructive criticism, feedback from a peer may be valuable. Tape recording also can be beneficial for fluency instruction. If a tape is first made of the passage, it can be used as a "model" for appropriate reading. The student can either listen to the passage and follow along or read along with the tape. Additionally, the tape recorder can be used to record the student's progress, by comparing successive readings.

Repeated readings furnish the student ample opportunity to master material before s/he is required to begin a new passage (Samuels, 1979). Passage mastery gives the student a feeling of success about reading, and motivate him/her to seek further improvement in reading.

Taped Reading

In the third technique, the student needs a book and the tape-recorded version of the book to develop fluent reading. Chomsky (1978) has reported that disabled readers improve their reading skills by practicing with a taped version of a trade book. To begin the procedure, the teacher needs to record a number of books of varying difficulty on tape. The voices on the tapes should be lively and reflect a good oral interpretation of the story. The student should make his/her own selection even if the book seems to be beyond the student's instructional level. The tape can provide the necessary "crutch" to bridge the instructional gap. If the book selection is too easy, then the student will proceed easily to the next tape. The student's selection of an easy book may provide the necessary ingredient of success so improvement in reading can develop.

The student is to listen to the taped book in its entirety every day and follow along in text. After each day's listening, the student can then return to any part of the tape for practice. Either the student can read along with the tape or listen to the tape and record his/her own voice. The teacher spends two 30 minute periods per week with the student on the taped book.

Instruction may begin with the student's identification of the part of the book s/he has prepared for the teacher. The student reads orally the prepared section of the book followed by teacher instruction on the same section. Instruction may include identifying isolated words by using a window-frame device in which the teacher places the card with the opening over the word and asks the student to identify the word. If the student is unable to recognize the word, the teacher lifts the card, and the student is able to use the context to identify the unknown word. Questions, leading to assessment of comprehension, are also part of this session.

Chomsky regarded the tape as a support and a model for developing fluency. Chomsky saw students' attitudes toward reading change to a more positive one, through use of tapes. With each new book, it took the students less time to become fluent in their oral reading. The students were reading more regularly than before the taped reading was initiated; this was true both at home and at school. Chomsky attributed the students' improvements to being immersed in the same books until fluent reading was developed, and being given repeated opportunity to actively participate during teacher or self-instructional time.

Model Reading

The fourth strategy, model reading, can be likened to the strategy (assisted reading) developed by Hoskisson (1979) for

beginning readers. In this strategy, the teacher "models" the sentence, paragraph, or page prior to the student's reading, then the student attempts to model the teacher's reading by "echoing" the previously read material. The student needs feedback to recognize the degree of progress. Praising the child or taping the child's "echoed" response may be helpful. This strategy furnishes the student with small chunks of material to assimilate, but within a meaningful framework of connected discourse.

Other Approaches Revisited

The following three approaches for developing fluency are not new and can easily be accomplished in a large group situation. Reading aloud daily to children of all ages has been stressed by many reading authorities (Smith & Johnson, 1980). While reading aloud the teacher is "modeling" smooth, fluent reading. The student is given an opportunity each day to assimilate appropriate phrasing, pitch, stress, and juncture, and to use the teacher's reading as a goal for him/her to reach.

Choral reading is also useful, though not new, for developing fluency. Students learn through group oral reading how to read smoothly in phrases with good stress, pitch, and juncture. The group is the "model" of good fluent reading. Poetry can serve as a good stimulus for choral reading. The practice required to read well in a choral format also provides the poor reader with the needed ingredient of repetition to become fluent.

Reading easier material is another strategy for developing fluency. The student is encouraged to select books at his/her independent reading level and read many of these simpler books. As the student is immersed in the meaning and movement of the easier books, fluent reading gradually develops. Reading easy materials, the student can easily attend to appropriate phrasing within a meaningful context. The beauty of the last three suggested approaches is their manageability within a classroom.

With the more severe nonfluent reader, all of the suggested approaches may be needed to develop fluency. Each approach can be beneficial to the reader who is having difficulties with reading smoothly. Developing fluency enables the poor reader to attend to meaning, and what is reading if it is not comprehension?

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INSTRUCTIONAL CLOZE PROCEDURES: RATIONALE, FRAMEWORK, AND EXAMPLES

William J. Valmont

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Cloze procedures are being used by more and more teachers. Schools, school districts, and state school systems have been using cloze or modified cloze procedures for testing reading comprehension growth. More educators now have begun to use cloze for teaching reading. One reason for this development, perhaps, is that research findings show cloze as a potentially effective instructional technique. Jongsma (1980) states that cloze "...is no more or less effective than many of the conventional instructional methods that are widely used." Even with such a modest endorsement cloze instruction has exploded in popularity.

Instructional cloze exercises are created by deleting, from sentences or longer prose, individual letters, parts of words, entire words, phrases, or portions of sentences. It is the task of the student to supply either the exact missing information or equally acceptable alternative information. When the various types of deletion patterns are used, different thinking and performance behaviors are required of the reader.

The basic attraction of cloze instruction stems from the belief that it can be used to help develop important reading behaviors. The ability to use various informational clues during the act of reading is the behavior most likely to be developed by cloze. Schoenfeld (1980) notes: "To complete a cloze passage, students must simultaneously process semantic (word meaning) and syntactic (word order) clues." Whenever graphic elements are included on the cloze blank for the student to use, phonic clues are also available for the reader. Marino (1981) adds another dimension to the value of cloze procedures by indicating that cloze tasks also involve "reader expectation." This aspect of reading may be referred to as a reader's prediction/confirmation ability. As readers move through printed materials they form predictions about what will arise past the point at which they are presently reading. This is because of information they have already processed. They then proceed to confirm their expectations by reading further. Bortnick and Lopardo (1973) state: "A major instructional advantage of the cloze procedure is that material which is prepared...draws on the language itself, and so-called skills are not taught in isolated language structures. The student is constantly exposed to the experience of handling the context of the reading material as well as the structural aspects of the language."

Some investigators indicate that the "hypothesis/test" theory provides the underlying framework for using techniques such as cloze in which context aids the reader. Dahl and Samuels (1973) state: "The hypothesis/test model of recognition of printed words presents...(a) basic idea. The reader has some prior knowledge of the subject matter and has more and more meaning accumulating as s/he progresses through the passage. As information builds the reader can predict which words have a high probability of occurring: This is the hypothesis. At this point all that is needed is confirmation of the expected word: This is the test of the hypothesis."

In brief, using the cloze technique as a teaching tool appears to rest on two assumptions:

1. The more basic resources a reader brings to a specific point during reading (e.g., knowledge of the topic, semantic associations, application of the rules of syntax, knowledge of clues contained within written material), the more able the reader will be to predict an exact missing or unfamiliar word. At the very least, the reader should be able to supply an acceptable alternative word for a missing or unfamiliar word.

2. Having students supply exact replacement—or other acceptable words—through instructional cloze activities will help students become better able to develop, understand, and utilize the basic resources they bring to the act of reading.

Jongsma (1980) indicates that there is a strong need for a conceptual framework, such as the one above, which will give focus to research and will provide guidance to those who create instructional cloze exercises. Jongsma cites three options. Context clue classification schemes, for instance, might be one way to create a conceptual framework. A second might be the framework provided by Halliday and Hasan (1976), which consists of five types of cohesive ties: reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion. A third approach might be to use Cambridge's (1977) processing strategies.

Of the above three options, the use of a modification of a context clue classification scheme appears to be a practical and useful way to organize instructional cloze exercises. Fortunately, much thought has been given to describing those clues which readers use to discern meaning. Artley (1943) presented one set of context clues. McCullough (1958) presented another scheme of context clues. Although there is overlap among the three, Ames' list includes those patterns which frequently aid comprehension. His list includes:

1. Experience with language and familiar expressions	8. Referents or antecedents
2. Modifying phrases and clauses	9. Association clues
3. Definitions or descriptions	10. Main idea and supporting details
4. Words connected in a series	11. Question-answer pattern
5. Comparison or contrast	12. Prepositional clues
6. Synonym clues	13. Nonrestrictive clauses or appositive phrases
7. Time, setting, and mood	14. Cause-effect patterns

With the exception of two points (1,9), Ames' list describes writing devices inserted into written material by authors which are helpful to readers in comprehending. Points 1 and 9 pertain to readers' experiential background contributions.

The identification and classification of context clues led to the development of many teaching activities in the last few decades. Unfortunately, most of these activities centered on teaching students mainly to identify context clues, rather than on helping students understand how context clues help one generate meaning and apply it to what one is presently reading. It is important to help students identify context clues. With a slight refocusing of teaching strategies, however, it is possible to help students become sensitive both to context clues and to the thinking those clues elicit (Valmont and Cera, 1979).

Comprehension exercises using the cloze technique as the major method of instruction may be created using the organizational pattern presented below. In order to create a framework for instructional cloze, this writer has identified three major areas of comprehension: (1) vocabulary, (2) relationships, and (3) personal involvement. Vocabulary is of major importance because words are the "tags" people use to identify concepts and to communicate those concepts. Relationships are important because cognition rests heavily upon knowing what something is in relation to something else. Personal involvement is seen as a third important component of comprehension, because readers automatically bring their personal understandings, attitudes, and experiences to bear on reading. This behavior may be influenced and cultivated. Sub-components include:

<u>Vocabulary</u>	<u>Relationships</u>
general context	main idea/detail
comparisons	cause/effect
contrasts	sequences (significant order of events and ideas)
antonyms	inferences (implied meaning)
synonyms	relating information from two or more sources
multiple meanings	reaching a conclusion or generalization
idioms	analogous relationships
	classification
<u>Personal involvement reacting to, judging, and evaluating</u>	
characters	events
opinions	facts
author's purposes	

In the above organization, the sub-components contain many of the items Ames and the others have identified as context clues. Additional items were added for the sake of practicality and completeness. In exercises based on components listed in this framework, students will be required to supply, using their existing language skills and knowledge, that information which traditionally has been considered to be the context clues. Through practice

in supplying the "context clues" themselves, students should be helped to understand the effects that context clues have on their own thinking while they are reading.

Sensitizing students to their own ability to supply and use context clues coupled with helping students understand the manner in which those clues influence thinking may be the most valuable aspects of instructional cloze lessons (Sampson, Valmont, Allen 1982). The following sections describe how several basic cloze teaching strategies may be created so that students themselves are required to supply part of the context. Several instructional types are supplied to demonstrate the versatility of the framework, sub-components, and instructional procedures presented in this article.

INSTRUCTIONAL CLOZE - VOCABULARY EXERCISES

General context — To create general context cloze exercises, simply delete words at random from a passage at the students' instructional levels. (General context exercises are probably the least effective kind of cloze exercises unless words are deleted for specific purposes. They are acceptable introductory activities.)

Comparisons — Create statements or short stories which include expressions requiring comparisons. Delete the comparison and have students fill in their own ideas. Example:

"At the carnival all of the rides are fun. I like the fastest ride. It is faster than _____."

Contrasts — Create sentences or short stories in which the words but, however, and on the other hand are prevalent. Structure the deletion blanks so that students will have to supply the contrastive statement. Example: "Janet has a new seat on her bike. On the other hand, Fred's seat _____."

Antonyms — Structure sentences or short paragraphs so that students must supply a word with the opposite meaning. Examples:

"Some people like hard cookies, but other people like _____ ones."

"Dad's cake always stays together on the plate.

Mine, however, _____."

Synonyms — Create a passage. Choose several words that you believe the students can replace with synonyms. Delete these words, and replace them with cloze blanks. Examples:

"The wind began to blow." "The wind _____ to blow."

"I became frightened." "I became _____."

Multiple meanings — Create sentences or a paragraph in which a single word a few times. Reveal various meanings of the word through context. (Later, provide other words and have students create their own sentences.) Example:

"The fighters are in the _____. The telephone began to _____. I like your diamond _____. The bathtub has a _____ around it."

Idioms — Have students explain their understanding of idiomatic expressions after you have given them some context to use. Example:

Bill was mad at Tom. Bill said, "I think I'll give Tom a piece of my mind." What Bill means is that he will

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INSTRUCTIONAL CLOZE: RELATIONSHIP EXERCISES

Main idea/detail — To have students deal with the main idea, create or find a brief story. Selectively delete some words and have the students fill in those blanks. Then have students supply a title (main idea) for the story. To have students fill in details, give them a short passage from which some of the important details have been deleted. Have them supply the details. (The student must be very familiar with the content of the paragraph or else it will be necessary to supply the details elsewhere on the page. When details are supplied for the students, this is a less effective activity than one in which they use only personal knowledge to fill in the blanks.)

Cause-effect — Create paragraphs or statements in which either the cause or the effect is stated. Delete the opposite. Examples:

"When the big dog wagged its tail, the toys on the counter

" _____, so we could not light the fire to cook our hot-dogs while we were at the picnic."

Sequences — Create passages in which words such as these are deleted: first (of all), next, after, second, finally, at last. Have students fill in the blanks. (You may, also, delete statements that indicate the passage of time and have students re-supply them. Example phrases might be: "one afternoon," "the sun started to go down," "it was getting very dark," "early the next morning."

Inferences — Write descriptive passages. Students, through inference, fill in the name of the person, place, or thing being described. Example: "It is round and brown. Players throw it through a hoop and earn two points. It is _____."

Relating information from two or more sources — Give students two sources of information (such as an encyclopedia paragraph and a newspaper clipping.) Create a cloze passage which uses some information from each source. Be certain to have students supply some of the information. Have students read both references and then complete the cloze exercise without looking at the references.

Reaching a conclusion or generalization — Create a passage and selectively delete some words which students can reasonably supply. At the end of the passage, phrase the first part of a conclusive statement and have students finish it. Example: (After having students read a paragraph about African bees, present this statement) "The African bee _____."

Analogous relationships — Give students an intact passage to read about a given person or subject. Create a parallel cloze passage in which a person, or subject similar to that of the original

is presented. (Delete significant words in the cloze passage so the students must fill in parallel ideas.) Have students read the original passage and then fill in the cloze passage through their understanding of the analogy. Example:

(The first paragraph is about an orchestra conductor; the cloze paragraph is about a police officer.) This sentence appears in the original story. "The conductor pointed the stick to tell the players when to start."
This statement appears in the cloze exercise. "The police officer _____ to tell the drivers _____."
At the end of the exercise, a statement such as this may appear:
"A _____ directs a _____ the way a _____ directs _____."

Classification — After providing students with a list of items, create statements to help students supply the category into which those objects may be grouped. Examples:

"Fred could put the paper, pens, and stamps in one place, since the are all things used to _____."
or, "Fred could put his model planes, coins, and baseball cards together, because they are all _____."

INSTRUCTIONAL CLOZE: PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT

Evaluating Characters — Create a paragraph describing a real or make-believe person. Be quite descriptive so readers will know the person by what he/she says or does or what others say about him/her. Next, create a cloze passage that shows the person in a new setting. Have students supply information about the character's behavior in the new situation. Example:

In the original passage, John is at school. He trips other students, takes their desserts, makes noise during movies, has to be the first one out the door, etc.
In the cloze passage, students fill in these statements about John at camp:
At mealtime, he _____. When the camp leader was talking, John _____. When everyone lined up to ride the horses, John _____.

Evaluating Opinions — Select from a newspaper (or create) an editorial in which arguments on both sides of an issue are presented. Selectively delete some of the words or phrases which the students should be able to replace. Have students fill in the blanks and write their own opinion of the issue at the bottom of the exercise.

Author's Purpose — Give students a skeleton framework of a paragraph into which they must insert words to color the reader's opinion of the subject matter. Example:

"The play was _____. The plot was so _____ that by the middle of the first act, I _____. The actors were _____. The part when the chorus broke into song was very _____. If you go to see this play, you will _____."

Summary

Using the instructional cloze strategies, myriad exercises may be prepared within the basic framework of (1)vocabulary, (2)relationships and (3)personal involvement (and the sub-categories of each) as described in this article. Instruction in which students are required to supply the "context clue" as part of the cloze task may be an aspect of instructional cloze procedures that will have a great deal of value for students. Of course, a great deal of research using this framework is required before its full value may be determined.

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THE NEWBERY AWARD BOOKS: ARE THEY BEING READ?

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A study conducted among Oklahoma schools investigated the frequency with which the Newbery Award books are being read by third and fifth grade students. It would seem reasonable that children would read such books with great regularity, since this award is given each year to an outstanding American author for his or her contribution to children's literature.

The subjects for the study consisted of 750 students, divided evenly between third and fifth grades, and drawn from schools to represent equal numbers of rural, urban, and metropolitan groups in Oklahoma. There was almost equal distribution of girls and boys. The students were given a list of books designed to assess the frequency extent to which they had read the Newbery Award Books. The list consisted of fifty children's books, of which ten were Newbery Award books. The participants were asked to indicate whether or not they had read the book. The Newbery Award Books were the winners from 1971 through 1980. Each response was individually tabulated and tested using a correlational analysis for reading frequency.

In correlating the individual responses of students reporting their reading of the Newbery Award Books, both third and fifth grades reflected a nonsignificant correlation between age, based on grade level, and the number of books read. In comparing the number of books read in the third grade to the responses of fifth grade students, a positive correlation, significant at the .05 level was reflected. Results of this correlational analysis indicated essentially no relationship between age and number of Newbery Award Books read within the grade level. The small, but significant correlation between grade level and number of Newbery books read was to be expected due to the additional years in school.

The third grade reported reading 448 Newbery Award Books, with a mean of 1.24. Also in the third grade, 54.29% of the students had never read any of the books investigated in this study. The fifth grade reported reading 590 Newbery Award Books, with a mean of 1.52. Of these students, 45.36% had never read any of the books investigated. One third grade student reported reading all ten books, and one student reported reading eight of the award winning selections. One fifth grade student reported reading all ten of the selections, and five fifth graders had read nine of the Newbery Award Books.

Generalizing from the findings of this study, the following conclusions can be made. Many third and fifth grade students in Oklahoma have not read many of the Newbery Award Books. It would seem worthwhile for teachers as well as librarians to promote an interest in these books among all students. The reading of Newbery Award Books as recreational reading would have multiple benefits, adding value to the curriculum, and adding quality to the lives of the readers.

Editor's note—

Without wishing to start a column of letters-to-the-editor, we would invite reactions from readers concerning the findings of this investigation. One's curiosity might be piqued to the point of asking, is this true of all grades, all states—can we generalize at all? Is there literature extant on this matter? We hope to hear from a few of our regular readers.

AN EXAMINATION OF ETHNIC CONTENT IN NINE CURRENT BASAL SERIES

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During the past several years, publishers of basal reading series have focused considerable attentions on recognizing the influence of ethnicity in basal reading series (Rupley, Garcia, and Longnion, 1981). Portrayal of ethnic story characters and story content are evidenced in current basal series in order that a more balanced depiction of minority groups be represented. The concern for and value of balanced ethnic portrayals in basal reading series has been addressed in various investigations (Kyle, 1978; Butterfield, 1979; Campbell and Wirtenberg, 1980).

In a study of story content in seven basal reading series published in the mid-1970s, Kyle (1978) reported that ethnic minority characters portrayed in sixth grade basals are usually well-known historical or contemporary figures rather than fictional characters involved in realistic, modern situations. It was also reported that the sixth grade basals characterized minority adults only in professional or all-adult settings. The results of the study also indicated sixth grade basals offered few examples of integrated groups of children and that only fifteen stories at the sixth grade level related the activities of a racially mixed group. Kyle (1978) concluded: "The activities of minority and nonminority characters should convey the fact that aspirations, talents, feelings and interests are not related to race...(Basal) readers must be developed and evaluated with an understanding of all the learnings—overt and incidental—that they can produce ...Newly published materials (basal readers) indicate that this understanding has not yet been fully reached (page 305)."

Although it is generally accepted that major publishers of basal reading series have made attempts to enhance the quantity and quality of their materials by depicting a more balanced portrayal of ethnic story characters and content, current research investigations addressing the extent of such attempts are very limited. Past studies have focused on either a particular grade level or only a few levels in basal reading series, in contrast to surveying all levels of a particular reading series or group of basal reading series. A major purpose of this study was to investigate the extent to which stories depicting the three largest ethnic groups are contained in nine of the major and current basal reading series (grades one through six). Blacks, Hispanics, and Native Americans were used in the study since they represent the

largest minorities nationwide. A fourth group labeled "Multiethnic" enabled the authors to code information about stories that featured major characters from more than one ethnic group.

The authors sought answers to the following questions regarding ethnic content by examining nine current basal reading series:

1. What amount of ethnic content is contained in nine of the major basal reading series; are there differences in the amount of ethnic content contained in these series?
2. Is there a particular basal reading series that emphasizes a greater number of stories about Blacks, Hispanics, or Native Americans than others; to what extent are these differences evident among the basal reading series?
3. In what ways can such information benefit individuals who are interested in purchasing a new basal series?

Developing Guidelines for Examination of the Nine Basal Reading Series

Guidelines are often provided by publishers of basal reading series to specify the extent to which they intend to include and depict ethnic groups within the structure of their specific format. It is the authors' contention that minorities should be depicted accurately, in a variety of roles, exhibiting a wide range of behaviors and emotions. In addition, story characters should be depicted in varied family settings and in problem as well as recreational situations.

To facilitate the development of specific categories and sub-categories in evaluation charts used in the study, commercial guidelines available from two major publishers were selected as sources for depiction of Blacks, Hispanics, and Native Americans in basal reading series (MacMillan, 1975; Houghton-Mifflin, 1981). A sampling of the major guidelines from both publishers are presented below to indicate the publishers' attempts to offer accurate, objective, and balanced portrayals and to eliminate stereotypic and distorted characterizations.

Macmillan (1975)

1. Represent blacks in all communities, urban, suburban, rural, well-to-do as well as middle class and poor. When discussing urban problems, include the role of white people.
2. Issues of concern to modern Indians should be treated honestly. The strengths and pride of American Indians should be shown. Indian characters should be three-dimensional.
3. Show Hispanic people in a variety of roles, women as well as men working outside the home and in the home. Aim for balance.

Houghton-Mifflin (1981)

1. Present members of minority groups in the full spectrum of jobs. Include blue-collar, white collar, executive, and professional members of each minority group.
2. Include meaningful relationships between members of different minority groups and between members of minority groups and majority groups.

3. Recognize the social and economic barriers that restrict racial and ethnic minorities.
4. Show relationships and cooperation between older persons and people of all ages.
5. Depict with sensitivity and accuracy the unique experiences of minority groups in the United States.

Categories for coding ethnic story content from the nine basal reading series used in this study were based on the above guidelines. In addition, the authors' experience in the area of ethnic content in texts were employed. Due to space limitations, categories and sub-categories regarding each of the four groups examined are not provided, but may be obtained from the authors.

Percentage Table of Ethnic Content in Nine Current Basal Series

Publisher/Stories Date	Hispanic	Blacks	Native Americans	Multieθνic	Total
MacMillan (1980) N=427	3.0	6.0	5.0	4.0	18
Open Court (1979) N=528	1.0	4.0	4.0	5.0	14
Rand McNally (1979) N=347	2.0	6.0	4.0	5.0	17
Houghton-Mifflin N=391 (1981)	3.0	6.0	4.0	5.0	18
Ginn and Company N=404 (1980)	1.0	4.0	4.0	9.0	18
Laidlaw (1980) N=269	2.0	6.0	4.0	9.0	21
Addison-Wesley N=608 (1982)	0.5	4.0	2.0	12.0	19
Scott Foresman N=456 (1981)	2.0	6.0	2.0	10.0	20
Holt, Rinehart and Winston (1980) N=409	2.0	5.0	2.0	9.0	18
Total Stories = 3839	$\bar{x}=1.8$	$\bar{x}=5.2$	$\bar{x}=3.4$	$\bar{x}=7.6$	$\bar{x} = 18$

(Logan and Garcia, 1982)

Results and Discussion

There is a distinct within-group consistency throughout the nine basal reading series examined in regard to the amount of ethnic stories. This implies that generally speaking, the amount of content regarding ethnic groups among the major basal reading series is basically parallel and that no single basal series offers more ethnic content for a particular group than another. Of the four ethnic areas examined, practically all nine current basal series included a greater occurrence of stories about Blacks and Multiethnic groups than stories focusing on Hispanics or Native Americans. This information apparently contradicts earlier findings of few examples of integrated groups in the basals and supports the notion that there is an increase in multiethnic story content.

Total percentages among the nine basal series indicates that the total number of ethnic stories included in the major basals do not vary significantly. This information can prove beneficial to individuals interested in securing a new basal series but speaks only to the quantity of ethnic content and not to its quality.

Publishers of basal series need to consider including additional stories about Hispanic groups since recent governmental reports project that the Hispanic population will increase rapidly and by the turn of the century will surpass the Black population as being the largest minority group. Classroom reading teachers who have a large population of Hispanic children in their classrooms should consider supplementing the basal program with appropriate Hispanic literature and tradebooks to better enhance the developmental reading program.

Summary

Publishers of current basal series are recognizing the value of ethnicity in story content. There are very few discernable differences in the amounts of story content found in the current basals examined. Indeed, the major basal series parallel closely regarding the amount of ethnic content presented. There is a considerably higher degree of stories about integrated groups than have been included in earlier basal reading series. Classroom reading teachers and administrators interested in purchasing a current basal series should be conscious of these similarities within existing series. Supplementary materials related to specific ethnic groups are recommended to enhance current offerings in basal readers.

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FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE: HOW IS IT USED IN BASAL READINGS?

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How much attention do editors of basal readers give to figurative language? What is the most common figure of speech found in basal readers? What is the least common figure of speech found in basal readers? These were the questions the authors sought to answer through their research.

Three popular basal reader series were used. They were the Scott, Foresman Basics in Reading Program (1978), Ginn Reading 720 Program (1976), and the Houghton Mifflin Reading Series (1976). These basal reader series were selected because, according to Beck, et al. (1979) and Aukerman (1981), they were among the most widely used basal reader programs. Five fourth grade basal reader textbooks and three sixth grade basal reader texts were examined. The figures of speech that were found were placed into one of the 13 metaphorical categories, explanations of which follow:

Abstractionistic metaphors are comparisons of abstract ideas with animate or inanimate objects or conditions, e.g., "death is the pits."

Animal metaphors occur when certain animal characteristics are attributed to human beings, animate or inanimate objects, and abstractions, e.g., "the man is a laughing hyena."

Animistic metaphors are employed when writers attribute life to inanimate objects, e.g., "the broom acted like a dancing machine."

Frozen metaphors occur when the figurative meaning becomes a literal meaning over time, e. g., "he sat at the foot of the bed."

Humanistic metaphors involve a comparison of a real or imaginary person to a condition, an inanimate object, or an abstraction, e.g., "the boy was like a computer."

Hyperboles are extreme exaggerations of animate or inanimate objects or abstractions, e.g., "the boy ate a two mile long hot-dog."

Inanimate metaphors are associations between two or more inanimate objects, e.g., "the ground was as hard as cement."

Incarnations are associations of positive or negative attributes of a real or imaginary person, object, or abstraction with particular persons or organizations, e.g., "she acted like Scrooge."

Litotes contain positive phrases which are negatively implied or stated, e.g., "that car is not half bad."

Metonymies are substitutions of the name of an animate or inanimate object, or abstraction for another word, e.g., "board" is substituted for the word "council."

Personifications are attributions of human characteristics to non-living beings, objects, or abstractions, e.g., "the tiger was like a judge."

Sense metaphors convey positive or negative reactions which result from associations with feeling, hearing, tasting, touching, and smelling, e.g., "the girl, with a cold smile on her face, congratulated her opponent."

Synechdochies contain an individual word or words which can be substituted for a whole class; or a whole class can be substituted for an individual word, e.g., "field hand" is substituted for the words "field worker."

Each figure of speech was classified and grouped into an appropriate metaphorical category. All literary selections in the book sample were examined. Omitted were the glossaries, the specific skills lessons, the tables of contents, the biographical sketches of authors, and the annotated bibliographies.

A frequency analysis count was used to determine the most common figure of speech found at each of the two levels and the frequency rankings of the 13 figures of speech classifications.

The data revealed that the most common type of figure of speech found in the fourth grade basal readers was personification. The rank order in which the figures of speech occurred in the fourth grade basal readers was as follows: 1) personification, 2) sense, 3) animal, 4) inanimate, 5) hyperbole, 6) humanistic, 7) synecdoche, 8) abstractionistic, 9) animistic, 10) frozen, 11) litote, 12) metonymy, and 13) incarnation (See Table 1).

Table 1 - Rankings of Figures of Speech Found in Fourth and Sixth Grade

Grade 4—1. Personification	Grade 6—1. Personification
2. Sense	2. Animal
3. Animal	3. Inanimate
4. Inanimate	4. Sense
5. Hyperbole	5. Hyperbole
6. Humanistic	6. Humanistic
7. Synecdoche	7. Frozen
8. Abstractionistic	8. Abstractionistic
9. Animistic	9. Synecdoche
10. Frozen	10. Animistic
11. Litote	11. Metonymy
12. Metonymy	12. Incarnation
13. Incarnation	13. Litote

The total number of figures of speech differed among the fourth grade basal reader series ranging from a low of 71 to a high of 288. Table 2 reveals the total data, as well as the counts

of the thirteen different figures of speech.

Table 2
Total Number of Figures of Speech
Found in Fourth Grade Basal Readers

Tropes	Houghton Mifflin	Ginn	Scott Foresman	Total
Abstractionistic	6	12	2	20
Animal	42	53	5	100
Animistic	6	8	4	18
Frozen	7	10	1	18
Humanistic	17	23	0	40
Hyperbole	40	18	7	65
Inanimate	33	30	20	83
Incarnation	0	0	0	0
Litote	1	0	0	1
Metonymy	1	0	0	1
Personification	45	59	21	125
Sense	46	54	8	108
Synecdoche	5	21	3	29
Total	249	288	71	608

The most common type of figure of speech found in the sixth grade basal readers was personification. Similar results were reported for the fourth grade basal readers. The rank order in which the figures of speech occurred in the sixth grade basal readers was as follows: 1) personification, 2) animal, 3) inanimate, 4) sense, 5) hyperbole, 6) humanistic, 7) frozen, 8) abstractionistic, 9) synecdoche, 10) animistic, 11) metonymy, 12) incarnation, and 13) litote (See Table 1).

As revealed in Table 3, the total number of figures of speech differed among the sixth grade basal reader series ranging from a low of 125 to a high of 232.

The total number of figures of speech differed among the fourth grade and the sixth grade basal series ranging from a low of 196 to a high of 520 (See Table 4).

It was found that the most common type of figure of speech in the fourth and the sixth grade basals was personification. The five most commonly used figures of speech were personification, animal, sense, inanimate, and hyperbole; the five figures of speech least frequently occurring were incarnation, litote, metonymy, abstractionistic, and animistic.

Table 3
Number of Figures of Speech
Found in Sixth Grade Basal Readers

Tropes	Houghton Mifflin	Ginn	Scott Foresman	Total
Abstractionistic	12	1	0	13
Animal	26	54	35	115
Animistic	2	5	3	10
Frozen	2	12	3	17
Humanistic	7	8	5	20
Hyperbole	35	10	14	59
Inanimate	36	42	14	92
Incarnation	0	0	0	0
Litote	0	0	0	0
Metonymy	2	6	0	8
Personification	40	51	31	122
Sense	32	40	17	89
Synecdoche	6	3	3	12
Total	200	232	125	557

Table 4
Total Number of Figures of Speech
By Series and Grade Levels

Basal Reader Series	Grade 4	Grade 6	Total
Houghton Mifflin	249	200	449
Ginn Reading 720	288	232	520
Scott Foresman	71	125	196

The authors recommend that basal reader publishers should assist students in developing critical thinking skills through preserving the figures of speech found in the original writings of the stories and articles. There needs to be a balance of the most common types of figures of speech and the least frequently used figures of speech in the basal reader textbooks. Exposure to a variety of figures of speech can enhance a student's reading speaking, listening, and writing, making both his receptive and expressive modes of communication more effective.

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CONTENT AREA READING: A MODULAR APPROACH

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The idea that content area teachers should accept some measure of responsibility for their students' success in assigned reading—long epitomized in the maxim, "Every teacher a teacher of reading"—is hardly new. Dissatisfaction with the transfer effects of take-out reading programs federally funded during the 1960s led to a ground swell of interest in content area approaches during the 1970s (Herber, 1978).

The degree to which the idea has been accepted by secondary content area teachers, however, is more than a little disappointing. In a recent naturalistic investigation, Ratekin et al. (1982) observed that the techniques most frequently recommended in content area courses and workshops are only infrequently used by practicing teachers.

Major reasons for the lack of significant progress in fostering an acceptance of these techniques include a misunderstanding of their function and a distorted idea of the amount of time, effort, and know-how they require. Moreover, even when these impressions are corrected through inservice training, the fact remains that many teachers lack the degree of creative and linguistic background needed in developing vocabulary reinforcement activities, effective study guides, graphic organizers, and the like.

A recent and promising attempt to alleviate these problems is underway in the Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, Public Schools in the form of Project READ:S (Reading Education Accountability Design: Secondary). This ESEA IV-C innovative/exemplary project is funded federally through the Idaho State Department of Education and embodies a new approach to bringing about teacher utilization of content area reading techniques.

The project is unique in two major respects. First, it greatly simplifies the participation of individual teachers by making available instructional modules prepared in advance for each textbook unit. Second, it coordinates the use of these modules with a diagnostic/prescriptive management system operated in the language arts program.

Secondary students are first diagnosed by one of two criterion-referenced systems, depending on their achievement level. The results of this testing are made available to content teachers. A science teacher might learn, for example, that a certain student has difficulty in predicting outcomes based on prose material and also in interpreting charts and tables—both important skills in learning from science texts.

The teacher is then free to make use, either in original or modified form, of one or more modules based on units from the actual text in use. These modules have been prepared by teams of instructors using the same book. By collaboratively developing the materials, ideas and insights are pooled and quality products are obtained, well in advance of the moment they are actually needed.

The modules contain three types of activities: vocabulary, comprehension, and study skills. They thus correspond to key steps of a directed reading activity and comprise, in addition, the principal techniques of content area reading instruction.

The vocabulary component presents key terms included in the unit, first in isolation with accompanying cassette (if desired), then in conjunction with brief definitions, and finally in appropriate contextual settings, both in the form of sentences and graphic organizers. Also included are a structural analysis component, which depends on the terms, and a self-check. Such units are intended to assist the student in quickly attaining the background necessary to good comprehension and thus correspond to the initial step of a DRA.

The comprehension component is designed to guide the students' understanding as they read silently by focusing their attention on information valued by the instructor. The most common (but not the only) format used for this purpose is the question-before-reading. One set of questions is written for each unit and each question is classified according to comprehension skill type. These types correspond to those included in the management system, thus placing the teacher in the position of easily modifying the module for individual students by eliminating or including questions as indicated by the diagnosis. The comprehension component facilitates the second, or purpose-setting, step of the DRA. It apprises students of what they are to read for. The result, of course, is a content guide to assist students during the third, or silent reading, step of the DRA. By responding in writing as they progress through the assignment, students are engaged in an active rather than a passive learning process. Module questions subsequently form the basis of a class discussion of the unit and help to ensure competent participation in such a discussion (the fourth step of the DRA). In addition to the question format, others are also used, depending on the nature of the unit. These include charts and diagrams to be completed, statements to react to, puzzles and problems to be solved, and so on. The variety of formats draws on extensive treatments of the subject of reading guides during the last decade and a half, and adds much needed flexibility to module development.

The study skills module component corresponds to the final step of the DRA. It provides students with practice in important and content-relevant skills, such as skimming, scanning, interpreting tables, etc., and does so by using actual text units as the basis of activities. As one might expect, the formats used for the study skills component vary considerably. Like the vocabulary component, however, each contains a self-check.

An area avoided deliberately is that of phonics. While an integral part of the skills step of the DRA at the elementary level, phonics is generally felt to be of minimal value and perhaps even counterproductive in a content area setting (Herber, 1978; Ryder, 1981). Participants in Project READ:S therefore concentrate their efforts on study skills.

Students involved in the project make use of all three types of module components in each of their academic subjects. Their progress is monitored through periodic use of the criterion-referenced instruments which form the basis of the management systems. Content area teachers are informed of updates in each student's status so that decisions about how best to employ the modules can be made.

Project READ:S possesses a number of attractive advantages. Considered together, they are sufficiently attractive to give educators pause and to cause them to reflect on whether a team-oriented, modular approach is preferable to the current individual-oriented emphasis.

The principal advantage is the ease with which teachers can make use of the modules. Daily preparations of graphic organizers, reading guides and the like are no longer the burden so many content area teachers perceive them to be.

A second advantage is the team approach employed both in the development of materials and in the diagnosis and instruction of students. Teachers working together on mutually taught text units are able to share insights into problems and gain an enhanced understanding of their subject and how best to teach it. Additional benefit is derived from the fact that monitoring each student's progress lends an aspect of accountability and, as a result, of reading awareness.

A third advantage is the close connection between teaching and assessment. The intent of Project READ:S is both to facilitate students in textbook reading assignments and to increase comprehension ability generally. These goals are approached by the management system simultaneously, and data presently available suggest that they are being reached.

Reflective of national trends, the Coeur d'Alene secondary schools experienced a test score decline through much of the 1970s. From 1972 to 1979, for example, eighth-grade composite percentile ranks on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills fell from 66 to 48, while those of tenth graders dropped from 43 to 36. It was at this point that Project READ:S was begun. After three full years, during which the national trend continued downward, Coeur d'Alene students

experienced remarkable gains. From 1979 to 1982, composite ITBS percentile ranks of eighth graders rose from 48 to 78 while those of tenth graders rose from 36 to 60.

These dramatic results attest to the soundness of the team-oriented, modular approach encompassed in Project READ:S. It may be time for such a method to be instituted on a broader scale.

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READERS - PLEASE NOTE

Word was received after the printing of this article ("Content Area Reading: A Modular Approach") that the instructional program described in the article (Project READ:S) has just been approved by the National Diffusion Network of the United States Department of Education for exemplary program status. This federal validation provides dissemination funds for any school district in the United States to use to replicate this junior/senior high school reading program in its schools. Information concerning adoption may be obtained by writing or calling Dr. Walter L. Powers, Assistant Superintendent, School District 271, 311 North 10th Street, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, 83814. Telephone (208) 664-8241.

APPLYING THE CRITICAL READING PROCESS TO THE FRAY MODEL

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This paper is an attempt to adapt the critical reading process to the Gray model of reading. The four steps of the Gray model (1948) identified as word perception, comprehension, reaction, and integration become in the critical reading process the perception of the connotative power of words, the comprehension of persuasive language, the reaction of judgment, and the integration of monitoring devices by the insightful, discriminating reader. As in the Gray model, the steps are interdependent since the connotations of words influence comprehension as well as the reaction of judgment.

The position maintained by the author is that critical reading is the use of critical thinking. Therefore, critical reading is critical thinking. This view has been emphasized by Russell (1961) and is incorporated in the comprehensive critical reading model by Ennis (1964) and adapted by Hash (1974) to dialogues in narrative form on critical issues. Critical reading is also seen as a cluster of skills that are used in accordance with the content of the material to be read, the characteristics of the reader, and the conditions in which the reading is done.

The four steps of critical reading adapted to the Gray model are described below, and include suggested instructional techniques for the elementary and secondary teacher.

Step 1. - The Perception of the Connotative Power of Words

In Step 1, the reader goes beyond the pronunciation of words as meaningful units as in the Gray pattern and distinguishes between the denotative and the connotative meanings of words. The word "teacher" has the denotative or dictionary definition of "one who teaches; especially, a person hired by a school to teach" (Morris, 1976). However, the word "teacher" may evoke connotative or associative implications beyond the literal, explicit sense. Connotations may be personal or general (Altick, 1965). Personal connotations reflect past experiences with the referent which may be cumulative or the result of one vivid example. The reader's reaction to the word "teacher" may be an emotional response to one particular teacher or a composite of reactions to several teachers. General connotations manifest a general consensus about the implications of a word, such as the word "Samaritan" which has come to mean a compassionate person who unselfishly helps

another rather than an inhabitant of Samaria. Therefore, words have changed in meaning because of general connotations.

Described below are a few techniques that can be used by teachers to develop the ability of elementary and secondary students to discern the connotative powers of words.

- a) Students state their personal connotations and the reasons for their reactions to such words as the following: child, school, student, teacher, comics, reading, mathematics, spelling, football, baseball

or

nuclear power plants, inflation, the draft, liberal, conservative, the Pentagon, intolerance, socialism, capitalism, the flag of the United States.

- b) Students analyze the associative qualities of brand names, book titles, song titles, names of residential areas, names of restaurants, and names of characters in books.
- c) Students respond to pictures by giving words that appeal to the senses: visual, auditory, tactile, palatal, and olfactory responses. These responses are then incorporated into language experience stories.
- d) Students generate cumulative sentences in accordance with Christensen's (1963) generative rhetoric, using descriptive words and phrases. An example by a sixth grade student, pertaining to a picture of a field of tulips, is given here:

"You see a field of tulips, a carpet
of color, Flowers with petals unfurled,
blossoms reaching for the sun."

More concreteness and sensory awareness are noted in the words that comprise the noun clusters.

- e) Students identify and analyze words that they believe were used by the writers of advertisements as suggested by Altick (1965). Example: Sure Disneyland is a (big, great, important, grand) place to visit. But just because you've been there doesn't (mean, say, tell, signify) your tour of Southern California is (ended, complete, closed, finished).

Because only minutes away from Disneyland is California's second (wonderful, noble, greatest, splendid) attraction, Knott's Berry Farm, where you and your family will (take part in, share, join in, have a stake in) experiences that will last a (long time, lifetime, long period of time).

Students discuss the reasons for their selections and whether they felt the rejected words might have been more effective.

- f) Students analyze and compare a choice of advertisements in a field, such as automobiles, as follows:

—selling points	—kind of appeal
—special words used	—kind of audience
—testability of information	

7. Students select and analyze words that appeal to the higher instincts or the lower emotions in editorials. Words in editorials are classified as follows:

The Power of Words

Words that strengthen,
feelings of honor,
courage, nobility
pride, and sympathy

Words that evoke
feeling of intolerance,
vanity, fear,
jealousy, suspicion
of new or different

Students discuss the writer's purposes in using these words and then rewrite the editorials using words of minimal connotational value.

Step 2. - The Comprehension of Persuasive Language

As in the Gray model, in Step 2 the reader is concerned with the ideas conveyed by the words and the author's intent in writing the message. Interpretation of persuasive language involves reading between the lines and making hypotheses about the writer's motives and deeper meanings.

The teacher's ability to ask questions that elicit interpretive responses is particularly important at this step. The thinking of students is circumscribed by the anticipated questions of teachers. Also, students should be encouraged to create their own questions and to interrogate teachers and other authorities about language patterns.

An example of an advertisement and suggested questions for interpretation that can be used by elementary and secondary teachers are given below:

ESSENCE, THE FOREVER SOAP, IS YOURS.
(Picture of bride and groom. The groom
is slipping a wedding ring on the
bride's finger.)
ESSENCE, the perfumed soap has twice
the fragrance of the number two soap.
Twice the perfume that takes the gloom
away. And twice the pleasure for you
and yours. A delight that is ever-
lastingly yours. ESSENCE, the forever
soap.

What is the source?

Who is writing

What is the purpose of
the ad?

what to whom

What are the facts?

for what purpose

What ideas need to
be proved?

and with what

For whom is the
ad written?

result?

How does the ad make
you feel? Why?

Questions pertaining to the advertisement can also be asked in accordance with Rank's (1976) intensify and downplay schema for

the analysis of communication, persuasion, and propaganda. A few questions under each of the categories of Rank's schema are given:

INTENSIFY	DOWNPLAY
<u>Repetition</u>	<u>Omission</u>
What ideas are repeated?	What facts about the
What words are repeated?	product are omitted?
What reasons can you give for these omissions?	About the source?
	Why were these facts omitted?
<u>Association</u>	<u>Diversion</u>
Is there an implied association between the product ESSENCE and any of the fol- lowing:	Is there anything that diverts attention from the main idea of the ad?
- Progress - Domestic pleasures - Sensual pleasures - The most people (bandwagon)	If so, what is the reason for the diversion?
- Security - Other associations	<u>Confusion</u>
What are the reasons for the associations?	Does the ad give an immediate or simple solution to a prob- lem? If so, explain.
<u>Composition</u>	
What feelings are evoked by the following phrases?	
"takes the gloom away"	
"for you and yours"	
"everlastingly yours"	
"the forever soap"	
Why is ESSENCE in capital letters?	

Editorials and other persuasive discourse can also be analyzed in accordance with Rank's schema. Students need practice in interpreting the specific ideas that words evoke in persuasive language in order to judge effectively the soundness of the arguments given.

Step 3. - The Reaction of Judgment

Step 3 concerns the reaction of judgment as in the Gray model. Judgments or critical decisions about the soundness of the reasons presented can be based on the following three criteria: (1) standards of logic, (2) empirical research, and (3) personal experience.

Logic is defined as the process of reasoning from assumptions to conclusions. The tool of logic is the syllogism or sequence of assumptions (or premises) and conclusions (inferences). Inferences are valid or invalid. For an inference to be valid, the premises are accepted at face value and assumed to be true. Validity refers to the process of reasoning rather than the truth of the premises. Therefore, premise 1 plus premise 2 equals the conclusion.

Inferences can also be sound or unsound. To be sound, inferences must be valid and also based on premises that are true (Altick, 1965). The following premises and conclusions are based on the advertisement for ESSENCE soap:

Major premise: A leading soap has twice the fragrance of the #2 soap.

Minor premise: Essence has twice the fragrance of the #2 soap.

Conclusion: Essence is a leading soap.

Major premise: People who use Essence soap are not gloomy.

Minor premise: Judy uses Essence soap.

Conclusion: Judy is not gloomy.

Since the major premises cannot be accepted as true, the derived inferences are considered unsound, and the rationality of the advertisement is in question.

To obtain empirical support for a claim the student may subject a testable advertised claim to experimental verification by testing the claim, making observations, drawing conclusions, and reporting the results of the experiment. Reeves (1974) described claim-testing projects undertaken by his students. He noted that the attitudes of the students tended to become more favorable and critical toward the products advertised after the experiments. One student tested the claim of Ivory Liquid that the detergent is so rich and thick "it even whips" and found the claim to be true. The same student also tested the other dishwashing liquids which proved to whip even better than Ivory. She questioned the significance of the capacity to whip as a reason for the purchase of any liquid soap.

Judgments are also based on personal experience. For example, the advertisement for Essence soap would be disregarded by a person who did not like the fragrance of the soap, or the lather did not agree with his or her skin. The prospective customer would decide not to purchase the commodity based on the criteria of personal experience rather than logical criteria or empirical inquiry.

Step 4. - The Integration of Monitoring Devices

After discerning the connotative powers of words, comprehending the ideas evoked by the words, and evaluating the soundness of the arguments presented, the reader integrates the processes of critical reading into his or her background of experiences, as in the Gray pattern. The reader assimilates the knowledge of the steps of the process for future retrieval in analyzing persuasive language.

The critical reader has the critical attitude or the critical spirit (Siegel, 1980) reflected in the predisposition to ask questions, to search for sound reasons, and to make independent judgments. This last step reflects an ongoing process by the insightful reader of acquiring internal monitoring devices for making discriminating responses (Baldwin and Readence, 1979).

An attempt has been made to adapt critical reading to the four-step Gray model of the reading process. Suggestions for instruction by elementary and secondary teachers have been presented under the first three steps. The last step, the integration of monitoring devices, is the culmination of the critical reading process since the goal is the development of discriminating readers who independently, habitually, and systematically criticize their own processes of thinking, feeling, and acting in response to patterns of persuasive language.

Milgram (Moritz, 1979) studied the extent to which one person will go in hurting another at the behest of a recognized authority figure and concluded:

A substantial proportion of people do what they are told to do, irrespective of the content of the act and without limitations of conscience, so long as they perceive that the command comes from a legitimate authority (Moritz, 1979:24).

He also maintained that the propensity to obey was a "fatal" human flaw that "gives our species only a modest chance of survival" (Moritz, 1979:25). If this is so, then it is the responsibility of the teacher to provide experiences that will build in students a critical attitude and promote the development of internal monitoring devices for evaluating the language of author and speaker.

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ORGANIZING READING MATERIAL INTO THOUGHT UNITS TO ENHANCE COMPREHENSION

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Many teachers recognize that type of poor reader who "knows the words but just can't comprehend what he or she is reading." Reading programs have been relatively successful in dealing with tasks at the word level, yet we recognize that comprehension is truly the goal of reading. Teachers have been clamoring for ideas to enhance the comprehension abilities of their students. This article offers one suggestion for the improvement of comprehension.

An inherent problem with understanding the written word is that phrasing the disparate words into thought units is an additional task of the reader, beyond merely figuring out the words. There are a few punctuation clues in print, but this mechanism is a poor substitute for the phrasing provided in speech by the human voice (Kleiman and Schallert, 1978). When we speak, the pauses between sets of words provide much meaning for the listener; indeed, these pauses "chunk" the individual words into units of thought. By listening to any radio newscast carefully, one can appreciate the information given by the broadcaster's voice as she or he pauses between meaningful chunks of language. Consider this sentence heard on a news broadcast:

Sheik Yamani / has issued / what might be
considered / a stern warning / after OPEC's
failure / to reach price agreement./

The lines represent the pauses heard in the broadcaster's voice as he stated this news item. These pauses serve to place the individual words into phrases, and it is only in phrases that words have meaning.

Unfortunately, oral phrasing, that powerful clue to the meaning of a message, is not available to readers. Instead, a reader of the message is presented with the eighteen words in the above sentence with no clue as to which words go with which. Imagine a reader who does not group words together mentally, but reads every word as if it were separate — no message is possible. Or, imagine a reader who reconstructs the message thus: Sheik Yamani has / issued what might / be considered a stern / warning after OPEC's failure / to reach price / agreement./ Surely this reader's comprehension of that message will be distorted at best. Phrasing is the clue to meaning that listeners have and readers do not

have, therefore we must help readers develop a mechanism for reconstructing thought units as they read. For even if readers can identify every word in a sentence, they will not understand unless they can organize the verbal input in a sensible manner.

Research Evidence

There is a body of research suggesting that organizing the verbal input for readers aids the comprehension of these readers. Cromer (1970) found significant gains in comprehension for junior college students when reading material was pre-phrased; indeed, when material was so organized, some poor readers with adequate vocabulary skills read as well as matched good readers. Stevens (1981) found that chunking words into thought units (by using slash lines) resulted in significantly greater comprehension scores on the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test among high school sophomores. This mode of presentation aided low, middle, and high ability readers equally. Oakan, Wiener, and Cromer (1971) found that poor fifth grade readers' comprehension was facilitated by organizing material into meaningful units. It thus seems that attention to the chunking of words into thought units can be profitable in increasing students' comprehension. Thus, teachers must be aware of opportunities to develop these chunking abilities in readers.

Developing Thought Units: Primary Grades

Teachers of reading at all levels must become aware of the necessity of organizing words into thought units. Difficulties with chunking become more apparent as written material becomes more complex, yet the habit of organizing printed input must be established early in the primary years. Unless children learn to read by phrasing into thought units with easier material, they will be unable to organize more complex material.

Early on, teachers should point out to their students the difference in phrasing between oral and written language. Students should be aware that providing phrase units is the task of the readers. Starting with the simplest sentences, such as:

You can play with me.

indicate to students that "You can play" and "with me" go together as idea units. Have the children listen to the way they would say this sentence. Point out that when they read the sentence, they must provide the pauses for themselves, for no speaker can do it for them.

Adapting a language experience story for this purpose may help children see the necessity for providing phrasing, since there is a direct connection between spoken and written language in this medium. For example, imagine that the following story has been elicited from the class:

The name of our school is Bryant School.
The name of our teacher is Ms. Greco.
We will have lunch at noon.
We will learn to read.

Using this material, show children which words go with which in thought units. Try reading the story with erroneous pauses

(e.g., The name of / our / school / is Bryant / School./), and ask the children if this makes as much sense as reading the story with words chunked properly. Discuss the necessity of "making words make sense" while reading.

Teachers should take every opportunity to stress this idea, especially since it is so widely ignored in published reading materials. While reading to children, the teacher can point out how phrasing aids understanding. When teaching punctuation, the teacher can indicate how punctuation tells us where to separate ideas sometimes, but does not give us sufficient clues to this; we must still be constantly aware of which words go together. One might ask children to use slash lines in order to see if they understand which words belong in a single thought unit.

Since thought units or phrases are so important to comprehension, one must question an over reliance on working with words in isolation. While it may occasionally be necessary to isolate single words, this should not occur too often, because it is in phrasal units that words carry meaning. Thus, rather than practice isolated words, children should have more exposure to phrases. Whenever possible, have children practice on phrase units. They will, hopefully, become familiar with phrases, and will have less trouble chunking words into phrases as they read complete sentences. The habit of practicing with phrases seems especially vital for the slower learner, since that learner needs explicit help in making the connections between words.

Thus, if the target words are "store", "play", "see", and "what", have children practice them in such phrases as:

to the store	play ball
see the turtle	what is it?

This will enhance the ability of readers to see words as parts of phrasal units. Readers then are more likely to look for such units on their own. It is incumbent upon primary teachers to seek every opportunity to develop the abilities of their students in this regard.

Developing Thought Units: Upper Grades

As children progress to more difficult reading material, the necessity of chunking words into thought units becomes even more important. Sentences are more complex, with more embedded ideas. It is necessary for the reader to impose "order" on the sentence by seeing the relationship among phrases. A reader who has had some success with simpler primary materials without chunking will find that s/he is overwhelmed by the more difficult intermediate materials. Indeed, the intermediate grades present problems to the up-to-then successful readers. It is possible that the failure to organize words into phrases may be at the root of a fraction of those problems. Teachers need to develop the abilities of their charges to organize verbal input, especially if no prior work with this concept has been done. Only by organizing the written input into phrases can students hope to cope with a sentence like this:

Interest in acid rain finally came in 1967
when a Swedish scientist named Svante Oden
reported a pattern of increasingly acid
precipitation.

Without phrasing, this mass of words means nothing. Perhaps because many upper grade students are not providing phrasing for themselves, they are failing to comprehend, even though they are successful at the word level.

One way to emphasize the importance of chunking ideas is to present sentences such as the above with phrase units marked (perhaps by using slash lines). Have students read each phrase, and discuss why these groups of words go together:

Interest in acid rain / finally came / in 1967 /
when a Swedish scientist / named Svante Oden /
reported a pattern / of increasingly acid precipitation.

A next step is to present somewhat complex sentences, asking students to mark their own phrase units. Discuss how understanding is impossible unless the words are grouped properly. For those students having difficulty, start with some of the ideas mentioned earlier (such as the use of language experience or oral reading). If necessary, start with easier material that children can chunk into thought units; if children cannot chunk material, they cannot understand it in any meaningful fashion. Gradually increase the difficulty of the material, emphasizing phrasal units. Instruct students to look for the "words that make a thought" when they are confronted with material that is difficult. In this way, they can recover the author's meaning by reconstructing the thought units of the author.

Again, overreliance on words in isolation (especially for poorer readers) must be questioned in the intermediate and upper grades. If we ask readers to look for thought units, practice in reading must take the form of phrases. By becoming adept at identifying the message carried by a phrase, a reader becomes a comprehender.

Concluding Remarks

This article has attempted to emphasize an important but often overlooked component of comprehension: the reader must chunk the many words of a sentence into meaningful groups of words in order for comprehension to result. While this problem becomes more apparent in the later grades due to the complexity of the reading material, it should be the concern of reading teachers from the very beginning. If children become expert at chunking words into thoughts (and not being content until they have derived a thought from each unit) at an early age, reading and chunking complex material will merely be an extension of this skill. Comprehension of more complex material is an impossibility without attending to thought units, a term which should be emphasized throughout the reading instruction periods. Recall that the addition of a very small artificial chunking device (slash lines) resulted in superior comprehension in the three studies cited

earlier (Cromer, 1970; Oakan, Wiener & Cromer, 1971; Stevens, 1981). If such minor attention to thought units produces significant changes in comprehension, what results could we expect from prolonged and systematic attention to this requisite comprehension task?

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READING STRATEGIES IN THREE DIFFERENT TYPES OF MATERIALS

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It seems safe to assume that all agree—the answer to the question "What is the major purpose of reading?" is, of course, "Comprehension." The next question, "What is comprehension?" is not so easily answered. Many books and articles are directed to this question, but there is and probably will never be a single clear-cut answer.

One effective way of viewing comprehension was described by Cunningham, Cunningham, and Arthur (1982). They compared comprehension to the construction of a building. Their analogy follows:

A writer	Architect
Text	Building Plan/Blueprint
Reader	Construction Company
Comprehension	Construction
Understanding	Completed Building
Schema	Job Description
Teacher	Construction Consultant

Langer (1982) tells us that for efficient text processing and successful comprehension to take place, a link with some already acquired knowledge is necessary.

The major determinant of a text's comprehensibility, according to Adams and Bruce, is the goodness of match between the knowledge the author has presumed of the reader and that actually possessed by the reader.

The statement that interest is as potent a factor in comprehension as is difficulty was made by Estes and Vaughan (1973). The authors go on to say that although students must read in non-interest areas in school, the teacher's expectancy cannot be as high with this material, and the teacher must guide the reader more carefully.

Despite the fact that reading teachers are aware that reading in the content areas is likely to be more difficult for children than reading something for enjoyment, not all of these educators spend the time necessary for bridging the gap between the reader's background knowledge and the material s/he is being asked to read.

The study reported here was conducted in order to determine whether or not children did exhibit more effective strategies when reading a trade book than they did when reading either a basal reader or a content area text. Although the study uses only three persons at three different grade levels in three different types of material, it constitutes an initial step in determining if, indeed, children read material from a trade book more effectively than they read material from a basal reader or a content text.

Subjects and Procedures

The three subjects in this study, a second grade girl, a fourth grade boy, and a seventh grade girl, were all from the same family. Based on their academic performance in school, all three were judged to be of average or above average intelligence.

Passages were selected from a trade book, a basal reader, and a science text book. A miscue passage and a cloze passage were developed from each source. The passages from the basal reader were administered first, those from the trade books second, and those from the content area textbooks third.

The Fry Readability Graph was used to determine readability of each of these passages. According to the criteria used in this procedure, the passages were either at the same grade level across the three types of material or within one grade level of difficulty.

Both oral reading on the miscue passages and silent reading on the cloze passages were provided for. In analyzing the cloze passages, criteria used in miscue analysis were applied in that the word supplied and that of the text were examined for correction, for grammatical acceptability, for semantic acceptability, and for meaning change.

It was hypothesized that the readers at each grade level would use the best reading strategies in reading the passage from the trade book, and that the least effective strategies would be used on the passage from the content area textbook.

Findings   Reading Performance in Different Types of Material

Type of Passage	Highly Effective Strategies			Moderately Effective Strategies			Some Effective Strategies			Ineffective Strategies			Grade Level
	Tr.	Ba.	Co.	Tr.	Ba.	Co.	Tr.	Ba.	Co.	Tr.	Ba.	Co.	
Miscue				X	X							X	2
Cloze				X	X				X				2
Miscue		X		X								X	4
Cloze				X	X	X							4
Miscue	X	X							X				7
Cloze		X		X					X				7

Tr. = Trade Book

Ba. = Basal Reader

Co. = Content Textbook

Although the second grade reader used moderately effective strategies on both passages in the trade book and the basal reader, there were variations in her performance on the content passages. Ineffective strategies on the miscue passage were exhibited, while some effective strategies were used on the cloze passage.

A wider range of strategies was used at the fourth grade level. The highly effective strategies were used in the basal miscue passage. There was no difference in the passages in the basal reader, trade book, and content text cloze passages; all moderately effective strategies. The oral performance was good on the content miscue passage, but the reader's comprehension was very poor. He was unable to supply any generalizations, very few specifics or major concepts; therefore, he placed in the ineffective strategies category.

Highly effective strategies were used by the seventh grade reader for the cloze passage in the basal reader and trade book, as well as for the miscue passage in the trade book. Moderately effective strategies for the cloze passage in the trade book were used. Some effective strategies were used in both content passages.

While the students did tend to use the most ineffective strategies in the content text, they did not use the highest strategies in the trade book passages. The hypothesis, thus, was rejected.

Only one of the six possible ratings on the trade book passages was in the highly effective range. This was accomplished by the seventh grade student. Three of the six ratings on the basal passages were highly effective. Two of these were achieved by the seventh grade reader, and one by the fourth grade student.

Five of the six ratings on the trade book passages fell under the moderately effective strategies category. Two of these were employed by the second grade student, two by the fourth grader, and one by the seventh grader. Three basal reader passages were also in this category, two from the second grade student and one from the fourth grade student. Only one content passages was in this category. That was the cloze passage read by the fourth grader.

In the ineffective strategies, one miscue passage was recorded at second grade level, another at the fourth grade level.

Limitations

The order of administration of the passages may have had something to do with the students' performances. Since the basal reader passages were administered first, this may have been a contributing factor to the best performance in this type of material. Content passages were administered last, and students may have been tired of the procedure by this time, and their poorer performance could have been as a result of that.

Additionally, to obtain the desired length for the miscue passages in the content area, it was necessary at the lower levels to include topics with several subheadings. Thus, the material did not have quite the uninterrupted continuity found in the passages in the other two types of material.

Lack of interest in the content area topics could have been another factor contributing to the lower performance exhibited in this area.

Conclusions

In this admittedly small sample, there is evidence that the reading of content area material is done less effectively than is the reading of basal readers or of trade books. This is particularly evident at the lower grade levels.

Suggestions for Further Research

A larger sample of students at each grade level should be used. The pattern of completing the passages should be varied to lessen the possibility that the order of administration might influence the performance.

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THE EFFECTS OF U.S.S.R. ON STUDENTS' ATTITUDES AND ACHIEVEMENT

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Today's educators recognize the importance of positive attitudes toward reading as a major concern of the basic reading program, and much has been written about the need to foster such attitudes. Wilson and Hall (1972) note that a positive attitude is essential for successful mastery of the printed page. Burns and Roe (1980) state that children with positive attitudes toward reading will expend more effort in the reading process than will children with negative attitudes.

Some authorities are convinced that attitudes may not only influence the student's desire and willingness to read, but may also affect reading achievement. Burns and Roe (1980) believe that there is an interrelationship between attitude and achievement; that is, "good attitudes, or feelings, about reading enhance reading achievement and good achievement enhances better feelings about reading." Ransbury's (1973) data support the latter claim. In a study, she found that fifth and sixth grade students attributed their attitudes toward reading mainly to their ability to read; that is, the greater their achievement in reading, the more positive their attitudes became. Bond and Tinker (1973) believe that successful achievers tend to form positive attitudes.

The widespread conviction that the reading program should help to develop positive attitudes toward reading has led many writers to try to determine factors which contribute to the development of such attitudes. A review of the literature suggests that in developing a positive attitude toward reading, the teacher must give attention to the importance of self-concept (Kokovich and Matthews, 1971; Quandt, 1971); teacher attitudes and behaviors (Smith, 1959; Rosenthal and Jacobsen, 1968; Palardy, 1969; McCracken, 1969; Carver, 1971); selected instructional practices (Grambs, 1959; Healy, 1965; Duffy, 1967; Kemper, 1969; Bullen, 1970; Lamb, 1971; Cathcart, 1973; Alexander and Filler, 1976); and ways of working with parents (Seigler and Gynther, 1960; Hansen, 1969).

Bisset (1969) found a significant increase in the amount of student reading when students had access to a variety of reading materials in the classroom and when they had the opportunity to discuss the materials with the teacher and with each other. Sauls (1971) found a positive relationship between the number of books read and the students' reading comprehension and attitude toward reading.

Sex has sometimes been found to be related to attitudes toward reading, with girls showing more positive attitudes in some studies (Hansen, 1969; Askov, 1970), although little sex difference was noted in another study (Denny and Weintraub, 1966). Socioeconomic level has generally been found to have a negligible relationship with attitude toward reading (Groff, 1962; Heimberger, 1970; Filler, 1973).

Since the factors which appear to have the most noticeable relationship to attitudes toward reading are those which lend themselves to intervention on the part of the teacher, it would seem that classroom techniques for promoting positive attitudes should be given attention. Chambers (1966) has suggested that frequent library trips are helpful in developing positive attitudes toward reading. Duffy (1967) believes that a relaxed time should be provided daily for children to read without pressure, and that a wide variety of books be present. Kemper (1969) believes that teachers can do a number of specific things which would lead to more favorable attitudes: planning reading activities which students like; using materials related to children's interests and needs; providing for recreational reading; and demonstrating a personal value for reading by practicing it orally and/or silently.

Middle graders participating in Roettger's (1980) study made several suggestions concerning their attitudes toward reading. They indicated that they felt children "should have time each day to read 'their own' books, even if they had not completed all their work." They also felt that teachers should help children find books they would enjoy by talking with them, and by telling them about interesting books.

The program called Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading (USSR or SSR) is widely advocated, sometimes under other names (Moore, Jones, and Miller, 1980), as a program which should help foster positive attitudes toward reading as well as help improve reading achievement (Hunt, 1972; Mork, 1972; McCracken, 1971; Noland, 1976). USSR incorporates attributes mentioned by many writers as valuable for the development of favorable attitudes and increased achievement: a specific time set aside for reading at regular intervals; a large quantity and wide variety of reading materials available; provision of a role model in that the teacher and other adults in the school show their value of reading by participating along with the children; encouragement to read by these adults; a pleasant, relaxed atmosphere; lack of pressure to report on what has been read; and the opportunity to share information about books read, if desired. Many authorities believe that these ingredients cannot fail to produce more favorable attitudes toward reading as well as increased reading achievement.

Most statements regarding the relationship of USSR to the development of positive attitudes and increased achievement, however, are based on observation rather than research (Moore, Jones, and Miller, 1980). The present study was undertaken in an effort to measure the effectiveness of USSR in promoting positive student attitudes toward and increasing student achievement in reading in a controlled situation.

PROCEDURES

The school in which this study was conducted had eleven fifth and sixth grade classes participating in the study, resulting in a population of 250 students. Of these, 60 fifth graders and 71 sixth graders engaged in USSR under the guidance of their homeroom teachers for 30 minutes every day for six months. The remaining five classes comprised the control group of 119 students and did not engage in USSR. The classes were randomly assigned to the six experimental and five control groups; all groups were mixed as to race and sex and were representative of the community as a whole.

USSR took place during the homeroom period when the children were heterogeneously grouped rather than during the homogeneously grouped language arts period; thus, all students continued to receive their usual reading instruction in the basal reading program throughout the duration of the study. The system in which the school is located emphasizes a well-coordinated basal program throughout all grades as the primary approach to the teaching of reading, with the same series being used in all classes. During the period when the experimental groups were engaged in USSR, the other groups were involved in varied activities focusing on units in health, manners, and grooming.

Four instruments were used to gather data prior to and at the completion of this study. The Heathington Intermediate Scale for Measuring Attitudes (1975) and the Estes Attitude Scale (1971) measured changes in attitudes toward reading as indicated by the students. A Scale of Reading Attitude Based on Behavior, by Rowell (1972), marked by all the teachers for the students in their language arts groups, measured observable behavior patterns reflecting student attitudes toward reading. The Slosson Oral Reading Test (SORT, 1963) gave a reading grade score and measured achievement in reading.

The SORT tests were administered individually to the children by the principal researcher; the children responded to the two attitude surveys in their language arts classroom groups. The teachers responded individually to Rowell's A Scale of Reading Attitude Based on Behavior. These were marked by the teachers for those children who were in their language arts classes in an effort to prevent spurious gains caused by the teachers being aware of which children were in the experimental classes.

Teachers participating in the study attended an informal conference held by the principal researcher during which guidelines for USSR as set forth by McCracken and McCracken (1972) were discussed. A printed copy of the guidelines was also furnished to each teacher to insure uniformity of participation.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Attitudes. Table 1 presents the results of the analysis of data gathered by administering the three attitude surveys—Heathington Intermediate Attitude Scale, the Estes Attitude Scale, and Rowell's A Scale of Reading Attitudes Based on Behavior. Mean scores were obtained for pretest and posttest administrations,

and differences between these means were analyzed by use of the t-test to determine significance. Differences between pretest and posttest mean scores on the Heathington and the Estes were not significant; however, the difference between the pretest and posttest means for the Rowell were significant ($p < .001$).

Table 1
Effect of USSR on
Attitude Toward Reading

Instrument	Group	Mean Difference	t value
Heathington	USSR	-0.2061	1.42
	Contr.	-2.5546	
Estes	USSR	-1.7252	0.27
	Contr.	-2.1176	
Rowell	USSR	3.3206	7.14*
	Contr.	-2.2101	

USSR = N 131
Contr. = N 119

* $p < .001$

These findings indicate that attitudes toward reading, as measured by the Heathington and the Estes, of students who participated in this study did not change significantly from pretest to posttest; and that attitudes of students who had participated in USSR did not differ significantly from attitudes of students who had not participated in USSR. However, teachers who observed these students believed that the USSR students finished their six-months of involvement with improved attitudes, as opposed to those who had no USSR. These beliefs are reflected in the scores on the Rowell which are significantly in favor of the USSR group.

It should be noted that the Heathington and the Estes are instruments that require the students to report their own feelings, whereas the Rowell is completed by teachers based on their observations of the students. It is possible that the students were unsure of the way to respond to this self-report instrument; such an instrument may be an inadequate method of obtaining data from elementary age children. It is also possible that the children were not particularly impressed with the USSR program, and their scores on the instruments showed these feelings.

Data obtained by the Rowell may also be open to question, in that the teachers in the language arts classes may have known which children were involved in the USSR groups and marked their tests for these children more favorably.

In view of the conflicting data gained in this study, it is impossible to draw any conclusions about the relationship of USSR to reading attitudes. Much more research needs to be done in this area before broad claims can be made.

Achievement. Table 2 presents the results of the analysis

of data gathered by administering the Slosson Oral Reading Test (SORT). As with the attitude surveys, mean scores were obtained for pretest and posttest administrations, and the difference scores between these means were analyzed by use of the *t* test to determine significance of the difference in these mean scores. The difference between the pretest and the posttest means of the SORT was significant ($p < .001$).

Table 2
Effect of USSR on Reading Achievement

Instrument	Group	Mean Difference	t value
SORT	USSR	0.6969	7.94*
	Control	0.4765	

USSR = N 131
Contr. = N 119

* $p < .001$

These findings indicate that the increase in reading test scores of children participating in USSR was significantly greater than the increase in reading test scores of children who did not participate in USSR.

IN CONCLUSION

Results obtained in this study indicate that regular participation by groups of fifth and sixth graders in a program of USSR was accompanied by improved performance on a measure of reading achievement over groups of fifth and sixth graders who did not participate in USSR. However, it is unclear whether the involvement in USSR had any effect on the children's attitudes toward reading. It is possible that continuing the study over a longer period of time may have yielded more positive results. Moore, Jones, and Miller (1980) feel that it is possible that no changes can be measured in just a few months' time.

While this study does not indicate that the improvement in reading test scores was a result of more positive attitudes toward reading, the reading score gain may have been related to an improvement in general vocabulary--an expected result concomitant with the wide reading done by the children in the USSR program.

This premise could well be the basis for further research into the relationship of USSR to improved reading test scores. The significant gain in reading test scores found in this study should be a persuasive argument in favor of using some form of USSR in every classroom on a regular basis.

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COMPREHENSION AND RATE: ORAL VS. SILENT READING FOR LOW ACHIEVERS

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The benefits of oral vs. silent reading instruction has been a focal point of controversy for professionals in the field of reading for several years (Heilman, Blair, and Rupley, 1981; Tinker and McCullough, 1978).

Although at the present time there seems to be an appreciation of the value of both approaches (Heilman, et al, 1981), many professionals still tend to accept the superior role of silent reading almost to the exclusion of oral reading (Tinker and McCullough, 1975).

However, it appears that the dichotomous nature of the oral vs. silent reading controversy may be somewhat oversimplified in light of the recommendation of Heilman, et al (1981). They point out that the focus should not be solely on silent reading instruction but teachers should see to identify possible ways of increasing the efficacy of oral reading instruction for the learner; thus, emphasis should be placed on the middle ground or a balance in the treatment of oral and silent reading instruction.

The potential efficacy of oral reading can be realized when two essential factors of reading are considered; i.e., rate and level of comprehension. Since the primary focus of instruction is to improve not only the comprehension level but also the rate of reading (Tinker and McCullough, 1978), it is important that these two factors be continually weighed in the instructional process to achieve the optimum balance of emphasis. For example, if a choice is to be made between an increase in reading rate or an increase in level of comprehension, most authorities would tend to weigh comprehension as the critical factor in the reading process (Ausubel, 1968; Tinker and McCullough, 1978; Dechant, 1970; Lamb and Arnold, 1980). Therefore, the instructional approach to reading instruction for any particular child should continually assess the need for efficiency, i.e., rate of reading with its corresponding impact on the level of comprehension of the learner. Increases in rate of reading with reductions in levels of comprehension appear to be counterproductive.

This investigator sought to examine the influence of oral and silent reading behavior on the reading rate and comprehension levels of the learner. Two questions were posed for investigation:

1. Do low achieving fourth graders read significantly more rapidly silently or orally?
2. Do low achieving fourth graders comprehend materials significantly better after having read orally or after having read silently?

Method

Sample

The subjects for this study were 18 fourth grade students from a public elementary school in Eastern Arkansas (12 boys and 6 girls). The subjects were selected for the study on the basis of their scores (i.e., below the 50th percentile) on the Total Reading subtest of the SRA Achievement Test (Maslund, Thorpe, and Lefever, 1978). The mean scores for grade equivalent and percentile rank of the subjects were 2.9 and 34 respectively.

Procedure

Each subject was administered six subtests of the Analytical Reading Inventory (ARI) (Woods and Moe, 1981). Three of these subtests (Form A, levels 2, 3, and 4) assessed the students' oral reading rates and comprehension, whereas, the other three subtests (Form B, levels 2, 3, and 4) measured the students' silent reading rates and comprehension. Each of the three levels of Form A and B were selected to correspond with the subjects' independent reading level (level 2), approximate instructional reading level (level 3), and expected grade level (level 4).

The administration of the six subtests of the ARI followed the publisher's instructions with the exception that step one (i.e., sight word list) was not administered since it was of no interest to the present investigation.

The actual testing consisted of having each subject reading separately each of the six subtests in the following order: Levels 2, 3, and 4 of Form A (orally), and Levels 2, 3, and 4 of Form B (silently). Upon completion of each subtest the subject was asked a series of questions that assessed level of comprehension of that specific subtest.

Data on student performances were collected on their reading rates (i.e., words per minute) and the comprehension levels (i.e., percentage of correct responses for both oral and silent reading subtests).

Results

Data were analyzed using a T-Test for paired samples (Nie, Hull, Jenkins, Steinbrenner and Bent, 1975). An alpha value was set at $p < .05$.

The mean scores and comparisons for oral and silent reading rates for each of the three levels of difficulty are reported on the following page, Table 1.

The comparison of the subjects' oral reading rates with their silent reading rates yielded a significant difference on level three, i.e., the students' approximate instructional level in favor of the silent reading rate ($\bar{X}$ oral = 86.9 WPM, $\bar{X}$ silent

= 102.6 WPM, $t_{17} = 2.69$, $p < .02$). No differences were observed in rates between oral and silent reading on the expected grade level (Level 4 of the ARI) or the independent reading level (Level 2 of the ARI).

Table 1
Rates for Oral and Silent Reading
Compared on Three Difficulty Levels

Levels of Difficulty	N	Oral Rate WPM	Silent Rate WPM	df	T	2-Tail Prob.
Second Grade	18	93.4	103.1	17	1.86	.08
Third Grade	18	86.9	102.6	17	2.69	.016*
Fourth Grade	18	90.5	97.7	17	0.72	.484

* Significant at $p < .05$ level

The mean scores for oral reading comprehension are compared with the mean scores for silent reading comprehension for each of the three levels of difficulty and are reported in Table 2.

Table 2
Comprehension for Oral Reading
and Silent Reading
Compared on Three Difficulty Levels

Levels of Difficulty	N	Oral Comprehension	Silent Comprehension	df	T	2-Tail Prob.
Second Grade	18	73.1	67.3	17	1.00	.333
Third Grade	18	77.3	55.0	17	4.63	.000*
Fourth Grade	18	70.4	37.0	17	6.90	.000*

*Highly significant difference beyond $p < .0001$

Assessment of subjects' comprehension on each of the three levels of reading indicated that the level of comprehension was significantly higher for oral reading than silent reading. These differences surfaced on level three, i.e. approximate instructional reading level ($\bar{X}$ oral comprehension = 77.3 and $\bar{X}$ silent comprehension = 55.0, $t_{17} = 4.36$, $p = .0001$) and level four, i.e. expected grade level ($\bar{X}$ oral comprehension = 70.4, and $\bar{X}$ silent comprehension = 37, $t_{17} = 6.90$, $p < .0001$).

Conclusions and Discussion

The literature indicates that if a student is making reasonably normal progress in reading achievement, silent reading rates will exceed oral reading rates by the time the student finishes

the second grade or has entered third grade (Tinker and McCullough, 1975; Spache, 1981). However, in this study only on the third grade level were the differences between silent reading rates and oral reading rates statistically significant.

It is interesting to note that the significant differences which existed between oral and silent reading rates occurred on the level that was read orally at the slowest rate, and that this level corresponded to the students' approximate instructional level for reading rather than the most difficult level, or expected grade level. One would have expected the rates to parallel the readability levels, or the difficulty levels of words and concepts (Heilman, 1977, pp. 489-490). One can only speculate why oral reading rate was slower at this level than at the other levels. It might have been a matter of interest. Comprehension on this level was 77%, somewhat better than comprehension on levels 2 and 4. Did these subjects comprehend better because they read more slowly, or did they read more slowly because they were comprehending more?

The rates at which the subjects read silently paralleled the levels of difficulty or the readability levels of the test materials. That is, the students slowed the pace of reading slightly as the materials increased in difficulty. However, slowing the pace for the increased difficulty levels did not prevent significant decreases in comprehension as difficulty levels increased. This, perhaps, points to a need for earlier emphasis or increased emphasis on teaching learners flexibility of rates relative to reading purposes and material difficulty (Davis, 1979). These subjects appeared relatively inflexible in rate and continued to read at approximately the same rates regardless of the difficulty level of the materials. This supports Harris' (1968) findings that most readers are rigid rather than flexible in terms of reading rate.

Oral reading comprehension was better than silent reading comprehension on levels 3 and 4. This fails to support Spache's (1981) conclusions following a review of the literature comparing oral with silent reading that "many authorities agree that oral reading, unlike silent, is not conducive to comprehension" (p. 131). In fact, one might conclude from this study just the opposite, that silent reading is not conducive to comprehension for low achievers.

Oral comprehension scores were relatively stable across the three levels of reading difficulty with subjects comprehending the third grade materials best, and the fourth grade materials poorest. However, with silent reading comprehension, the scores descended in a parallel fashion as the difficulty levels of the subtests increased. This may indicate that readability levels for oral reading may be the function of some factors other than those normally considered for silent reading.

As noted earlier, subjects were selected for this study on the basis of performance on the SRA Achievement Test. Although the SRA test scores identified an average grade equivalent level of 2.9 in reading for these subjects, it should be pointed out

that the average silent comprehension scores failed to reach a criterion of 75% for any level of test difficulty. If 75 percent comprehension for silent reading were accepted as the criterion for instructional reading level (Bond, Tinker, and Wasson, 1979), the average instructional level for these learners for silent reading comprehension was at some point below second grade. If SRA scores were used as the basis for placement in reading levels, silent reading instruction would be considerably higher than the level at which these students can function.

One possibility which may account for the significant differences between oral and silent reading comprehension is that students have more experiences with oral language than with silent reading, considering the developmental nature of language as described by Stoodt (1981). This may be a factor, but the credibility of this as a major causal factor is questioned. It is true that these students spent a number of years listening and speaking before learning to read, but the basal reading series which was employed with these children started instructional emphasis in silent reading in first grade, immediately after the children mastered minimal oral reading skills. Therefore, these subjects have had more experiences with oral language than with silent reading, but they have had considerably more instructional attention given to silent reading than to oral reading.

Another possible causal factor which may explain the significant differences between oral comprehension and silent comprehension is a matter of accountability. When students read materials aloud, they know that the teacher is able to determine whether or not they have read. This is not the case with silent reading. The students who do not read extremely well and who do not approach reading with unabashed enthusiasm may simply bow their heads for an appropriate period of time and appear to read silently. Of course they don't comprehend well—they haven't read. Questions which aren't materials dependent are answered from background experiences, giving an impression of some comprehension. This also may account for the differences in speed between oral and silent reading and may account in part for the differences in eye movements reported by Spache (1981).

Still another factor and one supported by learning theorists (Adams, 1976), which may account for the differences between oral reading comprehension and silent reading comprehension is that during oral reading the students are engaged both visually and auditorily. Perhaps, hearing their own voices read the materials reinforced the learning, thus improving comprehension. Reading orally likely enabled the students to concentrate more on the task at hand which resulted in improved comprehension.

Instructional Implications

It may be that the emphasis in reading instruction is out of balance for some learners, particularly low achievers. If, indeed, comprehension and not speed is the desired outcome for reading, as most reading authorities attest, then another look should be taken at the roles of oral and silent reading. Presently,

oral reading is advocated as a method for teachers to determine if the students are able to apply various word perception techniques, and, as a method to communicate or interpret information to an audience (Stoodt, 1981, p. 262). This study indicated a need to consider oral reading in the additional role as a comprehension strategy. Rather than see silent reading as superior to oral reading as a comprehension technique, teachers of reading should learn when and how student can best employ oral reading for comprehension.

It was concluded that purposeful oral reading should be given additional emphasis in time allocation in elementary grades. The purposes for oral reading should continue to be for diagnosis of word perception skills and oral interpretation, but also should be expanded to include purposes of comprehension. Low achievers, especially, should be taught to reinforce comprehension by reading materials orally.

No cutoff for the superiority of oral comprehension over silent comprehension was indicated by this study. It may be, at least for low achievers, that the present shift from oral to silent reading in first grade is too early.

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ACQUISITION OF SYNTAX— A DEVELOPMENTAL PROCESS

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Although interest in language acquisition dates back to time before Christ (Dale, 1976), it has been since the last generation that organized, systematic attempts have been made to study children's utterances. Early studies were mainly concerned with total length of response, sentence length, and sentence complexity (Bear, 1939; Davis, 1937; Hoppes, 1933; McCarthy, 1954; Nice, 1925). Generally lacking a theoretical base, the early studies produced much data but offered few interpretations.

During the last three decades, however, the study of language has taken a new focus. Chomsky's theory of transformational grammar and the work of Jean Piaget are primarily responsible for this change. Chomsky (1965) views language acquisition as a process based on the language user's implicit or explicit understandings of the syntactic rules of the language. Research based on Chomsky's model of grammar concerned the supposed rule-learning process and assumed that children induce hypotheses about the syntax of their language and produce utterances based on their own set of derived rules. As they develop, they gradually approximate the adult model. Thus, the child was viewed as an active participant in the acquisition of language, and language learning was viewed as an hypothesis-making process.

Piaget (1974), on the other hand, viewed language from a developmental perspective, i.e., as a process that occurs in a sequence of stages and involves interaction among the environment, cognitive processes, and linguistic abilities. The notion of developmental sequence includes the ideas that the stages are ordered chronologically, that the rate at which one passes through the stages may vary, but that the order in which one passes through the stages remains invariable.

Recent studies of elementary school children's language have revealed developmental trends in the acquisition of syntax. The following discussion reviews studies of the productive oral syntax (i.e., studies of syntax based on natural conversation) of children between ages 5 and 9 years, in terms of: developmental characteristics of productive oral syntax; the relationship between conservation (a measure of cognitive maturity) and productive oral syntax; and recommendations for classroom instruction. Findings from the cited studies lend strong support to the theory that language learning is a developmental process.

Developmental Characteristics of
Productive Oral Syntax

Although researchers have generally concluded that the language of early elementary school children is sophisticated and much like the language of adults, syntactic maturity of early elementary children is hardly complete. Dale (1976) noted that beyond 5 or 6 years of age, growth continues in mastery of subject-verb agreement and in mastery of case endings on personal pronouns. In addition, children reacquire the irregular past and perfect verb forms, i.e., use of irregular verb forms seems to go through a developmental sequence and is not complete until after 5 or 6 years of age. Thus, youngster will say "He comed and we played," evidence of a transitional stage in which children are acquiring the past tense "-ed" rule but have not yet learned about exceptions.

Developmental trends characterize various aspects of syntactic development. Length of response and length of the researcher's unit of analysis has frequently been found to increase with age or grade. The unit of analysis has been the sentence, the T-unit (Hunt, 1965), and the communication unit (Loban, 1976). A T-unit or communication unit is an independent clause and all the dependent clauses attached to it. Davis (1937) and Nice (1925) each found that mean number of words per sentence increased with age. Fox (1972), Loban (1976), and O'Donnell, Griffin, and Norris (1967) found an increase across grades in number of T-units or communication units per response and in mean number of words per unit. Morrow (1978) found significant increases with age in the productive oral syntax of 6-, 7-, and 8-year-olds in mean number of words per T-unit, and a significant increase in total number of T-units per response between 6- and 7-year-olds. Fox (1972) found significant differences between kindergartners and first graders in number of T-units per response, number of words per T-unit, and mean number of words per T-unit. O'Donnell et al. (1967) found a significant increase in length of T-unit between kindergarten and the end of first grade.

Sentence complexity has been found to increase with age. Strang and Hocker (1966) reported the frequency trend from most to least frequent in the language of first graders was from use of simple to complex sentences. Increases with age were found by both Davis (1937) and Templin (1957) in the use of the following more complex sentence structures: simple-with-phrase, compound, complex, and elaborated. Morrow (1978) segmented the productive oral language of 6-, 7-, and 8-year-olds into T-units and then applied the Botel, Dawkins, and Granowsky (BDG) formula for syntactic complexity. The BDG syntactic complexity counts increased with age and there was a significant increase in syntactic complexity between 6- and 7-year-olds and between 6- and 8-year-olds.

Use of subordinate or dependent clauses has also been the subject of research. Davis (1937) and Templin (1957) found the use of total subordinate clauses increased with age, and Loban (1976) found the use of total dependent clauses increased with age, although the rate of growth was inconsistent.

Many researchers (Francis, 1963; Morrow, 1978; O'Donnell

et al., 1967; Shubkagle, 1961; Strang & Hocker, 1965; Strickland, 1962) have studied syntactic patterns. While they have found a great variety of syntactic patterns in the oral language of early elementary school children, certain patterns were used with great frequency by children at many grade levels. The most frequently used patterns were subject-verb-direct object (Francis, 1963; Shubkagle, 1961; Strang & Hocker, 1965; Strickland, 1962), subject-verb (Morrow, 1978; O'Donnell et al., 1967; Shubkagle, 1961; Strang and Hocker, 1965), and subject-verb-object (Morrow, 1978; O'Donnell et al., 1967).

Strickland (1962) also found numerous changes in children's use of syntactic patterns when subjects were grouped by grade level. Ten of the patterns ranked among the most frequently used 25 in the language of upper elementary grade subjects did not appear at all in the language of first graders. Both Loban (1976) and Strang & Hocker (1965) concluded that it was not the pattern itself, but what was done to achieve flexibility within the pattern that was an indicator of language growth.

Finally, Loban (1976) noted that his research and that of others found the following to appear: conditional dependent clauses such as "if..." in the language of 6 and 7 year olds, subordinate clauses beginning with "when," "if," "because" in the language of 7- to 8-year-olds, and subordinate clauses beginning with "meanwhile," "unless," and "even if" in 8- to 10-year-olds' language.

Three researchers (Loban, 1976; O'Donnell et al., 1967; Menyuk 1963, '64a & '64b) used transformational grammar to analyze young children's productive oral syntax. Loban counted types of transformations (single-base, multi-base, multi-base deletion). O'Donnell et al. studied sentence-combining transformations. Menyuk wrote child grammars at three levels of grammar: phrase structure, transformational, and morphological.

Loban (1976) found that his subjects whose language samples were selected for transformational analysis used more of all three types of transformations (mentioned above) in their late school years than in their early years.

Major findings from the O'Donnell investigation of the sentence-combining transformations in the oral productions of kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, & 3rd grade students included the following:

First, as the mean number of words per T-unit increased by grade, so did the mean number of sentence-combining transformations per T-unit. Further, the increases in mean number of sentence-combining transformations per T-unit were the greatest at the grade levels where increases in mean number of words per T-unit were also the greatest.

Second, there were increases at all three grade levels and significant increases at grades two and three in rate of incidence of sentence-combining transformations in main clause coordination.

Third, there was a significant increase at grade one in rate of occurrence of sentence-combining transformation in nominal constructions.

Fourth, there was a great use at all grade levels of nom-

inal constructions as direct objects and a significant increase at grade one.

Fifth, there was a significant increase at grade one in rate of incidence of sentence-combining transformations in adverbial constructions.

Menyuk (1963,'64a,'64b) analyzed the language of nursery school children, kindergartners, and first graders in terms of grammatically acceptable structures (acceptable in adult grammar) and restricted structures (restricted to child grammar) and wrote child grammars at three levels of grammar—phrase structure, transformational, and morphological—to describe children's acquisition of adult syntax. At the phrase structure level are the syntactic structures used to form simple active declarative sentences. At the transformational level, application of transformational rewrite rules enables the formulation of compound and complex (in addition to simple) sentences, passive (in addition to active) sentences, and imperative, interrogative, and exclamatory (in addition to declarative) sentences. A sequence of inflectional rules is applied at the morphological level, enabling, for example, formulation of past tense and third person singular verb forms.

Menyuk noted a number of developmental trends. At the phrase structure and morphological levels, all nursery school children, kindergartners, and first graders used all grammatically acceptable structures. Therefore, only comparisons at the transformational level, where varying numbers of children used acceptable structures were made. At the nursery school level, there was a developmental trend in use of acceptable grammatical structures (Menyuk, 1964a). At the first grade level, significantly more first graders than nursery school children used the passive and auxiliary "have," "if," "so," and nominalization (Menyuk, 1963). Also, significantly more first graders than kindergartners used the auxiliary "have" and the conjunction with "if" (Menyuk, 1964a).

At the phrase structure, transformational, and morphological levels, varying numbers of nursery school children, kindergartners, and first graders used restricted structures. Therefore, comparisons by grade level were made at all three levels of grammar. These comparisons revealed a developmental trend in decreasing use of restricted forms (Menyuk, 1964a). To cite a few examples, significantly more nursery school children than kindergartners used noun phrases redundantly, omitted articles, and omitted or substituted forms in the third person present or past tense of verbs (Menyuk, 1964a). Significantly more nursery school children than first graders used preposition omission, article omission, than first graders used preposition omission, article omission, there substitution, and verb form substitution. Significantly more first graders than nursery school children used noun phrases redundantly (Menyuk, 1963), as did significantly more first graders than kindergartners (Menyuk, 1964a).

Menyuk also described changes in the use of restricted structures by writing alternate rules for sentences with restricted structures. Major findings concerning these alternate rules were: 1) use of alternate rules gradually decreased with age; 2) decrease in subjects' use of alternate rules was somewhat erratic; and

3) decreases in the percentage of children using particular alternate rules coincided with increases in the percentage of children using more differentiating rules, resulting in the finding that children acquire syntax by proceeding from application of the most general rule to application of increasingly differentiating rules.

Based on the results of the cited studies, Menyuk drew some conclusions. First, the grammar of younger children is simpler because children use an incomplete set of rules to produce an utterance (1964b). Second, there were fairly steady but somewhat erratic decreases in the use of restricted forms (1964a). Third, with some erratic exceptions, there was an almost steady rise in the percentage of children at each four-month age interval who used transformations (1964a). Fourth, almost all basic structures used by adults to generate their sentences were found in the language of children between two years, ten months and three years, one month (1964a).

Generalizations across studies by Loban, Menyuk, and O'Donnell in which transformational grammar was used to analyze children's productive oral syntax are limited because the purposes (therefore, the syntactic structures of analysis) were unique to the researchers. In general, however, it appears that children develop their own grammars and gradually approximate the adult model. As they do so, there are increases in number of specific types of transformations. Language learning appears to occur by application of general rules to application of specific rules.

Generalizations across studies of early elementary school children's productive oral syntax based on traditional grammar and T-unit analysis also reveal developmental trends. The following trends by age or grade level appear to exist: 1) an increase in sentence length; 2) an increase in use of complete sentences; 3) an increase in use of more complex sentences; 4) an increase in use of subordinate clauses; 5) an increase in number of T-units per response; 6) and increase in mean number of words per T-unit; 7) an increase in number of coordinate constructions within T-units; 8) an increase in number of dependent clauses per T-unit; and 9) an increase in syntactic complexity within T-units.

Relationship Between Conservation and Productive Oral Syntax

Researchers have also looked at the relationship between the ability to conserve, a measure of cognitive maturity, and children's productive oral syntax. According to Piagetian theory, when a child can conserve the child reasons that a substance or object retains its identity in spite of changes in appearance.

On the basis of performance on a Piagetian conservation task, Sinclair de-Zwart (1969) divided children into three groups; conservers, intermediaries, and nonconservers. Children were then asked to describe simple situations, a measure of language production (e.g., the difference between a short thick pencil and a long thin pencil) and to comprehend certain orders (e.g., "find a pencil that is shorter but thicker than this one"). Results

revealed no difference among the three groups on the comprehension measure; differences existed, however, on the production measure. Conservers tended to use comparatives, to use different terms for different dimensions using two couples of opposites (e.g., big/little, fat/thin), and to describe two objects differing in two dimensions in two sentences coordinating the two dimensions (e.g., this pencil is long[er] but thin[er], the other is short but thick). Nonconservers, on the other hand, tended to use absolutes rather than comparatives, to use undifferentiated terms for different dimensions (e.g., "fat" for both long and thick), and to describe two objects differing in two dimensions by describing only one dimension or by using four separate sentences. De-Zwart concluded that use of coordinated syntactic structures (e.g., "more" or "less") is more closely associated with a more mature level of cognitive thinking than is use of lexical terms ("long" "thick") and that cognitive functioning and linguistic structurings parallel each other.

Worth (1979) looked at syntactic variables in language samples of first graders who were categorized as conservers or nonconservers. Conservers used significantly more complex communication units, insertion-type communication units, and nominalization-type insertions than did their nonconserving counterparts.

In summary, results of studies by Sinclair de-Zwart (1969) and Worth (1979) revealed that conservers are more likely than nonconservers to produce language more sophisticated in use of specific syntactic variables. Conservers were more likely to use comparatives, different terms for different dimensions, coordinated sentences, and complex communication units.

Recommendations for Classroom Instruction

Based on the results of the cited studies, the implications for classroom instruction suggest that teachers should be aware of the influence of cognitive maturity, as well as the influence of experience, on the process of language development. As children do not grow cognitively at the same rate, they also do not develop language at the same rate, nor necessarily in the same fashion. Therefore, children within the same classroom will vary in level of cognitive maturity and in the production and comprehension of specific features of language. Teachers must keep in mind that language development proceeds along a course unique to each student. Instructional strategies and materials may need to be individualized according to level of mental maturity, as well as to quantity and quality of experiences in general and with language in particular.

Additionally, teachers should be aware of the possibly erratic course of development of some language variables. The development of some language features may not proceed along a predictable course within a particular student or across students in general. Growth spurts may be followed by plateaus or even temporary regressions. Teachers must understand that erratic characteristics of language development may be normal. Appropriate teaching strategies, then, would facilitate language growth by providing many and varied opportunities to use language in both oral and written

form and by providing role models who exhibit more mature language patterns.

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