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A Comparative Study of a General and Linguistic Language Approach in a Sixth Grade Classroom

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF A GENERAL AND
LINGUISTIC LANGUAGE APPROACH
IN A SIXTH GRADE CLASSROOM

A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate Faculty
Central Washington State College

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Education

by
Vernon L. Neland
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APPROVED FOR THE GRADUATE FACULTY

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITION OF TERMS USED

One of the most serious problems in elementary grammar classes has been that of morale. This was certainly so on the language side, on the literature side less so. Students responded to injunctions to improve their grammar and writing much as child did to injunctions to wash their ears: they knew they ought to, but they were not much interested. Kluckhohn stated that:

It's a pity that so few of us have lived down our childhood struggles with grammar. We have been made to suffer so much from memorizing rules by rote and from approaching language in a mechanical, unimaginative way that we tend to think of grammar as the most inhuman of studies (15:145).

Practice exercises, drill books, and other devices piled up on shelves, but teachers were quite certain that having filled blanks in those so-called "objective exercises" did not help pupils very much to write meaningfully (22:138). Teachers have seen children write "I have seen" many times over, only to shout seconds later, on the playground, the accustomed substitute "I seen." Youngsters could place the terminal periods in one dittoed exercise after another, yet the same children wrote a letter or report which omitted those very items of punctuation that teachers thought they had taught them.

Just how did children learn to express their ideas with clarity, vigor, and in correct form? They had to learn if our national interest was to be well served, for teachers were coming to see that learning to express themselves well in speech and writing was as important as learning to read (4:5-7).

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It was the purpose of this study to show that the linguistic approach, Harbrace series, will not produce higher language understandings than the general language-experience approach, Pollock and Straub series. The member of this study were culturally deprived sixth grade students at Garfield, Yakima, Washington.

Importance of the study. In the 1960's more than ever before, every child as he entered school needed to be able to master the skills of communicating in order to make for himself a place in the space age. In this complex world, the individual needed to listen with critical attention, to speak effectively, to read tremendous amounts of material ranging from easy to difficult for a variety of purposes, and to express clearly both simple and technical areas in written form. The elementary school introduced children to these skills and helped them to develop each one separately as well as in a unified way, in terms of each child's

individual ability and maturity.

If the results of this comparison suggested that one approach to grammar produced noticeable results, this teacher and other teachers could gain an added understanding of how to present material to a class in our space-filled curriculum.

Limitations of the study. For comparative purposes, the study included ninety students over a three-year term, 1964-1965, 1965-1966, and 1966-1967. For administrative convenience, all of the students were in the same room under the direction of the same teacher. The unit and time allotment sequence were held as constant as was possible but the rapidly changing background of students from three different years in time and the additional experience in teaching ability were limitations to definite study conclusions. The experimenter used his own students so the "halo effect" may have been present.

II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Linguistics. During this report, linguistics meant the study of language and was by no means a body of ascertained truth and theory. Linguistics provided a variety of ways of going about the search for truth and theory, ways that yielded testable results by virtue of their systematic application to the data. The essence of it, and of the science in general, might even have been said to boil down

to good work habits, good thinking, good intuitions (10:10-22).

Language. Throughout the report of this investigation, the term "language" was interpreted as meaning the plan or form of symbolization of experience that occurred inevitably because the need to transform experience into written or oral symbols or sounds was a biologically determined characteristic of man (7:7-18).

Linguistic study. Linguistic study called attention to new thinking concerning the relationship of language knowledge to speech, reading and writing. Some principles of linguistics were being incorporated into curriculum guides, but on the whole, linguistic findings had as yet had little impact on the elementary programs because of lack of general agreement which concerned the terminology and specific application of principles (3:3-5).

Language skills. Language skills in this investigation included organization, usage, sentence construction, punctuation, vocabulary building, spelling, and handwriting (12:3).

Language-experience approach. The language-experience approach involved the teaching of an array of thinking and language skills in a discussion setting which centered around a topic which was anchored directly in the experiences

and interests of the group. From the discussion emerged the subject matter which eventually provided the material for the development of skill in handling written language (8:44-47).

General approach. This study used the general approach to mean a teacher-centered class which based its sequence of instruction on textbook, rote, memorized learnings. The workbook and drill characterized this program (23:138-144).

Natural writing level. This study used this term to mean the non-directive type of writing the student did to characterize his academic personality in all areas of class activities without an emphasis on grades, spelling or grammar (13:5).

III. ORGANIZATION OF THE REMAINDER OF THE THESIS

This study was organized into four main divisions. This chapter identified and stated the problem. Chapter II reviewed the literature of the general and the linguistic approaches to language. Chapter III reported the procedures and results of the study in sentence and grammar understandings conducted in the sixth grade at Yakima, Washington, during the school years that ended in June 1965, 1966, and 1967. The final division, Chapter IV, contained conclusions and recommendations suggested by the study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The review of literature was undertaken to help establish the relationship or comparison of the general language approach, including language-experience, to the linguistic approach in elementary grammar. The general approach was reviewed first with an eye on the needs of the culturally deficient students in the study. Literature that pertained to linguistic grammar was then reviewed. Finally, the purpose of this review of literature was to show that there were definitely two approaches to language study and to show some of the unique features of both based on statements from authorities in the field. Trauger stated:

With grammar transformed and resurgent in high schools after a generation of neglect, with foreign languages flourishing in all grades, and with the science of linguistics burgeoning, the elementary program in language arts is in a new era. Courses of study are being redesigned and teachers have occasion to employ a wide knowledge of English and other languages. Instruction in usage and structure continues, but in a larger framework than previously (23:137).

I. THE GENERAL APPROACH TO LANGUAGE

In the general approach to language, students studied about the language but not the language itself. When students entered school in first grade, they received little language-experience credit for movie, radio, and television

language experiences. Little extension was made from meaningful activities to book learnings (1:3-5).

The general approach did not deal with formal grammar until grade seven since studies (21:43) pointed out that very little was accomplished by this effort and complete review of the material was necessary in the upper grades (14:40-42). Definitions were taught as language learnings and not as grammar understandings. A noun was solely a person, place, or a thing under this approach (14:57).

Trauger felt that the general approach to language did not stress using language as a code and made little use of the natural motivation of children in their interest in signals and their desire to break the code of the other person (23:138). Trauger stated:

Such discussions contrast with the negative viewpoint which held that nothing which might be considered technical about language should be introduced in elementary grades (23:138).

That retreat from language may have been a natural reaction from the aridity of unrealistic textbook material, workbooks, and rote instruction by teachers who knew the rules of grammar but had a limited knowledge of language (23:138).

Pollock and Straub, in the general tradition, expressed the idea that the ability to use language well, like other complex human abilities, was developed only through frequent repetition. Time after time and year after year the student needed to repeat in situations which had meaning for him the various activities involved in speaking, reading, and writing.

This meant more exercises, more drill books, and more definitions (16:7-42).

Many teachers that had consistently followed the general approach modified their approach to a wider language-experience program because of people like Burrows and Roberts (14:36-39).

Dr. Burrows stated:

Research shows that the careless use of workbooks, undeveloped parts of speech definitions, and grammatical analysis of sentences make no identifiable contribution to speech and writing in the elementary school and tend to confuse the student in later learnings (6:88).

Roberts concluded the strict general approach when he stated:

Teachers should limit the time spent on learning parts of speech, identifying them in textbook and workbook exercises, and marking subjects and predicates in ready-made sentences. In an already crowded curriculum, this time can be spent in helping children sharpen their powers of observation so that they have something to communicate and helping them say or write these things clearly (17:7).

The language-experience approach has proven to be a successful modified general language approach (14:32-38). An emphasis was not placed on workbook memory learnings as the traditionalists tended to do (16:7-42) or on the pure study of sound and signals as the linguists tended to do (10:14).

Strickland thought that the language-experience approach was flexible enough to meet the special needs of the culturally disadvantaged learner. This approach had

built in a special readiness factor that made subsequent learning activities meaningful because the text was used only after the interests of the students was determined through oral language activities (21:14-16).

Harbrace thought that the language-experience approach would have been further advanced if linguistic materials were used. Students then could understand their culture through the study of language (12:3-5). Harbrace stated:

Among the multitude of skills which this approach will yield are included the following: logical organized, and critical thinking: oral language facility in terms of fluency, syntax, grammar, critical reasoning, pronunciation, spontaneity, and courteous discussion procedures; expanded background of concepts, coupled with appropriate vocabulary labels; and organizational skills as they apply to listening, speaking, reading, and writing (12:4).

Edwards wanted the general language-experience techniques to apply to a larger group of students beyond the elementary years when they possessed readiness problems. Edwards reported that:

The so-called language-experience approach has proved to be an extremely effective technique for approaching the multi-faceted problem of culturally deprived students. Very often, unfortunately, its use is limited to very young children at the beginning stages of learning to read. It has been this writer's experience, however, that it works with outstanding effectiveness with adolescents who are potential dropouts, with functionally illiterate adults, in both individual and group situations, and even with illiterate peasants (8:47).

II. THE LINGUISTIC APPROACH TO LANGUAGE

In the linguistic approach to language, students studied the language as a language and received credit for knowing the basic sound structure of the language. Their language program grew from this basic assumption. Trauger stated:

This viewpoint, prompted by studies in psychology and linguistics, is a notable change from an earlier attitude which considered the child ignorant of grammar, largely, perhaps, because he could not state the rules and had not mastered the irregularities of the language (23:138).

Trauger further stated:

Anyone who looks upon language as an instrument for practical communication will shift emphasis from textbook English to the speech and writing of daily life. This leads to a testing of rules by the realities of actual usage. Valid rules survive this test, but that is not the fortune of those which never had a foundation in language history or which, though out of date, had been perpetuated from one textbook to another (23:138-139).

Having based their reasoning on the linguistic approach, linguists felt that there were problems in the study of language in the elementary schools as it has traditionally been carried on, and, as recent research studies seemed to indicate, was still being carried on in many schools (14: 27-32). Although linguists did not agree among themselves with respect to terminology or even methods of analysis, essentially they did agree that language should be studied

as a living body of communication rather than as a body of rules governing our speech and writing (10:22-25).

The linguistic approach recognized the importance of sounds which made up the spoken word, intonations which colored and gave emphasis to spoken language, dialects which differentiated regions and social groups, and words which were used to signal and determine the structure and meaning of sentences (3:3-7). Linguistics recognized language as a highly complex process, with psychological and neurological bases (11:44).

When Charles C. Fries did his pioneer study in sentence structure, he emphasized the importance of signals and markers in English which lacked the many endings of a highly inflected language, depending heavily for meaning upon word order and such signals and markers as "the" and the ending "s" (9:135-137).

As opposed to the general tradition of writing sentences for the sake of writing sentences, Bloomfield pointed out that in the upper grades elementary grades sentence building has been a profitable activity (4:125-127). By adding words or word groups to kernel sentences, children secured an easy acquaintance with the two basic sentence patterns (subject-verb-complement and subject-verb) and saw through the addition of modifiers, what varied patterns and meanings could result. Pooley stated that, as he compared the general and the linguistic approach to grammar:

There is nothing wrong, of course, in telling students that sentences can be classified as declarative, interrogative, imperative, or exclamatory, for, sure enough, they can be so classified, just as the physical elements can, sure enough, be classified as earth, air, fire, and water. There is nothing wrong with telling students that parts of speech include words that name things, words which modify other words, words which show relationships, etc., but it is a little like listing the ingredients of a cake as one egg, several hundred calories, some protein, icing, and a cylindrical surface (16:84).

A common term like "noun" had meaning in both approaches to grammar. The general approach had the student memorize a narrow definition at first and then the student had to practice and to do exercises to understand this strict definition. The linguistic approach had the student discover the function of the word in the sentence structure and then place the word into a general class after evaluating signals. A wide definition followed after the student understood the code (19:11-14).

The linguistic approach had no objection to applying the traditional names of parts of speech to words, even though many have abandoned these in their explanation of structure. If the names were attached as labels, which indicated the function of words and were introduced after composing has been done, children used them naturally and in connection with their own writing. Such terms as noun, verb, pronoun, modifier and connective were the most useful at this particular stage of the child's development (5:18-22).

Finally, Trauger felt that the linguistic approach was a wider extension of the general or the language-experience approach and better met the needs of culturally deficient students. He stated:

For children reared and living amid substandard English, the mastering of standard forms is equivalent to learning a new dialect. Almost, it is like learning a new language (23:145).

An increasing number of teachers avoid the prescriptive grammarian's blunt 'That's wrong,' 'That's awful English,' or 'You must say it this way. . . .' They prefer to help children discover that there are several ways of saying certain things and that many people like to hear or read them stated in one way rather than another. To this end these teachers encourage children to observe usages in the neighborhood and discuss their findings (23:148).

III. SUMMARY

This review of literature has pointed out that the general language approach, which included language-experience, and the linguistic approach were widely used approaches to elementary grammar. Individual teachers have modified these basic programs in order to meet special needs of their students.

The general language approach, which originally stressed rote memory and drill, modified its approach to meet the needs of the students. The language-experience approach taught correct grammar and definitions by deductive group methods and developed textbook learnings.

The linguistic approach was reviewed as an extension of the language approach. The linguistic method was found to be a descriptive, inductive view of language. The approach changed from a definition of ideas of grammar to a description of how items combine in actual practice. Finally, the linguistic approach completed the view of language by suggested grammatical rules.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES AND RESULTS OF THE COMPARISON

A general, identical language test (see appendix), which measured sentence structure and general grammar knowledge, was given on each first Wednesday of June in 1965, 1966, and 1967. The experimenter used the general language grammar approach in 1964-1965 using the basic text, Sharing Ideas (Pollock & Straub). In 1965-1966, the experimenter used the new text adoption, Language for Daily Use (Harbrace), and used the linguistic approach on Friday morning for thirty minutes. In 1966-1967, on Friday morning, the experimenter used forty-five minutes of linguistic materials under the same text program as 1966.

I. PROCEDURES

Children of the study. The children of this study were sixth grade, white, culturally deprived students at Garfield, Yakima, Washington. From 35 to 45 per cent of these students came from broken homes where more bottles were present than books. The word soap meant only a term that had been discussed in some ancient health class. The Iowa Basic Skill Test, Form II, mean composite score consistently placed these students a year behind their grade level in all areas of learning during the three test years. The class I.Q. mean, determined by the Lawrence-Thorndike

Intelligence Test and given during the second semester to all fifth graders at Garfield, placed the means 89.3 in 1964-1965, 92.1 in 1965-1966, and 90.7 in 1966-1967. Since few of the parents had graduated from high school or were even employed, little value was placed on grades. The students soon accepted the school standard of performance and grammar and the community standard of performance and grammar as being different.

Old test. In 1964-1965, the manual of Sharing Ideas was followed as closely as possible. The sequence of instruction started with oral language activities because of the restricted background of experiences and concepts that those students possessed. The sequence continued through the four types of sentences and their use, parts of speech and how to use them, paragraphs and how to write them, poetry and drama, and finally ended with round table and panel demonstrations.

Every Friday morning for thirty minutes, the students reviewed sentences and parts of speech understandings. Linguistic terms such as the word "pattern" and linguistic symbols and signals were deliberately not mentioned. Workbook exercises, definition drills, sentence building, and text review materials were used to prepare the students for the comparison test.

New text adoption. In 1965-1966, the teacher followed the manual of Language for Daily Use for class activities and

the same sequence of instruction as the previous year followed.

However, on Friday morning for thirty minutes, linguistic patterns of this text series were used in any manner that the teacher saw fit. The class progressed from "N V" to "The Adj. N in Adj. Adj. N V^h Adv. after Pn."*

The experimenter used code boxes to motivate many learning game activities. The students had a sentence signal and a word signal code box which they decorated in unusual ways. The sentence signal code box contained cut squares of colored paper with a different symbol on each piece such as: " . ! , C (capital needed) ?." The word signal code box contained symbols such as: "N, V, v^{be}, v^h, the, in, Adj., Adv., Pn." The teacher wrote a group of words or a sentence of interest on the board and the students selected symbols from their code boxes until they could code the message. The students readily made up their own games to challenge each other and the teacher. One student would make up a sentence and another student would attempt to code it.

The 1967 text, sequence, and activities were as similar to the 1966 program as possible. However, fifteen additional minutes, making a forty-five minute total, were

*N = noun	v ^h = helping verb
V = verb	Adj. = adjective
the = noun signal	in = in phrase following
Pn. = pronoun	Adv. = adverb
	after = after phrase following

used on Friday morning in an attempt to develop vocabulary in linguistic patterns. Students developed from one syllable words CVC (dog) to four syllable words VCCVCCVCCV (undertaker).**

A syllable code box was added during the third year of the program. Games to increase vocabulary size and understanding were played during the Friday morning period. The box contained ten symbols of C and of V. Students selected only three or four symbols from their code boxes in the early stages of the program and soon advanced to ten and twelve symbols.

Throughout the three-year program using both texts, a special attempt was made to make the Friday morning review or linguistic period interesting and challenging. Learning games, work sheets, competitions, and individual challenges seemed effective.

Test construction. The test was divided into two parts: Our Busy Language, and Criss Cross (see appendix). The first part asked the students to write the four basic sentence structures and gave the general vocabulary and the linguistic signal for each sentence structure as a guide. In the second part, the students examined a basic sentence and matched each word with the correct part of speech by

**V = vowel
C = consonant

having drawn a line from one to the other. The name of the speech part and the linguistic symbol were both given for language approach comparison purposes.

Sentences were judged to have been correct if they fulfilled the correct definition and were punctuated correctly. No consideration was given to grammar or spelling. The design of the test placed emphasis on sentence structure understanding and not structure definition. The natural writing level of the class was determined by having counted the total number of words and syllables of the four sentences.

The second part of the test told the teacher how well the students recognized the function of words in the sentence. The alert student earned eight points. One point was awarded for each correct match. The design of the test again placed emphasis on grammar understanding and not on rote definition.

The teacher deliberately did not tell the students to write long sentences or to use large vocabulary words so that a means of comparison could be established. No directions were given.

The test was given on the first Wednesday of June in 1965, 1966, and 1967 under similar conditions with no directions. The experimenter did not know how many students would be placed in the room but was assured of thirty, the number used in the comparison. At the completion of the test, the student in the last seat in each row picked up

the papers and handed them to the teacher. The teacher then counted thirty papers, random choice, and used this number for comparative purposes.

II. RESULTS OF THE COMPARISON

The results of the comparison were based on (1) the ability of the students to write and recognize the four basic types of sentence structures; (2) the natural, undirected number of words used by the students to express those four sentences; (3) the vocabulary of the students based on the counting of the total number of syllables; and (4) parts of speech understandings as displayed by the student in the crossing exercise.

Sentence structure results. Having been instructed in the general approach in 1964-1965, 43 per cent of the students wrote the basic sentence structures and 33 per cent wrote three structures. Together this represented 76 per cent of the sampling. Twenty-four per cent of the sampling wrote only one or two of the structures correctly. Every student wrote at least one structure correctly. See Table I.

Having been instructed in the linguistic approach in 1965-1966, 70 per cent of the students wrote the basic structures which represented 27 points higher than 1964-1965. Seventeen per cent wrote three structures. Together, this represented 87 per cent of the class and represented 11

points higher than 1964-1965. Thirteen per cent still wrote only one or two structures correctly. See Table II.

TABLE I: 1964-1965

NUMBERS AND PERCENTAGES OF THIRTY SIXTH GRADE STUDENTS WHO WROTE CORRECT SENTENCE STRUCTURES

Frequency	Per cent of class	Score	Per cent correct
13	43	4	100
10	33	3	75
5	17	2	50
2	7	1	25
0	0	0	0

TABLE II: 1965-1966

NUMBERS AND PERCENTAGES OF THIRTY SIXTH GRADE STUDENTS WHO WROTE CORRECT SENTENCE STRUCTURES

Frequency	Per cent of class	Score	Per cent correct
21	70	4	100
5	17	3	75
3	10	2	50
1	3	1	25
0	0	0	0

Having been allowed more time for linguistic pattern vocabulary work in 1966-1967, 73 per cent of the students wrote the basic four structures which represented 30 points

higher than 1964-1965 and 3 points higher than 1965-1966. Seven per cent wrote three structures. Together this represented 80 per cent of the class and 4 points higher than 1964-1965, but represented 7 points lower than 1965-1966. Twenty per cent of the sampling wrote only one or two structures correctly, which was 7 points higher than 1965-1966 and 6 points lower than 1964-1965. See Table III.

TABLE III: 1966-1967

NUMBERS AND PERCENTAGES OF THIRTY SIXTH GRADE STUDENTS WHO WROTE CORRECT SENTENCE STRUCTURES

Frequency	Per cent of class	Score	Per cent correct
22	73	4	100
2	7	3	75
4	13	2	50
2	7	1	25
0	0	0	0

In 1964-1965, the thirty students used 680 words to express the four sentences. The average total words per student was 22.7. This fact pointed out that the natural writing level for this group was from a four to a six word sentence having depended on the type of sentence or the sentence signal. The average sentence was extremely brief. See Table IV.

In 1965-1966, the thirty students used 973 words to express the four sentences. The average total words per student was 32.4. This represented an increase of 293 total words and represented an increase of 9.7 average total words per student over 1964-1965. The "natural writing level" increased from a four to a six word average sentence to a seven to a nine word average sentence. See Table IV.

TABLE IV

A YEARLY COMPARISON OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF WORDS IN THE FOUR SENTENCES WRITTEN BY THIRTY SIXTH GRADE STUDENTS

Year	Total words of thirty students	Average total words per student
1964-65	680	22.7
1965-66	973	32.4
1966-67	1,062	35.4

In 1966-1967, the thirty students used 1,062 words to express the four sentences. The average total words per student was 35.4. This represented an increase of 382 total words and represented an increase of 12.7 average total words per student over 1964-1965. Also, this represented an increase of 89 total words and represented an increase of 3 average total words per student over 1965-1966. The "natural writing level" had increased to an eight to a ten word average sentence. See Table IV.

In 1964-1965, the thirty students used 1,183 syllables to express the four sentences. The average total syllables was 39.4 syllables. See Table V.

In 1965-1966, the thirty students used 1,553 syllables to express the four sentences. The average total syllables was 51.8. This represented an increase of 370 total syllables and represented an increase of 12.4 average total syllables per student over 1964-1965. See Table V.

TABLE V

A YEARLY COMPARISON OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF SYLLABLES IN THE FOUR SENTENCES WRITTEN BY THIRTY SIXTH GRADE STUDENTS

Year	Total syllables of thirty students	Average total syllables per student
1964-65	1,183	39.4
1965-66	1,553	51.8
1966-67	1,667	55.6

In 1966-1967, the thirty students used 1,667 syllables to express the four sentences. The average total syllables was 55.6. This represented an increase of 484 total syllables and represented an increase of 16.2 average total syllables over 1964-1965. Also, this represented an increase of 114 total syllables and represented an increase of 3.8 average total syllables per student over 1965-1966. See Table V.

In 1964-1965, students briefly completed their sentences with the aid of many two-syllable nouns and two-syllable action verbs. The natural writing level increased in both 1965-1966 and 1966-1967 mainly because of the addition of one and two-syllable adjectives. Conjunctions, adverbs, and prepositional phrases were used seldomly. The design of this study did not consider the quality of writing style but only suggested that since more of the thirty students wrote more correct, longer sentences with the added use of adjectives, their writing quality did improve. See Table VI.

TABLE VI

A YEARLY AVERAGE COMPARISON OF THE TOTAL WORDS TO THE TOTAL SYLLABLES IN THE FOUR SENTENCES WRITTEN BY THIRTY SIXTH GRADE STUDENTS

Year	Total average words per student	Total average syllables per student
1964-65	22.7	39.4
1965-66	32.4	51.8
1966-67	35.4	55.6

Part of speech results. In 1964-1965, 14 per cent of thirty sixth grade students scored 100 per cent on the Criss Cross grammar comparison test; 33 per cent scored 88 per

cent; and 30 per cent scored 75 per cent. Together this represented 77 per cent of the class who placed in the upper quarter of the comparison test. This indicated that most students learned basic grammar understandings after having been instructed in the general language approach. See Table VII.

TABLE VII: 1964-1965

NUMBERS AND PERCENTAGES OF THIRTY SIXTH GRADE
STUDENTS WHO CORRECTLY MATCHED CRISS CROSS
ON THE COMPARISON TEST

Frequency	Per cent of class	Score	Per cent correct
4	14	8	100
10	33	7	88
9	30	6	75
5	17	5	63
1	3	4	50
0	0	3	38
1	3	2	25
0	0	1	13
0	0	0	0

In 1965-1966, 63 per cent of thirty sixth grade students scored 100 per cent on the Criss Cross grammar comparison test; 14 per cent scored 88 per cent; and 7 per cent scored 75 per cent. Together this represented 84 per cent of the sample who placed in the upper quarter of the comparison test. Seven per cent more of the students were able

to score in the upper quarter having been instructed in linguistic materials. Evidence to support linguistic grammar appeared from the 63 per cent of the sample that scored 100 per cent as opposed to 14 per cent in 1965. See Table VIII.

TABLE VIII: 1965-1966

NUMBERS AND PERCENTAGES OF THIRTY SIXTH GRADE
STUDENTS WHO CORRECTLY MATCHED CRISS CROSS
ON THE COMPARISON TEST

Frequency	Per cent of class	Score	Per cent correct
19	63	8	100
4	14	7	88
2	7	6	75
1	3	5	63
1	3	4	50
1	3	3	38
2	7	2	25
0	0	1	13
0	0	0	0

In 1966-1967, 70 per cent of thirty sixth grade students scored 100 per cent on the Criss Cross grammar comparison test; 7 per cent scored 88 per cent; and 7 per cent scored 75 per cent. Together this again represented 84 per cent of the class who placed in the upper quarter of the comparison test. Evidence again supported linguistic grammar since 70 per cent of the sample scored 100 per cent this year as opposed to 14 per cent in 1965. See Table IX.

TABLE IX: 1966-1967
 NUMBERS AND PERCENTAGES OF THIRTY SIXTH GRADE
 STUDENTS WHO CORRECTLY MATCHED CRISS CROSS
 ON THE COMPARISON TEST

Frequency	Per cent of class	Score	Per cent correct
21	70	8	100
2	7	7	88
2	7	6	75
1	3	5	63
0	0	4	50
2	7	3	38
1	3	2	25
1	3	1	13
0	0	0	0

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was a comparison of a general and a linguistic approach to elementary language. The scope was limited to thirty culturally deprived students in 1964-1965, 1965-1966, and 1966-1967, but some worthwhile conclusions and recommendations were the following.

I. CONCLUSIONS

A larger per cent of the 1965-1966 and the 1966-1967 students of the study showed greater language understandings through the use of the Harbrace materials than the 1964-1965 group. The comparison test pointed out that more students were able to recognize and write longer sentences after using linguistic materials. The students did increase their "natural writing level" and did improve their sentence structure understandings after having been motivated through linguistic materials. The students definitely understood better the function of sentence grammar after having used linguistic materials. [The better students appeared to be more interested and motivated in the linguistic approach and their scores on the comparison test further suggested this.]

Some important language learning, such as the ability to express ideas orally or in writing effectively, did not

lend themselves to the objective comparison test. To have said that a student is a better language student because he used more words and thus more syllables is not altogether correct.

However, this writer noted that the linguistic students, 1965-1966 and 1966-1967, used one and two-syllable adjectives freely and with understanding. Conjunctions, adverbs, and prepositional phrases were used seldomly by the students but were more easily identified by the linguistic students as recorded by the comparison test.

This study pointed out the idea that true grammar and language understandings begin when the child author studied what he had written about his life, his experiences, his ideas in a motivated linguistic way. Rules were discovered from such written language rather than learned from stereotype examples. Rules were discussed after linguistic games motivated questions during the 1965-1966 and 1966-1967 school year.

Finally, the design of the test sentence in the bottom half of the examination contained too many easy one-syllable words to show the extent of true growth in grammar understandings. The level of difficulty could have been increased so that 70 per cent of the 1966-1967 class would not have received 100 per cent on the grammar examination so that a larger range of scores could have been compared.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that other teachers carry out future studies of a similar design. Variables in children's written language as well as larger populations need to be studied before the efforts of structural linguistics upon the language development of children can be judged.

It is further recommended that studies using larger samples of students from various socio-economic groups be made. It would also be helpful to study children's writing for a longer period than nine months, as was done in this study. In addition, the effects of linguistics at other grade levels needed to be studied. Studies should be made using the linguistic approach to measure the quality of content of sentences, spelling, punctuation, and the effect of social class.

As a final recommendation, the readers of this study are encouraged to integrate the strong points of the language-experience and the linguistic approach to grammar in their own language programs.

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APPENDIX

June 1965, 1966, 1967

Our Busy Language

Write a declarative (.) sentence.

Write an interrogative (?) sentence.

Write an imperative (.--!) sentence.

Write an exclamatory (!) sentence.

Criss Cross

The tall boy is running swiftly after it.

the	pronoun (pn)
tall	adjective (adj.--noun signal)
boy	Noun (N)
is	preposition (prep.)
running	helping verb (V ^h)
swiftly	adverb (adv.)
after	adjective (adj.)
it	verb (V)