AN INVESTIGATION OF THE LINGUISTIC CONTENT OF SIX ELEMENTARY LANGUAGE ARTS TEXTBOOK SERIES

by

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for

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Honors thesis is designed to allow students to participate in independent study. This Honors project, culminating in the resulting thesis, has not been truly independent, however, for without the aid and concern of many people, this thesis would not have been complete.

The dissertation of Ann Bunch Lefcourt served as a model for the design of this project. With her kind permission, a modified replication of her doctoral thesis was attempted, using current state-adopted language-arts textbooks. She extended professional interest and advice through written correspondence.

Mr. Charles Wise, Curriculum Director of the East Alien County School system, made a valuable contribution to this project by generously providing copies of textbooks for the collection of the research data.

The advice and suggestions of Dr. Irma Gale, who served as advisor for the project, are acknowledged. Her enthusiasm and counsel have been a major source of encouragement and inspiration. The use of her professional resource materials facilitated the drafting of the manuscript.

Appreciation is also expressed to all others who contributed to this project with advice, information, and encouragement.
INTRODUCTION

The sweeping curriculum reforms in American education have prompted parents to study new developments in the teaching of the physical sciences, the modern foreign languages, and mathematics. Recent trends in the teaching of English will change the English curriculum as radically as the "new math" has changed the teaching of mathematics in school systems across the United States.¹

Parents are doing critical thinking about the new curricula, but many teachers and prospective teachers are equally concerned. Many are faced with a perplexing contradiction. They are being taught and/or are being encouraged to teach new concepts and understandings in a manner that conflicts with the ways in which they were taught. They are challenged to re-evaluate traditional methodologies and concepts associated with their own past learning and to consider the adoption of new expressions and patterns of thought.

Another very real problem manifests itself when the subject matter content and educational philosophies of the school texts fail to comply with the newer recommendations for curricular offerings and procedures. Again the teacher is confronted with a confusing paradox.

The realization that these conflicts do exist was one of the main influences in the selection of this topic for study. A desire

to learn more about linguistics or the "new English," as well as a desire to become more aware of the extent to which these concepts are actually being presented to elementary children, with the hope of finding some means to begin resolving the problem of existing discrepancies between theory and practice, were prime motivating factors for the research project.

With an awareness of general personal limitations, this project was begun with some reservations. A lack of extensive knowledge about English as a content subject and about linguistics in particular was a serious handicap. As an elementary education major with limited experiences in language-arts training, only a minimal amount of background knowledge could be assumed.

Immediately some modification of the project became necessary. An exact replication of the Lefcourt study was impossible since the current investigator did not have the same degree of competence to complete a study as comprehensive as the dissertation undertaken by the original researcher.

The Lefcourt study dealt with this question, "Are school programs in English, as evidenced by elementary English language textbooks, dealing inadequately or incorrectly with contemporary knowledge?"\(^1\) Basically, the thesis concluded that the correlation was low between the subject matter included in the textbooks in use in the state of Indiana and contemporary linguistic knowledge.

\(^1\) Ann Bunch Lefcourt, "An Examination of Five Elementary English Language Textbook Series, Grades Two through Eight, Employing a Linguistic Score Card Devised for that Purpose" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Dept. of Education, Ball State University, 1963), p. 4.
Since 1963 many elementary language-arts textbook series have been revised and new ones have appeared. In 1968 the Indiana State Textbook Adoption Committee adopted a new list of textbook series for use in Indiana schools. This thesis attempts to discern whether any significant changes have been made to improve the correlation between textbooks and contemporary knowledge in the new textbook series during the five-year interim period.
CHAPTER I
THE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The important role of English in American school systems is generally assumed. "In the elementary school the child spends between forty and fifty per cent of his time studying the English language skills of listening, speaking, writing, and reading."1 Obviously, the study of language is important. The language skills are underlying foundations of learning in other subject areas.

The teacher of English, then, has a great responsibility to instill in his student's not only an understanding of how language functions, but a command of written and oral discourse, an exposure to great books and stories and poems and plays, and a share in the cultural heritage of Western civilization.2

"Admonitions that instruction in the English language be based upon the methods and discoveries of modern linguistic study have been sounded frequently and widely in the past two decades."3 As a result, great reforms in school curricula have occurred in the 1950's and 1960's. Albert R. Kitzhaber examined the pace of these reforms in the English curriculum and saw that progress has been slow and fitful in improving the teaching of English in schools. He suggested a series of steps for improving the English curriculum and increasing

1 Lefcourt, p. 16.
2 Lefcourt, p. 19.
the rate of reform:

1. A careful definition of terms.

Is English only reading, writing, speaking and literature, or should other things also be included such as telephone techniques, and the Dewey Decimal System?

2. An evaluation of the effectiveness of current curricular offerings within English programs.

The present curriculum permits an aimless eddying around the same items year after year--apostrophes, topic sentences, subject-verb agreement--with the result that the curriculum is often stultifying to student and teacher alike; we must ask ourselves whether some more rational and efficient plan of organization is not possible.

3. A comparison of the content that is actually taught with "the current state of knowledge in relevant disciplines."

4. A critical analysis of textbooks. Judgments should be made with relevance to

...Conclusions about the proper aims and subject matter of English, the possibility of a more clearly sequential curriculum and present knowledge of language, literature, rhetoric, and the psychology of learning.

5. An evaluation of the teachers of English.

A great many of the people who teach English in the schools... are not well prepared to teach even the existing curriculum; nearly all would be unprepared to teach a curriculum that differed so much from the present one.1

These steps indicate that Kitzhaber delineates three areas that require attention if significant changes are to be made in the teaching of English--curriculum, textbooks, and teachers. This

thesis is specifically concerned with the second area, textbooks, although references to the other two are generally included. Present knowledge and current beliefs about education in general, as well as about specific subject matter, influence curriculum; this, in turn, becomes the basis for the publication of textbook series. Teaching is, in a great many ways, influenced by curriculum and textbooks.

The Problem

This study was planned to utilize a linguistic score card devised by Ann Bunch Lefcourt and authenticated for her study by many noted linguists. The purpose was to reveal the influence, if any, of linguistics and the results of linguistic research on the content of elementary language-arts textbooks used in Indiana schools since their adoption in 1968.

The questions which this research project attempts to examine and answer are the following:

1. To what extent is linguistic content incorporated in each of the new textbook series?

2. Is there some correlation among the content of all the series?

3. Have there been significant changes in textbook content since the last state adoption?

4. Are linguistic concepts incorporated in the text for students or contained primarily in the teacher's manual?

5. Does the research data suggest any possible implications for the future incorporation of linguistics in elementary textbooks?

The Need for the Study

The past quarter-century has produced an evolutionary shift in the study of English grammar—a shift growing out of the earlier work of such great traditional linguists as Jespersen and Sweet and continuing through the recent advances of such men as C. C. Fries, George L. Trager, and Henry Lee Smith, Jr., and Noam Chomsky. Essentially a shift in the way in which we view language—from a prescriptive to a descriptive view—from a deductive to an inductive approach—the new grammar at its heart presents a method and an attitude. . . . Freed from traditional attitudes which conceive of sentence relationships as based on meaning alone, e.g., "a noun is the name of a person, place, or thing; if it is not a name, it is not a noun," our grammarians develop new insights and new definitions based on the form and structure of the sentence.1

Content, more content, is the cry of the moment. It is necessary, say leaders in the field, because teachers don't know enough. . . . The elementary teacher is thought least properly equipped to teach about language, literature, and composition—insofar as counting credits indicates this lack. In any event, the assertion is that there is a content in English that is not being taught, and that it must be learned before anything rightly called "English" can be organized for teaching.2

These are some of the issues and problems that teachers of English face today. The new textbooks are an initial attempt to update language-arts programs. New directions in subject matter content and new ideas for teachers to use in their presentations of language lessons may be a beginning in the linguistic approach to language-arts learning.

Through the years, textbooks have become such an integral part of the general education system, that teachers and school curriculums


not guided to a great extent by the content of textbooks are rarely found. "The most readily accessible instructional aid for a teacher is the textbook. For most teachers it is an important guide to the content, the methods of teaching, and the evaluation needed in the program." ¹

An important function of the textbook and related instructional materials in elementary language arts is to provide a basic source of language knowledge convenient for the pupil. The textbook usually serves as the single common reference available to all children in the class. In many schools the adopted textbook series serves as the course of study. . . . The textbook is, in all probability, the most important teaching aid the teacher will have.²

Currently, most authors of the language-arts textbooks reviewed by this report acknowledge the importance of new linguistic knowledge and attempt to incorporate it into their books. This study examines the content of elementary language-arts textbooks. It is concerned with authorship, philosophy, the nature of language, the structure of English, dictionaries, method of linguistic inquiry, and the history of the English language. It does not deal with methods of teaching.

Since so much attention has been given to linguistics in recent years, evidence of linguistic orientation and of related linguistic attitudes toward language and linguistic content was sought in the elementary textbooks. This served as a basis for the investigation.


Limitations of the Study

One of the major limitations of this study concerned the qualifications of the investigator, since she lacks the sophistication of a trained student of linguistics. The investigation was motivated by a course in language arts teaching methods which emphasized the linguistic approach. As a future elementary teacher who will be using linguistically-oriented books and teaching the linguistic principles included in them, the investigator felt justified in pursuing her interest in this problem.

The utilization of a score card that had already been validated by noted linguists simplified the study to some extent; however, a simplified scoring technique requiring less precise linguistic background and acute ability to judge was used. This process of modification was permitted by the original author of the score card.¹

Organization of the Study

Before the reader can understand the significance of a score determined by the score card, some knowledge about linguistics in general is necessary. Chapter II includes reviews of selected literature which provide some insight and background knowledge for an understanding of linguistic concepts and principles. Chapter III explains the procedure of the research in determining the score and the scale used in scoring. A listing of the textbook series examined is also included.

Chapter IV summarizes the investigation. The findings of the study are presented in tabular form with explanatory discussions.

¹A copy of the letter in which permission is granted for replication of the Lefcourt study and for a modified use of the score card she devised is included in the Appendix.
Conclusions which evolved from the data are enumerated, and the implications of the study are noted.
CHAPTER II
UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF LINGUISTICS IN LANGUAGE-ARTS EDUCATION

Interest in linguistics among English teachers has risen phenomenally in the last few years. The subject is in the air at every professional meeting—sometimes earnestly advocated, sometimes bitterly combatted, often provoking questions, almost always somewhere in the background of any debate on the language section of the curriculum. With increasing frequency linguistics is now intruding even into discussions of the teaching of composition or literature. Staunchly old-fashioned textbook series have had to give it some recognition, and others claim modernity in its espousal. It is no longer responsible behavior merely to ignore it, yet no clear picture emerges from most of the debate. . . . The most pressing questions bear on the relations of linguistics to the more traditional formulations of the subject matter of English— to literature, to composition, and especially to grammar.

Attention focused on linguistics tends to be controversial and confusing to many people concerned with maintaining and/or improving high educational standards. In order to understand the role of linguistics, it seems necessary to examine its role in relation to the entire school curriculum as well as its relation to the language-arts program.

The English Language in the School Curriculum

Often the English language is taken for granted. The use of English develops and is incorporated into nearly every aspect of an American child's life. However, until he enters school and becomes enrolled in an English class, the individual usually does not

have his attention directed toward the nature of the English language for the purpose of developing an appreciation for and a genuine understanding of this uniquely human phenomenon. Gleason summarizes:

Language is an important feature of human life, the major means of communication, and hence a basic essential in our communicating society. . . . If a man is to understand himself, he must understand how he communicates. Some fundamental insight into language should be a basic qualification for an educated man.1

Paul Anderson attaches such importance to language-arts education that he states, "A student who fails to achieve competence in language faces life with an unfair handicap for which the school must accept responsibility."2

Traditionally, the study of English has been of great importance in elementary schools. Iris and Sidney Tiedt explain:

Elementary schools from their humblest beginnings were basically language schools. In our early colonial days the schools developed primarily as reading and writing schools. . . . Not only historically has English been prominent, however, for it continues in importance in spite of the rise of newer curricular areas such as science and mathematics. . . . In California the importance of English is codified in state law which reads: "Instruction is required (in the areas of English) for a minimum of 50% of each week in grades 1 to 6."3

The emphasis on language study seems justifiable as content in and of itself since the ability to use language is a characteristic which helps to distinguish man from other forms of life. Another factor which underscores the need for studying English is the tremendous growth of communication in the modern world in terms of time

1Gleason, p. 4.
spent in the communication process, expense, volume, and economic significance. "We live in a verbal world, one in which language plays an essential role." In this modern "verbal world," proper concern is being shown in the schools for students to learn of their "linguistic heritage and be able to use English to the fullness of its potential according to each student's ability."¹

The Tiedts propose these general aims for the elementary school English program:

1. To understand the English language and how it works.
2. To communicate fluently and clearly in written and oral forms.
3. To decode and encode English easily.
4. To know and appreciate our literary heritage of prose and poetry.²

With the importance of the language curriculum and these objectives in mind, determination of specific English objectives to be taught can be attempted.

Two of the most conspicuous features of the English curriculum are loose organization and great diversity. "English is probably the least uniform and the least coherent major segment in the American public school curriculum."³ There is even confusion concerning the question, "What is English?" The so-called "language-arts" curriculum often is really a series of separate subjects. Language,

¹Tiedts, p. 2.
²Tiedts, p. 5.
³Gleason, p. 11.
or English, usually refers to grammar, usage, and punctuation and is often separated from reading, spelling, and handwriting. Many schools offer curricular guides, texts, and workbooks for each area.¹

Currently, attempts are being made to organize and to unify the areas of language study. Several proposals and various ideas have been suggested.

In the first place, the English curriculum has long been the dumping ground for numerous small, often ill-assorted matters that someone thought ought to be in the school program somewhere. In some instances these have bulked so large that the central concerns were obscured. In the second place, some of the major components have had less internal unity and coherence than might be desirable.²

Promoters of the tripartite structure identify three main components—literature, composition, and language. Allen suggests that the structure should not be diagramed as an equilateral triangle. Instead, he recommends language should become the underlying base upon which literature and composition are built, as depicted in the following diagram.³

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literature</th>
<th>Composition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some critics of the tripartite structure have proposed an alternative. They suggest a dichotomy of language and literature.

The proponents of this position cite the fact that composition is actually part of language study and that the true content in English lies in language and literature, whereas composition is a skill.⁴

¹ Tiedts, p. 5.
² Gleason, p. 13.
⁴ Tiedts, p. 6.
The communications approach is another suggestion. The Tiedts describe this approach as an attempt

... to focus attention as much on the processes of English as on the content. This approach dichotomizes communication into sending and receiving. Sending encompasses speaking and writing whereas receiving includes listening and reading as illustrated in the following diagram.

Actually the communications approach divides English into a quartet—speaking, writing, listening, and reading—the skills or processes involved in communication. To a greater extent than the two previous models this definition relates to the elementary school program.

Compromise is probably the key to solving the problem of organization.

What Is Meant by the Term Linguistics?

As a synthesized and simplified concept of linguistics, this definition is offered: Linguistics is the science of language. It is the careful, exact, analytical study of the English language according to the scientific method. A great deal of emphasis is placed on observation of what is—the language people use, not on what ought to be—correctness advocated by precise grammar rules. Linguists are concerned with the structure of language.

1Tiedts, p. 6.
Linguistics ... will provide verifiable facts instead of mere notions and prejudices; it will lead to an understanding of the history and structure of our language. One who has studied the historical development of English is not likely to regard change in usage as "corruption" or "degeneration" he sees that English, like all other natural languages (those actually used by people in the conduct of their daily lives), has always been changing. One who gets an understanding of the origin and diversity of the many regional and social varieties of the language, that is, the dialects of the language is better prepared to master "good English," which means standard Present-Day English, written or spoken, the kind of English used by educated, cultivated members of the community. One who has studied the relations between the sounds of English and its writing system is better able to spell and punctuate. One who knows the new approaches to grammar can do a better job of analyzing sentence structure.  

Friend further describes the function of linguistics and its characteristics,

Like other disciplines, linguistics has various subdivisions. Historical, or diachronic, linguistics is concerned with language development through time. Comparative linguistics deals with the relations between languages. Descriptive or synchronic, linguistics aims at analyzing and describing the state of a language at a given time in its evolution. These are the three main branches. There are also specialized divisions, such as dialectology, the study of geographic and social varieties, and lexicography, the branch of applied linguistics that deals with dictionary-making.

A research study conducted by Walter Loban concluded that "children who are rated as most proficient in language are also those who manifest the most sensitivity to the conventions of language."  

Linguistic science research has drawn attention to new, emergent concepts

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2 Friend, p. 2
concerning these "conventions of language." In the area of grammar, an integral part of English, new approaches have developed from the body of facts which is being amassed by modern grammarians. Four basic kinds of grammar are vying for inclusion within the English textbooks—traditional, historical, structural, and generative transformational.

Traditional grammar, which has been the basis of English education for many years and continues even today, began in the eighteenth century. The prescriptive attitudes toward language of men like Joseph Priestley, Robert Lowth, and George Campbell, emphasized correct usage and precise definitions of parts of speech. They viewed Latin as a perfect language and tried to make English conform to comparable rules. One problem presented by traditionally-oriented analysis of structure is that the grammarians... 

... rely heavily on the most subjective elements in language—meanings—and this fact rules out, to a very large extent, any attempts to study language in an objective way. The problem this creates for the student is not so much that he must memorize rules supplied by his teacher or textbook, but that he has no method, no will, and little opportunity to verify the validity of these rules.

A Danish linguist, Jesserson, developed a historical approach to grammar in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Historical grammar destroyed the concept of Latin as an ideal language. It also explained many irregularities of spelling and discrepancies between spelling and pronunciation.

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1 Tiedts, p. 18


3 Tiedts, p. 18.
Structural grammar, a product of the twentieth century, was developed by Leonard Bloomfield. Such men as Bloomfield, Charles C. Fries, James Siede, R. A. Gleason, Jr., and Archibald Hill employed a descriptive approach to the grammar which was deplored by the traditionalists. Structuralists attempted to distinguish between the structure of language (syntax) and the meanings of language (semantics).

Studies made by the structuralists led to new concepts of phonemes (the 44 sounds of English), morphemes (meaningful units of language), and phrase structures. A new system of word classification was also devised. Definitions were based on syntax and form rather than on meaning as the traditionalists proposed. Structural linguists work to discover and describe complicated language patterns which convey grammatical meaning. Ralph Albaum offers this structural definition of grammar:

the study of the way a language operates. It is concerned with the functions of words in a sentence (parts of speech), the change of words to indicate function (inflection), and the relation of words to each other in a sentence (syntax).

Basically there are three kinds of grammar: historical, descriptive, and prescriptive.

Linguists such as Noam Chomsky and Robert Lees, who founded generative or transformational grammar

build on the work, especially in phonology, of the structuralists, but go further and attempt to establish rules for generating every possible sentence in English. Phrase structure rules explain how various phrases in

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1Tiedts, p. 19.
2Tiedts, p. 19.
English develop and transformational rules describe the several arrangements and rearrangements of these phrases which take place in the development of more complex sentences.¹

Paul Roberts simplifies the definition of grammar as "something that produces the sentences of a language."² These objectives of transformational grammar concerning the production or transformations of sentences were outlined by Iris and Sidney Tiedt:

1. Identify kernel sentences.
2. Supply rules for transforming kernel sentences.
3. Identify obligatory transformations and optional transformations.

Generative transformational grammar has developed very exact rules for transforming sentences. These rules are usually stated in a formula.³

New methods are accompanied by new terminologies. The following are new concepts introduced by linguists.

1. PHONOLOGY. The science of speech sounds, including especially the history and theory of sound changes.

2. MORPHOLOGY. A study and description of word-formation in a language, including inflection, derivation, and compounding.

3. SYNTAX. Sentence structure; the arrangement of word forms to show their mutual relations in the sentence.

4. INDECLATIONAL FORM. A morpheme added to a word which changes the base word's grammatical meaning without changing its part of speech classification.

5. DERIVATIONAL FORM. A morpheme added to a word which changes the part of speech classification of the base word.

6. TRANSFORMATION. A change in a phrase or sentence pattern which alters vocabulary items or grammatical struc-

¹Snugrue, p. 60.
²Tiedts, p. 20.
³Tiedts, p. 20.
tures while keeping the same (or as nearly as possible the same) total meaning.

7. **EXPANSION.** The addition of optional elements to a basic phrase or sentence pattern.¹

Critics say these and similar terms cause more confusion than clarification. Walter T. Petty responds to critics in this manner:

The new terminology must be considered in proper perspective; much of its rise has followed the rise of newer ways to look at language and at grammar .... While the exact bearing linguistic study will have on the language arts curriculum is still unclear, there can be no doubt that what is being said about language and the new grammars coming forth is more than merely the rise of a kind of nimickery to "set at" usage and composition teaching.²

Emphatically linguists answer "yes" to the question, "Does modern grammar offer something more effective than traditional grammar?" The modern grammar makes language more meaningful for students. It uses linguistics to engage students in the work of linguists, that is, an examination of the language itself. According to the Tiedts, modern grammar has the following advantages:

1. Description of the structure of English is based on a study of this unique language as it is actually used.

2. Grammar is differentiated from usage.

3. The student acquires a more realistic attitude toward language and language study.

4. Modern grammar offers a more positive approach to study of the English language which appeals to students.

5. Emphasis on creating original sentences after a study of sentence structure patterns suggests a beneficial relationship between grammar study and composition.³


³ Tiedts, pp. 23-24
Ideally, students inductively learn their language through inductive processes advocated by Bruner. Strickland, adopting the conviction of Bruner who states, "Any significant concept which children in our society need to learn can be taught in some honest form to all age levels," proposes that these linguistic concepts be developed in the elementary school:

1. Language is a system of sounds.

2. The sounds convey meaning only when put together in patterns of words and sentences.

3. The patterns of sound convey meaning to the initiated—those who know the language.

4. Pitch, stress, and juncture are a part of the sound system of the language and help to convey meaning.

5. The sounds and their connection with the things they represent is purely arbitrary.

6. The sounds are put together in characteristic designs; these designs can be composed of a great variety of appropriate fillers.

7. A language changes; old words may be given new meanings and new uses.

8. Likewise, old words are dropped and new words are coined or old parts to represent new meanings or modifications of old ones.¹

The chief aims of the school program in English are . . . to develop in all children . . . competence in listening, speaking, reading, and writing English and as much appreciation and understanding as possible of the literature of America, England, and the world. All members of school faculties . . . have an obligation to help all students toward this goal . . . . During the hours of the school day actually designated for the study of English, teachers have a special obligation to see that this ultimate aim is furthered as effectively as possible.²


²California Advisory Committee for an English Language Framework, English Language Framework for California Public Schools (California State Department of Education, 1968), p. 3.
Another aspect of linguistics is thus distinguished. Linguistics is a method of teaching as well as a body of subject matter content.

... English should not be permitted to become merely ancillary to, or ... replaced by other subjects that may resemble, but do not adequately substitute for, the study of English itself. ... And since English is a unity, it is doubtful that it can be well taught in disconnected segments designed to give students proficiency in some limited area. ... Instructional time for English should be devoted primarily to subject matter that clearly belongs to the major components of English and to exercises that enhance the students' competence in using the language and comprehending and enjoying literature.

Good instruction in English requires constant awareness that at every level of the school curriculum and every stage of individual pupil development, instruction in language, literature, and composition should be made to interact.¹

"Effective language varies with circumstances; appropriateness depends on such factors as subject, context, purpose, and anticipated listeners or readers."² Since "children learn best when they understand the significance of what they are learning, when it means something to them, and when they care about it," Ruth Strickland suggests that "facts or concepts regarding language seem ... important for children to learn, not through contrived lessons and drills but in the process of dealing with language in many different ways under many different circumstances." The day-by-day work in any classroom abounds in opportunities for teachers to introduce and reinforce these concepts as they "call attention to such generalizations at a variety of points, so that children give them conscious attention and test their applicability in day-by-day school living."³

¹California Advisory Committee, pp. 3-4.


strive for a spiral curriculum with instruction which utilizes the inductive method, in which students make critical observations of new or familiar data, analyze them to find common elements, make generalizations, and verify and refine old ones through further analysis of structures in learning the language arts content in all three of its parts—literature, composition, and language.1

This chapter has barely touched on a few aspects included in the broad scope of linguistics. The voluminous amount of research and literature dealing with the topic of linguistics is far too great to be included in this thesis. In agreement with Roland Harris, the important issue now is "the rational use of research in the teaching of English." Remaining pages of this paper deal with an investigation of how linguistic research and knowledge is incorporated in textbooks for use in the elementary schools in Indiana.  

CHAPTER III
RESEARCH PROCEDURES FOR THE STUDY

The decision to replicate the study of the Lefcourt dissertation included the opportunity to utilize the score card as a foundation for the research. The questions and topics chosen had been validated by noted linguists. An extensive discussion of the validation process is included in Lefcourt's doctoral thesis. By sampling the content of the textbooks, the questions on the score card help determine the extent to which textbook series incorporate modern grammar—the concepts to be learned and the approaches to teaching.

The method of research for this project began with the selection of the series of Elementary language arts textbooks to be studied. From a list provided by the Curriculum Laboratory at Ball State University library, the following series were selected for study: Our Language Today, for grades 1-8; The Macmillan English Series, for grades 3-8; Ginn Elementary English Series, for grades 1-8; The Roberts English Series; A Linguistic Program, for grades 3-8; and English Is Our Language, for grades 2-6. All were included on the Indiana State Adopted List for 1968 and were classified by the publishers' catalogs as textbook series "based on linguistic principles."

Another series, the English for Meaning Series, for grades 1-6, was unavailable for examination at the time this research was done.

1Lefcourt, pp. 76-110.
although it was also included on the State Adopted list. It was classified as one of the "grammars which contain some linguistic elements." Another series, in the same classification is the Using Good English Series, for grades 1-6. This series was also included in the study since it appeared on the state adopted list.¹

Copies were made of the score card taken from the Leicourt thesis. Each book of each series was evaluated in terms of the eighty-eight question score card.² The series, as a whole, was evaluated by means of a modified scoring procedure. The data and notes for each book of one series were evaluated and the information was categorized and transferred to another score card which represented a summary sheet of the total series.

The most feasible method of scoring commensurate with available information and with the limited linguistic ability of the investigator seemed to be the following:

1. A linguistic concept listed on the score card but developed or mentioned only in the teachers' manuals of the series rated one point.

2. A linguistic concept not clearly stated or fully developed in the texts but which could nevertheless be implied rated one point. For example, the concept may have been included minimally in only one book of the series.

3. A clearly stated linguistic concept fully developed within the texts rated two points.

¹Curriculum Laboratory, A Bibliography of Textbooks Based on Linguistic Principles (Muncie: Ball State University, 1968).

²A copy of the score card is included in this thesis in Chapter IV, "Findings of the Study."
4. A score of zero indicates either the absence of the specific linguistic concept in a series or the rater's inability to identify the presence of the concept.

In many cases, the language-arts series included traditional concepts together with linguistic concepts. In this research project, the textbooks were checked for linguistic content. The presence of traditional material was not given consideration; it neither added to nor detracted from the score.
CHAPTER IV

RANKING OF THE STUDY

For ease in recording the data, the textbook series were listed in alphabetical order according to the name of the senior author. The tabulated data for each series is listed in codified form; the following assigned letters represent the corresponding series.


Maxwell, John, et al., Ginn Elementary English Series. Teachers ed. (Boston: Ginn and Co., 1967), 6 volumes .... B


The numerals which occur in the rating columns represent:

0, Absence of the concept or obscurely included

1, Concept included in the teachers manual only and/or minimally included within the textbooks

2, Concept fully developed within the textbooks

24
### Linguistic Score Card and Evaluation

#### Authorship

1. Does the authorship group include any outstanding linguistic scholars?  
   - A: 1  B: 1  C: 1  D: 2  E: 2  F: 1  

2. Have these authors published any linguistically-oriented professional materials outlining their philosophy of language or of language teaching?  
   - A: 2  B: 2  C: 2  D: 2  E: 2  F: 2  

#### Philosophy

3. Is there a stated philosophy of language teaching for the series?  
   - A: 2  B: 2  C: 2  D: 2  E: 2  F: 2  

4. Does the stated philosophy include any reference to linguistic science or research?  
   - A: 2  B: 2  C: 2  D: 2  E: 2  F: 2  

5. Does the content provided correspond with this statement or acknowledgement of linguistic research?  
   - A: 2  B: 2  C: 1  D: 2  E: 1  F: 1  

#### The Nature of Language

6. Is there a linguistically-oriented definition of language anywhere in the series?  
   - A: 2  B: 2  C: 1  D: 2  E: 1  F: 2  

7. Is a distinction made between oral and written language?  
   - A: 2  B: 2  C: 1  D: 2  E: 1  F: 2  

8. Is it made clear that all people have spoken language; not all have a written language?  
   - A: 1  B: 2  C: 1  D: 1  E: 1  F: 1  

9. Is speech acknowledged to be much older than written language?  
   - A: 2  B: 2  C: 2  D: 2  E: 2  F: 2  

10. Is the point made that children learn speech first?  
    - A: 1  B: 1  C: 2  D: 0  E: 1  F: 2  

11. Is it made clear that most language change takes place through speech?  
    - A: 1  B: 1  C: 0  D: 2  E: 1  F: 2  

12. Are writing systems described as representations of speech rather than representations of objects in the real world?  
    - A: 2  B: 2  C: 2  D: 2  E: 2  F: 2
13. Are languages portrayed as systems?

14. Do children learn that one language is not better than another, just different?

15. Do children learn that each language affords its users a means of expressing and communicating their reactions to all phases of their culture?

16. Are children taught that language is a social convention?

17. Are children taught that they are the only animals who talk?

18. Is it made clear that cut off from people children would never learn to speak at all?

19. Is it made clear that children learn the language of the community to which they are exposed, regardless of their racial or national origin?

20. Are children given some sense of the extraordinary nature of their accomplishment in learning English?

21. Are children taught that new words are constantly being added to language?

22. Are children taught that words become obsolete as their usefulness ends?

23. Is it made clear that standards of usage change?

24. Is the importance of purposeful choice among the resources of language stressed?

25. Is a distinction made between a sound or "phoneme" (unit of speech) and a letter or "character" (unit of writing)?

26. Is the phonemic concept implicit in the structural treatment?
27. Is it made clear that there are more phonemes than letters in the English language?

28. Is it made clear that there are more consonant phonemes than letter consonants?

29. Is it made clear that there are more vowel phonemes than letter vowels?

30. Are diphthongs defined as consisting of a vowel plus a glide?

31. Are inflective morphemes identified?

32. Are derivative morphemes identified?

33. Are the functions of the apostrophe taught? (the possessive, the contraction, and the plurals of nouns).

34. Is a distinction made between isolated words and words in the stream of speech?

35. Are examples of functional shift given?

36. Are words classified as either open or closed classes?

37. Are the parts of speech defined by the grammar itself?

38. Are parts of speech defined in terms of form?

39. Are nouns defined by form and position within sentence patterns?

40. Are verbs defined by form and position within sentence patterns?

41. Are adjectives defined by form and position within sentence patterns?

42. Are adverbs defined by form and position within sentence patterns?

43. Are function words defined?

44. Are determiners defined as patterns with nouns?

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45. Are pronouns identified as commonly functioning as noun substitutes  

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46. Is the overlapping of pronouns with determiners pointed out?  

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47. Is a preposition defined as a word patterning like "with" followed by a noun or noun equivalent?  

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48. Are auxiliaries defined as words patterning with verbs as in the construction "may sing"?  

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49. Is it made clear that some auxiliaries also occur as full verbs?  

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50. Are intensifiers defined as words that pattern like "very" with adjectives and adverbs?  

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51. Are conjunctions, sentence connectors, and subordinators distinguished by differences in patterning?  

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52. Are simple interrogators defined as signals of questions?  

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53. Are interrogative pronouns defined not only as signals of questions but also as functioning units within the sentence?  

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54. Are miscellaneous structure words identified?  

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55. Is a sentence defined and classified from a linguistically-oriented point of view?  

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56. Is "sentence in English" specified by the grammar?  

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57. Are sentences classified primarily as kernels and transforms?  

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58. Are sentence patterns taught?  

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59. Is it made clear that matters of juncture, stress, and pitch are an integral part of the English language?  

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60. Is it made clear that punctuation is used in part to take the place of information in speech?

61. Are marks of punctuation taught?

62. Is the use of capital letters taught?

63. Is the use of the hyphen taught?

64. Is grammar defined in terms of the forms and arrangement of linguistic units?

65. Is grammar defined as a device that generates or specifies all and only the sentences of a language?

66. Are the statements about language descriptive?

67. Is the attitude toward correctness linguistically-oriented?

68. Are the five major grammatical devices of English described?

69. Is a dialect described as the language spoken in a specific speech community?

70. Is it clear that these dialects are dependent upon such features as are, geography, education, occupation, social position, settlement history, and cultural spreading?

71. Is it made clear that people can belong to more than one speech community?

Dictionaries

72. Is lexical meaning distinguished from contextual meaning?

73. Is it made clear that the dictionary does not make law but rather reports usage?

74. Are children taught that dictionaries will provide grammatical designations?
75. Are children taught that dictionaries report several meanings for most words?

76. Are children taught that dictionaries often suggest the semantic histories of words?

77. Are children taught that dictionaries provide etymologies of words?

78. Are children taught that dictionaries provide pronunciation clues?

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Method of Linguistic Inquiry

80. Is it made clear that the scientific method is employed in the study of language?

81. Is linguistic terminology used?

82. Is the linguistic terminology used defined in a glossary?

83. Are "informants" defined and explained?

84. Is it clear that the result of linguistic inquiry may be history or the detection of system and the working out of an adequate explanation of the system?

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History of Language

85. Is the impossibility of discovering the origin of language discussed?

86. Are language families discussed?

87. Are the historical backgrounds of English discussed?

88. Is the development of English discussed?

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Tabulation of the Scores

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<tr>
<th>Textbook Series</th>
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<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
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<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>34</td>
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<tr>
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<td>83</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>82</td>
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<td>65</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Method of Linguistic Inquiry</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>History of Language</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>Total Points</td>
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<td>150</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>136</td>
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</table>

Discussion of the Research Data

Interpretation of the research results must be determined with careful consideration. Early in the evaluation process a problem of semantics became apparent. To the investigator, lacking extensive linguistic training, some of the questions were misleading and confusing. Perhaps a trained linguist would have had no difficulty discerning whether or not certain concepts were contained in the textbooks; however, to the investigator, some of the questions on the score card were so closely allied that evaluating the textbooks in terms of each question was extremely difficult.

Phraseology of some questions, the very words chosen to represent the linguistic concept, was confusing in many cases. Deciding whether a concept should be interpreted literally was a
major factor in determining some scores. For example, one question asks, "Are children taught that they are the only animals who talk?" Must the concept that people are animals be included in the textbooks in addition to the emphasis on the uniqueness of human speech?

Despite the problems of evaluation, certain general tendencies can be noted in the tabulated research data. An indication of strengths and weaknesses in the various areas may be derived.

The chart on which is recorded the various scores of the textbook series determined by the current investigator in terms of the questions on the linguistic score card, suggests some interesting trends.

1. The collective authorship group of language-arts textbooks now includes some linguists. Scholars who know about the English language, linguists, are, at last, sharing that knowledge in the textbooks of school children.

2. Basically, the textbook authors of all the series are consistent in the statement of philosophy. In varying degrees they share some acknowledgment of linguistic research.

3. There are great differences among textbook series concerning the nature of our language. A wide range of scores indicates a difference in philosophy and/or treatment of this area.

4. A range of scores indicates great differences among the various textbook series concerning the structure of English. Some utilize the theories of the structuralists while others utilize generative-transformational principles.

5. Differences in grammar orientation lead to differences in terminology. Different terms are applied by the authors of the various textbook series.
6. Some differences in content concerning information about dictionaries exist.


8. While the overall range of scoring for the history of language is large, five of the six textbook series scored within a much smaller range. This indicates some correlation among the content of the various series in this area.

9. None of the textbook series examined contain identical information.

10. None of the textbook series includes all eighty-eight of the linguistic concepts contained on the score card.

11. The total points scored by each of the textbook series seems to suggest three divisions of the series according to linguistic-orientation: (1) One series ranked low in linguistic content, (2) three textbook series ranked together with significantly high scores to indicate the incorporation of linguistic content, and (3) two series ranked significantly higher than the other four in linguistic content.

12. One textbook series ranked significantly lower than the others to warrant further investigation concerning its classification as a linguistically-oriented language-arts textbook.

Conclusions Derived from the Study

As a result of the research project, these answers are offered to the questions outlined in Chapter I of this paper:

1. To what extent is linguistic content incorporated in each
of the new textbook series?

If the maximum number of three points were awarded for each of the eighty-eight questions on the score card a total of 264 points would be achieved. Every textbook scored considerably lower than this. Nevertheless, the existing scores do indicate a hierarchy of linguistically-oriented textbooks. Using the charted figures, the high-scoring series seems to be about 50% linguistically-oriented, and the lowest, about 37%. The research also indicated that textbooks for the lower grade levels contain a smaller number of items discussed in less detail.

2. Is there some correlation between the content of all the series?

Yes, all the series incorporate some linguistic principles although in varying degrees. Generally, the research data shows that fundamental differences exist among the series in the areas of the nature of language, the structure of English, and the method of linguistic inquiry. The series also varied greatly in relation to concepts included in the textbook content concerning dictionaries and the history of language.

3. Have there been significant changes in textbook content since the last state adoption?

In contrast to the Lefcourt study which concluded that there was a low correlation between linguistic knowledge and textbook content, this research indicates a marked change. The current examination and evaluation of textbook series and linguistic content, utilizing the same score card, has indicated a much higher correlation than the original study.
4. Are linguistic concepts incorporated in the text for students or contained primarily in the teachers manual?

A conspicuous number of scores of two points indicates a basic establishment of linguistics in each series. Scores of one point, which occurred much more frequently in many cases, indicates a reliance on teachers as a source of linguistic concepts. It is the teacher who has access to the teacher's manuals in the textbooks, and it is the teacher's responsibility to make the linguistic applications where the linguistic concept is only implied.

5. Does the research data suggest any possible implications for the future incorporation of linguistics in elementary textbooks?

The relatively low number of scores of zero in the high-scoring textbook series indicates a great deal of progress in making the texts linguistically-oriented. If progress continues, future textbook series published by these companies will contain similar concepts developed to a greater extent.

Even the low-ranked textbooks have achieved important changes in subject matter content. Current textbooks are much more linguistically-oriented than formerly. If this trend continues, greater gains may appear in the incorporation of linguistics in future textbooks.

Implications Suggested By the Study

At the conclusion of her research, the investigator feels justified in suggesting the following implications about the study itself.

1. A trained linguist would be much better qualified to determine an accurate judgment of the amount and/or quality of
linguistic content incorporated in the textbooks. The ability to recognize linguistic concepts in the elementary language-arts textbooks is important to elementary teachers, but the ability to make decisions and judgments about particular concepts in context is much less acute in the untrained investigator. As most teachers are of this latter category, selections of textbooks for a school community must often be superficial.

2. Since so many linguistic concepts are only implied in the textbooks or contained in the teachers' manuals, linguistic education in language arts is dependent, to a great extent, upon the teacher. This implies that teacher-training institutions must include linguistically-oriented language arts courses in the curricular offerings for elementary teachers at both the graduate and undergraduate levels.

3. In compliance with current trends in education which utilize new approaches and methods of teaching, the language-arts program should utilize an inductive approach. Students should be encouraged and led in discovering facts about their language and the structured patterns in it, as well as in arriving at their own generalizations and definitions.

4. Since no textbook series incorporates all the linguistic concepts, a variety of textbooks and other linguistically-oriented materials should be used as supplementary background sources for language-arts learning.

5. While the textbook series have incorporated so much more linguistics in their subject matter content than formerly, there are still refinements to be made and additional linguistically-oriented ideas to be developed and incorporated within the next revisions of the language-arts textbooks.
6. To some extent, the effort to simplify the scoring procedure distorted the findings of the research data. The three-point scoring system does not reflect differences in the quality of development of linguistic concepts in the textbooks and/or the number of times the linguistic concept appears in the series.
SELECTED REFERENCES FOR ELEMENTARY TEACHERS

Articles


Suggestions and ideas are provided for the improvement of student writing through awareness of relationships between speech and writing. Emphasis is on sentence patterns.


The author suggests that concepts from structural linguistics can help bridge the gap between traditional grammar and modern approaches without discarding the traditional.


The entire issue consists of articles which indicate the scope of dictionary study from the elementary levels through senior high school.


The authors report their experiences in the incorporation of linguistics in a beginning reading program.


The author discusses linguistics in terms of inductive learning possibilities.


The author discusses some issues concerning the teaching of linguistics and incorporates concrete suggestions for teaching language arts effectively.
Books


The editor has compiled a great collection of articles written by linguistic scholars on a variety of topics related to language arts. Articles by Nelson N. Francis, George P. Faust, Harold B. Allen, Herbert Hackett, Sumner Ives, A. J. Walker, Archibald A. Hill, John B. Carroll, and Donald J. Lloyd are included.


The author includes general background information about linguistics and an excellent bibliography of references for other language arts materials.


The articles by noted linguistic scholars contained in this book offer an overview of some of the implications for linguistics in education.


The author discusses the historical backgrounds of English grammar, presents some of the new ideas about grammar, and relates grammar to other aspects of the language arts.


The author relates spelling to sound and maintains that regularity in spelling English phonemes should determine words used in beginning reading and spelling.


The wide scope of the book makes it a valuable source of linguistic knowledge. Many linguists have contributed their ideas to this publication.

The findings of this research which analyzed subjects' speech, have important implications for language arts teaching. This study spearheaded an extensive research project in Oakland, California of elementary children (K-6) of various socio-economic levels.


The book contains an introduction to linguistic geography, the "speech communities" of the United States. It is concerned with language change. A bibliography of dialect literature is also included.


The broad scope of the book incorporated in the wide range of topics makes it a good source of background knowledge in many areas of linguistically-oriented language arts.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Curriculum Laboratory. *A Bibliography of Textbooks Based on Linguistic Principles.* Muncie: Ball State University, 1967.


Textbooks


Miss Marcia Gevers  
50 Warwick Road  
Muncie, Indiana 47304

Dear Miss Gevers,

I should be very pleased to have you replicate my study as an honors thesis. I hope that the state adoption committee will be interested in your results. What series are you going to evaluate? There have been such great changes in series since 1963.

If you should encounter any difficulties in using the linguistic score card, I shall be happy to help any way I can. The transformational series now available has gone so much further than I could have imagined when the score card was devised.

Your letter was delayed in reaching me because I am only in the city two days a week this year. If you need to write again, please use the address below.

Good luck! Please give my best regards to Dr. Gale.

Sincerely,

Dr. Ann Shubert  
316 Wayne Avenue  
Hawley, Pennsylvania 18428