A Comparative Study of Two Methods of Teaching Grammar

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TWO METHODS
OF TEACHING GRAMMAR

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of Loyola University in Partial Fulfillment of
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Master of Arts

January
1961

by

Sister Jeanne d'Arc Barnes, C.S.J.
LIFE

Sister Jeanne d'Arc was born Patricia Athlyn Barnes on January 21, 1923, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

She graduated from St. Jude grammar school in 1936, from Holy Angels Academy in 1940, and received an A.B. degree from Marquette University in 1944 where she had majored in English.

Three years after graduating from Marquette, Sister entered the novitiate of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondolet in St. Louis where she remained until her profession in March, 1950 at which time she was assigned to St. Joseph Institute for the Deaf in University City, Missouri. During the summers she took courses in Psychology at the University of Southern California, St. Louis University, and Loyola University where she began her graduate studies in the summer of 1955.
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CHAPTER I

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

One could scarcely deny the importance of teaching grammar in grade school when educators today constantly deplore the lack of grammar achievement in their high school and college students. There is frequent discussion in educational circles concerning pro's and con's of the importance of teaching formal grammar in grade school, of what is to be taught, and at what level. Theoretically the question seems to remain unanswered, while in practice one finds that formal grammar is taught in the grade school, that definite principles are taught, at specified times. The recognition of this policy is evidenced by the fact that such material is clearly outlined in teachers' manuals which accompany the standard texts.

At present, however, our concern lies, not in the easily available content and level of grammar teaching, but in the method. How does one teach grammar? How does one best teach grammar? How does one present the meaning of the terms noun, verb, phrase, clause? Is it possible to present this material in such a way that a quick and more lasting learning would be effected?
Questions such as these constitute the heart of the grammar problem which exists in our high schools and colleges today. In answering these questions we find ourselves considering the basic components of any learning situation, viz., the material, the teacher, and the learner.

What about the material? This perhaps is the most definite and clearly defined aspect of a learning situation, and the one most readily available in the form of manuals and texts. It is the one, however, with which we are not here too greatly concerned. Rather do we stress the role of the teacher in the learning situation. What part, then, does she play?

It hardly seems possible to overestimate the teacher's contribution to a learning situation for she controls it; she guides the learning by motivating the learner, providing an appropriate situation, teaching interpretive skills, and by providing suitable consequences. How does she do this?

How does she motivate the learner? She familiarizes herself with the needs of her pupils; she helps them to clarify and redefine goals previously formulated and to establish new goals more in keeping with the students' ability and past achievement; and she orientates her material and method to these goals.

How does the teacher provide an appropriate situation? By structuring the situation in such a way that it constitutes a problem geared
to the abilities and interests of the students, the solution of which will lie in distinct cues that have been patterned and organized so existing relationships among them is perceived. This relationship of the cues will influence the students' apprehension of the situation and their response to it. Even when the response is made to a particular detail of the situation, it is always made to the detail in relation to other details.

Students often cannot pay attention because they do not know what to pay attention to; thus cues are often missed. To remedy this the teacher must teach skills in the interpretation of cues in the learning situation. Skills in interpretation depend upon the three processes of differentiation, integration, and symbolization. These must be taught, for the more adequate the interpretation, the more adequate the response and the more adequate the learning.

In considering the response and the learning, we focus our attention on the learner, the third basic component of the learning situation. His response to the learning situation will vary not only according to his interpretation of it but also according to its consequences to himself. Has he achieved a goal? Has he a feeling of success? Have his needs been satisfied? His expectations confirmed? If the teacher has provided affirmative answers to these questions, she has provided suitable consequences which in many respects is the key to the art of teaching.
So how does one teach grammar? How does one set up a good learning situation in grammar? In general by teaching the material presented and by using the procedure indicated in the teacher's manual that accompanies the standard text being used. More specifically, by incorporating into this general method ways and devices that constitute distinct appropriate cues, well-organized and well-patterned, ways and devices that one has found through experience to be more apt to effect successful teaching.

What are these devices? These methods? Known only to the originators they are seldom or never used by others because they do not appear in the literature and thus it is that methodology in grammar teaching remains for the most part what and when rather than how.

Does this picture of grammar teaching vary in any way? We agree with Hoyt (4), who says, "Teaching grammar as part of English instruction in elementary and high school has not changed greatly in the last ten years and shows no sign at the moment of rapid change in the years immediately ahead."

This, then, gives us some idea of what is going on in the teaching of grammar. In the present study we ask, "But how does one best teach grammar? Can it be done with emphasis on the how? By carefully structuring the learning situation as to content and method?" In this way children to whom structuring is essential for any learning will learn, and children to whom structuring is not essential for learning will learn more and faster.
With these questions and considerations in mind, then, we continue our study with a review of the literature related to it.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

As far back in the literature as 1854, we find Mulligan's "Exposition of the Grammatical Structure of the English Language - an Improved Method of Teaching Grammar". (7) He states that his is a plan of arrangement entirely different from that of preceding grammarians.

"Grammar," he says, "lays the foundation for all sound logic and all true eloquence. It has the closest connection with correct thinking." Then he proceeds to relate logic to grammar.

He uses logic as an instrument minutely to analyze and clearly to define each part of speech and syntax. Having carefully devised definitions in this manner, Mulligan then uses his evolved definitions as criteria or principles with which to determine parts of speech and syntax.

In advocating this considerably involved and complicated process, he produces a scholarly, philosophic analysis of grammar, far beyond the comprehension of many a teacher -- much less a pupil -- the mastery of which would take a scholar no less penetrating than himself. No doubt this plan of arrangement is different, but it is also difficult, and not too practical for purposes of teaching grammar in elementary or junior high school. It is
not geared to the abilities and interests of the pupils, nor is it clearly related to immediate needs; and thus we might see motivation adversely affected.

Almost seventy-five years later, in 1925, Klapper's *Teaching English in Elementary and Junior High Schools* (5) was published. Klapper explains that although the usual approach in most teaching is through the analytic-synthetic method, in which the whole is broken down into parts and then analyzed, this does not seem to be true of grammar teaching. In grammar teaching, he maintains, the approach becomes synthetic-analytic and "logical, not psychological." This is a reversal of the usual method of teaching, and a procedure of which Klapper does not approve. Initially, in defense of his position, he states:

> If we are to make grammar rational and necessary in the eyes of the child, we must begin with the part of grammar which is related to the child's needs. The point of contact is the sentence. Since the child strives constantly to express thought, the sentence, the unit of thought expression, must be mastered first.

The application of this dictum is obvious enough. Sentence structure must be emphasized before parts of speech are taught. Sentences in great number should introduce lessons on participles, prepositions, and conjunctions, or any specific technical element of grammar. In the course of an analysis of the structure of these sentences and the function of all their elements, the new lesson should be evolved. (5)

On this point the writer of the present study is in perfect agreement with
Klapper, and would venture to add that presenting parts of speech through analysis of sentences is logical as well as psychological, and is, therefore, the best possible combination of method. It is psychological in that the sentence is related to the child's needs, as Klapper explained; it is logical in that sentences are basic to understanding parts of speech which get their meaning from their functions in sentences and which simply cannot exist, as parts of speech, apart from sentences.

Having clarified his concepts on his preference for the analytic-synthetic approach to grammar teaching, Klapper continues his discussion on method by introducing a question which follows quite logically in the process of refining this question of method, viz., should the method be inductive or deductive?

He observes the state of affairs in grammar teaching and eventually concludes that the current method is deductive. Again he takes issue. He feels that using one method is an extreme, that extremes are to be avoided, and therefore that one method is not to be adopted to the exclusion of the other. Of the wisdom of this policy there can be no doubt, and needless to say, it should not be limited to grammar teaching.

Following this policy out to its logical conclusion, he arrives at the idea that both methods should be used. This, in turn, leads his concern to
when each method should be used.

He resolves this problem by recommending that an intensely inductive procedure be followed in those grades which introduce formal grammar, and that the deductive procedure, which works out nicely when textbooks are used, be adopted in the upper grades.

Using the inductive procedure in beginning grammar learning, will then, according to Klapper, result in the child's defining parts of speech because of his own activity in which he has seen the function of the elements and has, therefore, arrived at a definition which is neither a stereotyped nor a parrot-like repetition of a scientifically accurate definition. It will be a definition which the child understands and is therefore able to use, to apply. Fine, but is this not using a synthetic-analytic approach? One in which the parts are synthesized into the whole? We think it is.

The final step and the one in which the concepts the child has acquired are clarified, is then, application. It begins when the child is able to use the definition. It is complete only when the child has had two types of exercises; analytic, in which sentences doubtful of comprehension are analyzed, and synthetic, in which context is originated which shows the use of the parts of speech.

In summarizing Klapper's instructions on methodology, we might
associate them with Gestalt concepts in which the whole is seen as a unit and the parts are seen in relation to the whole. Klapper starts with the sentences as a unit, breaks it down into parts which are meaningful only insofar as they are related to the sentence, the unit; then he analyzes the parts as they function in the sentence, arrives at the meaning of parts of speech, defines them, and finally applies them by putting them back into a context of similar but not identical sentence construction.

Klapper's book is certainly praiseworthy as it is well-organized and well-written. He seems to have an insight and understanding of methodology that must have resulted from his setting up well-structured learning situations, in which the cues were readily interpreted, the consequences satisfying, and the learner well able to solve the problem. He seems to have an insight that must have resulted from successful teaching experience. His ideas are applicable not only to grammar teaching but to all teaching and are well worth trying.

In 1953 Milde wrote an article entitled Grammatical Complements in Seventeen Words (6). It is an explanation of a teaching device found to be very useful in teaching concepts of grammatical complements. It consists of three sentences totaling seventeen words. These are used as patterns or criteria against which one matches new constructions. It is
an excellent method of teaching in that the criteria are concrete and therefore easier to understand and use as a guide than would be a definition which is abstract and not always within the reach of the poor student. In this learning situation, then, Milde provides definite distinct cues which in turn provide adequate interpretation, response, and learning.

It was more than thirty years after Klapper's work was published before another text on method in grammar appeared. This was Developing Language Skills, by Potts and Nichols (8), published in 1956. According to the authors, this book of exercises and accompanying explanations was composed and arranged with two major objectives in mind, viz., 1) to provide the sequential presentation of grammar knowledge in a manner which would make that knowledge more easily understood, and 2) to provide exercises in which the knowledge of each newly acquired grammatical term or construction will be used in such a way that the knowledge is of real value in checking and explaining the accuracy of written or spoken language.

"To provide sequential presentation" seems to be a point upon which teachers cognizant of method would agree; and "easily understood", implying difficulty in grammar learning, is certainly a desired goal in any classroom.

At this point we detour, and with the philosopher we ask, "Why? Why is there difficulty in grammar learning?" We study the problem and realize that the answer could lie in any one of the factors that influence
learning, general factors common to all learning and other specific factors completely individual.

Quite obviously it is neither practical nor pertinent to repeat at this point all the factors which influence learning. Nor is it even our aim to discuss the more general ones in detail. Our purpose here is rather to simply touch upon the more general ones and put them in their proper perspective in order that we may thus arrive at the idea of how basic and essential they are to all learning and to any methodology.

Most common in existence but least common in definable characteristics are the factors of the children and the teachers. They vary to the extent that there is variation in God's universe; no two are just alike. Because of this they resolve into individual problems which cannot be coped with in this study.

A factor which presents no great problem and one on which a wealth of literature is available is material to be taught and at what level. With few exceptions most texts present the same material for each grade.

Method, the fourth factor mentioned, is the one with which we are here concerned. It is a tremendously powerful factor whose influence on learning is so great that it can hardly be estimated.

In Mulligan's study, method was a detailed analysis of material
which effected an involved method; in Klapper's book it was also a detailed analysis of material which revolved around a treatment of method in general; in Potts' and Nichols' book it was a general discussion, an excellent one, on method, with emphasis on these seven steps:

1) Grammar must be taught in sequential steps.
2) It must be purposeful in that it must be related to the pupil's daily use of language.
3) It requires effective teaching.
4) A greater number of examples than can be provided in such a text as this are usually needed, for the teaching lessons develop a new topic.
5) The teacher must decide whether further drill on a particular topic is needed, or whether the pupils are ready to proceed to the next one.
6) Frequent review and drill lessons are essential in the development of any skill.
7) Review exercises are provided here for the convenience of the teacher. Before they are assigned, review lessons are very necessary. (3)

There seems to be unanimous agreement on "sequential steps". "Purposeful" means having a goal, and having a goal expedites all learning for it provides motivation. Then, too, relating the goal to the child's needs gives the psychological approach previously mentioned. "Effective teaching" is an obvious step, and in regard to "examples, drill, and review," the realization that they are a sine qua non of any teaching comes with experience.

We see, then, that these seven steps simple constitute good pedagogy, set up a good learning situation, and could be profitably used by
the experienced as well as the inexperienced teacher, the one for new ideas, the other for necessary ones.

Continuing our review of related literature, we meet a very handy device for grammar teaching utilized by the Sisters of Notre Dame of Worcester, Massachusetts (2). Although the article in which it is found does not have explicit directions as to its use, the diagram pictured below seems to have been effective in successful grammar teaching. The question forms listed in the diagram are utilized in the method presented in this study and will be treated in more detail in the appendix.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Predicate</th>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Predicate Noun</th>
<th>Predicate Adjective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who?</td>
<td>verb</td>
<td>Whom?</td>
<td>Who?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What?</td>
<td>(noun or pronoun)</td>
<td>What?</td>
<td>(noun or pronoun)</td>
<td>(noun or adjective)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whose</td>
<td>how</td>
<td>of whom-what</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>what</td>
<td>when</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>which</td>
<td>where</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>what kind</td>
<td>why</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>how many</td>
<td>how long</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>how far</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>how often</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>by whom-what</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to whom-what</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>for whom-what</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A fairly recent book, published in 1958, is Wolfe's Creative Ways to Teach English (9). It has by far the most explicit instruction of method that we have encountered in the literature thus far. Interesting to note is
one of the introductory comments, "Unless a weak student has one remarkable, gifted teacher in one of his classes from the sixth grade through the tenth, he is likely not to learn grammar at all despite parts of five years he will have spent on it before graduating from high school." Here again we meet the idea of difficulty in grammar learning, and the apparent lack of skill in methodology in grammar teaching.

One of Wolfe's creative ways of teaching grammar is to make it personal, thereby relating it to the child's needs and providing suitable consequences. Wolfe advises when teaching the meaning of the word *noun* to tell the students to:

1) Write the name of a person you know well.
2) Write the name of a town or city you like.
3) Touch the sleeve of your shirt or dress. Write a noun that names a part of the clothes you are wearing today.
4) Write the noun *home*. Now write three nouns that name things you saw at home this morning.
5) Touch something on or near your desk. Write the name of something you have touched.

And the best way to teach the meaning of the word *verb* is to question students to supply several missing verbs for sentences. Another way is to use a verb finder which means to use *I, you, he, or it* before the word you are checking. If the combination makes a sensible sentence, the word can be a verb. Both of these are useful, practical devices which should prove very helpful in teaching the meaning of the word *verb*. (9)

In this exposition of methodology the first steps in teaching the
meaning of the word adjective are similar to the first steps in teaching the
meaning of the word adverb. Break down the meaning of the definitions.
In doing this notice that adjectives and adverbs answer certain question
forms.

Because Wolfe's section on the teaching of adjectives and adverbs
is similar to the teaching device used by the Sisters of Notre Dame in
Massachusetts, and also to the method explained in the appendix of this
study, we shall not consider it further.

In the teaching of the meaning of the word, pronoun, Wolfe's
concern is limited primarily to error in case, which he corrects by drilling
a compound construction in which a noun and a pronoun are combined as
objects of the preposition. Thus: Mary and him. John and me.

Prepositions, according to Wolfe, are to be acted out as in the
following sentences:

Mary walked into the room.
Susan walked across the room.
John walked around the teacher's desk.
Paul walked toward his own desk. (9)

Further work on prepositions would involve listing common prepositions
and diagramming prepositional phrases.

Although Wolfe apparently uses different methods in his approach
to the teaching of the meaning of the various parts of speech, we find, upon
closer scrutiny, a basic unity underlying all his clearly specified and carefully structured procedures. In each instance many examples are given and from these examples the student eventually gets the feel of a particular part of speech and is then able to recognize it, if not always to define it.

This book should prove particularly helpful to new teachers, in that the instructions of method are so carefully structured and therefore enable one to proceed step by step with method as well as with material; it should also prove helpful for experienced teachers who continue to look for new ideas and ways in which to improve their teaching.

With the summary of Wolfe's book, we conclude the review of the literature related to methodology in grammar teaching, the topic of this present study.
CHAPTER III

EXPERIMENTAL PROCEDURE

In testing the proposed null hypothesis that there is no difference in the grammar achievement between children who have been taught by the method outlined in a standard text and children who have been taught by the method devised by the present writer, three classes were selected. These classes had been equated according to the grade level, mean IG, and socio-economic background. They were seventh graders of comparable intelligence from neighboring schools of a rather high socio-economic status.

In the study the scores of two of the three classes were combined to form one control group; the other class became the experimental group. The two teachers of classes in the control group had thirty-five years experience in teaching; the teacher of the experimental group had twelve years of teaching experience. Because it was impossible to find classes with all these factors equated, classes were chosen in which all the facts were equated except that of teacher experience.

Both groups were tested by the present writer in January. They
were given the California Language Achievement Test, Form G. At the time that the children in both groups were tested, they were told that they would participate in a study in which the grammar achievement of the groups would be compared. This, we felt, would provide motivation.

From January to June each of the three teachers taught grammar three days a week, twenty-five minutes a day. During the experiment this totaled three lessons.

The only instructions given to the teachers in the control group were to be exact about the time and to teach the material presented in the text for that period of time during the school year. The teacher in the experimental group taught the same material but did not use the text in any way except as a guide as to what to teach. She was instructed each week during the experiment about the method explained in the appendix of this study and was given lesson plans by the writer of the present study.

In June the three classes were retested by the present writer with an alternate form of the California Test, Form Z.

In order to check the reliability of the tests, a correlation study was done on the test and retest scores. For the experimental group the coefficient of correlation was found to be +.84 with a standard error of ±.04;
for the control group the coefficient of correlation was found to be +.73 with a standard error of ± .05. This increased the power of the tests because a reasonably high positive correlation reduces the standard error of the difference of the means.

The mean, standard deviation, and the standard error of the mean of the January tests and the June retests were computed for both groups. To determine the exact achievement of each group as well as which one obtained the greater, the difference of the means and the standard error of the difference were computed from these data.

The final procedure was to compute the net difference in gain with the standard error of this difference.
CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF STATISTICS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

The statistical procedure in the preceding chapter is presented in greater detail in this chapter. The first step in the statistical procedure was the computation of the intellectual level of the experimental and control samples according to the results of their performance on the Kuhlmann-Anderson Test, Form G.

TABLE I

TEST SCORES ON KUHLMANN-ANDERSON INTELLIGENCE TEST, FORM G,
USED AS A BASIS FOR EQUATING GROUPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Experimental N=43</th>
<th>Control N=104</th>
<th>Difference in the means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>114.20</td>
<td>113.97</td>
<td>.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>10.26</td>
<td>10.15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SE</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.R.</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>is insignificant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

21
From these data which yielded a critical ratio of .12, we feel safe in assuming that there is no significant difference in intelligence between the experimental and control groups, and therefore, that the groups are adequately matched.

Following this a correlation study was done on the test and retest of both groups. The coefficient of correlation for each group showed high positive correlation with a standard error that was negligible. We therefore assume with a high degree of confidence that the test and retest tapped the same material and therefore may be used in the respective gains. The results are summarized below.

**TABLE II**

**COEFFICIENTS OF CORRELATION OF THE TEST AND RETEST FOR THE EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experimental</th>
<th>Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>r</td>
<td>.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SE</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The next statistical procedure was to compute the mean, standard deviation, and the standard error of the mean of the scores of each group on the California Language Test which had been administered in January and June.

From this we see that the mean of the retest in the experimental group yielded a gain of only one point with an insignificant critical ratio, while the mean of the retest in the control group yielded a gain of 4.31 points with a highly significant critical ratio.

TABLE III

CALIFORNIA TEST SCORES OF EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS AT THE BEGINNING AND END OF THE STUDY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experimental Group</th>
<th>Control Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Test: M 84.00</td>
<td>Test: M 78.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retest: M 85.00</td>
<td>Retest: M 82.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gain or difference of the means: 1.00</td>
<td>Gain or difference of the means: 4.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD: 8.82</td>
<td>SD: 9.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SE: 1.26</td>
<td>SE: .92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SE: 1.3</td>
<td>SE: .64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.R. = .77</td>
<td>C.R. = 6.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Computing the net difference in gain of the means of the experimental and control groups was the final statistical procedure. The control group gained 3.31 points more than the experimental group. This gain was significant at the one per cent level of confidence. The results are listed below.

**TABLE IV**

**DIFFERENCES IN MEANS ON THE TEST AND RETEST**

**FOR EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL GROUPS**

**PLUS THE NET GAIN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Experimental</th>
<th>Control</th>
<th>Net difference in gain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DM</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>4.31</td>
<td>3.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEDM</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEDD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C.R.=2.28</td>
<td>P=.01</td>
<td>1.45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The foregoing table indicates clearly that under the conditions of this experiment, the null hypothesis has to be rejected. The findings, contrary to the writer's expectations, show that greater progress was made by the control group than by the experimental one. While one might speculate as to the reason for this unexpected result, it is impossible to pinpoint the factor or
factors which account for it.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Three classes of seventh graders, equated for intelligence and socio-economic background, were divided into a control group of 104 children, and an experimental group of 43 children. The control group's progress in grammar achievement was measured against that of the experimental group. The experimental group had been taught parts of speech and syntax according to a method devised by the present writer, while the control group had been taught parts of speech and syntax by the method outlined in a standard text in use in those schools.

Both groups were given the California Language Achievement Test in January and in June. The mean was computed for each group in January and for each group in June, and from this the difference of the means in January and June for the experimental group and the difference of the means in January and June for the control group was computed.

A gain of only one point was achieved by the experimental group while a 4.31 gain was achieved by the control group. The entire statistical
procedure led us to reject at a high level of confidence the null hypothesis that there is no difference in the grammar achievement of children who have been taught parts of speech and syntax by a system devised by the present writer and the children who have been taught parts of speech and syntax by a method outlined in a standard text.


APPENDIX I

It was at St. Joseph Institute for the Deaf in University City, Missouri, that the method of grammar explained in the study was developed. However, it was developed primarily as a method of language teaching; the grammar was simply a small part of the language. Papers were presented on this method as a method of teaching language, prior to the time that the experimental work was done on the grammar for this thesis. The papers were given for the American Speech and Hearing Association, for the Ohio Hearing and Speech Association in 1958, for the Kansas Hearing and Speech Association in 1958, for the Illinois Chapter of Delta Sigma Rho, Honorary Speech Fraternity, in 1959, and for the Indiana Hearing and Speech Association in 1960. The original paper was published in the Volta Review, February, 1958.
APPENDIX II

EXPLANATION OF THE METHOD USED IN THE EXPERIMENT

The method used in this study teaches recognition of the eight parts of speech, verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections; the three verbals, infinitives, participles, and gerunds; the kinds of sentences according to use, imperative, interrogative, declarative, and exclamatory; the kinds of sentences according to form, simple, complex, and compound.

Initially the teacher presents a device known as the key, introduced by Fitzgerald (3) as a way of teaching language to deaf children. Fitzgerald, however, never used the key in teaching grammar, nor did she use it as extensively as it is used in the method here presented. The key is a method whereby all newly learned words are categorized according to question forms. Thus:

What is that? a pencil Pencil, then, is a what word.
Who is that? my mother Mother, then, is a who word.
Where is that? downstairs Downstairs, then, is a where word.
When is that? tomorrow Tomorrow, then, is a when word.

Categorizing words according to the key is an easily learned system and one most necessary and basic to this particular grammar method, for the key becomes associated with certain parts of speech. Thus:

A who word is a noun or pronoun.

A whom word is a noun or pronoun.

A what word is a noun or pronoun.

A what kind of, what color, and how many is an adjective.

A where is an adverb of place, a when is an adverb of time, and a how is an adverb of manner.

A why is an adverb.

After the class has been introduced to the key, it is introduced to many examples of imperative sentences of one basic pattern, viz., verb, what.

Make a cake Sweep the kitchen. Make an appointment.

Open the window. Pass the sugar. Write a sentence.

Check the spelling. Take a picture. Take a nap.

Verb, what is an imperative sentence; the parts of speech are verb, article, noun; the subject if you understood, the predicate is the verb, and the direct object is what. The verb is transitive, active voice.
Instructions are given for diagramming in a rote manner in order that the following of them becomes rote and automatic. Thus:

Draw the line and break it. 

Put in the verb. 

Put a small line after the verb. 

Fill in the subject. 

Put in the direct object. 

Read the top line of the diagram. It should give the general idea of the sentence. 

Start from the beginning of the sentence and put in the modifiers. 

After this has been mastered, the class proceeds very quickly to another example of this basic pattern which teaches an adjective. This the child learns to recognize through its position in the sentence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb</th>
<th>what</th>
<th>Sharpen is a verb, pencil is a noun, and your is an adjective.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sharpen</td>
<td>your pencil.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb</th>
<th>what</th>
<th>Open is a verb, window is a noun, front is an adjective, and the is an article.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>the front window.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
verb what
See the big, black car. See is a verb, car is a noun,
black is an adjective, big is an adjective, and the is an article.

The adjective precedes the noun. When the what construction has
been underlined, the last word is considered first. It is a noun. Working
backwards then, we have noun, adjective, or noun, adjective, article, or
noun, adjective, adjective, article.

Verb, what can also be extended to teach adverbs. Then we have:
verb what how
Open the door quickly.
verb what how
Mail the letter now.

Verb, where is the second basic pattern in the imperative sentences.
In these sentences the where is an adverb phrase. Thus:
Go to the store. Go to school. Go to Marshall Fields.
Go to the movie. Go into the living room. Go to California.

The first word in the phrase, in the where construction is a preposition;
therefore to is a preposition. The last word in a where construction is a noun;
therefore store is a noun, movie is a noun.

As knowledge of this device grows, some children will realize that
without the preposition the construction in a what construction and the last
word in a what construction is a noun, i.e., to my house is where, but my
house is what.
The parts of speech in this pattern are verb, preposition, article, noun, or verb, preposition, adjective, noun. The syntax is subject understood, predicate, phrase with the last word being the object of the preposition. The verb is intransitive, active.

Verb, what, where introduces pronouns.

Put it on the table. Put it in the attic. Put it away.

This is an imperative sentence; we have verb, pronoun, preposition, article, noun. We have subject understood, predicate, direct object, phrase with the last word being the object of the preposition, or with the last word being an adverb. The verb is transitive, active.

It is a good idea to use this particular pattern to teach set and lay which can be substituted for put. This avoids much of the confusion associated with these particular verbs.

At this point a distinction between an adverb and a preposition is carefully brought out. If where is alone, it is an adverb; if it is a phrase, it is an adverb phrase with no adverb in the phrase. The first word in the phrase is a preposition. For example:

Put it on your desk. On your desk is where; it is an adverb phrase. On is a preposition.

Put it on. On is where; it is alone; therefore it is an adverb.
Another contribution of this particular pattern, i.e., verb, what, where is that it teaches an easy way to distinguish between there, the adverb, and there, the expletive.

Verb what where
There is a pencil on the table. The parts of speech are expletive, verb, article, noun, preposition, article, noun.

Verb what where
Put it there. The parts of speech are verb, pronoun, adverb, because if there means where, it is an adverb.

Verb, whom is another basic pattern in an imperative sentence; this is used to introduce the objective case. For example:

Help Mother. Show Mary. Ask her.

Be careful is verb, adjective and the fourth basic pattern exemplified in an imperative sentence.

Be polite. Be obedient. Be thoughtful.
Be courteous. Be patient. Be considerate.

This pattern introduces verbs of being and predicate adjectives. Later it will include predicate nouns and pronouns. It is an imperative sentence.
The parts of speech are verb, adjective; the syntax is subject understood,
predicate, predicate adjective. The verb is intransitive, linking.

Indirect objects are introduced with the pattern, verb, whom, what. Thus:

Hand me a pencil. Give me some chalk. Show me your new coat.

We have verb, pronoun, article, noun; we have subject understood, predicate, indirect object, direct object. Both objects are in the objective case.

If the pattern is verb, what, the syntax is subject understood, predicate, direct object; if the pattern is verb, whom, the syntax is subject understood, predicate, direct object; only if the pattern is verb, whom, what is the syntax subject understood, predicate, indirect object, direct object. This should be stressed after the children have had all three patterns here concerned.

The pattern for the objective complement is verb, what, adjective. In the adjective construction any adjective key could be used. Examples of this are:

Paint the boat red. Make the table round.

The most simple and often the most difficult to identify is the pattern, verb. This is also an imperative sentence with the subject
understood and the predicate is the verb.

We have thus far discussed all the parts of speech except the interjection which presents no learning problem. We have also listed basic patterns as illustrated in imperative sentences, basic patterns through which the parts of speech are to be taught. Our next consideration will be the verbals, viz., infinitives, participles, and gerunds without which consideration no method on grammar teaching would be complete.

An infinitive is to plus the verb, or, in this method, to plus the basic pattern. An infinitive can be used as a noun, an adjective, or an adverb; therefore its key could be what, what kind of, or why, depending upon its use in the sentence.

The infinitive plus the basic pattern is pictured like this:

\[\text{to } \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\]

This construction illustrates very nicely the importance of the sentence in deciding what part of speech a word or construction is. Thus:

why
Mary went downtown to meet her friends for lunch.

what kind of
The Fatima Story is a movie to recommend.

what
I like to swim in the ocean.
To write an interesting book report is difficult.

Notice where the basic patterns are. Notice, too, that the sections of the sentence that duplicate a basic pattern diagram exactly the same as an imperative sentence except the for the subject. Notice, also, that the syntax of the infinitive gives no problem here.

A participle is a verb used as an adjective. If a participle is a single word, it precedes the noun, as does an adjective; if, however, it is a participial phrase, it will follow the noun. The key will be a key for an adjective, what kind of.

I saw a falling star. In the what construction, working backwards, we have noun, adjective, article. In this instance the adjective looks like a verb. It is a verb used as an adjective; it is a participle.

I read an interesting book. This is a participial phrase; the participle is a present one.

I saw a boy climbing the fence. This is also a participial phrase; the participle is past.
Present and past participles are not introduced at the same time.

A gerund is a verb used as a noun; therefore the key for a gerund is what. The syntax will be the syntax of a noun; therefore it could be the subject, the predicate complement, the direct object, or the object of the preposition.

what
Swimming is fun. Swimming is a verb used as a noun; it is a gerund; its syntax is the subject.

what
I like sailing a boat. What is the direct object; therefore sailing is a gerund used as the direct object.

about what
Mary forgot about doing her homework. Here the gerund is the object of the preposition.

In addition to being imperative sentences and providing a pattern for verbals, the basic patterns are also core constructions for the other three kinds of sentences according to use, viz., declarative, interrogative, and exclamatory. For example:

Interrogative sentences:
Shall I _________? These can be used with any tense or any subject.
Did you _________?
Declarative sentences:

Mary will ___________. This is a good device for
She did not ___________. correcting incorrect functional
Paul does not ___________. grammar.

Exclamatory sentences:

How wonderful to ___________!

What a delightful experience it was to ___________!

All the sentences listed above have been simple sentences according to form; they varied only according to use.

Form means shape, or we could say, form means what the diagram looks like. If the diagram has only one horizontal line with a break to separate the subject and the predicate, it is a simple sentence according to form. Thus:

_________________________

If a sentence has more than one horizontal line it could be a complex or a compound sentence. It is a compound sentence if it is two simple sentences connected by and or but. Thus:

_________________________

and

_________________________
It is a complex sentence if it is one sentence with a clause which modifies it. As a modifier of the sentence, it will assume a key of a modifier. Therefore, it could be when, where, how, why and be an adverbial clause and it could be what kind of and be an adjective clause and it could be what and be a noun clause. For example:

when who verb what
When I go to the store, I will buy some paper.

what verb where
A harbor is where ships anchor best.

who verb what how
Mary can play baseball as well as Susan can.

who verb verb what why
Mary did not finish her homework because she was sick.

who what kind of verb who
The boy whom you saw climbing the fence was Joe Smith.

what what kind of verb how what kind of
The watch that my mother gave me is very beautiful.

who verb verb what
I did not know that John Foster Dulles had a son who was a priest.

what verb what to whom
That we will have a movie tomorrow is news to me.

In complex sentences the connectives are not conjunctions because the connectives many times serve a dual purpose of a function in the clause plus a function of a connective. Therefore the words that introduce adverb
clauses are a combination of an adverb and a conjunction and are called conjunctive adverbs. The same word, in introducing an adjective clause would be called a relative adverb. A word that functions as a pronoun and a conjunction is called a relative pronoun and is the connective in an adjective clause. The same word, when it introduces a noun clause, is simply an introductory word. Marking the key clarifies all these connectives quite nicely.

Any one of the compound or complex sentences could be imperative, declarative, interrogative, or exclamatory. However, seldom is an exclamatory sentence a complex or compound sentence; it is usually simple.

This concludes the outline of the method utilized by the teacher in the experimental group of this study. In the outline we have presented the procedure in detail and given an outline of the material that is to be taught with this procedure. This study is intended merely as an introduction to this method; to exhaust its potential would require more than the few pages we have devoted to it here. However, it has been presented in the hope that those who read it will try it, and in trying it will have success which will encourage them to continue with it. In continuing with it we feel sure that they will find opening to them many new vistas on the horizon of grammar teaching.
The thesis submitted by Sister Jeanne d'Arc Barnes, C.S.J. has been read and approved by a board of three members of the Department of Psychology.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content, form, and mechanical accuracy.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts.

January 20, 1961

[Signature of Adviser]