A Comparative Study of the Oral Language of Students in Basal-Based and Whole Language Kindergartens.

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A comparative study of the oral language of students in basal-based and whole language kindergartens

Benedict, Joan H. Lucille, Ph.D.
The Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical Col., 1994
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE
ORAL LANGUAGE OF STUDENTS
IN BASAL-BASED AND WHOLE LANGUAGE KINDERGARTENS

A Dissertation

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in

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by

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ABSTRACT

Concern has existed for several years over the classroom practices relating to the "whole language" approach as opposed to the "basal-based" approach relative to literacy development, especially with respect to the appropriateness of each method for use with minority and lower socioeconomic groups of children entering kindergarten. This study describes the oral language of both African American and European American kindergarten children from low and middle socioeconomic status families who are attending public school kindergartens, one using whole language and one a basal-based approach.

The language during centertime of seventeen children from these two classrooms was audiotaped using wireless microphones over a period of six weeks in the spring of the school term. Qualitative research methodologies following techniques for both participant and nonparticipant observations were implemented. Transcriptions were used to analyze the language according to the functions (Halliday, 1973), strategies (Tough, 1983), the Situational, Discourse, Semantic Model (Norris & Hoffman, 1993), and other recognized measures. Data analyses are presented in both descriptive and tabular form.

Oral language of all groups classified was found to be in accord with the expectations of analytical models; virtually all the children studied were expressing
themselves at the anticipated levels for their age. Even though there were recognizable differences in performance at particular points of measurement and levels of maturity, similar, somewhat parallel patterns were common to all groups. Contrary to what might have been expected by some educators, African American, lower socioeconomic status children actually performed at higher levels than European American, middle socioeconomic children in enough instances to suggest there was a similarity between the groups, particularly in the whole language classroom.

There is evidence to suggest that, in some areas, the "whole language" approach encouraged a more mature, richer use of language than did the basal-based approach. This observation applies to both middle socioeconomic European American children and lower socioeconomic African American children. When children are given the freedom to express themselves in carefully planned, developmentally appropriate (Bredekamp, 1987) centertime activities, regardless of their racial or socioeconomic status, they will interact orally in a manner that advances their oral language capabilities.
CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

Concern exists over contemporary classroom practices relating to the "whole language" approach to teaching language arts. This concern is particularly focused on the developmental appropriateness (Bredekamp, 1987) of the approach for minority groups of children entering kindergarten (Reynolds, 1991). The population considered in this study consisted of African American kindergarten children from low and middle socioeconomic status (SES) families, attending classes which included students from varied racial and socioeconomic backgrounds, using either the whole language or basal-based approach to encourage emerging literacy abilities. The focus of the study is on these children's oral language use, comparing African American kindergarten children with European American kindergarten children in whole language and more traditional or basal-based settings.

Burchfield and Burchfield (1992) report that the whole language approach for teaching language arts may be the most significant educational practice to appear in several decades. The whole language movement incorporates "developmentally appropriate" practices as it urges using language in natural ways for meaningful purposes (Bredekamp, 1987).
Bowman (1992), however, suggests that though the whole language movement is positive for the majority of middle-class children, low socioeconomic status children from African American homes may need to be moved more cautiously than middle class students from the experience of having books read to them in whole language classrooms into reading activities where they are expected to demonstrate specific skills. The reason she gives for moving cautiously is that children from low socioeconomic status families frequently lack experience with the subject matter in many of the books used in the whole language approach.

Delpit (1988) believes the middle-class culture dictates the power structure in the classroom; she stresses the need for more qualitative, observational research on low socioeconomic status children in the classroom to assist in determining approaches that are best for them. Educators (Bowman, 1992; Burgess, 1993; Hale, 1992) believe achievement by African American children may even have a different appearance. They feel this is because the learning style of African American children is not the same as European American children from middle class homes.

One way to identify language differences in children engaged in educational experiences is to gather information on oral language exchanges in natural, uninhibited situations. Doing so recognizes the fact that linguistic communication includes more than grammar. It includes the whole child
involved in social interaction using facial expression, body language, and social rules.

In many African American communities, for example, the sound of the word is more commonly important than the exact meaning, as part of the meaning is derived from context and intonation. Many African American children use loud voices which may sound aggressive, which are actually only expressive; and, they may use active body language. Bowman (1992) says such behavior is part of their culture. For this reason, careful and detailed analysis regarding the use of oral language is needed to help educators understand children from diverse backgrounds in order to meet particular needs as they begin their formal school experience.

Purpose of the Study

The problem addressed in this study is to compare how varied school environments support the oral language development of African American children from low and middle socioeconomic status families and European American children from middle socioeconomic status families in their emerging role as literate persons. Many educators are advocating an approach that is relatively new in this country called "whole language," not just for low socioeconomic status children, but for all segments of the population (Cutting & Milligan, 1990; Goodman, 1986; Holdaway, 1986; Pace, 1991). This change in
approach is encouraging since the recognition that all children develop in "universal, predictable sequences of growth" at their own "individual" rate has been accepted by most child development specialists (Bredekamp, 1987). Research has been needed to aid in determining if children utilize oral language in the same way in classrooms consisting of both low and middle socioeconomic status and/or racially mixed populations using the whole language approach and the basal-based approach. The objectives that guide this descriptive study include the following:

1. Describe the oral language of low socioeconomic status African American children and middle socioeconomic status European American children in a whole language classroom in a public school.

2. Describe the oral language of low socioeconomic status African American children and middle socioeconomic status European American children in a basal-based classroom in a public school.

Theoretical Support

The theoretical approach that supports the whole language movement is the "cognitive-developmental theory" (Pelligrini, 1991), also known as the "interactionist view" (Genishi & Dyson, 1984). The theory contends that language develops as part of the child's general ability or cognitive development.
This natural ability is strongly related to social interaction in the child's environment. The interaction of the child in his/her physical world (based on Piaget's theory) and in his/her social world (based on Vygotsky's theory) creates the impetus for the child to learn language (Kitchener, 1986; Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1991).

Research Support

The target population of my study consisted of African American children from low socioeconomic status families often considered "at-risk of school failure," and middle socioeconomic status European American children. Studies have suggested that any changes in oral literacy of low socioeconomic status children will be primarily due to their classroom experience if their homes lack in literacy enrichment (Chall, Jacobs, & Baldwin, 1990; Heath & Mangiola, 1991). Researchers (Clark, 1983; Winter & Rouse, 1990) have reported that parents in these families may not expect children to participate in any home academic activities such as book reading and may not provide sufficient guidance toward literacy learning at home. The innate ability of listening, followed by the development of oral language, constitutes the beginning of literacy for children (Preece, 1992). With the ability to express ideas orally, children are ready to learn to read and write (Dyson, 1981, 1989; Snow, 1991; Sulzby,
As children enter kindergarten, oral expression is encouraged in some classrooms and discouraged in others. Children from low socioeconomic status homes often do not express themselves orally in "standard" English (Snow, 1991) or in "classroom speech" (Preece, 1992). Acceptance of the natural language of the low socioeconomic status segment of the population by kindergarten teachers is important if they expect to help this group make the transition from home to school a positive experience (Dickinson & Smith, 1991).

Building upon their past and current oral language ability, a teacher can lead children into the use of language that is found in books and into writing that is acceptable in the school setting as they progress through the grades (Johnson, 1992; Ollila, 1992; Teale, 1986b).

The challenge for educators becomes one of determining what school environment supports the development of low socioeconomic status children's emergence into literate persons. Differences of opinion persist regarding what type of program is most effective. Researchers report that some educators feel that the basal-based program including drill, practice, and repetition of oral language in structured situations is the best way to help children from low socioeconomic status families "catch-up" (Gersten & George, 1990). Other researchers report that the whole language approach is more effective (Goodman, 1986; Goodman, 1984;
Studies have been undertaken to determine which method, the basal-based or whole language approach, will help children from low and middle socioeconomic status families develop into literate individuals. Whole language advocates are supported by results of two recent studies indicating that, by the end of second grade, the whole language approach supports the emergence of better readers than basal-based approaches for the low socioeconomic status population (Manning, Manning, & Long, 1989; Stice & Bertrand, 1990).

One study has determined that both socioeconomic status groups advance in oral language comprehension at equal rates in kindergarten and first grade. Children from low socioeconomic status families lag behind in reading, however, due to deficits in language awareness. They score lower in visual vocabulary and phonemic awareness in first grade. The researchers (Warren-Leubecker & Carter, 1988) could not determine the effects of informal literacy experiences on language awareness. They reported that by the end of first grade, children from low socioeconomic status homes did not differ on basic skills but did fall behind on phonemic awareness.

Tunnell and Jacobs (1989) summarized studies that have compared basal-based approaches with literature based approaches and reported that reading gains favored the whole
language approach in all but one study. The studies used mainly large populations in their samples and based their conclusions on quantitative data gathered from standardized testing. A qualitative part of one study measured the attitudes of the children toward reading and found positive attitudinal gains toward reading in the population that had experienced the literature based approaches.

Acceptance of current theory which is based on Piaget and Vygotsky and the results of recent research focused primarily on reading, suggests a need for extensive investigation into the effect that the "whole language" and basal-based classroom environments are having on the oral language of children from varying socioeconomic backgrounds. The qualitative methods applied in this study were selected in order to describe what was happening to children's oral language in the two types of approaches.

Definition of Terms

African American children - In this study they are children whose ancestors belong to a black race likely originating in Africa, now living in the United States as a result of arrival as explorers, traders, soldiers, guides, slaves and immigrants (McCracken, 1993).

Basal-based approach - In this study it is a language arts approach using basal text books that direct the teacher
in the instruction of children using drill, worksheets, and phonics, based on the behaviorist theory that "human beings acquire knowledge by internalization, reinforcement, and conditioning" (Kamii, Manning, & Manning, 1991).

Note: A group of kindergarten children were working with the teacher in a workbook during centertimes. Ditto sheets that focused upon isolated skills were used as center activities. Professional educators suggested the teacher for this study because of these practices and because they respected her as a "good" teacher. A small group of books on a shelf were labeled "book center" in the classroom. I did not observe the children using these books during the study.

Developmentally appropriate practices - refers to the appropriateness of the classroom instruction with regard to the children’s chronological age and the individual level of development as stated by the guidelines published by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (Bredekamp, 1987). In this study the developmental appropriateness of the classrooms was determined by a checklist (see Appendix A).

European American children - In this study those children whose families belong to a white race likely originating in Europe, living in the United States as a result of arrival due to escape from religious persecution, famine, overcrowded homelands, or taxes, and who had a desire for freedom, farmland, jobs, and/or riches (McCracken, 1993).
Oral language development - a predictable sequence in the development of the use of language or communicative competence that all children follow, at various rates of development (Lindfors, 1991; Pellegrini, 1991). In this study language samples were recorded and analyzed according to development using criteria described in the methodology of the study (see Chapter 3).

Socioeconomic status (SES) - refers to social and economic levels ranging from low to middle to upper. For purposes of this study low socioeconomic status children were identified by the teacher's reporting of the child's placement in the Federal School Lunch Program.

Note: All other children were considered middle socioeconomic status background. It was believed that no upper class children were enrolled in the classrooms.

Whole language approach - beliefs about teaching that developed from sources such as psycholinguistic research, cognitive development-interactionist theory, and common agreement about teaching held by professionals. It is a philosophy of learning based upon holistic interactions. Language learning is not segmented (Goodman, 1986). The whole language approach includes using language for real reasons in meaningful ways. Activities in whole language classrooms include shared book reading, modeled writing, independent reading, related arts activities, creative writing, dramatization, and others that meet the needs of the

Note: The whole language teacher in this study was selected because of professional educators' recommendations of her as a well respected teacher holding these beliefs. The principal and the school were recognized as promoting whole language beliefs by a supervisor, a college professor, and other educators in the community. Observation in the classroom revealed (a) teacher-made language charts containing weekly directions for the science center, the art center, and the reading center, (b) a large book center containing library books as well as teacher-made books with scripts from the children and, (c) creative art that represented themes from storybooks or seasonal themes. The teacher was observed using checklists to record the progress of the children as they advanced in skill levels. The classroom did not include some activities normally identified with the concept of "whole language" such as creative writing and activities based on children's literature.

Limitations

1. The classrooms chosen for language sample collection were not randomly selected. The teachers were suggested by knowledgable professionals and were willing to participate in the research.
2. The technical difficulty in audiotaping and videotaping necessitated a small sample size from each classroom.

3. Selection of subjects was made from the children whose parents gave permission to participate in the study rather than from the whole population of the classrooms.

4. The researcher was present in the rooms for the purpose of collecting data, which could have affected the data collected (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982, p. 108).

5. The findings of the study may be applicable only to particular settings that are similar (Lincoln & Guba, 1986, pp. 297-299).

Significance and Potential Contribution

Most research studies concerned with the "whole language" or basal-based approach have focused on the development of skills related to written language (e.g. reading and writing). More research needs to be done to determine how effective this approach is in promoting development of oral language skills with children from different socioeconomic statuses and racial/ethnic groups. The results of this study can offer insight for the selection of reading/language arts instructional strategies that encourage kindergarten students' linguistic competence, thus helping them become effective
communicators, ably using the skill most fundamentally critical to their success in all areas of their education.

Considerable public concern exists regarding the failing of the educational system in the United States, most particularly where minority and poor children are concerned. There is a perceived dilemma over educators' apparent inability to develop educational methods which adequately help to reverse the trend toward an expanding under-educated group of people (Boyer, 1992). Educators are experiencing pressure to produce fully literate citizens. It has never been more important for professional educators to demonstrate their ability to both determine the most effective and thus developmentally appropriate (Bredekamp, 1987) educational methods and put them into practice.
CHAPTER 2

SELECTED LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature relevant to young children's oral language was selected from a variety of areas. Material related to language development summarizing theory, describing classroom approaches (i.e. basal-based or whole language) related to language/literacy development, including supportive activities, home influences, home/school interactions, peer interactions, classroom methods, and relative to the African American culture and socioeconomic status has been included.

Theories Related to Language Development

Three widely accepted theories that contribute to our understanding of how children acquire a first language are the behaviorist-learning theory, the nativist theory (innatist view), and the cognitive-developmental theory (interactionist view). Historically, these theories have had considerable impact on educational thought regarding language acquisition.

The Behaviorist View

The behaviorist view, popular in the first half of the twentieth century, stressed that the learning of language is the result of environmental influences on the individual born
with the ability to learn language (Watson, 1924). This view supported the idea that the child learns through stimulus and response activity. The child is rewarded for desired behaviors, in this case, language or the beginning sounds of language. As the child grows, his language becomes more adult-like due to both positive and negative reinforcement by persons in the environment (Miller, 1989; Watson, 1924). The behaviorist view is more consistent with the basal-based approach for classroom literacy experiences.

The behaviorist position became most influential when B. F. Skinner’s book entitled *Verbal Behavior*, was published in 1957. He grouped speech into two main categories, one he labeled "mands" and the other "tacts." Mands represent communication used to command or demand certain behavior, followed by a consequence. Tacts represent communication used to make contact with the physical world such as labeling, with reinforcement consisting of an event or object given in response to the label or description. Skinner said the native language of a child is learned through operant conditioning by rewarding the child for using the proper syntax, semantics, phonology, and pragmatics (Miller, 1989; Pelligrini, 1991; Skinner, 1957).

**The Nativist View**

As a reaction to the behaviorist view of language acquisition, the innatist view known as "nativist theory" came
into vogue during the mid-sixties. Chomsky (1965) initiated this view when he advanced a theory dealing with syntax. The nativist theory promotes the belief that language is a developmental process that is controlled genetically. Chomsky believed that every human is born with innate memory and perception known as a "language acquisition device" that enables them to learn language (Chomsky, 1959). The child is born with part of the brain or skeletal framework that provides a natural ability to use proper semantics, syntactics, and phonology. The child’s responsibility is to learn the properties of his particular language community or culture. Pelligrini (1991) wrote that Chomsky was not totally accurate in his belief that the individual has an unconscious body of knowledge stored in a special place to be activated into a predetermined course. This "language acquisition device" has never actually been found (Pelligrini, 1991). Chomsky’s view influenced those involved in language studies and research, but it is not adequate for a total explanation of how language is acquired and develops (Lindfors, 1991).

Slobin (1970) said that rather than a body of innate knowledge, the child possesses special processes for acquiring language. From studies of language acquisition, children all over the world will overgeneralize a language rule during the development of the child’s native language. According to Slobin (1979), children possess the ability to approach
language learning similarly no matter what language is being learned.

The Cognitive Developmental View

A more recent theory of language acquisition that gained wide acceptance in the 1960's, is known as the cognitive-developmental theory or as some have labeled it the "interactionist view" (DeVries & Kohlberg, 1990). This theory contends that language develops as part of the child’s general ability (nature) or cognitive development and this natural ability is strongly related to social interaction in the child’s environment (nurture) (Miller, 1989). The interaction of the child in his/her physical world, based on Piaget’s theory, (DeVries & Kohlberg, 1990) and in his/her social world, based on Vygotsky’s theory, (Vygotsky, 1978) creates the impetus for the child to learn language. Language is learned in real circumstances calling for communication on the child’s part with someone in the child’s natural setting (Lindfors, 1991; Pelligrini, 1991; Preece, 1992).

Proponents of this theory agree that children are dynamic language learners. They advance grammatically as they actively experience the world. Children require little or no direct teaching of syntax (Pelligrini, 1991). Parents influence the acquisition of language by their children through the use of special language interactions used naturally without their realization (Motherese or baby-
talk) (Snow, 1977). Children do not analyze the rules of language until much later in childhood after Piaget’s "preoperational stage" (Bialystok & Bouchard, 1985). The child advances in his/her realization and ability to think about the rules of the language after real world experiences, from the broad to the specific as development allows (Wellman, 1985).

The cognitive developmental theory is consistent with the use of the "whole language" approach in the classroom (Goodman, 1986; Kamii, 1991). The theory encompasses all aspects of the child’s growth and allows for development to dictate the activity of the child as others meet the child’s needs in language acquisition. The cognitive developmental theory is the basis for most popular current ideas on child development and much of the contemporary research related to early childhood education (Elkind, 1987; Katz & Chard, 1988; Kohlberg, & Mayer, 1972; Spodek, 1982; Stegelin, 1992).

Summary

The above views have influenced educators and researchers interested in the human’s acquisition of language in this century. Present thought recognizes the interaction of the individual with objects and knowledgeable persons as the basis for learning language. Two theorists, Piaget and Vygotsky, have had great influence on the study of language development. The following discussion will address these theories.
Theory Related to the Appropriateness of Kindergarten Language Programs

In Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children From Birth Through Age 8 (DAP Guidelines), a publication of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, appropriate practices for enhancing language development and literacy of the four and five-year-old and the five through eight-year-old in primary grades are presented (Bredekamp, 1987, P. 55. & p. 70). Based on theory and research in the fields of language development and literacy curricula, these guidelines outline the criteria that should be used to evaluate kindergarten language programs. These criteria include curriculum goals and teaching strategies for the language program. Appropriate individual experiences that develop positive feelings toward learning are goals for the curriculum. Teaching strategies that provide experiences for children to see how reading and writing are useful through activities such as listening to stories and poems, dictating stories, seeing print on classroom charts, participating in dramatic play, and taking field trips are recommended. Reading and writing skills are taught as needed to individual children using enjoyable games and activities.

Any discussion of the soundness and appropriateness (Bredekamp, 1987) of a kindergarten language program should
begin with the research of two important theorists, Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky. Many researchers in the area of language development typically base their studies on the theories of these two psychologists (e.g., Britton, 1979; Cazden, 1981; Drucker, 1979; Dyson, 1984, 1986, 1993; Heath, 1983; Norris & Damico, 1990; Teale, 1986b). Their psychological theories are part of the change in models or paradigms in the study of language acquisition of young children which has taken place since the late 1970’s (Teale, 1986b).

The Piagetian View

Piaget (1959) theorized that children learn language through association with actions or acting upon real objects in their environment using their five senses. Thought is learned through activity and interactions. Education will only be meaningful if the child is cognitively ready to assimilate a new experience. The process of "knowing" or of the new information becoming part of the child’s stable knowledge base is known as equilibration. As the child experiences conflict because of what he knows and what he realizes he does not know, he is motivated to expand his concepts. The Piagetian stage known as "preoperational," from approximately 2 to 7 years, is the time during which children enter kindergarten. This is the time when children’s thinking is concrete, irreversible, and egocentric.
Piaget believed that young children's speech can be identified by two classifications. He calls language that is not directed to another individual "egocentric speech." The other, "socialized speech" is used to communicate with people. Egocentric speech is used by the kindergarten child most of the time because true communication with others does not take place until about seven or eight years of age. At these ages children "try to improve upon their methods of interchanging ideas and upon their mutual understanding of one another" (Piaget, 1959, p. 49).

Piaget described three types of egocentric speech. In repetition, the child repeats words just to hear them with no thought of communicating with others. In monologue, the child talks to himself as if thinking out loud. In collective monologue, another person is involved in the speaking event as a stimulus but the child has no interest in the other person's point of view or understanding of what the other person is saying (Piaget, 1959).

Pellegrini (1991) reported that Piagetian educators believe that learning through language is not as important as manipulating objects, minimizing the role of the adult. Cazden (1981) says Piaget believed that language meaning is limited to the concepts known by the child and that learning the meaning of "words" can only be accomplished within the conceptualization of the child.
The Vygotskyian View

The theory of Vygotsky (1978) emphasized the relationship of the adult to the child. Vygotsky believed communication with an adult helps the child to move from what the child knows or partially knows into unknown material through verbal communication with that adult. He labeled the area from where the child is to where he can potentially move "the zone of proximal development." The adult encourages the child to his next developmental level or to his highest potential by "modeling" and "verbalizing" experiences, and "naming" objects for him.

Vygotsky studied children’s negotiation strategies using language in relation to their cultural environment. He believed that communication was influenced by culture in a developmental sequence just as naturally as development occurs through maturation.

Vygotsky categorized development into two types. One emerges as a mental act of perception, resulting from a single interaction with a person of competence. The other evolves as this act of perception is translated from thought to speech in a matter of seconds (Werstch, 1991).

Researchers (Cazden, 1981; Dyson, 1987a; Teale, 1986a) influenced by Vygotsky have based studies on his theory. Vygotsky believed an adult is necessary for the child to learn language. Exposure to a new word or new concept provides an opportunity for the child to advance in development or to gain
maturity in language. This scaffolding between the adult and child should be a mutually satisfying interaction. Vygotsky says that through social interaction using gestures, speech, dramatic play, and drawing, the child emerges into a literate individual. Therefore, we cannot study the individual child's development in isolation, we must examine the social world that the child has experienced (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky's developmental theory continues to have an important influence on current research and educational trends in literacy development.

Secondary Theories Related to Language Development

The Schema Theory

The schema theory, characterized by Mandler (1984), describes the stories, scripts, and scenes which are common to the psychological processing organization of the human brain. These stories (temporal), scenes (spatial), and scripts (events in action), relate to memory in an individual. If an event schema is organized in time, order, and action, a person can hold it in memory and build on past knowledge to increase that person's own world knowledge. Once a person gains story structure (knowledge with understanding), it cannot be lost. The script is always with her/him. Orderly, patterned structure is in the world. Because of this organization, people can conceive the same ideas. The schema theory relates
to macro-concepts of the world, that is, knowledge gained from processing broad principles rather than narrow or micro-segments of information (Mandler, 1984). Oral language is influenced by the stories, scripts, and scenes that a person possesses mentally.

Nelson (1983) has theorized that children schematically organize categories in early language. These schemes are based on the relationships of real-world scenes, stories, and events. They are action related rather than abstract categories such as fruits, vegetables, etc. Mandler and Robinson (1978) found that younger children can remember unorganized scenes just as well as older children. Older children performed better on memory of organized scenes because they had more world-knowledge to build upon. The memory for concepts to be recalled in speaking for the purpose of communicating improves as the child experiences the world through objects and exchanges with a more competent person. The schema theory encompasses both Piagetian and Vygotskyian theories.

Cognition and Linguistics Theory

Stich (1990) contributed some structural ideas about the theory of grammar. He proposed that linguists must think of all possible language, whether it is grammatical or ungrammatical in form. He says linguists fail to take into consideration the ungrammatical language of a child. Just
because a child can follow some grammatical rules does not account for whether the meaning is internalized. Linguists should study language with the grammatical perspective of all thoughts that could be uttered. Stich believes there is need for a rule system with recognition that grammar in itself is just a portion of the psychological ability of a speaker. It is just a small part of the whole theory of language. In the past researchers have concentrated on syntax because it is concrete and observable. There is a need to concentrate on meaning which is progressively assimilated by the child, not innate. Meaning can be determined by the level of the child's performance in verbal communication.

**Cognition and Thinking Theory**

Smith (1990) hypothesized about the relationship of thinking and language. The brain, even in children, "plans, organizes, anticipates, categorizes, chooses, infers, solves problems, determines relationships, and makes decisions" (p. 16). These are often described as characteristic of higher order thinking. But everyone uses these abilities. Even an infant learns language by making sense of contexts in which language occurs, constantly solving problems.

Smith (1990) reiterates the belief held by some that low socioeconomic status persons are not typically expected to be higher-order thinkers. Yet, he says, the brain is always at work. Thinking is easy and effective when persons understand
and are in control of what they are thinking about. In educational settings, children from low socioeconomic status families often do not understand what they are supposed to be thinking, talking, or writing about. That is when they are classified as deficient in thinking and language. Thinking becomes "difficult and inefficient" when the subject to be discussed or thought about is contrived rather than spontaneous. Schools should be places where persons are free to demonstrate what they value, what they think about, and what they want to speak about.

Summary

Several theorists have made meaningful contributions to our understanding of the acquisition of language. In various ways they have attributed language development to physical or mental development, to the environment, or to an innate ability. Behaviorists stressed the importance of environmental influences upon the language learned by the child through stimulus/response activity. Chomsky believed that language categories are set from birth. Piaget hypothesized that experiences connect learning and language for the child. Vygotsky related the development of language to the interaction with more competent persons. Mandler presumed that order in the world establishes categories of language for the child to assimilate. Smith theorized that the child's individual experiences set the stage for learning
language. Each of these points of view have some degree of validity and have influenced the study of language development.

These theories serve as a foundation for understanding a child's language development. We know the kindergarten environment influences the language of the child. The kindergarten following the basal-based approach is influenced mainly by the behaviorist view. The teacher provides information followed by positive or negative responses to the children. The critical aspects in the kindergarten following the whole language approach center on the opportunities for social interaction of the teacher with students and among peers. Verbal interactions taking place in the whole language kindergarten can be related to the cognitive-developmental theory.

Literature Describing the Basal-based Classroom

Educators (Fuhler, 1990; Griffith, Klesius, & Kromrey, 1992; Liberman & Liberman, 1992) have said that the teaching of phonics is the beginning of basal instruction. Phonics involves the breaking of words into specific sounds before the process of reading the whole word. Maclean (1988) suggested that educators who advocate the teaching of phonics believe it has a lasting benefit in word recognition.
Most basal series include workbooks, introductory vocabulary words, questions at the end of each reading selection, tests used for evaluation purposes, and reinforcement worksheets (Fuhler, 1990). Educators (Cotton et al., 1988) report that basal readers often address one learning style of children, usually the field-independent style, which focuses on parts or pieces of language. Workbooks emphasizing discrete skills are used in many kindergarten classrooms (Hiebert, 1988). Discrete skills include correct spelling, handwriting practice emphasizing correct formation of letters, controlled vocabulary practices, single answer questions, and other teacher-controlled experiences. The philosophy in the basal-based classroom follows the "part-to-whole strategy" (Goodman, 1986). Language development is thought to occur as children progress through isolated skill instruction.

**Literature Describing the Whole Language Classroom**

In literature-based or whole language classrooms, children have a choice of reading materials including many trade books. Teachers read aloud to children. There is no ability grouping. Evaluation is accomplished through the use of portfolios including examples of children's original work, teacher checklists, descriptive written observations, and
other creative ways that the teacher determines (Fuhler, 1990).

Whole language is usually built around thematic units with rich resources of children's literature, especially predictable books (Bridge, 1986; Goodman, 1986; Norris & Hoffman, 1993; Westby, 1985). Themes such as "workers in your community" or "zoo animals" help children interact with the teacher using subjects that are familiar to them. This creates the literacy environment as the child enters the school setting in a whole language classroom.

DAP Guidelines (Bredekamp, 1987) state that "basic skills develop when they are meaningful to children" (p. 55). "Technical skills or subskills are taught as needed to accomplish the larger goals, not as the goal itself" (p. 70). These guidelines are consistent with the movement in language/literacy programs referred to as "whole language" (Dyson, 1993; Goodman, 1986).

Goodman (1986) says that the whole language approach includes "the language, the culture, the community, the learner, and the teacher" (p. 8). This method views language from a broad perspective of learning to speak, read, and write for meaningful, enjoyable reasons only focusing upon the narrow skills when needed by the individual child. Learning styles of individual children are recognized and an attempt to meet their needs.
Research in "linguistics, language development, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, anthropology, and education" contribute to the methodology used by whole language teachers (Goodman, 1986, p. 25). Advocates believe that reading can be taught without stressing fragmented skills (Bridge, 1986; Holdaway, 1979; Routman, 1988; Sampson, Briggs & Sampson, 1986). For example, to promote naturalistic learning Hall (1987) encourages using environmental print on items in the dramatic play center as a starting point in whole language instruction.

Meaningful exchange of oral language is essential in a whole language classroom. Researchers have studied children's use of talk in literacy experiences such as writing (Dyson, 1981; Goodman, 1984; Rowe & Harste, 1986) and have suggested that children should have the freedom to talk as they are engaged in writing experiences (Danielson, 1992; Dyson, 1989).

Shared book experiences are a part of the whole language classroom. This involves enlarging print so that groups can read repeatedly the familiar print of a story which may be from a trade book or the original words of the children. The listening center may be part of shared book experiences as children listen to stories on a tape recorder (Holdaway, 1979).

Invented spelling is encouraged in the whole language classroom. Words are spelled using the sounds of letters that the children hear but may not be spelled conventionally.
(Richgels, 1986). This process facilitates word recognition and spelling competence (Clarke, 1988).

Writing becomes part of the whole language classroom as children become authors of their own books. During the writing process children are assisted in editing their work by competent peers or by the teacher (Graves, 1983).

Just as adults and older siblings in the home are literacy models, the teacher and more competent peers will become the models for the children in the classroom. Teachers transfer their values about literacy by modeling reading and writing. Whole language teachers see their role as the initiator, resource person, and copartner (collaborator) in literacy instruction. The print that is functional in the classroom should have the same purpose as print in the outside environment. As the teacher in a kindergarten room reads or writes lists, letters, stories, songs, news reports, signs, announcements, greeting cards, maps, he/she will model literacy skills for students (DeFord & Rasinski, 1986).

**Activities That Support Language Development**

**Scaffolding**

Tharp and Gallimore (1988) suggest that through activities where cognitive and communication strategies are necessary, children are nurtured into using functions that support their movement into higher levels of competence.
Bruner described this activity of the adult or more competent person's interaction with the child as "scaffolding" (Wertsch & Rogoff, 1984). Bruner (1983) suggests that children acquire their first language instruction through interaction with more adept speakers. He noted that adults adjust their language to that of young children. Children's play, writing, and reading demonstrate the advantage of "scaffolding" between children and more competent persons. Researchers (Damon & Phelps, 1989; Farver, 1992; Newman & Roskos, 1991) report positive influences on literacy development as peers work cooperatively.

**Play**

Researchers in psycholinguistics encourage educators to include "play" as a vital part of the literacy program for young children. Through play children gain experience in language. Opportunities should be available for first-hand experimenting with language and for the teacher to extend (scaffold) or redirect the learning activity in play (Schrader, 1990; Wolfgang & Sanders, 1990). Classroom applications of play are suggested by researchers who have manipulated the literacy environment. Ideas for thematic settings are suggested in the professional literature (Levy, Wolfgang, & Koorland, 1992; Morrow & Rand, 1991; Roskos & Vukelich, 1991). Themes elevate the knowledge and language of young children to higher levels.
Pretend play between children has resulted in their ability to respond to and build upon the knowledge of their peers (Farver, 1992). Kindergarten children's play during recess was used to predict their cognitive success in first grade. Peer interaction and object play were positively related to effects in first grade cognitive performance. Peer interaction was positively related to a first grade criteria test. Object play in kindergarten positively related to mathematics achievement in first grade (Pellegrini, 1992). Peers influence one another and "scaffold" each other into higher realms of performance.

Writing and Reading

Psycholinguists Ferreiro and Teberosky (1982) studied children's knowledge about acquiring written language. They found that children identify likenesses, try to predict what is written, and try to understand what is written. Children actively try to make sense of written language when their environment is filled with many forms of writing. Ideas for encouraging writing in young children include starting with what they know, allowing them to make errors, and giving time for self-correction. Ferreiro and Teberosky suggest that a more competent person in the environment can aid the children in accomplishing their goals.

Charlesworth (1992) stressed the importance of activities that encourage the development of story knowledge in the
kindergarten curriculum. Trousdale suggests an abundant amount of repeated storybook reading and other forms of story presentations as part of the routine (cited in McGee & Richgels, 1990). Sulzby (1985) studied the behavior of young children during storybook reading episodes. She determined that literacy skills are gained as a result of this experience after observing the way children imitated language found in story books. This research supports the belief that literacy behaviors are developmentally coincidental with the age and stage of the child. Storybook language had a carryover effect on written language of children as they progressed in literacy ability.

Speech-language pathologists are encouraging professionals in their field to work with "whole language" teachers as they serve the language-learning disordered child. They are aware that helping the child in a language environment that has meaning and naturalness for him will allow him to use skills in a way that will have lasting effects on his speech (King & Goodman, 1990; Norris & Damico, 1990; Schory, 1990). The adults interacting with the child scaffold him/her to a higher level of language use.

Salyer (1994) found that children in a first grade classroom gained in writing ability as they freely talked during the composing time in a writers’ workshop. The meaning in their writing was impacted as they exchanged ideas.
The DAP guidelines (Bredekamp, 1987) state that "an abundance of ... activities" should be "provided to develop language and literacy through meaningful experience: listening to and reading stories and poems; taking field trips; dictating stories; seeing classroom charts and other print in use" (p. 55) and "being read at least one high quality book or part of a book each day by adults or older children" (p. 70). The studies on play, writing, and reading support the activities suggested for developmentally appropriate practices.

Emerging Literacy Development

Based largely on Piaget's and Vygotsky's theories, Teale (1986b), a well known educator in the field of literacy, has made six general statements about emerging literacy in the period from birth to six years of age. First, children begin learning to read and write very early in life before the first word is spoken. Second, speaking, reading, and writing develop concurrently and are interrelated. Third, literacy functions develop as they are used for real purposes. Fourth, young children are actively involved in their own literacy development. Social interaction with a literate person is important in this learning experience. Fifth, reading to the child encourages the development of literacy. Sixth, children
develop the ability to read and to write in a variety of ways and at different ages.

Research Relating to Language/Literacy

Contemporary language/literacy research has concentrated on the identification of those logical patterns in the development of literacy which are the basis for language in the classroom. Research in the past decade has helped educators learn more about the development of literacy or "emergent literacy" than at any other period of time.

The following discussion emphasizes research in the field of language/literacy. The areas of home, peers, classroom, and community are included in the literature review in relation to their influence on the oral language of children.

Literature Relating the Home and Oral Language Development

Mother-Child Interaction Research. There is a body of research known as the "mother-child interaction research" that has been recognized as important for the last two decades. These studies have involved mainstream families from middle-class socioeconomic conditions. The major objective of this work initially was to refute a belief that language development was an inborn characteristic not related to the child's language environment (Snow, 1977). This research is helpful and important in that it accurately described the
language development of the American child growing up in middle-class families. More recent research on nonmainstream families, however, indicates that the patterns derived in earlier studies are not universal but rather specific to one social class (Lindfors, 1991).

Research on Mother's Speech. Research on mothers' speech supports the theory that language development begins in the earliest stages of infancy. The earliest researchers looked only at the mothers' speech or actions believing it was the adult who mainly taught the infant to speak. Snow (1977) summarized twelve of these studies noting that the variables fit into three categories, "measures of prosody, of grammatical complexity and of redundancy" (p. 32). Studies of prosody determined that mothers slowed their rate of talking, used a higher pitched voice and exaggerated intonation patterns. Studies of grammatical complexity found that many questions were used, along with changes in syntax simplifying mothers' language. Mothers used lots of repetition and other redundant features.

Snow (1977) observed that studies show that conversation affects the interactions between the infant and the caregiver. The infant affects the kind of feedback from the mother by the response produced by the infant. Mothers exhibit an unconscious understanding of what their infant comprehends and use talk that increases the infant's knowledge.
Cross (1977) looked at mainstream mothers' talk to their children who were sixteen-months and thirty-months, and were rapidly developing linguistic ability. These mothers were unaware of the fact that they were understanding the meaning of their children's verbal expressions and continuing verbal interaction about the perceived topic.

Researchers noticed that mothers' speech doesn't change in response to their infants until the infant is old enough to respond to the mother (Phillips, 1973; Snow, 1977). Gleason (1977) found that infants acquire language when interaction takes place with an adult during mutual action on an object such as a ball.

More recently De Temple and Beals (1991) studied family conversation as a variable that supports the development of language. They found that young children exhibit strength in whatever the mothers focused on in speaking with them.

Relating Experiences from Home to School

Dickinson and Tabors (1991) reported that vocabulary development is related to the "narrative explanatory" talk that children listen to at mealtime in the home. They also found that language comprehension was related to the quality of book reading experiences between a mother and child.

Several researchers have studied the relationship of the family to early literacy experiences of the child (Chall, Jacobs, & Baldwin, 1990; Dyson, 1984; Heath, 1983;
For example, Lancy and Nattiv (1992) used parents as volunteer storybook readers in kindergarten classrooms resulting in improvement of the children's attitudes about leaving home to attend school.

Westby (1985) studied the oral story narratives that children used with parents at home and with teachers at school. The children's success in using narratives at home related to gains in their literacy ability at school. Westby noted that children often have their first difficulty with language when they enter school and are asked to do "decontextualized" oral or written tasks.

Parents can be taught how to make the most of literacy experiences in the home. Edwards (1989) conducted a study where low SES mothers were instructed on how to interact with their children during bookreading in the home. She concluded that the mothers responded positively when shown how to participate in book reading with their children.

Positive results have been achieved with reading scores of children in the primary grades when parents are involved in the school (Reynolds, 1991). Research has reinforced the belief that adequate oral language experience in the home contributes to successful literacy development as the child enters school.
**Peer Interactions Relate to Oral Language Development**

Another factor of importance regarding a child's development is his/her interaction with peers. Interactions between a literate person and a child may also include peers in the classroom or older children in the family or neighborhood (Harste, 1990). Grouping children heterogeneously for literacy activities gives the advantage of peer tutoring which serves as a beneficial social interaction in a classroom literacy event.

Dyson (1991) suggested that exchanges among peers in language, reading, or writing were beneficial for children entering school from homes where adults did not engage in such activities with them. Dyson (1987b) reported that the imaginative world of the children was nurtured by the sharing of their ideas with peers. They learned to create, extend, and evaluate their own stories and their peers through oral exchanges.

Day and Libertini (1992) observed children as they reacted to three different instructional settings in the classroom environment. Higher cognitive functioning, increased language, and cooperative behavior was apparent among peers as they talked, read, and wrote together when they worked in independent activities. Similar findings were reported by Damon and Phelps (1989) who studied learning among peers in the elementary years. They found peer collaboration increased the learning gains in groups working on problems
together. Peer interaction increased achievement in symbolic expression, role-taking, and communication skills.

Classroom spaces that encourage social interaction encouraging children to share perspectives with each other are positive environments. In the process of learning from peers, children become less dependent upon the teacher which is more realistic to life outside of school (Rowe & Harste, 1986a).

**Literature Related to Language and Classroom Methods**

The Developmentally Appropriate Practice Guidelines (Bredekamp, 1987) state that in a good language arts program, "children are provided many opportunities to see how reading and writing are useful before they are instructed in letter names, sounds, and word identification" (p. 55) and children "need time to enjoy these activities" (p. 70). Most children have some form of written and oral language experience with adults or older siblings in the home and/or community before school entry although quantity and quality is varied. As children enter kindergarten, literacy experiences providing both positive and negative results, are afforded in the classroom environment. Teachers will make decisions about the literacy environment that their classrooms will provide.

**Studies That Compare Language Arts Approaches in the Classroom**

Most studies comparing basal-based or whole language and literature based approaches have focused on what has been most
successful in developing reading and writing skills (Manning, Manning, & Long, 1989; Stice & Bertrand, 1990; Tunnell & Jacobs, 1989). In support of the basal-based approach, Delpit (1988) concluded that low SES children need direct instructional methods from adults of the same culture as the children. Researchers (Burts et al., 1992a) determined that many teachers and administrators are convinced that a basal-based approach is most appropriate for young children. Other researchers (Stice & Bertrand, 1990; Manning, Manning, & Long, 1989) studied the effects of whole language practices compared to skills-oriented programs on inner-city primary children. In their research, the whole language groups were better readers at the end of second grade.

In classrooms where literacy materials were readily available, literacy activity increased with peers acting as informants (Morrow, 1990; Newman & Roskos, 1991). More fluency and diversity of language was found in the block center than in the housekeeping or thematic centers (Isbell & Raines, 1991). Levy, Wolfgang, and Koorland (1992) reported that enriched sociodramatic play of kindergarten age children increased their language performance.

To summarize, researchers and educators are divided in their views on literacy instruction: some still support the basal-based approach and others support the whole language approach. More research to determine what is happening in the
classroom in relation to developing listeners, speakers, readers, and writers is needed.

**Literature Relating Oral Language Development and the Community: Socioeconomic Status Studies and African American Children**

Labov (1970) investigated the language of inner-city African American children in New York City. He was one of the first researchers to contest the belief that poor children are verbally deficient and lacking in cultural richness. He concluded that the social situation influenced verbal behavior, causing variation in the speech of individual groups, which, indeed have a rich cultural background to draw upon when the social situation is comfortable for them.

Bernstein (1972) described the school environments typically encountered by low SES children and said they contained less than adequate teaching materials, overcrowded classrooms, and frequent turnover of the professional staff. He said so-called compensatory educational programs were developed for "culturally deprived, linguistically deprived, socially deprived" (p. 135) children. They were created for those children who were exposed to them before they have had "an initial satisfactory educational environment" (p. 137). Because the environment was not appropriately (Bredekamp, 1987) adapted to the previous experiences of low SES children, the children were judged as deficient. In reality, if the
background experiences of the low SES children were taken into consideration and built upon in the classroom, the children would not be so inadequately prepared for the educational environment. Bernstein (1972) stressed that if the teacher from a middle-class culture expects children from lower-class cultures to learn to communicate relative to the teacher’s culture which is the dominant academic culture, the teacher must first learn the children’s culture. They must build on the children’s communicative competence as acquired in their own family and community.

Heath (1983) studied African American children living in a community called Trackton in the southeastern United States. Trackton children were surrounded by adults who interacted with them in caring tasks as infants and young children. The children were involved in many social interactions from the beginning of life but not activities typically found in middle-class homes. These adult interactions did not include reading to them, labeling things for them, or asking them questions for the purpose of teaching concepts. Heath concurred with Bernstein and Labov, that the children needed literacy activities presented to them in contexts that were more familiar to their cultural background and experience.

Horner and Gussow (1972) intended to prove that the home environment of low SES children programs them for failure in school due to the lack of verbal interactions. The researchers used Skinner’s classes of verbal behavior to
characterize the speech samples that they collected as the children interacted in their natural home environments. Conclusions from the study were that the children were talked to extensively in their homes. Commands were used most frequently in the low SES African American homes with the mother interacting much more frequently than others in the home with the children. Horner and Gussow hypothesized that if school environments met the needs of low SES children, the children would have the motivation to succeed. Since the mothers were the adults most frequently involved in verbal interaction with the children, the researchers recommended that attempts be made to modify the behavior of the mothers through parent education to help low SES African American children enter school on more equal terms.

Mitchell-Kernan (1972) studied native English speakers and Black English speakers. Attitudes about both types of speech were compared. African American parents in the study wanted their children to speak standard English in formal situations or when an outsider was present but felt that in informal, social situations among peers, Black English was more acceptable. At that time, in the early 70’s, the African American community was beginning to value its way of speaking as symbolic of its cultural heritage. This attitude was particularly prevalent among high school students in the study.
Kochman (1972) studied past practices of teachers. He said that language rules were applied to every oral word spoken by children in classrooms. Kochman suggested that the attitudes about these practices needed to change in order to educate all populations of students. Learning about individual children, their dialect and their culture, must become accepted as a rudimentary part of educating children from diverse backgrounds. He was one of the early proponents who advocated a need to change classroom curriculum, with emphasis on increasing the relevance to culturally diverse students. He said the goal of an oral language program should be to use language well in a "variety of social contexts on a variety of subject matter" (p. 229). "An oral language program in an inner-city school with a 100-percent black student body or in a suburban school with any percentage of black enrollment should have the same goal as a language development program in a white neighborhood with a 100 percent white middle-class student body or in that suburban school with a mixed enrollment, namely, the growth and development of the speech ability of the child in his native dialect" (Kochman, 1972, p. 230).

Recent studies have suggested that any changes in literacy for low SES children will be primarily due to their classroom experience. Hale (1992) suggested that European American children come to school more prepared to accept what the school has to offer. This is probably related to reports
that low SES parents did not expect children to participate in any home academic activities such as book reading and had not provided any guidance toward literacy learning involving books at home (Clark, 1983). Rather than academic activities related to books, Hale (1992) suggested that African American children have experienced more emphasis on oral expression in their homes.

When the attitudes of African American parents of preschoolers, African American teachers, and community leaders regarding language education were investigated, researchers found that the parents wanted their children to learn standard English at school, while the teachers felt language for thinking and creativity was the most important thing, whether it was standard English or not. The community leaders felt that African American children should not always be the ones that must change (Cazden, Bryant, & Tillman, 1981).

McKenna (1980) found that children from disadvantaged homes needed additional support in communication skills, particularly in seeing the other's perspective. In the study, McKenna proved that if disadvantaged children saw the need, they are quite capable of communicating. Their lack of communication often labeled "communication deprivation" is related to their misunderstanding of classroom activities and the "need" to communicate with the teacher about something she/he already knows. In a similar study where African American children tutored one another, as they saw the need
for communication, their language skills improved in the process of helping one another with school assignments (Heath & Mangiola, 1991).

In their study of low SES children Chall, Jacobs, and Baldwin (1990) concluded that both home and school influenced the literacy performance of the children. However, the home influence could not compensate for poor school literacy environments as the children grew older.

Researchers (Burts et al., 1992b) studied the stress behaviors of children in developmentally appropriate (Bredekamp, 1987) classrooms and developmentally inappropriate classrooms and suggested that low SES African American children exhibit more stress behaviors in inappropriate classrooms than middle SES European American children. The inappropriate classrooms were considered more traditional and tended to follow a more strictly basal-based curriculum. Children who were not free to communicate with their peers were under more stress than those who were encouraged to play, work, and talk together.

Summary

Recently, researchers and educators (Bowman, 1992; Heath & Mangiola, 1991) cautioned professionals not to overgeneralize about minority students, that is to not assume that they all fit into a particular mold that seems set by
their culture. These students exhibit a broad range of differences and should not be so readily classified as alike if they are from the same cultural group. The educators emphasized that children considered "at risk" should find a break from their everyday lives in school. School should provide such a diversity of learning choices that would be challenging to all ranges of ability and creativeness on the parts of students and teachers.

Conclusion

Research indicates that children develop oral language competence from interaction within the event structures of the home environment, with influences from family, neighbors, and peers before arriving at school. Theorists have identified factors that enhance oral communication of children entering school and beginning their formal education.

Repeated studies have shown that providing appropriate (Bredekamp, 1987) settings and conditions with an abundance of materials and activities for children to act upon strengthens their language development. Social interaction with adults and competent peers complements the positive affects of these provisions. Before entering school, children are especially influenced by their mothers' language.

While all these factors are present in every child's background, they vary widely with respect to type,
effectiveness, and manner in which they are experienced. It is to be expected, then, that children arrive at school in varying degrees of readiness for the educational experience.

These differences in children's backgrounds are generally recognized by experienced educators and accepted as commonplace. Not so widely accepted, however, is the importance of understanding the family culture of children and providing for their individual differences as they strive to adjust to the classroom environment. For example, inviting parents to participate with children in activities at school is one way to ease the transition from home to school.

Historically, literacy activities at school have been skill directed, which educators now identify as "basal-based" approaches. More recently, however, educators have been advocating what is considered to be more natural "whole language," or "whole to part," approach. Proponents of whole language teaching contend that, while oral communication can be impeded by direct instructional approaches, it may be expanded through play, pretending, storybook reading, story narratives, oral exchanges during writing, peer collaboration, and other social events.

Students considered "at risk" have educational needs that can be best met in the school context through teaching approaches that incorporate an understanding and appreciation of their cultural heritage and related previous experiences.
Even if a teacher accepts this proposition, however, translating it into classroom practice is a tremendous challenge.

Researchers such as Bowman (1991, 1992), Delpit (1988), and Norris and Hoffman (1993), have contended that, in spite of observable cultural or individual differences, teaching methods which accommodate varying degrees of readiness are available and should be encouraged. Models have been developed which can be used effectively to study groups of children and give us insight for implementing appropriate (Bredekamp, 1987) educational practices. A review of existing studies and a recognition of the potential for meaningful research regarding the identification of factors considered critical to the effective introduction of children to the educational process gave me a sense of direction for the work that follows.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction and Purpose

Several highly respected researchers have used qualitative research methodology to describe the language of children during social interactions, play, writing or drawing and during school activities where "talk" occurs (Chall, Jacobs, & Baldwin, 1990; Dyson, 1989; Cambourne & Turbill, 1991; Kantor, Elgas, & Fernie, 1993; Reifel & Yeatman, 1993; Roskos & Neuman, 1993; Stone, 1992). Their studies of young children involved in literacy and social experiences produced abundant descriptions of what was transpiring in classroom and other early childhood settings.

In order to learn more about the use of oral language in the whole language classroom and the basal-based classroom, I chose to follow the combined qualitative methods of participant and nonparticipant observer as described by several authorities (Denzin, 1978; Patton, 1990; Spradley, 1980) in order to collect data for the purpose of describing kindergarten children's language in their natural environments. Borg and Gall (1989), encourage the use of this method because the researcher "gains insights and develops interpersonal relationships that are virtually impossible to
achieve through any other method" (p. 391). Lauer and Asher (1988) say "qualitative descriptive research ... is a prerequisite to all types of experimental research (p. 18)."

The purpose of this study is to describe the oral language of African American kindergarten children from low socioeconomic status families and European American kindergarten children from middle socioeconomic status homes in public school kindergartens using whole language approaches and basal-based approaches to encourage literacy growth. My intentions were to do so in sufficient detail to (1) enable me to arrive at objective conclusions regarding any obvious differences in impact of the two teaching approaches with respect to race and SES and/or (2) provide meaningful insight or bases for further studies which would help guide educators in their selection of developmentally appropriate (Bredekamp, 1987) oral language teaching practices.

Current basal-based practices tend to be supported by their advocates as the mode of instruction that will best prepare children for doing well on standardized achievement tests. However, standardized testing of kindergarten children using conventional booklet paper and pencil tests has, at best, been difficult and at worst, unreliable and stressful (Fleege, Charlesworth, Burts, & Hart, 1993). It has been increasingly evident that developmentally appropriate (Bredekamp, 1987) teaching practices should be used with kindergartners in order to provide a sound basis for their
future progress (Burts et al., 1993). Provision of opportunities for oral language development needs to be an integral part of the reading/language arts curriculum in kindergarten as language is looked at as a total communication process. Children can be assessed during their daily naturalistic activities.

There are at least three qualitative models which have been developed to describe oral language, The Functions of Language (Halliday, 1973), Use of Language and Supporting Strategies (Tough, 1976), and The Situational-Discourse-Semantic Context Model (Norris & Hoffman, 1993). It seemed reasonable to suggest that, if all three models were used to describe the language of kindergartners from the groups concerned, the possibility of discovering identifiable patterns would be greatly enhanced. On the negative side, I might find that there would be no useful areas of agreement; on the positive side, I would find mutually supporting patterns. The theories of Jean Piaget (1959) and Lev Vygotsky (1978), set the theoretical structure for the study.

This chapter includes the plan for selection of the classrooms and children, research questions, description of the method for collecting data, plan for analyzing the data, descriptions of the classrooms, and a summary of the methodology.
Selecting the Sample

The two schools where the study took place are in the same school system located in a medium size city (population 400,000) in the Southeastern United States. The enrollment of the public school system is 61,000. The majority racial enrollment of the public schools is African American. For purposes of desegregation ordered by the courts, kindergartners are assigned to their neighborhood schools. If families want to send their kindergarten children to schools outside their neighborhood, the system will bus them to the elementary school in the court-ordered cluster of schools assigned to achieve desegregation.

The whole language classroom (W) was located in a European American suburban neighborhood where inner-city African Americans were bussed. The basal-based classroom (B) was located in the outer part of the city near a large area where African Americans live. The school has a mixed racial enrollment from the surrounding neighborhoods.

I located two kindergarten teachers who were willing to take part in the study and teaching in schools with populations from low SES African American families and middle SES European American families. The low socioeconomic status of the children was identified by the students' qualifications for the Federal Free Lunch Program as reported by the teachers.
One teacher was identified as following the whole-language approach by the principal, by other colleagues, by her own admission, and by observation. The traditional or basal-based teacher was identified in like manner. I obtained all necessary permissions from the school system, the principals, the teachers, and the parents of the children (see Appendix F). The Checklist for Rating Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Kindergarten Classrooms (Charlesworth, et al., 1991, 1993) was used to further describe each classroom (see Appendix A).

The initial intended population consisted of an equal number of children from both races and socioeconomic statuses (see Table 1). The actual population distribution was more diverse (see Table 2).

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intended Population</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>African American</th>
<th>European American</th>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Whole Language Classroom | 4 | 4 |
| Basal-Based Classroom    | 4 | 4 |
Table 2

**Actual Population**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>African American</th>
<th>European American</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td><strong>Low SES</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole Language Classroom</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basal-Based Classroom</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Middle SES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basal-Based Classroom</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The actual population were only children whose parents gave permission for them to be in the study after receiving a letter from me about the study (see Appendix G). There were three African American children from low socioeconomic status families and five children from European American middle socioeconomic status families in the whole language classroom. There were four African American children from low socioeconomic status families, one African American child from a middle socioeconomic status family, two European American children from middle socioeconomic status families, and two European American children from low socioeconomic status families in the basal-based classroom. The one African American child from a middle socioeconomic status family and the two European American children from low socioeconomic status families...
status families were included in descriptive data analyses of the vocabulary proficiency, vocabulary development, complexity of grammar and concept words. They were not included in data using the three models because of the complexity of the reporting systems that were used and because there were no children in these groups in the whole language classroom.

Procedure

Research Questions

After the initial steps of locating the teachers and children were accomplished, the focus of the study was narrowed to the specific action related to the research questions. Spradley (1980) says that the basic component of the qualitative study is the ability to ask the right question or questions. The "grand tour" questions for this study were:

1. What are the patterns of oral language usage of low SES African American children (LSAA) compared with the patterns of oral language used by middle SES European American children (MSEA) observed in a classroom of a teacher guided by the whole language approach?

2. What are the patterns of oral language usage of low SES African American children (LSAA) compared with the patterns of oral language used by middle SES European American children (MSEA) observed in a classroom of a teacher guided by the basal-based approach?
The grand tour questions contain three major factors: "place," schools serving children of low and middle SES families; "actors," European American and African American kindergarten children; and "activities," language during centertime. Six other dimensions add to the richness of description of the grand tour questions (Spradley, 1980). These are descriptions of the physical objects in the environment, the actions, the related activities, the order of events, the anticipated accomplishments, and the emotions felt by me and expressed by the children. These served as guides to me as the participant observer.

The participant observer is the one who goes into the field to discover what is happening. As I did this, participation in the acts being observed was necessary in order for me to be incorporated into the place (Spradley, 1980). I had gained "freedom of access" within the classrooms which enabled me to obtain as normal as possible relationships in the setting (Borg & Gall, 1989).

On my first day in each of the classrooms, the teachers introduced me to the entire class at large grouptime. I explained to the children that I am a teacher of children who are three and four-years-old and want to find out what "kindergarten" children say while doing "their" work. I showed them shirts with the microphones attached and asked that they take turns wearing them during their centertimes.
At this point I was accepted into the "social scene" of the classrooms.

Concentrating on the major features of the study and the minor dimensions as suggested by Spradley (1980), I formulated "mini-tour" questions that I could use as guides in the data collection and later in the domain analysis.

What are the classrooms like?
What are the children like?
What do the children do in centertime?
What materials are used?
What, in detail, is the language during centertime?
What, in detail, are the acts of the children in centertime?
What are the goals for centertime?
What can be learned about the children's feelings during centertime?
What oral language do the children direct to the teacher at centertime? (This question was formed as the domain analysis was in progress during analyses.)

These questions helped me, the participant observer, focus on the entire "social scene" as I entered the classrooms. They facilitated my composition of the "thick description" that is desired in qualitative methodology (Denzin, 1989). The participant observer watches what individuals do, listens to what they say, and interacts with them in order to be socialized into the scene (Spradley, 1980).
As a participant observer in the two kindergarten classrooms, I interacted with the children, after gaining the teachers' approval. This interaction consisted of reading to the class on my first visits to help them become comfortable with my presence and enabled me to introduce the microphones that were worn during the study. I responded to the children's comments or questions. At this point my role became that of a nonparticipant observer because my interactions with the children were minimized. According to Borg and Gall (1989) characteristics of a nonparticipant observer include minimum involvement, unobtrusive equipment, defined specifics, and attention to a sharper focus. This follows the initial interaction of the participant observer.

Most of the time I was observing and writing field notes. Patton (1990) calls the researcher the "participant as observer," describing the observer's activities as not wholly revealed. The teacher and children in the field had partial knowledge of why I was present. The teachers knew that I was collecting language samples related to socioeconomic status and race but not that they were related to the type of literacy programs in the two classrooms. Patton (1990) says this role will limit access to some kinds of information; therefore, the importance of my ability to assimilate into the scene became vital in order to gain information.
Data Collection

I began collecting data from both classrooms during the same week of school in late winter. School had been in session six months, thus giving what should have been an adequate amount of time for differences in teaching methods to have an impact.

Days of the week for the classroom observations were randomly alternated, for a period of six weeks. Five-hundred-ten minutes of language were recorded, the equivalent of 30 minutes total taped time for each of 17 children.

I collected language samples from all of the children whose parents gave permission for them to be in the study. I did this in order to collect as many samples of language from children as I could tape-record, to insure having a more representative group in each classroom. One child in the basal-based program brought in his permission form after the study was in progress. He was not added to the study due to time restraints related to spring holidays and the formal testing required by the school system immediately after the holiday period. The teachers requested that I conclude the collection of data by the holiday period.

I began audiotaping five minute segments of the children’s language in both classrooms. During the audiotaping I made detailed field notes of what each child said and as much about the setting and situation as I could record.
The centers were determined by what was provided in the individual classrooms but I tried to work in those in which the most natural interaction took place. These were centers like the block center, the dramatic play center, the art center, and the book center.

As Spradley (1980) suggests, observations resulted in my taking particular interest in certain areas which helped to focus my observations. These focused observations related to the activities that motivated children to use conversation, materials that created expressive language from the children, ways children used questioning, and ways children gained the teachers’ attention.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed qualitatively applying Spradley’s (1980) domain analysis as a systematic examination of the language to determine its parts and relationship to the whole. This type of analysis is a search for patterns in the data collection. Domains are categories of cultural meaning that include smaller categories. Some domains were predetermined in this study in order to concentrate on the analysis of language. Other domains resulted from the mini-tour questions. Data were analyzed descriptively with respect to:

1. Number of words (total number of words spoken in a five minute period). The total number of different words in the five minute period was calculated. Levy, Wolfgang, &
Koorland (1992) used this measure because "of the importance placed upon practice in the development of language" (p. 251).

2. Mean length of minimal terminable unit (MLT). This is obtained by taking the total number of words spoken in 5 minutes divided by total number of T-units (an independent clause and subordinated clauses or phrases)(Hunt, 1965; Levy, Wolfgang, & Koorland, 1992; O'Donnell et al., 1967). This was used to determine the grammatical complexity of the children's language.

3. Number of concept words (color, shape, number, quantity, space, time). Kindergarteners who can use concept words correctly are considered language competent (Genishi & Dyson, 1984).

4. The Functions of Language Model (Halliday, 1973) (see Appendix B). The seven functions are considered appropriate for analyzing the communication abilities of children. Transcripts of the language were coded by listing and accumulating the number of the lines of language on the transcript according to the functions. Each line was either a complete thought or expression with meaning.

5. Use of Language and Supporting Strategies (Tough, 1976) (see Appendix C). The strategies are useful for determining the development of essential ranges of thinking skills and uses of language. Coding followed the same procedure as for the above functions.
6. Situational-Discourse-Semantic Context Model (Norris & Hoffman, 1993) (see Appendix D). This model is used to analyze the language abilities of children. It is used to obtain a descriptive assessment of language. The same type of coding was used as in the models above.

The language was quantified in order to obtain a qualitative picture of the children's language as a whole. This is in accord with the recent trend of using both qualitative and quantitative data in ethnographic studies (Borg & Gall, 1989). As more data are accumulated qualitatively on larger populations in the future, analyses could include quantitative statistical procedures. According to Lauer and Asher (1988) descriptive studies lead observations into "coding and quantifying" (p. 19).

Compiling the Information

After compiling oral language in descriptive and tabular form, I described each classroom with the intention of developing a summary of the oral language patterns for each type of classroom in relation to the race and socioeconomic status of the children.

The reliability of the study is strengthened by triangulation of the data, using observation, fieldnotes, a classroom check list (DAP), audiotapes, transcriptions of the audiotapes, videotapes, and observations of the videotapes by trained colleagues. Lincoln and Guba (1986) suggest that
these procedures will protect the credibility of the study. They further recommend techniques such as discussion of observations with uninvolved peers to gain their reactions to the data, and lengthy description to increase dependability.

Description of the Classrooms

Basal-based Classroom

As I arrived at the classroom, I noticed that the door was bare except for the room number. To the right of the entrance was a small area with books on a low shelf for the book center. These books were not used while I gathered language samples. To the left was a long, low table with chairs around it where children usually did creative art activities such as using playdough, felt-tip markers, and crayons. The sink and a counter were near the table along the wall. Further down the wall was the dramatic play center surrounded by storage cabinets and movable shelving on the room side. There was a child-size sink, refrigerator, and cabinets with props for play. Next to the dramatic play center was a large open floor space with several low shelves containing puzzles, blocks, and games used at center time, usually after the children completed teacher assigned activities. Three tables were on the opposite side of the room where activities were planned for the children to work on during the time that the teacher directed reading groups. The
reading table was used for work sheets on topics such as rhyming words and other skill oriented topics. The math table was used for worksheets and patterning activities. The third table was used for art worksheet activities such as cutting out puppets, and other objects. Another table was normally used for the reading group working with the teacher. Occasionally books were on a table that was not being used for worksheets. Movable bulletin boards were arranged around the large area rug. Behind them were the children’s cubicles for storage of personal belongings. The bulletin board was sectioned off into a small area displaying a seasonal theme, a calendar, and a pocket chart containing word cards. There was a chalkboard on the wall with the alphabet displayed above it. A book easel was near the table used for reading. A few ditto sheets were displayed near the reading table. The room had an organized, uncluttered feeling and was attractive. Children were busy working and there was the soft buzz of talking as I entered the room each visit.

The ratings on The Checklist for Rating Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Kindergarten Classrooms (Charlesworth et al., 1993) are on the more appropriate side of the continuum more often than on the inappropriate side for the basal-based classroom (see Appendix A). The mean score was calculated to be 3.16 out of a possible five.

In the basal-based classroom, the children were instructed in reading skills in teacher selected small groups,
one group at a time, while the rest of the students worked in centers. The reading materials included workbooks and worksheets. Language samples were not collected from children while they were in the teacher-directed groups. The teacher encouraged the children in drawing and writing on the topic assigned for the day. Upon completion of the table assignments the children spent time in the block center, the game center, or the dramatic play center. According to the checklist rating and relative to personal observations in other kindergartens in the school system, this basal-based classroom provided more opportunities to do developmentally appropriate (Bredekamp, 1987) type activities and use developmentally appropriate types of materials than many others.

**Whole Language Classroom**

At the entrance to the whole-language classroom, many pieces of children's art were displayed. Children had used a large variety of art media such as paint, felt-markers, crayons, collage materials, scissors, and other materials. The room's arrangement included an area rug for grouptime, a book center, a reading center, a mathematics center, a science center, a dramatic play center, and an art center. These centers contained tables with five or six chairs surrounded by shelves that helped to define the centers and contained materials that were used in the individual centers.
One area of the room, the dramatic play center, had a simulated brick house with a white picket fence made of cardboard representing the pig's house in the story, *The Three Little Pigs*. The teacher's desk was located near this area in a corner out of view of most persons entering the classroom. The walls of the classroom contained many pieces of artwork representing class group work and individual work. There was string hung across the classroom near the center with artwork hanging from it. Themes from stories could be identified in the artwork along with recent holidays. Children's personal belongings were near the door closest to the play yard in small, sectioned shelving. On the wall over the grouptime rug were geometric shapes with children's names written on them which identified the groups that the children were assigned to when they went to centertime.

The room was bright, cheerful, and well organized in a cluttered way due to the amount of materials provided for the children and the display of their work. The room had a feeling of interest and excitement as I entered it for each visit.

When rating the whole language classroom using The Checklist for Rating Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Kindergarten Classrooms (Charlesworth et al., 1991, 1993) high scores were obtained on each item (see Appendix A). The mean score was 4.16 out of a possible five.
Children moved at their own pace. I observed the teacher as she used a checklist to note the children who achieved certain skills (e.g., math sentences, counting, vowel identification). Each child was positively reinforced as he/she worked at a comfortable pace. During centertime the teacher moved about assisting children with literacy skills or other types of help as needed. There was peer tutoring, especially at the science center as they were cooking, and at the mathematics center. A great deal of peer conversation concerning the activity in the center took place. I did observe a reading group time held once while I was in the room. A language experience chart relating to the theme of the week and the assigned activity in the reading center was used. Worksheets and workbooks were not used in the whole language classroom. Science and social studies topics were the basis for the centertime activities.

I thought that literature would be the basis for many activities since this was known as a whole language classroom but did not find this to be true. Artwork related to literature was displayed in the room, however, such as trolls under a bridge and the three little pigs' brick house.
Description of the Children

Basal-based Classroom

Language from nine children was recorded in this classroom, including two European Americans from middle SES families, two European Americans from low SES families, one African American from a middle SES family, and four African American children from low SES families. Chall, Jacobs, and Baldwin (1990) used similarly small numbers of children from each classroom for their language study in order to examine language with greater intensity. I also believe the smaller number enabled me to use more observations and types of measurements in my study.

I have assigned pseudonyms to the study children and the teachers in the study. In the basal-based classroom (B) they are:

Katie and Brenda - Middle SES, European American students
Tina and Tom - Low SES, European American students
Thad - Middle SES, African American student
Cade, Roy, Ann, and Tara - Low SES, African American students
Ms. Smith - teacher
Whole Language Classroom

Language from eight children was recorded, including five European American children from middle SES families, and three African American children from low SES families.

Their pseudonyms are:

Sue, Chris, Donna, Allen, Andy - Middle SES, European American students

Vera, Tony, and Toby - Low SES, African American students

Ms. Turner - teacher

Discussion

The target number of children for the study was eight children from each classroom. This number was selected to represent each room since most kindergartens in the area average around twenty or twenty-one children. Eight children was almost forty percent of the class and should have been representative of the class population.

The basal-based classroom was labeled classroom B. The whole language classroom was labeled classroom W. Acronyms for low socioeconomic status African American (LSAA) or low socioeconomic status European American (LSEA), middle socioeconomic status African American (MSAA) or middle socioeconomic status European American (MSEA) were used for ease of description.
Collection of the Language Samples

Language of individual children was recorded by using wireless microphones. These were attached to T-shirts with pictures of Aladdin on the front that were purchased at a local department store. I opened the shirts down the back, hemmed, and then sewed velcro on the opening in order to close the shirts after the children had slipped their arms through the sleeves. A small audio-recorder was connected to the central wireless control device. Three microphones, labeled A, B, and C, were controlled from the central machine. Three shirts had real microphones; two had fake microphones placed in them. The fake microphones, small blocks painted black with a wire and small fake mike, were attached to the shirts resembling the shirts with the real microphones. Children who were not part of the study but who expressed the desire to wear a shirt were able to wear one of these shirts. I was able to move the shirts around to all of the children who expressed a desire to wear one. Taking turns with the shirts took the spotlight off of the children in the study.

Each day after audiotaping was completed I transcribed the language, numbering each line. If more than one thought was on a single line, alphabet letters were used to distinguish the separate thoughts. I then coded the language according to the various criteria that had been established before the study was begun. Transcriptions of the language
from both classrooms amounted to 1521 lines of speech from the whole language classroom, and 1336 lines from the basal-based classroom. Since more than thirty minutes of language was recorded for each child, the tapes were played again and I timed thirty minutes of language while following the transcripts. I marked the timed segments of language for analysis. The segments selected for analysis began from the last language recorded so that the initial recordings where the children may have been more aware of the microphones could be omitted.

Summary

The planned quantification of the data was accomplished in order to describe qualitatively the patterns and themes that were occurring in the children’s oral language during centertime. In their study of language in sociodramatic play, Levy, Wolfgang, and Koorland (1992) suggest that "the direct measure of frequency for various language behaviors is well-suited to the assessment of language performance or proficiency" (p. 251). Using qualitative methodology requires that behavior be described as closely to the "actual human activity as possible" (Levy, Wolfgang, & Koorland, 1992). The methodology in this study is an attempt to describe the children’s language as accurately as possible.
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The study investigated the oral language of low and middle SES African American kindergarten children and low and middle SES European American kindergarten children in two classrooms using different approaches to develop literacy abilities. This chapter includes, first, the research questions and discussion of the method of analyzing data, second, proportions of time that language was collected in the various centers, third, the descriptive domain analyses of the language in the classrooms including tabular information, and fourth, domain analyses of language samples guided by the mini-tour questions. Discussion describing the triangulation of the data concludes the chapter.

Introduction

Two main research questions guided the researcher in this study.

1. What are the patterns of oral language usage of low SES African American children (LSAA) compared with the patterns of oral language used by middle SES European American children (MSEA) observed in a classroom of a teacher guided by the whole language approach?
2. What are the patterns of oral language usage of low SES African American children (LSAA) compared with the patterns of oral language used by middle SES European American children (MSEA) observed in a classroom of a teacher guided by the basal-based approach?

Qualitative methods of analyzing data are used to report the results of this study. Descriptive analyses of the domains included vocabulary proficiency (number of words), vocabulary development (number of different words), total number of thought units, and number of concept words; and the more complex model-related functions, strategies, and situational, discourse, semantic context. Finally, domains derived from the mini-tour questions were used to complete the analyses.

Analysis of the Amount of Time Language Was Collected in Each Center in the Two Classrooms

Description of the Amount of Time Spent in Each Center in Classroom W

The largest percentage of time collecting language samples was in the reading center in classroom W (see Table 3). Language collected in three other centers was very close in the percentage of recorded time. These were the math center, the art center, and the science center. The children
were in the book center on two occasions when language was recorded and on one occasion in the dramatic play center (see Table 3). The book center and dramatic play center were not open for the children to use on every visit when language samples were collected.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Center</th>
<th>Amount of Time</th>
<th>Percent of Time</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dramatic Play</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Center</td>
<td>70 minutes</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math Center</td>
<td>45 minutes</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art Center</td>
<td>45 minutes</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Center</td>
<td>21 minutes</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science Center</td>
<td>49 minutes</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Description of the Amount of Time Spent in Each Center in Classroom B

The largest percentage of time collecting language samples was in the art center in classroom B, followed by the dramatic play center, and games on the floor (see Table 4). Language recorded while using worksheets for art activities was next in amount with less percentage of time collected in the reading, math, blocks, and book centers.
Table 4

Analysis of the Amount of Time Language Was Collected in Each Center in Classroom B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Center</th>
<th>Amount of Time</th>
<th>Percent of Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dramatic Play</td>
<td>61 minutes</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Table</td>
<td>23 minutes</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math Table</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art - Worksheets</td>
<td>36 minutes</td>
<td>13%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creative Art Center</td>
<td>70 minutes</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blocks</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Games on Floor</td>
<td>52 minutes</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books on Table</td>
<td>8 minutes</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Descriptive Analyses of the Domains

Total Number of Words: Vocabulary Proficiency

By examining the number of words used in the recorded language samples, I determined the proficiency of the children’s vocabulary. A five minute sample of language was selected from the thirty minutes of language for each child. The representative sample was the five-minute period containing the most language for each child. The averages for the collections of language appear in Table 5.

On average, the children in the whole language classroom (W) used 6.4% more words than those in the basal-based
classroom (B) in the timed segments, differing by nine words per child. The low socioeconomic African American children (LSAA) in classroom W, averaged four more words in usage than the middle socioeconomic children (MSEA) in their classroom and more than all but the low socioeconomic European American group (LSEA) in classroom B (see Table 5).

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Class W</th>
<th>Class B</th>
<th>W - B</th>
<th>(W - B)/B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LSAA</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSEA</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSAA</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSEA</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Group</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of Different Words: Vocabulary Development

I counted the number of different words used by each child in order to evaluate vocabulary development. The average number of different words used, per class, was identical when rounded to the nearest whole word (72 words) (see Table 6). With only about three words more in classroom
B's average, variety in vocabulary was very similar when comparing LSAA groups. MSEA groups were almost identical. The basal-based classroom averaged more variety in vocabulary in both of the low socioeconomic status groups. In the whole-language classroom there was hardly any difference (less than one word) between the LSAA and MSEA groups (see Table 6).

Table 6

**Vocabulary Development as Measured by Average Total Number of Different Words Spoken in Thirty-Minute Samples**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Classroom W</th>
<th>Classroom B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LSAA</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSEA</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSAA</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSEA</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Group</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Mean Length of Thought**

Mean-length-of-thought (MLT) units were calculated to analyze the length of thought and the complexity of grammar in the children's oral language in each type of classroom. The mean-length-of-thought was obtained by taking the total number of words spoken in five minutes divided by the total number of thought units (T-units) (Hunt, 1965; O'Donnell et al., 1967).
On the average, the difference in MLT between total classroom samples was very small, with classroom W students having 5.78 words as the MLT and classroom B students having 6.06 words (see Table 5). The differences between the LSAA and MSAA groups within schools was almost identical with the MSEA group having a small edge over the LSAA group in the whole-language classroom, but with the opposite in the basal-based classroom.

Table 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Classroom W</th>
<th>CLASSROOM B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LSAA</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSEA</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSAA</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSEA</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Group</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of Specific Words Relating to Children’s Literature

There were very few phrases that related specifically to children’s literature. Those that were are included in the domain analysis of the language observations (see Appendix E).
Number of Concept Words

Concept words include those that identify color, shape, number (one, two), quantity (many, few), space, and time. Genishi and Dyson (1984) suggest that language competent kindergartners correctly use concept words for color, shape, number, quantity, space, and time. After counting all of the concept words in each category using the entire sample of thirty minutes per child, I averaged them. The totals confirmed that more concept words were used in Classroom W (average = 56.88) than in Classroom B (average = 41.00 (see Table 8).

In classroom W the LSAA children averaged considerably more concept words (75) than the MSEA group (46). In classroom B the LSAA children averaged 29.25 concept words, a relatively low number, but also above the MSEA average of only 23. It should be noted that both these groups averaged significantly lower than the LSEA and MSAA groups, whose higher scores brought the total group’s average up considerably.

The differences in the classrooms in the area of concept usage was context related. The differences were probably due to the activities taking place during centertime at the time the language was collected. For example, in classroom W, a different grouping of children were in the math center each time that I recorded language. Therefore, when studying Table 8, keep in mind that there was a large quantity of number
words used in classroom W. The main reason for measuring concept words was to determine whether all groups were capable of using them correctly. The children in classroom B did not use the concept of shape in the language that I recorded but I would suggest that they are capable of using "shape" words. The activities taking place in the centers during the recording sessions simply did not elicit shape terms. The reason for this suggestion is that these same children used many other concept words accurately.

Table 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Classroom W</th>
<th>Classroom B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LSAA</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSEA</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSAA</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSEA</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Group</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Halliday's Functions

Halliday (1973) described the language of children in natural environments by organizing their language according to certain categories he called "functions" (see Appendix B). The classroom was the "natural environment" used in this
study. When classroom W was compared with classroom B using his seven functions, some interesting observations were made (see Figure 1).

The Instrumental (I want) function, used to express a desire, was found more frequently in classroom W, with MSEA children using it more often (see Figures 2 & 3). For example, three boys were looking at books in the book center and Andy (W) said, "I wish I had a blue car like that. Wouldn’t you?" Another example was when Vera (W) said, "I’m going to pick something else," as she looked at a book made by the class about each child’s favorite food. Several children were following the book as she read each page. The Instrumental function was used when Katie (B)(MSEA) said, "Ms. Smith, may I color it?" She was referring to a Mardi Gras mask that she was working on at one of the tables used for a center. Just a few minutes later Katie said "Now, can I decorate it with some of this stuff?" (referring to a container with strings, ribbons, and other materials in it). Cade (B)(LSAA), who was working on a mask said, "I want....Yea," and reached for the stickers that Ms. Smith held up as he began to make his request. He did not know what to call them and responded to gestures from the teacher. Roy (B)(LSAA) said, "I need black. I need black. I need black." He was requesting a felt-tip marker in the same center activity.
The next three functions were also more frequently used in classroom W (see Figure 1). These were Regulatory, Interaction, and Personal. The Regulatory function was highest in classroom W in the MSEA group (see Figures 1, 2, & 3). Chris (W) said, "O.K. That's enough cleaning ya'll. Now we need to dry clean," as his group cleaned up the science center at the end of centertime. They were using wet paper towels to wipe so "dry clean" means to dry up the water they had spread over the table and counter.

In classroom B the low SES group used the Regulatory Function more than the middle SES group in that classroom (see Figure 2). Ann (B) provided us with an example when she said, "Oh, I got to wait," after she requested Ms. Smith to write the word "boat" on the chalkboard. She was directing herself at the moment. A short time later she attempted to influence another's behavior when she said, "You got to make you boat."

The Interaction Function used to maintain social interaction for pleasure was used the least in the classroom W LSAA group (see Figure 3). As Toby (W) made sheep at the art center with black paint and cotton balls she said to a neighbor, "You can use some of mine." Then she said, "I'm going to hold it so you can get some." She demonstrated good rapport with other children.

Roy (B) (LSAA) gave us an example of the Interaction Function at the art center when he said, "Hey, that's cute.
You did that? You did that?" then he laughed and made sounds to himself.

The Personal Function was used more in the whole language classroom in both middle and low SES groups and used the most among European Americans (see Figures 2 & 3). Andy (W)(MSEA) asserted his own importance and uniqueness when he said, "I'm just going to make him a dart thing like this," as he worked on a dinosaur diorama in the science center. Tony (W)(LSAA) expressed feeling and his own importance when he said, "That is real, real, real weird. I going to draw another one. I messed up. I keep on messing up." He was drawing with a marker in the art center. He wadded up a paper and got another piece.

The Heuristic function, exploring the environment, was used similarly in both classrooms. Katie (B)(MSEA) said, "How do you spell 'this'?" She continued to request information about correct spelling of other words as she created a book she entitled My First Book. Another example of the Heuristic Function was at the art center when Donna (W)(MSEA) said, "Ms. Turner, is this light gray?" She had mixed paints and wanted information. In the math center Tony (W)(LSAA) asked, "Chris, why did you put it up in there?"

The Imaginative function, using pretend language, was frequently used in classroom B (see Tables 3, 4, and Figure 1). It was used more than twice as much in classroom B during centertime since the dramatic play center was opened each time
after my first visit and was used as a regular center where the children were allowed to talk in low tones. I often spent time recording in this center due to the fact that the children were told to be quiet in the other centers. Often when they would wear a microphone as they worked at tables, language was not recorded because they did not talk as they worked. Classroom W did not have a consistently available dramatic play center (see Table 3).

In the dramatic play center Tara (B)(LSAA) looked toward the dolls and said, "The baby's crying. Time for her to wake up." She moved to the play stove and said, "00000. This is hot. I'm hungry. I'm starving." Imaginative play did take place in the whole-language classroom at the math center while Vera (W)(LSAA) was working with colored pebbles during a time where the children had not received specific directions from the teacher. She said, "Yep, you have to pay for all the jewelry that you took out of my store. Here you go, seventy-two. Here's all the jewelry. That's all I'm going to give you cause I always run out." A few minutes later Vera said, "Pretend like you want some newspaper and you only had one dollar to give me so you want some change." Although the amount of sentences in the Imaginative Function was larger in the basal-based classroom (B), examples of longer and more complicated speech were found in the whole language classroom (W).
Both classrooms had a large percentage of oral language in the Informative Function which Halliday described as a later developing function (see Figure 1). In classroom W the children used the Informative Function more than the children in classroom B (see Figure 1). Andy (W)(MSEA) said to a student sitting by him at the science table, "We're not going to the library." The middle SES children used the Informative Function more than the low SES children in both rooms (see Figure 2), yet Roy (B)(LSAA) said, "Hey, and I caught a fish like that," as he worked on a picture of boats and fish drawn on a background of water made with crayons. When considering race, classroom B's (B) European Americans used the Informative Function the most (see Figure 3). An example of this was when Brenda (B)(MSEA), who was tracing around cookie cutters said, "That is a zebra." Children in classroom B often used language in the Informative Function consisting of brief statements about objects in their present environment.
Figure 1. Summary of language coded according to Halliday's functions by level of maturity for classrooms W and B.

I. = Instrumental  II. = Regulatory  III. = Interaction
IV. = Personal  V. = Heuristic  VI. = Imaginative
VII. = Informative
Figure 2. Comparison of Halliday's functions by socioeconomic status (SES) for classrooms W and B.

I. = Instrumental  II. = Regulatory  III. = Interaction
IV. = Personal  V. = Heuristic  VI. = Imaginative
VII. = Informative

A = Classroom W, middle SES
B = Classroom W, low SES
C = Classroom B, middle SES
D = Classroom B, low SES
Figure 3. Comparison of Halliday’s functions by race for classrooms W and B.

I. = Instrumental  II. = Regulatory  III. = Interaction
IV. = Personal  V. = Heuristic  VI. = Imaginative
VII. = Informative

A = Classroom W, European American  
B = Classroom B, African American  
C = Classroom W, European American  
D = Classroom B, African American
When Halliday’s Functions are summarized on a table, it is clear that, while the LSAA whole language group in classroom W was not as expressive as the MSEA group in the same classroom, they were considerably more expressive than either the LSAA or the MSEA group in the basal-based classroom (see Table 9). In classroom B, the LSEA (2 children) and MSAA (1 child) were very different from the other groups in this analysis.

Table 9

Average Frequency of the Use of Halliday’s Functions Per Classroom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Classroom W</th>
<th>Classroom B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LSAA</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSEA</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSAA</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSEA</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Group</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Use of Language and Supporting Strategies

Tough (1976) developed strategies based on Halliday’s (1973) functions, but the strategies are more detailed and are intended for school-age children (Genishi & Dyson, 1984). I applied these strategies to the same language transcripts that
were examined in the previous sections of this study (see Appendix C). When we look at Figure 4 we see the same pattern of use of these strategies across all seven strategies. Classroom W had a greater amount of language for each strategy except for the last strategy, Imagining (see Figure 4). In fact, Classroom B had twice the amount of language in the Imagining Strategy. A great more time was spent collecting language in the dramatic play center in classroom B (see Tables 3 and 4). After my initial visit, a dramatic play center was opened each time that I recorded language and a considerable amount of language was recorded in this setting. Language in the dramatic play center was most often categorized as imaginative.

Tough (1983) suggests that the uses of language have a developmental sequence. Early efforts of the child to speak are "self-maintaining, directing, and reporting." These were the strategies used most often in both classrooms (see Figure 4). If we consider these strategies by levels of socioeconomic status the children in classroom W used Self-maintaining and Directing Strategies most often (see Figure 5). Reporting was used more than any other strategy by MSEA students in classroom B, the basal-based classroom. It was the strategy used most often in classroom B by European American students (see Figure 6).

An example of Self-maintaining language from Andy (W)(MSEA) is: "No, you." (Response when a nearby child said,
"get me a piece of paper.") He is protecting his own self-interest. This could also be considered "directing" as he directs the action of another. Andy (W) continues to use self-maintaining language in this scenario as he says, "You took my chair," and "Ms. Turner, I want to get a lot of pieces," [of paper in the art center].

Roy (B)(LSAA) uses Self-maintaining language as he says, "Hey, Ms. Smith, can, can I write a motor boat?" He is expressing a desire. "I need paper," continues the self-maintaining strategy.

An example of the Directing Strategy, often found in both classrooms, is used when Tony (W)(LSAA) tells Allen, "Look, look, look how many raindrop I got. Look at all five raindrop. One, two, three, four, five. I have to do it over." This was at the math center. Tony directs Allen who is sitting next to him and then he directs himself. He said this with excitement and enjoyment as he worked on the math activity.

Chris (W)(MSEA) is using the Directing Strategy as he helps Tony with his math activity when he says, "O.K. You got three raindrops, two suns. Put two. Put two. Put two right there. No, Tony, like that. Which one, two? Now put three. Do five." Competent peer Chris scaffolds Tony to correct answers in math.

The Reporting Strategy used the most frequently in classroom B (see Figure 4) by middle SES children is
illustrated by Thad (B)(MSAA) who said: "I, uh, I have a, I have a jet. The green one so fast." He was looking at a book with another boy. He often repeated what the other boy said, but was involved in conversation over a book which was on one of the tables.

In the dramatic center Roy (B)(LSAA) provided us with an example of Reporting as he reflected on the experience and his own feelings when he said to Ms. Smith, "Hey, we are having a lot of fun."

Toby (W)(LSAA), sitting at the reading activity table responded with a Reporting Strategy as she answered a student who asked her which is the best picture as she showed her two pictures. Toby compared the pictures and said, "I say Shane."

Sue (W)(MSEA) provided an example of Logical Reasoning when she explained the process of using materials in the art center to me. She explained, "When you saw a red thing in those boxes or you see a green thing you can get things." Her explanation was not complete but I understood from her movements that red meant that you could not use those art materials. Sue continued, "There a green thing right there," as she pointed to a green strip taped to the shelf. "And green means you can."

Ann (B)(LSAA) used Logical Reasoning when she explained to another child at the math center, "I don’t need to write. I’m finished. I did both of them."
Both of the examples of Logical Reasoning could be categorized as Reporting, although I categorized them as Logical Reasoning because the children gave information and explained the process or gave a reason for the reported information.

Predicting was one of the lesser used strategies by all of the children (see Figure 4). It was not used at all by the African American group in classroom B (see Figure 6) but it was used in classroom W in the African American group when Vera (W)(LSAA) anticipated an event as she pretended at the math center saying, "I know you want to buy these." Another day at the reading center Vera anticipated completing her work when she said, "I'm going to try to get through."

Another example of Predicting occurred when Sue (W)(MSEA) forecasted the event of her birthday and the length of time it would take to get here. She was at the art center when she said, "Well, my birthday party is kinda long. March, April, May, June, July, August. Hmm, August, not too long."

The least used strategy in both classrooms was Projecting (see Figure 4). It was not used at all in classroom B in the middle SES group or in the low SES African American group. It was used in classroom W in all groups (see Figures 5 & 6).

Andy (W)(MSEA) was projecting into the experience of others as he tried to help Allen who was crying for his mother. She had come into the classroom to talk to the teacher. When she left she hugged Allen and he began to cry.
Sue suggested that Andy go get Chris as a way to stop Allen's crying. Andy said, "I'll go get him. I'll go get him."

Chris (W)(MSEA) asked when he was ever going to quit crying and Andy responded by Predicting when he said, "I don't know, about two-thousand years."

Imagining is the last classification of children's talk that Tough (1983) describes. In classroom B where it was used numerous times, Katie (B)(MSEA) provided a good example as she played in the dramatic center with two other girls. She asked one of them for her "play" name then she pretended, "Tina, would you go write for me because she is being bad? In other words, write here. Go write. Now, you can listen to me. You have to do all the write with me cause you ain't working. Well, you not doing what I ask you."

Roy (B)(LSAA) was in the dramatic play center with two girls when he said expressively, "Oooooo, man said, we gonna have to eat all this food, huh? And the Easter egg, we gonna eat the Easter eggs, right? Ooooo, ya'll look. Hey, we got to wash some dirty, dirty dishes. Your and the dishes got to be clean."

Tony (W)(LSAA) gave us an example of Imaginative language when he responded to Vera who was at the math center pretending to make muffins. Tony responded, "I've got my pancakes ready. They ain't my muffins. Give me a muffin."

Logical Reasoning, Predicting, Projecting, and Imagining are advanced learning strategies that Tough (1983) says appear
later in development. These strategies can overlap Directing, Reporting and Reasoning (Tough, 1983). They represent more complex thinking. As I studied the transcripts for both classes, I found fewer examples of language that could be classified as more advanced strategies with the exception of Imagining (see Figure 4).

By summarizing the data within these two levels of learning strategies (early and advanced) in Table 10, we get results that may give us some of our clearest indications of the relationships and differences between types of teaching and socioeconomic groups (see Table 10). This also helps overcome the inherent overlapping strategy limitation encountered when working with Tough's categories, thus enabling us to obtain more objective information for comparison. In the early learning group of strategies there was virtually no difference between schools in the ratio of LSAA to MSEA performance. In the advanced learning strategies there appeared to be a dramatic difference between the schools. In the whole language class, the advanced learning ratio of LSAA to MSEA was 1.6 to 1 (32 to 19.8), while in the basal-based group it was exactly even (18 to 18).
In both the early and advanced learning categories, the number of frequencies recorded for the whole language LSAA group was higher than the basal-based LSAA group. Even when you combine the two levels of language learning, the ratio of LSAA whole language over basal-based is almost 1.4 to 1; the whole language children averaged 91.33 expressions (strategies) of language compared to 66.5 for the basal-based group.
Figure 4. Summary of language coded according to Tough's strategies for classrooms W and B.

I. = Self-maintaining  II. = Directing  III. = Reporting
IV. = Logical  V. = Predicting  VI. = Projecting
VII. = Imagining
Figure 5. Comparison of Tough's strategies by socioeconomic status (SES) for classrooms W and B.

I. = Self-maintaining II. = Directing III. = Reporting IV. = Logical V. = Predicting VI. = Projecting VII. Imagining

A = Classroom W, middle SES
B = Classroom W, low SES
C = Classroom B, middle SES
D = Classroom B, low SES
Figure 6. Comparison of Tough's strategies by race for classrooms W and B.

I. = Self-maintaining  II. = Directing  III. = Reporting  
IV. = Logical  V. = Predicting  VI. = Projecting  
VII. = Imagining

A = Classroom W, European American
B = Classroom W, African American
C = Classroom B, European American
D = Classroom B, African American
The Situational-Discourse-Semantic Context Model

The purpose of The Situational-Discourse-Semantic Context Model (S-D-S Model)(see Appendix D) is "to describe what a child is doing within a meaningful context of language use," "to make interpretations of how children are approaching a task," and therefore why they may be responding in a particular manner" (Norris & Hoffman, 1993). The S-D-S Model demonstrates that language viewed from the whole perspective involves many parts. Norris and Hoffman (1993) emphasize that the child understands language as a whole before seeing the parts that make up the language process.

I have used the model to examine language use from three viewpoints: Situational Context, Discourse Context, and Semantic Context (see Appendix D). The Situational Context includes the materials and information about a topic that the child is involved in learning about. The lowest level of learning in this area requires the presence of the actual objects for the child to gain information through experience. Each level that the child advances through in the situational context becomes more abstract as each involves more learning from oral discussion or reading.

The Discourse Context includes the material discussed during a learning situation. The discourse ranges from unstructured talk to very organized language involving scientific or cultural knowledge. Language includes feelings and reactions to an event. At the highest level children are
able to organize narratives relating feelings, plans, and reactions.

The Semantic Context involves the meaning of the language from simple description to evaluation. Language is evaluated according to the abstraction that is used during discourse.

**Situational Context**

The language used in the Situational Context is related to objects in the child's environment. The lowest level begins at the bottom of the S-D-S Model or the "Contextualized" end of the continuum and extends from Level I, identified as Egocentered to Level V, Logical (see Appendix D). At these levels, language is related to objects or actions in the child's immediate environment; its use would be considered the least organized or less mature. From Level VI - Egocentered through Level X - Logical, language is related to objects that are not present in the environment and involves mental imaging of the objects or events. These are on the "Decontextualized" upper end of the continuum. Language used at these levels would be considered more organized or more mature (Norris & Hoffman, 1993).

When using the Situational Context Model, Norris and Hoffman (1993) point out that two decisions must be made. The first is whether the language is related to the present context (Contextualized) or is related to a created event through imaging developed with language (Decontextualized).
The second decision involves which of the ten levels on the continuum suits the cognitive organization of the language.

In Figure 7, the uses of language in each area of the Situational Context Model are graphed by classroom. Classroom W was higher in use of all of the levels except for Level V, Logical on the contextualized end of the continuum and the two highest levels on the decontextualized level, Logical and Symbolic. There was no language recorded in either classroom that could be categorized at the highest levels.

The language recordings made in the two classrooms in this study give us examples of the levels of Situational Context beginning with Level I, Egocentered. At this level children are concerned with reaction to their environment through knowledge of their own bodies. Andy (W)(MSEA) gives an example of Level I, Egocentered when he claims his own space as he uses crayons on computer paper, "I'm right there." Vera (W)(LSAA), who is looking at books in the book center says, "I sitting by self." In both cases the children are speaking to themselves.

The children in classroom B provide very few examples of Level I language. Roy (B)(LSAA) says, "Ms. Smith, may I go to the bathroom?" expressing a physical need. Katie (B) (MSEA) says, "I don't have to," as she gives an angel to a girl by her instead of the boy that requested that she give it to him. She is speaking to herself.
Figure 7. Situational context dimension of Norris and Hoffman's integrated model of language for classrooms W and B.

I. = Egocentered  II. = Decentered  III. = Relational  
IV. = Symbolic  V. = Logical  VI. = Egocentered 
VII. = Decentered  VIII. = Relational  IX. = Symbolic  
X. = Logical
Contextualized Decentered, Level II, was used when Sue (W)(MSEA) carried on a conversation with another girl at the art center as they painted. Sue said, "I want this paper, you goose. What did you write?" In both cases she addressed the other child about the materials they were using in their work. At the math center, Tony (W)(LSAA) shook the beans in a can and said to the student next to him, "Did you see how many I had?"

Katie (B)(MSEA) said, "Thank," when the student sitting beside her told her that she could have the pink string. Thad (B)(MSAA) was looking at a book with several other children. He repeated, "race car," and responded "yea," as the other child requested to see the "bad one," referring to pictures of cars in the book. His language serves to illustrate the Decentered Level by "maintaining social contact and sharing joint reference towards objects" (Norris & Hoffman, 1993).

Level III, Contextualized Relational, was used when Andy (W)(MSEA) directed the child next to him about their work, "Don’t make a long book." They were at the science center. As Toby (W)(LSAA) worked at the reading table she used this function as she said, "You can still get it out cause the, you can use you finger after you write the finger, it doesn’t matter. It doesn’t matter." Another child has said she is going to tattle on the child that Toby tries to comfort.

Level III was still used as Katie (B)(MSEA) asked for help when writing in a book she was creating, "How do you
spell 'this'?" While Brandy (B)(MSEA) worked with playdough, she said, "It don’t matter what you make." Tom (B)(LSEA), who was playing Bingo, said, "I’m still over here," as he pointed out the relationship of where he was in reference to the others in the game.

Toby (W)(LSAA) used Level IV, Contextualized Symbolic language, while working on sheep made from cotton balls and black paint at the art center. She said, "You can use some of mine." The objects in this case were replicas of the mental representation of sheep. Chris (W)(MSEA) in the same setting said, "A animal’s black."

Ann (B)(LSAA) gave us an example of the substitution of objects in Contextualized-Symbolic language when she said, "Then, it must be Snow White." She was putting together a puzzle with another student. Thad (B)(MSAA) said, "Red Apple. No, I don’t have one," as he played a Bingo Game. He was looking for the color and shape of the red apple.

Donna (W)(MSEA) was in the dramatic play center in classroom A. She said to the other children playing in the center, "Get out the street, baby, now! (angrily) She suppose to get out. Better not get out the street again, baby." This is an example of Level V, Contextualized Logical. In the same setting, Vera (W)(LSAA) used this same level when she said, "Now, one of ya’ll can be the baby."

Tara (B)(LSAA) used Contextualized-Logical in the dramatic play center when she said, "I not going to church
like that," in response to another child's direction to wear certain clothes in the center. While pretending in the same center, Tina (B)(LSEA) said, "Momma, are we going to have a picnic?" She was taking and assigning a role in an imaginary event.

The Decontextualized level of the Situational Context has fewer samples of language in both classrooms (see Figure 7). Decontextualized-Self is described as language about objects, people, or actions that are not related to the present environment. Sue (W)(LSEA) said, "I love pepperoni pizza," as she worked at the art center. This was a comment made during a discussion about birthday parties. It was not related to the present environment or the work of the students. Tony (W)(LSAA) said, "Pigs, hey, those are easy." He was using the abstract concept "easy" to describe the work that a student was doing in the reading center.

Brenda (B)(MSEA) said, "On top of that McDonald thing, they got Ronald McDonald there. It a big blow-up thing on the way to school. I saw it, and my mom." She was describing objects that were not in her present environment. Cade (B)(LSAA) said, "My daddy let me ride it." He was telling about a "motorcycle bike" relating an experience with an object not in his present environment.

At the Decontextualized-Symbolic level Vera (W)(LSAA) recreated an event for another child when she directed him to "Pretend like you want some newspaper and you only had one
dollar to give me so you want some change." This was an experience she may have witnessed and now tried to make it relevant from another's perspective. This was the only language for Vera that could be identified for this level on the Situational Context Model (see Appendix D).

Sue (W)(MSEA) gave us another example of the Decontextualized Symbolic level when she said, "After you talk to me you don't hear." This speech was related to the microphone that she was wearing. Sue was at the art center when she described this for another child.

Both of these examples were from Classroom W. There were no examples from Classroom B of the Decontextualized-Symbolic level (see Figure 7).

At the Decontextualized-Relational level, Donna (W) (MSEA) gave a good example while playing in the dramatic play center where a gate was around the three little pigs' house. She explained the rules of a situation when she said, "Babies can't open this kind of stuff." Tony (W)(LSAA) gave another example of the Decontextualized Relational level while shaking the beans in a can at the math center. He said, "Gonna ma have to get it." He anticipated the number that he needed to solve his math problem.

In Classroom B, which had fewer examples of language at the Decontextualized-Relational level (see Figure 7), Tom (B) (MSAA) explained an operation while playing Bingo, "I'm not. I'm just going to call out. I'm not finding it." Ann (B)
(LSAA) explained her preference in the procedure of putting a puzzle together when she said, "Leave me alone and let me do this."

There were no examples of language that could be classified as Decontextualized Symbolic or Logical for either classroom (see Figure 7).

**Discourse Context**

The Discourse Context functions as a method for describing language that is used for the purpose of "transmitting factual information, expressing personal impression, or contemplating an event through literature" (Norris & Hoffman, 1993). Every conversation uses one of the Discourse Functions, on a continuum from language used to express personal thoughts or feelings, to participate in conversation or giving directions, to language used in story form. In the Discourse Context, Norris and Hoffman (1993) suggest that two decisions are necessary for identifying language levels in this context. Is the language more narrative, which is the Poetic Function, more expository, which is the Transactional Function, or more personal, which is the Expressive Function? The second decision concerns which of the eight levels of discourse best describes the language. The Poetic Function of language in the Discourse Context is described as the use of language for enjoyment such as in literature, while the Transactional Function is used to
accomplish the transmitting of information or action. The Discourse Context can be used to describe "talk" progressing from the more unorganized personal expression to "talk" used to communicate organized details to others.

On the Discourse continuum, below Level I (see Appendix D) is the Expressive Function. Language is more private at this level, attending to personal needs rather than for social interaction. I categorized the Expressive Function at the various levels, and have compared the various classrooms and subgroups at the Expressive Level as well as the Transactional, and the Poetic Levels. The Expressive Function can be found in the language samples as I write about them for each of the levels on the continuum.

Transactional-Expressive Function was demonstrated by Andy (W)(MSEA) who said, "No, you," in response to a child who made a request for him to get them a piece of paper. His own desire was the motive for this response. This comment was not linked to other conversation and was associated only for the moment to the language of the other child.

At the Expressive-Poetic Function, Sue (W)(MSEA) shared her feelings when she said, "Thank you, Cassie," as they were coloring at the reading center. This was not related to other thoughts expressed in the conversation.
**Figure 8.** Discourse context dimension of Norris and Hoffman's integrated model of language for classrooms W and B.

I. = Collection  
II. = Descriptive List  
III. = Ordered Sequence  
IV. = Reactive Sequence  
V. = Abbreviated Structure  
VI. = Complete Structure  
VII. = Complex Structure  
VIII. = Interactive Structure
The students used a considerable amount of language to make their needs known. This was illustrated by Katie (B)(MSEA), who repeatedly called the teacher's name to ask for help or direction. After gaining the teacher's attention by calling her name she said, "Ms. Smith, may I color it?"

At Level I: (see Appendix D & Figure 8) Collections refer to language that is loosely organized and about the outward world rather than personal expressions of the previously described Expressive Function. Both classes used more Transactional Function at Level I (see Figure 8). Chris (W)(MSEA) responded to another student in the science center with "Beehive," when she asked him what his name started with. She was making holes in a ball of clay with a pencil which might have reminded him of a beehive but nothing more in the immediate conversation verified this. It was part of a loose collection of thoughts. Tony (W)(LSAA) got another piece of paper at the art center and said, "There." This had no meaning for anyone else, just for Tony.

At the Level I: Transactional-Collection, Brenda (B)(MSEA) said, "Welcome." This was in the midst of working on a rabbit puppet but was not addressed to anyone in particular nor did it follow any conversational thought. Collections are described as whatever catches the child's attention at the moment. Thad (B)(MSAA) gave us an example of this as he looked at a book with another student. Thad said, "I have one of those." He repeated this several times but got no response
from anyone nearby. Cade (B)(LSAA) said to Katie, "Ooooh, look at this, Katie." He was referring to his paper where he wrote his name.

At Level II: Descriptive Lists are thoughts that the child utters that relate to one topic but do not have to be in a special order. In Classroom B slightly more of this type of language was used than Classroom W (see Figure 8).

Transactional-Descriptive List (Level II) was used by Sue (W)(LSEA) at the science center when she told the teacher, "Excuse me, I can’t do the milk. My mom know how to do it but not me. My mom never taught me." She was talking about the activity that was going on but it did not matter in what order she said this. She was presenting facts. Chris (W)(MSEA) said, "I’m cleaning up," as he worked in the science center. This was about the activity that was going on but it did not matter at what point that he said this in the conversation. He was describing what he was doing. Toby (W)(LSAA) said, "Don said a ‘p’ word not a ‘b’ word," at the art center. The information did relate to the topic someone was talking about but it was not related to anything else she said at that time. Vera (W)(LSAA) said, "And look at her hat," while looking at a book. This did not follow conversation or relate to the talk that followed but it did present facts about a topic.

At Level II: Transactional-Descriptive List, Brenda (B) (MSEA) said, "There’s my people. That is a zebra," while drawing around cookie cutters at the art center. Tina (B)
(LSEA) said, "I have one of those." She was relating to the general topic but this did not build on another idea. She presented a fact. As Thad (B)(MSAA) played a Bingo Game using color and shape, he called out the items. He said, "Red apple. Red apple. No, I don't have one. Green girl. I have Green girl." This was language that stated facts but didn't have to be in an ordered sequence. Cade (B)(LSAA) looked up from where he was involved on the floor and said, "Ashley's don't look good." He was stating a fact that was his opinion but it didn't build on other language. Ann (B)(LSAA) stated, "I've only two parts," as she worked with the cookie cutters and markers.

Level III: Ordered Sequence (see Appendix D, & Figure 8) refers to time and space sequences relating to objects or actions. No causes or effects are mentioned. In the Transactional Function as shown in Figure 8, classroom W, Ordered Sequence was used more than in classroom B. It is interesting to note that the children in classroom B used the Poetic Function of Ordered Sequence more than classroom W (see Figure 8).

When considering Level III: Transactional-Ordered Sequence, Andy (W)(MSEA) gave us examples. He stated, "Next time, I'll get a black one," and "We're not going to the library." Both statements referred to a sequence of events. Sue (W)(MSEA) said, "Wait a minute, you got mine and this is yours." The actions in this event were sequenced and related
but the order does not matter. Tony (W)(LSAA) used this level most frequently in his language sample. He worked on his book at the reading center and said, "I'm on my third page. I did my chicken." Both statements referred to an order of objects and time. Toby (W)(LSAA) was drawing egg shapes around all of the vowels on her paper in the reading center. She said, "I'm just going to do all the a's." She sequenced the order that she was working as she spoke.

Further examples of Ordered Sequence-Transactional Function were provided by Katie (B)(MSEA) and Brenda (B)(MSEA). As Katie drew around a cookie cutter she said, "I need the angel. I want the angel. I had it first." The last statement gave an order of an event but each of these statements could be made in any order. At the table where children were working on ditto sheet rabbit puppets, Brenda said, "Don't thank me, thank her. She got it." Tina (B) (LSEA) used a great deal of this level of language. She said, "I've already used the red. No, I want the red." She was making a picture. Cade (B)(LSAA) was working on a picture and said, "I bout to write a shark, a big old shark," to himself. Roy's (B)(LSAA) only use of Transactional-Ordered Sequence happened in the dramatic play center when he was playing with Tom. He wanted Tom to place cupcake papers on the table instead of him and he said, "No, you." He used Ordered Sequence as a Poetic Function more often than as a Transactional Function.
The order of events is important in the Reactive Sequence, Level IV (see Appendix D & Figure 8). The order is not explicit but rather implied. Classroom A had more language samples on the Transactional Function side of the continuum than classroom B, and significantly more than the Poetic Function for both classrooms. Classroom B had over twice as many Reactive Sequence examples in the Poetic Function category than classroom W (see Figure 8).

Donna (W)(MSEA) gave us an example of the Transactional Function-Reactive Sequence. "We are having two centers at once. We had two centers yesterday, and we will have two centers today." Chris (W)(MSEA), while cleaning in the science center said, "I’m cleaning up. Science center is the cleanest. O.K. That’s enough cleaning ya’ll. Now we need to dry clean. Those are all wet." In both cases the order of events was important. Another example was when Tony (W)(LSAA), who is at the math center said, "Like ya’ll do. We got blue, pur...pink. We only got two more to go, Chris."

Tom (B)(LSEA) used the Transactional-Reactive Sequence, when he said, "That’s all mine. Uh huh. Yes, they are. Cause I don’t have no scissors in my blue bowl. I got these out of my blue bowl. They are mine." Thad (B)(MSAA) said, "I’m the caller. I got one more. Then I is, too. I is gonna be the caller." The order of these statements seemed to have importance for the reasoning behind Thad’s declaration. Tara (B)(LSAA) said, "I can do that. Now, you got to do that with
you hands, boy. Hey, you put this in there," as she played with the dishes in the sink in the dramatic play center with Thad. She was implying that there was an order for working with the dishes.

In the Level V: Abbreviated Structure (see Appendix D & Figure 8), the organization of language is ordered and based on a cause-effect relationship. There is a goal implied but no preplanning for achieving the goal. Language is used to inform the other person in the Transactional Function of Level V.

There was a large amount of language from classroom A in the Transactional-Abbreviated Structure (see Figure 8). It was the most used level in classroom W. Allen (W)(MSEA) said, "Look at my hand. Wow! Look at my fingernail. Look, look," as he drew around a magnifying glass. Discovering how the glass magnifies, he shared the information with his neighbor at the science center without planning the experience. As Chris (W)(MSEA) worked at the math center shaking beans from a film can, he guided Tony. "What did you find? O.K. You got three raindrops, two suns. Put two. Two. Two. Put Two. Put two right there. No, Tony. Like that. Just put two like that. Two. Which one, two. Now put three." Tony (B)(LSAA) said a little later, "Look how many suns I got and one raindrop. One, two, three, four. Got to do that over." He thought he had five but when he counted he saw
that he needed to throw the beans again. The goal was implied but he made the plan to do it over after he counted the four.

Vera (W)(LSAA) gave us another example of Abbreviated Level while playing in the three little pigs house in the dramatic play center; Vera said, "Now you come. You go through the door. I'll go through. Go for a walk. She can play outside. Play." There was a physical order that was necessary in the activity that she was directing.

There were fewer examples of Transactional-Abbreviated Structure in classroom B. Katie (B)(MSEA) was in the dramatic play center when she said, "What's your play name? What's your play name? Tina?" The intent of her language was guided by her need to know what pretend name to call her friend. Brenda (B)(MSEA) used these words as she and another student worked on an Easter hat at the art table, "Ooooh, I know what you could do. You could do this." She held up some material for the friend. Cade (B)(LSAA) was working with the tiles on the floor. He said, "I make another one like this. I thinking about this." Ann (B)(LSAA) said, "I'm going to make a picture. I'm making one for my brother and one for me." There were steps implied in her language.

Level VI: Complete Structure (see Appendix D & Figure 8), consists of language that presents a sequenced explanation that has a preplanned goal. In Figure 8 we see that in classroom A, there was more language at this level in the Transactional Function, with the smallest amount of language
in the Poetic Function. In classroom B, there was a very small amount of language in the Transactional Function and none in the Poetic Function - Complete Structure.

An example of the Transactional - Complete Structure is when Sue (W)(MSEA), who was at the art table, in response to a student who asked her to a birthday party said, "Yes, but where is it? I love pepperoni pizza. You know what? I'm still five. Well, my birthday party is kinda long. March, April, May, June, July, August. August, um, not too long. Not bad." She ended her discussion about birthdays. Another example was at the math center. Tony (W)(LSAA) said, "Me and Chris only one that got Miami shirt. Don't you?"

Transactional - Complete Structure was used when Ann (B)(LSAA) said, "Ms. Smith, can I get another chair to put at that table cause I finished with this? Time to get out of space. Out of my way. I'm going to make a picture. I got .... You got to make you boat. You didn't make you boat. And you didn't make a trap. I just going to make my bigger than that." She moved to the table where they were working on pictures and set out to follow her goal.

There were no language samples that fell into Levels VII and VIII of the Discourse Context.

There were fewer examples of language for the Poetic Function (see Figure 8). In the Poetic Function the speaker uses language to tell about something that has happened. The speaker is a spectator of an event that is in a story or a
poem (Norris & Hoffman, 1993). Language is used for enjoyment rather than to accomplish something. The effect of the event is more important than the chronology of the event. At first children use language in the poetic realm to give a "loose collection of related events" (Norris & Hoffman, 1993, p.65). This advances into the ability to use language in a structured story that follows customary story lines. Children with less ability to embellish a storyline will tell stories that contain few details and have poor organization. Play, drawing pictures, and dramatization will encourage children to become more efficient in the Poetic Function of language use.

Poetic-Collections (Level I, see Figure 8) were used in both classrooms but there were fewer examples than in the Transactional Function. In classroom B, more language was found in the Poetic Function than classroom A.

An example of Level I: Collection, was found in Andy’s (W)(MSEA) language sample when he says, "I don’t know, about two-thousand years." This was his answer when another student asked if Allen was ever going to stop crying after his mother had left the room. This was language that he took from a true or fictional story that he has heard and used it to give a somewhat dramatic or exaggerated answer. This was Allen’s only language at Level I of the Poetic Function while Vera (W) (LSAA) provided many more examples. In the math center, she was manipulating shiny stones and said, "Yea, and that was my money. That’s only two whites. Seventy-two white. Seventy-
two white. Here's all the jewelry, I hope." The language intermingled with other poetic function examples that were at other levels.

Katie (B)(MSEA) was working on the cover of a book made with pages of ditto sheets. She spelled, "T-H-I-S, is, I-S." She reads, "This is my first." She spelled, "F-R-S-T." She read, "This is my first book." Later she read the book to me. It had rhyming words in it with picture cues. "I see a snail. I see a snail in a pail. I see a fish. I see a fish in a dish," and this pattern continued.

Tom (B)(LSEA) was working on a worksheet. He said, "A cat in a ball. A cat in a hat (with expression). A snail in a pail." He interrupted this with transactional language that was used to get the job done. While Roy (B)(LSAA) wore one of the microphones used in the study he spoke into the microphone, "Calling all cars. Calling all cars." He was pretending and using language as he dramatized. In a few more minutes he said, "Speaker, speaker, speaker." Then he talked to another student about the operation of the microphone.

The Poetic Function, Level II: Descriptive List (see Appendix D) is language that is organized around a topic in random order. The children in classroom B, used this level more than the children in classroom W (see Figure 8).

Donna (W)(MSEA) pretended as she was in the dramatic play center. She said, "It's our toaster. Babies can't open like this kind of stuff." Vera (W)(LSAA) used the greatest amount

While Tina (B)(LSEA) played in the dramatic center she said, "Did mother break her arm? I say, did mother break her arm?" (Katie does have a broken arm.) Tina gave another example of Poetic-Descriptive List when she said, "This is the refrigerator. The eggs are gone. Where’s the microwave?" Tara (B)(LSAA) was in the dramatic center when she said, "You ironing girl. Oooooo, a shirt for the baby."

Level III: Ordered Sequence, in the Poetic Function (see Appendix D) consists of chronological order but not logical order. The sequence can occur in any order. Again there was very little of this language in classroom W (see Figure 8) while much more occurred in classroom B.

Donna (W)(MSEA) pretending in the dramatic play center said, "Get out the street baby, now! She suppose to get out. Better not get out the street again, baby." Vera (W)(LSAA), using Poetic-Ordered Sequence, said as she pretended with the shiny stones in the math center, "Here you go. You can’t have much more. Here you go. Here’s all the jewelry. Here’s your
change." She used this level and function more than anyone else in classroom W.

Katie (B)(MSAA) pretended in the dramatic play center saying, "Good. Go. Let me shovel. You can play. Yes. Up here. Yes, right there. Put this birthday." This language was used in pretense as she was busy working. Tom (B)(LSEA) was in the dramatic play center when he said, "I got to get all the dishes out. Like this. I got you some desserts out, too. We're going to have a lot of stuff eaten today. We going to have a lot of stuff cooking today." Both were examples of topical relationships without the need for logical order.

The Poetic-Reactive Sequence consists of language that relates a cause and an unplanned effect. The basal-based classroom had more examples of this type of language than the whole language classroom (see Figure 8). When moving up the Discourse Context continuum, Level IV (see Appendix D) is the last level where classroom B had more examples of language in the Poetic Function than classroom W.

Sue (W)(MSEA) made a pretend response to another child's request of her when the other child asked her about how she was doing. Sue responded, "Fine." This may be considered an unplanned effect in the Poetic Function-Reactive Sequence level. Vera (W)(LSAA) was the only other child that uses language at this level. She was in the dramatic play center when she related this series of Reactive Sequence language.
"Like we can make this somebody can be the mailman. You be the mailman, O.K.? That give out mail, O.K.? Hello. (Talking into a play telephone) What time is it? We gonna have to go to bed."

Katie (B)(MSEA) was in the dramatic play center when she said, "Now, you can listen to me. You have to do all the write with me cause you ain't working." There was a sequence in Katie's language as she directed the other child to listen, to write, and an effect because the other child was not working according to Katie's pretend story. Tina (B)(LSEA) was in the dramatic play center when she said, "No, we don't have to have a freezer. All you have to do is get a machine ice. They has a machine ice. Yes, that can be the machine icer." She pointed to a toy as she ended the sequence of pretend talk. Using Poetic-Reactive Sequence Tom (B)(LSEA) said, "We are having a party. See. I know we getting everything out of the refrigerator." This also took place in the dramatic play center.

At Level V: Poetic-Abbreviated Structure the characters in a story have a common goal but not a common plan for reaching that goal. The children in classroom W, exhibit more of this level of language than the children in classroom B.

Donna (W)(LSEA) pretended in the dramatic play center. "Don't cry. O.K. You sit on this floor. You not going back outside again. Yuck! Get in. We got phones everywhere. Yea, I see you, baby. Now you sit up. Get out the street,
baby. Now! Now, you do not get out that door. Get back in there. Where's the baby? Where'd the baby go?" She played cooperatively with two other students, each taking a different part in the pretend play.

While playing with Vera (W)(LSAA) at the math center Tony (W)(LSAA) said in response to her pretending that the counting blocks were muffins, "I'm not going to give you too much. I'm using it. I've got my pancakes ready. They ain't my muffins. Give me a muffin." Their play had an initiating event, a reaction, and a conclusion.

Katie (B)(MSEA) said, "Tina, would you go write for me because she is being bad. In another words, write here. Go write. Now, you can listen to me. You have to do all he write with me cause you ain't working. Well, you're not doing what I ask you." The character that Katie was playing had plans and reactions.

Level VI: Complete Structure sets up an entire self-contained story within a topic. It includes a setting, a character, an initiating event, a goal, and a resolution. Vera (W)(LSAA) did this at the math center when she told the student next to her, "Pretend like you want some newspaper and you only had one dollar to give me so you want some change." She continued to work with money but they did not carry out this theme although her pretense with money and buying of objects continued. She did this again another day. Vera said, "O.K. I'm going to put ya'll muffins in the oven so
ya'll can eat them. Ya'll better not eat nothing sweet til but muffins. O.K. Ya'll muffins are ready. Who wants, you want some muffins? You not getting all of them. There all your muffins. You can have some muffins." She played out complete narratives.

There were no examples for Level VI in classroom B. Language, at the highest levels, Level VII: Complex Structure and Level VIII: Interactive Structure, was not used in either classroom (see Figure 8).

Semantic Context

The continuum of the Semantic Context starts from the lowest level using concrete, literal language, and progress to the highest level using abstract, figurative language. Semantic Context refers to the meaning in language using "a large network of cultural, scientific, world, historical, literary, and linguistic background knowledge" that is used to interpret the text (Norris & Hoffman, 1993). Language of the children in classroom W was higher in three of the areas of the Semantic Context: Evaluation, Inference, and Interpretation (see Figure 9). Classroom B was highest on Metalanguage, Description, and Labeling. They were equal on the lowest continuum. Examples of language from each area need to be examined.
Figure 9. Semantic context dimension for Norris and Hoffman’s integrated model of language for classrooms W and B.

I. = Indication  II. = Labeling  III. = Description  
IV. = Interpretation  V. = Inference  VI. = Evaluation  
VII. = Metalanguage
At Level I: Indication, communication is nonlinguistic using gestures, vocalization, and word approximations. Language at Level I must be taken in context. Allen (W)(MSEA), using the magnifying glass in the science center, said, "Huh, wow!" (with expression) "Ummmmmmmmm." He also smelled a felt-tip marker and said, "Peeyou." As Chris (W)(MSEA) was directing the cleaning of the science center, he made a disapproving sound, "Gaaaaaaa." Right after that he told a student with disapproval in his voice that he was making streaks. Vera (W)(LSAA), who used many whole thoughts in the language collected used this sound in the book center as she had difficulty putting up a book, "Ahhhhhhhh." Brenda (B)(MSEA) was working with playdough at the art center. She had just declared that she was not making pizza like the other children. She spoke distinctly as she said, "Ha, ha, ha. (Sounds like a show off) Aw, man (disapproval)." Then she said it didn’t matter what anyone made. Thad (B)(MSAA) had many examples of Level I in his language samples. As he played Bingo he said, "Huh?" when he needed something repeated because he didn’t understand what the person who was calling the cards out had said.

The second level of the Semantic Context is Labeling. At this level the child names objects. In Figure 9 we see that there was a large amount of Labeling language in both classrooms. Let’s look at some of the instances where labeling took place. Allen (W)(MSEA) was at the science
table. He said, intermittently with other language, "I'm using yellow....I'm hot....That was my tummy growl." At the science center Andy (W)(MSEA) said, "This is my second time, too. That's her first, too." At the art center Donna (W)(MSEA) said, "I have a mermaid on." At the math center Tony (W)(LSAA) said, "I got five."

Brenda (B)(MSEA), working with playdough was asked which kind of pizza she was making. She said, "The thin." Thad (B)(MSAA) labeled an action in the dramatic play center. He said, "Digging, digging, digging," as he pulled doll clothes from a small piece of luggage. Tom (B)(LSEA) labeled items on a work sheet. He said, "A cat in a ball. A cat in a hat. A snail in a pail." Cade (B)(LSAA) said to himself, "A big old shark," after he announced that he was about to write about a shark. He was working on a picture about fish.

At Level III: Description refers to qualities or actions related to objects. Classroom B had more of this level of language than Classroom A (see Figure 9). Some examples from classroom W include Donna (W)(MSEA), who was working at the art center on a painting. She said, "There forty people there. Three people there." Sue (W)(MSEA) asked, "What color are you going to color it?" at the art center. In the dramatic play center Vera (W)(LSAA) describes actions as she said, "You go through the door. I'll go through."

Classroom B had many examples of Level III including Katie (B)(MSEA), who said, "Too much." Then later, "This one
is mine." She was working on a ditto sheet with rabbits on it, gluing upper and lower case letters together. Brenda (B) (MSEA) was working on rabbit puppets made from ditto sheets. She said, "We're doing on our, our puppets. We're doing dot-to-dot, all kind of things." Cade (B)(LSAA) said, "I did not put that spoon in there." He was in the dramatic play center. Roy (B)(LSAA), while working on a picture, said, "Hey, I can write a motor boat;" then to himself, "Put this down and put a machine on it and put the thing, and put the things on there." He spoke to himself as he drew his picture.

Level IV: Interpretation involves language that refers to qualities that are not explicitly stated. Some personal experience has to be involved for the information to have meaning. It includes goals, states, qualities, and changes which require scientific, historical, or world knowledge (Norris & Hoffman, 1993). There are many interpretations made in both classrooms (see Figure 9).

Allen (W)(MSEA) stayed at Level IV for a length of time before he said, "Here you go." (Gave paper to Andy.) "You color that thing. Yep. Thanks for copying off of me....Got to use the same color as me. Now you ain't copying off of me." Andy used a different color from Allen. Toby (W)(LSAA) was working at the reading center. She talked about a manipulative that another child was using. She said, "You can still get it out cause the....You can use you finger after you write the finger. It doesn't matter. It doesn't matter."
Someone had said in a tattling manner that they were going to tell the teacher.

Tina (B)(LSEA) asked Ms. Smith if the children could play with some cupcake papers in a box. She interpreted for the other children in the dramatic play center saying, "We can play with these," giving information that they had gained permission. While Roy (B)(LSAA) played in the dramatic play center he said, "Hey, ya’ll better get ya’ll babies here fore them die. Why you just put the covers on them and let them go to sleep. Good night."

Level V: Inference is the highest level of language used in large amounts in both classrooms. Inference relates the information used in speaking to the past or the future. There must be information dealing with the world, science, academic, personal, or common knowledge on the part of the speaker and on the part of the listener if he/she understands the spoken language (Norris & Hoffman, 1993).

At the book center, Andy (W)(MSEA) pointed to pictures in a book and said, "I’m going to study about this one, and this one and this one." He was planning his future activities. Sue (W)(MSEA) said, "Lunch coming up." She was working at the math center. As Vera (W)(LSAA) was looking at books in the book center, she said, "I’m going to pick something else."

Katie (B)(MSEA) spelled the word "this" for Ms. Smith. Ms. Smith nodded her head in approval. Katie said, "That’s it?" showing surprise that she had spelled it correctly.
implying that she did not think she was capable of correct spelling. Tina (B)(LSEA) implied that Jerry was not in the right place when she said, "Ms. Smith, Jerry was coming in here. He came in here. He wanted to see that clock if he can't come in here." Tina's knowledge of the classroom rules lead her to tell the teacher of the misbehavior of Jerry and the reason as she perceived it.

Level VI: Evaluation includes language that expresses opinions, value judgements, and moral standards. Little of this language was found in either classroom although more was recorded in classroom A (see Figure 9).

Allen (W)(MSEA), while working at the science center said, "I love Butterfingers." Andy (W)(MSEA) shared an opinion when he said, "It's not going to work." He was working on a dinosaur diorama at the science center. While Sue (W)(MSEA) was starting to make pudding at the cooking center she offered a belief, "But I can't do it." She needed to pour a certain amount of milk into a cup. At the book center, Vera (W)(LSAA) said, "Well, I don't want to," as she justified her choices of activities.

Brenda (B)(MSEA) said, "That's easy, huh?" as she watched another student making a snowman with the playdough in the art center. Tom (B)(LSEA) expressed his opinion about Sloppy Joe hamburgers when he said, "I love it."

The highest level in the Semantic Context was Metalanguage, Level VII. There is no language recorded in
this area for the whole-language classroom (A). Classroom B had some (see Figure 9). This level involves expressing knowledge about language itself such as naming letters, grammatical rules, and the concept of wordness (see Appendix D).

Katie (B)(MSEA) said, "Ms. Smith, how do you spell 'this'? Ms. Smith, I don't know how to spell 'this'." She expressed her knowledge of knowing wordness when she asked for the spelling of a particular word. Tom (B)(LSEA) expressed his knowledge of sound in words as he sounded the syllables in "kang-a-roo." Cade (B)(LSAA) imitated a student who was reading. He said, "A cowboy, a cowboy like to like be..." "A cowboy can go in the..." He was aware of what happened when someone was reading, for example, the words stay the same on the page. Roy (B)(LSAA) asked, "Hey, Ms. Smith, can I write a motorboat?"

**Summary of the Language Samples Used With the Situational, Discourse, and Semantic Model**

Language samples from the children in the study have been organized by the levels that are identified on the Situational, Discourse, and Semantic Model (Norris & Hoffman, 1993). The language samples were gathered in a whole language and a basal-based classroom as talk was used freely during centertime in the two types of kindergarten classrooms. Similarities and differences may be related to race and socio-
economic status. These variables are the next way that I have examined the language levels of the students as I used the Situational, Discourse, and Semantic Model.

**Race, Socioeconomic Status, and the Situational Context.** Figures 10 and 11 illustrate the language organized according to the Situational Context (see Appendix D) for the middle socioeconomic status European American students and the low socioeconomic status African American students in each of the two classrooms. Since these were the targeted groups in the study, three children were not used in the calculations for Figures 10 and 11 from the basal-based classroom because there are no similar students in the study in the whole language classroom. They are Tina (B) and Tom (B) who are European American students from the low socioeconomic status, and Thad (B) who is a middle socioeconomic status African American student. The omission of these students was done on the Situational, Discourse, and Semantic Model because of the considerable number of levels on each of the three contexts. It would become extremely cumbersome to divide the groups of children in the basal-based classroom into such small subdivisions.

The language used in both classrooms with greatest frequency was Level III, Contextual-Relational (see Figure 10). At the Contextual-Relational level the students talk
Figure 10. Contextualized situational context dimension of Norris and Hoffman's integrated model of language for classrooms W and B according to race and socioeconomic status.

I. = Egocentered  II. = Decentered  III. = Relational  IV. = Symbolic  V. = Logical

A = Classroom W, middle SES European American  
B = Classroom W, low SES African American  
C = Classroom B, middle SES European American  
D = Classroom B, low SES African American
Figure 11. Decontextualized situational context dimension of Norris and Hoffman's integrated model of language for classrooms W and B according to race and socioeconomic status.

VI. = Egocentered VII. = Decentered VIII. = Relational IX. = Symbolic X. = Logical

A = Classroom W, middle SES European American
B = Classroom W, low SES African American
C = Classroom B, middle SES European American
D = Classroom B, low SES African American
about real objects used in a particular order or sequence for a real purpose.

The group that used the most language at the Contextual-Relational level in the basal-based classroom was the low socioeconomic status African American group (see Figure 10). In the basal-based classroom Ann (LSAA) was writing alphabet letters with an understanding of real words. Cade (LSAA) and Roy (LSAA) used this level as they talked about number and patterning at the math center.

The group with the next highest amount of language used at the Contextual-Relational level was the middle socioeconomic status European American group in the whole language classroom. Sue (MSEA) used the Relational level in the science center when pouring milk to make pudding. In the math center Chris (MSEA) and Tony (LSAA) used the Relational level as they counted jelly beans to complete addition equations.

On the Decontextual-Relational level of the Situational Context Model, both middle SES European American students and low SES African American students used language on the Decontextualized end of the continuum in the whole language classroom (see Figure 11). Norris and Hoffman (1993) describe language at this level as knowing what is appropriate (scripts) for the classroom situation and understanding logical relationships in the setting. In the whole language classroom Chris (MSEA) knew that they would not take books
back to the library when he heard that they were not going for their usual visit. Tony (LSAA) knew that he could take jelly beans out to recess and could finish eating them. He knew that recess was next on the schedule as he finished working in the math center.

The students in the whole language classroom used more language at the levels of Contextualized-Self, Self-Other, and Symbolic. Norris and Hoffman (1993) have determined some of the characteristics of Contextualized language.

Characteristics that apply to the whole language classroom include: requesting and commenting on objects in context; sharing responsibility for communication; sharing of space and time; involving persons that are present; and using language informally and as part of the experience.

Small amounts of Decontextualized language was used in the whole language classroom. These were at the Egocentered and Relational levels. Characteristics of Decontextualized language that apply to the whole language classroom are: language taking the child past his own experiences into pretend, imagined, and hypothetical events; people, objects, and events not being present in the immediate environment; interactions that include long periods of monologue; and, roles, location, and time being set through the use of language.

An example that applies these characteristics is when Vera (LSAA) spent time at the math center pretending to go to
the grocery store, talking to those around her about what they wanted her to buy. Much of this was accomplished as a monologue but she would get responses from those around her when she asked for them.

The middle SES European American students in the basal based classroom used more Contextualized-Symbolic and Logical language than their counterparts in the whole language classroom (see Figure 10). Characteristics of the Contextualized-Symbolic level include: talking about objects that are miniatures such as the materials in a dramatic play center; and, recreating activities that have been experienced or witnessed. Language at this level was used in the basal-based classroom in the dramatic play center which was opened during the time that I recorded language.

At the Contextualized-Logical level mental concepts of objects are part of the language. In the dramatic play center, children pretended food was on the dishes or in the cupcake papers, and the dolls would wake up or sleep.

Students in the basal-based classroom used very little of the Decontextualized language as described on the continuum (see Figure 11). Students in the whole language classroom were just beginning to use Decontextualized language. Because there was little used, the children were less likely to be able to understand decontextualized situations which included concepts that were not part of their actual experience.
Race, Socioeconomic Status, and the Discourse Context. Figure 12 illustrates the Discourse Context for middle socioeconomic status European American students and low socioeconomic status African American students in classroom W. Figure 13 illustrates the Discourse Context for these groups in classroom B. On the Discourse Context Continuum the European American middle SES students in the whole language classroom (see Figure 12) used the greatest amount of language at the Abbreviated Structure-Level V. At this level a topic is presented incompletely without the presence of goals for unifying the topic or giving causes that guide actions. Applebee (cited in Norris & Hoffman, 1993) found this is "the most common form of narrative structure produced by children at age 5, accounting for over half the stories produced" (p. 74). Children in the whole language classroom used this level in the science center as they manipulated science materials talking about what they were doing, the math center as they counted the various items to make number sentences, the dramatic play center as they told each other how to dramatize a series of events without giving reasons, and at the art center as they told what they were painting. One day at the art center two children discussed their birthdays and talked about their parties. The talk consisted of language that could be included at Abbreviated Structure level of discourse.

The next largest amount of language was used by the low SES African American group at the Abbreviated Structure-Level
V. The group used almost exactly the same amount of language at the Collection-Level I (see Figure 12). They participated in the same centers as described for the European American students. It was interesting to note that the next level of use for the European American students was also Collection-Level I. As the continuum at the Discourse Structure moves from less organized to more organized language, the European American group seemed to use more organization as the levels advance with the African Americans showing the same rate of organization developing in their language. Vera (W)(LSAA) was the child that used some language at the Complex Structure-Level VII and was a very verbal low SES African American. Ms. Turner shared with me informally that Vera hardly spoke to anyone at the beginning of the school year.

The greatest amount of language in the basal-based classroom in the Discourse Context was used by the low SES African American group at the Collection-Level I (see Figure 13). Language occurred at the Collection level when children talked about whatever attracted their attention. The Expressive Function includes ideas, and feelings that are spoken in a private and unstructured manner. It is part of the Discourse continuum and it is necessary for the observer of this language to know the context of the language in order to interpret it (Norris & Hoffman, 1993). Much expressive language took place at the Collection Level in the basal-based classroom as the children worked on playdough, looked at books
about vehicles, made Mardi Gras masks, worked puzzles on the floor, played in the dramatic-play center and worked on ditto worksheets.

The middle SES European American students also produced language at the Collection-Level I at the greatest amount for their group in the basal-based classroom (see Figure 13). The only level where they produced more than the low SES African American group was at Level IV-Reactive Sequence. There was a very small amount of a difference on the average lines of language.

Language at Level II-Descriptive List, was used by the low SES African American students in both classrooms. Both groups of children in the basal-based classroom used more descriptive language at Level II than was used in both groups in the whole language classroom. Very little language at the three highest levels of organization was used in either classroom (see Figures 12 & 13).

Race, Socioeconomic Status, and The Semantic Context. Figure 14 illustrates how race and socioeconomic status affected the semantic use of language in the basal-based classroom and the whole language classroom. Language in the Semantic Context illustrates the student’s ability to use language to communicate concrete to abstract knowledge about the world including the written word. As the two classrooms appear in Figure 14, each area of language on the continuum was used more frequently in the whole language classroom.
Figure 12. Discourse context dimensions for Norris and Hoffman's integrated model of language for classroom W compared by race and socioeconomic status.

I. = Collect  II. = Descriptive List  III. = Ordered Sequence
IV. = Reactive Sequence  V. = Abbreviated Structure
VI. = Complete Structure  VII. = Complex Structure
VIII. = Interactive Structure

A = Middle SES European American
B = Low SES African American
Figure 13. Discourse context dimensions for Norris and Hoffman's integrated model of language for classroom B compared by race and socioeconomic status.

I. = Collection  II. = Descriptive List
III. = Ordered Sequence  IV. = Reactive Sequence
V. = Abbreviated Structure  VI. = Complete Structure
VII. = Complex Structure  VIII. = Interactive Structure

A = Middle SES European American
B = Low SES African American
except for Level III, Description and the highest area, Level VII, Metalanguage.

At Level IV, Interpretation was significantly higher for both middle and low SES children in the whole language classroom (see Figure 14). Interpretation involves language that communicates personal experience or world knowledge and necessitates background knowledge that is not explicitly described in the talk. This occurred during activities that surrounded a theme. An example was in the science center when the dioramas were being made and there was talk centering around dinosaurs. Another example of Interpretation was as they were illustrating books on farm animals following a fieldtrip to the farm.

Level V, Inference is the next most common category of language used by the middle SES children in the whole language classroom. The low SES children used Inference the most in the basal-based classroom and, in fact, this was the next most used category in the Semantic Context (see Figure 14).

In both classrooms and all groups, Level I, Indication was used in modest amounts. Indication is communication that consists of sounds or gestures that relate meaning but are not identified as words. Since language in this study was recorded and transcribed, only the sounds were categorized in the Semantic Context (see Figure 14).

The highest level, Metalanguage, appeared in the language used by the middle and low SES children in the basal-based
classroom only (see Figure 14). A relatively small amount of Metalanguage was used when students were involved in making original books or were filling in worksheets in the basal-based classroom. Students used Metalanguage as they named the alphabet letters, asked for spelling of words, or rhymed words.

Domain Analyses on Each Classroom: Mini-tour Questions

From the descriptive observations collected, I identified "domains" (Spradley, 1980), cover terms under which the observations and the children’s language for each classroom can be grouped. The items under each domain have a semantic relationship. "Interpretive interactionism" is the act of giving meaning to actions between people, involving the use of language. The qualitative researcher asks questions to produce "thick descriptions" of a social situation (Denzin, 1989).

I intended to suggest other domains in order to insure that I adequately described the scene. After using the predetermined domains, namely, concept words, mean length of thought, Halliday’s Functions, Tough’s Strategies, Norris and Hoffman Model, I searched for domains, or ways to describe the language that I had not already used. The mini-tour questions were used for further examination of the language. Appendix E contains the domains that are discussed in the next section.
Figure 14. Semantic context dimensions for Norris and Hoffman's integrated model of language for classrooms W and B according to race and socioeconomic status.

I. = Indication  II. = Labeling  III. = Description  IV. = Interpretation  V. = Inference  VI. = Evaluation  VII. = Metalanguage

A = Classroom W, middle SES European American  B = Classroom W, low SES African American  C = Classroom B, middle SES European American  D = Classroom B, low SES African American
With my goal of constructing an in-depth description, domains are used to describe further the identifying features of the two types of classrooms.

Further Domain Analyses of the Two Classrooms

The developmentally appropriate practices checklist (see Appendix A) for rating the classrooms guided this discussion. The mini-tour question that asks what are the classrooms like is considered first in the domain analysis (see Table E.1).

The whole language classroom and the basal-based classroom had commonalities. The physical setup in both classrooms can be described as having flexible work spaces. They both had areas for a large grouptime, tables for centertime activities, and dramatic play centers. In the whole language classroom, the Three Little Pigs House was considered the dramatic play center. It had some housekeeping equipment in it. In the basal-based classroom, the center was set up for housekeeping.

There were important differences between the two rooms. The centers in the whole language classroom were divided by shelving that made each one distinct, while the basal-based classroom had shelves located around the large grouptime rug and only the dramatic play center was distinctly separated. Materials on the shelves in the basal-based classroom were to be used after the assigned work, often worksheets, was completed at the tables during the time of the group reading
instruction carried on with the teacher. Each reading group met with the teacher daily. The materials in the whole language classroom were used in the centers as the focus of the day's work. There were some materials that were stored on the shelving that were not used daily but were available if a child completed the planned activity. The children in the reading center met with the teacher once a week formally, although the teacher interacted with the children as they worked in the center daily.

"Talk" in the centers was handled differently by the teachers in the two classrooms. Children in the whole language classroom talked around the table where they were working. They asked for help or to be checked at the end of their work by holding up their hand and saying, "Check." Ms. Turner interacted with the children during center time by moving from area to area to assist the students as she determined that they needed help, or to make notations on her notepad of her observations of the achievement that the students exhibited as they worked in the centers. She did present a group reading activity with the group that is assigned to the reading center on the rug area before they began their assigned activity. It consisted of directions for making original books, illustrating a poem or pages in a book with words she had prepared in advance, and circling vowels in words of a poem during the times that I observed. She would
lead the group in choral reading of the poems or stories that were to be illustrated.

Children in the basal-based classroom mainly talked after they completed the assigned work on the tables. They moved to the rug area on the floor and used blocks, games, puzzles, and other teacher-made matching games. They talked in the dramatic play center but Ms. Smith often cautioned them to lower their voices.

The next domain answers the question, "what are the children like?" (see Table E.2). Racially the children are described as European American and African American. They are from families that are either middle socioeconomic status or low socioeconomic status. The children are on the kindergarten level in school. Both males and females are included but the language observations are not analyzed according to gender. Through observation of the teachers' reactions, I concluded that the children followed the classroom rules in both classrooms during all of the observations. The children responded cooperatively when the teacher asked them to lower their voices in the basal-based classroom.

The next mini-tour question explored the topic of centertime (see Table E.3). Many activities took place during centertime in both classrooms. Some of the differences that were observed between the two classrooms were: the whole language classroom included cooking, painting, designing
dioramas, counting objects, writing number sentences, and looking at books in a large bookcenter containing many books; the basal-based classroom included working with playdough, coloring ditto sheets, playing Bingo games, building with blocks, working puzzles, practicing writing letters on a worksheet, and teacher-directed reading activities in workbooks (see Tables 3 and 4).

Another domain answers the question, "what can be learned about the children's feelings during centertime?" (see Table E.4). This domain includes language from the transcripts where children either talked about their feelings or expressed a feeling. Some of the feelings expressed in the whole language classroom included love, fright, sorrow, hate, like, desire, disgust, wanting, not wanting, and difficulty. Feelings that were expressed in the basal-based classroom included wanting, not wanting, enjoyment, love, sorrow, assurance, like, and needing.

What are the questions asked by the children? These were taken from five minutes of language collected for each child and used for a domain (see Table E.5). In both classrooms they contain language that asks "what, who, how, and where." In the whole language classroom other questions included "why, did, aren't, can," and those in which the child had raised his/her voice at the end of a word i.e. "huh?, o.k.?" In the basal-based classroom, questions included "may I? would you?"
did you?" and raised voice at the end of a word, i.e., "this buckle thing? so? he?"

The last domain that was identified before the study took place answers the question, "Is language related to children’s literature included in the talk of kindergarten children during centertime in the basal-based classroom and the whole language classroom?" (see Table E.6). In the basal-based classroom, only two lines of language (they included the words, "fairy godmother" and "Snow White") could be related to a story in children’s literature. In the whole language classroom, seven lines were identified with children’s stories. Talk about the "three little pigs, the wolf, and the dalmatians" took place on two days.

A domain that became relevant as the analysis was in progress answers the question, "What are questions that the children direct to the teachers in each classroom?" (see Table E.7). The questions in the whole language classroom asked for the teacher’s opinion or for new information in most cases. In the basal-based classroom, where there were many more questions directed to the teacher, most were for direction or permission. As I reviewed the transcripts, it became apparent that the children in the basal-based classroom directed many more requests for help to the teacher. The children in the whole-language classroom seemed to know what was expected of them and conferred with one another more often.
Triangulation of Data

The reliability of the study was strengthened by triangulation of the data, using observation, classroom checklists (DAP), audiotapes, videotapes, and review of audiotapes and videotapes by trained colleagues. Lincoln and Guba (1986) suggest that these procedures will protect the credibility of the study. In addition they suggest techniques such as discussion of observations with uninvolved peers to gain their reactions to the data, lengthy description, and persistence in observing to increase dependability.

During the collection of the language samples by wireless microphones, I observed the child and wrote field notes about what was happening at the time. I have thirty minutes of recorded language for each child. On the last visit I also videotaped the children in the study and the two classrooms. Parts of the videotapes have been shown to colleagues.

Colleagues have verified the use of the language instruments on a portion of the transcribed language samples. A portion consisted of twenty minutes (4%) of the transcribed language.

One early childhood specialist analyzed the Halliday functions. After listening to the audiotape and reading the transcript she coded the language according to the functions. There was 86% agreement with my coding.
Because of the complexity and inherent overlap within the Tough model, strategies I, II, and III were used for validation purposes. On the Tough strategies our agreement was 86%. A discussion of the overlapping characteristics can be found in Tough's (1983) presentation of the model (pp.80-81).

An early childhood specialist analyzed the Situational-Discourse-Semantic Context Model (Norris & Hoffman, 1993). Using the broad context divisions, our average agreement was 93% on this model.

An English professor validated the work on the mean-length-of-thought portion of the analysis. Agreement on the identification of MLT units was 94%.

The Developmentally Appropriate Checklist (see Appendix A) has been completed for both classrooms. Colleagues viewed the videotapes and confirmed my interpretation of the descriptions of the classrooms.

Time has been spent in discussion of the data collection with uninvolved peers. All of these assisted in the validation of the data collection and analysis.

**Summary of Findings**

This chapter has included the research questions, percent of time for language sample collection, discussion of the domains, description of the language in the classrooms,
including tabular information, and graphs. Discussion of the triangulation of the data concluded the chapter.

Patterns that emerged from the observational data relating to the low SES African American children in the both classrooms revealed that on the average they talked more in the whole language classroom than the middle SES European Americans in their classroom as well as their counterparts in the basal-based classroom. The context related to the amount of "talk" that took place in the centers. Slight differences existed in the depth of vocabulary with low SES African Americans using more variety in words in the basal-based classroom. Differences in the mean-length-of-thought within or between groups of children in both classrooms was very small. The low SES African American group in the whole language classroom used many more concept words than all groups that are the focus of this study.

The function model indicates that all of the groups in both classrooms were using the informative function which is demonstrative of their maturity. The African Americans in both classrooms were very close to the European Americans on the highest maturity level.

The more advanced categories contain the important patterns to consider in the strategies. Those used by the low SES African American group in the whole language classroom were higher at the logical, predicting and projecting categories while there was little to none of this language in
this group in the other classroom. The middle SES European American group in the whole language classroom lead all groups at these levels.

Much of the language in both classrooms was "relational" according to The S-D-S Model in the Situational Context. The children were using a considerable amount of language for functional purposes as they worked in centers. The low SES African Americans in the whole language classroom used more language in the abstract levels as they talked about objects or events.

In the Discourse Context the children in the whole language classroom used language related to procedural steps linked to a topic. The low SES African American children in the whole language classroom used almost as much of this as the middle SES European Americans. The children in the basal-based classroom used loosely organized language, with no real focus more than any other single level.

The children in the whole language classroom used language to communicate personal experiences related to their centers. They talked about what they were doing, setting goals for their work, describing qualities related to the work, or talking about changes. The low SES African American children again used the same language as the middle SES European Americans. In the basal-based classroom the children used more descriptive language of characteristics such as
color, size, and shape. The low SES African Americans used more of this language than the middle SES European Americans.

More discussion of these findings is included in the next chapter. Related conclusions and implications will be presented.
Summary

Educators are debating over the philosophies related to classroom practices involving the emerging literacy of young children. Concern has been expressed as to what methodology suits young children, particularly young children considered "at risk." These youngsters include those who are from families of low socioeconomic status, many of whom are members of a minority culture. This descriptive, qualitative study has examined and compared the oral language of kindergarten children during centertime in two types of classrooms. One classroom followed the whole language approach to developing literacy abilities while the other classroom pursued a more traditional or basal-based approach. The classrooms were more developmentally appropriate than inappropriate (Bredekamp, 1987) with the whole language classroom being more developmentally appropriate than the basal-based classroom. Both classrooms had populations from middle and low socioeconomic status families and both had children from European American and African American cultures.

Thirty-minute oral language samples were collected from eight children in the whole language classroom and nine
children in the basal-based classroom over a period of six weeks in the spring semester of the school year. Language sample quantities were averaged according to the population groups since there was not an equal number in each group. All children whose parents gave permission to be in the study were included.

Oral language samples were tape-recorded using wireless microphones that were worn by the children in the study. Transcriptions of the recorded observations were numbered by line and then coded according to language categories within predetermined domains and those domains that emerged during the study. These categories were classified according to the total number of different words spoken in a five minute period, mean length of minimal terminable unit (MLT), number of concept words, functions, strategies, and the Situational-Discourse-Semantic Context Model in order to fully describe the language. Results of the coding appear in the form of tables and graphs for purposes of description of the context and language of the children. The remaining domains are used to further describe the language of the children.

Examples from the language transcripts support the analysis of the language. Conclusions about the language according to race and socioeconomic status in two types of classrooms are included in the discussion which follows.
Discussion

Vocabulary Proficiency and Development

The proficiency of the children's vocabulary was determined by counting the total number of words in the longest five minute sample of language for each child. The numbers were combined by type of classroom, race, and socioeconomic status. On average, the children in the whole language classroom used more words. The low SES African American group averaged the most word usage in the whole language class and more than their counterparts in the basal-based classroom. The low SES African American group in the basal-based room also used more words than the middle SES European American group in the basal-based classroom. The samples were examined for the number of different words in use and both classrooms averaged the same. This indicates that their vocabularies were very similar relative to variety (see Tables 5 & 6).

Delpit (1988) expressed concern over approaches that do not meet the needs of African American children. Bowman (1991) writes of the social nature of language stemming from group membership. Smith (1992) says, "we learn from the company we keep" (p.432). My findings suggest that the concern that exists over low SES African American children and their lack of oral language participation in the classroom (Bowman, 1991; Delpit, 1988) is not warranted when there is
the freedom to talk and interact as both of these classroom settings allowed. Genishi and Dyson (1984) report that children become language users through interaction. In both of these classroom settings, when children were allowed to interact and communicate, they took advantage of the opportunity to use language. The similarities among the groups will be considered as the discussion of further methods of looking at language occurs in this discussion.

Mean Length of Thought

The averages for the complexity of grammar among the groups in the classrooms were very similar, indicating that the typical utterances and degree of grammatical development (MLT) were similar for all groups in both classrooms. The low SES African American students in the basal-based classroom averaged slightly higher than all other groups (see Table 7). The MLT measurement reflects the communicative competence among the children. Young children use longer speech units and more complex syntax as they become more competent in their language use (Hunt, 1965; O’Donnell et al., 1967). Again, the MLT measurement in this component indicates the similarity of the groups in both classrooms, thus suggesting the close proximity of the low SES African American children to those considered to be in the mainstream population.
**Number of Concept Words**

More concept words (i.e., color, shape, number, quantity, space, time) were used in the whole language classroom than in the basal-based classroom (see Table 8). The greatest number were used by the low SES African American group in the whole language classroom. In the basal-based classroom the low SES African American children exceeded in use of concept words over the middle SES European American children. As the observer in the classrooms, I can report that much of the use of these words was context related. It depended upon the activities taking place in the centers.

Levy, Wolfgang, and Koorland (1992) used the measurement, number of concept words, because of the emphasis in kindergarten programs on concept development. In both classrooms the children were including these words in conversation, sometimes scaffolding a peer into higher levels, particularly in the area of mathematics (see Appendix F, Example 2). The practices in each of the classrooms allowed for the conclusion that all groups of children in these two classrooms could use many concept words successfully. The low SES African American students were not deficient in the use of concept words, again exceeding the middle SES European American children.
The Functions of Language

The functions that Halliday (1973) described provide a way to look at language as it occurs in natural environments of children. Halliday (1973) observed these language functions as he saw them emerging in a child between the ages of nine to eighteen months. Considering the average age of kindergarteners, we should be able to assume that all of the functions have emerged and are used by the children in this study. What we are looking for is whether the kindergartners are using all of the functions as they interact in their classrooms. We also want to know if there is a difference in the use of functions according to the social class or race of the children. The functions progress in level from what Halliday considered the less mature to the more mature. As children gain control of language they can make use of the functions in more diverse ways (Lindfors, 1991).

All of the groups of children in this study had developed the use of all seven functions in both classrooms (see Figure 1). More language was categorized in the whole language classroom because the children spoke more often during the time that language was being recorded (see Table 9). The Imaginative function was used more by the children in the basal-based classroom. It was the low socioeconomic children who used the Imaginative function the most (see Figure 2). Imaginative function was recorded in the dramatic play center which was open every visit after my first visit. Context
again influenced the amount of language in the Imaginative function. The children directed many questions about their work to the teacher (see Table E.7) indicating a need for help and more teacher-direction which involved the Regulatory function.

When grouped according to SES (see Figure 2), Imaginative function was the only area in the whole language classroom that the low SES group used more than the middle SES group. In the basal-based classroom, there was almost an even distribution of language between the SES groups, with the middle SES leading in four areas and the low SES exceeding in three.

The smaller use of language in SES groups and races was at the Instrumental level and the Heuristic level. At the two highest functions, Imaginative and Informative, the African American children exceeded or were close in proximity to the European American children. The minority children were interacting with each other and with the majority children in all language functions (see Figure 3). Therefore, if they entered school at a disadvantage, they were overcoming their obstacles and performing well in both classrooms.

An important conclusion that can be drawn from the use of Halliday's Functions as a guide to study what is happening in the two types of classrooms is that the children in the whole language classroom are performing as well and in some cases better than the children in the basal-based classroom when
compared on the bases of race and socioeconomic status. It is not necessary to teach from part to whole in order for children to use variety in their language functioning.

Use of Language and Supporting Strategies

Tough (1976) used language functions as a basis for studying the strategies that school-age children use in their language. For this reason we cannot assume that all kindergarten children are using all of the strategies as we could in the functions. Tough (1976) identified seven strategies with the first three considered less advanced and the last four, more advanced (see Appendix C). The children in the whole language classroom used higher levels of all of the strategies except for Imagining (see Figure 4). As previously noted, the children in the whole language classroom used a larger amount of language during the thirty minutes of time that was recorded. The amount of language for each strategy was averaged to assure that the extra child in the basal-based class would not provide more samples for that classroom (see Table 10).

Use of the various strategies followed the same pattern for both classrooms (see Figure 4) for the first six strategies including Self-maintaining, Directing, Reporting, Logical, Predicting, and Projecting. For example, the pattern that they followed began with the Self-maintaining strategy, both classrooms using similar amounts. Then both classrooms
advanced to using more Directing strategy and both used even more Reporting strategy. Then they both decreased in use for the Logical strategy and this continued for Predicting and Projecting. Both used more Imagining strategy but the frequency was highest in the basal-based classroom again due to the open dramatic play center. The less advanced strategies were used more often in both classrooms. Since this is kindergarten and the strategies are designed for school-age children, it would be expected that these children will gain in usage of them as they progress through the grades.

When considering the strategies of language and their use according to SES (see Figure 5), the low SES children in the whole language classroom used nearly the same proportions of strategies as those in the middle SES. They exceeded the middle SES by a large amount in the use of the Imagining strategy. The same observation cannot be made in the basal-based classroom. In that classroom, the low SES children exceeded the middle SES group in use of the Directing strategy, the Logical strategy, the Projecting strategy, and the Imagining strategy and were equal with them in the Predicting strategy.

Racial differences were the same as SES differences for the whole language classroom (see Figure 6). In the basal-based classroom, the European American children were higher in
every strategy except in the Self-maintaining strategy, which was the lowest level.

According to the use of strategies, low SES African American children performed almost the same as their middle SES European American classmates in the whole language classroom. The influence and scaffolding of classmates may have affected the variety and maturity of strategies that the low SES African American children used in their conversation during centertime (see Appendix F, Example 4). The assumption can be made that the self-expression and free communication that goes on in the whole language classroom was encouraging children to express themselves using a wide variety of strategies.

In the basal-based classroom where communication was freely allowed in the dramatic play center, the low SES children exceeded their counterparts in the Imagining function, the highest level of strategies. In contrast to Tough (1983), who reported that disadvantaged children do not use language readily for pretending and acting out a scene, a large amount of imaginative language was recorded in this study in both classrooms (see Figure 4). When appropriate practices (Bredekamp, 1987) for children were encouraged, as the Imagining strategy demonstrated in both classrooms of this study, children from the low SES minority group did as well or better than the higher SES children.
The Situational-Discourse-Semantic Context Model

The Situational-Discourse-Semantic Context Model (S-D-S Model) was developed to use in making naturalistic observations and for conducting descriptive observations in addition to many other uses depending upon the individual need (Norris & Hoffman, 1993)(see Appendix D). Language levels of children can be examined from within many contexts. Language used for conversation among children, for discourse between teacher and students, and for interactions related to curriculum can be evaluated for communicative effectiveness within classrooms.

Conclusions Related to the Situational Context. Within this context more language is categorized at the Contextualized level in both classrooms, as might be expected, considering the young age of the children (see Figure 7). This means that the objects or materials that the children talk about are in their environment. Observations in both classrooms determined the greatest amount of language occurred at the Contextualized-Relational level on the continuum, Level III. At this level real objects are used in relation to one another for functional purposes working toward a goal. The children in both classrooms had adjusted to school activities and were using language to accomplish goals utilizing the materials in the centers.
The low SES African Americans in the whole language classroom used a higher level of language at the first, fourth, and fifth levels of contextualized language. In all three cases, they were functioning more at those levels than the middle SES European Americans in their classroom (see Figure 10).

The five higher levels of the Situational Context, identified as Decontextualized, organize language that is used about materials or events that are not present in the environment. The low SES African American children in the whole language classroom used very nearly as much at the Egocentered, Decentered and Relational levels as the middle SES European American children in their classroom (see Figure 11). Decontextualized language was not used in the basal-based classroom by low SES African American children except for a very small amount in the Relational level.

At the Decontextualized level children are beginning to develop the ability to mentally organize information about materials and events. Both groups of children in the whole language classroom were performing at this level more frequently, which may have been due to the organization of the centers around a central theme, helping them to focus their thoughts.

Both classrooms were made up of children who were at similar levels of organization in their language, particularly from Level I to V (see Figure 10). Children from both races
and socioeconomic statuses were able to communicate with and scaffold one another in the Situational Context in both classrooms (see Appendix F, Examples 1, 8, 12). Rowe and Harste (1986a) remind us that children become less dependent upon the teacher as they learn from their peers which is more like the outside world.

Conclusions Related to the Discourse Context. The Discourse Context is used to classify language used within the situational context to give information about an event or activity. Children in the whole language classroom used more language at the Abbreviated Structure-Level V (see Figure 8). This agrees with Norris and Hoffman (1993) who report that children at the age of 5 use more language at this level than any other. At this level events are described in an order but no reasons or goals are given for the order.

Children in the basal-based classroom used more language at the Collection-Level I (see Figure 8). At this level children randomly talk about events or objects but in no particular order, just as their attention is attracted to something or someone. Everyday activities are included in this level, including expressive feelings about hunger or happiness (see Table E.4).

In the whole language classroom, there was some use of the higher levels of discourse at Levels VI and VII, and none at VIII. In the basal-based classroom there was considerably
more language in the levels from II through IV (see Figure 8). Children were moving further into the higher levels of discourse, V through VII, in the whole language classroom than children in the basal-based classroom.

When race and socioeconomic status were considered, the middle SES European American children in the whole language classroom used the most language at the Abbreviated Structure-Level V, as well as more than the low SES African American (see Figure 12). The low SES African American children used an almost equal amount of language at both the Collection-Level I and Abbreviated-Level V. The low SES African American children were using language at the upper middle levels in the whole language classroom. Both groups were using the most language at Level V which is typical of five-year-olds. Children in the whole language classroom were using a wide range of language that was becoming more organized on the Discourse continuum. Heath and Mangiola (1991) found that African American children’s language improved as they saw a real need to communicate. The centertime activities motivated communication.

In the basal-based classroom the low SES African American children used a greater amount of language at the lower Levels I, II, and III (see Figure 13). The middle SES European Americans used more at Levels IV and V. It can be concluded that more language is "simply and loosely organized" (Norris & Hoffman, 1993, p. 88) in the basal-based classroom.
Majority race children used more language at higher levels than the minority race children.

Conclusions Related to the Semantic Context. In the Semantic Context, language is scrutinized at the closest level, examining the meaning of sentences or words. The continuum progressively describes language as it becomes more abstract and complex. Both classrooms exhibited similar patterns of use as their language was categorized upward on the continuum (see Figure 9). This may be explained by similarity in the normal development of children. Isbell and Raines (1991) determined in their study, the context of the centers influenced the language of the children. This seems to be an influencing factor in this study.

Most language in the basal-based classroom was categorized at Level III. Levels IV and V followed closely with scarcely any variance between the two. In the whole language classroom, most language was categorized at Levels IV and V. At the highest level, Metalanguage was used only in the basal-based classroom, though sparingly (see Appendix F, Example 12). This is language used to talk about parts of speech. In the basal-based classroom children talked about correct spelling and they used phonetic sounding out of words.

Comparing groups on the bases of race and SES, we find that middle SES European American children used the most language at Levels IV and V in the whole language classroom.
(see Figure 14). Middle SES European American children used the most language at Levels II, III, IV, VI, and VII in the basal-based classroom.

Children in the whole-language classroom were functioning at higher levels for most of the language categories except for the highest level which is related to the teaching program of the basal-based classroom. At Level III, Description, the classes were almost even. Also of interest is the fact that at Level IV, Interpretation, there was very little difference within each classroom. Children were sharing personal experiences with each other related to the context of the classroom.

Summary of Findings

This study suggests some conclusions about the domains related to race and socioeconomic status in two types of classrooms, basal-based and whole language, in regard to the use of language collected in the context of classroom centers.

1. Children in the whole language classroom used more talk than children in the basal-based classroom during centertime.

2. Low SES African American children talked more in the whole language classroom than those in the basal-based classroom during centertime.
3. The amount of different words used in both classrooms for all subgroups of children was very similar.

4. The opportunity to use oral language in both of these classroom settings, allowing children to interact and communicate, encouraged all groups to use language.

5. The MLT measurement demonstrated the close proximity of the low SES African American children to those considered to be in the mainstream population in both classrooms, indicating that, when provided with the opportunity to talk, the low SES African American's oral language did not reflect a deficit.

6. When allowed freedom to interact in centers, children in both classrooms used concept words accurately, often using scaffolding to move a peer into higher levels of performance, particularly in the area of mathematics.

7. In regard to the functions of language (Halliday, 1977), children in the whole language classroom were performing as well and in some cases better than the children in the basal-based classroom regardless of race or socioeconomic status.

8. After examining the strategies (Tough, 1977) that children used in their language, we can conclude that when appropriate practices (Bredekamp, 1987) for children are encouraged in classrooms, children from low SES minority groups do as well or in some cases better than children from middle SES groups.
9. In the whole language classroom, both racial and SES groups of children could talk about objects or events that were not physically present but related to the focus of a central theme (S-D-S-Model).

10. Low SES African American children used as wide a range of language that was advancing in discourse organization as middle SES European Americans in the whole language classroom and more than both groups in the basal-based classroom (S-D-S-Model).

11. In the basal-based classroom, low SES African American children used more language at lower levels in the area of discourse organization (S-D-S-Model) than all of the other groups in both classrooms.

12. In regard to the semantic uses of language, children in the basal-based classroom talked about the mechanics of language, metalanguage (S-D-S-Model), demonstrating the need for scaffolding from the teacher to aid them in their abstract thinking about language.

Implications

The summary conclusions presented above lead us to a response to the general research objectives that were formed at the beginning of the study. These were to describe the oral language of low SES African American children and middle SES European American children in a whole language and a
basal-based classroom in a public school. These classrooms were to have well-respected teachers in the area of kindergarten education; I believe I accomplished this goal. Both teachers were recommended by supervisors and principals, and well respected by their peers. As I observed their performance, I had to agree. They were kind, supportive, well-prepared teachers whose children exhibited respect for them.

Descriptive analyses of the domains related to oral language of the kindergarten children have been accomplished using well-known and new models for analyzing language. A consistency of observations from model to model from these analyses enabled me to derive some broad implications in which I can feel confident.

An explanation for the similarity in vocabulary breadth and mean-length-of-thought among all the groups defined is related to the cognitive-developmental theory of child development (Pellegrini, 1991; Piaget, 1959). Vocabularies develop at a predictable rate and pace related to the environment that the child is exposed to and to the child himself/herself as an active learner.

Since the beginning of the kindergarten year, these children had interacted with one another and the teacher in prepared center activities where they had freedom to talk. Thus, the measurements for vocabulary and MLT were very similar for all children in both classrooms. This means that,
during the observations, the low SES African American children did not establish themselves as being "at-risk" or lacking in ability in language as is sometimes believed representative of their minority status.

Bernstein (1971) believed a group's social level or class status is exhibited through the oral language of the group. At a later time the writings of Pelligrini (1991) emphasized the idea that socialization patterns influence language more than the differences in socioeconomic status. This would lead us to hypothesize that the population variety related to race and socioeconomic status in these classrooms resulted in "scaffolding" of low SES children to higher levels of meaningful language resulting in their similar performance with middle SES children, overcoming any initial lag in MLT and vocabulary that might have been present at the beginning of the school year. Therefore, placement strategies for kindergarten children with regard to providing a mixture of races and socioeconomic statuses in classrooms that use developmentally appropriate practices (Bredekamp, 1987) is recommended.

The low SES African American children spoke more in their whole language classroom than the low SES African American children in the basal-based classroom. This observation leads us to believe that the whole language approach encouraged more "talk" resulting in language adept children. Heath (1982) encouraged support for producing
narratives for children from nonmainstream backgrounds in order to help them succeed in school. The adeptness of the low SES African American children in the whole language approach was emphasized again when they used variety in the functions and strategies in their language on at least an equal, and sometimes greater than equal, basis as the children in the basal-based classroom. Heath (1982) emphasized the oral tradition of the African American which the child is exposed to from birth. Thus, we can see how the whole language approach built upon the cultural strength of this oral tradition.

Bowman (1991) writes, "Structure refers to the changes that occur in children’s minds as a result of the interaction of their biological potential with experience, reflected in achievements like learning language, categorizing systems, and interpersonal relationships (p.19)." Although there were differences in the racial and socioeconomic status groups when examining language according to the Situational-Discourse-Semantic Model (Norris & Hoffman, 1993), the diversity in the structure and form of the language is evident in both classrooms. The narratives in both classrooms in the dramatic play of the children in the low SES African American grouping illustrated the imaginative, abstract thinking that was occurring in their minds. Levy, Wolfgang, and Koorland (1992) suggest play in thematic settings as a way to elevate the language of young children to higher levels. Interactions
among the children shaped the linguistic changes that the samples of oral language expression illustrated in this study. "Talk" related to the goal of the center activity promoted the use of the strategies identified from simple to difficult levels of oral language in accordance with the situation, discourse, and semantic context. Bowman's statement above is supported by the model's identification of language learning, categorizing ability, and interpersonal actions of the children.

Further use of the Situational-Discourse-Semantic Model is suggested to aid in perceiving the language levels of kindergarten children, the children's literature, and the teacher's talk. This would facilitate understanding the individual child's "zone of proximal development" (Vygotsky, 1978) in order to assist in "scaffolding" (Bruner, 1983) to increase meaningful learning.

Wells (1985) reported that before kindergarten, children prefer to narrate the telling of events to adults while Preece (1992) found that 5 and 6-year-olds freely relate events, factual or make-believe, to one another. Consistent with this information, the children in both classrooms in this study freely communicated with one another using a wide range of language levels. The low SES African American children had models in the other children in their classrooms in the area of discourse organization, although they performed at lower levels in both classrooms. Perhaps if "whole to part"
(Goodman, 1986) teaching were the focus in the classroom the middle SES European American children would provide models challenging the low SES African American children to more organized language levels.

Delpit (1988) believes that there is a place in education for the whole language approach but expresses concern over its tendency to favor the European American middle SES children while unintentionally suppressing admission to that class of African American children. The results of this study suggest that she need not be overly concerned since the majority of my observations show the performance of African American children paralleling the performance of European American children even in the more abstract levels of discourse. Her suggestion that classroom practices include rich language experiences with concentrated help in the areas of specific need can be accepted and implemented within the whole language approach.

**Suggestions for Further Research**

Qualitative methodology can be used in development and evaluation of an issue incorporating communicative systems, free from the restraint of a more structured study. The participant observer becomes part of the context where the research is conducted. Quantitative methodology, on the other hand, provides the more technical parameters of an issue. I am convinced that this qualitative, descriptive study can be
used as the basis for a more extensive in-depth positivist view into the issue of oral language development in the whole language classroom. Issues involving the effectiveness of the teacher, the whole language methodology (approach), and support of the child's family in relation to the type of teaching approach need further study.

Further research on the use of the Situational-Discourse-Semantic Model in relation to the teacher and the children's oral interactions needs to be conducted, particularly focusing on the race and socioeconomic status of the children. This study has demonstrated the validity of, and evaluation potential for, using the model to appropriately assess the oral language levels of the children in order to demonstrate the effectiveness of their communication. Research needs to be conducted to determine the validity of its evaluative effectiveness in interactions between teachers and children in classrooms using both approaches.

One of the problems encountered in conducting this study was the difficulty in finding classrooms that could be defined as purely whole language or basal-based. A study comparing two classrooms where literature is truly the basis of the activity in the centers, including a freely used dramatic play center, in one room and a basal-based classroom where children may freely talk in all centers should be conducted to further develop the knowledge-base related to classroom practices.
The similar performance of oral language usage among races and SES groups suggests that longitudinal studies would provide helpful information for educators. Determining when or if these groups begin to "separate" in performance particularly in classrooms that adopt the whole language approach is recommended. Data related to grades one through three would be especially helpful and would provide supportive information about the ages covered in Bredekamp's (1987) description of developmentally appropriate practices.

A comparative descriptive study using the methodology and measures in this study to describe the oral language of children in a whole language classroom comprised only of low SES African American children has the potential of enabling us to determine how much of an impact the middle SES children had on the low SES African American children in this study or vice versa. Similar research designs could be applied to the study of other minority groups.


APPENDIX A

CHECKLIST FOR RATING
DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICE
IN KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOMS
CHECKLIST FOR RATING DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICE
IN EARLY CHILDHOOD CLASSROOMS

Based on S. Bredekamp (Ed.) (1987) Developmentally appropriate practice in
early childhood programs serving children from birth through age eight
(exp. ed.). Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of
Young Children. Sections on Preschool and Primary Grades, ages 3-8.

_______________________________________
School

_______________________________________
Principal

_______________________________________
Teacher

_______________________________________
Ages of children

Number of children in room

Number of adults

_______________________________________
Observed/rated by

Date(s)

Time(s)

Activity/Activities

_______________________________________

_______________________________________

_______________________________________

_______________________________________

_______________________________________

Five points are listed for rating each item. Under 5 the most appropriate
practice indicators are listed, under point 1 the most inappropriate
practice indicators are listed. Point 5 indicates close to 100%
appropriate, point 4 indicates more appropriate than inappropriate. Point
3 indicates a fairly even split between appropriate and inappropriate.
Point 2 indicates more inappropriate than appropriate. Point 1 indicates
close to 100% inappropriate. Below each item there is a space for a brief
description of what you observed or found out by questioning the teacher
that underlies your rating.

Developed by Rosalind Charlesworth, Jean Mosley, Diane Burts, Craig Hart,
Lisa Kirk, and Sue Hernandez, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge.
CURRICULUM GOALS

1. Range of Curriculum Areas for Which Program is Designed

5.................4..................3......................2................1
   .physical
   .social
   .emotional
   .intellectual
   .learning how to learn

   Description:

2. The Place of Children's Self-esteem, Sense of Competence, and Positive Feelings Toward Learning In the Curriculum and Instruction.

5.................4..................3......................2................1
   .Each child is given an equal amount of positive attention
   .Children who conform receive more attention
   .Children are given attention according to their level of academic performance

   Description:

3. View of Growth and Development.

5.................4..................3......................2................1
   .Work is individualized
   .Children move at their own pace
   .Evaluated against a group norm
   .Everyone is expected to achieve the same narrowly defined skills
   .Everyone does the same thing at the same time

   Description:
TEACHING STRATEGIES

4. The Emphases in the Curriculum.

5. Organization of the Curriculum.

Description:
6. Teacher Preparation and Organization for Instruction.

5. Learning centers are set up which provide opportunities for writing, reading, math and language games, dramatic play. Children are encouraged to critique their own work. Errors are viewed as normal and something from which children can learn.

4. Little time for enrichment activities. May be interest centers available for children who finish their seatwork early. May be centers where children complete a prescribed sequence of teacher-directed activities within a controlled time period.

3. Description:

7. Instructional Activities.

5. Children work and play cooperatively in groups. Projects are self selected with teacher guidance. Activity centers are changed frequently. One or more field trips. Resource people visit. Peer tutoring. Peer conversation.

4. Children work alone, silently on their worksheets or workbooks. Little, if any, peer help is permitted. Penalties for talking.

3. Description:
8. Learning Materials and Activities.

5. Concrete, real, and relevant to children's lives
4. Blocks, cards, games, arts and crafts materials, woodworking tools, science equipment, etc.
3. Flexible work spaces (tables, carpet, etc.)
2. Limited primarily to books, workbooks, and pencils
1. Permanent desks that are rarely moved

Playful activity only when work is done

Description:

INTEGRATED CURRICULUM

Note: If you reach the end of your observations and any areas cannot be rated due to lack of information, arrange to meet with the teacher and ask the open-ended clarification questions. Use the descriptors as probes if necessary.

9. Language and Literacy.

5. Technical skills are taught as needed
4. Generous amounts of time are provided to learn through: literature and nonfiction reading; drawing, dictating, and writing stories; bookmaking; and library visits
3. Daily reading aloud by teacher
2. Subskills such as letters and phonics are taught individually and in small groups using games
1. Literacy is taught through content areas such as science and social studies

Children's invented spellings are accepted

Teaching is geared to passing standardized tests and/or skill checklists
Reading taught through skills and subskills
Reading taught as a discrete subject
Silence is required
Language, writing, and spelling instruction focus on workbooks
Teaching focuses on reading groups with other children having an adequate amount of seatwork to keep busy
Phonics instruction stresses learning rules rather than relationships
Everyone must complete the same basals no matter what their abilities
Everyone knows who is in the slowest reading group.
Acceptable writing has correct spelling and is standard English

Description:

(Clarification: Describe your language and literacy program.)
10. Math  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.Children encouraged to use math through exploration, discovery, and solving meaningful problems</td>
<td>.Taught as separate subject</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>.Integrated with other areas</td>
<td>.Taught at a scheduled time each day</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>.Skills acquired through play, projects, and daily</td>
<td>.Focus on textbook, workbook, practice sheets, board work, and drill</td>
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<tr>
<td>.Math manipulatives are used</td>
<td>.Lessons follow text sequence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.Math games are used daily</td>
<td>Seldom any &quot;hands on&quot; activity</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.Must finish work in order to use games and manipulatives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Description:  
(Clarification: Describe your math program.)

11. Social studies.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.Themes may extend over a period of time</td>
<td>.Included occasionally</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.Learned through playful activities, discussion, trips, visitors, writing, reading, social skills development, (planning, sharing, taking turns)</td>
<td>if reading and math are completed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.Art, music, dance, drama, woodworking, and games are incorporated</td>
<td>.Mostly related to holidays</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.Brief activities from the social studies textbook or commercially developed newspaper (i.e. Weekly Reader) and doing dittoed seatwork</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Description:  
(Clarification: Describe your social studies program.)

Discovery, built on the children's natural interest in the world. Projects are experimental and exploratory, encouraging active involvement of every child. Plants and pets in the classroom. Through projects and field trips children learn to plan, apply thinking skills, hypothesize, observe, experiment, verify. Learn science facts related to their own experience.

Description:
(Clarification: Describe your science program.)


Projects designed to help children use personalized facts. They learn to integrate facts into their daily habits. Dictate or write their own plans. Draw and write about these activities. Read about these activities. Enjoy learning because it is related to their lives.

Description:
(Clarification: Describe your health and safety curriculum.)

5. .Integrated throughout the day
   .Specialists work with teachers and children
   .Children explore a variety of art media and music
   .Children design and direct their own products and productions

Description:
(Clarification: Tell me about your program in the arts; such as art, music, movement, woodworking, drama, and dance.)

5. .Taught as separate subjects once a week
   .Specialists do not coordinate closely with classroom teachers
   .Representational art is emphasized
   .Crafts substitute for artistic expression
   .Coloring book type activities
   .Use patterns and cut-outs

15. Multicultural Education

5. .Materials and activities are multicultural and nonsexist

Description:
(Clarification: Tell me how you provide for multicultural education in your classroom.)

5. .Materials and activities lack evidence of attention to cultural diversity and a nonsexist point of view

16. Outdoor Activity.

5. .Planned daily so children can develop large muscle skills, learn about outdoor environments, and express themselves freely on a well designed playground

Description:
(Clarification: Describe the focus of your outdoor activity program.)

5. .Limited because it interferes with instructional time or
   .Provided as a time for recess to use up excess energy
GUIDANCE OF SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

17. Prosocial Behavior, Perseverence, and Industry

5........................................4............................3..........................2..........................1
.Stimulating, motivating activities are provided that promote student involvement.
.Individual choices are encouraged.
.Enough time is allowed to complete work.
/Private time with friend or teacher is provided...

.Lectures about the importance of appropriate social behavior.
.Punishes children who become bored and restless with seatwork and whisper, talk, or wander around.
.Punishes children who dawdle and do not finish work in allotted time.
.No time for private conversations.
.Only the most able students finish their work in time for special interests or interaction with other students.

Description:


5........................................4............................3..........................2..........................1
.Daily opportunities to develop social skills such as helping others, cooperating, negotiating, and talking with others to solve problems.

.Little time to develop social skills--mostly independent seatwork and teacher directed activities.
.Only social opportunity is on the playground but no consistent adult is available to provide guidance.

Description:

Positive guidance techniques are used:
- Clear limits are set in a positive manner
- Children involved in establishing rules
- Children involved in problem solving misbehavior
- Redirection is used
- Meets with child who has problems (and with parents)
- Recognize that every infraction doesn't warrant attention and identifies those that can be used as learning opportunities

Description:

20. Facilitation of self esteem by expressing respect, acceptance, and comfort for children regardless of their behavior.

Children are trusted to make some of their own decisions.
Children are encouraged to develop their own self control.
Teacher is warm and accepting.
Teacher provides understanding and nurturance.
Teacher adapts to children's needs.

Teacher screams in anger.
Teacher screams in anger.
Teacher screams in anger.
Teacher screams in anger.
Teacher screams in anger.

Description:
MOTIVATION

21. Internal vs External Sources of Motivation and Rewards for Achievement.

5.................4.................3.................2.................1

- Encourages development of internal rewards and internal critique
- Guide children to see alternatives, improvements, and solutions
- Guide children to find and correct own errors
- Teacher points out how good it feels to complete a task, to try to be successful, to live up to one's own standards for achievement
- The reward for completing a task is the opportunity to move on to a more difficult challenge

Uses external rewards and punishments
- Corrects errors; makes sure children know right answers
- Rewards children with, stickers, praises in front of group, holds children up as examples
- Motivation is through:
  - percentage or letter grades
  - stickers
  - stars on charts
  - candy
  - privileges

Description:

22. Teacher As a Model for Motivation.

5.................4.................3.................2.................1

- Through relationship with teacher, child models teacher's enthusiasm for learning, identifies with teacher's conscientious attitude toward work, and gains in self motivation

- Children identify with teacher's lack of enthusiasm and interest in his or her work and emulate it

Description:
TRANSITIONS

23. Transitions Within the School.

5.................4................3.................2................1

Children are assisted in making smooth transitions between groups or programs throughout the day by teachers who:
- maintain continuity
- maintain ongoing communication
- prepare children for each transition
- involve parents
- minimize the number of transitions necessary

Description:

24. Transitions Within the Classroom.

5.................4................3.................2................1

Transition activities (i.e. special song)
- warning signals are given
- ample time is allowed
- next activity is intrinsically enticing

Description:
PARENT-TEACHER RELATIONS: INTERVIEW
Note: Ask the teacher the open-ended questions. Use the descriptors as probes if necessary.

25. Teacher's View of Parents.

5..........................4....................3.....................2....................1

. Parents are partners
. Periodic conferences are held
. Parents are welcome at school
. Home visits by teachers are encouraged
. Teacher listens to parents and respects their goals for the child, their culture and their family configuration

Teachers not given adequate time to work with parents
Subtle messages make parents feel unwelcome at school
Parents' role is to carry out the school's agenda

Description:
(Tell me how you view the role of parents as they relate to your classroom and your program.)

26. Parent Involvement in the Classroom.

5..........................4....................3.....................2....................1

. Family members are encouraged to help in the classroom
. Family members are encouraged to help outside the classroom (such as making instructional materials)
. Family members are asked to help with decision-making where appropriate

Schedule is too tight to include parents
Parent participation policy is not followed up
Teachers' only contact with parents is attending formal PIA/PTO meetings
Contacts are formal through report cards and conferences once or twice during the year

Description:
(Tell me about parent involvement in your program.)
9A. Professional Development.

5.................4.................3................2.................1

Ongoing professional development opportunities provided to ensure developmentally appropriate practices and to support confidence, competence, and creativity

Participate in continuing professional development to maintain certification. Development opportunities are not necessarily related to the preschool/kindergarten/primary age group.

Description:
(Tell me about your professional development program.)

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE/DAY CARE

10A. Before and After School Program.

5.................4.................3................2.................1

Program staffed by people trained in early childhood education, child development, and/or recreation.
Wide variety of choices are offered:
- nutritious snacks
- private areas
- good books, sports, expeditions, clubs, and activities like cooking and woodworking
May do homework for a short period of time if wish to, if appropriate for age/program

Staffed by unqualified people.
Extension of school day: do homework or other paper and pencil activities.
Or may be considered baby-sitting--children warehoused in large groups with few, if any, materials.

Description:
27. Evaluation Methods.

5. Assessment through observation
   and recording at regular
   intervals
   Results are used to improve
   and individualize instruction
   No letter or number grades
   are given
   Children are helped to
   understand and correct errors

Description:
(Tell me about your evaluation system. How do you go about assessing the
students and how do you see the information?)

ADMINISTRATOR-TEACHER RELATIONS: INTERVIEW

28. Administrator is supportive of and knowledgeable regarding
devitably appropriate early education practices.

5. Appropriate practices are
   supported
   Principal demonstrates
   understanding of child
development and implications
   for appropriate practices
   Principal is willing to gain
   information regarding
   appropriate practices and to
   make changes if needed

Description:
(Clarification: What kind of preschool/ kindergarten program does your
principal support? Do you receive any specific guidelines? What are your
principal's expectations? Is your principal willing to listen and consider
suggestions for change?)
ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKLIST

This section will be filled out through interviews with school principals and other appropriate administrative staff.

EVALUATION

1A. Grading

5..................4..................3..................2..................1

-No letter or numerical grades are given during the preschool/kindergarten/primary years

-Grades are viewed as important motivators

Description:
(Tell me about your grading system.)

2A. Reporting Procedures

5..................4..................3..................2..................1

-Reports are narrative in form
-Progress reported relative to child's previous performance
-Relation to national standards is provided in a generalized way

-Reports are in letter or numerical grades or S/U
-Emphasis on how child compares to others in the same grade and to national norms

Description:
(Tell me how the grades are reported. How about test scores?)
3A. Promotion and Retention.

Progress is continuous; there is no promotion or retention or failure. The program fits the children; the children are not forced to fit the program.

Children repeat a grade or are placed in a special "transition" grade if they have not mastered the expected reading and math skills. It is assumed that their performance will improve with repetition or as they mature. Placement decisions are based on the ability to sit still and complete paperwork, follow directions, and perform near grade level in reading.

Description:
(Tell me about your pupil progression plan. What is the policy on promotion and retention?)

GROUPING AND STAFFING

4A. Group Size.

Group size is small enough to permit time for individualized planning and instruction.

Size
- No larger than 25 with two adults (one may be a paraprofessional)
- No larger than 15-18 with one adult
- 4-5 year olds, 20 children, 2 adults

Description:
(What are your class size policies?)

Groups of 25-35 with one teacher in a lockstep program.

Groups of 25-35 with one teacher in a lockstep program.

Preschool/Kindergarten teachers may teach 50 or more children in two half day sessions without an aid.
5A. Age Grouping.

Loss of efficiency in age grouping may vary: 3- and 4-year-olds; 4- and 5-year-olds; 3-year-olds or 4-year-olds. Placement is where it is felt children will do their best. Children with persistent difficulties may be placed temporarily in smaller groups.

Description:
(What are your criteria for age grouping?)

6A. Organization

Loss of efficiency in organization: Children remain in a relatively small (15-25 students) group for their integrated program. Specialists assist with special projects, questions and materials.

Description:
(What is your organizational plan? For example, small self contained classrooms versus departmentalization.)
7A. Placement of Special Needs Children.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.Mainstreamed into a regular class with possibly some instruction in another room</td>
<td>.Nominally assigned to a regular class but most instruction with a special teacher in another room</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.Receives equal attention from regular teacher</td>
<td>.Mostly ignored by regular teacher who assumes they get needed instruction from special teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.Is seated among regular students</td>
<td>.May be seated in separate area in regular classroom</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.Regular communication between regular and special teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Description:
(Do you have any special needs children in your school? What is your policy relative to mainstreaming?)

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

8A. Teacher Education/Certification.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.Teachers have specialized early childhood training appropriate to age group</td>
<td>.Elementary or secondary teachers with no specialized training or field experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.Have supervised field experience, child development, integrated instructional and curriculum strategies, and family communication included in teacher education program</td>
<td>.CDA certification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Description:
(Do your teachers have early childhood certification?)
APPENDIX B

A DESCRIPTION OF HALLIDAY'S FUNCTIONS
A Description of Halliday’s Functions

There are seven general functions that children use in interacting with others. They are:

I. **Instrumental:** The "I want" function. The child expresses a desire for objects or for physical needs to be satisfied.

II. **Regulatory:** The "do as I tell you" function. The child attempts to control another’s behavior.

III. **Interaction:** The "me and you" function. The interaction for pleasure is the focus of the language rather than the substance of what is said.

IV. **Personal:** The "here I come" function. The child expresses a feeling of importance and uniqueness.

V. **Heuristic:** The "tell me why" function. Language is used to get information about the environment.

VI. **Imaginative:** The "let’s pretend" function. This is the language of dramatic play, story telling, and creative writing.

VII. **Informative:** The "I’ve got something to tell you" function. Language is used to tell someone new information. This is a later developing function because it depends on certain linguistic concepts and skills.

**Note.** These functions may overlap and may be used without language, through actions and body movement. Children should have opportunities to use them all in an ideal situation (Genishi & Dyson, 1984).
APPENDIX C

USE OF LANGUAGE AND SUPPORTING STRATEGIES
Use of Language and Supporting Strategies

I. **Self-Maintaining.** Personal needs and desires. Includes justifying own behavior, criticizing others, threatening others.

II. **Directing.** Conducting the actions of self and others.

III. **Reporting on present and past experiences.** Includes labeling actions and physical attributes, sequencing, comparing, noting central meaning, reflecting on own feelings.

IV. **Towards logical reasoning.** Explaining causes, seeing problems, giving reasons, drawing conclusions.

V. **Predicting.** Anticipating actions or events. Identifying possible solutions.

VI. **Projecting.** Ability to put self into other’s situation.

VII. **Imagining.** Pretending, fantasizing.

**Note.** The last four strategies may overlap the first three (Tough, 1976).
APPENDIX D

THE SITUATIONAL–DISCOURSE–SEMANTIC CONTEXT MODEL

USED FOR ASSESSMENT AND INTERVENTION
Table 1. The Situational-Discourse-Semantic Context Model Used For Assessment and Intervention.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SITUATIONAL CONTEXT</th>
<th>DISCOURSE CONTEXT</th>
<th>SEMANTIC CONTEXT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level X</td>
<td>Level VIII</td>
<td>Level VII</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOGICAL</td>
<td>INTERACTIVE</td>
<td>METALANGUAGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- hypothetical</td>
<td>multiple plots</td>
<td>- knowledge of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- mental objects</td>
<td>or topics</td>
<td>linguistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- abstractions</td>
<td>- reciprocal</td>
<td>properties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- principles</td>
<td>- integrated</td>
<td>- separate form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level IX</td>
<td>Level VII</td>
<td>from meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SYMBOLIC</td>
<td>COMPLEX</td>
<td>or function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- linguistically</td>
<td>STRUCTURE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>created</td>
<td>- separate sub-topics/episode</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- possible event</td>
<td>- each complete</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level VIII</td>
<td>Level VI</td>
<td>Level V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELATIONAL</td>
<td>COMPLETE</td>
<td>EVALUATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- relationships</td>
<td>STRUCTURE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>within event</td>
<td>- overall moral</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- scripts-schema</td>
<td>or objective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level VII</td>
<td>Level VI</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DECENTORED</td>
<td>ABBREVIATED</td>
<td>INFERENCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- recreate event</td>
<td>STRUCTURE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perspective of</td>
<td>- plans, intents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>observer</td>
<td>- incomplete</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level VI</td>
<td>Level V</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EGOCENTERED</td>
<td>REACTIVE</td>
<td>INTERPRETATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- recreate event</td>
<td>SEQUENCE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perspective of</td>
<td>- cause-effect</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>participant</td>
<td>- no intent/plan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level V</td>
<td>Level IV</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOGICAL</td>
<td>DESCRIPTIVE</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- representation</td>
<td>LIST</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- logical reason</td>
<td>- topic related</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- concrete</td>
<td>- no unifying</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level IV</td>
<td>Level III</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SYMBOLIC</td>
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<td>DESCRIPTION</td>
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<td>- substituted</td>
<td>SEQUENCE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>objects</td>
<td>- temporal order</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>- illustrations</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Level III</td>
<td>Level II</td>
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<td>Level I</td>
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<td>COLLECTION</td>
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<td>- sensori-motor</td>
<td>- associations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>exploration</td>
<td>- no structure</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>- discovery</td>
<td>- change topics</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level I</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>stimulation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- own body</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level I</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COLLECTION</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- association</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- no structure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- change topics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level II</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>LABELLING</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>- name wholes</td>
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<tr>
<td>within whole</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- categories</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- sensory input</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level I</td>
<td></td>
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<td>- non-linguistic</td>
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<td>communication</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>in context</td>
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</tbody>
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APPENDIX E

DOMAIN ANALYSES OF THE TWO CLASSROOMS

RELATED TO THE MINI-TOUR QUESTIONS
Table E.1

**What are the classrooms like?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grouptime area rug</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four childsize tables</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative art displays</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher made charts</td>
<td>are contained in</td>
<td>classroom W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book center</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dramatic play center</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading center</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art center</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science center</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math center</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open shelving for</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>materials</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grouptime area rug</td>
<td>are contained in</td>
<td>classroom B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four childsize tables</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word cardholder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calendar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seasonal Bulletin Bd.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dramatic play center</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading table</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math table</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art worksheet table</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art center</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blocks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Games on floor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books on table (few)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table E.2

**What are the children like?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>European American race</td>
<td>is a way to</td>
<td>the children in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American race</td>
<td></td>
<td>this study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle SES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower SES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males and females</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table E.3

**What do the children do in centertime?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cooking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawing original pictures</td>
<td>are in centertime activities</td>
<td>Classroom W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designing dioramas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making books</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying vowels in a poem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counting beans, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading books in bookcenter</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading classmade books</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing equations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Making Collages</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dramatic play</td>
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<tr>
<td>Illustrating poems</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dramatic play (1 day)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Working with playdough | are in centertime activities | Classroom B |
| Coloring ditto sheets |            |            |
| Making patterns using colored paper on newspaper | | |
| Playing Bingo | | |
| Working puzzles | | |
| Making books using ditto sheets | | |
| Coloring with crayons | | |
| Making collages | | |
| Dramatic play w. dishes | | |
| Building with blocks | | |
| Teacher directed group in reading workbooks | | |
| Writing the letter "e" on a worksheet many times | | |
Table E.4

What can be learned about the children’s feelings during centertime?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I love you.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I’m scared.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I’m sorry.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I love pepperoni pizza.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I read this book and I love it.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Oh, I just love these blues. (rocks)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>It doesn’t matter.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>If I put a dot on it that means I hate it.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Chris, you know, I like you.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those kids are bossing me around.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I wish I had a blue car like that.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>It’s hard for me.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I want to go in that center today.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I want to play this.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I want to see a bad car.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>We are having a lot of fun.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I love this book.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t want that boat.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I need it.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t want to mess that one up.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That’s O.K.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Too bad.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I think I can do that.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I want it like this.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I want to be the caller.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>No, I want the red.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like the cupcakes.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

are feelings expressed by children in classroom W

are feelings expressed by children in classroom B
Table E.5

What are the questions children ask?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You be the mailman, O.K.?</td>
<td>are questions children ask</td>
<td>in classroom W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What time is it?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who gonna be the sister?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What happened to the baby?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where'd the baby go?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What? Why?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you see how many I had?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who's at the end?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'm hot, aren't you?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why you messing it?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Can I play?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can I have a black one?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did they put it?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allen, did you get to put on one of these?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Smith, may I color it?</td>
<td>are questions children ask</td>
<td>in classroom B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Now, can I decorate it with some of this stuff?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This buckle thing?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Smith, would you cut this?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What? So?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You did that?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can I press it like this?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This puts how many?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That's for you, OK?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are these things right here?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Now, what goes with fox?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Where's my glue?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What about E.T.?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Included Terms</td>
<td>Semantic Relationship</td>
<td>Cover Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m play little pig. That’s what I’m going to be, the wolf. We going to play little pig. Ya’ll finding the Billy Goats Gruff? Oh, you pass me 100 and dalmatians. Then she saw the puppies and so they go for a walk under neath from the house to get the puppies. (pretend reading)</td>
<td>is language related to</td>
<td>books in classroom W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oh, you talking about my fairy godmother. Then, it must be Snow White.</td>
<td>is language related to</td>
<td>books in classroom B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. The entire transcript was used.
Table E.7

What are questions children direct to the teacher?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Included Terms</th>
<th>Semantic Relationship</th>
<th>Cover Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Turner, you like mine?</td>
<td>are questions directed to</td>
<td>the teacher in classroom W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Turner, can I go outside?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Turner, can I keep this like it is?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Turner, want any of these books up there?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Turner, can I color the whole front?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms. Turner, is this light gray? (art c.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Turner, is this right? (reading c.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Smith, may I color it?</td>
<td>are questions directed to</td>
<td>the teacher in classroom B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Smith, would you cut this?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Smith can you give me a purple?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Smith, if anybody does it right could we read it to anybody?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Smith, how do you spell &quot;this&quot;?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you spell, &quot;first&quot;?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms. Smith, may I go put it in my booksack?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Smith, what’s this for?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Smith, can I write motorboat?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hey, Ms. Smith, where to put it?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Smith, can I finish this?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Smith, would you give me that?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Smith, can we play with these?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX F

FIVE-MINUTE LANGUAGE SAMPLES
Classroom W – Whole Language Approach

Example 1  Sue – Age – 5 yrs., 8 mon.

Sue was a European American girl from a middle SES home. One of the days I observed and recorded her she was in the art center. She was sitting with three other children. They were painting with a set of water colors including orange, green, purple, yellow, blue, and black.

"I’m going to paint." (She is talking to me at first.)
"When you see a red thing by something...(She points to the shelf nearby.)
"When you saw a red thing in those boxes or you see a green thing, you can get things."
"There a green thing right there. (Points to a strip of paper Contact papered to the shelf.)
"And green means you can."
"I don’t know." (speaks to another child)
"Hey, look. I have a shirt." (microphone shirt)
"Get some yellow. Make some sun." (Scaffolding)  "There."
"Making some grass and the sun. (Answers another child)
"Well, it’s kind of mixed up green and yellow."
"Kind of."
"Look out, girl. I need green."
"I forgot, I thought I need yellow. I needed green."
"I’m making a girl."
"Sometimes I make too big face." (Her painting had a large head on it.)
Example 2  Classroom W - Chris - Age - not available

Chris was a European American boy from a middle SES family. He was at the math center with Tony and three other children. He shook a film can and rolled out beans as though they were dice. They had suns on one side of them and raindrops on the other side. Chris counted the suns and raindrops, then colored in the number on a teacher-made worksheet. He wrote a number sentence for the set.

"What did you find?"
"O.K. You got 3 raindrops, 2 suns."
"Put 2 suns, put 2, 2, put 2, put 2 right there."
(He is helping Tony. This was a good example of scaffolding with a competent peer.)
"No, Tony, like that."
"Just put 2 like that."
"Which 1, 2?"
"Now, put 3."
"Do 5."
"I didn’t." (shaking can)
"I got 3 raindrops, 3 raindrops, and 2 suns."
"I got the same as you."
"O.K."
"1" (to self, softly)
Example 3  Classroom W - Donna - Age, 5 yrs., 3 mo.

Donna was a European American girl from a middle SES family. She was in the dramatic play center with two other girls. One of the other girls was in the study, Vera, who was African American. They played cooperatively, each taking a different part.

"No, she on the road." (talking on play phone)
"Put the phone! Put the phone!"
"She, she came back."
"Don't cry." (playing with alarm clock)
"O.K. You sit on this floor." (angrily)
"You not going back outside again."
"Yuck! Get in. We got phones everywhere."(mumbles into phone- There were three telephones on the shelf.)
"Up here." (pointing to telephones)
"Yea, I see you, baby. Now, you sit up." (talking to Vera)
"It's our toaster."
"I'm the daddy."
"Get out the street, baby. Now!" (angrily)
"She s'pose to get out. Better not get out the street again, baby."
"Now, you do not get out that door, again."
"No. (screams) No, no, you get back in there."
"Babies can't open this stuff."
"Babies can't open this stuff."
"Babies can't open like this kind of stuff."
"What are you writing?" (to me)
"Get back in there, bear. Well."
"Don't get out."
"Want ice cream?"
"Where's the baby?"
"Where'd the baby go?"
Example 4  Classroom W - Allen - Age - 5 yrs., 5 mon.

Allen was a European American boy from a middle SES family. He was in the science center with four other children sitting around the table. There was not a planned activity on this particular day. The children were using materials that were available to them from the center. Allen was cutting computer paper. He threw it away and went to get some more.

"Here you go." (sings to self)
"You color that thing." (coloring on paper)
"Yep."
"Thanks for copying off of me." (in a pleasant tone)
"I’m using yellow."
"Got to use the same color as me."
"Now, you aren’t copying off of me." (He is tracing around a magnifying glass and Tony does the same.)
(This is another example of scaffolding.)
"Ooooo, you did that pretty fast."
"Look, at mine. Look at mine."
"Mine is yellow."
"I didn’t."
"Now, I’m going to make it into a pattern."
"I love Butterfingers."
"Someone has to find she."
"Look at my hand." (using magnifying glass)
"Wow!" (whispers to self)
"Look at my fingernail."
"Look. Look."
"We are pattern all the things."
"Let’s take it out."
"O.K." (He was drawing the magnifying glass with orange stripes on it.)
"This _____ isn’t very good but I’m going to do it."
Example 5  Classroom W - Andy - Age - not available

Andy was a European American boy from a middle SES family. He was in the science center with Allen, Tony, and two girls. He was working with clay and dinosaur figures in a clear box, making a diorama.

"Could you move it there, now?"
"I’ll go get him. I’ll go get him." (Allen is crying for his mother who had come into the room, spoke to the teacher, then left. She kissed Allen on her way out. Andy is going to get Chris to comfort Allen. Sue had suggested it.)

"Chris."
"Allen, Allen’s crying."
"Come on. We gotta go. Allen’s crying. We got…"
"I don’t know. About two-thousand years. (Answer to: "Is he ever going to stop crying?" asked by Chris)"
"I’ll make one."
"I was going to make his dart now." (for Allen who is still crying)
"I was going to put, I’m just going to make him a dart thing like this."
"I didn’t cut it."
"I got those."
"Let me make him one."
"O.K. I’m going to make it."
"I’m going to make it back into his belly, now."
"Oh, I’m going to make it back into his belly, now."
"I can do it cause I did that before you."
"I did that before you, so let me have it."
"I can make it."
"What?"
"Yep."
"You took that out of my hand."
"O.K. I’ll make you a good one."
"Now, take that to Sue."
"Megan, would you please run (may be lean )forward."
"No, you let me do it. I, I’ll do it."
"I, I’ll tell Ms. Turner."
"I’ll tell Ms. Turner."
"I was, I was going to do it that way."
"I’m going to pop it in."
"I’m going…..(sound)… A key, it’s going to poke you right in." (talking to self and dinosaur)
"Come on. (sound) Uh, Uh, Uh."
"00000oo. I’m going to scoot it out."
"It’s not going to work."
"We need something curlier."
"Hey, keep it in. Keep it in." (excitedly)
"Hey, let me get, move that, move that out!"
"Recess time, boy!"
"I know we can."
"I'm going to make him a rainbow."
"He's hot!" (puts his arm around Allen who is still crying) "He's hot!"
"Ms. Turner."
"Ms. Turner, Ms. Turner, Ms. Turner, Ms. Turner, Allen's hot." (concerned)
"He feels hot."
"He feels hot."
"Scoot over Chris."
"Chris, you know I like you."

Example 6  Classroom W - Tony - Age - 5 yrs., 5 mo.

Tony was an African American boy from a lower SES family. He was sitting at the art center drawing on computer paper with felt-tip markers. There were three other children at the table. Some were using the water color paints.

"That is real, real, real weird."
"I going to draw another one." (He drew a purple monster.)
(Laughs. Allen asks him to put the markers where he can reach them. Tony does.)
"I messed up."
"I keep on messing up." (sounds disgusted)
(wads up paper, gets another piece out of a box) "There."
"1, 2, 3" (counts paper that he tore off)
"EEEE" (tears sheets apart)
"Toopsy, toopsy, toopsy" (sings softly)
"Well, there, listen took some, fine." ("find," maybe)
"Allen, did you take one of my paper?"
"Cause I had two papers."
"1, 2, 3"
"Did you take one?"
"I'm going to look under your paper."
"Nope."
"I still got them."
Example 7  Classroom W - Vera - Age - 6 yrs., 1 mo.

Vera was an African American girl from a lower SES family. She was at the math center working with colored pebbles. Four children were sitting around the table with a pile in front of each one. They had been there for awhile and after counting the pebbles they had begun to pretend. Vera seemed to lead the group. The pebbles that they called white were clear, very pretty pebbles.

"Better hurry up before I close the store."
"Somebody give me some money."
"I don't have much but a little bit."
"O.K." (to self)
"Come on, come on, come to the store."
"Now, I fixing to go home."
"Bye ya'll."
"Wait."
"It's in the morning."
"It's time for me to come home."
"Put all my money and put all my jewelry." (in box)
"Look at my jewelry already."
"Somebody give me some money."
"I don't have no money."
"Well, you don't get no jewelry if you don't get no money."
"OOOWeeee, OOOOWeeee, (sounds) there go that blue one."
"There go that blue."
"O.K. Here."
"No, I don't need your change."
"She don't need your change."
"Thank you."
"Change. Change."
"I need some more whites, please, just one."
"O.K. I get two."
"I have three."
"So, will you come back to the store you can say, please, give me white, give me white, give me white."
"I'm sorry, Willie, this is a coodo." (sounds like)
"If I was home and I waited, then I'd be tired out."
"O.K. everyday, she want to come to my store and get jewelry, and jewelry, and jewelry."
"Look at what we made."
"Two-eighty, seventy-two, seventy-two, seventy-two, here's your change."
"Lashay was playing but I don't know what happened to her."
"Got so me some money, money."
"I got another, Oooo, that's what I like that I was looking for it right by your feet."
"I just saw that right, there you go, there you go."
"No, that's..."
"Here you to."
"That the white one that you was looking for."
"I know."
"Yea, and that was my money."
"You have to buy everything that you see up to here."
"And, if you want this like Allen want it you can by it with money."
"O.K. Five people do it.
"Seventy-two, that's seventy-two whites."
"That's only two whites."
"Oh, I just love these blues."
"Here you go."

**Example 8  Classroom W - Toby - Age - 5 yrs., 2 mo.**

Toby was an African American girl from a lower SES family. She was at the art center making a sheep with black paint and a cotton ball. Three other children were at the table with her. None of her five-minute samples have a lot of talk in them but what she said was usually a complete thought and made sense. She was competent at whatever she was doing. She usually worked and did not say much. I suspected from the way she shyly looked at me when I asked her to wear a shirt with a microphone that she was aware of the apparatus and me the whole time it was on her.

"You can use some of mine."
"Don't take all of it out."
"I'm going to hold it so you can get some."
"Don said a "p" word not a "b" word."
Classroom B - The Basal-based Approach

Example 9  Katie - Age - 5 yrs., 4 mo.

Katie was a European American girl from a middle SES family. All of her five minute samples have very little language in them except this one which was made in the dramatic play center. She was with two other girls. She was playing with a doll in a very loving and careful way. She put the doll down and got a broom and began sweeping.

"Play like your baby sister."
(laughs) "Who's got the baby?"
"She was sitting down." (mumbles to self, pretending)
"Get out. Get up."
"You need to sleep."
(laughs) O.K. Get in your seat."
"Get in your seat, diaper."
"Get in your seat." (stronger sound)
"Now."
"Sit there." (mumbles)
"We own a bakery." (mumbles sounds)
"We can do all the work."
"Do all the work with me?"
"Go outside and and ....."
"Go rake the leaves outside." (Katie does it.)
"This is funny way to do the laundry."
"I know." (Other child says, "Too much dirt."
"Here we go, just sweeping up away."
"The storm." (laughs)
"Ms. Ben, Natalie's thing um, undid, undone." (to me)
"It's undone."
"Wait, that's the way." (laughs)
"That's O.K."
"Eat your hamburger." (pretending again)
"Don't bend over, Natalie."
"Cause, just Natalie."
"What's your play name?" (to Natalie)
Brenda was a European American girl from a middle SES family. Brenda was working at a table where the children were coloring ditto sheet rabbits, cutting them out, and gluing them on paper bags to become puppets.

"Hey, look at mine."
"Look mine."
"I got even another."
"You can sit there." (to me)
"We’re doing on our, our puppets."
"We’re doing dot-to-dot, all kind of things."
"Easter stuff."
"Not the girls."
"All the girls are coloring it now."
"So, all the boys get to go in free places."
(makes sounds, sings) "I got green."
(sings same words over and over)
"On top of that McDonald thing, they got Ronald McDonald there."
"It a big blow-up thing on the way to school."
"I saw it."
"And my mom."
"Nuh Uh, look at mine."
"You don’t have to color it the same color."
"Cause she’s getting it, I can get it."
"Welcome."
"Don’t thank me, thank her."
"She got it." (a ditto paper for me to look at)
"I gave it to you but she got it."
"Hooray!"
(continues cutting rabbit) "Uuuh, don’t think not."
Example 11  Classroom B - Tina - Age - 6 yrs., 1 mo.

Tina was a European American girl from a lower SES family. She was making a patterning design on a strip of newspaper on the table. Six girls were around the table. She shyly put on the shirt with the mike. Her shyness was apparent when she dropped her eyes and bowed her head. She worked for a few minutes then talks to the teacher.

"I’m doing a patterning." (to me)
"Right here."
"Right here."
"I guess I’m going to have to scoot down. (to Brenda)
"Put this right here."
"Now look what I have to do, sit on both of these, like this." (chairs)
"A red?"
"Don’t."
"Like gets some yellow up on the top."
"Ya’ll get some yellows on the top."
"Get some yellows on the top."
"We beating you." (to Brenda)
"You can’t tell if somebody’s, you can’t tell if somebody’s beating you."
"That don’t make sense."
"Ms. Brown, there ain’t no more glue."
"Ms. Brown."
"Red, yellow, blue."
"Ms. Brown, there ain’t no more uh, there ain’t no more, there ain’t no more glue and she’s won’t...."
"Uh huh."
"That’s a bottle."
Example 12  Classroom B - Tom - Age - 5 yrs., 9 mo.

Tom was a European American boy from a lower SES family. He was working on a book made from ditto sheets on rhyming words. He was sitting at a table with a group of boys.

"Now, I got a wagon."
"That goes on..."
"Why are you doing that?"
"I want to use a marker."
"Put it on, Ken."
"Why did you put that there?"
"A capital "K"?"
"A cursive "k"?"
"A cursive "K"."
"Now, where was I?"
"What this say?"
"What rhymes with cat?"
"What rhymes with cat?"
"Cat, hat, mat---ter."
"What else how?"
"What else?"
"Well."
"I'm still over here."
"I can't do this."
"I can't work."
"A cat in a ball."
"A cat in a hat." (said with expression)
"A snail in a pail."
"Truck goes with, well, what?"
"That's all mine."
"Uh huh."
"Yes, they are."
"Cause I don't have no scissors in my blue bowl."
"I got these out of my blue bowl."
"They are mine."
Example 13 Classroom B - Thad - Age - 5 yrs., 3 mo.

Thad was an African American boy from a middle SES family. He was in the dramatic play center with one other boy.

"Jordy, look."
"I'm mopping up the house, so it be clean. I'm mopping up the house, be clean, clean, clean." (repeats singing)
"Ah, I need to get more food."
"I need to cook some more food for birds."
"I need to cook, I need some more food now no food, I need some more food." (chants)
"Cook the food." (working at the stove)
"La-pa-la-pa-la-pa"
"This food going to be hot."
"This the food is not burning up."
"It's getting hot."
"I need salt. Salt."
"I need salt."
"I'm salting."
"I need salt."
(shshshsh sound for water)
"I need water."
"Whooooooo." (sounds)
"Here's the pot. The pot."
"I need, then can pour in there."
"This is going to be a big old pot."
"Real big."
"See, real big."
"This pot going to be real big."
"This pot going to be real big."
Cade was an African American boy from a lower SES family. He was sitting at a table making a Mardi Gras mask. Four children were at the table.

"I don't know where the cap is either." (marker cap)
"What name?"
"Ooooh. Uh huh."
"Ms. Brown. Ms. Brown, I can color my..."
"Uhoooh. Look at this, Katie."
"I wrote my name."
"Here your..." (hands marker to child)
(Ms. Brown says to Cade, "Do you want to glue some things on there?")
"Wait, wait, wait."
"Hey." (into the microphone on the shirt)
"What?"
"Hey, Ms. Brown."
"Ms. Brown."
"Ms. Brown, Ms. Brown, Ms. Brown, Ms. Brown, I don't know how to put this on."
"I want." (Cade points.) (Ms. Brown holds up some stickers.)
"Yea." (He takes the stickers.)
"Ms. Brown, Ms. Brown."

Cade looked at the other children at the table. He touched the microphone and waited for help much of the time.
Example 15 Classroom B - Roy - Age - 5 yrs., 6 mo.

Roy was an African American boy from a lower SES family. He was sitting at the table working on the Mardi Gras mask. He picked up a brown marker. He was concentrating on the work. He looked at another child. He drew carefully around the cut out mask. He held up the mask to his eyes. He said nothing. Finally, he talked to the girl across the table.

"I need a black. I need a black. I need a black."
"Ooooh, ma-an!"
"Whoa!" (laughs)
"I need the red, now."
"Ooooh, Hey that."
"You did that?"
"You did that?"
"Hey, that's cute."
"You did that?"
"You did that?" (laughs, mumbles)
"Ooooh."
"Ms. Brown."
"Watch me."
Ann was an African American girl from a lower SES family. She was seated on the floor on the large rug working on a puzzle with another girl.

"Uh, uh. (negative) Would you let me do this, Rachel, Prachel?"
"Oh, you talking about my fairy godmother."
"Uh oh. Uh oh."
"Leave me alone and let me do this."
"Rachel, Rachel."
"Maybe she's a date girl." (It was a puzzle of Cinderella dressed for the ball.)
"All right, come on, come on. Don't be such a sleepyhead."
"Huh, uh, uh, uh, uh, uh. (in a sing song way)"
"Oh, she's trying to make a style."
"With her hair up, and everything."
"Oh, I don't know."
"I am going to be quiet." (Teacher told her to be quiet.)
"Did you hear me?"
"Let's get that pony tail out of you back."
"All right, all right. He go to his own table."
"Let him dismiss."
"Bye, dismiss."
"Somebody going to get...."
"No way, Hosea, not for me."
"Quit crawling over me."
"Quiet over there, Rachel, Prachel."
"I've got faces, too."
"He's making faces at you."
"He's crying, that means you cry alot, too." (points to jeannie on the shirt with the microphone.)
"You better stay over there, girl."
"I could tell on you right now."
"Uh oh" (Teacher said something to other girl about helping on the puzzle.)
"She doesn't even want to help me."
"She just holding the box."
"All you doing is holding that box like a bunny rabbit."
"Go get you a dress to wear." (Softly telling Rachel to get a shirt with a microphone on it from me.)
"D" (in answer to Rachel who asked what letter was on her shirt.)
"E P" (laughs)
"What about E P?"
"What about E T?"
"Stop it."
"Would you stop it?"
"Then, it must be Snow White."
"What about Snow White?"
Example 17 Classroom B - Tara - Age - 5 yrs., 5 mo.

Tara was an African American girl from a lower SES family. She would not talk while she worked at the tables the first two times I put a microphone on her. When she was finally in the dramatic play center, she talked almost constantly. She was pretending to cook at the stove. Roy and Sarah were in the center with her.

"Ooooh, this is hot."
"Come on."
"I'm hungry."
"I'm starving."
"Ooooh. Wow! Eggs, got eggs. Got a lot of eggs."
"Put it on that blue." (Points to dish)
"Ooooh."
"Don't take that out. That cooking."
"Patty cake, patty cake, bakers man, put it in."
"Time to eat."
"No, don't do that."
"I don't know."
"Now, the mustard done."
"I, that's for our picnic, right there."
"Why you doing that?"
"Look what she's doing."
"What she's doing?"
"No, don't touch that. That's for Roy."
"He saw the real goldy spoon." (silver)
"Wait, no. We got something else for kids."
"Well, let's be getting...Shoot! Now, let me get it."
"Now, look what you have done."
"Oh! Oh! Oh! look!"
"Either set it here or put it in there."
"Look, I found another spoon."
"That another gold spoon, Sarah."
"Those our Easter eggs."
Cade and Thad were on the large rug on the floor working with a building set. I put microphones on both of them and turned them on at the same time. This is five minutes of their conversation as they worked together.

(Thad) "Why you didded it? That mine."
(Cade) "I need a piece."
(Thad) "Hey, Ah. Shhhh."
(Cade) "Uh huh." (negative)
(Cade) "This is not your wheel. Yes, it is. I just..."
(Thad) "Yeeee, you gave these pieces."
(Cade) "That's too little for..."
(Cade) "We can use that later."
(Thad) "I got power. I got a three wheeler motorcycle."
(Cade) "Does it go faster than part of the speed?"
(Roy) "And we got a motorcycle bike." (Roy was near.)
(Thad) "That's what I got, too."
(Roy) "A motorcycle bike?"
(Thad) "Yes."
(Cade) "Does it work? Do you have to push it yourself?"
(Thad) "Uh huh." (yes)
(Thad) "I have my battery. I rode it last, last week."
(Thad) "My, my daddy let me ride it and uh now ..."
(Cade) "Ms. Brown. Ms. Brown. You can open this?"
(Thad) "Ya'll got a lot of stuff."
(Cade) "Who? Put that there, put that there, right there."
APPENDIX G

TEACHER LETTERS, PARENT LETTERS,
PERMISSION FORMS,
AND
COPYRIGHT LETTER
January 26, 1992

Dear Principal and Teacher:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my study of kindergarten children's oral language during centertime or freetime in the classroom. Your help is invaluable.

Your participation is very important since it will provide information concerning the oral language of children in relation to the socio-economic status enrollment of the classroom and in various language arts approaches. When I am in your school or classroom, I will make every effort to be as unobtrusive as possible. Please remember, all individual information that you may provide will be strictly confidential and will not be shared with anyone.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 769-1639. Once again, I appreciate your cooperation and look forward to seeing you in the near future.

Sincerely,

Joan Benedict
Doctoral Student
Louisiana State University

Rosalind Charlesworth
Major Professor
Louisiana State University
388-2443
January 26, 1993

Dear Parents,

Your child’s kindergarten class has been selected from the kindergarten classes in this school system to participate in a study of kindergarten children conducted by Joan Benedict of Louisiana State University. This study is designed to analyze the variety in oral language produced by kindergarten children during a time when children are allowed to talk in the classroom. I will need to audiotape your child for 5 minutes on five different occasions and videotape him/her for 5 minutes on one occasion. This will result in thirty minutes of total time. These audiotapes will be listened to by me only and are only for the purpose of my accuracy in reporting language samples. The videotape will be viewed by one other researcher who will not know the identity of the children. To strengthen the study, I will also ask to see your child’s scores on the readiness test which was given at the beginning of this school year.

Your child’s name will not be used in any way in this study. The teacher, school, and children will remain confidential and will not be used in any reporting that takes place after the research study is completed.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 769-1639. Please return the permission form on the next page to school with your child by February 1, 1993.

Your participation in my study is greatly appreciated!

Sincerely,

Joan Benedict
Doctoral Student
Louisiana State University
TEACHER VOLUNTEER TO PARTICIPATE FORM

I, ________________________________, volunteer to participate in the study on kindergarten children's oral language usage during centertime or free time in the classroom conducted by Joan Benedict of Louisiana State University. I understand that I can withdraw from the study, that I will remain anonymous, and I will be given an opportunity to ask questions prior to the start of the study and after my participation is complete.

________________________________________
signature

______________________________
date
PERMISSION FORM
FOR ORAL LANGUAGE STUDY

I give permission for my child,

__________________________________________
child's name

to participate in the study of kindergarten children (as explained in the attached letter) conducted by Joan Benedict. I understand I can withdraw my child from the study, that he/she will remain anonymous, and I will be given an opportunity to ask questions prior to the start of the study and after my child's participation is complete.

__________________________________________  ______________
parent's signature  date
PRINCIPAL VOLUNTEER TO PARTICIPATE FORM

I, _____________________________, volunteer to participate in the study on kindergarten children's oral language usage during center time or free time in the kindergarten classroom conducted by Joan Benedict of Louisiana State University. I understand that I can withdraw my school from the study, that my school will remain anonymous, and I will be given an opportunity to ask questions prior to the start of the study and after my school's participation is complete.

______________________________
signature

______________________________
date
Singular Press  
4284 41st Street  
San Diego, CA. 92105  

Dear Sir:

This is to confirm my telephonic request for permission to use the Situational, Discourse, and Semantic Context model that appears in the book entitled Whole Language Intervention by Janet Norris and Paul Hoffman published in 1993 in the appendix of my dissertation. The title of my dissertation is "A Comparative Study of the Oral Language of Students in Basal-Based and Whole Language Kindergartens." Dr. Norris has been a member of my dissertation committee at Louisiana State University. A copy of the model as it will appear is attached to this communication.

Kindly respond by FAX as discussed. Thank you for your prompt response.

Sincerely,

Joan Benedict  

Telephone: 504-769-1639  
FAX No.: 504-766-8455  
942 Burgin Avenue  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70808

Permission is granted exclusively for the purpose specified in this letter; reference and acknowledgement must be given to the book and the publisher respectively. With the acknowledgement publisher address: Singular Publishing Group, 4284 41st Street, San Diego, CA 92105 needs to appear. Best of luck with The

Chairman & CEO

JUL-17-1994 11:11 FROM SINGULAR PUBLISHING GROUP TO 15847688455 P.01
VITA

Joan Hymel Benedict was born in New Orleans, Louisiana. She is a graduate of Fortier High School in New Orleans. She received her B.A. degree from Samford University, with a major in Elementary Education in 1962.

In 1982, Joan received her M.S. degree from Louisiana State University, majoring in Child Development in the School of Home Economics. She held a graduate assistantship in the Home Economics Laboratory Preschool. During her masters program she was awarded the Clara Tucker Fellowship in Home Economics. Her thesis was a descriptive study of the child care arrangements of Louisiana professional women.

Joan has taught preschool in a church program, preschool-gifted, first and third grades in public schools, and second grade in a private school. She has directed a church preschool program and a day care center. Her most recent work experience has been as an instructor at Louisiana State University where she has taught undergraduate child development classes. She has been assistant director and is now director of the laboratory preschool program in the School of Human Ecology.

Her experience includes supervising student teachers who are working towards state certification in nursery school and kindergarten. She directs summer kindergarten camp for Louisiana State University Short Courses and Conferences. She
teaches classes in parenting for the education department of Woman's Hospital in Baton Rouge.

Joan is active in professional organizations including National Association for the Education of Young Children, Southern Early Childhood Association, Association for Childhood Education International, National Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators, and their state affiliate organizations. She has participated in annual, national and local conferences on committees as well as having given many presentations. She is an institute trainer for Southern Early Childhood Association for administrators of childcare programs and has conducted institutes in six southern states.

She is a member of several honorary organizations including Gamma Sigma Delta, Alpha Delta Kappa, and Kappa Omicron Nu. Joan is married to Robert Benedict. They have two grown children.
DOCTORAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION REPORT

Candidate: Joan H. Benedict

Major Field: Education

Title of Dissertation: A Comparative Study of the Oral Language of Students in Basal-Based and Whole Language Kindergartens

Approved:

Bernard Clarkeworth
Major Professor and Chairman

Daniel Jorgensen
Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

Janet Morris

Date of Examination:

June 27, 1994