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SYNTACTIC AND DISCURSIVE DIFFERENCES
BETWEEN CASUAL ORAL AND FORMAL ORAL STYLES
IN THE NARRATIVES OF THIRD AND SIXTH GRADERS

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MARILYN J. WILSON

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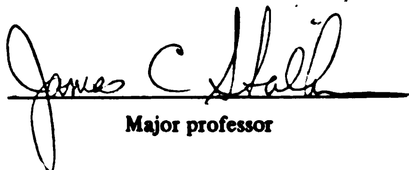

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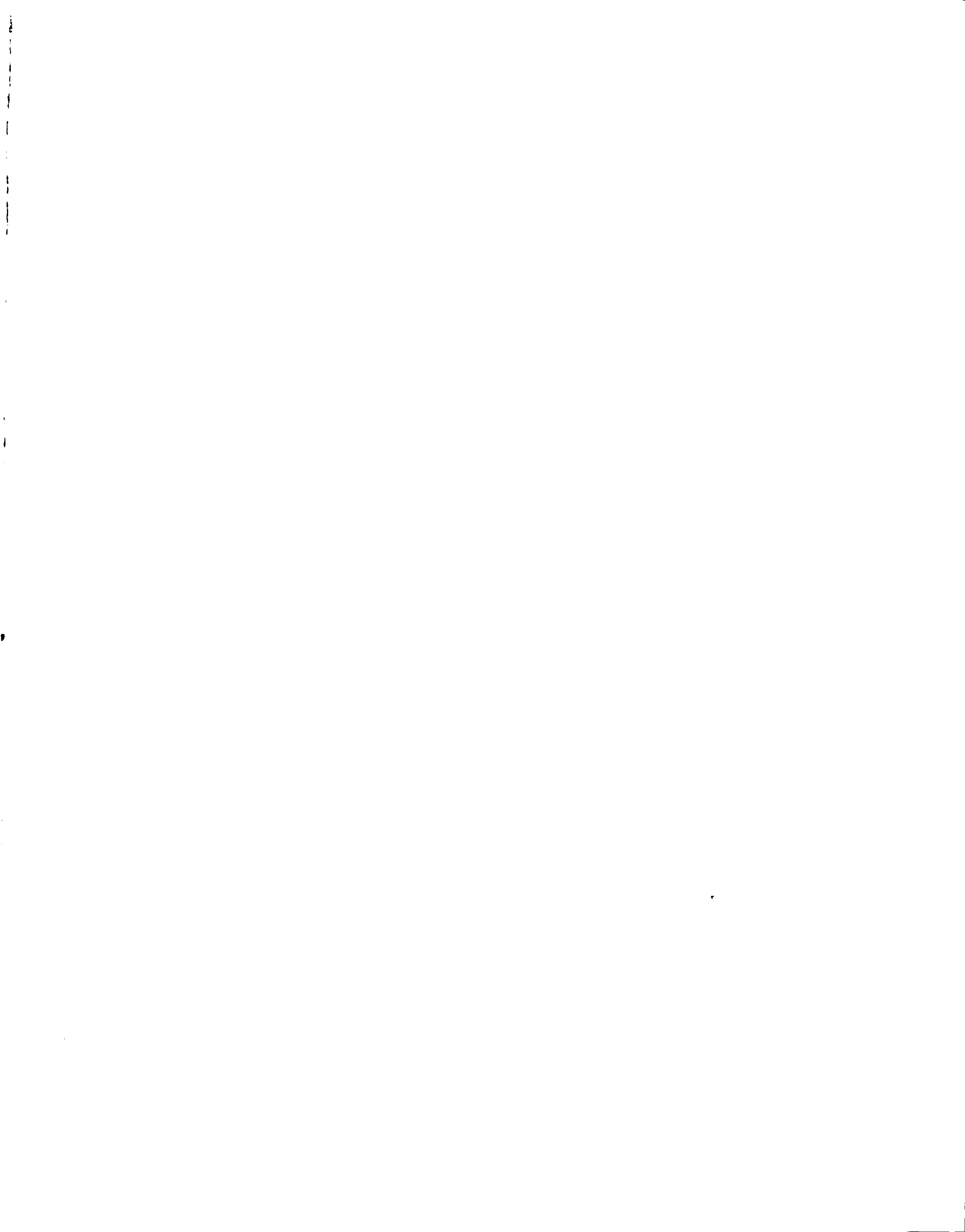

SYNTACTIC AND DISCURSIVE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CASUAL ORAL AND FORMAL ORAL STYLES IN THE NARRATIVES OF THIRD AND SIXTH GRADERS

By

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ABSTRACT

SYNTACTIC AND DISCURSIVE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CASUAL ORAL AND FORMAL ORAL STYLES IN THE NARRATIVES OF THIRD AND SIXTH GRADERS

By

Marilyn J. Wilson

Questions have recently been raised not only about the syntactic development of children's language but also about children's stylistic development in the use of language and the development of their ability to handle narrative discourse. This study investigates the syntactic and discursive structures of third graders' and sixth graders' informal oral narratives and the shifts that are made in syntactic and discursive structures from casual to more formal oral narratives.

Fifteen third graders and fifteen sixth graders were asked to tell a fairy tale, either "Snow White" or "Cinderella," on two separate occasions. The first was ostensibly a practice session for the second but covertly recorded; the second was openly recorded with the promise of its being written down as a story for other children to read. T-Units were used to analyze the syntactic structures, and the theories of narrative structure of Labov and of Stein and Glenn were used in the analysis of narrative discourse.

Results show that syntactic complexity for both grades increases from casual to formal styles in the following variables: length of T-Units and clauses, ratio of subordinate clauses to T-Units, numbers of non-clause modifiers of nouns, and numbers of passives and inversions. The formal style also produces fewer initial coordinating conjunctions and more formal diction and syntax. At the same time, the increases in syntactic complexity are not as great as those found in Hunt's and O'Donnell's data on written language, suggesting that formal oral language is not comparable to written language; rather they are perhaps on a continuum, ranging from informal oral to formal oral to written. Differences in syntactic structures between grade levels are not as substantial as differences between styles.

Both third and sixth graders exhibit an awareness of the demands of formal narrative structure and of the need to include details and sequencing signals for the listener. Formal styles appears to demand an increase in motivation, greater coherence, and greater development of characterization.

Sixth graders appear to have greater control of narrative structure than third graders in their inclusion of significant episodes and scenes, greater motivation, clearer delineation of the relationships between episodes, and greater control of coherence and sequencing.

Evaluated narrative, in Labov's sense, is produced by both third and sixth graders to a greater degree in the formal style than in the informal. Such devices as recording the state of mind of the

characters, including details, using dialogue, and using more evaluation syntax make the formal narratives more reportable. The use of evaluative devices, particularly evaluative syntax, increases for the sixth graders. While sixth graders are not all accomplished story tellers, they do appear to surpass the third graders substantially in their ability to make the narratives memorable. It appears that sixth graders have a more developed sense of audience and an understanding of audience needs.

The three major hypotheses (1) that children as young as eight already control stylistic variations, (2) that formal style will elicit more complex syntax and greater control of narrative discourse, and (3) that sixth graders would demonstrate greater control in these respects were borne out by the data. The major difference in control is in narrative structure, where sixth graders appear to surpass the third graders in substantial ways, rather than in syntactic complexity.

To my son and to my parents,
for their cooperation and their kindnesses,
and to Stuart, whose understanding, inspiration,
encouragement, and above all, good humor
made this all possible.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES	vi
LIST OF FIGURES	vii
Chapter	
I. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	1
Introduction	1
Developmental Trends in Language Learning:	
Syntactic Complexity	3
Traditional Studies	3
Transformational-Generative Studies	6
Developmental Trends in Language Learning:	
Stylistic Variation	12
The Variables of Style	12
Acquisition of Stylistic Control	15
Narrative Structure	20
II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	35
Thesis	36
Population and Sample	38
Procedure	39
Method of Analysis	42
III. SYNTACTIC ANALYSIS	45
T-Unit Analysis	45
Non-Clause Modifiers of Nouns	54
Types of Subordinate Clauses	55
Distribution of Clauses Among Multi-Clause T-Units .	60
Coordination of T-Units	64
Other Syntactic Complexities	67
Lexical Selection	69
Conclusions	72

Chapter | Page

IV. NARRATIVE STRUCTURE: STORY 76

Narrative Structure: A schema 76
Story Schema: Orientation and Episode System . 79
Orientation 82
Episode System 83
Episode System: Cinderella 85
Episode System: Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs . 88
Analysis of Stories: Orientations 91
Analysis of Stories: Episode System 96
Episodes 96
Motivation 102
Characterization 106
Additional Details 113
Relationship Between Episodes: Cinderella . . 118
Relationship Between Episodes: Snow White . . 120
Discussion of Relationships Between Episodes . . 122
Coherence in Episodes 123
Discussion of Results 127

V. NARRATIVE: DISCURSIVE STRUCTURE 136

Discursive Structure: A Schema 136
Abstract in Discursive Structure 138
Coda in Discursive Structure 141
Evaluation in Discursive Structure 143
Evaluation and Syntax 148
Intensifiers 151
Comparators 151
Correlatives 153
Explicatives 155
Evaluation in Vicarious Narrative 157
Discussion of Results 164

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS 171

Implications 178

APPENDIX 185

BIBLIOGRAPHY 205

LIST OF TABLES

Table | Page

1. T-Unit Analysis: Average Number of Words per Sample, Words per T-Unit, Words per Clause, and Clauses per T-Unit 46

2. Average Number of Words per T-Unit, Words per Clause, and Clauses per T-Unit 49

3. Ratio of Non-Clause Modifiers of Nouns per T-Unit . 55

4. Ratio of Subordinate Clause Types per T-Unit . . . 57

5. Distribution of Clauses Among Multi-Clause T-Units . 61

6. Rate of Occurrence of Initial Coordinating Conjunctions per 100 T-Units 65

7. O'Donnell's Study: Rate of Occurrence of Initial Coordinating Connunctions per 100 T-Units . . . 66

8. Ratio of Passives and Inversions per 100 T-Units . . 68

9. Number of Students Including Key Scenes--Cinderella . 98

10. Number of Students Including Key Scenes--Snow White . 101

11. Types of Introducers 140

12. Percentage of Types of Codas 142

13. Ratio of Instances of Quoted Dialogue per 100 T-Units for "Cinderella" and "Snow White" 147

14. Frequency of Comparatives, Correlatives, and Explicatives for 100 T-Units 150

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure | Page

1. Distribution of Clauses Among Multi-Clause T-Units, Hunt and Wilson 63

2. Summary of Grammatical Rules, Stein and Glenn . . . 80

3. Structure of a Simple Episode, Stein and Glenn . . 81

Once upon a time . . .

CHAPTER I

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Researchers in language acquisition and language production have long been interested in developmental trends in language learning and in the definition and description of syntactic maturity: what can one expect to find in the language performance of older children in terms of syntactic complexity and syntactic appropriateness that one would not expect to find in the language of younger children? The notion that virtually all of language has been learned by the child by the age of five or six has been discredited by the research of Paula Menyuk and Carol Chomsky among others, on syntactic development beyond the age of six. Their research indicates that children do not acquire productive control of certain transformations until after that age.

Recently linguists have been looking with increasing interest at stylistic variation in language performance and at the ages at which speakers gain control in exercising stylistic choices. Of particular interest is the role that social constraints relative to audience, participants, and topics play in the stylistic choices a language user makes. William Labov's seminal work in sociolinguistics (1971) leads him to state:

> . . . a great deal of language learning takes place relatively late in life [after the prime language-learning time of 0-6 years], especially the knowledge of the significant choices within the set of possibilities open to native speakers. . . . These differences in language convey a great deal of information: not cognitive information of the type usually considered most important--but rather a wide variety of noncognitive information on the speakers, the situations, the topics, the immediate attitudes, and underlying values which are governed by social interaction.[1]

Speakers acquire a complex verbal repertoire and gain new linguistic competence as they enter into new social situations.

While most of the research and literature on stylistic variation is concerned with the language performance of adolescents and adults, this study investigates the language capability of elementary school-age children, third graders and sixth graders specifically, particularly their ability to shift from a casual style of oral narrative discourse to a more formal style, given social situations which require such a shift to be made. My thesis is that stylistic variations in oral language--those more or less conscious choices in syntax, vocabulary, and narrative structure--are coming under the child's control as early as the third grade, with increasing control occurring for sixth graders. At the same time, this study describes the differences between syntactic complexity in a formal oral style and in a formal written style. The children, at one stage, were instructed to produce a story "to be written down." (See Chapter II for details on methodology.) Thus, while no data were gathered directly on the written style of the students in this study, the design of the study does allow some interesting comparisons to be made between that data on the formal oral style gathered from my

students and the data on the written style gathered by researchers like O'Donnell, Griffin, and Norris (1967) in their study of oral and written language.

Any research on stylistic variation must necessarily consider the research done on developmental trends in language learning, specifically on language maturity and syntactic complexity at the ages being studied. Four questions need to be explored. First, what does the research reveal about the language production ability of the ages being studied? Second, how has syntactic maturity or complexity been defined in terms of syntactic control, and what differences can one expect to find between children's syntax at various grade levels? Third, what does the research on stylistic variation contribute to our knowledge of the ages at which children begin acquiring control of a verbal repertoire of styles? Fourth, what does the research contribute to our understanding of the capabilities of children at various grade levels for handling narrative structure? A review of the major research and literature on these topics follows.

Developmental Trends in Language Learning: Syntactic Complexity

Traditional Studies

The studies of language performance of children from 1930 to 1960, growing out of the traditional theory of grammar, were primarily concerned with sentence length, kinds of subordinate clauses, relative frequencies of parts of speech, a description of errors in morphology and syntax, and tabulation of sentence types such as simple, compound, and complex.[2] Throughout these early

studies, researchers struggled with the definition of sentence and with the inadequacy of sentence length as a measure of syntactic complexity. Both Davis (1937) and Templin (1957) set up rules for sentence division in speech, partly based on prosodic features that would now be labeled "terminal junctures," and McCarthy (1930) introduced designations such as "simple sentence with phrase" and "elaborated sentence" as an attempt to disambiguate the term.

Much of the research in the late fifties and early sixties was based on structural linguistics, with the two major research projects on children's language being conducted by Strickland (1962) and Loban (1963). Strickland based her investigation on the "phonological units" obtained from the oral language of children, grades one through six. Her phonological unit, or sentence, was defined as "a unit of speech ending with a distinct falling intonation which signals a terminal point."[3] Although her definition corrected some of the problems of sentence definition, the task of defining syntactic maturity still existed. Sentence length by itself, without regard for complexities within the sentence, was an inaccurate measure of syntactic maturity because embedded sentences can be used to increase syntactic complexity. A conjoined sentence can instead be embedded, with the result being a shorter but more complex sentence. "The man was standing on the corner and he was selling balloons" becomes "The man standing on the corner was selling balloons." Strickland herself concluded that the length of the phonological unit was not a very satisfactory measure of the maturity or the complexity of language.[4]

Despite the problems inherent in sentence definition, Stickland's study provided an interesting perspective on the language of children at the elementary level. She analyzed her data according to the syntactic structure of sentences, frequency of syntactic patterns, and amount and kinds of subordination. Some of her conclusions, with implications for the present study, are listed below:

1. Children at all grade levels used a wide variety of sentence patterns, although five or six patterns were favorites at all grade levels.

2. The lengths of the phonological units used by these children varied more within a grade than from grade to grade; therefore length of phonological unit proved to be an unsatisfactory measure of language maturity.

3. Children at all grade levels could expand and elaborate their sentences through the use of movables and subordination.[5]

Strickland concluded that, in general, a wide range of language patterns is used by children at all grade levels and that children at an early age acquire the basic structures of language; these findings are germane to the present study.

In 1952 Walter Loban initiated a longitudinal study of children's oral language abilities that followed the same subjects from kindergarten through high school. Dissatisfied with the phonological unit as the basis for segmenting his subjects' language, he used instead the "communication unit"--a grammatical, independent clause with any of its modifiers.[6] He regarded two coordinated independent clauses as two communication units. A number of significant developmental patterns appeared in the language samples he studied:

1. In each succeeding year of measurement, the number of words in communication units increased, on an average.

2. Flexibility within pattern rather than pattern itself seemed to be a measure of effectiveness and control of language: the high group in language ability employed a more extensive repertoire of adverbial clauses and showed a greater capacity for fitting movables within movables.

3. The subjects as a whole used adverbial and nominal clauses much more frequently than adjectival clauses, and all groups showed an increasing use of subordination as their chronological age increased.[7]

Other researchers of the sixties, Strang and Hocker (1965), for example, found evidence substantiating Loban's and Strickland's claim that flexibility within structural patterns, not sentence length, is indicative of linguistic sophistication.[8]

Transformational-Generative Studies

Language acquisition studies based on transformational-generative theory, for the most part, corroborated the findings of the earlier studies of the developmental patterns of language acquisition and the relative degree of linguistic sophistication demonstrated by five- and six-year-olds. These studies significantly superceded previous research, however, by attempting to investigate language competence--the internalized knowledge of language--as well as language performance--the language actually produced--and by using more sophisticated methodology for the analysis of sentence structure.

Paula Menyuk (1963), in an analysis of the language of children from two to seven, studied the base structures acquired by her subjects and the kinds of transformations performed on them.

She found a developmental order in the acquisition of certain transformations; the passive and nominalization, for example, were formed more often by older than by younger children.[9] Carol Chomsky (1969) discovered that at the levels of both competence and performance, certain syntactic structures in which the deep structure relationships are not explicitly signalled in the surface structure (such as the underlying structures of "John is easy to see," "John promised Bill to go," and "John asked Bill what to do") are acquired by many children well after the age of five, and by some children not until the age of nine or ten.[10]

Of most significance to the present study are the studies done by Kellogg Hunt (1965) and by O'Donnell, Griffin and Norris (1967). Hunt's study, Grammatical Structures Written at Three Grade Levels, deals with the written language of fourth, eighth, and twelfth grade students. His study of written language is important to the present research especially for two reasons: (1) Hunt investigated writing; although my study is on oral language, it was one of my original hypotheses that the formal style produced by my students would share certain features of a writing style; and (2) Hunt, in his study, produced an objective, quantitative measure for syntactic analysis that he called a minimal terminable unit. Like Loban, he was dissatisfied with sentence length as a measure of complexity because sentences of younger children tend to be longer than those of older children, a fact accounted for by young children's overuse of the coordinate "and" between main clauses.

Hunt's "T-Unit" consists of one main clause plus any subordinate clauses or phrases attached to or embedded in the main clause.

The purpose of Hunt's study was to discover the developmental trends in the frequency of various grammatical structures written by students in the three grades. Hunt collected writing samples on a variety of subjects from each student in the study and analyzed samples of a thousand words from each. The subject matter was whatever the student normally wrote about in school. All writing was done under the supervision of the teachers, with no changes made in the writing of the student.[11] Hunt defined "maturity" in language use as "the observed characteristics of writers in an older grade."[12] Sentence maturity for Hunt has nothing to do with whether older students write better in any general stylistic sense. Rather it refers to the differences between their syntactic structures and those of younger students as directly correlated to an increase in their chronological ages. Sentence maturity, then, for Hunt, is really sentence complexity and as such has nothing to do with content, appropriateness of syntax for situation, etc. In their article, "Syntactic Maturity and Syntactic Appropriateness in Teaching Writing," Malmstrom and Weaver (1976) caution against incorrectly assuming a correlation between syntactic complexity and "good" writing: ". . . syntactically mature sentences are not always stylistically appropriate sentences. Neither are syntactically mature sentences necessarily syntactically clear; that is, the syntax of a syntactically mature sentence may be difficult to unravel."[13]

Hunt's results show that the best index of syntactic complexity is T-Unit length, the second best is clause length, and the third best is clauses per T-Unit, or subordinate clause index. As children get older, their T-Units get progressively longer, and they write more clauses per T-Unit. Hunt discovered the increase in the use of adjective clauses to be of particular significance. His investigation of subordinate clauses reveals that adjective clauses, rather than noun or adverb clauses, are the ones used more often by older students.[14] In equal numbers of words, eighth graders used one and a half times as many adjective clauses as fourth graders, and twelfth graders used more than twice as many as fourth graders. The number of adjective clauses per T-Unit for grades 4, 8, and 12 was .45, .090, and .16, respectively--an almost fourfold increase.[15]

The increased length of T-Units is partially explained by increases in the use of dependent clauses, but Hunt also discovered that significant increases occurred in the lengths of the clauses themselves. Even T-Units containing no subordinate clauses increased in length at about the same rate as did multi-clause T-Units. He hypothesized that the lengthening of T-Units resulted in part from an increase in the number of sub-clausal sentence-combining transformations embedded in them, and this was borne out by his data. The major lengthening of clauses occurs as an expansion of the nominals used as subjects, objects of verbs, objects of prepositions, etc. For example, eighth graders, as compared with fourth graders, used more than twice as many nominals per clause. "One

gets the impression," states Hunt, "that the younger students tend to use short clauses to express these meanings, whereas older students tend to reduce such clauses to mere modifiers which are consolidated with the same noun in another clause, thus achieving greater length."[16]

In addition to the expansion of nominals, the nominalization of clauses--converting a clause to a nonclause nominal--also helps to account for the increase in lengthening of clauses.

Two general conclusions arrived at by Hunt, pertinent to the present study, are (1) that almost all the syntactic structures identified were used by the youngest writers, and (2) that many of these structures, nevertheless, were used with significantly greater frequency by the older students, particularly those produced by sentence-combining and deletion transformations, reducing sentences to words and phrases, and embedding them within other clauses.

In 1967 O'Donnell, Griffin, and Norris researched the oral and written language of children in grades 3, 5, and 7. The language samples consisted of children's oral and written responses to two films--animated cartoons of two of Aesop's fables--and each was shown without sound so that the language of the film would not influence the language of the children. Each child was asked to tell the story of the cartoon privately to an interviewer, and the oral responses were taped. The students were then asked to write the story of the film. Using the T-Unit as a measure of syntactic complexity, the researchers analyzed the oral and written samples and then compared the results of the two styles. Their results,

published in Syntax of Kindergarten and Elementary School Children: A Transformational Analysis (1967), include the following:

1. In both speech and writing, the total length of responses increased with every advance in grade level.

2. At every grade the average length of the T-Unit increased both in speech and writing, as did the number of clauses per T-Unit.

3. The use of sentence-combining transformations increased with age in both modes of expression, particularly the use of adverbial constructions.

4. Kindergarten children used relative clauses with greater frequency than children at any later grade level, a sharp contrast to Hunt's results showing that an increase in the use of such clauses indicates syntactic maturity.[17]

Most of Hunt's and O'Donnell's conclusions are not surprising, given past research on developmental patterns in learning language. The general conclusions we arrive at from a composite view of the research cited are that although the basic sentence patterns are acquired by children at an early age, the use of adverbial phrases and clauses, in particular, and other sentence-combining transformations, in general, increased with age; the most developmental variety of syntactic structure was found within the sentence or clause, both in the kinds of structures used within a clause and in the frequency with which certain structures appeared in children's speech; and the length of T-Units as well as the length of the clauses increased with the chronological maturity of the child.

Developmental Trends in Language Learning: Stylistic Variation

The Variables of Style

Variation in language has generally been described in terms of dialect variation by researchers interested in regional, social, and ethnic language variations. The major purpose of such studies has been to write the grammars of the various dialects. But any purely linguistic description of the rule system of a language or a dialect of that language is necessarily limited because of the distinction that is usually made between linguistic and non-linguistic data. Researchers in sociolinguistics have given language description a broader base to account for the fact that speech variation is a function of networks of social relationships. Gumperz (1972) sees the line between social and linguistic categories obliterated. He comments:

> Communication is not governed by fixed social rules; it is a two-step process in which the speaker first takes in stimuli from the outside environment, evaluating and selecting from among them in the light of his own cultural background, personal history, and what he knows about his interlocutors. He then decides on the norms that apply to the situation at hand. These norms determine the speaker's selection from among the communicative options available for encoding his intent.[18]

The primary concern of this study is the stylistic variations existing between the language patterns used in two different situational contexts, i.e., where the speakers make linguistic decisions, either consciously or subconsciously, on the basis of the situation. As such, the study becomes a sociolinguistic one.

Style is more than a matter of statistical frequency of elements or deviations from a norm. Dell Hymes (1972) says that styles also depend on qualitative judgments of appropriateness and "must often be described in terms of selections that apply globally to a discourse."[19] As a framework for styles he discusses speech events and speech acts, the former being defined as "activities, or aspects of activities, that are directly governed by rules or norms for the use of speech,"[20] and a speech act as the minimal term of a speech event. As such, a speech event may consist of a single speech act, but it will often consist of several. A party is a speech situation, a conversation during the party is a speech event, and a joke within a conversation is a speech act.

Hymes offers a list of the components of speech acts and events which affect the style, the sociolinguistic variables affecting speakers' linguistic choices. The major components relevant to my study are the message, content, or topic; the setting or situation dictating the register; the participants, including speaker and listener; the goals and purposes; the channel or medium of transmission of speech, i.e., oral or written; and the genre or mode.[21]

The classic work on style involving participants and situations is Martin Joos' <u>The Five Clocks</u> (1961), in which he designates five styles of language, either oral or written, that are dictated primarily by situation, participants, and purposes. The range of styles includes the <u>intimate</u>, which excludes public information and communicates the person and the situation rather

than providing information; the casual, also excluding public information, but which is addressed to friends and acquaintances and which makes use of ellipsis and slang; the consultative, used for conducting daily business, and which makes use of background information, with the listener participating continuously; the formal, which includes non-participation of the listener(s) and is designed to inform; and frozen, the style of print and declamation.[22]

Susan Ervin-Tripp (1972) defines style as the term normally used to refer to the co-occurrent predictable changes at various levels of linguistic structure within one language. She describes Joos' analysis of style as dealing with the vertical properties of such shifts, whereby a stylistic shift made at one level of structure, such as the syntactic, will also dictate a shift at another level, such as the phonological.[23] William Labov's study of the dialects of New York City (1976) represents a similar kind of analysis, in which stylistic variations in different social strata are studied. Labov contrasted grammatical, lexical, and phonological elements used by subjects in a wide range of socio-economic classes, and established four categories of style: casual speech, careful speech, reading style, and word lists.[24] Casual speech was elicited by the question, "Have you ever been in danger or near death?" and careful speech by the interview itself, so that the two styles represent the speech patterns largely determined by the variables of different topics, situations, and goals. Labov found in his interview that when changes occurred in a speech episode

from a careful to a casual style, such shifts affected three levels of structure: the phonology, the syntax, and the lexicon.

The studies of Joos, Labov, and Ervin-Tripp all illustrate the impact of the "qualitative judgments of appropriateness" that Hymes refers to in language use. As the topic, the situation, the participants, the goals change, so does the style of the language used. The communicative option the speaker selects is controlled by all of these variables.

Acquisition of Stylistic Control

Research on stylistic variation presents numerous examples of style shifts in the language of adult speakers, as cited. Research on the stylistic variations in the language of children is not so abundant, although more recently there has been growing interest in this kind of investigation. It is a fairly well-established fact that all adult speakers of English, regardless of native dialect, have control over a range of styles, but it is less certain the degree to which children still in the process of acquiring a full adult grammar of English control more than one style.[25]

DeStefano's study of the English vernacular spoken by black ghetto children (1974) suggests that in formal educational situations these children, as early as in the first grade, used more standard English forms than they are commonly believed by teachers to control. Her study consisted of repetition tasks for black ghetto children, grades one, three, and five, whose native dialect was Black English Vernacular. The sentences contained various forms from a "Language

Instruction Register" (her term for the style of classroom instruction); all of these forms have semantic equivalents in the black vernacular registers the students already controlled. Two-thirds of all the responses of the black children made use of the forms in the Language Instruction Register, with more than 50 percent of the first graders' responses, more than 60 percent of the third graders' responses, and more than 70 percent of the fifth graders' responses being in the formal register.[26] Her conclusion is that children do acquire control of registers fairly early and learn to make socially appropriate language responses.

As early as 1965 Hocker reported a study of the spontaneous oral language of first graders, showing that stylistic variation exists among first graders in both language patterns and sentence length, depending on the situation such as parties, trips, school or home.[27] Rudolph Troike (1976) provides anecdotal evidence of both receptive and productive bidialectalism among young children. He illustrates the social perceptiveness of young children with the following anecdote:

> As is well known, there are two ways in American English of pronouncing the word creek: in northern dialects it is pronounced to rhyme with pick (even by educated speakers), while elsewhere it rhymes with peek. An acquaintance of the writer happens to be a "crick" speaker, while his wife is a "creek" speaker. Several years ago his son, who was then five, said something to his father about the "creek" behind their home, and was promptly reproved by his four-year-old sister with "Don't you know that you're supposed to say 'crick' to Daddy and 'creek' to Mommy?"[28]

Julie Jensen's study, "A Comparative Investigation of the Casual and Careful Oral Language Styles of Average and Superior

Fifth Grade Boys and Girls" (1973), describes the differences between two oral styles, with the variables again being the setting or situation and the participants. She defines careful speech style as that associated with a mental set in which particular attention is paid to one's manner of speaking, and casual speech as that which is informal, spontaneous, and relaxed.[29] She elicited casual speech by having the children, in pairs, discuss the topic of selection of animals for a zoo, with no interviewer present and a running tape recorder concealed. After the casual speech period, the interviewer entered the room, dismissed one of the children, and conducted an interview on the same subject with the remaining child, thereby obtaining careful speech samples. Given the evidence of the studies previously cited in which different speech styles are controlled by much younger children, it is not surprising that Jensen reported significant differences between casual and careful speech in her study of fifth graders. In terms of grammatical control she found significant differences between the two styles, the careful style demonstrating substantial increases in the following areas: length of communication units (or T-Units); length of clauses; greater subordination and structural complexity. Variety of syntactic patterns remained the same from casual to careful.[30]

All of the studies of stylistic language variation of children cited to date have dealt with the different styles or registers produced by changes in either the situation or the participants. Other variables affecting styles of language production are the channel, whether oral or written; content or topic; and

genre or mode. With reference to the channel of the discourse, Strickland, Loban, and Menyuk all based their research on oral language; Hunt's study was based on the writing samples of his subjects. But the study of O'Donnell, et al. concerned itself with both forms of discourse, comparing the oral language of the subjects with their written language, keeping the purpose, the participants, the topic, and the situation constant. The following differences found in the O'Donnell study between the two forms or channels of expression are most relevant to my study:

1. Oral compositions were longer than written compositions at every grade level.
2. Word length of T-Units was significantly greater in oral than in written expression in grade 3; it was greater in writing than in speech in grades 5 and 7, though not significantly so.
3. The average number of sentence-combining transformations per T-Unit was significantly greater in writing than in speech in grades 5 and 7, and nonsignificantly greater in speech than in writing in grade 3.
4. Initial coordinating conjunctions appeared in T-Units in each of the grades about three times as often in speech as in writing.[31]

Another stylistic variable is subject matter, content, or topic: does the topic affect the style, and to what extent? Does one kind of topic elicit greater syntactic complexity than another kind of topic might? Little research has been done on this. Because Hunt's study and O'Donnell's study each elicited different kinds of writing--Hunt examining a thousand words of free writing from students' normal writing assignments in school and O'Donnell having subjects view a film and tell the story of the film--their

studies cannot provide data concerning these questions. But a later study by Hunt (1970) demonstrated that syntactic complexity is, to some extent, independent of subject matter. In his experiment, writers of varying ages and maturity levels were asked to perform the same writing task, each being given a set of simple sentences to combine, utilizing all of the information they contained. Even when the older writers added no more information, they still wrote more words per T-Unit and more words per clause, displaying greater syntactic complexity.[32] While this research indicates that sentence complexity is, to some extent, independent of subject matter, it does not prove that subject matter has _no_ effect on syntactic complexity.

Still another variable is the genre or mode of discourse: narrative, expository, conversational, poetic, oratorial, etc. Mike Pope's study, "The Syntax of Fourth Graders' Narrative and Explanatory Speech " (1974), points to some significant differences between these two modes of discourse. He obtained the narrative speech by showing a short film and asking the subjects to retell the story of the film, and the explanatory speech by showing a short documentary film and having the subjects provide an explanation of the film. Using Hunt's measure of syntactic complexity, he found that explanatory speech had longer T-Units, a higher subordinate clause index, and more sentence-combining transformations.[33] Adjective clauses and modifiers were used with greater frequency in this mode, as were noun clauses, adverbial clauses of time, cause, and condition, and comparative phrases. The only transformation

more common in narrative was the coordinate predicate. Pope compared his results on syntactic complexity with those of O'Donnell. The syntactic complexity of his fourth graders' narrative speech was comparable to that of the first and third graders' narrative speech in O'Donnell's study, while the syntactic complexity in his fourth graders' explanatory speech was comparable to O'Donnell's fifth and seventh graders' narrative speech. This comparison appears to give added support to Pope's assumptions about the syntactic difference in the two modes.

Narrative Structure

The third question that this study is investigating is the degree to which children have control of narrative discourse, both in terms of stylistic variation and of narrative structure. The narratives produced by the third and sixth graders in my study were casual and formal versions of two fairy tales: "Cinderella" and "Snow White."

Discourse analysis is a relatively new field of study, since most linguistic analysis deals with the sentence or smaller units rather than with linguistic units that go beyond sentence boundaries. The research and analysis done to date can be classified in four major categories: (1) a textual analysis of simple stories and fairy tales with respect to their underlying structure and the relationship existing between the elements within that structure, resulting in a generalized "story schema";[34] (2) the effects of such generalized schemata on the recall of narrative by

subjects of various ages, in psychological studies; (3) analysis of the content of original stories that children tell, with emphasis on the kinds of character and plot development produced at various ages; and (4) the extension of textual analysis to more sophisticated fiction and the resulting schemata for specific literary texts.

Little research has been done on the control of narrative structure by children of varying ages. The existing research includes (1) the psychological studies done on children to determine their ability to recall stories after having read or heard them for the first time, such as the research of Mandler and Johnson (1977), Rumelhart (1975), and Stein and Glenn (1975), a situation considerably different from the task the students were asked to perform in my study; and (2) William Labov's study (1976) of fight narratives produced by preadolescent and adolescent blacks of varying ages, along with Kernan's study (1977), discussed later in this chapter. My review of the literature on discourse analysis was an attempt to find a framework that I could adapt to my analysis of the narrative structures of the fairy tales produced by the students.

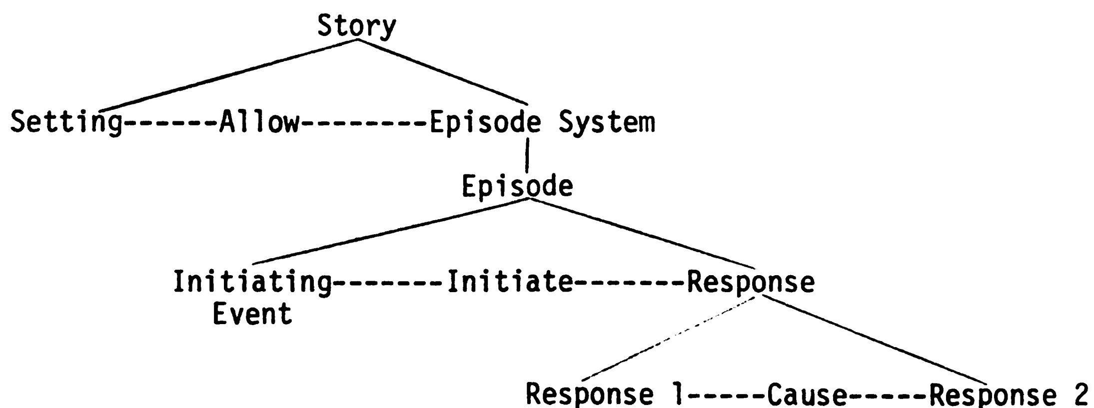
Much of the work in the first category--the analysis of simple stories and fairy tales--has received its impetus from V. A. Propp's Morphology of the Folktale (1968), a detailed analysis of the composition of Russian folktales. Such analyses are based on the assumption that myths and fairy tales have very similar and unusually clear structural characteristics compared to many other types of prose because of their transmission in the oral tradition. Mandler and Johnson (1977) state: "An orally transmitted story will

survive only if it conforms to an ideal schema in the first place or has gradually attained such a structure through repeated retellings."[35] Even though variation exists in the retelling of the tales, the end result is that in each tale a stable organization emerges, partially as Latman (1975) suggests, because "one of the most stable images in the world repertoire of fairy tales is based on the conflict of two orders--rejection and failure, on the one hand, and recognition and success on the other."[36] Propp's analysis suggests a binary network of narrative categories that Rumelhart, many years later in "Notes on a Schema for Stories" (1975), adapts, modifies, and systematizes in his own creation of a simple story grammar. Though limited, his grammar does attempt to represent the internal organization of story material.

The second type of analysis of narrative structure is designed to study the comprehension of narrative material by subjects of varying ages. It attempts to illustrate hierarchical levels of complexity in narrative discourse which guide comprehension processes during encoding and aid retrieval processes during recall.[37] Many of these studies, while not directly applicable to the present investigation, do offer some valuable insights into narrative structure and provide a basis for useful analysis. Mandler and Johnson discuss the limitations of Rumelhart's description of story structure as being too narrow and applicable to stories with only single or embedded episodes. They make some adjustments of his original schemata for their own purposes. Stein and Glenn (1975) similarly use Rumelhart's analysis as the

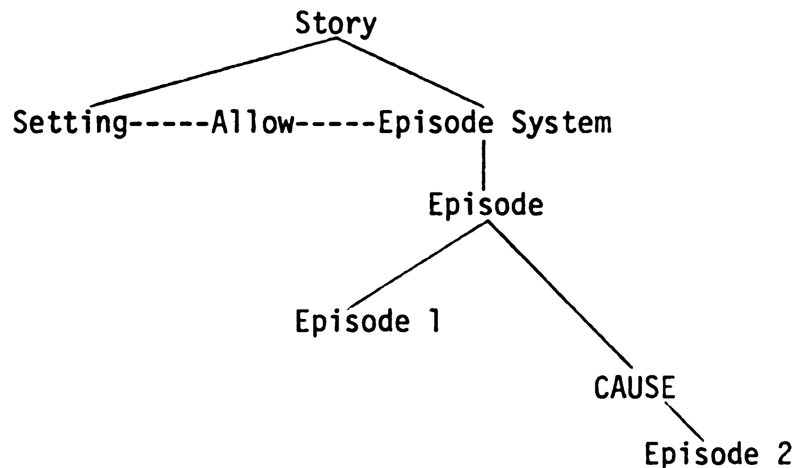
foundation for their own. However, they make significant modifications in an attempt to overcome the serious limitations that they find in Rumelhart's schemata; in their view the hierarchical network of categories is not always binary in nature, and the relationships between categories are more complex in some cases than Rumelhart's schemata suggest.

Story grammars like those developed by Rumelhart, Mandler and Johnson, and Stein and Glenn are much like the phrase structure constituent grammars of modern linguistics. The underlying structure of a story can be represented as a tree structure which makes the constituent structure and the relationships between the constituents explicit. The events in the story are related both by their place in the tree structure and by the type of connections, causal or temporal, that exist between them.[38] The following tree structure (omitting the phrase-structure rules that produce the tree) is an example of one episode of a story, provided by Stein and Glenn:[39]



Story consists of (1) setting and (2) the episode system. The setting sets the conditions that allow the episodes to occur. Each

episode consists of an initiating event and response(s). These two categories are connected by the "Initiate" relationship denoting a causal connection between the initiating event and the response. But because a story usually has more than one episode, it is necessary to show in different ways the relationships that exist between episodes. Three basic relationships exist: (1) an AND relationship that indicates simultaneous activity or temporally overlapping states; (2) a THEN relationship indicating temporal order; and (3) a CAUSE relationship indicating a direct causal connection between two episodes. The latter is illustrated by the following partial tree structure provided by Stein and Glenn:[40]



This schema was developed, in part, from Stein and Glenn's attempts to study the structural relationships existing in the stories told by their subjects during tests of immediate recall. While the purposes of my study are quite different, the schema nevertheless offers a rudimentary framework for the analysis of narrative structures detailed by my students.

Such a schema is suggested, although not specifically delineated, in the studies in the third category of literature on narrative structure--the studies done on the content of children's original stories, with major emphasis on analysis of subject, characterization, and plot development. Pitcher and Prelinger (1963) analyze the content of the spontaneous stories told by children between the ages of two and five, an interesting though not directly applicable study for my own analysis of the retellings of fairy tales. Arthur Applebee (1978) expands their analysis of these stories and discusses stories told by older children as well. His purpose is to correlate them to the stages of cognitive development proposed by Piaget and Vygotsky. What emerges in Applebee's description of how the child's conceptual development is reflected in the types of narrative the child produces. He lists the six major stages of narrative from least to most complex, each representing a progressively more complex combination of two basic structuring principles, centering and chaining.[41] The first general stage, "heaps," is the stage of immediate perception, with few links between items. The second stage, "sequences," relates to the child's making use of superficial and arbitrary sequences in time without any discernible causal link between them. The third stage, labeled "primitive narrative," is a collection of complementary events organized around a concrete core. The fourth, the "unfocused chain," consists of incidents leading directly from one to another but the attributes linking them continue to shift. The result is a story that has much of the structure of a narrative but which

basically loses its point and direction. The fifth, the "focused chain," occurs when children's stories containing the processes of chaining and centering occur within one narrative. Typically the center is a main character who goes through a series of events, somewhat like a picaresque story. The last, the "true narrative," allows for each incident to develop out of the previous one, and at the same time elaborating a new aspect of the theme or situation. The ending is usually entailed within the initial situation. Five-year-olds, in some cases, are capable of telling true narratives, although sometimes even older children have difficulty with them. Children in the preoperational stage of conceptual development are more likely to produce the unfocused chain narrative or the focused chain narrative, a finding important for the analysis of my data, discussed further in Chapter IV.

The textual analysis of more sophisticated fiction demands much more than the story grammars or schemata used in the literature reviewed up to this point. Discourse analysis in the field of literary criticism is considerably broader, with a view of narrative as two-dimensional: story--the internal relations of action and character, and discourse--the set of external relations between narrator and reader (or listener) that includes such things as time, aspect, and mode of narrative.[42] Seymour Chatman has written extensively about narrative transmission in discourse. In an early article (1969) he discusses discourse as the literary aspect of the narrative:

> Story events as such are nonliterary: they have no necessary connection with discourse. They could as easily be reproduced in a silent movie with no captions or a comic strip without words. . . . Given the fact that a story is a story in language the question is "What are the properties of the linguistic modus, the verbal means by which the author (as opposed to a silent-film director or comic strip artist) communicates the story to his audience?"[43]

In a later article (1975) Chatman further develops his concept of the second dimension of narrative as the set of external relations between narrator and reader:

> The initial question, then, is whether a narrator is present, and if he is, how his presence is recognized and how strongly it is felt by the audience. The narrator comes into existence when the story itself is made to seem a demonstrable act of communication. If an audience feels that it is in some sense spoken to (regardless of the medium), then the existence of a teller must be presumed.[44]

Discursive structure, then, the second dimension of narrative, involves the relationship between narrator and reader and the extent to which the narrator makes his presence felt in the narrative. Varieties of narrative transmission range from a primarily unmediated story with no intervention by the narrator, along a continuum to a highly mediated narrative with considerable intervention by the narrator.

While Chatman makes it clear that he is discussing fictional rather than personal narrative, some interesting parallels can be drawn between Chatman's view of fictional narration and William Labov's view of historical or personal narration. In "The Transformation of Experience in Narrative Syntax" (1972), Labov explores the narrative structure of experiences related by children and adolescents concerning a brush with death or a dangerous situation.

The only essential element for a minimal narrative is a sequence of two clauses which are temporally ordered, having a beginning, a middle, and an end. But in his research on personal experience narratives, Labov discovered that most narratives contain other elements as well. A fully-formed narrative may contain all of the following elements: an abstract, an orientation, complicating action, evaluation, result or resolution, and a coda.[45] Each of these is explained in full in Chapters IV and V. Labov is suggesting, like Chatman in his discussion of fictional narrative, that personal narrative is usually more complex than merely setting and plot. Like Chatman, Labov sees narrative as two-dimensional: the story, characterization, plot on the one hand, and the relationship between narrator and audience on the other. The two dimensions are inextricably bound together in the total narrative.

This second dimension of narrative involves primarily the evaluation of the narrative. According to Labov, it is this element of narrative structure that has not been discussed in the literature to any extent, even though it is perhaps the most important element in addition to the basic narrative clause.[46] The evaluation is the means by which the narrator indicates the point of the narrative, its reason for being told, what the narrator is getting at. Labov explains:

> There are many ways to tell the same story, to make very different points, or to make no point at all. Pointless stories are met (in English) with the withering rejoinder, "So what?" Every good narrator is continually warding off this question; when his narrative is over, it should be

> unthinkable for a bystander to say, "So what?" Instead, the appropriate remark would be, "He did?" or similar means of registering the reportable character of the events of the narrative.[47]

Labov's concept of evaluation, the means by which the narrator makes the story reportable, appears to be similar to Chatman's explanation of the kinds and degrees of narrator intervention. Their two-dimensional view of narrative is very important for the analysis of my data.

Labov's study, furthermore, ties evaluation in narrative to certain syntactic features; in other words, evaluation involves not just what is said but how it is said. Particular syntactic features provide a means of evaluation, and the use of these structures, to some extent, reflects the linguistic abilities of children at varying ages. The control of narrative structure, in part, is dependent on the syntactic control of the narrator.

As such, the control of narrative structure is related to the chronological age and the particular stage of linguistic maturity of the narrator, a point to be discussed extensively in Chapter V. Like Labov, Kernan (1977) studies the narratives of three groups of children of varying ages, and he uses Labov's method of analysis to discuss evaluative elements in narrative discourse.

While the amount of literature and research on narrative discourse applicable to my study is limited, the research cited has provided valuable insight into the nature and structure of narrative. The story schema of Stein and Glenn and the two-dimensional view of narrative provided by Chatman and Labov will provide the framwork

for the analysis of the narratives produced in my study. Of particular importance is the work of Labov which provides the framework for the analysis of evaluation and syntax in narrative structure.

FOOTNOTES--CHAPTER I

[1]William Labov, "Variation in Language," in The Learning of Language, ed. Carroll E. Reed (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1971), pp. 187-8.

[2]Roy O'Donnell, William Griffin, and Raymond Norris, Syntax of Elementary School Children: A Transformational Analysis (Champaign: NCTE, 1967), p. 3.

[3]Ruth G. Strickland, The Language of Elementary School Children: Its Relationship to the Language of Reading Textbooks and the Quality of Reading of Selected Children (Bloomington: Indiana University, Bulletin of the School of Education, 1962), p. 16.

[4]Ibid., p. 60.

[5]Ibid., p. 102.

[6]Walter D. Loban, The Language of Elementary School Children: A Study of the Use and Control of Language Effectiveness in Communication, and the Relations Among Speaking, Reading, Writing, and Listening (Champaign: NCTE, 1963), p. 7.

[7]Ibid., pp. 82-6.

[8]Strang and Hocker, "First-Grade Children's Language Patterns," Elementary English, 42 (1965), 38-41.

[9]Paula Menyuk, "Syntactic Structures in the Language of Children," Child Development, 34 (1963), 408.

[10]Carol Chomsky, The Acquisition of Syntax in Children from 5 to 10 (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1969), p. 120.

[11]Kellogg Hunt, Grammatical Structures Written at Three Grade Levels (Champaign: NCTE, 1965), p. 3.

[12]Ibid., p. 5.

[13]Jean Malmstrom and Constance Weaver, "Syntactic Maturity and Syntactic Appropriateness in Teaching Writing," in Current Topics in Language: Introductory Readings, ed. Nancy Ainsworth Johnson (Cambridge, Mass.: Winthrop Publishers, 1976), p. 349.

[14]Hunt, p. 142.

[15]Ibid., p. 89.

[16]Ibid., p. 143.

[17]O'Donnell, et al., pp. 77-9.

[18]John J. Gumperz, "Introduction," in Directions in Sociolinguistics: The Ethnography of Communication, ed. Gumperz and Hymes (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1972), p. 15.

[19]Dell Hymes, "Models of the Interaction of Language and Social Life," in Directions in Sociolinguistics: The Ethnography of Communication, ed. Gumperz and Hymes (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1972), p. 57.

[20]Ibid., p. 56.

[21]Ibid., pp. 58-65.

[22]Martin Joos, The Five Clocks (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1961), pp. 19-39.

[23]Susan Ervin-Tripp, "On Sociolinguistic Rules: Alternation and Co-occurrence," in Directions in Sociolinguistics: The Ethnography of Communication, ed. Gumperz and Hymes (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1972), pp. 233-5.

[24]William Labov, "The Reflection of Social Processes in Linguistic Structures," in Current Topics in Language: Introductory Readings, ed. Nancy Ainsworth Johnson (Cambridge, Mass.: Winthrop Publishers, 1976), pp. 143-4.

[25]I am, of course, talking about productive control of styles, with the assumption that receptive control of stylistic variations does exist, for the most part, for most adolescents and children.

[26]Johanna S. DeStefano, "Register: Social Variation in Language Use," in Language and the Language Arts, ed. DeStefano and Fox (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1974), p. 21.

[27]Strang and Hocker, pp. 38-41.

[28] Rudolph Troike, "Receptive Bidialectalism: Implications for Second-Dialect Teaching," in Current Topics in Language: Introductory Readings, ed. Nancy Ainsworth Johnson (Cambridge, Mass.: Winthrop Publishers, 1976), p. 95.

[29] Julie Jensen, "A Comparative Investigation of the Casual and Careful Oral Language Styles of Average and Superior Fifth Grade Boys and Girls," Research in the Teaching of English, 7, No. 3 (1973), 341.

[30] Ibid., p. 345.

[31] O'Donnell, et al., pp. 80-2.

[32] Kellogg Hunt, Syntactic Maturity in Schoolchildren and Adults, Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development, 35 (1970), p. 54.

[33] Mike Pope, "The Syntax of Fourth Graders' Narrative and Explanatory Speech," Research in the Teaching of English, 8 (1974), 22.

[34] Jean Mandler and Nancy S. Johnson, "Remembrance of Things Parsed: Story Structure and Recall," Cognitive Psychology, 9 (1977), 111.

[35] Ibid., p. 113.

[36] Juri M. Latman, "Notes on the Structure of a Literary Text," Semiotica, 15 (1975), 201.

[37] Mandler and Johnson, p. 115.

[38] Nancy L. Stein and Christine G. Glenn, "An Analysis of Story Comprehension in Elementary School Children: A Test of a Schema," ERIC, No. ED 121474, 1975, p. 25.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid., p. 20.

[41] Arthur N. Applebee, The Child's Concept of Story (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1978), p. 72.

[42] Seymour Chatman, "New Ways of Analyzing Narrative Structure, With an Example from Joyce's Dubliners," Language and Style, 2 (1969), 3-4.

[43] Ibid., pp. 30-1.

[44]Seymour Chatman, "The Structure of Narrative Transmission, in *Style and Structure in Literature: Essays in the New Stylistics*, ed. Roger Fowler (New York: Cornell University Press, 1975), p. 215.

[45]William Labov, "The Transformation of Experience in Narrative Syntax," in *Language in the Inner City: Studies in the Black English Vernacular* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1972), p. 363.

[46]Ibid., p. 366.

[47]Ibid.

CHAPTER II

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The impetus for my study was an informal analysis of stylistic variation conducted by Bradford Arthur, reported in Teaching English to Speakers of English (1973). He studied the variations existing between two versions of the Cinderella fairy tale told by a third grade girl on two separate occasions. On the first occasion she was given the task of telling the story for practice as preparation for a retelling of the same story at a later time. The second version, she was told, would be recorded and written down as a formal story. The stylistic differences that Arthur records between the two versions include morphological, syntactic, and lexical differences. From his analysis Arthur discovered that the second, more formal version contained fewer sentences beginning with the coordinating conjunction and; a greater variety of other conjoining words and phrases like and while, but then, and at once, when, by that time, etc; more syntactic word-order inversions like "once upon a time there lived a little girl named Cinderella"; a greater number of subordinte clauses functioning as adverbs of time; an increase in sentence complexity, with fewer simple sentences conjoined by and, like "When the prince saw her, he was delighted, and danced with her all evening"; complete

consistency in the use of the past tense; and a more formal lexicon, like the verb wept for cried.[1]

Arthur theorizes that young children are already beginning to master a formal style in addition to an informal one: "Her performance clearly indicates that her passive assimilation of literary prose enabled her to produce an approximation of such prose herself, with little difficulty and no special training or encouragement."[2]

Arthur's informal study, I felt, deserved replication on a larger scale. While Arthur's general hypothesis about the control of language styles by children had been supported by some of the research cited in the first chapter, no formal study had been done using Arthur's particular methodology. Even more significantly, few studies have been done on the control of narrative structure by children. Arthur's methodology, it seemed to me, offered a useful approach for such analysis. To make the study more interesting I felt it would be beneficial to look not only at the informal and formal oral language of third graders but also at the language samples of somewhat older, more "language-experienced" sixth graders and include a comparison of the two groups.

Thesis

In general, my hypothesis is that children, as early as the third grade, are already gaining control of more than one register or style. Such children are gaining flexibility in the use of language and are making more or less conscious choices regarding language use. Stylistic variations in syntax, vocabulary, and

discourse structure exist between children's casual oral style and their more formal oral style of narrative discourse. I am defining informal style on the basis of Jensen's (1973) definition of casual speech as that which is informal, spontaneous, and relaxed; and formal style on the basis of her definition of formal speech as that associated with a mental set in which more attention is paid to the manner of speaking.[3] A switch from one style to the other is related to the variables discussed by Hymes (1972), including participants in and purposes of the speech act.

More specifically, my first hypothesis is that the formal style of both third graders and sixth graders, compared to their informal styles, will show greater syntactic complexity; a more complete, carefully motivated, and coherent narrative structure; a more formal lexicon and usage; and a greater use of evaluation elements correlating with the increase in syntactic complexity. My second hypothesis is that sixth graders, compared to third graders, will have greater control of stylistic variation and will demonstrate a greater degree of syntactic complexity in both informal and formal styles, and will have greater control of narrative discourse. My third hypothesis is that the formal oral style these students produce will approximate written language--that formal oral and written forms share certain features. O'Donnell did compare the oral with the written discourse in his study, but he made no distinction between informal and formal oral; his methodology made no provision for eliciting one kind of oral response more than the other.

I am interested throughout the study in comparing my results based on these three hypotheses with the results of studies reviewed in Chapter I.

Population and Sample

The study was conducted with the cooperation of the Lansing Public Schools at Lyons Avenue Elementary School. The thirty students for the study were drawn from two grade levels, third and sixth. The third grade was selected specifically in an attempt to replicate Bradford Arthur's study, and the sixth grade was selected largely so that developmental trends in language learning and use could be evaluated in a comparison of the two grade levels.

Lyons Avenue School is located in the south part of Lansing, in a relatively stable lower-middle class neighborhood, as defined by the principal and the classroom teachers. The school population has a larger percentage of white children than Black or Mexican-American. My sampling was white, with the exception of one black sixth grader. Because the school is relatively small, the fifteen third grade females and the fifteen sixth grade females used in my study represent the majority of students of that sex in each of the two grades.

I limited my study to females, largely in order to eliminate the sex variable. John B. Carroll (1971) maintains that sex is, by all accounts, an important variable in language development.[4] An article by Dorothea A. McCarthy (1970) suggests that boys are

slightly later than girls in practically all aspects of language development:

> These differences seldom are statistically significant, but the careful observer cannot ignore the amazing consistency with which these small differences appear in one investigation after another, each being conducted by a different experimenter, employing different techniques, different subjects, and sampling different geographical populations.[5]

She goes on to cite study after study corroborating her statement. A study by Rubin (1972) shows that boys are behind girls in language and reading-readiness skills when they enter kindergarten.[6] Gunderson (1976) correlates the fact that boys have more difficulty learning to read with their later language development compared to girls, but she also suggests that many of these differences may have their roots in the characteristic differences between the ways boys and girls are reared and socialized.[7] Carroll suggests much the same thing, and he goes on to say that "it is possible that current cultural and social trends in the U.S. are working towards reducing differences between boys and girls in language development."[8] Whether, in fact, there are significant differences between the language development of girls and boys, and whether or not these differences are being mitigated by current child-rearing trends, it seemed wise to limit my study to one sex to avoid any possible differences between boys' and girls' language development. For this reason I chose to study the language of the girls only.

Procedure

To elicit narrative discourse, I selected two fairy tales, "Cinderella" and "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," to be told by

the children. These two tales are quite familiar to most children, either through the story book mode or through the Walt Disney animated cartoon versions of both tales. I also felt that the two stories were reasonably similar in their complexity of plot, character, etc. I tried to limit the stories to these two, although one third grader and two sixth graders knew only "The Three Bears," and one sixth grader told "The Three Little Pigs." Unless otherwise stated, my figures on syntactic complexity are based on data from all the stories, but my results on narrative structure reflect only the data from "Cinderella" and "Snow White" because of the nature of the analysis.

Most of the tape-recordings were done in a small room adjoining the main sixth-grade classroom. It was quiet and private with few possibilities for distractions. The room contained a table, three or four chairs, and two filing cabinets. I sat behind the table during both the casual and formal tapings, and the child in each situation sat across the table from me. During the first set of tapings the tape-recorder containing a remote microphone was on a chair next to me, hidden from view of the child. During the second taping, however, the recorder was placed on the table in full view.

For five of the third grade formal tapings it was necessary for me to use the hallway outside the third grade classroom because the other room was in use at the time. This might have introduced some variation in my results, but I tried to make the setting as close to that of the room as possible. We sat opposite each other in scaled-to-size chairs, with the tape-recorder on a chair next to us.

For the first set of tapings I asked each child to tell me either the story of "Cinderella" or "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" in their own words, as well as they were able to remember it. I told them this was a practice session but that I would be back the following week to ask them to tell the story again into a tape-recorder so that I could record it and write it down as their version of the story for other children to read.

The second set of tapings occurred a week later. This time I had the recorder in view and explained that I would be taping their stories and then typing them up for other children to read.

None of the children asked questions during their story-telling experiences, except for two of them who mixed up their beginning and asked to start over. I allowed them to begin again. My role as interviewer was to simply listen to the stories. I provided little verbal encouragement, although I occasionally smiled and nodded my head slightly as an encouragement to continue. These non-verbal cues are normal interactional cues, and their absence would have distorted the situation.

The task was changed from one session to the next in two ways: the purpose and goal of the task was changed from a practice session to dictating a story for other children to read, and the physical environment was changed because of the presence of a tape-recorder which would contribute to a more formal atmosphere. The story or subject, the participants, the channel of transmission, and the mode of discourse remained the same. My assumption in setting up the study in this way was that even with the relatively

minor changes from one interview to the other, the change in the purpose and goal of the task would be sufficient to demonstrate stylistic variations.

Method of Analysis

In this study Kellogg Hunt (1965) defined syntactic maturity as the observed characteristics of writers in an older grade and as such demonstrated the correlation between syntactic "maturity" and syntactic complexity, as did O'Donnell in his study. Because other connotations exist for the meaning of syntactic "maturity," however, as discussed in Chapter I, I prefer to use the term "complexity" in my study.

I chose to use Hunt's T-Unit as the basic measure of syntactic complexity, a measure relatively easy to use and one that a number of researchers have used confidently as an accurate measure of such complexity. Hunt and O'Donnell, Griffin, and Norris in their study found that the best indicator was the length of the T-Unit, the second best was the length of clauses, resulting from the increased use of sentence-combining transformations and deletion transformations, and the third best indicator was the number of clauses per T-Unit. O'Donnell, et al. state:

> This investigation supports the finding by Hunt (1964, 1965) that when fairly extensive samples of children's language are obtained, the mean length of T-Units has special claim to consideration as a simple, objective, valid indicator of development in syntactic control.[9]

Although I am using this basic measure of syntactic complexity, some qualifications of this view will be offered during later analysis,

in relation to the length of T-Units produced by the children in my study.

I divided each of the language samples of my third and sixth graders (found in the Appendix) into T-Units; each T-Unit consists of one main clause plus any subordinate clauses or phrases attached to or embedded in the main clause.

The syntactic analysis involves a two-by-two comparison of the data--a comparison of the third grade casual with the sixth grade casual and third formal with sixth formal, and a comparison of third casual with third formal and sixth casual with sixth formal. Much of the syntactic analysis uses Hunt's T-Unit analysis.[10] The analysis of narrative structure is based primarily on the work of William Labov, with major contributions from Chatman, Applebee, and Stein and Glenn.

FOOTNOTES--CHAPTER II

[1]Bradford Arthur, Teaching English to Speakers of English (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Javanovich, Inc., 1973), pp. 62-4.

[2]Ibid., p. 64.

[3]Julie Jensen, "A Comparative Investigation of the Casual and Careful Oral Language Styles of Average and Superior Fifth Grade Boys and Girls," Research in the Teaching of English, 7, No. 3 (1973), 341.

[4]John B. Carroll, "Development of Natural Language Skills Beyond the Early Years," in The Learning of Language, ed. Carroll E. Reed (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1971), p. 147.

[5]Dorothea A. McCarthy, "Sex Differences in Language Development," in Psychological Studies of Human Development, ed. Raymond Kuhlen and George Thompson (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1970), p. 349.

[6]Rosalyn Rubin, "Sex Differences in Effects of Kindergarten Attendance on Development of School Readiness and Language Skills," Elementary School Journal, 72 (1972), 272.

[7]Doris V. Gunderson, "Sex Differences in Language and Reading," Language Arts (March 1976), 302.

[8]Carroll, p. 148.

[9]O'Donnell, et al., pp. 98-9.

[10]Each of the syntactic variables analyzed in this study involved the application of the T-test for statistical significance at the .05 level. The only variable in which the difference was significant at the .05 level was the sixth graders' increase in the use of the three-clause T-Unit from four percent (casual) to eight percent (formal).

CHAPTER III

SYNTACTIC ANALYSIS

T-Unit Analysis

The measure of syntactic complexity developed by Kellogg Hunt and used by a number of other researchers is the T-Unit, a minimal terminable unit which consists of one main clause plus any subordinate clauses or phrases attached to or embedded in the main clause. The length of the T-Unit, the length of clauses within T-Units, and the number of clauses per T-Unit have been used in syntactic analysis as valid indicators of development in syntactic control. Using these measures as a basis for determining syntactic elaboration, I analyzed the syntactic data of the children in my study with two major questions in mind: Is the increase in chronological age from third graders to sixth graders accompanied by an increase in syntactic elaboration? Does a formal situation encourage the production of greater syntactic elaboration? A third question, not directly resulting from my data but suggested by a comparison of my data with the data in other research, is one related to written style: Does the formal oral style approximate the syntactic elaboration of written style? While my own study did not involve writing samples, some assumptions can be made about the relationship between

speech and writing by comparing my data on formal oral style with Hunt's and O'Donnell's data on oral and written styles.

Using Kellogg Hunt's definition of T-Units, I analyzed the fifteen samples each of casual and formal oral styles at each grade level in terms of average number of words per sample, average T-Unit length, average clause length, and average number of clauses per T-Unit. The results are listed in Table 1.

TABLE 1.--T-Unit Analysis: Average Number of Words per Sample, Words per T-Unit, Words per Clause, and Clauses per T-Unit.

T-Unit Analysis	Grade Level 3 (N = 15)	Grade Level 6 (N = 15)
Number of Words per Sample		
Casual	366	285
Formal	465	373
Words per T-Unit		
Casual	8.0	8.5
Formal	8.5	8.6
Words per Clause		
Casual	6.4	6.8
Formal	6.5	6.6
Clauses per T-Unit		
Casual	1.25	1.25
Formal	1.30	1.30

At both grade levels, as expected, an increase in the average number of words per story occurred from the casual to the formal styles, possibly because the more formal demands an increase in the

number of details, a factor to be discussed at greater length in Chapter IV. One must also consider the possibility of the "rehearsal" effect on their fluency. They had rehearsed the story for me during the first session which might possibly have increased their fluency during the second. The fact that a week intervened between sessions, however, lessens this possibility.

At the same time that there was an increase in story length from casual to formal, there was a decrease in the length from third graders to sixth graders in both styles. One explanation for this disparity is that sixth graders may be farther removed from the fairy-tale telling mode than third graders are in terms of both age and interest; sixth graders may simply not recall as many details or they may not be as involved in the task of telling fairy tales. A further explanation is that sixth graders may have a keener sense of audience and may assume that the listener already knows the details. They may choose, consequently, to tell only the key points of the narrative, a point to be discussed further in Chapters IV and V. However, the data are inconclusive on this point.

O'Donnell's study of written and oral language showed that in both speech and writing, the total length of responses increased with every grade level. O'Donnell's subjects, it is recalled, narrated the story of a film they had just seen, so that it is possible that the immediacy of the recall affected the length of the narrations, unlike the situation where the recall of the fairy tale occurs, very probably, long after the last time the tale had been read, seen, or heard, especially for the older sixth graders.

In the other three categories, length of T-Unit, length of clause, and number of clauses per T-Unit, the expected increase from casual to formal did occur for both grade levels, the only exception being the clause length for sixth graders in which a slight decrease occurred from casual to formal--6.8 words per clause to 6.6. The greatest increase was the jump for the third graders from 8.0 words per T-Unit for casual to 8.5 for formal, the category according to Hunt that is the best indicator of syntactic complexity. Interestingly, the increase in clauses per T-Unit from 1.25 to 1.30 was identical for both grade levels. The language performance of the sixth graders showed a slight increase in syntactic elaboration over the performance of the third graders in length of T-Unit and in length of clauses, with the number of clauses per T-Unit remaining identical from third to sixth grades in both styles. On the basis of T-Unit analysis, my data show a trend from casual to formal style towards increasing syntactic elaboration. The data also suggest that, in most cases, an increase in chronological age is accompanied by greater syntactic elaboration in language performance.

My original hypothesis that a formal oral style is an approximation of written style must be reconsidered in light of my data. While my analysis shows some differences in syntactic elaboration between casual and formal oral styles, there may also be a greater difference between formal oral and written styles in terms of such elaboration and a more complex relationship between them than I first hypothesized. An interesting comparison can be made between the data for my formal oral style and the data for the

written language samples analyzed in Hunt's and O'Donnell's studies. The combined figures of Hunt and O'Donnell appearing in the following table have been adapted from Frank O'Hare's (1973) discussion of their research in his NCTE Report.[1] The table includes my figures on formal oral style and contrasts them with the figures of Hunt and O'Donnell on written style.

TABLE 2.--Average Number of Words per T-Unit, Words per Clause, and Clauses per T-Unit.

T-Unit Analysis	Grade Level 3	4	5	6	7	8	12
Words/T-Unit							
Wilson (formal oral)	8.5			8.6			
O'Donnell (written)	7.7		9.3		9.9		
Hunt (written)		8.5				11.3	14.4
Words/Clause							
Wilson (formal oral)	6.5			6.6			
O'Donnell (written)	6.5		7.4		7.7		
Hunt (written)		6.6				8.1	8.6
Clauses/T-Unit							
Wilson (formal oral)	1.30			1.30			
O'Donnell (written)	1.18		1.27		1.30		
Hunt (written)		1.29				1.42	1.68

My data, when compared with Hunt's and O'Donnell's, suggest that the formal oral style is one of a repertoire of stylistic variations rather than an approximation of written. It is true that for words per clause my figure of 6.5 for third graders is identical to the 6.5 of O'Donnell's third graders. But figures in other categories are considerably different. In two categories, length of T-Unit and length of clause, the formal oral figures of my sixth graders are lower than the figures for the written style of O'Donnell's fifth and seventh graders, although the number of clauses per T-Unit is about the same. For sixth graders, at least, the formal oral language does not appear to show the same type of syntactic elaboration that written language does. It appears that these differences are great enough to establish formal oral as different from written, an assumption that is substantiated by research cited later in this chapter as well.

One complication, however, is the fact that the distance between formal oral and written fluctuates considerably, depending on grade level, and in fact becomes reversed for third graders. In T-Unit length the figures for my sixth graders' formal oral, 8.6, is lower than the 9.3 of O'Donnell's fifth graders, just as in clause length my sixth graders' 6.6 is below the 7.4 of O'Donnell's fifth graders. However, the average T-Unit length of my third graders' formal oral style is 8.5, higher than the 7.7 of O'Donnell's third graders, and the average number of clauses per T-Unit for my third graders, 1.30, is slightly higher than the 1.18 for O'Donnell's third graders.

Although these figures may reflect the size of the sample, the specific school, etc., they may also reflect the complex relationship between oral and written language at various grade levels. They may provide some evidence that the control of syntax and the development of syntactic elaboration may vary with the channel (oral or written) for different grade levels. It is not surprising to find less syntactic control in the writing of third graders than in their speaking, considering the more difficult psycho-motor control required for the writing task, especially for children just becoming familiar with this channel. But it is an interesting fact that sixth graders' oral language does not show the same kinds of syntactic elaboration as their written language. My results are substantiated by O'Donnell's study; he found that the length of T-Units was significantly greater in oral than in written expression in grade three, but that the length of the T-Units in writing was greater than that in speech at grades five and seven.

A possible explanation for this disparity between oral and written in grades five, six, and seven is the frequently greater emphasis on formal writing than on formal speaking in schoolroom activities or assignments; energies are perhaps being directed toward written expression. The circumstances in most third grade classrooms are likely to be reversed: writing is just beginning to be emphasized, while the other channel of communication is speech.

A second possible explanation is the growing awareness at the upper grade level of the need for greater redundancy in written language, which would tend to increase the length of T-Units.

Probably unconsciously, students in the process of developing their writing skills become aware that written language cannot rely on the non-verbal cues accompanying oral language or on the immediate feedback available in normal speech situations. Therefore writing must make greater use of verbal redundancy.

My T-Unit analysis points to the conclusion that while there are differences in syntactic elaboration between casual and formal styles at both grade levels and between both grade levels in each of the styles, the greater differences appear to be between the casual and formal oral styles of the third graders. They are developing stylistic flexibility primarily in oral language, while the sixth graders appear to be developing greater syntactic flexibility and syntactic elaboration in written language, according to the comparison of my study with O'Donnell's.

I have been looking primarily at length up to this point. But I must raise some important questions about T-Unit analysis. Does the increase in T-Unit length always mean an increase in syntactic complexity? Or can this length be interpreted as merely an increase in verbosity? Length of T-Unit or clause alone is not a sufficient index of complexity; what the T-Unit or clause consists of in terms of embedded elements, etc., is crucial for determining if complexity actually exists. One can either say, "I know the man who is sitting in the car," or "I know the man sitting in the car." Certainly the first T-unit is longer than the second, but it is by no means more complex. In terms of the number of transformations performed on the deep structure of the sentence, the second, shorter

T-Unit is in fact more complex; the clause modifier "who is sitting in the car" has been reduced by a deletion transformation to "sitting in the car" (and could be reduced further to "in the car"). A decrease in clause length or T-Unit length may be evidence of greater syntactic control if one considers the fact that as children's language matures, it becomes more concise.

Is it possible, then, that the shorter T-Units and clauses found in the oral language of the sixth graders in my study, compared to the longer T-Units found in the writing of Hunt's and O'Donnell's subjects of comparable ages, is a reflection of more conciseness in their oral language? One of the best indicators of conciseness is the use of non-clause modifiers of nouns.[2] Such modifiers, when reduced from full adjective clauses, provide phrases like "the red car" from "the car that is red," or "the book on the table" from "the book that is on the table." Because Hunt and O'Donnell tested a broader range of non-clause modifiers of nouns than I did in my study, our specific results cannot be compared. But O'Donnell found a higher number of such modifiers in the writing of his fifth and seventh grade students than in their speech, although he found large overall increases from one grade to another in this kind of modification in both speech and writing.[3]

It is doubtful, then, that the shorter T-Units and clauses in the oral language of the sixth graders in this study can be attributed to greater conciseness. It is possible that greater emphasis on writing in classroom activities in the sixth grade and an increased awareness on the part of sixth graders for the need for

more redundancy in written language contribute to the longer T-Units in their writing, although this is somewhat speculative.

Hunt's and O'Donnell's claim that T-Unit length is a valid indicator of development in syntactic control rests not on length alone but on the correlation they found between T-Unit length and syntactic complexities within T-Units. At the same time that increases in length of T-Units occur from one grade level to another, in spite of the fact that students increasingly develop an ability to reduce clauses and phrases for greater conciseness, the occurrence of syntactic sentence-combining transformations also increases.[4] An analysis of several syntactic complexities follows in subsequent sections of this chapter.

Non-Clause Modifiers of Nouns

One way of increasing both clause length and T-Unit length is to increase the number of non-clause optional elements that are added to the minimal elements of the clause. Hunt maintains that the major lengthening of clauses and T-Units occurs as an expansion of nominals whereby adjective clauses are reduced to non-clause modifiers of nouns in adjoining clauses, an opportunity often missed by young writers.[5]

My study of noun modification in oral language (excluding adjective clauses to be discussed later) includes adjectives (the <u>red</u> car), prepositional phrases (the man <u>in the car</u>), participles (the man <u>sitting in the car</u>), appositives (the old woman, the <u>wicked</u>

witch), and adverbs (this girl here). The results of my analysis of non-clause modifiers of nouns are listed below in Table 3.

TABLE 3.--Ratio of Non-Clause Modifiers of Nouns per T-Unit.

	Grade Level 3 (N = 15)	Grade Level 6 (N = 15)
Casual	.12	.13
Formal	.15	.17

My data show an increase in the use of such modifiers both from casual to formal style and from third to sixth grade. The greater increases are from casual to formal styles at both grade levels. As previously mentioned, both Hunt and O'Donnell found increases in noun modification from one grade level to another, Hunt's eighth graders writing about a third more modifiers of nouns per clause than the fourth graders did,[6] and O'Donnell reporting large overall increases in this kind of modification in both speech and writing. It appears, then, that increased noun modification is one of the factors in syntactic complexity.

Types of Subordinate Clauses

Any increase in the ratio of clauses per T-Unit or in the length of T-Units is accounted for, in part, by the increased use of subordinate clauses, a factor discussed in the section on T-Unit analysis. But beyond looking at the increases in subordinate clauses, one can gain insight into developmental language patterns by

observing the frequency of types of clauses at varying grade levels. Studies in syntax have characteristically divided the types of subordinate clauses into three: adverbial, which are often movable, as in "When he arrives, we'll leave," and "We'll leave when he arrives"; nominal, which often function as direct objects or subjects, as in "I thought that he said yes," and "What he said is no concern of ours"; and adjectival, which function as modifiers of nouns, as in "The persons who came were strangers," and "He's the one that I mentioned yesterday."

My hypothesis regarding frequency of types of subordinate clauses was that a difference in chronological age, and therefore a difference in degree of syntactic control, might reflect a difference in the frequency of one or more clause types. Would the adjectival clause, for example, increase in use for sixth graders? At the same time I was interested in seeing what, if any, differences occurred in the frequency of one or more types of clauses between casual and formal oral language styles. Table 4 contains the breakdown of these subordinate clause types for each of the grade levels and for each of the styles.

Looking first at the differences between casual and formal oral style, one sees in both grade levels a small increase in the use of each type of clause. No one type of clause appears to increase in use substantially over any other. The figures do show, however, that adverbial and nominal clauses are used with greater frequency than adjectival clauses at both grade levels and in both oral styles.

TABLE 4.--Ratio of Subordinate Clause Types per T-Unit.

Clause Types	Grade Level 3 (N = 15)	Grade Level 6 (N = 15)
Adverbial		
Casual	.091	.102
Formal	.109	.121
Nominal		
Casual	.132	.120
Formal	.150	.136
Adjectival		
Casual	.026	.029
Formal	.038	.038

Increases in the use of subordinate clause types from third grade to sixth grade occur only in the adverbials in both casual and formal styles; the use of adjectivals increases from third to sixth grade only in the casual style and remains the same in formal style. The most interesting fact is the decrease in frequency of nominals from third to sixth grade in both styles. Even though the decrease is slight, it may be accounted for, in part, by the decreased use of dialogue, both direct and indirect, on the part of the sixth graders, who were less likely than the third graders to use constructions such as, "And then Snow White said, 'Why don't you . . ." or "She said that the dwarfs should . . ." This factor is discussed further in Chapter IV.

The most consistent increase in use of subordinate clause types is from casual to formal at both grade levels rather than

between grade levels. Each type of clause increases slightly from casual to formal for third and sixth graders. This fact, of course, remains consistent with the general increase in length of T-Units and in the higher frequency of subordinate clauses per T-Unit.

The fact that there is so little difference between the third graders and sixth graders in this category, with the exception of the decrease in the use of nominals, may be further evidence of the developing oral style among third graders, while the stylistic development of sixth graders may be occurring to a greater extent in written style, as suggested previously.

Kellogg Hunt's study of written language showed a significant increase in the use of adjectival clauses which doubled from fourth to eighth grade.[7] My study shows no such increase. The increase in casual style from .026 for third graders to .029 for sixth graders is minuscule, and no change whatsoever occurs from third to sixth in the formal style. O'Donnell's study showed that kindergarten children used adjectival clauses more frequently than did children at any other age, in either speech or writing.[8] The significant increase in use of adjectival clauses that Hunt found in his study was not shown in O'Donnell's study. The disparity between these studies regarding adjectival clauses needs further study. Hunt's hypothesis that the use of adjectival clauses is a good indicator of syntactic maturity is questionable in light of O'Donnell's study and the evidence from my study.

The variable of genre or mode and its effect on types of clauses is an interesting one. Hunt's samples consisted of a

variety of modes, but O'Donnell's were primarily narrative in structure. O'Donnell's students were asked to discuss orally and to write their versions of an animated story-film they had just observed. The O'Donnell study found a steady increment from grades one to three to five to seven in the use of nominal and adverbial clauses in both speech and writing.[9] (Adjectival clauses were not studied separately but were grouped with non-clause modifiers of nouns for purposes of analysis.) Mike Pope's (1974) study of the syntactic differences between fourth graders' narrative and explanatory speech showed that the use of adverbials and nominals were significantly greater in explanatory speech than in narrative speech; and in the comparison of this study with O'Donnell's, Pope points out that the use of adverbial and nominal clauses by his fourth graders in their explanatory speech exceeded the use of these types of clauses by O'Donnell's seventh graders in their primarily narrative speech.[10] Pope discovered, too, that the T-Units in explanatory speech are significantly longer than those in narrative speech, and the ratio of clauses per T-Unit in the explanatory is significantly higher than in the narrative.[11] As a summation of the differences between the two genres, Pope says:

> . . . the syntactic complexity of the fourth graders' narrative speech in this study is comparable to that of the first and third graders' narrative speech in O'Donnell's study, while the syntactic complexity in the explanatory speech of the fourth graders in this study is comparable to that of O'Donnell's fifth graders' narrative speech.[12]

If, as Pope's study suggests, it is true that mode or genre affects the length of T-Units, the ratio of subordinate clauses to

T-Units, and the types of clauses used, the relatively small increases in these categories in my study from third to sixth and from casual to formal may be accounted for, in part, by the narrative genre. The effect of genre on syntactic complexity bears further study.

Distribution of Clauses Among Multi-Clause T-Units

Another measure of syntactic complexity related to, but different from, the number of clauses per T-Unit is the pattern of distribution of clauses among T-Units--the relative number of clauses found in single-clause T-Units, two-clause T-Units, three-clause T-Units, etc. For example, in "Then Cinderella quickly got dressed and she went to the ball," each T-Unit contains only one clause. In "When she got dressed, she went to the ball," the T-Unit contains two clauses. And in "When her fairy godmother came, after she got dressed, she went to the ball," the T-Unit contains three clauses. My hypothesis was that syntactic complexity would be reflected in the degree to which the students used multi-clause T-Units. For example, are sixth graders likely to use a greater number of three-clause T-Units than third graders, and is there a decrease in single-clause T-Units from casual to formal oral style at either grade level? Table 5 gives these figures.

One can see a stronger preference for single-clause T-Units in the casual speech of both third and sixth graders than in the formal, although the preference is still there in the formal. At both grade levels the formal shows an increase over the casual in

TABLE 5.--Distribution of Clauses Among Multi-Clause T-Units.

Clauses	Grade Level 3 (N = 15)	Grade Level 6 (N = 15)
Single-clause		
Casual	63 percent	64 percent
Formal	58	58
Two-clause		
Casual	29	30
Formal	33	32
Three-clause		
Casual	10	04
Formal	11	08
Four-clause		
Casual	04	07
Formal	01	09
Five-clause		
Casual	00	02
Formal	00	02

the percentage of clauses used in two-clause T-Units, from 29 to 33 percent for third graders and from 30 to 32 percent for sixth graders. An increase also occurs from casual to formal for both grades in the three- and four-clause T-Units. There was no incidence of five-clause T-Units in either style of the third graders and an extremely small percentage in the casual and formal of the sixth graders.

These figures support the hypothesis of greater syntactic complexity in formal style. At both grade levels a decrease occurs

from casual to formal in the use of single-clause T-Units, and an increase occurs in the multi-clause T-Units.

I expected to find greater differences between third and sixth graders. There was virtually no difference between them for either style in the percentage of clauses in single-clause T-Units and minimal difference in the two-clause T-Units for both styles. Interestingly, the frequency of three-clause T-Units decreased from third to sixth graders for both styles: from 10 percent (casual) and 11 percent (formal) for third graders to 4 percent (casual) and 8 percent (formal) for sixth graders. Little change occurred in the four-clause T-Unit between grades. Perhaps, as previously suggested, the third graders have developed a formal oral style that functions well enough to meet their conversational needs through the sixth grade level. This aspect of a formal oral style is fairly well established in children by the third grade and shows little change. Once again the emerging pattern is one of greater differences between styles rather than between grade levels. And, again, as previously suggested, these speakers may be aware in some way that overly complex structures will not function well in oral language--even in the formal style.

Figure 1 shows the distribution of clauses among T-Units compared with the results of a similar analysis done by Hunt in his study of the writing of fourth, eighth, and twelfth graders.[13] Because my hypothesis is that formal oral language is closer to written than is casual oral, the graph contains the figures for formal oral style in both grades.

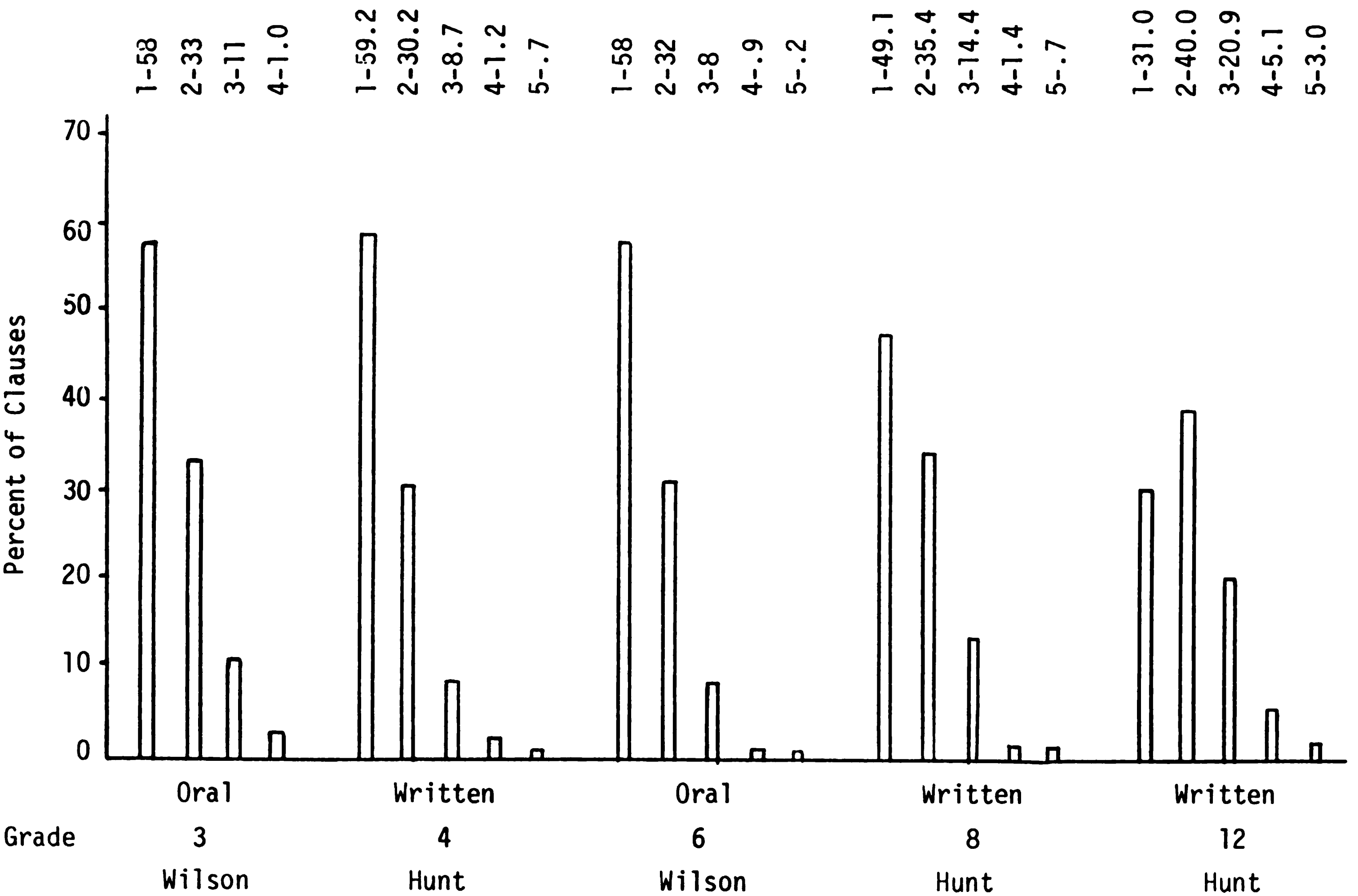


Figure 1.--Distribution of Clauses Among Multi-Clause T-Units, Hunt and Wilson.

The graph shows the small degrees of difference between the performance of third, fourth, and sixth graders in each category. It is interesting that the fourth grade written data, however, shows a slightly higher percentage of single-clause T-Units (59.2) and a slightly lower percentage of two-clause (30.2) and three clause (8.7) T-Units than the third graders in their formal oral, 58, 33, and 11 percent respectively. When one compares the figures for the sixth grade oral with the eighth grade written, the reverse is true. A large increase occurs in eighth grade written in the use of multi-clause T-Units with a decrease in the use of single-clause T-Units. These comparisons offer further support for the conclusion that those syntactic structures being analyzed do develop in different patterns within different channels of language performance.

Coordination of T-Units

One reason that sentence length is a poor indicator of language complexity, aside from the fact that "sentence" is difficult to define, is that younger children tend to use a large number of coordinating conjunctions like "and" or "and so" to conjoin main clauses, resulting in extremely long sentences. This tendency decreases significantly with age, according to Hunt's study. The fourth graders in his study used more than three times as many coordinating conjunctions to introduce T-Units in their writing as the twelfth graders did, and twice as many as eighth graders.[14] Hunt is careful to state that the use of such conjunctions is not a grammatical problem, simply a stylistic one: "It is grammatically

allowable for almost any two adjoining declarative sentences to be connected with an and. The fourth grader merely exercises that option too often for mature taste."[15] (Of course, this situation is neither a grammatical nor a stylistic "problem" for children. It is simply normal linguistic development.)

My own study, rather than finding a decrease in the use of the initial coordinating conjunctions "and," "but," or "so" from third to sixth grade, found an increase. The figures appear in Table 6.

TABLE 6.--Rate of Occurrence of Initial Coordinating Conjunctions per 100 T-Units.

	Grade Level 3 (N = 15)	Grade Level 6 (N = 15)
Casual	76.7	83.5
Formal	70.7	80.8

The increase in both styles from third to sixth grade, while differing from Hunt's data on writing, is consistent with O'Donnell's data on speech, presented in the Table 7. My 76.7 (casual) and 70.7 (formal) for third grade compared with O'Donnell's figures of 72.79 are fairly close, as are my figures of 83.5 (casual) and 80.8 (formal) for sixth grade compared with his figure of 81.25 for fifth grade. (O'Donnell, it is recalled, made no distinction between casual and formal speech. His subjects were asked to tell the story of an animated cartoon strip of two of Aesop's fables to an interviewer.)

TABLE 7.--O'Donnell's Study: Rate of Occurrence of Initial Coordinating Conjunctions per 100 T-Units.[7]

	Grade Level		
	3	5	7
Speech	72.79	81.25	75.11
Writing	25.37	28.54	23.07

Looking at the differences in my study between oral casual and formal styles at both grade levels, one finds the frequency of coordinating conjunctions initiating T-Units to be high in both styles, although a decrease occurs at both grade levels from casual to formal--from 76.7 to 70.7 for third graders, and from 83.5 to 80.8 for sixth graders. This decrease suggests that the students are exercising a sense of appropriateness as they shift styles, third graders as well as sixth graders. This explanation is further supported by O'Donnell's figures showing a dramatically significant higher proportion in oral language than in writing. Obviously children do distinguish between written and oral channels of discourse in their language performance, just as they distinguish between casual and formal in oral. This significant difference in the use of initial coordinating conjunctions between speech and writing is evidence of the students' clear awareness of a difference between appropriateness in the two different channels of discourse. These findings add significantly to the small store of information on acquisition of communicative competence.

Other Syntactic Complexities

An analysis of two other syntactic patterns, the passive construction and the inverted sentence, has produced some interesting results. Passive sentences are usually acquired later than active, and inverted sentences in which SV(O) is inverted to VS(O) or in which an adverbial is placed at the beginning of the sentence rather than close to the word being modified are more likely to be found in formal than in casual language performance. Both constructions represent syntactic complexities because each one is a marked construction--syntactically out of the ordinary.

The number of passives and inversions used by my third graders and sixth graders is relatively small. In terms of total numbers, six passives each were used by third graders and sixth graders in their casual style; the number jumped to thirteen in the formal style of third graders and to twelve in the formal style of the sixth graders. Few inversions were used by either third or sixth graders in either style. Table 8 provides the ratios of passives and inversions per 100 T-Units.

Between grade levels we find slight increases. The major increases occur from casual to formal style, particularly in the use of passives. While the number of uses of each construction is extremely small, one can still see a trend toward greater formality in language as both third graders and sixth graders shift from casual to formal oral language.

TABLE 8.--Ratio of Passives and Inversions per 100 T-Units.

Structures	Grade Level 3 (N = 15)	Grade Level 6 (N = 15)
Passives		
Casual	.86	1.23
Formal	1.62	1.84
Inversions		
Casual	.00	.20
Formal	.37	.30

Examples of the third grade passives include "he got stretched," "Cinderella got locked upstairs," and "they got turned into a man." The informal "got" construction for the passive was used frequently in both casual styles. But other passives were also used: "They were turned into a carriage," "he was chosen to go," and "the apple was poisoned," all third grade samples. Sixth graders provided similar constructions.

The third grade inversions were: "Then came the seven dwarfs into the house," "Out came a prince riding on a horse," and "'A wicked stepmother,' said Grumpy," the latter being a rather common example of inversion in passages of dialogue in print. All three examples of third graders' inversions were in the formal style; none appeared in the casual.

Two out of the three sixth graders' inversions also appeared in the formal style. The three constructions are: "Then comes a knock on the door," "Off they went," and "There came a telegram."

My conclusion is that the children's passive assimilation of literary prose results in the occasional production of such prose when the purpose of speech warrants its use.

Lexical Selection

Although lexical choice is not traditionally a part of syntactic analysis, lexical selection in transformational analysis is a part of the grammatical component and as such will be influenced by the same factors as syntactic choice. A survey of the stories shows that, to some extent, lexical selection is determined by the purpose or goal of the story-teller. What we would consider to be more formal diction was used with greater frequency in the formal styles of both third and sixth graders than in their casual. I am defining formal diction as that which is marked--out of the ordinary for colloquial, conversational, informal English.

Only three examples of adverbials of manner with the "ly" derivational suffix are found in all the stories (excluding the frequent "really" found in several samples, both grades, both styles). All three appear in the formal style of the third graders: "She went to the ball happily," "the shoe fit just perfectly," and "they immediately knew it was the wicked witch." No examples occurred in the stories of the sixth graders.

The following lists contain other lexical selections that illustrate the colloquial, casual diction used in the casual style with the more formal diction of the formal style, the differences occurring between styles rather than between grade levels:

Third: casual	Third: formal
1. Daddy	1. Dear Father
2. tickets	2. invitation
3. mad	3. disgusted
4. girl	4. maiden

Sixth: casual	Sixth: formal
1. guy	1. men
2. something to wear	2. a gown
3. went to look for	3. went searching for
4. walking	4. wandering
5. said	5. announced

At both grade levels there were a few instances in which the formal style contained the less formal word choice. Two third graders said "slipper" in the casual version but "shoe" in the formal, and one said "man" in the casual but "guy" in the formal. One sixth grader used "appears" in the casual but "comes" in the formal, and another said "weeping" in the casual and "crying" in the formal.

In other syntactic phrases as well there were differences between casual and formal styles, but few differences between grade levels. The following lists contain phrases appearing in the formal versions of both third and sixth graders. Phrases in parentheses are the comparable phrases in the casual style, if such a phrase occurred.

Third

1. He grew to like her very much.
2. She would visit them every springtime when the blossoms come out.
3. When the clock struck twelve (at twelve o'clock)
4. She put a really pretty dress on her. (She zapped something on her.)

5. They sensed something peculiar. (Something was peculiar.)
6. A storm was brewing. (It started to rain and storm.)
7. No one answered. (No one said anything.)

Sixth

1. She chanced to prick herself.
2. A prince happens along.
3. Beware of strangers. (Not to let strangers in.)
4. The person whom he married . . .
5. She fell into a deep sleep. (She fell asleep.)

These phrases are somewhat more formal than their casual counterparts and in some instances add more suspense: "they sensed something peculiar" instead of "something was peculiar," and "a storm was brewing" instead of "it started to rain and storm." "She chanced to prick herself" and "a prince happens along" are reflective of traditional fairy tale diction, and "No one answered" instead of "No one said anything" suggests typical diction in passages of written dialogue. The phrase "whom he married" contains the only example of this relative pronoun in the objective case in all of the stories produced in this study.

While these phrases are more formal and appear in the formal versions, their use does not necessarily indicate quality. In one instance, at least, the less formal phrase "She zapped something on her" has more life and force than its counterpart, "She put a really pretty dress on her." These phrases do indicate, however, that children as young as third graders are guided in lexical and syntactic selection by the purpose or goal of the language task, at least to some extent. Like the child in Bradford Arthur's informal study,

the children in my study produced an approximation of literary prose, demonstrated, in part, by their lexical selections in the formal oral style. Undoubtedly their ability to produce such prose resulted from their passive assimilation of the prose they encountered in stories they read or had read to them. This aspect of the study offers exciting possibilities for further research.

Conclusions

These data seem to present a discernible pattern of increasing syntactic complexity from casual to formal oral style at both grade levels, especially for third graders. The evidence supports my original hypothesis that children as early as the third grade are gaining syntactic control of the styles in a linguistic repertoire. This control manifests itself in the greater syntactic complexity found in the formal oral style in all of the following categories: increased length of T-Units and clauses; greater ratio of subordinate clauses to T-Units; increased numbers of non-clause modifiers of nouns, greater distribution of clauses in multi-clause T-Units; decreased use of initial coordinating conjunctions; greater ratio of passives and inversions per T-Unit; and more formal diction and syntax.

My hypothesis that formal oral style would exhibit characteristics comparable to written style needs to be reevaluated in light of my data and its comparison to the data of Hunt and O'Donnell. At the same time that my data show some distance between casual oral and formal oral styles, my data compared with Hunt's and O'Donnell's

show, also, that there is some distance between formal oral and written styles. There is perhaps a repertoire of stylistic alternatives, beginning to develop as early as the third grade.

The assumption that sixth graders would exhibit more control and greater syntactic complexity than third graders was not entirely borne out by the data. Differences between grades were not as substantial as differences between styles, and the differences between grades occurred in fewer of the syntactic variables studied.

A further analysis and comparison suggest that the development of stylistic flexibility may occur in different channels for children of different ages. Third graders appear to be developing stylistic flexibility in oral language, as demonstrated by the differences existing between their casual and formal oral styles, while sixth graders, whose differences between casual and formal oral styles are not so great and whose syntax is not so different from third graders' as one might expect, may be developing language control in written rather than in oral language. Such hypotheses warrant further study and investigation.

It was assumed in this study that the goal of the formal language event--the production of a written discourse--would be the controlling factor in the syntactic complexity of the discourse produced. We know, from evidence cited above, that children as early as the third grade produce syntactic structures in written discourse quite different from those in oral. My assumption was that similar differences would appear between the casual and formal oral language events as well. Many differences did occur; there

were increases in the complexity of the syntactic elements studied from casual to formal oral. It appears, however, that the channel--oral or written--has a greater control than the purpose or goal. The children in many cases continued to use the discourse that was more appropriate for oral language. The channel of discourse being used at the moment had more effect than the ultimate goal of the discourse.

But this is an unusual speech event; the goal in this study does not have the same compelling nature as that in a normal conversation. The goal is less tangible. To some extent this speech event was unreal because the goal was not immediate. Had there been a real audience of other children to make the goal more immediate, the results may have been quite different. Several implications for considering audience and goals in classroom speech and writing events are discussed in Chapter VI.

FOOTNOTES--CHAPTER III

[1]Frank O'Hare, Sentence Combining: Improving Student Writing Without Formal Grammar Instruction (Urbana, Illinois: NCTE, 1973), p. 22.

[2]Roy O'Donnell, William Griffin, and Raymond Norris, Syntax of Elementary School Children: A Transformational Analysis (Champaign: NCTE, 1967), p. 62.

[3]Ibid., p. 81.

[4]Ibid., p. 98.

[5]Kellogg Hunt, Grammatical Structures Written at Three Grade Levels (Champaign: NCTE, 1965), p. 106.

[6]Ibid., p. 109.

[7]Ibid., p. 89.

[8]O'Donnell, et al., p. 60.

[9]Ibid., p. 78.

[10]Mike Pope, "The Syntax of Fourth Graders' Narrative and Explanatory Speech," Research in the Teaching of English, 8 (Summer 1974), 224.

[11]Ibid., p. 221.

[12]Ibid., p. 224.

[13]Hunt, p. 26.

[14]Ibid., p. 11.

[15]Ibid.

[16]O'Donnell, et al., p. 55.

CHAPTER IV

NARRATIVE STRUCTURE: STORY

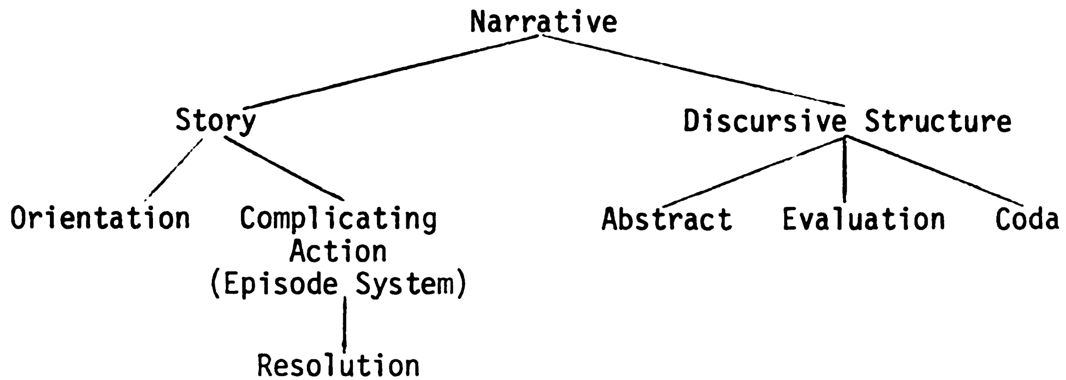
Narrative Structure: A Schema

Most studies of child language acquisition have dealt with syntactic and semantic analysis at the sentence level; little study has been done on acquisition of units beyond sentence boundaries. While analysis of sentences or smaller units is useful and insightful, it does not contribute much to our understanding of how children acquire control, either receptively or productively, of narrative structures. Except for psychological studies of children's immediate recall of stories, there is little research on children's discourse or on the degree of control relative to age. Discourse analysis, in general, is a relatively new field in language study, and what has been done in this area has seen very limited application to the discourse of children, with the notable exception of a few researchers like Ervin-Tripp and Mitchell-Kernan who have studied children's control of speech acts and speech events in various modes, and Keith Kernan, who has applied William Labov's definition of narrative to children's narrative. My study of the narrative structure of the stories told by third and sixth graders develops a schema for the description of narrative structure and discusses the differences

in narrative structure between the casual and formal oral styles and the differences between grade levels.

While it is somewhat artificial to divide discourse analysis into two separate categories, this division does expedite discussion of narrative structure. For purposes of discussion in this study, story in narrative structure--the internal relations of action and character--and discourse--the set of external relations between narrator and reader/listener--will be discussed separately. It is important, nevertheless, to keep in mind that these two dimensions are inextricably bound together in the total narrative, as shall be demonstrated further in Chapter V.

In an attempt to schematize the narrative structure of the two fairy tales told in my study, I have adopted as the framework elements of Chatman (1975), Labov (1972), and Stein and Glenn (1975). My schema includes the two-dimensional view of discourse containing story and discursive structure provided by Chatman, the six elements of a full narrative provided by Labov (abstract, orientation, complicating action, evaluation, result of resolution, and coda), and the more fully-elaborated episode system and relationships between episodes provided by Stein and Glenn. The following diagram represents the elements just listed, with the exception of the full episode system which will be delineated separately for each story later in this chapter:



This diagram is not meant to suggest a linearity of narrative structure; it is designed merely to show the two dimensions of narrative discourse and to illustrate which dimension primarily controls each of the six narrative elements described by Labov, a point to be discussed later in this chapter and in Chapter V.

Such a framework provides a means of analyzing narrative that is superior to traditional literary analysis in which the relationship between the author/narrator and the reader/listener is often ignored. Labov's framework on which much of the analysis is based includes a discussion of the nature of the speech event in which the narrative occurs, in which the speaker and listener are engaged. Mary Louise Pratt (1977) refers to Labov's speech act theory as important for literary analysis as well:

> There are enormous advantages to talking about literature in this way, too, for literary works, like all our communicative activities, are context-dependent. Literature itself is a speech context. And as with any utterance, the way people produce and understand literary works depends enormously on unspoken, culturally-shared knowledge of the rules, conventions, and expectations that are in play when language is used in that context. Just as a definition of

> explaining, thanking, or persuading must include the unspoken contextual information on which the participants are relying, so must a definition of literature.[1]

To this end, I have adopted Labov's basic framework and modified it to use as the basis of analysis in this study.

Story Schema: Orientation and Episode System

Most story grammars, including those of Stein and Glenn, present the rules which define the types of primary and higher order categories and the relations between any two categories in a simple story, much like the phrase-structure rules in a phrase-structure constituent grammar. Stein and Glenn summarize these rules in Figure 2 on page 80. Figure 3 on page 81 represents a tree showing the ideal application of the rules in Figure 2.[3]

Each story being analyzed is divided into its individual propositions, usually simple sentences, and matched to the discourse structures diagrammed on page 81. Such a detailed analysis is necessary for Stein and Glenn's purpose, which is to determine the degree of story comprehension by their subjects after having heard the story read to them just once--in other words, a check on their immediate recall. A careful match of the subjects' story production with that of the original story must be done. Obviously, for my purposes, Stein and Glenn's schema is limited; it is highly behavioristic, representing a lock-step, stimulus-response model of story production that discourages any creativity in story recall. It is to be hoped that other superior schemas will emerge to describe the process of story recall.

Summary of Grammatical Rules

1. Story ⟶ ALLOW (Setting, Episode System)
2. Setting ⟶ (State, Action)
3. Episode System AND / THEN / CAUSE [Episodes, Episodes]
4. Episode ⟶ INITIATE (Initiating Event, Response)
5. Initiating Event ⟶ (Natural Occurrence, Action, Internal Event)
6. Response ⟶ MOTIVATE (Internal Response, Plan Sequence)
7. Internal Response ⟶ (Goal, Affect, Cognition)
8. Plan Sequence ⟶ INITIATE (Internal Plan, Plan Application)
9. Internal Plan ⟶ (Cognition, Subgoal)
10. Plan Application ⟶ RESULT (Attempt, Resolution)
11. Attempt ⟶ (Action)
12. Resolution ⟶ INITIATE (Direct Consequence, Reaction)
13. Direct Consequence ⟶ (Event, End State)
14. Reaction ⟶ (Affect, Cognition, Action)

Intra-category connectors:

AND: includes simultaneous or a temporal relation.

THEN: includes temporal but not direct causal relations.

CAUSE: includes temporal relations which are causal in nature.

Figure 2.--Summary of Grammatical Rules, Stein and Glenn.

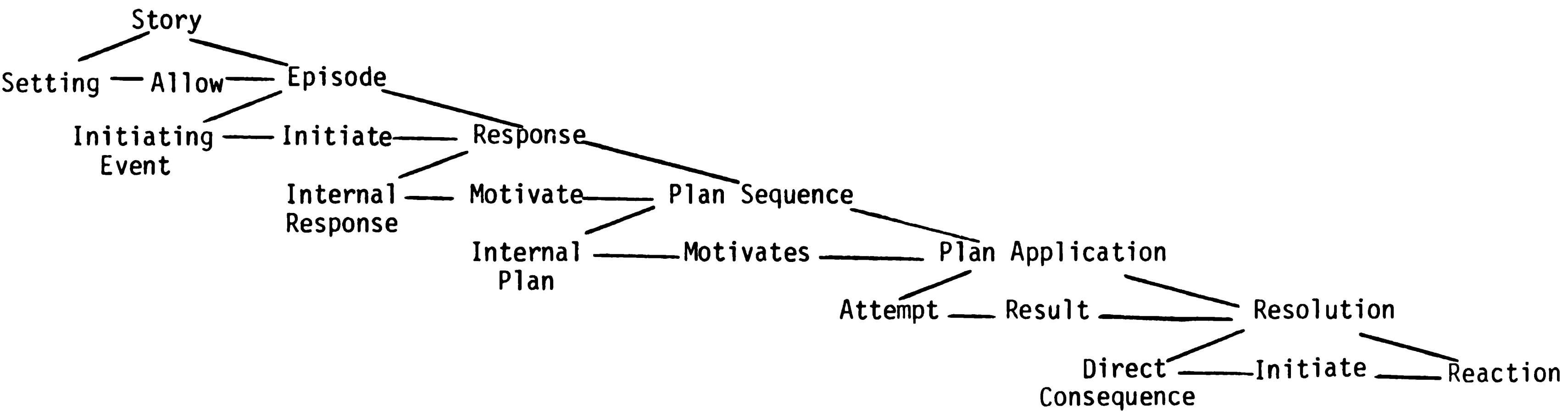


Figure 3.--Structure of a Simple Episode, Stein and Glenn.

In the present study no such detailed matching of sentence to sentence can be done because there is no detailed original story to use as the base. Numerous versions of both fairy tales exist, and this study is not so much concerned with story comprehension as it is with the overall syntactic and narrative structure of the individual versions of the tales told by the children in the study. Of course, these retellings reflect the students' previously internalized discourse structure of these stories, rather than their immediate recall of details. For this reason the analysis of the episode systems in both stories is much more general in nature, although I am using the basic framework of Stein and Glenn's episode system.

Orientation

Stein and Glenn define orientation, or setting, as the beginning part of the story which introduces the main character(s) and describes the social, physical, or temporal context in which the rest of the story occurs. Their definition states that the type of information contained in the setting is basically stative and refers to long-term or habitual states of characters or locations. An activity of a character may be considered part of the setting only if it is habitual. The setting, according to Stein and Glenn, creates the necessary conditions for the story to occur but does not directly cause the subsequent actions and events.[4]

The relationship that exists between the setting and the series of episodes that follow depends upon the individual narrative:

> Some stories simply introduce the character, give a few descriptive statements and then proceed to the episode system. In these stories the setting does not tell you anything about the character's past or present behavior and does not give any clue or advanced information about the events to occur in the remainder of the story. However, in many children's stories, especially those adapted for young readers, the setting often is more directly related to the subsequent occurrences in the remainder of the story. For example, many settings relate the type of internal desire the character has expressed over a long period of time. The remainder of the story often details just how this internal state changed or influenced a character's subsequent behavior.[5]

Labov defines orientation as the section of the narrative that identifies the time, place, persons, and situations.[6] Both studies suggest that the setting is often found at the beginning of the narrative, but they also stress that much of the material is found throughout the narrative as scenes shift and change. Labov emphasizes the importance of the orientation in narrative development because it can set the stage for the subsequent polarization of forces: protagonist vs. antagonist, good vs. evil.

<u>Episode System</u>

While Labov says little about the complicating action in narrative except in terms of the evaluation of the narrative, Stein and Glenn spend considerable time discussing and illustrating their conception of the episode system, as they refer to the complicating action. They define episode as:

> . . . the primary higher order unit of a story . . . that consists of an entire behavioral sequence. It includes the external and/or internal events which influence a character, the character's internal response (goals, cognitive plans) to these events, the character's external response

> to his goals, and the consequence resulting from his overt responses. Inherent in this sequence is a causal chain of events beginning with an initiating event and ending with a resolution.[7]

Because a story usually consists of more than one episode, the episodes must be linked. To reiterate, Stein and Glenn see three basic relationships, the first two of which are temporal and the third, causal: (1) an AND relationship indicating simultaneous activity or temporally overlapping states; (2) a THEN relationship indicating temporal order; and (3) a CAUSE relationship indicating a direct causal connection between the two episodes. There are obviously other types of relationships existing between episodes, which Stein and Glenn do not mention, possibly because such relationships are more likely to exist in more complex narratives than those used in their studies: parallel episodes, ironic relationships between episodes, episodes characterizing participants in other episodes, to name a few. The episodes in the fairy tales studied here generally fit into the relationships categorized by Stein and Glenn.

Applebee, in his study of children's narratives, poses a central question in the discussion of the relationships between episodes: Are the narratives more likely to be unfocused chain narratives in which events are loosely connected without a focus or center; focused chain narratives in which events are linked together, usually by one main character, as in a picaresque story; or true narratives in which the incidents are linked both by centering and chaining, where each incident is developed logically

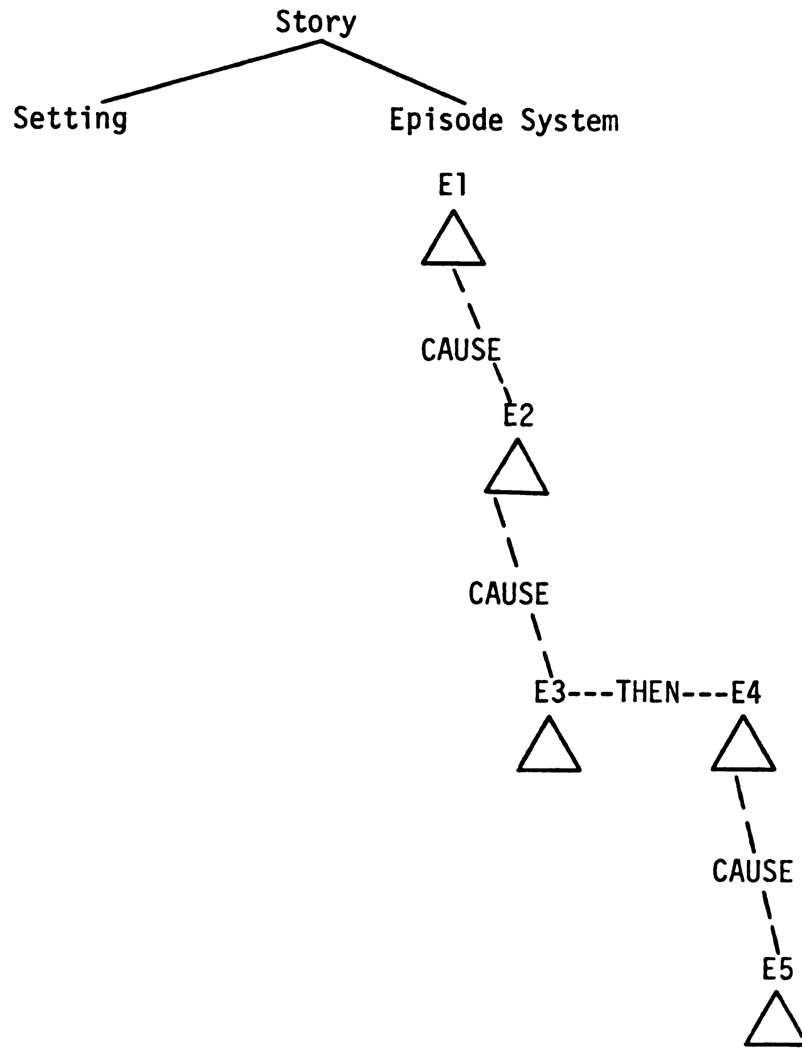
out of the previous one? In other words, how close are the narratives of the third and sixth graders to the true narratives described by Applebee? (For the present discussion of story, I am not considering Labov's definition of a fully-formed narrative as having evaluation, although it will be central to my discussion of narrative discursive structure in Chapter V.)

The episode system in the data collected for this study will be analyzed on the basis of the essential elements in each episode; the adequacy of the motivation of the events in the episodes; the development of characterization, including types of responses, both internal and external; the use of details in the episodes; and the relationships between episodes in terms of the appropriate choice of linkages establishing logical, coherent development.

Episode System: Cinderella

The basic story structure of Cinderella in an idealized form contains an orientation and five episodes within the episode system. The diagram on page 86 illustrates the five episodes and the relationships existing between them. The setting contains the following elements:

1. Cinderella lives with her cruel stepmother and stepsisters.
2. She is made to do all the work while her stepsisters are pampered.


Story
Setting
Episode System
E1
CAUSE
E2
CAUSE
E3---THEN---E4
CAUSE
E5

The essential elements of Episode 1 are:

1. The prince announces a ball to which everyone is invited.
2. Cinderella wants to go, but her stepmother refuses to let her.
3. While her stepsisters get ready to go to the ball, Cinderella must stay home and do all the work.
4. After everyone leaves for the ball, Cinderella begins to cry.

The essential elements of Episode 2 are:

1. Cinderella's fairy godmother comes to find out why Cinderella is crying.
2. Her fairy godmother changes a pumpkin into a coach, mice into horses, and gives Cinderella a beautiful dress to wear and a pair of glass slippers so that she can go to the ball.
3. She tells Cinderella that she must be home by midnight.

The essential elements of Episode 3 are:

1. Cinderella rides to the ball.
2. No one recognizes her at the ball.
3. She dances with everyone, including the prince.

The essential elements of Episode 4 are:

1. The prince falls in love with Cinderella and wants to marry her.
2. But when Cinderella hears the clock strike twelve, she rushes out of the ballroom and loses one of her glass slippers.
3. When she gets home she is changed into her old self.

The essential elements of Episode 5 are:

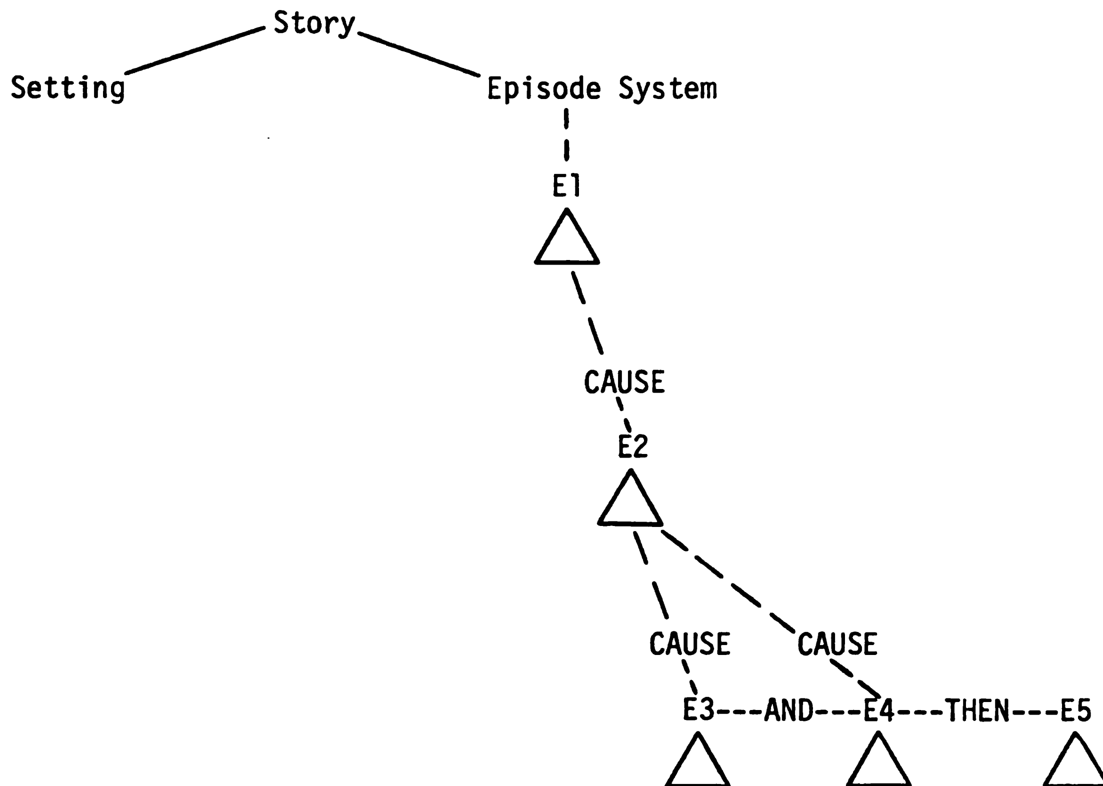
1. The prince chases Cinderella and finds her glass slipper.
2. He begins searching the next day throughout the kingdom for the owner of the glass slipper.
3. He comes to Cinderella's house and tries the slipper on the stepmother and stepsisters first. It doesn't fit.
4. He next tries it on Cinderella and it fits, must to everyone's surprise.
5. He asks her to marry him, and they live happily ever after.

The first episode is causally related to the second: Cinderella's unhappiness about being unable to go to the ball is both a necessary and a sufficient reason for the fairy godmother to come. Similarly, the second episode causes the third: Cinderella's fairy godmother causes Cinderella to go to the ball. A temporal relationship exists between the third and fourth episodes: Cinderella's going to the ball is a necessary but not a sufficient cause for the prince to dance with her and fall in love. The fourth and fifth episodes, again, are related causally: the prince's search of the kingdom for Cinderella is caused by his having fallen in love with her at the ball and by her disappearance at midnight.

The resolution in Stein and Glenn's schema is found at the end of every episode, i.e., the initiating action of every episode ends in either the attainment or the non-attainment of the goal. Labov simply suggests that the resolution is the termination or final outcome of the series of events in the complicating action. Labov's view of resolution is more applicable to the present study, so in this analysis the resolution is described as occurring at the end of the fifth episode when the prince finds Cinderella and asks her to marry him.

Episode System: Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs

The basic structure of Snow White consists of the orientation and five episodes within the episode system, illustrated in the diagram on page 89. The orientation contains the following elements (continued on page 90):


Story
Setting
Episode System
E1
CAUSE
E2
CAUSE
CAUSE
E3---AND---E4---THEN---E5

1. Snow White lives with her stepmother, the queen, who is very vain.
2. Whenever the queen asks her magic mirror who is the fairest in the land, it answers that she is.

The essential elements of Episode 1 are:

1. One day when Snow White's stepmother asks her mirror who is the fairest, it replies that Snow White is the fairest.
2. The queen becomes very angry.
3. She orders one of her guards to take Snow White out into the woods and kill her.

The essential elements of Episode 2 are:

1. The guard takes Snow White into the woods.
2. But because he can't bring himself to kill her, he commands her to flee.
3. As proof of Snow White's death, he takes the heart of a deer back to the queen.

The essential elements of Episode 3 are:

1. Snow White flees and comes to the house of the Seven Dwarfs.
2. Finding no one home, she enters, cleans it up, and falls asleep.
3. When the dwarfs find her there, she tells them her plight and they agree to keep her there.
4. When they go to work the next morning, they warn her not to let any strangers in.

The essential elements of Episode 4 are:

1. Meanwhile, when the queen asks her mirror again who is the fairest, it replies that Snow White is, that she is still alive, living at the home of the seven dwarfs.
2. The queen disguises herself as an old woman.
3. She takes a poisoned apple to Snow White.
4. Unsuspecting, Snow White lets her in, takes a bite of the apple, and collapses.

The essential elements of Episode 5 are:

1. The dwarfs come back, find Snow White, and put her in a coffin in the woods.
2. A prince comes along, sees her lying there, and kisses her.
3. She comes back to life and rides off with the prince to live happily ever after.

There is a causal relationship between episodes one and two and between two and three: the queen's command to her guard to kill Snow White forces him to take her into the woods, presumably to kill her; his aversion to doing so causes her to flee to the safety of the seven dwarfs' house. An AND relationships exists between episodes three and four: the two episodes happen simultaneously. While Snow White is telling the dwarfs about her plight, the queen is discovering that Snow White is still alive. But a complexity exists in this part of the episode system that is not present in Cinderella. While episodes three and four occur simultaneously, episode four is also caused by episode two: the fact that Snow White escapes in episode 2 causes the queen in episode four to disguise herself and to find Snow White in order to kill her herself. Episodes four and five are related temporally: after Snow White collapses, the dwarfs come back and discover what has happened. The resolution occurs at the end of the episode when the price comes along, kisses Snow White, and brings her back to life.

Analysis of Stories: Orientations

Orientations are important, according to Labov and to Stein and Glenn, because they provide a detailed picture of the situation out of which the ensuing conflict will develop, particularly in fairy tales. Not only must a reference be made to the essential character(s) in the story, but if the character's personality,

internal responses and cognitions are important to the development of the plot, they must be specified.

All but two third and sixth graders made a reference to Cinderella by name, although in the formal version of two third graders, "girl" was used, and in the casual version "girl" and "she" were used once each. Two sixth graders did not refer to Cinderella by name in the orientation, one in the casual version and one in the formal.

In the Snow White stories all but three third and sixth graders refer to Snow White by name; the three who do not include two third graders in their first versions who omit any mention of Snow White in the orientation, and one of these two also omits any such reference in the formal version. One sixth grader in both styles makes no mention of Snow White in the orientation.

The most interesting aspect of the orientations is the relationships that are established between the protagonists (Cinderella and Snow White) and the antagonists (the stepmother/stepsisters and the queen). In Cinderella, most of the third and sixth graders mention either the stepmother or the stepsisters or both in both the casual and the formal styles, and most make a reference to Cinderella's being a maid or slave in her stepmother's house. Some describe the stepmother as being mean to Cinderella, making her do all the work.

A slight increase in the use of details occurs in the orientation from casual to formal styles in a few of the third and sixth graders' stories, and in some cases the change is dramatic:

	Casual	Formal
Third:	Cinderella was a girl and she was a slave.	Once upon a time there was this girl who was a maid for her three stepsisters and her stepmother. And she lived with her.
Sixth:	Cinderella had a stepmother and two stepsisters, and her stepmother made her work and didn't let her do anything. She always did the work and she had to sleep in the attic and everything.	Once upon a time there was this girl named Cinderella, and she lived with her stepmother and two stepsisters. And her stepmother and stepsisters made her do all the work, and cleaning and cooking and everything, and sewing. And she had to sleep in the attic.

Greater differences appear between the third graders and the sixth graders, however. Generally, the sixth graders develop the relationship between the stepmother/sisters and Cinderella more fully than the third graders do. However, this development is not always in the orientation; often it occurs in the first episode when the stepmother/sisters are getting ready to go to the ball.

While the relationship between Cinderella and her stepmother/sisters can be explained on the basis of dislike or on the basis of the stereotyped stepmother/stepdaughter relationship, the relationship between Snow White and the queen is more complex: the vain queen ostensibly becomes jealous of Snow White's beauty, and unless this fact is made explicit, the queen's attempt on Snow White's life remains by and large unmotivated.

In general, the third graders' orientations in both styles did little to develop the conflict between the queen and Snow White. Most did mention the queen's dislike of Snow White but did not refer to any jealousy. Likewise, only one third grader mentioned the

magic mirror in the orientation, and that was in the formal style. Three mentioned the mirror in the first episode of both versions, but two did not mention it at all in the entire story of either version. While three third graders did add explanatory details to their orientations in moving from casual to formal styles, only one strengthened the conflict between the queen and Snow White in her formal version by referring to the queen's jealousy. Overall, the third graders' casual and formal orientations seemed to reflect a grasp of the fact that some setting had to be given, but they failed to establish the basic conflict very precisely. Third graders obviously have control of the orientation in narrative structure, demonstrated by the Cinderella stories, but it appears that the complexity of the relationship between Snow White and the queen may be responsible for their lack of explanatory details in the orientations of this narrative. (A more complete discussion of motivation occurs further on in this chapter.)

The sixth graders, on the other hand, presented the initial situation more fully than the third graders even in their casual versions. Only one sixth grader had a limited orientation in both versions. In two other cases there was a definite elaboration from casual to formal. Like the Cinderella stories, the Snow White tales illustrate more complete, detailed orientations by sixth graders, with some change from casual to formal. The following excerpts, an informal and formal from each grade level, illustrate:

	Casual	Formal
Third:	Once upon a time there was a beautiful princess named Snow White, and the queen, her mother, she was very wicked and she didn't like Snow White.	Once upon a time there was a princess named Snow White. She had a mother. Her mother was queen and she was a wicked one. She wanted to get rid of Snow White.
Sixth:	A long, long time ago a queen had a baby and named it Snow White. And then that queen died and the king married another queen and this queen was wicked and everything. And every morning the wicked queen would go to her mirror and ask who was the fairest of all. And the mirror would say, "You are the fairest of all," and all this.	Once upon a time there was a queen, and she was sitting at her window sewing one day, and she chanced to prick herself, and a few drops of blood fell onto the snow, and she said that her child's hair would be as dark as the window pane, and her lips would be as red as blood, and she would call her Snow White. And so then she had this child, and then she died. And then the king married another lady, and this lady was kind of a witch, and every morning she'd go to her mirror and say, "Mirror, mirror, on the wall, Who's the fairest of them all?"

The origin of Snow White's name included in the formal verion of the sixth grader quoted above appears in two other Snow White stories, in the casual and formal versions of one other sixth grader. This information appears in none of the third graders' stories.

The significant change from the third graders' versions to the sixth graders' is much more obvious in the Snow White stories than in Cinderella. One possible explanation is that the need for laying the groundwork for what happens to Snow White is much more important than for Cinderella: what happens to Cinderella is _in spite of_ her antagonists, not directly because of them, as in Snow

White's case. Motivation is much more crucial in Snow White. Perhaps sixth graders, more than third graders, understand the need for motivation. Motivation is discussed more extensively later in this chapter with reference to the episodes and the coherent development of events within the episodes.

In a few cases, material that one would expect to find in the orientation establishing the relationship between the protagonist and the antagonist is developed instead in the first episode. Five third graders and four sixth graders, in both versions, developed the conflict between Cinderella and her stepmother/sisters when Cinderella is not allowed to go to the ball and must stay home to do all the work. A similar situation occurs in some of the Snow White stories when the queen suddenly discovers that she is no longer the fairest. The following excerpt from a sixth grader's formal version shows the limited orientation and the further development of the conflict in the first episode:

> Once upon a time there was three stepsisters with Cinderella, and they were going to the ball, and then they all announced, "Let's go to the ball, let's go to the ball," and Cinderella was talking about how she wanted to go to the ball. So they said, "You funny thing." And she said, "I'm not funny-looking." And they started to laugh at her, and they said, "Come here and help me zip up this dress. Come here, come help me do this. Wash them floors. You're going to stay here and do the chores."

Analysis of Stories: Episode System

Episodes

Few third graders or sixth graders, in either version of Cinderella, included all the essential elements of the episodes.

Since most of the essential elements are either motivating actions or results of such actions, omission of any of the elements usually results in incomplete, somewhat unmotivated episodes or portions of episodes, a lack of suspense and conflict, and a resolution with less impact. Table 9 indicates, for each scene represented, the number of third and sixth graders for each style that included the particular action. The total number of third graders represented is eight, and the number of sixth graders is seven.

Occasionally a third or sixth grader omitted one of the actions in the episodes such as Cinderella's crying, or the use of magic to change rags into beautiful clothes, etc., or the fairy godmother's warning to be home by midnight, or dancing with the prince. These omissions were fairly evenly distributed among the students at each grade level, between grade levels, and between casual and formal styles. But the essential elements for plot development were included by most students: the announcement of the ball, the coming of the fairy godmother, Cinderella's going to the ball, her running out and losing her glass slipper, and her being able to fit into the glass slipper during the prince's search. It appears that the major events of the narrative, including the resolution at the end, occur virtually in all the stories.

In contrast, very few third or sixth graders included two of the actions in either version: Cinderella's dancing at the ball unrecognized and being changed back to her former self after the ball, both of which are relatively unimportant for plot development.

TABLE 9.--Number of Students Including Key Scenes--Cinderella.

Scenes	Grade Level 3 (N = 8)	Grade Level 6 (N = 7)
I. 1. Announcement of ball		
Casual	7	7
Formal	8	7
2. Cinderella not allowed to go		
Casual	8	6
Formal	8	7
3. Cinderella must stay and work		
Casual	7	5
Formal	8	6
4. Cinderella cries		
Casual	5	5
Formal	5	5
II. 1. Fairy godmother comes		
Casual	8	7
Formal	8	7
2. Changes horses, pumpkin, clothes		
Casual	8	5
Formal	8	6
3. Warning to be home by midnight		
Casual	5	6
Formal	6	5
III. 1. Cinderella goes to the ball		
Casual	8	7
Formal	8	7
2. No one recognizes her		
Casual	0	2
Formal	1	1
3. Dances with the prince		
Casual	6	7
Formal	6	6
IV. 1. Prince falls in love with Cinderella		
Casual	0	3
Formal	0	3
2. Hears the clock strike twelve; leaves		
Casual	6	5
Formal	7	6
3. Runs out and loses slipper		
Casual	8	7
Formal	8	7
4. Is changed back to her old self		
Casual	4	0
Formal	2	3
V. 1. Prince chases her and finds slipper		
Casual	5	7
Formal	7	7
2. Searches the kingdom for owner		
Casual	6	6
Formal	7	7
3. Tries slipper on stepmother/sisters		
Casual	5	2
Formal	7	2
4. Tries it on Cinderella and it fits		
Casual	7	7
Formal	8	7
5. They get married		
Casual	6	5
Formal	7	6

The most interesting omissions were those involving scenes more crucial to plot development and development of conflict: the prince falling in love with Cinderella, his finding the glass slipper, and the stepsisters trying on the slipper. Few differences exist between casual and formal styles, except among third graders who increased their reference to the prince finding the slipper from five to seven, and the stepsisters trying on the slipper from six to eight. It is interesting that the increase was found only among third graders; one would expect the same change among sixth graders from casual to formal, but none occurred. It is possible that the sixth graders assumed this information to be implicit in their stories, and did not feel compelled to make it explicit.

More sixth graders than third graders included the two events concerning the prince falling in love with Cinderella and his finding the glass slipper, particularly in the casual style. However, in the last episode, of the third graders, five in the casual and seven in the formal referred to the stepsisters trying on the glass slipper, and of the sixth graders, only two in each style included the scene. This is an interesting phenomenon because the inclusion of this element helps to develop the conflict and to heighten the impact of the resolution: the rise of Cinderella and the fall of the stepmother/sisters. It is somewhat surprising that the third graders carried the development further than did the sixth graders, even though the inclusion of this detail is not necessary for the resolution to occur. Perhaps the sixth graders understand this.

As in Cinderella, few third graders or sixth graders in either version included all the elements of every episode in Snow White. Table 10 illustrates the actions in the episodes that the third and sixth graders <u>included</u> in their stories. The total number of third graders is 6, and the number of sixth graders is 5.

Most sixth graders and a few third graders omitted the scene where the guard substitutes a deer's heart to show the queen, and only two third graders included the scene of Snow White's telling the dwarfs about her plight. Both of these scenes are relatively unimportant to the development of the plot. Key elements to plot development, however, are included by almost all third and sixth graders in both styles: the queen's ordering Snow White to be killed, the queen's taking a poisoned apple to Snow White, Snow White's collapse, and the prince's bringing her back to life.

On the other hand, a few at both grade levels omitted any explicit reference to the queen finding out that Snow White was still alive, living with the dwarfs. She simply showed up at Snow White's door one day with a poisoned apple. And two third graders in their casual versions and one in her formal failed to mention that the apple was poisoned, as did one sixth grader.

Major omissions that showed differences between styles or between grade levels were the queen's use of the magic mirror, her jealousy of Snow White, and the dwarfs' warning to Snow White to beware of strangers. Only one third grader in the casual style and three in the formal referred to the mirror, in contrast to

TABLE 10.--Number of Students Including Key Scenes--Snow White.

Scenes	Grade Level 3 (N = 6)	Grade Level 6 (N = 5)
I. 1. Mirror tells queen that SW is fairest		
Casual	1	4
Formal	3	4
2. Queen becomes jealous and angry		
Casual	1	4
Formal	1	4
3. Queen orders SW killed		
Casual	5	5
Formal	6	5
II. 1. Guard can't kill SW so commands her to flee		
Casual	4	5
Formal	5	5
2. Kills a deer instead to show heart to queen		
Casual	3	1
Formal	4	2
III. 1. SW goes to house of Seven Dwarfs		
Casual	5	5
Formal	5	4
2. She cleans and then falls asleep		
Casual	4	2
Formal	4	3
3. Dwarfs find her and she tells her tale		
Casual	2	4
Formal	2	4
4. They warn her not to let strangers in		
Casual	0	3
Forman	2	4
IV. 1. Queen finds out SW is still alive		
Casual	5	2
Formal	4	3
2. Queen disguises herself		
Casual	4	5
Formal	4	5
3. Takes poisoned apple to SW		
Casual	6	5
Formal	6	5
4. SW takes it and collapses		
Casual	6	5
Formal	6	5
V. 1. Dwarfs find SW and put her in casket		
Casual	5	5
Formal	5	5
2. Prince finds her and kisses her		
Casual	6	5
Formal	6	5
3. SW comes back to life and rides off w/ prince		
Casual	6	4
Formal	6	5

four sixth graders in both styles. References to the queen's jealousy occurred in only one third grader's versions, in contrast to the references of four sixth graders' stories in both versions. The reference to the dwarfs' warning to Snow White increased for both grade levels from casual to formal styles, although the sixth graders overall had a higher incidence of this scene in their stories. Quite possibly the sixth graders, more than the third graders, sensed the dramatic impact of this scene and consequently included it more frequently.

Motivation

It is clear from the discussion of the essential elements in the episodes that certain problems arise in plot development and dramatic impact when those essential elements are missing: if Cinderella is not commanded by her fairy godmother to return by midnight, why does she run out when she hears the clock strike twelve--why the haste? If the prince just dances with Cinderella without any mention of his falling in love with her, why the chase scene, and why the impetus to find the owner of the glass slipper? How does the wicked queen know where Snow White is now staying? And if the apple isn't poisoned, why does Snow White collapse? Some of the events and outcomes are weakly motivated and the resolutions less than dramatic. Even when the stepsisters are described as trying on the glass slipper, references to their jealousy are infrequent. And the entire conflict between Snow White and the queen in most of the versions is attributed to the

queen's dislike of Snow White; in only a few cases, primarily among sixth graders, are the queen's vanity and her subsequent envy of Snow White's beauty made explicit.

How can we account for such obvious gaps in motivation? One might assume, of course, that third and sixth graders simply are not sufficiently aware, consciously or unconsciously, of narrative development, that their understanding of causal relationships is not fully developed. Studies done on the recall of stories by children, however, suggest that even very young children are capable of dealing with causal relationships. Stein and Glenn's study of first and fifth graders showed that the types of category information most frequently recalled were major settings, direct consequences, and initiating events, all highly consistent across stories and grade level.[8] Mandler and Johnson's study of first and fourth graders and adults showed similar results. Adults recalled more information, but even the younger students were sensitive to the structure of stories and organized retrieval in a fashion similar to adults. The main difference was that children seemed to place greater weight on outcomes than on attempts, and they often did not recall reactions. Mandler and Johnson go on to state:

> We believe the lack of recall does not primarily reflect a lack of comprehension. Rather the schemata which young children use to organize their recall emphasize the outcomes of action sequences rather than the actions themselves or the internal events motivating them.[9]

According to this study, then, the outcomes of actions rather than the motivations for the actions or the actions themselves take precedence. It is a matter of emphasis rather than a lack of

comprehension. Cinderella rushing out at midnight, the prince chasing her, Snow White being given a poisoned apple, and her collapse are all outcomes of other actions or motivations; those motivations remaining unspecified may be a reflection of the emphasis given to stories in story-recall by children rather than a conceptual lack.

Some evidence exists in the stories themselves that these third graders and sixth graders comprehended the motivational structure of the narratives. For example, in three Cinderella tales, all in the formal style, one third grader and two sixth graders used the anaphoric "the," in "the prince was chasing her" and "the prince found it," implying that an earlier reference to the prince was intended, even though no earlier references were actually made. In another case, a sixth grader, in her casual version, said about Cinderella, "She had to be back or she would be ugly again" even though there was no previous reference to the fairy godmother having changed her from an ugly to a beautiful girl in the first place. In the casual version of a third grader's Snow White, there is no orientation; Snow White is simply walking through the woods looking for somewhere to go. It isn't until much later in the narrative that she refers to the queen, in a scene that follows Snow White at the house of the seven dwarfs: "The queen had found out about this" implies an earlier reference even though there was none. A sixth grader in her casual version of Snow White says about the queen and the poisoned apple: "Then she came as an old lady with <u>that</u> apple," without any previous or subsequent reference

to its having been poisoned. The story teller obviously assumes this knowledge on the part of the listener. All of these examples suggest that, at least for these individuals, the gaps in the motivation of actions or in the events themselves are attributable, not to any lack of knowledge of the underlying structure of the story, but to their simply not realizing them in the surface telling of the story.

Of particular interest in Snow White is the lack of explicit motivation for the queen's desire to kill Snow White. To reiterate, third graders, especially, made no mention of jealousy in either of their versions, but simply said the queen hated Snow White, and only a few implied that the queen was vain by referring to her magic mirror. One must consider the possibility that children of this age (8) are unable to imagine jealousy as a motive for a parent: how could the queen possibly be jealous of her own daughter's beauty? At the same time, in some versions of the tale, the queen is Snow White's stepmother and as such the queen is killing a potential rival for the affections of the father/husband, a rival who does not enjoy the protection of blood relationship. Children may be aware, unconsciously, of this motivation and may not remember the spurious false reason, i.e., the envy of Snow White's beauty. Still another possibility is that the step-relationship is not as clearly emphasized in Snow White as it is in Cinderella, so it is not as easily remembered. At the same time it is possible that these examples illustrate the Piagetian idea of the evolving ability

to abstract from oneself to the thoughts and needs of a reader, a point to be discussed later in this chapter.

The lack of motivation may lie in the nature of the fairy tale itself. V. Propp, speaking of the motivations of villains in Morphology of the Folktale, says that motivations in folktales "belong to the most inconstant and unstable elements of the tale. . . . There is reason to think that motivations formulated in words are alien to the tale on the whole."[10] The cruelty of Cinderella's villainous stepmother is often unmotivated in the stories told by my students: some state her dislike for Cinderella, and the rest merely state that she is wicked, cruel, or mean, without stating an explicit motive. Of course, the motive could be implicit--Cinderella is a stepdaughter and stepsister--nothing more need be said. Certainly Snow White's villainous queen needs no explicit motivation either, if Propp is correct.

Characterization

Story-tellers can provide for motivation by developing characters as extensively as possible. Although characters in fairy tales are generally one-dimensional and have limited possibilities for development, a story-teller can, nevertheless, delineate the character by recording a character's external or internal responses; internal responses include cognitions, goals, and emotions.[11] Recording these responses often constitutes evaluation of the narrative, in Labov's terms.

A number of the Cinderella tales of both third and sixth graders included statements about the characters' internal responses. The cognitions, few in number, were primarily introduced by phrases like: "she knew that . . ." or "she almost forgot . . ." or "she thought. . . ." The most interesting in the Cinderella tales, though, were those which reflected the thinking of the other characters in the story, especially the antagonists, rather than Cinderella herself. The following two are from the formal styles of two third graders, both depicting the state of mind of the stepmother/sisters: "the stepmother and stepsisters were very confused because they knew she (Cinderella) couldn't have went to the dance"; "They tried everybody in it except for Cinderella, so he finally tried her and it fit her and everybody was surprised." One sixth grader, in both styles, says about the stepsisters: "and her stepsisters was wondering who was that pretty girl who was dancing in there," "and her stepsisters was wondering who was she (at the dance)." All four examples, besides adding interesting details, help to develop the conflict between the stepsisters and Cinderella. It is important to note that three of the four appear in the formal versions.

The goal statements--desires or intentions--appear to be fairly evenly distributed between casual and formal styles, but sixth graders used twice as many as third graders in both styles. The statements most commonly take the form of stating or implying Cinderella's wanting to go to the ball.

The affective responses are found in greater numbers in the formal versions of the sixth graders than in their casual versions or than in either of the third graders' versions. The following examples illustrate:

1. She was feeling really bad. (third, casual)
2. Cinderella got excited because . . . (third, casual)
3. She went to the ball happily. (third, formal)
4. She wanted to go so bad. (sixth, formal)
5. The prince really liked her. (sixth, formal)
6. He loved her a lot. (sixth, formal)
7. Cinderella was really happy. (sixth, formal)

In Snow White the cognitions were evenly distributed between casual and formal for the sixth graders, but the third graders' use increased substantially from casual to formal. Most took the form of "she knew that . . ." or "she thought . . ." But the less typical words describing the particular cognition were all in the formal styles of the third graders: one said, "Snow White imagined a lot of things happening"; two others used the word "remembered," and one, in describing the dwarfs' coming home, said, "They sensed something peculiar."

The goal statements were evenly distributed between grade levels and between styles in the Snow White stories, most taking the form of the queen wanting to kill Snow White, and the guard not wanting to kill her.

The affective responses occurred with greater frequency among third graders in both casual and formal styles. Many were used with reference to Snow White's being scared, the dwarfs' being sad, the queen's not liking Snow White, and her getting angry over the fact of Snow White's beauty.

While sixth graders in Cinderella appear to develop characterization more extensively through the use of internal responses than third graders, the reverse is true in Snow White. But even if there were greater consistency between grade levels in these stories, one must be careful about suggesting that an increase in the quantity of internal responses always represents a qualitative improvement. Comments on a character's internal responses generally have the effect of clarifying and sharpening characterization and events, but Stein and Glenn suggest that omissions of internal responses are common and can indicate that a character's feelings or thoughts are implicit either from the initiating event which has occurred or from the behavior that follows.[12] The implication is that external events and actions can be as insightful into a character's inner thoughts and feelings as are descriptions of those feelings themselves.

Labov's view of narrative strongly supports the use of objectivity rather than descriptions of feelings as a means of making a point or developing dramatic conflict. The impact of a good narrative is derived more from objectivity than from subjectivity: external actions rather than internal responses give the narrative its force. The internal responses of Stein and Glenn are referred to by Labov as external evaluations. He discusses the importance of the evaluation of the narrative--the means used by the narrator to indicate the point of the narrative--in terms of the need for the narrator to ward off a "So what?" response to the story. The narrator must clearly make the narrative reportable,

interesting, and worth the listener's time. There are many ways in which a narrative can be evaluted, he says. "Evaluation devices say to us: this was terrifying, dangerous, weird, wild, crazy; or amusing, hilarious, wonderful; more generally, that is was strange, uncommon, or unusual--that is, worth reporting. It was not ordinary, plain, humdrum, everyday, or run-of-the-mill."[13]

To evaluate the narrative, the narrator can stop the narrative, turn to the listener, and tell him what the point is--a kind of external evaluation: "it was a terrifying experience" or "it really scared me." Here the speaker steps out of the bounds of the narrative itself to tell what the character or the narrator is thinking or feeling, very similar to the internal responses, as Stein and Glenn refer to them, illustrated above in Cinderella and Snow White.

A different method of evaluation, one that allows the narrative itself to convey the information, is by embedding the evaluation within the narrative. The narrator can either attribute a statement to himself as occurring at the moment rather than addressing it to the listener outside of the narrative: "I just closed my eyes and said, 'This is it'"; or he can quote himself as addressing someone else. A third option for embedding the evaluation in the narrative is by introducing a third person who evaluates the protagonist's or the antagonist's actions for the narrator. This type of embedding is used primarily in personal rather than in vicarious narratives, and, as such, did not occur in the narratives in my study.

This study did, however, find story-tellers evaluating by telling what people did rather than what they thought, a type of evaluation that more closely approaches the objectivity in narrative transmission that Labov discusses. Instead of the story-teller saying that a character was scared, a more effectively dramatic form would be to say that he was shaking like a leaf. Feelings and thoughts are made explicit through observable actions.

Examples of this kind of embedded evaluation occurred in both tales, in both casual and formal styles, and by both third and sixth graders, with no discernible differences in frequency in any of these categories. A number of third and sixth graders do not describe Cinderella as being unhappy, but they show her feelings by her crying. Few actually describe the stepmother/sisters' feelings of jealousy, but some describe their actions that demonstrate jealousy. One of the best examples is from the formal version of a sixth grader, who describes the contempt the stepsisters have for Cinderella in this way:

> And then they all announced, "Let's go to the ball, let's go to the ball." And Cinderella was talking about how she wanted to go to the ball. So they said, "You funny thing." And she said, "I'm not funny-looking." And they started laughing at her, and they said, "Come here and help me zip up this dress. Come here, come help me do this. Wash them floors. You're going to stay here and do the chores."

No reference to their internal responses is necessary; their comments and actions tell the story. A third grader, in her formal verions of Cinderella, describes the stepmother's jealousy during the shoe-fitting scene in this way:

> The next day the king said to go around with the glass slipper trying it on the women's feet. So they kept on going, and then the last house was Cinderella's. And then the stepsisters and the mother tried it on. The stepmother locked her up. The little mice gone and got the key and got her out just in time. And then the man almost left and then she said, "Wait. Can I try on the glass slipper?" And they said, "Yes." And then the old stepmother tripped her and broke the glass slipper. Then she said, "Wait. I got the other one." She pulled it out of her little pocket and there it was.

In Snow White the dwarfs are sometimes described as crying, with no explicit reference being made to their grieving over Snow White's apparent death. A few students refer to the wicked queen laughing (with glee) at the effect of the poisoned apple, with no explicit reference to the queen's internal response.

A number of students refer explicitly to the internal response of the character and then illustrate it with the actions of the character. The stepmother is often described as not liking Cinderella, along with what this state of mind entails: Cinderella is made to do all the hard work like scrubbing the floors, and she has to sleep in the attic. A good example of the use of both internal and external responses is found in the following excerpt from a sixth grader's formal version of Snow White:

> So he took Snow White into the woods, and she was picking flowers and being as gay as could be in the woods. And he was very sad because he knew he had to kill her. And after a while later the woodsman said, "Run away, run away, run away quick, because I don't want to kill you." And Snow White was very, very frightened. Why would the woodsman want to kill her? But anyway, she ran, and she ran, and she ran away from that woodsman.

Overall, the best examples of characterization appear to be in the formal versions in both stories. At least, the most quotable

ones are from the formal versions, although examples are found in the casual versions as well. Perhaps a formal style demands more in terms of characterization, either consciously or unconsciously, for children as well as adults.

Additional Details

Another option that exists for creating interest in a narrative is the use of interesting details to embellish an event or scene. Overall, there was an increase in the use of details from the casual to the formal styles at both grade levels for both tales. Four of the eight third graders provided new information in their formal versions of Cinderella, as did seven of the eight sixth graders. In Snow White four of the six third graders increased their use of details in the formal version, and all five of the sixth graders did. One third grader had a tremendous increase, obvious from the length of her versions: the casual version with 158 words and the formal with 976 words.

The following examples from various students help to illustrate the increase in the use of details:

	Casual	Formal
Third:	Then she rides away to the ball. And then she starts dancing, and then she leaves. . . .	Then she's finally at the ball and then she goes in and then she starts dancing and everything. And her mother and her sisters don't even notice her. And then when the clock gets to twelve she has to leave, and she goes away.

Casual

Third:	And she woke up and she said, "Hello, my name is Snow White." And then they said their names, and then she stayed.	And so then she woke up and everybody went down on the floor. And she woke up and she said, "Oh, what are these little men? You are so little." And then they lived with her. Grumpy didn't really want her, except then he grew to like her very much.
	Then she gets really mad and she goes out into the forest and she finds where Snow White is staying at the dwarfs' house, and then she gets an apple and she falls asleep.	And then she hurried to her laboratory, and she fixed a rotten apple that would make Snow White fall asleep. And then she made a mixture for herself to make her look real old. And then after that Snow White went to the door because somebody had knocked on the door. It was an old lady, the wicked queen. She asked if she would like an apple. Snow White was delighted so she took the apple but when she took one bite she immediately fell onto the floor.
Sixth:	But her mother said she couldn't do it until she did all this work, and Cinderella worked all day so that she could go, but she didn't get it done until after the coach left to take her sisters to the ball.	She wanted to go, but her stepmother said, "Only if you do all this work," and she gave her a whole list of jobs to do before she could go. And by the time the coach had arrived to take her two stepsisters away, she was still working on scrubbing the living room carpet.
	And she appealed to the prince, and she had to go at 12:00 midnight or she would be turned back, and she'd be nothing again. So she accidentally dropped her shoe when she was running out at 12:00 midnight, and the prince found her shoe.	And she appealed to the prince, so the prince really liked her and was going to marry her. At 12:00 she had to go, so she ran out, and the prince was calling her and calling her because he loved her a lot. So then she tripped and lost her shoe, and then when she got back home, she turned into her regular old self. And then the prince. . . .

	Casual	Formal
Sixth:	A long, long time ago a queen had a baby and named named it Snow White.	Once upon a time there was a queen, and she was sitting at her window sewing one day, and she chanced to prick herself. And a few drops of blood fell onto the snow, and she said that her child's hair would be as dark as the window pane, and her lips would be as red as blood, and she would call her Snow White.
	And then she found a cottage, and she went in and cleaned it up because it was all messy and stuff.	And then she found this cottage in the woods, and then she went in there, and it was all messed up, and it had six little beds, and the beds were all messed up. The pillows were all over it. And then she straightened it up and there was dishes and stuff all over the place. Then she straightened it up.

With particular reference to the resolution in Cinderella--and the final event leading up to the resolution--there is also an increase in the use of additional details in the formal versions, especially among third graders, seven of whom made their scenes more dramatic in this way. The following excerpts, the first from a third grader and the second from a sixth grader, illustrate:

Casual	Formal
And they sent one of the night-watchmen to see who would fit the slipper, and Cinderella fit it so they got married.	And the prince sent one of the guards to find out who fitted the slipper, and they tried every house except for Cinderella's. They tried everybody in it except for Cinderella. So he finally tried her and it fit her, and everyone was surprised.

Casual	Formal
And the prince found her shoe and was going around trying it on everybody, and the shoe didn't fit anybody but her, so Cinderella's fairy godmother changed her back forever, and then they got married and lived happily ever after.	And then the prince ordered a search of the entire kingdom of anybody who could fit that shoe to bring them to him. So the guards went out, and the last person they tried on the shoe was Cinderella, and it fit, and so Cinderella was real happy, and her fairy godmother changed her back into the pretty Cinderella, and then she married the prince and lived happily ever after.

The first example illustrates the increased suspense from casual to formal style. It repeats "they tried . . . except for Cinderella" as a way of building suspense and culminates it with "he finally tried her and everybody was surprised." The second excerpt is perhaps the more interesting. A more formal statement introduces the formal version: "the prince ordered a search of the entire kingdom"; and additional details complete it: "her fairy godmother changed her back into the pretty Cinderella," and she was "real happy."

The most dramatic scene for most of the Snow White stories appears to be the scene when the queen, disguised as an old woman, tries to kill Snow White with the poisoned apple. All but two of the students (both third graders) used details to embellish this event in their formal versions. The first excerpt is from a third grader, the second from a sixth grader:

Casual	Formal
Then this old woman came to the seven drafts' door and gave Snow White a poisoned apple, and she took a bit out of it and she fell to the floor.	And a lady came to the door and said to Snow White, "Would you like to buy an apple?" And Snow White said, "Yes." And then she took an apple and she went inside and shined it up more, and she took a bite out of it, and it was a poisoned apple, and then she fell to the floor.
And the wicked witch said, "Here, have a bit of my apple, and I'll take a bite of the other side, just to make sure that it wasn't poison." You see, the witch only poisoned half of the apple. And so Snow White took a bite and the witch took a bite, and Snow White fell down, and she slept and she slept, and meanwhile the witch went away.	So she bought an apple, and the wicked witch said, "Here, I will eat one half and you will eat the other." And Snow White said, "Sure." And the queen took a bite and nothing happened to her because she took the half that wasn't poisoned. And then Snow White took a bite of the half that was poisoned and fell asleep--half asleep, half dead. And then the wicked witch laughed and left. She was so happy. Finally she would be the fair-est of all in the land.

In the first example the suspense is heightened by the reference to Snow White taking the apple in and shining it up--a stark contrast to the fact of its being poisoned. The second example emphasizes the queen's satisfaction in having poisoned Snow White and her vanity in now being the fairest in the land. Although not all formal versions were as dramatically changed as these, most of the formal versions contained additional details heightening the effect of the scenes leading to the resolution.

Increasing the details appears to be a favorite device for both third and sixth graders for creating greater drama and interest

in the formal styles. In a sense, this technique is a kind of evaluation device: adding details makes the story more reportable, more worth the telling, more dramatic and effective. The excerpts from the stories provided above seem to be irrefutable proof that for the majority of third and sixth graders, the formal style demands a finer sense of detail.

Relationship Between Episodes: Cinderella

The coherence of a narrative is in part dependent on the relationships that exist between episodes and how well those relationships are defined. For a narrative to develop logically, one episode must follow another in logical order. (This applies only to simple narratives, to be sure, not to more complex narratives that use flashbacks, etc.)

To reiterate, the second episode of Cinderella is connected to the first by a causal relationship. Cinderella's fairy godmother comes because of Cinderella's unhappiness at not being allowed to go to the ball. Her unhappiness is both a necessary and a sufficient condition for the godmother to appear and to work her magic. The second and third episodes are also connected causally: Cinderella's wish to go and the fairy godmother's magic cause her to go to the ball. The third and fourth episodes are connected by a THEN relationship, indicating a temporal sequence in which the third does not directly cause the fourth to occur but sets up the necessary conditions for it to occur. Cinderella's going to the ball allows the prince to dance with her and consequently fall in

love with her. This type of relationship is one of the easiest to deal with in either production or comprehension of story material. It simply calls for a conjoiner like "Then" or "And then," etc. to connect one episode with another.

The more complex causal relationship, again, exists between the fourth and fifth episodes. The prince's falling in love with Cinderella at the ball causes him to chase her when she runs out of the ballroom, and his finding the slipper enables him to search for her.

Most third and sixth graders, in both styles, indicated the causal relationships between the first and second episodes by stating something like the following: "And then Cinderella began to cry, and her fairy godmother came and asked her why she was crying." The same is true of the relationship between the second and third episodes: "And then she went to the ball." Few third graders, however, either in their casual or formal versions, made the casual relationship explicit between the fourth and fifth episides. Many said something similar to the following statement from the formal version of one third grader: "And he (the prince) was going around, trying the shoe on everybody" without any specific reference to cause. One third grader in her casual version said, "And he was calling to her, 'Come back, come back,' because she lost her slipper," implying a causal relationship different from the one that actually exists in the story. The strongest statement was one in the formal version, where she states, "He was chasing her because he wanted her to stay longer."

The sixth graders expressed the causal relationship more frequently in both styles. Three students explicitly stated the relationship in their casual versions and four in their formal, illustrated below:

Casual	Formal
So she started dancing with the prince, and so he told his mother than he had found a girl . . . and so he found (the slipper) and he told a man to go look for it.	And he says that he wants to try the slipper on all the girls who live there to find the princess so he can marry her.
And he goes out searching for her, and the lady who fits it gets to marry him.	And the prince said, "I want that girl. That girl is for me." And so he went to go get a man . . . and so they went to people's houses trying on the glass slipper.
He wanted to marry her so his messengers went to look for the girl who the shoe would fit.	So she ran out, and the prince was calling her and calling her because he loved her a lot.
	And then he said he wanted to marry her, and so they went out searching for the girl. . . .

Relationship Between Episodes: Snow White

The causal relationship existing between episodes one and two is, in almost all cases, established by third graders in both versions, but established very weakly in four of the six third graders' casual versions and in three of the formal versions. They simply state that the queen's dislike for Snow White is the cause of the queen's order to have Snow White killed. But almost all third graders in both styles state explicitly the causal relationship

between episodes two and three: Snow White's fleeing as a result of the guard's order to kill her and his warning to her to flee.

The sixth graders expressed the causal relationship between the queen's jealousy and Snow White's attempted murder. Of the five sixth graders telling the tale, four in both versions stated the fact of the queen's jealousy. They tended, as a group, however, to place less emphasis on Snow White's fear. Many in both versions said that Snow White was simply left in the woods.

The AND relationship between episodes three and four indicating the simultaneous activity of Snow White's being at the dwarfs' house and the queen's finding out about it presented a problem for most third graders and sixth graders. Only one third grader in both versions indicated this relationship explicitly, in the first version using the past perfect tense to indicate an action having been completed earlier, and in the second version using the connective "meanwhile" to indicate simultaneous activity: "the queen had found out about this" and "meanwhile, back at the palace. . . ." Only one sixth grader in the casual version expressed this relationship: "While she (Snow White) was preparing lunch, back at the castle, the wicked queen. . . ." Two sixth graders in the formal version used the "meanwhile" construction. Others simply indicated a temporal relationship between the two episodes.

At the same time, there is a CAUSE relationship between episodes two and four: the guard's not killing Snow White forces the queen to try to do it herself. This cause relationship is made explicit in three of the third graders' casual versions and in four

of their formal; and in two of the sixth graders' casual versions and in three of their formal.

Discussion of Relationships Between Episodes

The CAUSE and the AND relationships seem to present the most difficulty for third and sixth graders, although the CAUSE is less difficult for sixth graders than for third graders; it may be the complexity of the relationships between the second, third, and fourth episodes that makes it difficult. One must be cautious, however, in assuming that because these relationships are not always made explicit, they are not comprehended or understood. It is highly probable that these relationships can exist in the story-teller's knowledge of the underlying structure of the story without being explicitly realized in the surface of the story. As an example, third graders seldom expressed the cause of the prince's running out after Cinderella as she left the ball, but most did mention their subsequent marriage and their living happily ever after. In a similar vein, the fact that the queen tried to kill Snow White implicitly suggests that she discovered that Snow White was still alive. Perhaps the story-tellers' understanding of the causal relationship was complete but the concept was simply not produced in the performance of the narrative.

One must consider, too, the fact that at least one third grader and two sixth graders expressed the AND relationship between episodes three and four in Snow White suggests that this kind of relationship can be both understood and expressed by children as

young as the third grade, although not all of the children may have the syntactic control necessary to produce the constructions that indicate this type of relationship, a point to be explored further in this chapter.

At the same time, it is possible that children of the ages of those in this study, particularly third graders, understand causal in the abstract but not necessarily in the concrete. Applebee's study of the spontaneous stories told by children shows that the causal relationship is already being expressed by five-year-olds, but it may be that, while they understand it in the abstract, particular causes are mystifying. "Love" may be beyond them; hence they do not understand _why_ the prince chases Cinderella.

Coherence in Episodes

The organization of the tales is primarily a temporal sequence of events; consequently most problems with organization and coherence involve lack of transitions between scenes and events, gaps and omissions in the ordering of events, and improper sequencing of events.

Inadequate transitions occur in a few of the third graders' Cinderella stories. One third grader, in particular, had no real transition from Cinderella's crying to the coming of her fairy godmother. She said, "So then she gone out to the backyard and then she started crying. And then the fairy godmother said something back, 'Why are you crying?'" In her formal version she essentially repeats this, and then goes on to describe Cinderella's

going to the ball, with the same lack of transition: "And so she said, 'Remember to come back at midnight.' And so she gone. And the young prince kept on dancing with her." Another third grader failed to make a connection between the prince and the man who goes around the town trying on the glass slipper:

> She was too busy dancing with the prince, and she wasn't paying attention to the clock. At twelve o'clock she ran out, and she left her slipper there and everything was turned back. Her clothes were all rags again. And then there was this man who went around to all of the houses. . . .

Is "this man" the prince, the prince's aide, someone else? One cannot be sure. In the formal version, however, the connection is improved:

> Then the prince told this guy to go and find--to go in every house and see whose foot would fit into it.

Two third graders in their casual style and one sixth grader in her casual and formal styles had a very abrupt transition to the seven dwarfs coming home: the first time they even mentioned the dwarfs was in connection with the dwarfs coming home to find Snow White dead; no previous mention had been made. A similar problem occurs in the casual and formal versions of one third grader and one sixth grader regarding the queen's showing up at the house of the seven dwarfs without any reference to her having found out that Snow White was even alive.

Some of the omissions in the ordering of events have already been discussed, but smaller gaps occur which interfere with the orderly flow of events due to insufficient information. Almost all examples occurred in the stories told by third graders, suggesting

that they have somewhat less control of sequencing than sixth graders do. Gaps like the following occurred in several stories of the third graders, fewer in the formal versions than in the casual, but still greater in number than in either the casual or formal styles of the sixth graders:

1. No mention is made that the stepmother/sisters go to the ball, and yet Cinderella is described as getting home just in time before her stepmother comes back.

2. "The prince tried the stepmother and the stepsisters." With what? No mention is made of the prince finding the slipper, although it is mentioned that Cinderella loses it.

3. "Information came in that he wanted to know all the women, so she couldn't go because she didn't have all of her work done." She couldn't go where? One must know the story in order to understand it.

4. "Then she (Snow White) got married." One must assume married to the prince, although it's not stated.

5. (The queen) took them (the apples) and went "Knock, knock." Where did she go?

6. "And the queen said to the guard to put Snow White's heart in it." The "it" obviously refers to the jewelry box, although it's not stated in this third grader's narrative.

The following excerpts illustrate the improper sequencing of events that occurs, again, primarily in the prose of third graders, less often in the formal than in the casual style, but much more frequently than in either style of the sixth graders:

1. And they went to the ball, and she asked if she could go but they wouldn't let her because she had too much work to do at home.

2. And then her sisters and her mother go to a dance and then they tell her that she can't go because she has to clean the house.

3. And then she starts dancing, and then she leaves, and then she goes home and then she starts cleaning some more and then her mother and her sisters come home and then they tell her that it was a good dance. And then when she starts to go out she loses her glass shoe, and then she rides away.

4. And she went and she met a man and they danced until midnight, and then it struck and her fairy godmother said she would have to be back before it struck.

5. Grumpy was sad (after Snow White's death) and he grew to like her very much.

In the first two examples, the story-tellers have the stepmother/ sisters giving Cinderella instructions after they have already left for the ball. The third example provides a description of her losing her slipper after she has returned home, and the fourth has the fairy godmother instructing Cinderella to be home by midnight just as Cinderella hears the clock strike twelve. (The fourth example does have another interpretation, however. It is possible that the story-teller meant "had said" by "said.") The fifth excerpt describes Grumpy's increasing liking for Snow White after the fact of her death has already been stated.

Generally, the sixth graders have greater control of sequencing and of the use of transitions, therefore making fewer mistakes in the temporal ordering of the narratives, in both casual and formal styles. But, in defense of third graders, it must be said that their narratives were generally longer, a factor that makes the juggling of the details more complex. Those sixth graders who did produce extensive narratives, however, controlled the sequencing to a greater extent than the third graders with shorter narratives.

Discussion of Results

It is clear from the data presented that third and sixth graders, to some extent, are aware of the narrative demands of formal narrative structure and of the need to supply details and sequence for a listener. Motivation in the orientations and in the episodes seems to increase slightly from casual to formal styles for both grade levels; the formal style appears to demand more coherence than does the casual style; and it illustrates a slightly greater development of characterization than does the casual style. In almost all cases, the formal style of third and sixth graders includes more details to heighten the effect of the action.

It is also clear from the data that sixth graders appear to have greater productive control of narrative structure than third graders in the following areas: higher frequency of including important episodes and scenes; greater motivation and stronger orientations; greater clarity in showing the relationship between episodes; more control of coherence and sequencing. (Unfortunately we have no data on how adults deal with these aspects of narrative structure, so that we cannot compare sixth graders with adults on this task.)

The greater ability of sixth graders to control sequencing and provide coherence is not surprising when one considers the stages of cognitive development represented by the students in this study. According to Piaget's theory, the third graders have just recently made the transition from pre-operational to concrete operational. Theoretically third graders should be able to deal

with concrete operations, be able to form generalizations and classifications, but because the transition from one cognitive stage to another is gradual rather than abrupt and immediate, it is safe to assume that the type of thinking from an earlier stage is still likely to appear later on during the transitional period, albeit with less frequency. Because third graders are much closer in age to pre-operational thought than sixth graders are, the narratives of third graders contained more instances of pre-operational thinking, namely more instances of egocentric thought. Piaget suggests that events in egocentric thought are more likely linked together on the basis of personal interest than on temporal order. He says:

> This mode of exposition, which consists in connecting propositions by "and then" is typical. The conjunction "and then" indicates neither a temporal, a causal nor a logical relation, i.e., it indicates no relation which the explainer could use in order to link his propositions together for the purpose of a clear deduction or demonstration. The term "and then" marks a purely personal connexion between ideas, as they arise in the mind of the explainer. Now these ideas, as the reader may see, are incoherent from the point of view of the logical or of the natural order of things, although each one taken separately is correct.[14]

Certainly we cannot say that the narratives of third graders are devoid of logical and/or temporal order. Most of them do, in fact, demonstrate a fair amount of logical sequencing. However, in comparison with the sixth graders, the third graders' narratives more frequently contain gaps in scenes and events, lack coherence in the structure of the narratives, and lack transitions. According to Piaget, the gradually developing ability to arrange a story or an explanation in a definite order is acquired some time between the

ages of seven and eight. While my third graders are somewhat older than this, eight or nine, their capacities for temporal and causal sequencing are perhaps not fully matured, accounting for some of the substantial differences between their narratives and those of the sixth graders in this respect.

The preoperational child is weakly compelled to justify a chain of reasoning because he lacks an awareness of the demands of communication; the child exhibits little orientation toward the needs of the listener.[15] In a similar vein James Britton describes the language of young children as "expressive speech," similar to the language of adults talking with friends, where there is little need to fill in the background.[16] Older children such as the sixth graders in this study appear to be more aware of audience needs--the need for background information--than younger children are, and therefore they are more likely to make the relationships explicit and the events and scenes more coherent and logically sequential.

The treatment of written language by Flowers and Hayes (1977) in terms of writer-based or reader-based prose can also be applied to spoken language. Writing/speaking for oneself, with little thought of the needs of the reader/listener, often results in the writer/speaker following the pattern of his/her own discovery process. Reader/listener-based language, on the other hand, is organized as an overview from which the reader/listener can see an idea structure from the top down.[17] Sixth graders seem to have a more sophisticated sense of plot structure, and they appear to be more capable of seeing the whole, not just as an accumulation of

details, but as a cohesive unit. In this respect, their stories are more comprehensible than those of the third graders.

A study by Gardner and Gardner discussed in Applebee (1977) provides further evidence of this; they studied children of varying ages in a story-completion task and found that six-year-olds treated stories as though they were comic strips, eight-year-olds as a long series of events involving a hero, and twelve-year-olds as a consistent whole.[18] Applebee's terms for these types of narratives are unfocused chain narrative, focused chain narrative, and true narrative. (See discussion in Chapter I, p. 25.) Many of the third graders in this study exhibited characteristics of the focused chain narrative in that their stories often were treated as a series of episodes strung together but having either Snow White or Cinderella as the central focus. The sixth graders, on the other hand, were more likely to tell true narratives in which the incidents were linked by both centering and chaining and where the relationships were logically expressed.

Obviously the child's stage of cognitive development will dictate, to some extent, the kind of narrative that will be produced. At the same time, we must be aware that a child's receptive abilities are not always the same as his/her productive abilities. A child may be perfectly capable of understanding a causal relationship that he/she may not have full productive control of as yet. Third graders seem to have an understanding of temporal and causal relationships although not all of them made all of these relationships explicit in the narratives they produced. Again, they may

understand causal at an abstract level but may not comprehend particular causes.

The possibility exists that some of these performance problems may, in part, be attributed to a limited degree of productive syntactic control. One of the third graders, as stated above, apparently scrambled the sequence of events by saying, "And she went and she met a man and they danced until midnight, and then it struck and her fairy godmother said she would have to be back before it struck." Her statement ostensibly suggests a reverse order of what actually happens: she has the fairy godmother giving Cinderella the warning <u>after</u> the clock strikes twelve. This kind of sequencing occurs much more frequently among the third graders than among sixth graders. Sixth graders were likely to handle this in one of two ways: either by placing the events in proper sequence to begin with, or by using certain syntactic structures to help convey the intended meaning. For example, suppose that in mid-sentence the narrator realizes that she has forgotten to state the warning earlier; she can embed the information as in this excerpt from one of the sixth grader's stories:

> And she's the only one the prince dances with, but she has to be back by twelve o'clock, so when the clock strikes twelve she leaves, but she loses her slipper.

Cinderella's having to be back by midnight causes her to leave quickly. This is the equivalent of embedding it in an adverbial clause: "Because she had to be home by midnight, she left when the clock struck twelve." Another sixth grader states: "When twelve o'clock came, she had to go, so she ran down the stairs."

A third option is the use of the past perfect tense to indicate a past action having been completed earlier. Instead of the original statement, the narrator could have said: And she went and she met a man and they danced until midnight, and then it struck, and her fairy godmother _had_ said she would have to be back before it struck. Some third and sixth graders are capable of using the past perfect construction, although I found few examples of its use in this study. One third grader did say, as a way of indicating that the queen had found out about Snow White's being alive: "The queen had found out about this." And one sixth grader said, "Meanwhile back at the palace the queen had made herself look like an old lady . . ." and then went on to discuss the queen's going to Snow White's house.

These examples suggest that sixth graders have a greater degree of productive control of syntactic structures, a control that allows them to control the meaning more precisely. It is not that third graders aren't capable of using such structures but that they simply do not use them as effectively, as frequently, or as appropriately. Third graders do not have the same degree of control of the linguistic structures that would allow them to cope with the complexities of the meanings they want to convey.

My analysis thus suggests that the primary difference between the narrative structure of third and sixth graders is a matter of not always realizing in the surface story what they know about the underlying structure. In some cases, at least, the degree

of syntactic control that the narrator possesses can affect the structure of the narrative itself, a point to be explored further in the next chapter.

FOOTNOTES--CHAPTER IV

[1]Mary Louise Pratt, Toward a Speech Act Theory of Literary Discourse (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977), p. 86.

[2]Nancy L. Stein and Christine G. Glenn, "An Analysis of Story Comprehension in Elementary School Children: A Test of a Schema," ERIC, No. ED 121474, p. 56.

[3]Ibid., p. 57.

[4]Ibid., p. 11.

[5]Ibid.

[6]William Labov, "The Transformation of Experience in Narrative Syntax," in Language in the Inner City: Studies in the Black English Vernacular (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1972), p. 364.

[7]Stein and Glenn, pp. 11-12.

[8]Ibid, p. 45.

[9]Jean Mandler and Nancy S. Johnson, "Remembrance of Things Parsed: Story Structure and Recall," Cognitive Psychology, 9 (1977), 145.

[10]V. Propp, Morphology of the Folktale (Austine: University of Texas Press, 1968), pp. 75-6.

[11]Stein and Glenn, pp. 11-14.

[12]Ibid., p. 14.

[13]Ibid., p. 371.

[14]Jean Piaget, The Language and Thought of the Child (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd.), pp. 108-9.

[15]Arthur N. Applebee, The Child's Concept of Story (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1978), p. 99.

[16]James Britton, Language and Learning (London: Penguin Press, 1970), p. 169.

[17]Linda S. Flowers and John R. Hayes, "Problem-Solving Strategies and the Writing Process," College English, 39 (December 1977), 460.

[18]Applebee, p. 121.

CHAPTER V

NARRATIVE: DISCURSIVE STRUCTURE

Discursive Structure: A Schema

Narrative structure has two dimensions. Story, discussed in the preceding chapter, consists of the internal relations of action and character. The second dimension of narrative is discursive structure, a term that Seymour Chatman (1969) uses to describe the literary aspects of fiction--"the verbal means by which the author communicates the story to his audience."[1] It is the set of external relations between narrator and reader that includes time, aspect, and mode of narrative. Narrative perspective is a bridge to outside reality. Chatman (1975) discusses narrative transmission and this relationship between narrator and audience as follows:

> The initial question, then, is whether a narrator is present, and if he is, how his presence is recognized and how strongly it is felt by the audience. The narrator comes into existence when the story itself is made to seem a demonstrable act of communication. If an audience feels that it is in some sense spoken _to_ (regardless of the medium), then the existence of _a_ teller must be presumed.[2]

This relationship between narrator and audience is the central focus of Labov's study (1972) of the structure of the personal narratives or black pre-adolescents and adolescents concerning a brush with death or a dangerous situation that they encountered at one time or another. Labov's analysis includes what he considers

to be the six elements in an extended narrative: an abstract, an orientation, the complicating action, the evaluation, the result or resolution, and the coda. Not all narratives contain all six elements; they are simply analytical categories developed by Labov and not intended to indicate that the success of the narrative is dependent on the presence of all the categories. Three have been treated as aspects of Story in Chapter IV: orientation, complicating action, and resolution; the remaining three will be discussed in this chapter specifically because they are aspects of discursive structure--the relationship between narrator and audience. To be sure, such a division is artificial. Obviously audience awareness and the situational context of the language event are important factors in the story structure, as discussed in Chapter IV. The present chapter will discuss all the elements to the extent to which they are affected by audience awareness. Story structure cannot be totally understood when viewed outside the framework of the context of the situation, a point understood and developed by Labov (1972) in his analysis of narratives. Labov discovered that the narrative structure was affected in significant ways by the kinds and degree of evaluative elements included in the narrative. What a speaker chooses to include will be directly affected by the situational context--the audience, the purpose, the topic. To ignore these variables in the study of narrative structure is to limit the analysis in fundamental ways.

Labov defines abstract as one or two clauses at the beginning of the narrative that summarize the whole story; he defines

coda as clauses appearing at the end of the narrative that signal that the narrator is finished; and he defines _evaluation_ as that part of the narrative that gives the reason for telling it, the reasons why the narrative is reportable and worth telling. Particularly in personal narratives, the abstract helps to establish the relationship between narrator and audience, the coda serves to close off the relationship, and the evaluation serves to convince the audience that the narrator has a reason for telling it. The following discussion will show both the similarities and the differences in how personal and vicarious narratives use these narrative elements.

Abstract in Discursive Structure

Personal narratives often begin wtih one or two clauses that summarize the whole story or encapsulate the point of the story and, as such, add to the worthwhileness of reporting the experience. They can also indicate that what follows is a narrative and not some other kind of discourse. An example offered by Labov of a typical abstract in a personal narrative is one at the beginning of a fight narrative: "Well, I talked an old man out of pulling the trigger." The narrative itself goes on to relate details of the incident. The abstract establishes the main point of the experience and convinces the audience that the experience is a reportable narrative. An abstract does not appear in all personal narratives, but when it does, it contributes to the evaluative force of the narrative.

No abstracts appeared in any of the stories told by my subjects, perhaps for a variety of reasons. One may be the nature of

the speech event itself. The narratives of Labov's subjects were provided in response to the question, "Were you ever in a situation where you were in serious danger of being killed, where you said to yourself--'This is it'?" In response to this question one is more likely to introduce the narrative with an abstract that provides an overview of the experience. The narratives of my subjects were neither personal nor in response to a question.

If the third and sixth graders in this study had been given the task of telling what a story was about rather than the task of telling the story itself, their responses would more likely have contained abstracts like: "Cinderella was about this girl who . . .," a kind of narrative that Applebee refers to as a summary or synopsis rather than a retelling.

A third reason for the lack of abstracts may be that because of the nature of the task they were asked to perform, my students assumed that the listener already knew the story; there was no need for an introductory statement about the tale itself. The tales are familiar ones, and the fact that I asked for a telling of these tales specifically suggests that I need no introduction to them. Besides, no fairy tale begins with an abstract of the kind found in personal narratives; it begins with an introductory formula designating that a fairy tale narrative is about to begin. Any other kind of abstract would be inappropriate, a concept that both third and sixth graders appear to have.

Narratives begin with what Kernan (1977) calls an "introducer . . ., some relatively stylized way of indicating that what follows

is a narrative and . . . is not subject to the rules of sequencing that apply to dialogue or conversation."[3] The introducer in fairy tales is often the formulaic "Once upon a time." Since storytellers, under fairly formal circumstances, would be compelled to use the expected, traditional introducer, one would expect that the formal versions, in particular, would contain the formula. This is precisely what I found, with greater use in the formal style for both grade levels, illustrated below:

TABLE 11.--Types of Introducers.

Introducers	Grade Level 3 (N = 15)	Grade Level 6 (N = 15)
Casual		
Once upon a time	13 percent	20 percent
Once there was (were)	20	7
There was (were)	20	27
Other	47	47
Formal		
Once upon a time	47	53
Once there was (were)	20	13
There was (were)	7	13
Other	27	20

Few differences exist between grade levels, but there is considerable difference at both grade levels between casual and formal styles. "Once upon a time" increases for third graders from 13 percent to 47 percent, and for sixth graders from 20 to 53 percent. (Other elements of the formula, such as rare diction, were discussed in Chapter III.)

Coda in Discursive Structure

The coda in the personal narrative, in addition to signalling the end of the narrative, may also contain general observations or show the effects of the events on the narrator. Labov's example from a fight narrative illustrates:

> I was given the rest of the day off. And ever since then I haven't seen the guy 'cause I quit. I quit, you know. No more problems.[4]

Similar codas may be found in fictional narration, depending on the degree of narrator intervention, particularly if the story is told from the first person point of view.

Other codas merely bridge the gap between the moment of time at the end of the narrative itself and the present, and forestall further questions about the narrative.[5] The codas that I found in my study served this function. They sometimes consisted of the traditional fairy tale formula, "And they lived happily ever after," with a greater use in the formal rather than casual versions for both grade levels. Most of the story-tellers just ended the tales without the coda, and a few said, "And that's the end"(see Table 12). Twenty-seven percent of the third graders and twenty percent of the sixth graders had no codas in their casual style, but both grades increased their use of the codas in the formal style, the third graders to forty-seven percent and the sixth graders to sixty-seven percent. The differences are substantial. Obviously the formal style demands a formal coda for both grade levels, but the sixth graders, particularly, seem to recognize its importance in the formal style. The

coda, it appears, is a crucial narrative element in formal narrative speech events, especially for older children.

TABLE 12.--Percentage of Types of Codas.

Codas	Grade Level 3 (N = 15)	Grade Level 6 (N = 15)
Happily ever after		
Casual	20 percent	20 percent
Formal	40	27
That's the end		
Casual	7	0
Formal	7	40
None		
Casual	73	80
Formal	53	33

Both the abstract (or introducer) and the coda in narrative structure help to establish the set of external relations between narrator and audience. They formally introduce and close off the narrative. It appears from this data that both third graders and sixth graders recognize their importance and have some control of these elements, for both grade levels increase their use of introducers and codas in their formal versions. They appear, then, to recognize the need for identifying the beginnings and endings of narratives, a recognition that manifests itself primarily in the more formal of the language events.

Evaluation in Discursive Structure

Labov states that the evaluation of the narrative--the means used by the narrator to indicate the point of the narrative--is the most important element in a narrative in addition to the basic narrative clause because it helps to prevent the "So what?" response and registers the narrative reportable.[6] Narratives can be evaluated by external methods in which the narrator steps out of the bounds of the narrative itself, or by internal methods in which the evaluative comment is embedded within the narrative, a point discussed extensively in Chapter IV.

Labov's evaluation, in terms of narrator intervention, is similar to Chatman's concept of narrative transmission. Chatman treats narrative transmission as being on a continuum from unmediated, mimetic, where the narrator is unobtrusive, to mediated, where the narrator recounts, describes, and presents his view of the story--a highly vocal and visible narrator who, on occasion, may direct his remarks to his audience, apart from the story itself, as a commentary on events or as an observation on the meaning of the events in the story.

In the narratives told by my students the narrators' voices were never obtrusive and direct, primarily because all narratives were told in the third person. Nevertheless, there was some use of external evaluation, where the narrator stepped outside the bounds of the narrative to report on characters' internal responses, such as "And she was feeling very sad," and "The stepmother didn't like Cinderella." As I discussed in Chapter IV, a number of third and

sixth graders referred to the state of mind of characters: "the stepmother/sisters were very confused," "everyone was surprised." Most of these responses were recorded in the formal versions. Feelings and emotions were recorded more often in the formal versions and more frequently among the sixth graders' formal versions: "she was feeling really bad," "she went to the ball happily," "the prince really liked her," and "Cinderella was really happy."

The more deeply embedded the evaluation is, the closer the narrative comes to the mimetic end of the continuum where the story is allowed to speak for itself. Skilled narrators can "show" the point of the story--its worth--by objectively describing what happens to the characters, their external responses and the results of those responses. But this kind of narrative demands considerable skill.[7] Some of the narratives in my study illustrated a skillful use of embedded evaluation, such as the following excerpt from a sixth grader's formal version of "Cinderella" in which the stepsisters' actions and words convey their cruelty to Cinderella:

> And then they all announced, "Let's go to the ball, let's go to the ball." And Cinderella was talking about how she wanted to go to the ball. So they said, "You funny thing." And she said, "I'm not funny-looking." And they started laughing at her, and they said, "Come here and help me zip up this dress. Come here, come help me do this. Wash the floors. You're going to stay here and do the chores."

Not all of my students demonstrated this degree of skill in the use of embedded evaluation of this type. Many had to rely on external evaluation as well, and the narratives of those who didn't use some external evaluation and of those who did not demonstrate

skill with this type of embedded evaluation were lacking in interest and excitement. The result was a bland, unimaginative story that would have difficulty convincing the listener of its reportability. Although my instructions did not specifically ask for imaginative stories, my assumption was that the task itself, telling a story for someone else to read, would encourage imaginative stories. The following "Cinderella" story told by a sixth grader for her formal version is largely unevaluated:

> Once upon a time there was a girl named Cinderella, and she lived with her two stepsisters and her stepmother. One day her stepsisters and stepmother were invited to a ball, and she wasn't invited. And they made her do all the housework. And right after they left, since she wanted to go so much, her fairy godmother came and made a pumpkin from the garden into a coach, and gave her a gown, and she went to the ball. And she had to be back home by midnight. And as it started striking midnight, she ran out and she lost one of her glass slippers, and the prince found it, and he looked everywhere to find her. And when he finally did, they were married, and she was a princess, and that's the end.

There is little evaluation in terms of showing Cinderella's responses or telling about them, and there are no details for interest or emphasis. Adding details makes the story more reportable, more dramatic and effective, as demonstrated by the following "Cinderella" story, a formal version told by a sixth grader:

> Cinderella was a girl that lived in a little cottage, and she had a stepmother and two stepsisters. And her stepmother was like a slavedriver and didn't like her stepdaughter so made her work all the time, and made her real daughters always be real pretty and everything. And then she worked and worked and worked, and she didn't have any time to play or anytime to make herself look pretty, and she really wanted to be pretty. And she wanted to go to a ball, because they lived in a town where kings and queens and princes and stuff lived, and she wanted to

> marry the prince. And so then she was crying one night when the ball came because the prince was looking for a bride, and her fairy godmother came for her and asked her what she was crying about. And she told her fairy godmother than she wanted to go to the ball, and that she'd like to marry the prince. So the fairy godmother turned a pumpkin into a stagecoach and made three mice horses, and two mice stagecoach drivers, and they went to the ball. And her fairy godmother included that she had to be back by twelve last chime, and so she said, "All right." And so then she went to the ball, and she had a really good time and she appealed to the prince. So the prince really liked her and was going to marry her. At twelve o'clock she had to go, so she ran out and the prince was calling her and calling her because he loved her a lot. So then she tripped and lost her shoe, and then when she got back home she turned into her regular old self. And then the prince ordered a search of the entire kingdom of anybody who could fit that shoe to bring them to him. So the guards went out, and the last person they tried on the shoe was Cinderella, and it fit, and so Cinderella was real happy, and her fairy godmother changed her back into the pretty Cinderella, and then she married the prince and lived happily ever after.

This version contains a great amount of detail; it tells about Cinderella's internal responses (external evaluation) and also shows them (internal evaluation). The result is a reportable narrative in contrast to the previous example. (The use of detail is discussed at length in Chapter IV, along with illustrations of its increased use in the formal versions of both third and sixth graders.)

The use of dialogue is another method for embedding evaluation: the character's words can make the point of the story and indicate the story's worthiness as illustrated above in the excerpt containing the dialogue between Cinderella and her stepsisters. Dialogue provides dramatic effect, something that is missing in narratives where the narrator merely <u>tells</u> rather than <u>shows</u>. Dialogue is used with a substantially greater frequency by third

graders than by sixth graders, and it is used much more frequently in the formal versions than in the casual for both grade levels, with the greatest increase occurring from the casual to the formal of the sixth graders. Table 13 shows for each grade level the ratio of instances of quoted dialogue per 100 T-Units.

TABLE 13.--Ratio of Instances of Quoted Dialogue per 100 T-Units for "Cinderella" and "Snow White."

	Grade Level 3 (N = 14)	Grade Level 6 (N = 12)
Casual	.77	.24
Formal	.97	.63

While the use of dialogue, overall, is infrequent, with less than 1 T-Unit in 100 containing dialogue, the greater degree of dialogue among third graders is somewhat surprising, given the fact that its use is an embedded form of evaluation. If the use of dialogue is a sophisticated evaluative form, why do we find third graders using it more frequently than sixth graders? One possible explanation is that, even though it is an embedded form of evaluation, third graders feel more at ease with quoted dialogue perhaps because they are closer in age to the story-telling mode and because they are especially familiar with stories that make frequent use of dialogue, basal readers for example. Their own use of dialogue may reflect the style of stories with which they are most familiar.

Applebee's explanation (1978) is similar. He found in his study of the stories told by children and adolescents and their discussions of those stories that younger children are more likely to produce real retellings of stories, with more detail, than older children are. Older children, because of their increasing cognitive ability to generalize and analyze, are more likely to produce summaries and synopses of stories rather than retellings.[8] The sixth graders in this study may simply be beyond the true retelling stage in narrative, as defined by Applebee, and may prefer the summary form that includes less dialogue, at least in their casual versions. But the increase of dialogue in their formal versions is substantial, from .24 to .63. Possibly sixth graders recognize the dramatic effect of dialogue and consequently use it when that effect is most important--in the formal versions that will be read or heard by other children. Third graders may be using dialogue primarily because of their familiarity with it from the stories they read, while sixth graders may be more conscious of its dramatic possibilities and use it more consciously in their formal versions.

Evaluation and Syntax

Narrative transmission, according to Labov, is not limited to narrative perspective, point of view, or the kinds of evaluation discussed in the previous section; it also involves the internal structure of narrative clauses, their syntactic complexity or simplicity, and the effect of this complexity or simplicity on the narrative itself.[9]

According to Labov, the narrative clause itself is one of the simplest grammatical patterns in connected speech, true of adult narratives as well as those of children and adolescents.[10] He describes the basic syntax as consisting of eight elements: (1) sentence adverbials and conjunctions, (2) simple subjects, (3) the underlying auxiliary as a simple past tense marker which is incorporated in the verb, (4) preterite verbs, with adverbial particles, (5) complements like direct or indirect objects, (6) manner or instrumental adverbials, (7) locative adverbials, and (8) temporal adverbials and comitative clauses. Such syntax produces sentences in narrative structure like: "This boy punched me and I punched him. Then the teacher came in and stopped the fight," illustrated in this way:[11]

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	This boy		punched	me			
and	I		punched	him			
Then	the teacher		came			in	
and			stopped	the fight.			

Any departure from this basic narrative syntax complicates the syntax, says Labov, and he classifies the major departures as intensifiers, comparators, correlatives, and explicatives, each category containing a number of subtypes. He says that such syntactic complexities added to the basic narrative syntax are usually evaluative elements: "Since syntactic complexity is relatively rare in narratives, it must have a marked effect when

it does occur. And in fact, we find that departures from the basic narrative syntax have a marked evaluative force."[12] Evaluation, then, manifests itself by syntactic complexity. The form of embedded evaluation necessarily complicates the basic syntactic structure and often has an evaluative force. It must be clear, of course, that not all occurrences of these syntactic elements have an evaluative function; in some cases they serve a purely referential function in which they clarify the factual circumstances surrounding the narrative.[13] But for the most part the increased use of these elements enhances the evaluative force of the narrative.

Table 14, presented here as an orientation for the reader, provides the results of the three categories of evaluative syntax analyzed in this study. Following the table, each of the categories, along with the category of intensifiers (not included in the table), will be discussed in detail.

TABLE 14.--Frequency of Comparatives, Correlatives, and Explicatives for 100 T-Units.

Evaluative Syntax	Grade Level 3 (N = 15)	Grade Level 6 (N = 15)
Comparatives (she was the fairest of all)		
Casual	1.38	3.74
Formal	1.73	4.32
Correlatives (C. is staying . . ., feeling really bad)		
Casual	.97	1.65
Formal	.98	1.69
Explicatives (While, since, if clauses, etc.)		
Casual	2.52	3.72
Formal	2.27	5.06

<u>Intensifiers</u>

Labov describes narrative clauses as a linear series of events which are organized in the narrative in the same order as they occurred. An intensifier selects one of these events and strengthens or intensifies it in a number of ways: (1) by expressing phonology like "and we were fighting for a lo-o-ong time, buddy"; (2) by quantifiers like <u>all</u>, often inserted at a critical point in preadolescent narratives; and (3) by repetition of a word or phrase.[14] None of these complicates the structure very much, however. My study shows very few differences between the causal and formal styles in the use of quantifiers or repetitions. The quantifier <u>all</u> was used very frequently in both styles, at both grade levels: "all her dresses," "so she cleaned it all up," "all the time," etc. There were greater differences in frequency between the two grade levels, with the third graders using more quantifiers like <u>very</u>, <u>all</u>, <u>too</u>, <u>really</u>, etc., but they used slightly fewer repetitions than the sixth graders, such as "she slept and slept," "she ran and ran," "very, very, very messy," and "she was lying there, just lying there." Certainly intensifiers are evaluative elements, but overall, there did not appear to be significant differences between casual and formal styles or between grade levels in their use.

<u>Comparators</u>

Comparators are elements which compare one thing with another, or compare events which did occur to those which did not

occur.[15] Labov classifies negatives, futures, and modals as comparators in the latter category, dealing with a level of expected and unrealized events which go beyond basic narrative sequence. To some extent they complicate the syntax, and they usually have an evaluative function. Questions and imperatives, of a higher degree of syntactic complexity, also often have an evaluative function, but they were almost non-existent in my data. The analysis of comparators in this study, therefore, was limited to Labov's last subtype, the comparative, which he considers as reaching the highest level of syntactic complexity.[16] The comparative includes the grammatical comparative and superlative such as "she was the fairest of all;" clauses with as and prepositional phrases with like; and metaphors and similes. I found examples of comparatives and superlatives in both styles at both grade levels, with slight increases from casual to formal styles at both grade levels, and with fairly substantial increases from third graders to sixth graders. Examples include "she was the beautifulest girl," "the prettiest of all," "she ran as fast as she could," "all dressed up as a little old lady," "it smelled like a great big flower patch," and "the oldest, fattest, with the longest beard." Only two subjects, both sixth graders, used a simile describing Snow White's beauty: "And the baby's hair was as black as coal, and her skin was as white as snow, and her lips were as red as cherries." Certainly the use of such comparatives adds evaluative force to the narratives and intensifies the descriptions being made. The increase from third grade to sixth grade may be a reflection of the older children's ability to

control more complex syntax, a point to be discussed later in this chapter.

Correlatives

Correlatives bring together two events conjoined in a single independent clause. The operation requires complex syntax because it involves both deletion and conjoining transformations. Correlatives include the following syntactic elements in increasing order of syntactic complexity:

1. Progressives in _be...ing_
2. Appended participles in which one or more verbs in _-ing_ are aligned, with tense marker and _be_ deleted: "He was sitting there, minding his own business."
3. Double appositives such as "a knife, a long one, a dagger"
4. Double attributives such as "a cold, wet day"
5. Left-embedded participles such as "an unsavory-looking passenger," much more syntactically complex than right-embedded ones.[17]

Correlatives serve an evaluative function because they suspend the action, bring in a wider range of simultaneous events, and heighten the effect of the situation.

My analysis consisted of elements two through five. Progressives were very numerous in both styles and at both grade levels and did not enter into my analysis. A small number of appended participles occurred with even distribution between styles and between grade levels. Examples include "And Cinderella is staying with the stepmother, feeling really bad," "And they started going around, trying to fit the slipper on people's feet," "She was cleaning out the house, dusting . . .," "She was crying, wishing that she could go," and "She was sitting at her window, sewing one day."

Although there were no double appositives in my data, there were numerous double attributives, possibly because appositives are a less common syntactic pattern than are attributives. Of the twenty-two double attributives, only six appear in the casual styles and sixteen appeared in the formal styles, with relatively little difference between grade levels. Their use is apparently determined by the purpose of the speech act and degree or formality of the task, a conclusion supported by Labov's results. He says that double attributives are as rare as double appositives in colloquial speech. The fact that the majority of double attributives were found in the formal style suggests that the degree of formality of the speech act plays an important role in their frequency. Examples included "little old lady," "mean, grumpy stepmother," "great big beautiful glass coffin," "wicked old hag," and "big, ugly wolf." Their use obviously makes the story more interesting, more reportable, particularly because many of the double attributives were used with reference to the antagonists in the stories, as noted in the above examples, perhaps as a way of establishing and developing the conflict between the major characters in the tales, a point discussed later in this chapter.

I found only one case of a left-embedded participle, appearing in one of the sixth grader's stories: "it was a messy-looking place." This syntactic construction is apparently quite complex and demands a high degree of syntactic control, a possible explanation of why no other examples were found in all of the data.

Explicatives

Explicatives are separate clauses appended to the main narrative clause; they include qualifications introduced by *while*, *though*, and *if*, and causal clauses introduced by *since*, *because*, or *so that*, etc. Their evaluative function is to suspend the action of the narrative and to transfer the attention of the listener backward or forward or into a realm of abstract speculation.[18] They serve to bring several actions together in the same sentence, thereby increasing suspense. Many of the explicatives in my study did not have an evaluative function, particularly the *because* clauses that functioned to clarify the text. *If* clauses were used by some third graders but more frequently by sixth graders, and only sixth graders used *even though* clauses, suggesting that clauses of qualification demand a degree of control manifested more often in the oral language of older children.

In general at both grade levels (see Table 14) one finds a slight increase from casual to formal style, with two exceptions. One is the slight decrease in the third graders' use of explicatives. The other is the fairly large gain in the use of explicatives for the sixth graders, probably reflecting their increased use of qualifying clauses. Overall the trend is for an increase in syntactic complexity from casual to formal style which simultaneously adds evaluative force to the narrative.

While these examples of syntactic complexity do not necessarily prove an association with evaluation of the narrative, they do strongly suggest the association. Labov says:

> . . . most occurrences of these features are closely linked to the evaluation of the narrative: they intensify certain narrative events that are most relevant to the main point; they compare events that did occur to those which might have but did not occur; they correlate the linear dimension of the narration by superimposing one event upon another; and they explicate the point of the narrative in so many words.[19]

Labov's study was partially an attempt to assess the development of evaluative syntax with age. His age divisions were (1) pre-adolescents, 9-13 years of age, (2) adolescents, 14-19 years of age, and (3) adults. It is difficult to make a comparison of my results with his because the third graders in my study are barely pre-adolescents by his standards, and the sixth graders are still pre-adolescents, so that both of the grade levels fit more or less into his youngest category. His results, however, are suggestive for my study.

Labov reports a regular and marked increase for all four categories from pre-adolescents to adolescents to adults, intensifiers showing the least amount of increase, comparators showing a somewhat greater increase, and the correlatives and explicatives showing the sharpest increase.[20] This study's results parallel Labov's. Increases from third to sixth graders occur in all three categories, with slight increases in the correlatives and substantial increases in both comparatives and explicatives. This data supports Labov's conclusion that there is a correlation between increases in these types of syntactic complexity and increases in chronological age. While most of these evaluative structures are used by third graders, their use increases dramatically by sixth graders.

Evaluation in Vicarious Narrative

Labov states clearly that most examples of evaluation are to be found in narratives of personal experience rather than in narratives of vicarious experience. In the latter, though events may be remarkable, there is little urgency for the speaker to justify the telling of the story because there is little personal involvement in the events of the narrative. Labov contrasts the narrative of a favorite TV program told by one of the adolescents with the highly evaluative narrative of another adolescent telling about a fight he had been in. Given this contrast between personal and vicarious narrative, one would not expect much evaluation in the narratives in my study. There is no personal involvement in the events of the fairy tales, the situation for telling it is fairly contrived, and the events in the tales are quite predictable, both in terms of their familiarity and their basic fairy tale formulas. Nevertheless, numerous examples of evaluative narrative exist in the data.

One possible reason is that fairy tales are not like TV shows. Fairy tales may speak to subconscious needs, desires, fears, whereas TV shows generally do not. Hence, the involvement of the teller may be greater in fairy tales. This possibly accounts for the higher degree of evaluation found in the tales than one might expect.

The excerpts that follow illustrate the evaluative syntax of third and sixth graders, but they also include other forms of evaluation discussed in Chapter IV and at the beginning of this

chapter: the use of dialogue, descriptions of internal and external responses, and details of the relationships of the characters, all of which help to heighten the effect of the narrative and make the telling more worthwhile.

In the majority of cases, the formal versions were more highly evaluated than the casual, and the sixth graders' much more so than the third graders', the reasons for which will be discussed later in this chapter.

The first two Cinderella stories are fairly representative of the third graders' narratives:

"Cinderella" (casual version)

There was two stepsisters and one stepmother and a little girl named Cinderella. They boss her around and make her do all the work and do their hair and button their shirts and stuff like that. And they were invited to a ball--a dancing party--so they got it and they read it, and they said it was good, and Cinderella couldn't go because she didn't have anything to wear, and they didn't let her. And so they went, and Cinderella was crying. And a fairy godmother came and made a dress and made a coach for her and turned a mouse into a horse and a pumpkin into a carriage. And she went, and she met a man, and they danced until midnight, and then it struck. And her fairy godmother said she would have to be back before it struck. And she went back, and she lost her slipper, and it was too late, and she lost her horses, and they turned back into mices. And then she walked home, and the prince tried the stepsisters and the stepmother. Their mother locked her up upstairs, and she couldn't get out. And then this one fat mice unlocked it, and she came down, and the prince tried it on and they got married.

"Cinderella" (formal version)

Once upon a time there was two stepsisters and one stepmother, and there was a little girl named Cinderella. And she was like a slave, and they made her hem their dress and put makeup and put their shoes on. And they got a

> message, and it said that they could come to the ball for a dance, and Cinderella didn't get to go. And they left, and she had to do all this work, and she was crying, and so she went outdoors and was crying. And this one fairy godmother came and said, "Why are you crying?" And she said she couldn't go to the ball. And then she made her into a pretty girl with a dress and took her to the ball. She told her she should come back at twelve o'clock. And so she was going, and she met a man, and they danced together until it was twelve o'clock, and then she ran, and her shoe came off, and she walked home. And the man that she met came to their house and tried everyone. And Cinderella got locked upstairs, and then the big fat mouse unlocked it. She got out, and she tried it on, and they got married.

The first rarely goes beyond basic narrative syntax. The intensifier _all_ is used once in this narrative, and there is a causal clause introduced by _because_.

The second uses more of the syntactic elements being discussed. _All_ as an intensifier is used once, and _girl_ is modified by _pretty_. The comparative _like a slave_ is used, and there is some repetition of Cinderella's crying as a means of heightening the effect of the situation. Dialogue also adds dramatic force to the story. While the differences between these two versions are not outstanding, there is noticeably more evaluation in the formal version than in the casual.

More striking are the evaluative elements found in some of the stories of the sixth graders, the formal more highly evaluative than the casual. The following two excerpts are from a sixth grader:

"Cinderella" (casual version)

> Cinderella and her stepsisters they were going to this ball, and she asked them could she go, and she said, "No, you look too funny." And so she started crying, and then her fairy godmother came and told her not to cry. She had this magic want stick, and she made her a dress and everything and some glass slippers. And she turned a pumpkin into a coach. And there were three mice, and she turned them into some horses, and then they went to the ball. . . .

"Cinderella" (formal version)

> Once upon a time there were three stepsisters with Cinderella, and they were going to the ball, and then they all announced, "Let's go to the ball, let's go to the ball." And Cinderella was talking about how she wanted to go to the ball. So they said, "You funny thing." And she said, "I'm not funny-looking." And they started laughing at her. And they said, "Come here and help me zip up this dress. Come here. Come help me do this. Wash them floors. You're going to stay here and do the chores." And so then they left. And she started going over there by the fireplace. And she started crying. And then her fairy godmother came and said, "Don't cry. I'll fix you up." And so she changed her into a pretty girl. And there was three white mouse [sic] and she changed them into white horses, and a pumpkin she changed that into a coach. . . .

There is more dialogue in the formal version, although the sixth graders, as we noted, use much less dialogue than the third graders. There are more examples of repetition for emphasis and effect, particularly in the conversation between Cinderella and the stepsisters. Their repetitious commands to Cinderella emphasize their cruelty to her and their conflict with her. The intensifier _all_ is used, and there are more noun modifications: _pretty_ girl, _white_ mouse, _white_ horses.

Another sixth grader told the story of Snow White. Following are some excerpts from her versions:

"Snow White" (casual version)

1. So he took Snow White out to the woods. And then he was about to kill her, and he decided he couldn't do it. So he told Snow White to run away into the woods and never, ever come back. So she ran, and she ran, and she ran, and at night she lay down, and she started crying. . . .

2. And so the next morning the dwarfs went away to their mine. And Snow White made breakfast, but before they left, Happy said to make sure that she wasn't to let any strangers in because it may be the wicked witch in disguise. . . .

3. And then she went downstairs into her secret cellar and made up a potion and put on a secret disguise and went out through her secret door and went to the woods. . . .

"Snow White" (formal version)

1. So he took Snow White into the woods, and she was picking flowers and being as gay as could be in the woods, and he was very sad because he knew he had to kill her. And after a while later the woodsman said, "Run away, run away, run away quick because I don't want to kill you." And Snow White was very, very frightened. Why would the woodsman want to kill her? But anyway, she ran and she ran and she ran away from that woodsman. . . .

2. And the next morning when she woke up the oldest dwarf and the fattest one with the longest beard, named Happy, said, "Make sure you beware of strangers because it may be the wicked queen in disguise."

3. And then the wicked queen went down through her secret door down to her secret cellar, and she mixed up all these secret potions, and she drank one potion, and it made her a wicked old hag, a very ugly hag, not to mention that. . . .

The casual version, excerpt 1, has some repetition: "never, ever" and <u>she ran</u>; but the formal version has considerably more evaluative elements: as in the first version, <u>she ran</u> is repeated, but so is

the command to run away. There are three intensifiers, _very_, a comparative in "as gay as could be," and much more dialogue.

In both casual and formal styles, excerpt 2, _witch_ is modified by _wicked_, but the formal version also contains details that furnish the superlative forms: _oldest_, _fattest_, _longest_.

The casual version, excerpt 3, uses _secret_ as a modifier three times, a repetition that heightens the drama of the narrative. The formal version, in addition to a similar repetition, uses two intensifiers: _all_ and _very_. An important element of evaluative syntax is the double attributive: _wicked old_ hag, a grammatical feature used much more frequently by sixth graders than by third graders. The formal style also contains an appositive: "a . . . hag, _a very ugly hag_," a construction occurring very rarely in either third or sixth grade language in this study.

While there is sometimes a point in personal narratives, just prior to the resolution, where evaluative elements are concentrated, evaluation is more likely to be found throughout the narrative. The fictional narratives in my study have no obvious evaluation sections, although there are points throughout the narratives where greater evaluation seems to occur. In Cinderella, particularly among sixth graders, many evaluative structures occur in the description of the conflict between Cinderella and her stepmother/sisters; in Snow White the most evaluation occurs during the scenes describing the attempts on Snow White's life, particularly in the descriptions of the wicked queen as she plots Snow

White's death. A number of illustrative excerpts are provided in the section above.

Interestingly, Labov's study of personal narrative shows that most often it is the antagonist whose description is the most syntactically complex and the most highly evaluated.[21] It is the antagonist who makes the narrative reportable, a point supported by my data. As discussed earlier, the large number of double attributives used in the stories are often used in the descriptions of the antagonists.

The excerpts cited above illustrate the higher degree of evaluative syntax used by sixth graders, as well as the increase in such syntax from casual to formal style for both grade levels. Such examples show that evaluative narrative exists in the vicarious as well as the personal narrative mode. Obviously both third and sixth graders felt a stronger obligation to convince the listener/reader of the worth of the stories in their formal versions. At least to some degree they were aware of the needs of the audience. The audience for the casual versions was I--an adult--one who supposedly knew the tales already; the story-tellers were not strongly compelled to make the stories reportable. In contrast, the speech event for the formal version included an eventual audience of other children who would be reading the stories; the formal situations demanded that the story-tellers make their stories reportable and interesting. Sixth graders understood the purposes in more detail than did the third graders.

Discussion of Results

The abstracts and codas used in personal narratives do not apply to vicarious narratives. The narratives produced by the students in this study begin with statements that serve to identify what follows as narrative discourse, and they end with statements simply signalling the end of the discourse. The "once upon a time" and the "they lived happily ever after" statements, or versions thereof, clearly define the parameters of the narrative and signal the speaker as having the floor for whatever length of time it takes to relate the narrative. The major differences were between styles, with a substantial increase from casual to formal for both grade levels. It appears that both third and sixth graders recognize the importance of these narrative elements.

Once the narrator has established his/her responsibility for narrative transmission and has established the relationship between him/herself and the audience, it becomes compelling for the narrator to make the narrative reportable. Even given the fact that the third and sixth graders in this study were asked to tell the stories, this speech event in itself compels them to make the story reportable and interesting. Devices such as recording the state of mind of characters, their wishes and emotions, including interesting and relevant details, and using dialogue add to the reportability of a story. The compelling nature of vicarious narrative to be reportable becomes apparent in the increased use of these devices in both the third and sixth graders' formal versions--for the benefit, one

can assume, of the audience who will eventually be reading these stories.

Similarly, the formal styles at both grade levels produce the more complex evaluative syntax: the increased use of correlatives, comparatives, and explicatives.

While a study of evaluation in narrative does show important differences between styles, it shows even more dramatically some of the differences between grade levels in the production of evaluative narrative. The use of evaluative devices by sixth graders--reporting interesting details, recording the emotions of characters--increases over their use by third graders. The most dramatic difference between third and sixth graders, however, is their use of evaluative syntax. Sixth graders appear to produce much more of the complex evaluative syntax than do third graders. This finding suggests a number of implications about children's varying abilities to handle discursive structure, along with some implications about the discursive structure itself.

First, both younger and older children recognize the dramatic effect of dialogue, interesting details, reports of feelings and emotions of characters. Regardless of age, the students in this study use these devices for making narratives more worthy of being told. But the fact that, as I discussed in Chapter IV, the sixth graders generally developed the conflict and provided better motivation suggests that older children know more precisely <u>where</u> in the narrative such details, such reporting of emotions will be most effective. The older children, I reported earlier, elaborated character

and motivation, as evidenced in their superior orientations. Third graders, on the other hand, were likely to add details more randomly without controlling where the details would occur for the most dramatic effect.

Kernan's study (1977) of the narratives of children of varying ages substantiates this view. He says:

> The younger the child, the more likely it will be that the understanding and appreciation of the narrative by the audience will be based upon the narrative events themselves. The older the child, the more likely it will be that a proper understanding and appreciation of the narrative will be assured through the use of contextual and extranarrative elaboration. The younger children seem to assume that the communication of the events themselves will result in the same understanding and appreciation on the part of the audience that they themselves have. The older children, on the other hand, realize that the interpretation and appreciation of the narrative events will depend, at least in part, upon knowledge that is external to the narrative events themselves.[22]

As Kernan suggests, older children's abilities to produce greater evaluation in narrative may be related to their superior understanding of speech acts and speech events. Ervin-Tripp and Mitchell-Kernan (1977) suggest that the age related differences in the elaboration of certain narrative components may reflect the developmental changes in the way children adapt their speech to the requirements of their audience.[23] It is probable that the older children have a greater awareness that their own assumptions about motives need to be made explicit; they can more clearly anticipate the areas that need elaboration and evaluation for the listener.

Situational context in language processing involves more than just audience awareness. On one hand, audience awareness makes

speakers conscious of the need to supply background information, logical connections, etc. for comprehensibility. On the other hand, when the speaker is telling a narrative that the listerner obviously knows, the speaker can assume some major information about the story on the part of the listener. Harste and Carey (1979) refer to a study in which better retellings, after oral reading, were obtained when the readers were asked to retell what they had read to someone not present during their oral reading of the story. The implication is that the readers who were recalling the stories were less inclined to include necessary elements of the narratives when the listener can be assumed to know the narratives, and more inclined when the listener cannot be presumed to know the stories. This explanation may account for the fact that in some cases the narratives told by the students in my study lacked some of the structural elements one would expect to find. To what degree did the fact that the students were telling the stories in my presence affect what they chose to include? This is a fascinating question that warrants further investigation.

Older children seem to have the greater control necessary for producing evaluative syntax that goes beyond basic syntactic structures. The age-relatedness of increasing syntactic complexity has long been understood, but the demands of producing more complex syntax for evaluative purposes make this task of language learning even more remarkable. The use of comparatives, correlatives, and explicatives increases with age, it appears from this study, a use that very subtly increases the evaluation of the narrative as well.

Obviously such evaluation demands a higher degree of linguistic and cognitive skill and at the same time demands a subtle understanding of how narrative can most effectively be evaluated. Evaluating a narrative by adding more details is not as complex a process as manipulating the syntax itself for evaluative purposes. Sixth graders appear to exercise this kind of syntactic elaboration more effectively than third graders.

Certainly the sixth graders are not all accomplished storytellers, but they do appear to surpass the third graders in some significant ways. Whatever the complex of reasons, it appears that a major aspect of the development in narrative structure occurs well after the basic syntax of the language is learned.

FOOTNOTES--CHAPTER V

[1]Seymour Chatman, "New Ways of Analyzing Narrative Structure, With an Example from Joyce's Dubliners," Language and Style, Vol. 2 (1969), 30.

[2]Seymour Chatman, "The Structure of Narrative Transmission," in Style and Structure in Literature: Essays in the New Stylistics, ed. Roger Fowler (New York: Cornell University Press, 1975), p. 215.

[3]Keith T. Kernan, "Semantic and Expressive Elaboration in Children's Narratives," in Child Discourse, ed. Ervin-Tripp and Mitchell-Kernan (New York: Academic Press, Inc., 1977), p. 93.

[4]William Labov, "The Transformation of Experience in Narrative Syntax," in Language in the Inner City: Studies in the Black English Vernacular (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1972), p. 365.

[5]Ibid.

[6]Ibid., p. 366.

[7]Labov states that the narratives produced in the Black English Vernacular demonstrate these evaluative elements to a much greater degree than the narratives produced by middle-class speakers. For further discussion of this point, see Labov: "The Transformation of Experience in Narrative Syntax."

[8]Arthur N. Applebee, The Child's Concept of Story (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1978), pp. 93-6.

[9]Labov, p. 369.

[10]Ibid., p. 375.

[11]Ibid., p. 376.

[12]Ibid., p. 378.

[13]Ibid., p. 392.

[14]Ibid., pp. 378-9.

[15] Ibid., p. 381.

[16] Ibid., p. 386.

[17] Ibid., p. 390.

[18] Ibid., p. 392.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid., p. 394.

[21] Ibid., p. 390.

[22] Kernan, p. 102.

[23] Susan Ervin-Tripp and Claudia Mitchell-Kernan, "Introduction," Child Discourse (New York: Academic Press, Inc., 1977), p. 16.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This study of syntactic complexity and discourse structure in the narratives of third and sixth graders has produced both expected and unexpected results. My first hypothesis that children as early as the third grade are gaining control of more than one register or style in speech production was supported by the data in general. At both grade levels increases appear from the casual to formal styles in several elements of syntactic elaboration: length of clauses, length of T-Units, number of clauses per T-Unit; use of non-clause modifiers of nouns; number of multi-clause T-Units; use of passive and inversion constructions; and more formal diction. A decrease from casual to formal at both grade levels occurs in the use of coordinating conjunctions initiating T-Units. Certainly the total effect of these differences between casual and formal oral styles is one of greater syntactic elaboration in the formal for both third and sixth graders.

It is obvious, however, that an analysis of syntactic differences provides a very limited picture of the language of children. Discussions of quality and effectiveness of language cannot be based on this kind of analysis alone, but must involve an analysis of discourse as well. The data on narrative discourse

in terms of both story and discursive structure strongly suggest that third and sixth graders are aware of the narrative demands of formal narrative structure and audience expectations; formal versions generally contain greater character motivation, more coherence, more formal introducers and codas, and greater use of evaluative elements such as details, thoughts and feelings of characters, and dialogue. Similarly, the formal styles at both grade levels produce the more complex evaluative syntax: the increased use of correlatives, comparatives, and explicatives. Children, even as young as eight, intuitively sense the greater stylistic demands of a more formal speech style in the narrative genre. When the potential audience is a group other than the interviewer, when their narratives will be read or heard by other children, third and sixth graders alike feel compelled to make the story more reportable. The changing participants, albeit potential, and the changing purpose of the narrative transmission compel them to modify their narratives in the direction of greater syntactic complexity, greater narrative formality, increased reportability and evaluation.

Because these differences between casual and formal oral styles are so apparent as early as age eight, further study is warranted on how early, in fact, these stylistic differences actually begin to occur, and what kinds of differences begin to occur at what ages. The study of language acquisition must be more concerned with discourse, with the speech acts and speech events and the contexts in which they occur. Children cannot be assumed to be mono-stylistic. Any research or teaching must

account for the child's clear knowledge of stylistic appropriateness. How soon are children aware of the sociolinguistic demands of varying audiences, purposes, situations in human discourse? How soon do children begin acquiring a repertoire of styles to meet the needs of various speech acts and events? And above all, why do they begin to develop these differences?

In almost all cases, the syntactic features studied increased slightly in complexity from casual to formal styles. And when one looks at the totality of differences, the combination of these features, one sees that the differences between styles is considerable.

These differences are important, considering that the speech event changes from casual to formal only in the sense of its purpose and of its _potential_ audience. The real, immediate audience is still the interviewer; the potential audience--other children who will be hearing/reading the story--is still very remote. That so many differences do occur from one speech situation to another emphasizes the significance of these changes in the speech events. These syntactic and discursive differences also demonstrate the degree to which young children are aware of varying speech events and the linguistic demands placed on them.

The assumption made at the beginning of this study was that the purposes established for the formal oral narrative would encourage the kind of syntactic elaboration one would expect to find in written narratives, but it appears from the data that the channel of the language event--oral or written--has a greater impact

on the language used than does the purpose or ultimate goal. While the differences between casual and formal oral language were substantial, they were not as great as I expected them to be. Formal oral style is still oral discourse, and the channel controls to some extent the degree of elaboration or complexity produced. Just as there are differences between casual and formal oral styles, there also appear to be syntactic differences between formal oral and written styles, based on a comparison of my data with Hunt's and O'Donnell's. The comparison suggests that the formal oral style is one of a repertoire of styles rather than an approximation of written, as my original hypothesis indicated. The written syntax of O'Donnell's fifth and seventh graders is more elaborate than the formal oral syntax produced by the sixth graders in my study. More study needs to be done on the differences in complexity between informal oral and formal oral discourse, and between formal oral and written discourse.

A suggested area for further investigation is a study of whether the syntactic differences between a formal oral style and a written style suggested here would be accompanied by differences in the narrative structure between these two styles. Would a written story be even more tightly structured, well-motivated, well-organized than a formal oral version of the same narrative? My assumption would be that the differences would occur across all aspects of narrative.

To some extent, however, the data show that the relationship between oral and written language is complex and that the development

of syntactic elaboration may vary with the channel (oral or written) at different grade levels. Third graders' speech appears to be more syntactically elaborate than their writing, while sixth graders' written is more syntactically elaborate than their oral. My tentative conclusion is that third graders are developing syntactic flexibility primarily in oral language and sixth graders in written language, clearly an idea that offers exciting possibilities for further research.

Variation in syntactic elaboration relative to age and channel suggests that development may be guided by the educational demands; that is, sixth graders might develop in oral language if the school required it. The fact that the written channel is emphasized in sixth grade encourages development in that channel and may indirectly discourage conscious development in the oral channel.

The study of syntactic complexity must consider differences in genres. Mike Pope's study suggests that narrative prose is syntactically less elaborate than expository prose. If this is true, what is it about narrative structure that differs from expository structure in terms of syntactic elaboration? Furthermore, are there structural and syntactic differences between personal and fictional narratives, between personal and expository narratives? These questions need to be explored.

Another major question raised by this study is that of the T-Unit as a measure of syntactic complexity. Are there better measures, and can complexity be described more accurately?

As I discussed earlier, the syntactic complexity (based on T-Unit analysis) of sixth graders is only slightly greater than that of third graders; for sixth graders the differences are greater between styles than between grade levels. But the syntactic control that the sixth graders do exercise can, in some cases, affect the narrative structure in substantial ways. Crucial elements of the plot, inadvertently omitted from the narrative, can be included in the narrative later by embedding them in an adverbial clause or by using the past perfect construction (discussed in Chapter IV). Both syntactic devices are used by sixth graders more frequently than by third graders, who are more likely to disturb the flow of the plot by throwing in something that should have been included earlier or by simply omitting any reference to the event whatsoever. This suggests that certain kinds of syntactic structures can affect the flow of the story, can make the story smoother, and can help to make clear what the relationships between elements in the plot are. And sixth graders are clearly more skillful at using these syntactic structures for careful narrative development than third graders.

We find similar results in the use of evaluative syntax by third and sixth graders. Sixth graders appear to produce much more of the complex evaluation syntax than third graders do; they have an increased use of comparatives, correlatives, and explicatives, all of which help to make a story more interesting, more reportable.

The slight increase that occurs in syntactic complexity from the third to the sixth graders' narrative is relatively insignificant,

but when one looks at the fact that the increases result in more highly evaluated narratives, it becomes apparent that the quality cannot be measured by increased complexity so much as by how the structures affect the narratives as a whole. Sixth graders have a better command of the syntax in terms of how it will add to the interest and reportability of the narratives.

The data also suggest that the sixth graders are considerably more capable of controlling other aspects of narrative structure as well. Sixth graders include more frequently the important events and scenes; their orientations more clearly motivate subsequent actions; they establish clearer relationships between episodes; and their coherence and sequencing are more developed. Certainly sixth graders' narratives demonstrate a greater control of these narrative elements over the narratives of third graders.

A major conclusion of this study is that sixth graders have a more developed sense of audience and understand audience needs. It appears that older children have an increased awareness of speech acts and speech events and of how changes in the contexts of language demand changes in the language itself. The sixth graders' awareness of audience results in more complete description of motivation, inclusion of important scenes, more complete orientations, greater coherence. An interesting phenomenon in this study is that while, for the most part, sixth graders' use of motivation is more fully developed than that of the third graders, the sixth graders do occasionally omit scenes that heighten the conflict. One notable example is the frequent omission by sixth graders of the prince

trying the glass slipper on Cinderella's stepmother/sisters. In contrast, many more sixth graders than third graders include the magic mirror scene in Snow White, which helps to establish the conflict. Why the difference? Possibly sixth graders recognize the need to establish conflict at the beginning of the stories in either the orientation or the first episode, which is precisely where the magic mirror scene occurs at first. The slipper scene in Cinderella, on the other hand, occurs at the end of the story and is no longer necessary for understanding the relationship that exists between Cinderella and her stepmother/sisters because that was established earlier in the story. It appears that sixth graders are more keenly aware of _when_ the scenes are crucial. They are more aware of audience in speech events and recognize the need for motivation early in the narratives.

Implications

The results of the differences between casual and formal styles and between third and sixth graders in their narrative discourse suggest several implications for the classroom. One is that syntactic analysis alone offers only a partial view of changes that occur in varying language events and that the limitations of syntactic measuring instruments interfere with even that discussion. Differences between styles and between grade levels become substantial when syntactic changes were analyzed along with changes in narrative elements and structure. Changes in syntax effect

changes in narrative structure. A full analysis must include both aspects of language prduction.

It is also obvious from this study that viewing language use apart from the situational context in which it occurs is very limiting. Speech act theory must be central to any kind of analysis of children's oral or written language and must be incorporated in classroom instruction in language arts. Teachers need to recognize that children as early as age eight already sense differences between styles of language and between channels of language. Beyond that, children have the ability to make discernible changes in syntax and in narrative structure from one speech style to another. This kind of flexibility in language needs to be fostered, encouraged, provided for in the classroom. Such flexibility occurs and is acquired quite naturally as situations arise that demand this kind of flexibility. Providing real audiences, providing language experiences for various speech events, and providing a wealth of practice in speaking and writing styles will help children gain control of language variation in as natural a way as possible. It is important that such language activities occur in natural contexts, for it is normal discourse in a wide range of speech events that provides this kind of awareness in children probably long before formal education begins.

The speech event that the students in this study participated in was unusual; the goal was not immediate, i.e., the students were not seeing their words turn into print immediately, nor were they speaking to their real audience. The goal, then, was less

tangible than a normal conversation. This suggests that many language interactions analyzed in the classroom have an artificial quality, including the use of written language in the classroom. A problem with many writing assignments is that the ultimate goal may be one thing, but the channel of communication may dictate another. The difficulty with getting students to write as they speak, freely and spontaneously, may be attributed to the fact that they are using a different channel of communication. This is not to suggest that this kind of goal in writing has no value but rather to suggest a possible explanation of why this kind of goal in writing is difficult to achieve. Writing, even to young children, will be more than simply "speech written down." Writing is a more formal channel, in most cases, and places demands on syntax and structure different from those in oral language. The repertoire of styles that children begin to acquire includes not only casual and formal oral styles but spoken and written styles as well. Further study needs to be done on just what the linguistic and narrative differences are between each of these styles.

Linguists have long recognized that older children's language will be more mature than younger children's language. The studies of Carol Chomsky, Paula Menyuk, and others strongly support this. But in addition, discourse analysis of children's narratives strongly suggests that older children have better control of narrative structure than younger children do. It is important for teachers to recognize the full extent of children's language abilities in order to have realistic expectations of

children's ability to produce coherent, well-motivated narratives. Because this study was limited in scope and in the number of students studied, it is important that this topic be investigated more thoroughly.

Teachers must also consider the possibility suggested in this study that children acquire syntactic flexibility in different channels of language at different ages. Older children have a greater control of a repertoire of styles ranging from informal oral to formal oral to written. Flexibility for younger children appears to be in the oral channel, on the other hand. Although it is possible that emphasis on writing in sixth grade has fostered sixth graders' writing development, the extent to which development in either speech or writing can be forced is questionable. Teachers should be encouraged to provide ample opportunities for both language processes to be used so that natural growth and development can occur in speech as well as in writing.

A study of this nature is clearly only a beginning, but it undoubtedly establishes the fact of language flexibility among younger and older children both. Language learning is a remarkable feat, made more remarkable by the fact that syntactic flexibility can affect narrative structure, and in fact, is inextricably bound with the overall discourse structure of the narrative. Language flexibility, then, goes far beyond a simple elaboration or complexity of syntax and obviously is acquired long after the basic syntax of the language is learned. This study adds to the small store of information we have on language learning after the crucial early

years and clearly establishes that the acquisition of language in later years is related to the contextual demands of language. Language study can no longer be limited to simple syntactic studies but must include discourse and the context in which it is used and modified. I hope that this study aids the understanding of children's awareness of the context of language and their ability to control language in varying speech situations.

. . . and they lived happily ever after.

APPENDIX

SAMPLE NARRATIVES

APPENDIX

SAMPLE NARRATIVES

The following narratives, three from each grade level, are representative of the narratives told by the students in this study. I arbitrarily included punctuation and capitalization for making the reading easier. The punctuation that I included was based on the intonation patterns of the speakers. The inclusion of punctuation in no way affects T-Unit analysis because such analysis is based on clauses rather than on terminal punctuation.

Third Grade: Tammy, Informal

Cinderella was a girl and she was a slave and one night she wanted to go to a ball but she couldn't because she didn't have no clothes or nothing else so she couldn't go. And some mice and some more of her friends they made her a dress and she got to go. And she didn't have nothing to go in. And then she saw a fairy and she turned some pumpkins into a "coach" and she made some horses and slippers and she made all beautiful and she got to go. And at twelve o'clock she knew what time that she was supposed to be but she was too busy dancing with the prince and she wasn't paying attention to the clock. At twelve o'clock she ran out and she left her slipper there and everything turned back. Her clothes were all rags again. And then there was this man who went around to all of the houses to see if the slipper fitted anyone and he went to her house and her stepsisters--it wouldn't fit them. They tried to squeeze their foot in but it still wouldn't go in. And then he asked if there was anyone else in the house and they said, "Yes, there's only a slave." And he told them to bring her down and have her try on the slipper and it fit Cinderella and she was the princess.

Third Grade: Tammy, Formal

Once upon a time there was this girl who was a maid for her three stepsisters and her stepmother. And she lived with her. And one night there was going to be a ball and Cinderella wanted to go but she didn't have nothing to wear. She only had rags. Then she saw a fairy and she came and she turned some pumpkins into a couch and she changed some mice into horses and she gave Cinderella a beautiful dress. And after she done that then she told Cinderella she had to be back at twelve o'clock and Cinderella went to the ball happily and then when she was too busy dancing with the prince and then the clock struck twelve o'clock she had run out and she was on her way down the steps she turned into a rag. She left one of her shoes behind. Then the prince told this guy to go and find--to go in every house and see whose foot would fit into it. He went to every house. Nobody's foot fit into it until he came to Cinderella's house. And after he came to Cinderella's house he tried it on all the stepsisters and the stepmother. They tried to squeeze their foot in, but they couldn't put it in and then they asked if anyone else was in the house and he said no that there wasn't except the maid and he said to bring the maid down. And Cinderella came down and her foot fit the shoe just perfectly and she got married to the prince and lived happily ever after.

Third Grade: Lisa, Informal

Snow White lived with her mother and her mother didn't want her. And she fell asleep. And she told the hunter to take Snow White out to the woods and kill her to get her heart. The hunter didn't want to, so instead he killed a deer and got its heart. He brought it back to the queen and the queen said, "Ah, that's not Snow White's heart," and so she got mad and told the hunter to go out and really kill Snow White. And he couldn't find her because she was out in the woods and got lost. And so after she had got lost in the woods, she fell asleep, and when she got up in the morning and finally found her way through the woods, and then she found a cottage. And she knocked on the door and nobody was at home. So she opened the door and looked in, and there wasn't anybody home. Nobody said anything. So she went in and went upstairs. First she cleaned it up. Then she went upstairs and fell asleep on all the beds. And then she heard the door open and then came the seven dwarfs in the house and saw that somebody had been there, so they went upstairs and went to the bedroom and saw that Snow White was in their bed, so they ran downstairs and they were really scared and then they went back upstairs and Snow White was awake. So Snow White went downstairs and fixed them some breakfast and then she told them to wash their hands before breakfast or they couldn't eat, so they all went upstairs to wash their hands and face and then they ate. Then this old woman came to the seven dwarfs' door and gave Snow White a poisoned apple and she took a bite out of it and she fell to the floor. And then a prince came along and she was out in a casket,

and he opened it up and kissed her and she came awake and they lived happily ever after.

Third Grade: Lisa, Formal

Snow White went into her room and her mother called her. And she wanted for the hunter to take Snow White out into the woods to kill her to get her heart. Instead, he didn't want to kill her, so he killed a deer and got its heart. And when he went back to the castle he gave the heart to the queen and the queen said, "Oh, that's not Snow White's heart," and she told the hunter to go back out in the woods and really kill Snow White, and he couldn't so he killed something else and got its heart and took it back to the queen and it fooled the queen and she thought it was Snow White's heart. And then she got lost out in the woods and she was sad because she couldn't find her way back home. So then she fell asleep and in the morning she got up and started walking around and then she came to a cottage. And when she saw the cottage, she went into the cottage and said, "Is anyone home?" Nobody answered so she looked around and cleaned the cottage up, because it was really dirty. And then she went upstairs and cleaned it up and then she took all the dust downstairs and threw it outside. And then she ran back upstairs and fell asleep on all the dwarfs' beds. Then when the dwarfs got home, they found that somebody had cleaned it up, so they went upstairs with a flashlight and looked in all of the rooms. They couldn't find anyone, so they looked in the one room and found that Snow White was there. And then they woke up Snow White and she went downstairs and told them to go upstairs and go to sleep and she'd start cooking breakfast for in the morning. And the dwarfs said, "Okay," and then they went upstairs and fell asleep and then when

morning came their breakfast was already on the table and Snow White was sitting in the chair over in the corner. And when she sat down, first she told them to wash their hands and wash their face, and they said, "Oh, shoot," because they didn't want to wash their face and hands. And when they did they ate breakfast. Then they went back to take a little nap. And then they went back upstairs and went to sleep. And a lady came to the door and said to Snow White, "Would you like to buy an apple?" And Snow White said "Yes." And then she took an apple and she went inside and shined it up more and she took a bite out of it and it was a poisoned apple and then she fell to the floor. And then the dwarfs came back downstairs and saw that she was dead and they took her out to the casket. And then the prince came and kissed her and then she woke up and they lived happily ever after.

Third Grade: Connie, Informal

Once there was a queen who wanted a beautiful person like her. Finally one day she had a little kid and it was a girl and it was beautifuler than her. And then one day about fourteen or fifteen years old she asked one of her guards to go out into the woods and cut out her heart, and then the guard couldn't do it so he went and left her in the woods. And then the seven dwarfs find her and they take her in. And this queen asks, "Mirror, mirror on the wall, Who's the prettiest girl of all?" And it says "Snow White." And then she goes and finds where Snow White is and gives her this poisoned apple and then Snow White doesn't die because the dwarfs come back in time. And then she gives her a blanket and squeezes and then they come home and then the queen puts something in her and makes her go to sleep. And then the prince comes along and kisses her and then she wakes up and they get married.

Third Grade: Connie, Formal

Once upon a time there was a lady who wanted a little baby who was as beautiful as her. She had one one day and it was beautifuler than her and she was jealous so she told one of her soldiers to go out into the woods and cut her heart out. One of the soldiers couldn't do it, so he just left her in the woods. And the seven dwarfs came and took her to their house and then she was cooking for them and everything and made their beds and stuff. And one day the mother asked her mirror and said, "Mirror, mirror on the wall, Who's the prettiest girl of all?" And it said "Snow White." She said, "I thought Snow White was dead." So she went to the place where Snow White was staying and gave her a poisoned apple. Then the dwarfs came and saved her. Then she said, "Mirror, mirror on the wall, "Who's the prettiest girl of all?" And it said, "Snow White." And then she went over to their house again and she gave her a scarf and said, "Oh, let me tighten it for you." And she squeezed and strangled Snow White but Snow White returned from that. Then she made up as a little old lady and then they played dunk-the-apple game and then she said, "Let's ask Snow White to eat this one" and pushed it over for Snow White. And then Snow White fell down and fell in a deep sleep and a princess [sic] came and kissed her and woke her up and then they got married.

Sixth Grade: Charlie May, Informal

Cinderella and her stepsisters they were going to this ball and she asked them could she go and she said, "No, you look too funny," and so she started crying. And then her fairy godmother came and told her not to cry. She had this magic wand stick and she made her a ? and a dress and everything and some glass slippers and she turned a pumpkin into a coach and there were three mice and she turned them into some horses and then they went to the ball and she told her to be back at twelve o'clock sharp. If she wouldn't come back at twelve o'clock the coach would change back, and so she went there and her stepsisters was wondering who was she so she started dancing with the princess [sic] and so he told his mother and his father than he had found a girl and when twelve o'clock came she had to go so she ran down the stairs and she lost one of her slippers and so he found it and he told a man to go look for it and so he went to everybody's house to try on the glass slipper and he went to Cinderella's house and they had her locked up in this room and they was trying on this slipper and one of their foot was too big and the other one was too small and one knee was cracked and stuff like that and he heard her cough and he opened the door and she came out and he tried on this slipper and she turned into this pretty girl.

Sixth Grade: Charlie May, Formal

Once upon a time there was three stepsisters with Cinderella and they were going to the ball and then they all announced, "Let's go to the ball, let's go to the ball," and Cinderella was talking about how she wanted to go to the ball. So they said, "You funny thing." And she said, "I'm not funny-looking." And they started laughing at her, and they said, "Come here and help me zip up this dress. Come, here, come help me do this. Wash them floors. You're going to stay here and do the chores." And so then they left and she started going over there by the fireplace, and she started crying, and then her fairy godmother came and said, "Don't cry. I'll fix you up." And so she changed her into a pretty girl and there was three white mouse and she changed them into white horses and a pumpkin she changed that into a coach. And she told her she got to be back at twelve o'clock sharp and so she went to the ball. She was running up the stairs and she was dancing with him and her stepsisters were wondering who was that pretty girl who was dancing in there. When twelve o'clock came she had to go so she ran down the stairs and her glass slipper came off. And the prince said, "I want that girl. That girl is for me." And so he went to go get a man that helped him to look for and so they went to people houses trying on the glass slipper. And they had locked Cinderella in this closet and when he was in this house she sneezed and they was trying on the shoe and one of the stepsisters foot was too big and the other one was too small and the other one was too big too. And so the prince unlocked the door for Cinderella and she came out and when she

fitted the glass slipper on she changed back into a (?) And then he said, "This is the one," and they left.

Sixth Grade: Carol, Informal

A long, long time ago a queen had a baby and named it Snow White. And then that queen died and the king married another queen and this queen was wicked and everything. And every morning the wicked queen would go to her mirror and ask who was the fairest of all. And the mirror would say, "You are the fairest of all," and all this. And then one day he said, "You are no longer the fairest of all. Snow White is." And so she got upset and wanted Snow White put away, so she called her huntsman, and her huntsman took her away and took her into the woods but she was so beautiful that the huntsman didn't want to kill her, so he just left her in the forest and then he went back to the queen and told her that he had killed her. And then the next morning the queen again asked the mirror who was the fairest of all, and the mirror said that Snow White was still the fairest of all because the huntsman hadn't killed her. But then she goes to this house and she walks in and she sees seven little beds, seven little everythings, and then she's sleepy after being in the woods, so then she lays down for a rest. And then the dwarfs come in and see her laying there and they wonder who she is, and then finally she wakes up and she tells them everything that happened. So they say she can live with them as long as she cleans the house and stuff, so then the wicked stepmother finds all this out. And then she dresses up as an old lady and takes a poisoned apple to Snow White's house while the dwarfs are gone off to work, and they work in the mines. And so she says she can't let her in because the dwarfs said that she couldn't let anybody into their house or

anything, so the old lady says, "Well, I'll give you an apple," and she cuts it in half and gives it to Snow White, and Show White eats the apple and falls flat on the floor and then when the seven dwarfs come back they think that she's dead, but she's only asleep and so they put her on this bed thing outdoors and they just leave her out there for awhile and they're crying and everything, and finally this prince comes along and really thinks she's gorgeous and all this stuff and decides to kiss her and he kisses her and she wakes up and they live happily ever and they ride off on his white pony.

Sixth Grade: Carol, Formal

Once upon a time there was a queen and she was sitting at her window sewing one day and she chanced to prick herself and a few drops of blood fell onto the snow, and she said that her child's hair would be as dark as the window pane, and her lips should be as red as blood, and she would call her Snow White. And so then she had this child, and then she died. And then the king married another lady, and this lady was kind of a witch, and every morning she'd go to her mirror and say, "Mirror, mirror on the wall, "Who's the fairest of them all?" And so one morning she said this, and the mirror, instead of saying, "You are the fairest of all," the mirror said, "Snow White is the fairest of all." And so the queen wanted to know who Snow White was and everything, and so she called the huntsman, and the huntsman told her who it was, and she said, "Okay. Take Snow White into the woods and kill her." So the huntsman took Snow White into the woods and she was so beautiful that he couldn't kill her, so he just left her there in the woods. And finally she went into this house, and when she walked in, it had a table with seven little chairs and seven little plates and seven little cups, and then she went upstairs and there were seven little beds with names on them, and then she was so sleepy that she decided to go to sleep. So she laid down on one of the beds. It just so happened to be Sneezy's. And so then when the seven dwarfs came home, they ate and they went up to put on their pajames and go to bed, and they went upstairs and they found Snow White there. And they woke her up and she said that she was scared and everything, and they said, "Well,

we won't hurt you," and all this stuff. So then she told them about the wicked queen and all this stuff, and then they said that she could live there if Snow White did all of their cleaning and everything and did all of the housework and stuff, and so she said "Okay," and then they all went to sleep. Then the next morning the queen went to her mirror and said, "Mirror, mirror on the wall, Who's the fairest of them all?" And the mirror said, "Snow White is still the fairest of them all." And so she got really mad and so then she went to the dungeon and she started making a potion and stuff. Meanwhile back at the seven dwarfs' house Snow White was packing their lunches and everything and sent them off, and they were all leaving out the door, and before she left out the door, they said, "Don't let anyone in and close the door and lock it up tight and everything," and she said, "Okay," and so then they left. And then back at the castle the queen had made herself look like an old lady and then she made a poisoned apple, and then she set out for the forest and she found the house of the seven dwarfs, and she knocked at the door and everything. Snow White just looked out of a little window upstairs and said, "I'm sorry I can't let you in." And the queen said, "Well, just take half of my apple anyway," so she cut off half of it and gave it to Snow White. Snow White took a bite and fell dead to the floor. At least everybody thought she was dead, but she was really supposed to be asleep. Then the witch left, and then the dwarfs came back and they find her on the floor and so then they pick her up and they take her outdoors and they put her on this little bed, and then they're all crying and everything and then this prince

happens along--a real durky prince, you know--he gets lost in this woods. He doesn't know where he's going, really weird, but he was very handsome, but the dumb, cute type. He saw the princess and he said, "Well, I guess I'll kiss her, anyway she's so beautiful," and all this stuff. So he knelt down and kissed her and then she woke up and then they ride off on their pony and they lived happily ever after.

Sixth Grade: Laura, Informal

Once upon a time there was this man and his daughter and then his wife died and he got married again to this old lady that had two daughters. And then he died, and this lady and her daughters was real mean to her. And then one day the prince came and said that there was going to be a ball and everyone was invited. And they were going to go, and Cinderella said she wanted to go, but they wouldn't let her. And then they went to the ball, and she was crying because she wanted to go and her fairy godmother came and let her go and she said that she had to be back by twelve o'clock because she would be ugly again. And so she got to go to the ball and she danced with the prince. And she lost her glass shoe when she was running and he wanted to marry her so his messengers went to look for the girl who the shoe would fit. And then they found her and then they got married.

Sixth Grade: Laura, Formal

Once upon a time there was a rich father, and he had a daughter named Cinderella. And when his wife died, he got married to this old lady that had two daughters. And then when he died, they all lived in the castle. Well, they always made her sleep in the attic and stuff and they made her do all the work. And then one night the prince came, and he said that everybody could go to the ball, and she wanted to go, but they wouldn't let her because she had work to do, and she didn't have any good clothes. So she couldn't go. And then that night she started to cry because she couldn't go to the ball. The prince said who he likes he's going to marry. And so she wanted to go even more. So they were at the ball. And her fairy godmother came and she told her that she could go, and she made her pretty and everything. And then she was at the ball, and he left everybody to dance with her. And then that night at the stroke of midnight she started to leave, and she was running down the steps, and she lost her shoe. And then he said he wanted to marry her, and so they went out searching for the girl who the shoe fit, and they found her, and that was the end.

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