THE EFFECT OF GRADE LEVEL ON CHILDREN'S CONCEPT OF STORY STRUCTURE IN STORY COMPLETION AND RETELLING TASKS

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A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T S

For my father Brownie, my mother Kitty, and my husband Glen. Thank you for your love.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

One area in the study of comprehension is the children's use of story grammars or story schemata and the effort of knowledge of these grammars on comprehension performance. It has been suggested that a person's knowledge of story structure facilitates comprehension (Sebasta, Calder, and Cleland, 1982). It is also posited that this knowledge not only plays a major role in retrieving or remembering information, but is also useful in encoding information. (Clewell and Haidemos, 1983). Story schemata are actually a person's expectations about a story which serve as a guide for organizing story information. This could be compared somewhat to structurally empty slots that one fills in as she or he listens or reads. (Shadow, 1982). A story grammar is an attempt to describe or define the components and structure of a story.

Research in the field has focused primarily on determining whether children do in fact use some sort of story grammar to understand and comprehend material. The study presented here attempts to expand on this question as well as tries to ascertain if grade level is a factor in children's aquisition and use of story structure.

There are two main theories in the area of story grammar which try to explain how children attempt to use these strategies when comprehending. One is the viewpoint which suggests that comprehension by using a story grammar is basically a problem solving approach. In this situation, the reader interacts with the text to provide a basis for comprehension. The students tend

to use all or parts of stored knowledge which they have accumulated both from home and school. In this theory, when the child is confronted with material, be it known or unknown, she or he immediately pulls information from his storage of related background knowledge and/or experiences and use these to help him or her understand the material. Thus the interaction between the reader and the text.

The second theory dealing with using story grammars to comprehend material is one which define story grammars as text-based structures, as a series of elements which make up a story. Many researchers ascribe to this belief, including Gordon and Braun (1983) from whom the elements in this paper were chosen. The nine components they identify which lay out the structure of a story are: setting, location, time, initiating event, internal response, attempt, outcome, reaction and resolution.

The stories which were used in this study did indeed fit this rigid structure. All of the stories, with the exception of the one re-telling story, are single episode stories which contain the identified structures. In these cases a protagonist in introduced in the setting, there follows an episode in which something happens causing the protagonist to respond to it, which in turn brings about some event or state of affairs that ends the episode.

At the present time it is not clear whether children do use a story grammar to help them comprehend material, and if a grammar is being used, whether this useage increases in its complexity as the child matures. It is supposed that this is in fact the case and because of this children may be better comprehenders as they progress through the early years of school.

Significance of the Study

Although there is a fair amount of research about this general concept of what stories are, and whether children use some system to comprehend what they read, there appears to be a gap in the area surrounding prediction. There have been studies done which involved a re-telling aspect, but not many where children of different grade levels were asked to predict the next consecutive element in a story. It would appear that any additional insights in an area where little research has been done should prove to be of some benefit. The purpose then of this paper is to address the questions regarding re-telling and predicting. This was accomplished by assessing fifteen children's performance, five each from grade one, two and three on both a story element prediction task and a story re-telling task. It was postulated that as children become older, they will be better able to correctly predict and re-tell the elements of a story, and that all children will possess some basic knowledge of story structure.

Increased knowledge in this area would benefit teacher's in understanding the importance of the use of story grammar and how children use this grammar to predict elements of stories and to re-tell them.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of the present study was to investigate children's knowledge of story grammar and how they employ this knowledge to understand stories. Since it would appear that having access to a story grammar facilitates comprehension, the next stop is to access what elements of story structure children possess and whether they employ them in re-telling or predicting stories.

In the present study children were asked to predict "what comes next" in several stories which were interrupted at different points. Additionally, the children were assessed as to their re-telling performance after hearing a multi-episodic story. On both of these tasks, the children were scored on how closely they followed the components of a story identified by Gordon and Braun (1983).

Following from the stated purposes of this study, the following research questions were generated:

1. How many elements immediately following an interrupted story, do children ages six to nine, predict correctly from a story grammar?

2. How many story grammar elements will children ages six to nine, mention in a re-telling task, after hearing a complete multi-episodic story?

3. What is the effect of age/grade level on children's ability to perform on a story element prediction task?

4. What is the effect of age/grade level on the number of story grammar elements childrenwill mention in a story re-telling task?

5. Are some elements predicted significantly more often than others in a prediction task?

6. Are some elements remembered and mentioned significantly more often than others in a re-telling task?

Limitations

A number of factors that might limit the generalizability of this study will be discussed at this time. As far as possible these factors were controlled.

The first limitation deals with the subject selection procedure. The criteria set for selection was that of an average student. For this study, average was defined as a child who was working at, or nearly at, grade level. The problem incurred here was that there were no recent test scores upon which to base the selection. The children, therefore, were selected by teacher nomination. This method, although felt to be acceptable for this study, is perhaps less preferable to selection made on the basis of standardized test scores. Because of this, the results of the study could only be generalizable to children perceived as working at grade level by their teacher.

The second limitation is the size of the available groups for selection. The school used in this study contains only two classes for first grade, and one each for second grade and third grade. Therefore when the teachers involved selected their "average" children, the available pool from which to draw subjects was small. There was only a pool of ten first grade students, and seven each for the second and third grade groups. However the five children needed at each grade level was chosen randomly from among those available.

The third factor which could not be standardized was the familiarity with the examiner. Since the examiner in this case was also a classroom teacher at the school, two groups were more familiar with the examiner than the third. The first grade children in this

situation was less familiar with the examiner than either the second or third grade children. This could have had some effect on the results.

The final consideration was one of group size. There were only five children in each of the three groups. This is a small number for groups and any results would need to be generalized cautiously. It was felt, however, that these numbers were acceptable in light of the depth of testing and interactive nature of the dependent measures.

Definition of Terms

The following terms will be used throughout this paper and will be used as they are described below:

1. Metacognition - An individual's personal awareness of the cognitive processes or strategies used in learning.
2. Discourse - Any kind of speech or writing which a child may encounter.
3. Educational Experiences - Grade level in school at the time of testing.
4. Story Grammar Elements - separate items which when put together constitute a story. The elements which were considered in this study were those proposed by Gordon and Braun (1983).
    - (A) Story - Written material which contains a theme and a plot.
    - (B) Plot - An episode or a series of episodes
    - (C) Episode - Special kinds of events which involve the reactions of animate objects to events in the world. The episode consists merely of the occurrence of some event followed by the reaction of the protagonist. A complete episode contains a setting and a series of events.

(D) Setting - Description of the time, place and the central character of a story.

(E) Events - Include:

(i) - An Initiating event that sets a goal or a problem.

(ii) - Attempts to achieve the goal or solve the problem, which usually consist of two parts, the development of a plan, and the application of that plan.

(iii) - Reaction of the characters to the events. This reaction consists of two parts; an internal and an external response.

(iv) - Outcome, attainment, or resolution of the problem.

5. Schema - All experiences and knowledge a person has accumulated and stored in the recesses of the brain to be used at any time. For this paper we are mainly concerned with how children use these experiences to help them comprehend material they have heard.

Summary

The purpose of the present study was to answer questions about how well children were able to predict story elements, and how well, once they had heard a story, they were able to re-tell the story elements of that same story.

In order to answer the questions, a randomly selected group of five first grade children, five second grade children and five third grade children were tested on two different tasks. They were first tested using a story element prediction task, and secondly, a story element re-telling task. The prediction task involved nine stories which were interrupted: each story was interrupted at a different point to correspond to the nine points in the Gordon and Braun story grammar (1983). At these interrupted points the children were asked to tell what they thought would come next in the story.

In the element re-telling task, the children heard a multi-episodic story and then were asked to re-tell as much of the story as possible. In both of these tasks, points were awarded each time the child correctly followed the grammar designed by Gordon and Braun (1983). Student performance on the tasks were recorded and analyzed in an attempt to asess children's knowledge and use of story grammars in comprehension. From the data and analysis, conclusions regarding the six research questions were drawn.

The remainder of thestudy is organized in this manner: Chapter II presents a review of the related research: Chapter III describes the design and procedures followed in the study: Chapter IV presents and discusses the results of the analysis of the data: Chapter V contains the summary, final conclusions, and implications of the investigation, especially as it pertains to classroom usage.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine children's knowledge and ability in comprehending orally presented stories. This was explored by examining children's responses to a prediction task and a story re-telling task. This chapter will present a survey of research related to the area of the elements of story grammars and children's knowledge of these. The first section will deal with the many varying definitions of story grammar found in the literature. It will also attempt to briefly define what a story grammar is, and the components that are included in story grammars. The second section will deal with the importance of story grammars in a classroom setting. Section three directly follows this by describing the use of story grammars. The final section details some results which have been obtained from studies similar to this one, and develops a rationale for the present study.

Theoretical Basis of Story Grammar

Although it may appear that there is a singular and similar base of knowledge which surrounds the area of story grammars, there are in fact two separate groups of researchers which follow two viewpoints. These will be discussed separately in the following section.

The first approach to the area of story grammar is one which is supported by McConaughy (1980), Tierney and Mosenthal (1980) and Bartlett (1932). This view suggests that comprehension in story grammar is basically a problem-solving approach. In this situation

the reader interacts with the text to provide a basis for comprehension. The students would be using all or parts of the stored knowledge they acquired during their experiences both at home and at school. In this theory, when the child is confronted with material, be it known or unknown, she or he immediately will pull information from his storage of related background knowledge and/or experience and use these to help him or her to understand the material. Thus the interaction between the reader and the text.

McConaughy (1980) defines the grammar of a story as a series of problem solving episodes which centers on the main character's efforts to achieve a main goal. The reader interacts with his knowledge and the printed material to comprehend the story. She goes on to state that a grammar defines components of text structure along lines which reflect goal-oriented real-life event sequences. She states the grammar should include catagories for internal responses of characters which lead to outcomes. McConaughy also feels that there are different types of story schematas used by adults and those used by children. She states the schematas vary in both the components of story information they include and the way in which this information is organized.

Tierney and Mosenthal (1982) stress the internal state of the reader as being of importance in their definition of story grammar. They feel story grammars exist as an approximation of a reader's internalized grammar for a single protagonist narrative. This internalized story structure which they say is within all people tends to foster comprehension when a reader encounters print.

Generally they feel these catagories are hierarchical and include equivalents of setting, event structures, episodes, an initiating event for the episode, a reaction to the initiating event, internal and external response components to the reaction, attempt and consequent components, and a final resolution.

One of Bartlett's (1932) major contributions in the theory of memory was his concept of a mental schema or structure which he felt influenced story comprehension. He emphasized especially the reciprocal interaction which occurs between new incoming information and existing mental structures by stating that incoming information is actively integrated into a subjects existing mental structure but, at the same time, new information modifies the organization of pre-existing structures.

This concludes the initial theories of an interactive model which is used to describe story grammars. The second approach is one whichdefines story grammar as a text-based structure, and many times as a series of elements. Several researchers in the area of story grammar ascribe to this belief, and these shall be discussed in more detail below.

Marshall (1983) defined story grammar as a description of typical elements found frequently in stories. She felt that adults used these elements to recall stories and that they tended to use them hierarchically when summarizing. She also stated that children as young as five are aware of the basic story organization and use it as the basis for comprehending stories they hear and when creating stories of their own. Central to this is the assumption that comprehension is organized and that the closer the reader's organization is to that of the text, the greater

comprehension is likely to be. Because of this, elementary school children have been taught to use story grammar to help them understand what they read.

Another definition which was given by Whaley (1981) stated that story grammars represent a kind of "average" of all possible story structures. She also felt that not all catagories are present in all stories. Most stories appear to have most elements but there are elements such as internal reaction, which in many cases are implicit and not explicitly stated in the print.

Sadow (1982) viewed story grammar as a set of components or elements in a story. She stated it was the kind of events, actions, and information that make up what we call a story, and it describes the relationships among those elements. In other words, what one may recognize as a story is more than a simple series of events. It is a series of related events: one thing leads to another and events are related to each other in specified ways. She cited research which has shown that what people remember best when they recall a story tends to conform to the description of stories consisting of elements. Just as traditional sentence grammar represents our intuitive knowledge of language structure, a story grammar seems to reflect what is known about stories.

Morrow (1982) has also addressed the concept of story structure and the role it plays in comprehension. Story structure focuses on the basic unit of a story, that is, the plot action. Features of plots are studied in terms of the separate acts that occur, the sequence of acts, and their relationship to each other.

Stien and Glenn (1979) also worked in this area andmade some assumptions relating to the topic. They assumed that story

material has some kind of internal structure much like sentences. They also assumed that stories can be described in terms of a hierarchical network of catagories andthe logical relations that exist between these catagories. It was further assumed that this network corresponds in some way to the way story information is organized. This network defines a logical order assumed to exist among catagories. The catagories are types of information which recur in most folktales or fables. The inter-catagory relations specify the degree to which a catagory influences or logically preceeds the occurrence of a subset catagory. The grammar presents the rules which define the catagory structures and the intercatagory relations occurring in a simple story.

The analysis of discourse as proposed by Thorndyke (1977) focuses on the more abstract level of structure. The emphasis here is on identifying the underlying structural elements common to a class of narrative discourses. These elements and their rules of combination constitute a framework or schema that describes the organization of numerous texts. Such general structures are used during the comprehension and recall of narratives as a techique for improving memory for the text. The underlying assumption is that insofar as people are able to identify a particular story as an example of a general, previously-learned organizational framework, they use that framework to comprehend and encode the information in a particular text. He was concerned about how common features of narrative text organization influenced recall of entire propositions and sets of propositions. His formulation of a story grammar presumes, at a certain level of abstraction, a

stereotype in the structure of and relationships between the elements of a narrative discourse.

Rummelhart (1975) also felt that story grammar was a set of rules that describe how a story can be broken down into units and how these units are related to one another. The organizational principles formalized in his grammar correspond to the organizational strategies used by subjects in comprehending stories. The primary unit of analysis is defined as an informational mode or catagory. Each catagory refers to specific type of information which serves different functions within the story structure. He defines several different catagories existing in a story structure, the information in any catagory containing one or several propositions. The number of propositions occurring is not the critical variable defining catagory membership. At times information in an entire sentence may be classified into one or two different catagories, depending upon the functional role of each portion of the sentence. The catagories can be described in terms of a hierarchical network in which a logical sequence is created among the catagories and specific relations determine the degree of causality existing between any two catagories. Each of the catagories can be described in terms of higher order catagories and that the hierarchy is basically a binary network.

The last researcher, or in this case, group of researchers is Gordon and Braun (1983). They are being dealt with last because theirs was the grammar chosen to be used in this study.

Gordon and Braun define story grammar as sets of rules that spell out how stories are typically organized. These rules specify story component parts, the types of information that occur at

various locations, and the relationships among the parts. They are usually successive and usually consistant throughout most stories, and if catagories are omitted in a story, the knowledge of a story schema may cue children to infer content under the omitted story catagories. They feel knowledge of the components in a well-organized story may enhance comprehension and recall. The nine components of this grammar are the nine components chosen for this study: setting, location, time, initiating event, internal response, attempt, outcome, reaction, and resolution.

These items were chosen to be used in this study along with the theory behind them. It was felt that the theory of story grammar as a set of rules which spell out how stories are typically organized was a stronger argument than the interactive model. Once it had been deciced which theory to accept the components were drawn from the Gordon and Braun research because of thheir completeness and simplicity, since the study would be done with children eight years and under. A more complete definition of these elements can be found in Chapter One.

Importance of Story Schema and Related Research

Research has been undertaken to determine if and how children use story grammars and if knowing or using this grammar is of any benefit in aiding comprehension. Although all the studies have been done with different subjects in different situations, almost all results point in a similar direction: teaching and using story grammar seem to be an asset and will help children better understand the stories they read and hear. The research has been completed in two areas: predicting and re-telling; however, the research in the area of prediction is rather limited. Generally the prediction tasks consist of the children hearing or reading incomplete stories and having them tell or write the missing parts or what comes next. The re-telling tasks usually have children hearing or reading a story and then re-telling as much of the story as possible.

Importance of Story Schema

Several researchers have, without direct experimentation, attempted to define and explain the importance and usage of story schema.

Beginning with young children in general, Goodman and Burke (1980) made some general statements regarding story structures. They stated that by listening to stories, young children become familiar with certain story landmarks: beginnings, plot sequences that build nicely to a climax and resolutions, themes and endings. Such landmarks are comfortable and helpful. They allow the children to settle in quickly from author to author and are helpful

because they allow readers to predict the course of the story and to monitor their own reading.

In response to adults reading to children or telling them stories, children begin to develop a sense of story as an on-going schema that becomes more familar and more useful the more it is called upon. The stories that young children hear provide them with general frames of reference for more conceptually difficult stories. As readers get orlder, they begin to encounter written information in a variety of formats. This is especially the point at which their understanding of story grammar can be useful and helpful.

Sadow (1982) has observed the advantages story grammars seem to have in the area of organizational skills, especially in reference to the important information from the stories readers would not want to miss. Her research indicates that a generalized framework or schema guides the relationship, selection, and organization of important details in one's mind. She also states story grammars suggest the nature of that framework and especially offers a design for questions that would implicitly convey this framework to the children. She suggests that using the questions based on story grammar will elicit both literal and inferential levels of thought. In addition they will- and this is their special virtue - highlight the information, whether explicit or implicit, that makes a story coherrent and in turn helps children understand the sense of a story.

McConaughy (1982) argues that there are different types of story schemata used by children and adults. The schemata vary in both the componants of story information they include and the way in which this information is organized. It may not be the case

that children simply have limited memories than adults, but also that children organize the deep structure of a story in a qualitatively different way from the adult organization; there may also be a gap between a teacher's schema for a story and the schema his/her students are using. Even preschool children have a "sense of story" om that it must at least have a geginning and ending. This cognitive schema sets up expectations for what is coming next during encoding and operates in construction of story information during recall. She states that some elements of the story will be recalled more easily than others because they are more important for deriving meaning.

Whaley (1981) describes the importance of story grammar in a similar, yet different manner. She states that a schema might serve to allocate attention to various aspects of the story. Similarly, she states, it may aid in recall by providing a temporal sequence for the story parts and by permitting the reader or listener to make inferences in formation when text content is forgotten or not given. Thus a schema might guide individuals to look for important aspects of a story, to know when a portion of the story is complete, and to anticipate certain types of information. It also appears that the children and adults have a concept of what constitues a story, and this concept develops more fully over time. Since children to appear to have this sense of structure, it seems to make sense to include this type of instruction in a language arts program. Whaley feels that one way to advance children's reading comprehension is to enhance the development of their knowledge of story componants. This is especially helpful if it works on transfering the knowledge to new or more difficult tasks such as reading unfamiliar selections

or writing their own stories. She states that not only do children use story grammars, but they use them in three different ways: firstly as a set of expectations for the structure of stories; secondly to facilitate comprehension; and thirdly to improve memory of the text.

The development of story grammar has helped us consider and analyze units of text that are larger than words and sentences. That is in itself a significant contribution of the research. Story grammar research may also contribute to classroom practice, as in adapting research tasks to instruction.

Re-Telling

Much research has been done in the area of re-telling with different age groups. Most of the tasks, however, have been similar. In almost all cases, subjects have heard or read a passage, and after various periods of time have been asked to re-tell as much of the story as they could. These were then scored and conclusions were drawn. This section will try to describe some of the more prominant studies in this area.

In 1972 Mandler and Johnson reported a study with twenty-one first-grade children, twenty-one fourth-grade children, and twenty-one university students, to try to gain an understanding of the structure of stories that each group used in comprehension. The subjects were tested on recall of two similar stories they heard. After the first story they spent ten minutes on an unrelated visual task. They were then asked to recall as much as they could. In the second task, the subjects heard the story and then given the

recall task twenty four hours later. Mandler and Johnson found that the fourth-graders recalled more than the first-graders. The The grade one children recalled settings, beginnings, and outcomes better than other catagories and that attempts, endings, and reactions were poorly recalled: The grade four group showed similar results although there was no longer a significance between recall of attempts and outcomes. They found that even young students are sensitive to the structure of stories and have schemata which organize retreival in a fashion similar to adults. They felt that the main difference between the groups seemed to be the greater weight placed on outcomes rather than on attempts and in the almost complete loss of both internal and external reactions.

Thorndyke (1977) did a study with sixty-four undergraduates of Stanford University. His purpose was to examine the effects of structure and content variables on memory and comprehension of prose passages. The subjects involved heard or saw two passages and then were asked to write down as much of the story as they could. His results suggested that both structure and content play an important role in memory for connected discourse. As the amount of identifiable structure in the passage decreased, there was a corresponding decrease in comprehension and recall.

Meyer (1977) has reported a series of three studies designed to try and find: (I) the structure or organization of the content of a passage: (2) the serial positions of the ideas in a passage: (3) the relative importance raters assigned to all the ideas in a passage.

In her first study, Meyer used three groups of twenty-three Cornell University undergraduates. They all listened to two, five hundred word passages. One group simply heard the passage and was

then asked for a free recall. The second group heard the story twice and then were asked to recall it. The third group heard the story three times before they were asked to recall it. The ideas from the story were split into three area; high, medium, and low based on their level of importance in the structure of the passage. She found that the recall at all levels increased with more exposure to the stories and that the subjects' recall of groups of units related to one another in that information that was high in structure was also high in recall, and that information low in structure was low in recall.

In the second experiment, she used two groups of twenty-one students from Cornell with six passages which were carefully produced so the high and low content structure were controlled. The subjects in each group read and recalled three passages which were mixed for high and low content. There were two sessions. In the first session the subjects read the passage and were immediately asked for recall. In the second session they were tested one week later, and then given cue words and asked to recall the passage. She found that the recall was higher when the content was hierarchially higher and that it was remembered longer as well.

In her third study, she used three groups of grade six students who listened to a six-hundred-fourty-one word tape, and then were given thirty questions which were read and answered on paper. Here again she found that all groups remembered more information high in content structure. In conclusion she suggested that those preparing materials should be careful to place important material high in content structure of the instructional text to ensure retention by the students.

Stein and Glenn (1979) reported on the structure of stories representative of those found in children's literature. They used twenty-four first and fifth graders from St. Louis, Missouri. There were four stories used with all of the statements in the story put into story grammar catagories. The children heard the stories, did some oral counting tasks, and then were asked to recall the story. They were then brought back one week later for another chance to recall the story. They found that the fifth graders included more of each type of information than did the first graders. The older children stated more information concerning the intentions and motives of the characters. They felt, however, that even the children as young as six were capable of organizing and temporally sequencing story information in simply constructed narratives. More information was remembered in the immediate recall task than in the delayed recall task. The most frequent catagories were the major settings, consequences, and initiating events. The least frequent catagories remembered were attempts, reactions, minor settings, and internal responses.

Tierney, Bridge, and Cera (1979) attempted to define for a non-narrative text the discourse operations of children. They used good and poor readers from the third grade in two elementary schools in Arizona. After the children had a short interview with the researcher, they were given a passage to read as well as a buffer passage which had nothing to do with the actual recall task. They were then asked to recall everything they could from the first passage. They found that the amount of explicit information recalled was greater than the amount of inferred information generated. The good readers rendered significantly more inferred information than the

poor readers, on the other hand, tended to substitute more general concepts for the specific terms used in the passage.

Phifer, McNickle, Ronning, and Glover (1983) studied the effect that details have on readers, recall of major ideas in text. In their first study they used a thirty-two paragraph story in which eight paragraphs were correct, eight had one supporting sentence left out. Seventeen undergraduates were given twelve minutes to read the passage, and then fifteen minutes to write all they could remember about it. In the final analysis, the subjects recalled significantly more idea units from major idea sentences supported by two or three details than those not supported by details.

Their second study was similar. Fourty-eight undergraduates were asked to read a five thousand word chapter in which one half of the major ideas were not supported by details. The subjects had thirty minutes to read the chapter and then twenty minutes to write as much of the story as they could. They found that significatly more major idea units supported by details in the text were recalled than the major units not supported by details.

It appears from this research that the use of story grammar does have an effect on a child's comprehension of story material. It also appears that material is remembered better immediately after hearing it and that as time increases recall decreases. As well, it appears that stories are made up of elements and that certain elements are easier for children to remember and other elements are more difficult to remember.

Predicting

Very little research has been done using prediction and story grammar together. It appears to be a new field which is waiting to

be explored. Whaley (1983) is the one notable exception. She reported a study with fifty third graders, fifty-one sixth graders, and fifty-two eleventh graders. The investigation probed the extent to which good readers in each of these three grades expect certain structures in stories and studied the nature of their expectations. It also examined age related similarities and differences in structural expectations. She hypothesized that if subjects expected certain structures, then certain responses would occur in the recall protocols. She used six stories which were divided into statements and these into story catagories. The subjects silently read three stories predicting what could or would come next in incomplete stories. They then silently read the other three stories and supplied information for a missing part of the story. The subjects have their predictions to the researcher aloud. Her results indicated that individuals use schemata when called upon to understand and remember material. Complimentary analysis also provided evidence that readers did expect particular structures in stories. She found that individual responses could be accounted for by the notion that readers expect particular structural elements and sequences of elements in simple stories. There were also age related differences in the extent to which good readers employed a set of expectations for reading stories. Third grade students tended to expect particular structures less frequently than did sixth and eleventh graders. Students at each grade level appeared to use minor schemata.

Instruction

It appears from the previous sections that the use of story grammars facilitates comprehension with students. This section will

deal with the more specific means by which story grammar instruction may be used in the classroom. Several researchers have made some suggestions regarding the use of knowledge about story schemata in classroom instruction. This is as well, a growing area and one which will probably be seen more frequently in the future.

Marshall (1983) suggested that using story grammars could make an excellent basis for evaluating student comprehension. The elements of story grammar could be used to form comprehension questions and as a means of evaluating the adequacy of student re-telling. She stated that using re-telling in a classroom could prove to be helpful because children would then have to organize the information they think is important, and then the teacher could evaluate the completeness of the recall. A re-telling performance checklist could assess student's reading, emphasizing comprehension as an integrated process rather than as isolated skills.

As well, Gordon and Braun (1983) made some suggestions for instructions. They firstly felt that it is the componants in a well organized story which are important and that these will emhance comprehension and recall through inference. They feel that instruction would be helpful if it occurs over an extended period of time, especially when transfering the knowledge to new or more difficult tasks, such as reading unfamiliar selections or writing their own stories. Also as an add benefit, it appears that knowledge of a story schema may help children cue into or infer this knowledge.

Fitzgerald and Speigel (1983) worked with twenty average and below average fourth grade readers who had been identified as being lacking in a keen sense of narrative structure. The children were

randomly assigned to one of two treatments: special instruction designed to develop knowledge of story structure, or instruction in dictionary usage and word study. There were also two phases of instruction, a short-term intensive phase, and a long-term intermittent phase. Upon completion of the study, the results were very positive for the story structure treatment.

In the study, when compared to a control treatment, direct instruction is schematic aspects of narratives did enhance story structure knowledge of fourth graders who were average and below average readers. Importantly, the story structure instruction also had a strong positive effect on reading comprehension. Furthermore, the effects were realized very quickly, during the first phase of teaching.

The positive effects of story structure instruction and knowledge of narrative charecteristics were manifested in many ways: firstly overall knowledge of story structure as measured by the production and scrambled story tasks taken together, and the production catagory score taken alone,: secondly, the ability to gather and integrate information when specific content was forgotton, as measured by the incidence of distortions and additionsin the scrambled story recall,: thirdly, awareness of specific catagory adjencies as shown by analysis of adjacent catagories in the production task,: lastly, the accuracy of recall in the scrambled story recall.

The finding of this important study strongly suggest that direct instruction in schematic aspects of narratives is useful for developing children's knowledge of structures and charecteristics of narratives. It also appears to be a powerful form of classroom instruction in reading comprehension.

Summary and Conclusions

Researchers have attempted to come to some conclusions about and regarding the issue of story grammar and its effect on comprehension. It appears from the majority of the work done that the knowledge of story grammar is an important aspect of comprehension and that increased ability in story grammar can lead to increased comprehension.

This review of related literature, however also pointed to several areas which require further investigation. Although studies have been done with children, few have dealt with young children, and even fewer have dealt with children in a grade by grade developmental sequence. As well, few of the studies used the oral testing mode, in preference to other modes of testing. Many pieces of research have been done in the area of re-telling but again, little has been done in the prediction area. Since these areas appeared to have little research surrounding them, it was deemed desireable to incorporate them into a study that could, upon its completion, add material and data to the existing body of knowledge on story grammar. Thus a developmental study was planned employing young children (grades one, two and three) in an oral prediction task as well as a more common re-telling task in listening.

CHAPTER III

DESIGN AND PROCEDURES

The purpose of the present study was to explore the nature and development of children's ability to use and understand a story grammar in different comprehemsion tasks. The study was designed to collect data in two areas: (1) When confronted with nine incomplete stories, how well will the child be able to predict the next event in the story; (2) After hearing the complete, multi-episodic story, how well will the child be able to re-tell the complete story. Data was collected and analyzed to try and answer the following research questions:

1. How many elements immediately following an interrupted story, do children ages six to nine, predict correctly from a story grammar?
2. How many story grammar elements will children ages six to nine, mention in a re-telling task, after hearing a complete multi-episodic story?
3. What is the effect of age/grade level on children's ability to perform on a story element prediction task?
4. What is the effect of age/grade level on the number of story grammar elements children will mention in a story re-telling task?
5. Are some elements predicted significantly more often than others in a prediction task?
6. Are some elements remembered and mentioned significantly more often than others in a re-telling task?

The Study

Sample

The sample used for this study consisted of fifteen students. There were six girls and nine boys, representing three levels of educational experience: first grade, second grade, and third grade. These children were all selected from one school in the Winnipeg School Division #1. Winnipeg #1 is a division which encompasses a large area of diverse population. The school used in this study contained children from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. The teachers involved suggested that their students were representative of middle-and lower-middle-class socio-economic areas. Teachers of first, second, and third grade classrooms were asked to submit names of all the "average" children in their classrooms in the area of language arts. Five names at each grade were then randomly selected from this pool to become subjects for this study.

The five subjects at the grade one level had a mean age of 6 years 7 months at the time of testing. The five subjects selected from the second grade level had a mean age of 7 years 9 months at the time of testing. The five subjects at the third grade level had a mean age of 8 years 5 months at the time of testing.

All subjects were tested on twenty days in May, 1984.

Research Instrument - Stories for Predicting and Re-telling

In order to carry out this investigation, it was necessary to develop two different instruments for measuring student's ability to predict story elements and to re-tell a story. A total of nine single episode stories and one multi-episodic story was collected or generated that conformed to the pattern of the grammar described by Gordon and Braun, (1983).

Their view defines story grammar as a set of rules that spell out how stories are typically organized. These rules specify story component parts, the types of information that occur at various locations, and the relationships among the parts. They are usually consistant and successive throughout most stories. The nine components of this grammar for which the children were tested were: time, location, characters, initiating event, internal response, attempt, outcome, reaction and resolution.

In the single-spisode stories, some re-writing or re-phrasing was done to make the stories fit the story pattern more exactly. For the multi-episodic story for re-telling, the story was written by the researcher to conform exactly to the story grammar.

The stories were taken from a variety of sources, but all were from aterials designed for primary children. Stories were not ones that the children had encountered in their classroom readers (See appendix A for a copy of each story used).

The stories were all read by the researcher into a tape recorder so that the children all heard exactly the same reading of the stories. Instructions for each task were also taped to establish a standard-

ized presentation. As well as the stories which were used in order to obtain the initial element of time, since no part of a preceeding story could be read, the children were asked this question, "If you were going to tell a story, how would you begin it?"

Testing Procedures

The predicting and re-telling tasks were administered to each subject individually by the researcher. All of the subjects were tested in the nurse's office of the school which was a very quiet atmosphere. All of the testing was done in May 1984. All of the students were allowed to handle the tape recorder prior to being asked the testing questions. Also, during the actual testing session, they were allowed to manipulate the recorder themselves.

During the administration of the predicting task, the children heard portions of nine stories. At a certain point in each story the researcher discontinued the story and asked the child, "What do you think might come next?" The tape recorder, was then stopped, the children answered on a second tape recorder, and then the initial recorder was turned on and the child got to hear the completion of the story before the next story began.

In the re-telling task the children heard the entire multi-episodic story with instructions to try and remember as much of it as they could. At the end of the story, the children then re-told, into the second recorder, as much of the story as they could remember.

Points were awarded in the prediction task each time the child named the event or situation that conformed to the next componant as described in the Gordon and Braun grammar. In the re-telling task a point was awarded the child each time she/he included a correct event in his/her version of the story that conformed to the grammar. An example of the scoring system which was used follows.

Story	Element(s) Given	Targeted Element
1	none	time
11	time	location
111	time location	character(s)
1V	Time location character(s)	initiating event
V	time location character(s) initiating event	Internal response
V1	time location character(s) initiating event internal response	attempt
V11	time location character(s) initiating event internal response attempt	outcome
V111	Time location character(s) iniating event internal response attempt outcome	reaction
1X	time location character(s) initiating event internal response attempt outcome reaction	resolution

Name _____ Grade _____

Targeted Events	Events Mentioned
1. Time	
2. Location	
3. Character(s)	
4. Initiating event	
5. Internal response	
6. Attempt	
7. Outcome	
8. Reaction	
9. Resolution	

Name

Grade

Targeted Events		Events Mentioned
1.	Time	
2.	Location	
3.	Character(s)	
4.	Initiating event 1	
5.	Internal response 1	
6.	Attempt 1	
7.	Outcome 1	
8.	Reaction 1	
9.	Initiating event 2	
10.	Internal response 2	
11.	Attempt 2	
12.	Outcome 2	
13.	Reaction 2	
14.	Initiating event 3	
15.	Internal response 3	
16.	Attempt 3	
17.	Outcome 3	
18.	Reaction 3	
19.	Resolution	

Dependent Variables

The dependent variables examined and analyzed were:

1. The ability to employ story grammar in a prediction task.
2. Comprehension of a story as measured by a re-telling task.

Dependent Measures

1. The scores the child received on the prediction task.
2. The scores the child received on the re-telling task.

Statistical Analysis

The data were analyzed using a one-tailed *t*- test analysis of independent samples employing grade level as the independent variable for each analysis. Each dependent measure was analyzed separately. All possible comparisons were employed for each set of analyses, (i.e., grade 1 vs. grade 2; grade 2 vs. grade 3; and grade 1 vs. grade 3). It was hypothesized that performance would be significantly related to grade level (i.e. grade threes would perform better than grade twos who would perform better than grade ones). Alpha value was set at a traditional .05 level.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine children's knowledge and ability in comprehending orally presented stories. This was explored by examining children's responses to a prediction task and a story re-telling task. This chapter will include a description of the analyses of the data and a presentation of the level of statistical significance of the analyses, as well as a discussion of the results. Information was sought concerning the following questions:

1. How many element immediately following an interrupted story, do children ages six to nine, predict correctly from a story grammar?
2. How many story grammar elements will children ages six to nine, mention in a re-telling task, after hearing a comple multi-episodic story?
3. What is the effect of age/grade level on children's ability to perform on a story element prediction task?
4. What is the effect of age/grade level on the number of story grammar elements children will mention in a story re-telling task?
5. Are some elements predicted significantly more often than others in a prediction task?
6. Are some elements remembered and mentioned significantly more often than others in a re-telling task?

The discussion of the findings has been organized in the following manner:

(1) Discussion of the methods and procedures used to collect the data.

(2) Presentation of the data for the prediction and re-telling task as well as the frequency distribution of the story elements involved.

(3) Discussion of the results for the prediction and re-telling task especially as they pertain to the six research questions posed previously.

(4) Concluding remarks.

Methods and Procedures

The results shown in this chapter are from two tests in the area of story grammar. The first was a prediction task; the second a re-telling task. Fifteen children were randomly chosen to participate, five each from grades one, two, and three. They were chosen by their teachers as fitting the description of an "average" student. This was defined as a child who was working at or very close to his/her grade level. All fifteen children participated in both tasks. The testing session lasted approximately twenty-five minutes per child and was done in one sitting.

In the prediction task, each child heard portions of nine stories. At a certain point in each story, the researcher discontinued the story and asked the child, "What do you think might come next?" The tape recorder was then stopped, the child gave his answer into a second tape recorder, and then the initial recorder was turned on and the child got to hear the completion of the story before the next began.

In the re-telling task the children heard the entire multi-episodic story with instructions to try and remember as much of it as they could. At the end of the story, the children then re-told, into the second recorder, as much of the story as they could.

Points were awarded in the prediction task each time the child named the event or situation that conformed to the order described in Gordon and Braun's grammar (1983). In the re-telling task a point was given to the child each time she/he included a correct event in his/her version of the story that conformed to the grammar being used.

Presentation of the Data

Mean scores and standard deviations for both the prediction task and the re-telling task are presented in Table 4.1, with Figures 4.1 and 4.2 graphing the mean scores for the three grades in both tasks.

The prediction task had a possible score of nine correct. In grade one the mean was 4.4 with a standard deviation of 1.342. The grade two mean was slightly higher with a score of 5.0 and a standard deviation of 1.225. The grade three children increased slightly again with a mean score of 6.0 and a standard deviation of 0.707. When these three scores were averaged the collapsed mean was 5.1333 and the standard deviation was 1.2459. The re-telling task had a possible nineteen correct responses. The grade one mean in this case was 6.4 with a standard deviation of 4.450. There was a slight increase to the grade two mean of 7.2 and a standard deviation of 3.633.

Table 4.1

Mean and Standard Deviation Table for the Predicting and Re-telling Task by Grade Level

Grade		Predicting (Possible 9)	Re-telling (Possible 19)
1	$\bar{X}$	4.4	6.4
	S.D.	(1.342)	(4.450)
	(N=5)		
2	$\bar{X}$	5.0	7.2
	S.D.	(1.225)	(3.633)
	(N=5)		
3	$\bar{X}$	6.0	12.0
	S.D.	(0.707)	(2.236)
	(N=5)		
Total	$\bar{X}$	5.1333	8.5333
	S.DO	(1.2459)	(4.1725)
	(N=15)		

Figure 4.1

Comparisons among Means by Grade Level in the Prediction Task

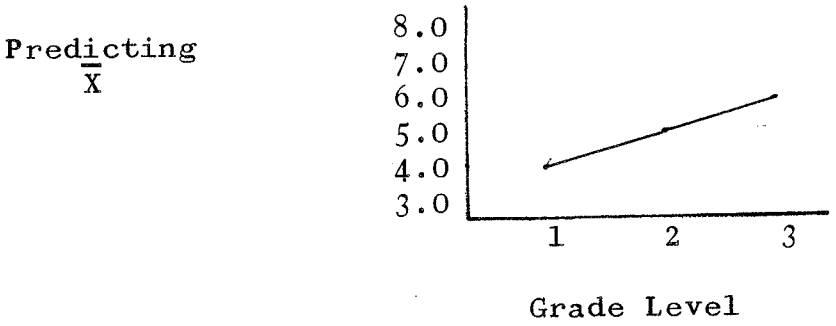
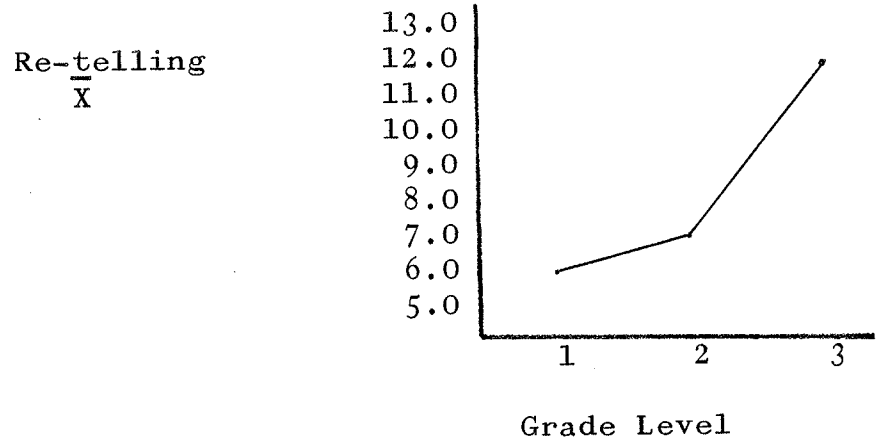


Figure 4.2

Comparisons among Means by Grade Level in the re-telling Task



A large positive difference occurred between the second and third grade scores. The mean for the third grade group was 12.0 and had a standard deviation of 2.236. These numbers averaged for a total mean score of 8.5333 and a total standard deviation score of 4.1725.

In order to analyze these statistics, a t-test analysis was done by three different comparisons (grade one with grade two, grade two with grade three and grade one with grade three) for both the prediction task and the re-telling task.

On the prediction task, in the comparison between grade one and grade two the $t\ (9) = 0.74$ ($f=.241$). This was not significant beyond the .05 level. In the grades two and three comparisons the $t(9) = 1.58$ was found ($f=.081$). This also was not significant at the .05 level. The third and final comparison in the prediction task was between grades one and three. In this two grade comparison the $t\ (9) = 2.36$ ($f=.028$). These scores did show a significant difference between the grade one children and the grade three children.

Table 4.2

T Scores and P Values for the Prediction and the Re-telling tasks

Comparisons		
Predicting	+(9)	p
Grade 1 - 2	0.74	.241
Level 2 - 3	1.58	.081
1 - 3	2.36	.028 *
Re-telling		
Grade 1 - 2	0.31	.382
Level 2 - 3	2.52	.021 *
1 - 3	2.51	.023 *

* $p < .05$

In the re-telling task, again with nine degrees of freedom, the same three grade level comparisons as above were done. When the grade one and grade two scores were analyzed, $t(9) = 0.31$ ($p = .382$). This does not show a significance difference between these levels. In the grade two and three comparison however, a significance was found with $t(9) = 2.42$ ($p = .021$). This does indicate that the grade three children were significantly better in the re-telling task than the grade two children. The grade one and three grouping as well showed a significant difference again in favour of the grade three children over the grade one children. $t(9) = 2.51$, $p = .023$).

To recapitulate, in the prediction task, the between grade comparisons of grade one and two were not significantly different from each other, as were not the between grade two and three comparisons. However, with the between grade comparisons of grade one and grade three children did perform significantly better than the grade one children did.

In the re-telling task, the between grade grouping of grade one and two was the only nonsignificant comparisons. Both of the grade two-three comparisons and the grade one-three comparisons showed that the grade three children performed significantly better than both the grade two children and the grade one children.

Table 4.3 and Figure 4.3 displays the results for the prediction task as per the number of correct responses for each element from the five children in each grade level. In all but one instance the number of correct responses by grade increased between grade one and two, and between grades two and three.

Table 4.3

Frequency Distribution of Correctly Answered Elements on the Prediction Task

Element	Gr.1 (N=5)	Gr. 2 (N=5)	Gr. 3 (N=5)	Total (N=5)
Time	3	3	4	10
Location	0	0	0	0
Characters	4	3	5	12
Initiating Event	4	4	5	13
Internal Response	0	0	0	0
Attempt	3	5	5	13
Outcome	5	5	4	14
Reaction	3	4	5	12
Resolution	0	1	2	3
Total	22	25	30	

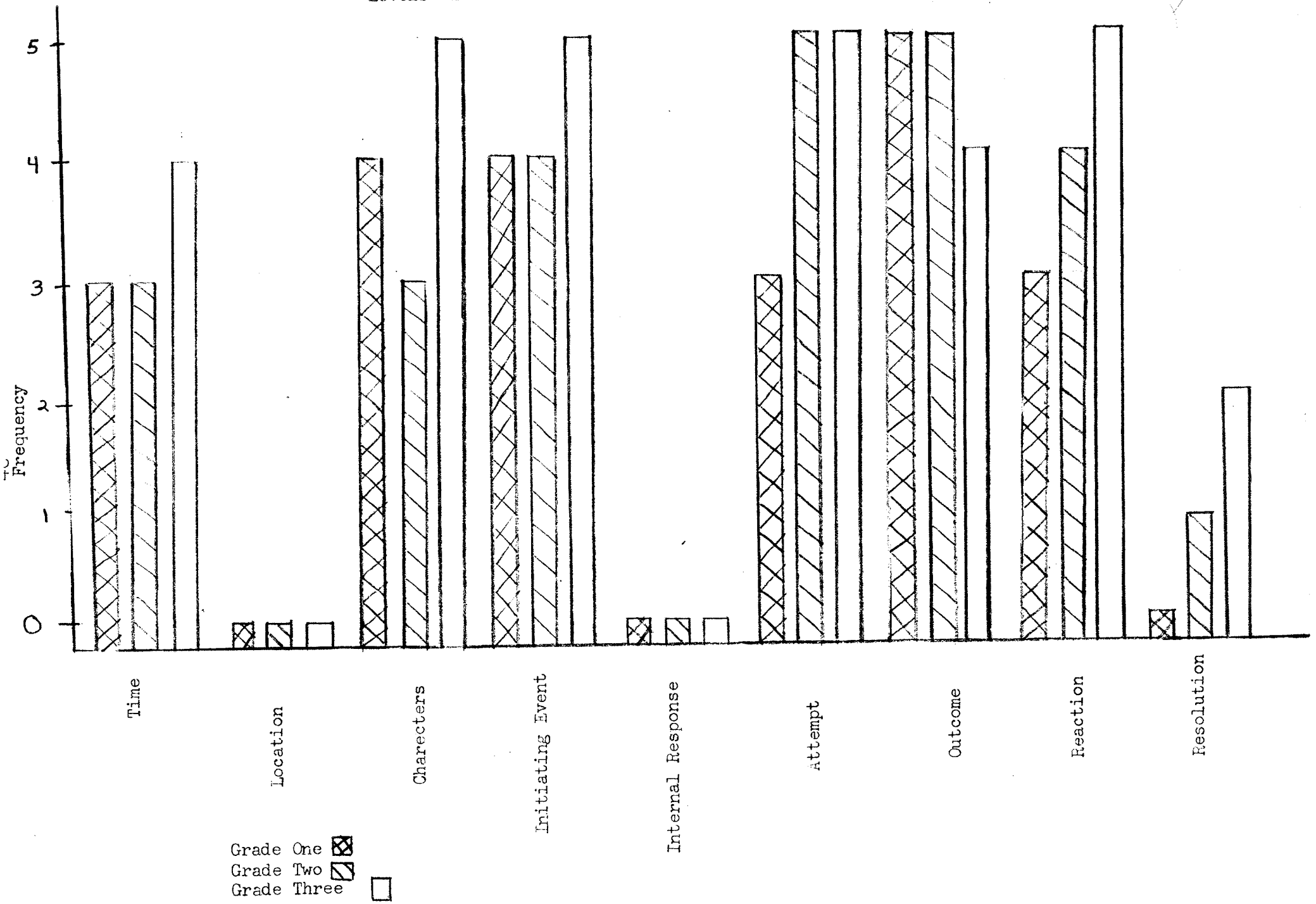
Table 4.4

Frequency Distribution of Elements on the Prediction Task

Element	No. correct /15
Outcome	14
Initiating Event	13
Attempt	13
Characters	12
Reaction	12
Time	10
Resolution	3
Location	0
Internal Response	0

Figure 4.3

Frequency Distribution for Elements Among Grade Levels in the Prediction Task



For the element of time, the scores increased from three correct responses in both grades one and two to four correct at the grade level. The location element had no correct responses at any grade level. In the character element the grade one scored four correct respomses, one better than the three correct at grade two. The grade three score was five correct. In the initiating event both the grade ones and twos scored four correct responses with the grade threes scoring all five correct. The internal response catagory again had no correct responses at any of the three grade levels. The element attempt had the grade twos and threes score a perfect five correct responses with the grade one score of only three. In the outcome catagory the roles reversed slightly with the grade ones and twos scoring a perfect five and the grade threes scoring only four correct responses.
The reaction catagory was all varied with the grade ones scoring three, the grade twos scoring four and the grade threes scoring a five. Likewise, the final catagory of resolution had three different scores. A zero for grade one, a one for grade two and a two for grade three. All total the grade three children scored better than the grade two children, who scored better than the grade one children in the prediction task.

Table 4.4 displays the rank order of elements mentioned with the three grades scores collapsed. Outcome was the event mentioned most often. All but one of the fifteen children mentioned it for a total score of fourteen. Initiating event, and attempt were the next commonly mentioned with a total score of thirteen each, which means all but two of the fifteen children who participated mentioned

it. Characters and reaction were also close with a total score of twelve correct responses from a possible fifteen. Time was also mentioned quite frequently with a total score of ten correct responses from the fifteen students. This score still ranks in the top one third. From the time element, a large drop occurs to the last three elements. While the time element had ten correct responses from a possible fifteen, the next element resolution had only three correct responses. This is a large drop between one element and the next. The last two elements, location and internal response both, were not mentioned even once for a score of zero out of fifteen children. Not one child from either of the three grades made a correct prediction for the above two elements mentioned.

There is then, in the prediction task, a jump from almost complete success as measured by all but one correct response, to a complete failure, one which in two cases, the element was not mentioned correctly by a single child out of the fifteen children participating.

The re-telling task showed some similar trends; however, results differed because the task involved a three episode story, with nineteen elements. Table 4.5 and Figure 4.4 show the number of correctly mentioned elements for all three grade levels with a possible five correct for each grade level.

The first element, time, showed the grade ones and threes with three correct responses each and the grade twos with one less correct response score of two. Location again, just as in the prediction task, had not one child out of fifteen correctly predict it.

Table 4.5

Frequency Distribution of Correctly Answered Elements on the Re-telling Task

Element	Gr.1	Gr. 2	Gr.3	Total
Time	3	2	3	8
Location	0	0	0	0
Characters	3	4	3	10
Initiating Event 1	4	3	5	12
Internal Response 1	1	0	3	4
Attempt 1	3	3	4	10
Outcome 1	4	3	5	12
Reaction 1	0	1	2	3
Initiating Event 2	1	2	5	8
Internal Response 2	0	0	0	0
Attempt 2	1	2	3	6
Outcome 2	2	4	5	11
Reaction 2	0	1	1	2
Initiating Event 3	3	2	4	9
Internal Response 3	0	0	0	0
Attempt 3	2	2	3	7
Outcome 3	3	5	5	13
Reaction 3	1	2	5	8
Resolution	0	1	4	5
Total	31	37	60	

Figure 4.4

Frequency Distribution for Elements Among Grade Levels in the Re-Telling Task

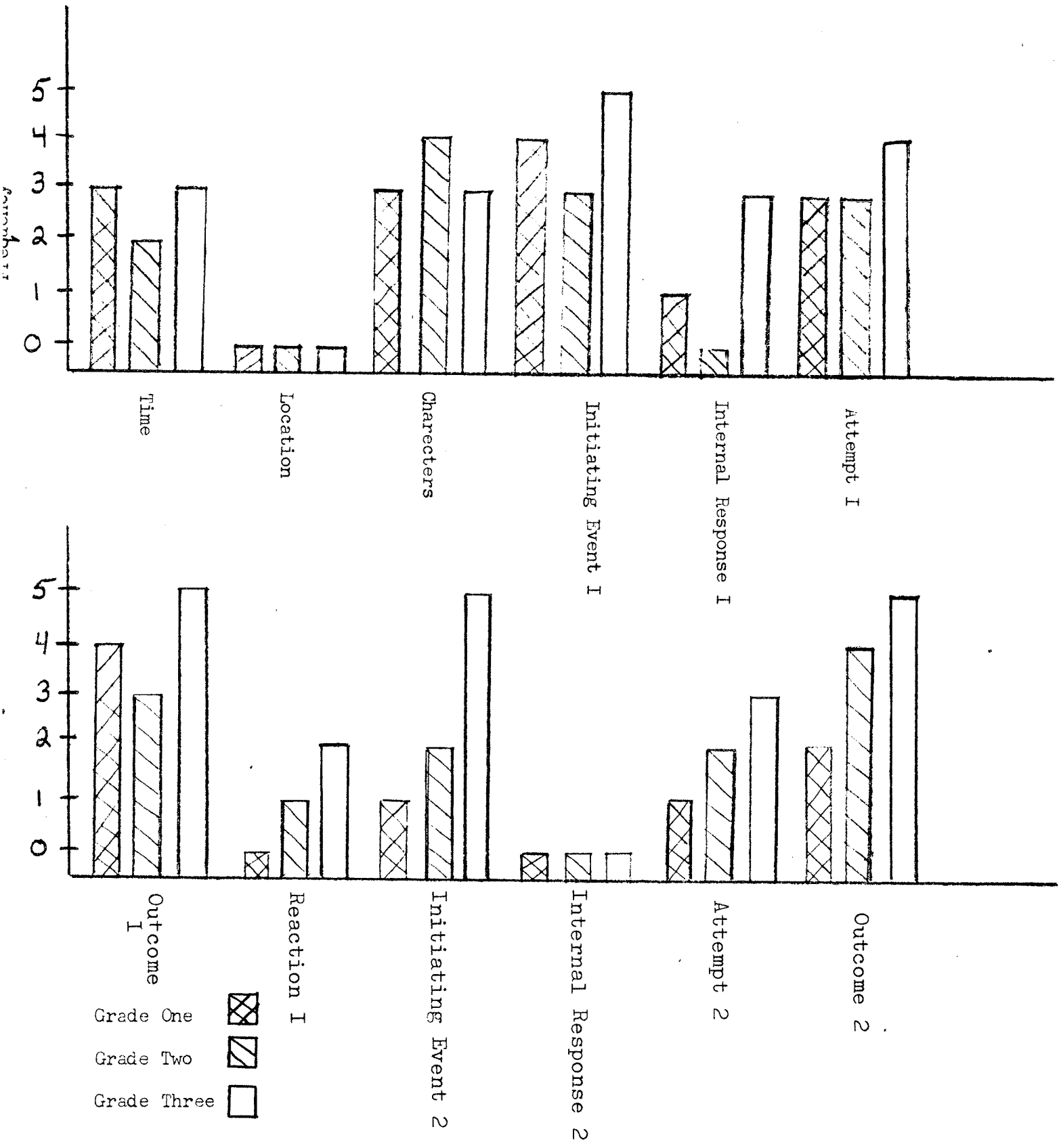
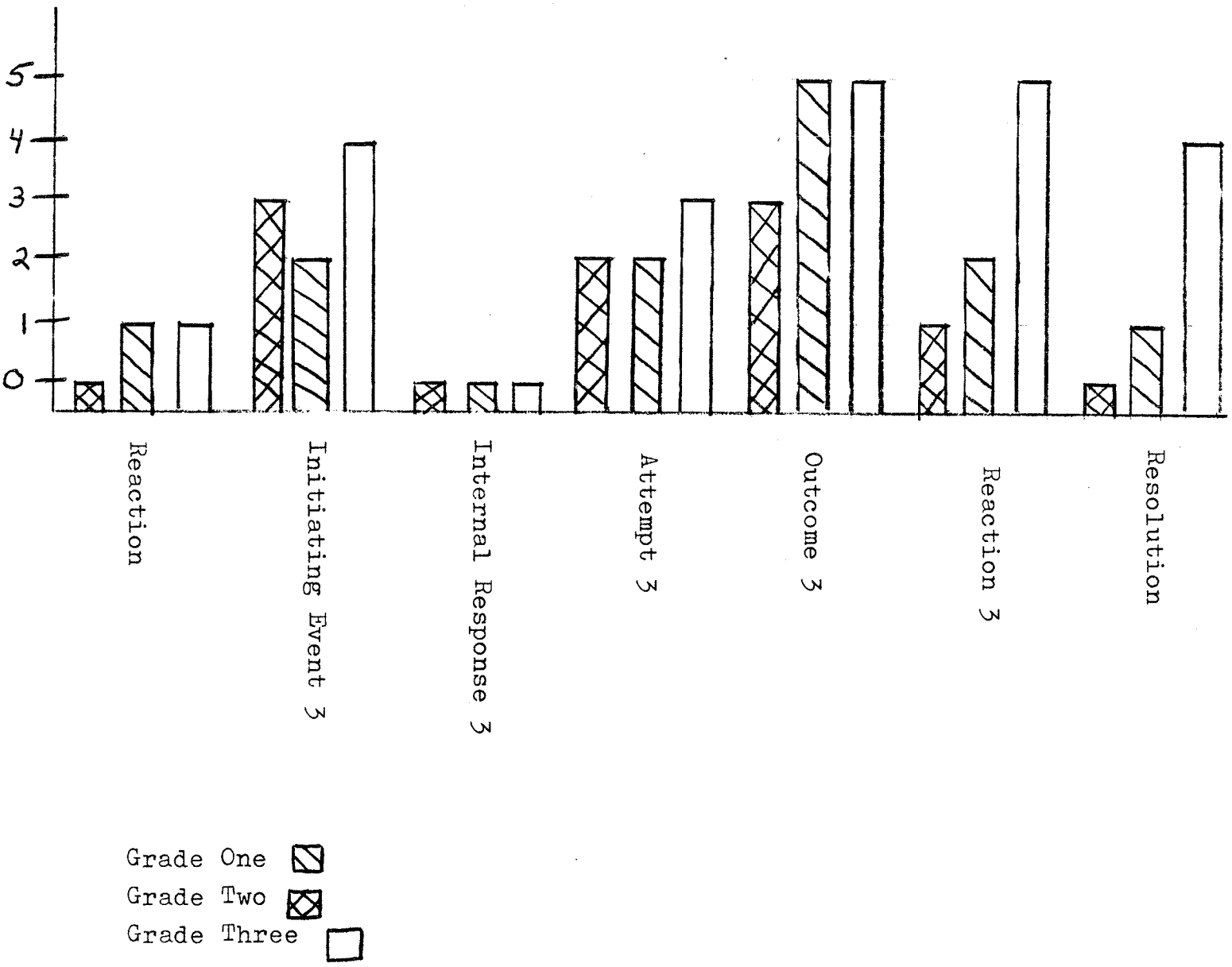


Table 4.5

Frequency Distribution of
Correctly Answered Elements
on the Re-Telling Task
(con't)



The element character showed almost the same pattern as the element time. The grade ones and threes again had the same score of three, except this time the grade twos upped them by one by receiving a score of four. In the initiating event 1, the scores were all different with the grade ones scoring four points, the grade twos three points and the grade threes five points. The internal response 1 catagory was very low with the highest score being three points for the grade threes and then a much lower score of one for the grade ones and zero for the grade twos. In the first attempt catagory the grade ones and twos both answered three times correctly and the grade three children answered four correctly. The first outcome catagory had four correct answers at the grade one level, three at the grade two level and all five correct at the third grade level. The reaction 1 element received fairly low scores at all three grade levels. The grade one children did not predict this element correctly at all. Also there was only one correct prediction at the second grade level and two correct at the grade three level. The second initiating event was low at the first and second grade level with scores of one and two respectively. Interestingly all five grade three students predicted this element correctly. The internal response two catagory, like location, received no correct predictions at any of the three grade levels. Attempt two had one correct prediction at grade one, two correct predictions at grade two and three at grade three. A little higher scores were shown in the outcome two catagory. Two children correctly predicted this at grade one, four correct at grade two and all five predictions correctly answered at grade three. Reaction two was low again with

no correct predictions at grade one, and only one correct at both grade two and grade three. There were three correct responses at the grade one level, two at the grade two level and four at the grade three level for the third initiating event. The internal response three catagory, just like the internal response two catagory, had no correct predictions at any of the three grade levels. The attempt three element had two correct predictions at both the grade one and two levels, and three at the third grade level. The third outcome catagory received a perfect score of five at both the grade two and three levels, and three correct at the first grade level. Reaction three had one correct response at grade one, two at grade two, and a perfect five at the grade three level. The last catagory, resolution showed a varying degree of success. It received no correct responses at the grade one level, one at the grade two level, and four correct at the grade three level.

As can be seen from the above data, there was a wide range of scores both by grade level and by element. A further discussion surrounding these factors can be found in the following section.

The final topic to be discussed in this section is the frequency distribution of the elements in the re-telling task.

In the re-telling task, each element had a possible correct of fifteen since there were fifteen children participating in the study. The highest randked catagory was the last outcome catagory with thirteen points. Closely following this was the outcome one and the first initiating event with a combined total of twelve correct responses. Outcome two received eleven correct responses which interestingly places all three outcome catagories in the

top four placings. Attempt and characters each received ten correct responses and the third initiating event followed closely behind with nine responses. Time, initiating event two, and reaction three all scored eight correct responses out of fifteen possible. Attempt three received seven, and attempt two received six. The final element resolution received five correct responses closely followed by internal response one with four, reaction one with three and reaction two with only two.

The last three events in the order, location, and internal responses two and three did not receive one correct response out of a possible of fifteen on the re-telling task. This is especially interesting since location and internal response were also the only two events in the prediction task which were not mentioned by any of the fifteen students. It does appear from these scores that children are more aware or knowledgeable about some elements in a story than others.

Table 4.6

Frequency Distribution of Elements
on the Re-telling Task

Element	No. Correct / 15
Outcome 3	13
Outcome 1	12
Initiating Event 1	12
Outcome 2	11
Attempt 1	10
Characters	10
Initiating Event 3	9
Initiating Event 2	8
Reaction 3	8
Time	8
Attempt 3	7
Attempt 2	6
Resolution	5
Internal Response 1	4
Reaction 1	3
Reaction 2	2
Location	0
Internal Response 2	0
Internal Response 3	0

Discussion of the Results

Since the primary purpose of this study was to try and present some possible answers to six research questions, the data from the previous section will now be discussed within the framework of each of the six research questions.

Question 1

How many elements immediately following an interrupted story, do children ages six to nine, predict correctly from a story grammar?

As displayed in Table 4.7, it appears that not only are children able to predict certain elements of a story, they also seem to increase in their ability to predict as they mature. This may be because younger children may have less specific knowledge about the structures of stories as well as the content which is found in stories. This may lead to fewer successes when trying to predict catagories of information. It is also possible that older children's expectations are related to increasing experience with stories over time, either incidently, through repeated exposure to stories, or as an effect of instruction (Whaley, 1983).

It would appear from the data that children ages six to nine can, on a series of interrupted stories, predict many of the elements in a story grammar. It would also appear that children predict more accurately as they mature.

Figure 4.7

Total scores for Prediction and Re-telling by Individuals with Grade Level

Student Grade	Number	Predicting (9)	Re-telling (19)
3	1	6	15
3	2	5	9
3	3	6	13
3	4	7	12
3	5	6	11
$\bar{X}$		4.4	6.4
2	1	5	11
2	2	6	11
2	3	6	5
2	4	3	6
2	5	5	3
$\bar{X}$		5.0	7.2
1	1	5	7
1	2	3	1
1	3	6	12
1	4	5	3
1	5	3	9
$\bar{X}$		6.0	12.0
	TOTAL	77	128
	TOTAL $\bar{X}$	5.1	8.5

Question 2

How many story grammar elements will children ages six to nine, mention in a re-telling task, after hearing a complete multi-epidosic story?

A re-telling task can prove to be a difficult and complicated one. In order to remember and re-tell a story a child must be able to udnderstand and to some degree be able to relate to the events in the story. The students also tend to organize all the information that they think is important and store this information for a later playback.

Table 4.7 shows a total mean of 8.5 out of a possible nineteen for all three grades. This is lower than a fifty percent success rate in this area. An important factor here however is in the vast jump between the grade one and grade two scores, and the scores for the grade three children. This will be discussed in more detail when discussing research question four.

As far as this question is concerned, it appears that children ages six to nine, predict less than half (45%) of the elements in a re-telling task after hearing a complete multi-episodic story.

Question 3

What is the effect of grade level on children's ability to perform on a story element prediction task?

As can be seen from Tables 4.1 and 4.2 there was a difference between grade levels, however, only significantly so on one grade pairing. When looking at the means of correct responses for the three grades it becomes apparent that each grade scores are successively higher than the previous grade. This would tend to be expected and accounted for by things such as extra experience

with stories and story material both at home and at school. There would also be an advance in the child themselves as far as their natural development is concerned, between the ages of six and nine.

When a one-tailed test was done using the above means, there was only one combined grade level showed significance. While the grade two were better than the grade one children the difference was not a significant one. Likewise, the grade three children were better, but not significantly better than the grade two children. The significance occurred between the grade three children and the grade one children. Again this is probably due to the maturation factor as well as the added advantage of two extra years of exposure to stories and a growing familiarity with the structures that generally accompany them.

It would appear then from the data that as children progress from grade one to grade three, they appear to be better able to predict correctly the next element in a story element prediction task. However, significance was observed only between the grade one students and the grade three students.

Question 4

What is the effect of grade level on the number of story grammar elements children will mention in a story re-telling task?

As can be seen from Tables 4.1 and 4.2 there was a difference between grade levels on the re-telling task between the three grade levels. This was even more noticeable here than on the prediction task. When the scores were analyzed in a one tailed test between the three grade level groupings, significance was found at two of of the three levels. The combination score of grades one and two

were not even near significance. However both the grade two-three groupings and the grade one-three groupings were both significant with P values of .021 and .023 respectively. This indicates that the grade three children performed significantly better than both the grade one children and the grade two children.

There are several possible reasons why this may be so. Initially it would seem maturation and longer more varied school experience could account for the difference. Upon questioning the teachers, it was learned that the grade three group read a great deal in their free time and were also very fond of making up and performing plays for the class. They seemed to be a very verbal group who were also accustomed to giving oral reports as well as written reports to the class on the books they read. When all these factors were taken into account, especially the familiarity with oral reporting on books, it could easily be postulated that these events in their school experience added a great deal to their ability to re-tell a story.

From the above data then it could be presumed that as children progress from grade one to three and gain more knowledge and experience both with story materials and with social situations, they are able to perform better on a story element prediction task.

Question 5

Are some elements predicted more often than others in a prediction task?

There were nine elements in the prediction task and upon reviewing Table 4.4 it becomes apparent that some elements are definitely predicted more often than others. From the nine events,

the top six fall into a very tight knit group. There was only one answer in all but one case where there were two responses, which separated the six events. From this top list of six which included outcome, initiating event, attempt, characters, reaction and time, all had at least a two-thirds success rate. The last three categories, resolution, location and internal response were at the bottom of the list with scores of three, zero and zero respectfully. This is a large and definite gap between the two groups.

It was hypothesized that resolution and internal responses were more difficult elements for students. In reference to location it was felt that perhaps children gave the time and characters and felt the setting was complete. Perhaps leaving out location was more of an oversight rather than because it was a difficult concept. Children tend to discuss location so much in school that it is not a salient factor anymore to them and therefore they deem it redundant or unnecessary to mention it.

It would appear then that some elements are predicted more often than others. In this study, the more commonly mentioned elements were in descending order; outcome, initiating event, attempt, characters, reaction and time. The three least frequently mentioned elements were resolution, location and internal response.

Question 6

Are some elements remembered and mentioned significantly more often than others in a re-telling task?

The re-telling task used in this study contained nineteen elements, many of which were repeated in each of three episodes. Upon reviewing Table 4.6, it becomes apparent that there were indeed some elements which were recalled much more often than others.

Interestingly many of the elements appeared in basically the same ranking position as they did in the prediction task. In the ranking there was a gradual decline from thirteen correct responses out of fifteen down to three elements which ranked as having no correct responses at all.

In the top one third the elements most commonly remembered and mentioned were; outcome three, outcome one, initiating event one, outcome two, attempt one, and characters, with scores ranging from thirteen down to ten. It is interesting to note that all three outcome catagories are in this group. This seems understandable since almost all children when telling any story tend to tell the "what happened" in the story, even if they leave the rest of the story fragmented. Outcome was also the most correctly answered item on the prediction task.

In the second one third of correctly answered elements there were six elements which again were separated by only a total of three points. These elements were, in descending order, initiating events three and two, reaction three, time and attempts three and two.

The bottom group of elements all had correct responses of five or less. Three elements, location, internal response two and internal response three had no correct responses at all from the fifteen children. The other elements in this group were: resolution and five responses, internal response one with four, reaction one with three and reaction two with two responses. Upon looking back to Table 4.4, it could be seen that the last two events, which were the only ones to receive no correct responses, were axactly the same. Location and internal response were obvious problems for

children in both a predicting task and a re-telling task. As was stated previously in the prediction task, it was felt location was deleted for reasons other than because it was a difficult element. It was felt it was perhaps omitted because it was an element taken for granted by the children or perhaps by giving the time and characters they had completed the setting.

Internal response would seem to be a difficult element, especially since much of the information contained in this element is to a degree inferred, a much more complicated skill.

It would appear then that certain elements from a story grammar are remembered and mentioned less frequently than others in a story-re-telling task. In this case, the two most significant elements were location and internal response.

Conclusion

Several items of interest were seen in the results of the study. All six research questions were answered by the data presented in this chapter.

To briefly summarize, the children ages six to nine could predict elements in a story element prediction task. It appears that all children have some concept of story. Grade level did appear to be a contributing factor as the grade twos performed better than the grade ones, and the grade threes performed better than the grade twos. The only significant difference, however, appeared between the grade one children and the grade three children.

Children also seem capable of remembering and mentioning certain elements in a re-telling situation. Again the threes were better than the twos who were better than the ones. In this case, there were two significant combinations at the .05 level: the grade three

children with the grade one children and the grade three children with the grade two children.

As well, certain elements do appear to be easier or more difficult for all the children, both in the prediction task and in the re-telling task. Outcomes and initiating events appear to be fairly easy elements for all the children just as location and internal responses were the most difficult.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to examine children's knowledge and ability in comprehending orally presented stories. This was explored by examining children's responses to a prediction task and a story re-telling task.

Although it may appear from a brief glance at the research that there is a similar and sigular baseof knowledge which surrounds the area of story grammars, in actuallity, there are two distinct and separate viewpoints.

McConaughy (1980), Tierney and Mosenthal (1982), and Bartlett (1932) view the use of story grammar as basically a problem solving approach. They suggest that the reader interacts with the text to provide a basis for comprehension. When children, then, are confronted with material, be it known or unknown, they will immediately pull information from their storage of related background knowledge and or experiences and use these to help them understand the material.

The second view of story grammars is one which could be considered a text based approach. In this view all stories are considered to be made up of a set of typical elements that outline and detail the story. Marshall (1983), Whaley (1981), Sadow (1982), Morrow (1982), Stien and Glenn (1979), Throndyke (1977), Rummelhart (1975), and Gordon and Braun (1983), all ascribe to this point of view. It is felt among these researchers that it is these elements that people use to help then remember and understand stories. These elements can also be described as a set of rules which spell out how a story is typically organized. They specify story componant parts, the types of information that occur

at various locations and the relationships among the parts. The elements are generally successive and consistant throughout stories. It is suggested that knowledge of the componants in a well-organized story may enhance comprehension and recall. This is the view followed by this researcher. The nine componants chosen for this study were: setting, location, time, initiating event, internal response, attempt, outcome, reaction, and resolution.

Much of the research previously done was completed in the area of re-telling, and the researchers involved came to similar conclusions. They feel that added exposure to story grammars could faciliatate comprehension.

A review of related research related to story grammar pointed to several areas which required further investigation. Although studies have been done with children, few have dealt with young children and even fewer have dealt with children in a grade by grade developmental sequence. As well, few if any of the studies, used the oral mode in preference to other modes of testing. Many pieces of research have been done in the area of re-telling but again, little has been done in the prediction area. Since these areas appeared to have little research surrounding them, it was deemed desireable to incorporate them into a study that could, upon its completion, add material and data to the existing body of knowledge on story grammar acquisition. Thus a developmental study was done using young children, (grades one, two, and three) in an oral prediction task as well as a more common re-telling task.

The purpose of the present study was to explore the nature and development of children's ability to use and understand a story grammar in different comprehension tasks. The study was designed

to collect data in two areas: (I) when children were confronted with nine incomplete stories how well they could predict the next event in the story, (2) after hearing a complete multi-episodic story, how well would the children be able to retell the complete story.

The data were collected and analyzed to answer the following research questions:

1. How many elements immediately following an interrupted story, do children ages six to nine, predict correctly from a story grammar?
2. How many story grammar elements will children ages six to nine mention in a re-telling task, after hearing a complete multi-episodic story?
3. What is the effect of age/grade level on children's ability to perform on a story element prediction task?
4. What is the effect of age/grade level on the number of story grammar elements children will mention is a story re-telling task?
5. Are some elements predicted significantly more often than others in a prediction task?
6. Are some elements remembered and mentioned significantly more often than others in a re-telling task?

Method

The subjects of this study were five children randomly selected from each of three grade levels: grade one, grade two, and grade three. They were all selected from a pool identified by their teachers as being overall "average" students. Average was defined

as someone who was working at or very nearly at grade level. All of the subjects were residents of the same lower middle class urban community.

The children were all tested in the two areas. First the children were asked to listen to nine stories which were interrupted at various places and were asked to tell what they thought might come next in the story. Points were awarded each time the child named the correct element of the story as described by the grammar of Gordon and Braun (1983).

In the second task the children were asked to listen to a complete multi-episodic story and, at its conclusion, re-tell as much of the story as they could. Points were awarded each time the child named one of the elements from the story that matched the grammar set down by Gordon and Braun. The first task had a possible correct of nine points, and task two had a possible correct of nineteen points.

The independent variable in this study was grade level. The dependent variables were the ability to employ story grammar in a prediction task, and comprehension of a story as measured by a re-telling task. There were also two dependent measures, one for each dependent variable: the scores the children receive on the prediction task, and the scores the children receive on the re-telling task.

A one-tailed *t* test analysis was used in the analysis of both the prediction task and the re-telling task with grade level groupings of one and two, one and three, and two and three to determine significance between these groupings.

Summary of Findings

The following is a summary of the findings of the study for each research question.

(1) Children ages six to nine appear to be able to predict certain elements of a story, after hearing a series of interrupted stories. It also appears that children increase in their ability to predict as they mature.

(2) Since the total mean score for the combined three grade levels averaged out to less than a fifty percent success rate, it would appear that although all children were able to re-tell certain elements in a story grammar, the task still seemed to be a difficult one. The grade three children however, did perform significantly better at this task than did the grade one and two children.

(3) Grade level appears to play a role in the success a child may have in a story element prediction task. Each grade performed successively higher than the previous grade. The difference, however, was not significant when the grade one group was compared with the grade two group. As well, the grade three group was not significantly better than the grade two group. The grade three group did perform significantly better than the grade one group.

(4) There was a noticeable difference in performance according to grade level on the re-telling task between the three groups. Significance was found with two of the three groupings. While the grade two children performed better than the grade one children, the difference was not found to be significant.

Significance was found, however, with the grade two-three groupings, and the grade one-three comparisons. The grade three children performed significantly better than both the grade one and grade three subjects.

(5) There were nine elements in the prediction task, and it was apparent that certain elements were predicted more frequently than others for all the children. The top group, or more easily predicted elements, contained six elements. These were in decending order: outcome, initiating event, attempt, characters, reaction, and time. The three most infrequently predicted elements by all the children were: resolution, location, and internal response.

(6) In the re-telling task there were nineteen elements and again it seemed apparent that certain elements were mentioned by almost all of the children, and some elements which were deleted by nearly all of the children. This ranking appeared to be very similar to the ranking in the prediction task. The most commonly mentioned elements were: outcome, and initiating event, and the least frequently mentioned were: location and internal response.

Implications for the Classroom

On the basis of the present study the investigator has drawn the following implications for classroom practise:

(1) Because of some weakness shown in the re-telling task, time should be spent, especially at the grade one and two levels in this area. This could take form of plays, reporting, discussions, and more available contact time with people outside the classroom.

(2) Since it appears in both tasks that there are not significant difference between grade one and grade two, but there are differences in grade three, some of the skills involved may be due mainly to maturational factors. If this is indeed the case, teachers should not expect the younger children to have as solid a grasp of story elements as the older children.

(3) In both the prediction and re-telling tasks certain elements appeared to be difficult for all three age groups. It is these elements then that should be concentrated on in classroom instruction (i.e., internal response, characters).

(4) In the classroom the teacher should spend time making children aware of how to use a story grammar. This may help the children both in the production and the understanding of stories.

Implications for Further Research

The results of this study provide the basis for the following suggestions for further research:

(1) In order to confirm its findings, this study should be replicated with other populations.

(2) Studies in this area should be undertaken with larger groups of children to see if the results would be congruous to these results.

(3) Research which involved a pre-test, teaching of the story grammar skills, followed by a post-test should be done to assess the effects of some skill teaching in this area.

(4) Investigation should be conducted into which the extent story grammar awareness influences overall story comprehension.

(5) Research which would be valuable would be an investigation of the developmental level necessary for successful instruction in the concept of story grammars.

(6) Studies directed at the question of the extent to which success in using story grammars is a result of explicit reading instruction and to what extent it is the result of maturation would be beneficial.

Conclusions

Within the limits of this study the following conclusions seem warrented:

(1) Children ages six to nine are able to predict certain elements correctly from a story grammar immediately following an interrupted story.

(2) Children ages six to nine are able to re-tell certain elements after hearing a complete multi-episodic story.

(3) Children tend to predict and re-tell better as they progress from grade one to grade three.

(4) The catagories of outcome and initiating event appear to be the least difficult for all three grades and in both the prediction and the re-telling task.

(5) The location and internal response catagories appeared to be the most difficult for all the children in both the prediction and the re-telling tasks.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

TAPED STORIES

TAPED STORIES		COUNTER
1.	without story	074
2.	The boy who cried wolf	000
3.	The cricket and the spider	012
4.	The lion and the mouse	018
5.	The pot of gold	033
6.	The crow and the pitcher	042
7.	The dog in the shadow	049
8.	The owl and the raven	056
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APPENDIX B

PREDICTING TASK

Instructions - Part 1

"Hi_____, I'm going to be playing this game with several girls and boys so most of the instructions are on a tape so they will be the same for everyone. Are you ready to begin? Good"

"Today we're going to play a game with some stories. It's called what comes next. You are going to be hearing eight stories on this tape recorder. At a certain spot in each story, I'm going to stop reading and ask you to tell me "what do you think might come next" in the story. There are no wrong answers. I just want to see if you know what part of the story should come next. I will be taping your answers so I don't forget them and then you will hear the rest of the story. Do you understand what I want you to do? Good, let's begin."

1.

"If you were going to tell a story, how could you begin it?"

2. The boy who cried wolf

Aesop fable
Shining Bridges

Once upon a time in a grand country there was a boy who took care of sheep near a dark forest. One day he said to himself, "I wish something exciting would happen". Then he thought to himself "I know what I'll do! I'll make believe a wolf is after the sheep".

In a loud voice he cried out, "Wolf! Wolf!" The villagers ran over to help him. They looked everywhere for the Wolf, but there was no wolf.

The next day the boy wished again that something exciting would happen. "Wolf! Wolf!" he cried out louder than before. Again the villagers came running but found no wolf.

The third day the boy didn't have to wish for something exciting. A wolf really came out of the forest and began to chase the sheep.

"Wolf! Wolf!" cried the boy still louder than ever. This time the villagers did not come to help the boy. The wolf killed quite a few sheep and the boy couldn't chase it away.

Later he asked the villagers, "Why didn't you come and save my sheep"?

One villager spoke for the rest. "Boy," he said "You cried 'Wolf' twice when there was no wolf. How could we know that this time a wolf was really there?"

3. Cricket and Spider

Mr. Mugs Work Book 5

Long long ago, on a summers day in a wood a cricket was walking through a village called Sunville. He saw a spider sitting on a kettle. "What are you doing?" the cricket asked the spider. "I'm waiting for my dinner' said the spider "Do you want to join me?' "Not I! I would be the dinner!' cried the cricket. The cricket ran away happily because the spider had not fooled him.

4. The Lion and the Mouse

Aesop Fable
Shining Bridges

One summer day in a large forest a little mouse forgot to look where he was going and because of this he ran over the paw of a sleeping lion. The mouse became terribly afraid.

The lion awoke. "What do you mean by this?" he roared. He put his paw over the mouse and opened his mouth to eat him.

"Oh, King of the Forest", cried the frightened little mouse. "Please forgive me and let me go. If you do I'll always remember it. Who knows, great King? One of these days I may be able to do you a good turn."

"What?" roared the lion. "A little mouse like you help me?" He laughed at such an impossible idea. Then he lifted his paw and let the little mouse go.

A short time later the lion was caught in a trap. His roars could be heard by all the animals in the forest. The little mouse was awake and heard them too.

"That is the lion who let me go" he said to himself. "I've got to help him". Off through the forest he ran. He didn't stop for a second until he reached the roaring lion.

The lion was caught in a trap made of rope. The little mouse began to nibble. He nibbled through the rope and made a hole in the trap. The hole was large enough for the lion to step through.

The lion was very thankful. He turned to the mouse and said, "Now I've learned something. I will remember it always. Little friends may be great friends."

5. The Pot of Gold

Great Short Stories
1978 instructional fair

Once upon a time in the country there was a little girl and her mother who were very poor. They had little food to eat. One day an old woman told the girl about a pot of gold. "If you can go over the rainbow, there is a pot of gold at the end. If you can get the pot of gold, you and your mother will never be poor again".

The little girl thought and thought. Then she began to cry. "I don't know how to go over the rainbow" she cried. All at once, a fairy came to the little girl. The fairy had golden wings and drove a golden wagon. "I can help you" said the fairy. "Come with me in my golden wagon. I will take you over the purple road. I will take you over the purple road of the rainbow to the pot of gold."

6. The crow and the pitcher

Aesop Fable
In a dark wood

There was once a crow who needed a drink. He looked all around for some cold water, but he could not find any. At last he found a big pitcher by a tree. He looked into it and found that there was just a little water in it. The pitcher was so deep, that try as he would, the crow could not get a drink. The crow, however would not give up. After thinking about it for a while, he knew what to do.

Near the pitcher there were some stones. One by one he dropped them in. As he dropped in the stones, the water in the pitcher came up, little by little. At last it was up to the top, and the crow got a long cold drink.

7. The dog in the shadow — Mr. Mugs at School

A long time ago, on a summers day a dog was crossing a stream with some meat for his dinner. As he looked into the clear water he saw his own shadow. He thought that his shadow was another dog with some more meat. When the dog saw the meat in the shadow, he wanted it as well as his own. So he snatched at the meat in the shadow.

At once his own meat dropped into the water and was gone. It made him sad when he saw that the meat in the shadow was gone too.

The dog had to go home without any meat for his dinner. the greedy dog had wanted too much and had lost everything.

8. The Owl and the Raven

Many years ago, in the land of the Eskimos, lived an owl and a raven. They were fast friends. The raven had made a dress for the owl dappled white and black and the owl planned to do something in return.

One day, the owl made a pair of boots of whalebone for the raven and then began to make a white dress. He wanted the raven to try on the dress to be sure it fit properly. But when he was about to try it on, the raven kept hopping about and would not stand still.

The raven continued to hop around until the owl got so angry that he poured oil from the lamp all over the raven. Since that day, the raven has been black all over.

9. The Spring egg

In a far away country, many years ago there lived a wise old king. He was sad because he alone found Spring to be a time of sadness. He wished he could be happy like the other people of the kingdom. He then offered a reward to anyone in the kingdom who could make him feel happy about spring. Many people came and failed until at last a young child with long golden hair came bearing a small box. She opened it and inside was a simple egg, but colored as brightly as the sun and the fields outside the king's window. The King was so enthralled with the simple beauty which he could hold in his hand that he declared that the young girl should come to him every year during the Spring and bring him colored eggs. She agreed, which pleased the king, and perhaps started the tradition of colored eggs at Easter.

APPENDIX C

RE-TELLING TASK

Instructions - Part 2

In this second part, I want you to listen carefully to a complete story. After it is finished, I am going to ask you to re-tell me the story as exactly as you can to me. Just like the first part, I will be putting your story on tape so I don't forget what you've told me. Do you understand what I want you to do? Good, let's begin.

10. The old man and his sons

Many years ago, in a beautiful forest lived an old man who had three sons.

There came a time when the old man knew he was going to die and knew it was time to choose his wisest son to take his place. He decided he would go into the woods dressed as an old lady who was lost and needed help. He would position himself so that each of his three sons would be sure to see him on their way home from work.

The next day, the old man dressed himself up and went to wait in the woods. He knew his oldest son would be along soon. He wondered if this son would stop to help an old woman. By and by the first son appeared.

"Hello old woman, what are you doing so far in the woods?" the eldest asked.

"I have wandered far and lost my way. Would you show me to my home?" the old man asked.

"I'm sorry old woman, but I couldn't, I would be late for my supper" and the eldest son went on his way.

"He does not seem fit to have my land" thought the old man, and he waited for his second son.

Very shortly the middle son walked by. The old man wondered if he would stop to help. The son stopped when he saw the old woman and said, "Hello old woman, what are you doing so far in these woods?"

"I have wandered far and lost my way. Would you show me to my home?" the old man asked.

"I'm sorry old woman, but I couldn't, I would be late for my dinner" and the middle son continued home.

The old man thought "He does not seem fit to have my land either". The old man was disappointed, but decided to wait for his youngest son.

Soon after, the youngest son walked by and again the old man wondered if he would help.

"Hello old woman, what are you doing so far in the woods?"

"I have wandered far and lost my way. Would you show me to my home?" the old man asked.

"Yes, of course I will" replied the youngest. "It is not safe for you to be out here all alone."

"But what of your supper?" asked the old man.

"I can eat anytime" replied the son.

At this, the old man threw off his old clothes and embraced his son. "You my son shall be the one to have all that I own. You alone are good and kind. Your other brothers care not about others and therefore do not deserve my favor."

It was therefore that because of his kindness the youngest brother always had more than he could possibly ever wish for and lived a long happy life.

APPENDIX D

STUDENT RESPONSES

(Numbered responses are to each of the nine predicting tasks; the paragraphs are the re-telling responses)

SUBJECT 1 - 1

1. Once upon a time
2. There was a, three bears
3. Once upon a time, once upon a time,there was three pigs
4. Once upon a time, don't know
5. She told her to go over the hills where the rainbow is
6. He go'd up in the tree and got the water
7. The water splashed over his face
8. He took it off
9. The eggs were colorfull. They were black, and blue and orange and red and lots of colors

Once upon a time there was an old man. He thought he was going to die so he sended his wisest son out in the woods dressed up like a lady. One old man came and the wise boy asked if he could take him home and he said "No". The other time, another old man came and said he wanted to help the boy get home. And he took him home.

SUBJECT 2 - 1

1. don't know
2. little red riding hood went to her grandma's
3. he flew away
4. he fell into a hole
5. they bought lots of food and everything
6. he might trip
7. he fell and then went into a waterfall
8. it got ripped
9. the egg hatched

I don't get this. About a man who thought he was going to die and. It's hard. Don't remember any more.

SUBJECT 3 - 1

1. One Day
2. There was a big bad wolf
3. A spider and a cricket got married and had babies
4. He tripped on the feet of the lion
5. The lady will never be poor again and the lady will get to buy food.
6. He would jump into where the water is and then he would jump up.
7. He wouldn't see nothing
8. The owl would get mad and he would tell him to stop it and that's all.
9. The king would see the bright egg and that's all

Once upon a time there was this old woman who had three sons. The man knew he would die so he thinked of an idea to get the sons to take his place so he dressed up like dresses up and went far into the woods. Then the brothers came around and asked him "What are you doing far in these woods?" "I lost my way, I came very far and lost my way, would you take me home?" "I can't, I'll be late for my supper." Then the second one came into the forest and he asked the poor old lady "Where are you? how come you're so far in these woods?" "I lost my way home. Can you show me where the way home is?" "No, I don't have time. I have to go home and have supper." And then the second one came and then he asked the old lady "What are you doing so far in these woods?" "I wandered far, I lost my way home. Would you take me home?" "Yes" That's all I know.

SUBJECT 4 - 1

1. Once upon a time
2. There was a little boy
3. There was a man
4. he got aten
5. she found the gold
6. he drank it
7. he went home
8. don't know
9. he liked it

He was going to die pretty soon, and all of his boys came, but the first boy and the second boy said, "No, I'm going to be late for my supper and the last boy said "Yes, I will take you to your home."

SUBJECT 5 - 1

1. By telling them something about it. Things that it's about
2. Once upon a time there were three bears
3. There was so many birds
4. And he knocked into a tree
5. She went and got it
6. He was.....I forget
7. He went and got it
8. Happy
9. He kept on holding it in his hands

Once upon a time there was three boys and his dad. He knew he was going to die soon and he wanted somebody to take his place. And so one day he got dressed and went far away in the woods and waited for one of his sons to come. He waited, and the first son came and he said,the first son said, "Why are you sitting here?" "I lost my way" and I got lost here." And he said, "Can you help me to find my home again?" He said"No, I'm going to be late for my supper." And the other boy came and then he said, "How come you're here?" "Because I lost my way and didn't find the way back. Can you help me?" And he said "Sure". And he ripped off his clothes and said, "You'll take my job, you're so kind and sweet." And that's the end of the story.

SUBJECT 1 - 2

1. Once upon a time
2. What is it called again? Once upon a time, there was a little girl
3. He lived in a palace
4. The lion comes and the hunter drops a net on him and the mouse chews him out
5. They would be rich for ever and ever
6. He put rocks in a whole bunch and it comes up and he gets to drink
7. He dropped his own meat in the water
8. They didn't get to be friends any more
9. Well, he put the needle through and he ate it and kept the eggshell

Once upon a time there was an old man and his three sons. And the old man, I think, the old man always went out in the forest wearing old lady clothes and he waited for his three sons. The biggest son came first and the old man asked, I mean the,the, the,the, the boy said "What are you, old lady, what are you doing so so far out in the woods?" "I lost" And the old man said "I lost my way. Can you take me home?" Something like that. And then the next boy came, the middle sized boy came and, and he, the old man, the boy said "What are you doing out in the woods so far?" And he said "I lost my way, I lost my way, I lost my way from home. Can you take me to my home?" And he said "No, I have to go home for supper." I forgot that in the other one.

And then the youngest boy came and he said, "You, what are you doing out in the woods, out so far?" And the boy, the old man said "I've lost my way to my home. Can you take me home?" And then, the boy said, "Yes, I will." And he, the old man said, "Don't you have to go for supper?" And he said, "I don't have to go. I can eat anytime I want." And then the old man took off the old lady clothes and the old man said, "You are the kindest boy. You get, you get, lots of things." I don't know. "And you are the best kind of like that" And the man, the boy lived happily ever after with all the stuff he got.

SUBJECT 2 - 2

1. Once upon a time
2. There was a little boy
3. There was a cricket
4. He met the lion
5. don't know, that's hard
6. He put rocks in and got a drink
7. He dropped his meat and he had no meat at all
8. There was a loose string and he pulled it and all his stuff wrecked
9. That it burnt his hands it was so colorful

Once upon a time there was three boys and an old man. And the old man knew he was going to die and so he had to choose one of his three brothers to to take over his place. And so he dressed up as an old lady and went far, far, out into the woods. And then the first brother came along and said "Hello old lady, What are you doing so far out in the woods?" I've gone so far I've lost my way, will you help me home again, find home again?" And he goes "I'm sorry, old lady, but I'll be late for work" And then the second brother comes along and he goes "Hello old lady, what are you doing so far out in the woods?" And she goes "I've gone so far that I've lost my way. Will you help me home again?" And he goes"I'm sorry I can't right now" And so the third brother comes along and he says "Hi old lady, what are you doing so far out in the woods?" And she goes "I've gone so far I've lost my way. Would you help me home again?" She goes "Sure it is dangerous for you to be way out here."

SUBJECT 3 - 2

1. Once upon a time
2. There lived a boy
3. Lived a girl named Cindy
4. "Squeek, squeek"
5. The road is a purple road
6. He kept putting rocks in and the water kept going higher and higher
7. The dog fell in
8. He finally standed still
9. He thought to paint them and that got him happier and then he finally got happy about Spring

There was three men and the the grandfather was about to die so he went out to the woods and tried to pick the three men out of one for the captain of the world. And then, the first one he doesn't pick, second one he doesn't pick, so the third one, he says to the third one. "You can be my, be in charge of the world so he picks him and that's the end.

SUBJECT 4 - 2

1. By pretending, you're telling somebody about something
2. there was something like that
3. no answer
4. he ran into the lion
5. he tried it
6. put pebbles in there
7. fell in the river
8. no answer
9. he kept it

He had three sons, and like he was dressed up as an old lady and he had, he wanted to see who would get his land cause he was going to die and the first son walked by and he wouldn't help him and the second son walked by and he wouldn't help her and then the third son came and helped her.

SUBJECT 5 - 2

1. No answer
2. no answer
3. there was a cricket and something else
4. He bumped into the lion
5. She went to get the gold
6. went home
7. fell in the lake
8. couldn't get it on him
9. He poked a hole through it and put a string around his neck

The three sons, the one came, and he had to go for his supper and then second one came and he had to go for supper and the third one came and he took him to his house.

SUBJECT 1 - 3

1. I would use a title first
2. There was a boy
3. There was a cricket
4. A lion caught a mouse and was ready to eat it
5. She would run off and tell her Mother and try to get the pot of gold
6. He started to pick up pebbles and then the drink in the pitcher got higher and higher
7. He would try to get it but he wouldn't get it because it was just his own shadow
8. He'd probably try to make the dress without having him to try it on
9. He would give the reward to that little girl because she made him happy

Many, many long years ago, there was an old man, and he had three sons. The old man knew he was about to die so he would have to pick one of his sons to take over so then one day he thought of dressing up in an old woman, and to go in the forest and when his sons would come the one that would help him he would choose, he would choose that one to be, to take over the land. So then he went, then he got all dressed up and then he went far out in the woods where he knew his three sons would be coming very soon, and the oldest son would be always first. So then the oldest son came along and said,"Hi old woman, old lady, what are you doing out here in the forest?"

The old lady said, "I have lost my way, could you help me find the way with me?" He says, "Oh no, I'll be late for supper." And then the old guy says "Oh he won't be fit to take over this land." So after a couple of minutes the middlest son came. And he said "Hi, old woman, what are you doing here?" And she said "I have lost my way, will you help me find my way home again?" But the middlest son said, "Oh I'm sorry, no, I'll miss my supper." So the middlest son went off home. And then the smallest son came and said "Hi old woman what are you doing out here in the forest?" The old man, lady, woman said, "I have, I am lost and found, lost my way. Can you help me find my way home again?" "Sure" said the smallest son, "I will help you find, it isn't safe for you to be out in the woods." Then the old man took off the clothes he was wearing and ran up to his son and said, "You are the person that who will take over the land for me. You are kind to others and I want you. But your other brothers are not very kind and are cruel to others. So the youngest brother lived happily ever after and would get most, lots, most of the stuff he wanted.

SUBJECT 2 - 3

1. Once upon a time
2. There was a lady
3. The cricket and the spider went for a journey
4. The mouse got aten
5. He lived in a kingdom
6. He took a straw and he drank it
7. And the dog snapped at it
8. The owl flew away
9. The egg turned into a joker

There was this old man and there was three sons. One was, there was two big ones and a middle sized one and the old man was going to die soon so he was going to see which one was going to own his land and he went into the woods and got lost and then his big son came and said "I'll be late for my supper" and the other son came and said "I'll be late for my supper too". And the middle sized one said he would help you get home and then he said that "son" you would have my land" and the son wished he would drop dead.

SUBJECT 3 - 3

1. You could start like Once there was a girl who had no friends and she asked her Mother if she could, how she could have some friends and her Mother said "By being friendly with them", Like if someone gets hurt, you can help them, and they'll be your friend, or like if someone's talking about something you shouldn't say something silly. You shouldn't or they won't be your friend.

2. don't know
3. The cricket had to work so hard and he asked his friend if he could help and he helped and before the.
4. The mouse got caught by a bear and the lion helped the bear, helped the mouse get free.
5. The girl goes over the rainbow and gets the pot of gold and she comes back and her and her mother aren't poor anymore.
6. He gets some rocks and puts them in a bottle and the water gets higher and higher and he drinks from it.
7. The bone falls out and he doesn't have no more bone.
8. He tries to catch the raven and he catches it and then he puts the dress on her.
9. The girl knocks on the egg and asks for some food and whenever she asks for it, she gets it.

There was an old man and he had three sons. But he knew he was going to die pretty soon so he thought of dressing into an old lady and he would dress into that the next day and the next day he went out in the woods and he saw his three sons coming.

The oldest son came first and the old man said, "Could you help me find my way home?" The son said "I'll be late for my supper." Then the old man thought He isn't very friendly, I won't pick him for to replace me. So the middle sized son came, and he asked if he would help him and he said, "No, I'll be late for my supper. And the old man said to himself, he won't be the one to replace me. So the smallest one came and he said, "Could you help me find my way home?" And the smallest one said, "All right" and then the old man took off his disguise and he said, "You will replace me because you're reasonable and you helped me."

SUBJECT 4 - 3

1. Once upon a time
2. There was a little boy who said things so many times that when he said some things another time some people wouldn't believe him.
3. There was a cricket and a spider who were playing in a pond
4. A mouse ran across a lion's foot
5. The girl tried to go over the rainbow
6. He threw pebbles in there to make the water rise
7. He saw a dog
8. The owl, he was jumping and he stuck a pin in him as he was pinning it up.
9. The little girl had made him happy

One day an old man knew he was going to die and he thought which one of his sons would be the one to take the place of him. So one day he thought he'd dress up as an old woman and go to the forest. The next day came and the old man dressed up as an old woman and went into the forest. And the three sons came and the first son came, the oldest one, and asked him, "What are you doing so far out in the woods?" He said, "I am lost, can you help me find my way home?" "No, I cannot. I'm sorry, I cannot help you find your way home. I have to go home and eat my supper." So the oldest boy went home. The middle aged one came and the man asked again, "Can you show me my way to my house?" "No, I cannot, I will be late for my supper." So the middle aged one went home for supper.

The youngest one came and asked the old lady, "What are you doing so far out in these woods?" "I am lost, I wandered so far into the woods, I am lost. Will you help me find my way to my hut?" "Yes, I will" "But what about your supper?" "I can eat anytime I want to." When the man heard that he took his disguise off and said "You are the son that I have chosen to have my house. So when the man did, the boy went and moved his house happily ever after.

SUBJECT 5 - 3

1. Once upon a time
2. don't know
3. I think that the spider plays around all the time and the cricket gets ready for winter
4. Well, he saw a lion, and the lion grabbed him and said "What are you doing here?" or something like that. And the mouse said, "If you let me go, I'll pay you back some day." And then one day hunters got him in a net and the mouse chewed all the strings off and he was free.
5. Maybe the girl she goes over the rainbow and she finds the pot of gold and then they're all both rich and lives happily ever after.
6. He puts a whole bunch of stones in it and the water goes up and he drinks.
7. He lost his own piece of meat and it fell into the water and he didn't get it.
8. He might say that he doesn't like it anymore and then the owl won't feel bad.
9. He might be happy all through the Spring now, every day all the Spring and put it in his and it will shine everywhere and he can look at it for awhile and then leave.

In the beginning there was an old man. He was about to die and he wanted one of his sons to have to be kind enough and he would pick that person to get all his stuff and be rich like that. The first one came and he said "What are you doing in these woods?" to the old lady and she said "I've been walking and you, I lost my way, will you help me find it?"

And he said "No, because I have to go home and have some supper." So he left and the other son came and he said "What are you doing in the woods?" and the lady said, "I was walking and I lost my way. I was wondering if you could help me find my way back." So he said, "uh uh because I am going home and I'll be late for supper." And the other son came and he said, "What are you doing out in these woods?" And she said that "I was walking and I lost my way. I was wondering if you could help me find my way home?" "Yes, of course I will help you." And she said, "What about your supper?" And he said, "I can have supper anytime." And then his father said, "You'll be the one who gets all my stuff when I die." And that was the end. And then at the end he died, I think he died, and he got all his stuff and lived happily ever after.