TEACHING STANDARD ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

AT V. L. WILLIAMS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

FORT WORTH, TEXAS

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

For some time, teaching Standard English has been a problem of major proportion at Versia L. Williams Elementary School, Fort Worth, Texas. Even casual observation shows that pupils do not grasp much of the classroom English teaching, nor do they transfer that which they do learn to other school work or daily use. The instructional program in English at the Williams Elementary School, therefore, must be supplemented to the extent that the pupils may be given the kinds of experiences in the classroom that will ultimately result in their learning Standard English in a manner that will enable them to relate the "book talk" to their own idiolects, which according to Giddings (2) everyone has. They bring to school a well-established set of habits which they will continue to use in spite of the classroom instruction, because they hold on to the teaching of their first teachers -- their mothers. This conclusion is substantiated by Tidyman and Butterfield (5), who further point out that the habits of speaking and listening are determined by the home and community environment.
The main purpose of this investigation, however, is to help the teachers of all six grades to relate the new elementary English textbooks and the dialects of the pupils of Versia L. Williams Elementary School. These books, *New Directions in English*, Harper and Row Publishing Company, are linguistically oriented and take into account the home and environmental influences that are hindrances to the acquisition of Standard English. Thus, these new textbooks, properly used, should facilitate the accomplishment of this purpose by the teachers. The writer has taught at this school for the past twelve years, and this thesis arises from an effort to find a suitable method to use in the teaching of Standard English, beginning in the first grade. This work is intended to serve as a guide or help for the teachers who are not acquainted with the linguistic approach to the teaching of Standard English to the disadvantaged Negro child.

**Background Information on Students**

Enrollment at Williams Elementary School is between three and four hundred Negro pupils who come mostly from lower-income homes with a minority from middle-income homes. As a result they do not enjoy all the advantages that some children do. These children are exposed to radio and television in their homes but do not have sufficient contact with books, music, and works of art. To help provide more experiences for them with books, in addition to the library in the school, the Fort Worth Public Library sends its bookmobile to
the school every two weeks. In an effort to broaden their music
appreciation, the Junior League sponsors free musical concerts
given by the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra twice a year in the Will
Rogers Memorial Auditorium. The League also gives free perfor-
mances of children's fairy tales, rotating among the schools every
two years. Attendance at the musical concerts is made possible by
securing chartered buses and taking the pupils to the concerts under
the direction of the music teacher.

With the new consciousness of the Negro about his heritage and
his manifestation of pride in being black, the pupils of this school
comprise a good representation of Negroes who need a better founda-
tion for racial pride. Teaching them Standard English while respect-
ing the dialects that they have as native speakers of English should
reinforce this pride in their black heritage instead of developing the
inferiority complex that has underlain the prevalent attitude in years
past.

Significance of the Problem

Since a good knowledge of written and spoken Standard English
is becoming increasingly important, there is a dire need for the public
schools to develop and provide a more effective instructional program
commencing in the primary grades. There has been an awakening to
the seriousness of this problem, which is reflected in the new elementary
English textbooks adopted in Texas for 1969. They are further evidence
of this earlier awareness of the important role that English and the
language arts have in modern living. According to Tidyman and
Butterfield in *Teaching the Language Arts*, today's living is so complex
that new vocabularies and precise use of words are necessary.

Work is becoming more highly specialized, and
occupations arise which require refinements in the
use of language as a means of giving information and
of persuasion, as in the work of a business executive,
a salesman, a radio announcer, or a teacher. The
increasing diversity of interests and occupations of
members of the family requires discussion and the
resolving of conflicts (5, pp. 3-4).

Because people have been unable to express their ideas or
feelings, cases of grave conflicts have resulted. Since all are ex-
posed to the new mass media of communication, they come into con-
tact with new patterns of expression (4).

The beginning of the war on poverty in 1963, as reported by the
National Council of Teachers of English (1), also focused on the need
for basic education. The reasons were uncovered for the handicaps
which have long held Negroes back from contributing more to the free
society of this country. It became apparent through these studies that
the main solution to the poverty plight of Negroes rested in better
training in school, which will lead to vocational competence, to the
securing of better homes, and to the alleviation of intellectual atrophy.

With these developments in our society, the job of the English
teacher has become more significant. Pupils must have programs
planned for them that will properly emphasize the need for the
development of their oral and written expression so that they can make
a practical application of Standard English. Those students who event-
tually go to college will have a great need to write and speak Standard
English. Great difficulty is encountered by college students who do
not have good backgrounds in Standard English. As Edna McGuire
says,

Aside from teachers, probably no one realizes
the need for more and better writing in junior and senior
high schools so acutely as the college freshman who has
just completed his first semester of English (3, p. 256).

If the elementary English program is strengthened, the pupils
will have better tools for written and oral expression by the time
they reach junior high and high school where the need is more keenly
felt. When teachers do not improvise activities in an atmosphere
conducive to learning, students generally graduate from high school
lacking skills in both written and spoken Standard English.

Pupils who come to Williams Elementary School have dialects
which have hindered their learning of Standard English, and thus they
consistently rank low in classroom performance and on standardized
tests which are constructed on the basis of experiences of middle-
class children. These children must be helped to overcome this
handicap and still retain some respect for the importance of their
dialects. Skill is needed by the teacher to build the pupils' knowledge
of Standard English on the foundation laid at home without degrading
that foundation. They must be made to understand that Standard
English forms the basis for the communication of ideas more effectively among people who speak different English dialects throughout the country. Like many other racial or regional dialects, their dialects are not nationally accepted, but through the medium of Standard English these pupils can be understood and accepted wherever they go, even to England or Australia.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


CHAPTER II

DEALING WITH THE AFRO-AMERICAN DIALECT

The dialect of the Afro-American child has been considered substandard and has been thought to cause the child to be verbally retarded. Mildred R. Gladney and Lloyd Leaverton, curriculum researchers with the Department of Curriculum Development and Teaching, of the Chicago Public Schools, have done some research, however, which proves that the Afro-American dialect does not contribute to verbal retardation. In Elementary English these educators state that they have found that such a fact is not true of a large number of Negro children in the low-income area.

However, the nonstandard dialect is considered a serious problem by the teachers, who work tirelessly, if unsuccessfully, to change it, using such methods of constant correction, providing a model of Standard English and following the various speech activities suggested in many language arts manuals and supplements (6, p. 758).

Difficulty has arisen and will continue to arise until, as educators, teachers recognize the fact that the Afro-American child's dialect has a "definite structure and organization" (6, p. 758) which make it resistant to change. A demonstration of this was shown in the Gladney and Leaverton investigation that was conducted in the Chicago Public Schools during a special summer session in 1965.
Tape-recorded conversations were made of children in the kindergarten, and children who had just completed the third grade. Gladney and Leaverton found that the oral speech of both groups contained most of the major differences from Standard English. This fact was true even though the third graders had been exposed to Standard English and evidently learned much of it, because they were reading at grade level and some even above grade level.

As a result of their findings, these educators suggest that certain conditions must be formulated as a basis for an effective language arts program for children who use their language fully as a means of communication with the adults and other children in the community. First, it is suggested that "we must start at a point meaningful to the learner," that is, an actual statement made by the child. This is the signal for the teacher to begin the learning sequence in the teaching of Standard English patterns. Second, "in utilizing the different patterns of the non-standard dialect, preference should be given to that speech pattern that permits the transition from the child's dialect to the standard dialect by adding to the child's dialect." If the child says, "My mama pretty," then the teacher simply restates it to him as "My mama is pretty." A third condition is for the teacher to focus on one pattern at a time and use a systematic procedure that is in accordance with linguistic principles. Because of the influence that this condition can have on the child, it is a most important one.
Undesirable results can be the outcome if the child is corrected unsystematically every time he uses his dialect instead of Standard English. The child may become discouraged and confused, which may cause him to lose interest in learning Standard English. For instance, the use of *is* in simple statements, such as "He is going" must be followed by using "I am going" and "You are going" to avoid such forms as "I is going" and "You is going."

After an analysis of the taped conversations of children from the kindergarten through the third grade, it was found that there are four outstanding speech differences noted in verb usage. These differences, which became the focal point for the program, are common differences which are also found in the dialects of pupils at Williams Elementary School. They are

(a) The verbs *is* and *are* are omitted:
   (1) In simple sentences.
      "He my friend."
   (2) In sentences using the present participle form.
      "They playing house."
   (3) In sentences expressing the future using the verb *go*.
      "She gon be a nurse when she grow up."

(b) One verb form is used for all subjects in the present tense.
   "Chocolate milk look good."
   "The baby look like he do."
   "That boy have a piece of bread."

(c) One verb form is used for all subjects in the past tense.
   "We was hungry."
   "Somebody knock that down."
Be is used in place of is, am, and are and in sentences describing a recurring event.

"When my mama be gone, I take care of the babies."

"Sometimes he be riding in the alley."

"I be scared when it be thundering." (6, p. 759).

To cope with and try to solve these speech problems, Rhymed Pattern Practices were found to be very successful. These rhymes provide the model of Standard English usage, and with this method the teacher proceeds to elicit speech patterns from the children by telling a story or asking questions. Then the responses are written on the chalkboard or paper. Classification of sentences in two categories, namely, "Everyday Talk" or "School Talk", along with an explanation of the differences, should show the children that both kinds of talk are different ways of expressing ideas, but that they are to be used in different situations. Some oral and written exercises for study and practice will help make the pupils more proficient in the transition from nonstandard English to Standard English.

Lebov (8), in New Directions in Elementary English, states that there are some phonological variables which have grammatical consequences. One such variable is r-less-ness, wherein r becomes a schwa or even disappears before vowels as well as before consonants or pauses: "Carol is equal to Cal, nor is equal to gnaw, and interested equals inte'rested". Another phonological variable is the loss of l in words like tall, help, calm, and fault. However, one of the most
complicated variables is the general tendency towards the simplification of consonant clusters at the end of words -- clusters such as -st, -ft, -nt, -nd, -ld, and zd, in such words as past (pas), rift (riff), round (roun), told (tol), and raised (raz). The Standard English equivalents must be learned by the pupils.

In order to help our pupils make the substitution of standard usage for their nonstandard usage, "Aural-Oral" or the linguistic method of language teaching is suggested. This method allows the teacher the opportunity to treat the pupils' dialect as a primary language and Standard English as a second language. Finocchiario (4) describes the "Aural-Oral Method" as one that allows the teacher to present Standard English on a basis of describing the standard and nonstandard dialects. The basic idea is to teach Standard English to the pupils by letting them hear it first and then speak it, with lessons being presented orally first and written later on. Grammatical rules are subordinate to the actual practice of speaking the language, so that the pupils may grasp the basic structural patterns which will be presented in regular context of sentences that tell experiences of the pupils.

Two fundamental goals of the teaching of Standard English as a second language are "the acquisition of those abilities and skills necessary to communicate needs, interests, and ideas, and an understanding of the socio-cultural patterns of Standard English." (4) In
the teaching of English as a second language the attainment of these goals is aided when general principles of education are used as guides to teaching. Finocchiario (4) considers these principles as vital, first of which is that the teacher should learn what he can about the language characteristics and socio-educational background of his pupils so that the new teaching-learning experiences will be related to the previous experiences of the pupils. Second, the linguistic development of the pupils may be at different stages in the four main language skills. She points out that some children may hear sounds and not be able to say them; others may use patterns during practice and be unable to use them in real language situations, while still others may call out words in reading but cannot bring meaning to the printed page. With these factors in mind, the teacher will have to give the pupils specific practice in these skills on a group basis, if these weaknesses are common to the group. However, individual help will be necessary if the weaknesses are widely varied or some small groups may be used where a few pupils have common weaknesses. The third principle, that all pupils learn at different rates, accounts for the individual differences of pupils. Therefore, the teacher should make files of pictures, of flashcards, of experience charts, and of worksheets based on the nonstandard dialect of the pupils. The pupils may find this even more helpful if they are encouraged to contribute pictures and help to make the experience charts. According to the fourth
principle, pupils should consistently practice and repeat language in patterns in various situations. It is very important that pupils do the greatest amount of the speaking and not the teacher. This will give the pupils more confidence in the Standard English they are learning. Finally, precedence in teaching should be given to those language and socio-cultural learnings which the pupils can find immediate use for in school, at work, and in the community.

These educational principles can be made directly applicable to the Negro pupils when the teacher realizes that he must be aware of the context of their nonstandard dialect. The problem may lie, as Erickson (3) states, in the attitude of the teacher and not in the nature of the pupils' dialect. The prevalent attitude of teachers of not allowing pupils to bring their home language and experience into the classroom needs to be changed in order to facilitate the successful teaching of Standard English.

Erickson (3) further points out that what most teachers teach as "Standard English" is a spoken form of written English — that which is read but not often spoken by us. Standard English makes spoken language acceptable. It will be useful for Negro children to learn Standard English as a second language because it is occasionally functional in special situations. The requirement that one must learn to speak Standard English to be successful in school should be considered as secondary in teachers' as well as pupils' goals.
Various devices will be needed by the teacher in order to realize any success in teaching Standard English as a second language: devices such as the tape recorder, phonograph records, sound films, television, overhead projector, and opaque projector. Group discussions may be used wherein the pupils hear Standard English being used by their peers.

The tape recorder is an especially versatile device for the teacher because he can record patterns of sentences and paragraphs for the pupils to listen to in groups, thereby releasing the teacher to work with other group activity. If enough equipment is available, each pupil may record a paragraph on tape at the beginning of the semester, being sure to state his name for correct identification. Then the paragraph should be played back so that the pupil can hear just how he sounds and how he is using his language. Later on in the semester after the pupils have had practice in using Standard English patterns, they should record the same paragraph so that the teacher and pupils can compare the recordings to judge the progress that has been made by the pupils. In addition, Finocchiaro (4) suggests the following purposes that may be served by using the tape recorder which the teacher will find very useful: paragraphs can be recorded for dictation by the teacher; special radio or television programs may be transcribed for class listening and discussion later on; fairy tales, dialect stories and poems can be recorded for the entire class to hear
and become aware of dialect disadvantages, and sentence patterns may be recorded by the teacher with space left after each pattern for the pupil to repeat what he has heard.

Phonograph recordings of speeches by noted speakers, of choral readings, and directions to play activities or dances will give the pupils practice in listening to Standard English being used by various people. Television programs on which the speakers use Standard English will serve the same purpose. These same devices may be used to help the pupils become aware of the problems of dialects, if their attention is called to programs such as "Beverly Hillbillies" on television (5). A class discussion on the limitations of the dialect that the Clampitts speak will make the disadvantages of dialect more understandable. Since many television programs now have Negro participants, it will be particularly useful to discuss the language that they use. In conjunction with this, it would be profitable to invite some successful Negroes in the community to address the group at different periods during the year. They will serve as models to the pupils that Standard English can be acquired and used successfully.

As suggested earlier, the picture file should be a cooperative activity. Selection of pictures and mounting them can become a useful lesson to help pupils acquire Standard English as the teacher says to them, "Can you find a picture of a squirrel?", "Who has the glue?", or "Let's look for a card for this picture." This activity
would be very easy to include in the social studies class when it is time to change pictures on the bulletin board for each unit, or for any other subject to which pictures are applicable. Pictures with good Standard English patterns on them would be excellent.

The flannel board, the pocket chart, and the overhead projector may be used to reinforce the teaching of sentence patterns that have been presented to the pupils. The teacher may demonstrate to the class how various sentence patterns may be put together or altered by combining different beginnings and endings. Sentence strips may be used to compose complete sentence patterns, then cut into parts for ease of handling. On the overhead projector, the teacher can demonstrate the various combinations of sentence patterns that pupils may want to use. It must be kept in mind that sentences are to describe or tell about the everyday experiences of the pupils. Primary teachers will find pictures especially useful to help the children say or repeat sentence patterns. Motivational questions about the pictures may have to be asked. Varying of the questioner from the teacher to different pupils will make this activity more interesting, as well as give pupils another opportunity to use sentence patterns.

A major factor, as aforementioned, is the attitude of the teacher toward the pupils' dialect. When the teacher keeps in mind the fact that there are many dialects of English, it is easy for him to accept any nonstandard English as one of them. As pointed out by Brooks (2),
most of us move from formal to informal American English very readily, and so can the pupils who speak nonstandard English shift to Standard English easily if their "first language" is not rejected. Furthermore, if teachers show acceptance of the pupils' dialect by not saying their speech is wrong, the pupils will feel accepted, thus creating a better psychological atmosphere for learning. This can mean to the pupils that the teacher says:

I accept you and your language. Use it when you need it for communication with your family and friends. But, if you really want to be a successful participant in other areas of this American life, why not learn the language spoken there -- Standard English? (2)

Teachers realize that pupils will use nonstandard English because it is more effective around their peers and their families than Standard English. If they say "You done it," they will get favorable acceptance at home, but "You did it," will bring embarrassment to the pupils because the listeners will pay special attention to their speech.

Brooks (2) makes a powerful case for the prediction that unless language arts teachers accept the speech of culturally deprived pupils, these pupils will continue to become problems as drop-outs, hangers-on, or failures.

Grouping the class in English can add to the effectiveness of the program, because work in small groups provides the learners the opportunities to ask questions, receive praise, and accept encouragement more than in the class as a whole. A division of the class into
three rotating groups—namely, speaking, reading, and writing—will facilitate close study among the pupils. These groups should meet three days each week with the speaking group concentrating on listening to and repeating Standard English patterns, the reading group doing silent reading or seat work, and the writing group conducting a discussion of the particular weaknesses of the members of the group that need improvement. The other two days the class will meet as a whole to engage in various English activities. Golden (7) has found this method to be very successful because it challenges the student and allows the teacher time to gain insight into better teaching of the language. During group activities, the teacher will realize the real value of the tape recorder.

In teaching the pupils vocabulary and sentence patterns the teachers will say the word or pattern in a complete sentence, such as, "This is our room!" or "We are going to enjoy studying English this year." Pupils will be told to repeat the statement in unison, and the explanation will be given immediately that the statement is equivalent to "Dis is ow room" and "We gon enjoy studying English this year" or "We gon enjoy studying English dis yeah." Next these patterns will be placed on the chalkboard so that the pupils may see them and make mental associations with these patterns.

Individual oral practice will be conducted in the following manner:
Teacher: Show me a pencil.
Pupil: This is a pencil.

Teacher: Lend me a pencil.
Pupil: Here is a pencil.

Teacher: Give me a pencil.
Pupil: Here is a pencil.

These patterns contain some frequently used words that can function as good examples to help the pupils in their dialect substitutions.

For instance listed below are the standard forms and their non-standard equivalents:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STANDARD</th>
<th>NONSTANDARD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Show me a pencil.</td>
<td>Sho me a pencil.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is a pencil.</td>
<td>Dis is a pencil.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lend me a pencil.</td>
<td>Len me a pencil.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Here is a pencil.</td>
<td>Heah is a pencil.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give me a pencil.</td>
<td>Gimme a pencil.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Here is a pencil.</td>
<td>Heah is a pencil.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Drills like these will be repeated as the needs of the pupils demand repetition. More complicated patterns which are part of everyday speech will also be used orally in sentences. In answer to the questions "Did you eat breakfast this morning?" the pupils may reply "Yes'm I et breifus this morning." Instead of telling the pupils that their answers are incorrect, the teacher will simply repeat "Yes, Mrs. Gray, I ate breakfast this morning." After engaging in several exercises of similar construction, the class will be ready to work on the lessons in Chapter 12 of New Directions in English. (1) The
teacher will note the nonstandard equivalents to the sentences given in this lesson. For example, "Mabel is the leader" is equal to "Mabel be the leader"; "Joan needs company" is equal to "Joan need company," and "They are friends" is equivalent to "They friends."

When pupils have made substantial progress in dialect substitution, the teacher will be able to help them learn that paragraphing, variety in use of conjunctions, modified ideas, flexible language, and the position of a word or phrase in a sentence can enhance the study of Standard English (10).

Oral composition helps solve the problems of long, run-on statements and punctuation. By reading aloud their written work, pupils can readily see not only where punctuation marks should be placed, but also where sentences end and others begin. Written composition can be made easier for the pupils with the help of sentence patterns. Another help in written composition is the tape recording of well-constructed sentences which the pupils hear and repeat. Sentences may be unfolded on the screen before the pupils by using the opaque projector and a roll of adding machine paper on which sentences have been written. The paper is drawn through the projector so that pupils may be shown how words function in the sentence, that some parts cannot stand alone, and that punctuation is added in the right places. The teacher may stop at desired places in the sentence or return to certain parts that pupils fail to understand.
First impressions of paragraphs will come at the very beginning of the year, when pupils will be encouraged to relate some of their experiences, at which time they will use two or more closely related thoughts on one topic. Experience charts will be excellent visual reinforcement to lend concreteness to this activity. The nonstandard dialect forms of the pupils will be recorded on the charts, which can be used later on in the year as bases of judgment as to the amount of progress made by the pupils during the year. Pupils can be taught logical organization of materials and ideas by using paragraphs.

Overworking of such conjunctions as and, or, but, and because can be helped if the meanings of these words are taught. Then the teacher may demonstrate on the chalkboard how these conjunctions may be interchanged in sentences. A list of these conjunctions on a chart or in a corner of the chalkboard will serve as a ready reference for the pupils as they do original oral or written composition. This is another place where the adding machine strips under the opaque projector can be very helpful.

Modification of ideas may be taught by the use of the chalkboard, flannel board, and overhead projector. At the beginning examples will be simple so that all pupils will understand them. For example, "I saw animals" can be extended so as to communicate more ideas with progressive additions of words. As a linguist, the teacher understands that native speakers of a language can glean a great deal
of information from this kernel or basic sentence. But the addition of words makes certain just what the speaker is intending to communicate to the listener. Modification such as "I saw a thousand animals" to "I saw more than a thousand animals," and "I saw more than a thousand animals with spiral horns" makes it absolutely clear what idea the speaker is communicating to his listener (10, p. 208).

A knowledge of the flexibility of the language will show the pupils that words, phrases, and clauses can be placed in various positions to emphasize a particular part of the sentence. Idiomatic expressions are especially good for this learning experience. The teacher will demonstrate to the child that he may say, "I ran quickly back home," "I quickly ran back home," or "Quickly, I ran back home" and be expressing the same thought in three different patterns. With these different word arrangements, pupils will be aware of the fact that they can change the positions of some words in the sentence and yet retain the basic meaning of the sentence. They should discover various ways to begin sentences, vary their lengths, and make different kinds of sentences. This will help them learn to link sentences together in paragraphs. Awkward combinations of words that affect the sound and rhythm of the sentence can be learned through experimentation and thus avoided.

However, the teacher should not fail to alert the pupils to the fact that there is a limitation to flexibility dependent upon the idea that
is being expressed in the sentence. Sometimes the sentences may not lend themselves to more than one arrangement. Then, too, choices of rearrangements become more limited as the sentence progresses toward completion. For example, "Since I was going to town, I got ready" gives the writer many choices after "Since," "I," "was going," up to "to town." But from that point on the choices made depend on the first part of the sentence.

Linguistics has emphasized the importance of the position that a word holds in the sentence. This position can signal the meaning of a word. Experimentation with word and phrase changes in position will be used to help pupils to understand this fact. A great deal of enjoyment can be got by the children as they make examples and then change the words or phrases to different positions and sometimes compose sentences that are comical or nonsensical. These examples may be written on the chalkboard or the overhead projector so that pupils may get the visual image of the sentence. Here are some possible constructions resulting from position changes:

Mary gave Jean an invitation.
Jean gave Mary an invitation.

The dog bit the man.
The man bit the dog.

The innate linguistic understanding that the child has of his native language will let him know that the first change is possible without affecting the basic soundness of the sentence. However, the second
sentence thus changed should bring about either laughter or disbelief.

Different pupils will be asked to volunteer to help with the preparation of attractive bulletin boards. On the boards will be placed pictures and materials relative to the lessons as well as some of the pupils' classwork. This will make the pupils feel that they are part of the learning activity that is taking place in the classroom.

Pupils will be further motivated toward learning Standard English by directing their attention to billboards, television, and radio commercials to find examples of patterns used in the classrooms. A collection of magazines and newspapers in the classroom will enable the pupils to look for Standard English patterns and help to reinforce the idea that the learning of Standard English is necessary.

Creative activities such as play acting, playing games, and staging puppet shows are excellent activities for the upper elementary pupils. The younger pupils will enjoy block building, finger painting, housekeeping, playing in the rhythm band, and making puppets. Planning and getting ready for such activities will afford many opportunities for the pupils to gain experience in the use of Standard English. Pupils should be encouraged to write original plays, stories, and poems. The plays may be presented before the class and the stories and poems may be read to the class, if the pupils are willing to do so.

Many activities should be used to encourage oral participation
by all of the pupils. Once a week a classroom discussion should be held that may be called "Just Plain Talk," "Caf Fest," "Friday Hour," "Buzz Session," or "A Conversation Period."

These sessions can be made productive if the teacher stresses rules and etiquette of good conversation in English class. The teacher suggests that irrelevant subjects that arise during regular class time be discussed at this particular period. Thus the sessions are enjoyed by the pupils as interesting talk, and the teacher is as inconspicuous as possible. As a result of this activity, the teacher will realize a closer, more harmonious relationship with the pupils. The teacher should be an alert observer to discover the speaking problems of the pupils and the dialect usage common to them. Initiation of this activity at the very beginning of the year will provide the teacher with dialect patterns to use in classroom learning.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


CHAPTER III

THE NEW TEXTBOOKS

Upon opening the New Directions in English (1), the teacher may be greatly surprised to find that the traditional approach to English is not used. A new linguistic approach has been incorporated into these books to make English more interesting and applicable to daily life.

These books have two main sections, a language section and a composition section. In the language section, there are fourteen chapters which deal with how one learns, how language works, and how language is used. At the beginning the child finds out that he learns through perception, solving problems, and classifying items. A knowledge of how his language works is gained through the study of chapters three through seven. Here the child will get practice working with words to learn how they function in sentences; practice in denoting, connoting, and getting meaning from context; and practice in using evidence to infer meaning or conclusions. The latter part of the language section helps the child to understand different kinds of language, to understand how communication can be carried on in ways other than speaking, to understand that his language has changed, to understand the backgrounds of words, and to understand how to make his language fit certain situations. Finally, the child is able to
discover how to make sense about sentences through the use of
sentence patterns, and he learns the use of punctuation marks in a
very unusual manner.

The Composition Section is also divided into three sections:
composing sentences is stressed in the first section which includes
Units one to eight; second, the child's attention is focused on com-
posing paragraphs in Units nine through thirteen; and finally, in Units
fourteen to eighteen the child is taught how to combine the sentences
and paragraphs into stories and compositions. In order to make the
sections as effective as intended, they should be taught in conjunction
with each other.

Of course, the innovations in English teaching may be a bit
disconcerting to the teacher who has become accustomed to the tradi-
tional method and does not wish to deviate from it. But the teacher
who accepts this new approach to English and does the best that he
can will no doubt be surprised at the response by the children. The
teacher needs to become fairly well acquainted with the texts so as to
be able to introduce them enthusiastically to the class. The child is
allowed to use his everyday language and experiences. Implications
in the title can be discussed to help the pupils understand what they
can expect from the new books. The fact should be stressed that
teachers and educators are trying to help pupils enjoy learning English
more than in the past. The pictures reveal that authors and publishers
have come to the realization that different races should be represented in textbooks so that every child can feel some identity with the lessons in the books.

In the teaching of composition, it is important that the teacher remember that what the child writes is more significant than how correctly he writes it. Composition writing can be stifled if the teacher stresses form too much. The red pencil should be put aside so that children will not be afraid to put their thoughts on paper. This marking of errors on papers has been one of the major hindrances to composition.

The first chapter of the book helps pupils to take good looks at themselves in relation to their surroundings. The lesson can be introduced by asking motivating questions such as "Do you belong to any group?" "Are all the members of your particular group alike?" "Are all members of our class alike?" and "Do other pupils show the same reaction to things that you do?" Pupils should become aware as the answers are given that no two persons perceive things the same nor do they react in the same way to similar situations. If the teacher reads orally the material on the pages, the pupils will be able to get greater meaning from it. Then their discussion of the picture should help them to understand the meaning of the word 'hookah.' This word is a cue for the teacher to remind the pupils that they sometimes use words whose meanings are not clear to their listeners, such as some of their dialect expressions; thus Standard English is a necessary substitution.
Pictures are excellent for children to write about. Each child should be given the opportunity to write a paragraph about the picture at the bottom of page 2 (1), the paragraphs exchanged several times, and comparisons made of the paragraphs, so that pupils will learn how their other classmates see the same picture that they saw. No mention of errors should be made because that is not the purpose of this lesson. If some of the paragraphs are not easy to read and understand, this gives the teacher the opportunity to call to the attention of the pupils the necessity for making their writing easy to understand.

This activity may be extended by having the children choose some other picture, either one in the English book or one somewhere in the room and write about the picture. The same procedure of exchanging papers for comparison will help them to see clearly just what they should be doing in composition.

As a means of summarizing what the pupils have learned, some questions may be asked, "Did you learn something about odd words today?" "Can you see the reason why there can be different descriptions of the same picture?" and "Do you have a better understanding of how to write about what you have seen?"

As pupils' responses are given, they will be written on the chalkboard just as they say them. This gives them a chance to see their dialect forms in writing. Standard English equivalents will be
given along with nonstandard forms, and the children will be given
more practice in the art of dialect substitution for Standard English.
These steps followed throughout the year in similar exercises will
continue to reinforce the learning of Standard English.

A profitable chapter in helping pupils to learn about their
language and their dialects is Chapter Nine. It begins by giving some
information concerning the relationship that English has to other
modern languages, through a background of the history of Modern
English. Later in the chapter presents material about how time and
distance influence the language that people speak. Most useful of all
to this particular approach to the teaching of English is the third
section, which deals with a person’s speech and how it is influenced
by the groups to which he belongs whether they are national, regional,
trade, or social. All of the pupils should be encouraged to take part
in the discussion of this chapter so as to gain deeper insights into
their language which will lessen the confusion about the various usages
in the language. It is important that the child learn through the study
of this chapter the difference between a dialect and a language. Some
excellent exercises for this purpose are found on page 126 (1), in which
the pupils are given examples of dialect expressions commonly found
in the United States. All dialects are treated with equal respect, and
the pupils are given the opportunity to put the expressions in their
own dialects. Here they can learn that no dialect is inferior to another
one but simply another way of expressing the same idea. So they can feel proud to learn that their dialect that has been considered "substandard" is really "nonstandard," like all others.

Since the idea of teaching Standard English as a second language is the primary concern of this study, it is suggested that the teacher may find it very helpful to use Chapter Nine to begin the classroom activities. If it is favorably received by the pupils, it should make the teaching of the other portions of the textbook much easier because it will build the confidence of the pupils in their dialects and the language they use.

The teacher can help the pupils relate dialect expressions to the various groups of persons that they come in contact with. Emphasis should be placed on the understanding that formal and informal speech requires different vocabularies. The pupils will find it interesting to make lists of the different words that they use during a period of time as they move from one group to another. They may be surprised to discover that they have such a great command of the language that they speak. A comparison of these lists will help pupils to add to their vocabularies some expressions that their classmates use but which may not be known to others. An introduction can be made at this point of the different speech groups that are represented in the school. This has a direct relationship to the idea of "School Talk" which is mentioned earlier in this chapter. Lists can be made of the different expressions
that they have encountered thus far in school. On page 128 the teacher
discovers that the classroom is no longer forbidden territory for the
use of slang. In most instances pupils are more proficient in slang
usage than in Standard English. Another challenge is presented here
to the teacher to help pupils to learn synonymous expressions in
Standard English to what they are saying in slang language. A good
reference to be included in the school library or classroom library,
if possible, is a slang dictionary, such as *Dictionary of American
Slang*.

One of the most important methods of teaching Standard English
is through the use of sentence patterns, as discussed above. This is
the method that pupils have used to learn to talk in the beginning,
through imitating the sentence patterns of their family. In Chapter
Twelve the teacher can help pupils examine the sentence patterns
and learn them for formal usage. Instead of giving the pupils infor-
mation about the sentence patterns, the teacher can use these exercises
to help the pupils learn about the different patterns inductively. This
chapter is a good background for the preparation of the pupils to be
able to recognize and understand the basic part of each sentence which
is taught in Chapter Thirteen. The teacher should give the pupils
plenty of time to explore the lessons in Chapter Thirteen. In correlating
the chapters, this can easily be done with Chapters Three and Thirteen.
The teacher helps the pupils to progress from basic sentences to
expanded sentences and to be able to distinguish between the two patterns. This helps the pupils to understand the use of modifiers in expanding their sentences to make the message clearer that the sentence is communicating to the reader or listener. Here again, the second language aspect is taught by dialect substitutions for words, phrases or sentence patterns.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

From the preceding study of the suggested teaching of Standard English as a second language by the aural-oral method to nonstandard speakers of English in the Williams Elementary School, and the information that has been gathered through various studies of this technique, the English teacher of the disadvantaged pupils may see some of the benefits that may be derived from this new method.

Foremost among the benefits that may be derived from the teaching of Standard English as a second language is that the pupils are allowed to retain the dialects that they have brought from home. The success that such an approach has had so far offers real hope to the teacher that the pupils in his classroom will likewise find the method beneficial, thus helping the pupils to learn Standard English, which is so vital to their futures as contributing and useful citizens in their country.

Another benefit of aural-oral method is the use of the sentence patterns through which the child learns how sentences are made and the function of words in the sentences. This particular treatment can help clarify in the pupils' mind the agreement of subject and verb, the function of modifiers and their use to expand sentences, and the
idea of how to put his thoughts together in groups of sentence patterns that are related in order to compose paragraphs and compositions. This is an invaluable boost to the composition part of English teaching. In this way words, phrases, and sentences patterns have more meaning to the pupils where they are found in context instead of isolated.

The inductive method of learning proclaimed by these linguistically-oriented textbooks offers additional benefit to the method. Research in recent years has supported the theory that the child understands more clearly and retains knowledge more thoroughly if he observes, and draws his own conclusions and inferences. The new approach offers a great deal of promise in the realm of learning Standard English. A desire both to observe carefully and to question intelligently can be awakened in the pupils by the liberal attitude of this method. Extended to teacher observation, this same method may lead to a more enlightened attitude toward many usages heretofore labeled incorrect. Less rejection and more intelligent acceptance of debatable usages should be a result.

A careful evaluation of this aural-oral method of teaching Standard English as a second language leads to the conclusion that this new system promises to be of great value to the teacher in language instruction. If the teacher is searching for ways to improve his teaching of Standard English to the disadvantaged child, he would do well to explore the possibilities of this field, for much practical help may be found here.
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Books


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