
Abraham S. Fischler College of Education ETD Archive

11-1-1985

Creative Approaches to Vocabulary Enrichment in Fourth Grade Students Through Semantic Analysis

Jeannine G. Counts
Nova Southeastern University

Follow this and additional works at: https://nsuworks.nova.edu/fse_etda



Part of the [Education Commons](#)

All rights reserved. This publication is intended for use solely by faculty, students, and staff of Nova Southeastern University. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, now known or later developed, including but not limited to photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the author or the publisher.

NSUWorks Citation

Jeannine G. Counts. 1985. *Creative Approaches to Vocabulary Enrichment in Fourth Grade Students Through Semantic Analysis*. Master's thesis. Nova Southeastern University. Retrieved from NSUWorks, Center for the Advancement of Education. (5)
https://nsuworks.nova.edu/fse_etda/5.

This Thesis - NSU Access Only is brought to you by NSUWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Abraham S. Fischler College of Education ETD Archive by an authorized administrator of NSUWorks. For more information, please contact nsuworks@nova.edu.

CREATIVE APPROACHES TO VOCABULARY ENRICHMENT
IN FOURTH GRADE STUDENTS THROUGH SEMANTIC ANALYSIS

by

JEANNINE G. COUNTS

A Practicum Report
submitted to the Faculty of the Center for the
Advancement of Education of Nova University in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Science.

November 1985

ABSTRACT

Creative Approaches to Vocabulary Enrichment in Fourth Grade Students Through Semantic Analysis

Counts, Jeannine G., 1985: Practicum Report, Nova University, Center for the Advancement of Education

Descriptors: Elementary Education/ Intermediate Grades/ Grade 4/ Vocabulary Development/ Vocabulary Skills/ Lexicography/ Synon/ms/ Antonyms/ Thesauri/ Semantics/ Semantic Analysis/ Reading Skills/ Language Enrichment/ Enrichment Activities/ Language Development/ Learning Centers (Classrooms)/ Acceleration (Education)

This practicum report focuses on an enrichment strategy designed and implemented by the author to increase the vocabulary of accelerated fourth grade students. There were two criteria to be met by members of the target selection. First, they had to excel in language arts as indicated by superior test scores on the county reading test. Secondly, each participant had language arts grades of excellent status as evaluated by the previous instructor.

The aim of the strategy was to present similarities and dissimilarities of target words and affect positive changes in the students' performances and attitudes toward their creatively written expressions. The students scored less than a mastery level of 80% on a pretest designed to challenge their understanding of word meanings. They were offered access to junior editions of the dictionary and thesaurus but did not realize the functional properties of these informational sources.

Included in the author's approach were teacher-made and commercially reproducible materials. Formal vocabulary instruction was presented daily with accompaniment of the dictionary and thesaurus. The students were given opportunities to visit the media center and to use the computer to write and record their compositions. The author made many laminated self-paced task cards designed to attract student interest. Superior abilities were challenged and levels of interest remained high. The thesaurus and dictionary have become commonly used since their introduction. The measureable success of the practicum was indicated by the range of 90% to 100% mastery of the target list of words. It is the author's conclusion that formal presentation and practice methods in semantic analysis are highly beneficial to accelerated students.

(Appendices include: a teacher survey, a pretest/posttest, a student questionnaire, and pretest/posttest student scores.)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
TITLE PAGE	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
CHAPTER	
I PURPOSE	1
II RESEARCH	5
III METHOD	14
IV RESULTS	23
V RECOMMENDATIONS	26
VI REFERENCE LIST	29
<u>APPENDICES</u>	
APPENDIX A - - Teacher Survey	31
APPENDIX B - - Student Attitude Questionnaire	32
APPENDIX C - - Pretest/Posttest	33
APPENDIX D - - Student Pretest/Posttest Scores	34

I. PURPOSE

This practicum was exercised in an elementary school located in a resort area on Florida's west coast. The school was attractive and the staff enjoyed significant parent interest and support. The classes were self-contained, heterogeneously grouped, and ranged in level from kindergarten to grade five. The student population was approximately 700 with 40 instructors. Much of the population of the area was transient due to desirable conditions which encourage winter residency and vacationers. On occasion, this factor had impact in the classroom.

The class setting included 30 fourth grade students of predominately middle-class families. One-third of the students comprised the target audience for this study based on their previous scholastic performances and superior test scores on the county reading management program.

The writer was responsible for the lesson planning and teaching of all subjects, testing and evaluation of students, record keeping, and reporting to parents. The implementation of this proposal was also incumbent upon the writer.

The basic reading approach employed a basal text and its related materials. It was the most popular

reading approach in this county. The vocabulary was developed sequentially for the students. Treatment given the word listings was usually conventional. The list was placed before the students, the words were pronounced, and minimal discussion followed due to the time scheduling of several reading groups within a class. The usual follow-up contact with the words was in one or two workbook pages. There was no prescribed recollection or application for creatively written activities.

The author suggested that students receive vocabulary instruction involving semantic analysis and that creative opportunities be provided to encourage the use of a vocabulary of enrichment quality.

The junior dictionary and the junior thesaurus accompanied this practicum study.

It had been significantly noted that fourth graders demonstrated a discrepancy between their performance on the county's comprehensive reading test and their actual ability to effectively apply skills in creative expressions and compositions. The county required 80% or above for proficiency which enabled students to progress to the next higher reading level. The discrepancy was strongly indicated by the performance results as well as teachers' responses to a survey submitted by the writer (Appendix A).

Intermediate teachers from the resident school

and a neighboring school were surveyed to further establish credence to the need for vocabulary enrichment for accelerated students. All of the teachers responded positively to the question regarding the need for enrichment. Additionally, all had observed students who would benefit from the challenge of extended instruction.

The test scores showed that a target audience of ten students scored between 96% and 100%. These scores signified excellent achievement in the reading and English components of the language arts. Further, they indicated academic superiority and an above-average readiness level for attaining functional, enriched vocabulary. Yet, the students demonstrated that they had only minimal understanding of semantically similar and dissimilar characteristics of words as they continued to submit repetitious duplication in their creatively written compositions. In informal discussion, intermediate teachers did not feel that these students were simply making careless errors, nor did they feel that the youngsters were deficient in their backgrounds of experiences. Therefore, the writer suggested that these children needed more exposure to formal instruction of vocabulary and techniques that make writing more practical.

In addition to teacher observation, the students

were given a story which repeatedly used the term "great" as a meaningful descriptive word. The story content was offered within the vernacular of primary students. The children were asked to substitute the word "great" with a word of similar meaning. There were five possible places to respond using synonyms. The students were advised that the dictionary and thesaurus were available if they wished to use them for help on this task. The results proved that the children were unable to choose a semantic likeness more than once. Two of the youngsters were unable to express one substitution. None of the group used the dictionary or the thesaurus as an informational source to locate synonymous meanings. In a discussion which followed, the students revealed that they were unaware of the functional properties of these informational sources.

The children were also administered an attitude questionnaire regarding feelings toward creative stories (Appendix B). Some responses showed negativism, and most showed insecurity. All students responded that they were more comfortable with a given list of words from the teacher.

Students who had academically achieved above-average grades in the language arts should have reflected a degree of superiority in practical application of oral and written discourse. Further,

an awareness of both the dictionary and thesaurus as helpful sources of information at the junior level was necessary. Those factors were not evidenced in a positive way.

Finally, youngsters who exhibited aptitude and readiness for language arts enrichment, as verified by superior test performances and observations by their teachers, should have been afforded challenging opportunities to develop their talents in the elementary grades. The writer concluded that active experimentation addressed to solving the aforementioned concerns was indeed a priority.

II. RESEARCH

The search which follows will be addressed to the key words in the practicum title. Vocabulary and semantic analysis will be discussed. Creative approaches will be treated in the chapter regarding method.

To determine the best approach to teaching vocabulary to school-aged children is as difficult as defining "language" itself. A child will not use a new word unless it is meaningful to him and until he knows the semantic features of a word so well that he is able to use it spontaneously in several different contexts (Barrett, Huisingsh, Jorgensen, Zachman, 1983).

Traditionally, vocabulary is presented to students in a large-group situation. The word list is located in the teacher's manual of the basal text. As noted by McCourt-Lewis (1980), "...ten words, one under the other, listed on the chalkboard." There have been improvements in the past decade which show that major textbook producers have made a concerted effort to present a vocabulary and/or glossary of terms to accompany lessons in elementary subject areas. This is desirable according to Standal and Shaefer (1978) who state, "The words are best introduced in the affected content area." However, there is no prescribed manner in which to help students apply the newly introduced vocabulary to encourage verbal extension beyond the lesson at hand. There are no semantically-related terms presented to help students anchor the new information. Harris and Smith (1980) contend that development of the associative process can be encouraged through the use of games and exercises which put the written word and the associated stimulus together:

1. (beginning readers) The child can match words with pictures on a bulletin board or flannelboard.

2. (any level) The child can demonstrate (or see demonstrated) the differences among words that are close in meaning. For example, a child can first walk , then ramble , totter , tiptoe , and stride

across the room, thus associating these words with their actions.

3. (any level) Relationships among words can be shown in diagrams, helping the child to make associations.

Investigations of semantic feature analysis (Johnson and Pearson, 1978) show that children gain experience and begin to notice that some words share the same features. They soon see that they vary in amounts and degrees of the shared feature i.e., illnesses are serious, but diseases are more serious.

A whole set of relationships has been portrayed through a semantic network approach consisting of nodes and links. The nodes represent concepts, and the links represent relations between concepts. Word concepts are derived from repeatable reality. They are the composition of internal and external experiences. The relationship between vocabulary expansion and growth through experience are highly relative (Collins and Quillan, 1969).

Artley (1975) states, "It is not the identification of each word in sequence, with word meaning added to word meaning in serial order, that gives meaning to a sentence. It is the sentence that gives meaning to the words." Toms-Bronowski (1982) says that effectiveness of vocabulary teaching techniques have shown that the specific teaching of

vocabulary is desirable and improves general word knowledge.

In researching the literature the writer feels, for purpose of clarity to the reader, that the following examples of instructional strategies should be explained and general sequence characteristics listed. They are discussed here as they would be suggested for use in teaching vocabulary through semantic analysis.

1. Semantic Mapping . This process is categorical structuring of information in graphic form. It is an individualized content approach, in that students are required to relate new words to their own experiences and prior knowledge (Johnson and Pearson, 1978). A completed semantic map provides the teacher with information about what the students know and reveals anchor points upon which new concepts can be introduced (Johnson et. al, 1982).

The general instructional sequence for semantic mapping is to:

- A. Select a word (topic) of classroom interest or need such as a word central to a story to be read.
- B. Write the word on the chalkboard.
- C. Ask the class to think of as many words as they can that are in some way related to the target word you have written, and jot them on

paper, in categories.

D. Have individuals share the words they have written and, as they do, write them on the board and attempt to put them into categories.

E. Next have the students name the categories.

Student discussion is crucial to the success of semantic mapping. Through this method, students learn the meanings and uses of new words and new meanings for known words (Johnson et. al, 1982).

2. Semantic Feature Analysis involves the following steps:

A. Select a category.

B. List some words within the category (bicycle, car).

D. List some features shared by some of the words (two-wheeled, motor).

E. Add additional features.

F. Complete the expanded matrix with pluses and minuses.

G. Discover and discuss the uniqueness of each word.

H. Repeat the process with another category (Johnson, 1978).

Standal and Shaefer (1978) offer the following strategies for improving vocabulary:

1. Attempt to develop word consciousness. To choose words precisely, one must appreciate their

expressiveness and power. This requires a consciousness of words and language. In addition, Barret et. al (1983) support this statement with "We manipulate other people with words. We win arguments with words. We convince..., we express... and we can be verbose, explicit, and vague with words."

2. Identify clusters of synonyms and antonyms to help students learn many forms through association. Culyer (1978) advocates grouping words that are semantically related to help young students recognize the similarity in meanings. As students become more mature, they should receive help in distinguishing various connotations of similar words (eg. stout, fat, obese, heavy). Regarding antonyms, teachers should begin with words familiar to the children and progress to new words. Warner (1972) states that listing many synonyms and antonyms and employing them in short writing assignments develops writing skills as well as vocabulary skills.

3. Try to increase students' awareness of words with multiple meanings. This will likely lead to greater comprehension. Work is needed in this area because when one knows a word in a particular context, a mind set may be developed for that familiar meaning, states Culyer (1978).

4. Attempt to make students aware of the use of figurative language. Comprehension is helped when

awareness in this area of language is used. Basal texts use figurative language during the late primary and early intermediate grades. Metaphors, idioms, and personification are devices that may be necessary to the comprehension of a reading selection. To truly understand them, students will need to use them in their own writing and speech.

5. Use structured overviews of text chapters for clarifying relationships among words and concepts. Pachtman and Riley (1978) profess the teacher use of overviews *and* diagrams that depict graphically *the* relationships among concepts and terms.

6. Provide specific instruction in the use of specialized vocabulary. If students are to understand what they read, they will require specific instruction.

Semantic feature analysis capitalizes on the categorical nature of memory structures for individual words. To analyze similarities and differences in words and to detect fine semantic shadings, Johnson and Pearson (1978) suggest the following exercises:

- A. List words that share a feature.
- B. Rank synonyms on one feature. (astound, astonish, amaze)
- C. Use word categories. This is designed to help expand vocabulary through classification.

D. Omission. Decide which word is the misfit and discuss reasons why.

E. Category match. This activity involves dictionary usage.

With consideration for all research and appreciation of all strategies proposed during the literature search, it seems appropriate to summarize in this statement: "For people to really own a word, they must be able to both use it themselves and understand it when it is used by others (Standal and Schaefer, 1978).

The writer concluded that it is incumbent upon us, as educators, to expose students to the advantage of enrichment exercises which will likely promote both productive and receptive vocabularies as they show readiness for them.

Possible alternatives have been explored, considered, and critiqued. "Though there is agreement among many researchers that word knowledge is an important component of comprehension, there have been few research studies designed to examine the effectiveness of training in vocabulary development, either independently or in relation to the entire comprehension process" (Davis, 1972). In a study by Johnson (1981), he suggests that effectiveness of training studies are few, in part, because the question of why word knowledge is so important is

still unsolved.

Since the time of Davis' quote, the writer found a wealth of material regarding experimentation and results of various effective techniques. There are still as many strategies of effectiveness, it seems, as there are parents, teachers, and clinicians who teach vocabulary.

Regarding strategy, Petty, et. al. (1974) combine new ideas with traditionally proved methods as follows: "Major emphasis...should be upon teaching new words in natural and meaningful situations, but some value can be gained from exercises. These include filling in blanks, writing a numeral or letter, or circling or underlining words."

A quote from the local newspaper as reported in December, 1964, presents an idea to warrant careful consideration and to challenge the editing pens of educators. "Since some of the most intimidating things to elementary schoolchildren are spelling, punctuation, and grammar, why not just give them the freedom to write in their own way and worry about rules later?" Omitting the intimidation (in the early elementary grades) of necessary punctuation and correct spelling will probably allow creativity to flow more freely. This seems a valid consideration since each time one speaks to someone or shares his written ideas, his ego is on the line. Educators will

agree that students have a fragile self-estimation and this could be a motivational factor ^{limiting} toward verbal expression.

After careful study of the related literature, the following statement can be made: As an enrichment strategy to increase vocabulary, a plethora of teacher-made and commercially-prepared materials were offered to accelerated students. Daily instruction to focus on semantic analysis was active throughout the implementation period.

III. METHOD

Numerous preparatory steps were requisite for proper implementation of this practicum study. Vocabulary lists of target words were charted for group skill exercises, and individual copies were placed in the students' working file folders. Various game-type materials which involved letters and words were gathered: i.e., Scribbage by Lowe Company and Password by Milton Bradley Company. Teacher-made bulletin board characters and captions were colorfully prepared and laminated as background beginnings for the students to creatively fill with their productions. Four such bulletin boards were planned for the nine week period.

The author created group-sized pictures in colored chalks for the purpose of generating original

ideas for a writing/discussion segment of the students' expressive efforts. The pictures were laminated and were used in partnership with the featured formal lesson and target vocabulary.

Fifty task cards with attractively-colored characters and printed texts were laminated for individual student use. These were offered as self-paced opportunities. Vocabulary cards made of oaktag material were displayed to create related "family" groups of words which provided visual stimulus for initiating this study. The cards were later used as a hands-on student activity game of matching related words. Graphic writing instruction was presented for fun and to emphasize another dimension for making compositions interesting.

After the strategy had been fully planned, cubicles in the media center were used as needed by the target students throughout the nine week program. These provided a privacy area conducive to creative thinking as mentioned in the proposal. Student instruction and applied exercises consisted of 30 minutes each day.

A significant amount of time and energy was expended in the materials preparation and many student opportunities were provided. The author felt this unity was necessary to attain the goal of the practicum.

Week One

A teacher-made pretest was administered to determine the appropriateness of the level of difficulty of the target list. Students scored 35% or below which established the target list as quite suitable for the study.

Introduction of the practicum through bulletin board characters of "The Nyms" and explanations of their names established a beginning. The dictionary and the thesaurus were presented and their functions were discussed. Student copies of stories which allowed the search for synonymous terms were used. This promoted the use of the dictionary and the thesaurus.

Activity cards were offered each day and partnerships were invited initially. Self-confidence and a degree of comfort surfaced the third day as students appeared to feel a rhythm to their routine. Short stories and poems were alternately read to the group.

A target list of five vocabulary words were analyzed through a method the students named "hurricaneing". The action featured a word and students named any word within their experiences that was relative. From this came the word family. Synonyms were named as members of "families". This process was repeated throughout the study using new

target words each week. Flash cards taken from the bulletin board were used as a manipulative matching game.

Weeks Two and Three

A word bank to promote language awareness and extend vocabulary was begun. The students transformed an unattractive box into an interesting, colorful depository for new words. The objective of the student collection was to study and discuss functional uses of the words submitted. Successful attempts were made to anchor the new words with familiar ones. Practical application and illustration in sensible, meaningful ideas occurred in a sundry of oral and written expressions. The students were offered several choices for reporting in regard to the weekly collection as a means of sharing with peer members of the target audience:

- A. A news/journalistic approach as a reporter on the scene of a newsworthy event
- B. An interviewing technique involving partnerships
- C. Speech-making to small groups of four to six students
- D. Producing a television show with colorful pictures and captions which incorporated the new vocabulary
- E. Create a pictorial dictionary suitable for

duplication for classmates to color and keep

F. Cartooning a sequence using six to eight story panels

These approaches were enjoyed with increasing popularity and proved a welcome deviation from the more traditional techniques of using a new vocabulary list. Students' humor began to emerge in their expressions as fulfillment of assignment choices ended week three. Following this period in the study, it was observed that the use of the thesaurus and the dictionary had become useful informational sources within the school day.

Weeks Four and Five

A mid-course evaluation was administered and all indications were that the present approach was effective. No changes in implementation were necessary.

Analysis of degrees and shadings of similarities was explored, i.e., Would you rather be enlightened or informed? The writer provided an outline form of the face and puffy hat of a chef. Students were given a target word to place on the band of the hat. Each student located his word in both the thesaurus and dictionary and recorded each synonym he discovered in the hat of the chef's figure. The caption for this exercise was "Cooking Up New Words". The caption of the general bulletin board was "In Other Words...".

The display of each child was three feet by two feet in size. The words were printed on colorful sentence strip paper. The children filled in the expressions on the faces of their figures and these were displayed on a large bulletin board area in the classroom for the school's annual Open House.

The students had completed several written compositions by the end of week four. Their efforts were jointly edited by teacher and student in personal conference situations. The students were found to be surprisingly talkative about their works and often anxious to try one of the other approaches. Whenever more sophisticated wording could be applied to express ideas, the suggestion was made by the writer. If the student wished to change his wording, he referred to the thesaurus. There was no penalty for misspelled words.

Weeks Six and Seven

With the continuation of joint editing, the students were developing a direct association with the mechanics of evaluation. But more importantly, they seemed to look forward to improvements which would make their work more enjoyable to other students. An appointed time for using the computer lab was arranged so that students' edited work could be reproduced for sharing. The lab accommodated all ten target students simultaneously. The computer aide and the author

conferred and planned the sessions with care. The ten children practiced with the word processor and typed favorite compositions. As the aide worked with the students, the author was allowed to exercise other activities within the classroom. It is important to note that, at this point, the target selection, the aide, and the author were very secure in the outcome objective of the creative computer approach. Following the computer sessions, reproductions of each student's efforts were shared with all members for the purpose of discussion/evaluation before the next computer experience.

Week Eight

Pairs and small groups were arranged for the purpose of sharing oral recitations and written expressions collected to this point. Students exchanged their works with a peer member of the target group. Each student chose three selections which he found especially appealing and different from his own as a written communication. He then shared a single effort from his classmate's portfolio. As this was one component of the daily agenda for week eight, the segment was repeatedly practiced. Following these presentations, a question/answer/discussion became active; i.e., Can anyone think of another word for ...?, How might that be expressed in another way?, Would someone care to take this idea a little further?

Students combined creative expressions with creative art as a holiday theme. The whole class was invited to join this project. Teacher and target students' editing conferences remained active following each formal lesson. The art expressions were not included in the thirty-minute instruction period but were relative, and time was planned to include these exercises as an extension of the vocabulary lesson. The author felt that any related energy nourished the concepts and created a healthy addition. This encompassed the very objective of the practicum study.

Week Nine

Teamed as peer partners, students were given two target words for which to locate five semantically similar words. Following this accomplishment, each child wrote a selection using a chosen "word family". Oral and written works were shared in partnerships. The "hurricaning" procedure, using target vocabulary as well as words from the word bank box, continued to be an enjoyable and popular practice.

Students participated in self-paced NYM task cards designed to reinforce the concepts of this practicum. Partner reading of short stories created healthy exposure and another dimension to the language arts program.

The practice of ranking word families as to

intensity was practiced all week as the target-word assignments were completed by each peer team. Semantic similarities, dissimilarities, and shared features of target vocabulary were discussed during weeks eight and nine.

On the last day of week nine, the posttest was administered (Appendix C). Scores ranged from 90% to 100% mastery of the target vocabulary. The Student Attitude Questionnaire (Appendix B) accompanied the posttest and the results are discussed in the next chapter.

Week Ten

This week was to be used for the purpose of reteaching any segment of the curriculum change that needed further attention. With the attainment of the practicum goal it was decided that week ten could be continued with media center visits for student writing and research for social studies projects. The author had the opportunity to observe practice in semantically similar word choices as applied in the paraphrased reports. This week was also enjoyed by combining components of the entire study and included the practice of game playing i.e., Scribbage, Password, and the introduction of Junior Scrabble.

A new outline figure of a dachshund dog provided excitement for students to capture unfamiliar words and use the thesaurus and dictionary to locate the

synonymous vocabulary to complete a new word family. The words were ranked in intensity by the order in which they appeared on the figure. The bulletin board display carried the caption: "Doggone Good Words". The students used these words in cartoon panels with conversational word bubbles and illustrations of characters. All compositions were shared with peer groups of five members.

IV. RESULTS

Upon culmination of a nine week implementation program, the evaluation of the success of the proposed strategy was attained in answer to the following questions:

1. Did the participants correctly match 80% of semantically similar words to a target word list as measured in the posttest in Appendix A?

Yes. A score of 80% or above was considered the mastery level in this county's reading management system. To remain compatible, the 80% level was adopted for this study. A pretest showed a range of 15% to 55%. On the same test, following the implementation, the target audience scored from 90% to 100% with a mean score of 97.0% (Appendix D).

2. Did the students affect more positive attitudes toward creatively written compositions as reflected in the Student Attitude Questionnaire

(Appendix B)?

Yes. The Student Attitude Questionnaire revealed negativism and insecurity initially. This instrument measured attitude, either positive or negative. Finally, all members of the selection exhibited a more comfortable feeling toward their writing.

Question one reflected a posttest result of YES responses from 100% of the target selection as opposed to a pretest result of 60%.

Question three yielded a pretest result of 50% preferring a list provided by the teacher. The posttest reflected that 90% preferred to use their own words.

The other questions exclusively provided the author with necessary and helpful information to lead this study.

3. Have the students displayed a working knowledge of the junior thesaurus and the junior dictionary as evidenced in creatively written compositions and factually paraphrased reports as measured by teacher observation?

Yes. The target selection was not only actively employing the junior editions but was using the Webster Thesaurus. Some were consulting Roget's Thesaurus by the end of week three. As the parts of speech were studied in English class, the thesaurus became more effectively used. The students became more aware that their writing creates moods. Correct shadings and degrees of words helped them express those moods.

The thesaurus and dictionary share an important association for the self-motivated and inquisitive. With use of these information sources, the students will likely gain further understanding and the quality of their writing will continue to improve.

4. Did the students complete a word "family" and its network of relationships after studying the semantic features of a target word as measured by teacher observation in informal group discussion?

Yes. 100% of the target selection discussed related words and ranked synonyms as to which was the more intense word for creation of particular moods. Another dimension to this objective was added when art activities were included.

The cost of the program was within very reasonable limits. The time and energy of the writer was more costly in terms of materials preparation. However, student enthusiasm was generated, thus making the initial effort worthwhile.

Uniformly-cut pieces of paper obtained from a printing shop provided the background for task cards. These materials were easily available at no cost. A booklet of synonym and antonym exercises was purchased for each child for a total cost of \$12.50. All other supplies were on hand.

The program was manageable with regard to scheduling and compatibility with the total program.

The pre-planning of materials, the students' productions, and the presentation of shared materials were vital to the success of the program. The author was convinced that various creative approaches heightened student interest in applying new vocabulary. Students' attitudes often change to receptive and productive when the challenge is attractively packaged.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

It was the author's theoretical intention to justify the need to initiate enrichment programs in language arts at an early elementary level of instruction. The means of various creative approaches as vehicular instruments to meet this objective have proven successful.

The student criteria for the enrichment project was an important factor. However, students who indicate an average ability level became interested as lessons were presented in class. It is recommended that all children who show interest in creative compositions be afforded the opportunity of participation. The target vocabulary can be appropriately designed for various ability levels. The value of pretesting to establish suitable target words must be stressed. Choosing difficult words is certainly not to be confused with the choice of a

suitable level of challenging difficulty. The latter must include a vocabulary in which each target word has a synonym within the students' experiences. There must be an anchor word in each word family so that relationships, networks, and degrees of intensity can create moods and meanings.

It is suggested that the instructor move from an exclusively traditional approach to more contemporary ideas for generating student expression. Further, the teacher should allow some time when peer partnerships, tutoring, and discussion can flourish. Healthy exchanges and interactions will likely produce student success.

Vocabulary lists in association with art experiences induced high interest in written communiques. It is suggested that such incorporation remain active.

If the target audience should number more than ten members, joint editing between teacher and student might become difficult. The checking method of evaluation requires minimal time as compared with joint editing. The difficulty involves the time factor. Possible solutions might be to solicit the aid of qualified resource persons or to alternate instructional days of the enrichment classes. Careful planning, many and varied materials, and alternation of editing appointment times for students should

provide some probable solutions.

Additionally, it is suggested that more copies of thesauri be made available to elementary school children. If active programs are occurring, one thesaurus per five students is very necessary.

Successful ideas and practices mentioned in this study will be shared with other teachers as interests are expressed. Copies of vocabulary lists, bulletin board ideas, and alternative approaches to traditional methods of extending vocabulary will be discussed as inquiries are made.

Finally, the author emphasizes that professional reading to remain apprised of related ideas and new developments is essential to the success of enrichment programs.

REFERENCE LIST

- Artley, A.S. Words, Words, Words. Language Arts , 1975, 52 , 1067-1072.
- Barrett, Mark, Huisingsh, Rosemary, Jorgensen, Carol, and Zachman, Linda. Teaching Vocabulary . Moline, Illinois: LinguSystems, Inc., 1983, 3-7.
- Collins, A. and Quillian R. "Retrieval Time From Semantic Memory." Journal of Verbal Learning and Verbal Behavior , 8 , 1969.
- Culyer, Richard C. "Guidelines for Skill Development: Vocabulary." The Reading Teacher , 1978, 32 , 316-322.
- Davis, A. L. (Ed.). (1972). Culture, Class, and Language Variety . Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Harris, Larry A. and Smith, Carl B. Reading Instruction . New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1980, 168-225.
- Johnson, Dale D., and Pearson, P. David. Teaching Reading Vocabulary . New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1978, 31-171.
- Johnson, Dale D., Toms-Bronowski, Susan, and Pittelman, Susan D. (1981). An Investigation of the Trends in Vocabulary Research and The Effects of Prior Knowledge on Instructional Strategies for Vocabulary Acquisition (Report No. CS 006 534). Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin, Center for Education Research. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 214 118)
- Johnson, Dale D., Pittelman, Susan D., Toms-Bronowski, Susan and Chu-Chang, Mae, Tsui, George, Yin, Mai Chun, Chien, Chu Ying, and Chin, Peggy (1982) Studies of Vocabulary Development Techniques in The United States of America and The Republic of China . (Report No. FL 013 541). Madison, Wisconsin: Wisconsin Center For Education Research. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 227 679)
- McCourt-Lewis, Anne A. (1980, March). Vocabulary Development Synonym For Sense-Ible Word Identification Instruction . Paper presented at the

Annual Meeting of the Eastern Regional Conference of the International Reading Association, Niagara Falls, New York. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 190 981)

- Pachtman, Andrew B. and Riley, James D. "Teaching the Vocabulary of Mathematics Through Interaction, Exposure, and Structure." Journal of Reading, 1978, 22, 240-244.
- Petty, Walter T., Petty, Dorothy C., and Becking, Marjorie F. /Experiences In Language/. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1973, 301-320.
- Standal, Timothy C. and Schaefer, Christine C. (1979). /Vocabulary Improvement: Program Goals and Exemplary Techniques/. (Report No. CS 007 477). (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 239 229)
- Toms-Bronowski, Susan (1982). /An Investigation of the Effectiveness of Semantic Mapping and Semantic Feature Analysis With Intermediate Grade Level Children/. (Report No. CS 006 929). (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 224 000)
- Warner, Timothy P. "Vocabulary: Make It A Stimulant, Not A Depressant." /Journal of Reading/, 1972, /15/, 590-592.

APPENDIX A

TEACHER SURVEY

YOUR RESPONSE TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONNAIRE WILL BE APPRECIATED.

1. In your opinion, is there a need for vocabulary enrichment for accelerated students? Yes No

2. Have you observed capable students who would probably benefit from more challenge in word analysis to extend their vocabularies? Yes No

3. Do you notice significant limitation in word usage in creatively written expressions? Yes No

Example: Capable students appear content to use the word sickness in repetitious fashion within a single creative composition because they are not aware of other synonymous choices. (illness, poor health, ailment, disease, etc.)

4. Have you observed your advanced students having a working knowledge of a junior thesaurus? Yes No

5. Do you feel there is adequate time during the teaching day to offer such enrichment to advanced students?

Yes No

THANK YOU.

Please return to:

Jeannine Counts

APPENDIX B

STUDENT ATTITUDE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Do you like to write stories? _____

2. What do you like to write about? _____

3. Do you like for the teacher to give you a list of words to choose from or do you like to think of your words by yourself? _____

4. Do you think you could write better stories if you knew more words and their meanings? _____

5. How do you feel when your teacher asks you to write a story? _____

6. What kind of words would you like to learn so you could write your favorite stories or poems? _____

This test was administered to students on legal-size paper.

COUNTS 33

APPENDIX C

Pretest/Posttest

In each of the following groups, encircle the letter of the word that most nearly conveys the meaning of the word above.

1. colossal
a. expect b. imitate c. enormous d. lie
2. perseveres
a. tear b. persist c. produce d. perform
3. tranquility
a. strength b. peace c. charm d. wealth
4. authentic
a. real b. unusual c. weary d. cross
5. enlighten
a. require b. choose c. inform d. entail
6. replica
a. meeting b. scale c. copy d. cling
7. astound
a. speak b. disappoint c. surprise d. sin
8. converse
a. increase b. admit c. limit d. speak
9. foe
a. guess b. assortment c. enemy d. tint
10. specific
a. definite b. selfish c. recommend d. space
11. eerie
a. monster b. strange c. fickle d. poise
12. hesitation
a. inspire b. ovation c. interruption d. odd
13. scholar
a. instant b. elusive c. learner d. soldier
14. neutral
a. late b. peaceful c. fair d. weak
15. consequence
a. obese b. neglect c. result d. late
16. shrewd
a. unpleasant b. clever c. worthless d. long
17. ailment
a. overcome b. heritage c. disease d. brawl
18. dispute
a. release b. mourn c. replace d. feud
19. prognosticate
a. locate b. progress c. predict d. find
20. intense
a. inferior b. serious c. current d. normal

APPENDIX D

TARGET VOCABULARY AND SEMANTICALLY SIMILAR WORDS
TEST RESULTS IN PERCENT

Student	Pretest	Posttest	% Gain
1	45	100	+55
2	30	100	+70
3	30	90	+60
4	35	100	+65
5	55	100	+45
6	20	95	+75
7	35	90	+55
8	25	95	+70
9	50	100	+50
10	45	100	+55
Mean	37.00	97.00	60.00

NOV 15 1990

Jeannine G. Counts

DOCUMENT RELEASE

Permission is hereby given to Nova University to distribute copies of this applied research project on request from interested parties. It is my understanding that Nova University will not charge for this dissemination other than to cover the costs of duplicating, handling, and mailing of the materials.

Signed: Jeannine G. Counts
student's name

Date: 11/13/90