



University of Canberra

This thesis is available in print format from the University of Canberra Library.

If you are the author of this thesis and wish to have the whole thesis loaded here, please contact the University of Canberra Library at *e-theses@canberra.edu.au* Your thesis will then be available on the www providing greater access.

A study of a procedure designed to sample the oral language, reading and strategy learning behaviours of young children.

by

Lynne M Philp

A field study report submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Education in the Canberra College of Advanced Education.

December 1982

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To the children who participated in the study, thank you, and also to your teachers for their willing co-operation and participation.

My special respect and gratitude to Max Kemp, my supervisor, whose scholarship and support was so important. And to Kathy Grabham and Graham Little my appreciation for your sustained interest and valued input. Particular thanks to Jenny Worner for your patience and skill in preparing the copy.

To my friends and colleagues thank you, especially to Bev and Janet for editorial assistance. And a final thank you to Ivan for your loving support and splendid graphics.

This field study is dedicated to my father who, whenever I asked why something was so, was likely to say "You tell me".

ABSTRACT

The original aim of the study was to trial an assessment procedure, HOWZAT, designed to sample the oral language, reading, and cognitive style competencies of seven year old children. The evaluation of the pilot study indicated that the procedure was limited in the extent to which the original aims could be attained.

A follow up study with amended aims, items, and procedure was conducted and evaluated. The second study was a descriptive, empirical study of the responses of a sample of seven year old children to eighteen items - most of which contained distortions of written language forms. The procedure required the children to make decisions about the acceptability of the items and to discuss and justify their decisions. The sample consisted of thirty children, ten from each of three reading ability groups. The allocation of children to groups and ranking within each of the groups according to reading ability was done by their respective teachers.

The children's responses to the items and some of their response behaviours were analysed in two major ways.

In the item analysis it was found that the children had similar response patterns to the items that were distorted semantically, syntactically and in conventions of print but responded differently to the graphophonically distorted items.

The patterns of response to the different kinds of distortions were interpreted in terms of the intrusive effect of the distortions on the children's expectations about written language.

Different response patterns were also found between and within the three ability groups. Children perceived by their teachers as being better readers demonstrated competence in finding and using strategies for dealing with the task and items. Individual profiles were presented to illustrate these differences.

The conclusion reached in the evaluation was that the use of distorted materials had produced interesting results but was not justified on ideological grounds. However, the procedure was judged to have some potential as an action research methodology to explore children's reasoning with print and strategy learning abilities, and to probe their linguistic development and performance.

CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE</u>
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	
1.1 Background to study	1
1.2 Criteria for proposed assessment procedure	14
CHAPTER TWO: DESCRIPTION OF HOWZAT	
2.1 Objectives	24
2.2 Materials and Procedure	25
2.2.1 Howzat items	25
2.2.2 The Howzat task	32
2.2.3 Instructions	32
2.2.4 Procedure	33
CHAPTER THREE: PILOT STUDY	
3.1 Observations	35
3.1.1 Diversity of Response Behaviours	36
3.1.2 Differences between ability groups	41
3.1.3 Variations in interviewer's behaviour	42
3.1.4 Problems with the procedure .	44
3.2 Evaluation of the Pilot Study in Terms of the Objectives	46
3.3 Conclusions drawn about the Pilot Study	49
CHAPTER FOUR: SECOND STUDY - OBJECTIVES, ITEMS AND METHODOLOGY	
4.1 Objectives	50
4.1.1 Responses to the item sets ...	50
4.1.2 Group analysis	51
4.1.3 Individual analysis	51
4.1.4 HOWZAT procedure analysis ...	52
4.2 Materials and Procedure	52
4.2.1 Items	52
4.3 Task and Instructions	56
4.4 Procedure	56
4.4.1 Amended interview format	56
4.4.2 Amended item presentation order	60

	<u>PAGE</u>
4.5 Methodology	61
4.5.1 Sample	61
4.5.2 Reading ability groups	62
4.5.3 Ranking within ability groups	63
4.5.4 Data collection	64
4.6 Descriptors for Coding	65
4.6.1 Response modes	65
4.6.2 Response behaviours	69
 CHAPTER FIVE: SECOND STUDY - ANALYSIS OF DATA	
5.1 Preface	79
5.1.1 Response modes	81
5.1.2 Response behaviours	81
5.1.3 Order of data analysis	82
5.2 Response Mode Analysis	82
5.2.1 Preface	82
5.2.2 Concepts of Print and Linguistic Knowledge items, including item analysis	86
5.2.3 Graphophonic Knowledge items, including item analysis	136
5.3 Response mode analysis : between groups, within sample and within group	171
5.3.1 Preface	171
5.3.2 Distribution by sex	176
5.3.3 Distribution by age	177
5.3.4 Interpretation of the distribution by age and sex.	178
5.3.5 Total number of responses ...	179
5.3.6 Meaning response mode	181
5.3.7 Form response mode	185
5.3.8 Differential responses to distorted items	189
5.3.9 Readability response mode ...	194
5.3.10 "Doesn't Make Sense" response mode	197
5.3.11 "Makes Sense", elimination and other linguistic realities response mode	198
5.3.12 Imaging response mode	199
5.3.13 "Other" response mode	200

5.4	Response behaviour analysis : between groups, within sample and within group	201
5.4.1	Preface	201
5.4.2	Box choice	202
5.4.3	General response behaviours .	207
5.4.4	Reading behaviours	215
5.4.5	Response behaviours related to distortions in linguistic knowledge and concepts of print items	224
5.4.6	Response behaviours in relation to Not OK → OK conversions	227
5.4.7	Language of literacy used in GPK items	230
5.4.8	Language of literacy incorrectly used	232
5.4.9	Difficulties with syntax, articulation and fluency ...	235
CHAPTER SIX:	SECOND STUDY - GROUP, SUBGROUP AND INDIVIDUAL PROFILES	
6.1	Preface	238
6.2	Group 1 profile	238
6.2.1	Group 1, Subgroup (1-4) profile	240
6.2.2	Individual Group 1 (1-4) profile - Timothy	243
6.2.3	Group 1, Subgroup (6-9) profile	250
6.2.4	Individual Group 1 (6-9) profile - Matthew	253
6.3	Group 2 profile	261
6.3.1	Group 2, Subgroup (1-4) profile	262
6.3.2	Individual Group 2 (1-4) profile - Caitlin	263
6.3.3	Group 2, Subgroup (6-9) profile	270
6.3.4	Individual Group 2 (6-9) profile - Carla	272

	<u>PAGE</u>
6.4 Group 3 profile	282
6.4.1 Group 3, Subgroup (1-4) profile	283
6.4.2 Individual Group 3 (1-4) profile - Rebecca	285
6.4.3 Group 3, Subgroup (6-9) profile	294
6.4.4 Individual Group 3 (6-9) profile - John	296
 CHAPTER SEVEN: DISCUSSION	
7.1 Introduction	310
7.2 The HOWZAT procedure as a strategy learning/problem solving task	311
7.2.1 Explanation of the HOWZAT model and components	313
7.3 Kopp's assertion	330
7.4 Deep structure : surface structure theory	332
7.5 Discussion of the results of the analyses in relation to the objectives	335
7.5.1 Discussion of Objective 1 ...	335
7.5.2 Differences between item sets - methodological	336
7.5.3 Differences between and within item sets - nature of the task and items	341
7.5.4 Response mode patterns to the LK/CoP items	343
7.5.5 Response mode patterns to the GPK items	351
7.6 Discussion of Objective 2	356
7.6.1 Between and within group correlation differences	357
7.6.2 Hypothesis 1	361
7.6.3 Hypothesis 2	369
7.6.4 Hypothesis 3	371
7.7 Discussion of Objective 3	373
7.8 Discussion of Objective 4	373

	<u>PAGE</u>
7.9 Conclusions	375
7.9.1 Conclusion 1 - Value of the study to the investigator ..	375
7.9.2 Conclusion 2 - Limitations of the study : ideological .	377
7.9.3 Conclusion 3 - Problems of validity, reliability, and generalizability	379
7.9.4 Conclusion 4 - Potential uses of a modified HOWZAT procedure	382
BIBLIOGRAPHY	388
APPENDIX I	391
APPENDIX II	450

LIST OF TABLES

<u>TABLE</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
1. Response mode rates to Concepts of Print, Linguistic Knowledge, and graphophonic knowledge items	84
2. Response mode rates to each of the Linguistic Knowledge and Concepts of Print items	87
3. Response mode comparisons between LK/CoP items 1-5 and LK/CoP items 7-11	133
4. Response mode comparisons between the CoP2/LK6 and LK5/LK2 items	135
5. Response mode frequencies for each of the Graphophonic Knowledge items	137
6. Comparison of response mode frequencies for the GPK6/GPK2 and GPK1/GPK5 items	166
7. Comparison of language patterns and response behaviours for the GPK6/GPK2 and GPK1/GPK5 items	169
8. Group and subgroup response mode rates to the Linguistic Knowledge/Concepts of Print items	172
9. Group and subgroup response mode rates to the Graphophonic Knowledge items	174
10. Distribution of numbers of boys and girls in the groups and subgroups	176
11. Distribution of ages (months) of the children in the sample	177
12. Total number of responses to LK/CoP items	179
13. Total number of responses to GPK items	180
14. Distribution of meaning responses to LK/CoP and GPK items	181
15. Distribution of Cognitive Assertion responses to LK/CoP items	182
16. Distribution of Cognitive/value responses to Lk/CoP items	183

<u>TABLE</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
17. Ratio of cognitive assertion to cognitive/value response frequencies to LK/CoP items	184
18. Distribution of form responses to LK/CoP items	185
19. Distribution of form responses to GPK Items	186
20. Distribution of meaning : form response ratios to LK/CoP items	188
21. Differential meaning response analysis for items LK/CoP 1-5 and LK/CoP 7-11	190
22. Differential form response analysis to items LK/CoP 1-5 and LK/CoP 7-11	191
23. Differential form response analysis to GPK items 6 and 2 and GPK items 5 and 1	193
24. Distribution of readability responses to LK/CoP and to GPK items	194
25. Distribution of readability subcategory responses to LK/CoP items	195
26. Distribution of readability subcategory responses to GPK items	196
27. Distribution of "Doesn't Make Sense" responses to LK/CoP and GPK items	197
28. Distribution of "makes sense" and elimination responses to LK/CoP items and "other linguistic realities" responses to GPK items	198
29. Distribution of imaging responses to LK/CoP and GPK Items	199
30. Distribution of "other" responses to LK/CoP and GPK items	200
31. Distribution of OK box choice for LK/CoP and GPK items	202
32. Distribution of the Not OK box choices for LK/CoP and GPK items	203
33. Distribution of Not Sure box choices for LK/CoP items	204

<u>TABLE</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
34. Distribution of Not Sure box choices for GPK items	205
35. Distribution of the change of box behaviour for LK/CoP and GPK items	206
36. Distribution of the number of clarifying questions asked for LK/CoP items	207
37. Distribution of the number of clarifying questions asked for GPK items	208
38. Distribution of the number of questions unanswered for LK/CoP and GPK items	209
39. Distribution of long pauses during discussion of LK/CoP responses	210
40. Distribution of long pauses during discussion of GPK items	211
41. Distribution of "don't know" responses during discussion of LK/CoP and GPK items	212
42. Distribution of verbal behaviour during sorting of all items	213
43. Distribution of multiple responses to LK/CoP and GPK items	214
44. Distribution of frequency of reading LK/CoP items aloud spontaneously	215
45. Distribution of frequency of reading GPK items aloud spontaneously	216
46. Distribution of the number of LK/CoP items read aloud	217
47. Distribution of the number of GPK items read aloud	218
48. Distribution of the frequencies of miscued LK/CoP items	220
49. Distribution of the frequencies of miscued GPK items	221
50. Ratio of the number of items read to the number of items miscued	222

<u>TABLE</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
51. Distribution of the number of GPK nonsense words read as meaningful words	223
52. Distribution of behaviours related to distortions for LK/CoP items	224
53. Ratio of noted CoP distortion on Q : distorted items responded to on grounds other than form	226
54. Ratio of noted LK distortion on Q : distorted items responded to on grounds other than form	226
55. Distribution of spontaneous Not OK → OK conversion behaviour for all items	227
56. Distribution of refusal to give Not OK → OK conversions for all items	228
57. Distribution of the use of language of literacy terms in responses to GPK items	231
58. Distribution of the numbers of children who used incorrect language of literacy features	233
59. Distribution of numbers of children displaying language, fluency, and voice difficulties	235
60. Timothy 1 (1-4) Response mode and response behaviour summary	244
61. Responses to all items - Timothy	245
62. Matthew 1 (6-9) Response mode and response behaviour summary	254
63. Responses to all items - Matthew	255
64. Caitlin 2 (1-4) Response mode and response behaviour summary	264
65. Responses to all items - Caitlin	265
66. Carla 2 (6-9) Response mode and response behaviour summary	273
67. Responses to all items - Carla	274
68. Rebecca 3 (1-4) Response mode and response behaviour summary	286

<u>TABLE</u>		<u>PAGE</u>
69.	Responses to all items - Rebecca	287
70.	John 3 (6-9) Response mode and response behaviour summary	297
71	Responses to all items - John	298

APPENDICES

(i)	Differential distribution of the number of questions asked for LK/CoP items 1-5 and 7-11 and GPK2/6, GPK1/5 items	450
(ii)	Breakdown of multiple responses to GPK items 6/2 and 5/1	451

LIST OF FIGURES

<u>FIGURE</u>		<u>PAGE</u>
1.	Data sheet for CoP items	80
2.	Response mode frequencies for item LK7	90
3.	Response mode frequencies for item LK8	93
4.	Response mode frequencies for item LK6	97
5.	Response mode frequencies for item CoP2	101
6.	Response mode frequencies for item LK4	104
7.	Response mode frequencies for item CoP1	108
8.	Response mode frequencies for item LK5	112
9.	Response mode frequencies for item LK2	115
10.	Response mode frequencies for item CoP3	120
11.	Response mode frequencies for item LK3	125
12.	Response mode frequencies for item LK1	129
13.	Response mode frequencies for item GPK6	140
14.	Response mode frequencies for item GPK2	144
15.	Response mode frequencies for item GPK7	148
16.	Response mode frequencies for item GPK3	151
17.	Response mode frequencies for item GPK5	154
18.	Response mode frequencies for item GPK4	159
19.	Response mode frequencies for item GPK1	162
20.	The "HOWZAT" model	314
21.	Between group differences for groups 1 and 3	359
22.	Comparison of behaviours for children ranked (1-4) and (6-9) in Groups 1 and 2	360