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The Effectiveness of an Integrated Oral Language-Writing Program, Using Grouping, on the Composing Ability and Writing Attitudes of Ninth Grade Students

Monica A. Cosgrove
The College at Brockport

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THE EFFECTIVENESS OF AN INTEGRATED ORAL LANGUAGE-WRITING
PROGRAM, USING GROUPING, ON THE COMPOSING
ABILITY AND WRITING ATTITUDES OF
NINTH GRADE STUDENTS

THESIS

Submitted to the Graduate Committee of the
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
Faculty of Education
State University College at Brockport
in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Science in Education

by

Monica A. Cosgrove

State University College at Brockport
Brockport, New York
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SUBMITTED BY:

Monica Cosgrove

APPROVED BY:

F. Moroney White 12/16/83
Thesis Advisor Date

James L. Bogy 12/10/83
Second Faculty Reader Date

Robert B. Pille 12/17/83
Chair, Graduate Policies Date
Committee

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of an integrated oral language-writing program, using grouping, on ability to compose and on writing attitude. A secondary purpose was to see if there were a relationship between ability to compose and writing attitude. A pretest, posttest design with a control group was used for the study. The treatment group consisted of twenty-seven students from a heterogeneously grouped rural-suburban school. The control group consisted of twenty-seven students, heterogeneously grouped, from a suburban-rural school.

Students in the treatment group were divided into groups of three, meeting twice a week, for a nine week period for the purpose of discussion and writing. A communication spiral, involving students in the three stages of the process of writing, was used as a guide. Researcher-devised writing-oral language activities were used. The control group received no treatment, but rather, writing activities consisted of being assigned a topic to write on or writing an essay based on a story or play they had read in literature.

Students in both groups were administered the Writing Apprehension Scale devised by Daly and Miller (1975) before and after the nine week treatment program. A writing sample was taken before and after the nine week treatment period.

After establishing group equivalency, t tests for small independent samples were used to determine if there were a significant difference

in composing ability and writing attitude between the treatment and control group after the treatment program. In order to determine if there were significant gains from pretest to posttest for both groups in writing attitude and composing ability, t tests for dependent samples were used.

Correlation coefficients were obtained to see if there were a significant relationship between ability to compose and writing attitude.

The results indicated that there was a significant improvement in attitude toward writing for the students in the integrated oral language-writing program. There was also a significant gain in composing ability from pretest to posttest for students in the treatment program. The correlation study failed to find a significant relationship between writing attitude and composing ability.

Recommendations for classroom application as well as suggestions for future research were given.

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Chapter I

Statement of the Problem

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of an integrated oral language-writing program, using peer grouping, on students' abilities to compose and on students' attitudes toward writing. This study investigated an alternative approach for developing writing skills in the classroom.

The following questions were posed:

1. Will a class exposed to an integrated oral language-writing program show a gain in its ability to compose in comparison to a traditional class as measured by holistically scoring compositions before and after the treatment program?
2. Will a class exposed to an integrated oral language-writing program show an improvement in attitude toward writing over a traditional class as measured by the Writing Apprehension Scale developed by Daly and Miller?
3. Is there a significant relationship between writing attitude and ability to compose?

Need for the Study

One of the most important issues emerging in reading education over the past decade is concern for the inadequate writing abilities of many students. Recent reports of a decline in student writing ability have

prompted popular and professional questioning of student writing achievement. Most of these reports have focused on performance. Yet, prior to performance there exists attitudes which affect performance.

Attitudes toward writing are an integral part of the composing process, but the fact is that they are rarely measured and analyzed. Little is understood concerning students' feelings about writing, their perceptions of it and what values they place on it. Moreover, in spite of a general acknowledgement that attitudes affect writing performance, most measures of growth in writing have been restricted, assessing such areas as progress toward standard usage, improvement in writing mechanics, and development of syntactic versatility. There has been reluctance in considering improvement in attitude toward writing as a valid goal of composition instruction. However, recent research suggests that attitudes influence writing performance and that a student's attitude toward writing is measurable (Cooper & Odell, 1980; Daly & Wilson, 1981; Kroll, 1979).

A review of the literature on composition in the classroom reveals that composition is a matter of the teacher giving a writing assignment, the student writing, and the teacher correcting and grading the finished paper. Sometimes the teacher will insist on revision of the returned work if there is time. Then, the next assignment is made and another paper is due. Another variation is the classroom teacher who, whether because of "time" or a dislike of writing, neglects composition as much as possible in favor of literature, discussions, and grammar drills.

The clearest indication that writing skills need improvement comes from a report recently published by the National Study of Secondary Schools Writing (Applebee & others, 1980). Researchers discovered that pre-writing activities were extremely limited. In a typical assignment, just over three minutes elapsed from the time the teacher began to discuss or pass out assignments until students began writing (Applebee, Lehr, & Auten, 1981). This study also found that the majority of writing focused on information presented in lessons or textbooks. In essence, composing assignments were given for the purpose of testing what students had learned in their classes. Although this is a legitimate use of writing, its relationship to developing composing skills would seem at best tenuous. Applebee (cited in Lehr & Lange, 1981) concluded that in order to improve the writing of secondary school students, "We need more situations in which writing can serve as a tool for learning, rather than as a means to display acquired knowledge. We need practical descriptions of specific techniques and activities that can be successfully incorporated into the various content areas" (p. 70).

Research in secondary school composition also indicated that emphasis on writing for the teacher-as-examiner was prevalent (Lehr & Lange, 1981; Wolski, 1981). Results of a recent study demonstrated that peer interaction groups, in contrast to teacher-centered classes, had made strides in the area of changing attitudes toward writing (Elias, 1982).

Wolski's study on secondary school composition (1981) indicated that there was a need for pre-writing activities, especially for discussion of approaches to a topic, and what information should be included. He also indicated that activities to help students while they are writing are almost nonexistent.

A review of the literature on approaches to the teaching of writing and composition reveals that there are five basic approaches: The models approach, steps approach, sentence combining approach, relationships approach and the theory of the world approach (Myers, 1978). In examining the weaknesses apparent in each of these approaches to the teaching of writing, the need for an exchange of oral language in the classroom and the need for a viable medium for doing so becomes apparent. It has been suggested, too, that what is needed are ways to help students write more personally satisfying, more communicative prose without requiring that schools undertake a crushing burden (Scanlon, 1979). Therefore, it seems logical that an approach to writing that combines an oral language based writing program and a viable medium, that of putting students in small groups for purposes of discussion and other pre-writing activities, might be productive. Such an approach might help students in classes to see each other's writings as communication and might assist in developing helpful responses to these communications.

Definition of Terms

Terms used in this study were as follows:

Oral language: The spoken aspect of language; that which is heard, interpreted, and understood.

Writing Attitude: A system of feelings related to writing which causes students to approach or avoid writing situations.

Holistic scoring: A procedure for evaluating writing by considering the effect of the whole piece of writing (Greenhalgh, & Townsend, 1981).

Communication spiral: A researcher designed guide for students for the purpose of guided oral language exchange with their peers as they progress through the three writing stages: pre-writing, writing, and revision (See Appendix B).

Composing Ability: "The ability to present ideas rather than to discover ideas or adapt the content of a piece of writing so as to make that content appropriate for one's audience and purpose" (Hirsch, cited in Cooper, C., & Odell, L., p. 39). Hirsch (1977) recommends that one should not assess composing ability by counting specific features of prose style. Rather, Hirsch proposes that one make a holistic judgment about the overall relative readability of a piece of writing. In turn, relative readability of a text is determined by the amount of time and effort spent in trying to grasp the ideas and attitudes conveyed in text. In assessing the relative readability of a piece of writing, Hirsch recommends one basic question be considered: Does the writing communicate its meaning without hindrance from the author's carelessness, ineptitude, or lack of craft? This study focused on the relative readability of writing samples.

Summary

The literature reviewed showed that there was a need for writing programs which emphasize the process of writing rather than merely the written product. The traditional approach to the teaching of writing imposes rules, structure and patterns on the writer. It ignores the composing process and focuses on the product--the written composition. The current focus, however, is that the written piece is only part of

a complex process which begins before the pen touches the paper. This emphasis on writing process is one of the focal points of this paper.

The literature reviewed also demonstrated that there was a need for writing programs that afforded the students the opportunity to discuss thoughts and ideas before writing them down on paper. A way of helping to change students' attitudes toward writing seems to be by making the writing tasks more realistic, and by giving students the opportunity to discuss their ideas and what they have written with their peers. Research has reflected that the teacher is often a too intimidating audience.

This study combined the areas of an oral-language based writing program and peer interaction as a method of improving composing skills and attitudes toward writing.

Chapter II

Review of the Literature

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of an integrated oral language-writing program, using peer grouping, on ability to compose and on writing attitudes. The theories and research which form the basis of this investigation will be discussed in terms of four different areas:

Writing as a process

Relationship between oral language and writing

Peer grouping

Writing attitudes

Writing as a Process

In the past, empirical research on the adolescent focused upon the product rather than upon the process of writing. Of the 504 studies written before 1963 cited in the "Bibliography of Research in Written Composition," only two deal directly with the process of writing among adolescents (Emig, 1971). However, recent studies have begun to focus upon the process rather than upon product of composition. This shift in emphasis from product to process is the single most significant change in composition pedagogy in the last decade (Fulwiler & Young, 1982).

Since writing instruction, in the past, focused on grammar and mechanics and not composition, writing assignments failed to stress the kind of thinking skills requiring students to generalize, analyze, synthesize, and defend their ideas. Research has shown that red pencil correction of children's writing does not help them learn to do it better the next time (Nordberg, 1981). When writing is regarded as a process, each composition need not be a finished piece of writing. Recent research reflects the view that the students need time to write on their own and to generate their own ideas (Crowley, 1976; Elbow, 1973, Graves, 1983).

In his writings, Graves continually makes use of the terms "writing process," "composing process," and "writing episodes" (Graves, 1978, 1981, 1983; Walshe, 1982). Such nomenclature indicates that writing is not simply the scrawling of symbols on paper, but rather a complex, procedural and quite dramatic happening which consists of parts or stages. The stages now commonly attributed to the writing process are: pre-writing, writing, and revision. None of these exist without the others in any complete writing episode (Brockley, 1981).

Fader (1976), Macrorie (1976), and Murray (1968) have extended the idea of process of writing to include what they term "writing workshop." The emphasis is on the creation of a writing community in the classroom.

Research on the composing process has also focused on the developmental nature of writing ability. Long-term acquisition of writing ability depends to a great extent on cognitive growth (Buckley, 1979; Falk, 1979; Flower, 1979; Vygotsky, 1962). Moffet (1968) and Britton (1978) both adopt the sequential approach and are influenced by the writing of Piaget who posits that all humans pass through a series of

discrete intellectual stages on their way to cognitive maturity. The basic direction of this sequence is from physical interaction with the material world to abstract hypotheses about the world, the latter occurring with sophistication only in the final stages (Wadsworth, 1979). It is generally accepted among educators that high school teachers need to be particularly concerned with the transition from concrete to formal operations because this last stage represents the flowering of mature, logical thought and it is the final destination of the education process. In the past ten years it has been seen that as many as half of the students from Junior High on into adulthood are apparently unable to think abstractly or to process and produce logical propositions (Fulwiler & Young, 1982). It has also shown that if students are provided regular opportunities to work in the expressive mode with new and challenging subject matter, they can improve their critical abilities significantly. Expressive language, both oral and written, promotes open-ended exploration of new experiences.

Many educators have determined various stages in the composing process. Although the words describing these stages vary from writer to writer, they correspond in meaning. Blake (1976) and Cooper (1976) see writing as a three-step process involving pre-writing, writing, and re-writing. Murray (1975) terms the stages prevision, visions, and revision. Emig (1971) labeled the dimensions of the composing process as pre-writing, planning, starting, reformulation, stopping and contemplation of the product.

Britton divides the process into three stages: conception, incubation, and production (cited in Fulwiler & Young, 1982). Once the writer

knows what writing must be done, what is expected, and how to proceed, the conception stage is completed. It is at this point--while the product incubates--that expressive language, both oral and written, plays a major role. Britton claims that an essential part of the writing process is "explaining the matter to oneself" and talking about it (Britton, Burgess, Martin, McLeod, & Rosen, 1975). Without this stage, all the careful note making and selection and arrangement of data can do very little. The production stage, the actual committing of ideas to paper for an audience, cannot occur unless the writer has first understood the task that has been given. Britton concludes that "in the emergence of any original thinking, there is an expressive stage in that thinking whether the writing is ultimately informative, poetic, or persuasive. It is what the writer makes of these expressive beginnings that determines his thought processes as the written text is produced" (Britton et al., 1975, p. 30). These expressive beginnings include classroom talk, interpretive note taking, journal writing, and early drafts.

Pre-writing, as defined by Emig (1971) is:

That part of the composing process that extends from the time a writer begins to perceive selectively certain features of his inner and outer environment with a view to writing about them--usually at the instigation of a stimulus--to the time when he first puts words or phrases on papers elucidating that perception. (p. 79)

Pre-writing occurs only once in a writing process. According to Hannan (1977) students should not be asked to write something for which they have no preparation. The stimulus needed for prewriting is any experience to which students may react in writing. This experience may be a film, a picture, a literary word, discussion or question (Tuttle,

1978). Also, questioning at the early stages in the composing process can help students to explore facts, feelings, theories, and values in ways that will at least increase the likelihood of their having something interesting to say when they begin to write (Odell, 1975).

It is generally accepted that the next stage in the composing process is the "rough draft" or "writing" stage. Murray (1975, 1978) calls this the "vision" stage because, until the author narrows his topic by writing the first draft, everything is possible. This stage often takes the shortest time and this discovery draft is often written in one sitting. According to Murray (1978), writers do not write what they know, but to know. This is the essential process of discovery through writing. After writing the rough draft, several authors suggest sharing compositions with an audience (Calkins, 1978; Elbow, 1973; Fader, 1976; Graves, 1983). If students are able to test their composition on the teacher or their peers, they will know whether or not they are communicating early. Reading aloud what they have written also helps writers clarify ideas and detect mechanical errors (Tuttle, 1978).

The third stage in the writing process is commonly referred to as revision. Murray (1975) considers revision to be the most important part of the composing process:

Writing is rewriting . . . And yet rewriting is the writing skill least rehearsed, least examined, least taught . . . Most texts confuse rewriting with editing, proofreading or manuscript preparation. Yet rewriting may be the most exciting, satisfying, and significant part of the writing process An understanding of the process of prevision, vision, and revision may result in the redesign of writing units so that students spend more time on prevision, far less time on vision, and much more time on revision. (pp. 1-2, 16)

Emig (1971) explains the three types of reformulation involved in composing: correcting, revising, and rewriting. Correcting usually eliminates mechanical errors or involves changes in style. Revising is a larger task including major reorganization of the work. Rewriting is the largest of the three and may encompass the writing of an entirely new composition.

It is the consensus among authors that the writer need not be overly concerned with grammar, mechanics and style until the final draft of the composition (Elbow, 1973; Loban, Ryan, & Squire, 1969; Tuttle, 1978). An over-concern for correctness in form at the beginning of the composition can have a sterile and debilitating effect.

Having reached the stage where the writer feels the composition is finished, he or she may wonder about the reception from the audience or may read aloud the finished product to a peer or teacher.

An insight which may prove to be valuable is that which sees "process" serving as peacemaker in the old conflict between "creativity" and "discipline." To the advocates of the former, "process" offers its pre-writing and draft writing stages at the best times to foster qualities they regard as important (free inquiry, zest, spontaneity, self expression, etc.). On the other hand, emphasis on process offers its editing and rewriting stages as the occasions most likely to be effective for cultivating skills and conventions because specific instructions can then be given on the weaknesses currently showing in the writing of individuals or groups (Walshe, 1979).

Referring to the writing process, Graves (1983) talks about the challenge facing teachers:

The challenge to teachers is to know the process of writing, to understand the self-centered force behind the writer, and to see the place of this centeredness in a writer's overall development. When the teacher understands this, she/he practices the craft of the substance of the substance of the craft of teaching. Moving like a surgeon's scalpel, unnoticed by patient and observers, the teacher asks the one relevant question. The writer may hardly notice the teacher or the question since his attention is so precisely focused on the person and the piece. Thus, the control remains with the writer who has new energy for the problem at hand. (p. 245)

Relationship Between Oral Language and Writing

A review of the literature on oral language and writing focuses on the relationship between these two modes of the language arts. The Hosis Report in 1917 stated that "Oral work should be conducted in intimate relation with written work and that the best results will follow when both are taught by the same teacher" (Lundsteen, 1979). The Hatfield Report in 1935 also stressed the relationship between oral and written modes of expression. The Bullock Report in 1976, which studied oral language across the curriculum, emphasized the need for holistic and integrated approaches to communication instruction, but, most noteworthy was the recognition that oral language plays a vital role in the development of written language skills (Marland, 1977).

Burrows' research suggests that written composition needs to be tied to oral language (Lundsteen, 1979). Conversation and "free talk" are the basis for consciously structuring reporting, story telling and retelling, both from original and from other sources. Blankenship and Stelzner (1979) suggest that oral language and writing supplement each other because they share at least two basic features: both use language as a primary source of meaning and both require the individual to deal with certain rhetorical concepts and principles such as those having to do with thesis, support,

definition, inference, assumption and organization. Talking allows students to share ideas among themselves and can stimulate them to want to write about their experience (Lehr, 1981).

Harste, Burke, and Woodward (1981) refer to language growth as a multi-lingual event with constant interplay between oral and written language. Their research suggests that oral and written language interact while developing simultaneously.

According to Zoellner (1969), the alternation between vocal and scribal activity leads to a reshaping and vitalizing of the scribal mode so that the student's written "voice" begins to take on some of the characteristics of his/her speaking voice. On the other hand, the cross-modal influences should also operate in the other direction with vocal emissions taking on some of the "literate" characteristics which distinguish the trained speaker from the mere talker. Writing improves talk, and talk, writing. Richards (1978) has suggested that language competence grows through an interaction of writing and talking. She has also observed that many children spend a great deal of time vaguely listening and then merely reciting. Her suggestion is that time be allotted in the school curriculum for using language for playing with stories and ideas, for exploring things and peoples, and for organizing thoughts and feelings explicitly.

Dyson (1981) refers to the relationship between oral language and writing. She sees talk as being an integral part of beginning to write, providing both meaning, and, for some, the systematic means of getting that meaning on paper. She sees the thematic content of the written product frequently evolving in the talk preceding writing. Talk is also

used to elaborate on the full meaning of that product. Oral language is a tool which can seek needed information, assist in the encoding of words, and express evaluations of a completed work (Tough, 1974).

In referring to the relationship between oral language and writing, Graves suggests that the experience of finding that someone is interested in what the student has to say is basic to the writing process (Walshe, 1982). Goodman, Haussler and Strickland (1980) suggest that a classroom context which fosters an interrelationship of spoken and written language and that acknowledges the constructive nature of the child as learner is conducive to fostering growth in the writing process. Anastasiow's research (1971) suggested that approaches toward writing that were most successful were those that were cognitively oriented. A cognitive approach is one in which instruction is geared toward encouraging the student to actively construct the experience presented in class in terms of his/her current level of competency. The oral language of the student is a sample of what he/she knows and is the base on which teachers can build a writing curriculum. Haley-James' research (1982) suggests that writing is most likely to encourage learning when students talk as a part of writing. Although writing encourages thought, writing is slower than speaking. Discussion of the work in progress provides instant feedback. Conversation helps writers objectify and analyze their efforts to construct and communicate meaning.

The research in the oral language-writing area suggests to teachers at all levels the importance of offering a variety of classroom activities that combine the speaking and writing modes (Jolly, 1980; King, 1981). This is recommended so that the language, experiences, and ideas of students can be used to promote motivation, precision, and control.

without the student's own ideas and initiative there can be no writing. Published writers have long recognized that knowing what to say is actually the hardest part of writing (Calkins, 1978). Oster (1980) has stated that "the need to verbally share our experiences is the real motivating force behind writing and quite certainly, writing in its earliest stages is essentially a collaborative rather than a solitary activity" (p. 6).

Because most writing implies, eventually, some audience, it is recommended that teachers combine writing and speaking in the classroom; this provides an immediate audience. Talking about writing is valuable because talk is more expressive than writing and because, as Britton suggests, talk relies on an immediate link with listeners; the rapid exchange of conversation allows many things to go on at once--exploration, clarification, shared interpretation, insight into difference of opinion, illustration and anecdote, explanation of gesture, and expression of doubt (cited in Fulwiler & Young, 1982).

Activities which combine oral language and writing increase students' linguistic sensitivity and sophistication by making them aware of some of the grammatical properties of language. Children become better able to talk about language and meaning. Psycholinguistics suggest that this increased linguistic awareness does give more control over language and affects written work and reading (Goodman, Haussler & Strickland, 1980; Smith, 1973).

McLeod's research (1981) has suggested programs combining oral language and writing are successful for a number of reasons: they draw upon knowledge students have already acquired; students are able to

approach writing with a feeling of accomplishment rather than failure; the approach teaches that written language should convey thought as clearly as oral language; sharing writing with peers teaches students to regard writing as an extension of conversation, a conversation dependent upon using precise words in communicating with an audience.

Moffett (1968) stated, "It is through talk and discussion that learners face the challenge of defining, clarifying, qualifying, elaborating, analyzing, and ordering experience, concepts, opinions or ideas, thereby developing their thinking and verbalizing skills for reading and writing" (p. 74).

Peer Grouping

Research on language has focused on interaction between students and their teachers. That schools are contexts for interactions and cooperation among children is a recent focus of classroom research (Cazden, 1983; Deford, 1982; Fader, 1976; Guinagh & Birkett, 1982; Goodman, Haussler, & Strickland, 1980; Graves, 1978; Harste et al., 1981). There are many justifications for such interactions. One of the main justifications is the value of collaboration and the dialogue it requires for the language and intellectual development of each child (Vygotsky, 1962). Basic to Vygotsky's theory of language development is the belief that individual cognition has a social foundation and that complex thought is, in essence, internalized speech. The questions asked by the adult and the dialogue that follows become the critical thinking, the introspective arguments of the child's inner speech. But it seems consistent with the Vygotskian point of view that dialogue through peer grouping in the classroom could be a helpful intermediate step between receptively being directed by the

speech of another and productively directing one's own mental processes via inner speech (Goodman et al., 1980). The interactions of minds, one of the salient characteristics of group work, provides a stimulation that can be gained in no other way (Loban, Ryan, & Squire, 1969). Peer writing groups help students write personally satisfying, communicative prose by allowing them to get away from competition for grades and from the fear and authority carried by the teacher. The writing group approach builds into the writing process the opportunity for revision and feedback before submitting a paper to the teacher for a grade, allows stimulating cooperation instead of stressful competition, and helps develop critical thinking skills which is basic to a liberal education (Scanlon, 1979).

Learning to write is in great measure a process of gaining new awareness. Gebhardt (1980) has proposed that gaining new awareness of any kind is likely to be a painful process. The evidence provided by collaborative activity in the society at large suggests that people can gain both awareness and support as adequately in a small group as from the direction of a teacher.

Another reason students can help each other learn to write is that a person is, or can learn to be, an astute and demanding audience before he becomes a clear, effective writer, just as a small child can become an astute and discriminating listener before he/she can speak. Thus, reading aloud what has been written helps students learn to write. The listeners become increasingly capable of detecting lack of clarity, organization, logic, and substance, a development which leads eventually to the ability to write clearly, coherently, and logically themselves (Beaven, 1977). Crowhurst (1979) suggested that reading the writing of others to comment usefully is valuable practice in critical reading for a real purpose.

Another justification for peer grouping is based on Halliday's view that language learning is an intersubjective inherently social phenomenon. According to Halliday (1977), learning language is a process of construction. An individual has to construct language, but he/she does not do this alone but in interaction with others; and the others are not simply providing a model but are also actively engaged in the construction process. A program that combines oral language and writing actively engages students in the constructive process of writing.

A review of the literature on oral language and writing in the classroom presents the view that what is needed is not direct teaching of form but responsivity on the part of the students' conversational partners (Goodman et al., 1980). Zoellner (1969) emphasized that talking and writing go together and recommended that writing classes be run like art classes. That is, the students write with felt pens on butcher paper draped over easels, using their own subjects or a common subject and stopping now and then to examine the work of others and to discuss special features and problems. Fader (1976), in a writing class at the University of Michigan, arranges students, selected for a range of interests and abilities, into groups of three, and on each paper he gives a grade for the writer and the two editors. According to Fader, the result is that the members of the group become dependent on each other and are constantly sharpening each other's perceptions and writing skills.

Monahan and Zelner (1982) propose the creation of a "writing atmosphere" whereby writing be shared with a variety of people who give feedback on it. They have provided suggestions to assist teachers in setting up writing groups that allow students to share their writing.

Elbow (1973) proposes a model for establishing writing groups. Students begin to nurture trust among group members by first reacting only to the positive aspect of each other's writing. As time passes, group members begin to offer constructive criticism by stating their observations about the papers. In the exchange of papers, students are exposed to a variety of different writing approaches which may later help improve their own writing. In the second step of the editing process students work in pairs, reading and editing each other's papers for punctuation and grammatical errors according to an editor's code which they themselves have composed.

Cooper (1975), who helped to develop writing programs for secondary schools, believes that a central role of the teacher is to train students to work together in pairs or small groups as this facilitates peer questioning and students are better able to begin their drafts.

Peer grouping for oral language and writing activities also encourages student writers to communicate with a more realistic audience. The teacher-evaluator is often not a typical reader and therefore not the best audience to motivate good writing. Moffett (1968) distinguished between young children's adolescents' motivations to write well for teachers. Whereas young children will often prefer to write for a "significant adult" reader such as a teacher, the adolescent will be uncomfortable with this audience. Britton (1975) and Bruffee (1973) suggest that much of the writing should be done for peers and teacher, as trusted adult, rather than for teacher as examiner. Rosen (1979) suggests that often the teacher might be the only adult responder that students have in their lives. She suggests that students need a sense of actual live audience responding to their words.

Ellman (1975) defends peer grouping and evaluation pointing out that students are more willing to accept criticism from peers and are able to experience the writer-audience relationship. Peckham (1978) proposes an environment in which students will listen to, read, and evaluate each other's papers. He teaches his students how to teach each other to write. Langer (1982) refers to the importance of having "sharing discussions" whereby students help focus their thoughts and explain their ideas sharply in ways which can benefit them in both academic and non-academic settings. Slavin's research (1980) indicates that cooperative learning techniques can be used in the writing classroom as the dominant instructional mode. Group activities serve to take the pressure off individuals who, at times, need the security of the group. Group members actually "teach" each other by tactfully dismissing certain suggestions while using others. The social skills of positive interaction and cooperation are reinforced in group activities.

Research has shown that children's interactions have a positive effect on their ability to write (Dyson, 1981; Graves, 1978; Harste et al., 1981; Murray, 1968). The classroom in which students are grouped with peers for the purpose of questioning, modeling, providing feedback and support for each other has a positive effect on students' ability to write (Fader, 1976). Many authors claim that grouping students for writing activities improves the learning environment of the classroom, as well as the writing and reading, creating an atmosphere of sharing and trust that seeps into other aspects of classroom life (Bruffee, 1978; Haley-James, 1982; James, 1981).

Elias (1982) investigated peer interaction as methodology to improve both writing and writing attitudes. She discovered that students who have a sense of their own voice are better writers than students who lack the ability or instruction to create voice in writing. Guinagh and Birkett (1982) observed a cooperative critique group for improving writing and discovered that through cooperation students learned to give and accept criticism and to work together on an intellectual activity. Some students who had been only marginally involved started to take writing seriously. In addition, while students were working in groups, the teacher had time to work with individual students. Jacko's study (1978) revealed that students writing in small groups tended to develop a commitment to each other, were comfortable with having other students read and comment on their papers, and showed signs of seeing themselves as resources.

Murray (1968) describes the classroom environment where peer grouping for the purpose of writing occurs:

When I sit in the classroom reading or writing, planning or doing paper work, while my students teach themselves in small groups, I feel lonely, more than a bit left out. I have to remind myself that my first responsibility as a teacher is to prepare my students so they can function when I am not there. Their independence from me should not be cause for guilt, but for pride . . . When the teacher can stop teaching, can stand back and see his students teaching themselves, then he has succeeded. His ambition should be to teach as little as possible and eventually not to teach at all. He is most successful when the students have become their own teachers. (p. 133.)

Through peer grouping, the writing/reading/evaluating/writing cycle flows as skills interchange and feed each other.

Writing Attitudes

The idea that people vary in how they feel about writing is not new. For centuries teachers and authors have alluded to the fact that some people like writing more than others. Although the importance of attitude to learning has long been widely known, until recently composition instructors have done little more than blame negative attitudes for students' poor performance and have noted the superior performance of students with positive attitudes.

A review of the literature on attitudes toward writing reflects that writing teachers have de-emphasized the important role attitudes play in learning to write, and they seem reluctant to consider improvement or even change in attitude toward writing as a valid goal of composition. In contrast to this position, Kroll (1979) claims that the relationship between positive attitude and success is especially relevant in writing classes because here student effort is necessary for improvement. According to Holladay (1981) research into attitude toward writing, still in its infancy, supports Kroll's claim. This research indicates that attitudes definitely influence growth in writing, that a writer's degree of apprehension toward writing can be measured, and that certain teaching strategies can promote a positive attitude toward writing.

Students have always identified writing as a part of English and therefore easily avoidable because the English class was the only one in which writing played any noticeable role. Fader (1976) suggests that changing this attitude toward writing is crucial to increasing the student's ability to compose. Marland's research (1977) concluded that people tend to regard writing as they regard breathing--something you take for granted until you notice something wrong with it. Writing becomes

something to be put right, cured, corrected; its active role in learning is often overlooked. Students look upon writing as a visible product to be corrected, and this attitude, it has been suggested, causes apprehension toward writing. Graves (1978) suggested that educators fail to see writing as an essential mode of communication. Students often surmise that eradication of error is more important than encouragement of expression. Underlying this attitude is the belief that they have little of value to say and therefore, why write. They feel incompetent at conveying information through writing (Bock, 1976; Hayes, 1981; Selfe, 1981).

Rose's research (1980) revealed that rigid rules for composing and using language as well as confused planning strategies may cause negative attitudes toward or even stifle writing altogether. Bloom's study (1980) disclosed lack of awareness of the complexities of the composing process and authoritative, teacher-centered produce-based mode of teaching as being partly responsible for negative attitudes toward writing.

In a seminal investigation in 1967, Eulert (cited in Holladay, 1981) studied the factors which affect learning in composition. He discovered that the two most significant factors are student attitudes and motivation. From his study, he concluded that learning to write depends on the student's self image, personal attitudes, and motivation and that learning takes place when these three interact. Thus, he concluded, composition instruction should center on changing students' attitudes. This view is substantiated by other researchers (Fader, 1976; Graves, 1978; Macrorie, 1976; Murray, 1968).

The definitive and most extensive research into students' attitudes toward writing has been conducted by Daly and various associates and comes under the topic of "Writing Apprehension," a term coined by Daly and Miller to describe a general tendency toward anxiety which is triggered by the specific situation of writing (Daly & Miller, 1975). In terms of writing and related skills, research consistently reveals differences between high and low apprehensives. High apprehensives find writing unrewarding and consequently avoid situations where writing is required. This anxiety is often reflected in their written products and attitudes about writing situations. Low apprehensives represent the other end of the continuum. They are confident in their abilities to write and often enjoy it.

Research has associated apprehension with choices people make, attitudes they hold, and differences in their writing skills and performance (Daly & Wilson, 1981). Writing apprehension has been linked to both academic and occupational decisions (Cope, 1978; Daly, 1977). Highly apprehensive individuals prefer and choose occupations and majors they perceive as not requiring much writing. In contrast, low anxious individuals select jobs and academic concentrations they perceive as demanding little writing. A study by Book (1976) revealed that individuals apprehensive about writing, write and divulge less information. Hayes' research (1981) concluded that apprehensive writers disliked writing and took a great deal of time to complete an assignment while non-apprehensive writers enjoyed writing and wrote rapidly. The main conclusion of Selfe's study (1981) on the composing processes of high and low apprehensives was that high apprehensives rushed through the task without planning and the

low apprehensives tended to use several pre-writing strategies and plan their work. Cope (1978) observed that the style of the anxious writers in her study was flat, neutral, self hiding, and less expressive than that of writers who are not anxious. A study by Daly (1977) substantiated the research that high apprehensives avoid writing.

Research reflects that certain approaches and strategies in teaching writing actually promote a positive attitude toward writing. Dyson (1981) discovered that the interactive classroom, one in which children are questioning, modeling, providing feedback and support for each other, had a positive effect on students' ability to write.

Waldschmidt (1975), in pairing peers for talk-writing, reported improved attitudes toward composition class among the students in his study. Elias (1982) reported a similar finding in her study focusing on peer interaction as a method for creating voice in writing.

Guinagh and Birkett (1982) discovered that students' attitudes toward writing became more flexible and more positive as a result of using a student cooperative critique group. The group setting gave students the opportunity to present their ideas to peers and to listen to suggestions for improvement. Through cooperation, students wrote with greater skill and seemed to find it more enjoyable.

Jacko (1978), utilizing the dynamics of small group processes as an approach for improving writing skills, reported it to be most effective in securing student involvement and in improving attitudes toward writing. Fader (1976) observed improved attitudes in writing as a result of the non-traditional method of arranging his writing classes into groups of three for the purposes of discussion and evaluation.

Summary

This chapter reviewed the theories and research which addressed the following questions and concepts: the relationship of spoken and written language, the nature of the writing process, grouping of students for improvement in writing and students' attitudes toward writing.

A review of the literature on oral language and writing reveals that oral language plays a vital role in the development of written language skills. Conversation helps writers objectify and analyze their efforts to construct and communicate meaning. Research supports the grouping of students for writing as this interaction actively engages students in the constructive process of writing. This emphasis on writing as a process is also prevalent in current research. A review of the literature reflects that too often writing assignments have failed to stress the kind of thinking skills that generate fresh and creative ideas. Much more emphasis needs to be placed on the pre-writing stage of the writing process as that is where the generation of ideas occurs. Research also supports that negative attitudes toward writing are connected to the stagnant approach that has been taken to writing in the past. Yet, certain approaches and strategies actually promote a positive attitude toward writing. Since studies have demonstrated that good writing performance is related to a positive attitude toward writing, it seems logical the emphasis should be on programs and strategies that promote this positive attitude.

Chapter III

Research Design

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of a researcher-designed, oral language-writing program, using grouping, on students' ability to compose and on attitudes toward writing. The study also determined if there were a significant relationship between writing attitude and ability to compose.

Group Equivalency

After selecting the two groups of students for the study, group equivalency was established by checking the computed means on a composition pretest and attitude pretest given to students in both the treatment and control groups. A t test was run demonstrating no significant difference between the two groups.

Hypotheses

The main object of the study was to see if an integrated oral language-writing program using peer grouping would affect students' attitudes toward writing and their ability to compose. In order to test the main hypotheses of the study, they were cast in the null form:

1. There will be no significant difference in composing ability between a class involved in an integrated oral language-writing program and a traditional class.

2. There will be no significant difference in attitudes toward writing between a class involved in an integrated oral language-writing program and a traditional class.

3. There will be no significant difference in composing ability from pretest to posttest for students in the integrated oral language-writing program.

4. There will be no significant difference in attitude toward writing from pretest to posttest for students in the integrated oral language-writing group.

5. There will be no significant difference in composing ability from pretest to posttest for students in the traditional group.

6. There will be no significant difference in attitude from pretest to posttest for students in the traditional group.

7. There will be a correlation coefficient of .60 or higher between the control group's ability to compose and writing attitude on the pretest.

8. There will be a correlation coefficient of .60 or higher between the treatment group's ability to compose and writing attitude on the pretest.

9. There will be a correlation coefficient of .60 or higher between the treatment groups' ability to compose and writing attitudes on the pretest.

10. There will be a correlation coefficient of .60 or higher between the treatment group's ability to compose and writing attitude on the posttest.

11. There will be a correlation coefficient of .60 or higher between the treatment group's ability to compose and writing attitude on the posttest.

12. There will be a correlation coefficient of .60 or higher between both groups' abilities to compose and writing attitudes on the posttest.

Methodology

Subjects

The subjects in the experimental group were twenty-four ninth-grade students from a rural-suburban school. Students were heterogeneously grouped.

Students in the control group were twenty-four ninth-grade students from a suburban-rural school. Students were heterogeneously grouped.

Instruments and Procedure

In order to determine students' ability to compose, writing samples were taken from students in both the treatment and control groups prior to and after the nine week treatment period. These writing samples were evaluated holistically according to relative readability by a team of three English teachers, all of whom were trained in holistic scoring. The writing samples were evaluated according to a 1-5 Likert scale. For reference, samples were used to help determine what would constitute a 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 score.

In order to determine attitudes toward writing, a writing apprehension scale, devised by Daly and Miller (1975), was administered to students in both groups prior to and after the nine week period (see

Appendix D). The scale consists of twenty-six questions aimed at pinpointing attitudes toward the various aspects of the composing process. Scores on the scale may range from a low of 26 to a high of 130.

Teacher Background

There was one teacher for each classroom. The teacher from the treatment group had taught five years and was permanently certified in English, Spanish, and reading.

The teacher in the traditional group (control group) had taught seven years and was permanently certified in English and French and had taken courses toward certification in mathematics.

Oral Language-Writing Program

Both groups had a forty minute English period daily. Spelling, vocabulary, grammar, literature and writing were included in each week's plan.

In the treatment group (Oral language-writing group) students were divided into groups of three for the purpose of oral discussion and writing. In order to form the groups of three, students had been asked to identify on a paper two other students with whom they would like to work. Some modifications were necessary. Students were given folders with paper and note cards as a guide for oral discussion and writing. Students followed the communication spiral which was attached to their folders (see Appendix B). The teacher, the researcher of this paper, and a student modeled what students were to do. Using the communication spiral as a guide, students progressed through the three writing stages

of pre-writing, writing, and revision. Brainstorming and oral discussion of what had been written took place before the improvement and revision stages. The students also read aloud their finished products to the group. A guide for questioning and discussion was provided each student. Topics and activities with which to interact were given to the students (see Appendix C). Two forty-minute periods per week for nine weeks were allotted for this activity. At times, students were instructed to work on their revisions for homework.

The role of the classroom teacher was that of a guide. She circulated among the groups, listened to the various group discussions and provided input and guidance when she deemed it appropriate.

Traditional Group

Spelling, vocabulary, literature and writing were integrated into each week's plan. Students were given weekly writing assignments based on a play, poem or story they had in class or for a homework assignment. Any discussion that occurred prior to writing was a class discussion and tended to be dominated by the teacher and a few of the students. On occasion, the teacher simply wrote a title or choice of topics on the board and had students choose one and "write a well constructed composition." There was little oral language exchange in this classroom.

Analysis of Data

In analyzing data, t tests for small independent samples were used to see if there were a significant difference between the treatment and control group's ability to compose and writing attitude. In order to determine if there were a significant pretest-posttest difference in

composing ability and in attitude toward writing for both groups, t tests for dependent means were used. Correlation coefficients were obtained to determine if there were a significant relationship between ability to compose and writing attitude.

Summary

This study evaluated the effects of an integrated oral language-writing program, using grouping, on students' abilities to compose and on their attitudes toward writing.

Forty-eight students from two heterogeneously grouped classrooms formed the sample.

The treatment involved the participation of twenty-four subjects from the integrated oral language-writing program, working in groups of three, on a variety of activities combining oral language and writing, for approximately forty minutes, twice a week, for a period of nine weeks. A communication spiral designed by the researcher was used as a guide for the students.

To determine if there was growth in composing ability in the treatment group, a writing sample was taken before and after the nine week period and was holistically scored to determine relative readability.

To determine if there had been a change in attitudes toward writing after the treatment, the Miller and Daly Writing Apprehension Scale was administered before and after the treatment. Raw data were analyzed statistically using t tests and correlation coefficients.

Chapter IV

Analysis of Data

Purpose

This study investigated the effect of a researcher-designed, oral language-writing program, using grouping, on ability to compose and on writing attitudes. A secondary purpose was to determine if there were a significant relationship between writing attitude and ability to compose.

Findings and Interpretations

A two tailed t test for independent means was used to determine if the treatment and control groups were equivalent in composing ability. The control group's mean pretest score was higher than the treatment group's but there was no significant difference at the .05 level of significance. Since no significant difference was found in composing ability between the two groups, pretest similarity for composing ability was established.

A two tailed t test for independent means was also used to determine if the treatment and control groups were equivalent in attitude toward writing. The control group's mean pretest score was higher than the treatment group's but there was no significant difference between the means at the .05 level of significance. Since no significant difference was found in attitude between the two groups, pretest similarity was established.

The first experimental hypothesis was that there would be a difference in composing ability between the treatment and control groups. To test this hypothesis, a first null hypothesis was created. The first null hypothesis stated that there will be no significant difference in composing ability between a class involved in an integrated oral language-writing program and a traditional class. A two tailed t test for independent means was applied to test the hypothesis at the .05 level of significance. Based on the data in Table 1, the first null hypothesis was retained. No significant difference was found in composing ability between the two groups at the end of the nine week period. As a group, those involved in the integrated oral language-writing program were not significantly different from those involved in the traditional program, at the end of the nine week period. Table 1 provides the data from this statistical analysis.

Table 1

Mean Pretest and Posttest Composing Ability
Scores of Treatment and Control Groups

	df	Pretest \bar{X}	s.d.	df	Posttest \bar{X}	s.d.	t
Treatment Group	46	2.94	.866	46	3.23	1.018	1.0691
Control Group	46	3.24	.892	46	3.28	.756	.2025

$t(46) = 1.68, p < .05$

The second experimental hypothesis was that there would be a difference in attitude between the treatment and control groups. To test this hypothesis a second null hypothesis was created. This hypothesis stated that there will be no significant difference in attitude toward writing between a class involved in an integrated oral language-writing program and a traditional class. A two tailed t test for independent means was used to test this hypothesis at the .05 level of significance.

The results of the t test rejected the null hypothesis and established that there was a significant difference in attitude toward writing after a nine week integrated oral language-writing program using grouping. In fact, data were significant at the .01 level of significance. Table 2 provides the data from this statistical analysis.

Table 2

Mean Pretest and Posttest Writing Attitude
Scores of Treatment and Control Groups

	df	Pretest \bar{X}	s.d.	df	Posttest \bar{X}	s.d.	t
Treatment Group	46	72.9	14.4	46	83.6	13.6	2.6475*
Control Group	46	75.45	4.7	46	75.41	14.6	.0098

$t(46) = 1.68, p < .05$

* = statistically significant

The third null hypothesis was that there will be no significant difference in composing ability from pretest to posttest for students in the integrated oral language-writing program. Since the researcher wanted to know if there were significant growth in composing ability for the treatment group, from pretest to posttest, a one tailed t test for dependent means was used to test the hypothesis at .05 level of significance. Results of the t test rejected the null hypothesis. There was a significant difference in composing ability from pretest to posttest for students in the integrated oral language-writing program using peer grouping. In fact, data were significant at the .01 level.

The fourth null hypothesis was that there will be no significant difference in attitude toward writing from pretest to posttest for students in the integrated oral language-writing program. Since the researcher wanted to know if there were significant improvement in attitude toward writing for the treatment group over the nine week treatment period, a one tailed t test for dependent means was used to test the hypothesis at the .05 level of significance. Results of the t test rejected the fourth null hypothesis. There was a significant difference in attitude from pretest to posttest for the treatment group. In fact, data were significant at the .01 level. Data pertaining to the third and fourth hypothesis are in Table 3.

Table 3

t test of the Difference of the Treatment Group's
Pretest and Posttest Scores for Composing
Ability and Writing Attitude

	Pretest			Posttest			t
	df	\bar{X}	s.d.	df	\bar{X}	s.d.	
Composing Ability	23	2.94	.866	23	3.23	1.018	2.77*
Writing Attitude	23	72.9	14.4	23	83.6	13.6	-3.26*

t (23) = 1.71, p < .05

* = statistically different

The fifth null hypothesis stated that there will be no significant difference in composing ability from pretest to posttest for students in the traditional group (control group). A one tailed t test for dependent means was used to test the hypothesis at the .05 level of significance. Based on the results of the t test, the null hypothesis was accepted. There was no significant difference in composing ability from pretest to posttest for students in the control group.

The sixth null hypothesis stated that there will be no significant difference in writing attitude from pretest to posttest for students in the traditional group. A t test for dependent means was used to determine if there were a significant difference from pretest to posttest at the .05 level of significance. Based on the results of the t test, the null hypothesis was accepted. There was no significant difference in attitude toward writing for the control group. Data pertaining to the sixth and seventh null hypothesis are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

t test of the Difference of the Control Group's
Pretest and Posttest Scores for Composing
Ability and Writing Attitude

	Pretest			Posttest			t
	df	\bar{X}	s.d.	df	\bar{X}	s.d.	
Composing Ability	23	3.24	.892	23	3.28	.756	.286
Writing Attitude	23	75.45	14.7	23	75.41	14.6	.034

t (23) = 1.71, p < .05

As an additional investigation, the researcher was interested in knowing whether, given attitudes toward writing, composing ability could be predicted. Thus a correlation study was conducted to test the remaining six hypotheses. A correlation coefficient of .60 was chosen as it would mean that thirty-six percent of the variation would be explained. Data pertaining to these hypotheses are presented in Table 5. Raw scores are included in Appendix A.

The seventh hypothesis states that there will be a correlation coefficient of .60 or higher between the control group's ability to compose and writing attitudes on the pretest. This hypothesis was not accepted as the correlation coefficient between the two variables was estimated to be .21, reflecting only a chance relationship.

The eighth hypothesis states that there will be a correlation coefficient of .60 or higher between the treatment group's ability to compose and writing attitudes on the pretest. This hypothesis was not accepted as the correlation coefficient between the two variables was

.37, indicating a low correlation and explaining only fourteen percent of the variance.

Table 5
Pretest Posttest Correlation Coefficients for
Writing Attitude and Composing Ability

	r
Total Pretest	.28
Treatment Group	.37
Control Group	.21
Total Posttest	.41
Treatment Group	.56
Control Group	.32

The ninth hypothesis states that there will be a correlation coefficient of .60 or higher between both groups' abilities to compose and writing attitudes on the pretest. This hypothesis was rejected as the correlation coefficient was .28 indicating a low correlation and explaining only about eight percent of the variance.

The tenth hypothesis states that there will be a correlation coefficient of .60 or higher between the control group's ability to compose and writing attitudes on the posttest. This hypothesis was rejected as the correlation coefficient was .32 indicating a low correlation and accounting for only about ten percent of the variance.

The eleventh hypothesis states that there will be a correlation coefficient of .60 or higher between the treatment group's ability to compose and writing attitudes on the posttest. This hypothesis was

rejected although the correlation coefficient of .56 was a modest one and did account for better than thirty percent of the variance.

The twelfth hypothesis states that there will be a correlation coefficient of .60 or higher between both groups' abilities to compose and writing attitudes on the posttest. This hypothesis was also rejected as the correlation coefficient was .41, accounting for about seventeen percent of the variance.

Raw data for this study are located in Appendix A.

Summary

The results of the analysis of the independent t tests indicate that, in comparing the treatment group with the control group at the end of the nine week treatment program, there was a significant difference in attitude toward writing for the treatment group. Results also indicate that there was not a significant difference in composing ability between the two groups at the end of the nine week treatment program.

Results of the analysis of the dependent t tests indicate that there was a significant gain in composing ability from pretest to posttest for students in the integrated oral language-writing program. There was also a significant gain in attitude toward writing for students in the treatment program.

Students in the control group showed neither a significant gain in composing ability nor in attitude toward writing.

The correlation study failed to find a significant relationship between writing attitude and composing ability, indicating that attitude toward writing cannot accurately be used as a predictor of composing ability.

Chapter V

Conclusions and Implications

Purpose

This study investigated the effects of an integrated oral language-writing program, using grouping, on the ability to compose and writing attitudes of ninth grade students. The study also determined if there were a significant relationship between writing attitude and ability to compose.

Conclusions

The conclusions reached relate to the results of the t tests the correlation study, and other informal observations.

The results of the independent t tests indicated that, at the start of the nine weeks, the treatment group and control group were equivalent in composing ability and in writing attitude. When the two groups were compared at the end of the nine weeks, they were not significantly different from each other in composing ability. Yet, when the two groups were compared in writing attitude, a significant gain was noted for the treatment group, indicating the effectiveness of the integrated oral language-writing program for improving attitude toward writing.

Results of the t tests, which compared pretest and posttest means for each individual student, indicated that students in the treatment

group improved significantly in both ability to compose and attitude toward writing. The control group did not gain significantly in these areas. Thus, it can be concluded that the integrated oral language-writing program described in this paper is effective in improving composing ability and attitude toward writing.

Although the correlation study failed to find a significant relationship between attitude and composing ability, a correlation coefficient of .56, reflecting a modest relationship, was calculated between the treatment group's ability to compose and writing attitudes on the posttest. Yet, the study does not indicate that attitude toward writing can be accurately used as a predictor of composing ability.

During the actual treatment program the researcher and classroom teacher observed many positive reactions among students in the class. Students seemed anxious to get into their groups and start their pre-writing activities. It was not difficult to keep them on task and only occasionally did they need to be reminded to keep their discussions on the topic or activities. All compositions were unique despite the fact that students were working in groups and sharing ideas. Each student seemed to progress in developing his or her own individual writing style.

Implications for Research

This study was limited to ninth grade students in a rural-suburban district. A more complete investigation of the effects of an integrated oral language-writing program, using grouping, could include other

grade levels of students and a suburban or urban population. It would be beneficial to replicate the study for a longer period of time.

At a lower grade level, it would be interesting to see if students who gained in composing ability also gained in reading achievement. Further studies could include an IQ test or a standardized reading test. Different measures could be used for evaluating attitude toward writing and growth in composing ability. Growth in oral language usage and confidence in speaking in groups might be other factors to be considered in future studies.

Implications for Classroom Practice

One of the advantages of the integrated oral language-writing program using grouping was that it exposed students to all four modes of the language arts--reading, writing, speaking, and listening--as the students followed a classroom context that fostered the interrelationship of spoken and written language and that acknowledged the constructive nature of the student as learner. Through conversation and discussion, students were able to construct and communicate meaning and then were able to transfer their thoughts on paper. Goodman, Haussler and Strickland (1980) and Graves (1983) have suggested that this type of classroom environment will eventually foster a growth in the writing process. An approach that combines oral language and writing permits the student to focus on the process of writing rather than simply on the product.

Motivation appears to be a strong factor in getting students to write. The program described in this paper appeared to promote motivation as the students' own ideas and experiences were discussed with their peers. Students were facilitated in expressing their thoughts. Students appeared to learn how to talk about writing, how to question, and how to make revisions. Students who had been previously at a loss for words after writing four or five sentences were, at the end of the program, filling up both sides of the paper. Oster (1980) has suggested that verbally sharing experiences is the real motivating force behind writing.

The integrated oral language-writing program provided activities which combined speaking and writing in a manageable way for the classroom teacher. This approach also allowed the teacher time to work individually with or conference with students while others were working in groups.

In the search for new and interesting ways of approaching writing with the student in the classroom, the method described in this study was successful. The fact that there was a positive change in the students' composing ability and attitudes toward writing is encouraging. If students are enjoying what they are doing and have a positive attitude, they are likely to become more proficient.

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APPENDIX A

Treatment Group Pretest and Posttest Raw Scores
Control Group Pretest and Posttest Raw Scores

APPENDIX A

Treatment Group Pretest and PosttestRaw Scores

<u>Student Number</u>	<u>Composing Ability</u>		<u>Attitude Scale</u>	
	<u>Pretest</u>	<u>Posttest</u>	<u>Pretest</u>	<u>Posttest</u>
1	4.33	5.0	101	100
2	3.0	3.66	100	111
3	3.33	4.33	96	97
4	4.33	5.0	90	98
5	1.33	2.0	84	78
6	4.0	3.0	83	86
7	3.0	2.66	82	88
8	2.0	3.0	82	84
9	2.33	3.0	77	80
10	2.0	2.0	76	92
11	3.33	3.66	76	88
12	4.0	4.66	75	97
13	4.66	4.66	69	96
14	3.33	4.0	69	88
15	2.66	2.0	64	79
16	3.0	3.33	62	71
17	3.0	3.33	61	93
18	2.66	4.0	59	65
19	2.0	2.0	59	62
20	2.0	2.33	58	86
21	2.66	2.66	58	79
22	3.0	3.33	58	59
23	2.0	2.0	57	66
24	2.66	2.0	54	65

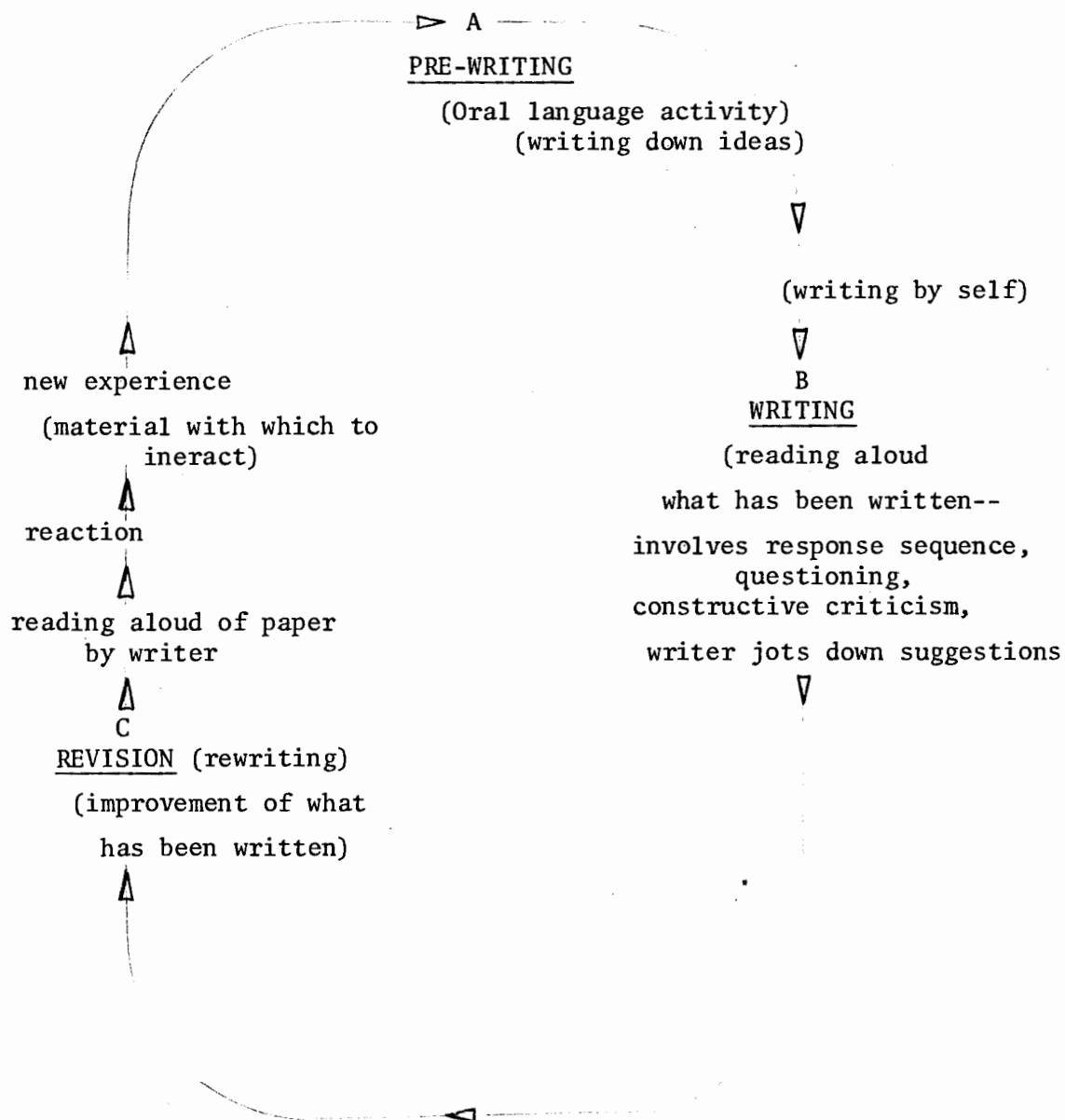
Control Group Pretest and PosttestRaw Scores

<u>Student Number</u>	<u>Composing Ability</u>		<u>Attitude Scale</u>	
	<u>Pretest</u>	<u>Posttest</u>	<u>Pretest</u>	<u>Posttest</u>
1	2.0	2.3	106	112
2	4.0	4.3	99	93
3	4.0	3.3	97	90
4	4.7	5.0	96	101
5	2.3	2.3	89	76
6	4.0	3.0	87	86
7	3.0	4.3	84	86
8	3.7	3.7	82	76
9	5.0	4.3	78	77
10	4.33	4.0	78	77
11	4.0	3.0	74	74
12	3.66	3.66	73	87
13	2.33	3.0	71	72
14	2.0	3.0	70	78
15	3.33	3.0	70	66
16	2.33	3.0	70	64
17	2.66	2.0	69	71
18	2.0	2.33	68	68
19	2.33	3.66	68	63
20	3.0	4.0	61	69
21	2.66	2.66	61	61
22	3.66	3.0	56	55
23	3.0	3.0	53	55
24	3.66	3.0	51	53

APPENDIX B

Communication Spiral

APPENDIX B



For the next ten weeks you will be involved in an oral language based writing program. As a participant in this program you will be involved in three roles, that of writer, listener-responder, and group member. The following is a description of the roles and a list of instructions and guidelines for you to follow:

I. Writer

As writer, following the communication spiral, you will proceed through the stages of pre-writing, writing, and revision.

A. Pre-writing

1. Oral activities such as brainstorming, discussion about ideas and experiences, interviewing, or orally reacting to a stimulus such as a picture.
2. While group discussion and oral activities are going on, jot down your spoken words as you come up with usable ideas.

B. Writing

You are trying to get on paper:

1. The words that come to mind
2. Natural sounding phrases
3. An arrangement of material effective for your audience

Remember . . . most likely your phrases and sentences will not be in final shape at this point. Yet, try to organize your ideas into some kind of order with a specific purpose in mind. After writing, read aloud what you have read to the group and pay close attention to the feedback they give you. Jot down some points that will later help you improve your piece of writing.

C. Revision

Having received the feedback from the group, work on improving what you are composing. When finished, have one of the students in the group read aloud what you have written.

II. Listener-responder

A. Response sequence

1. Give positive feedback. What is most striking or interesting about the paper? What ideas stay in your mind more vividly than others? Remember to respect the writer's train of thought.
2. What questions do you have? In questioning the writer, the following might be helpful:
 - a. Will you explain that a little more?
 - b. Can you give me some more examples?
 - c. Tell me some more about what you're saying because I'm not sure how it all fits in.

3. Suggestions

What suggestions that you have might be helpful to the writer? Remember that you are a sample audience. If a line isn't clear or if something is missing, tell the writer. Advise him/her to make a change. Any criticism should be constructive. It should help the writer build on his/her strengths.

III. Instructions for team (group).

- A. In following the communication spiral, you must work together seriously with your partners.
- B. You and your partners must respect the privacy of other teams.
- C. Remember . . . you are a communicator . . . both a sender and receiver of messages.

APPENDIX C

Activities

APPENDIX C

Activities

ACTIVITY

The following is a writing activity that goes along with the concept of stereotypes that we have been discussing in class:

You are to write an obituary for one of the "dead" objects in the box that was shown to you (or one of your choice). A copy of the obituary page of the newspaper will be given to you as a source of ideas.

Example:

CREST TOOTHPASTE . . . Famous for whitening and brightening qualities departed this world April 14, 1983 . . . a victim of inflation . . . nobody put their money where their mouth is. Survived by many fluorides and cavity fighting products. In lieu of dentures send contributions to Monroe County Dental Association. Visiting hours will immediately follow breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

ACTIVITY

You will be interviewing a family member or family friend. Decide who you will be interviewing and as part of the pre-writing activity, write up and discuss at least eight questions to ask the interviewee. Your writing activity will include writing up the interview and discussing it with the members of your group. Then proceed to the revision state in the communication spiral.

ACTIVITY

You, as a group, have been cast away on a desert island. Brainstorm all the ways you could use the objects you have with you here and now (those in your pockets and purses) for survival or for escape.

Then, for your writing activity, write a composition in which you have explained the use for these objects in your imagined situation.

ACTIVITY

Each member of the group is to develop a mental image of a character by answering such questions as: What age is my character, what sex? What does he or she look like physically? What is he or she like in terms of personality and character? What is your character's occupation or status in society? In what kind of living quarters does your character reside? Who are his or her companions? What past experiences have had an impact on your character's life?

Each member of the group then describes his/her character to others in the group. After all the characters have been described, each student writes a story involving all characters that have been described. (The writing section of the Communication Spiral starts at this point.)

ACTIVITY

Cut out pictures of absurd or impractical items from old magazines or catalogs. Tell students, as they are each presented with an item, that the item is a gift from their rich Aunt Hortense, who will bequeath her millions to the student who writes the thank you note. Students must mention the gift specifically and make mention of how it will be used or enjoyed.

ACTIVITY

Ask students to think of something that ought to be caged in the GREAT ZOO. Anything might be considered a possible candidate except

people and real animals. War, fear, lies, racism, divorce and competency tests might easily be put behind the zoo's bars. Use the following questions to guide the writing of your composition: What is it? Why should it be included? Why is it dangerous?

GARAGE SALE ACTIVITY

Garage sales have caught on in the world of literature. Characters from stories, novels, plays read in your classes this year have decided to hold a garage sale. What items does each character decide to put on sale? Why? A list of the possible characters, items and reasons for sale follows:

<u>Character</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Reason</u>
Oliver Twist	rags, clothes	been adopted
Romeo	portrait of Rosaline	loves Juliet
Atticus	rifle	hated killing
Mme. Defarge	knitting needles	Revolution succeeded
Thoreau	fishing pole	vegetarian
Tom Sawyer	paint and brush	job finished
Huck Finn	raft	decided to live on land
Socrates	wine	preferred hemlock

Ways to Use the Activity

1. Ask which literary characters would buy the items. Why?
2. Use the activity as a review of the literature read during the year.
3. Ask students to write ads for the garage sale.
4. Ask students to be one of the items and write personal histories of themselves.
5. Ask students to write dialogue between two of the items commenting on their lives, or the appearance of other items, or the characters selling the items or buying the items.

CHARACTERS ACTIVITY

Students are asked to choose a literary character they would like to be at that moment of time if they could not be themselves. Each student in turn explains who he or she would like to be and explains why. This activity could be varied by asking people to choose an animal, car, an element, a part of speech, or any number of things.

APPENDIX D

Writing Apprehension Scale
WAS Answer Sheet

APPENDIX D

WRITING APPREHENSION SCALE

Directions: Below are a series of statements about writing. There are no right or wrong answers to these statements. Please indicate the degree to which each statement applies to you by marking (ON YOUR ANSWER SHEET) whether you (1) strongly agree, (2) agree, (3) are uncertain, (4) disagree, or (5) strongly disagree with the statement. While some of these statements may seem repetitious, take your time and try to be as honest as possible. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

	SA	A	UN	D	SD
1. I avoid writing.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I have no fear of my writing being evaluated.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I am afraid of writing essays when I know they will be evaluated.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I look forward to writing down my ideas.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Taking a composition course is a very frightening experience.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Handing in a composition makes me feel good.	1	2	3	4	5
7. My mind seems to go blank when I start to work on a composition.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Expressing ideas through writing seems to be a waste of time.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I would enjoy submitting my writing to magazines for evaluation and publication.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I like to write my ideas down.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I feel confident in my ability to clearly express my ideas in writing.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I like to have my friends read what I have written.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I'm nervous about writing.	1	2	3	4	5
14. People seem to enjoy what I write.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I enjoy writing.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I never seem to be able to clearly write down my ideas.	1	2	3	4	5

WRITING APPREHENSION SCALE (Continued)

	SA	A	UN	D	SD
17. Writing is a lot of fun.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I expect to do poorly in composition classes even before I enter them.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I like seeing my thoughts on paper.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Discussing my writing with others is an enjoyable experience.	1	2	3	4	5
21. I have a terrible time organizing my ideas in a composition course.	1	2	3	4	5
22. When I hand in a composition, I know I'm going to do poorly.	1	2	3	4	5
23. It's easy for me to write good compositions.	1	2	3	4	5
24. I don't think I write as well as most other people.	1	2	3	4	5
25. I don't like my compositions to be evaluated.	1	2	3	4	5
26. I'm no good at writing.	1	2	3	4	5

WAS ANSWER SHEET

Student's Name (Print) _____ Semester _____

Year _____

SS# _____

Course/Section _____

Instructor _____

SCORE: _____

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TOTAL