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REPEATED READINGS OF STORYBOOKS: AN EXPLORATION OF  
THE IMPACT ON YEAR ONE PRIMARY STUDENTS

by

Carole V. Froese

B.Ed. University of British Columbia 1984

THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF ARTS (EDUCATION)  
in the Faculty  
of  
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## APPROVAL

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## ABSTRACT

by Carole V. Froese

## REPEATED READINGS OF STORYBOOKS:

## AN EXPLORATION

## OF THE IMPACT ON YEAR ONE PRIMARY STUDENTS

Children requesting to hear their favorite books over and over again is a commonly noted occurrence. Although reading to children has been advocated by a wide range of the educational community, this occurrence has only recently been explored by educational researchers.

This study was undertaken to explore the changes that occur in the response of five and six year old children as they become increasingly familiar with storybooks. Three research questions were addressed by this study: 1) Does the amount of student discourse increase as the children become more familiar with a book; 2) Does the form and focus of student discourse change as the students become more familiar with a storybook; and 3) Are there any other implications of having students become increasingly familiar with a storybook?

Twenty Year One Primary students were read three unfamiliar books eight times each. Each session was

videotaped, transcribed, and analysed to examine changes in the focus and form of the student discourse.

The main finding of this study is that students helped each other to create meaning through a socially negotiated collaborative process. Out of this collaborative interaction, a common frame of reference emerged that influenced the affective response towards literacy, as well as imaginative play and classroom discourse.

Three patterns of participation emerged from the analysis of the contributions of individual group members. Those students that were less confident expressing their ideas were provided with models of responding and time to formulate their own responses.

The study also revealed that attention to meaning and illustrations remained consistently high throughout all the readings, as did the amount of comments about the books. The increase in the amount of choral reading as the children became more familiar with the text, had implications for print concepts of the students.

The results of this study indicate there are advantages that could exist for repeatedly reading stories as a deliberate part of classroom story reading practise. The limitations and several areas for further research are also considered.



REPEATED READINGS OF STORY BOOKS:  
AN EXPLORATION OF THE IMPACT ON YEAR ONE PRIMARY STUDENTS

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## CHAPTER 1

### Introduction

#### Purpose of the Study

This study explored the variations in the children's response to literature that occurred as they were repeatedly read three books by their classroom teacher. In carrying out this investigation the following assumptions were made: 1) that story time is a social event 2) that it is important to consider the context in which the discourse is embedded.

A consequence of these assumptions and the broad position taken by this study is therefore that student discourse plays a significant role in the story time event and that results must be considered in relation to the context in which the discourse occurred.

#### Scope of the Study

This study concentrates on the discourse of Year One Primary students during whole group story time. The target population for the study consists of a heterogeneous group of five and six year old children. The twenty children involved in the study attend a half day program in a middle class neighbourhood in the Coquitlam School District.

### Research Questions

In exploring the impact of repeated readings on the students, three general research questions were addressed:

1) Does the amount of student discourse increase as the children become more familiar with a book; 2) Does the form and focus of student discourse change as the students become more familiar with a story book and; 3) Are there any other implications of having students become increasingly familiar with a storybook?

### Importance of the Study

The interactive nature of the traditional bedtime story has proven to be beneficial not only to the attitude of children toward reading, but also to their language development and eventual ability to read. Evidence of the importance of reading aloud has come from a wide range of theoretical, correlational, experimental, anecdotal and case study reports (Bissex, 1980; Bruner, 1983; Cochrane, Cochrane, Scalena, Buchanen, 1984; Butler 1988a, 1988b; Clark, 1976; Durkin, 1966; Hill, 1989; Holdaway, 1979; Johnson & Louis, 1987; Morrow, 1988, 1989; Schickedanz, 1978, 1981; Smith, 1983, 1986, 1988; Sulzby, 1985; Teale, 1982; Wells, 1986; White, 1984). These reports have reinforced the practice as being developmentally sound, and have also described it's apparent effects on a positive



attitude predisposing children towards literacy, and specific aspects of literacy development. The resulting endorsement of reading aloud to children together with the application of Vygotskian and Reader Response theory in the classroom, has secured a place for sharing books with children in the classroom.

A few key research studies have focussed attention on the repeated reading of stories to preschoolers (Crago and Crago, 1976; Martinez & Roser, 1985; Morrow, 1988; Sulzby, 1985; Yaden 1988; Yaden, Smolkin & Conlon, 1989). All the studies reported that as a story became increasingly familiar through repeated readings, the responses of the children to the books changed quantitatively or qualitatively, or both.

Many teachers repeatedly read stories in their classrooms because, at an intuitive level, it seems appropriate to be responsive to the needs and desires of their students. However, the impact of repeated reading has not been fully explored by researchers. Most of the research has focussed on preschoolers in one-to-one or small group contexts. Therefore teachers are not able to make informed decisions as to the inclusion of repeated readings into their group read aloud sessions.

### Organization of the Study

Chapter one has introduced the purpose, the scope, the research questions addressed, the importance of the study and the organization. Chapter two provides the relevant theory, classroom application of theory and the research base of the study. Chapter three outlines the design of the study, including the type of research, materials, subjects, and procedures used to gather and analyze the data. Results of the data collection are presented in chapter four, with both statistical and descriptive analysis. The final chapter includes a general discussion of the findings and conclusions regarding educational implications and recommendations for future research.

## CHAPTER 2

## Literature Review

Vygotskian Theory

Two important and related themes emerge from the writings of Vygotsky (1962). The social foundations of cognition and the importance of instruction in development have significant implications in educational theory and practise. It is the view of Vygotsky (1962) that an interactive relationship exists between social interaction, language, and thought. Social interaction is specified as the crucial component for the development of language. Language is the vehicle by which children can experience, then conceptualize. The internalization of external dialogue enables language to influence thought processes, causing thought to transform as it becomes speech. Vygotsky comments: "Every sentence that we say in real life has some kind of subtext, a thought hidden behind it" (Vygotsky, 1962, p.149)

Vygotsky emphasizes the role of the adult or more competent peer in providing the assistance in arranging the environment so that the child is able to reach higher or more abstract ground from which to reflect. He points out that imitation and instruction play a major role in the

child's development. His concept of "the zone of proximal development," refers to the discrepancy that exists between the child's actual mental age and the level he reaches in solving problems with assistance. He remarks that "[w]hat the child can do in cooperation today, he can do alone tomorrow..." (1962, p.104) The crucial role of the adult, is to mediate the experience by relating the child's tacit knowledge to new learning. This mediation takes the form of providing a model for imitation, and instructing the child at a level just beyond the child's current stage of development. The adult works with the child to explain, supply information, question, correct, and make the pupil explain. The teacher carries on from the parent to activate the prior knowledge to ensure that new learning is meaningful to the child.

Although Vygotsky capitalizes on the role of the adult or the more able peer in providing the tutelage to stimulate the development of the child, his ideas have implications for the collaborative interactions involving students of various abilities. Vygotsky maintains that the primary function of speech for adults and children alike, is to facilitate communication and maintain social contact. He proposes that people respond to new learning by hunting through their minds for knowledge and understanding that can be used to assimilate the new input. The new information is

processed according to what the person believes and knows. This tacit knowledge varies between individuals, therefore throughout the course of discussion about a book, for example, individuals are called upon to consider alternatives to their own perspectives. This reflective stance and the conversation that ensues leads to a joint construction of knowledge and a change in the prior knowledge accessible to the individual to assimilate new learning. The dichotomy of this socially negotiated, yet very personal process, is elaborated by Louise Rosenblatt (Rosenblatt, 1978, 1982).

#### Reading As A Transaction

Rosenblatt builds on the aspect of Vygotsky's theory that acknowledges the significance of connecting the prior knowledge of the individual to new learning. She focuses specifically on the role that prior knowledge plays in the reading process. Rosenblatt (1982) suggests an important decision is made early in our reading, either consciously or unconsciously. An efferent or aesthetic stance is adopted, that determines the way in which the reading act is experienced. The stance is not determined by the text itself, but by the orientation of the reader toward the text. It is essentially an expression of purpose.

Efferent reading refers to the focus on technical information that we "carry away" from a text. We do this type of reading in order to learn how to do something or secure specific information from the text. Efferent reading has been emphasized in the school system. This stance equips students to fill out job applications, follow instruction manuals, or extract information from content area writing. However, it does not equip children to approach literary texts in a way that permits a full range of experiential responses.

Rosenblatt acknowledges efferent reading should be taught. However, she asserts that aesthetic reading requires a somewhat different, but equally important, set of skills. Aesthetic reading refers to the inward shift that focuses attention on the perceptions of individuals toward a story, poem, or play. Rosenblatt (1982) contends that our experiences with people, associations with similar circumstances, and previous experience with texts, all shape the way in which we perceive a literary text. Reading becomes a conversation, or **transaction**, between the author and the text requiring a much broader range of thinking skills than recall of information.

White (1984) notes this transaction is easily observable with her two year old daughter. She comments:

I am astonished at the early age this backward and forward flow between books and life takes place. With adults or older children one cannot observe it so easily, but here at this age when all a child's experiences are known and the books read shared, when the voluble gabble which is her speech reveals all the associations, the interaction is seen very clearly (White, 1984, p.13).

Rosenblatt emphasized that understanding the transactional nature of reading would correct the tendency of the teacher to presume the author's intentions and ignore as irrelevant what the child actually does make of it. She suggests that literary instruction take place in an environment in which children are invited to share their responses, unfettered from a frame of reference imposed by the teacher.

Rosenblatt does recognize that some interpretations are more defensible than others. The text cannot be ignored. Prior knowledge plays a large part in the interpretation of the text, but the text does provide specific information that makes answers or comments more or less plausible. Large and small group discussion serves as a way to fine tune thinking. Rosenblatt believes that students are to be encouraged to share responses in verbal and nonverbal ways

as the basis for valuable interchange. She reminds us that "[d]iscovering that other's have had different responses, have noticed what was overlooked, have made alternative interpretations, leads to self-awareness and self-criticism" (Rosenblatt, 1982, p.276). Therefore, reading is at once, an intensely individual transaction, and as Vygotsky has emphatically stated, an inherently social endeavor.

### Language Learning Made "Whole"

"Whole Language" refers to the grassroot movement that reflects a conceptual shift in the way that many researchers and teachers view the reading process. Instead of objectives-content-methods-evaluation schemes derived in the fifties, these teachers and researchers focus on how the individual goes about creating meaning in his/her environment. The theories of Vygotsky and Rosenblatt are generously drawn upon, in order to create a social environment in which the individual is accepted and encouraged in the learning process. In practical application, there are many interpretations of what comprises "whole language." However, there are specific philosophical tenets that define the term, and thus guide the application.



The focus has shifted to the role of the individual learner. There is recognition and appreciation of the fact that there are many ways of becoming literate, something referred to as "multiple literacies" (McLane and McNamee, 1990). A rich exposure to books has assisted some children in their journey towards literacy. Other children come to school able to read that have never been read stories (Clark, 1976; Durkin, 1966). Their knowledge comes from exposure to environmental print, television, or encouragement to read and write functional messages. Individual differences are accepted and valued for the diversity of approach and experience that they bring into the classroom. Recognition is given to the fact that the text is only one element of the reading process. The individual has a unique history which affects the way s/he transacts with the text. Therefore, more emphasis is placed on those methods that support the learner in his/her development, rather than on the manufacturing of programs to "hand down" a mandated body of knowledge.

The recognitions that children learn to read and write much like they learn to talk is one of the central tenets upon which "Whole Language" theory is based. Learning to talk is assumed to be a normal function of our species. "All children except the most severely deprived or handicapped acquire a vocabulary of over ten thousand words

during the first four or five years of their lives" (Smith, 1986, p.19). These words are acquired naturally through meaningful interaction to satisfy needs and desires.

Learning to speak is acknowledged as a process that requires mediation. Parents respond to one syllable utterances that may have little resemblance to the correct word form, and provide the scaffolding to ensure that new learning is connected to old learning (Bruner, 1983; Cazden, 1983; Shapiro & Doiron, 1987). As Halliday so aptly put it: "The child knows what language is because he knows what language does" (Halliday, 1973, p.10). Gross approximations of language are gradually refined to standard forms that are accepted within their language community.

Learning to read and write are approached in much the same way. Comprehension is the central focus in all literacy activities. The reader comes to an understanding of the print through predicting, then confirming, or disconfirming and adapting predictions. If the child is not yet able to read, then hearing books as they are read aloud is important. "Just as speech develops in an environment which is immensely richer than the immediate needs of the infant, so the orientation to book language develops in an

environment of rich exposure beyond immediate needs."

(Holdaway, 1979, p.40)

Language is not viewed as a subject but a vehicle to discover new ideas or facts, share perceptions and information, and think reflectively. Therefore two fundamental aspects must be a part of the classroom: an accepting environment in which children are able to experiment and refine approximations in reading, and writing and; a stimulating environment rich in a wide range of print as well as other representations of expression. Children are given access to a wide range of books, magazines, writing materials and environmental print. They are encouraged in their initial attempts of reading and writing, and they are provided with answers to their questions.

Literacy is recognized as a profoundly social endeavor. The child's involvement in human relationships plays a significant role in how the child perceives him/herself as a reader and writer. Children are encouraged to engage in small and large group discussions, and to work cooperatively to complete a wide range of tasks. They modify their view of the world and extend their ability to think about it through reading, writing, listening, speaking, and representing in a variety of learning situations.

Wells (1985) comments on the significance of storying, or constructing stories in the mind. When these stories are given expression in words, the resulting verbalization makes one's own interpretation of events and ideas available to others. This activity pervades all aspects of learning and is one of the most fundamental ways of creating meaning. Sharing stories has been long standing tradition in both literate and nonliterate societies. Wells explains that stories emerge with essentially two types of purposes, either to complete tasks, or to offer a personal interpretation of human experience. The intention to express ideas or thoughts, frees the speaker or writer from the constraints of accomplishing a task and allows for a more reflective attitude. Because these stories take place in a context of social interaction, they are jointly constructed and require collaboration and negotiation for their achievement. "In this way, members of a culture create a shared interpretation of experience, each confirming, modifying, and elaborating on the story of the other" (Wells, 1986, p.195). A byproduct of this shared experience is an enriched range and depth of learning in the classroom.

This notion of the role of the individual in creating socially negotiated meanings is an important notion in the "whole language" theory and practice. Opportunities to

exchange stories allows teachers and students to share their understandings of a topic and bring their understandings of the world into closer alignment. Therefore children are encouraged to work both independently and in a variety of flexible groupings.

The concept of grouping children into skill groups has been a common part of classrooms based on a synthetic approach to the teaching of reading (Goodlad, 1984). However, the purpose was based on the notion that children at a specific level of skill development required a similar body of knowledge to be administered. Flexible groups of children are created to meet a variety of needs in a variety of situations: heterogeneous groups, interest groups, and skill groups, are ways of allowing children to interact with their peers and their teacher to create meaning.

Frank Smith strongly advocates children being apprenticed to "clubs," where more experienced members collaborate with less experienced club members. All the club members benefit from the ideas and learning strategies that are shared. They also benefit from the opportunity to teach others what they know. The teacher is a part of this group. Whereas the traditional role of the teacher was to disseminate information, the new role of the teacher is one of an experienced group member that guides the development

of the children's language competencies. Wells (1985) describes this role as "leading from behind." The teacher gives instruction in the direction in which the child has deemed significant.

The term "whole language" then simply refers to the focus of acknowledging that learners construct meaning using language in an integrated, socially negotiated context. Rather than representing something new in education, it reflects a practical application of Vygotskian and Reader Response theory.

### Reading To Children

Reading to children is strongly advocated from a wide spectrum of people within the educational community. Many books have been published for parents and teachers listing the advantages of reading to children and recommending books to share. (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985; Booth, Swartz, & Zola, 1987; Barton, 1986; Bettelheim, 1977; Butler, 1988; Trelease 1989a, 1989b). This is not a new revelation but something that has been recommended since the turn of the century (Huey, 1918).

Wells (1986), as part of a longitudinal study entitled Children Learning to Read Project, studied the correlation between reading achievement in school and factors such as amount of homework, being read to, parental interest in and help with schoolwork, and early experiences with literacy. He found that listening to stories appeared to be the single most important factor in determining future success in reading.

Holdaway (1979) emphasizes the impact of experiencing books in an emotionally satisfying context. He comments: "Predominant is the personal joy and motivational strength displayed in the behavior (literacy)" (p. 52). This affective response predisposes children to literacy learning by creating a motivation to read in order to experience vicarious adventure, fun, and tragedy (Butler, 1988; Holdaway, 1979; McNamee and McLane, 1990; Meek, 1982; White, 1984).

Many other researchers link the development of specific literacy skills, such as print awareness, letter and word recognition abilities, sound-symbol correspondences, vocabulary and syntax of written language, and comprehension skills from book-reading experiences (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985; Holdaway, 1979; McNamee and McLane, 1990; Ninio, 1980; Ninio & Bruner 1978; Schickedanz,

1978, 1981; Shapiro & Doiron, 1987; Snow and Goldfield, 1982; White, 1984).

### The Nature of the Bedtime Story

One crucial notion is that a young child must learn in their path to literacy is that print carries meaning. Ninio and Bruner (1978) document the picture book reading by a mother and her child from the age of eight months to one and a half years old . The discourse between the mother and the child reflected a highly routinized activity of attentional vocative, query, and label, feedback from the mother to support the child as needed. The parent provides the bridge from "language heard to language seen" (Bissex, 1980).

This case study represents Vygotskian theory in action. The supportive parent plays a key role in assisting or "scaffolding" (Bruner, 1983, 1985), the young child in the construction of meaning. The "scaffold" gradually deteriorates as the need lessens and the child's competence grows. In the case of book reading, as the child is able to focus attention on aspects of the text or provide the label, the parent's assistance is no longer required. Sulzby comments that "children read to before formal schooling are ushered into an understanding of the relationships between oral and written language within a social context in which



written language is used in hybridized fashion at first and then gradually takes on its more conventional nature" (Sulzby, 1985, p. 460).

It is important to recognize that there is a significant variation in the way in which parents read to children (Guinagh & Jester, 1972; Heath, 1982). Heath (1982) conducted a study of the literacy socialization practices in the homes of fifteen middle-class primary school teachers of preschool children. She discovered that while young children followed the same pattern noted by Ninio and Bruner (1978), with older children the nature of the interaction changed. Children over three years of age were generally encouraged to listen and answer questions when they were directed by the adult. Teale notes that the material being used, the age or developmental level of the child, and the type of interaction during the story reading episode are all factors that significantly effect the nature of the book reading. He remarks: "The interactions which lie at the heart of learning to read and write are truly 2-way streets, with the child affecting the environment as much as the environment affects the child." (Teale, 1982, p.566)

Studies of early readers have given us some insight into the development of interest in print in preschool

children. Correlational studies of early readers (Clarke 1976; Durkin 1966) revealed a number of factors existed in the homes of these children: a wide range of print materials available to the children; the children were read to; the children asked questions about print and the print was interpreted for them by responsive adults & siblings; and the children experienced both reading and writing.

#### The Nature of Story Time at School

Shared reading of big books are the school version of the bedtime story. These large scale, teacher made or published books, are used to enable all the children to see the illustrations, to see the teacher modeling the tracking of print, and to develop the confidence needed to attempt emergent reading (Holdaway, 1979; Johnson & Louis, 1987). "Expressive and dramatic interpretation of the text teaches children the great truth: reading is not the sequential naming of words, but the translation of printed symbols into meaning." (Johnson & Louis, 1987, p.10)

Surrounding children with a wide array of books is something that can be done easily in primary classrooms. However, as Smith (1983) points out, children do not learn by osmosis. Adults provide good models when they are

observed reading books, but allowing children to hear them read aloud is what makes the difference.

Some researchers have found that, as with parents, there is a considerable amount of variation in the way that teachers read books their students (Cochrane-Smith, 1984; Dickinson & Smith, 1990; Martinez & Roser, 1985). Dickinson and Smith (1990) detail three distinct types of reading by pre-school teachers in their study: Co-construction in which there is discussion of cognitively challenging topics; Didactic Instruction that invites choral reading and responding to factual questions; and performance oriented reading in which children listen to the book without interrupting. The level of interaction between the teacher and student throughout the reading event determines the nature of the story time session. The different ways of reading must be taken into consideration, when considering the effects of a story reading event.

#### Repeated Readings of Storybooks

Most children express a keen desire to reread books that they have heard and enjoyed. One summer at our family cabin in the Sierras, my four year old brother had a book called Bill and the Fish introduced to him. For the remainder of the summer, he insisted on hearing the book

repeatedly and could recite it flawlessly. Many parents can attest that this is not an isolated incident.

Many teachers recognize the appeal of familiar books. The most popular books are invariably the books that have been read aloud or recommended by the teacher or another student. During an eight week period, researchers (Martinez & Teale, 1988) monitored the book selection of a kindergarten class twice a week to determine the books that were selected most frequently: unfamiliar; familiar (read aloud once); or very familiar (read repeatedly). The very familiar books were selected three times as often, and familiar books twice as often as the unfamiliar books. The researchers also discovered that the children were more likely to engage in emergent reading with the familiar books as opposed to simply browsing. As a result of this study, the researchers suggest repeated readings of stories should be included as a regular, planned part of the read aloud program.

The popularity of familiar books has also been powerfully demonstrated in terms of book sales. In 1981, Ailiki's book Digging Up Dinosaurs sold 2,000 copies. After this book was featured on the PBS show, Reading Rainbow, it sold 25,000 copies (Trelease, 1989). Parents and children responded to the introduction of the book.

There are frequent references to repeated readings in books and articles about Children's Literature. It seems to be assumed that it will occur as long as children have some choice in the selection of their reading material. A fair degree of hypothesizing over the benefits of the repeated readings is evident in the reading. Rereadings are heralded as a way to extend knowledge and understanding (Bettleheim, 1977; Hill, 1989; Holdaway, 1979; Sulby, 1985). Bettleheim comments that "[o]nly on repeated hearing of a fairy tale, and when given ample time and opportunity to linger over it, is a child able to profit fully from what the story has to offer him in regard to understanding himself and his experience in the world" (Bettleheim, 1977, p 58).

Repeated readings of books are also attributed to assisting children in their emergent reading attempts (Clarke, 1976; Hill, 1989; Holdaway, 1979; Meek, 1988; Schickedanz, 1978, 1981; Wells, 1986). The children are familiarized with book language and given the time to sort out the story meaning, which allows them to shift their attention to the print. When children were asked to explain how they learned to read, some attributed their success to having books read to them repeatedly (Sulzby, 1985).

White highlights another aspect of repeated readings not so commonly noted. She describes a scenario in which her daughter and a friend, cast her in the role of Goldilocks. Their familiarity with the fairy tale enables them to incorporate the book into their play. Wells (1986) notes that the experience of stories enriches the range of the children's imaginative play in his longitudinal study. However, White's reflection touches on another perceptive point: "As I listened to them I thought how useful among small children is a core of stories known to them all, for upon this they can build all manner of games and share a common heritage with one another" (White, 1984, p.52). She emphasizes the special bond that develops as a result of the imaginative play. White elaborates that the same sort of quality emerges when adults share familiar nursery rhymes with children. The personal relationship of the individuals involved is deepened as a result of their common frame of reference.

The studies that focus on repeated readings fall into two groups. One group of studies (Dowhower 1987; Samuels 1979) focus on repeated readings as a study skill to improve speed, accuracy and expression of oral reading, and retention and understanding of text material by school aged children. These studies focus on the impact of students practise in reading texts in order to improve their reading

skills. The other group of studies concentrate on the quantitative and qualitative changes in the response of preschool children as storybooks are read repeatedly. The latter studies explore the changes that occur as children negotiate the meaning of storybooks in a social setting and are of interest in this study. I am particularly interested in exploring the changes that occur in school aged children in a large group setting, given that it is the most common context for read aloud sessions in the classroom.

The studies of repeated readings with preschool children have focussed predominantly on one-to-one, or small group readings. Many of the studies are case studies of a researcher's child. Crago and Crago (1976) undertook a longitudinal study of their daughter Anna, to determine the child's focus of interest as revealed by her verbal responses. Felix Hoffmann's Rapunzel was read sixteen times over the course of four and a half months. Anna interrupted with her questions and comments about story, character and illustrations throughout all the readings. The study noted a decrease in number of comments tied to the pictures, and the fact that by the last reading, Anna still had things to say about the book. Even after sixteen readings of the same book, Anna was actively engaged in the process of meaning making.

Martinez (1983) explores the story time interactions of four year old Maria Dolores and her father over a four and a half month period, in order to observe the kinds of meanings children construct in natural situations. This descriptive case study suggests that repeated readings result in more participation in dialogue by the preschooler, which involved moving beyond the literal to drawing conclusions, as well as making predictions and inferences about the nature of characters and their motivations. Martinez describes the way in which the story represented a personal experience for Maria Dolores. The child not only associated the characters and events in the story with her own experiences, but placed herself into the situation created by the author.

Martinez and Roser (1985) undertook two more formalized case studies to look at the differences in responses when listening to familiar as opposed to unfamiliar stories. Six books were read three times each to: four preschoolers by their parents; and two groups of four year old children by their preschool teacher. The researchers reported four findings in their studies. First, the children made about twice as many utterances in each setting. The researchers suggest that as the children became more familiar with the text, they became more able and willing to respond verbally. Second, they noted that the talk changed form. Children reading to a parent at home asked more questions initially,



and made more comments when the stories were familiar. The nursery school children made about twice as many comments when the books were familiar. Third, the children focused on different aspects of the text (characters, events, details, titles, setting, story language or theme) as the books became familiar, which leads the researchers to suggest that as children gain control over particular aspects of stories, they are able to attend to other dimensions. Fourth, Martinez and Roser used transcripts from topics that emerged repeatedly in order to indicate the greater depth of understanding that occurs over repeated readings.

Yaden (1988) also noted that a single reading failed to exhaust his preschoolers need for more information and rereadings brought forth greater sophistication in the responses. He focussed his two week study specifically on the spontaneous questions of his five year old son during six readings of Arthur's Halloween. Fifty six percent of the questions focussed on illustrations. Questions about word meanings, integral to appreciating the story plot were not requested until the fourth and sixth readings of the story. Yaden concludes that "[c]omprehension is not an all or nothing matter decided by one exposure to a text."

(Yaden, 1988, p.557)

Yaden, Smolkin & Conlon (1989) designed two longitudinal studies to document the types and frequencies of preschool child-initiated questions, and to generate hypothesis concerning the kinds of information children tend to focus on during story reading. In the first study two boys were audiotaped twice a week for two years. One of their parents read child selected books and reread texts as often as requested. In most cases the boys were read to individually, however about twenty-five percent of the sessions were conducted together. The second study was a series of single case studies of four boys and three girls that were recorded weekly for one year. These children also selected the books to be read or reread. Parents were encouraged in both cases to respond rather than to ask questions, thereby allowing the children to indicate the "gaps" in their knowledge. Spontaneous questions were coded accorded to focus on pictures, print, conventions, and story text. A general pattern emerged for five of the nine children. Most of the questions focused on pictures, next on story meaning, then on word meaning and least of all on graphic form. Yaden et al., (1989) suggest that storybook reading may have more of an effect on the development of children's comprehension processes than on print awareness. One the most significant strengths of this descriptive study is the inclusion of the classification system which clearly delineates the criteria for coding each of the questions.

Morrow (1988) designed an experimental study to investigate whether frequent one-to-one readings in a school setting would increase the number and complexity of comments and questions from children of low socio-economic status. Seventy-nine low SES four year old children from three urban daycare centres were divided into three groups: a control group that participated in traditional readiness activities; an experimental group that was read a different book each week for the ten weeks; and another experimental group that was read three books three times each.

Morrow reported that both groups increased in terms of number and complexity of questions and comments. Yet by the third reading of the same story, the children's habit of making literal and illustration related responses had developed into more complex, interpretive behavior that was less tied to illustrations. The children in the repeated reading group also gave a higher quantity of responses focussing on print and story structure, as well as attempting prereading by reciting and narrating stories from memory. However, Morrow notes that the students were much more interested in the meaning of stories than in issues about story structure or print. Morrow also noted variations in the form of language used. The repeated reading group made significantly more comments whereas the

different book group asked more questions. Morrow analyzed the comments and questions of children based upon ability. The number of comments and questions of the low ability group increased, whereas the comments and questions of the high ability group decreased.

Morrow also made an interesting observation in the behavior of the students during story reading. At first the children responded minimally during the story reading and questions and comments came almost randomly. Later the children listened to larger chunks of stories and responded at natural stopping places or at the ends of stories when they were encouraged to go through the books on their own. This particular observation is supported by the descriptions of story time behavior described by Sulzby (1985) and Teale (1984).

Sulzby (1985) noted a similar pattern in book reading. She suggests that a child's initial interaction with an unfamiliar book is mediated by the adult to include aspects of both oral and written language. As a child gains experience with the storybook, the parent reads more of the book at a time before interaction occurs. It becomes more of a performance style of reading by the adult with the child listening and observing. With the familiarity that

the child develops, s/he is able to reenact stories or attempts to read stories on their own.

### Summary

The research reviewed presents a theoretical perspective with practical applications for the teaching of literacy in the classroom. Vygotsky's contention that social interaction is a key component of language learning is supported by a wide range of researchers (Newman, 1985; Smith, 1983, 1986, 1988; Wells, 1986). Reading is viewed as a transaction that takes place between the text and the reader in socially negotiated context (Cochrane-Smith, 1984; Koeller, 1988; Rosenblatt, 1978, 1982).

The application of Vygotskian and Reader Response theory necessitates the type of classroom environment described by proponents of "whole language." A supportive and responsive learning environment is viewed as a catalyst to stimulate individual children to use their own experiences to help them make sense of literacy learning. The teacher's role is to facilitate learning by valuing a range of responses and providing the "scaffolding," or mediation to activate the child's prior knowledge that enables assimilation of the new learning (Bruner, 1983; Cazden, 1983; Ninio & Bruner, 1978; Vygotsky, 1962).

Reading stories aloud to children has a strong role in ushering children into literacy (Clark, 1976; Durkin, 1966). It provides the bridge from "language heard to language seen" (Bissex, 1980; Holdaway, 1979; Schickedanz, 1978, 1981). Yet the nature of this experience is determined by the reader and the child(ren) involved. Research shows that there is a considerable amount of variation in the amount of verbal interaction during story time with children, witnessed in both parents (Guinagh & Jester, 1972; Heath, 1982) and teachers (Cochran-Smith, 1984; Dickinson and Smith, 1990). In considering the impact of reading aloud to children, it is important that we carefully define the context in which the story time occurs.

Research on repeated readings which deals with issues of comprehension as opposed to skill development is sparse. However, findings of several studies suggests that this strategy may be beneficial for developing necessary language skills in young language learners. The studies explore a broad range of questions with a variety of approaches. However, a variety of interesting commonalities and divergences have ensued from these studies. One area examined in numerous studies is the amount of discourse generated throughout repeated readings. Crago and Crago (1976) note in their informal case study of their daughter,

that she continues to make unprompted comments about the book in the sixteenth reading. The results of other studies also indicate that the amount of discourse increases over repeated readings (Martinez, 1983; Martinez & Roser, 1985; Yaden, 1988; Yaden et al., 1989). Morrow's (1988) finding suggest that the increase in the amount of discourse is not related to repeated readings but to repeated one-to-one story sessions. She found that the questions and comments of both the different book and repeated reading group increased over the course of her experimental study. She attributed repeated readings to the emergence of more interpretive responses in which the children began to predict outcomes and make associations, judgments, and elaborative comments.

A number of descriptions of this more "interpretive" type of responses exists in the research. Martinez (1983) noted a higher propensity to draw conclusions, as well as make predictions and inferences about the nature of characters and their motivations. Martinez and Roser (1985) report that the children's responses indicated greater depth of understanding with repeated readings and Yaden (1988) comments on the increasing sophistication of questions. Yaden's comment that the construction of meaning takes time, seems to be particularly relevant.

The change of student focus was also noted by some researchers (Crago & Crago, 1976; Martinez & Roser, 1985; Morrow, 1988). These studies suggest that as the children have dealt with one aspect of the text, they move on to explore new areas of concern. It is difficult to compare the conclusions about story focus due to the fact that all of the researchers have used different systems for categorization of utterances that are not clearly delineated. Research on the spontaneous questions (Yaden, 1985; Yaden et al., 1988) suggest a general focus on illustrations and meaning throughout all of the readings. Martinez (1985) discusses the shift in focus on items encompassed in Yaden's general meaning category. Therefore research must be closely examined to determine if the divergences suggested in conclusions exist.

Some researchers have noted a change in the nature of the interaction as students are read to over a period of time (Morrow, 1988; Ninio & Bruner, 1978; Sulzby, 1985). The studies describe a shift from random responses, to a tendency to listen to larger chunks of the story before commenting. This can be related to Vygotsky's premise that the role of the adult is to increasingly allow the child to accept more responsibility for his/her own learning. The "scaffold" diminishes because it is no longer needed (Bruner, 1983; Cazden, 1983; Ninio & Bruner, 1978).



Several interesting apparent by-products of repeated readings have been suggested by the research but not proved or disproved with further study. The claim that word meanings are not requested until after several readings of a text have only been substantiated by three examples of this occurrence (Martinez & Roser, 1985; Yaden, 1988). Martinez and Roser (1985) and Morrow (1988) make differing claims about the shifts in the use of language forms. Morrow (1988) notes a pattern of participation based on student ability level. The impact of repeated readings on children's imaginative play (Wells, 1986) and the bond that it nurtures with those sharing the same experience (White, 1984) has also been noted. These research results provoke many questions about the nature of repeated reading sessions and the changes they seem to effect.

### Conclusions

Much of the work on storybook reading has focussed on the behavior of parent and preschooler in one to one readings, or small group readings in nursery school settings. However there is a lack of research on interactive readings in a whole group classroom setting with school aged children. This grouping is the most common context for story time in school, therefore it is worthy of

exploration. The research on repeated readings of storybooks is also scant. Yet there is evidence to suggest that qualitative and quantitative changes take place over the course of repeated readings. Research is needed that clearly delineates descriptive terms and give precise descriptions, illuminated by examples of the occurrence. It is only with this information that informed judgements can be made with respect to the inclusion of repeated readings as a deliberate part classroom practise.

#### Research Questions

In exploring the impact of repeated readings on school aged students in a large group context, three general research questions were addressed:

- 1) Does the amount of student discourse increase as the children become more familiar with a book?
- 2) Does the form and focus of student discourse change as the students become more familiar with a story book?
- 3) Are there any other implications of having students become increasingly familiar with a storybook?

## CHAPTER 3

## Method

Design

A variety of factors are at work in any literacy event. Qualitative research allows these events to be studied in a holistic way that facilitates the development of grounded theory. The recursive nature of qualitative research allows for the generally formulated initial questions to be reviewed with each succeeding activity to reveal unanticipated outcomes.

The most persistent complaint for use of ethnographic research methods is that the data is filtered through the eyes of the data collector and therefore results are skewed with the researcher's personal biases (Borman, Le Compte, Goetz, 1986). The researcher requires a considerable amount of training and experience to develop and refine the mandatory skills of observation and interpretation to provide valid information (Borg & Gall, 1989). Due to my inexperience as a researcher, I felt it wise to design this study to accommodate the "multiple realities" of the classroom situation, while allowing for verification.

Given that story time sessions take place in a confined area, it was possible to make videotaped recordings of the literacy events. The discourse records were then transcribed for intensive analysis. Semantic analysis of discourse records (Biddle, 1986) enables data to be obtained systematically, thereby limiting the distortion of research findings by instrumentation. It also allows for the data to be examined in a variety of ways. Quotes can be used to illustrate observations, and statistical analyses of discourse-unit frequencies and sequences may be reported.

To provide a complete picture of the classroom reality, questionnaire data and anecdotal records were included in the methodology (Hutchinson, Hopkins, & Howard, 1988; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Spindler, 1982).

#### Procedures For Collecting The Data

Permission was obtained from the School Board of School District 43 to gather data from a sample of Year One students. A proposal was submitted to Simon Fraser University Ethics Committee for permission to proceed with the study. Once granted, permission was granted from the principal of the school and the parents of the students in the class (See Appendix A).

### Subjects

The subjects of the study included all twenty students in a Year One Primary class in School District 43. These children were predominantly from middle class homes. There were nine boys and eleven girls in the class.

Fifteen of the children entered the school in September of 1990; one child transferred from a Catholic school in November; three children were dual entry students beginning school in January 1991; one E.S.L. student transferred from Ontario in January where she had attended Junior kindergarten for one year, and kindergarten for four months.

A questionnaire was sent home to determine home reading practices, preschool experiences, and amount of time spent watching educational television prior to school entry. See Appendix B.

The questionnaire indicated that all the children had access to a wide range of books, and extensive book experience. Parents reported that all of the children were read to at least once a week, with 55% being read to on a daily basis. Most of the children had stories read to them by more than one person regularly. Most of the children made five to ten comments during an average story reading

suggesting an interactive rather than performance oriented style of story reading. See Appendix C for a full reporting of questionnaire results.

All but two questionnaires indicated the children had favorite stories that they requested to hear repeatedly. Fifty five percent of the children told stories from memory and four children were listed as readers.

All of the responses indicated that the children watched television prior to school entry, on average about two hours a day. Most of the shows listed more than once, contain a story reading focus or component. Nearly all of the children had participated in pre-school or organized activities for preschoolers at a local recreation centre. Therefore story time was not a new concept to these children prior to school entry.

### Materials

#### Storybooks

Ten books were selected to show to the children and determine the level of familiarity based on the following criteria: Appeal to 4-6 year old children; a storyline to provoke discussion; a narrative format; delineated characters with a goal or problem to overcome; a structure

with elements to assist young children in understanding the storyline.

The books that one or more children could talk about were deemed familiar and discarded for the purposes of the study. Due to the wide exposure of the children to books, six more books were selected in order to find three unfamiliar books that appealed to the children.

The three texts (See Appendix D) chosen reflected all the selection criteria, but they had a few differences that made each book quite unique. The appeal of Wombat Stew was based on the fact that one student had a nanny from Australia that had intrigued many of the children with stories of Australia on their way to school. This book had two times as many pages than the other books, and much more text on each of the pages. The characters in the story were Australian animals which were unfamiliar to the children. The book had a cumulative structure that contained repetitive elements.

If You Give A Mouse A Cookie was appealing to the children because of the mouse. The children quite enjoyed reading and talking about mice. Two of the class favorites were books called Eeny Meeny Miney Mouse and Cat and Mouse. This story goes full circle from the little mouse being

given a cookie, through a series of events, to the mouse wanting a cookie at the end of the story. Sentences are started on one page and finished on the following page in a way that invites the children to predict or anticipate the next event.

The main character of Noisy Nora is also a mouse. This theme is more complex than in the other two texts. A few events are followed by Nora's noisy behavior, which is followed by a repetitive response from her mother, father, and older sister. The events conveyed and Nora's bad behavior are not explicitly related to one another. The reader must surmise the reasons for Nora's behavior.

### Procedure

There were general expectations for student and teacher behavior that were mutually determined at the beginning of the school year. It was emphasized that all people in the class came to school to learn. Our job was to make sure that we helped that person to learn in the following ways: be a respectful listener; encourage peers to try new things; be kind; be patient; be generous with pats on the back for accomplishments.



There were specific expectations for the children during story time. The rules guiding large group discussions and story time were also made cooperatively by the teacher and the students at the beginning of the school year. The children were to sit on their bottoms with their legs crossed, something referred to as "criss-cross apple sauce." Hands were to be kept to themselves, in their lap or beside them. Children were encouraged to join in with the reading of the story. If they wanted to ask a question or make a comment, they were expected to put up their hand.

While one child was sharing their ideas, the rest of the students were to listen politely by looking at the person. It was assumed that all comments and questions were to be treated respectfully by me, the teacher, and the rest of the students. Those students distracting other students from the story, were given the choice of staying or going to sit at the round table until they were ready to cooperate. A student breaking the rules was given two chances and then asked to go sit at the round table until s/he was able to control her/himself.

I had three functions in my capacity of teacher/researcher:

1. Organizing:

To facilitate discussion by inviting children with

their hands up to respond; to redirect irrelevant discussion back to the book; to deal with inappropriate story time behaviors;

## 2. Questioning:

To encourage children to ask questions or make comments throughout the story with pause time for general questions; to encourage students to answer their own questions or the questions of their peers by asking "What do you think?";

## 3. Scaffolding:

Provide responses for the children when their comments are incomplete or they do not respond; provide positive reinforcement for children's responses; provide semantically contingent responses to facilitate understanding.

The amount of text focussed discourse throughout each reading was largely determined by teacher prompts and pacing. Some books are conducive to performance style reading. For example the books I Was Walking Down The Road or Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?, have an internal rhythm, and repetitive passages that must be read without interruption in order to be fully appreciated. However, the purpose of this study was focussed on a more

interactive style of reading. In order to cue the children to engage in conversation about the story, I encouraged the students to offer their comments with pause time at the end of a page, or verbal prompts. The following examples are typical of the verbal prompts:

Any comments?

Any other ideas?

What do you think will happen?

Any other predictions?

One key purpose of sharing books with the children was to nurture an appreciation of literature. Therefore, it was necessary to tailor the length of the story time session to the attention span of the children. As a result pacing varied to accommodate the general level of engagement in the text. During the initial readings, it was possible to field the responses of all the children who had something to say. However, when more children had their hands up, it was necessary to curtail some of the discussion and continue with the reading. As a result the total amount of discourse does not represent all of the responses that the students had to share.

Other factors that affected text focussed discourse were the personal concerns and observations of individual group members. Around the time when the study started, the

children requested to have recess outside with the other children on a regular basis. As a result, some attention was diverted from story time toward anticipation of going out for recess. Valentine's Day, the Show and Tell schedule, changes in routine, and numerous other concerns emerged that played a role in determining the direction to the story time session.

Large group story time had been scheduled since September to occur at about 10:15 am. This schedule was maintained for the study to provide continuity with classroom routine. Sessions generally lasted around fifteen minutes. However, one session was interrupted by recess and the reading was continued after the break. On occasions the time of the story session was changed to accommodate variations in daily activities, assemblies, visitors, teacher absences, and fire/earthquake drills. See Appendix E schedule of read aloud sessions.

The video apparatus was set up in the classroom one week prior to the beginning of the study in order to familiarize the students with the presence of the equipment. The children were videotaped and viewed the tape to see what they looked like. Many of the children were also familiar with the video camera from home experiences. The camera was

directed toward the children to record their facial expressions and actions during the story session.

The three unfamiliar books were read to the children eight times each on a rotating basis four days in each week. All of the stories were read over a six week period. Each story session was videotaped, and transcribed into utterances. An utterance was defined as a continuous sequence of words spoken by one individual. If the individual paused between clauses or words, it was tallied as two utterances. Eight transcripts were randomly selected and checked by a research assistant for accuracy. The discrepancies between the primary researcher and the research assistant were minor and easily reconciled upon listening to the videotape again.

### Coding

I carefully reviewed the literature of investigations describing children's responses to interactive storybook readings in order to devise the coding system. In addition, I created categories based on my own observations of children's responses to literature during story time in my classroom. The purpose of this tool was to examine the focus of text related student discourse, while considering the context in which it took place. The context not only

included the interactive discourse of the teacher, but also the student discourse not related directly to the text (organizational, unrelated, and incomplete comments, questions, and answers). An effort was made to limit the number of categories and to provide a coding system that could be used easily for research purposes. One category examined **teacher discourse** (Ninio & Bruner, 1978; Snow, 1983). The other four major categories focussed on student discourse: **focus on illustrations** (Morrow, 1988; Schickedanz, 1981; Sulzby, 1985; Yaden, 1988; Yaden, Smolkin, & Conlon, 1989), **focus on story structure** (Morrow, 1988, 1989; Yaden, Smolkin, & Conlon, 1989), **focus on meaning** (Cochrane-Smith, 1984; Martinez, 1983; Morrow, 1988; Schickedanz, 1978; Sulzby, 1985; Yaden, 1988; Yaden, Smolkin, & Conlon, 1989), and **focus on print** (Morrow, 1988; Schickedanz, 1978, 1981; Sulzby, 1985; Yaden, 1988; Yaden, Smolkin, & Conlon, 1989). The coding tool for determining the focus of discourse is detailed in Table 1. More specific descriptions of the categories and subcategories are specified in the coding guide in Appendix F.

Table 1

Coding Tool: Focus of Discourse	
Part A: Teacher Discourse	
1. Organization	
2. Questions about text	
3. Comments about text	
Part B: Student Discourse	
1. Illustrations	
2. Story Structure	
a. setting	
b. character	
c. theme	
d. plot	
e. resolution	
3. Meaning	
a. predictions	
b. definitions	
c. interpreting	
d. opinion	
e. one's narrative	
f. narrative behavior	
4. Print	
a. letters/sounds	
b. words	
c. readings words	
d. reading sentences	
e. punctuation	
5. Book Characteristics	
6. Organizational	
7. Unrelated	
8. Incomplete	

I transcribed and analyzed all of the data. Utterances were numbered during the transcription to determine the amount of utterances in each story session. Comments and questions were coded according to main idea of the utterance. Therefore if an utterance included a independent clause with a prediction and a subordinate clause with a focus on the illustration, it would be coded as a

prediction. Two independent clauses reflecting two different subcategories, were coded in both categories.

The research assistant attended coding practice in which the categories were described and defined. The Focus of Discourse Coding Guide was designed to assist in the coding. Examples from the transcripts were used to clearly delineate each category (See Appendix F). The research assistant independently coded eight randomly selected transcripts. Interrater reliability was 87%

The student discourse focussed on the text (utterances about illustrations, story structure, meaning, and book characteristics) was coded to reflect the form of the language used in discourse. Utterances were coded as questions, answers, or comments. Reading was tallied to indicate the number of utterances devoted to choral reading. Repetitions were tallied to ensure that two identical utterances were only coded once as a question, comment or answer. The specifics for coding are detailed in the Language Form Coding Guide (See Appendix G). A research assistant independently coded eight randomly selected transcripts to determine an interrater reliability of 87%.

Field notes documented any behaviors or incidents that were pertinent outside the bounds of the story time



sessions. These include activities in the classroom and comments made by parents. Anecdotal notes were kept to record my observations throughout the study.

Throughout the course of the study, I perceived a difference in the interaction patterns of some of my students during early and later readings. As a result I calculated the frequency of individual student contributions with the assistance of the Wordfreq program found in the Microsoft Word-version 3.0 package.

## CHAPTER 4

## Results and Discussion

Amount of Student Discourse

The amount of discourse specifically focussed on the text gradually dropped (See Table 2). It must be taken into consideration that during the middle readings, not all of the students were selected to share their responses.

Table 2

Number of Text Focussed Utterances			
Reading	Story #1	Story #2	Story #3
1st	48	58	32
2nd	42	39	-
3rd	37	54	12
4th	32	41	26
5th	28	34	31
6th	20	-	28
7th	16	42	15
8th	20	20	22

Although many researchers have noted an increase in the amount of discourse generated by preschoolers as stories become more familiar (Martinez, 1983; Martinez & Roser, 1985; Morrow, 1988; Yaden, 1989), some researchers (Heath, 1982; Sulzby, 1985) have reported a similar pattern of children listening to more of the text before responding (Morrow, 1988; Sulzby, 1985; Teale, 1984). Sulzby (1985) suggests that a child's earliest interactions with a book

are mediated by the adult to include aspects of both oral and written language. As the child becomes familiar with the storybook, the reading becomes more of a performance by the adult with the child listening and observing. To tap the ideas of Vygotsky and Bruner, the scaffold diminishes as it is no longer needed.

### Patterns of Participation

Over the course of the study, three patterns of participation emerged. The first, highly verbal, group of students monopolized discussion during the first four readings of the texts. In contrast, students who were generally less verbal participated to a greater extent in the last four readings of the text. The third group distinguished itself by the constant level at which the students participated through all the readings. Table 3 presents the average amount of utterances per reading over the first half and second half of the repeated reading sessions for three students in each of the groups. The third column represents the percent of change between the first and last readings.

Table 3

Patterns of Participation: Avg. Utterances			
Name	Early Readings	Later Readings	% Change
David	19.7	8.3	-58
Reggie	14.8	7.6	-49
Brendan	10.9	4.1	-62
			(Decrease)
Toban	4.6	8.4	83
Nancy	3.1	5.8	87
Megan	2.8	5.5	96
			(Increase)
Nicole	5.7	5.1	-11
Kelvin	4.7	5.6	19
Tara C.	4.1	5.0	22
			(Constant)

Morrow (1988) noted that the amount of comments and questions increased in low ability students, whereas the comments and questions of high ability students decreased. Although the same patterns has been identified, the reason for this occurrence seems to differ in this study. Based on teacher judgement, the children that offered fewer comments and questions during the initial readings were not all low ability students, just as the more verbal children during the initial readings were not all high ability students. The difference seems to be more related to the level of confidence they had in verbalizing their thoughts in a large group situation, than to measures of ability.

### Language Forms

The form of the language in the text focussed utterances maintained a consistent pattern throughout all three readings (See Figure 1,2,3,).

Note: Bar labels are coded with a number and a letter to refer to the book and reading respectively. For example, 2C refers to the third reading of the second book.

Figure 1

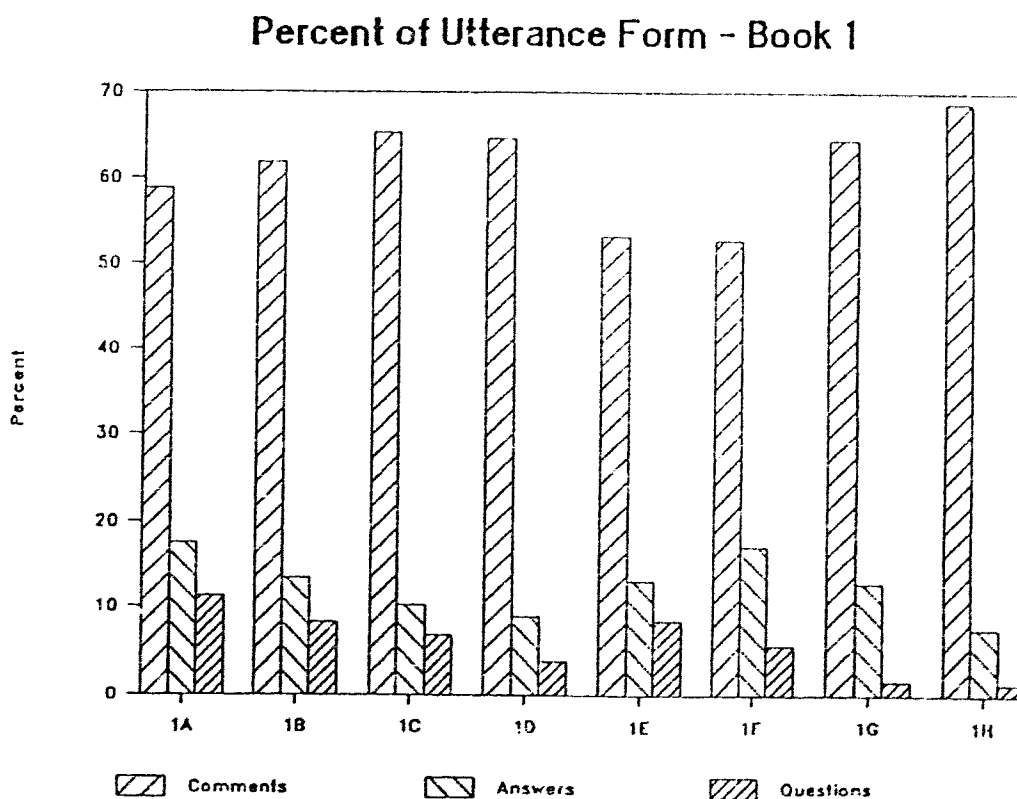


Figure 2

Percent of Utterance Form - Book 2

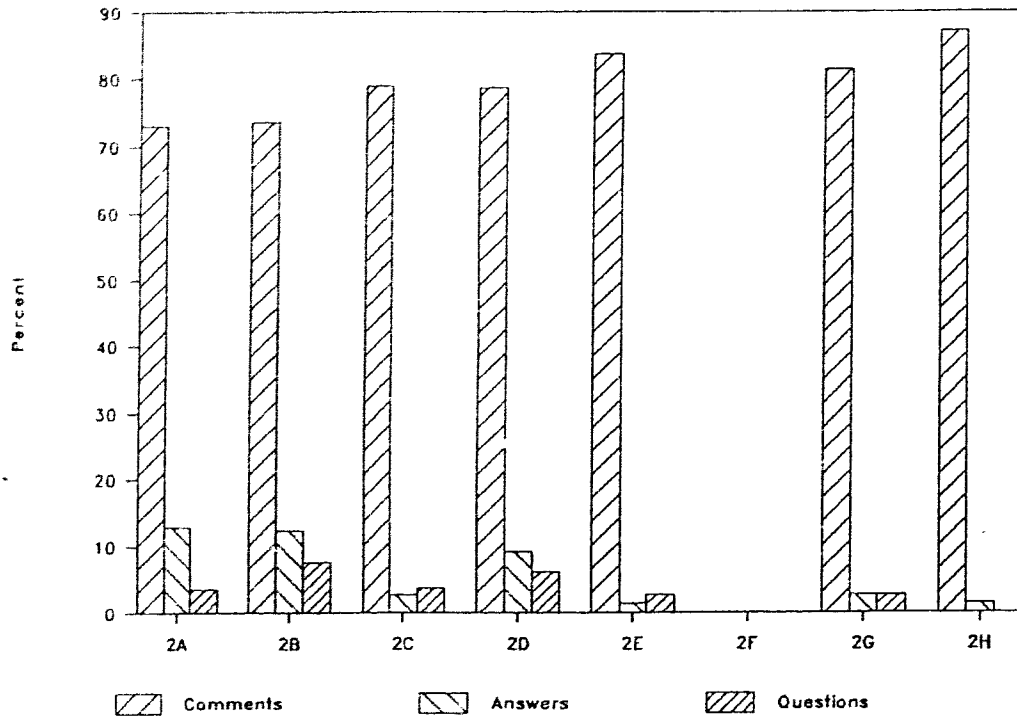
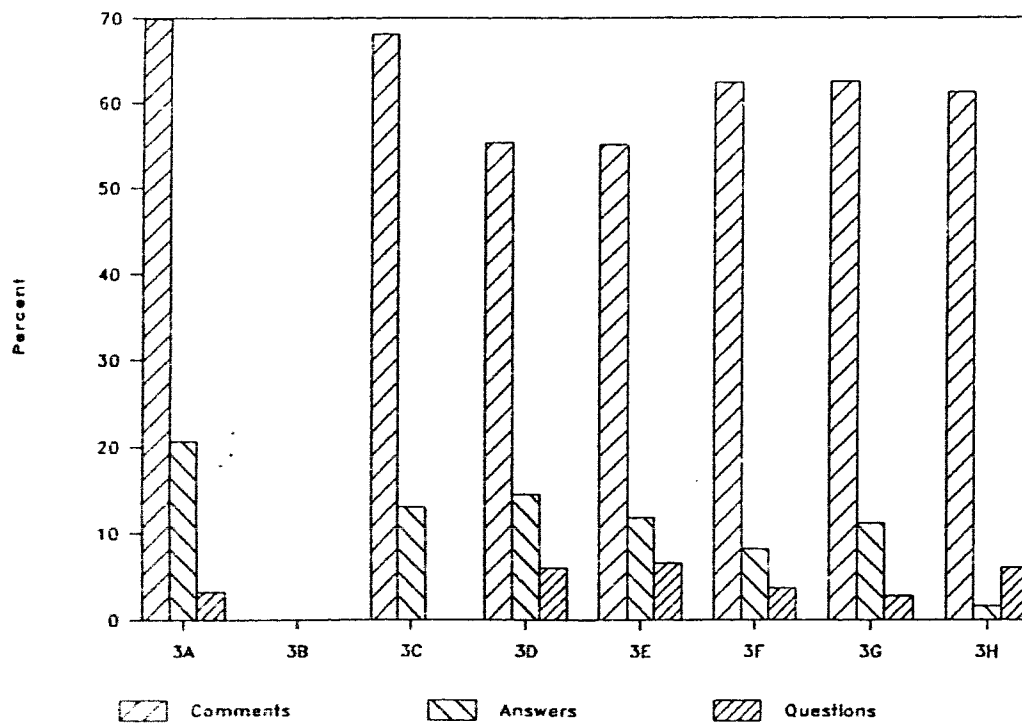


Figure 3

Percent of Utterance Form - Book 3



Comments comprised 50-80 % of all of the text focussed discourse. Answers were the second most frequent form, but never accounted for more than 20 % of the utterances. Questions were the least used form, and usually accounted for less than 10 % of the utterances.

The findings contradict the findings in the case study by Martinez & Roser (1985). They noted that the amount of comments increased substantially and the number of questions dropped once the children became familiar with the story. Morrow (1988) found that the children made significantly more comments when the books were familiar whereas the students in the group that was read a different book in each session, asked more questions. The findings of Martinez and Roser (1985) and Morrow (1988) both suggest that the language forms used most commonly change over repeated readings.

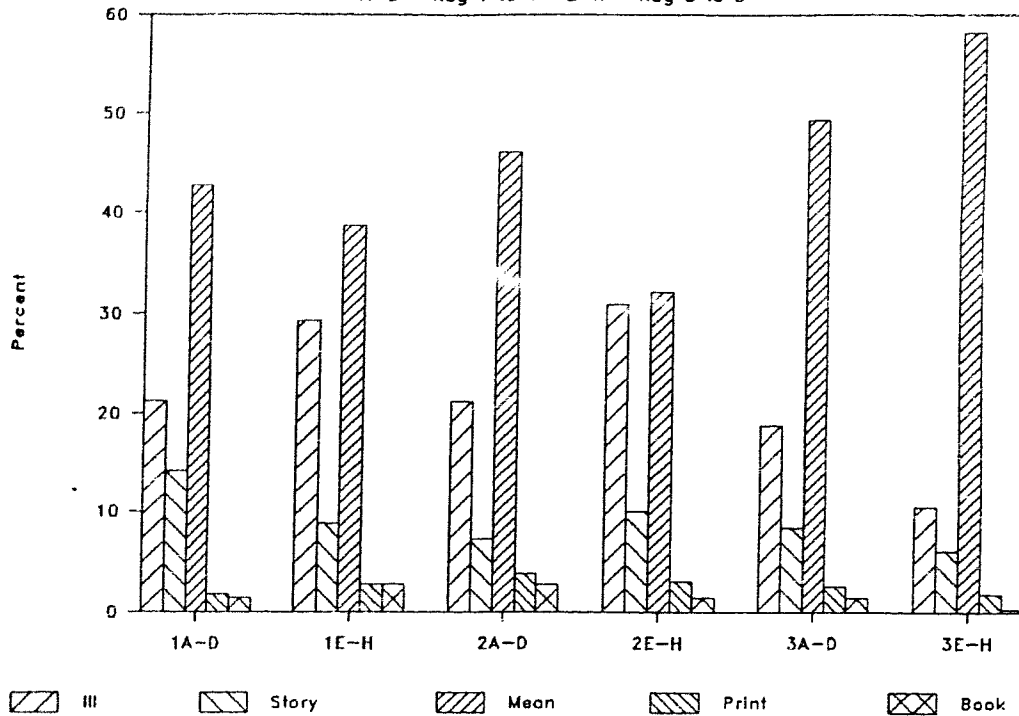
#### Focus of Student Interactions

Strong consistencies also emerged in the focus of text related discourse. A focus on the meaning and illustrations remained consistently high throughout all the readings. The focus on print, story structure and book characteristics remained consistently low.

Figure 4

### Focus of Student Discourse

A-D = Rdg 1 to 4    E-H = Rdg 5 to 8



#### Focus on Meaning

The consistently high focus on meaning reflects increases, decreases, and continuities within the sub-categories of this broad category. The number of utterances coded as narrative behavior increased with repeated readings. The number of utterance focussing on predictions decreased. The number of utterances focussing on opinions and interpretations remained fairly constant in early and later readings of the texts.



### Potential for Vocabulary Development

A particularly noteworthy finding is that most of the definitions were not even requested in the first readings. Three words were discussed in the first three readings of the Wombat Stew. The remaining eight unfamiliar word meanings were not discussed until after the third readings. In some cases, repeated discussions about an unfamiliar word took place before the children were able to use the word in context.

Most of the unfamiliar definitions came from the text of Wombat Stew. Six words from this text were discussed throughout the all the readings except number six and eight: gumnuts, billycan, dingo, platypus, emu, and blue-tongued lizard.

Toban saw a blue tongued lizard on a television commercial. Melissa pointed out that emu had been in her book, My Grandma Lived in Gooligulch. Melissa's nanny from Australia came to visit the class and she brought a gumnut to show the children. Three students read about a platypus in The Province newspaper. This element of personalization seemed to have an impact. By the forth and fifth readings of the story, the words emu, gumnuts, and platypus were used appropriately in context.

In the second reading of Wombat Stew, David proposed that a billycan was "a pail that smushes up into a big blob of mud". In the third reading, Brendan suggested that the name of the can was Billy. However by the fourth and fifth reading, the word was being used correctly in context. One mother also commented on her child's correct use of the word at home.

Dingo was the word that the children found the most difficult. Brendan corrected Misti when she called the dingo a wolf in the second reading, but by the seventh reading the definition of a dingo was still not clear. The illustration looked like a wolf, fox, or dog to the children. As a result, it was not differentiated as a different type of animal.

Toban:  
It's the dingo's tail.

Andrew:  
I just call it a fox cause that's really what it is.

Toban:  
His name is Dingo.

Mrs. Froese:  
Do you think a dingo is exactly the same as a fox?

Brendan:  
Dingo.

Andrew:  
Yes.

Toban:  
Yeah, Dingo is his name.

Mrs. Froese:  
You think so?

The only definition in If You Give A Mouse A Cookie was discussed in the seventh reading of the story.

Andrew:  
Do you know what nail scissors are? They're kind of things that have pointy's just like nails.

(Mrs. Froese - Uh huh)

And then when you open them it looks like two nails, that are sharpened.

Mrs. Froese:  
Nicole.

Nicole:  
What nail scissors are are little things that you clip your nails with.

He has such little hairs so he gets them with nail scissors. Cause he can't use big scissors.

Mrs. Froese:  
Nancy.

Toban:  
He can't use hair scissors.

In Noisy Nora the meaning of "felled some chairs" was requested and explained by another child in the fourth reading of the story. Nancy's question during the fifth reading of Noisy Nora stimulated a long conversation about marbles, games played with marbles, and how many people owned marbles that clearly conveyed information about marbles.

Nancy:  
What is marbles?

Mrs. Froese:  
What are marbles?

Andrew:  
There round things that are like they are little round,  
just like marble works. Do you know what marble works  
is?

Mrs. Froese:  
Do you know the marbles are in the math centre? Who  
knows where they are in the math centre?

Tara go get them. Show one to Nancy.

The most difficult word for the children in this story  
was "shrub." It was discussed in the fourth, and fifth  
readings, and still not clearly understood all the children  
by the seventh reading.

Toban:  
I remembered what I was going to say.

How could Noisy Nora fit in the mailbox or in a shrub?

Mrs. Froese:  
Well, I guess it would depend on the mailbox and it  
would depend on the shrub.

What is a shrub?

Toban:  
A type of seed or something

Melissa:  
A bush.

Mrs. Froese:  
A bush.

So can you see a mouse fitting in a bush?

Brendan:  
Yeah, it could hide behind a bush.

Yaden (1988) also noted that two definitions crucial to the understanding of the story, were not requested until the fourth and sixth readings. Martinez & Roser (1985) report that a question about word meaning was not asked until the third reading of a story. This suggests that repeated readings of a story are required before children are ready to deal with unfamiliar terms. The children appear to focus their attention on the basic storyline of book before they are able to attend to unfamiliar vocabulary. It also suggests that repetition is necessary in order for children to learn challenging words or phrases.

#### Depth of Understanding

A number of studies have indicated that when stories were read repeatedly, children's responses indicated a greater depth of understanding (Martinez, 1983; Martinez & Roser, 1985; White, 1954; Yaden, 1988). The depth of understanding is reflected most effectively in topics of discussion that emerge repeatedly, as noted by Martinez and Roser (1985). These researchers cite examples from transcripts to show the depth of understanding that emerges in the later readings of the text. The transcripts of this study provides many examples of the same occurrence.

For example, the following opinion statements are taken from the first reading of Noisy Nora.

Tara C.:  
That's a naughty kid. She's a brat. Cause I never do that.

Nikolina:  
I never either.

By the fifth reading of the story the children seem to be able to relate more to Nora and consider the motivating factors behind Nora's behavior.

Melissa:  
I think she's a little sad cause she doesn't get to cook with her sister and her mom.

Mrs. Froese:  
Probably.

How is she showing that she's sad, Melissa?

Brendan:  
Cause she's angry.

Mrs. Froese:  
How is she showing she's angry.

Brendan:  
Because she's throwing things on the floor and being bad and doing all those things.

By the fifth reading of Wombat Stew, the children are trying to work out how the wombat would feel about the dingo's repetitive chanting of "wombat stew..."

Mrs. Froese: (repeating a question asked too quietly)  
Why do you think the wombat is covering his ears with his hands?

David:  
Cause he doesn't like it.

Nikolina:  
Cause he doesn't like the music.

Mrs. Froese:  
Pardon?

Nikolina:  
Cause he doesn't like the music.

Mrs. Froese:  
David, why do you think?

David:  
I know it's cause he doesn't like the music.

Mrs. Froese:  
He doesn't like the music.

David:  
He doesn't like what he's singing.

Melissa:  
Then how come he keeps singing?

Mrs. Froese:  
Why wouldn't he like those words.

page 23 "Wombat stew,  
Wombat stew,  
Hot and spicy,  
Oh so nicey,  
Wombat stew!"

Andrew:  
Cause he's a wombat.

David:  
Cause he's a wombat. And he might get eaten up by the dingo.

In the last reading of the story, this understanding is extended one step further to speculate on the chant that the wombat would like. A small group of children appreciate this thought and break into a spontaneous chant adapted from the text with the enemy of the wombat as the main ingredient.

David:  
I think he's singing dingo stew.

Mrs. Froese:  
He's singing dingo stew!

Megan.

Megan:  
Well the wombat looks cute.

Chorus:  
Dingo stew,  
Dingo stew,  
Crunchy, munchy,  
For my lunchy,  
Dingo stew!"

Yaden (1988) notes that it is not realistic to expect a child to hear a story one time and fully grasp all aspects of the story. A single reading failed to exhaust his son, David's, need for more information. This is similar to Anna continuing to respond to Rapunzel throughout the sixteen readings of the text (Crago & Crago, 1976). Comprehension seems to be a process that develops layer upon layer.

### The Significance of "Storying"

It is interesting to note that even by the last readings of all three books that the children continue to make comments about their own experiences. The utterances in the "one's experience" category reflect life to text interaction sequences elaborated on by Cochrane-Smith (1984). These utterances help the children apply a book's information, meaning, message, topic, problem, or theme to



their lives. Wells (1986) notes that **storying** is the most fundamental means of meaning making. The children are actively engaged in sharing their own stories as a way of relating the text to their own lives, and relating their experiences to the group.

Table 4

Utterances of Own Experience			
Reading	Story #1	Story #2	Story #3
1st	12	6	20
2nd	6	25	-
3rd	12	11	12
4th	11	10	5
5th	13	3	9
6th	1	-	7
7th	0	3	30
8th	7	7	11

After several readings of Wombat Stew, the illustration of bugs, and slugs, and creepy crawlies stimulates Nicole to share the story of her father's fear of snakes and spiders. It provided the opportunity for other children to share their own stories. The desire, as explained by Vygotsky, to maintain social context is clearly demonstrated. When Misti doesn't have a real experience to share, she creates one in order to be a participant in the discussion. The stories also help to explain the reason for the diverse range of personal reactions to the creatures highlighted in the text.

Nicole:

Uhm. I...like cause my Dad doesn't like snakes. Like

cause he just freaks out. Even if he sees a spider on the ceiling he goes "Aahh, look it there's a spider on the ceiling".

Mrs. Froese:  
So do you think he'd like this stew?

Nicole:  
Nooo!

Mrs. Froese:  
Probably not.

Michelle.

Michelle:  
One time my sister had a pet snake.

(Chorus-Oooh!)

Mrs. Froese:  
So your sister likes snakes.

Michelle:  
And I had two snakes and my sister ??? had one for ten weeks but then ??? and once they got out of the cage and ran away so we only have one snake.

Mrs. Froese:  
Misti.

Misti:  
My Grandma has a pet snake and it's a baby and it's so cute.

Mrs. Froese:  
Kelvin?

Kelvin:  
You know that three years ago we caught two of them and put them in a little aquarium but I think they crawled up on the side and then went through the balcony and slithered back to where they were.

Kelvin:  
But it was really far.

Mrs. Froese:  
They went back home.

Kelvin:  
Yeah, and it was really far.

In Noisy Nora, the treatment by her sister, triggers a discussion about bullies and the unfair treatment. The following example was quite typical of the kind of stories that were stimulated in response to Nora's sister saying "Why are you so dumb?" The children examined the concept of injustices, and how our experiences shape our understanding of books and one another.

Misti:

I was going by myself, I couldn't find my Mom. And, and this bully came walking right in front of me and he pushed me down on the ground.

Mrs. Froese:

Yeah. And how did that remind you of the story?

Misti:

About her sister.

Mrs. Froese:

Ah, about her sister being mean to her, just like the bully was mean to you?

Misti:

And I hurt, I hurt my elbow.

In drawing the association between Nora's sister's nasty treatment of Nora and their own personal experiences with injustice, the children were able to empathize with the main character and with each other. The children learn that their own experiences can at once be very personal, and yet universal at the same time, an important realization emphasized by Rosenblatt.

Implications for Development of Print Concepts

Narrative behavior includes replication of story text in the form of choral reading, as well as statements that included recreations of text. The amount of narrative behavior increased as the children became increasingly familiar with each of the texts. The degree is not accurately reflected in the statistical analysis due to the fact that one page of text was tallied as one utterance rather than by the number of words that were reiterated or chanted. However, it does give a sense of the increase that took place.

Table 5

Utterances of Narrative Behavior			
Reading	Story #1	Story #2	Story #3
1st	2	0	1
2nd	7	3	-
3rd	15	5	15
4th	12	2	21
5th	26	7	30
6th	16	-	35
7th	14	8	22
8th	18	5	26

The children responded enthusiastically to the repetitive text in Wombat Stew and Noisy Nora, particularly in the middle readings. In If You Give A Mouse A Cookie, they joined in to provide words printed on the following page.

In Noisy Nora, the children were most interested in replicating the text. This example is taken from the final reading of Noisy Nora.

Nikolina:  
I can say some of the words.

Mrs. Froese:  
Can you? Which words?

Nikolina:  
"Quiet" said her father, "Hush" said her Mom. "Nora,"  
said her sister "why are you so dumb?"

Mrs. Froese:  
Yes, you can!

Tara.

Tara C:  
I can read some of the words.

Mrs. Froese:  
Can you?

Tara C:  
"Hush" said her Mom. "Nora!" said her sister, "Why are  
you so dumb?"

Mrs. Froese:  
Kelvin.

Kelvin:  
I can read three pages of it.

Mrs. Froese:  
Can you. My goodness.

Kelvin:  
It's "Quiet" said her sister. "Hush!" said her, no,  
no, I mean now I remember. And then she dropped her  
sister's marbles on the kitchen floor. "Hush" said her  
mom. "Nora!" said her sister, "Why are you so dumb?"

Morrow (1988) also noted the increasing amount of narrative behavior as the children repeatedly read the stories. The "readings" indicate that at this point, the children are still relying predominantly on their memory, rather than print cues. However, this rehearsal makes the children more equipped to match the oral rendition with the print on the page when they have the opportunity to read the book individually (Schickedanz, 1978, 1981). Field notes and anecdotal records suggest that this is the case. The three books used in the study were in high demand during independent book time after the eight readings were completed. Children "read" the books independently and in small groups using picture and print cues. I was frequently asked to read specific passages or words, as well as show the children a specific word that they requested, or to listen to their own "readings" of the text.

#### Concentration on Illustrations

After the meaning category, illustrations were the next most frequent focus of the text related student discourse throughout the study (See Figure 4, page 58).

There seems to be a relationship between discourse focussed on meaning and that focussed on illustrations. In all of the books to different degrees, an increased focus on illustrations corresponded with a decreased focus on meaning

and visa versa. It appears that a focus on creating meaning detracts from a discussion of the details of illustrations.

The fact that illustrations are widely discussed by young children in repeated readings has been noted by other researchers (Yaden, 1988; Yaden et al., 1989). However, other researchers (Crago & Crago, 1976; Morrow, 1988) noted that attention shifted away from illustrations to other areas after repeated readings. The results of this study indicates that illustrations remain a constant focus throughout the repeated readings. In June, the children were asked to reflect back on which of the books in the study of repeated readings that they liked the best. Every child referred to the pictures, either generally or specifically, as a basis for their decision (See Table 6).

Table 6

Favorite Book Survey
Wombat Stew
I like the pictures.
I like how the platypus smiles.
I like the creepy crawlies.
I like when the dingo holds his throat like this.
I like the picture of the wombat falling out of the bucket.
I like when the dog drinks soup and holds his throat.
I like when the wolf gets poisoned.
If You Give A Mouse a Cookie
I like when he jumps out of bed in his underwear: 7 students in agreement
I like when the boy is getting him a napkin and he pulls everything out of the cupboard.
I like when he draws the picture: 2 students in agreement
Noisy Nora
I like the picture when the baby is in the crib.
I like the picture of Mona Lisa Mouse.
The pictures are nice.

The pictures seemed to provide a means of connecting prior knowledge with the text, clarifying meaning, and ascertaining information not provided in the text of the story. The illustrations were particularly helpful in clarifying the meaning of unfamiliar words such as billycan, shrub, and all the Australian animals. It was also helpful in depicting unusual meanings such as the old fashioned mailbox in Noisy Nora. The stand up mailboxes were most familiar in past generations, and it caused confusion as to how Nora could be in a mailbox.



Perhaps one reason for the strong reliance on the illustrations was due to the fact that many of the students "read" books during independent book time via the illustrations. The children expected the illustrations to provide them with information about the story. This was clear in the discussion of the picture of the mouse, on page 19 of If You Give A Mouse A Cookie. Due to an inconsistent colour layout in the publication, the mouse appeared much more yellow than in the other illustrations. The children's very strong conviction that pictures help to tell the story, lead to a substantial amount of time spent searching for ways to justify the colour difference and integrate it into the storyline during the last six readings of the story. Explanations ranged from speculations about the mouse spending time in the sun, or to the idea that he got yellow crayon on himself while colouring. Even after I explained the probable reason for the colour variation, the children continued to search for a way to explain the difference in terms of the storyline.

A few key illustrations in each book emerged as focal points for discussion. Each of these pictures included a fair amount of detail. However, I believe that group identification was the motivating factor for repetitively commenting on these particular illustrations. Comments

about these pictures usually provoked a sense of affirmation. The other children laughed, expressed their agreement, and shared their own ideas.

In Wombat Stew the picture of the creepy crawlies on page 21 provoked the most discussion. The following example was typical of the discussions that took place in each of the third through eighth readings.

Nicole:  
I like it with six eyes.

Mrs. Froese:  
David.

David:  
I like that one almost going into the stew. I like that one down there.

Andrew:  
That's smiling

Reggie:  
Look it this one! He looks funny.

David:  
I meant this one right there. (gets up and points to illustration)

Kelvin:  
You know which one I like?

Mrs. Froese:  
Oh yeah.  
Kelvin sit on your bottom. Criss-cross.  
Yes.

Kelvin:  
I like the bug that has 24 legs.

Mrs. Froese:  
Andrew.

Andrew:

I like that one with six eyes and six legs and six teeth.

Student:

No seven teeth.

The picture of the mouse in his underwear generated the most discussion of any illustration in all three books. The children thought it was hilarious. During the final reading of If You Give A Mouse A Cookie there were eighteen references made to that one illustration. In February the class was working through the CARE KIT, a personal safety program focussing of sexual awareness. Therefore there was a considerable amount of discussion about things that are private. The fact that this little mouse came flying out of his bed in his underwear was considered outrageous.

David:

Here comes the mouse in his underwear!

Reggie:

Mouse in his underwear!

Mrs. Froese:

Tara. Tara.

Tara C:

I can't see.

Mrs. Froese:

Tristan.

Tristan:

I think the mouse is gonna be in his underwear.

Mrs. Froese:

Reggie.

Reggie:

I think after this part he's gonna jump out in his underwear.

(squeals, boisterous laughter)

Here he comes.

page 12. You'll have to fix up a little box for him with a blanket and a pillow.

page 13. He'll crawl in,  
make himself comfortable  
and fluff the pillow a few times.  
He'll probably ask you to read him a story.

Mrs. Froese:  
David.

David:  
Look at him in his underwear there.  
(laughter)

Mrs. Froese:  
Just leave it like that.

Reggie:  
Here it comes.

Student:  
Here it comes.  
(boisterous, uncontrolled laughter)

### Collaborative Meaning Making

Current theory of language learning emphasizes that language learning is a social process (Holdaway, 1979; Smith 1983, 1986, 1988; Wells, 1986). There are many examples, which demonstrated language to be a social endeavor. The interaction takes place between the students and text, the teacher's oral rendition of the text and the students, and the student with one another. The children collaborate in

the meaning making endeavor to clarify, extend, relate, judge, and make associations.

The other children interject comments to assist Tristan in communicating his message.

Tristan:  
I think the boy is ???

Mrs. Froese:  
Pardon me, Tristan.

(Tristan ???)

Mrs. Froese:  
You think the...

Melissa:  
The boy's his maid.

Mrs. Froese:  
You think the boy is made? The boy is mad?

Melissa:  
His maid.

Toban:  
A servant.

Mrs. Froese:  
Oh, he's a MAID! I see what you mean.

David makes a prediction in the second reading of Wombat Stew that Brendan disagrees with. Andrew provides his perspective, which is elaborated on by Melissa.

David:  
I'm thinking that he might fall down and then... be dead.

Brendan:  
But you're wrong.

Andrew:  
I know what is happening.

Mrs. Froese:  
The dingo?

Andrew.

Andrew:  
He's just jumping cause he's so happy  
(referring to the dingo)

David:  
And he'll fall down.

Melissa:  
On his bum.

The children work collaboratively to weave together their individual ideas and experiences, information from the text, and information from other students. The children listen carefully to each other's responses in an effort to relate what is being said to the text. Nicole makes a seemingly unrelated comment during a reading of If You Give A Mouse A Cookie.

Nicole:  
I like the part when, one time I seen this show, it's a nature show and there was a whole bunch of snakes and they showed one snake was eating up a parrot.

Mrs. Froese:  
So how is that like the story? I don't quite understand.

Nicole:  
Well like I just wanted to tell you it.

Ten utterances later, Andrew is still thinking about Nicole's comment. His mind set to create meaning from the

interactions of the teacher and peers with the text, is so strong that he endeavors to relate Nicole's comment, to the text. He relates the snake to its prey, which in turn creates a connection to the main character of the story. Kelvin's comment is expressed in a way that conveys excitement about the connection that Andrew was able to make. Both boys are satisfied that they have been able to transform a seemingly unrelated comment to meaningful input.

Andrew:

Maybe she said that because snakes eat rats you know.

They eat mice.

Kelvin:

They do too!

The environment is one of sharing stories, reacting to comments, and working together to create meaning, much like the one described by Wells (1986) in his longitudinal study.

### Shared Experiences

The intact group that had been in the classroom since September, had a broad range of shared experiences by the time the study began at the end of January. These common experiences helped to develop a sense of belonging in the class. The four new class members did not have this developed sense of group identification. Through the course of the repeated readings, the familiarity with the texts,

served to develop a common frame of reference which nurtured the special bond referred to by White (1984).

Phrases and ideas from the story became tools for communicating in the classroom. When the children lined up to enter the classroom, someone frequently said "Righto, in we go", from the text of Wombat Stew. This was expanded to include, "Righto, out we go" and "Righto, off we go." At the sand centre, students would collaborate to make concoctions of wombat stew and chant the choruses from the book. Noisy Nora became the reference point for anything noisy. A loud bang in the school, or outside would elicit comments like "That must be Noisy Nora" or "That's as noisy as ten Noisy Nora's".

The illustration of the mouse in his underwear in If You Give A Mouse A Cookie, evoked laughter from the children that became more boisterous with each reading. The response became much more focussed on one another than on the illustration. It was socially acceptable and fun to share in the laughter of the group.

There were a number of examples in which the children related their school experiences to the book being read, indicating the children's attempts to compare, extend, or relate textual information to matters outside the text. A



favorite action song called Harvey Holleybus was related to the mouse in If You Give The Mouse A Cookie because the student connected the line about the mayor in his underwear to the little illustration of the mouse flying out of bed in his underwear. Kathryn likened the same illustration to the a book in which a little monkey flies out of a tree.

The familiarity with the books developed a common body of knowledge that expanded outside the bounds of story time. The common frame of reference was used to talk about many facets of daily life in the classroom. When a reference was made and identified with one of the books, it generated a pleased excitement. The children were able to share a giggle and be affirmed as a member of the group.

I have noticed this same type of occurrence with individual pupils or small groups. Toban on numerous occasions has approached me with a story of why he's having "a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day". He related very strongly to Judith Viorst's book, and used it as a way of talking about his own experiences. However, it has only been through repeated readings, that everyone in the class is able to cue into the source of a specific reference, and appreciate the connection that has been made. Being able to share in this knowledge nurtures a sense of acceptance into the group on a personal level.

## CHAPTER 5

## Conclusions

General Discussion

This study indicates that repeated readings of storybooks result in quantitative and qualitative changes in the nature of student response. A total of three unfamiliar books were read eight times each, to twenty Year One Primary students in a large group context. Over the course of the seven week study, many of the same situations occurred that had been described by researchers studying repeated readings with preschoolers in one-to-one and small group settings. However, the appearances of a number of factors suggest that the dynamics of repeated readings with school aged children in whole class settings are different that the dynamics found by other researchers.

In this study, the amount of student discourse that focussed on text gradually declined over the course of the eight readings. However, in one-to-one and small group settings, preschoolers are reported to become more verbal as they become more familiar with the text (Bruner, 1978; Martinez & Roser, 1985; Morrow, 1988; Yaden et al., 1989). One explanation for this finding is that students in this study seemed to listen to larger chunks of text before responding. Although preschoolers generally make more

utterances when the story becomes familiar, this pattern of listening and observing for larger stretches of time after interactive readings, has also been noted by other researchers (Morrow, 1988; Sulzby, 1985; Teale, 1982).

Three patterns of participation emerged from the analysis of the contributions of individual group members. The discourse of more verbal students decreased as the stories were read repeatedly. In contrast, the students who are generally less verbal begin to assert themselves in the later readings. Other students participated at a relatively constant level through all the readings. These patterns suggest that repeated readings facilitate the participation of less verbal students in the discussion of stories. Morrow (1988) notes a similar pattern of participation in which low ability students were found to participate more in discussions after repeated readings. However, based on my knowledge of the students, I believe that the most influential factor affecting these patterns of response seems to be the level of confidence the children have in sharing their ideas in a large group context. It would appear that repeated readings give less confident students the time to formulate and contribute their response in a supportive setting. Allowing students to gain confidence in sharing their ideas in a large group context has important implications for the child in older grades, when

participation in large group contexts becomes increasingly important.

The primary focus of student discourse remained consistently on meaning for all eight readings of the texts. Many studies with preschoolers have noted that young children initially talk about the illustrations then become more meaning focussed with repeated readings (Crago & Crago, 1976; Ninio & Bruner, 1978; Yaden et al., 1989). In this study, relatively few utterances focus on print and story structure elements, a finding that is consistent with previous research (Martinez, 1983; Martinez & Roser, 1985; Morrow, 1988; Yaden, 1988; Yaden, 1989).

Illustrations accounted for about half the utterances of the meaning category, but remained a significant focus for all of the readings rather than decreasing in importance as noted with studies of preschoolers (Crago & Crago, 1976; Ninio & Bruner, 1978; Yaden et al., 1989). Discussion of illustrations included a dimension not mentioned in the one-to-one or small group settings. The illustrations provided information about the text in addition to a source of shared enjoyment. Specific illustrations were identified as group favorites and became a way of enthusiastically participating in the read aloud sessions. This affective response is an

important factor in predisposing children to include books in their lives (Holdaway, 1979; Meek, 1982; White, 1984).

Perhaps one of the most important findings in this is that repeated readings in larger groups facilitate the comprehension processes of young children. In the larger group students helped each other create meaning through a socially negotiated collaborative process. The group members listened and responded to the experiences and perceptions of their classmates. Understandings evolved as a result of reflection on the varied prior knowledge, the pictures and the text, and the student directed focus on aspects of the story. Out of this collaborative interaction, a common frame of reference emerged that determined directions in imaginative play and discourse. References from the text became a part of daily classroom life that all of the students were able to appreciate. This special bond contributed toward the creation of a supportive language learning environment which is conducive to language learning (Holdaway, 1979; Smith 1983, 1986, 1988).

The language forms used also remained relatively constant throughout all of the readings. Comments accounted for fifty to eighty percent of all of the text focussed utterances, followed by answers, then questions. The findings of Martinez & Roser (1985) and Morrow (1988) note

that comments are used more frequently in the later readings of the texts. It seems that comments play an important role in the interactive discussion of the books. The use of this form of language allows the students to determine the direction of discussion by starting from what they know and expanding it to include new learning. The children are permitted this independence, thereby nurturing them with the skills and confidence necessary to become a self-directed learner.

In some ways the interactions of students in this study displayed characteristics similar to preschool students in other studies. One overwhelming similarity is the fact that the children require time to construct meaning (Crago & Crago, 1976; Martinez, 1983; Martinez & Roser, 1985; Morrow, 1988; Yaden, 1988; Yaden, Smolkin & Conlon, 1989). In this study the children continued to share their own experiences until the last reading of the text, demonstrating the importance of storying in the construction of more sophisticated understanding of stories. This was particularly obvious through the analysis of discourse records in which the same topic emerged repeatedly, as noted by Martinez and Roser (1985).

Generally the children waited until the third or fourth reading of text before inquiring about unfamiliar vocabulary

or phrase definitions. This occurrence was also noted by Yaden (1985) and Martinez and Roser (1985). This suggests that the children engage in constructing meaning and then attend to the details to enhance their comprehension.

With repeated readings the children displayed more narrative behaviors. They joined in the reading of the text and chanted familiar lines, or made comments which were embedded with lines from the text. The rehearsal of the text makes the children more equipped to match the oral rendition with the print on the page (Holdaway, 1979; Morrow, 1988; Schickedanz, 1978, 1981).

The results of this study suggest that repeated readings of storybooks have a place in classroom practise for the advantages it affords to the development of language skills.

#### Limitations of Study

There are certain features of this study that I consider limitations. Whereas some of these features are a necessary part of conducting research, changes could be made to improve the design of the study. In order to control the number of readings for the purposes of the study, a number of routine choices were denied the students. They were not

allowed access to the book between readings to reenact the stories at individual book time. The children had a degree of choice in initially selecting the books, but no choice over the book to be read at story time on a daily basis. Individuals who had a distaste for one of the texts had to listen to it eight times. These divergences from normal classroom procedure obscured the classroom reality to a degree and failed to tap the natural tendency of students to request repeated readings of their favorite books.

The transcribing of the discourse into utterances did not accurately represent the amount of discourse. Year One students frequently continued through long phrases or sentences before pausing. Therefore, one utterance could translate to mean one word or twenty. In addition, anecdotal records note that during the middle readings of the texts, it was not possible to listen to all the responses of children with their hands up without going beyond the attention span of the group. In order to more accurately reflect the amount of discourse, the length of utterances and nonverbal behaviors, such as the number of raised hands, could be considered.

The amount of narrative behavior increased as the children became familiar with the books. The coding tool did not accurately convey the actual increase in narrative



behavior throughout the readings. Each page of a book was tallied as one utterance. A tally of the words "read" or cited from the text would have more accurately conveyed the amount of narrative behavior.

Developing readers frequently go through a process of memorizing stories, matching their oral rendition to the print, then actually reading. It was difficult to effectively differentiate between the "narrative behavior" and "reading" while coding. The most overt indicator that a child was attending to the print was a tracking motion with fingers or eyes. With a large group of children, it was only possible to observe this behavior in children that were closest to the book. The instances coded as attention to print were usually made during the transcription based on teacher knowledge of the child's reading ability or the pace of the student's speech. Therefore the relatively low attention to print must be considered in light of this fact.

A final limitation was a source of error in carrying out the design of the study. In one case the extended microphone was switched off and none of the data could not be transcribed. In the second case, the extended microphone was not turned on until ten minutes into the session. Therefore, the data had to be averaged for sake of comparison with other books.

### Suggestions for Future Research

This study suggests a number of directions for future study. Replication of the study with a similar group of children would indicate if the factors noted in this description also occur in other contexts with children of the same age level. It would also be interesting to compare the impact of repeated readings of school aged children in a large group context, with those in one-to-one and small group contexts. Observational studies noting the difference of student interactions with books during individual book time, after repeated readings would offer valuable information about the impact of repeated readings on the development of print concepts. This study has also provoked questions about the participation patterns of the individual in a collaborative context, the changing nature of the student-teacher interactions and student-text interactions. A considerable amount of research needs to be done in the area of repeated readings before the implications for classroom applications are fully understood.

### Implications for Classroom Practise

Despite the limitations of this study, it has provided a detailed description of some of the advantages of

repeatedly reading storybooks to school aged children in a large group context. The students help each other to create meaning through a socially negotiated collaborative process. They benefit from the prior knowledge of their peers and developed an understanding of how different people create meaning. This practice not only facilitates the comprehension processes of young children, but contributes to a supportive environment and a positive affective response toward reading. Children are given the opportunity to create a commentary about the reading rather than merely answer questions proposed by a teacher.

In this process, children are given the time to come to a deeper understanding of texts and can deal with new vocabulary and phrases once they have grasped the storyline. It also allows students that are less confident expressing their ideas in large group contexts, the models of response and time to formulate their own responses. Ultimately, all the students benefit from the prior knowledge of a wider range of participants in the discussion.

The fact that the children memorize the stories that are read repeatedly has a variety of implications. The children are able to match their oral rendition of the text with the print. They also share a common frame of reference with their classmates. Therefore, the children are able to

engage in imaginative play and explain classroom happenings using comparisons and discourse from the text. In this way, the children develop a strong group identification and the ability to communicate in a variety of ways.

The results of this study suggest that repeated readings have an important place in classroom practise for the development of language skills, a positive attitude toward language learning, and a supportive classroom environment. Therefore teachers can feel justified in responding to the requests of their students to "read it again".

## APPENDIX A

## Covering Letter and Consent Form

January 14, 1991

Dear Parents,

As many of you know I am currently working on my Master of Arts degree in Education at Simon Fraser University. I am very interested in how young children respond to books.

I will be doing a research project that will look at children's responses to three books. Each book will be read eight times during class from January 21 - February 28, 1991. The nature of the children's questions and comments will be analyzed. I will be asking parents or guardians to fill out a questionnaire to determine the book reading habits of the children in the class.

Please complete the following consent form to allow your child to participate in this study. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at the school before 8:30 am. or after 11:30 am. You are also welcome to contact professor J. Scott at Simon Fraser University (291-3395). Thanks for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Carrie Froese

---

Consent for Participation in Research

I give my consent for \_\_\_\_\_, to participate in the research project examining the response of children to repeated readings of literature. I realize that this project is being conducted as part of the Master of Arts Program at Simon Fraser University.

I understand my child may withdraw from participation in this research without any penalty at any time.

I also realize that no aspect of the research will be reflected in the performance evaluation of my child.

If I have any questions, I know that I can contact:

Carrie Froese  
College Park School  
939-4658

or Judith Scott  
Professor  
Faculty of Education  
Simon Fraser University  
291-3395.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX B

## Questionnaire

How often is your child read to?  daily  
 2-3 times a week  
 once a week  
 once a month  
 less than once a month

Who reads to your child?  mother  
 father  
 sibling  
 grandparents  
 babysitter  
 \_\_\_\_\_

How many questions are asked or comments are made by your child during storytime?  less than 5  
 5-10  
 more than 10

Where does your child get his/her books?  school library  
 public library  
 home  
 other

Does your child have any favorite books that s/he asks you to read over and over again?  yes  
 no

Please list \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Does your child tell any stories from memory?  yes  
 no

Please list \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Is your child able to read books for him/herself?  yes  
 no

Before entering school how many hours a day did your child watch educational television?  hours a day



## APPENDIX C

## Data From Questionnaire

How often is your child read to?

- 11 - daily
- 6 - two to three times per week
- 3 - once a week
- 0 - once a month
- 0 - less than once a month

Who reads to your child?

- 19 - mother
- 15 - father
- 9 - grandparents
- 8 - sibling
- 4 - baby-sitter
- 1 - other

How many questions are asked or comments are made by your child during storytime?

- 12 - 5-10
  - 5 - less than 5
  - 2 - more than 10
  - 2 - no response
- (1 person checked two categories)

Where does your child get his/her books?

- 20 - home
- 17 - school library
- 9 - public library
- 6 - other

Does your child have any favorite books that s/he asks you to read over and over again?

- 18 - yes
- 2 - no

average number of books listed: 4+  
range indicated: 1-10+

Does your child tell any stories from memory?

- 11 - yes
- 9 - no

average number listed: 4+  
range indicated: 1-8



Is your child able to read?

- 15 - no
- 4 - yes
- 1 - no response

Before entering school, how many hours a day did your child watch educational television?

- 8 - two hours
- 5 - one hour
- 3 - one to two hours
- 2 - no response
- 1 - three hours
- 1 - four hours

Programs listed more than once: Sesame Street, Mr. Rogers, Fred Penner, Mr. Dress-Up, Today's Special, Reading Rainbow, Polka Dot Door, Under The Umbrella Tree,

## Programs listed once:

Babar, Wildlife Programs, Take Part, Picture Page, 3-2-1-Contact, Sharon, Lois & Bram's Elephant Show, Disney Afternoon, Cartoons,

Did your child attend pre-school?

- 18 - yes
- 2 - no

## amount of time indicted:

- 8 - two years
- 4 - one year
- 2 - less than one year
- 1 - three years and over

range indicated: 7 months to 3 1/2 years

## APPENDIX D

## Text of Storybooks

Vaughan, Marcia K., WOMBAT STEW. Ashton Scholastic, Sydney, 1984

page i title page

page ii publishing info and dedication

page 1 One day, on the banks of the billabong,  
a very clever dingo caught a wombat...

page 2 and decided to make...

page 3 Wombat stew,  
Wombat stew,  
Gooey, brewy,  
Yummy, chewy,  
Wombat stew!

page 4 Platypus came ambling up the bank.

"Good day, Dingo," he said.  
Snapping his bill.  
"What's all that water for?"

page 5 "I'm brewing up a gooey, chewy stew  
with that fat wombat,"  
replied Dingo  
with a toothy grin.

page 6 "If you ask me," said Platypus,  
"the best thing for a gooey stew is mud.  
Big blops of billabong mud."

"Blops of mud?" Dingo laughed.  
"What a good idea.  
Righto, in they go!"

page 7 So Platypus scooped up big blops of mud  
with his tail and tipped them into the billycan.

page 8 Around the bubbling billy,  
Dingo danced and sang...

page 9 "Wombat stew,  
Wombat stew,  
Gooey, brewy,  
Yummy, chewy,  
Wombat stew!"

page 10 Waltzing out  
 from the shade of the ironbarks  
 came Emu.  
 She arched her graceful neck  
 over the brew.

"Oh ho, Dingo," she fluttered.  
 "What have we here?"

"Gooley, chewy wombat stew,"  
 boasted Dingo.

page 11 "If only it were a bit more chewy,"  
 she sighed. "But don't worry.  
 A few feathers will set it right."

"Feathers?" Dingo smiled.  
 "That would be chewy!  
 Righto, in they go!"

So in the gooey brew  
 Emu dropped  
 her finest feathers.

page 12 Around  
 and around  
 the bubbling billy,  
 Dingo danced and sang...

page 13 "Wombat stew,  
 Wombat stew,  
 Crunchy, munchy,  
 For my lunchy,  
 Wombat stew!"

page 14 Old Blue Tongue the Lizard  
 came sliding off his sun-soaked stone.

"Sssilly Dingo," he hissed.  
 "There are no fliesss in this sstew.  
 Can't be wombat sstew  
 without crunchy fliesss in it."  
 And he stuck out  
 his bright blue tongue.

page 15 "There's a lot to be said for flies,"  
 agreed Dingo, rubbing his paws together.

"Righto, in they go!"

So Lizard snapped  
 one hundred flies from the air  
 with his long tongue  
 and flipped them into the gooey,  
 chewy stew.

page 16 Around  
 and around  
 and around  
 the bubbling billy,  
 Dingo danced and sang...

"Wombat stew,  
 Wombat stew,  
 Crunchy, munchy,  
 For my lunchy,  
 Wombat stew!"

page 18 Up through the red dust popped Echidna.

page 19 "Wait a bit. Not so fast," he bristled,  
 shaking the red dust from his quills.  
 "Now, I've been listening  
 to all this advice-  
 and take it from me,  
 for a munchy stew  
 you need slugs and bugs  
 and creepy crawlies."

page 20 Dingo wagged his tail.  
 "Why, I should have thought of that.  
 Righto, in they go!"

page 21 So Echidna dug up all sorts of creepy crawlies  
 and dropped them into the gooey, chewy,  
 crunchy stew.

page 22 The very clever Dingo stirred and stirred,  
 all the while singing...

page 23 "Wombat stew,  
 Wombat stew,  
 Hot and spicy,  
 Oh so nicey,  
 Wombat stew!"

page 24 Just then the sleepy-eyed Koala  
 climbed down the scribbly gumtree.

"Look here," he yawned,  
 "any bush cook knows  
 you can't make a spicy stew  
 without gumnuts."

page 25 "Leave it to koala to think of gumnuts,"  
 Dingo laughed and licked his whiskers.

"Righto, in they go!"

And into the gooey, chewy, crunchy,  
 munchy stew  
 Koala shook lots and lots of gumnuts.

page 26 "Ah ha!" cried Dingo.  
 "Now my stew is missing only one thing."

"What's that?" asked the animals.

"That fat wombat!"

page 27 "Wait!"

"Stop!"

"Hang on, Dingo!"  
 You can't put that wombat  
 into the stew yet."

page 28 "Why not?"

"You haven't tasted it!"

"Righto! I'll taste it!"

And that very clever dingo  
 bent over the billy  
 and took a great, big slurp of stew.

page 29 aargruffooee (speech balloon)

"I'm poisoned!" he howled.  
 "You've all tricked me!"

page 30 And he dashed away  
 deep into the bush,  
 never again to sing...

(music and lyrics)

"Wombat stew,  
Wombat stew,  
Gooley, brewy,  
Yummy, chewy,  
Wombat stew!"

back cover One day, on the banks of the billabong, a very  
clever dingo caught a wombat and decided  
to make gooley, brewy, yummy, chewy,  
wombat stew!

However, when Wombat's friend's decide  
to help, things go very wrong for Dingo.

Numeroff, Laura Joffe, IF YOU GIVE A MOUSE A COOKIE,  
Scholastic, Toronto, 1985.

- page i title of book  
page ii & iii title page  
page iv dedication & publishing info
- page 1. If you give a mouse a cookie,  
page 2. he's going to ask for a glass of milk.  
page 3. When you give him the milk,  
page 4. he'll probably ask you for a straw.  
page 5. When he's finished, he'll ask for a napkin.  
page 6. Then he'll want to look in a mirror  
to make sure he doesn't  
have a milk mustache.  
page 7. When he looks into the mirror,  
he might notice his hair needs a trim.  
So he'll probably ask  
for a pair of nail scissors.  
page 8. When he's finished giving himself a trim,  
he'll want a broom to sweep up.  
He'll start sweeping.  
page 9. He might get carried away and  
sweep every room in the house.  
page 10. He may even end up washing  
the floors as well!  
page 11. When he's done,  
he'll probably want to take a nap.  
page 12. You'll have to fix up a little box for him  
with a blanket and a pillow.  
page 13. He'll crawl in,  
make hiself comfortable  
and fluff the pillow a few times.  
He'll probably ask you to read him a story.  
page 14. So you'll read to him from one of your books,  
and he'll ask to see the pictures.

- page 15. When he looks at the pictures,  
he'll get so excited he'll want to draw  
one of his own. He'll ask for paper and crayons.
- page 16. He'll draw a picture.
- page 18. When the picture is finished,
- page 19. he'll want to sign his name
- page 20. with a pen.
- page 21. Then he'll want to hang  
his picture on your  
refrigerator.  
Which means he'll need
- page 22. Scotch tape
- page 23. He'll hang up his drawing  
and stand back to look at it.  
Looking at the refrigerator  
will remind him that
- page 24. he's thirsty.
- page 25. So...
- page 26. he'll ask for a glass of milk.
- page 27. And chances are if he asks for a glass of milk,
- page 28. he's going to want a cookie to go with it.
- back cover If you give a mouse a cookie,  
he's going to ask for a glass of milk...  
And that's only the beginning!



Wells, Rosemary, NOISY NORA, Scholastic Book Services, New York, 1973.

- page 1 picture of Nora jumping
- page 2 & 3 Title page
- page 4 copyright information
- page 5 dedication
- page 6 blank
- page 7 Jack had dinner early,
- page 8 Father played with Kate,
- page 9 Jack needed burping,
- page 10 So Nora had to wait.
- page 11 First she banged the window,
- page 12 Then she slammed the door,
- page 13 Then she dropped  
her sister's marbles  
On the kitchen floor.
- page 14 "Quiet!" said her father.  
"Hush!" said her mum.
- page 15 "Nora!" said her sister,  
"Why are you so dumb?"
- page 16 Jack had gotten filthy,
- page 17 Mother cooked with Kate,
- page 18 Jack needed drying off,
- page 19 So Nora had to wait.
- page 20 First she knocked  
the lamp down,
- page 21 Then she felled some chairs,
- page 22 Then she took  
her brother's kite

- page 23 And flew it down the stairs.
- page 24 "Quiet!" said her father.  
"Hush!" said her mum.
- page 25 "Nora!" said her sister,  
"Why are you so dumb?"
- page 26 Jack was getting sleepy,
- page 27 Father read with Kate,
- page 28 Jack needed singing to,
- page 29 So Nora had to wait.
- page 30 "I'm leaving!" shouted Nora,  
"And I'm never coming back!"
- page 31 And they didn't hear a sound  
But a tralala from Jack.
- page 32 Father stopped his reading.  
Mother stopped her song.
- page 33 "Mercy!" said her sister,  
"Something's very wrong."
- page 34 No Nora in the cellar.  
No Nora in the tub.
- page 35 No Nora in the mailbox  
Or hiding in a shrub.
- page 36 "She left us!"  
moaned her mother
- page 37 As they sifted  
through the trash.
- page 38 picture of father, mother & Kate looking at Nora  
(on next page)
- page 39 "But I'm back again!"  
said Nora  
With a monumental crash.
- page 40 illustration Nora with family in messy room

## APPENDIX E

## Time Frame Of Study

- Jan. 14-18, 1991 -Consent form sent home and collected  
 -Video equipment set up and left running  
 -Students have opportunities to view themselves
- Jan. 21-25, 1991 -Questionnaires sent home and collected
- Jan. 21, 1991, 10:15 am -First reading of Wombat Stew
- Jan. 22, 1991, 10:15 am -First reading of If You Give A Mouse A Cookie
- Jan. 24, 1991, 10:10 am -First reading of Noisy Nora
- Jan. 25, 1991, 10:10 am -Second reading of Wombat Stew
- Jan. 28, 1991, 10:15 am -Second reading of If You Give A Mouse A Cookie
- Jan. 29, 1991, 10:15 am -Second reading of Noisy Nora
- Jan. 30, 1991, 10:10 am -Third reading of Wombat Stew
- Jan. 31, 1991, 10:10 am -Third reading of If You Give A Mouse A Cookie
- Feb. 4, 1991, 10:15 am -Third reading of Noisy Nora
- Feb. 5, 1991, 10:10 am -Fourth reading of Wombat Stew
- Feb. 6, 1991, 10:45 am -Fourth reading of If You Give A Mouse A Cookie
- Feb. 7, 1991, 10:15 am -Fourth reading of Noisy Nora
- Feb. 11, 1991, 10:10 am -Fifth reading of Wombat Stew
- Feb. 12, 1991, 10:15 am -Fifth reading of If You Give A Mouse A Cookie
- Feb. 13, 1991, 10:15 am -Fifth reading of Noisy Nora
- Feb. 19, 1991, 10:15 am -Sixth reading of Wombat Stew
- Feb. 21, 1991, 10:15 am -Sixth reading of If You Give A Mouse A Cookie

- Feb. 25, 1991, 10:15 am -Sixth reading of Noisy Nora
- Feb. 26, 1991, 10:15 am -Seventh reading of Wombat Stew
- Feb. 27, 1991, 10:15 am -Seventh reading of If You Give A  
Mouse A Cookie
- Feb. 28, 1991, 10:45 am -Seventh reading of Noisy Nora
- Mar. 1, 1991, 10:15 am -Eighth reading of Wombat Stew
- Mar. 4, 1991, 10:15 am -Eighth reading of If You Give A  
Mouse A Cookie
- Mar. 5, 1991, 10:15 am -Eighth reading of Noisy Nora
- Mar. 5 - June 1, 1991 -books easily accessible to students

## APPENDIX F

## Focus of Discourse Coding Guide

## PART A: THE NATURE AND AMOUNT OF TEACHER DISCOURSE

## 1. ORGANIZATIONAL STATEMENTS

- statements focusing attention back on the story
- discipline
- request to speak louder

Pardon me.

I'm sorry, I couldn't hear you.

Toban (student's name)

We'll talk about that later.

Save it and tell me later.

That's two.

You have a choice.

Melissa, did you have something to say?

## 2. QUESTIONS PERTAINING TO THE STORY

- encouraging participation in discussion
- request for clarification or elaboration

ie. What do you think?

Any predictions?

How does that relate to the story?

What do you mean?

## 3. COMMENTS PERTAINING TO THE STORY

- scaffolding (repetition, extension)
- positive reinforcement

ie. Nancy thinks the mouse is sick.

Oh, so you think the mouse will go to a veterinarian.

Oh goodness! / Oh dear!

That's a thought!

## PART B: THE NATURE AND AMOUNT OF STUDENT DISCOURSE

## 1. ILLUSTRATION RELATED

- questions and comments specifically about the illustrations (ie. labeling or identification of character in the illustration)
- discussion/anticipation of upcoming illustrations

- ie. His cute, little, tiny clothes are right there.  
I'm not gonna look until the mouse jumps out in his underwear.  
He looks surprised.  
It looks like...  
Look it. Over there...  
I like the spider that has six eyes and six legs and six teeth.  
That's (name of character).  
Super underwear!

## 2. FOCUS ON STORY STRUCTURE

- a) setting (time, place)
  - time, place

- ie. Australia
  - Nora's home
  - boy's house
  - I think they're in the bathroom.

- b) character

- identification of the character's role or activity
- statements and questions focused on understanding kinds of character traits and personalities, character developments and changes, and characters' motivations for actions.

- ie. Who is Jack?  
Who said that?  
Why is Nora doing that?  
The dingo wants to eat the wombat, right?  
Nora is sad.  
He looks excited cause he looks like he has a smile on.  
The mom and dad, they don't like the kid.

- c) theme

- statement of problem or goal to be achieved by the main character
- global statement/the author's message to us

- d) plot (what the character does about these feelings and needs)

- identification or clarification of story events
- details from the text
- interpretation of story plots, episodes when sequence of events is understood

ie. The wombat got out of the billycan.  
 Jack put the bowl on Nora's head.  
 How could she do it?

- e) resolution  
 -problem solution  
 -attainment of goal

### 3. CREATING MEANING

#### a) predicting/confirming predictions

ie. I think he is going to go to the doctor's  
 I think the mouse is gonna be in his underwear.

- b) word/phrase definitions  
 -concerned with word meaning

ie. What is a shrub?

- c) interpreting (life to text)  
 -children compare, extend, and relate textual  
 information to matters outside the text  
 -associations with other books or connecting personal  
 experience or knowledge (prior knowledge)

ie. I know the picture over there looks like Mona  
 Lisa mouse.

- d) opinion  
 -a belief or conclusion held with confidence but not  
 substantiated by positive knowledge or proof  
 -a general personal evaluative comment

ie. I like it.  
 That's funny.  
 I like that part.

- e) drawing from one's experience or imagination  
 -stories and comments triggered by the topic,  
 illustrations, or the behavior of the characters.

ie. I've seen a mouse.  
 My sister is loud all the time.

- f) narrative behavior
  - reciting lines of predictable print from memory
  - ie. choral reading
    - I like it when "You all tricked me."
- 4. GRAPHIC FORM RELATED
  - a) letters/sounds
    - ie. His name must be MMMMM.
  - b) words
    - written or spoken form
    - repeats words or phrases
    - ie. What does that word say?
      - Where does it say "truck"?
      - Does this say \_\_\_?
      - Hey, that rhymes.
  - c) reading words
  - e) reading sentences/phrases/multiple word arrays
  - f) punctuation
    - names
    - purpose
- 5. GENERAL BOOK CHARACTERISTICS
  - title
  - author
  - illustrator
  - book language (It should say...)
  - page numbers
  - dedications
  - bibliographic
  - genre
  - book length
  - use of printed words to represent sounds
  - use of comic strip speech balloons to indicate what characters say
  - use of print size and paginal arrangement to represent meaning
  - ie. Why are those numbers there?
    - Why do you say those names all the time?
    - Why are books so long?



6. COMMENTS/QUESTIONS UNRELATED TO THE STORY
    - the comment or question has provide neither a springboard nor even a loose relation to the story
    - ie. Are we going outside for recess?  
I need Christopher's phone number.
  
  7. ORGANIZATION
    - dealing with distracting behaviors
    - precursor to comment
    - directing teacher to page to be discussed
    - ie. I wanted to tell you about the other page  
You know what?  
Excuse me.  
Kelvin's not sitting criss-cross.
  
  8. INCOMPLETE
    - statements that cannot be categorized due to lack of information or context
- \*\*\* On rare instances, two independent clauses in one utterance will reflect two distinct categories. In those cases mark both categories.
- ie. Uhm, I like it, when he, when Jack says "Why are you so dumb" and I like it when he, when he throws the bowl on Nora's head, look it!

## APPENDIX G

## Form of Discourse Coding Guide

1. Questions
  - queries
  - utterances ending in a question mark
2. Answers
  - to student or teacher questions
3. Comments
  - expression of ideas
  - narrative behavior embedded in a comment  
ie. I like when she says "Why are you so dumb?"
4. Reading the text
  - choral reading
  - reading words or sentences
  - repeating words from the text
5. Repetitions
  - the same ideas or statements repeated by a student in order to be heard or acknowledged

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