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Written retellings of narrative and expository texts: A case study of elementary primary grade delayed male readers

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**WRITTEN RETELLINGS OF NARRATIVE AND EXPOSITORY TEXTS:
A CASE STUDY OF ELEMENTARY PRIMARY GRADE
DELAYED MALE READERS**

by

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**Bachelor of Science
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**A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the**

**Doctor of Education Degree
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Dissertation Approval

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A Case Study of Elementary Primary Grade Delayed Male Readers

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ABSTRACT

Written Retellings of Narrative and Expository Texts: Case Study of Elementary Primary Grade Delayed Male Readers

by

Timothy Todd Houge

**Dr. Thomas Bean, Examination Committee Chair
Professor of Instructional and Curricular Studies
University of Nevada, Las Vegas**

This study examined how four second grade delayed readers, who were delayed in various stages of reading and writing, read and wrote about narrative and expository paired-topic texts. This study was based on the assumption that: (a) elementary primary grade children could read and write about narrative and expository texts; (b) delayed readers are children who can learn to read, even though they are below grade level, if they are given the opportunity; and, (c) written retellings could be used to assess students' understanding of texts and are one method of bringing the reading-writing relationship together.

A case study research approach was used to examine and describe the experience of the four delayed readers, and the phenomenon of their selections and readings and written retellings of narrative and expository texts. The participants' written retellings of the paired-topic narrative and expository texts were analyzed for textual patterns and assigned a richness score. The examination of the written retellings of the paired-topic

texts was used to determine the quality of their writing and their stylistic features as compared to the original texts they read and wrote about. It also determined whether elementary primary grade delayed readers could write about narrative and expository texts demonstrating their comprehension of the text.

Conclusions drawn from the study, and discussed in the final chapter, suggest that: (a) the four elementary primary grade delayed readers were capable of demonstrating preference for narrative or expository text and supplying relatively high-quality explanations for why they chose one over the other; (b) the four elementary primary grade delayed readers were successful in reconstructing the linguistic structural patterns of the original narrative and expository reading texts in their own writing, therefore confirming that the text they read does have an affect on their writing; (c) the written reconstructions of the original narrative and expository texts reflect the comprehension of the elementary primary grade delayed readers and their ability to read and write about narrative and expository texts; and, (d) the four elementary primary grade delayed readers each were able to compare and contrast similarities and dissimilarities between the narrative and expository original reading texts.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The following study sought to qualitatively examine the extent to which four elementary primary grade delayed readers could read and comprehend paired-topic narrative and expository texts as revealed through written retellings. It explored the degree to which these delayed readers were able to write about and summarize the text structures found in narrative and expository texts.

Statement of the Problem

There is very little research about elementary primary grade delayed readers' reading and comprehension of narrative and expository texts. Most existing studies have occurred within the context of the elementary intermediate grades (Harkrader & Moore, 1997; Alvermann & Boothby, 1982; Palmer & Stewart, 1997). However, there have been important exceptions in this regard.

Morrow (1984, 1985, 1986) and Pappas (1991, 1993), for example, orally read expository and narrative text to kindergarten students and discovered the students were capable of orally retelling both types of texts. Moss (1997) and Clark (1997) recently completed similar studies using first grade students and received like results. Despite these attempts to demonstrate elementary primary grade children's success with expository text, this issue of allowing elementary primary grade children, particularly

delayed readers, to read both narrative and expository texts and respond, in a written format, remains largely unexplored.

This study differs from previously completed studies in two ways because it explored the elementary primary grade delayed readers' ability to read narrative and expository texts and complete written retellings. Examining elementary primary grade delayed readers' performance with both types of texts is important for understanding the possible function of narrative and expository texts during literacy activities in the classroom. Furthermore, the implementation of paired-topic narrative and expository texts is valuable because thorough understanding of both types of texts is a vital part of children's reading and writing success.

No studies to my knowledge have employed written retellings as a means of assessing elementary primary grade readers' success in reading paired-topic narrative and expository texts. Furthermore, no study has examined this process with delayed readers.

Background

Narrative and expository texts. In today's multifaceted world, an important part of reading and writing instruction involves introducing students to various types of narrative and expository texts. One means of doing so is through deliberate efforts to engage students in both types of literature. However, in the past we have neglected to build students' reading and writing skills for expository text (Daniels, 1990; Langer, Applebee, Mullis, & Foertsch, 1990; Moss & Newton, 1998). The continuing disparity in the use of narrative and expository texts by primary and intermediate elementary teachers poses a challenge to American educators concerned with developing students who are successful readers.

One purpose for using expository texts in the elementary primary grades is to enhance students' exposure to a different type of text. This focus does not suggest leaving narrative text on classroom shelves. Rather, as Nell Duke (1998b) suggests, it means that developing a balanced approach to using narrative and expository texts should be the first aim of our nation's schools, particularly in the elementary primary grades. She suggested educators (a) encourage the publishers of literacy and basal programs to include more expository texts in their materials, (b) incorporate research about the successful use of expository texts with young children in our preservice and practicing teachers' professional education programs, (c) link expository text reading and writing to science achievement, (d) encourage parents to include more expository text in their homes and, (e) increase the budget for purchasing reading material when attempting to include equal amounts of expository texts in the classroom.

Although educators recognize a need to introduce both types of texts, not all students receive guided instruction with expository texts. The absence of guided instruction eventually leads to reading difficulties for both good and poor readers (Bear & Barone, 1998). This lack of exposure to expository texts in the primary grades results in poor development of expository reading and writing skills needed in the intermediate grades. However, recently, there has been an appeal to increase the use of expository texts in the elementary primary grades (Hiebert & Fisher, 1990; Sanacore, 1991; Littlefair, 1991; Pappas, 1991; Freeman & Person, 1992; Duke, 1998a; Moss & Newton, 1998). Teachers who set aside time to instruct students with expository texts in the early elementary grades are preparing students for subsequent development into successful elementary intermediate grade readers of this type of text.

As teachers move into using expository texts in the elementary primary grades it will become evident that students often encounter expository texts that contain different rhetorical structures such as informational; narrative-informational, and informational-poetic (Duke, 1998b). Narrative-informational text refers to narrative text that is designed to communicate information concerning the natural or social world, and is comprised of text features such as comparative/contrast, problem/solution, and cause/effect. Informational-poetic, on the other hand, refers to poetry that is designed to communicate information concerning the natural or social world, and is comprised of text features such as comparative/contrast, problem/solution, and cause/effect. Finally, informational text refers to text that is neither narrative-informational nor informational-poetic. When teachers who become aware of the three types of expository texts they can use this knowledge in discussing concepts and organizational patterns in much the same way as they do with narrative texts.

Morrow's (1984, 1985), Pappas' (1991, 1993), Moss', (1997), and Clark's, (1997) studies clearly demonstrate that kindergarten and first grade children can comprehend narrative as well as expository text after listening to the stories being read to them. Their work supports the necessity of providing elementary primary grade students with opportunities to become engaged in narrative and expository texts. In addition, narrative and expository texts have the potential of being a vehicle for maximum reading development among delayed readers (Korkeamaki, Tianinen, & Dreher, 1998).

Delayed readers. Students who have difficulty reading are commonly referred to as being "deficient", "having differences", or "delayed in their literacy development" (Valtin, 1978, 1979). Many students who are experiencing slow progress in their reading

have delayed development. Therefore, many educators who work with students who are behind in their reading adopt the delayed model. In contrast to the difference and deficit model, the delayed model leads to a developmental approach to instruction. Frequently, students who are delayed readers respond to the same type of instruction as students who are not behind, and they rarely require an elaborate and separate series of teaching methods. Teachers apply the difference model (students learning in different ways requiring special teaching methods) or deficit model (students who have a permanent neurologic or other severe physical disability that radically limits their growth and development) when classroom instruction does not seem to help a student learn (Bear & Barone, 1998).

Delayed learners learn to read like anyone else while teachers focus on a continuum of reading success that builds on the developmental phases (Shaywitz, Escobar, Shaywitz, Fletcher & MaKuch, 1992). Each student is seen as an individual who is behind, due to a set of factors that has contributed to their delayed literacy development. Some of these factors are inexperience with written language, poor or inappropriate instruction, transience and poverty, maturational delay, and lack of motivation and self-esteem (Bear & Barone, 1998). Unfortunately, there is no quick fix for students who are behind (Allington & Walmsley, 1995), but these students can be taught in a similar manner and with similar types of texts as their peers, providing the texts are at their reading level and reading and writing requirements do not become overwhelming. If delayed readers are required to read a text that is too difficult and requires that they just sound out words, their brains are unable to comprehend what they read. Therefore, delayed readers can be instructed with, read, and comprehend text that is

at their reading level, or at a level where they are being challenged by new vocabulary and concepts, without being frustrated. Teachers who desire to incorporate a balanced literacy approach in their curriculum to help delayed readers grow as readers and writers, are often eager to gather information about students' comprehension of the texts they read. One, of numerous techniques, is the written retelling process (Brown & Cambourne, 1987).

Assessment with written retellings. Teachers are well aware that in order to assess students' comprehension, after being instructed with narrative and expository texts, there must be an effort to get students to reveal what they have learned while reading (Brown & Cambourne, 1987). This reading/writing approach is based on the premise that reading and writing are components of the same communication process. Although differences exist between learning to read and write, as well as between different types of media through which messages are conveyed, these two forms of communication originate from the same conceptual language process. Stotsky (1993), in an extensive review of literature investigating the relationships among reading and writing, concluded that when instruction in writing is specifically geared toward simultaneous improvement in reading, gains in reading comprehension have occurred. Further, she explained that attempting to improve writing skills by providing reading experience in place of grammar study or in place of additional writing instruction was as advantageous or more so than direct instruction. She concluded that reading cannot replace writing, or vice versa, as an instructional mode, but that reading experience may be crucial as it relates to writing instruction.

Logically, reading and writing should complement each other as they are taught in the classroom. For example, the written retelling process begins with teachers asking students to read and respond to a story in writing. After completing the written retelling process, students' retellings are rated according to how much of the story they have recalled, if they have recalled text structures, and their organization of information using a five point holistic richness scale (Irwin & Mitchell, 1983). Students' written retellings provide teachers with a window into their understandings, their periods of confusion, and their times of insight during reading.

Emphasis on the written retelling process has been embraced by educators (Kalmbach, 1986). Therefore, studies that focus on instruction with narrative and expository texts with elementary primary grade delayed readers, using written retellings as a lens to their reading comprehension and growth, are needed. Children at this age, whether good or poor readers, have read and responded to narrative texts for many years. Nevertheless, our current educational obligation is preparing students to sufficiently read different types of texts in the elementary intermediate grades. One means of doing so is by permitting the good and poor readers the opportunity to read and write about narrative and expository texts in the primary grades.

Research Goal and Questions

The goal of this study was to explore elementary primary grade delayed readers' reading and writing about paired-topic narrative and expository texts and to use their written retellings as a means of assessing their comprehension of the texts.

Specifically, I attempted to answer the following questions:

- 1a. What do delayed readers prefer regarding narrative and expository text prior to their reading and writing about both types of texts?
- 1b. What do delayed readers prefer regarding narrative and expository text subsequent to their reading and writing about both types of texts?
2. What affect do the patterns of texts, of original narrative and expository texts, have on delayed readers' written retellings?
3. How do delayed readers' written retellings reflect their comprehension of narrative and expository texts?

Theoretical Framework

This study focused on the perceptions of four delayed readers' interpretive meanings of narrative and expository texts as experienced by the participants in their interactions with the researcher. Therefore, it was most appropriately placed in the framework of symbolic interactionism and conducted using case study methodology (Merriam, 1998). Reading and writing about narrative and expository texts with the guidance of a teacher is both interactive and subject to the interpretations of the students involved in those reading and writing activities.

If we are to understand students' lives, what motivates them, what their interests are, what connects them to and differentiates them from others, what their values and beliefs are, why they act as they do, and how they see themselves and others, it is necessary to place ourselves in their situation and view the world with them. Because social interaction is constructed by the students engaged in it, we should try to see it from their viewpoint. We should appreciate how they interpret the symbols bestowed on them by teachers or researchers, the meanings they assign to the symbols, and how they

construct their own action. In addition, because this is a process, it must be sampled over time (Blummer, 1969). In other words, the symbolic interactionist perspective is that students act on the basis of meanings that objects—in this case narrative and expository texts—have for them and do not respond to how others perceive it but, rather, to how they interpret the different types of texts.

In my earlier study of written responses to different texts, (Houge, 1998) I noted that readers have their own unique meanings about expository text and what reading an expository text means to them. Some of the time it requires confronting many difficult words but more often it means taking on something new after they had just begun to feel comfortable with narrative text.

Because this study sought to understand the participants' responses to narrative and expository texts, participants' success with each type of text was considered to hold particular meaning for them as readers and writers. The meanings rest in the theoretical framework of symbolic interactionism (Schwandt, 1994). In other words, these meanings are derived from the social interaction between and among the students and are instituted and adjusted through an interpretive process. For example, students use and rework these derived meanings as devices for the guidance and configuration of action towards narrative and expository texts. Thus, by interacting with, watching others interact with, or communicating about these different texts students interpret a meaning about the text and therefore pursue, or avoid, interacting with the whole text or parts of the text.

Alvermann, O'Brien, and Dillon (1996) have suggested that we look at hunches as personal angles on more formal substantive theories that are also compatible with our theoretical lens. As an example of my symbolic interactionist viewpoint for this current

study, students' reading is clearly not just identifying the words on the page, nor is it just making sense of the sentences and paragraphs within which those words appear. Rather, it is how students try to construct meaning within the larger reading and writing instruction and how they view their experiences within the instruction.

Because interpreted meanings shift over time with successive interactions, reality is not permanent but is revised with the newly constructed perceptions of different types of texts within a context (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). Symbolic interactionism provides a lens for examining the changing perceptions of students involved in reading narrative and expository texts that are developing over time.

Significance of the Study

There were a number of significant reasons for studying elementary primary grade delayed readers' reading and writing about narrative and expository texts. A study of this sort is new and will contribute to several important areas in the field of literacy. First, it will contribute to the understanding of how narrative and expository texts can be used during reading instruction for delayed readers. It is necessary for elementary primary age children, including delayed readers, to read a variety of narrative and expository texts. Without exposure to, and experience with different types of texts, many children will have a difficult time comprehending and writing about any text that is not narrative (Christie 1989; Daniels, 1990; Pappas, 1991, 1993). Increasing elementary primary grade delayed readers' understanding of the forms and functions of different types of texts is especially important with respect to learning how to read and write these types of texts as they progress through the grades.

Second, this study provided insight into how these four elementary primary grade delayed readers read and wrote about narrative and expository texts. The findings from this study aided in determining what might be the most productive grades during which to begin to provide experience with reading and writing about expository text. Furthermore, the findings determined whether delayed readers in the elementary primary grades could read and comprehend expository texts even though research has shown that narrative texts are primarily used in elementary school instruction (e.g., Christie 1989; Daniels, 1990).

Third, this study added to the already expansive amount of research that demonstrates a need for emergent readers to write (e.g., Bear & Barone, 1998; Zecker, 1996; Clay, 1993). Writing enables children, in this case delayed readers, to perceive themselves as writers, as a member of the group who are already reading and writing, and therefore write by reading. Children learn, “through reading like a writer, to write like a writer” (Smith, 1983, p. 567).

Furthermore, it contributed to teachers’ understanding of the effect of their selection of reading materials used for reading and writing instruction (Swafford, Akrofi, Rogers, 1998; Johnson, 1995; Eckhoff, 1983). Teachers must ensure that children have access to reading materials that are relevant to the kinds of writing they will be asked to complete.

Finally, due to the limited research on elementary primary grade delayed readers’ reading of narrative and expository texts, this study addressed a gap in the literature. We are now noticing an explicit challenge to incorporate both narrative and expository texts in the elementary primary grades (Pappas, 1993; Duke, 1998a, 1998b; Duke & Kays,

1998). Therefore, it was not the intent of this study to determine if one type of text was more appropriate to use for instruction than the other one. Rather, the intent was to explore and describe the processes used by elementary primary grade delayed readers as they read and wrote about paired-topic narrative and expository texts.

Limitations Of The Study

Assumptions

Inherent in any research design and methodology are the researcher's theories of literacy learning and understanding which influences what the researcher is likely to observe and learn (Harste, 1992). These theories formulate conceptual boundaries around "what is foreground and what is left in the background, what is carefully detailed and what is glossed" (Dyson, 1995, p. 6). To retain the integrity of this research it was essential that I maintained openness to findings, respecting the lives of these children, attempting to see the world through their eyes, and acknowledging but, also questioning, interpretations and responses. In this way, old assumptions and conceptual boundaries are cleared and improved with new understandings of the domain being studied (Dyson, 1995).

Limitations

Like all studies, this one contained several limitations. Due to logistical restraints, this study could not be conducted with the children in their classrooms, which can lead to two problems. First, because the participants were involved in the reading and writing session after school, there were problems with the children being tired, hungry, and eager to play rather than read and write. Although I could not eliminate this threat to validity, as a partial guard against it, I had a wholesome snack and a cold drink

for the children prior to reading and writing. A second problem was the fact that the participants were in an environment, and with an instructor, that was initially strange to them. This potential problem was not easy to solve; however, with the parents' support and the participants' willingness to become better readers and writers this problem took care of itself after the initial two meetings as the participants adjusted to the environment and me.

Invariably, the question of how many participants are needed in order to adequately answer the questions posed at the beginning of the study was a concern to the reader. Since the sample for this study consisted of four primary elementary grade delayed readers, the sampling size was a limitation. Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommend sampling until a point of saturation or redundancy is reached. "In purposeful sampling the size of the sample is determined by informational considerations. If the purpose is to maximize information, the sampling is terminated when no new information is forthcoming from new sampled units; thus redundancy is the primary criterion" (p. 202). Applying Lincoln and Guba's sampling size guideline, it was determined that the data collected from this sample adequately answered the questions generated at the outset of this study.

A problem with a developmental study with young children is establishing a high degree of confidence that the participants understand the task requirements in approximately equivalent ways. Although this was a very difficult problem to resolve, I included measures in this study to constrain the problem. For example, I checked the participants' written retellings for indications that they exhibited some information about the text that was read. If the participants' writing tasks did not contain any information

about the text, I stopped the child and clarified their writing task. Furthermore, I wrote down the participants' behavior during these tasks in the form of fieldnotes.

My holistic evaluation of the written retellings was another limitation. Although experienced teachers have the ability to evaluate written retellings, research has demonstrated that evaluations will differ widely among the teachers (Cooper and Odell, 1977). This problem was resolved by having raters, from similar backgrounds, carefully trained using a format suggested by Meredith, Mitchell, and Hernandez-Miller (1992).

Another limitation involved the issue of internal validity. Internal validity deals with the question of how research findings match reality. In order to enhance internal validity of this qualitative research, all of Merriam's (1998) six basic strategies were incorporated:

1. **Triangulation**—using multiple investigators, multiple sources of data, or multiple methods to confirm the emerging findings.
2. **Member checks**—taking data and tentative interpretations back to the people from whom they were derived and asking them if the results are plausible. In this study, the member checks involved the participants and their parents.
3. **Long-term observation at the research site or repeated observations of the same phenomenon**—gathering data over a period of time in order to increase the validity of the findings. In this study, there were ten reading and writing sessions with each participant, which will result in a total of forty reading and writing sessions.
4. **Peer examination**—asking colleagues to comment on the findings as they emerge.

5. Participatory or collaborative modes of research—involving participants in all phases of research from conceptualizing the study to writing up the findings (due to the age of the participants I will collaborate with the parents).
6. Researcher's biases—clarifying the researcher's assumptions, worldview, and theoretical orientation at the outset of the study.

Summary

In today's elementary schools, basal series and children's trade books are used all through the curriculum. Students are reading large amounts of narrative text in the elementary primary grades and consequently are challenged with the increased expository texts used in the elementary intermediate grades. While teachers are beginning to incorporate more expository texts in the elementary primary grades, they continue to search for a means of assessing students' comprehension. Written retellings are one means of furnishing information concerning students' comprehension of the text that connects the reading with writing. Although studies have investigated elementary primary grade students' ability to orally listen to and retell both narrative and expository texts with success, no studies have been recorded that have asked elementary primary grade delayed readers to read and complete written retellings about paired-topic narrative and expository texts. Furthermore, no studies have examined the students' comprehension using written retellings.

This study evaluated four elementary primary grade delayed readers' reading of narrative and expository texts using their written retellings and a five-point holistic richness scale as a lens for assessing their comprehension. This assessment assisted me

as I searched to identify students' ability to generalize beyond text, summarize text, write about major points in text, include supporting details and supplementations, and write with coherence, completeness, and comprehensibility. This study, then, sought to furnish elementary primary grade teachers with holistic knowledge about delayed readers' capability to successfully read and comprehend both narrative and expository texts.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The first section in this chapter presents the research on the use of narrative and expository texts, which is the foundation for the development of this study. The second section introduces the research perspectives of delayed readers, which contribute to the assumptions supporting this study. The third and final section, on the reading and writing connection, continues to build the framework in which writing about a story is the basis for evaluating a child's understanding of the text.

The main theme to be explored in this chapter is that of literacy learning among delayed readers. From the perspective of literacy learning it may be argued that literacy refers "to the process individuals engage in as they interact with written text for both creating and interpreting the texts" (Raphael & Brock, 1997, p. 16). The thesis to be developed is that elementary primary grade children can read and write about narrative and expository texts. This review does not imply that these studies are an exhaustive list. It was narrowed in order to provide a conceptually rich discussion of major trends and themes in studies of narrative and expository texts, delayed readers, and written retellings.

Text

This section of the literature review explores studies that form the theoretical framework for understanding narrative and expository texts. Included here are research studies that describe how much expository text is used in our elementary schools, the effectiveness of narrative and expository texts with elementary primary grade students, and strategies that increase students understanding of expository text. In reviewing this section, the reader should keep in mind that the use of expository text in the elementary primary grades has not been a regular practice and is just now receiving research attention.

Narrative and Expository Text

Recent research in text comprehension suggests that the use of multiple texts rather than basal reader series is on the rise (Palmer & Stewart, 1997; Young & Vardell, 1993; Freeman & Person, 1992). Increasingly, students are being asked to read and respond to nonfiction trade book material by third grade. Their transition to these more complex materials is often abrupt and may contribute to their reading difficulties, particularly if they are already lagging behind in literacy (Pappas & Pettegrew, 1998). There is a need for research in this area as “results of studies exploring the efficacy of nonfiction trade books in content area classrooms are equivocal” (Palmer & Stewart, 1997, p. 632).

Although secondary students in the past have repeatedly been instructed from expository texts, such as social studies textbooks, that pattern of instruction is currently declining. Many contemporary young adult narrative texts are replacing the patriarchal expository textbooks with the expectation that secondary students’ critical thinking will

be enriched (Bean, Kile, & Readence, 1996). The reverse is occurring in elementary instruction where expository texts are used alongside narrative texts (Roser, Strecker, & Ward, 1996). Specific areas of examination include the connection of the instruction to expository literature and to each other, ways in which the teachers model effective reading practices of engaging with expository literature, and the extent to which the instruction engages students in diverse reading situations.

To make a classroom where both types of texts are used for instruction a reality, and not just a slogan, requires a dramatic shift in the conventional narrative reading instructional practice that has dominated the elementary primary curriculum. Nevertheless, to alter this practice may first require a better understanding of narrative and expository texts and their text structures.

Narrative Text

Narrative texts include “songs, poetry, ballads, oral storytelling, rhymes, anecdotes, reminisces, and a host of fiction types such as historical, science, realistic and fantasy” (Doiron, 1995, p. 36). Fiction is a name for stories that aim to entertain or amuse readers. Its characters, and their motivations and feelings, influence action, drive the plot, and are of primary importance. Finally, fiction contains descriptions that are used to depict the places that characters go, the objects they come across, and the other characters they meet (Pappas, 1998).

Historically, modern reading series have chosen fiction stories because they contributed to the “moral and cultural edification” of young readers (Luke, 1987, p. 180). Eventually, the new “scientific” approach to educational theory was brought about. This approach accentuated the significance of choosing texts whose vocabulary and syntax

was controlled. In the end, William H. Elson and William Gray combined the two beliefs by creating Dick and Jane, fictional characters who symbolized “modern postwar life in an industrial democracy” (Luke, 1987, p. 102). Through predominantly narrative text, their reading series “promised teachers a unified, up-to-date approach” (Luke, 1987, p. 101).

Gray believed that another reason for the predominant use of narrative texts was that children learned to read by comparing their own life and experiences with those in a text. Consequently, his objective, when developing the first successful modern basal, was to represent “typical and shared childhood experiences” (Luke, 1987, p. 107). In addition, Gray emphasized a popular idea of depicting stories as a “natural model of expression” and therefore frequent interaction with them was central to children’s literacy development (Freeman & Person, 1998). Although this view has been challenged in recent years by people such as Pappas (1993), it is still firmly held by many educators. The idea behind the use of narrative text is simply to ensure text comprehension with simple text structure.

Text structure of narrative text. Children start to configure and identify a predictable organization for the stories in books that assists them with anticipating events and outcomes (Smith & Bean, 1983). The text structure of narrative texts involves interpersonal understanding about how goals of characters correlate and how their strategies for achieving these goals blend or conflict (Wilensky, 1983). In addition, narrative texts have a dominant structure that includes the setting, initiating event, simple reaction, attempt, consequence, and reaction (Graesser, Golding, & Long, 1984; Bean, 1988). In general, narrative text contains a text structure that somewhat represents our

everyday life, however, there is another type of text that represents a different aspect of our life—the factual aspect found in expository text.

Expository Texts

Expository text is intended to “communicate information so that the reader might learn something” (Weaver & Kintsch, 1984). Historically, the use of expository texts was driven by efforts to increase students’ factual awareness of affairs of the world. Initially, the publication of expository texts multiplied following the enactment, by Congress, of the national Defense Education Act in the early 1960s. This Act granted funds for the buying of science books by libraries that were meant to aid in coming face-to-face with the threat established by Soviet scientific successes, specifically Sputnik (Giblin, 1989). Publishers seized this opportunity and the first large publications of juvenile expository texts originated with assistance from the United States Government. As a model, Crowell’s Let’s Read and Find Out Series of science concept picture books and Harpers’ I Can Read Series were the earliest expository texts “that combined solid information with lively, colorful graphics” (p. 18).

In 1969, publication of juvenile expository texts slowed as a result of Richard Nixon and the Vietnam Conflict. Consequently, publishers either closed down nonfiction series or made a decision to taper off. Nevertheless, expository texts began having a comeback following Milton Meltzer’s 1976 Horn Book article, Where do all the Prizes Go. The Case for Nonfiction. Meltzer (1976) ascertained that out of the fifty-three Newberry Awards bestowed upon authors of books that had “the most distinguished contribution to American literature for children” (p.17) only five were authors of expository texts. This initiated a creation of awards such as the Boston Globe-Horn Book

Awards and Children's Book Guild of Washington, which had their emergence in 1976 and 1977.

At this point, a new type of expository text was created, the Photo Essay. These expository texts offered powerful visual images that supported children's developing understandings of how to read this type of literature skillfully and thoughtfully. Because of the photo essays, the juvenile expository text domain made a comeback in the early 1980s and parents began to purchase expository texts for their children. Children were provided the opportunity to understand that different literature allowed them substantial opportunities to observe and engage in conversations about books, stories, and other texts they have read, which is integral to understanding literature. This kind of reading required students to become familiar with the text structure of expository text.

Text structure of expository text. Expository texts typically include cause/effect, comparison/contrast, time order, simple listing, problem/solution, and argument (McGee & Richgels, 1986; Bean, 1988; Putnam, 1991). What's more, children's expository texts are "aesthetic and imaginative" (Dorion, 1995, p. 36) and are "well-researched, on an incredible variety of subjects, combined with clear and interesting style and language" (Vardell, 1991, p. 474). In addition, expository texts also have text structure that makes "general statements about animals, objects, people, and so forth, because their purpose is to inform" (Pappas, 1991, p. 451) and furnish models for children in writing their personal publication of nonfiction (Freeman, 1991).

Although the types of narrative and expository texts available for instruction are generally of high quality, the stories are only as interesting as the teacher makes them. Appropriate attention to both types of texts will determine how well the teacher can

effectively ensure students love for the different texts while they participate in a balanced reading curriculum.

A Balanced Reading Curriculum

Currently, theorists are debating when children should be taught about the different types of text available to read. The New London Group (1996) argued that the need for a new approach to literacy education is now and they referred to this new approach as multiliteracies. They claim that this multiliteracy approach will do a better job of appropriately meeting the demands of the increasing cultural and linguistic diversity in the world. One of the main characteristics of their new education, or what can be referred to as pedagogy, is Situated Practice. Situated Practice is comprised of the “immersion in experience and the utilization of...discourses” (p. 88). In other words, students need to be provided with the convenience of reading, and writing about, different types of texts regularly while in school.

However, all too often, beginning reading instruction has focused on the use of narrative text on the assumption that stories are easier to comprehend because of the predictable structure. This assumption is so deeply ingrained that almost all of the available programs for beginning reading instruction are based on the story text. For instance, Duke (1998a, 1998b) investigated the amount of informational text experiences offered to children in 20 first grade classrooms chosen from very low- and high-SES school districts. She observed the classrooms for four full days during a nine-month school year, collecting data about the types of texts on classroom walls and other surfaces, in the classroom library, and in classroom written language activities. Her results showed that there was a scarcity of information texts “in classroom libraries, on

classroom walls or other surfaces, and classroom written language activities” (Duke, 1998b, p. 39). A mean of 3.6 minutes per day were spent with informational texts during the written language activities. Furthermore, this scarcity was especially distressing for children in low-SES school districts, where already-smaller classroom libraries consisted of a much smaller proportion of informational texts.

Moss and Newton (1998) conducted a similar study that included an examination of the amount of expository text in the basal textbooks of second, fourth, and sixth grades. The results showed that the most frequent form of literature in basal textbooks in all three grade levels was fiction (46%). The second largest percentage of selections at all levels was poetry (28%) while the third highest percentage of selections was information literature (17%). Furthermore, the results showed that the amount of informational literature for second grade ranged from 7% to 26% while the range for fourth grade was 11% to 24%, and for sixth grade the range was 16% to 25%. This study confirmed, “that basals written in the last decade continue to be comprised primarily of fiction” (p. 8). The reason for these occurrences in Duke’s and Moss and Newton’s studies are not yet well understood, and the disappointing results of these studies may lead educators to believe that the relationship between expository text and learning in the elementary primary grades does not occur. Four recent studies, however, have demonstrated that such a conclusion may be premature.

Caswell and Duke (1998) instructed two elementary age delayed readers participating in a University Literacy Lab. Both students were provided with narrative and expository texts to read and write about. In the first semester at the lab, the boys were instructed with narrative texts with little success in their developing comprehension

and print vocabulary. In succeeding semesters at the lab, they were given choices about the use of narrative verses expository texts. The boys selected expository texts and showed greater initiative and on-task behaviors. They also were more likely to approach writing assignments with enthusiasm.

In a similar study, Purcell-Gates (1995) demonstrated a delayed reader's success with narrative and expository text in her well known study of Donny, a second grade boy who was a nonreader. She found that after being instructed predominately with narrative text in the classroom he readily responded to instruction with expository text. Donny continued to progress slowly after a year of working one-on-one with her while reading narrative text. During her second year of instruction, Purcell-Gates began exposing Donny to expository texts by reading to him and discovered he always had questions about what was read. Eventually, Donny was able to read expository texts with heavy scaffolding from Purcell-Gates and orally discuss his comprehension of the texts.

Kamil and Lane (1997a, 1997b) observed a group of first grade students as they were instructed in the classroom with equal amounts of narrative and expository texts. The instructional program was designed to teach the students how to recognize different types of texts, how to make use of text features in expository text, how to assess expository text in critical ways, and how to make use of multiple sources of information. In addition, the program emphasized the writing process as much as reading and all instruction was balanced between narrative and expository text. At the completion of the studies, the students showed "significant improvement in reading and writing, could easily distinguish text genres in reading and writing, and were able to use appropriate strategies to deal with specific forms of text" (Kamil & Lane, 1997a, p. 4).

Kamil and Lane showed “that it is not only possible but feasible to teach students at the first grade level about information text genres, features, and uses” (p. 6).

Furthermore, these were first grade students, with a wide range of abilities, including delayed readers. They made average or above average progress while being instructed with narrative and expository text.

Finally, Korkeamäki, Tiainen, and Dreher (1998) studied a second-grade classroom in a university training school in Finland. The study was divided into two phases. Phase one consisted of a month of reading instruction using fiction texts. Phase two was also a month long, however, nonfiction texts were used for reading instruction. The purpose of this study was to determine what happens when elementary primary grade students are taught strategies for finding and using information in nonfiction texts.

During the first phase of the study, the students were instructed with fiction texts using the Question-Answer Relationship (QAR) approach. This taught students that (a) some answers are “right there” in the text; (b) some answers require a reader to “think and search” and to combine information from several parts of the text; and, (c) some answers are not in the text, so a reader must use experience and knowledge or pictorial information. In the next phase, students were instructed to employ the QAR-strategies while reading expository text. At the completion of the study, all students except one used the strategies to locate desired information in the nonfiction texts and did not copy text but rather wrote notes using their words. Additionally, the students organized their texts, used their own words and language structures, and drew their illustrations in such a manner that the researchers were convinced students are capable of overcoming common difficulties with reading and comprehending expository texts.

In summary, a balanced reading curriculum that includes both narrative and expository texts can be effective with elementary primary grade students. As students begin to learn how to read, they also begin to innately desire to use both texts as a tool for learning about the world that they live in. This natural curiosity about the world demonstrates a need to include expository text in the elementary primary grades' curriculum. As the reading instruction changes to include expository texts, so must the instructional approaches that teachers use.

Instruction with Expository Texts

Ausubel, Novak, and Hanesian (1978) contend that instruction with expository materials is not always as effective as it might be. For example, when it is presented without regard to how students will learn material meaningfully, it may yield disappointing results in student achievement. The following inappropriate practices are gleaned from Ausubel, et al. (1978, p. 124) and describe what not to do when instructing with expository texts. Although recommended for all forms of expository instruction such as lectures, explanations, textbooks, and educational films they also support instruction with expository text in the elementary primary classroom.

1. Premature use of verbal techniques with cognitively immature students. For example, telling seven-year-old students that all sharks are fish may be more appropriate than explaining that they belong to a class of fish known as Chondrichthyes.
2. Arbitrary presentations of unrelated facts without any organizing or explanatory principles.
3. Failure to integrate new learning tasks with previously presented materials.

4. **The use of evaluation procedures that merely measure ability to recognize discrete facts or to reproduce ideas in the same words or in the identical context as originally encountered.**

Ausubel et al. (1978) proposed that, for meaningful learning to occur during expository instruction, three conditions must exist:

1. **Students must have previous knowledge to which they can relate new material. Students who are provided background knowledge prior to reading have information that they can connect their new information to and so can easily learn at a meaningful level.**
2. **Students must be aware of the relationship between the new material and their existing knowledge. They are only likely to make connections between the new and the old when they know that such connections are possible.**
3. **Students must have a meaningful learning set. Students must approach new information with the attitude that they can understand and make sense of it. Students are more likely to have this attitude when teachers emphasize meanings rather than verbatim recitation. For example, they are more apt to learn material meaningfully when they know they will be expected to explain it in their own words rather than having to recite the text. A meaningful learning set is also more likely to occur when students are confident that they can understand new material.**

Conclusion

In this section, I have presented literature describing narrative and expository texts and their use in the classroom. The presence of narrative text in the classroom is so great we are hard pressed to imagine a modern elementary primary classroom teacher being effective without at least having narrative text in basal readers or literature books. However, recently there has been an increased interest in including expository text with narrative text. At the beginning of this section, I described the importance of using both types of texts. I then went on to describe the history of narrative text and expository texts and their text structures. Next, I discussed a balanced reading curriculum and some research demonstrating that our current curriculum in the elementary primary grades is unbalanced and the need for more expository text in those grades. Finally, I discussed research that effectively used narrative and expository text with elementary primary students and some essential practices to maintain when presenting expository text.

Delayed Readers

Any attempt to provide the best possible education for delayed readers must focus on who these children are, why they are delayed readers, and how a regular curriculum can be advantageous to them (Purcell-Gates, 1995). The effectiveness of the classroom instruction with delayed readers may be influenced by one of the many external factors such as the curriculum used. We need to accept the fact that delayed readers will inevitably enter every classroom with the beginning of a new school year. That is not to say that if we accept the reality of delayed readers they will continue to be delayed readers forever. Our objective should be to teach “every child to read and write as

quickly as it is possible for that child to learn to read and write” (Roller, 1996, p. 133).

As educators who are dedicated to teaching children we need to ask, given that we will have delayed readers each year, why this child is delayed and how can I provide the child with an equal amount of instruction that is similar to their peers.

As I read books and studies within the domains associated with delayed readers and that definition, I saw an emphasis on the importance of educators. Children must see some adaptive value to learning to read and write. Those children who do not value learning to read and write frequently do not read and write and are labeled delayed readers. However, Roller (1996) suggested that delayed readers are children who, if given the opportunity, can seek the knowledge and make connections needed to solve the puzzle of reading. Delayed readers, then, can be referred to as those children who have age appropriate social behaviors, yet read and write below their present grade level.

In the following section, I review research on delayed readers in relationship to emergent literacy. Next, I discuss some of the life experiences of delayed readers that cause a delay in emergent literacy. Finally, I look at the instruction of delayed readers and suggestions to improve their education.

Reasons for Delayed Readers

The processes of learning to read is quite effortless for some children, however, there are other children who learn to read after a great deal of effort. These are our delayed readers. While many factors bear on a child’s ability to read, one of the most important is their development prior to formal reading instruction. If children succeed during the course of such prereading instruction, they are more likely to continue to succeed, but if the first step is a poor one, they are more likely to encounter failure.

Developing reading skills early in a child's life increases the odds of a positive initial reading and writing experience, although it is not a perfect guarantee.

Mantzicopoulos and Fulk (1994) have pointed that there has been an emphasis on the early identification of delayed readers. In their review, they discussed studies that emphasized formal instruction as a way of preparing children for successful first grade experiences. The purpose of this practice was based on the assumption that early identification would facilitate early prevention efforts (Mantzicopoulos & Morrison, 1994). Yet, there is research purporting that not all children are in the proper frame of mind, have the confidence, or are able to attend to reading tasks in first grade because reading develops at different stages for different children due to their lack of emergent literacy experiences prior to formal instruction.

The emergent literacy model has pointed out that learning to read begins long before children enroll in first grade (e.g., Mason, 1980; Teale & Sulzby 1986). Emergent literacy is the first phase of literacy development, which begins prior to formal instruction as "children observe and engage in experiences mediated by print in their daily lives" (Purcell-Gates, 1995, p. 7). Even though all children have interactions with written language as a result of living in a literate society many of them do not have enough socially meaningful experiences with print to become successful readers and writers when they enter school. For example, Smith (1997) conducted a longitudinal study of 57 nonreading preschoolers from middle class and low-income homes. When the children were reexamined five years later, those preschoolers who entered with advanced knowledge about print did become good readers. However, those children who entered preschool with restricted knowledge or experiences ended up struggling to learn to read.

These children were delayed readers due to their life experiences that clearly contribute to their delayed literacy development.

Life Experiences

There are indefinite numbers of children sitting in classrooms all across America who have had life experiences that have delayed their rate of reading and writing development. However, their experiences have not stopped them from learning to read and write. The children's experiences have only moderately, or in some cases excessively, slowed down their rate of learning. When given plenty of time to read and write, with proper instruction and patience, delayed readers can achieve a grade and developmental level that serves them as they pursue intellectual goals. For instance, Roller's (1996) workshop plan that is used in her Summer Reading Program, allows real reading and writing to occur with delayed readers. This type of plan uses a group-read-group or group-write-group structure (children receive a group minilesson, read or write, and share in a group) that provides children with direct instruction as well as independent reading. In addition, "it provides an atmosphere where children can experience the activity and begin to understand the whys and what fors of reading and writing" (p. 41). The Iowa Test of Basic Skills demonstrated that over a span of one to three years two of her children's reading achievement grew more than a year in a year's time. Six of the children made expected growth or what is termed a year's growth in a year's time. Seven children's test scores showed they did not make expected growth in reading, however, five of these children demonstrated substantial growth in the complexity of the text they could read as they exited the summer reading program. The other two children could not

read comfortably at the preprimer level after two and three summers in the program, however, their growth in literacy knowledge was illustrated through writing samples.

These workshop plans demonstrate that delayed readers can and do learn to read in spite of the life experiences that are, in part, a reason for their delayed reading progress. In the following discussion of delayed readers' life experiences, I will look closely at each life experience and discuss what each means. It is important to note that delayed readers difficulties with learning to read and write are not a result of one singular life experience. Not one of these life experiences, by itself, explains the reason for delayed readers. Rather, it is a complex interplay of all of them (Purcell-Gates, 1995).

Inexperiences with written language. Students who have limited or no experiences with written language often become delayed readers. Those teachers who teach at the preschool and kindergarten level frequently become aware of a student's unfamiliarity with written language just by whether or not they take a book from the shelves, by the way they flip through the pages of a book, or hold and scribble with their crayons and pencils (Bear & Barone, 1998).

Everything children learn about written language prior to attending school is constrained by what they learn about its functions and the values placed on its different forms within their sociolinguistic communities and cultures. Inside this world, they discover the nature, characteristics, and language forms of written language that are used inside their cultures. As children engage in literacy episodes using these forms of written language, they learn that print has linguistic meaning. In addition, they discover ways in which print represents meaning (Purcell-Gates, 1995).

It is not uncommon for inexperience with written language to come from generations of inexperience (Purcell-Gates, 1995). It is because of this inexperience that delayed readers do not have an interest in literacy. According to Allington (1994), there needs to be a thousand hours of listening to stories in order to provide students the experience they need to acquire an interest in literacy. Thus, there is a need to read to students who have inexperience with written language.

Educational interferences. Poor instruction continues to be one of the most apparent interferences in our schools. “Poor instruction is instruction that students find meaningless or too hard” (Bear & Barone, 1998, p. 390). Teachers can stay away from this type of instruction by becoming aware of their students’ interests and what they know as well as maintaining reading and writing instructional activities for different student development levels. Also, an instructional plan must be established to maximize learning. Although learning can take place without careful planning, it will not take place to the fullest extent. While teachers can strive to create plans that make their instruction appropriate for their students, the transient rate of their students can obstruct the most logical lesson plans.

Transience rate. Although sad, there are schools that have a transient rate of 50 % (Bear & Barone, 1998). Currently, one in four children lives in poverty (Connell, 1994) where they have no books or computers, and usually have fewer opportunities to read and write. Poverty can explain, in part, why some students are delayed in their reading and writing skills, however, whether they come from poor households or higher economic households students can also experience maturation delays.

Maturation delays. Students who experience a maturational delay are just as intelligent as their peers are but, unfortunately, these students do not appear intelligent because of their delay. These students many times are experiencing difficulties with schoolwork because they are working with academic material that is at their frustration level. When they come to a word they do not know they commonly respond by agonizingly attempting to sound it out or wait for an adult to provide them with the correct pronunciation. They eventually become “children who think of reading as little more than getting to the end of the line without a mistake” (Roller, 1996, p. 41). However, through scaffolding adults can provide some form of structure that supports children in their efforts to learn. Scaffolding, then, can bring children to the level at which they are being challenged by exposure to new vocabulary and concepts without being frustrated, or what Vygotsky (1978) refers to as the zone of proximal development. Delayed readers who have maturation delays frequently require support from teachers. Without it, there is no joy in reading or motivation to read.

Lack of motivation and low self-esteem. Research in literature instruction has emphasized classroom based research linking students’ interest, attitude, motivation, and teachers’ roles in creating contexts appropriate to life-long reading habits (Dole, Duffy, Roehler, & Pearson, 1991; Guthrie, Schafer, Wang, Afflerback, 1995; Pintrich & DeGroot, 1990). There has been much research about motivation that has revealed that students need to be actively engaged readers, writers, and students with interesting and motivating reading materials. Children who are engaged in literacy activities are learning and individually motivated to enhance their knowledge of a particular interest. That is,

the curricula experienced during reading instruction should be motivating enough to students to cause them to be involved in what is labeled literacy engagement.

Once students have learned how to read, the extent to which they continue to read is a function of motivation—an internal state that arouses them to action, pushes them in particular directions, and keeps them engaged in literacy activities. Reading enables them to acquire new reading knowledge and skills, and writing provides the impetus for demonstrating the things they have learned. In short, motivation is, “the process whereby goal-directed activity is instigated and sustained” (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996, p.4).

Within the realm of motivation, the child must maintain a positive self-esteem. One of the primary reasons responsible for children’s inability to read is their belief that they are nonreaders. In other words, because they believe they cannot read, they do not attempt to read anything. This includes print inside their world. Marie Clay (1991) argued that readers grow only as they come to control the different synergistic components of the system through their own efforts at figuring it out. Assisted by knowledgeable interactions with a teacher at the beginning, the learner acquires a self-extending system. That is, the more readers read real text successfully, the better they will become at reading (Purcell-Gates, 1995).

We know with some certainty that children growing up with literacy events and objects surrounding them will easily move into literacy as they begin formal instruction in kindergarten, however, with almost the same certainty we know that those experiencing particular life experiences will become delayed readers. Life experiences tend to delay the process of learning. As one example, children mature at different rates. They need the assistance of a well informed adult as advocated by Vygotsky (1978).

Among other things, children who are delayed readers need challenging tasks and teachers need to remain persistent until the children succeed at becoming effective readers and writers with little concern for the errors the children make along the way. Teachers are also likely to overcome a delayed readers' life experiences by changing their instruction to include placing value on reading and writing, demonstrating its function in our culture, providing clear, direct, explicit explanations and instruction, and expecting the delayed reader to succeed. In other words, teachers must keep in mind that there are children who are delayed readers and writers but with persistence, high expectations, and the perspective that all children can learn to read, these children can be reading at an acceptable level by the end of the school year (Taylor, 1996).

Instruction of Delayed Readers

Educators such as Allington (1977) know that the longer children remain nonreaders or delayed readers, the less likely are their chances to get up to their grade levels or their ability levels even with the best remedial help. As a result of this awareness, "educators have developed remedial and corrective reading classes and a host of training programs, materials, and techniques to use in them" (p.57). However, Allington emphasized that "even with these intervention processes and strategies, many readers remain poor readers" (p. 57). During a subsequent investigation, Allington (1983) discovered that reading instruction for readers in the high-group included more reading, was focused on meaning, and was rarely interrupted by the teacher. In contrast, the reading instruction for the low-group or delayed readers, had little reading, was focused on decoding, and was frequently interrupted by the teacher.

Twelve years later Allington (1995) concluded that the conventional wisdom supporting our current school organizations and instructional practices for delayed readers must be challenged. For example, educators need to stop looking at the individual differences among students as indicators of how much or how little students might learn. Rather, teachers and principals need to think of individual differences as an indication of how much intensive instruction will be needed to expedite delayed readers' literacy development and move them alongside their peers. According to Allington, educators must stop believing that delayed readers can not learn to read on schedule if instructional programs, that include the use of narrative and expository texts, for example, are to be implemented with the delayed reader population.

We have always known that there are individual differences in students' acquisition of reading skills. In the past, we have consistently offered grade-level, textbook centered instruction. When our delayed readers did not blossom in these environments, we developed low reading groups, remedial programs, and pullout programs. However, according to Roller (1996) we need to "stop trying to "fix" the children and start fixing the schools that often fail them" (p. 138). Thus, although many schools probably do not intend to fail delayed readers, the fact is that they often do so unknowingly due to lack of understanding of how to redefine instruction to meet the needs of delayed readers.

Walmsley and Allington (1995) suggest six principles to guide both long-term and short-term instructional support programs. The six principles are:

- 1. All staff are responsible for the education of all students. By placing the responsibility on all school staff personnel, it becomes not one person's job but everyone's job to educate children who are delayed learners.**
- 2. All children are entitled to the same literacy experiences, materials, and expectations. Delayed readers have traditionally been asked to read aloud rather than silently, they have had their attention focused on word recognition rather than comprehension, have spent more time working alone on low-level work sheets than on reading authentic texts, and have experienced more fragmentation in their instructional activities.**
- 3. Children should be educated with their peers. Segregating children many times can negatively impact a child's self-esteem, hinder their access to rich core curriculum, and undermines the responsibility of the regular education program to educate all children.**
- 4. We need to define what counts as the literacy curriculum. The literacy curriculum should be comprised of books, magazines, newspapers, and documents. Within each of these categories, students should read narrative and expository texts.**
- 5. We need to offer high-quality instruction. This type of instruction includes a teacher who knows when to intervene and when not to, when to draw children's attention to which features of the text, and how to model and explain strategies in ways children can understand.**
- 6. We need an organizational infrastructure that supports the teaching of literacy.**

Roller's (1996) workshop plan supports all of these six principles with the exception of entitling all children to have the same literacy experiences, materials, and expectations. She argues that by saying children need the same literacy experiences there might be an interpretation that "same" means all children read the same story from the same book. In her workshop plan "same" would mean providing all children the opportunity to participate in a reading workshop and providing them with opportunities to choose their own reading materials.

Additionally, Roller believes that 1 to 3 percent of the children are delayed readers or what she terms variable readers: those "who are struggling mightily to learn to read" (p. 137). If this is the case then Roller argues for providing "uniform structures in which all children participate, while allowing each child to use materials that are appropriate" (p. 137). However, this does not imply that all children should be expected to read at a particular level at a particular age. Expectations that are too high can be as damaging as expectations that are too low. In the workshop plan, realistic expectations for each child based on the child's actual performance lead the instruction.

Conclusion

In this section, I have explained that delayed readers are children who can learn to read, even though they are below grade level, if they are given the opportunity. Next, I explained that children's life experiences such as inexperience with written language, educational interferences, transience rate, maturational delays, and lack of motivation and self-esteem are causes of poor emergent literacy development. Finally, I discussed the type of instruction that has historically been applied when instructing delayed readers and six principles that are meant to reorganize the delivery of literacy instruction.

Writing

This section of the literature review examines how written retellings assess students understanding of the text they have read. This section is not a comprehensive review of all the studies related to retelling. Rather it is a review of reading and writing studies, which investigate the reading-writing connection, what written retellings are, and how they have successfully assessed students' understanding of text.

Reading and Writing Connection

Children learn about reading and writing long before they receive any formal instruction (Teale & Sulzby, 1986). Reading and writing are interrelated processes, which children learn about while immersed in a literate climate that allows them to observe others using written language in addition to independently exploring written language (Teale, 1986). Researchers are now beginning to view literacy learning as a cultural practice in which children learn about written language by internalizing social actions (Bear & Barone, 1998; Roller, 1996; Avery, 1993). In other words, children are socialized into literacy by way of participating in a quasi-social dialogue. Children combine the words of others (both spoken and written) with their own words. This is not a process where children remain inactive or learn through copying and imitating, but rather, they are seen as young writers who learn to adopt their culture's ways of using written language from those who are more proficient (Vygotsky, 1978).

The correlations between writing and reading processes have been examined from different viewpoints. There are those who believe reading influences writing and have demonstrated that children's reading experiences are evident in the written text they have produced (Eckhoff, 1983). For example, children who have participated in literature

based reading programs have been inclined to generate writing with similar organization and language characteristics of the literature they are reading. Their written samples can have anything from a dedication page to endings representative of the literature they have read. Literature can inspire young writers' choice of topic, words, spellings, story beginnings and endings, and illustrations.

Reading and writing, then, consistently connect and have an influence on each other. Hansen (1987) states that "writing is the foundation of reading...when our students write, they learn how reading is put together because they do it. They learn the essence of print" (p. 178-179). Furthermore, when children write they are furnished chances for learning the sound-letter relationships that benefits their reading. Knowing a sound-letter relationship in reading can benefit their writing (Roller, 1996).

Literature provides children with examples for language use, creating sentences, style, and format. In addition, teachers have begun to recognize the value of quality literature as an important component in children's literacy development. Writing allows children to reflect and understand what they have read. These writings can be used to assess students understanding of the text as well as providing profiles of what children are doing well in their writing and what areas need to be addressed. Written retellings are one method of bringing the reading-writing relationship together. In addition, they provide a useful profile of children's understanding of the text in a manner that keeps writing at the forefront, whereas multiple-choice tests do not.

Written Retellings

Retelling stories is an active process, which can aid development of comprehension, oral language, and sense of story structure (Morrow, Gambrell, Kapinus,

Koskinen, Marshall, & Mitchell, 1986). Retelling stories enables students to reconstruct stories, which involves thinking about story events and arranging them in sequence.

Meredith, Mitchell, & Hernandez-Miller (1992) reported that retellings “have the advantage of being more like real classroom tasks, giving insights about what a reader comprehends (the product of comprehension) as well as how that reader comprehends (the process of comprehension)” (p. 129). For example, assessing delayed readers’ retellings “can help a teacher identify problems not obvious when a student is asked simply to answer questions” (Morrow, 1990, p. 129) such as understanding story sequence, the text structure, or student’s personal opinion about the story. In short, they are evaluated on the connection between the instructional and personal experiences they have inside and outside books.

Currently, researchers have identified two dimensions of retelling which are “the explicit recall of text information and the creation of a new text” (Bullion-Mears, 1997, p. 545). Retellings which engage students in active interpreting, evaluating, and selecting information that will be included in their retelling lead students to construct a new text based on the book they have just read (Kalmbach, 1986). The two integral dimensions of retelling, are intended to complement each other, as well as strengthen the connections between the information students acquire from the story while at the same time they are remaining alert to the experience of reading, thus providing a smoother transition from reading mindset to writing mindset.

These dimensions of retelling have led researchers to consider a reader’s stance, which is their frame of reference or orientation for responding to text (Beach, 1993).

Rosenblatt (1978) ascertained that efferent reading focuses on what is taken away from

the text, the remembered information, whereas aesthetic reading focuses on what the reader is experiencing during the reading transaction, the lived through experience. In Bullion-Mears (1997) study, for example, 30 fourth- and 30 eighth-grade students were asked to complete a written retelling after reading the free verse poem You Are in Bear Country. The results of the study showed that there were 162 efferent responses to this poem as compared to 31 aesthetic responses. In other words, “students at both grade levels responded to the passages from an efferent stance most frequently” (p. 548). These conclusions demonstrated that students need practice balancing their responses to text between what they remember and their lived-through experiences.

Morrow (1983) conducted a survey with kindergarten children and discovered that students rarely have opportunities to retell stories to the teacher or to the class. Teachers thought retelling stories was “time consuming, difficult for the children, and without documented educational value” (Morrow, 1985, p. 648).

Morrow (1984, 1985, 1986) then set out to demonstrate that retelling could improve kindergartners’ comprehension of stories by initiating three studies in which kindergarten children retold given stories. They were evaluated in the areas of: (a) comprehension; (b) story structure; (c) sequencing; and, (d) language. Once each week for eight weeks, children in experimental groups listened to different stories, then retold them individually to research assistants. Experimental groups showed large improvements in oral language complexity, comprehension of story structure during retelling, and inclusion of structural elements.

After completing the studies, Morrow concluded that the studies offered “rigorous empirical data and anecdotal support for the educational values of retelling stories” (p.

659). Furthermore, her studies demonstrated that many skills were improved using retelling, therefore retelling cannot be thought of as a frill. Finally, Morrow concluded that “classroom story role playing and retelling stories to friends and to the teacher need to be encouraged” (p. 659).

Gambrell, Pfeiffer, and Wilson (1985) set out to discover whether fourth grade students, who were instructed to retell a text passage in a written format, also improved in the areas of writing and recall abilities. Their study showed that the students performed much higher on reading comprehension than a control group. In a subsequent study of fourth grade students, Gambrell, Koskinen, and Kapinus, (1991) found that after they introduced the concept of retelling, demonstrated how to bring it to completion, and then allowed the students to practice, both quantity and quality of students’ retellings increased. They concluded that “simple practice in retelling significantly improves the free and cued-recall performance of both proficient and less-proficient readers (p 362).” Furthermore, “the retelling performance of both proficient and less-proficient readers improved drastically after only four practices” (p. 362). These results support current theory in written retellings that believe retelling should be introduced in a spiral curriculum format. That is, written retelling should be introduced at one level, then repeated and practiced again at higher levels; however, the question of when it is feasible to introduce the concept of written retellings remains unanswered.

Leone (1994) studied sixty third and sixty-five fifth grade students’ written retellings after being read a fiction and nonfiction story to determine whether or not both groups of children could effectively understand and complete written retellings. She determined that generally both the third and fifth grade students understood the concept

of written retellings and concluded that even though differences in the quality of the written retellings were apparent, students of all ability levels can successfully participate in this type of response. For the younger students, however, teachers may have to modify and adapt the richness of the retelling scale to accommodate the less experienced writer.

Clark (1997) examined three first grade students who were struggling at the beginning stages of reading. She observed that the three young delayed readers were generally able to orally reconstruct, after listening to the books being read to them, the written language of the narrative and expository books with richness and competence. This study determined that retellings can be used successfully with younger students and can have an important influence in shaping the ways teachers assess elementary primary grade students' reading comprehension.

Finally, Moss (1997) investigated oral retellings of twenty first grade students. Their ability levels ranged from below average to above average. Retellings occurred after being read the expository text How Kittens Grow. Following her qualitative analysis of the students' oral retellings, Moss noted that ten of the children scored at Level 3 of Irwin and Mitchell's (1983) Richness of Retellings Scale. This meant they accurately and completely recounted the main ideas and details of the text, retold in sequence, and were able to summarize the text. In addition, seven students scored at level 4 and one at level 5, which meant they had the ability to infer beyond the text. This study confirmed "that young children are readily able to summarize text information, identify information they considered important, and provide opinions and rationales for those opinions" (p. 11).

Conclusion

Writing to read can be as natural as reading to write. When one is done without the other growth in both reading and writing are decelerated. Written retellings assess students' comprehension of their reading and naturally connect the process of reading and writing. In this section, I reviewed studies that reveal the success of retellings. This assessment technique can be used in the classroom and quickly provide teachers with the information they need to know about students' understanding of a story.

Summary

Chapter II began with a discussion of the two types of texts—narrative and expository. Both types of texts were defined and discussed. In the analysis of delayed readers, the widely accepted theory that emergent literacy begins at different ages for each child was reviewed. Allington, Roller, Purcell-Gates, and others who advocate this approach to teaching reading were noted, along with their theories and contributions to the concept of delayed readers. Next, the reading-writing connection was explored since many educators and researchers view them as integral parts of the same process—that of creating meaning from or about a text. Finally, the concept of written retelling was defined, illustrated, and analyzed.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides a description of the research design. Included are the procedures to ensure human subject protection and confidentiality and a description of the research context. Next, methods for data collection and analysis methods are outlined. Finally, a discussion of my role as the researcher is included.

Research Design

A case study methodology (Stake, 1995; Yin, 1994) was used in this study. This methodology was selected as the best means for understanding children's views and approaches during the process of reading narrative and expository texts and completing written retellings. Such a process does not lend itself to statistical measurement; it is more effectively measured via "an intensive holistic description" (Merriam, 1998, p. 34). A case study allowed me to examine and explain a phenomenon as it occurred in its instructional setting, thus providing "an in-depth understanding of the situation and its meaning for those involved" (Merriam, 1998, p. 19). In addition, a case study design for this study was appropriate because the interest was in process rather than outcomes, in context rather than specific variables, in discovery rather than confirmation (Merriam, 1998). Finally, since judgments about individual responses in traditional group research are based on the average responses, a case study design allowed for "personalization of data analysis" (Neuman and McCormick, 1995, p. 3).

The three principles of data collection as outlined by Yin (1994) were followed in this case study: (a) multiple sources of evidence (interviews, direct observation, participant-observation, physical artifacts); (b) creating a case study data base—collected written retellings as well as case study notes and documents; and, (c) maintaining a chain of evidence (noting the time and place of the reading and writing). The methodology involved interviews, examination of written materials, and audiotaping of specific reading and writing instructional discussions.

Participants and Study Site

Prior to selecting the participants and site of the study, I sought to secure human subjects protocol approval from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (See Appendix A). Once approval was granted it was determined that unique sampling would be the method for selecting the participants. This type of sampling was based on the assumption that I, as the researcher, wanted to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore had to select a sample from which the most could be learned (Merriam, 1998). The type of sampling that was applied in this study is referred to as unique sampling. That is, the sample was based on unique and atypical attributes such as the students' present grade level assignment, ability to read and write, and their parents' willingness to permit them to participate in the study.

The four participants who were the focus of this study were chosen based on meeting the following criteria: (a) they were currently in second grade so as to assure their ability to read the lowest level of text that was available to me from Steck-Vaughn Book Company; (b) they were reading and writing approximately six months below their present grade level; (c) they were willing to participate in the study; and, (d) they had

parents who were willing to permit their child to participate. Each parent received an explanation of the nature of the study and was asked to sign a human subjects consent form (See Appendix B), which assured confidentiality and anonymity. In addition, all reports used pseudonyms for the participants and the city where the study took place.

Four elementary primary grade delayed readers were targeted for this study due to time restraints and availability of participants. This population was chosen because it was the goal of the researcher to explore elementary primary grade delayed readers' reading and writing about paired-topic narrative and expository texts. In addition, this study was designed to determine whether an elementary primary grade delayed reader could complete a written retelling following reading of a narrative and an expository text. I instructed each participant forty-five to sixty minutes a week in my reading room at the participants' school. The children received one-to-one reading and writing instruction from me at no cost to their parents for volunteering to participate in the study.

The purpose for four sets of data, which was collected by using four participants, was to build confirmability. That is, I was attempting to assure that my findings were confirmable and not merely the effects of chance, instruction, or ability of the teacher. By collecting data from four participants in four individual reading and writing sessions, I took one type of action that enhanced the transferability of my findings. According to Adler and Adler (1994), "observations conducted systematically and repeatedly over varying conditions that yield the same findings are more credible than those gathered according to personal patterns" (p. 381). However, it was important that I, as a researcher, not demand the same results, but rather desire outsiders to concur that, given the data collected, the results made sense and were consistent and dependable (Lincoln

and Guba, 1985). “The question then is not whether findings will be found again but whether the results are consistent with the data collected” (Merriam, 1998, p. 206).

Books

Since the aim of this study was to investigate children’s reading and understanding of narrative and expository texts, the books chosen for this study were carefully selected to meet the following criteria so as to maintain validity in my design: (a) be unfamiliar to the children; (b) be narrative and expository books paired by difficulty of reading; (c) be narrative and expository books paired by similar topics; and, (d) be easily attainable. The books that met these requirements were the Pair-It-Books that are published by the Steck-Vaughn Book Company (See Appendix D) and were purchased for this study.

The Pair-It-Books provided emergent readers the benefit of a balanced reading diet. There were four levels of Pair-It-Books starting with stage one up to stage four, however, only stage two and three were used in this study:

Stage 2 included sixteen-page books that gradually became more difficult and reflected more complex text structures such as dialogue, content vocabulary, and question-and-answer format.

Stage 3 included twenty-four-page books that introduce fables, folktales, plays, and pourquoi tales and invite readers to respond in writing. The books also supported the strong picture-text match with chapters, indexes, glossaries, and captions.

Text structures. The most prevalent text patterns these children encountered while reading the narrative texts included the following with examples from How Spiders got Eight Legs and Little Red and the Wolf:

1. **Setting**—Long ago in Africa, spiders had only two legs./Once upon a time, Little Red Riding Hood went on a walk to visit her Grandmother in the woods.
2. **Initiating event**—Every year, there was a big race in the jungle. The spider thought, “I am much better than the others. I’ll think of a way to win this year’s race without working too hard.”/Now Big Bad Wolf was hiding and watching. He licked his lips and thought, “I’m going to follow Little Red Riding Hood. Maybe I’ll get a tasty dinner.”
3. **Internal response**—Spider was mad./Little Red Riding Hood stopped and yelled, “Hey, Big Bad Wolf, I know you’re there! Help me carry all this food to Grandmother. Then you may stay for dinner.”
4. **Attempt**—Spider tried to run with eight legs but it was too hard./Big Bad Wolf did that very thing.
5. **Consequences**—He yelled, “These eight legs don’t work! How am I going to win the race?”/From that day on, Big Bad Wolf has been called Big Friendly Wolf.
6. **Reaction**—Spider was worried. He knew he had to be honest. He said, “I tried to trick all of you. Cheetah is the real winner.”

The most prevalent text patterns the participants encountered for the expository texts included the following with examples from A Look at Spiders and Wolves:

1. **Cause/Effect**—Many spiders use silk to wrap up insects so they can eat them later./Wolves live in packs so they can look for food and water together.

2. *Comparison/Contrast*—Both spiders and insects have a hard covering on the outside of their bodies. Spiders have eight legs and no wings. Insects have six legs and usually do have wings./Wolves are much like dogs. They have big feet and long legs, grow thick fur in winter, and can bark, growl, and howl.
3. *Time Order*—Wolf pups are born in the winter. By next fall, the pups take care of themselves.
4. *Simple listing*—Spiders will eat insects, small frogs, and small lizards./Wolves live in dens. A den may be a cave, a hollow log, or underground.
5. *Problem/Solution*—In order to catch their food crab spiders often change their body color to match what is around them./White wolves live in the coldest places. The white snow helps the white wolves hide.

Instructional Practices

Before instruction with the text began, there were two extra sessions, prior to the ten scheduled reading and writing sessions, to assess the participants' reading and writing abilities. This assessment consisted of taking a running record as the child read a set of Pair-It-Books from the Steck-Vaughn Book Company. The purpose of this assessment was to acquire a reliable measure of how well the participants read narrative and expository text because this was important information for planning instruction (Clay, 1993). Running records were used for instructional purposes to guide me when making decisions about the participants' level of reading and observing any particular reading difficulties the participants' may have had. Clay (1993) advocates that stories to assess text reading should be selected from readily available materials used within the regular

instructional program. By using Pair-It-Books, I permitted the participants to read text similar to the text they were asked to read throughout the study.

Books were ordered to match each participant's level of instructional text following the initial administration of the running records. Instructional level was determined when the child read the text at the required accuracy of 90 to 94 percent. The reason for using an instructional level text was to engage the children in working-to-read and problem solving as they attempted to read the text at an independent level of 95 to 100 percent accuracy.

In addition to taking a running record of the participants' initial reading of a narrative and an expository text, I asked each child to complete a written retelling following their reading of each book. No instruction was provided about how to complete a written retelling. The children were simply asked to write about the book (See Appendix C).

By observing the participants as they wrote their first written retelling I learned a great deal about what they understood about print as well as written retellings. The participants' written retellings were a good source of information about what I needed to teach about writing and retelling. The written retellings also established a baseline of each participant's writing capabilities that were compared to their tenth written retelling to determine the amount of writing growth they made over the course of ten reading and writing sessions.

Series of instruction. A series of instructional events took place during the reading of narrative and expository text. First, each participant had an introduction to the Pair-It-Books. This introduction consisted of providing background information and

setting the purpose for reading. Second, to answer the question, “what do delayed readers prefer regarding paired-topic narrative and expository texts prior to their reading and writing about both of the texts” (number 1a), the participants were asked two questions: (a) Which book would you prefer to read first—the fiction or nonfiction? and (b) Why do you prefer to read this particular book first?

The answers participants provided for these questions were tape recorded and transcribed to maintain accuracy in reporting and to provide a record of the participants’ own words in describing their preferences, and why they have these preferences. Tape recording preserves “all data, unobstructed”(Lecompte & Preissle, 1993, p. 340).

Third, in order to reinforce new vocabulary from the text, semantic webbing was implemented as a pre-reading exercise (see Figure 1). The purpose of semantic webs was to increase children’s reading comprehension and support and guide their understanding and thoughtful responses to books (e.g., Bear & Barone, 1998; Readence, Bean, & Baldwin, 1998).

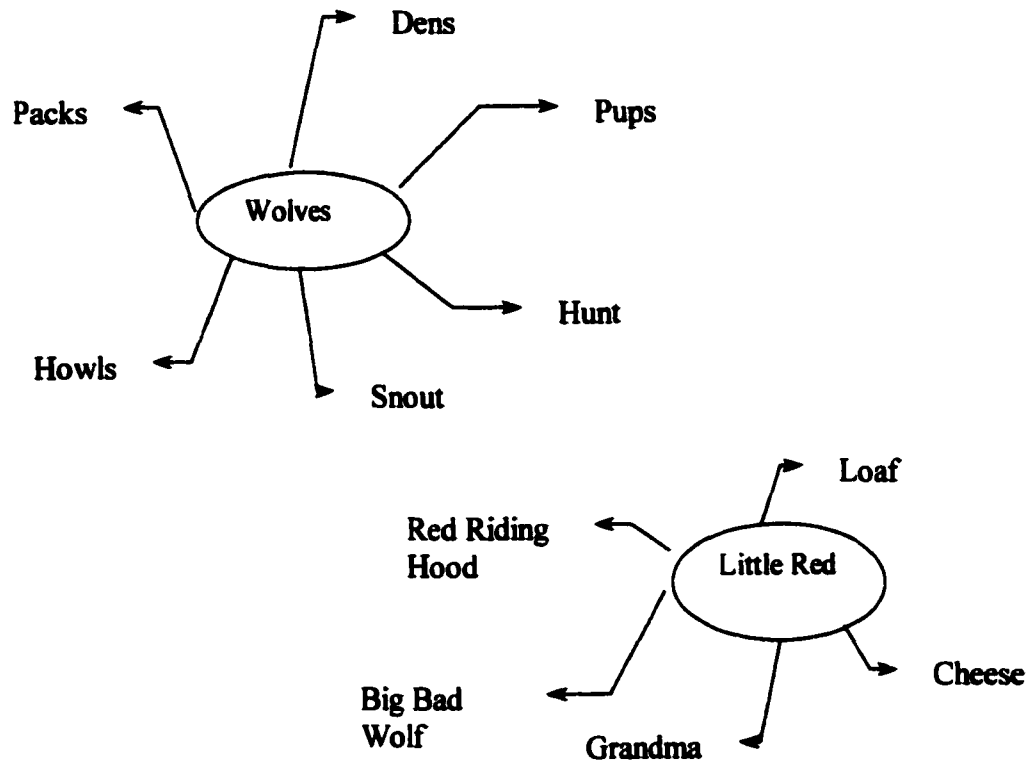


Figure 1. Example of Semantic Webs employed as an instructional technique for introducing vocabulary for both narrative and expository texts using Little Red and the Wolf and Wolves as sources.

Fourth, in order to clarify possible misunderstandings about the text, and to apply recommended interactive instructional practices, there was interaction with students, as they read the book orally. For example, the participants were provided with praise while reading, clarified information related to topic in text, and time to share their personal reactions.

Fifth, the participants were asked to complete a written retelling. Before the participants proceeded with their retellings, they were asked the following questions that were adapted from Leone (1994):

1. If you were going to tell a friend what this book was about, what would you say?
- 2a. What was your favorite part of this book? (fiction)
- 2b. What was the most important thing you learned from this book? (nonfiction)
3. How did you feel about this book?

After the participants read and completed a written retelling for the paired narrative and expository books, they were asked two questions similar to the questions asked prior to reading the books: (a) Which book did you prefer to read and complete a written retelling? and (b) Why do you prefer this book? Responses were used to answer the question, “what do delayed readers prefer regarding narrative and expository texts subsequent to their reading, and writing about, both type of texts” (number 1b).

And finally, the children were asked to assist in completing a Venn Diagram (See Figure 2), recalling similar and dissimilar aspects of the paired narrative and expository text. Venn diagrams are visual organizers that aid in measuring students’ comprehension in a simple and effective way (Tarquin & Walker, 1997). Frequently, comparisons (or contrasts) can be made between narrative and expository text with the similar content. Children can be guided through the process by organizing the discussion around a key question, “what things are the same and different in each book?”

Venn diagrams are a concept borrowed from mathematics and can be used to reveal how concepts that are classifiable in more than a single way are represented

(Jones, 1988). The use of Venn diagrams in this study was to determine if students made intertextual connections between narrative and expository texts. Previous studies (i.e., Short, 1992; Hartman, 1995; Meyer, Martens, Flurkey, & Udell, 1998) have indicated that students use intertextuality as they read and respond to literary works and make connections to previously encountered text. Simply defined, intertextuality is the connection readers make when they link their understanding of the text with another or experiences outside of text such as day-to-day life and families (Hartman, 1991).

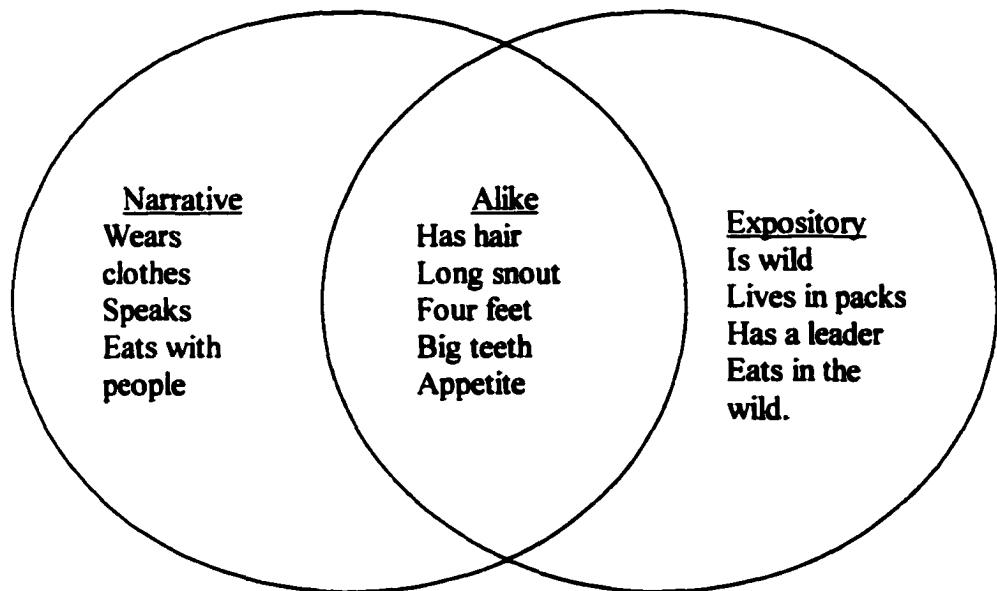


Figure 2. Example of a Venn diagram employed as an instructional technique using Little Red and the Wolf and Wolves as sources and “similar” and “different” as the basis of classification.

Data Collection

Data Sources

Interviews, observations, and artifacts from reading/writing instruction were conducted to gather data. Data were gathered from the reading and writing sessions between the children and me. These data sources reflected the researcher's assumptions and theoretical framework and answered the research questions. Multiple data sources were employed in order to increase the reliability of interpretation. First, at the study outset, Flynt and Cooter's (1998) Interest/Attitude inventory were conducted and recorded with the children (See Appendix E). While this was not a major data source, it provided knowledge about the children's personal interest, perceptions of their reading ability, and feelings about reading. In addition, conversations with the students about their reading and writing experiences prior to this study were discussed and recorded and used to elicit the their perceptions of their reading and writing (See Appendix F).

Next, observations were recorded in as much detail as possible to form the database for analysis. These written accounts were in the form of field notes and were collected as each child read and wrote about each book. For example, to answer the question, "What affect do the patterns of texts, of original narrative and expository texts, have on delayed readers' written retellings?" (number 2), physical artifacts in the form of students' written retellings were collected throughout the study and checked for the following:

1. Length—What are the number of words and sentences in written retelling, T-units, and words per T-unit (Eckhoff, 1983)?

The T-unit, which is short for minimal terminable unit, was designed to measure development of sentences in the writing of grade school children (Bardivu-Harlig &

Bofman, 1988). A T-unit includes an independent clause and its dependent clauses. A sentence can be broken down into two (or more) T-units when two (or more) independent clauses (with subjects and finite verbs) are adjacent to one another. However, a sentence is broken into one T-unit when one or more clauses are embedded in an independent clause. Since the T-unit divides the speech stream into main clauses and their dependent clauses, the need to identify sentences is done away with.

The following examples illustrate how to break a sentence into T-units:

A. There was a snake in the tree and it was eating a bird egg. = 2

T-units

B. There was a snake in the tree that was eating a bird egg. = 1 T-

unit

2. Linguistic Structures—What are the number of simple and complex verb forms as compared to the number in the book (Eckhoff, 1983)?

All simple present and past tense verbs, such as “eats” in the sentence “The snake eats the bird” and “gave” in the sentence “It gave some to the babies,” will be counted as simple verbs, while verbs with auxiliaries, such as “can eat” and “could fly,” will be counted as complex verbs.

3. Stylistic Features—Is the style of writing found in the written retelling modeled after the text in the book (Eckhoff, 1983)?

Furthermore, written retellings answered the questions, “How do delayed readers’ written retellings reflect their comprehension of narrative and expository texts?” (research question 3). For example, if the child’s written retellings were progressively scored higher from written retelling number one to number ten, it could be concluded that the participant’s comprehension increased with each new reading of a text. In addition, it

demonstrated that the participant had grown as a reader since the participant was reading and comprehending. The participant had also grown as a writer because the written retellings were scored higher, which demonstrated an understanding of what was read and their ability to place what they had comprehended onto paper in a logical and sequential manner.

A table displaying what data sources were collected, how the data were collected, and what question each data source attempted to answer was made use of to assure that I collected all the data in the appropriate fashion and at the correct time in the study (See Appendix G).

Data Analysis

During my investigation, I looked for data that answered the research questions, searching, for example, for any data that might indicate more preference for either narrative or expository texts. Particularly compelling were components that revealed information about the participant's reasons for preferring narrative or expository texts, which were evident in the student's responses to the questions prior, and subsequent, to their reading and writing about both texts. Specifically, I examined the data for information about the participants': (a) preferences for narrative or expository texts; (b) success with reading, and writing about, narrative and expository texts; (c) comprehension of both types of texts; (d) growth as a reader and writer as seen through their written retellings; and, (e) any unanticipated outcomes.

Analysis of the data occurred in several stages beginning with bringing all the information about the case together—interviews, field notes, running records, written retellings, and reflection memos. Organizing this material was the first step in striving to

“develop a formal, retrievable data base, so that in principle, other investigators can review the evidence directly and not be limited to the written reports” (Yin, 1994, p. 92). In other words, the case study database (or record) was the data of the study, organized so that I could locate specific data during intensive analysis (Merriam, 1998). Since this was a multiple case study, two stages of analysis—within-case analysis and the cross-case analysis, were employed. For the within-case analysis, I treated each case (each of the four participants) as a comprehensive case in and of itself. Data was gathered so I could learn as much “about contextual variables as possible that might have a bearing on the case” (p. 194). Once the analysis of each case was completed, cross-case analysis was started. The purpose was to “build abstractions across cases” (p. 195). I attempted to build a general explanation that fit each of the individual cases, even though the cases varied in their details (Yin, 1994).

In order to analyze data systematically, I analyzed data simultaneously with data collection (Merriam, 1998). Without ongoing analysis, the data could be unfocused, repetitious, and overwhelming in the sheer volume of material that needs to be processed. Because simultaneous data collection and analysis occurred both in and out of the field and could have become overwhelming, I applied Bogdan and Biklen’s (1992) ten guidelines for analyzing data as they were being collected.

Qualitative Data Analysis Procedures of Written Retellings

Qualitative analysis was selected in order to discern patterns of connections students make between text reading and their writing about what they have read. Mitchell (1985) asserted that both quality and quantity of information are important when determining comprehension. Qualitative analysis focuses on students’ understanding of

the text. Occasionally referred to as holistic ratings, qualitative analysis records supplementation, wholeness, and understanding (Irwin & Mitchell, 1983). In short, qualitative analysis for retelling is grounded in the assumption that the whole written retelling is more significant than any of its parts and that a perception of a written retelling sample encompasses all of those elements.

Assessment. To gain the advantage of evaluating written retellings as a whole, I made use of a richness scale that contained a five-point holistic measure of written retellings. This richness scale was based on Irwin and Mitchell's (1983) richness scale; however modifications were made to the original richness scale to clarify its use with elementary primary grade students' retellings. The modifications involved eliminating three qualities of richness: (a) generalizes beyond text, (b) thesis statement; and, (c) supporting details. Two other raters and myself determined, after extensive review of elementary primary grade delayed reader/writers' written retellings, that these qualities of richness were not to be expected. However, the five levels of richness were maintained and a score of 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 was assigned to a written retelling, with 1 being the lowest score and 5 being the highest, as originally designed by Irwin and Mitchell.

In addition, the richness scale was retitled **Judging Richness of Elementary Primary Grade Students' Retellings** in order to identify it as a scale to judge retellings completed by elementary primary grade students (see Table 1). It was anticipated that most of the participants would use inventive spelling and conventional orthography; however, all of the written retellings were scored exactly as they were written providing glosses where it seemed necessary.

Table 1

Judging Richness of Elementary Primary Grade Students' Retellings

Level	Criteria for establishing level
5.	Student includes all major points, relevant supplementations; shows high degree of coherence, completeness, and comprehensibility.
4.	Student includes all major points, relevant supplementations or none; shows good degree of coherence, completeness, and comprehensibility.
3.	Student includes some major ideas; relevant supplementations or none; shows adequate coherence, completeness, and comprehensibility.
2.	Student relates a few major ideas; includes irrelevant supplementations; shows some degree of coherence; some completeness; the whole is somewhat comprehensible.
1.	Student relates details only; irrelevant supplementations or none; low degree of coherence; incomplete; incomprehensible.

Additionally, Irwin and Mitchell (1983) developed a Checklist for Judging Richness of Retellings (see Table 2) "as a means of categorizing the principal qualities of each level of richness in comparison with all other levels" (p. 394). This checklist was meant to help the raters gain a total impression of a student's comprehension.

Table 2

Checklist for Judging Richness of Elementary Primary Grade Students' Retellings

	5	4	3	2	1
Major Points	X	X	Some	?	?
Supplementations	Relevant	Relevant/None	Relevant/None	Irrelevant	Irrelevant
Coherence	High	Good	Adequate	Some	Poor
Completeness	High	Good	Adequate	Some	Poor
Comprehensibility	High	Good	Adequate	Some	Poor

To enhance the reliability of the written retellings, two other raters independently examined and evaluated the retellings using the checklist to help them rate the written

retellings. The raters were chosen on the basis that they: (a) had similar backgrounds (Cooper, 1977) of currently being active doctoral students who have literacy as an area of interest; (b) were willing to volunteer; and, (c) were committed to meeting for training and logical time limits for reading and rating written retellings (Cooper, 1977).

Because research has demonstrated that holistic scoring can become more reliable when raters are carefully trained (Cooper & Odell, 1977), all raters were trained using a format suggested by Meredith, Mitchell, and Hernandez-Miller (1992). The first training session consisted of a general discussion of the holistic scoring rubric, including a description of the criteria for establishing levels of richness, the rating used for each level on the holistic scoring rubric, and general criteria for judging richness of retellings. Selected written retelling examples from an earlier pilot study (Houge, 1998) were photocopied in their original format and presented to the raters to examine and discuss. Following this initial training, the raters scored six retelling samples. The second training session discussed specific scoring problems of items or raters identified through the ranking of the previously scored six samples. Six more retelling samples were scored following this training. Finally, there was a third training session that discussed scoring problems identified through the analysis of the second data set.

Researcher's Role

My own interest in narrative and expository texts and written retellings as a research topic was revealing in terms of the value I placed on reading and writing in the elementary primary grades. I have taught public school at the first and second grade level for eleven years and have a deep and abiding concern for the students' reading and writing skills that will take them through elementary, middle, and high school and, for

some, college. Because I value the use of both narrative and expository texts and believe in the importance of connecting reading with writing, reading and writing instruction at this level influences my view of the reading and writing tasks for delayed readers.

During this study, I assumed the role of a participant as observer for the reading and writing sessions. This can be referred to as an active membership role (Adler & Adler, 1994), which allowed me to become more involved in the setting's central activities and to assume responsibilities that advanced the tutoring sessions. In addition, this participant as observer role allowed me to take an overt stance as I forged close and meaningful bonds with participants. For example, I observed and recorded the students' reactions towards the narrative and expository texts used for reading instruction, examined their written retellings, and talked to them about their text preferences.

Presentation of Results

Results of the study are summarized in the final two chapters of the dissertation. The summary also contains an assessment of the usefulness and effectiveness of the methodology, implications for educational policy change, and indications for further research.

Results from this study highlighted the realities of employing narrative and expository texts for instruction with delayed readers. Implications for the future use of narrative and expository texts with elementary primary grade delayed readers were disclosed through the words of the students' as they retold the stories of each book. More important, perhaps, was the possibility for new connections, insights, and understandings for teachers who are considering utilizing narrative and expository texts in their reading instruction. In addition, it was hoped the results would be useful for those teachers who

are already utilizing narrative and expository texts and for students who desire more diversity in the type of texts they are required to read. Finally, it was hoped administrators, who are a large constituent in determining the type of texts used in the classrooms of their school, would be able to use this information when selecting the types of texts to used for instruction. Better understanding of the purpose and results of instructing elementary primary grade delayed readers as they read and write about both narrative and expository texts, was the ultimate goal of this research.

Summary

The methods in this chapter were designed to investigate four delayed readers during the process of their reading narrative and expository text and completing written retellings about each. As a major component of this plan, it was necessary to code and classify students' written responses by Irwin and Mitchell's (1983) modified 5-point richness scale and how students relate texts to their life experiences and prior knowledge. A detailed description of the research design was presented, and the procedures for data collection and analysis were explained. This chapter also presented the introduction of the research setting and subjects.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to qualitatively examine the extent to which four elementary primary grade delayed readers could read and comprehend paired-topic narrative and expository texts as revealed through written retellings. It explored the degree to which these delayed readers were able to write about the text structures found in narrative and expository texts. This study was based on the assumptions that (a) elementary primary grade children could read and write about narrative and expository texts; (b) delayed readers are children who can learn to read, even though they are below grade level, if they are given the opportunity; and, (c) written retellings could be used to assess students' understanding of texts and are one method of bringing the reading-writing relationship together. This chapter focuses on the analysis of the data collected from the reading/writing sessions of the four elementary primary grade delayed readers as they read and wrote about paired-topic narrative and expository texts.

The first section of this chapter briefly describes the location of the study, which is designed to develop a portrait setting of where the participants attended school and worked one-to-one with me in the reading/writing sessions. The second section presents particular and general description and interpretive commentary (Merriam, 1998) of the participants, which is a detailed description meant to develop the opening foundation of the study. The third section is a biographical sketch of each of the participants, which

builds a framework for who these participants are. The fourth section discusses each participant's reading/writing skills and their performance during the reading/writing sessions, which contributes to an understanding of their level of reading and writing. The fifth, and final section, provides a data analysis of the study, which is meant to answer the questions established at the onset of the study.

Where the Study Occurred

This section of the chapter briefly describes the environment and population of the school these children attended and the classroom where the reading/writing sessions occurred. The purpose of this vivid portrayal is to transport the reader to the setting so as to allow for a clear view of the participants' school and particular school population. It is important for the reader to know where these participants attended school and the school population in order to develop a more realistic picture of the participants. The reading/writing session occurred in my classroom where I assumed the role of a reading specialist, providing small groups of children with reading and writing instruction throughout regular school hours. However, none of the study's participants attended my class during regular school hours.

The Research Site

The School

The four children in this study attend an elementary school in a large southwestern metropolitan city. This particular school serves a population of approximately 600 students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. In addition, there is a high population of L2 students (over 20 % are L1 Spanish speakers) and about 110

students are bused 10 miles from an economically depressed area. The bus drivers of the school have revealed that these students live in houses that are small and are likely to have extended family units living in one house.

The Room

The reading/writing sessions occurred in the reading specialist's room, which is my room that I use for the daily instruction of delayed readers. It is located in a two-year old building on the east side of the school. This building sits about fifteen feet away from the original twenty-seven year old school building and was built to provide eight more classrooms, the psychologist and speech therapist's offices, and a teacher's lounge. Entering the room requires leaving the main building to go outside and walk over to the new building and enter each classroom from the outside.

My reading classroom is warm, the paint is fresh (two years old), and the colors are alive. Every inch of wall space is occupied with print of some kind: maps, charts with poems written on them, posters, and phonetic sounds and pictures. The 100 most frequently used words are printed on 4" by 6" cards and stapled to the wall. In addition, there are shelves of books up against two different walls.

It is a typical elementary school room, white marker boards across the front, homemade and purchased posters almost everywhere, and a carpeted floor. On a table beside the wall immediately to the right of the door entrance sit five Macintosh computers. On the back wall there is a sink with a faucet and a drinking fountain and beside the fountain is an auburn 8' by 4' wardrobe closet. A 3' by 6' pressed-wood table with a beige Formica top stood in the center of the room as you enter the door. Around the table are seven plastic chairs that are short and obviously designed for small children.

Three are orange, two are tan, and two are sky blue. Near the table and close to the back wall is a 3' by 3 1/2' bookcase with three shelves. The bookcase is full of books that are used for reading instruction. Behind the bookcase is a door that leads into a bathroom.

It is fairly small as classrooms go, about 20' by 35,' yet it is a big room for so few students which is untypical for this area. My desk is facing the water fountain with the right side of the desk against the wall. In the middle of the desk lay a lesson plan book, left of the lesson plan book is a large red dictionary, right of the lesson plan book are two stacked wire baskets filled with miscellaneous papers, in the upper left hand corner of the desk stand a wooden frame with a family picture (my wife, twin 8 year old girls, two Greyhounds, and one Great Dane), and the rest of the things on the desk are miscellaneous (pencil holder, stapler, tape dispenser). From the look of the dust, stacked files, strewn students' writing projects, individual reading books, and a blue lunch box, it is apparent that organization is not a characteristic of mine (See Appendix H).

Selection of the Participants

This section of the chapter explores the events of selecting the participants and is written to develop a framework for understanding the researcher's feelings and perceptions of the participants as I met them, and their families, for the first time. Included here are the descriptions of the participants and their parents, the evening and all its routine practices, and my own interpretive thoughts as the evening came to pass. The objective for providing the reader with such detailed description of the selection process was threefold: (a) "to afford the reader the vicarious experience of having been there"

(Merriam, 1998); (b) to allow the reader to see the four participants for the first time through the research's eyes; and, (c) to establish the uniqueness of each participant.

In reviewing this section, the reader should keep in mind that my goal was to involve four elementary primary grade delayed readers who were committed to work individually with me for the next ten weeks, reading and writing about narrative and expository texts. In order to get four children who were committed to ten reading and writing sessions I first needed their parents to become committed to supporting their efforts. Therefore, much of my time during my first meeting with the participants and their parents was spent explaining exactly what their children would be doing during their forty-five to sixty minute reading/writing sessions.

Parents' Night

In My Classroom

The clock on my classroom wall read nearly seven when the door opened and a family of four, the mother carrying a two-year-old daughter, walked into the classroom. Their seven-year-old son walked behind with his head down, displaying his shyness. They were parents who were attending Parents' Night at our elementary school. Parents' Night is a special annual event that occurred within the first four weeks of the school year. Parents were invited to come on campus and meet their child's new classroom teacher.

As I had hoped, these parents had heard about my invitation to work with a second grade child while they were visiting their classroom teacher. The father, of Greek decent, was tall, in his middle thirties, with jet-black hair. He firmly shook my hand and introduced himself, his wife, and his son Andy. His wife was shorter, with shoulder

length brown hair, and a soft calming smile. Andy was tall for a seven-year-old. He was at least a head taller than other students in his class and had received his looks from his father.

“Andy’s teacher explained that he is not reading at grade level and suggested we speak to you about some tutoring,” the father said.

“Well, I am offering to work with four second grade children in the area of reading and writing. I plan to work with them individually for ten weeks, once a week, for forty-five to sixty minutes, as part of a graduate study I am conducting,” I explained.

I then went on to explain in further detail about what I had planned, showed them the books Andy would be reading, and told them how I thought it would benefit their child who needed extra practice with reading and writing. Both parents leafed through the books for a minute or two. I remember looking at Andy, who seemed to be wondering if perhaps his fate was being decided, and saw a timid reserved boy. I wondered how he would cope with working in the reading/writing sessions I had planned. Would he be able to relax enough to read orally to me? Would he choose the book he wished to read or choose the book he thought I wanted him to choose? Could he step out of being shy and timid while with me to speak about his likes and dislikes of the books he was going to read? These were things I was going to find out after the reading/writing sessions began.

His parents looked at each other and nodded their heads yes and then turned to me and agreed to allow their son to participate. They selected Monday afternoons as the time for Andy to attend the reading/writing sessions with me. They walked out of my room with Andy in tow, never saying a word.

I had my first case study, and while I felt pleased, I knew I needed three more. The clock read seven-fifteen. Forty-five more minutes and Parent Night was over. I sat waiting and wondering if anyone else would come and volunteer. It is during those times that quietness in a room seems overwhelming. It is so quiet during those moments that little sounds are loud; the shoes on the asphalt of someone walking past my room, doors opening and closing, and the tiny ticking of the clock on the wall. When the footsteps outside my door slowed, and then stopped, I looked up to see two more parents walk in.

These were the parents of Bobby. Bobby was a small, agile, Caucasian, black-haired boy with a demeanor that seemed to say, "Get out of my way because I am on the move." His mother claims he got that from her.

"I always have to be moving and doing something. My husband tells me to sit down but I have to be doing something. When I do stop, I drop from exhaustion. Bobby is just like me," she enthusiastically, and quickly, explained.

For moments then, the room was still as we watched Bobby play with his little five-year-old sister. From the classroom next door came the sounds of parents leaving and thanking the teacher for her time. Through the small casement window behind Bobby's parents streamed the last light of the day. In the background, the mechanical hum of air conditioners from the school reminded everyone that though the daylight was gone, the heat left behind continued to make being outside uncomfortably hot.

Once again I explained, to Bobby's parents this time, what my study was about and what their son would be doing during the ten reading/writing sessions. As they signed the permission slip allowing Bobby to participate on Tuesday afternoons, Bobby ran outside after his sister laughing and giggling. Dad shot me an exasperated look and

walked out the door after them. Mom thanked me and walked out, trailing behind. I did not have a chance to see her out the door before Cody and his parents walked into my room.

Cody's parents had two children, both of them boys. Cody was the younger of the two, with his brother being eleven and in fifth grade. Cody was an average sized, thin, fair skinned, lanky Caucasian second grade boy with large eyes and a big smile. He walked in beside his brother walking heel-to-toe and looking around the room as if he were marveling at being in the Reading Room, where he had most likely observed children entering and existing while he attended school. As I explained to his parents about the reading/writing sessions I watched Cody wander around the room, examining the picture of my family sitting on my desk. He did not seem to be listening as I answered his parents' questions. I watched him brush back wisps of darkish brown hair that had fallen on his furrowed brow as he leaned over the computer keyboard. I remember thinking that he had such calm, trusting eyes. They were eyes that seemed to be saying, "Whatever mom and dad decide it is fine with me." They were so different from the eyes of Andy who had left my room only minutes earlier.

Cody's parents signed the permission slip allowing him to become a participant in my study on Thursday afternoons. They thanked me for allowing him to have an opportunity to acquire some extra reading and writing practice, and asked me to call if I had concerns about their son. The family advanced toward the door without Cody saying goodbye.

About the time I gave up hope that my fourth case study would come through the door, in walked Danny and his mother. Danny strutted in as proud as punch with a very

relaxing expression on his face. He immediately reminded me of the late actor John Candy. His eyes glistened with joy as if life was for living and problems were for tomorrow. Danny was also Caucasian with bright white skin, a chubby figure, and blonde hair, which was cut short and parted to the left. When I showed his mother the books we would be reading, he was involved with looking at the books as well. He was even making a decision about which one he wanted to read first. It was hard not to like Danny and I learned to look forward to Wednesday afternoons when he and I would read and write about books.

Eventually his mother turned to Danny and asked, "Well is this something you think you would like to be part of?"

"Umm, yeah. Some of these books look neat," Danny said.

His mother signed the permission slip and then expressed her concern about his delayed reading skills. Finally, she thanked me and told me to keep her informed about his progress or lack thereof. As they turned to leave the room, I glanced down and saw that both of Danny's canvas tennis shoes were untied. The laces were dragging loosely on the floor and he took no notice of them.

The Participants

Any attempt to provide the best possible understanding of the participants in this study must focus on who these children are, where they live, whom they live with, and what type of family they have. The effectiveness of the reading/writing sessions could have been influenced by one of the many external factors such as how many brothers or sisters these participants had, whether they had a mother and father at home that worked

with them, their opinions of reading, writing, and themselves, so on. As a researcher I was dedicated to finding out where these children lived, what their responsibilities were and their daily routines. In order to get a clear understanding of their lives I asked them questions and traveled to their neighborhoods to observe their houses and neighborhood surroundings.

My objective was to present these participants as real children living in today's world, but I also sought to bring the reader close to these participants as if they were viewing the participants themselves. The importance of this will become clear when the analysis and interpretation of each participant's selection of narrative and expository texts and writing is revealed. These detailed profiles are meant to assist the reader in understanding the participants' text selections and writings. The intent was to reach a balance between description and interpretation so that study's results illuminated key themes and patterns concerning the participants text selections and writings.

In the following section, I provide a biographical description of each participant and talk about their lives and responsibilities. Next, I discuss their beliefs about when they began to read and write and their feelings toward each. Finally, I talk briefly about their perceptions of reading and writing in their second grade classrooms.

Case Study One: Andy

Biographical Sketch

Andy lived in a one-story adobe style house with his mom, dad, two-year-old sister, a poodle named Fluffy and a large outside dog that was named Rocky. This is the house Andy was brought into after he was born and has spent the last seven years. The house his parents own sits in a neighborhood that is surrounded by middle to lower-

middle class people. A majority of his neighbors are Caucasian while the rest are African American, Hispanic, and a small percentage are some other ethnic group. Sidewalks run down both sides of the street where kids ride their bikes, rollerblades, or skateboards, and older kids play football in the street. It reminded me of the neighborhood Henry Huggins, his dog Ribsy, and his friends lived in on Klickitat Street in Beverly Cleary's well-known books Henry Huggins and Ribsy.

Andy's childhood, thus far, could be thought of as very good compared to the average child in his school. He has only one job requirement in his home—clean his room—which he said he does without complaining. He loves to play video games on his television that is in his bedroom or watch television shows such as Beastwars or Godzilla. Before going to bed at nine o'clock he reads a little bit, watches about sixty minutes of television, does homework at the kitchen table with the help of mom or dad and sometimes his grandmother or grandfather, eats dinner, takes a bath, and listens to his mom read a book.

He feels he started reading when he was in kindergarten and now considers himself a good reader because he can sound out words.

"If I were helping someone to read, I would tell them to sound out words because a good reader sounds out words," Andy explained with surprising confidence.

"Well, who helps children read the most when they attend school?" I asked.

"Teachers," he answered as if it was a stupid question.

He thought he started to write when he was in first grade and enjoyed it immediately because, "you get to draw all kinds of stuff, write all kinds of stuff, and write big words."

I asked him, “now that you are in second grade, is there anything you do in your classroom that has anything to do with writing.”

“No,” and after pausing, “just the pencil sharpener,” he answered seriously.

I did not answer right away. Young children’s answers have always amazed me, and I have always been awful at wanting to respond immediately. Almost always I have given into that desire and have blurted out a response with some intense expression on my face. My lack of success has mostly been due to panic and a severe desire to keep things moving. When I am around a young child in a one-to-one situation, I manage to find exactly the most meaningless possible thing to say, or precisely the most futile topic to discuss. It is like I have something inside of me that screams out every time there is a second of silence, “say something you idiot.” Once, when I was a very young inexperienced teacher, I quickly responded to a child’s answer to my question, “Is that it? Is that your answer?” The child began to cry and I learned that what a child says needs to be heard and appreciated.

“Thanks Andy,” I finally managed to say.

Case Study Two: Bobby

Biographical Sketch

Bobby lived in a beige adobe style house with his mom, dad, five-year-old sister, and two medium size dogs. He too, was brought into this house after he was born and has spent the last seven years there. He lived in the same neighborhood as Andy, attended the same elementary school and was assigned to the same second grade classroom as Andy.

Bobby is a happy boy who comes from a lower middleclass working family. On average, he has what every seven-year-old boy could want—two parents, a home, food, and friends. His jobs at home are to clean his room and pick up his toys in his room; however, he laughingly stated that he does not do his jobs until his mom or dad yell at him. He loves to play and it does not seem to make a difference what he is playing as long as he is playing and being active. Before going to bed at seven-thirty he does homework with the help of mom or dad, watches the television show The Simpsons on the television that is in his bedroom, takes a bath, and plays.

He feels he started reading when he was six-years-old and now considers himself a good reader because he reads a lot, however, he feels he doesn't get to read a lot in his second grade classroom.

"There are two kids in my class and they fool around and we can't read," he nonchalantly explained.

He believes he started to write on the first day of second grade and once he started writing he was writing big and small words. He enjoys writing because he "gets to write about stuff."

"Is there anything you do in your classroom that has anything to do with writing?" I asked.

After thinking for a brief minute Bobby said, "Yeah, worksheets and phonics papers."

Reflection

I have met a lot of children like Bobby, who have no real understanding of what writing is about. Kids like Bobby, that are in their first semester of second grade,

respond to questions about writing that make me believe that they have never experienced writing as it was meant to be. I mean real writing. Writing that requires them to think hard about what words to put on a blank piece of paper so as to clearly convey the thoughts in their heads. Writing that will cause them to think about the spelling, meaning, and clarity of what is on paper. Writing that, when completed, causes them to want to share what they have written, not hand in to the teacher for an evaluation. Writing that, as (Au, 1993) explained, is purposeful and largely self-directed. Writing that is for “ideas, action, reflection, and experience” (Smith, 1984, p. 55).

I would venture to say that kids like Bobby have never looked at a story, or a poem, and wondered what it takes to write like what they have just read, not to mention what it feels like. And I am confident that these kids have never wondered about how authors of the words they read learned to write and know enough to write so that the thousands of people who read their words understand and enjoy their writing.

Case Study Three: Cody

Biographical Sketch

Cody lived in a pallid colored adobe style house with his mom, dad, and eleven-year-old brother. He too, was brought into this house after he was born and has spent the last seven years there. He lives in the same neighborhood as Andy and Bobby and attends the same elementary school.

Cody seems to be a happy boy who never wants for anything, but he was always wondering what it would be like to have more. During our time together it became a common practice for him to stop and ask questions about what it would be like to do this or to be that. He has chores to complete in his house like cleaning the bathroom and his

room. Since they are recurring chores required every weekend before he can play, he does not have much choice but to get them completed.

After school Cody and his older brother walk across the street to a local Daycare Center to check in and stay until mom picks them up around five-thirty. After getting home and eating dinner he completes homework in front of the television in the Living Room. Usually he does his homework without any help, however, mom or his big brother will help him, “if it is hard stuff.”

He feels he started to read when he was five years old and he started by reading Dr. Seuss’ books. As a matter of fact he still enjoys reading Dr. Seuss’ books because “it’s fun to read rhyming words because they sound funny.” He feels he is a good reader because he knows a lot of words and he knows “really long words like Mississippi.”

When I asked him, “If you were helping someone learn to read, what could you do to help that person?”

He replied by saying, “help them sound it out and I would say the word for them if they still didn’t know it.”

Cody feels he began to write on the first day of kindergarten and the first words he wrote were question words and other people’s names. He still enjoys writing “because I like writing funny words.” In second grade he writes in a journal and on phonic workbook pages.

Reflection

After I interviewed Cody I thought about his responses. When elementary primary grade children think about reading and writing, they frequently think about sounding out words and forget the meaning one should get from reading. The meaning of

what is read is what drives the love of reading. A lot of teachers, particularly the elementary primary grade teachers, work on teaching children what Au (1993) refers to as “low-level skills, such as decoding, spelling, grammar, and literal comprehension” (p. 30) so that the children’s reading of words matches their grade level expectations. After putting so much effort into the low-level skills instruction, many teachers do not have the time or energy to teach children how to make meaning from text. This sometimes results in having children who believe reading and writing is about knowing big words.

Case Study Four: Danny

Biographical Sketch

Danny lived in an adobe style house with his mom, dad, two cats, and a chocolate labador named Duke. This also is the house Danny was brought into after he was born and has spent the last seven years. This house sits in the same neighborhood as Andy, Bobby, and Cody with the same lower-middle class people with a high percentage of Caucasians and a low percentage of African Americans, Hispanics, and others. The sidewalks and streets are similar as well with different kids doing the same things such as riding their bikes, rollerblades and skateboards.

Danny is an only child with no chores at home. When he is home he likes to play Play-Station, with his best friend, his dog, and mom and dad. Before going to bed at nine-o’-clock he does homework with the help of mom or grandma, eats dinner, watches about two hours of cartoons, like Scooby-Doo, on his television in his bedroom, takes a shower, and listens to mom read a book.

He feels he started to read when he was five-years old and considers himself a medium reader because he does not practice reading at home as much as he should.

“Little tiny books that had probably, like, four words on a page,” were the kinds of books he feels he was reading when he first started to read. The last book he was asked to read by his teacher was a “big book that was thick and given to us in reading groups” (the school’s basal). He likes reading “because it helps you learn.”

“If you were helping someone learn to read, what could you do to help that person,” I inquired.

“Well, I would try to help them sound it out.”

He feels he started to write when he started to read by writing small words such as “dog, cat, fish, words like that.” He has enjoyed writing since he learned how to write, “because it’s fun to do and it gives you something to do.”

“What kind of writing do you do in school?” I asked.

“Our names in cursive, journals, and phonics pages,” he answered while trying to swallow the graham cracker snack I had provided for him.

Reflection

Here is a second grader who says he enjoys reading but the last book he can remember reading is a story from the school’s basal series. He claims to love writing yet considers completing phonic pages as writing. This gives the impression that his educational background has not expanded the definition of literacy to go beyond skills.

Conclusion

Too often children like these four boys are not motivated to read for enjoyment or to discover something new about their world and then write or think about what they have read (Smith, 1984). This type of motivation is a motivation that comes from the heart. It creates a real passion for reading, writing, and learning. A passion that if

anyone has ever seen it, knows it can only be from the heart. Guthrie, et al. (1996) referred to this kind of motivation as “reasons for reading” (p. 433). Too often teachers want the basal stories read, phonics pages completed, handwriting neat, and journal entries written by students for teachers, not for the students who write them.

Children like these four boys rarely, if ever, are allowed to have the courage to read and write what they have a passion for. To have courage to think, and be motivated to learn, is infrequently encouraged or accepted in our present educational system (Smith, 1984; Allington, 1995). This is the type of curriculum Purcell-Gates (1995) described in her book about Donny, a second grade student who “could “do school” on a surface level. He had learned to fill in blanks of worksheets, circle words on worksheets, pay attention to the teacher, and “follow along” in his book as the teacher, or someone else read” (Purcell-Gates, 1995, p. 62). This type of curriculum also assumes that children like Donny are capable of reading independently from texts they have “never heard before and to derive enjoyment and/or information from these texts” (p. 84).

Reading and Writing

This section of the chapter discusses the reading/writing sessions that occurred with each participant. This section is not a comprehensive review of each individual reading/writing session. Rather it is a review of all of the reading/writing sessions, which took place over a ten-week period of time, a description of the level of reading and writing each participant was functioning when the sessions began, and how their reading and writing improved at the end of the sessions. This description of the participants’ and their reading and writing skills is meant to present each participant as an individual.

Whereas no two children are alike in the regular classroom, no two participants were alike in this study. Each participant was unique and presented some type of challenge to me as a teacher and researcher, which is described in these narratives of their reading/writing sessions.

These concrete descriptions of the reading/writing sessions and the participants' levels of reading and writing will develop a basis for the reader to reflect upon while reading the analysis and interpretation section. In order to fully appreciate the analysis and interpretation of each participant's selection of narrative and expository texts and their writing, it is important to picture the reading/writing sessions as well the reading/writing levels of these participants at the beginning and end of the study. My goal was to provide the reader with a descriptive narrative that allowed for a clear and precise portrait of each participant and their reading/writing levels.

The Reading/Writing Sessions

The four children who attended the reading/writing sessions worked one-to-one with me, in somewhat of a tutoring role, for forty-five to sixty minutes a week for ten weeks after school. My role differed from a typical tutoring role in several ways: (a) the childrens' areas of deficiency in reading and writing were not specifically identified for the purpose of guiding the instruction; (b) language components such as sounds, syntax, and semantics were not taught separately for the purpose of mastery but were taught during authentic use of the text; and, (c) routines of reading, and writing about, what they read, remained the same throughout all the sessions. The children became very familiar with the routine and began to perform each task automatically with each additional session.

These sessions were not designed to be skill-based instruction, but rather a time to read books, talk about the vocabulary and content of the book, and retell the story in a written format. Each week the children would read one book and write about it. Prior to reading, I showed them a narrative and expository book with the same topic. The children were then allowed to leaf through each book and then were asked to choose which book they would like to read first. After choosing a book, they were asked why they chose that book to read first, introduced to the vocabulary through a semantic map, asked to read the book aloud while I took a running record, and completed a written retelling. The goal of this study was to explore four elementary primary grade delayed readers' reading and writing about paired-topic narrative and expository texts. In addition, this study sought to determine whether these four elementary primary grade delayed readers could complete a written retelling following their reading of a narrative and expository text.

Andy

Feeling that Andy was going to be withdrawn the first few sessions, I devoted time each session to enjoying small talk. Usually I talked about his day at school or what he did over the weekend. I made sure each question could be answered with a yes or a no so as to make it very simple and comfortable for him. Also, feeling the press for time to help him gain ground as a reader and writer, as well as making sure we stayed on track as far as reading and writing about one book per session, I allowed no more than five minutes for conversation after he entered the room and sat down beside me. He was always anxious during our small talk and always kept his answers short glancing toward

the book we were going to read and myself. Once we moved into reading the book he became much more relaxed.

Looking at Andy during each session was like looking at a scared puppy. He had the exact same look in his eyes as a puppy that does not know what you want them to do. You know the look—the look that seems to say, “I want to do what you want me to do, but I am not sure what you want me to do and, in addition, I am not sure if I can do what you want me to do.” If anyone has ever brought home a new puppy that is timid you know what I mean. The puppy’s eyes are darting to each person in the room and to all the new furnishings. Eventually the new puppy runs to somebody and jumps in their lap or runs to a corner of the room and sits shaking.

Andy had to read and write while in a room with me sitting right beside him. He was so nervous about doing well that he made me nervous because I did not know what I was going to do if he did not do well. I sat hoping each time he began reading that he would do well so the routine could go smoothly.

Reading. The desire to read well was demonstrated through his style of reading. He read by pointing to each word with his finger. His head would be bent over the book while the book lay on the desk and when he got to a word he did not know he would stop. At first this startled me because I am accustomed to children asking what the word is or listening to them attempt to sound out the word. Andy did neither, but eventually, after fifteen to thirty seconds, he would say the word and go on or say, “I don’t know that word.” He never asked me to tell him what the word was or ask for help sounding it out. If he did not know the word, he did not know the word. It was as simple as that.

Following an initial introduction to the vocabulary, through semantic webbing, Andy would be asked to read the book. At the time we began our reading/writing sessions he was about three to four months behind in both his reading and writing. I started him in Steck-Vaughn's stage two books, which were sixteen-page books that gradually become more difficult and reflected more complex text structures such as dialogue, content vocabulary, and question-and-answer format. After reading the first two stage two books at an independent level, I moved him into stage three books, which were twenty-four-page books that introduced fables, folktales, plays, and pourquoi tales and invited readers to respond in writing. The books also supported the strong picture-text match with chapters, indexes, glossaries, and captions. He scored between the instructional level (accuracy of 90 to 94 percent) and the independent level (accuracy of 95 to 100 percent) at this stage. However, the length of the text seemed to bother him, because he consistently let out a sigh of relief when he completed reading each book and usually made a comment about the length of the book such as, "that was a long book."

Listening to Andy read was bearable because he read with fluency, but his reading was very monotonous. There was such intensity about getting through the book without making a mistake that he did not vary his tone of voice, take time to comment about the pictures, or ask questions about what he was reading.

Andy displayed signs of being in the beginning reading phase. Bear and Barone (1998) state that a child is in the beginning reading phase if they: (a) read aloud to themselves; (b) fingerpoint as they read; and, (c) are disfluent and inexpressive in their reading and read word by word. Because Andy was fluent in his reading, he was showing signs of moving into the transitional reading phase.

Writing. Andy demonstrated similar behaviors during writing activities as he had during his reading activities. His writing was always very neat and he made sure it was neat by erasing frequently while writing each retelling. He erased so much that I eventually had to give him a pencil that had no eraser and tell him to just concentrate on writing, not the neatness. That took him out of his comfort zone for a while but he eventually adjusted. However, it was not uncommon to hear him respectfully state, after he was completed with his retelling, “if I had an eraser I would have erased that.”

When writing his retelling, Andy would stop after each thought he placed on the paper and wait for a prompt from me such as, “can you remember anything else about the story?” He would then nod his head yes and then orally tell me what he could remember. I would then have to say, “You’re right, that did happen. Why don’t you put that in your retelling?” This routine occurred for every sentence in his retelling until he would state that he could not remember anything else about the story. Then we would stop and I would have him read his retelling to me. During the time he read his retelling to me the pencil sat inside the desk where he placed it and it was never brought out for correcting any mistakes he might notice while reading what he wrote. Once he determined writing was over, it was over and any mistakes that were in his writing would remain mistakes.

Andy’s written retellings indicated that he was “using within-word pattern strategies to determine increasingly abstract and complex spellings” (Bear & Barone, 1998, p. 82). In other words, his writing demonstrated that he was aware of using two letters to stand for one sound, observing the middles of words and looking for long-vowel patterns, understanding the spelling of most r-influenced vowels, and writing in such a way that the words looked correct. He used his knowledge of sounds and letters when

spelling, but the words just were not spelled that way. For example, GRATE for great, RANE for rain, and LEEF for leaf were words he wrote that made sense and were readable.

Andy's written retellings also revealed that he was in what Bear and Barone (1998) refer to as a Literal Comprehension stage of understanding. He could retell and answer questions about what he read and had a middle level understanding of it. More specifically, he could remember primary events, retell and summarize, understand most facts, and develop specialized vocabulary.

Figure 3 shows Andy's first retelling he completed after reading the expository book Season to Season. His retelling reads: "In winter snakes sleep together. In spring leaves change to green. In summer little birds learn how to eat. In fall birds fly south for the winter. In winter rabbits are hard to find." Andy understood the function of punctuation in a sentence, but clearly was not familiar with the concept of capitalization of the first word of a sentence. Additionally, this retelling demonstrates that he stuck to the primary events of the story and reported the events in the order they were presented in the story.

Season to Season

In winter birds fly to
 south. In spring leaf change
 in summer little birds
 fly south. In fall birds
 fly south for the winter.
 In winter rabbits are hard to
 find.

Figure 3. Example of Andy's First Retelling of the Expository Book Season to Season.

Figure 4 shows Andy's last retelling he completed after reading the expository book Storms. His retelling reads: "Thunderstorms are dangerous. People can die! People get shocked. Tornadoes are really dangerous. They have hard winds. They can kill people too! Tornadoes are also called twisters. Hurricanes do a lot of damage too. They are worser! Ice storms are dangerous too. The rain freezes and makes ice and on a sidewalk. It is slippery. A blizzard is when there is snow everywhere in the air." This retelling is much longer than his first. His understanding of how to use punctuation in a sentence is persistent and he clearly is familiar with the concept of capitalization of the first word of a sentence. Additionally, this retelling, like his first, demonstrates that he stuck to the primary events of the story and reported the events in the order they were presented in the story.

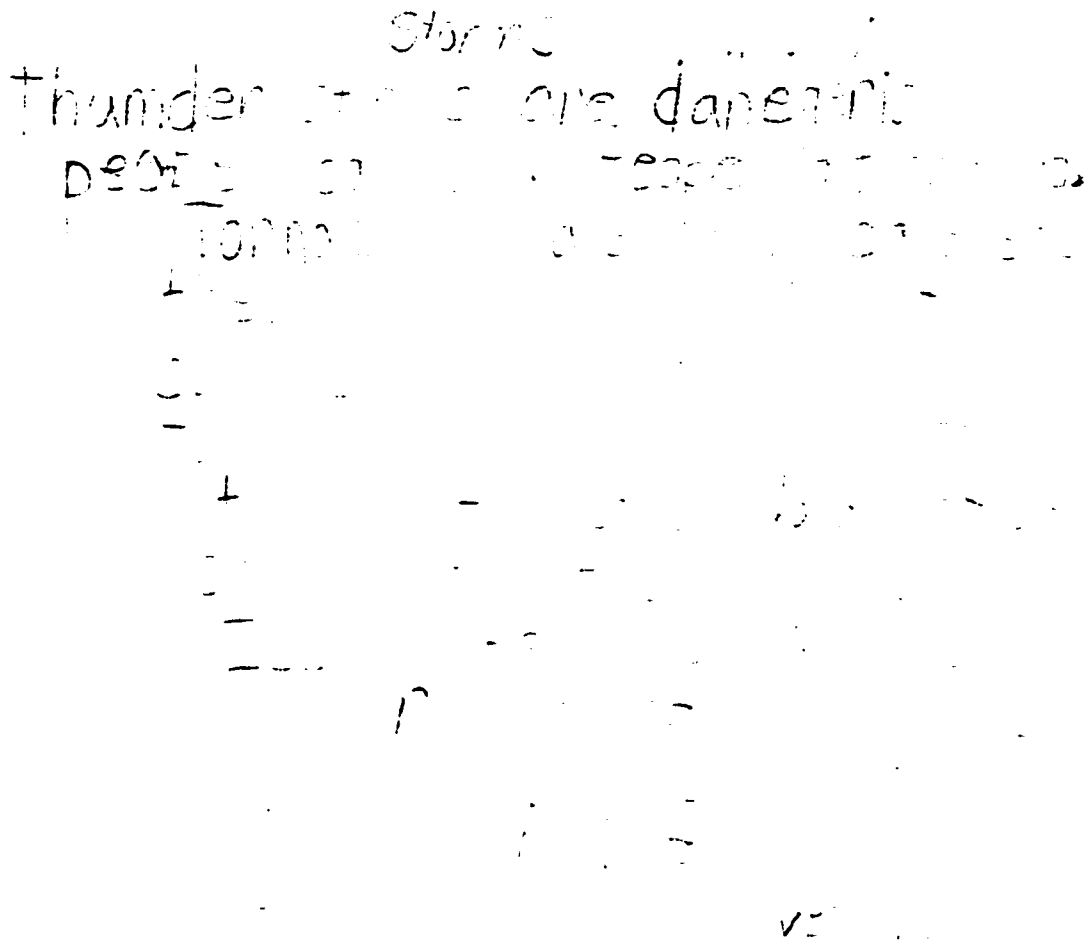


Figure 4. Example of Andy's Last Retelling of the Expository Book Storms.

Bobby

Each Tuesday I walked over to the school's gym and dining hall and checked Bobby out of Safekey. This is a childcare program designed to permit children from the school to walk from their classroom to the gym to remain until a parent gets off of work to pick them up. While the children are in Safekey they are required to work on homework first and then are allowed to play games with other children. Usually two teachers from the school, who volunteer and get paid, are in charge of discipline, game

activities, and the signing in and signing out of each child. Bobby's parents had given me permission to sign him out on Tuesday afternoons, which I did. From Safekey we walked to the Reading Room, which was about fifty feet away.

During the reading/writing sessions with Bobby, I pledged to remain alert at all times. There was no opportunity to let down and relax because Bobby was on the move from the time we walked out of Safekey to the time we walked back into Safekey. If he thought a pencil needed sharpening he would run over and sharpen it. If he thought there were pencil marks on the desktop where he sat he would begin erasing them and would not stop until he thought they were thoroughly erased. If there were papers stacked on my desk in a somewhat sloppy manner, he was over there arranging them neatly. These incidences occurred while I was writing his name on the running record, finding the book we were to read that day, finding his file with his retelling journal, etc. When I would say something like, "It's ok. I'll fix it later." He would ignore me and mumble something like, "Yeah, but people shouldn't write on your desk." Once, during my exasperation with getting him back on task, I pitched in and helped him erase marks on the desktop. I even helped him erase pencil marks that I did not see, yet he insisted were there.

Bobby came in the room like Looney Tune's Tazmanian Devil. By coincidence I happened to give him the notebook with the Tazmanian Devil on the cover. Looking at the Tazmanian Devil each Tuesday before Bobby's reading/writing session was a reminder to be prepared when he entered the room. This meant that the book he was to read must be laid out in advance, his name would be on the running record, the semantic

web would be laid on top of the book, and the title of the book and date would already be placed on top of the paper where he would be writing his retelling.

There were a few times we finished our reading/writing sessions within thirty to thirty-five minutes. He came in, read his book, wrote his retelling, and had his backpack on, waiting at the door to leave. The first time this occurred I was still writing information on the running record sheet and was just getting ready to say, "go ahead and begin reading," when I heard him say, "I'm done." I looked at him, with my mouth open in astonishment, and thought, "What do you mean you are done? We haven't even started." I learned to have everything ready before he came and recognized that he did not need any down time to eat his snack and discuss the day. He was ready to come in and begin the reading and writing tasks immediately.

Reading. Bobby had a great memory and phonic awareness. When the vocabulary was introduced through semantic maps his reading moved fluently because he remembered the vocabulary and at the very least remembered how to sound out the vocabulary. The initial assessment indicated that he was slightly below grade level in reading and writing. I started him reading Steck-Vaughn's stage two books, which he remained in for the first eight books before moving to stage three for his last two books.

Bobby's reading indicated that he was on the tail end of being a beginning reader and in the beginning stages of being a transitional reader. He demonstrated signs of being a beginning reader by: (a) fingerpointing to words as he read; (b) being inexpressive while reading; and, (c) at times read word by word (Bear & Barone, 1998). However, his reading was somewhat fluent most of the time. The initial introduction to the vocabulary appeared to put him at ease and allowed him to feel more confident about

being able to read the text. Without the introduction to vocabulary, he stumbled through the reading and over used his phonic skills by attempting to sound out the words he was not sure of, thus, causing his reading to be disfluent.

Throughout the reading/writing sessions he scored between the instructional level (accuracy of 90 to 94 percent) and the independent level (accuracy of 95 to 100 percent). I elected to keep him in the stage two books throughout eight of our sessions because he was not consistently scoring in the independent stage. In addition, I sensed that he would not be able to read the longer text in the stage three books.

Writing. Bobby began writing his retellings fairly neatly; however, towards the last retelling he wrote in a very messy, and practically unreadable fashion due to his desire to finish quickly. His retellings usually were one long sentence. That is, he started the retelling with a capital letter and put a period behind the last word in his retelling. When he was writing, he rarely sat still. He would write standing up, sitting down, with the notebook on his lap, leaning over the notebook on the desktop while on his knees in the chair, etc. It was amazing watching him write, but eventually he would finish, tell me that he was done, and then begin picking up his backpack. More often than not, I would have to stop him so we could reread the retelling and discuss what he wrote.

After reading Bobby's retellings it was evident that he began the reading/writing sessions writing in the Letter-Name Spelling stage. He was able to read words with long vowels patterns, but he wrote a one-to-one correspondence between the number of sounds in a word and the number of letters—one letter for each sound (phoneme) that he heard (Bear and Barone, 1998). He was able to write down ideas that came to his mind and could reread it in the same way each time. However, in his last five retellings he

exhibited signs of moving into the Within-Word Pattern spelling stage. He was becoming aware that he needed to use two letters to represent one sound and used his long vowel patterns. For example, during his sixth retelling he reread what he had written and stopped to say, "That's not 'like,' that's 'lick.'"

In addition, he was in, what Bear and Barone (1998) termed, the Beginning Writing stage. This meant he wrote about the literal events of the stories. In other words, he seemed to enjoy writing about what happened, but his retellings remained short and after ten retellings, he remained in the Beginning Writing stage of retelling.

Figure 5 is an example of his first retelling after reading the narrative book Sam's Seasons and reveals his level of writing. His retelling reads: "Sam was sitting on his bed and his mom asked him where are your boots and he wore them in spring and he splashed in puddles he jumped into leaves he found his boots." This retelling is very literal and sticks to the facts. However, there are events left out of the retellings such as what Sam did with his boots in the winter and summer, which kept the retelling short. Bobby understood that punctuation is required to be put somewhere in a story so he placed it at the end of the retelling when he finished.

Sam's Seasons

Sam was sitting on his bed
 and his mom asked him what
 for your boots and he went
 from in spring and he found
 in puddles he jumped into
 leaves he found his boots.

Figure 5. Example of Bobby's First Retelling of the Narrative Book Sam's Seasons.

Figure 6 is an example of his last retelling and reveals his level of writing after reading the narrative book Little Red and the Wolf. His retelling reads: "He was thinking to steal her food. He was hiding behind the trees and a bush. The Baker and Butcher and Farmer gave her food. Then she went to Grandmother's house with the wolf helping to get to Grandmother's house. He changed to be good so he could eat." Bobby's retelling is longer and he talked about of the literal events in the story. His concept of a sentence has improved dramatically. He now knows how to capitalize the beginning of a sentence and realized that punctuation needs to be placed throughout the retelling. In addition, his writing is much more readable because he used more conventional spelling than his first retelling.

He was hiding behind the tree
 And a bunch.
 The Baker and butcher and
 farmer gave her food.
 Dinner.
 Then she went to Grandmother's
 house with the wolf.
 Helping her to get to
 Grandmother's house.
 So he could eat.

Figure 6. Example of Bobby's Last Retelling of the Narrative Book Little Red and the Wolf.

Cody

Each Thursday after school I waited patiently for a soft knock at the door. As I walked over to open the door I would see a face pressed to the small window set in the door. I would never see the whole face but only a nose, eyes, and forehead because Cody was too short to place his whole face against the window. After opening the door Cody would walk in with a smile and head for his seat. On top of the desk where he would be reading and writing would be sitting a carton of cold milk and graham crackers. This was

the snack that was available to all of the boys, but Cody especially looked forward to his milk and graham crackers. He wasted no time in grabbing a cracker and opening his milk carton. While he was enjoying his snack I prepared for our reading/writing sessions by getting out the book, writing information on top of the running record sheet, and placing the title of the story he was going to retell on top of a blank piece of paper.

It was during this time that Cody would ask questions such as, "Why do you have those books piled over there? Do your children ever read those books? Did you sharpen these pencils? Why do you have so many pencils?" He would also use this time to go to the bathroom and more often than not when he came out of the bathroom he was ready to get started. I knew there was no use rushing him because things like eating his snack, drinking his milk, and just plain getting settled down after a hectic day of school were necessary before getting down to business.

His posture during reading and writing was an, "I'm tired" posture. For example, he frequently laid his head on his left arm as he read or wrote. He never complained about reading and writing, but it just seemed to tire him out. With each page he read he sighed deeply and with each sentence he wrote he made the same deep sigh. Sometimes he would say, "I'm tired. Can we quit?" I would encourage him and explain how nice of a job he was doing. He always looked at me as if to say, "In other words, you are not going to let me quit and we are going to sit here until I finish." Needless to say, our reading/writing sessions took a full sixty minutes.

Reading. Cody read smoothly but very slowly and with a very monotonous voice. He did not show signs of being excited about any book we read; however, he was very observant about the illustrations or photographs. After he read a page, he would look at

the illustration or photograph intently and sometimes make a comment about something he noticed or just go onto the next page.

The initial assessment showed that Cody was just slightly below grade level in the area of reading. I started him in Steck-Vaughn's stage three books, where he scored between the instructional level (accuracy of 90 to 94 percent) and the independent level (accuracy of 95 to 100 percent). Even though he could read the level 3 books, the length of the text seemed to bother him. He consistently made comments about the book's length while reading it and when he finished he would lay his head on the desktop as if reading the book took all of the energy out of him. In addition, I sat worried while he was reading because he read so slowly and the book was long. I worried he would never get it read, and written about, within our allotted sixty minutes.

Cody's reading indicated that he was at the Beginning Reader Stage (Bear & Barone, 1998). While reading he fingerpointed, was somewhat disfluent, and very inexpressive, tending to read word by word. Although his accuracy was high, it was difficult listening to him read because he was slow and inexpressive.

Writing. Like reading, writing was not something Cody seemed to enjoy. He usually attempted to avoid it by talking about something completely opposite of what the book discussed. I often had to direct him back to writing by handing him a pencil and asking him to write his name on the paper. However, this was not assurance that he would begin writing because his next ploy to avoid writing was to say, "I don't remember anything about the book." After reassuring him and explaining that because he did such a good job of reading the book he probably remembers something about the story, we

would talk about it and I would ask him questions such as, “How did the book start? What happened to that character? What did the book tell us? How did the book end?”

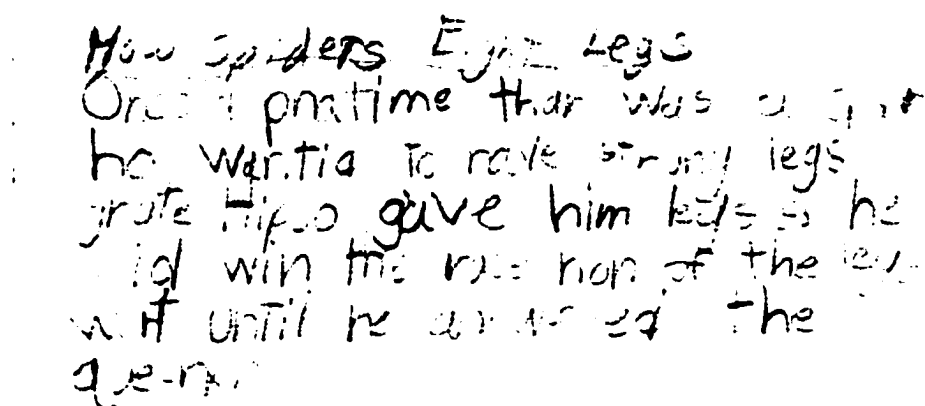
He was very capable of answering these questions and would do so with confidence. However, he would hesitate and say, “But I don’t know how to begin.” I would explain that he could begin with whatever he remembered about the story. Eventually, he would begin after he had placed his head on his left arm and lay in his chair with his right leg stretched out. Surprisingly, I rarely had to assist him after he started writing and when he was done he would tell me and read what he wrote to me. His writing was very neat even though he did not spend time erasing or worrying about how neat it looked. It just seemed to come out neat without much effort on his part.

His written retellings indicated that he was “using within-word pattern strategies to determine increasingly abstract and complex spellings” (Bear & Barone, 1998, p. 82). In other words, his writing demonstrated that he was aware of using two letters to stand for one sound, observing the middles of words and looking for long-vowel patterns, understanding the spelling of most r-influenced vowels, and writing in such a way that the words looked correct. He used his knowledge of sounds and letters when spelling, but the words just do not happen to be spelled that way. For example, THAR for there, and WORT for worked, were words he wrote that made sense and were readable.

Cody retold and summarized events and main ideas or information from the expository texts. This indicated that he was in the Beginning Writers Stage of writing (Bear & Barone, 1998). Figure 7 is an example of Cody’s first retelling after reading the narrative book How Spiders got Eight Legs. It reads as: “Once upon a time there was a

spider who wanted to have strong legs. Great Hippo gave him legs so he could win the race. None of the legs worked until he answered the question."

This retelling demonstrated his concept of long vowels in such words as "gave" and "grate" making his retelling very readable. He included no punctuation, however, he did capitalize the first word. Also, he kept his retelling short and told the very basic literal events of the story.

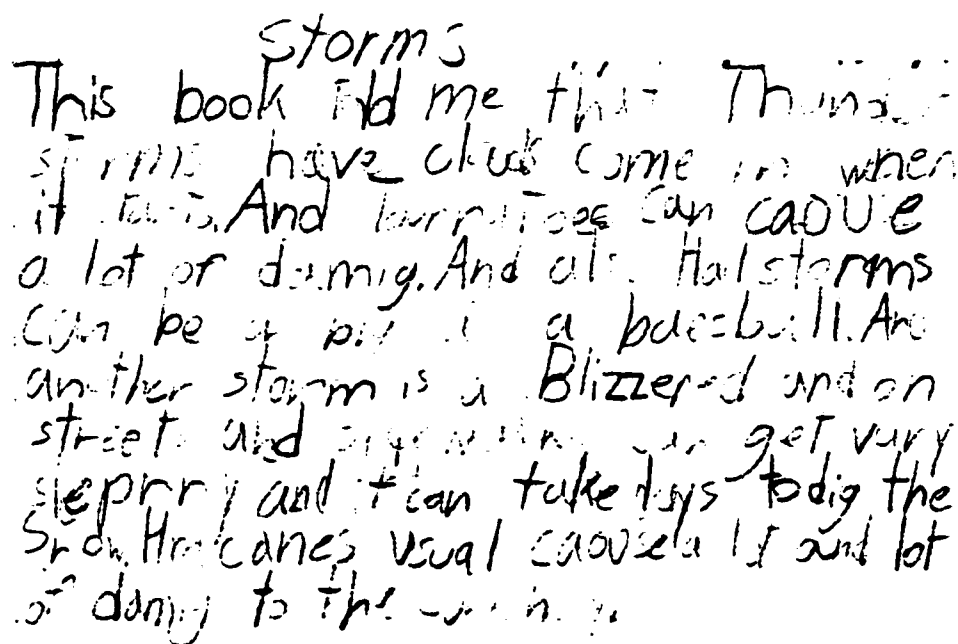


How spiders Eight Legs
 Once a pmtime there was a spider
 he wanted to have strong legs
 grate Hippo gave him legs so he
 could win the race none of the legs
 work until he answered the
 question

Figure 7. Example of Cody's First Retelling of the Narrative Book How Spiders got Eight Legs.

Figure 8 is an example of Cody's last retelling after reading the expository book Storms. It reads as: "This book told me that Thunderstorms have clouds come in when it starts. And Tornadoes can cause a lot of damage. And also Hailstorms can be as big as a baseball. And another storm is a Blizzard and streets and sidewalks can get very slippery and it takes days to dig the snow. Hurricanes usually cause a lot and a lot of damage to the country." This retelling is much longer and shows his improved understanding of

punctuation. In addition, Cody's spelling has improved, which increased the readability of his writing.



Storms
This book told me that Thunder
storms have clouds come in when
it rains. And hurricanes can cause
a lot of damage. And also, hail storms
can be as big as a baseball. And
another storm is a blizzard and on
streets and sidewalks can get very
slippery and it can take days to dig the
snow. Hurricanes usual cause a lot of
damage to the houses.

Figure 8. Example of Cody's Last Retelling of the Expository Book Storms.

Danny

Danny never knocked before coming into the room. Each Wednesday he would open the door and stick his head inside to look around and make sure I was there. He always had a "happy to see you" smile and once he saw me he would step into the room. He would drop his backpack with a thud on the floor and flop down in a chair sighing deeply as if the day at school had zapped every bit of energy out of him. I usually got up and brought the milk and graham crackers to him.

“Thanks Mr. Houge. Did you know we had to do two writing assignments today and one was just because we were too noisy? Well, you wouldn’t know because you weren’t there but we did.” He stopped to chew a cracker and drink some milk.

“And I had a rough day. Just because I was looking up at the ceiling thinking about what I was going to write, my teachers tells me to pull a card. So I do that, thinking, what did I do? And then I go back to my desk and I look up at the ceiling again, because I am thinking, and she tells me to pull another card.”

There was never a loss for words on Wednesday afternoons when I worked with Danny. He loved to tell me about his Tag Football League game he had each Saturday and anything else that happened in his life that he considered worthy of talking about. He spoke in a very casual manner as if we had the rest of the afternoon just to talk. Usually I nodded my head or made a short comment but rarely did I ask questions. It was not necessary with Danny. He kept the conversation going without any assistance.

I looked forward to Wednesday afternoons because it was interesting to listen to Danny. It was as if a little adult was speaking, not an eight-year-old child. A majority of the time I did not hear everything he said because I was writing and getting ready for our reading/writing session. However, one hot afternoon, something he said struck me as funny, but he was very serious.

It had been picture day at school. This was the day a picture crew came in and took head shots of all of the children, and the staff, in the school. Many children had come to school dressed very nice. Danny had on jeans, which was unusual because he usually had on baggy shorts. He also wore a football jersey, which was something he would normally wear, but it was by no means dressy.

As he sat eating and drinking his snack he said, "Did you notice my new jeans?"

"Yes," I said nonchalantly.

"Well, I wore them today because it was picture day. It was a little bit warm but I figure I want to wear my jeans so I look nice when I take my picture. So, tomorrow I'll wear shorts again, but today I wore jeans for pictures. I hope the my picture turns out ok."

I did not have the heart to tell him that the picture he had taken in school was only a head picture (the middle of the chest and the head). The only thing he was going to see was his worn football jersey and his smiling face. He never did show me the picture he took on picture day.

Reading. Danny was a very choppy reader. He attempted to sound out many words he should have known by sight. He would sit beside me, leaning much of his upper body over the book attempting to read. It was exhausting listening to him read and he would regularly tire himself out and have to take a break half way through the book. He would get up and go to the bathroom, get a drink of water, stand and stretch, or start a conversation about something that happened in his life. I allowed these breaks as long as they did not take more than five minutes. I always had to steer him back to the book, but he never complained. He was always very compliant, but it was obvious when he began squirming around in his chair that he was getting tired of reading and writing. Once I became aware of these behaviors I would encourage him and assure him that he was doing a good job.

Danny was clearly in Bear and Barone's (1998) Beginning Reading Stage. He would fingerpoint while reading, was very disfluent and inexpressive when reading, and

read word by word. The initial assessment indicated that he was four to six months below grade level in reading and writing. I started him reading Steck-Vaughn's stage two books, which he remained in for all ten reading/writing sessions. Throughout the reading/writing sessions he scored at the instructional level (accuracy of 90 to 94 percent) a majority of the time and occasionally at the independent level (accuracy of 95 to 100 percent). I elected to keep him in the stage two books throughout our ten sessions because he was not consistently scoring in the independent stage.

The Semantic Webs that were used to introduce the vocabulary assisted his reading tremendously. When he came to a word that I had introduced prior to reading, he recognized the word, immediately felt more comfortable, and would attempt to sound it out, which, almost always, would lead to him reading the word without my assistance. He rarely, if ever, used his pictures as clues for what the word might be. When he would turn to me and say he did not know the word I would direct him to look at the picture. Once he did this he figured out the word, but he never got to the point where he used the pictures as clues without my assistance.

Writing. Like reading, Danny was in the Beginning Writer Stage. He did not know how to spell many words and so spent time inventing the spelling for the words he wanted to write. He spoke aloud to himself while writing so he could write every sound he heard in a word.

His retellings showed his semiphonemic spelling or orthographic knowledge of words. For example he wrote FLOT for float, SPAC for space, WOK for work, and WUS for was. He was a Letter-Name Speller—someone who “may be able to read words with long vowels patterns, but they will write a one-to-one correspondence

between the number of sounds in a word and the number of letters—one letter for each sound (phoneme) that they hear” (Bear & Barone, 1998, p. 76).

In addition, Danny displayed signs of being a Beginning Writer through his responses to the stories. For instance, he always wrote about the literal events in the stories. He also would talk about the stories and sometimes include his personal opinion, however these personal opinions did not appear in his retellings.

Figure 9 is an example of Danny’s first retelling after reading the narrative book Sam’s Seasons. It reads as: “Sam lost his boots. Sam remembered that he put them on and wore them in the spring. In the summer he made sand castles. In the fall he put the leaves in a pile. In the winter he put the boots on and he used them as brakes. He found his boots and they were too small.” This retelling illustrated how much further delayed Danny’s writing was than the other three participants. For example, he did not have any concept of consonant digraphs in words that he could read such as “them,” “they,” and “that.” However, unlike the other participants, he demonstrated his concept of a sentence by including a capital letter at the beginning and a period at the end. Finally, even though his retelling was short and he wrote about the literal events, he told all the events in a sequential order and included all of the seasons.

Sam's Seasons
 Sam had his boots
 and came out to put them on and over
 to the spring. (made) sand
 In the fall he put the sand
 In the winter he put the sand
 He had his boots and shoes.

Figure 9. Example of Danny's First Retelling of the Narrative Book Sam's Seasons.

The sand castle contest
 Families, lots of families, entered a competition.
 They had a family that made
 a sand castle. There was a tall one.
 There was a small one. Jan was
 the judge. The judge had a list of
 names. The judge put the
 names in the sand.

Figure 10. Example of Danny's Last Retelling of the Narrative Book The Sand Castle Contest.

Figure 10 is an example of Danny's last retelling after reading the narrative book The Sand Castle Contest. It reads as: "Families, lots of families, entered a competition.

They had a family that made a big sand castle. There was a tall castle. There was a short castle. One was medium. The lifeguard had a problem deciding who to pick and they picked the small one.” This retelling illustrates how much his writing had improved through his correctly spelled words such as “that,” “they,” and closely spelled “there.” It is now a readable retelling with much improved handwriting. Once again, his retelling remained short and he told the literal events of the story, but he was careful to tell all of the literal events in sequential order, making it a very good retelling.

Conclusion

Overall, these four boys fit the delayed reader mold—someone who responds to the same type of instruction as students who are not behind, and rarely require an elaborate and separate series of teaching methods (Shaywitz, et al., 1992). The reading/writing sessions were designed so that reading and writing complimented each other. In essence, the sessions allowed the children to read and write authentic texts for authentic reasons. The children read authentic narrative and expository texts and retold them as if they were writing to inform a friend or parent what the book was about.

Data Analysis

The purpose of this study was to examine how well four elementary primary grade delayed readers could read and reconstruct narrative and expository texts through written retellings. This study examined elementary primary grade delayed readers’ preferences for narrative and expository texts, the affect the structure of narrative and expository texts had on elementary primary grade delayed readers’ writing, and

elementary primary grade delayed readers' comprehension as demonstrated through written retellings. This section of the study focuses on the analysis of the data collected from the delayed readers' written retellings that they completed following their oral reading of a narrative and expository text. Research was conducted from September through November, during which time thirty-four one-to-one reading/writing sessions were conducted with the four participants. Throughout the reading/writing sessions I collected field notes, running records, and physical artifacts such as written retellings. The following questions guided the study:

- 1a. What do delayed readers prefer regarding narrative and expository text prior to their reading and writing about both types of texts?
- 1b. What do delayed readers prefer regarding narrative and expository text subsequent to their reading and writing about both types of texts?
2. What affect do the patterns of text, of original narrative and expository texts, have on delayed readers' written retellings?
3. How do delayed readers' written retellings reflect their comprehension of narrative and expository text?

The source of analysis for this study was the transcripts of the participants' reasons for preferring either narrative or expository text and participants' written retellings. After reading each book to me, the participants were asked to pretend they were telling someone about this book as they completed a written retelling. This occurred once a week for a period of ten weeks for Bobby and Danny while Andy completed only eight reading/writing sessions and Cody completed only six due to illness and holidays.

This process allowed for a number of comparisons:

1. A comparative analysis of each participant's reasons for preferring to read narrative or expository texts prior to, or as the better-liked after, reading and writing about both texts.
2. A cross case analysis of each of the four participant's reasons for preferring to read narrative or expository texts first, or as the better-liked, after reading and writing about both texts.
3. A comparative analysis of the distinctive linguistic structural patterns of the narrative and expository texts.
4. A comparative analysis of each participants' narrative and expository texts' linguistic structural patterns.
5. A cross case analysis of each of the four participants' written retellings of narrative and expository texts.

Question 1a and 1b

Results

Data for this section of the study were drawn from the answers the four participants provided before reading and writing about a set of pair-it-books. I allowed participants to look through both the narrative and expository texts prior to asking them which text they would prefer to read and write about first and why. Subsequent to reading and writing about each text, the participants were asked which text they liked the best and why. The participants' responses were audiotaped and transcribed.

First Analysis. Data from the transcribed audiotapes were analyzed by sorting their responses into two categories using the within-case analysis (Merriam, 1992). The

two categories were, the responses before reading and writing about each text and responses after reading and writing about each text. After completing the within-case analysis I completed cross-case analyses of each participant's response to each set of pair-it books they read by organizing the responses the participants provided by sets of pair-it books. My intent was twofold; to observe the responses of each participant and look for patterns among sets of pair-it books. For example, did all the participants who read the same set of pair-it books choose the expository or narrative text as the better-liked text?

The final analysis revealed that Andy and Danny chose expository texts before and after reading and writing about each set of pair-it books. Bobby, on the other hand, chose narrative texts seven times and expository texts three times whereas Cody chose to read expository texts three times and narrative texts three times. However, he and Bobby both changed their choice of texts a total of one time each after reading and writing about each text.

The results of this analysis are arranged in Table 3 to provide the reader with a comprehensible outline of the types of texts each participant selected. Each set of pair-it books were placed together so the reader could clearly see which type of text each participant chose before reading and writing about both types of texts and the text they preferred after reading and writing about each text. For example, the stage two pair-it books Season to Season (expository) and Sam's Seasons (narrative) were read by Andy, Bobby, and Danny. Both Andy and Danny chose the expository text before and after they had read and written about each text, however, Bobby chose the narrative text Sam's Seasons. Furthermore, Bobby and Danny were the only two participants to read the pair-

it books Dinosaur Fun Facts (expository) and Dinosaur Show and Tell (narrative), but notice that Danny selected expository text before and after reading and writing about each text whereas Bobby selected to read the narrative text before reading and writing about each text, but after he had read and written about each text he preferred the expository text over the narrative text. This occurred once more with Cody with the pair-it books Storms (expository) and Carlita Ropes the Twister (narrative) except Cody had selected the expository text first and had switched his decision to the narrative text.

Table 3

Cross-Case Analysis of Participants' Selection of Texts

Title of Books	Andy		Bobby		Cody		Danny	
	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A
Season to Season (Exp.)	X	X					X	X
Sam's Seasons (Narr.)			X	X				
Lift Off (Exp.)							X	X
I Can Be Anything (Narr.)			X	X				
Dinosaur Fun Facts (Exp.)				X			X	X
Dinosaur Show and Tell (Narr.)			X					
Wolves (Exp.)			X	X			X	X
Little Red and the Wolf (Narr.)								
Beach Creatures (Exp.)								X
The Sand Castle Contest (Narr.)								X
Pizza For Everyone (Exp.)	X	X			X	X		
Pizza Pokey (Narr.)			X	X				
A Look at Spiders (Exp.)	X	X						
How Spiders Got Eight Legs (Narr.)					X	X		
Storms (Exp.)	X	X			X			
Carlita Ropes the Twister (Narr.)						X		

Note. The letter B = Before and the letter A = After.

Second Analysis. After completing the first analysis, I chose to complete a second analysis that involved sorting the before and after responses into the session each response was given as a guide to determine if a pattern emerged from first

reading/writing session to the last. This procedure yielded the order of responses seen in Table 4.

The sessions were labeled 1 and 2, 3 and 4, and so on because these sessions included a text that was a pair to another text. For example, session one for Danny included the text Season to Season while the second session included the text Sam's Seasons. There were a total of seventeen pair-it books completed among all four participants. The expository text was chosen a total of twelve times as the first text to read, and write about. The selection of texts after reading and writing about each text, also revealed that expository texts were chosen as the preferred text twelve times.

This table clearly illustrates Andy's and Danny's choice of expository texts from their first reading/writing session to their last. Note, however, that Bobby and Cody both changed their choice of texts in the fifth and sixth reading/writing session. At this point no connection can be made to this phenomenon, but I contribute it to their sense of comfort about which text they chose to prefer to read and write about, which they did not possess up to this point due to the fact that they had not met or worked with me prior to this study. Generally, however, no pattern emerged regarding the type of text the participants selected in the first and the final sessions.

Table 4

The Type of Text Each Participant Chose to Read Before and After Reading and Retelling

	Andy		Bobby		Cody		Danny	
Sessions	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After
No. 1 & 2	Exp.	Exp.	Narr.	Narr.	Narr.	Narr.	Exp.	Exp.
No. 3 & 4	Exp.	Exp.	Narr.	Narr.	Exp.	Exp.	Exp.	Exp.
No. 5 & 6	Exp.	Exp.	Narr.	Exp.	Exp.	Narr.	Exp.	Exp.
No. 7 & 8	Exp.	Exp.	Exp.	Exp.			Exp.	Exp.
No. 9 & 10			Narr.	Narr.			Exp.	Exp.

Third Analysis. Using the constant comparative method of data analysis (Merriam, 1992) I reviewed the participants' explanations as to why they chose a particular type of text to read and write about or as the better-liked text, to categorize the content of the explanations. Throughout all the analyses, I implemented investigator triangulation (Stake, 1995) by presenting the participants' explanations to another expert to discuss alternative interpretations. Indeed, these alternative interpretations were fundamental to the findings I present.

In keeping with Merriam's (1992) course of action for constructing categories, data analysis was done in conjunction with data collection. Once all of the data were collected, I conducted an intensive analysis attempting to substantiate, revise, and reconfigure tentative findings.

I began by reading the participants' transcribed explanations for selecting an expository or narrative text and writing down notes, comments, observations, and queries in the margins. After working through the entire set of explanations from each participant, I went back over my marginal notes and comments and tried to group the comments and notes that seemed to go together, keeping in mind that the categories "are

abstractions derived from the data, not the data themselves” (Merriam, 1992, p. 181). In the end, I came up with six categories that reflected what I saw in the explanations the participants provided for why they chose a particular type of text: (a) book’s illustrations (BI) (e.g., “Cause the pictures look real.”); (b) thought it would be, or was, easier to read (ER) (e.g., “I thought it would be easier to read because it’s sort of like a cartoon and cartoons are easier to read.”); (c) had a desire to learn (DL) (e.g., “I just wanted to learn what was going to happen. I think I will learn about rockets.”); (d) thought it would be fun to read (FR) (e.g., “Because they are going to put on a show and it looks funny.”); (e) it is real (IR) (e.g., “Because it is real life.”); and, (f) story based (SB) (e.g., “Because it has more jobs than this one and her brother and her feel like they can be anything.”).

Because each participant may have provided more than one reason for selecting a text their explanation may have been categorized two ways. For example, Andy’s explanation that, “this one is real and this one is not because the pictures look real and that one doesn’t” was categorized as *book’s illustrations* and *it is real*. Danny’s explanation, “because I like to learn new things and I just want to learn new facts about things and I just want to know more about animals” was categorized as *wanted to learn* and *it is real*. The results of the participants’ explanations given before reading and writing about each text can be seen in Table 5. The results of the participants’ explanations given after reading and writing about each text can be seen in Table 6.

Table 5

Categorization of the Explanations Before Reading and Writing about Each Text

	BI	ER	DL	FR	IR	SB
Expository	3	0	4	0	6	0
Narrative	3	2	0	4	0	0

Note. BI = Book's Illustrations; ER = Thought it would be Easier to Read; DL = Had a Desire to Learn;

FR = Thought it would be Fun to Read; IR = It Is Real; SB = Story Based.

Table 6

Categorization of the Explanations After Reading and Writing about Each Text

	BI	ER	DL	FR	IR	SB
Expository	3	0	0	0	8	6
Narrative	0	2	0	0	0	3

Note. BI = Book's Illustrations; ER = Thought it would be Easier to Read; DL = Had a Desire to Learn;

FR = Thought it would be Fun to Read; IR = It Is Real; SB = Story Based.

The expository and narrative texts were selected three times because of the books' illustrations prior to reading and writing about each text. Narrative texts were never selected because of their illustrations after both texts were read, whereas expository texts were selected three times. Conversely, expository texts were never selected because a participant thought they would be easier to read prior to or after they read and wrote about both texts while narrative texts were selected twice because a participant thought they would be easier to read both before and after they read and wrote about each text. Understandably, expository texts were the only texts selected because the participant had a desire to learn or because it was real where narrative texts were the only texts selected because they thought it would be fun to read. Although reading and learning about something that is real in expository texts is exciting and fun to children (Guthrie, Van

Meter, McCann, Wigfield, Bennett, Poundstone, Mary, Faibisch, & Mitchell, 1996) the participants in this study never noted that reason for wanting to read expository texts. Finally, expository texts were selected six times and narrative texts three times after each text was read and written about because of some aspect of the story.

Although they appear obvious, these eight categories of reasons for selecting narrative and expository texts are a reminder that children do have reasons for selecting a type of text. Sometimes it may be as simple as the illustrations looked cool or they thought the text might be easier to read but other times it may be that they wanted to learn or just be entertained. Whatever the reason, it would seem pertinent from these results that teachers and parents be aware of children's reasons for reading different types of texts.

Conclusion

Overall, expository texts were selected more often than narrative before reading and writing and were better liked than narrative. Although narrative was selected by the participants less frequently it reveals that elementary primary grade delayed readers can enjoy both types of texts. In fact, no comments were made regarding their dislike of narrative texts or their desire to read only expository. This finding perhaps serves more to highlight the importance of providing children with both types of texts rather than recommending that teachers and parents avoid books with narrative text. Additionally, since this section of the study found that illustrations, or the way the text looks, and a child's desire to learn, can be significant factors in which text the children want to read, this finding should serve as a guide to adults when exposing children to narrative and

expository texts. Children seem more interested if the text has bright illustrations or photographs or is related to their interests.

In summary, these results provide some evidence that elementary primary grade delayed readers have text specific preferences and can provide logical explanations for their selection. These results also highlight the practicality and effectiveness of permitting children of this age the opportunities to self-select between narrative and expository texts. Ultimately, it is anticipated that providing elementary primary grade children with alternatives to reading only one type of text can not only have a positive impact upon their reading occurrences in the short term, but also have longer term benefits upon the development of young children's reading interests and future reading skills of narrative and expository texts.

Question 2

What affect do the patterns of text of original narrative and expository texts have on delayed readers' written retellings?

In order to examine the nature of the textual patterns of written retellings of the participants, the T-units and simple and complex verbs of each of the texts were first analyzed. This section will: (a) examine the T-units and simple and complex verbs in the original written narrative and expository texts; (b) present an analysis of the nature of the use of T-units and simple and complex verbs in the four participants' written retellings; and, (c) present a cross-analysis of the written retellings of the four participants. This analysis is important in order to determine why delayed readers and writers, like the children in this study, are need of a variety of reading texts, because many times they have a difficult time understanding the meaning of a sentence, organization, and spelling

when writing. If it is determined that their writing and their stylistic features appear to be significantly affected by the text they read then it will make sense to provide them with a variety of reading texts (Eckhoff, 1983). To determine whether or not the participants' writing was affected by the text they read I first had to count the T-units and simple and complex verbs in the original texts, then do the same in the participants' retellings, and finally make a comparison. Because the numbers may become overbearing in this section, I provided graphs to aid in the reading of the numbers.

T-units and Simple and Complex Verbs in the Original Written Texts

Eckhoff (1983) completed an analysis of texts' T-units, and words per T-unit, as well as simple and complex verbs as a means of determining whether linguistic patterns of a text that children read affected their writing. In other words, if there were texts with few words per T-unit, and many simple verbs it was logical to believe those shorter T-units and simple verbs would appear in children's writing. Her findings concluded that this was the case. This method of studying texts and children's writing guided the analysis of the T-units and linguistic patterns of the narrative and expository texts the four participants read and was a means of methodological triangulation (Stake, 1995).

The Patterns in the Narrative and Expository Texts. To begin, the sets of pair-it books were separated into stage two and stage three categories. The number of words, T-units, and simple and complex verbs, for each text were counted and recorded in the front cover of the book. Table 7 gives an example of the type of text that is found in the first part of Dinosaur Show and Tell, a stage two narrative pair-it book with a total of two hundred eleven words, eleven simple verbs, seventeen complex verbs, and twenty-eight T-units, with an average of 7.5 words per T-unit. The purpose of Table 7 is to provide

the reader with an awareness of how T-units and simple and complex verbs were calculated.

Table 7

Linguistic Patterns and T-units in the First Five Pages of the Narrative Level 2 Text

Dinosaur Show and Tell

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 1. | Mrs. Rex smiled at her class. 1 T-unit/1 simple verb |
| 2. | She told the students about something fun. 1 T-unit/1 simple verb |
| 3. | "Tomorrow we will have Show and Tell," she said. 1 T-unit/1 complex verb |
| 4. | "You may bring something special to share." 1 T-unit/1 complex verb |
| 5. | "What can we bring?" asked Dexter. 1 T-unit/1 simple verb |
| 6. | "Bring anything you really like," said Mrs. Rex. 1 T-unit/1 simple verb |
| 7. | Dexter's friends talked about Show and Tell. 1 T-unit/1 simple verb |
| 8. | Dexter could not think of anything to bring. 1 T-unit/1 complex verb |
| 9. | "I will bring my bug collection," thought Dawn. 1 T-unit/1 complex verb |
| 10. | "I have bugs of all sizes." 1 T-unit/1 simple verb |

In order to demonstrate the differences in the T-units and simple and complex verbs in the level two and level three pair-it books Table 8 was provided as an example of the level three narrative text Carlita Ropes the Twister. It was made up of three hundred eighty words, twenty simple verbs, twenty complex verbs, and twenty T-units, with an average of 7.9 words per T-unit.

Table 8

Linguistic Patterns and T-units in the First Two Pages of the Narrative Level 2 Text**Carlita Ropes the Twister**

1. Once there was a girl who was stronger than the wind and faster than a horse. 2 T-units/2 complex verbs
2. Her name was Carla. 1 T-unit/1 simple verb
3. She was small and thin, so everyone called her Carlita, which meant little Carla. 2 T-units/1 simple verb and 1 complex verb
4. This is her Story. 1 T-unit/1 simple verb
5. Carlita wanted to be a cowgirl. 1 T-unit/1 simple verb
6. Her father taught her to ride a horse, to herd cattle, and to rope animals. 1 T-unit/1 simple verb
7. Soon she was jumping from one galloping horse to another. 1 T-unit/1 complex verb
8. One time Carlita flipped eight times in the air without messing up her hair. 1 T-unit/1 simple verb
9. Carlita was amazing. 1 T-unit/1 complex verb

In an attempt to provide the reader with a sense of T-units and simple and complex verbs in the expository texts Table 9 and Table 10 illustrate the type of text found in the first part of a level two and three expository text. Dinosaur Fun Facts is a stage two expository pair-it book with a total of eighty-three words, three simple verbs, twelve complex words, and fifteen T-units with an average of 4.9 words per T-unit.

Table 9

Linguistic Patterns and T-units in the First Ten Pages of Expository Level 2 TextDinosaur Fun Facts

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 1. | Some dinosaurs were tall. 1 T-unit/1 complex verb |
| 2. | Brachiosaurus was as tall as a tower. 1 T-unit/1 complex verb |
| 3. | Some dinosaurs were small. 1 T-unit/1 complex verb |
| 4. | Heterodontosaurus was as small as a dog. 1 T-unit/1 complex verb |
| 5. | Some dinosaurs were long. 1 T-unit/1 complex verb |
| 6. | Stegosaurus was longer than a camper. 1 T-unit/1 complex verb |
| 7. | Some dinosaurs were heavy. 1 T-unit/1 complex verb |
| 8. | Triceratops was as heavy as 2 elephants. 1 T-unit/1 complex verb |
| 9. | Some dinosaurs ate only plants. 1 T-unit/1 simple verb |
| 10. | Plant eaters had very flat teeth. 1 T-unit/1 complex verb |

Table 10 is an example of a level three expository text titled Storms. It has three hundred sixty-four words, twenty-four simple verbs, twenty-two complex verbs, and forty-six T-units with an average of 7.9 words per T-unit.

Table 10

Linguistic Patterns and T-units in the First Two Pages of the Expository Level 3 TextStorms

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 1. | Thunderstorms have lighting and thunder. 1 T-unit/1 simple verb |
| 2. | Lightning is the bright flash in a thunderstorm. 1 T-unit/1 simple verb |
| 3. | The flash is an electric charge that heats up the air. 1 T-unit/1 simple verb |
| 4. | The hot air makes a booming sound called thunder. 1 T-unit/1 simple verb |
| 5. | Heavy rain often comes with a thunderstorm. 1 T-unit/1 simple verb |
| 6. | Tornadoes are powerful storms. 1 T-unit/1 complex verb |
| 7. | They have very strong winds. 1 T-unit/1 complex verb |
| 8. | These winds blow around and around in a circle. 1 T-unit/1 simple verb |
| 9. | They form a cloud shaped like a cone. 1 T-unit/1 simple verb |
| 10. | Sometimes the cloud drops down and moves along the ground. 1 T-unit/1 simple verb |
| 11. | Then it damages nearly everything in its path. 1 T-unit/1 simple verb |
| 12. | Tornadoes are sometimes called twisters. 1 T-unit/1 complex verb |

In the narrative texts of the pair-it books the T-units were longer and connect to one another in a chain fashion, telling the story that is comprised of dinosaurs as the characters in the first text and fictional individuals in the second. However, the expository texts were comprised of shorter T-units that are statements providing information about the illustrations. Each page had text that was unique to that page and its illustration and was not related to the text on the previous page. Figure 11 is a graph that was created so as to compare the narrative and expository texts' T-units and simple and complex verbs.

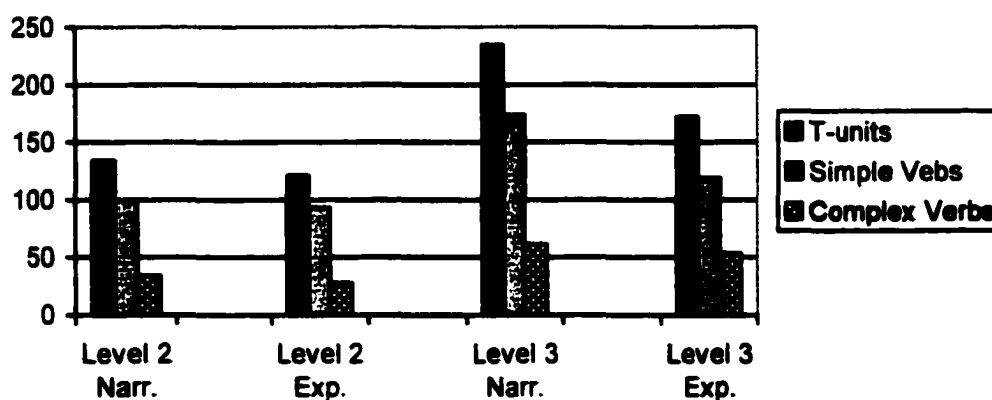


Figure 11. Analysis of the Level Two and Level Three Narrative and Expository Texts.

The narrative level two pair-it books had one hundred thirty-four T-units, one hundred simple verbs, and thirty-four complex verbs. The expository level two pair-it books had one hundred twenty-one T-units, ninety-three simple verbs, and twenty-eight complex verbs. The narrative level three pair-it books had two hundred thirty-five T-units, one hundred seventy-four simple verbs, and sixty-one complex verbs. The expository level three pair-it books had one hundred seventy-two T-units, one hundred nineteen simple verbs, and fifty-three complex verbs.

Overall, the narrative texts contain thirteen more T-units than the expository texts for level two, seven more simple verbs, and six more complex verbs. For level three, the narrative texts contained eighty-three more T-units than the expository texts, fifty-five more simple verbs, and eight more complex verbs. In addition, the level two narrative texts averaged 5.7 words per T-unit and the expository texts had 6.0 words per T-unit. For level three narrative texts the average length of a T-unit was 6.5 words and for expository texts it was 8.4 words per T-unit.

Conclusion

The pattern to be recognized among the narrative and expository texts was that the narrative texts contained more words, T-units, and simple and complex verbs. However, words per T-unit for the narrative texts was less than for expository text. This may be due to the publisher attempting to simplify sentence structure with the intention of easing the process of learning to read (Eckhoff, 1983).

Comparison of the Original Texts' and Participants' Writings' T-units and Simple and Complex Verbs

In order to facilitate the reader's comparison of the participants' T-units and simple and complex verbs with the T-units and simple and complex verbs of the original texts I prepared Table 11. This was done prior to presenting the analysis of the participants' writing so that the reader has the opportunity to look comparison of both the original text and the participants' written text before looking at the individual analysis of each of the participants' writing. This outline presents the number of T-units and simple and complex verbs in each of the original texts as well as the T-units and simple and complex verbs in the participants' written retellings of that particular text.

Table 11

Comparison of the T-units and Simple and Complex Verbs in the Original Text and Written Retellings

Title of the Original Text and Participants' Retellings	T-units	Simple Verbs	Complex Verbs
<u>Season to Season</u> (Level 2 Exp. Text)	15	14	1
Andy's 1 st Retelling— <u>Season to Season</u>	5	5	0
Bobby's 2 nd Retelling— <u>Season to Season</u>	7	4	3
Danny's 1 st Retelling— <u>Season to Season</u>	5	5	0
<u>Sam's Seasons</u> (Level 2 Narr. Text)	21	21	0
Andy's 2 nd Retelling— <u>Sam's Seasons</u>	9	9	0
Bobby's 1 st Retelling— <u>Sam's Seasons</u>	7	4	3
Danny's 2 nd Retelling— <u>Sam's Seasons</u>	9	9	0
<u>Lift Off</u> (Level 2 Exp. Text)	15	15	0
Bobby's 4 th Retelling— <u>Lift Off</u>	5	5	0
Danny's 3 rd Retelling— <u>Lift Off</u>	7	7	0
<u>I Can Be Anything</u> (Level 2 Narr. Text)	28	28	0
Bobby's 3 rd Retelling— <u>I Can Be Anything</u>	7	7	0
Danny's 4 th Retelling— <u>I Can Be Anything</u>	5	5	0
<u>Dinosaur Fun Facts</u> (Level 2 Exp. Text)	15	3	12
Bobby's 6 th Retelling— <u>Dinosaur Fun Facts</u>	5	1	4
Danny's 5 th Retelling— <u>Dinosaur Fun Facts</u>	7	4	3
<u>Dinosaur Show and Tell</u> (Level 2 Narr. Text)	28	11	17
Bobby's 5 th Retelling— <u>Dinosaur Show and Tell</u>	6	3	3
Danny's 6 th Retelling— <u>Dinosaur Show and Tell</u>	5	1	4
<u>Wolves</u> (Level 2 Exp. Text)	29	15	14
Bobby's 7 th Retelling— <u>Wolves</u>	8	2	6
Danny's 7 th Retelling— <u>Wolves</u>	7	4	3
<u>Little Red and the Big Bad Wolf</u> (Level 2 Narr. Text)	36	32	4
Bobby's 8 th Retelling— <u>Little Red and the Big Bad</u>	5	3	2
Danny's 8 th Retelling— <u>Little Red and the Big Bad</u>	11	9	2
<u>Beach Creatures</u> (Level 2 Exp. Text)	47	46	1
Danny's 9 th Retelling— <u>Beach Creatures</u>	5	5	0

Table 11 Continued

Comparison of the T-units and Simple and Complex Verbs in the Original Text and Written Retellings

<u>Sand Castle Contest</u> (Level 2 Narr. Text)	21	8	13
Danny's 10 th Retelling— <u>Sand Castle Contest</u>	6	3	3
<u>A Look at Spiders</u> (Level 3 Exp. Text)	97	80	17
Andy's 3 rd Retelling— <u>A Look at Spiders</u>	7	6	1
Cody's 2 nd Retelling— <u>A Look at Spiders</u>	6	6	0
<u>How Spiders Got Eight Legs</u> (Level 3 Narr. Text)	130	85	45
Andy's 4 th Retelling— <u>How Spiders Got Eight Legs</u>	10	8	2
Cody's 1 st Retelling— <u>How Spiders Got Eight Legs</u>	3	3	0
<u>Pizza for Everyone</u> (Level 3 Exp. Text)	29	15	14
Andy's 5 th Retelling— <u>Pizza for Everyone</u>	7	4	3
Bobby's 9 th Retelling— <u>Pizza for Everyone</u>	5	3	2
Cody's 3 rd Retelling— <u>Pizza for Everyone</u>	8	2	6
<u>Pizza Pokey</u> (Level 3 Narr. Text)	53	53	0
Andy's 6 th Retelling— <u>Pizza Pokey</u>	9	7	2
Bobby's 10 th Retelling— <u>Pizza Pokey</u>	9	6	3
Cody's 4 th Retelling— <u>Pizza Pokey</u>	11	11	0
<u>Storms</u> (Level 3 Exp. Text)	46	24	22
Andy's 7 th Retelling— <u>Storms</u>	13	9	4
Cody's 5 th Retelling— <u>Storms</u>	7	3	4
<u>Carlita Ropes the Twister</u>	51	36	16
Andy's 8 th Retelling— <u>Carlita Ropes the Twister</u>	5	2	3
Cody's 6 th Retelling— <u>Carlita Ropes the Twister</u>	7	5	2

Table 11 outlines how the patterns in the original texts were followed in the participants' writing. For example, in the text Season to Season there were thirteen more simple verbs than complex verbs. Of the three participants' who completed a written

retelling about this text all of three of them included more simple than complex verbs. In the text Lift Off there were no complex verbs and when Bobby and Danny wrote about this text they also did not include any complex verbs.

Analysis of Participants' Writing

In this section, I completed a within-case analysis of each of the participants' writing for each session to determine the number of words per retelling, T-units, words per-T-unit, and simple and complex verbs. Initially, each of the participants' written retellings was sorted into narrative and expository categories. Next, I counted the number of words, T-units, and simple and complex verbs in each of their retellings. I then charted the information for each participant and completed a cross-case analysis of the results. Figures 10-17 are the results for each participant.

Figure 12 illustrates that Andy included no complex verbs in his first two retellings; however, in his third retelling he included one complex verb. In his 5th retelling he began to include more complex verbs in his expository retelling than his narrative retelling and this pattern continued until his last retelling.

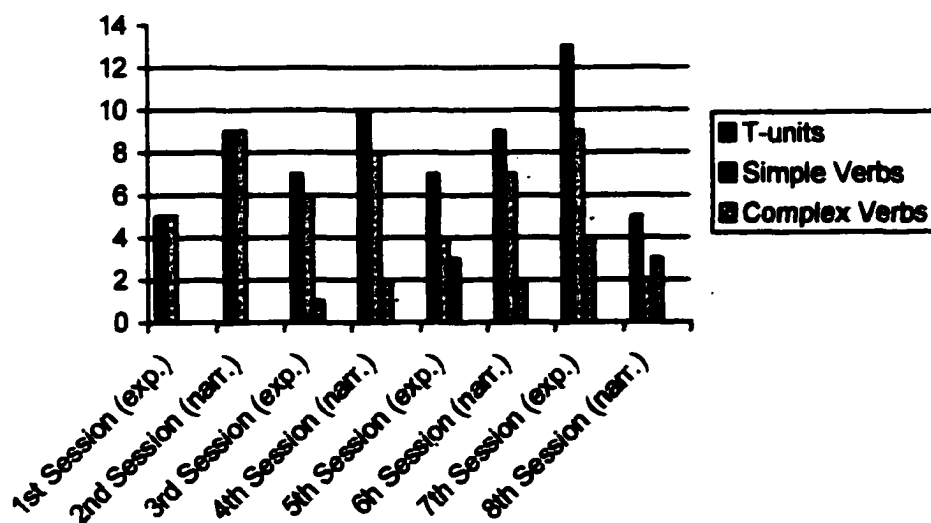


Figure 12. Analysis of Andy's Written Retellings for Each Session

Figure 13 shows that there were thirty-six T-units in Andy's narrative retellings and thirty-two in his expository retellings. In addition, he had twenty-six simple and nine complex verbs in his narrative retelling and nineteen simple and seven complex verbs in his expository. Finally, he wrote a total of two hundred twelve words in his narrative retellings (an average of 6.4 words per T-unit) and one hundred ninety words in his expository (an average of 5.9 words per T-unit).

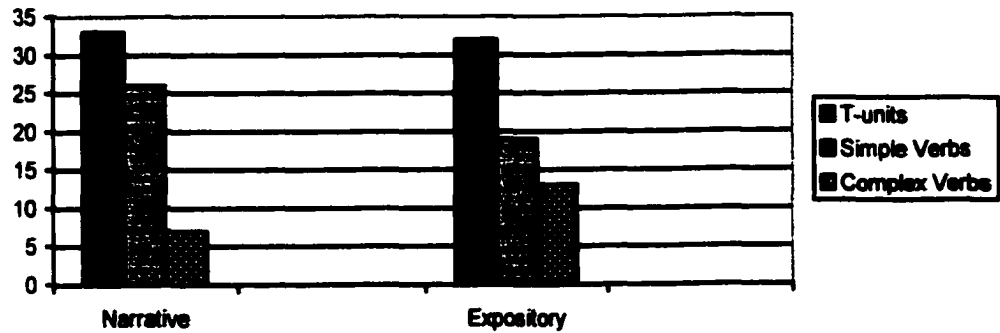


Figure 13. Analysis of Andy's Written Retellings

Figure 14 is a graphic image of Bobby's retellings that shows there were no consistent patterns in his use of T-units and simple and complex verbs for either narrative or expository retellings. In his first two retellings he included complex verbs but did not include them in his third and fourth retellings. In his fifth and sixth retellings he had more T-units and simple verbs in his narrative retelling but less complex verbs. In his seventh and eighth retellings he had a similar pattern except there were eight T-units in his expository retelling and only five in his narrative retelling.

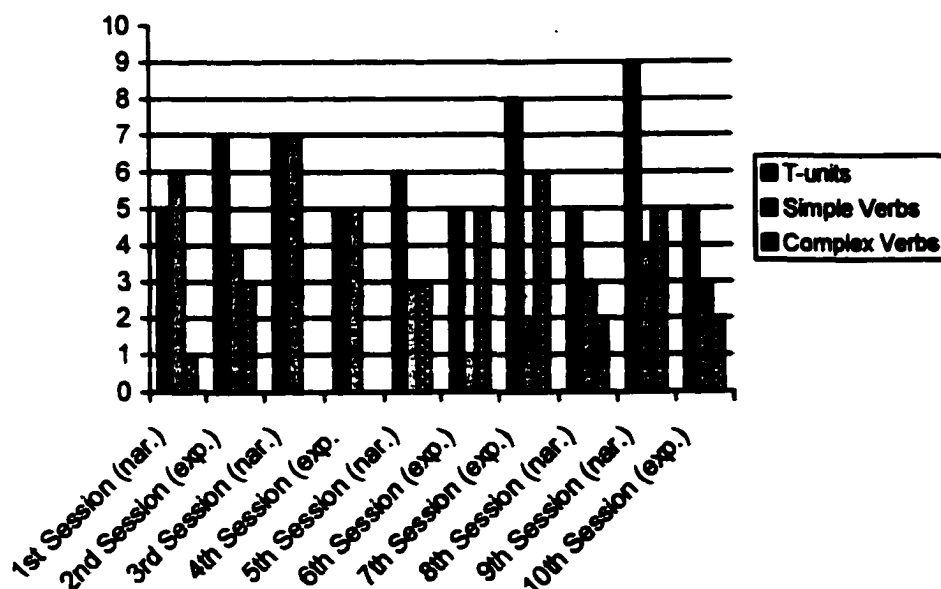


Figure 14. Analysis of Bobby's Written Retellings for Each Session

Figure 15 shows that Bobby included thirty-four T-units in his narrative retelling and twenty-eight in his expository. Furthermore, he utilized twenty-four simple and fifteen complex verbs in his narrative retelling and ten simple and thirteen complex verbs in his expository. Lastly, Bobby wrote two hundred thirty-six words in his narrative retellings (an average of 6.9 words per T-unit) and two hundred twenty-one words in his expository (an average of 7.9 words per T-unit).

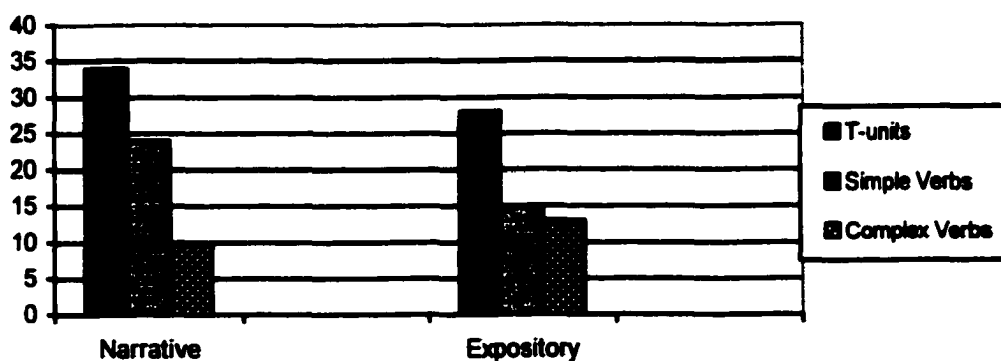


Figure 15. Analysis of Bobby's Written Retellings.

Figure 16 is an analysis of Cody's retellings for each session that shows he began writing short retellings with no complex verbs. By the time he had completed his third retelling of an expository text he used complex verbs more than simple verbs. This look at each of Cody's sessions shows a growth from session one to session six.

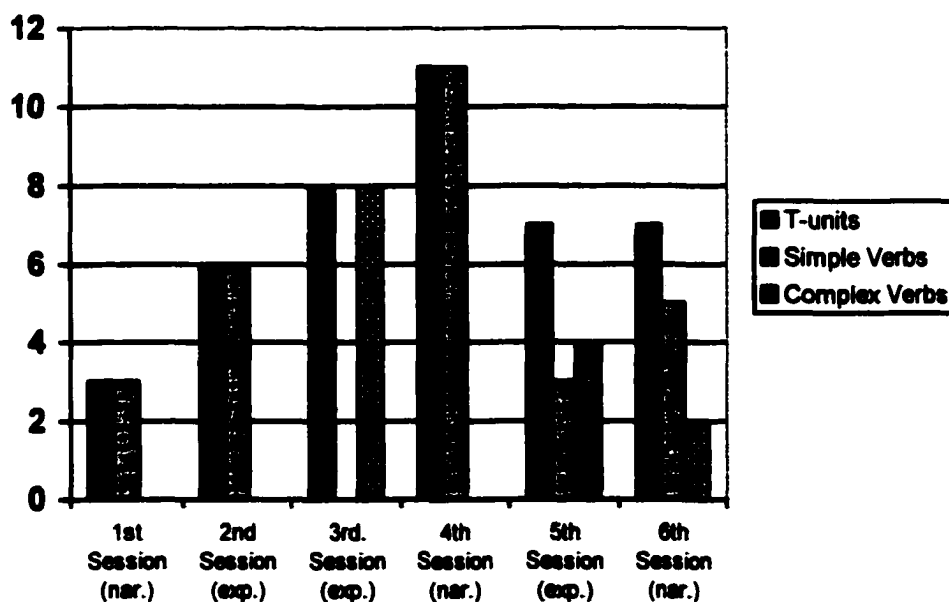


Figure 16. Analysis of Cody's Written Retellings for Each Session

Figure 17 shows that Cody composed twenty-one T-units in his 3 narrative retellings and twenty-one in his 3 expository. He totaled nineteen simple verbs and two complex verbs in his narrative and two simple and twelve complex verbs in his expository. In the end, he wrote one hundred seventy words in his narrative retellings (an average of 8.1 words per T-unit) and one hundred seventy-five words in his expository (an average of 8.3 words per T-unit).

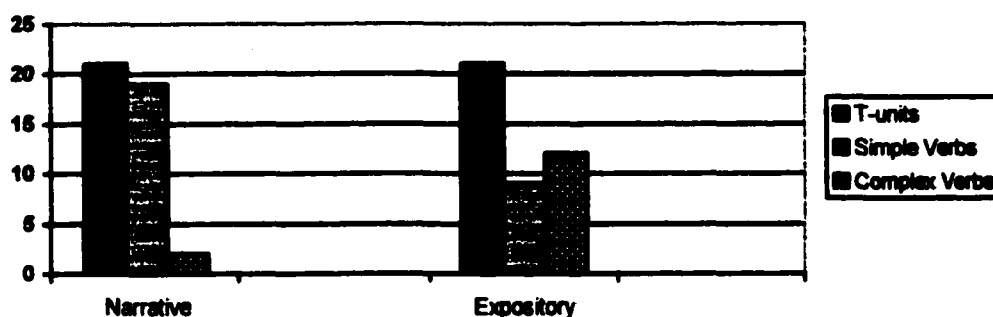


Figure 17. Analysis of Cody's Written Retellings.

Figure 18 is a graphic picture of Danny's retellings that shows that even though he selected expository texts over the narrative texts for each session his retelling with the most words and T-units was a narrative retelling in his eighth session. In addition, this graph shows that he did not begin to include any complex verbs until his fifth retelling. Overall, Danny made growth as a writer by beginning to include a balanced number of simple and complex verbs.

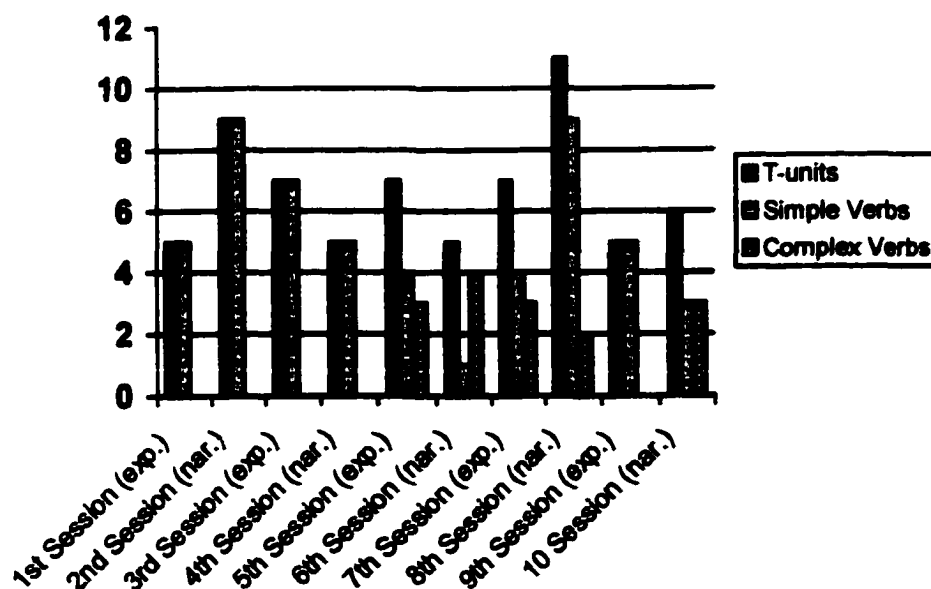


Figure 18. Analysis of Danny's Written Retellings for Each Session

Figure 19 shows that Danny had thirty-six T-units in his narrative retelling and thirty-one in his expository. Moreover, he had twenty-seven simple and twenty-four complex verbs in his narrative retellings and nine simple and seven complex verbs in his expository. Finally, he wrote three hundred three words in his narrative retellings (an average of 8.42 words per T-unit) and two hundred forty-two words for expository (an average of 7.8 words per T-unit).

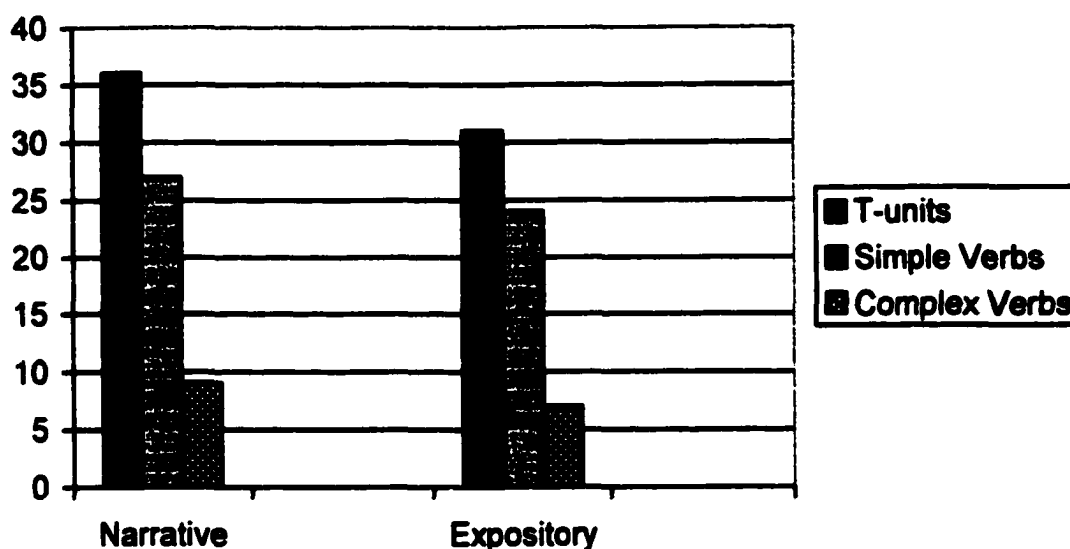


Figure 19. Analysis of Danny's Written Retellings.

Combined, the four participants wrote two hundred-thirty six T-units, which amounted to one hundred twenty-four in narrative retellings and one hundred twelve in expository. They included ninety-six simple and sixty-seven complex verbs in their narrative retellings and twenty-eight simple and forty-five complex verbs in their expository. In the end, they wrote nine hundred twenty-one words in their narrative retellings (an average of 7.4 words per T-unit) and eight hundred twenty-eight words in their expository (an average of 7.4 words per T-unit). See Figure 20 for a graphic outline of the final results.

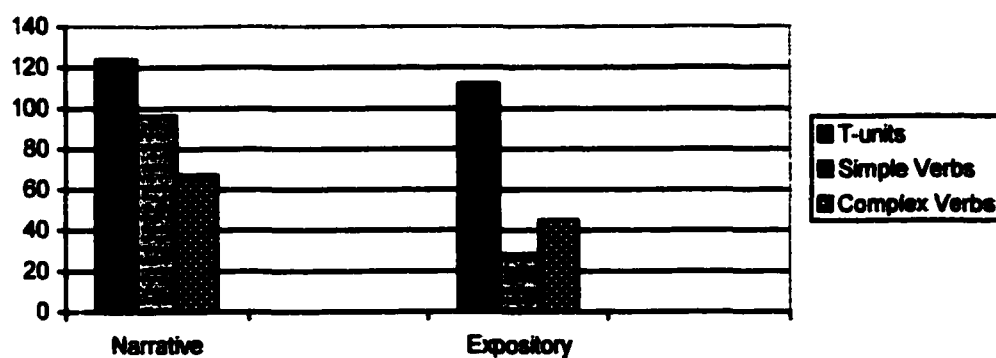


Figure 20. Analysis of the Participants' T-units and Simple and Complex Verbs for Their Narrative and Expository Retellings.

Figure 21 shows the results after the participants' retellings were broken into level two and level three texts. The level two narrative written retellings had sixty-five T-units, fifty-two simple verbs, and thirteen complex verbs. The level two expository written retellings had fifty-nine T-units, forty-three simple verbs, and sixteen complex verbs. The level three narrative written retellings had fifty-four T-units, forty-one simple verbs, and thirteen complex verbs. The level three expository written retellings had fifty-three T-units, twenty-four simple verbs, and twenty-nine complex verbs.

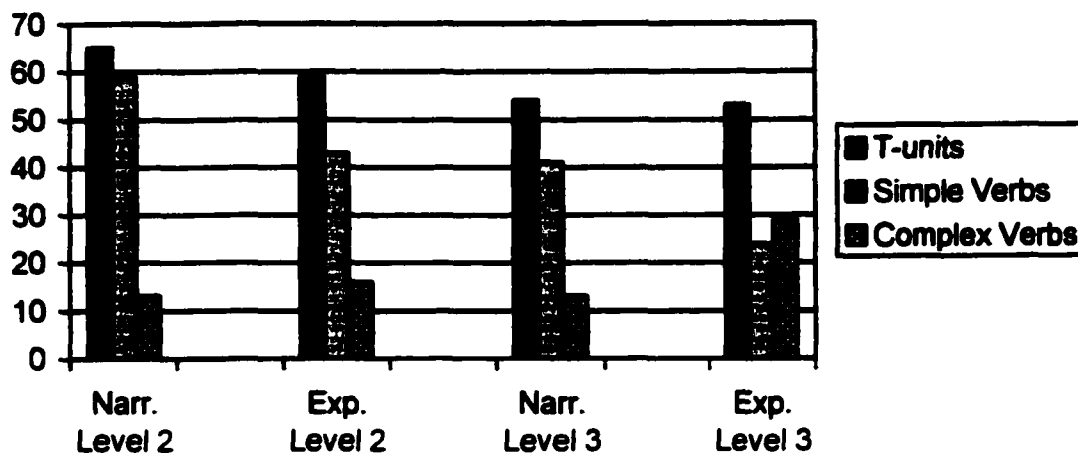


Figure 21. Analysis of the Participants' Level Two and Level Three Narrative and Expository Retellings.

Taken as a whole, there were six more T-units in the narrative level two retellings than expository, nine more simple verbs but three less complex verbs. The narrative level three retellings had only one more T-unit than the expository, seventeen more simple verbs, but sixteen less complex verbs. In addition, the narrative level two retellings averaged 7.2 words per T-unit and the expository retellings averaged 7.7 words per T-unit. For level three narrative retellings the average length of a T-unit was 7.1 words and for expository retellings also averaged 7.1 words per T-unit.

Conclusion

Since there were a total of twenty level two written retellings and only fourteen level three it is not feasible to compare level two to level three. However, the pattern of there being more simple verbs than complex verbs holds true for both levels except for the expository retellings in level three where there were five more complex verbs than simple. Overall, the narrative written retellings were lengthier than the expository

retellings, although it is important to keep in mind that the original narrative texts were lengthier as well and maintain a pattern of more simple verbs than complex.

The findings for this section of the study that attempted to answer question number two showed that the writing of the participants studied contained features of their original reading texts. The narrative written retellings of all four participants were lengthier, had more T-units, contained more simple than complex verbs, and were composed of shorter T-units reminiscent of their original narrative reading texts. The expository written retellings were shorter, had fewer T-units, contained fewer simple and complex verbs, and were composed of lengthier T-units resembling the exact pattern as the original expository reading texts.

Although this study was exploratory it would seem from these findings that there is a definite need for more emphasis on the type of text children read and write about. Not only is reading important for itself, but the strong relation of reading to writing suggests that the development of reading may also enhance writing (Tierney & Pearson, 1983). Delayed readers and writers, like the children in this study, are especially in need of a variety of reading texts, as they seem to have great difficulty with a sense of sentence, organization, and spelling when writing. Thus, their writing and their stylistic features appear to be significantly affected by the text they read.

Perhaps one of the greatest needs in reading and writing with elementary primary grade children, alongside word recognition and word meaning, is exposure to assorted types of texts. It would be well to experiment with the use of various types of texts with young children—ones that entice children to read them with beautiful illustrations and readable text. The relationship demonstrated in this study between the text children read

and the text they write indicate the importance of providing children with a variety of narrative and expository reading texts.

Question 3

How do delayed readers' written retellings reflect their comprehension of narrative and expository text?

To explore this question, an analysis of the four elementary primary age delayed readers' written retellings of narrative and expository texts are discussed. Each written retelling was given a richness score. These scores are reported beginning with the highest level of 5 where participants include all major points, relevant supplementations, and show high degree of coherence, completeness, and comprehensibility. Level 4 is a level where participants include all major points, relevant supplementations or none, and show good degree of coherence, completeness, and comprehensibility. The next level is level 3 where participants include some major ideas, relevant supplementations or none, and show adequate coherence, completeness, and comprehensibility. Next is level 2 where participants relate a few major ideas, include irrelevant supplementations, show some degree of coherence, completeness, and the whole is somewhat comprehensible. Finally there is level 1 where participants relate details only, irrelevant supplementations or none, low degree of coherence, incomplete, and incomprehensible.

I scored retellings with two volunteers who were currently graduate students and previously reading specialists. They were trained using a format suggested by Meredith et al. (1992) during three sessions that totaled approximately five hours. Each volunteer rater evaluated twelve retellings including ten that were scored by all raters. This meant that more than one rater evaluated approximately 24% of the retellings.

Once the interraters finished coding the retellings with a richness score I tabulated their scores and placed a richness score for each of the remaining twenty-two retellings. The interrater reliability for richness scores of the retellings was 87% with any differences discussed and resolved.

Results.

The four participants completed thirty-four written retellings. Half of their retellings were retellings of narrative texts and the other half expository texts. Figure 22 reveals that the richness scores of the participants remain fairly evenly distributed among scores 2, 3, and 4. The fourteen scores of 3, six scores of 4, and one score of 5 indicate that a little more than half of the time the participants did not have any difficulty recalling textual information.

Looking at each participant's scores provides an even narrower concentration on the change of scores over the ten sessions. For example, Andy's received scores of 3 for all of his retellings except session 3 (score of 2) and 7 (score of 5). Bobby's scores fluctuated from a low score of 1 to a high score of 3. His first retelling received a score of 2, his next retelling received a score of 3 and then he score a level 2 for the next three sessions. During the last five sessions he fluctuated between scores of 1 to 3. Cody received a score of 2 in his first session, a score of 3 in his second session and then moved to a score of 4 for the next four sessions. His scores consistently increased. Danny's scores resemble Bobby's score. They fluctuated between 2 and 4 and resembled no consistent pattern.

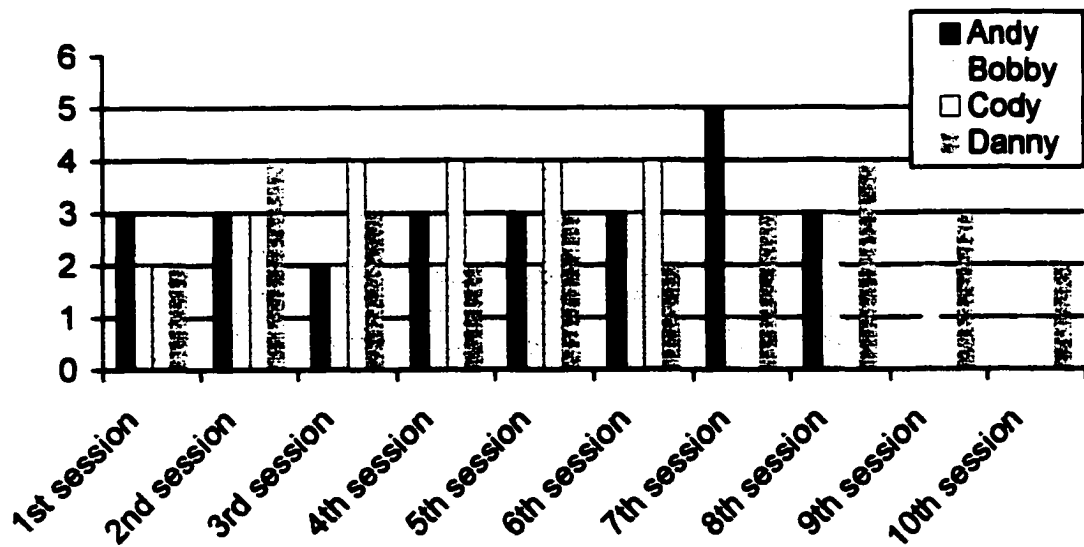


Figure 22. Richness Scores of the Four Participants' Written Retellings

Taking into consideration that there were two types of retellings—those that retold narrative texts and those that retold expository texts—I divided the two types of retellings into a narrative and expository category and completed an analysis of their richness scores. There were no narrative retellings that received a score of 5, four that received a score of 4, five that were given a score of 3, seven that were given a score of 2, and one obtained a score of 1. Of the expository retellings, one received a score of 5, two were given a score of 4, nine were given a score of 3, four were given a score of 2, and one obtained a score of 1 (See Figure 23).

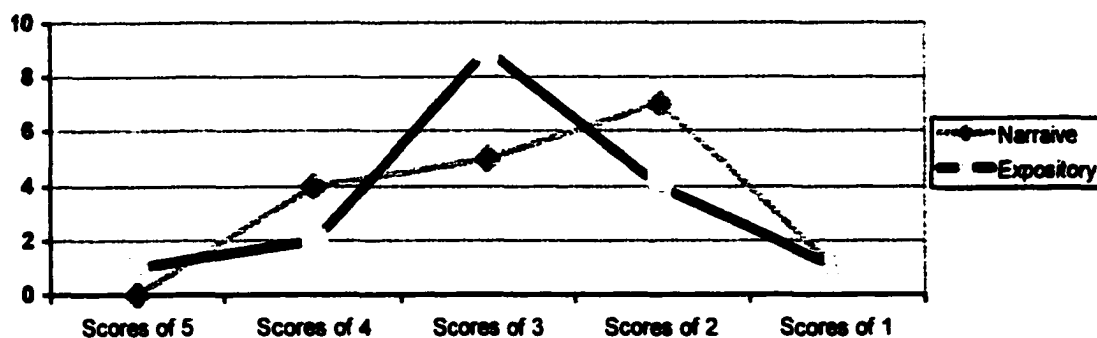


Figure 23. The Richness Scores of the Narrative and Expository Written Retellings.

These results demonstrate that the delayed readers in this study were very capable of writing about narrative and expository texts in a fashion that adequately demonstrated their comprehension of the text. The scores were relatively evenly distributed for both the narrative and expository texts supporting the endorsement for allowing elementary primary grade delayed readers the opportunity to read and write about narrative and expository texts.

Examples of Retellings

In the next section, selected participants' written retellings illustrate each level of richness seen in Figure 22 and 23. These samples exemplify typical elementary primary age delayed readers' responses at each level. Each response at each level of the richness scale will be briefly described and analyzed.

Sample of the Participants' Retellings at Each Level of Richness. My first example is a retelling that was completed by Andy during his seventh session after he read the expository text Storms. This was the only retelling that received the score of 5. Andy wrote:

Thunderstorms are dangerous. People can die! People get shocked.

Tornadoes are really dangerous. They have hard winds. They can kill people too! Tornadoes are also called a twister. Hurricanes do a lot of damage too. They are worser! Ice storms are dangerous too. The rain freezes and makes ice and on a sidewalk it is slippery. A blizzard is when there is snow everywhere in the air.

Andy included all major points such as storms being dangerous. He also included supplementations such as people can get killed and ice on the sidewalk is slippery.

Finally, he wrote with a high degree of coherence, completeness, and comprehensibility.

Six of the participants' retellings received a score of 4. These retellings included all of the major points, relevant supplementations or none; showed some good degree of coherence, completeness, and comprehensibility. Danny completed this retelling during his seventh session after reading the narrative text Little Red and the Big Bad Wolf:

Little Red Riding Hood was going to her Grandma's. When Little Red Riding Hood stayed on the path she walked by the Butcher. The Butcher gave her some roast. The Little Red Riding Hood ran into the Baker and the Baker gave her some bread. Then she ran into the Farmer. The Farmer gave her some ears of corn. Little Red Riding hood couldn't carry all of her food so she asked the wolf if he will help and he helped her. So from that day on the Big Bad Wolf was called the Big Nice Wolf.

Danny's retelling integrated all major points such as the people Little Red met on her way to Grandma's and what each of those people gave her. He had no relevant

supplementations but showed some degree of coherence, completeness, and comprehensibility.

Fourteen of the participants' retellings received the score of 3. This meant that their retellings included some major ideas, relevant supplementations or none, adequate coherence, completeness, and comprehensibility. Cody wrote this retelling during his second session after reading the expository text A Look at Spiders:

A spider can be as big as a parents hand and can be as small as a tip of a pencil. They live in home, in deserts, and forests. They eat insects like flies and other insects. A wolf spider is poisonous.

This retelling included only some major ideas such as the size of spiders, where they live, and what they eat. There were no supplementations. However, there was adequate coherence, completeness, and comprehensibility.

Eleven participants' retellings were given a score of 2. This score indicated that the retelling related a few major ideas, included irrelevant supplementations, showed some degree of coherence and completeness, and the whole was somewhat comprehensible. Bobby wrote this retelling during his ninth session after reading the narrative text Pizza Pokey:

The dog was a Disco Dog. The boy said do the pizza pokey. They rolled the dough out. Sauce was put on. Then the sauce was put on. Then they spices were put on. Then they put cheese on the pizza. Then they cooked it. Then they ate it!

Bobby's retelling related only a few major ideas such as the dough being rolled out and sauce, spices, and cheeses being placed on the dough. In addition, the retelling

showed only some degree of coherence and completeness and on the whole was only somewhat comprehensible.

Two of the participants' retellings were given a score of 1. This meant the retelling related details only, had irrelevant supplementations or none, low degree of coherence, and was incomplete, and incomprehensible. Bobby wrote this retelling during his tenth session after reading the expository text Pizza for Everyone:

The largest pizza was 120 feet. That's as long as a baseball diamond. My favorite pizza is pepperoni and sausage. They taught me about China and Italy. They taught me about shaping dough with there hands.

Conclusion

Examples of four different elementary primary grade delayed readers' written retellings after reading narrative and expository texts demonstrates that elementary primary grade delayed readers can sufficiently write about narrative and expository texts with a generally good sense of comprehension. Elementary primary grade delayed readers who are limited to reading and writing about one type of text such as narrative, therefore, are limited in their opportunities to stretch their thinking beyond one type of story format with familiar words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs, and so forth. Their understanding of other types of texts undoubtedly will provide them with a smoother transition into reading these types of texts as they enter into the intermediate grades. By allowing, indeed, encouraging and delighting in early reading and writing about narrative and expository texts, teachers of all young children allow the opportunity for increased reading/writing success.

Finally, it is vital that we keep in mind that this was a study of delayed readers and writers who are commonly placed in the bottom reading group in their classrooms. In this study they adequately demonstrated their ability to read and write about narrative and expository texts. For that reason, teachers must realize that if the children in their low reading group can successfully read and write about narrative and expository texts, then all children in their classrooms should be able to do the equivalent of their delayed readers.

Intertextuality

The use of Venn diagrams in this study was to determine if the participants made intertextual connections between narrative and expository texts. Intertextuality appears to be vital to meaning-making and the construction of complex understandings about text and life (Short, 1992). Students can, and do, comprehend texts encountered in school through making intertextual links. However, this linking is not persistent in schools or promoted by instructional practices (Short, 1992) and unfortunately not with delayed readers (Allington, 1983).

The participants' intertextual links were tested once they had read and completed a written retelling of a set of pair-it books. Participants were asked to tell me how the narrative and expository texts were alike and different. I placed their answers in a Venn diagram as they watched. Additionally, I read their responses back to them to assure I had recorded their answers correctly. Examples of one Venn diagram from each participant can be seen in Figures 24-27.

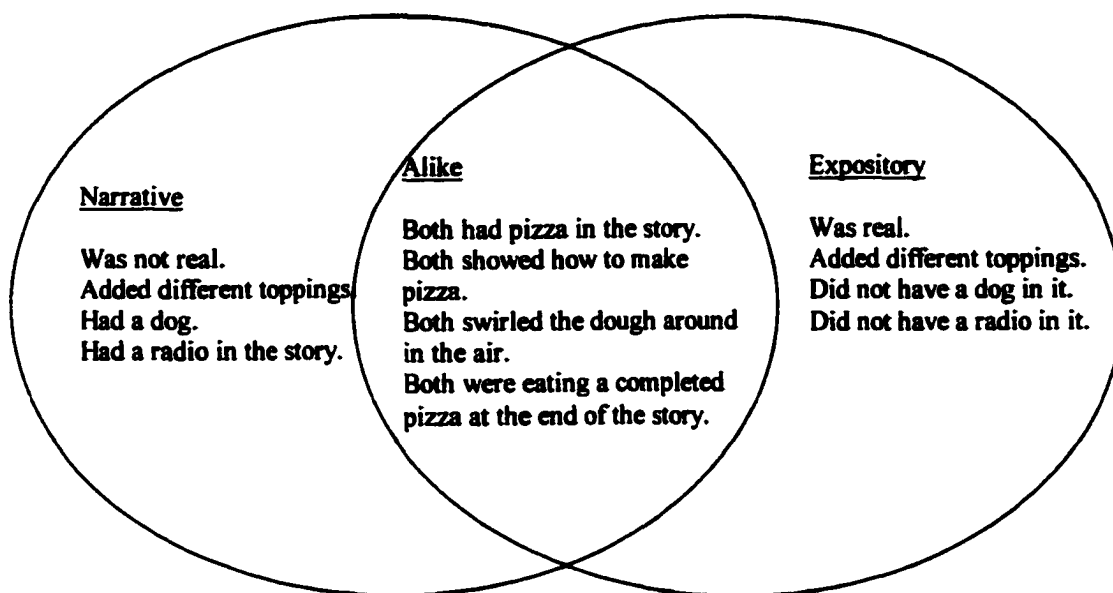


Figure 24. Example of the Intertextual Links of Andy Shown in a Venn Diagram after Reading and writing about Pizza Pokey and Pizza for Everyone.

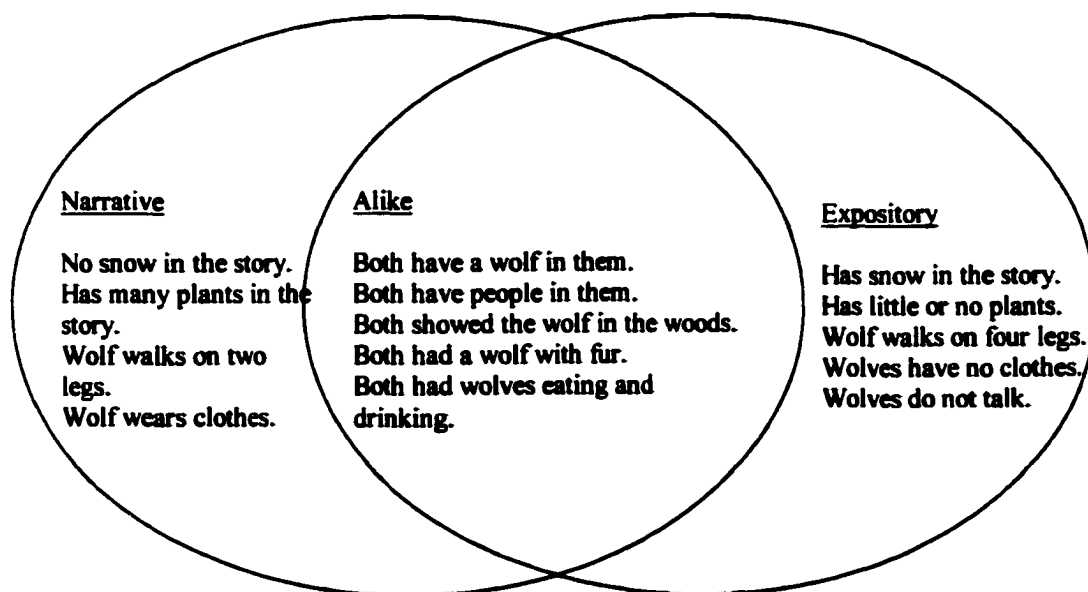


Figure 25. Example of the Intertextual Links of Bobby Shown in a Venn Diagram after Reading and writing about Little Red and the Wolf and Wolves.

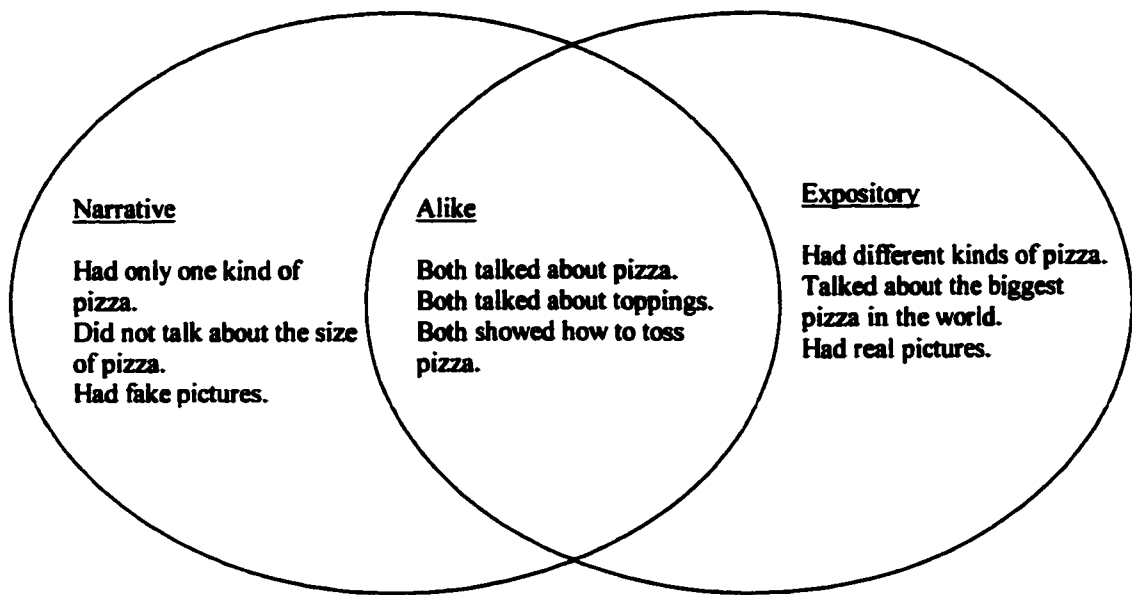


Figure 26. Example of a the Intertextual Links of Cody Shown in a Venn Diagram after Reading and writing about Pizza Pokey and Pizza for Everyone.

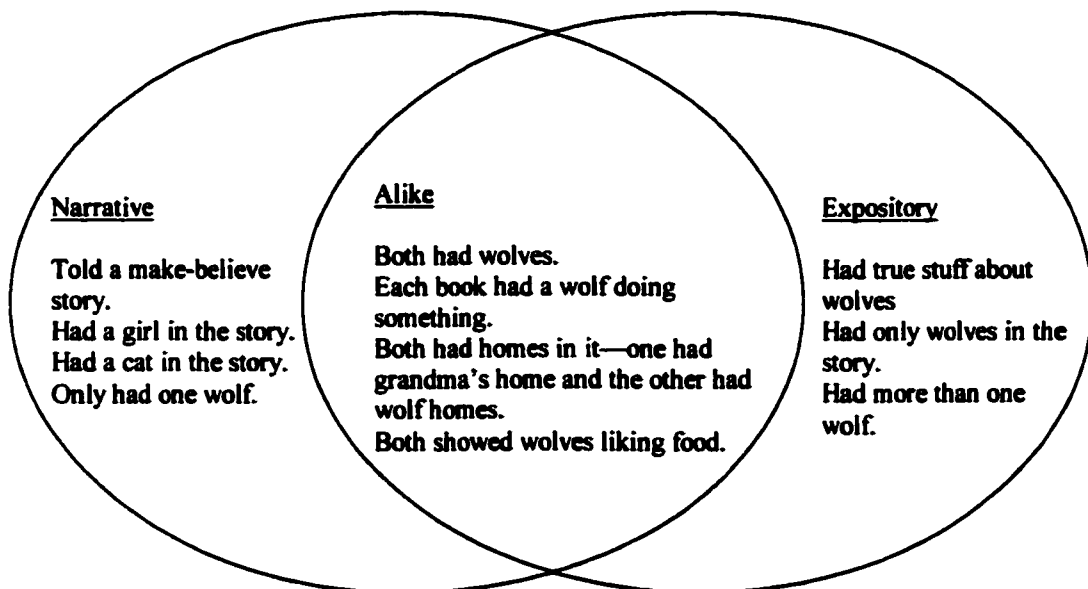


Figure 27. Example of the Intertextual Links of Danny Shown in a Venn Diagram after Reading and writing about Little Read and the Wolf and Wolves.

Results

In determining how many intertextual connections the four participants made during the reading/writing sessions I counted the number of statements in the “alike” columns. Overall, there were seventeen Venn diagrams completed—four for Andy, five for Bobby, three for Cody, and five for Danny. The total number of intertextual connections by all of the participants were sixty—sixteen for Andy, seventeen for Bobby, eight for Cody, and nineteen for Danny (see Figure 28).

These results illustrate the participants’ ability to make intertextual connections between two different types of texts. Even though each participant was obviously very different, as described in their biographical sketches, they all were able to make intertextual connections. Once again, this supports the need for teachers and parents to expect similar growth and success from children who are different from one another yet capable of reading and writing about narrative and expository texts and making connections between the texts.

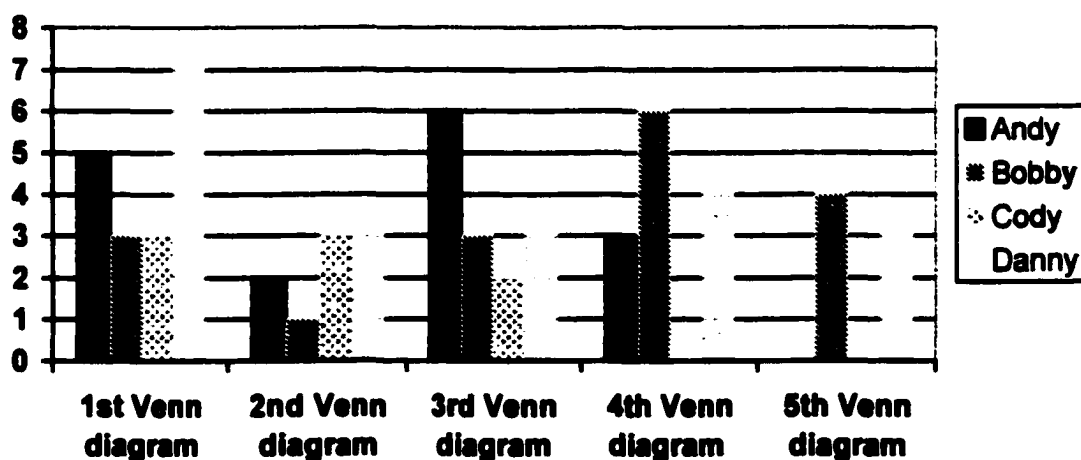


Figure 28. Number of Intertextual Connections During the Reading/Writing Sessions.

Conclusion

The findings obtained from the Venn diagrams indicate that the participants involved in this study appeared to have intertextual knowledge prior to the study. Their abilities to make intertextual links in the first Venn diagram were relatively high and remained so throughout the reading/writing sessions. This finding suggests that although these were delayed readers they had developed intertextual understanding prior to second grade.

Since this was supplementary data collected during the scheduled reading/writing sessions, further research and analysis is needed to more precisely identify factors related to intertextuality. Also, future research might include determining at what age intertextual links are made in children's reading. Likewise, additional research could focus upon issues related to apparent intertextual links children make to their lives as well as other texts.

Summary

Chapter IV began with a concrete description of the selection process of the four participants used in my study. Additional description of each participant, the location of the study, and finally a report of the participants' reading/writing levels followed this with the intent of illustrating who the participants were, where the study took place, and the participants' level of academic development. In the next section of the report I began

with a discussion of the text selections of the participants before they read and wrote about each set of pair-it books that consisted of one narrative and one expository text based on a parallel topic. The data analysis revealed that the four delayed readers in this study preferred expository texts to narrative texts based on the text's illustrations, their desire to learn, the fact that the text was real, and because they enjoyed some aspect of the story. I then examined what affect the patterns of texts, of the original narrative and expository texts, had on delayed readers' written retellings. My investigation showed that the original narrative text contained more T-units and simple and complex verbs than the original expository text in level two and level three pair-it books. When I compared this pattern to the four participants' written retellings I discovered that the retellings followed the same pattern as the original texts, concluding that the texts children read do have an effect on the quality and stylistic features of their writing. Next, I examined the participants' written retellings to determine if their retellings reflected their comprehension of narrative and expository text. Using a five point richness scale that was a modified version of Mitchell's (1983) five point richness scale I, along with two other raters, rated the written retellings. The final analysis revealed that the delayed readers' retellings in this study primarily received a score of 2, 3, and 4 causing me to conclude that delayed readers can write about both narrative and expository texts with coherence, completeness, and comprehensibility. Finally, I analyzed the four participants' Venn diagrams illuminating the fact that they could make intertextual links between different types of texts and possessed this ability to do so prior to my investigation. In other words, there needs to be additional studies to determine at what

age children began making intertextual links between different texts as well as their own lives.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

The purpose of this descriptive research study was to qualitatively examine the extent to which four elementary primary grade delayed readers could read and comprehend paired-topic narrative and expository texts as revealed through written retellings. It explored the degree to which these delayed readers were able to write about the text structures found in narrative text and summarize information found in expository text. The study demonstrated the narrative and expository preferences of the elementary primary grade readers before, and after, they read and wrote about each text. In addition, the study verified that elementary primary grade delayed readers can write about both narrative and expository texts with coherence, completeness, and comprehensibility.

The four elementary primary grade delayed readers were targeted for this study as the four participants read and responded to narrative and expository texts. To begin, taped oral responses for choosing one type of text to the other were coded and analyzed. After the texts were read and the students' written retellings were completed, individual retellings were coded and analyzed using a modified version of Irwin and Mitchell's (1983) 5-point richness scale. Finally, frequency counts provided information about the extent to which the participants related narrative text to expository text, or vice versa, after reading and writing about both types of texts. The research questions addressed were:

- 1a. What do delayed readers prefer regarding narrative and expository text prior to their reading and writing about both types of texts?
- 1b. What do delayed readers prefer regarding narrative and expository text subsequent to their reading and writing about both types of texts?
2. What affect do the patterns of texts, of original narrative and expository texts, have on delayed readers' written retellings?
3. How do delayed readers' written retellings reflect their comprehension of narrative and expository text?

This chapter presents conclusions derived thorough examination of the research data. It also discusses implications for instruction and culminates with recommendation for future research endeavors.

Conclusions

1. The four elementary primary grade delayed readers were capable of demonstrating preference for narrative or expository text and supplying relatively high-quality explanations for why they chose one over the other.

According to recent research, being allowed to read both narrative and expository texts at a young age is important for preparing children to read different types of texts in the older grades (Caswell & Duke, 1998). Furthermore, current research tells us that children must be provided a choice of the type of texts they are to read in order to build motivation for reading and learning (Guthrie, et al., 1996).

This study indicated that these children were generally quite prepared to select the type of text they desired to read and write about. The fairly rich quality of the participants' explanations for selecting one type of text over the other illustrated how

well prepared the participants were for choosing what they preferred to read. Moreover, their explanations demonstrated that these young delayed readers understood the differences between narrative and expository texts. This ability to explain why they may desire to read and write about one type of text to the other let educators see that they may have underestimated, not only the young, but the delayed readers' sensitivity to narrative and expository texts.

Since expository texts were selected more frequently prior to reading and writing about each text and as the better-liked text after reading and writing about each text, it was evident that the expository texts were more appealing to the children than the narrative. Most of the children in this study readily selected expository texts over narrative even though it is well known that narrative texts are commonly read to, and by, elementary primary grade children (Moss & Newton, 1998; Duke, 1998a). Thus, narrative is a very familiar type of text to most young children and yet the four participants chose the expository texts based on the books illustrations, their desire to learn, its real information, and its story. This may reflect their lack of exposure to expository text causing them to desire to read something they rarely are permitted to read.

The factors creating this preference for expository texts may be those that are used to identify these children as delayed readers. In order to assist a child with their reading one must first identify what level of reading they are functioning. Currently, our education system implies, through a lack of lower reading leveled expository texts (Moss & Newton, 1998), that a delayed reader must read narrative text that has very familiar text structures, repetitive text, and the liking. Following their reading of numerous narrative texts, the delayed reader begins to build on the strengths of their constructed

knowledge of this type of text, which they may eventually become insensitive to and begin to become curious about another type of text called nonfiction or expository text. This type of text permits children to speak to others about what they learned from their reading. With this perspective in mind, we may want to adjust the way in which we identify and instruct elementary primary grade delayed readers.

2. The four elementary primary grade delayed readers were successful in reconstructing the linguistic structural patterns of the original narrative and expository reading texts in their own writing, therefore confirming that the text they read does have an affect on their writing.

Another significant finding in this study was the indication that the four elementary primary grade delayed readers applied the written language linguistic structural patterns of the narrative and expository texts in their written retellings. The information examined in this study suggests that the linguistic structures of the participants' written retellings resembled the linguistic structures of the texts they read. Although the individual participants demonstrated different levels of ability, the analyses showed that the pattern of T-units and simple and complex verbs used in the children's writing approximated those of the original written texts they read. The cross analyses showed that each of the participants were sensitive to the distinct linguistic structures of both narrative and expository texts.

Since the expository texts in this study had as definite a linguistic structural pattern (more T-units and simple verbs) as did the narrative texts, it was reasonable to suggest that the participants' writing of the narrative and expository texts would follow the same linguistic structural pattern. As this study has suggested, one way to introduce

young children to expository text is through an instructional technique that permits the children to read narrative and expository texts with similar topics. Through the reading and writing about both types of texts children develop an understanding of how narrative and expository texts are structured. They bring this understanding with them as they figure out the organization of passages as they read and attempt to comprehend what the author of a selection is trying to communicate.

The ability to reconstruct the two types of texts offers evidence that learning to read and understand the texts is a meaning-driven, constructive process (Pappas, 1991; 1993). Narrative and expository texts are similar in some respects, although there are intrinsic differences in the written texts and purposes. According to Pappas, children need to have a sense that variation of each type of text exists in written language and that the different texts accomplish various purposes. The data supplied in this study illustrated that these young delayed readers were capable of recognizing these variations in the two types of texts and apply them to their own writing.

The findings provided in this study also indicates that these young delayed readers were capable of processing the linguistic structures of the expository text as well as the narrative text, which may be attributable to their imitating the linguistic structures they saw in the texts they read for this study. The findings in this study may also mean that the use of expository text not only needs to, but also can, have a more prominent place in the literacy programs in the elementary primary grades because the increased experience with expository texts in the early literacy programs can cause young children's difficulties with expository texts later in school to fade (Kamil & Lane, 1997a). The information gained from this study indicates that some children's writing may resemble

the linguistic structures of the texts they are reading. Additionally, this study shows that, not only are the original narrative and expository texts' linguistic structures different, but also children's linguistic structures in their written retellings of the different texts are different and adhere to the same pattern as the original texts.

3. The written reconstructions of the original narrative and expository texts reflect the comprehension of the elementary primary grade delayed readers and their ability to read and write about narrative and expository texts.

Retelling assisted me in becoming familiar with, in part, the comprehension processes applied by the participants after they had read both narrative and expository texts. Retelling was a constructive undertaking that required the four participants to construct an individual text by formulating conclusions based on the original texts. The retellings in this study went beyond comprehension to consist of producing text in a written format. Although this detail does not propose that one must regard the product of retelling as a writing task, it can be said that comprehension and production of texts are but parts of an individual, united process, and that this process is made patently clear through retelling.

Maintaining such a stance of comprehension of text and the product of retelling that follows, preserves various significant instructional implications. It removes the unnatural- division between reading and writing that exists in many educators' curricula. It promotes a belief that reading and writing cannot be separate entities, but rather complement with each other. Specifically, to at least some extent, the children in this study learned to better their writing through reading as well as better their reading through writing (Teale, 1986; Hansen, 1987; Roller, 1996). The written retelling

procedure of narrative and expository texts in this study was a strategy that encouraged this kind of learning.

Results in this study suggest that the elementary primary grade delayed readers were capable of comprehending paired-topic narrative and expository texts when they were written at the child's reading level. Retelling appeared to be a useful strategy for eliciting the four participants' recollection of narrative and expository texts. Because of the individualized strategy of retelling, it may turn out to have potential at assessing elementary primary grade children's comprehension of narrative and expository texts than traditional test methods.

Furthermore, the results in this study verify that elementary primary grade delayed readers were proficient at summarizing narrative and expository texts, recognizing details they regarded as significant, and writing in a clear, coherent fashion so that the reader of their writing understood what they were writing about the original text. Overall, the written retellings had two components—what was recalled from the original texts and how what was recalled was structured into unique writing pieces that communicated a point (Kalmbach, 1986).

4. The four elementary primary grade delayed readers each constructed similarities and dissimilarities between the narrative and expository original reading texts.

Venn diagrams were implemented in this study as a means to classify the narrative and expository texts in terms of more than a single trait. More specifically, the Venn diagrams required the four participants to explain how the two pair-it books were different and also how they were similar. The participants made connections between the pair-it books based on their own personal interpretations. This process of intertextuality

involved making connections between the texts and represented the constructive nature of reading.

When I compared the proportion of intertextual connections each participant made, I found that they made relatively the same amount of connections. While all of the participants made intertextual connections, their connections were typically confined to “both had animals” or “both had trees.” Interestingly, when asked if they could think of something that was not so obvious, some of the participants like Cody noted, “both talked about doing good things like leaving spiders alone and being honest” or Danny who stated that “both talked about the type of job you can have.”

These kinds of findings suggest that elementary primary grade children need not be expected to read only one type of text, which in most cases would be narrative, but that concerted efforts are necessary to bestow them with other types of texts and forge understandings of the perspectives and practices of them. Allowing for multiple texts by enacting a curriculum that permits children to read and discuss the likes and differences between texts can be extremely useful in this process because it affords a familiarization, as well as the appreciation, of different types of texts. This process of familiarization of different types of texts shifts in shared relations, positions both teachers and children in new and sometimes productive ways when teaching and learning to read and write, and creates openings for new links between texts. However, such innovative collaboration between texts may also derail one-type-only reading agendas, as well as create difficult to repair students’ desire to read, understand, and write about more than one type of reading text. Forging critical associations between texts within the classroom reading and writing instruction necessarily involves vulnerability and risk that children may grow in ways

unimaginable. Yet placing the practices of teaching reading and writing with more than one type of text in the classroom is probably a lot more productive than either regulating or minimizing the boundaries between the texts.

Limitations of the Study and Implications for Further Research

As I conducted and analyzed this study, several limitations and implications for research emerged. While my combination of narrative and expository texts yielded valuable insights into the preferences of this small number of participants, more in-depth information about the participants' interests would be beneficial. Knowing how students' preferences translated to actual reading behavior at home and in the classroom, as well as knowing how young children choose a particular type of text, would add important dimensions. Observations of young children choosing reading materials and interviews after they choose books in the classroom and school library could offer this information. Furthermore, interviews with the children's parents and siblings could provide further detail into what they read at home and if they discuss what they have read in school. More information regarding the classroom environment and teachers' values and instructional practices regarding literacy and literature would also be valuable in discovering how the participants' teachers use literature and writing. Further, since this study was comprised of boys only, it would be important to more specifically address the preferences and writing skills of boys and girls from other diverse backgrounds.

Study Implications

At some juncture, to ask the question of how children learn to read and write about expository text begs the question of what type of reading/writing curriculum were

the children taught. Thus, I believe the findings of this study may have implications for elementary primary grade teachers and future investigations about teaching reading and writing with both narrative and expository texts.

Implications for Elementary Primary Grade Teachers

The findings of this study support the importance of developing a dual-text reading/writing curriculum and encouraging young children to engage in active reading and writing activities with more than one type of text. Because they could actively prefer one type of text to the other and provide logical explanations for their choices, the four study participants were able to read the texts with confidence, write about the texts to demonstrate their comprehension, and compare the two types of texts for differences and likenesses. If one posits reading/writing instruction as a time to expose young children to both narrative and expository texts, perhaps numerous experiences with both types of texts should be provided in the elementary primary grades—prior to asking children to engage in, and reflect on, expository texts in the intermediate grades. This concept places development of a curriculum that emphasizes young children reading and writing about expository texts as central to the development of children who can read and write about both types of texts. The notion of supporting elementary primary grade teachers in learning to teach reading and writing with narrative as well as expository texts reflects a developmental focus in reading/writing instruction in the primary grades and appropriately so. The participants in this study clearly demonstrated their ability to read and write about expository texts that were written at their level of reading.

Duke (1998b) offered five suggests for incorporating expository texts in the elementary primary grades. She recommended that educators: (a) encourage the

publishers of literacy and basal programs to include more expository texts in their materials, (b) incorporate research about the successful use of expository texts with young children in preservice and practicing teachers' professional education programs, (c) link expository text reading and writing to science achievement, (d) encourage parents to include more expository text in their homes and, (e) increase the budget for purchasing reading material when attempting to include equal amounts of expository texts in the classroom. This study's successful results with using paired-topic texts support a sixth technique for including expository texts in the elementary primary grades—pair narrative texts with similar topic expository texts.

Another implication from the findings of this study centers on the importance of the actual intertextual links between the narrative and expository texts. Because study participants consistently described the similarities and differences among the narrative and expository texts, it appears the opportunity for elementary primary grade teachers to take a greater role in interacting with children about the texts they read may provide critical support for the children's ideas and improve their self-confidence as well as their intellectual growth. Results of this study suggest that allowing young delayed readers the opportunities to read and write about expository texts may be more productive if the teachers encourage talk about the texts and make comparisons to other types of texts.

Implications for Future Investigations About Teaching Reading and Writing with Narrative and Expository Texts

Given the clear success of reading and writing about narrative and expository texts with the four participants in this study, it may be that some educators and book publishers have been too quick to dismiss the reality and success of expository texts in

the elementary primary grades. As I considered these four participants and all the other delayed readers I have had the privilege of helping read and write, more than anything else, their individuality was what I most desired to understand—for it was through personal uniqueness that each child made his or her greatest achievement when learning to read and write about narrative and expository texts. My experiences with the four participants in this study have convinced me that, at its finest, the reading/writing curriculum must be an endeavor that is collaborative and yet individual in focus. Further, the explorations of how well or poorly children read and write about narrative and expository texts must continue to span the range of elementary primary grade children—from the lowest through the average to high readers and writers.

APPENICIES

Appendix A

DATE: November 24, 1998

TO: Timothy T. Houge (CI)
M/S 3005

FROM: *Marsha Green*
Dr. Fred Preston
for Chair, Social/Behavioral Committee
of the Institutional Review Board

RE: Status of Human Subject Protocol entitled:
"A Case Study That Investigates Struggling Elementary Readers'
Responses to Narrative and Expository Text Structures"

OSP #311s1198-141s

This memorandum is official notification that the protocol for the project referenced above has been approved by the Social/Behavioral Committee of the Institutional Review Board. This approval is approved for a period of one year from the date of this notification, and work on the project may proceed.

Should the use of human subjects described in this protocol continue beyond a year from the date of this notification, it will be necessary to request an extension.

If you have any questions or require any assistance, please contact Marsha Green at 895-1357.

cc: T. Bean (CI-3005)
OSP File

Office of Sponsored Programs
4505 Maryland Parkway • Box 451037 • Las Vegas, Nevada 89154-1037
(702) 895-1357 • FAX (702) 895-4242

Appendix B

A Human Subjects Consent Form

Dear Parent:

I am a graduate student at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and am doing a research study involving reading instruction of elementary students. This information will help in preparing teachers for instructing students in literature.

I am asking your permission for your child to participate in this study. The reading materials used will be part of his or her regular tutoring session. The only change in the normal tutoring schedule will be that I will ask your child some questions about what types of books he or she likes or dislikes.

The reading instruction may be audiotaped so that I may further study the information after the session. Your child will be identified on the audiotape by first-name only and will not be identified at any time in any of the reports resulting from this research.

You are free to withdraw your consent of your child's participation at any time during the study.

If you would like a copy of the study summary results, the Coordinator of the Literacy Center will be given a copy when the study is completed.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 799-7720 or my advisor, Dr. Thomas Bean, at 895-1455. You may also contact the UNLV Office of Sponsored Programs at 895-1357 for questions regarding the rights of research subjects.

Please sign below to indicate that you have read the above information and agree for your child to participate in this study. I understand that I may withdraw my child from the study at any time. I have included an extra copy of this consent form for you to keep. Please return one signed copy to me as soon as possible. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Timothy T. Hougé

.....

Child's Name: _____

Parent's Signature: _____

Appendix C

Instruction for Initial Written Retelling

After reading the book say to the child: YOU DID A VERY GOOD JOB OF READING THIS BOOK. NOW I WOULD LIKE YOU TO WRITE ABOUT THIS BOOK. O.K.? (Wait for response and then proceed.) GREAT, SO WRITE ABOUT THIS BOOK RETELLING THE STORY JUST AS IF YOU WERE TELLING ME ABOUT THIS BOOK. HERE IS A PIECE OF PAPER AND A PENCIL FOR YOU TO USE. IF YOU HAVE ANY WORDS YOU DON'T KNOW HOW TO SPELL, I WANT YOU TO SPELL THEM THE BEST YOU KNOW HOW. THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IS TO WRITE DOWN EVERYTHING YOU REMEMBER ABOUT THE BOOK YOU READ.

If the child has difficulty responding to this request ask: TELL ME SOME OF THE THINGS YOU'RE GOING TO PUT INTO YOUR WRITTEN RETELLING.

If the child claims that he or she doesn't know how to write, encourage the child by saying: YOU CAN WRITE YOUR RETELLING ANYWAY THAT YOU LIKE, IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE IN GROWN-UP WRITING.

If the child claims not to know how to write a retelling, say: WRITE YOUR RETELLING THE WAY YOU THINK A RETELLING SHOULD BE .

Note. Adapted from "Cultural Artifacts as Scaffolds for Genre Development" by G. Kamberelis and T. D. Bovino, 1999, Reading Research Quarterly, 34, p. 169.

Appendix D.

Take Me Home Pair-It-Books: Stages 2 and 3**Stage 2**

Price, C. (1997). Season to Season. Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn Company.

Price, C. (1997). Sam's Seasons. Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn Company.

Smith, M.K. (1997). Wolves. Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn Company.

Thompson, G. (1997). Little Red and the Wolf. Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn Company.

Keller, E. (1997). Dinosaur Fun Facts. Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn Company.

Keller, E. (1997). Dinosaur Show and Tell. Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn Company.

Thompson, G. (1997). Lift Off! Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn Company.

Keo, E. (1997). I Can Be Anything. Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn Company.

Smith, M. K. (1997). Beach Creatures. Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn Company.

Smith, M. K. (1997). The Sand Castle Contest. Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn Company.

Smith, M. K. (1997). Apples and More Apples. Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn Company.

Thompson, G. (1997). The Apple Pie Family. Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn Company.

Stage 3

Keo, E. (1998). Japan. Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn Company.

Keo, E. (1998). The Crane Wife. Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn Company.

Halpern, J. (1998). A Look at Spiders. Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn Company.

- Mead, K. (1998). How Spider got Eight Legs. Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn Company.
- Barnes, A. (1998). Pizza for Everyone. Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn Company.
- Stoodt, J. (1998). Pizza Pokey. Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn Company.
- Leslie, R. (1998). Storms! Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn Company.
- Canetti, Y. (1998). Carlita Ropes the Twister. Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn Company.
- Thompson, G. (1998). Corn: An American Indian Gift. Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn Company.
- Thompson, G. (1998). Jenny and the Cornstalk. Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn Company.
- Mead, K. (1998). Gifts to Make. Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn Company.
- Mead, K. (1998). A Gift to Share. Austin, TX: Steck-Vaughn Company.

Appendix E**Interest/Attitude Interview**

Student's Name: _____ **Age:** _____

Date: _____ **Examiner:** _____

Introductory Statement: [Student's name], Before you read some stories for me, I would like to ask you some questions.

1. **Where do you live? Do you know your address? What is it?**
2. **Who lives in your house with you?**
3. **What kinds of jobs do you have at home?**
4. **What is one thing that you really like to do at home?**
5. **Do you ever read at home? [If yes, ask:] When do you read and what was the last thing you read? [If no, ask:] Does anyone ever read to you? {If so, ask:] Who, and how often?**
6. **Do you have a bedtime on school nights? [If no, ask:] When do you to bed?**
7. **Do you have a TV in your room? How much TV do you watch ever day? What are your favorite shows?**
8. **What do you like to do with your friends?**
9. **Do you have any pets? Do you collect things? Do you take any kinds of lessons?**

10. When you make a new friend, what is something that your friend ought to know about you?

School Life

1. Besides recess and lunch, what do you like about school?
2. Do you get to read much in school?
3. Are you a good reader or a not-so-good reader?

[If a good reader, ask:] What makes a person a good reader?

[If a not-so-good reader, ask:] What cause a person to not be a good reader?
4. If you could pick any book to read, what would the book be about?
5. Do you like to write? What kind of writing do you do in school? What is the favorite thing you have written about?
6. Who has helped you the most in school? How did that person help you?
7. Do you have a place at home to study?
8. Do you get help with your homework? Who helps you?
9. What was the last book you read for school?
10. If you were helping someone learn to read, what could you do to help that person?

Note. Adapted from Reading Inventory for the Classroom, (pp. 27-28), by E. S. Flynt, and R. B. Cooter, 1998, Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Appendix F

Case Study Participants' Structured Interview about Their Reading and Writing Experiences

- 1. When do you believe you started to read?**
- 2. What kind of words or books did you read?**
- 3. Did you enjoy reading when you started to read?**
- 4. When do you believe you started to write?**
- 5. What types of words did you write?**
- 6. Do you have a library card?**
- 7. How often do you go to the library?**
- 8. Do you enjoy reading? Why or why not?**
- 9. Do you enjoy writing? Why or why not?**
- 10. Is there anything you do in you classroom that has anything to with your writing?**

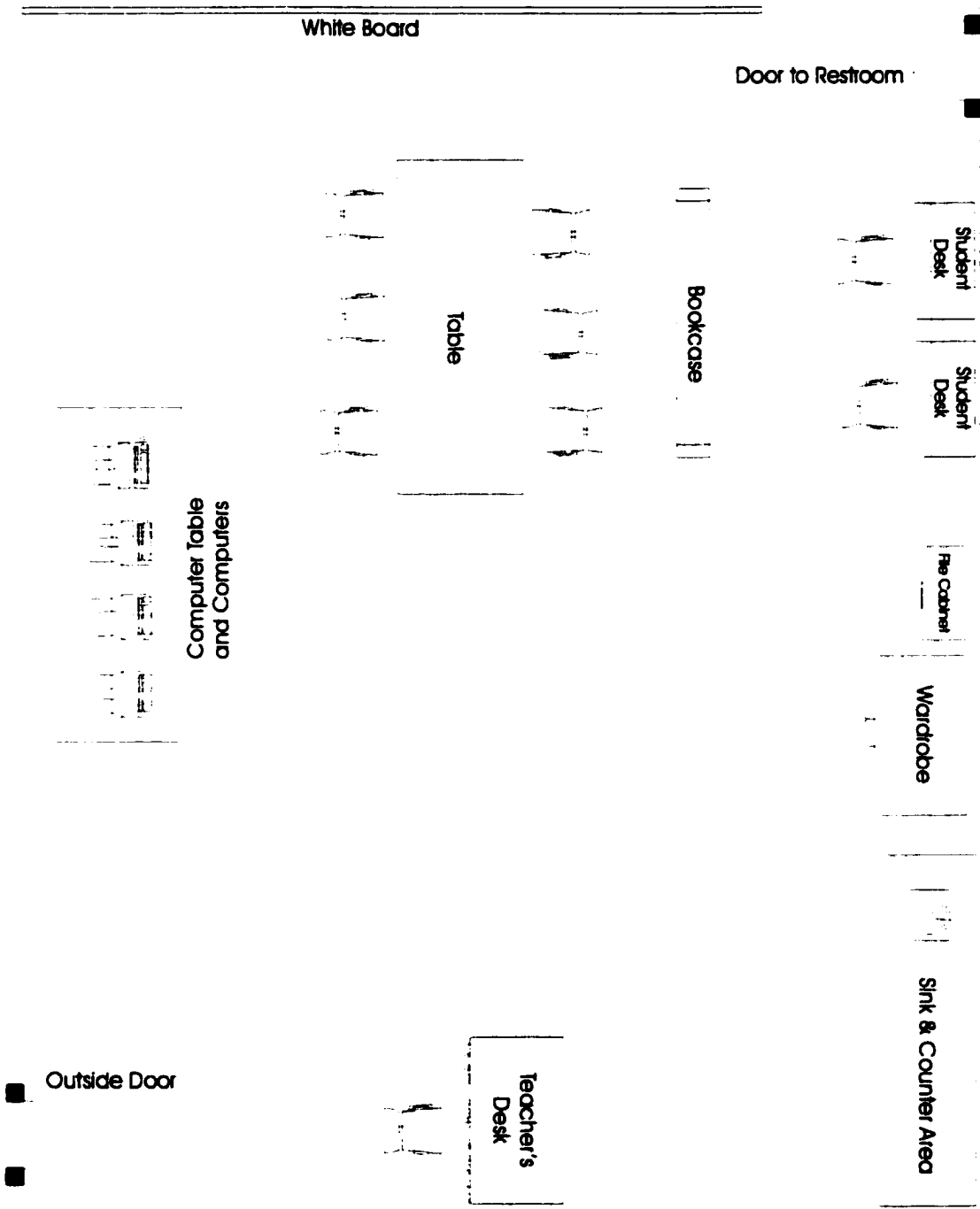
Appendix G

Table for When and How Data will be Collected

Question	When was data collected?	How was the data collected?
1a. What do delayed readers prefer regarding narrative and expository text prior to their reading and writing about both types of texts?	Immediately following the introduction of the Pair-It-Books.	Two questions were asked: (a) Which book would you prefer to read first—the fiction or nonfiction? and (b) Why do you prefer to read this particular book first?
1b. What do delayed readers prefer regarding narrative and expository text subsequent to their reading and writing about both types of text?	Immediately following the reading and written retelling of the paired narrative and expository books.	Two questions were asked: (a) Which book did you prefer to read and complete a written retelling? and (b) Why do you prefer this book?
2. What affect do the patterns of texts, of original narrative and expository texts, have on delayed readers' written retellings?	After the participants have completed a written retelling.	Written retellings were examined for the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Length—What are the number of words and sentences in the written retelling, t-units, and words per –t-unit? 2. Linguistic Structures—What are the number of simple and complex verb forms?
3. How do delayed readers' written retellings reflect their comprehension of narrative and expository texts?	After the participants have completed a written retelling.	Irwin and Mitchell's (1983) modified richness scale that contains a five-point holistic measure of written retellings. Each written retelling was coded and analyzed on the holistic scoring rubric that was designed to reflect five levels of performance.

Appendix H

The Reading Room



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