Fifth-grade childrens preferences for illustrations in middle-grade basal reading materials
by Daniel Joe Lucas

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of DOCTOR OF EDUCATION
Montana State University
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Abstract:
The purpose of this study was to: (a) investigate preferences among fifth graders for illustrative style found in basal readers (i.e., realism, cartoon, abstract, impressionistic, photographic) when the illustration accompanies a particular literary form (i.e., legend, poem, biography); (b) examine illustrations from all the selections of the five major basal reading series texts written for middle grade children in order to classify the type of illustrative styles found in them; (c) read, evaluate, and categorize as to literary form, the approximately 800 selections from the same five basal reading series texts written for middle grade children.

The problem was investigated by: (a) a review of literature related to the problems; (b) a review of the five major middle grade reading texts; (c) an investigation of 521 fifth grade children's preferences for illustrative style; and (d) a tabulation, analysis and comparison of data gathered.

The major conclusions of the study indicated that: (a) the rank order of literary selections in five major middle grade reading texts was: informational article, poetry, reading activities, con- temporary realistic fiction, traditional literature (including legend), biography, modern fantasy, historical fiction, and drama; (b) the highest percentage of illustrative styles for legend, poetry, and biography in the same texts was impressionistic, photographic, and photographic respectively; (c) there was a preference among fifth graders' for illustrative style when the illustration accompanied the literary forms legend, poem, biography; (d) there were significant differences between the following when the illustration accompanied a particular literary form: male and female fifth graders' preference —poem; Mexican American and Caucasian fifth graders' preference— biography; Native American and Caucasian fifth graders' preference— legend; non-Caucasian and Caucasian fifth graders' preference—legend.

The major recommendations of the study were (a) all persons responsible for the purchase of material to use in the teaching of reading to middle grade students should receive training in critically evaluating illustrations as well as the text, due to the large amount of space and dollar outlay committed to illustrations and the resulting expense to schools districts; (b) photographs were utilized highly by publishers and students in the study tended to choose photographic styles for poem and biography. Personnel who are evaluating reading texts for use with middle grade students should be aware of these preferences. The trend in published materials to include more photographs should be encouraged.

FIFTH-GRADE CHILDREN'S PREFERENCES FOR ILLUSTRATIONS IN
MIDDLE-GRADE BASAL READING MATERIALS

by

DANIEL JOE LUCAS

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

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DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The continued research in the teaching of reading is necessary
because it places the instructional program on a scientific basis, aids
in answering unresolved questions, and clarifies conditions that
influence its effective development (Weintraub in Robinson, 1971). This
continued research in the teaching of reading stemmed in part from the
fact that helping children to develop competence in communication has
been accepted as one of the major objectives for elementary education
in America (Klausmeier and Ripple, 1971). Fitzgerald and Fitzgerald
(1965:v) noted that ". . . language training and reading instruction
affect immeasurably the activities, progress, and outcomes of children's
lives."

Reading proves to have its unique concerns as part of the total
instructional program in the elementary schools. In order to improve
the teaching of reading, educational researchers have investigated some
of the conditions which influence the effective development of reading.
In doing so, a great amount of published scholarship was accumulated
(Walcutt, 1974:3). Numerous controversies have ". . . surged back and
forth over reading theory during the past twenty-five or thirty years
. . ." (Walcutt, 1974:4). One area of controversy has been the use
of basal readers as the main tool for the teaching of reading in the
elementary school (Cruiscuolo, 1967 and Ragan, 1966). Criscuolo

(1967) and others (Chall, 1967, Huck, 1967, R. Smith, 1976) have noted, however, that the current practice in most elementary schools is to select a set of basal readers for the basic instructional program. In a review of reading methods and materials which included basal reader programs, R. Smith (1976:117) noted: "It must be reiterated that no method or material is a panacea." Harris (1972:24) stated that teachers have to ". . . adjust to the strengths and weaknesses of each system." In order to make such adjustments, teachers need valid information about the nature of reading readiness; the reasons and methods behind vocabulary control; the stages of children's development; the reading tasks required of the content fields; the values of supplementary tools; the methods of grouping students; the role of oral and silent reading; the nature of word attack skills; and the relationship of writing style, material format, broadened content, and illustrative style to student interest (Spache, 1965).

Weintraub pointed out that this information is not always available:

> Positive claims and counterclaims are often heard among persons who uphold particular practices, techniques, or materials in teaching beginning reading. Rarely are the proponents of various materials able to substantiate claims with more than the heat of argument of an undying devotion to their cause. Oftentimes this is so because there is little or no research on which to base one's convictions. Sometimes this is so because the research that has been done confuses rather than clarifies so that contradictory results can be cited (1966:61).

Harris (1972:24) concluded that innovative reading programs contained few real differences in teaching method. Essentially these programs consisted of new materials with parts corresponding to the basic components of readiness, preprimers, primers, readers, workbooks, teacher's manuals, tests, and supplementary books (R. Smith, 1976:94-102). The instructional program in the basal readers included strands or skill areas such as phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, rhetoric, interpretation and comprehension, and study skills (Walcutt, 1974). Disputes about some of these components parts have continued as to the timing, degree of emphasis, and other adjustments to be made within a component within a plan (Harris, 1972).

R. Smith (1976:91) indicated that before making purchases, the personnel of the school needed to apply guidelines for evaluating basal reading material. He urged consideration of such things as philosophy of the program, treatment of ethnic, racial, and sex groups, interest value of the children's book, quality of illustrations, development of word identification skills, emphasis of comprehension activities and questions, usefulness of teacher's manuals, and recommendations for individualization and grouping. The actual story content and its presentation, for example, exert an influence on children's reading understanding, attitude, and skill. Yet Pellowski (1973:117) noted that, "The history and criticism of children's literature has tended to ignore the reading textbook and what it contains."

One of the unresolved questions in reading research concerning basal readers involves the manner in which stories are illustrated. Read (1950:340) noted that, "Pictures have always been important aids to the teaching of reading. They are the link between reality and the new strange symbols we call words." Yet, other writers (Hall, 1964, and Bloomfield, 1961) implied that satisfactory beginning reading texts should not have illustrations. As recent as 1966, one teachers' edition of a reading program contained the following statement pertaining to illustrations:

> In order to focus the pupil's attention upon the reading materials themselves, pictures must be excluded from the basic experience. Experience has consistently demonstrated that a) pictures constitute a distracting element in the process of learning to read, and b) because pictures furnish clues to meaning, they lead the pupil's to guess at words rather than to read them. (Incidentally, the absence of pictures permits the release of highly individualzed creativity when the pupils are encouraged to illustrate the stories, for they are not hampered by the interpretation of another 'artist'.) (Merrill, 1966:6).

Anderson stated that:

> If the purpose of reading is merely to independently decode words, then such deletion (of pictures) might be significant. However, if the purpose of reading is to obtain meaning, and if an important aspect of reading is the expansion of concepts, then the children's readers should be selected with the best possible illustrations (1968:169).

Although one series (Rasmussen, 1964) contained illustrations that had little to do with story content, pictures ordinarily are designed to accurately represent the text. They also ". . . help develop the story's mood, reveal characterization, and can even

portray action without words" (Nelson, 1972:26). Lewis (1976:82)

stated that the illustrations when done well expand ". . . the enjoyment

of the text as the text expands the details of the drawings."

Authors of children's reading textbooks and educational

researchers have freely expressed their convictions about the quality

and appropriateness of the illustrations found in elementary school

textbooks. Dow (1951:101), discussing illustrations of textbooks in

general, stated that, "Illustrations in textbooks are generally poor

and are often so wretched as to detract from the interest and dignity

of the subject." Although Dow was speaking of texts in general, his

comment that illustrations were the "textbook makers last-minute chore"

seemed appropriate for pre-1950 basals. He pointed out that there had

been sporadic improvement in illustrative techniques and that there

was a gap between what was published and what could be. He further

noted that students expected numerous and effective pictures: "visual

evidence is no longer merely optional in most textbooks and ought no

longer to be tawdry, or irrelevant" (Dow, 1951:108). Children today

expect even better illustrations due to their exposure to higher

quality children's literature:

> Today's trade books for children are more beautifully and
> meaningfully illustrated, more sensitively written, and embody
> more enchanting literary style than any other generation has
> ever known (LePere, 1967:243).

Huck pointed out that basal text publishers have responded to

this demand for better illustrated material:

As children mature they can appreciate more abstract and sophisticated art design. Basic readers for the middle grades reflect the maturity and a few provide a real education in art itself. When selections have been made from beautifully illustrated books in children's literature, several series have obtained permission for the original art work. This serves to introduce students to some of the best illustrations of children's literature today. Examination and comparison of even the covers of basic readers at present as contrasted with those of ten years ago give a sampling of the many changes that have occurred in the technological aspects of publishing books today (1967:239).

Weintraub noted, in a summary of research, that certain styles

and qualities of illustrations were preferred by children:

Similarly, general findings can be summarized about children's preferences for various kinds of illustrations. Colored illustrations tend to be preferred over black-and-white, and the more colors used, the stronger the appeal to children. Saturated primary colors are most appealing to young children, who also select realistic drawings over those of a more fanciful nature. Realism appears to be a more potent factor in picture preference than does color. Furthermore, illustrations that depict animals and children and their activities, including action suggesting the story sequence, are preferred (1971:197).

Research conducted on children's preferences for illustrations,

however, does not necessarily coincide with adult views on the

appropriateness of illustrations (Rudisell, 1952). Teachers of elemen-

tary school children, who use the literature from basal readers to

teach reading, need to be aware of children's preferences for

illustrative styles since more often than not, the teachers select the

materials for their classes or serve on adoption committees (Newton,

1960:131). Illustrations are a part of the message in reading. They

take up space (Rudisell, 1952). Concannon (1975:254) commented that,
"All too often the beauty of the illustrations becomes a strong selling
point along with raising the cost of the text." Examination of
basal readers showed that more illustrations and more expensive
techniques were used in modern reading texts (Huck, 1967:239). A
determination of children's preferences for illustrations could there-
fore be an important factor in the production of reading texts and in
the selection of basal series for use in a school system.

Statement of the Problem

Huck (1967:237) found that basic readers were used ". . . in
some 95 percent of our primary grades and in 88 percent of the middle
grades. . . ". R. Smith (1976:92) urged consideration of many parts of
these materials before making purchases. Illustrations of these basic
readers have changed significantly (Huck, 1967). In order to determine
the illustrative preferences of children, writers (Stewig, 1974 and
Huck, 1976) have identified qualities such as disposition on the page,
color, detail, coordination with the text, size, tension, shape, and
media. The most common styles of illustrations used in children's
reading materials may be grouped in the following categories:
realistic, photographic, cartoon-like, impressionistic, and abstract
forms (Lictieg, 1975, and Lam, 1969).

Should the styles of illustrations in presently available

reading material not be in line with children's preferences, the
efficiency of reading instruction might be decreased. Therefore,
there is a need for a knowledge of children's preferences for
illustrations.

The problem of this study was to investigate the type of art
style preferred by fifth graders in selected Montana schools.
Specifically the study attempted to answer the question: Will there
be a preference among fifth graders for illustrative style found in
basal readers (i.e., realism, cartoon, abstract, impressionistic,
photographic) when the illustration accompanies a particular literary
form (i.e., legend, poem, biography)? Another purpose was to examine
illustrations from all the selections of the five major basal reading
series texts written for middle-grade children in order to classify the
type of illustrative style found in them. Another part of the study
entailed the reading, evaluating, and categorizing of approximately
800 selections from the same five major basal reading series texts
written for middle-grade children.

Need for the Study

Weintraub (1971) reported that continuous research in reading
was a necessity. Yet, Pellowski (1973:117) noted that, "The history
and criticism of children's literature has tended to ignore the reading
textbook and what it contains." Russell (1970:143) stated that

". . . children, and especially young children, are attracted to books

by their physical format."

In order to evaluate illustrations in children's books,

Anderson (1968) identified qualities of good illustrations. Lam (1969:

137), however, implied that illustrations should also be liked by

children: "The likes and dislikes of children should be considered in

the style of art incorporated in these books."

There have been studies dealing with children's preferences of

illustrations. Rudisell (1952) studied children's preferences for

color versus other qualities in illustrations. A search of ERIC

materials for the period of January, 1970 to October, 1976, however,

yielded no studies of fifth grade children's preferences for illustra-

tive styles in relation to story context in middle-grade basal readers.

The proposed study investigated these preferences and their relation-

ship to context of the accompanying literary material.

General Questions to be Answered

Questions to be answered by the study were:

1. What are the "milestones" in the history of the use of

illustrations in reading materials and basal readers?

2. What are the semantic functions and utility of illustrations

in reading materials?

3. What are the controversies in the use of illustrations?

4. What are the research findings pertaining to children's preferences for illustrations?

5. What is the distribution of illustrations among the types of illustrative style in the five major basal reading texts written for middle grade children?

6. What is the distribution of selections among literary forms in the five major basal reading texts written for middle grade children?

7. Will there be a preference among fifth graders for illustrative style (i.e., realism, cartoon, abstract, impressionistic, photographic) when the illustration accompanies the literary form -- legend?

8. Will there be a preference among fifth graders for illustrative style (i.e., realism, cartoon, abstract, impressionistic, photographic) when the illustration accompanies the literary form -- poetry?

9. Will there be a preference among fifth graders for illustrative style (i.e., realism, cartoon, abstract, impressionistic, photographic) when the illustration accompanies the literary form -- biography?

10. Will there be a difference in preference among male and female fifth graders for illustrative style (i.e., realism, cartoon, abstract, impressionistic, photographic) when the illustration

accompanies the literary forms -- legend, poetry, biography?

11. Will there be a difference in preference among Mexican American, Native American, and Caucasian fifth graders for illustrative style (i.e., realism, cartoon, abstract, impressionistic, photographic) when the illustration accompanies the literary forms -- legend, poetry, biography?

General Procedures

The general procedures followed in this study were:

1. The writer conducted an extensive review of literature pertaining to the use of illustrations in basal reading texts. This review reported studies in the following subcategories: 1) "milestones" in the history of the use of illustrations in reading materials and basal readers; 2) semantic functions and utility of illustrations in reading materials; 3) controversies in the use of illustrations; 4) children's preferences for illustrations -- style, theme, and color.

2. An examination of illustrations from all the selections of the five major basal reading texts (as determined by national sales) written for middle-grade children was made in order to classify the type of illustrative style found in them (i.e., realistic, impressionistic, photographic, cartoon, abstract).

3. An examination of the approximately 800 literary selections of the same five major basal reading texts written for middle-grade

children was made in order to categorize them as to the basic kinds

of literary form they represent (i.e., fantasy, informational article,

poetry, traditional narrative - including myth, epic, legend, tall

tale - contemporary fiction, biography, drama, historical fiction).

4. Three selections were chosen from a middle-grade basal

reading text on the basis that they fairly represented subjects, themes,

characterizations, and forms which regularly appear in fifth grade

reading programs.

5. Illustrations in each of the five categories of style

(i.e., realistic, cartoon, photographic, impressionistic, abstract)

were prepared for a part of each selection. Each illustration was

prepared by an artist of reputation who had experience with children's

illustrations. The photographer was a recognized professional

photographer. The illustrations were reproduced on 35mm slides in

color.

6. The writer developed an instrument for the subject's

recording of his or her preference for an illustration. The instrument

was prepared in the form of a ballot. A sample of the instrument

appears in Appendix B.

7. The stimuli (illustrations prepared in five styles and

reproduced on 35mm slides) were presented to the subjects. A taped

reading of a selection was presented to the class and the tape was

stopped at the section to be illustrated. The stimuli (an illustration

prepared in five styles and reproduced on 35 mm slides) were

presented to the subjects. Subjects were then asked to mark their

choice of the preferred slide on the instrument.

8. The writer reported results obtained from the instrument

used with the subjects. Tables were constructed to answer the

questions proposed and to fulfill the purposes of the problem. An

array was displayed of styles compared with each literary form to show

possible relationships between style choice and literary form. The

chi square statistic was used to make decisions on retaining or

rejecting the null hypotheses.

Limitations

The study was limited in the following ways:

1. The majority of sources for this paper were from the

Montana State University Library, a personal library, other libraries

through inter-library loan, and extensive use of ERIC resources. The

review of literature was limited to research reports for the period

of January, 1970 to October, 1976. Studies listed under the following

descriptors were included: preferences, textbook bias, children's

literature, pictures, basal readers, reading interests, and illustra-

tions.

2. The research in this study was conducted in selected

schools throughout Montana. Ability to draw generalizations from the

findings in this study was limited in that only these selected Montana

public school fifth grade children participated in the study.

3. Generalizations drawn from the data produced in the study were further limited in that three literary forms and five illustrative styles were used. Three different illustrations were used.

4. The study was limited due to the particular artist's perception of the style.

5. While the writer originally intended to determine illustrative preferences of Black students as well as Native American, Mexican American, and Caucasian students, the two schools having the greatest number of fifth grade Black students had but nine children who were in this ethnic category; this was not considered an adequate sample size to conclude differences.

6. Since the biographical selection concerned a person who lived before the development of photography, a realistic portrait was used for photographic style.

Definition of Terms

Certain terms were considered in the following context:

Abstract. Any art in which the depiction of real objects in nature has been subordinated or entirely discarded, and whose aesthetic content is expressed in a formal pattern or structure of shapes, lines and colors (Mayer, 1969:1). Abstract art may be further characterized by having two dimensional qualities and justaposition of forms out of

their natural order.

Basal Reader. A textbook, usually part of a grade series., used for instruction in reading (Good, 1973:57).

Biography. Writers of children's biography are not bound by definition to an attempt at recreating the subject's life as full as possible, with complete detail and careful documentation. Instead the biographer may use several forms such as the picture-book biography, the simplified biography, or partial biography. A complete biography spans its subject's lifetime, but may be relatively simple or difficult. (Huck, 1976:561).

Cartoon. An often humorous or satirical drawing or series of drawings, the main interest of which is the subject matter rather than the style of execution. Cartoons are generally rendered in a simple, linear manner. They are usually entertaining but may also serve the purpose of instruction and political or social commentary (Mayer, 1969:63).

Children's Literature. Published reading material of a superior quality written for children by expert writers; published reading materials of a superior and lasting quality accepted by children and read by them with pleasure (Good, 1973:342).

Contemporary Realistic Fiction. Contemporary realistic fiction may be defined as that imaginative writing which accurately reflects the life as it could be lived today. Everything in such a

story can conceivably have happened to real people living in our natural, physical world, in contrast to fantasy where impossible happenings are made to appear quite plausible, even though they are not possible. Historical fiction portrays life as it may have been lived in the past, while contemporary realism focuses on the problems of living today (Huck, 1976:394).

Drama. A story told by means of dialogue and action; written to be performed on the stage by actors. Plays for children are usually arranged in order that the children may perform them.

Drawing. The delineation on a surface of shapes and forms. It may be further elaborated with applications of color, highlights, and shading with hatching or washes to produce the effect of light and shadow (Mayer, 1969:115).

Historical Fiction. Historical fiction attempts to provide young people with the vicarious experience of participating in the life of the past. Forms include imaginative stories in which authors deliberately reconstruct the life and times of a period in the past, books written from an author's memory of an earlier period, or books that have taken on an aura of the past simply by being around a long time (Huck, 1967:469).

Illustration. ". . . By illustration we mean any form of exposition of elucidation. The degree it elucidates or reveals is

the degree of its goodness or badness. It can exist on its own, or it
may need to be amplified by words. Or it can itself amplify a text.
It can also serve decorative ends. It can be a drawing, a painting, a
collage or a photograph; it can also be a thumb-print, a geometrical
diagram, an ink blot or anything else that communicates. It should
always be judged by the effectiveness of its statement and the media
in which it appears" (Gill and Lewis, 1964:34).

Impressionism. Art work characterized by discontinuous
brushwork and by the breaking up of light into its component parts.
Artists creating impressionistic work break away from the traditional
technique of continuous brushstrokes, from the representation of
clearly outlined objects, and from preconceived notions of the color
that things have in nature. Such art work may be further characterized
by the artist's play with light and shadow (Mayer, 1969:192-193).

Informational Article. Informational articles are ones which
are designed to convey facts, or interesting comments about a particular
subject. Usually such articles are written by people who are
authorities in their fields; or they are written by writers who study
subjects, interview specialists, and compile the data (Huck, 1976:526).

Instructional Material. Any device with instructional content
or function that is used for teaching purposes, including books,
textbooks. . . (Good, 1973:307).

Middle-grades. A term commonly applied to grades 4, 5, and 6, or to any two of these grades in an elementary school (Good, 1973: 366).

Modern Fantasy. Modern fantasy contains some imaginary elements that are contrary to reality as we know it today. Writers of modern fantasy may personify animals or toys, create new worlds, change the size of human beings, give humans unusual powers, or manipulate time patterns. An example of a well-known fantasy is Charlotte's Web, by E. B. White. Common forms and topics in modern fantasy include: modern fairy tales, strange and curious worlds, imaginary kingdoms, animal fantasy, the world of toys and dolls, Lilliputian worlds, fabulous flights, eccentric characters and preposterous situations, magical powers, tricks with time, overcoming evil, suspense and supernatural, science fiction. The modern literary fairy tale utilizes the form of the old, but has an identifiable author. In many instances, modern fairy tales are farcical versions of the old fairy-tale form. The story may be set in the days of kings and queens and beautiful princesses, but the conflict may have a modern twist (Huck, 1976:251-257).

Photograph. A faithful representation of an object obtained by the action of the sun's rays upon a chemically prepared plate (Adeline's, 1927:302).

Poetry. Carl Sandburg made the statement that "what can be

explained is not poetry. . . . The poems that are obvious are like the puzzles that are already solved. They deny us the joy of seeking and creating." Poetry for children differs little from poetry for adults, except that it comments on life in dimensions that are meaningful to children. Its language should be poetic and its content should appeal directly to children (Huck, 1976:310).

Preference. Favorable evaluation of some object. . . as compared to other possibilities that are rejected; a selection that may be intellectual or emotional in origin, that is always volitional at least in the act of choosing, and that concerns any of the value realms such as aesthetics or morals (Good, 1973:433).

Primary Grade. Any one of the first three grades of an elementary school (Good, 1973:263).

Reading Activity. Reading activities include pages within the student's copy of the basal which provide exercises or practice for reading or reading-related skills (i.e., literary skills, study skills, comprehension skills) (Weiss, 1973).

Realistic. In general, the depiction of human figures, real objects, or scenes as they appear in nature, without distortion or stylization (Mayer, 1969:322).

Traditional Literature. The traditional folk or fairy tale usually has no identifiable author. Originally the tales were passed from one generation to the next. Although names such as Grimm, Jacobs,

and others have become associated with some of these, they did not

write (in the sense of create) the stories. Names attached to such

traditional forms are usually referred to as the compilers of the

tales as opposed to the authors. These are stories that are said to

have been born of the oral tradition. Common forms in traditional

literature include folk tales, fairy tales, fables, myths, epics, and

Bible stories. Fables are brief, didactic tales in which animals, or

occasionally the elements, speak as human beings. Myths deal with

human relationships with god, with the relationships of the gods

among themselves, with the way people accept or fulfill their destiny,

and with the struggle of people within and without themselves between

good and evil forces. The epic is a long narrative or cycle of stories

clustering around the actions of a single hero (Huck, 1976:251).

Summary

The continued research in the teaching of reading is necessary

because it places the instructional program on a scientific basis, aids

in answering unresolved questions, and clarifies conditions that

influence its effective development. Teaching children to read has long

been an accepted responsibility for elementary education in America.

Because of its complexity, reading instruction poses unique

problems for the teacher. Researchers have investigated the teaching

of reading in order to solve some of these problems. Although much

published scholarship has accumulated, numerous controversies have appeared during the past thirty years. The use of basal readers as the main tool for teaching reading has been one such controversy. No particular basal reading system should be considered a panacea. Teachers have been encouraged to adjust to the strengths and weaknesses of each system. In order to make such adjustments, however, teachers need valid information about many aspects of the reading process. Data for making these adjustments, however, have not always been available or reliable.

Smith (1976) indicated that individual components of reading programs should be placed under close scrutiny before purchasing a series. This kind of evaluation, however, has not always taken place.

One component of basal reading series that deserves scrutiny is the use of illustrations. Opinions as to the value, style, media, color, and other qualities have been expressed by many writers (Hall, 1964; Read, 1950; Fries, 1966; Anderson, 1968; Rasmussen, 1964). Other writers (Dow, 1951, and LePere, 1967) pointed out that today's children not only expected illustrations, but also expected higher quality ones. Huck (1967) noted that modern basal publishers responded to this demand by using new technology for the printing of instructional materials.

Adult view on the appropriateness of illustrations, however, have not always coincided with children's preferences (Rudisell, 1952).

Illustration production has assumed more space and has raised the price
of materials. A determination of children's preferences for illustra-
tions could, therefore, be an important factor in the selection of a
basal series.

Since basal readers were found to be used by many schools a
knowledge of the values that children place on illustrations would be
helpful to teachers and other school personnel. Should the styles of
illustrations in presently available basal readers not be in line with
children's preferences, the efficiency of reading instruction might
be decreased. The purpose of this study was to investigate the type
of art style preferred by fifth grade pupils in selected Montana
schools. Another purpose was to examine illustrations from all of the
five major basal reading texts written for middle-grade children in
order to classify the type of illustrative style found in them. Another
part of the study entailed the reading, evaluating, and categorizing
of approximately 800 selections from the same five major basal reading
series texts written for middle-grade children.

Although the writer found studies dealing with various aspects
of children's preferences for illustrations, a search of ERIC materials
for the period of January, 1970 to October, 1976 yielded no studies of
fifth grade children's preferences for illustrative styles in relation
to story context in middle-grade basal readers. The proposed study
investigated these preferences and their relationship to context

of the accompanying literary material.

The study attempted to answer questions as to the 1) history of the use of illustrations in basal reading materials; 2) the semantic functions and utility of illustrations in reading materials; 3) controversies in the use of illustrations; 4) research findings pertaining to children's preferences for illustrations; 5) the distribution of illustrations among the types of illustrative style in the five major basal reading texts written for middle grade children; 6) the distribution of selections among literary forms in the same five major basal reading texts written for middle grade children; 7) the preference among fifth grades for illustrative style when the illustration accompanied a particular literary form; 8) the differences in preferences among male and female fifth graders for illustrative style when the illustration accompanied a particular literary form; 9) the differences in preferences among Mexican, Native American, and Caucasian fifth graders for illustrative style when the illustration accompanied a particular literary form.

General procedures for the study were outlined as follows: 1) a review of literature was conducted; 2) an examination of illustrations of five major reading series was made in order to classify the type of illustrative style in them; 3) an examination of selections in the five major reading series was made in order to categorize them as to literary form; 4) three selections were chosen from three major

literary forms; 5) illustrations were prepared for each of five categories of style; 6) an instrument in the form of a ballot was prepared for the recording of subjects' preferences; 7) subjects were presented the stimuli and asked to mark their preference; and 8) data, findings, conclusions and recommendations were reported.

One limitation of the study was that the majority of sources for the paper were taken from the Montana State University Library, a personal library, available sources through inter-library loan, and ERIC materials for the period of January, 1970 to October, 1976. Ability to draw generalizations from the findings was limited: 1) in that only selected Montana public school fifth grade children participated in the study, 2) in that three literary forms, five illustrative styles, and three illustrations were used, and 3) in that individual artists prepared the illustrations in the different styles.

The following terms were defined: abstract, basal reader, biography, cartoon, children's literature, contemporary realistic fiction, drama, drawing, grade, historical fiction, illustration, impressionism, informational article, instructional material, middle-grades, modern fantasy, photograph, poetry, preference, primary grade, reading activity, realistic, and traditional literature.

The next topic in this paper will be the presentation and discussion of the procedures used in this study. This will be found in Chapter 2.

Chapter 2

PROCEDURES

The purpose of this study was to investigate the type of art style preferred by fifth graders in selected Montana schools. Specifically the study attempted to answer the question: Will there be a preference among fifth graders for illustrative style found in basal readers (i.e., realism, cartoon, abstract, impressionistic, photographic) when the illustration accompanies a particular literary form (i.e., legend, poem, biography)? Another purpose was to examine illustrations from all the selections of the five major basal reading series texts written for middle grade children in order to classify the type of illustrative styles found in them. Another part of the study entailed the reading, evaluating, and categorizing of approximately 800 selections from the five major basal reading series texts written for middle grade children.

The procedures used in this study will be discussed in this chapter. The first section of the chapter will elaborate on those procedures dealing with the review of literature, the classification of illustrations, and the categorization of literary selections. The second section of the chapter will discuss those procedures for the investigation of the type of art style preferred by fifth grade students. The procedures discussed in each section will appear in the order in which they were completed by the writer.

SECTION ONE

The procedures used in this part of the study included the following parts: 1) the statement of questions answered in part one, 2) major elements reviewed in the related literature, 3) examination of middle-grade selections for illustrative styles, and 4) examination of middle-grade selections for literary forms.

Questions to be Answered

1. What are the "milestones" in the history of the use of illustrations in reading materials and basal readers?

2. What are the semantic functions and utility of illustrations in reading material?

3. What are the controversies in the use of illustrations?

4. What are the research findings pertaining to the children's preferences for illustrations?

5. What is the distribution of illustrations among the types of illustrative style in the five major basal reading texts written for middle-grade children?

6. What is the distribution of selections among the literary forms in the five major basal reading texts written for middle-grade children?

Review of Literature

The writer conducted an extensive review of literature pertaining to the use of illustrations in basal reading texts. This review reported studies in the following subcategories: 1) "milestones" in the history of the use of illustrations in reading materials and basal readers; 2) semantic functions and utility of illustrations in reading materials; 3) controversies in the use of illustrations; 4) children's preferences for illustrations -- style, theme, and color. Appropriate studies were reported from those holdings available from the Montana State University Library. Studies listed in the ERIC Index, the Education Index, and Dissertation Abstracts for the period of January, 1970 to October, 1976 and listed under the following descriptors were included: preferences, textbook bias, children's literature, pictures, basal readers, reading interests, illustrations.

Examination of Middle-Grade Selections
-- Illustrative Styles

An examination of illustrations from all the selections of the five major basal reading texts written for middle-grade children was made in order to classify the type of illustrative style found in them (i.e., realistic, impressionistic, photographic, cartoon, abstract).

The five major basal reading series were those which had the highest national sales according to a report by Market Data Retrieval, 1974. A copy of appropriate information from this report appears in

Appendix G.

A table was prepared to record the occurrence of illustrations in the categories.

The grade designation provided by the publishers was used to classify readers as middle-grade.

Examination of Middle-Grade Selections -- Literary Forms

This part of the study entailed the reading, evaluating, and categorizing of approximately eight hundred selections from the same five major basal reading series texts written for middle-grade children.

Selections were categorized as to the basic kinds of literary forms they represented, that is: modern fantasy, drama, poetry, traditional literature (including myth, epic, legend, tall tale), contemporary realistic fiction, biography, historical fiction, and informational article.

A table was prepared to present the number of selections for each literary form listed above.

The grade designation provided by the publishers was used to classify texts as middle-grade.

SECTION TWO

The procedures used in this part of the study included the

following parts: 1) a statement of the questions to be answered,

2) population description, 3) experimental procedures (i.e., choice

of literary selections, preparation of illustrations, preparation of

the instrument, and the method of presenting the stimuli to subjects),

and 4) analysis of data (i.e., method of organizing and reporting

data and analysis of data).

Research Questions

1. Will there be a preference among fifth graders for illustrative style (i.e., realism, cartoon, abstract, impressionistic, photographic) when the illustration accompanies the literary form -- legend?

2. Will there be a preference among fifth graders for illustrative style (i.e., realism, cartoon, abstract, impressionistic, photographic) when the illustration accompanies the literary form -- poetry?

3. Will there be a preference among fifth graders for illustrative style (i.e., realism, cartoon, abstract, impressionistic, photographic) when the illustration accompanies the literary form -- biography?

4. Will there be a difference in preference among male and female fifth graders for illustrative style (i.e., realism, cartoon, abstract, impressionistic, photographic) when the illustration

accompanies the literary forms -- legend, poetry, biography?

5. Will there be a difference in preference among Mexican American, Native American, and Caucasian fifth graders for illustrative style (i.e., realism, cartoon, abstract, impressionistic, photographic) when the illustration accompanies the literary forms -- legend, poetry, biography)?

Statement of Null Hypotheses

1. Ho: There will be no preference among fifth graders for illustrative style (i.e., realism, cartoon, abstract, impressionistic, photographic) when the illustration accompanies the literary form, legend.

2. Ho: There will be no preference among fifth graders for illustrative style (i.e., realism, cartoon, abstract, impressionistic, photographic) when the illustration accompanies the literary form, poem.

3. Ho: There will be no preference among fifth graders for illustrative style (i.e., realism, cartoon, abstract, impressionistic, photographic) when the illustration accompanies the literary form, biography.

4. Ho: There will be no significant difference in preference between male and female fifth graders for illustrative style (i.e., realism, cartoon, abstract, impressionistic, photographic) when the

illustration accompanies the literary form, legend.

5. Ho: There will be no significant difference in the preference between male and female fifth graders for illustrative style (i.e., realism, cartoon, abstract, impressionistic, photographic) when the illustration accompanies the literary form, poem.

6. Ho: There will be no significant difference in the preference between male and female fifth graders for illustrative style (i.e., realism, cartoon, abstract, impressionistic, photographic) when the illustration accompanies the literary form, biography.

7. Ho: There will be no significant difference in preference between Mexican American and Caucasian fifth graders for illustrative style (i.e., realism, cartoon, abstract, impressionistic, photographic) when the illustration accompanies the literary form, legend.

8. Ho: There will be no significant difference in preference between Mexican American and Caucasian fifth graders for illustrative style (i.e., realism, cartoon, abstract, impressionistic, photographic) when the illustration accompanies the literary form, poem.

9. Ho: There will be no significant difference in preference between Mexican American and Caucasian fifth graders for illustrative style (i.e., realism, cartoon, abstract, impressionistic, photographic) when the illustration accompanies the literary form, biography.

10. Ho: There will be no significant difference in preference between Native American and Caucasian fifth graders for illustrative

style (i.e., realism, cartoon, abstract, impressionistic, photographic)
when the illustration accompanies the literary form, legend.

11. Ho: There will be no significant difference in preference
between Native American and Caucasian fifth graders for illustrative
style (i.e., realism, cartoon, abstract, impressionistic, photographic)
when the illustration accompanies the literary form, poem.

12. Ho: There will be no significant difference in preference
between Native American and Caucasian fifth graders for illustrative
style (i.e., realism, cartoon, abstract, impressionistic, photographic)
when the illustration accompanies the literary form, biography.

13. Ho: There will be no significant difference in preference
between Caucasians and non-Caucasian fifth graders for illustrative
style (i.e., realism, cartoon, abstract, impressionistic, photographic)
when the illustration accompanies the literary form, legend.

14. Ho: There will be no significant difference in preference
between Caucasian and non-Caucasian fifth graders for illustrative
style (i.e., realism, cartoon, abstract, impressionistic, photographic)
when the illustration accompanies the literary form, poem.

15. Ho: There will be no significant difference in preference
between Caucasian and non-Caucasian fifth graders for illustrative
style (i.e., realism, cartoon, abstract, impressionistic, photographic)
when the illustration accompanies the literary form, biography.

Population Description

All subjects participating in this study were fifth grade students from selected schools in Montana. Classes were chosen which contained a high proportion of Mexican American, Native American, and Caucasian students.

Twenty-seven fifth grade classes were chosen. Five hundred twenty-one students from ten schools participated in the study. Schools selected were those identified by a representative of the State Department of Public Instruction and school district principals as having a high proportion of the ethnic groups noted above. Schools participating in the study included the following: 1) Garfield and Taft in Billings, 2) Crow Agency and Wyola on the Crow Reservation, 3) Loy and Emerson in Great Falls, 4) Belgrade, Manhattan, Monforton, and Willson in the Bozeman area.

Experimental Procedures

This section will describe the choice of literary selections, preparation of illustrations, preparation of the instrument, and the method of presenting the stimuli to subjects.

Choice of literary selections. Three selections were chosen from a middle-grade basal reading text. Two of the selections were prose and the third was poetry.

In order that the selections be representative of the literary

forms in middle-grade basal reading texts, each selection was chosen from a different literary form. These selections were chosen from one publisher's fifth grade text.

The selections were chosen on the basis that they fairly represented subjects, themes, characterizations, and forms which regularly appeared in fifth grade reading programs. A transcript of each selection appears in Appendix A.

Preparation of illustrations. Illustrations in each of the five categories of style were prepared for a part of each selection. The photographic style for biography, however, was a photograph of a painted portrait. The section of the story of poem illustrated was one which was illustrated by the publisher. The section was also one in which an illustration was intended to extend the text and reveal the story mood and action. Each illustration was prepared by an artist or photographer of reputation who had experience with children's illustrations. The photographer was a recognized professional photographer. The illustration from the original text was also used. Listed in Appendix D is a description of the qualifications of each person who prepared the illustrations.

The illustrations used in the study were all of the same general shape, size, and arrangement. The illustrations were reproduced on 35mm slides. The styles of illustrations used in the study were 1) cartoon, 2) impressionistic, 3) realistic, 4) photo-

graphic, 5) abstract. Each slide was prepared with a number and alphabetical letter so that when projected onto the screen, it was identifiable by the child. Half-tone photographs of the illustrations appear in Appendix E.

Preparation of instrument. The writer developed an instrument for the subject's recording of preference for an illustration. The instrument consisted of a ballot, printed on a regular eight and one-half by eleven inch paper. A number and letter appeared on the ballot in order that the preference could be marked. An informal check on the reliability of the instrument was made by conducting a pilot study with fifth graders at Monforton, Belgrade, and Manhattan schools, Bozeman, Montana. A description of the pilot study appears in Chapter 4.

Method of presenting stimuli. The five slides of illustrative styles for a single selection were arranged for presentation by assigning each a random number (1-5). A copy of the random number assignment appears in Appendix F.

Copies of each of the three selections were provided each student in order that he or she could read along with the oral taped reading of the selection. Instructions on how to mark the ballot were given. At this time students were asked if they could see clearly the screen located at the front of the room. Those who could not were repositioned. The classroom teacher was asked to indicate on paper those students who were color-blind. The responses from the color-

blind students were included in the data analysis. A taped reading of

a selection was presented to the class and the tape was stopped at the

section to be illustrated. The tape was recorded by someone other than

the experimenter. The subjects were asked to consider the slide as if

it accompanied the selection just listened to and read.

The five slides of illustrative styles for a single illustra-

tion were shown twice to allow students to review them before making

a choice. Subjects were asked to mark their choices on the instruments.

Slides were projected for ten seconds. Instruments were collected.

The total time involved for these procedures was approximately thirty

minutes.

Analysis of Data

Results obtained from the instrument used with the subjects

were tabulated by means of descriptive statistics. Tables were

constructed to answer the questions proposed and to fulfill the

purposes of the problem. The tables were constructed to provide

information concerning the subject's preferences for illustrative

style when accompanied by a specific literary form.

An array was displayed of styles compared with each literary

form to show possible relationships between style choice and literary

form. The chi square statistic was used to make decisions on retaining

or rejecting the null hypotheses. A null hypotheses was rejected if

the chi square statistic was significant at greater than or equal to the .05 level of significance.

Summary

The purposes of this study were 1) to investigate the type of art style preferred by fifth graders, 2) to classify the illustrations in middle-grade basal readers as to type of style, and 3) to categorize selections in middle-grade basal readers as to literary form.

To accomplish the first purpose of the study, illustrations in five styles were prepared for three literary selections. Five hundred twenty-one students in twenty-seven fifth grade classes were asked to listen to and read the selections, after which they were shown the slides; students were given ballots on which they were to indicate their preference for a particular slide.

To accomplish the second purpose of the study a review of literature was conducted; illustrations in middle-grade basal selections were classified as to style; and selections in middle-grade basal selections were categorized as to literary form.

The data was compiled and analyzed to test the stated hypotheses. The chi square statistic was used to analyze the data at the five percent level of significance. The data was then presented in appropriate tables for drawing conclusions and making recommendations.

The next topic in this paper will be the review of literature.

This will be found in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Literature relative to the role of illustrations in basal

readers appears to fall into four major subcategories. The first

section of this chapter recounts "milestones" in the history of the

use of illustrations in reading materials and basal readers. The

semantic functions and utility of illustrations in reading materials

are discussed in the second subcategory. A third cluster of writings

looks at the controversies in the use of illustrations. A fourth

group contains those studies devoted to aspects of children's

preferences for illustrations. Style, theme, and color preference

will be reported.

History of Illustrations in
    Reading Textbooks

"Not every child who picks up an attractive book in school

today realizes that behind such features as good paper, readable type,

and interesting illustrations there is a long and colorful story"

(Russell, 1961:53).

The history of the use of illustrations would probably begin

with the earliest cave drawings and progress through stone inscriptions

to modern photographic and silk screen color processes. The invention

of papyrus in the Nile region, parchment (made from the skins of sheep

and cattle) dating back to 500 B.C., the reed or quill pen, Chinese

rag paper, the development of libraries by the Sumerians, the

Babylonians, the Chaldeans, and the Assyrians, the invention of

printing with moveable type, the first printing of books in Peru -- a

full century before it began in English speaking countries, the arrival

of the printing press in Massachusetts in 1638, and the mass paper

production of the 1700's, all contributed important elements in the

history of reading materials and the use of illustrations (Russell,

1961).

Before there was an alphabetic system of writing, pictographic

and ideographic symbols were used. The development of these systems

point to the early importance of communicating a message via illustra-

tions. Durkin (1974:191) noted that pictographic symbols related

directly to the visual appearance of their referents. A drawback in

such a system was that the message was not always capable of being

pictured. This drawback led to the development of the ideographic

system of writing:

> An ideograph is a conventionalized character substituted for
> the pictograph. The Dakota Indians symbolized 'plenty' by a
> buffalo head. . . . with the ideograph the direct relationship
> or origin of the symbol becomes difficult to trace (Russell,
> 1961:50).

Durkin (1974:191) noted that the ideographs often showed ". . . no

relationships to its sound and, generally, none to its meaning either."

Durkin (1974:191) demonstrated that written English, although not

ideographic, has some ideographs. Examples were mathematical signs

(+,=), numerals (4, 10), and abbreviations (Ms., Co.). A person
reading these ". . . either knows or doesn't know that 10 is read as
'ten'." There is no way a person can reach that conclusion from the
ideograph alone.

In the alphabetic system of writing, words are represented by
letters (graphemes) that, over their years of use, have been assigned
speech sounds (phonemes). Although written English is alphabetic it
does not have a mutually exclusive phonetic-graphemic relationship.
The language has approximately forty-six sounds but only twenty-six
letters to represent these sounds. Even though combinations of these
letters allow the English writer to form written messages, many messages
are still not capable of being communicated by the alphabetic system
alone. Illustrations are felt to be one means of extending the written
language into more complete realms of communication.

John Amos Comenius (1592-1670) is credited by most authorities
as first emphasizing the need for illustrations to extend learning
beyond the written phases. Hymen (1966:105) stated that "His book
Orbis Pictus (World in Pictures) established the method of using
illustrations for elementary students. His work set the stage for later
educational reformers years later."

Witty, et al (1966:24-25) noted that progress in the teaching
of reading ". . . may be best appreciated by tracing the development
of the reading textbook." A review of the history of reading texts

pointed to the changing concepts in thought about the reading process,
the progress in educational theory and practice, the influence of
research in child development, and the developing concepts in the
learning process. The changing attitudes toward the role of illustra-
tions and the increasingly technical advancements in producing
illustrations also played important roles in the history of reading
materials.

One of the first reading books was the Hornbook, which really
was not a book but a wooden paddle. On this paddle, a sheet of paper
was fastened and covered by a transparent sheet of horn. Appearing
on most "paddles" were the letters of the alphabet, vowels and vowel-
consonant combinations, a benediction, and the Lord's Prayer.
Occasionally, a cross was placed on the parchment. Except for this,
there was no other illustration on the Hornbook. This particular
symbol was appropriate, however, since it was the "Old Deluder Law
of 1647" which required townships to establish schools so that
children could learn to read the scriptures and the cross was intended
to emphasize the religious function of reading (Hillway, 1964:20).

After 1750, the Battledore was developed (Huck, 1976:61).
This book of instruction ". . . consisted of cardboard or other
material folded to form three leaves." Although the book had no
specific religious teachings, it contained the letters of the alphabet
in both lower and upper cases, numerals, easy reading lessons, and

woodcuts of animals. Huck (1976:61) pointed out that "Probably these
were the first books of pictures that could be handled by children
themselves."

The New England Primer (1792) is usually described as being the
next main reading text after the Hornbook and the Battledore. Tyack
(1967:3) stated that The New England Primer was ". . . morbid at best
and sadistic at worst." The primers of this time ". . . indicated
values which were consciously inculcated in the young" (Tyack, 1967:
179). Tyack (1967:179) added that "Religious orthodoxy and anxiety
about salvation in early America spoke through the pages of The New
England Primer (of which over 2,000,000 copies were sold.)"

The frontispiece in the Primer was usually a portrait of the
reigning British monarch at the time the edition was printed. During
the Revolutionary War, these pictures were replaced with engravings
of American patriots. These frontispiece engravings showed a
nationalistic rather than a religious objective for learning to read.

A series of pictures about one inch by two and three-fourths
inches in size accompanied the verses in the Primer which were designed
to teach the letters of the alphabet. "All of these pictures were
woodcuts in black and white, crudely drawn, poorly proportioned, and
altogether unattractive and inartistic" (Smith, 1965:22). The pictures
often emphasized the dismal message of the verse. For example, in
teaching the letter "y" one finds the verse "Youth forward slips/Death

soonest nips." The accompanying illustrations show a hideous figure holding a huge spear in his hand which is pointed at the head of a young child who stands nearby (Smith, 1965). Print and illustrations of this "Little Bible of New England" were necessarily small (Witty, et al. 1966:25).

Following the extensive use of The New England Primer, a number of spelling books came into vogue. Perhaps the most successful of the 1700's was Thomas Dilworth's A New Guide to the English Tongue. The 1770 edition was four by six inches in size and bound in leather. The speller, however, added a feature not found in any of the others -- a series of twelve crude little woodcuts (Smith, 1965).

In 1790, Noah Webster published his famous "Old Blue Back Speller" -- The American Spelling Book. The book is said to have reached a total distribution of twenty-four million. The first picture in an early edition was supposed to be a likeness of Noah Webster, showing him with hair standing upright in horn-like spikes, which gave him a most "uncouth" appearance. This portrait brought so much derision upon the author that it threatened for a time to ruin the future of his books. The speller, however, had so much merit that the public soon forgot the strange looking author who appeared in the frontispiece and accepted the book on its own worth. The other pictures in the speller were black and white woodcuts used to illustrate the fables and were of a highly moral character. The