THE EMERGENT LITERACY BEHAVIORS OF BILINGUAL EDUCATION
KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS DURING MODIFIED
SUSTAINED SILENT READING:
A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY

DISSERTATION

Presented to the Graduate Council of the
University of North Texas in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

By

Dreama J. Rosenkrans, B.S., M.Ed.
Denton, Texas
December, 1993
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Rosenkrans, Dreama J., *The Emergent Literacy Behaviors of Bilingual Education Kindergarten Students during Modified Sustained Silent Reading: A Descriptive Study*. Doctor of Philosophy (Reading), December, 1993, 291 pp., 30 tables, 2 figures, references, 122 titles.

Although the importance of children's independent functioning with storybooks is recognized in emergent literacy, no detailed description of kindergartners' behaviors during Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) was found in a literature review. The purpose of this study was to describe the behaviors of kindergarten students during Sustained Silent Reading sessions modified to be developmentally appropriate.

Performing the dual role of teacher and researcher, the author employed a naturalistic observational approach to gather longitudinal data over the course of one school year in an all-day public school kindergarten class. Data was collected for 19 Hispanic students. Nine students later were chosen for in-depth analysis. Finally, four children were selected for fully developed case studies.

Three types of data were collected: videotapes of SSR sessions, records of children's book selections, and reflective fieldnotes. During data analysis, the author produced stream-of-behavior chronicles, transcriptions,
standardized observation protocols, and reports of children’s reading preferences.

Analysis of data resulted in the description of three major categories of behavior: (a) reading preferences, (b) social behaviors, and (c) emergent reading behaviors (conceptions about literature and literacy, books, and print). Analysis for each child and cross-case study analysis produced voluminous findings. Among the findings: children’s book selections were purposeful, influenced by personal experiences, and often repetitive; within the context of social interaction, children accomplished important cognitive work and revealed background knowledge, skills, and academic needs; and children’s emergent reading behaviors reflected abilities, level of interest, and social purposes. Three major reading behavior categories emerged: silently studying, discussing books, and pretend readings.

These and other findings resulted in numerous implications, including: extensive classroom book collections are vital to the success of SSR; children must be free to make their own selections; videotaping is a useful tool for assessing social dynamics and cognitive development; teachers should avoid static grouping of children; and SSR should be considered an essential component of kindergarten literacy programs.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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I extend my deep appreciation to my colleagues in the Richardson Independent School District for their enthusiasm and support. It has been a joy to work with them on a daily basis. A special debt is owed to Dr. Anne Homan Vincent for her professional assistance, constant encouragement, and enduring friendship.

I also thank the parents of the students for their permission, enthusiasm, and wonderful children. The many hours I spent getting to know Virginia, Ricardo, Cecilia, and Carlos have been a highlight of my teaching career.

This study also would not have been possible without the abilities, encouragement, and loving support of my husband, Wayne E. Rosenkrans. His gifts of time and effort will not be forgotten.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Since the early 1970s, researchers and practitioners in early childhood reading education have experienced a paradigm shift in knowledge of the process by which children become literate. Early in the century, Huey (1908) argued for natural ways of fostering children's literacy development. Instead, a reading readiness approach emerged and became dominant in American primary education. Teale and Sulzby (1986) reviewed the historical evolution of this paradigm. It began to develop during the 1920s and 1930s, related to research in child development and the work of psychologist Arnold Gesell (1949). Reading readiness advocates argued that children's cognitive growth was dictated by maturation. The educational implications and applications of this belief were profound. "Readiness to read was the result of neural ripening. The mental processes necessary for reading would unfold automatically at a certain point in development. . . . If the child is not yet ready, wait" (Teale & Sulzby, 1986, p. ix). The maturationalist approach became entrenched in educational practice.
During the 1960s, a combination of forces (including paranoia over the Russian Sputnik satellite technology, infancy research and the social equality movement) led to the abandonment of the maturationalist approach and adoption of an "interventionist posture" (Teale & Sulzby, 1986, p. xii). This new reading readiness, dedicated to preparing children for reading through direct instruction, has permeated instructional materials and practice. Teale and Sulzby (1986) summarized readiness paradigm implications:

1. Instruction in reading can only begin efficiently when children have mastered a set of basic skills prerequisite to reading. The most important skills predict subsequent achievement most strongly.

2. The area of instructional concern is reading. It is implied that composing and other aspects of writing (except for letter formation or handwriting) should be delayed until children learn to read.

3. Sequenced mastery of skills forms the basis of reading as a subject to be taught; instruction focuses almost exclusively on the formal aspects of reading and generally ignores the functional uses of reading.

4. What went on before formal instruction is irrelevant, so long as sufficient teaching and practice presented in a logical sequence are provided when instruction begins.
5. Children all pass through a scope and sequence of readiness and reading skills, and their progress up this hierarchy should be carefully monitored by periodic formal testing. (p. xiii)

A significant body of more recent research related to young children has led to a new paradigm as the focus of research attention. Teale and Sulzby (1986) outlined these principal findings associated with the emergent literacy view of reading now widely adopted:

1. Literacy development begins long before children begin to receive formal instruction. Children use legitimate reading and writing behaviors in the informal settings of home and community. The search for skills which predict subsequent achievement has been misguided because the onset of literacy has been misconceived.

2. Literacy development is the appropriate way to describe what was called reading readiness: The child develops as a writer/reader. The notion of reading preceding writing, or vice versa, is a misconception. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing abilities (as aspects of language--both oral and written) develop concurrently and interrelatively, rather than sequentially.

3. Literacy develops in real-life settings for real-life activities in order to "get things done." Therefore, the functions of literacy are as integral a part of
learning about writing and reading during early childhood as are the forms of literacy.

4. Children are doing critical cognitive work in literacy development during the years from birth to six.

5. Children learn written language through active engagement with their world. They interact socially with adults in writing and reading situations; they explore print on their own, and they profit from modeling of literacy by significant adults, particularly their parents.

6. Although children's learning about literacy can be described in terms of generalized stages, children can pass through these stages in a variety of ways and at different ages. Any attempts to "scope and sequence" instruction should take this developmental variation into account. (p. xviii)

Within the reading readiness framework, preschool, kindergarten and first grade children were not expected to function independently with books because they could not use books in a manner most adults would consider reading in the conventional sense. Independent reading programs in school, such as Sustained Silent Reading, were reserved for older students who, in the teacher's view, were able to practice reading skills and increase their fluency (Kaisen, 1987). Many educators also considered SSR a way to promote interest in books by exposing students to the pleasures of reading.
This was particularly important because only a minimal fraction of the typical school day required actual reading.

Central to emergent literacy research is the understanding that children learn to read by reading. Children’s experiences with books therefore are considered extremely important beginning in infancy. As literature-based reading programs have gained acceptance, school districts, schools, and individual teachers have implemented structured times during all or most school days for young children to work independently with books.

Researchers have begun to construct a body of descriptive research analyzing children’s independent functioning with books in various settings (Hickman, 1979; McIntyre, 1992; Putnam, 1981; Teale, 1988). In a review of the literature, however, there were no descriptions of children’s behaviors during a Sustained Silent Reading period modified to address kindergartners’ developmental needs (Hong, 1981; Kaisen, 1987).

**Background of the Study**

In 1988-1989, I returned to teaching after five years in the research and evaluation department of a metropolitan school district. I implemented a traditional Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) period in my kindergarten classroom. Students willingly followed the guidelines, but remained on task only for brief periods each day before closing their books and spending the rest of the allotted time looking
around the room. I then adopted a modified program and it quickly became one of the children's favorite activities.

Their behaviors included: playing teacher by reading books to each other; retelling stories; chanting and reciting poems learned in class; heatedly debating the meaning of pictures in books which had not yet been read to them; conducting polls about who liked which books; and arguing the merits of one book compared to another. Even though the rules prohibited the students from leaving their assigned tables, they occasionally approached me to stare alternately at my face and the book I was reading. Some commented about the lack of pictures in my books, some asked about content, and others only observed silently.

Although their behavior was intriguing, it was not possible to conduct a detailed observation because I performed the role of adult model by reading. I subsequently decided to undertake a formal study that would permit a detailed description of the children's behavior.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to describe the reading preferences, social behaviors, and emergent-reading behaviors of bilingual education kindergarten students during modified Sustained Silent Reading.

**Statement of the Problem**

The problem to be investigated was, "What are the reading preferences, social behaviors, and emergent-reading
Research Questions

The general research question that guided the study was, "What are the book-reading behaviors of kindergarten students during modified Sustained Silent Reading?"

Deliberately broad and open-ended questions—"What is happening?"—are characteristic of descriptive research (Bailey, 1982). New and more specific questions were expected to emerge during the course of the investigation (Bissex, 1987; Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983). Therefore, no a priori hypotheses were formulated. Nevertheless, since all formal research requires focus and structure (Erickson, 1981; Goetz & LeCompte, 1984), the following secondary questions were formulated to direct this study:

1. What are the students' reading preferences as defined by their daily book selections for SSR?
2. What is the nature of the students' social behaviors during SSR?
3. What is the nature of their emergent-reading behaviors over the course of the school year?

Significance of the Study

This description of bilingual education kindergarten students' functioning with books in the natural classroom setting should prove useful in three areas identified by Britton (1987): basic research, development, and teaching.
Basic Research

While a field of study is still in its infancy—in this instance emergent literacy—descriptive contributions to the literature are particularly important. Description is "the foundation upon which all scientific endeavor--natural and social--is grounded" (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984, p. 2).

Kantor, Miller and Fernie (1992) elaborated as follows:

Linkages among early childhood research, practice, and literacy theory are in and of themselves emergent and in need of a fuller articulation. Ethnographic studies of early childhood classrooms whose curricular practices are based on the view of young children as "meaning makers" of and with written language have the potential to inform us at the intersection of theory and practice. Questions oriented to practice can be explored such as: "What is the nature of literacy within the early childhood classrooms?" and "How do young children interact with written language within and across classroom contexts?" Descriptions of children participating in such literacy practice can in turn inform our knowledge of young children's literacy development: How does experience in classrooms expand the literacy repertoires of young children? (p. 187)

This study contributes to the literature of emergent literacy by describing young children's specific reading preferences, social behaviors, and emergent-reading
behaviors. The study establishes a benchmark for comparison of these case-study children with others, and lays groundwork for further descriptive studies of Sustained Silent Reading at the kindergarten level. It also contributes significantly to the descriptive research available for Spanish-speaking kindergarten children.

Development

Britton (1987) described development as "the process of helping practitioners to discover the [basic] research and apply it to their own situations and practice" (1987, p. 17). This study may influence educational practice by:

(a) encouraging other teachers to conduct naturalistic classroom research, (b) providing information about Sustained Silent Reading that allows for more objective decision-making concerning implementation, and (c) presenting the possibility of using similar data collection techniques for assessing children to plan for instruction more effectively.

Teaching

Teacher-researchers typically set out to contribute to basic research and development, but their deepest motivation for conducting classroom studies is the desire to better understand what is happening in their classrooms and in their own teaching (Bullock, 1987). By initiating investigations with wider applications, teacher-researchers learn valuable information about individual students.
(Britton, 1987). Accomplishing this is extremely important for teachers committed to the best possible education for each student.

Classroom research has vital importance for the teacher, but Bissex (1987) urged teachers planning studies to ask, "To whom else might this research be useful or interesting?" (p. 33). In that context, this study's findings should interest other teachers, researchers, administrators, curriculum planners, educators of teachers, and parents.

**Definitions of Terms**

The following terms have specific meanings in this investigation:

1. Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) - A component of the school day in which a period of time is set aside for students to choose their own reading materials and read silently without interruption. The teacher models for the students by reading during this time. No reports, discussion, or records are required (Levine, 1984).

2. Modified Sustained Silent Reading - A modification of Sustained Silent Reading designed to make it more developmentally appropriate for young children who do not yet read independently. Although several formats have been suggested (Hong, 1981; Kaisen, 1987), the following guidelines were adopted for the purposes of the study: (a) students were seated at tables in groups of two to five;
(b) students were allowed to select three or four books for each session; (c) students were not allowed to leave their tables, but could exchange books with others seated at the same table; (d) students were not required to maintain silence; (e) the teacher only read silently; and (f) SSR was not discontinued when minor interruptions occurred, such as unscheduled announcements over the intercom or persons entering the room unexpectedly.

3. Bilingual education students - Students who do not know the English language well enough to function academically in English and therefore are assigned to a bilingual education classroom with a teacher fluent in the students' first language. In this study, all participants were Spanish speakers.

4. Silently studying - An emergent-reading behavior in which children quietly study illustrations or photographs.

5. Discussing book - An emergent-reading behavior in which students respond verbally. Their verbalization may involve only themselves or an audience. Children respond with personal narratives and anecdotes, discuss content, provide labels (e.g., "Look! Santa Claus!"), comment (e.g., "He's fat."), and follow the action (e.g., "Uh-oh. He's going to jump!").

6. Pretend reading - An emergent-reading behavior in which children intentionally act as if they are reading a book. In the case of unfamiliar stories, they create a text
appropriate for the illustrations. When pretend reading familiar books, they retrieve the text of the story. Recitations of memorized text also fit this category. The texts children produce may vary in sophistication, depending on the extent to which children have learned to use oral-like or written-like language and the completeness of the story. The criterion used to assign a child’s performance to this category was the child’s apparent intent, not the sophistication of the finished product.

7. Aspectual reading - An emergent-reading behavior in which children "focus upon one or two aspects of print to the exclusion of other aspects . . . the child may focus upon a few known words, or a few letters and associated sounds, or upon the remembered text--whichever aspect or combination of aspects the child focuses on, s/he attempts to use the print" (Sulzby, 1985, p. 471).

8. Conventional reading - Independent reading or reading that the lay public would identify as children being able to read by themselves.

Limitations

The qualitative nature of this study and its small sample limited the expected generalizability of the findings to other populations. The study involved data collection for 19 students in one bilingual education kindergarten class. Nine students later were chosen for intensive analysis. Ultimately, four students were chosen from the
nine as the focus of case studies. All students were Spanish-dominant Hispanics attending school in a metropolitan area of Texas. The children came from a predominantly low socioeconomic background. They included American-born children and recent immigrants from urban and rural areas of Mexico. The findings of this study are not expected to be directly transferable to groups unlike this one.

Descriptive case studies provide a valid basis for comparisons, however, and careful measures were taken to insure that this study incorporated clear definitions of the essential terminology, sufficient descriptions of participant characteristics, and replicable methodology to provide for research data comparability and transferability (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984, p. 9).

Assumptions

It was assumed that no unusual external conditions would exist that would adversely affect the results of this study.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This literature review synthesizes recent research related to children’s independent functioning with tradebooks during modified Sustained Silent Reading (SSR). The chapter comprises a review of SSR programs, and studies the book preferences, social behaviors, and emergent-reading behaviors of young children during modified Sustained Silent Reading.

Sustained Silent Reading

Researchers and practitioners share intense concern about the fact that children arrive at school with measurably wide variations in their literacy experiences. Wells (1986) made this point clearly in describing two participants in the Bristol Language Development Project. Upon entering school, one boy had approximately 6,000 story-reading experiences while one girl had none.

Schools have been urged to establish literacy-rich environments that close this gap, and to create other favorable conditions to help all students achieve literacy (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott & Wilkinson, 1985). The professional literature describes program elements fitting the requirements of these environments. DeLapp (1989) lists
several essential components:
1. Adults read to children daily.
2. Children have time to read books they choose.
3. Children discuss and reflect on the books they read.
4. Children respond to books through writing, art, drama, music, and talk.
5. Children write about topics they choose.
6. Children share their reading, writing, and art products with the entire class.
7. Children experience a variety of quality literature as an essential part of any theme or unit of study.
8. The daily schedule is flexible. (pp. 223-224)

The following program characteristics have special significance to this study:

1. Students' self-selection of reading materials (Simons, 1988; Tunnell & Jacobs, 1989; Zarrillo, 1989);
2. Access to well-developed classroom libraries (Fielding, Wilson & Anderson, 1984; Henke, 1988; Morrow, 1982); and

For the past 25 years, young American children typically have experienced some time to read books independently during the school day. This time—generally referred to as recreational, practice or free reading—often
was allowed only when students finished other assignments that teachers viewed as the "real work." Hunt (1970) introduced Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading (USSR) and promoted it as "the essence of reading power" (p. 150). It quickly gained educators' attention nationwide. McCracken (1971) shortened the name to Sustained Silent Reading (SSR), possibly due to the public's negative association with the acronym. McCracken also proposed these guidelines:

1. Students read silently.

2. The teacher models for the students. No interruptions are permitted.

3. Students generally select a single newspaper, magazine or book.

4. The session is timed.

5. No reports or records are required.

6. The entire class reads.

Numerous articles have appeared in educational journals since 1971, primarily addressing teachers' questions regarding practical issues such as: (a) definition and guidelines, (b) rationale, (c) promotion, (d) reading materials, (e) teacher as model, and (f) implementation problems (Berglund & Johns, 1983; Blake, 1979; Gambrell, 1978; Levine, 1984; McCracken & McCracken, 1978; Moore, Jones & Miller, 1980; Schaudt, 1983).

Few empirical studies have documented the benefits of SSR, so its popularity among principals and teachers
(Kaisen, 1987; Schaudt, 1983) may be attributed to common sense notions (Gambrell, 1978) that reading ability will be enhanced by daily practice. Berglund and Johns (1983, pp. 534-535) believe that wide adoption of SSR primarily has been based on four assumptions:

1. Schools allow relatively little time for students to actually read because they devote too much time to skills instruction.

2. Students' comprehension improves when they have the opportunity to construct meaning without "the pressure of reading every word perfectly and remembering every detail."

3. Silent reading is more important than oral reading.

4. Students are more likely to "become independent readers who read for their own information and enjoyment" because of SSR.

Research questions for the available studies have been based on these assumptions. They have been concerned primarily with the effect of SSR on reading achievement, attitudes, and habits. The studies were characterized by: (a) subjects from upper elementary, middle, and secondary levels; (b) short-term duration; (c) survey research rather than empirical designs; and (d) inconsistent conclusions regarding achievement, attitudes, and habits (Collins, 1980; Moore, Jones & Miller, 1980; Schaudt, 1983).

Exclusion of young students from these studies may reflect two views in the reading readiness paradigm:
children are either readers or nonreaders; and, it is pointless to provide or investigate a reading time for nonreaders. Teachers of young children have been least likely to include SSR in their school day (Kaisen, 1987). Morrow (1982) studied the literacy environments of 30 preschools and 37 kindergartens in public schools and reported only 3% of the classrooms had regular SSR sessions scheduled.

Kindergarten and first grade teachers who do implement SSR often use it as a filler while waiting for all children to arrive or while taking attendance rather than as a significant part of the reading program. The teacher in Hickman's study (1979) used it as a filler, and Putnam (1981) reported the teacher ended a 10-minute booksharing period at the beginning of each day by saying, "Let's start school now" (p. 261). Teacher expectations for children's behavior under these conditions tend to be low. McIntyre (1992) found in her study of three first grade students, which included behavior during independent reading, that they were allowed to read or not read as long as they were quiet. The teacher did not act as a model; she completed paperwork during the five to 20-minute sessions. McCracken and McCracken (1978) identified the failure of teachers to act as appropriate models (along with restricted availability of reading materials) as a primary factor in the failure of SSR.
The reluctance of teachers to implement SSR at the kindergarten and first grade levels, and the subsequent failure of researchers to study it at those levels, may be related partly to problems in the strict enforcement of SSR guidelines with young children (Levine, 1984). Hong (1981), recognizing these inherent problems, suggested modifications that she believed "would be helpful for beginning and slower readers in the early primary grades" (p. 889). Her modifications were:

1. Each session should be held at the same time daily so it becomes an expected part of the routine. It should begin with one to five minutes, and eventually reach 10 to 15-minute sessions.

2. The group should comprise five to seven students rather than an entire class.

3. Teachers should read books aloud to the class before placing the books in the classroom library.

4. Students should be allowed to take only one book at a time.

5. Students should sit near the classroom library to minimize commotion if they finish a book during the session and exchange it.

6. Teachers should read, but also respond to students' questions concerning unknown words.

7. Students should read in pairs and be allowed to talk with their partners quietly.
8. Students should handle books with respect. (pp. 889-890)

Kaisen (1987) interviewed 65 elementary (K-6) teachers and 12 principals regarding SSR implementation. He also proposed modifications to resolve problems experienced by kindergarten and first grade teachers.

1. Teachers should model behavior by reading, not make themselves available to assist students.

2. Students should begin sessions with several books available to them to avoid the need for extra trips to the classroom library.

3. The classroom library should contain familiar books, supplemented by wordless picture books that enable students to grasp the story line without teacher assistance.

4. Students should be encouraged to bring familiar books from home. (pp. 534-535)

In spite of modification proposals, the literature contains no widespread adoption of SSR at the kindergarten or first grade levels (especially among educational programs that operate within the reading readiness paradigm). Inclusion of independent reading at these levels seems to have occurred primarily in the context of the emergent literacy approach. Tunnell and Jacobs (1989) reviewed one set of studies to identify commonalities in literature-based reading instruction. All of them included SSR. Some of the programs were relatively less structured than traditional
SSR. For example, the teachers in Hickman's (1979) study regularly scheduled independent reading periods for the entire class, but a group of students stayed with the teacher for story-reading and other literature-related work. Teachers did not fill the intended SSR role as the model of a silent, solitary reader.

Few studies have described the general rules and results of SSR programs for young children. Putnam (1981) described literacy programs in six inner-city kindergartens. Three classes adopted a "literate environment" approach (practices compatible with emergent literacy philosophy). The other three were traditional, employing a commercially packaged reading readiness program as the core of the curriculum. Only one of the traditional teachers scheduled a time for group independent reading, and did not seem to consider SSR serious work. Two of the three literate environment teachers scheduled daily SSR sessions. The third teacher reportedly believed her half-day schedule could not accommodate a daily session. Her sporadic sessions "were short, maybe 5-6 minutes; the children tended to be somewhat noisy, and the focus of many of them wandered from books" (p. 87). The other two teachers scheduled daily SSR sessions that increased in length over time. In one teacher's class, each session lasted 13 minutes, students exchanged books quietly, and silence was enforced. In the other class, students read for 25 minutes, chose several
books at a time, were not allowed to exchange, and could read aloud to themselves and whisper to classmates. Individual children were selected for case studies. Fieldnotes for one student, made in June, reported that the child looked at eight books in 25 minutes. Three books were pretend readings. The student looked at the remaining five books without verbalization. The researcher roughly estimated the child's time on task at 50%. Most of the children followed the pattern of this case-study child, "focusing on books intermittently, savoring some books more than others, periodically getting up to exchange books, and occasionally engaging in some kind of social interaction with another child" (p. 89).

A further modification of SSR emerged spontaneously and became an institutionalized part of the literate environment. Putnam described its September beginning:

As we walked into the room we saw perhaps half the children sitting at their desks, and most of them were looking at books [author's emphasis]! They seemed quite absorbed. It was a striking phenomenon, because this was completely their own initiative. No adult had been in the room prior to our coming in. (p. 44)

As a result of this observation, the teacher set aside a 20-minute period daily for "booksharing," in which students could look at books and discuss them with classmates. In December, the teacher added paper and
markers to the table, creating a 20 to 45-minute "booksharing and printing time." Putnam stated that observers in these classrooms would "likely be struck by a sense of purposefulness among the children as they went about their business" (p. 45).

In spite of its limited adoption, there is empirical evidence that the implementation of SSR for young children is beneficial. Morrow (1982) studied the relationship between classroom libraries, literature programs, and children's voluntary use of literature among nursery and kindergarten children. Significant correlations were found between SSR periods and the frequency of use of literature by preschool (.32 p<.05) and kindergarten (.45 p<.01) children.

Reading Preferences

Self-selection of books is considered an important part of empowering children to become lifelong readers (Hiebert, Mervar & Person, 1990). Since this has been one of the primary goals of SSR, there has been widespread support for children being given the freedom and responsibility to choose their own reading materials (Carbo, 1987; DeLapp, 1989; Simons, 1988; Zarrillo, 1989; McCracken, 1971).

Tunnell and Jacobs (1989), in their review of research on literature-based reading programs, discussed the connection between self-selection and students' attitudes. "A positive attitude toward reading seems to be affected by
allowing children to select their own materials . . .
Sustained silent reading is unsuccessful unless children are allowed to read books of their own choosing" (p. 476).

Self-selection may be especially important for students from homes that lack children's books and story-reading activities. Holdaway (1982) noted the differences between home storytime and school storytime experiences. "There is not the same opportunity [at school] for personal selection. . . . There is seldom the opportunity for all the children to handle the books independently as they become favorites" (p. 294). Given a chance to make their own choices, however, "children quickly avail themselves of the opportunity to practice and experiment with a selection from the material made available to them" (p. 295).

McIntyre (1988), reporting on children's independent behaviors in first grade library centers, found evidence of the practice and experimentation to which Holdaway referred. The strategies children used in response to books were influenced by their level of interest.

Since restricted reading choices contribute to the failure of SSR (McCracken, 1971), well-developed classroom libraries are needed. The availability of such collections has become as vital to the overall educational program as to independent reading. As schools increasingly have adopted literature-based approaches to literacy development, libraries and classroom collections have moved beyond
utility as a source of books for recreational reading and become central to the instructional program (Hiebert, Mervar & Person, 1990).

Morrow's (1982, 1983) studies found that students in classrooms with well-developed literature programs and library designs demonstrated a higher interest in literature activities. An adequate number of books—at least five to eight per child (Huck, 1976)—has been recommended. As literature-based programs increasingly are adopted, however, larger numbers of books are being reported. Kiefer (1988) visited in kindergarten through fourth grade classrooms over a period of six years. The classroom collections she observed contained between 400 and 500 tradebooks supplemented by books from the school libraries. McIntyre (1988) studied children's behavior in a first grade classroom library that housed more than 1,200 volumes. The library included wordless picture books, short novels, fiction and nonfiction books, magazines, poetry anthologies, reference books, short novels, and tape-recorded books. Few classroom libraries studied were so well stocked. Morrow (1982) studied 133 preschool through second-grade classes and found an average of three books per child.

Adequately stocked classroom libraries require some kind of logical scheme for shelving books. Strickland and Morrow (1988) recommended color-coding and shelving by category. Simple cataloging systems allow children (and
adults) to locate books in large collections efficiently, and teach children that libraries are organized systematically. Morrow (1982) found only 15% of the observed classroom libraries included organizational systems.

Few studies have examined the nature of book selection behavior in young children. Related professional literature has emphasized questions regarding adults making quality choices for young children (Huck, 1976). Studies have tended to focus on the appropriateness of children’s choices relative to frustrational, instructional, and independent reading levels (e.g., Anderson, Higgins & Wurster, 1985). The paucity of information may be attributed to data gathering techniques used to measure preferences. Typically, they employed interest surveys, which tend to be inappropriate and unreliable for young children. Behavioral observation more adequately gauges children’s interests.

No studies specifically reported kindergarten children’s behavior during selection of books. Mervar (1989) described second graders in literature-based classrooms and textbook-based classrooms as they made reading selections. Hiebert, Mervar, and Person (1990) presented the results:

When children from both programs were observed in libraries, no obvious differences were apparent in the manner or time in which children from different groups
chose books. ... However, interviews with children about their selections produced a different story. Children in literature-based classrooms gave elaborated reasons for their selections and indicated that they had specific books in mind when looking, such as those written by a particular author. ... Children in literature-based classrooms also referred to specific topics as the basis for their selections. ... Such references to authors, illustrators, and topics were infrequent in the responses of children from textbook-based classrooms. (p. 759)

Students in textbook-based programs reported that they browsed until they found books that offered exciting and interesting pictures.

Hickman (1979) omitted details of students' reading preferences from her study of responses to literature in kindergarten through fifth grade, but briefly discussed their reactions to fiction and nonfiction books: ... while children showed that they knew some books were stories and some were collections of practically useful information, there were similarities in the way that they dealt with the two kinds of books. On the one hand, children let themselves be entertained and amazed and even moved by material designed to inform. ... Conversely, children sometimes took an intense
interest in the information available from fiction. (p. 188)

Only one study examined children's selections for SSR (Wittreich, 1984). Fourth-grade students self-reported their reading selections over the course of 36 SSR sessions during the fall. Approximately 50% of their selections were from the recreation/sports category. Another 25% were animal stories. The remaining 25% were distributed among seven categories: adventure/mystery, biography, history, mythology, fairy tale/fantasy/folklore, poetry/plays, and science/science fiction. The researcher expressed concern that students selected a narrow range of books and recommended steps be taken to expand their interests.

Because young children undergo such rapid developmental changes, much of the literature suggests that at young ages, their book preferences may be highly unstable. A contributing factor--possibly a significant influence in children's selections--is familiarity. Books read to students by teachers specifically were reported to be children's strongest preferences (Kiefer, 1988). Hickman (1979) found that books the teacher read to the class generated more talk and elicited the most varied responses compared to other books. "The fact that a book had claimed the teacher's attention gave it, in a sense, special sanction, and this may have had considerable influence with some children" (p. 160). Books read aloud to children also
were accessible to them in a cognitive sense, she noted. This may account for observations that children’s emergent-reading behaviors during independent reading were influenced by and correlated with their familiarity with books (McIntyre, 1988; Martínez & Teale, 1988).

Although children’s repetitive storytime requests at home have received attention, there is limited information regarding repetitive preferences in the school context. Hickman (1979) observed:

While one might predict that meeting the same book over and over could bring boredom, it seemed in most cases to bring fluency. A note in the margin of the logbook reads: "Familiarity doesn’t breed contempt, it breeds comment." And children’s comments about a story they had considered several times, in different contexts, were more confident and somewhat different in character from earlier responses. Most of the books to which children and teachers returned again and again were what would be identified by critics as "quality" literature. It is tempting to conclude that only books of considerable depth could support this repetition, but such a claim would not be precisely accurate. Some titles noted for humorous episode and not much else were used over and over by upper grade children. (pp. 183-184)
Martínez and Teale (1988) observed kindergarten students in their classroom library twice a week for eight weeks to study book selections and uses. To analyze book selections, books were classified in terms of familiarity (unfamiliar, familiar or very familiar). Unfamiliar books had not been read to the students by the teacher. Familiar books had been read once by the teacher. Very familiar books had been read repeatedly by the teacher. Books also were classified as predictable or nonpredictable. Predictable books contained "repetitive language, predictable plot line, cumulative patterns [and] structure based on familiar sequences like the alphabet" (p. 570). The researchers found: (a) the mean number of times each familiar book was selected was almost double that for unfamiliar books (7.6 vs. 4.1) while the mean for very familiar books was still higher (13.4); and (b) predictable books were selected approximately twice as often as nonpredictable books (means of 11.1 vs. 5.5).

Regarding reasons for choosing certain books, young children tend to be less articulate than older children. Applebee (1978) examined evaluative capabilities of five and six-year-old students. "When asked to explain why they like stories, children will say 'It's nice' or 'It's good,' and pushed about why it is nice, will respond with a circular 'Because I like it'" (p. 99). Kiefer (1988) reported the same combination of generic and circular response. "When
asked how pictures [in picture books] made them feel, kindergartners often responded with 'happy' and were reluctant to single out any book as better than another. When pressed, one kindergartner did reply, 'These two are better because I like them'" (p. 264).

**Social Behaviors**

Teachers and researchers historically have focused on cognitive aspects of literacy, approaching "reading and writing processes as individual asocial activities" (Cairney & Langbien, 1989, p. 561). Literacy development occurs in a social context, however. Regarding reading research, Margaret Meek stated, "we are certain only that good readers pick their own way to literacy in the company of friends who encourage and sustain them and that . . . the enthusiasm of a trusted adult can make the difference" (Meek, 1982, p. 193).

Amid the heavy attention given to the role of adults--teachers and parents--in children's literacy development, few researchers have described the role of children's classroom peers. One related research topic in recent years has been children's cooperative behavior--especially the nature of children's talk and its role in children's development (Cazden, 1972; Ervin-Tripp & Mitchell-Kernan, 1977). Dyson (1987) investigated children's spontaneous talk during journal writing by 79 multiethnic children in kindergarten through third grade. She concluded that all
peer talk was valuable in children’s development, even talk considered off task by teachers and researchers.

Talk about academic tasks is often contrasted with social talk: individuals achieve because of the time they spend "on task." My observations suggest that the "academic" and the "social" are not so simply—or so profitably—separated. The social laughing, teasing, correcting, and chatting that accompany children’s academic work are byproducts of the need to link with others and be recognized by them. But they can also be catalysts for intellectual growth. (p. 417)

The social purposes and cognitive effects of children’s interaction have direct and indirect relationships to modified Sustained Silent Reading. Structurally, SSR involves peer culture activity (Corsaro, 1985) embedded in a school culture activity. Peer culture activities have been defined as child-dominated and controlled experiences. School culture activities have been defined as experiences planned and structured by teachers (Kantor, Miller & Fernie, 1992). SSR is a school culture activity to the extent that a teacher sets aside a daily time, establishes rules that define the activity, and provides supervision. During SSR, however, the teacher is not directly engaged with the students. They possess a large degree of autonomy at their tables and interact with each other freely. Kantor, Miller
and Fernie (1992) studied the uses of literacy among children aged three through five at a university laboratory preschool. They observed children using print to support the social dynamics of "inclusion, exclusion, hierarchy, leadership, ownership, and control of the materials and resources" (p. 197). Students used their own and teachers' literacy abilities to "accomplish various purposes within their peer culture" (p. 188).

Bloome (1985) illustrated some of the social interaction purposes of reading. One student shared a love note and another retreated to a book when the rest of the class became boisterous. "Carol uses reading as a way to separate herself from the class. . . . Linda and her girlfriends use reading as a way to form a social group" (p. 135).

Schmuck (1977) found that the social dynamics of an entire group affected learning. "Classroom groups with supportive friendship patterns enhance academic learning, while more interpersonally tense class environments in which peer group rejects are strong and frequent get in the way of learning" (p. 273). Dyson (1987) stated, "The very power of children's social lives to contribute to and alternately detract from school learning suggests a need for comparative studies of peer group life" (p. 416).

Regarding peer interactions, Cazden (1988) observed: "Collaboration and helpfulness among classmates that is
spontaneous (unassigned) may be highly valued both as an expression of prosocial attitudes and as a multiplier of resources for the participants. But it also creates problems for students who are left out" (p. 137). Garnica (1981) investigated the nature of peer conversations in two kindergartens. Omega children—those who rank low on a social dominance scale—were compared to a random sample of non-omega students. Garnica stated:

The emerging picture of the omega child seems to be one of a verbally neglected individual. Hardly any of the other children appear intentionally to engage the omega child in conversations and the omega child only infrequently initiates verbal exchanges with other children. The conversational partner network of the omega child is drastically limited and thus the amount of speech that the child produces in productive, interactive social exchanges with other children is highly attenuated. (p. 241)

Cazden (1988), reporting on a series of studies by Elizabeth Cohen, a sociologist, noted that children who possess high social status engaged in the greatest amount of interaction. "Children who interacted the most were also the ones who learned most, especially about the more complex concepts" (p. 142). These findings underscore the need to structure activities (school culture) so that children have
time to interact with each other freely (peer culture).

Dyson (1987) concluded:

Given tasks worth talking about and the right to talk, children's interactions can contribute substantially to intellectual development in general and literacy growth in particular. Those interactions can provide both social support and social energy—the capacity for action fueled by human desire for social communication and individual expression . . . the value of spontaneous peer talk . . . may, in fact, contain some of children's most intellectually skillful behaviors. (pp. 396-397)

Sylvia Ashton-Warner (1963) was an early proponent of the importance of peer culture interaction. In Teacher, her account of teaching Maori children in New Zealand, she wrote:

From long sitting, watching and pondering (all so unprofessional) I have found out the worst enemies to what we call teaching. . . . The first is the children's interest in each other. It plays the very devil with orthodox method. If only they'd stop talking to each other, playing with each other, fighting with each other and loving each other. This unseemly and unlawful communication! In self-defense I've got to use the damn thing.
So I harness the communication, since I can't control it, and base my method on it. . . . And between them all the time is this togetherness, so that learning is so mixed up with relationship that it becomes part of it. What an unsung creative medium is relationship! (pp. 103-104)

These observations concur with Vygotsky's (1978) view of learning as intrinsically social. Hepler and Hickman (1982) discussed the social aspects of children's responses to literature:

Perhaps the single most important function of the community of readers is to provide a model set of reader behaviors which tell children how readers act. Readers enjoy books, thinks the child, and I do, too. Readers show their enjoyment by talk and actions, and I can contribute to this talk and action, too. Thus, two kindergartners who do not yet decipher meaning from print, nonetheless sit together and tell each other Pat Hutchins' story of *Rosie's Walk* (1968). "Here's where the fox gets bashed with a rake. Now he's gonna get stung." (p. 282)

In her study of responses to literature by students in kindergarten through fifth grade, Hickman (1979) stated:

Children need to talk about books--not just to the teacher--but to each other. One of the surprisingly strong impressions gained from this
study was the amount of free comment and spontaneous sharing of books among the children. The opportunity to show a book to a friend, to giggle over it, point at the pictures, offer an opinion, perhaps argue a little, kept children interested in and in contact with books they might otherwise have ignored. And since children's immediate impressions are not likely to be expressed at all if not expressed at once, this spontaneous sharing served as natural motivation for the formulation of response statements. Teachers who recognize the importance of such language opportunities will legitimize the social behaviors that occur when children talk to each other about books. (p. 203)

According to Bruner (cited in Hepler & Hickman, 1982), talk facilitates the negotiation of meaning by children and becomes central to the learning process. One example is Galda's (1982) study of the effect of dramatization on the story comprehension of children in kindergarten through second grade. Students who dramatized stories performed significantly better on a comprehension measure compared to students in the discussion condition. The researcher suggested that discussions were teacher-directed, while children had the opportunity for verbal interaction with their peers in the dramatization condition.
Cazden (1986) noted that peer interaction also enabled students to experiment with a range of roles unavailable to them in typical teacher-student interactions. Children were more likely to assist others and challenge ideas when interacting with peers, for example.

**Scaffolding** (Ninio & Bruner, 1978), another form of interactive assistance, has received wide attention in studies of adult-child interactions with storybooks. The adult tailors the level of response to the child’s level of competence. As the child’s capabilities increase, the adult reader engages the child in increasingly difficult tasks. At the same time, the adult avoids frustrating the child. This activity reportedly promotes higher level functioning. Neuman and Roskos (1991) investigated the literacy-related conversations of 37 four-year-olds and five-year-olds during play at a preschool. They discovered three categories of conversation:

1. **Designating** consisted of ways in which preschoolers attempted to name or to discover the names of literacy-related objects, pictures, or text. (p. 238)

2. **Negotiating** conversations served to establish agreement between two players on the meaning of a literacy-related object or routine. Where designating exchanges focused on the identification of objects, negotiating involved the interpretation of their meaning. (p. 240)
3. Conversations in the coaching category consisted of attempts by one child to help another overcome some type of literacy-related obstacle or interference in play. (p. 243)

Neuman and Roskos (1991) concluded that such interactions may function as scaffolding but not as a substitute for adult-child exchanges. Adults are more knowledgeable than children, and children were not as adept as adults in tailoring assistance to their peers' level of competence. Children frequently expected too much, which resulted in confrontations and/or the end of play. The role of the more capable peer was fluid, however. "Due to the children's varying experiences in literacy, the actual definition of what constituted the 'more capable peer' changed according to the particular literacy demands and routines required in the play experience" (p. 238).

Dyson (1987) also found peer interactions productive. In collaboration, children frequently accomplished intellectual tasks considered "over their heads."

Dyson concluded:

The intention here is not to minimize the teacher's role, but to suggest that children's achievements may not be linked solely to teacher-child interactions. Children's academic accomplishments can be influenced by their
relationships with each other, as well as with the teacher. (p. 416)

Given the importance of the social context to learning, Cairney and Langbien (1989) raised questions of concern to researchers and educators alike.

Is literacy learning a social and collaborative process in our classrooms? That is, are the social relationships within the classroom facilitating or impeding literacy development?

For example, implementing the procedures required for an independent reading program, without permitting students to share their reading with others, or allowing them to respond in an atmosphere of trust and warmth, will be doomed to failure. (p. 562)

**Emergent-Reading Behaviors**

Roskos (1988) studied literacy behaviors during play among four-year-old and five-year old children. She stated, "[They] behaved like readers and writers. They assumed a literacy stance and in so doing exposed their theories-in-use about the functions and features of written language" (pp. 563-564). During modified Sustained Silent Reading, children also display the cognitive and linguistic resources at their disposal. Children tap these resources as they work their way toward literacy (Teale, Hiebert & Chittenden, 1987). Teale (1987) noted that ethnographic studies
"suggest that in becoming literate young children are, in a complex and simultaneous way, learning about (a) functions and uses of literacy, (b) attitudes toward literacy, (c) conventions of written language, (d) decoding and encoding strategies, and (e) comprehending and composing strategies" (p. 49).

Cochran-Smith (1984), in her case study of a young child's literacy development, identified some "basic conceptions about literature and literacy" (pp. 57-58). These conceptions developed in the context of adult-child book-reading sessions. The conceptions most relevant to SSR are adapted as follows:

1. Reading is common and socially appropriate for children and adults.
2. Reading is important, often taking precedence and preference over other activities.
3. It provides intimate, social interaction among people, often on a one-to-one basis.
4. It can be initiated and terminated by either children or adults.
5. It is entertaining and relaxing.
6. It is an appropriate and pleasurable solitary activity.
7. Book characters, events, and situations are often relevant to real life situations.
8. Readers discuss ideas and events in books, immediately or long after reading.

9. Reading provides a primary way of finding out about almost anything.

10. Any person may function as a reader or a listener when someone else reads.

11. Listeners may interrupt, ask questions, and make comments when something is read.

12. Books are created by and for people.

13. Books are valued possessions.

14. Individual tastes in books vary; readers value the option to make their own selections.

15. Knowledge based on primary personal experience or hearsay can be verified or disputed by printed information.

Snow and Ninio (1986), reflecting on their own past research, acknowledged the importance of these conceptions in children’s development.

But I am afraid that one thing to be learned from picture-book reading got short shrift in our discussion—and that is that books are a source of enchantment and wonder. This message might, after all, turn out to be the most important contribution of picture-book reading to the acquisition of literacy. (p. 121)
Holdaway (1979) considered children's independent functioning with storybooks as important as adult-child interaction. He stated:

Both activities are complementary aspects of the same language-learning cycle. In both aspects there is close visual and tactile contact with books, becoming increasingly focused on the conventions of print. All of the most powerful strategies of mature reading are being established and the complexity of the behavior makes the normal description of pre-reading skills look quite ridiculous. (p. 61)

A child's independent experience with books also "lacks an audience and is therefore self-regulated, self-corrected, and self-sustained. . . . The child is not self-conscious or over-awed by the need to please an adult . . ." (Holdaway, 1982, p. 296).

Teale (1987) reported that current research concurs with Holdaway's view.

Thus, the research indicates that a child's independent reenactments of books play a significant role in the ontogeny of literacy. They provide opportunities for the child to practice what was experienced in interactive storybook reading events. Also important, however, is that independent reenactments provide
opportunities for the child to develop new understandings about reading in general and about the individual book in particular. (p. 62)

During modified SSR, students are not required to engage in reenactments. They are free to respond to books however they wish. One way in which young children frequently respond is by browsing, defined as events in which children do not attend either to the print or illustrations, but pick up books, flip through them, toss them around, fight over them, or pass them to other children (McIntyre, 1988, 1992).

Hickman (1979) studied behaviors of students in kindergarten through the fifth grade and reported that younger children were more likely to browse than to be intent in their book responses.

McIntyre (1988) studied the reading behaviors of 20 first graders during their elective use of the classroom library over the course of 18 weeks. She identified six strategies students used to make sense of storybooks. Browsing was not one of the strategies, but she found that students who browsed certain books later returned to the same books and applied sense-making strategies.

In a subsequent study, McIntyre (1992) observed independent reading time for an entire class. Using a whole tradebook or basal story as the unit of analysis, she reported that browsing ("book handling") accounted for 28%
(presented in the study as a frequency count of 43) of student behaviors.

Martínez and Teale (1988) studied the behavior of kindergarten students in a classroom library twice a week for eight weeks. They observed:

1. Browsing accounted for 31% of children's interactions with books.

2. Students spent proportionately more time browsing through unfamiliar books than familiar or very familiar books.

3. Browsing accounted for 34% of children's responses to nonpredictable books.

4. Children responded to big books (oversized books approximately 14 by 18 inches, all of which had predictable texts), with a comparatively lower incidence of browsing (20%).

A second category of children's independent responses to literature has been identified as "silently studying illustrations." Martínez and Teale (1988) studied children's independent functioning with books and reported that this category accounted for 31% of overall behaviors. When children selected books with predictable texts, silent studying accounted for only 12% of responses.

McIntyre (1992) found comparable percentages. "Looking at pictures" accounted for 35% (presented as a frequency count of 53) of children's behaviors.
Extensive time and high incidence of children silently studying the visual content of books may be explained in part by the current sophistication of children's literature. Kiefer (1989) argued that contemporary picture books have become "art objects that provide a unique aesthetic experience that has a lasting effect. Picture books have become intellectually demanding and are used as an art form by an increasing number of talented artists" (p. 87).

A third category of behavior has been described by the literature. Children respond verbally to books without attempting to retrieve the text. Martínez and Teale (1988) reported that "discussing story or illustration" occurred infrequently.

Hickman (1979), in contrast, observed that children at all of the grade levels studied (kindergarten through fifth grade) stressed explanation of puzzling items or events in stories, while the youngest children commented most freely. Younger children frequently made "personal statements tied to literature through association only" (p. 199). Martínez (1983) also concluded that children associate characters and events in stories with their own experiences, even placing themselves into the contexts created by authors.

Sulzby (1985) described the same category in a study of 24 kindergarten children. Students were asked to "read" a favorite storybook of their choosing once during the fall and again in the spring. The readings, while unlike the
more spontaneous behaviors of SSR, were entirely independent attempts by the children. The sessions were audiotaped and transcribed for classification according to 11 categories that appeared to have developmental properties. The least mature category—designated "attempts governed by pictures, stories not formed"—was described this way:

This is the least mature category found with five-year-olds. It is found infrequently with them and more frequently with younger children. The language behavior and physical behavior of the child are closely tied in these attempts. There are two sub-categories: (a) labeling and commenting, and (b) following the action. In each case, if one listens to the speech of the child alone, one would not be able to infer a story; rather, the speech that accompanies each page appears to be a response to the discrete page. The language is not tied together sufficiently for a naive audience to understand.

Labeling and commenting. When a child reads or re-enacts a book through labeling, the child will turn to a page, point to a pictured object, and then give its name or descriptor: "Doggie" . . . Commenting refers to giving information about the labeled or highlighted item: . . . "He's a monster."
Following the action. . . . Children who give this kind of re-enactment act as if the action in the picture is now occurring. Their speech is distinctive and paired with an indicating finger that often seems to trace action in the pictures: "See, there he goes." . . . When young children give "following the action" readings, they often stand up and gesture from the pictures off the book into some seemingly imaginary space, sometimes making motions for the story characters. These re-enactments are often accompanied by "sound effects" by the child either made verbally, "Pow!" or "Krrr," or physically, with banging or rubbing. (pp. 465-466)

This description is consistent with Hickman's study (1979). Kindergarten and first grade children "used motor responses to a more marked degree than other groups, particularly echoing the action and demonstrating meaning" (p. 197).

As children interact with storybooks, they begin to engage in emergent or pretend readings of books. This behavior, which begins at a much younger age than kindergarten, follows children's experiences in adult-child storybook readings. Holdaway (1982) described the behavior: Attracted by the familiar object, the child picks it up, opens it, and begins attempting to retrieve for himself some of the language and its
intonations. Quite early this reading-like play becomes story-complete, page-matched, and picture-stimulated. The story tends to be reexperienced as complete semantic units transcending sentence limits. (p. 295)

Holdaway observed that adults tend to underrate what is accomplished during this behavior. He explained the significance of children's activity:

A superficial assumption about this reading-like behavior would be that it was a form of rote learning based on repetitive patterning without deep comprehension or emotional response; that it would produce attempts at mere surface verbal recall. However, detailed study of this behavior through the analysis of tape recordings did not bear this out. On the contrary, what was displayed was a deep understanding of and response to central story meanings. (p. 295)

Holdaway argued that what children memorize is not text, but meaning. He related this activity to children's literacy growth:

Success in recreating the story is rewarded in a continuous, cyclic fashion similar to the rewards of experimenting with speech, and therefore tends to be self-sustaining. It is a situation which recalls the secure, pleasurable presence of the
loved adult. . . . The experience builds confidence in the ability to control language without outside help and, by the absence of criticism or correction, encourages self-regulation of complex language tasks. . . . the adult provides real experience of the skill [reading] in joyful use. The skill then becomes a central feature of the learner's natural play and natural striving. . . . The early stages in the development of any complex human skill is activity which is like that skill and approximates progressively toward an activity which incorporates real processes and operations in mature use of the skill. (p. 297)

In Sulzby's (1985) classification scheme for emergent reading of favorite storybooks, early attempts to retrieve or recreate stories were characterized by oral-like language. The category "attempts governed by pictures, stories formed (oral language-like)" described children using "speech appropriate in oral, face-to-face interactions such as conversation or storytelling" (Sulzby & Zecker, 1991, p. 179). McIntyre (1992), found "reading the pictures with oral-like language" accounted for 14% (presented as a frequency count of 21) of first grade students' behaviors in the classroom library.
Once children learn linguistic features of written language (Purcell-Gates, 1988), their reenactments begin to sound like the text of books. McIntyre (1992) reported "reading the pictures with text-like language" accounted for 13% of first graders' independent reading behavior.

Eventually, print governs children's attempts. Sulzby (1985) presented the following three subcategories of print-governed attempts:

Refusing to read based on print awareness. Often children begin to refuse to try to read as they learn more about the process of reading, in particular as they learn that it is the print rather than the pictures that people read . . . there appears to be a transition from a very complete written language-like re-enactment rendered while looking at the pictures (as described above) to a sudden refusal to try, with the child explaining why he or she cannot read: "I don't know the words," . . . "I can't really read--I was just pretending."

Reading aspectually. Before the child becomes an independent reader, she or he often starts to focus upon one or two aspects about print to the exclusion of other aspects. . . . This seems to be a period during which the child begins to be specifically aware of things that he or she can use as aids or clues in figuring out print. Now the child may focus upon a few
known words, or a few letters and associated sounds, or upon the remembered text. . . . The child who is focusing on memory for text will recite the text while pointing vaguely to print or while running the finger along the text. . . . Here the child seems to be practicing parts of the repertoire that will be put back together later on. (pp. 471-472)

Holistic reading. In holistic reading, "the child has integrated all of the aspects of reading (comprehension, letter-sound knowledge, and known words) into the ability to read from print flexibly and with self-regulation" (Sulzby, 1985, p. 472).

McIntyre's (1992) study of the independent reading behaviors of first graders during the first 10 weeks of the school year found that aspectual reading accounted for 10% (presented as a frequency count of 15) of student activity. Martínez and Teale (1988) grouped all attempts that fell short of conventional reading under one category, emergent reading. They reported that emergent readings accounted for approximately 27% of the behaviors of kindergarten students in the classroom library. Students were more likely to engage in emergent readings when working with familiar and very familiar books.

In summary, the sequence of behaviors--from least mature to most mature--comprises browsing, verbalizing without forming stories, forming stories with first oral-
like language and then written-like language, aspectual reading, and holistic or conventional reading. These behaviors appeared to have developmental properties (Sulzby, 1985). In addition, children study books silently. Researchers remain sensitive to individual differences, however. Teale (1987) cautioned:

Hand-in-hand with any discussion of development should be consideration of individual differences in growth. To date we have insufficient research information to describe a progression of what is learned when it comes to emergent literacy. (p. 58)

Sulzby's classification scheme has been useful in understanding and interpreting children's behavior. Teale (1987) noted:

I find promising Sulzby's notion of there being developmental patterns in children's learning patterns that, though complex, are nonetheless describable. Her idea of a repertoire of strategies is certainly compatible with the individual differences so many researchers are reporting. (p. 68)

McIntyre (1988) described the factors that may determine how a child uses available strategies:

... strategies used are not developmentally linear, but recursive in nature as many children
use a variety of strategies to read one book. Further analysis of transcriptions and behaviors for each two-page spread of a storybook shows that not only does development and familiarity with the book often determine which strategies are used, but it is suggested that social interactions, and the length of the text, may also affect the children's choice of sense-making strategies.

(p. 11)

Regarding book conventions and print, Goodman (1980) concluded, "some children even as young as three provide evidence that they are aware that some of the early pages of a book are insignificant" (p. 14). Nevertheless, some children express interest in pages that are not part of the story. Smolkin, Conlon and Yaden (1988) studied the print-oriented questions of young children and described their interest in print:

Our examination of the print-oriented questions of the seven subjects leaves no doubt that young children do attend to the print appearing in virtually every part of the picture book: in the illustrations, in the body of text, in the front matter, and on the end pages . . . they asked about print in titles, in bibliographic information sections, and in the accompanying text itself, a visual environment where print "could
almost be said to be ugly" (Holdaway, 1986, p. 91). (p. 62)

The same researchers also noted the instructional implications of these observations:

... as a result of the children's interest in the print on the "insignificant" pages of front matter, we have begun to wonder what the effects of discussing end pages, title pages, and bibliographic information pages with children may be. (p. 66)

Children also learn correct book orientation, format conventions, left and right page orientation, and the direction of print. Clay (1991) outlined some of the demands on children:

Good readers seem to learn a pattern of movements for the visual scanning of print. They must act within the constraints on movement imposed by our arbitrary ways of writing down our language. Children who learn to read from one-line sentences or captions acquire the left to right movement. Later they become able to scan two or three lines of print. Into this general pattern they build the ability to search visually word by word in sequence and later still the ability to search letter by letter or cluster by cluster but still in sequence. During the acquisition stage,
directional learning can be seriously disturbed by recurrent error. Its stability is also temporarily shaken when the child tries to integrate new learning into the old schema (new letter features, punctuation, sentences running on to the next line). (p. 139)

The child’s ability to do these things appears to be enhanced if the same hand is always used and if the messages in books always start in roughly the same place. If the child exhibits no preference for one hand over the other and if the visual format of the pages varies widely in artistic design, the task is more difficult.

**Summary**

In conclusion, this literature review presented a synthesis of recent research related to children’s performance during modified Sustained Silent Reading: Sustained Silent Reading, reading preferences, social behaviors, and emergent-reading behaviors.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The problem to be investigated in this study was, "What are the emergent book-reading behaviors of bilingual education kindergarten students during modified Sustained Silent Reading (SSR)?" This chapter provides descriptions of the study's research paradigm, the time frame for the study, the setting, the participants, and the data collection and analysis procedures.

Research Paradigm

A paradigm of naturalistic inquiry was chosen for the study because this approach is at the center of investigations related to children's literacy development. According to Teale (1986):

Historically, the study of emergent literacy is still in its infancy. We are at the point of working out what count as data, of determining the parameters of inquiry in the area, and how literacy development interfaces with oral language and cognitive development. In short, the field is very much involved with description, with building a sound theory of just what is being researched. Naturalistic inquiry, with its tendency toward the use of qualitative methods such
as observation, interview, and documentary analysis, permits one to locate the relevant variables as they emerge from the situation and thereby construct ecologically valid descriptions. (p. 174)

A qualitative, longitudinal, observational case-study approach was adopted to examine how children behave over time within the context of a daily school activity. Qualitative techniques emphasize the natural setting, process rather than product, and the participants' perspectives. They are particularly suited to documenting as fully as possible what happens when children engage in "the often messy, noisy, and colorful process of becoming literate" (Dyson, 1986, p. 407).

The Role of the Researcher

Typically, researchers undertaking qualitative research projects function as participant-observers to share "as intimately as possible in the life and activities of the setting under study . . . [to] develop an insider's view of what is happening" (Patton, 1991, p. 207). To avoid disrupting the participants' natural behavior, observers must invest significant time familiarizing themselves with the students so children gradually will view them as part of the natural classroom landscape.

In this study, I served as both classroom teacher and researcher. The data was collected using an unobtrusive VHS-format camcorder, which remained in a fixed position on
a tripod and silently recorded students’ activities without intervention. A small microphone at table level captured sound of adequate fidelity on the videotapes. During all videotaping, I performed the traditional role of classroom teacher during SSR, sitting in a customary place and reading as a model for the children. Observation of students took place later through careful repetitive viewing of the videotapes. The roles of participant and observer were not performed concurrently, as is common in qualitative investigations.

**Securing a Site**

As a teacher-researcher, the logical focus of investigation was my own classroom, although I initially considered collecting data in the classroom of a colleague. After some deliberation, it became apparent that familiarity with the students would be an asset in interpreting their behavior. The motivation and opportunity associated with learning more about students for whom a teacher has direct responsibility was an important consideration.

Acquiring the necessary cooperation was facilitated by my status as an employee of the school district and as a member of the school faculty. At the district and school levels, administrators were open to proposals they perceived as unobtrusive research. The research was discussed first with the principal, who gave her approval and support. Formal approval was sought and obtained from the school
district’s research and evaluation department. A brief cover letter in Spanish was substituted for a standard videotaping/research consent form in English, which could not be understood by many of the parents. The parents who asked for further details seemed extremely pleased that their child’s teacher was pursuing advanced study and expressed support.

**Time Frame for Data Collection**

Data collection began October 19, 1989 and continued through May 29, 1990. Data was collected on 87 days between those dates, resulting in approximately 1,258 minutes of videotaped Sustained Silent Reading sessions.

During the first six weeks of the school year, modified SSR was introduced and modeled for the students. They became familiar with the routines associated with choosing books, finding assigned seating, exchanging books with classmates, and putting away books. The initial six-week period also allowed the students to familiarize themselves with their new teacher and classmates. I was concerned that videotaping during this period would be disruptive. Had I known in advance how disinterested students actually were in the equipment, data collection would have been initiated earlier in the school year.

Between October 19, 1989 and February 13, 1990, book selections were recorded in written notes only for children who were videotaped. In February, I purchased a notebook-
size personal computer for use in the classroom. Subsequently, book selections for all children were recorded on most days. Between October 19, 1989 and May 29, 1990, a total of 2,787 book selections were recorded.

Qualitative researchers generally cease collecting data when they believe they have reached data saturation, a point in time when additional data does not provide significant new information. The decision to collect data over the course of the entire school year was consistent with Strickland’s (1988) description of how teachers tend to go about their investigations. They "select a certain task or structure a specific learning situation and observe children’s responses and development over time" (p. 761). Since kindergartners are at an age of rapid development, and it was assumed that changes would be reflected in their SSR activity, it was natural to remain curious about their behaviors until the end of the school year.

**Participants and Setting of the Study**

The study took place in a full-day kindergarten classroom of an American public elementary school. Although the school was located in a large urban area, it operated under the jurisdiction of a neighboring suburban school district. The district operated primarily half-day kindergarten programs, but schools with populations designated as academically-at-risk provided full-day kindergartens. Of the district’s 35 elementary schools, 10
offered full-day programs during the 1989-1990 school year when data for this study was collected.

The following information (for a U.S. census tract that most closely matched the school's attendance boundaries) presents general demographic facts about the community from which this school's population was drawn. A comparison of the 1980 Census Report and a 1990 update showed that while total population remained stable, there was a 9% increase in the number of households. The 1980 Census Report showed that 14% of residences were owner occupied. According to Market Profile Analysis: Consumer and Business Demographic Reports for 1990, single-family dwellings composed 19% of the housing units and 81% were multi-family residences.

Estimated household income within the census tract (see Table 1) reflects the relative distribution of families' economic levels. The school community's population (see Table 2) was relatively young according to the 1980 U.S. Census Report.

During the 1989-1990 school year, the ethnic distribution of this elementary school's population was 52% Hispanic, 23% African American, 19% Anglo, 5% Asian and 1% Native American. Students who qualified for the federally funded free or reduced cost lunch program represented 72% of the school population. A majority of the school's Hispanic population scored Level 3 or below on the English form of the Language Assessment Scales (LAS) and therefore qualified
for the state’s Spanish language bilingual education program.

Table 1

**Estimated Annual Household Income**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dollars in thousands</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-9.9</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-14.9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-24.9</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-49.9</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50+</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2

**Population by Age**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 18</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-24</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55+</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There were 19 students in the teacher-researcher's kindergarten classroom: nine boys and 10 girls. All the students were Hispanic. Seventeen children scored Level 1 and two children scored Level 2 on the English form of the LAS, qualifying all of them for the bilingual education program. The students included recent immigrants from Mexico and children born in the United States.

Although collecting data for only a few students would have been more manageable, the decision to collect data for the entire class initially was made after careful consideration. The primary factors in this decision were special ethical issues related to the dual role of researcher and teacher. When researchers work in a classroom with the sole purpose of collecting data, a few students may be targeted without adversely affecting the other children. Teacher-researchers must take adequate precautions to insure that they maintain a uniform level of interest in each child, hold consistently high expectations for all students, and avoid potential behavioral problems associated with special attention. Although some teacher-researchers have been ethically comfortable selecting a few students for studies (Bissex & Bullock, 1987; Goswami & Stillman, 1987), I decided to collect year-long data for all students. This did not preclude the option to select students at the conclusion of the school year as the focus of more in-depth analysis and reporting.
An additional consideration was the potential loss of participants due to mobility. According to Market Profile Analysis: Consumer and Business Demographic Reports for 1990, the length of residence was relatively unstable (see Table 3).

Table 3

Length of Residence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10+</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I wanted to avoid identifying too small a focus group early in the year because of the risk that some or even all of the selected students might move away during the school year. In addition, students who arrived during the school year most often were new immigrants with varying school experiences (or no school experience), and their literacy-related behaviors could be expected to yield important information.

I elected not to collect data for two of the 19 children because of special circumstances. One nine-year-old girl, the sister of one of the boys in my class, was
undergoing treatment for a life-threatening disease. She enrolled after the school year began. After lengthy discussions involving the teacher, principal, and parents, this child was placed in kindergarten in spite of her age. She never had attended school previously, and desperately wished to be placed with her brother. Recognizing her age difference, sporadic attendance, and the fact that she often felt ill, I decided to exclude her from data collection. Since the students were not present in the room when data concerning their book selections was recorded, this child was not aware that she was excluded (there were exceptions to this procedure only on two days). She also did not seem to notice, and made no comments about not being seated at tables where videotaping occurred. The second child excluded from data collection enrolled late in the school year, had very poor attendance, and withdrew from school before the end of the year. Although two boys withdrew from school early in April, their reading selections were included in the data because 77 book selections were available for one child and 80 were available for the other.

Regarding the teacher-researcher’s experience and qualifications, I held a bachelor’s degree in elementary education with kindergarten certification, a master’s degree in elementary education with bilingual education certification, and had completed all course work for a doctor of philosophy in reading education. During the 1989-
1990 school year, I had 16 years of experience in education: 11 years of experience as a classroom teacher in kindergarten through third grades, and five years of experience working for a large urban school district's department of research and evaluation.

**Physical Setting: The Classroom**

The entrance to the classroom contained an office center where two assigned children functioned as secretaries, recording attendance and lunch orders every morning. The front of the room contained a large oval rug, which served as an area for whole-class activities and doubled as an individual and small-group work area. A large chalkboard occupied the full length of a wall in front of the rug. A section of this board was reserved as a chalkboard center for the children. It also displayed charts containing work the class had done related to literature units (e.g., characters' problem-solving strategies), and the text of nursery rhymes and songs children had learned. One corner of the room contained a kidney-shaped table that served as a teacher center, where children came to work individually and in small groups.

A large area of the room was reserved as a classroom library. It contained a full-size sofa, a small rocking chair, a chart stand for large books, a freestanding book display, a long set of bookshelves, and a round table suitable for seating four children. The library center
contained literature-related puppets, puzzles, dioramas, stuffed animals, and small props. The book collection comprised approximately 500 books, not including 25-30 books borrowed from the school library each week. To help children organize the large number of books, and to enable them to locate books, a color-coding scheme was introduced. Small labels (circles or symbols of different colors) were affixed to the lower left corner of each book cover. Some colors or symbols denoted entire categories of books; others organized series large enough to warrant an entire library shelf. Table 4 shows the library center structure.

Students also could choose to work in these centers: housekeeping, listening, sand, water, science, chalkboard, writing, art, geography, easel painting, clay, blocks, flannel board, and manipulatives. Efforts were made to integrate print into these centers (e.g., cookbooks in housekeeping, poems about getting wet in the water center, and cartoon drawing books in the chalkboard center).

Although children occasionally were grouped on the basis of instructional needs for specific lessons, static ability grouping was not used. Students were assigned to tables throughout the room for limited amounts of time each day during journal writing, Sustained Silent Reading, and assigned projects. At other times, tables doubled as work areas for different centers.
Table 4

Organization of Classroom Library

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book category</th>
<th>Category designation</th>
<th>No. of books</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABC, Concept and Counting</td>
<td>pink</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby</td>
<td>boxed</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basal readers</td>
<td>gray</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class-made</td>
<td>heart</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiction</td>
<td>blue/orange/white</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday</td>
<td>tree</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-fiction</td>
<td>red/brown/green</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poetry</td>
<td>purple</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predictable</td>
<td>&quot;X&quot;</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference</td>
<td>black</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Instructional Program

The school day began at 8:15 a.m. and ended at 3:15 p.m. The children attended music and physical education classes away from their classroom four days a week. They also attended art, guidance, computer, and library classes once a week. All instruction outside their own classroom was conducted in English. They also left the classroom for English-for-Speakers-of-Other-Languages (ESOL)
instruction during a 45-minute period daily. Areas of instruction taught by the classroom teacher—literacy, mathematics, science, and social studies—were addressed through an integrated curriculum approach. These areas of instruction were presented primarily in Spanish. Literacy instruction was organized around teacher-created literature units in which a book or group of books were studied. These units included listening to, discussing, illustrating, and reenacting stories in books. The discussions and study of books typically focused on characters, problem-solving, story grammar, motivation, and cause and effect. Other related activities included creating original books, cooking, and learning nursery rhymes, poems, and songs. Daily literacy-related activities included storytime in Spanish and English, modified Sustained Silent Reading, journal writing, and theater. (For theater, the children dictated stories to the teacher and then cast classmates in the roles required by each story. The entire class gathered around the rug and one child’s theater story was read by the teacher. Then roles were announced and the story was acted out while the teacher read it a second time.)

School district objectives for kindergarten language arts, which corresponded with state-mandated guidelines, were integrated into the literature units. The state-adopted curriculum for bilingual education served as an instructional resource.
Data Collection Procedures

The basic plan for research was to collect evidence of children’s reading preferences and their behaviors during modified Sustained Silent Reading over the course of a school year. Qualitative data-gathering techniques were used for the study. There were several reasons for the decision to collect data by videotaping. As both teacher and researcher, I was not able to separate myself from a constant supervisory and disciplinary role. More importantly, to implement a successful independent reading program, the teacher must serve as a reading model for the children. Conducting observations during Sustained Silent Reading would have precluded me from fulfilling this responsibility. Finally, the videotape medium facilitated viewing of SSR sessions multiple times. The videotapes were viewed multiple times to construct stream-of-behavior chronicles, produce transcripts, and complete observation protocols for individual children. The videotapes made it possible to construct descriptive fieldnotes that complied with the important aspects delineated by Bogdan and Biklen (1982): reconstruction of dialogue, accounts of particular events, and depiction of activities.

Beyond descriptive fieldnotes, data gathering included reflective fieldnotes, records of students' book selections for SSR, and information about the literature program.
Descriptive Fieldnotes/Videotaping

Initially, it was hoped that children could be videotaped at the tables assigned to them for SSR and journals. Seating assignments changed approximately every six weeks so that children had the opportunity to sit with different groups and in different areas of the room throughout the school year. My intent was for students to be videotaped with classmates they normally interacted with during SSR. Tables originally were scheduled for videotaping on a random basis. Once data collection began, however, audio recording problems prompted a decision to videotape students in pairs, seated at a small table set apart for this purpose at one end of the classroom library. Students subsequently were scheduled randomly to work at this table. This procedure was followed for a total of 38 sessions beginning October 19, 1989 and continuing through February 1, 1990.

As the year progressed, preliminary reviews of the videotapes indicated that the behavior of children in pairs seemed calmer and more on task than the behavior of larger groups of children at other tables. I became concerned that children’s natural behavior was not being captured (sitting in their customary places alongside classmates they read with daily, or with the same number of students who usually accompanied them). The original microphone (a wireless omnidirectional electret condenser type) was replaced with a
pressure zone microphone, making it possible to clearly distinguish individual recorded voices of children while they were seated at larger tables with several students. Of the 88 sessions videotaped during the study, 25 involved students sitting at their regular tables.

A few deviations from the data collection procedure (random assignment) were permitted. Children sometimes were grouped with classmates for social or academic purposes. On five occasions, students were videotaped individually to test expectations of which students would or would not function well by themselves. On two occasions, children were videotaped on the basis of the books they had selected for the day. The groupings for 19 of the 87 sessions resulted from these kinds of decisions. My notes for May 11, 1990, reflect the kind of decision-making that occurred occasionally during data collection.

I’m going to tape Sally tomorrow because she chose two student-made books and I want to see what she does with them. I’m choosing Freddy because he chose El tesoro de Azulín (1988) and El chivo en la huerta (1988) and I think he might actually attempt an aspectual reading of them. I’m going to put Carlos with them to see if their low-key manner can lure him into some storytelling and away from his usual silent interaction with his National Geographic books.
Formal data collection began the seventh week of the school year. Children paid little attention to the stationary camcorder from the beginning. They seemed disinterested in my explanation of the function and purpose of the video camera. They said they knew what it was and that I was going to "watch them on TV." Many of their families apparently owned videocassette recorders (VCRs) and several parents had rented video cameras to record children's birthday parties. Initially, a small flashing red light (which indicated the camcorder was recording) seemed to distract some children, so it was covered. I was undecided about whether I would grant anticipated requests from children to view videotapes out of concern that it might affect their behavior. There were no requests and the issue was avoided. The students were somewhat more interested initially in the first microphone. They occasionally fidgeted with it, used it for impromptu "announcements" and threatened to play with it to attract the attention of classmates.

Reflective Fieldnotes

Reflective fieldnotes detailing my thoughts on analysis, methods, ethical dilemmas, and frame of mind (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982, p. 87) were made throughout data collection. Since the videotape medium enabled me to observe students repeatedly, I continued to compile reflective fieldnotes throughout the analysis.
**Book Selections**

Initially, no plans were made to record all students' book selections. Only selections by children who were being videotaped each day were recorded, with the purpose of later identifying what they had been reading. As the school year progressed, it became apparent that reading selections were an important aspect of SSR behavior. At the end of February, I began to record book selections for all students on most days.

As much as 10 minutes had to be set aside at the end of every school day for children to select books for SSR. Occasionally, this was not enough time and I would compel them to leave the classroom library long after the dismissal bell. I debated whether to attempt formal observation of the book selection process itself, but rejected the idea.

Students selected books for SSR during the last 15 minutes of each day, a time that tends to be hectic for kindergarten teachers as they supervise children tidying the room and gathering personal belongings. Children selected their books for SSR for use the following morning, and book selection data was collected after the students left. On two occasions, data was typed into the notebook-size personal computer while the students were present, giving them an opportunity to observe the process. (The students already were accustomed to the teacher's use of the computer for recording their dictated stories.) On the first
occasion, a small group of children gathered and one student inquired about my activity. Another student quickly explained that I wanted to know what they read. This answer seemed to satisfy everyone, and they quickly dispersed to continue their end-of-day routines.

For purposes of organizing and later analyzing children’s reading preferences, a computer database was created using Lotus 1-2-3 Version 2.2 (Kapor, 1989). Records in this database comprised the following fields: student name, gender, book title, date of selection, category of book, and where applicable, any dates the book had been read aloud to the class. The book categories used were: ABC, baby, basal reader, concept, counting, fiction (folk/fairy tales and miscellaneous), holiday, nonfiction, poetry, predictable, and reference. The categories used for the database did not exactly match the color coding system that organized the classroom library because the shelving system was designed primarily to help students organize and manage the books physically. For example, the ABC, concept, and counting books occupied one shelf in the classroom library. They all were designated "pink circle" books for the students. The database, however, distinguished the three categories precisely. Information was compiled detailing titles of all books read to the class, stories told, and poems taught.
Data Analysis Procedures

The data yielded by the videotapes and written records was handled primarily using qualitative techniques characteristic of naturalistic studies related to emergent literacy (Teale & Sulzby, 1986). When appropriate, the data was handled quantitatively (e.g., frequency counts were used to compare relative distributions of types of behavior). Quantitative methods such as tests of significance were inappropriate; in a comprehensive description of children’s reading behavior, any occurrence, no matter how infrequent, is significant (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984).

Data reduction (Bailey, 1982; Miles & Huberman, 1984) began during the spring vacation of 1990, when a general review of all sessions taped to date was conducted. This general review consisted of viewing the videotapes in chronological order, focusing on all children taped in each session, and producing stream-of-behavior chronicles as the videotapes were viewed. This procedure was repeated at the beginning of summer 1990 for all sessions taped between spring break and the end of the school year. Further data analysis was delayed until the summer of 1991.

Subsequent viewings of the videotapes and study of the stream-of-behavior chronicles prompted me to select nine children for intensive analysis. These nine students were chosen on the basis of distinguishing characteristics or behaviors. A guiding question was “Which children are most
unlike each other or the group as a whole?" For example, one child known to have experienced storybook reading at home (a trait uncharacteristic of the group) was chosen, along with a child who seemed to have a particularly deprived home literacy environment. A child who seemed particularly animated was chosen, along with a child who was subdued. A child who tended to use all books as counting books (regardless of content or format) was chosen, along with a child who selected an unusually high number of baby books. By rereading my first impressions from notes in the original general review of videotapes, I became aware of the fact that one child was mentioned rarely, although she was videotaped numerous times. I realized this same child tended to disappear in the classroom. Teachers rarely have opportunities to examine in depth the behavior of such children. Curiosity therefore prompted these questions: "What was this child doing? Was she not doing anything? Is this why she attracted so little attention? Was her behavior so quiet that she simply traveled incognito?"

After nine children were chosen for analysis, all sessions in which they appeared were viewed in chronological order. I focused exclusively on the target child. Other children's behavior was noted only if they interacted in a significant way with the target child. This required multiple viewings of some sessions, since two or more of the nine children sometimes appeared together. This procedure
made possible the construction of individualized stream-of-behavior chronicles (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984) which "facilitate the delineation of categories of activities, the study of time and motion use, and the mapping of movement and physical environment" (p. 143). Following the procedure employed by V.G. Paley (personal communication, February 27, 1989), I transcribed only select portions of audiotapes relevant to issues of interest.

Salient features of the children's behavior emerged during the viewings. Units of analysis were discovered and established (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984) during subsequent study of the completed stream-of-behavior chronicles. A standardized observation protocol was constructed to facilitate frequency tabulations of these units for each book that a child viewed (see Appendix A). The observation protocols for all nine children were completed based on the stream-of-behavior chronicles. The protocols then were checked against another complete review of the videotaped sessions for those children.

Further notes regarding the children's behavior were added to the protocols and the stream-of-behavior chronicles during the second viewing. Observation forms were not used exclusively because premature reduction of behavior to quantitative analysis often results in a far more sterile product than what is produced by "thick" description (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Therefore, while the frequency
tabulations of the observation protocol contributed to a clearer, more accurate description of some aspects of behavior, the stream-of-behavior chronicles, and repeated consultation of videotapes, retained a prominent role in analysis. This approach was essential in creating a rich narrative text appropriate to reporting descriptive studies (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983).

Finally, four of the nine children were chosen as the focus of fully developed case studies. The two criteria for selection were: (a) potential for contributing unique characteristics, and (b) exhibiting behaviors characteristic of the larger group. After selection of the four case-study children, videotaped SSR sessions for each one were viewed chronologically in their entirety. Notes were added to the stream-of-behavior chronicles and observation protocol forms. Additional transcripts were produced and checked for accuracy.

Regarding children’s book selections, reports were produced from the database using R&R Worksheet Report Writer computer software (Ballard, Ciccolo, Hershfield & Meyers, 1988) to sort, select, and tabulate data and produce printed reports. Reports for the entire class allowed analysis of children’s selections by book category (e.g., fiction, holiday) and individual book titles (e.g., The Little Red Hen). Reports for individual students made it possible to
analyze children's selections by book category, book titles, dates, and familiarity.

**Quality Control**

"To an extent, determining quality is an intuitive, subjective process . . ." (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984, p. 209). In spite of some inherent subjectivity, qualitative studies must employ measures to insure credibility. The following measures outlined by Merriam (1988) have been utilized to safeguard the reliability and validity of this study. (Member checks and participatory modes were not used due to the young age of the subjects.)

**Recognition of researcher bias.** The relationship of the researcher to the subjects and the dual roles of teacher and researcher were acknowledged. For example, as teacher-researcher, I sometimes tolerated unruly behavior which, as teacher only, I would have addressed and corrected. My inhibitions sprang from a researcher bias that children's natural behavior was being captured and that intervention would be artificial. The dual role, however, enabled me to interpret children's behavior in the context of more comprehensive knowledge of each child. This knowledge of children sometimes influenced my perception of what actually was happening as I viewed videotaped sessions. The distance in time between data collection and final analysis (four school years) along with multiple separate viewings of videotaped sessions, helped to correct bias.
Long-term observation. Longitudinal data collected over the course of an entire school year guarded against premature conclusions based on cursory observations of children or isolated incidents.

Rich, thick description. An exhaustive effort was made to present comprehensive, detailed data that would enable readers to vicariously observe SSR and make comparisons with other studies.

Typicality of case. A conscious effort was made to provide sufficient information regarding individual children and the general population from which they were drawn. This should make it possible to accurately assess similarities and differences with other children. Where applicable, information was provided regarding the individual’s behavior compared to the rest of the class.

Triangulation. The focus of the study was behavior only during modified SSR, so common triangulation techniques (such as interviewing parents and gathering writing samples) were not employed. An attempt was made, however, to honor the intent of triangulation internally wherever possible. Reading preferences ascertained from quantitative data related to book selections, for example, were compared to fieldnotes of videotaped sessions. Most importantly, triangulation for descriptive studies is accomplished as other researchers conduct similar studies for comparison.
Audit trail. Extensive notes and documentation were collected and preserved during and after the data collection and analysis.

Peer examination. Expert peer examiners were engaged at each stage of analysis to insure the credibility of the study. (One examiner was an experienced kindergarten teacher with a doctorate in early childhood education. A second examiner was an experienced kindergarten and first grade teacher. A third examiner was an experienced first grade teacher. The second and third examiners were reading specialists; all three examiners had bilingual education experience and certification.) Specific measures taken were:

1. Following the production of stream-of-behavior chronicles for the four case-study children, systematic random samples of SSR videotaped sessions (five to eight minutes in length) were identified for each child. Summaries of children's social behaviors and emergent-reading behaviors were produced. The first and second peer examiners viewed the videotapes and made notes of their observations. Following a discussion of the children's behavior, they were provided the researcher-produced summaries. Peer examiner observations were in 100% agreement with the researcher's summaries.

2. After completion of the observation protocols, systematic random samples of 10-minute SSR videotaped
sessions were taken. The three peer examiners were trained to use a modified observation protocol (see Appendix B) and shown the segments of SSR sessions. They focused only on the target child in each sample. Using a single book as the unit of analysis, they calculated time-on-task for each sample. (The researcher’s times for book events ranged from 30 seconds to 11.5 minutes.) Sixty-seven percent of the peer examiners’ book event times fell within a 15-second tolerance of the time calculated by the researcher. Another 11% fell within a 60-second tolerance and 22% varied from the researcher’s times by more than 60 seconds but less than 90 seconds.

The peer examiners concurred with the researcher regarding book orientation observations at rates of 86%, 100% and 86%, respectively. Regarding print orientation and attention to graphophonemic information, agreement was 100% for all three peer examiners. Regarding performance categories, agreement was 67%, 89% and 67%, respectively. Problems of researcher and peer examiner agreement specifically involved the "silently studying" and "discussing books" performance categories. Interrater agreement was 100% for "browsing" and 100%, 100% and 75%, respectively, for "pretend readings." Subsequent discussion ended in agreement that problems were related to children’s use of mixed strategies and that assigning a child’s
performance exclusively to one category can be problematic. (For further discussion, see Implications in Chapter V.)

An additional factor was the peer examiners’ interpretation of children’s behavior based on a few segments vs. the researcher’s interpretation of children’s behavior within the context of all observed behaviors for the school year. For example, when an unusually nonverbal child verbalized in response to a book, the researcher classified it as "discussing book." Some peer examiners classified the same behavior as "silently studying" based on the limited amount of verbalization. Whether a child’s performance is measured against a single standard or within the context of the child’s usual behavior may need to be addressed in future studies.

3. Following the completion of the study, the first peer examiner reviewed the four case studies, the findings and the implications. She concurred with the results.

Summary

In summary, a naturalistic, longitudinal, observational case-study approach was used to answer the question, "What are the emergent book-reading behaviors of kindergarten students during modified Sustained Silent Reading?" The teacher-researcher videotaped students during SSR sessions, produced descriptive fieldnotes from videotapes, made reflective fieldnotes from direct and indirect observation, and collected data for children’s SSR book selections over
the course of one school year. During data analysis, stream-of-behavior chronicles from the videotaped sessions were produced, relevant segments were transcribed, standardized observation protocols were developed, reports of children's reading preferences were generated, and patterns of behavior were identified. After reviewing data for the entire class, nine students were selected for further analysis. Ultimately, four students were chosen to be the focus of fully developed case studies. Appropriate measures were taken to insure the credibility of the study.
CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS: THE CASE STUDIES

This chapter presents the case-study analyses. The general research question guiding these analyses concerned the book-reading behaviors of kindergarten students during modified Sustained Silent Reading (SSR). The following questions provided more specific direction for the study:

1. What are the students' reading preferences as defined by their selections for SSR?

2. What is the nature of the students' social behaviors during SSR?

3. What is the nature of their emergent-reading behaviors over the course of the school year?

During data collection and analysis, additional questions emerged. Regarding students' reading preferences, the extent of diversity in their selections was questioned. Were there gender differences? Did they choose favorite books repeatedly much as young children request bedtime favorites? What was the incidence and nature of their evaluative statements? What role, if any, did the exchange of books play?

Regarding social behavior, the nature of children's interaction was questioned. Did students engage in
collaborations? What was accomplished during these collaborations? What influence did children exert on each other’s behavior?

Regarding emergent-reading behaviors, what conceptions about literature and literacy, book conventions, and print were evidenced in children’s behavior?

The consideration of these questions prompted the adoption of the following format to present the case studies.

1. Description of the child
2. Description of behaviors: (a) reading preferences; (b) social behaviors; (c) emergent-reading behaviors (conceptions about literature and literacy, conceptions about books, and conceptions about print).

Transcript Conventions

Since most student dialogue was in Spanish, information about translation has been included with information regarding transcript conventions. Most dialogue was in Spanish and analysis was conducted in that language. The text of the case studies contains translations of student dialogue for the benefit of English-speaking readers. All dialogue originally was in Spanish unless otherwise specified. With some exceptions, the original Spanish excerpts for each case study are in Appendix C through Appendix F. Spanish originals of single words, phrases, and
brief statements are not presented unless necessary for understanding the events.

The following conventions were used to present transcripts:

1. All names, including those of the four case-study children, are pseudonyms.

2. Speakers are identified in the first instance by full first name. Thereafter, the first initial serves for identification.

3. Parentheses () denote parenthetical explanatory information.

4. Square brackets [] denote words inserted into quotations (not the speaker's words).

5. The ellipsis denotes a speaker pause between words or syllables.

6. Quotation marks are used to identify text children intended as characters' dialogue during pretend readings.

7. Children's grammatical mistakes in the original Spanish were not corrected. No attempt was made to reproduce the grammatical mistakes in English.
Virginia

Virginia, a Hispanic female, was five years seven months old at the beginning of the 1989-1990 school year. She recently had come to the United States from Mexico, where she had been living with her grandmother. Although her mother reported some difficult moments at home, Virginia, an only child, appeared to be adapting well to the change, which included a new stepfather. She seemed to be a happy, well adjusted child for whom family was extremely important. Virginia was a soft-spoken but articulate child with excellent verbal skills in Spanish. Near the end of the school year, she spoke often and excitedly about the baby her mother was expecting. Virginia was one of only three children in the room who did not qualify financially for free lunch. During the summer following the study, she moved to another school district when her parents became homeowners. Her mother said she had provided her daughter clay, crayons, paints, and books, and asked for suggestions for other stimulating play things for home. Virginia often spoke excitedly of watching fairy tales such as Pinocchio and Cinderella on television and apparently owned a few videotapes. She was a popular child, much sought after to be a companion in the housekeeping center. Virginia also enjoyed time to herself. She painted at the easel for long periods of time, absorbed in her work and oblivious to the surrounding noise and activity.
Reading Preferences

Virginia's reading selections were recorded on 49 days between November 2, 1989 and May 29, 1990. Prior to February 19, 1990, her choices were recorded only when she was videotaped. After that date, her reading selections were documented regardless of whether she was videotaped. Her 161 book selections provide insight into her reading preferences (see Table 5).

Virginia's interest in books seemed to lie in the stories they contained and the opportunity to retrieve those stories through pretend readings. Fiction best suited these purposes, accounting for her strong preference for the category. Among all books involving verbalization by Virginia, 65% were fiction.

Of her fiction selections, 34% were folk/fairy tales (comprising 20% of her overall selections for the year). She consistently approached fairy tales with special affection. Familiarity appears to have been a factor in her selections within the subcategory. She chose no unfamiliar folk/fairy tales during the year. All her selections were familiar (32%) or very familiar (68%).

When she chose nonfiction books (15%), she preferred illustrated books over books containing photographs. Virginia's preference may have been influenced by the fact that illustrations lend themselves more readily to treatment as fiction.
Table 5

Virginia's Book Selections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basal Readers</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class-made</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counting</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiction (total)</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folk/Fairy Tales</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-fiction</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poetry</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predictable</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Her interest in stories may account for her infrequent choice of some categories. Predictable books comprised only 1% of her selections. The class had read these books chorally, so their familiarity would have helped her retrieve satisfactory texts. The plots were simple, however, and may not have afforded Virginia the desired
drama of beautiful queens and ugly stepsisters. In addition, all the students owned personal copies and the attraction of unfamiliar, less accessible books seemed stronger.

Other categories with low percentages of selection did not appear to furnish sufficient storytelling material. Baby books and reference materials (consisting primarily of word books and picture dictionaries) provided no stories and she demonstrated no interest in them. The bulk of her holiday choices (6%) were Christmas books, which she began to choose in February, with her interest continuing through May.

Although Virginia enjoyed poetry, it constituted only 5% of her choices. Her favorite poetry book was *De Tin Marín* (Fernández, 1983), a whimsically illustrated book of traditional Spanish nursery rhymes. She chose it three times and acquired it several times by exchange. Virginia chose three other books three times each. Two were versions of "Snow White" and "Little Red Riding Hood," both choices consistent with her love of folk and fairy tales. On four days, all choices were the folk/fairy tale genre. Virginia generally showed diversity, but 14 other books were chosen twice. Among her 161 selections for the year, she chose 138 different books.

Formal observations were not made of Virginia as she made her daily selections. However, anecdotal records
indicated she chose books carefully, often spending an extended period finding a pleasing combination. On seven days, her three books were from one series. For a two-week period in March, she chose only books on loan from the school library.

Each morning at the beginning of SSR, she was videotaped engaging in a ritual that mirrored this care about her selections. She contemplated all the front covers before choosing the one to view first. After she finished the first book, she repeated the process with the remaining two books. She generally conveyed the impression that she was ordering the books from most to least important. One exception in February seemed to indicate the reverse. She pretend read a book about winter, then proceeded to an African folk tale (the subject of a class literature study and much in demand). Although Virginia liked the story and its heroine, she seemed uninterested, turned pages silently, and paid more attention to a classmate. She eventually discarded it and shifted attention to Rumpelstiltskin (Zelinsky, 1986). Subsequent behavior seemed to indicate this large, illustrated book interested her most. She was free to view books in any order, so she may have used a "save the best until last" approach. An alternative interpretation might take into account the frustration and regret Virginia demonstrated during a previous SSR session, which ended before she finished viewing her books. Knowing
viewing her books. Knowing she would want to spend more
time with the fairy tale, she may have tried to get the
other books "out of the way" first. Carefully considering
the order of books was her routine all year.

Virginia made scattered evaluative statements
throughout the year. She sometimes commented on her choices
for the day. Pointing to three choices from a bilingual
folk tale series, she told a companion, "These are pretty
also." With one exception, her statements were positive.
Apparently, she made a statement if her reaction was
positive and withheld comment if not. Although made aloud,
her statements seemed to be for her own benefit, not an
audience. She smiled, hugged, and patted books, showing she
considered reading a pleasurable activity.

Virginia's intense interest in her chosen books seemed
to affect behavior regarding exchanges. The classroom rule
and common practice was to exchange books voluntarily when
children had finished viewing them. Virginia generally was
uninterested, preferring to review her own books. Sometimes
she ignored students' offers of exchange. Other times, she
shook her head or told them, "No." One day she offered a
reason, simply stating, "I liked them." She resisted
exchanging single books, preferring instead to wait until
she had read all her selections. She may have considered
her selections a set. When a classmate proposed one
exchange, Virginia responded, "I've already read this one,
but I haven’t finished yet" (showing the one she was reading at the time).

Virginia suggested an exchange for a specific book for the first time in January. She was turned down, but assured the child would exchange with her the following day. Stung by the polite rejection, she "saved face" by pointing to her books and saying, "This one is prettier and no one is going to take it away from me. This one is mine. And this one is mine. And this one is mine. And this one is mine. And I love them a lot."

In February, she initiated an exchange to acquire a copy of "Cinderella." "I want that book," she pleaded successfully with her voice and facial expression. Not until the end of April did she issue her first open offer to exchange books, asking, "Who wants to exchange with me?" There were no takers even after she repeated the offer, so she tried persuasion. "I have the one about the ocean," she announced. In May, she consistently began to offer and accept exchanges, something her classmates had done since the beginning of the school year.

In summary, Virginia showed a strong preference for fiction, especially folk/fairy tales. Both her book selections and the order in which she viewed them were important to her. Her possessiveness of her daily selections rendered her reluctant to surrender them in exchanges. This last behavior was consistent with much of Virginia’s social interaction related to books.
Social Behavior

Fifteen sessions of Virginia were videotaped between November 2, 1989 and May 24, 1990. She was recorded with 13 different classmates in groups of two to five students. SSR, as traditionally practiced without modification to allow social interaction, may have proved less burdensome to Virginia than to any other student. Although she was a sociable and extremely popular child, she considered SSR time to be primarily a solitary activity.

Virginia often ignored classmates at her table, even when they were engaged in noisy interaction or disruptive off-task behavior. She gave brief, reluctant attention to fellow students if necessary to avoid appearing rude. She especially avoided conversation unrelated to book content. Early in November, one classmate seated with Virginia responded to books with narratives of personal experiences. Virginia was so unresponsive, she moved nearly off camera to distance herself from the distracting classmate. Virginia responded only when the classmate offered her a chance to respond to a book. "Look. Some really big men," said the classmate while pointing to a circus illustration of men on stilts. Virginia, showing a broader background knowledge, explained, "It's because there are sticks inside." She also contributed this kind of help whenever the class needed a fairy tale resource, often supplying correct interpretations of illustrations. She explained, for example, that kings
wear certain kinds of crowns and princes are boys even if they wear tights and skirts. After providing assistance, Virginia usually returned to her books. She sometimes concentrated so intensely that her forehead appeared furrowed.

Virginia functioned quietly and independently during SSR from the beginning of the year. As her reading companions increasingly attended to their own books, she seemed more receptive of limited interaction. By January, the same classmate who once irritated Virginia with personal narratives began to engage in pretend readings. Virginia displayed an uncharacteristic level of camaraderie when she scooted her chair next to the classmate, put an arm around her, and listened to her performance. Even then, Virginia fidgeted and moved away after a few minutes. The role of listener did not suit her. In the last 11 sessions, she spent minimal time listening to others and rarely abandoned her own books to give classmates her undivided attention. When children engaged in an unusually high level of off-task behavior during the spring, Virginia tried hard (sometimes un成功地) to focus on her work. She tended to attend to and participate in companions' off-task behavior only if it amused her, and it only amused her when book related. For example, in March, she ignored one child's loud accusation that someone had used objectionable language, but
a moment later attended to another child's choking sounds as he acted out what happened to a dog in a book.

As the school year progressed, many children adopted a technique that enhanced their ability to focus on their work. They turned their chairs away from the tables, facing away from classmates, and placed books in their laps. This privacy position seemed to inform classmates that they wanted to be alone, decreased visual and aural interference, and increased privacy for pretend readings. As popularity of the technique increased, Virginia could have embraced it. Instead, she made limited use of it for only seven of her 60 books. She may have needed it less because of her ability to shut out others. It also interfered with her preferred mode of handling books: standing them on the table.

A second technique—the teacher position—also was popular among the girls. It involved holding a book with the reader's face turned toward an imaginary audience. Like others, Virginia often used introductory remarks such as "Hello, children!" or "I'm going to be a teacher!" when she engaged in this activity. The technique did not change her view of reading as a predominantly solitary activity. During 15 taped sessions, she never solicited an actual audience, and the few times when others tried to be her students, she rebuffed them. Combining the privacy position and the teacher position suited her purposes. The teacher role provided a loose framework for SSR; interacting with
books was her primary focus. One exception occurred in April when she responded to a classmate's invitation to play school. She announced to imaginary students which books she would read and which activity centers they would use after she finished. She also modeled use of an imaginary computer keyboard to record books she had selected for SSR, complained how tiring it was to hold books in the teacher position, and finished by creating an English text for her students using her best teacher voice. On this one occasion, books served as props and were secondary to playing school.

Late in the school year, Virginia seemed more willing to interact with classmates during SSR. She previously made isolated comments or answered questions abruptly, but by spring she began a level of interaction approximating collaboration. In April, without abandoning her own book, Virginia assisted Emilia in retelling "The Three Billy Goats Gruff." This classmate often used dramatic gestures and voices, but generally required significant assistance in retrieving texts. Virginia supplied the identity of characters, clarified illustrations, and held up one side of the dialogue. (See Appendix C for original Spanish text.)

Emilia: Do you know what [it is]? The ...

Virginia: The little goat.

E: The little goat. "Will you let me pass?"

V: "No!"
E: "No!"
V: "By my snot! Oooh!"
E: And he let him pass. And the middle-sized one.
V: But that one was the mommy and that one was the baby.
E: Trip-trap, trip-trap, trip-trap, trip-trap. "Who's there? I'm..." What?
V: "I'm the mother of the one who passed first. My husband is coming in a little while."
E: "You can pass."
(Material omitted)
E: Tip, top, tip, top, tip, top, tip, top. "Who is it? Who is it?"
V: "It's me. I'm the hus[band]..., I'm the hus[band]..."
E: "I'm the husband of the little goat. You scolded him. Come here." Bam! Bam! They all went until they reached (unintelligible). And snip, snap, snout. This tale's told out.

Later that day, Virginia assisted Emilia again with vocabulary to pretend read a Spanish version of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (Carle, 1989). Virginia acquired the book later in an exchange and needed help herself. (See Appendix C.)
Virginia: In the morning, he ate an apple. Another morning he ate two pears. He ate three... three grapes. He ate four... uh... What are these called?

Emilia: Cherries.

V: Cherries.

This was the first time Virginia requested assistance. Before the end of SSR that day, she asked Emilia to teach her a song in a book of Spanish nursery rhymes. She listened intently, asked her to sing it again, then sang it alone. Virginia appeared to discover that interacting with others could be beneficial.

Throughout the year, Virginia demonstrated a strong tendency to focus on her own books, but remained aware and was influenced by activities of classmates around her. Several times she observed other students, then immediately mimicked their behavior. One day in February, she turned silently through a copy of *Rumpelstiltskin* (Zelinsky, 1986), slowly examining each full-page illustration. She was bothered by a classmate’s loud animal sounds. She protested, telling the student to be quiet, then returned to her book. A second child soon attracted her attention and she stopped to listen to him read a class-made book. He counted enthusiastically and announced which student had illustrated each page with a flair of importance, in addition to producing loud animal sounds. When Virginia
returned to her own book, she appropriated the two boys' behavior by announcing in a loud voice, "The queen and the king! I'm the prettiest queen. And with the girl! She's the (unintelligible). Look at the baby! Look! She's angry! She's very, very angry. She's gone now. I'm this one! I'm this one! Because she has a pretty dress." (See Appendix C.) It was difficult to judge whether Virginia's behavior was a case of "If you can't fight them, join them," or if she was experimenting to see if the behavior was as much fun as the two boys demonstrated.

Her most salient behavior (adopted from the example of others) was identifying herself as a character in each book. In February, a classmate attracted Virginia's attention to the book he was reading. On each page, the narrative said "goodnight" to a different animal. Turning to the rooster page, the classmate said, "I'm this one!" Two pages later, Virginia pointed excitedly to a kitten and said, "I'm the kitten!" This began a routine Virginia embraced the rest of the year. From then on, she frequently and enthusiastically appropriated a character in each book for herself, shouting "I'm this one! I'm this one!" Sometimes this statement was the only verbalization for an otherwise silent treatment of a book. She identified herself as colors, animals, and human characters. Occasionally she gave a brief explanation for her choice. At times she used the format to invite others to interact with her. Displaying a book, she would
ask, "Which one are you?" When others used the same
technique in an attempt to interact, she sometimes accepted
their invitations. Other times her curt "No" seemed to
serve as an abbreviated "I don't want to talk to you right
now or involve myself in your book." While self-
identification as a character was a popular SSR activity for
many students, none embraced it as heartily as Virginia.
These characterizations may have manifested her strong sense
of self or a way to personalize a story. It may have been a
way for a young child to adopt the narrative voice, a point
of view from which to tell the story. Finally, it may have
been just a game, a form of play, which Virginia found
enjoyable.

Identification of oneself as characters in books did
not originate with Virginia or Ray (the classmate to whom
she first responded in February). It was initiated by a
different child early in the school year. It may be
significant, however, that Virginia first responded to Ray's
example because she seemed especially responsive to him.
Perhaps they "connected" because of shared characteristics
(both were bright, cheerful and well-behaved; each was an
only child whose mother was expecting a second baby; both
came from a higher socioeconomic group; and both had
substantial exposure to books at home). Early in November,
they were videotaped together. Ray engaged in an animated,
gleeeful riot of language play, song, teasing, and physical
play with a book of nursery rhymes. Virginia responded with her own giggly, nonsensical concoction. Based on this early session, Virginia might have been expected to engage in extensive language play throughout the year. In reality, she seemed to need someone else to initiate it, and no one motivated her like Ray. In subsequent taped sessions with other children present, they never reestablished the same intimacy. Ray also discovered he could amuse other boys in class with general silliness, while Virginia was uninterested in conversation or activity unrelated to the content of books.

A secure family life seemed to affect the content of Virginia's work. By spring, she was settled with her mother and stepfather, and was excited about her mother's pregnancy. Virginia then began to reshape stories to fit a family mold. Goats in "The Three Billy Goats Gruff" became "the husband, the mommy, and the baby." She knew the protagonist in the story of "Jack and the Beanstalk" was male, but insisted "there was a girl in the house and a cow and a mom." In her view, the accomplishment of "The Gingerbread Man" was not that he ran away from a little old man and a little old woman but that he had "a mommy and a daddy." Recasting characters also was compatible with claiming characters for herself. To exclamations of "I'm this one! I'm this one!" she seemed to add, "This is a family! This is a family!"
In summary, Virginia preferred book-reading as a solitary activity, often remaining focused in the face of distractions. She resisted virtually all conversation unrelated to books. She understood that one could function both as a reader and a listener, and although she was a most attentive listener during teacher-directed activities (e.g., literature studies and storytime), she preferred functioning as a reader during SSR. She became more open to social interaction as the year progressed, eventually collaborating in pretend readings and seeking assistance. The impact of family and classmates was evident in her work.

**Emergent-Reading Behaviors**

The following sections of this case study trace Virginia’s academic development in terms of conceptions about literature and literacy, books, and print. This section also describes her use of English during SSR.

**Conceptions about literature and literacy.** Virginia demonstrated from the beginning of the school year that she understood important "basic conceptions about literature and literacy" (Cochran-Smith, 1984). Her behavior consistently showed book-reading was important and pleasurable for her. She smiled to herself at the beginning and end of books, rebuked classmates who bothered her, and made positive evaluative statements. The percentage of time on task during each SSR session also reflected her interest. (See Table 6.) "Time engaged" was conservatively defined as only
the time she interacted with books and excludes time spent settling in, making transitions between books, browsing, visiting with others, and in one instance, making a bathroom trip. The sessions with a low percentage of time engaged, (such as 52% for Session 7) generally were sessions in which companions engaged in disruptive behavior, making it difficult for her to stay on task.

Virginia consistently demonstrated ability to focus on a book for a lengthy period of time. With the exception of Sessions 11, 14 and 15 (when she was allowed to choose four books), she began each SSR session with three books. The number of books she viewed indicates not only a low rate of exchange with others, but her tendency to examine books at length, often gazing at one illustration for extended periods of time.

Virginia apparently enjoyed books most when they contained stories and she understood that illustrations were the key to the stories. She also discovered that some nonfiction books are useful for creating stories when the pictures are sufficiently supportive. The following excerpt was taken from a text she created for a nonfiction selection in February. Since the book recited a litany of things that happen in winter rather than a story, her text was restricted to a description of each discrete page. However, her demeanor and voice conveyed a formal story reading and she concluded with a traditional closing recitation. (The

Table 6

**Virginia's Time on Task (TOT) in SSR Sessions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>TOT</th>
<th>No. of books</th>
<th>Max. time on 1 book</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>11/89</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>11/89</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1/90</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1/90</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2/90</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2/90</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>3/90</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>4/90</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>4/90</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>4/90</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>4/90</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>4/90</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>4/90</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>4/90</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>5/90</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
And the nights are filled with light.

The New Year arrives and the houses are filled with toys.

It’s winter!

Many of Virginia’s texts were inaudible or unintelligible, partly or entirely because of her quiet voice. In addition, she frequently lowered her voice for increased privacy. While other students often searched for listeners for their stories, she considered herself an audience of one. When she was engaged in teacher behavior, when she found herself competing with classmates’ voices, or when the mood struck, she raised her voice enough to facilitate the production of transcripts. As the year
progressed, she incorporated more hand gestures and expressive voices for her own narrative and for her characters' dialogue.

Virginia understood that books contain rhymes, songs, and stimuli for language play, although she engaged in these less than she created stories. She also enjoyed many books quietly, viewing at least one book silently during 12 of the 15 sessions. Table 7 contains the distribution for Virginia's reading behaviors for the books she viewed during the videotaped sessions.

Table 7
Virginia's Emergent-Reading Behaviors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>% Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Silently studying</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussing book</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretend Reading</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Total books viewed = 60.

The high percentage of nonverbal viewings is consistent with Virginia's approach to reading as a predominantly solitary activity. Likewise, the low rate of discussion reflects the fact that she rarely commented or engaged other children in conversation about her books. The high
percentage of pretend readings accurately reflects the importance of stories for Virginia.

The majority of Virginia's pretend readings were in response to books which had been read to her in class. The data indicated that Virginia sometimes enjoyed the challenge of unfamiliar stories that made considerable demands on her text-creation abilities. (See Table 8).

Table 8
Virginia's Pretend Readings and Familiarity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unfamiliar</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familiar</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Familiar</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unidentified</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conceptions about books. From the beginning, Virginia demonstrated correct book orientation, beginning at the front and working page by page to the end. She attended primarily to the illustrations, however, ignoring the text. As she turned each page, her attention was drawn first to the right side of each two-page spread. After viewing the right page to her satisfaction, she gave brief attention to the left side. Sometimes, when turning pages rapidly, she ignored the left page entirely, viewing only the right page.
By the beginning of January, she corrected her previous viewing pattern and attended to the left page first.

She also began to pay attention to book conventions in January. Other than examining the covers of her books to decide her viewing order, she previously had considered front matter of little interest. In fact, she often used the time it took to turn to the first page of text to glance at classmates' books. She first showed interest in the conventions of book format because of one book's end matter. After closing the book with a traditional recitation (for which an English equivalent would be "Snip, snap, snout, this tale's told out") she noticed a photograph of the author and the author's family. Virginia attempted a sophisticated text for the author information, combining evaluative statements, a summary of the book, and nonsense names for the people pictured. "This nice story was made by (unintelligible) Meco... Mica, and his wife Yasir (unintelligible). They made it nice and it was about Christmas and about (unintelligible) and about (unintelligible) and about Easter," she said. (See Appendix C.) Covers, title pages, authors, illustrators, and translators had been emphasized during storytime and literature studies. Nothing, however, elicited her attention as much as this single photograph, perhaps reflecting the importance Virginia attached to family.
Virginia began to attend to the print on covers and title pages soon after, and started assigning titles to her books. By the end of the year, she had assigned titles to 30% of the books viewed. A large number of the titles (72%) accompanied pretend readings of books, but the title assignment became so important that the title was sometimes the only verbalization in an otherwise nonverbal performance. Two of her original titles—"Mystery of the Snow" and "The Mystery of the Witch Who Knows How to Sew the Most"—indicate she was exposed to literary influences outside school. (The term "mystery" had not been used in school at any time during the year.)

Conceptions about print. Although Virginia primarily was interested in illustrations, she demonstrated understanding early in November that print carries the meaning. She seemed to understand that reading requires a certain orientation when she correctly tracked her finger along a line of print from left to right. At first, she was uninterested in tracking regularly. In February, she demonstrated brief confusion by reverting to looking first at the right-hand page. She appeared to track the text properly from left to right on the right page of a first grade basal. When she moved to the left page and tracked right to left (Figure 1) she revealed she was working from the center of the page.
Figure 1. Example of Virginia's incorrect orientation in tracking right to left on a left page.

Had Virginia turned the page and continued to verbalize while tracking instead of returning to the left page, her error would not have been evident. It is impossible to judge if this was a fleeting confusion or a longstanding misconception because her previous tracking involved only right-hand pages. Subsequent tapes showed she soon adopted a left-to-right orientation for all pages.

Books with unfamiliar layout formats presented other problems. In April, she worked with a dinosaur book containing a heading on each page. She assumed the long line of text at the bottom of each page was more important, attended to it first, and dealt with the heading last, before continuing to the next page. When confronted with another unusual book layout, she tracked the text as indicated in Figure 2.

The tracking was conducted without verbalization, as if practicing her finger movement. On the following page, she started verbalizing, but once again tracked the text incorrectly. Upon reaching the third page, she demonstrated
Figure 2. Example of Virginia’s incorrect order in tracking text in an unusual book layout.

correct orientation. Since Virginia was not decoding, she could not have been reoriented by the content of the text. Perhaps she operated on the premise that on each page, similarly positioned text is addressed first. Apparently, the concept of proceeding from top to bottom ultimately took precedence. In April, she became much more interested in tracking text with her finger. Near the end of the month, Virginia made serious attempts for her verbal text to match the length of the printed text. When she was not able to make this match, she would make a second attempt, starting at the beginning of the line or filling in the remaining printed text with nonsense sounds. By the end of the month, Virginia attended to individual words as she tracked text, requiring even greater efforts to make her verbal text match the printed text word for word. This heightened awareness of smaller and smaller units of print might be expected to presage attention to graphophonemic cues. Instead, Virginia continued to attend to the meaning and feel of the text. When reading a class-made book of original poetry titled We
Are Poets, she said "All the Rhymes," repeating the new title to recreate the feel of the original.

At the end of May, a classmate at her table engaged in an aspectual reading of a Spanish version of *Spot Goes to the Circus* (Hill, 1986). The text was familiar to the class and popular. Nevertheless, the classmate sacrificed fluency in order to laboriously "sound out" each word. Intrigued by this new behavior, Virginia stared and listened intently for a total of six minutes. At one point, expending great effort, the classmate triumphantly announced that a word said "clumsy" (torpe). Virginia immediately turned to her own book, *Animal Sounds* (Battaglia, 1981), and mimicked the classmate's aspectual reading. She did not truly understand his activity since her "reading" bore no resemblance to the text of the book. Nevertheless, she tried to duplicate the sound of his text by breaking words into syllables, repeating articles and syllables, and mimicking his stammering, halting delivery. For example, the Spanish words for "bees" (abejas) and "turtles" (tortugas) contain three syllables each. She fragmented them as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book's Text</th>
<th>Virginia's Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What do frogs say?</td>
<td>Las... tor... las...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croak! Croak! Croak!</td>
<td>tor... tu... gas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croak!!!</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Buzzzzzz say the bees. Las... las... a... be... jas.

Virginia indicated by her attention and demeanor that she considered her classmate's activity important. The school year ended the following week, making it impossible to document how Virginia integrated her new developing concept of reading into her behavior, and how soon she used her considerable graphophonemic knowledge for this type of aspectual reading.

In summary, Virginia consistently enjoyed her reading selections throughout the school year. Their appeal was the stories they contained and she engaged in expressive pretend readings for almost half of the books she viewed. She silently studied approximately a third of the books which was consistent with her approach to SSR as a solitary activity.

Virginia demonstrated correct book orientation from the beginning. By the end of the school year, book conventions such as author information and titles had become important to her. Regarding print, while she understood it carried meaning, she experienced some difficulties with its orientation. However, she resolved tracking problems and by the end of the school year was attending to individual words.
The Role of English

As noted in the introductory information, a new stepfather became part of Virginia's family during the school year. Fluently bilingual in English and Spanish, he was anxious for Virginia to learn English. This emphasis, in addition to his presence as an English-speaking role model in the home, resulted in a level of English activity by Violeta uncharacteristic of the other students. The following section—unique to this case study—describes the role of English in Virginia's book-reading behavior.

In January, Virginia's six months of exposure to English at home and in school culminated in her first attempt to create an English text for a book. After a brief introduction in Spanish, she turned to the first page of a book. Using a dramatic tone of voice, she began, "The little... The little (unintelligible)." She turned the page and repeated, "The little (unintelligible). After a brief distraction by another child, she began to talk about the book's content in Spanish rather than continue the pretend reading in English. The interruption may have sidetracked Virginia (as often happened with other children). It is also possible the demands of constructing an English text were simply too great. It was the first of many persistent efforts to engage in pretend readings in English in spite of her limited vocabulary. The high number of unintelligible words in these texts was due to several factors: a soft
voice; her accent as a beginning speaker of English; and intentional mumbling of words because of language insecurity.

By March, Virginia learned that known, familiar stories (such as folk tales) provided support and a better chance to produce English texts. In January, she proceeded no further than "The little (unintelligible)" for an unfamiliar story. In contrast, "The Gingerbread Man" allowed her more successfully to produce the text "I have a mommy and a daddy and (unintelligible). You can't catch me. I'm the Gingerbread Man."

Another folk tale, "Jack and the Beanstalk," also supported and stimulated her first use of the English phrase "Once upon a time." Virginia did not use the Spanish equivalent nearly as often as many other children. Perhaps it was because she often approached books silently (especially at the beginning), delaying verbalization until she was several pages into the book. A classmate touched Virginia's book one day in March and explained that the title said "The Beanstalk." Virginia then began a pretend reading in English. She repeated "The Beanstalk" and continued with "Once upon a time there was a girl in the house and a cow and a mom. Everybody (unintelligible)."

Virginia embraced dialogue wholeheartedly by April. She seemed determined to create even longer English texts in spite of her limitations. Sometimes she mixed Spanish
vocabulary with English where needed and repeated common phrases. She tried to preserve a story line although it sometimes was difficult to follow. Virginia seemed satisfied by her efforts. The following example accompanied *The Secret Seller* (Lifton, 1967). Although the following context suggests she intended "yummy" sounds, she actually repeated the name of the letter "M" in English. Whether she was learning how to make a "yummy" sound in English, saying the letter name, or had another intention was uncertain.

"A forest! A forest and the (unintelligible) and the rats, he (unintelligible). He eats this and this. He eats apples. He eats gusanos (worms), caracoles (snails) and 'M' and 'M' and 'M' and 'M'. And the (unintelligible), he eats gusanos (worms) and (unintelligible). Thank you so much to play with me and the (unintelligible). You're welcome. Bye, bye. Bye, bye. We want to play all with you. Mom! Mom! All want to play with me! We want to play with you. Thank you. And we want to live with you (unintelligible). Mom, I want to play. And now we gonna eat. And you play. To play (unintelligible)."

This text was delivered in an animated manner and she appeared to thoroughly enjoy herself.

Virginia’s increasing confidence and expressiveness enabled her to produce other satisfying texts. For *Carousel* (Crews, 1982), she combined voice, rate of speech, and head
movements to convey the motion of a merry-go-round accelerating and decelerating. Without all three, she could not have accomplished this feat using only her limited English vocabulary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book’s Text</th>
<th>Virginia’s Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Riders up.</td>
<td>Now start.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music playing.</td>
<td>(unintelligible exclamations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horses off.</td>
<td>Fast.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up and down.</td>
<td>Fast!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Round and round.</td>
<td>And so fast!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fast and faster.</td>
<td>And real fast!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music blaring.</td>
<td>And real, real, real, fast, fast, fast, fast, fast, fast!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horses racing.</td>
<td>And real fast!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music ending.</td>
<td>So faaaaast!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horses slowing.</td>
<td>So fast!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stopping.</td>
<td>Fast.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following day, when a classmate had the book, Virginia tried to make him respond to the sense of speed. "Fast! Fast!" she said as she moved her finger quickly
across the page. The other student was more interested in which horse would win, so she gave up.

Her frequent use of English led other children to perceive her as a resource for vocabulary (only one of Virginia's classmates scored above Level 1 on the English "Language Assessment Scales"). At the end of April, two classmates struggled with a Spanish version of Spot's Birthday, (Hill, 1982). One showed her a snake in the story and called out in Spanish, "Hey, Virginia! Say it in English." She responded first in Spanish, but shook her head as a gesture of self-correction. "Snake," she replied. The delighted classmate turned to another student and enthusiastically exclaimed in Spanish, "That's it! That's it! That's what you call a snake!" Virginia jumped up and down, excited she could translate.

Virginia's body language sometimes reflected the mental demands of working in English. Once she even pressed her hands to either side of her face, grunted, and grimaced in frustration. She developed strategies including mumbling, filling in with Spanish or nonsense words, repeating words and phrases, and supplementing with facial expressions and body motions. Combined with fierce persistence, they allowed her to engage in pretend readings in English, which pleased her immensely.

In the last weeks of the school year, Virginia integrated a complex, sophisticated set of reading
behaviors. Even while struggling with English, she remained on task for long periods, engaging in pretend readings and employing more dialogue and expressiveness than early in the year.
Ricardo

Ricardo, a Hispanic male, was five years one month old at the beginning of the 1989-1990 school year. He was the oldest of three boys and showed a strong sense of responsibility toward his brothers. Sometimes Ricardo described conflicts between his parents, and measures he took to protect his brothers (e.g., taking them into another room, closing the door, and turning on the television set). He was, nevertheless, a cheerful and friendly child, popular with his classmates.

He was physically busy, rarely sat still, and often hopped on one foot as he narrated personal experiences, television program plots, and anecdotes involving his younger brothers. Ricardo enjoyed school, approaching each day enthusiastically and responding emotionally during literature studies. He frequently interrupted excitedly with a comment or improvised sound effects during storytime. Other times he would sit motionless, captivated by the unfolding drama of the picture books.

Late in the school year, he became increasingly sensitive at school; classmates more easily hurt his feelings as family problems seemed to escalate.

Reading Preferences

Ricardo’s reading selections were recorded on 59 days between October 19, 1989 and May 29, 1990. Prior to February 19, 1990, his choices were recorded only when he
was videotaped. After that date, his reading selections were documented regardless of whether he was videotaped. His 202 book selections reflect his reading preferences (see Table 9).

Table 9

Ricardo's Book Selections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basal Readers</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class-made</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counting</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiction</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folk/Fairy Tales</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-fiction</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poetry</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predictable</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ricardo chose fiction for 38% of his selections, compared to 32% nonfiction. However, examination of
the videotapes revealed that 54% of the books he actually viewed during the sessions were nonfiction. His behavior indicated a marked preference for nonfiction. He approached this category of books enthusiastically while generally exhibiting a more subdued response to fiction.

Three-fourths of his nonfiction selections were National Geographic books. He chose at least one National Geographic book on 21 of the 59 days his selections were recorded. On four days he chose National Geographic books exclusively. The classroom library included National Geographic books published for adults, such as The World of the American Indian (Billard, 1979), as well as books for older children such as Our Universe (Gallant, 1980), and the "Books for World Explorers" series. The library included 50 books from the "Books for Young Explorers" series designed specifically for young children. Ricardo made selections from all these types of books but he had difficulty physically managing larger books and tended to abandon them more quickly than books from the series intended for younger readers.

Regarding his repetitive nonfiction choices, he chose Our Universe (Gallant, 1980), the only non-animal selection, three times. Two dinosaur books were chosen three times each, and he chose Spiders (Bason, 1974) five times. The Book of Mammals (Crump, 1981) was his most popular choice. He chose Volumes I or II a total of seven times, starting in
November and continuing through May. Five other nonfiction books were chosen twice.

Three times he chose all his books for the day from a series composed of one counting book and three concept books. This series was also popular among his classmates, possibly due to the brightly colored dinosaur characters. In April, he offered an explanation for his selections, supporting this conjecture regarding the series’ appeal.

"Look. I have three of just dinosaurs. They’re just about dinosaurs."

Ricardo also enjoyed the fiction books he chose. Of 15 books he chose three or more times, six were fiction. His repetitive fiction choices leaned toward folk tales, consistent with his overall preferences for the year (approximately half of the fiction selections were folk/fairy tales). His selections in this category were influenced by the degree of familiarity. Unfamiliar and familiar books were evenly divided with 14% each. Very familiar books comprised 72% of his folk/fairy tale selections. "Goldilocks and the Three Bears," "The Little Red Hen," "The Hare and the Tortoise" and "The Gingerbread Man"—along with a Curious George book and an African folk tale—were each chosen three times. Ten other fiction books were chosen twice. Among his 202 selections for the year, he chose 145 different books.
The low percentages represented by categories other than fiction and nonfiction are consistent with distributions for Ricardo’s classmates. One exception was the Reference book category (primarily word books and picture dictionaries). While most children chose no reference books during the school year, and only five students chose them once or twice, Ricardo chose Reference books a total of seven times. He chose one of the least attractive picture dictionaries twice. He used the Reference books as he used other nonfiction books, verbalizing about each picture.

Ricardo’s Holiday choices (4%) were divided between Halloween-related stories and Christmas books. Like other children, he continued to choose Christmas books through May.

Although Ricardo’s behavior showed he thoroughly enjoyed books, he made no evaluative statements during the year. Ricardo offered and accepted exchanges of books readily without any identifiable ritual. He was open to exchanging full sets or individual books. On occasion, he would refuse to exchange books he had not yet viewed. Other times he would exchange even non-viewed books in order to please a classmate or to secure a social transaction (return favor). Securing interaction with his classmates could be considered his only opening ritual.
Ricardo was more likely than other children to exceed the allowed limit of three books per SSR session. He chose four or five books eight times prior to April 27, 1990, after which the class was permitted to choose four books per session. On a few occasions, when other children protested about his illegal number of books, he seemed unconcerned about the rule and even encouraged others to follow his example.

In summary, Ricardo’s behavior indicated a preference for nonfiction books in spite of a greater choice of fiction (32% vs. 38%). Nonfiction, especially National Geographic books, gave him the high interest material he needed as the framework for interaction with others. He viewed fiction books more quietly. He especially liked folk tales, as indicated by his repetitive choices. He exchanged books readily, consistently eager to set the stage for friendly interactions that so characterized his social behavior during the year.

Social Behavior

Twenty sessions of Ricardo were videotaped between October 19, 1989 and May 29, 1990. He was recorded with 16 different classmates in groups of two to five students. Once, on March 28, 1990, he was videotaped alone. SSR, as traditionally practiced without modification to allow social interaction, would have been unappealing and perhaps intolerable to Ricardo. Social interaction was so vital to
his functioning that it became difficult, if not impossible, to address his academic development separately from his social behavior.

From the first videotaped session, it was evident that interaction with his classmates was extremely important to him. Classmates often interacted with him willingly. However, when grouped with children who wanted to attend to their own books, he used overt tactics to gain their attention. Some of the strategies observed were:

1. Patting classmates' arms.
2. Using attentional vocatives (e.g., "Look! Look!")
3. Calling classmates' names.
4. Creating dramatic sound effects.
5. Asking questions (e.g., "What is this?")
6. Making reference to another child's interests (e.g., "Look! Here's a King Kong!")
7. Making direct appeals to friendship (e.g., "Come on! You're my friend.")
8. Pretending to hide books to arouse his classmates curiosity.
9. Holding books open in front of other children.
10. Smiling.
11. Various combinations of these.

When he failed to secure attention for his own books, he attempted to attend to the other students' books. Often there was an easy rhythmic give-and-take of divided
attention between his own and others' books. When this happened, Ricardo engaged in a high level of on-task behavior. When companions did not cooperate, Ricardo appeared frustrated and bored, and sometimes accomplished relatively little. Some classmates also were better suited to being grouped with Ricardo. Children who interacted as equals, when grouped with Ricardo, always enjoyed the experience. Those who preferred to view their own books quietly and independently, were particularly ill-suited to being grouped with him. Children who sometimes wanted to work alone and other times wanted an audience, varied in suitability.

An excerpt of a January session—when Ricardo was working with Dinosaurs (Jackson, 1972) from the "National Geographic Books for Young Explorers" series—was characteristic of his enthusiasm and lively mode of interaction. (See Appendix D for the Spanish original.)

Ricardo: (in a mock frightened voice) Look!

Crocodile is going to eat a dinosaur.

Little. Look. What is this?

Freddy: He wants to trap it.

R: What is this?

F: I don't know.

R: A lizard.

F: Look! Poor things. These are good. These two.

R: And these?
F: (unintelligible) They’re bad.
R: (accompanied by a stabbing motion) One time I’ll
kill them with a knife.
R: This one was good, right?
F: Yes.
(Material omitted)
R: (accompanied by dying motions and sound effects)
All these are good and this one is bad. I’ll kill
it with a stab right to its foot.
F: No, no, no. You can’t kill them.
R: I’ll twist its head.
F: Not this one, okay?
R: I’ll just twist this one’s head. I’ll make him
little pieces.

Ricardo was predictably open to participating in
teacher-student play. Unlike some classmates who only
played teacher for pretend audiences, Ricardo sought real,
personal interaction. Almost without exception, he agreed
to act as an audience to others throughout the year and to
attend to other students’ books on request—even when he was
extremely interested in his own books. One day in November,
for example, he had a National Geographic book. He already
had demonstrated at the beginning of the session he was very
enthusiastic about it. Nevertheless, when the only child
grouped with him that day asked him to be her student, he
consented immediately. Although he glanced over at his abandoned book from time to time, he performed extremely well as her audience. Ricardo tended to be very verbal, but he listened quietly to the girl for almost nine minutes before he began to display signs of restlessness and fatigue, fidgeting in his chair and whistling. Not until January did Ricardo begin demanding attention for his own books, rather than giving his attention to others.

As expected, given his social interaction needs, Ricardo did not assume the privacy position that other students used to reduce interaction. He turned his chair away from the group to create a text for a book only once (in April). Even then, he willingly interrupted himself occasionally to assist a classmate.

Social interaction was so important to Ricardo that the physical seating arrangement impacted his behavior. Sitting side by side along one side of a rectangular table suited him ideally. When seated at one of the 48-inch diameter round tables designed for four students, he was too far away to share books easily. Consequently, when assigned to a round table, he either became frustrated or solved the problem by leaving his chair to stand next to someone else.

The extent to which Ricardo's behavior was influenced by others was readily apparent. When grouped with a serious child, his behavior became more serious. When grouped with a child who behaved playfully, he followed suit. Whether or
not this was primarily because Ricardo was suggestible or pliable, or whether he exhibited a subconscious reaction in order to secure and maintain social interaction, is open to speculation. In either case, this behavior could be considered beneficial or detrimental. For example, unlike most of the other children, Ricardo appeared to be slightly self-conscious about being videotaped at the beginning of the year. He grinned as if posing, exaggerated his behavior, and played with the microphone before settling down to work. If he had been grouped with other boys who experienced this, he might have been more disruptive. Fortunately he was grouped with two girls who seemed uninterested in the camcorder and microphone, and quickly focused on books. Ricardo followed suit.

Regarding gender differences, when grouped with one or more females and only females, he gladly interacted with them. In mixed company, he preferred interaction with males, seeking their attention and generally ignoring the females at the table. He responded to females in mixed company when a female student gave him attention.

One session developed into a gender-oriented dispute. Ricardo and another boy engaged two girls sitting with them in a verbal free-for-all of name-calling, deriding each others' mothers, ignoring each other, and taunting. (This occurred during the spring when, as noted in the introductory notes, Ricardo seemed particularly sensitive
and vulnerable.) Given the extended hostility in this session, it was surprising that Ricardo suddenly asked the most aggressive girl, "Do you want to be my friend?" She immediately moved her chair next to him in order to share her book and the verbal hostilities at the table ceased.

The extent to which Ricardo was unsuited to solitary SSR work became fully apparent at the end of March when he was seated at a table by himself for one session. When videotaped earlier in the month, his behavior was more independent and less verbal. On the chance that this behavior might signal a new level of maturity, a decision was made to videotape him alone. It was expected that he might engage in a pretend reading, and that the text he produced would provide further insight into his development. The session opened with Ricardo looking disheartened at the prospect of working by himself. Although he continued to fidget and repeatedly glanced toward the other students, he quickly attended to his first selection, a fiction book about dinosaurs. After eight minutes, he found his solitary status intolerable and tried talking to the teacher. When that proved fruitless, he tried to engage a classmate. Again unsuccessful, he resorted to addressing the class as a whole. No one responded, so he resumed viewing his book, intermittently demonstrating fatigue behavior and trying to catch anyone's attention. Despite apparent behavioral distractions, by the end of the 15-minute session, he
actually had spent 97% of his time on task. Given this exceptionally high percentage, solitary status during SSR could be judged a preferable arrangement for Ricardo. An observer would have to take into account, however, the level of unhappiness he demonstrated throughout the session and recognize that if solitary status were a constant or frequent practice, Ricardo soon would dislike and resent SSR time, rather than look forward to it eagerly.

In summary, social interaction was a vital and integral part of Ricardo’s behavior during SSR. He developed numerous strategies to secure others’ attention and willingly acted as an audience upon request. As the school year progressed, he became more capable of functioning alone, but remained open at all times to interaction.

**Emergent-Reading Behaviors**

The following sections trace Ricardo’s emergent-reading behaviors in terms of conceptions about literature and literacy, book conventions and print.

**Conceptions about literature and literacy.** Ricardo demonstrated from the beginning of the school year that he possessed "basic conceptions about literature and literacy" (Cochran-Smith, 1984). His behavior consistently showed he considered book-reading to be important and pleasurable.

An excerpt from a session early in March demonstrates Ricardo’s active style and enjoyment of books. Children were not allowed to have the literature-related stuffed
animals from the library sofa during SSR time. In spite of the rule, he used a Curious George doll as his audience while he viewed Curious George Goes Sledding (Rey & Shalleck, 1984). (See Appendix D.)

Ricardo’s Dialogue

Teacher, teacher, lend me your little ape. So he can read with me. So he can read his book.

Look! Here you are!
Look! Here you are!
You’re laughing because (unintelligible). Look.
Here you are again. And here again. And over here, too. You’re not even here.

Look! Your little ball.

Explanatory Notes

Ricardo asked a classmate for the doll. Ricardo showed the doll the book then seated the doll in his lap facing the book.

He leaned over and excitedly started talking to the doll as he pointed to illustrations in the book. He nuzzled the doll.

Reference to a snowball.
Now you’re going to make a big ball. Look! Another big ball! Look! Look!
Now you’re going to crash into that. Watch! Watch!
Watch! Look! Eeeee!
You crashed!

He went inside.

Ricardo used an explanatory tone, as if explaining the happening to himself or to a third party.

He patted and kissed the doll.

He made exclamations.

Look! There you’re running. And here you’re (unintelligible). Look, here you are.

And now you’re going to jump with your girlfriend.

He flipped the doll in the air.

Look! Now you’re going to... Look! You jumped with your... You jumped with your girlfriend!
Look! Here you are and here you’re crashing. And here you crashed! Boom! He provided sound effects. As SSR time ended, Ricardo was still working animatedly with the book and the doll.

The percentage of time on task during each SSR session also reflected his interest. "Time engaged" is defined conservatively as only the time he interacted with books and excludes time spent settling in, making transitions between books, browsing, and visiting with others. In Ricardo’s case, social interaction was so central to his mode of functioning that it was difficult to isolate time spent socializing from time on task. This accounts for the high percentages of time on task (see Table 10).

His extremely active behavior sometimes left the general impression that he spent a lot of time off task. The data revealed, however, that excluding a restless beginning in October, his times on task were generally high. Sessions with lower percentages of time engaged involved instances when social conflict occupied a large amount of time (such as 64% for Session 16 when there was gender-related conflict at his table).

Ricardo enjoyed books primarily because they contained interesting photographs and illustrations that in turn, provided a basis for conversation and social interaction.
Table 10
Ricardo’s Time on Task (TOT) in SSR Sessions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>TOT time</th>
<th>TOT</th>
<th>No. of books</th>
<th>Max. time on 1 book</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>10/89</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>11/89</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>11/89</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>11/89</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>11/89</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1/90</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1/90</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1/90</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>2/90</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>2/90</td>
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<td>78</td>
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<td>70</td>
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<td>3.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>3/90</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>3/90</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>3/90</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>4/90</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>4/90</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>5/90</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>5/90</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>5/90</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>5/90</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
He showed minimal interest in the retrieval of text and pretend reading. He engaged in only two recitations during the school year. In November, with the help of a classmate, he recited the predictable text of a scary book which had been read to the children repeatedly during the previous month. In May, he helped a classmate as she attempted to recite and recreate the text of a book.

He attempted to create a story text only twice. His choice of "The Gingerbread Man" in February was not surprising because the repetitive nature and structure of familiar folk tales facilitated pretend readings. His choice of *Cat and Canary* (Foreman, 1985) at the beginning of April was surprising, given his level of familiarity with the book, its relative difficulty, and his low incidence of text retrieval during the year. Although not the subject of an in-depth literature study, he had heard the book read aloud once in conjunction with *Lucky's Choice* (Jeschke, 1987). The main characters of both books were cats, and their adventures were compared in class. Unable to remember the cat's name in *Cat and Canary* (Foreman, 1985)—it was simply "Cat"—and unable to persuade anyone to help him, he decided it was named "Lucky" (the name of the cat from the companion story). Ricardo worked strenuously to retrieve a text for the entire book. In spite of the difficulty of the task, he made a strong effort to deliver the pretend reading with appropriate intonation and expression. (See Appendix D.)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book’s Text</th>
<th>Ricardo’s Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Illustrations accompanied by lengthy text show the cat’s owner waking, dressing, and preparing for work.)</td>
<td>(unintelligible) He was changing clothes. And he was brushing his teeth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cat often watched other cats on other roofs chasing birds. He never chased birds. After all, his best friend was a canary.</td>
<td>(unintelligible) He was going (unintelligible). But then... but one day, he wanted... He saw the other cats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All the birds flocked to his roof. Most days his roof was a blizzard of birds.</td>
<td>Lucky... Lucky was going... was going with his little bird and all the little bird’s friends. And a storm happened to him.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
One windy day Cat found a kite tangled on a television antenna. When he untied it, he became caught in the string. Suddenly the wind came up and Cat was whisked into the air and over the streets. The cats on the other roofs were amazed to see Cat flying.

Winds rushing between the high buildings blew him higher until he was flying among the tallest skyscrapers.

Canary tried desperately to keep up with him. Cat was thrilled to be suddenly soaring free as a bird.

And meanwhile... Lucky found a kite (unintelligible). The antennas of the... of the TV. And the wind blew and blew and (unintelligible) blew and blew and they all saw him like he was far away (unintelligible). But then Lucky (unintelligible) was going up and up. And he had fun because he couldn’t fly like birds. And the little birds were... were... were catching up with him.

And it took him way up.

And he had fun.
The sun turned the great buildings to gold and silver, and threw Cat’s giant shadow across surprised people far below.

But soon the sun was covered by storm clouds and Cat no longer felt free as a bird.

The huge buildings now looked dangerous and threatening. There was no way Cat could control the kite.

He was being blown farther and farther from home. Below he could see the icy river. Snow began to fall.

Just as Cat was about to give up, Canary appeared with a large flock of birds. They took the kite strings and turned toward home.

Down they went, through the snow toward the bright flashing lights of the city. And he went... he went up with his... His friends helped him.

And he was looking up and down. Over some skyscrapers. He got scared. Because... the wind was carrying him away. And from up high down.

He was afraid of falling into the water. Down. (unintelligible)

How he came down! Over his birds. Over his birds.
And he told them goodbye.
And he put (unintelligible)
I wish I could fly.
That’s all. Snip, snap,
snout. This tale’s told
out.

The entire pretend reading was produced for his own
enjoyment and creative satisfaction. He neither sought an
audience nor conversed with anyone during his performance.
In fact, he was interrupted at one point by the girl sitting
with him. She asked if he wanted to read with her and he
answered negatively without hesitation. Although this
quiet, solitary behavior was a relatively late development
in the school year, nonverbal viewings of books were
frequent (at least one book in 14 of the 20 sessions). His
verbalization tended to be so animated and rambunctious,
that he projected the opposite appearance, but Ricardo could
sit quietly with a book. His behavior almost always
involved interaction with others, so that verbalization
intended for himself only was extremely rare, and did not
appear until late in the year.

Table 11 contains the distribution for Ricardo’s
reading behaviors for the books he viewed during the
videotaped sessions.

The low number of pretend readings is consistent with
his approach to books: they were not for stories, they were
a good topic for conversation with other children. Of his
six pretend readings for the year, three were of familiar
books and three were very familiar books. He chose no unfamiliar books for that purpose.

Table 11
Ricardo's Emergent-Reading Behaviors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Silently studying</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussing book</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretend reading</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Total books = 72.

Literature became a stimulus to language play for Ricardo during the spring. He did not engage in one kind of language play repeatedly, but demonstrated a wide variety of language play which reflected originality. In March, he looked at a book with a photograph of a giraffe on the cover. "Gi, giraffe. Gi, gi, gi, giraffe. Gi, gi, giraffe," he said in English. A first viewing of the videotape left the impression that he had begun to engage in aspectual reading. Subsequent examination showed that, in fact, he paid no attention to the text of the title (either visually or by tracking with his finger). Neither the syllable "gi" nor the word "giraffe" bear any resemblance to the title of the book, Secrets of Animal Survival (1983). Most importantly, the sound of his voice had a playful quality with the "gi, gi, gi" actually approximating a child's "choo-choo" sound for a train. This type of
behavior could presage actual aspectual reading, but was not aspectual reading.

In April, Ricardo engaged in language play initiated by a classmate playing school. He acted as her student and both students spoke in Spanish, mimicking a heavy English-language accent. (Anecdotal records indicate this form of language play—speaking Spanish as if not proficient—had been observed at this school by different teachers. When questioned, students explained, "That's the way Americans talk.")

Ricardo also enjoyed rhyme. "Do you want a mango?" he asked a friend. The friend responded negatively, but Ricardo retorted with "You're a monkey." ("Mango" and the Spanish word for "monkey" rhyme.)

In May, he combined rhyme and numerical play. In spite of the questionable mathematics, he enjoyed himself tremendously. (The Spanish words for "eight" and "Pinocchio" rhyme.) (See Appendix D.)

Aaaah! This is the mathematics I wanted.
Two plus two are two plus two are not three.
One, one, one plus one are eight.
Eight Pinocchio are eight.
Seven plus seven are seven.
Eight plus eight are Pinocchio.

He also played with classmates' names. He tracked his finger along a line of text in a book and amused himself and a friend by purporting to read the child's first, middle and last names. Paternal and maternal surnames are retained in
Spanish, so children typically have a second surname listed. Thus, his classmate was not surprised when he added "Castle" as a second surname. ("Castillo" is a common surname in Spanish.) However, the addition of a fifth name, "Whale" (Ballena) was unexpected and humorous. It achieved the effect he intended and Ricardo showed he was tremendously pleased, laughing loudly.

**Conceptions about books.** From the beginning, Ricardo demonstrated knowledge of correct book orientation. He could begin at the front and work page by page to the end. His typical mode of using fiction or nonfiction books as springboards for discussing interesting photographs and illustrations lent itself to a more random approach. He often flipped pages back and forth in books and occasionally worked from back to front because it made little difference in examining photographs. Ricardo paid little attention to book conventions. To decide whether a book interested him, he most often opened it and browsed without examining the cover. He first closed a book with a traditional recitation in February, even though the book was nonfiction and he had not engaged in a pretend reading. He used the closing later in the year at the end of a story.

Ricardo assigned titles to books infrequently during the year. In November, he assigned the title "Harry" to a Spanish version of *Harry and the Horrible Whatsit* (Gackenbach, 1979). "The Gingerbread Man" and "Lucky" were the only other titles assigned. He paid no attention to author or illustrator information.
Conceptions about print. Ricardo paid little attention to print throughout the year. In November, when he recited the text to a Spanish version of *It Didn’t Scare Me* (Goss & Harste, 1984), he attended only to the illustrations on the right side and ignored the print on the left despite its visual prominence (white letters against a black background).

He demonstrated understanding that print carries meaning in November when he tracked all the text on the title page with his finger—including the publisher information at the bottom of the page. When he finished, he turned and smiled at his reading companion. He later tracked two titles with his finger.

At the beginning of April, Ricardo began a session with a book about a cat which, along with another cat story, had been read to the class. (See Conceptions about Literature and Literacy.) He called to the teacher, asking for the title of the book. The teacher ignored him to discourage his loud behavior. He persisted, but receiving no response, answered his own question with the title "Lucky." He repeated the question twice without eliciting a response, then tracked the text with his finger. As he tracked, he said, "Lu, lu, la ele (the name of the letter "l" in Spanish), Lucky." Satisfied with this title, he turned to the beginning of the story and began to pretend read. The actual title of the book was *Cat and Canary* (Foreman, 1985). "Lucky" was the cat’s name he remembered from the other book. The graphophonemic awareness he demonstrated was
connected with his auditory perception of the initial sound of "Lucky" rather than the visual cues provided by the title of the book.

In summary, Ricardo thoroughly enjoyed modified SSR time. He reacted to books enthusiastically, often providing sound effects and movement. He expected books to provide interesting topics of conversation and approximately half of his viewings were verbal, involving interaction with his classmates. As the year progressed, he became increasingly able to function independently. By the end of the school year, approximately half of his viewings were nonverbal. Although Ricardo was minimally interested in pretend readings, he did demonstrate sophisticated behaviors late in the year. He also exhibited an interest in diverse language play.

Ricardo demonstrated early correct book orientation. Otherwise, he exhibited little interest in book conventions such as titles and front matter. He paid little attention to print, although he demonstrated correct orientation in tracking. This lack of attention was consistent with an extremely low incidence of pretend readings. He did engage in activity that indicated he was beginning to experiment with graphophonemic information.

In the last weeks of the school year, Ricardo was more able to focus on his own books without interaction, even engaging in sophisticated pretend reading. He did, however, remain open to requests for assistance and attention from other children.
Cecilia

Cecilia, a Hispanic female, was five years one month old at the beginning of the 1989-1990 school year. She lived with her parents and a seven-year-old brother. Cecilia’s father came for her at the end of each school day and both expressed genuine excitement about seeing each other. She talked about her older brother frequently and affectionately, referring to him as "little brother" (hermanito) rather than by his name. (The diminutive "-ito" suffix in Spanish denotes someone is younger or smaller. It is also used to express affection.) Cecilia used this form to indicate affection. Her classmates interpreted the term to mean a younger brother, however, and expressed disbelief when she claimed her brother could read books by himself and perform other tasks ascribed only to older children.

Cecilia’s demeanor generally was calm, but her voice and face were highly expressive during activities she found stimulating. Friendship seemed extremely important to Cecilia, so she made getting along with other children and being "nice" her priority.

Reading Preferences

Cecilia’s reading selections were recorded on 60 days between November 9, 1989 and May 29, 1990. Prior to February 19, 1990, her choices were recorded only when she was videotaped. After that date, her reading selections were documented regardless of whether she was taped. Her 198 book selections, representing 161 different books, provide insight into her reading preferences (see Table 12).
Table 12

Cecilia's Book Selections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basal Readers</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class-made</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counting</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiction</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folk/Fairy Tales</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-fiction</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poetry</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predictable</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cecilia enjoyed choosing books that had been used in literature studies or read to the class for storytime. Sometimes, upon opening a book, she would remark cheerily to a classmate, "This is the one the teacher read, isn't it?" The importance of familiarity is evident in her folk/fairy tale selections. Only 12% were unfamiliar. Instead, she preferred familiar (23%) and very familiar (65%) stories.
Her repetitive choices reflected these preferences. Of the 20 books she chose twice during the year, 11 were fiction selections. She chose a storytime book about two animal friends three times. She chose "Goldilocks and the Three Bears" three times and The Tale of Peter Rabbit (Potter, 1901) four times. Her favorite was "The Gingerbread Man," which she chose eight times from January through May. It was the subject of a class literature study in early December. She also had been exposed to the book at home. She explained to a classmate: "One time my little brother brought [home] 'The Gingerbread Man' book from his school and he already took it back." Emphasis on the book in class and her brother's selection may explain her choice of this book more than any other during the year. She chose a Spanish version of It Didn't Scare Me (Goss & Harste, 1984) four times. This scary book with a predictable text was used in October in a literature study about monsters. Cecilia was particularly amused with the ending of this book. Several times she flipped directly to the back of the book and gleefully told reading companions, "Look! His hair is going to stand on end!"

Cecilia chose Halloween, Thanksgiving, Easter, and Christmas books a total of 20 times, representing 10% of her selections for the year. (Only two other students, both girls, exceeded this with 13% each.) Christmas books were especially important. Eleven of her 20 holiday choices were Christmas books. She continued to choose them through May as other children did. Santa Claus was the central
attraction in these books. "Look! Santa Claus!" she would exclaim excitedly. Once she told a classmate emotionally, "I like Santa Clauses." This fascination with Christmas prompted her to choose a large photography book, Christmas in America (Cohen, 1988), twice. (Cecilia chose this book frequently during the months of December, January, and February before daily recording of her choices began. Her selections in the data probably do not reflect her interest accurately.) With the exception of her interest in this Christmas book, Cecilia chose books with a photography format infrequently (less than 5% for the year). Two-thirds of her non-fiction selections for the year were illustrated, although the classroom library contained far more non-fiction photography books. However, ocean-related books of either format held a special appeal for her. Her family had taken a beach vacation during the summer preceding the school year. The background knowledge she gained enabled her to correctly interpret the visual content of these books, and she took pleasure in identifying familiar objects and scenes. She chose 13 ocean-related books during the year, 6% of her total selections.

Her percentages for other categories generally were similar to classmates, although her behavior with a "Baby" book was unusual. Only six children had made selections from this category. (These simple, generally wordless board books sometimes were used to teach vocabulary in English-for-Speakers-of-Other-Languages [ESOL] instruction and sometimes placed in the housekeeping center so children could read to
dolls.) The students did not consider these books a serious SSR choice although they were popular during the last two weeks of May, when Cecilia chose two. She spent two and a half minutes diligently creating an inaudible text for the book. Students rarely dedicated an extended period of time to books in this category, preferring instead to browse.

During the first few SSR sessions, Cecilia did not have a chance to view all three books. She expressed regret about this but then dropped the issue, saying she would choose the same books the following day. (She did not.)

During the first half of the year, Cecilia made occasional evaluative statements, saying she liked certain books. Her behavior became more nonverbal and less conversational as the year progressed, and she made fewer evaluative statements. Her demeanor continued to reflect thorough enjoyment of books and SSR time. She often smiled at her classmates to communicate she was pleased with her books.

Cecilia exchanged books easily without any particular ritual or pattern. For one period in mid-year, she attempted at the beginning of each session to secure a commitment for later exchange of books. The purpose seemed more a gesture of friendship than a concern about books. If her classmates were not responsive, she did not seem to mind and continued her work cheerfully.

In summary, Cecilia showed a preference for fiction, although she was notably interested in Christmas and ocean-related books. She exchanged books readily, without any
particular ritual. This behavior was consistent with the value she placed on friendship and getting along.

Social Behavior

Fifteen sessions of Cecilia were videotaped between November 9, 1989 and May 25, 1990. She was recorded with 11 different classmates in groups of two to four. SSR, as traditionally practiced without modification to allow social interaction, would have been extremely inappropriate for Cecilia at the beginning of the school year. She may have been able to conform to traditional SSR rules by the end of the year, however.

From the beginning of the year, Cecilia responded to the content of books with personal commentary. She typically pointed to illustrations, then began a dialogue (or in the case of an unresponsive classmate, a monologue) approaching free association. An excerpt from a session early in November illustrates her behavior. She was looking at a circus book while seated next to a classmate. (See Appendix E for the Spanish original.)

"Look how they did. (She pointed to a strong man.) My daddy has a (unintelligible) and he's strong. That one my little brother can carry but just a little. My little brother is this old. Look. This old. (She held up seven fingers.) And how old are you? I'm this old. (Cecilia showed five fingers. The classmate ignored her.) Well, I'm this old. (She lowered her thumb and shrugged.) I used to be this old but now I'm this old."
Sometimes illustrations elicited personal narratives, as in this example of her work with a book of weather poems. (See Appendix E.)

Cecilia: Look what it’s like. Look. Snow is going to fall here because snow is colder, isn’t it? Because when I would fall down, I got my clothes dirty and then I didn’t have (unintelligible).

Virginia: When snow fell, I’m going to ask my mommy if we can play and make a snowman (unintelligible) because she knows how.

C: I ... My little brother doesn’t have gloves, only a cap. And I have a cap that my mommy bought for me and some gloves.

V: I don’t have any gloves because I left them in my daddy’s box in another house.

C: I live in Texas. But my house ... I live upstairs. I live upstairs. (unintelligible). In the back. (unintelligible) My aunt was driving it and she wrecked it. (She continued the narrative telling about the tooth she hurt during the accident.)

Securing the attention she sought required several attention-getting strategies. She most frequently used the attentional vocative, "Look!" She occasionally patted classmates’ arms or called their names if necessary.

By mid-year, the nature of Cecilia’s work with books changed. She still sought to verbalize and interact with classmates, but the subject of discussion was the content of
her books. This led to collaborations such as the following excerpt from a session at the end of January when she shared her copy of "The Gingerbread Man." (See Appendix E.)

Cecilia: And she (a cow) got tired.

Nicholas: She threw the water at him (the Gingerbread Man).

C: Yes. (unintelligible)

N: They were chasing him.

C: Yes, they were chasing him. Look. They got tired, too.

N: He (the fox) is going to catch him, isn’t he?

C: Yes, he’s going to tell him the lie. He’s going to tell him the lie.

N: And then he’s going to eat him. He’s going to tell him to get on his nose and he’s going to fall in his mouth.

C: (laughing) Yes. Look. First here and then he climbs up here and then here. He’s going to eat him. And yummy! And yummy! And he liked him.

The easy give-and-take of this collaboration (Cecilia repeatedly affirmed Nicholas’s statements before continuing) illustrates the importance Cecilia placed on being a good friend and getting along. She demonstrated these values repeatedly throughout the year. When students asked for her attention and she was more interested in her own books, she did not overtly reject them. She gave brief or intermittent attention--acknowledging them with a nod of her head--while attempting to attend to her own books. When she took an
interest in the books of other students who were working quietly, she attempted to view their books unobtrusively without seeking their permission.

Cecilia generally demonstrated a spirit of inclusiveness. Consequently, her classmates responded to her warmly in situations that normally would have elicited competition. Once, a friend identified herself as a character in a book (saying she wanted to be "Cinderella"). An unspoken classroom rule among students seemed to be that only one child could claim a character. Cecilia said, "Me, too." Then she added sweetly, "Both of us." The friend agreed.

During another session, she and another child rapidly turned pages in their books, racing to see who could "read" faster. When Cecilia realized she was going to win, she slowed, then stopped turning pages and waited for her classmate to catch up. This way they finished simultaneously and both laughed.

Cecilia also expected classmates to "be nice" and set limits for tolerating misbehavior. In February, a girl who had been disruptive for the entire session took one of Cecilia's books without permission. Cecilia recovered it with an emphatic, "No. You just wait." Later in the year, when the same girl turned pages in the book Cecilia was reading, Cecilia slapped her hand away. Cecilia seemed puzzled when a boy refused to respond to her repeated requests for attention. She seemed irritable with classmates in only one session during which she also yawned
periodically. Her atypical behavior most probably was due to insufficient rest.

Cecilia was preoccupied throughout the year with the idea that all students must follow school rules. She reprimanded one boy for playing with the microphone, and warned another not to tear the pages in his book. She attempted to direct classmates back on task by telling them, "Look at your book" or "Let's read." When she realized she had an illegal number of books one day, she immediately returned the fourth book to the library.

Late in the year, her early conversational mode and subsequent collaborative mode gave way to independent functioning. She began to engage in solitary behavior, often creating story texts for her books. She remained open to interaction with classmates, but she adopted a privacy position (turning her chair away from the table). By the end of the year, she demonstrated more interest in the content of books than in other children.

Cecilia also began to play teacher late in the school year. Consistent with her emerging independence, she engaged only pretend audiences, not other students. Cecilia's play as teacher, not previously captured on videotape, emerged fully in one session in April. She exhibited the following behaviors:

1. She turned herself physically in order to face the imaginary class and gestured to show where the class was seated.
2. She held the book in the "teacher" position so that "students" could see.

3. She told "students" where the book was kept in the class library so they could find it later.

4. She told "students" she only had time to read one book because they would be going to music class soon.

5. She told them the title of the book she was going to read.

6. She used English for the first time in a videotaped session to read to the "students" in English.

7. She tracked text with her finger to show the "students" where she was reading.

8. She used a formal closing recitation.

9. She typed on an imaginary computer keyboard to record the books the "students" had chosen for SSR.

The last behavior mimicked one aspect of the teacher-researcher role. Although Cecilia had only seen book titles recorded twice on a notebook-size personal computer, she incorporated the action into her teacher play.

In summary, Cecilia began the year using books merely as springboards for conversation. Later she focused on the content of books, still within the context of social interaction. She gradually adopted more solitary behavior and eventually functioned independently, directing her attention to book content. At that stage, she began to make use of the privacy position and to engage in solitary teacher play. She placed great emphasis on friendship and
interacted pleasantly with classmates, except when she judged their behavior unacceptable.

Emergent-Reading Behaviors

The following sections trace Cecilia's emergent-reading behaviors in terms of conceptions about literature and literacy, books, and print.

Conceptions about literature and literacy. Cecilia demonstrated from the beginning of the school year that she considered SSR time pleasurable. She smiled at classmates and books, conversed excitedly, and made positive evaluative statements. Her percentage of time on task also reflected this interest (see Table 13). "Time engaged" is defined strictly as only the time she interacted with books. It excludes time spent settling in, making transitions between books, and interacting with others in ways unrelated to the content of books. Relatively low percentages of time on task (Sessions 1, 5 and 14) were due to Cecilia engaging in extensive conversation or being distracted by other students. In Session 12 (60%), she was not credited with extensive time engaged in "teacher" play--only time directly engaged with book reading. Since it could be argued that her activity was both productive and book-related, the time-on-task allocations were interpreted conservatively.

Except for the last three sessions, when she was permitted four books, she began each SSR session with three selections. The number of books viewed in the early sessions reflects her failure to view all her books. Later sessions indicated lack of exchanges (with the exception of
Session 8), although she did view all three of her own books. Only the last three sessions involved extensive exchanges.

The nature of Cecilia’s response to and enjoyment of books changed over the course of the year. At first she enjoyed them because they provided a springboard for Table 13

Cecilia’s Time on Task (TOT) in SSR Sessions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session Date</th>
<th>Session time</th>
<th>TOT %</th>
<th>No. of books</th>
<th>Max. time on 1 book</th>
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<tr>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>86</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.5</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>2/90</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
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<td>60</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.5</td>
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<td>60</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/90</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
conversation involving personal narratives. The narratives were delivered with expressive facial expressions and tone of voice. She also employed animated hand gestures. Later her verbalization began to address book content (e.g., "The little rat jumped! The little rat jumped. It was sitting down. Look. This is really pretty. And then it went to the water! Look at the little rat.") These book discussions included the subcategories of "labeling and commenting" and "following the action." By the end of the year, she enjoyed books for their content and engaged in many pretend readings. These tended to be inaudible since she was verbalizing only for herself. The shift in behavior was reflected in the number of books viewed without verbalization. During the first seven SSR sessions, only one book was viewed nonverbally. In contrast, approximately 50% of books viewed during the last eight sessions were nonverbal performances.

Throughout the school year, Cecilia’s interpretation of the content of books was affected by limited background knowledge. One example was book genre. When working with a counting book early in the year, she demonstrated no awareness that it was a counting book. She did not associate the large numeral on each page with the number of items depicted or recognize a progression in the number of items.

She often misidentified characters, calling a toad a rat, a fly an ant, an old lady a girl, a bee a fly, and a
fairy an angel. Sometimes her identifications went unchallenged; other times, classmates corrected her.

Her performance also was affected by a low level of visual literacy. For example, one illustration depicted a cow sitting on a well with a leg curled around a bucket. One hoof was not visible and she commented sadly, "Look how he had his hand cut off."

Other times, Cecilia apparently lacked necessary experiences and schema to interpret illustrations and photographs. One student explained to her how a circus performer walks on stilts after Cecilia described the performer as a very tall man. Another classmate showed her a photograph of a bird catching a fish, mistakenly explaining, "A fish caught a bird." Cecilia responded with an even more erroneous explanation, "No, they’re friends." When she did have applicable experiences, their positive impact was very pronounced. Cecilia’s family had taken a trip to the beach and her experiences enabled her to correctly interpret illustrations in the many ocean-related books she chose.

Cecilia did not engage in language play during the videotaped sessions. She did, however, make numerous meta-statements regarding reading. She often began a book by saying "I’m going to read." Midway through the school year, her statements seemed to indicate a developing awareness that reading involved more than she previously thought. At the beginning of January, she selected the Three Bears Rhyme Book (Yolen, 1987), in which each page contains a poem, all
related to the story of "Goldilocks." Cecilia was familiar with the book because it had been read to the class as part of a literature study of the folk tale. She approached the book as if each page contained a story and attempted to create a text. Arriving at a page that contained extensive text, she seemed intimidated. She showed the book to her reading companion and said, "Look. I can't ... I can't ... I can't talk this a lot (unintelligible). Can you?" When the other child responded that she couldn't read it either, Cecilia turned the page and found a much shorter poem. This time she said, "Look. Here it has a little bit." She looked at the illustration on the left. It depicted Goldilocks and the Baby Bear reading in an armchair. She tracked the text with her finger and said, "Then he was reading with the girl. (unintelligible) After they were reading, he was talking to her about that." (See Appendix E.)

Cecilia employed her ritualistic phrase, "I'm going to read again," when she returned to the book later in the session. Her statements about her own limitations and the text she created indicated an awareness of the difference between talking and reading.

At the end of January, she again demonstrated awareness that the text of the book was not truly available to her merely by looking at the illustrations and inventing text. A classmate showed her a book and asked for assistance. (See Appendix E.)
Nicholas: What does it say here? What does it say here?

Cecilia: (Shrugged shoulders to indicate she didn’t know.) And you?

N: I don’t know.

C: My little brother does know how to read.

N: No.

C: Uh-huh. Because he has a book that (unintelligible).

In April, she worked with a class-made Peter Rabbit book. The book originally had blank speech bubbles and the class had composed dialogue, which was written in with a marker. Cecilia already had viewed the book once and decided to use it again. "I’m going to start again," she announced. Then she added, "I’m going to pretend read." (Her actual Spanish statement, "Yo voy a leer de mentiras," translates literally as "I’m going to lie read.") Notably, the students’ behavior had not been called "pretend reading" in English or Spanish during the school year. Her statement was a recognition that she was not reading in the conventional sense.

Later behavior again revealed she no longer thought "pretend reading" meant merely talking about the book. Her actions conveyed understanding that reading required something more. As she worked to construct a text, she struck the book with her hand in frustration, as if she could not get her text to conform to the requirements of the book. This previously unobserved behavior indicated she was
setting increasingly difficult personal goals in order to more closely approximate what she perceived as the true act of reading.

Finally a classmate selected a Spanish "Spot" book in May. Cecilia had chosen it three weeks earlier. Cecilia’s behavior with the "Spot" series was atypical. Classmates commonly used these books to play a guessing game in which one student asked another "What’s this?" for the illustration hidden under each flap. Cecilia seemed uninterested even when encouraged by other players. Instead, she attempted to pretend read the books. She may have believed she could approximate the actual text since it was short and printed in large, bold type. Her classmate began to work with the book, and reaching a flap, read "Hello, Spot" for each of four animals behind a door. Cecilia, who had been attending to her own books, interrupted and said "Hello, Spot. Hello, Spot. Hello, Spot."—counting each greeting with her fingers. She then asked the other student seriously, "Did you read that?" Her demeanor and the context seemed to indicate her question referred to more than ritualistic use of the word "read"—as when she would say, "I’m going to read now." She actually was asking, "Did you really read that? Did you read that as an adult would?" Her classmate ignored the question, and Cecilia paused briefly. She then returned to her work, left to draw her own conclusions. Cecilia’s behavior demonstrated she had a growing awareness of the nature of reading.
Table 14 contains the distribution for Cecilia's reading behaviors for the 53 books she viewed during the videotaped sessions.

Table 14

Cecilia's Emergent-Reading Behaviors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Silently studying</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussing book</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretend reading</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Total books = 53.

The distribution of Cecilia's pretend readings as they relate to degree of familiarity with the books indicates a preference for known books. (See Table 15.) Unfamiliar books, of course, were the least cognitively accessible and thus offered the poorest support for her efforts.

Table 15

Cecilia's Pretend Readings and Familiarity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unfamiliar</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familiar</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Very familiar</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unidentified</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conceptions about books. From the beginning, Cecilia usually demonstrated correct book orientation, starting at the front and working to the end. During one session in November, she found the cover format of one book confusing. Its back cover was identical to the front. Cecilia turned over the book repeatedly, trying to decide where to begin. She solved the puzzle by opening the book both ways and examining the contents. Finding the title page, she began viewing the book. The one instance when she worked from the back toward the front of a book occurred in February with a first grade basal. This did not seem to show disorientation; she merely seemed to be experimenting, beginning with the book upright on the table, an uncharacteristic position for her. This orientation also indicated she knew the book was a collection of stories rather than a single story.

While exploring the basal, she also attended to its table of contents. These had been demonstrated to students several times. Occasionally a child would attend to one. A student typically would run a finger up and down a contents list. This time Cecilia showed she understood its purpose. Looking down the table of contents, she chose a title and then looked for the corresponding page in the book. By starting at the top of the table of contents, she encountered small page numbers familiar enough that she could find them in the book. After locating a page, she lost interest in the content; she did not look at the
illustration or text. She returned instead to the table of contents to repeat the process.

Cecilia paid no attention to author or illustrator information. She made limited use of the traditional closing recitation, although she liked to say aloud that she was finished as she closed a book.

Cecilia treated title pages as an important part of a book from the beginning of the year. She talked about the illustration and sometimes said aloud a title for the title page even if she hadn’t done this for the cover. If she found the title page interesting, she viewed it as a sign that the entire book would interest her. She reacted to title pages as many other children reacted to the first page of the story text.

Cecilia’s titles tended to be simple, referring to an object or person in the cover or title page illustration (e.g., "A Tree" for a Christmas book, "The Water" for an ocean book, "Good Night" for a book about quiet things, and "The Three Little Bears’ Girl" for "Goldilocks and the Three Bears"). The titles she invented did not become more complex as the year progressed. The incidence of title creation decreased as she became more interested in functioning independently. As she moved away from the use of books as a basis for conversation, she became less verbal.

Conceptions about print. At the beginning of the school year, Cecilia showed interest in illustrations
exclusively. She often pointed to different things in the illustrations as she talked.

Near the end of November, she paused and attended to a classmate when he said aloud a title for his book and tracked the text with his finger. When he finished, Cecilia smiled at him, but did not mimic his behavior. One week later, she attended to print for the first time, tracking the text on a cover as she created a title. Cecilia, who was left-handed, tracked the text with her left hand in a right-to-left motion.

During her next videotaped session at the beginning of January, she worked with a familiar book of predictable text. She tracked the text on the left side of the page with her left hand as she repeatedly glanced at an illustration on the right side. She tracked the text with a left-to-right movement, in contrast to her orientation in November. She used a single sweep of her hand to accompany her more lengthy oral text, as if generally acknowledging the printed text more than attending to each line. After a few pages, she began to point, seemingly randomly, to different points on the page of text. Rather than a tracking motion, this was similar to the way she had reacted to illustrations earlier in the year.

The following day, she tracked the text in a book using her right hand with the proper orientation, proceeding top to bottom and left to right. Moving to a second book, she switched hands. Using her left hand, she improperly tracked the print from right to left, bottom to top.
When videotaped again in February, she used her left hand to track correctly along a line of text at the bottom of each page. After a few pages, she abandoned tracking the text on the right-hand side and tracked only on the left page.

When Cecilia began to play teacher in April, she adopted the practice of holding the book with her left and dominant hand. She then used her right hand to track text. She did so with the proper left-to-right orientation. To better balance books, she tucked the front covers under her chin. This turned the lines of text to a vertical position from her viewpoint. As she tracked each line of text left to right, she moved her finger away from herself. In terms of page orientation, she incorrectly tracked the lines of text from bottom to top (from her viewpoint, right to left). She eventually grew tired of holding books in the teacher position and laid them flat on the table. She immediately switched to tracking text with her left hand and reverted to a right-to-left motion.

During May, she showed little interest in tracking. Throughout the year, Cecilia exhibited combinations of correct and incorrect tracking, using horizontal and vertical orientation and both hands.

She always verbalized in conjunction with her tracking, but never attempted to make tracking of print match her oral text. She continued to use one sweep of the hand across the printed page to accompany her entire verbalization. With
one exception—when she pointed individually to the words "The End"—she never attended to individual words.

She was present during a session in which another student engaged in aspectual reading focused on graphophonemic information. Cecilia did not show interest in his efforts, however, or react as if this behavior held any significance.

In summary, Cecilia thoroughly enjoyed SSR time throughout the school year. Initially, books merely provided a context for conversation. Eventually she enjoyed books for themselves, studying numerous books silently and engaging in pretend readings. These often were accompanied by meta-statements regarding reading, which indicated Cecilia was keenly aware of her own and others' behavior.

Cecilia demonstrated correct book orientation. Although she paid no attention to author or illustrator information, she was very interested in title pages. In addition, she experimented with tables of contents.

Regarding print orientation, she exhibited considerable confusion during the year. The problem may have been exacerbated by her left-handedness. Although she always verbalized as she tracked print, she made no attempt to match the length of her oral text to tracking.
Carlos

Carlos, a Hispanic male, was six years nine months old at the beginning of the 1989-1990 school year. Carlos recently had come from a rural area in Mexico where he lived with his mother and grandparents while his father worked in the United States. He was enrolled in school in Mexico the previous year. His father said attending school there required a half-hour ride by horseback, and Carlos attended irregularly. The father also said Carlos was having difficulty adjusting to regular school attendance in the United States and sometimes ran home after being left at school. The father returned Carlos to school when this happened and said he was anxious for his son to like school and learn to read. (The father attended three years of school in Mexico but never learned to read. The mother’s literacy was limited to signing her name.) Carlos sometimes said he did not like school and wanted to return to Mexico to ride horses, take care of animals, and spend time outdoors with his grandfather.

At the beginning of the school year, Carlos showed signs of deep cultural shock. He seemed overwhelmed by the abundance of instructional materials and visuals in the class. Sometimes he stood and stared at various objects, pointing at them quizzically. He attended to instruction, but showed little emotion. Despite his previous school experience, he could not recognize or write his name.

He demonstrated interest only in the block center, where he sat for long periods of time, holding a small
wooden vehicle in his hand and moving it back and forth. He initially interacted with classmates infrequently. As the year progressed, he became more verbal and active. He eventually expressed emotion toward other children and in response to stories.

Reading Preferences

Carlos's reading selections were recorded on 39 days between November 8, 1989 and May 29, 1990. Prior to February 19, 1990, his choices were recorded only when he was videotaped. After that date, his reading selections were documented regardless of whether or not he was videotaped. His 126 selections, representing 81 different books, provide insight into his reading preferences (see Table 16).

Total percentages do not reflect the pattern of Carlos's selections throughout the year. Like his classmates, he first chose books from fiction, nonfiction, and other categories, although the data show he selected books from fewer categories than most other students. In February, Carlos began to direct his attention to two National Geographic children's series, "Books for Young Explorers" and "Books for World Explorers." Both used a photography format almost exclusively. On two days in February, he made all three selections from these series. Each time, he returned to fiction selections for a few days afterward. As the year progressed, Carlos chose a larger number of nonfiction books to the exclusion of other categories (see Table 17).
Table 16

Carlos's Book Selections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basal readers</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class-made</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counting</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiction (total)</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folk/fairy tales</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-fiction</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poetry</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predictable</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Not all nonfiction selections were National Geographic books, but they composed the majority (81%) of his nonfiction choices. He chose at least one National Geographic book on 21 of the 39 days when his selections were recorded. On 13 days, he chose all his books from the National Geographic series. National Geographic books also accounted for a disproportionate number of repetitive choices. Fifty percent of the 16 books he chose two or
three times were National Geographic books. Of books chosen four times, 80% were from National Geographic. The three books he selected most frequently (five times each) were from the National Geographic series. These three books, *Animal Architects* (1987), *Animals in Summer* (McCauley, 1988) and *Zoos Without Cages* (Rinard, 1981) reflected his strong interest in animals. Among the nine repetitive choices that were not National Geographic books, two were miscellaneous nonfiction and three were folk/fairy tales. Consistent with the other children, he preferred very familiar stories (47%). His familiar and unfamiliar selections were divided evenly (26.5%).

Slightly more than half of his fiction selections were folk/fairy tales. Given Carlos's interest in animals, his repetitive choices of "Goldilocks and the Three Bears" and "The Three Little Pigs" were not surprising. His choice of "Snow White" was unexpected, however. "Snow White" was selected 16 times by students during the year, but it was a
gender-related choice. Except for one boy who chose it once, Carlos was the only male who chose this title. As a repetitive choice, it was especially noteworthy. Although he mistakenly called the main character "Cinderella," his limited verbalization with the book seemed to show he was familiar with the story line. One time he stared silently at an illustration of the seven dwarves for a several minutes. In a sympathetic voice, he said, "Look. (unintelligible) They're praying." He then turned to the preceding page and said in a tender voice, "Look. Poor little thing. Look. (unintelligible) Here they killed her. Look. They poisoned her." This behavior—uncharacteristic in his verbalization, emotion, and response to fiction—may have been related to the fact that one of Carlos's siblings had a life-threatening illness and was receiving chemotherapy.

Carlos's high percentage of nonfiction books (58%) and low percentage of fiction books (32%) were the extremes of the range for the entire class. Carlos's combined fiction and nonfiction choices accounted for 90% of his selections for the year. He made few choices from the ABC, counting, poetry, and holiday books, and completely ignored six categories. All his holiday choices were Christmas books—a preference shared by the whole class. Among his 126 selections for the year, he chose 81 different books.

His only evaluative statements occurred during a session in November. After saying he liked one book, he rejected a copy of "The Little Red Hen" offered by a reading
companion, saying he didn't like it. When the companion insisted he look at it, Carlos became irritated, repeatedly pushing away the book. When the persistent companion prevailed, Carlos called the book "The Poopy Little Caterpillar" and pushed it aside. "The Little Red Hen" was extremely popular; various versions were chosen by students 37 times during the school year. (Comprehensive data were not collected until February 19, 1990. Since the book had been the focus of a literature study early in the year, more complete data probably would have reflected an even higher selection incidence.) Carlos was one of only two students who did not choose this folk tale. When he acquired it by exchange in January, he spent just nine seconds browsing though it.

During the earliest videotaped sessions, Carlos rejected offers to exchange books. Unlike other students, it apparently was not a social act (denoting a refusal of friendship). Neither was he possessive regarding his own books. He seemed to reject exchanges because he was not interested in reading. After fulfilling his assignment, he was not interested in acquiring more than his three books.

Later in the school year, Carlos began accepting exchanges proposed to him or, in some cases, forced on him. In March, he began proposing exchanges. Once he offered a book to another student, who rejected it. He then displayed several inside pages to interest the reluctant classmate. This attempt was accompanied by minimal verbalization, but was a clear effort to promote the exchange.
In summary, Carlos began the year choosing diverse books but eventually limited his choices almost exclusively to nonfiction selections, particularly National Geographic books. These books also dominated his repetitive choices. His willingness to exchange books increased gradually, but exchanges were accompanied by the limited verbalization that also characterized his social interaction.

**Social Behavior**

Eleven sessions of Carlos were videotaped between October 25, 1989 and May 11, 1990. He was recorded with nine different classmates in groups of two to four students. Initially, Carlos participated reluctantly in SSR. Modifications to traditional SSR, which allowed for social interaction, had limited impact because he showed little interest in books or his classmates.

During the first videotaped session late in October, Carlos interacted with his reading companion, a girl, after he finished his own books. He helped her recite a nursery rhyme, talked about the book’s cover illustration and briefly played a game. This interaction seemed based on boredom and disinterest in his books rather than a desire to socialize. The girl’s behavior, quiet and uncommunicative, seemed to suit Carlos. Generally he was reluctant to engage in conversation early in the year, and responded to more verbal children with visible irritation. In subsequent sessions—as he demonstrated more interest in his books—he ignored reading companions almost completely.
Carlos made several behavioral transitions in February. He alternately interacted with and rebuffed classmates. He talked about the contents of a book with a classmate for the first time. In March, he began to engage in conversations with classmates, and continued this for the remainder of the school year. Sometimes another child's comment prompted a conversation. Sometimes an interesting subject in Carlos's books led him to initiate a discussion. The weather in Acapulco, the aging and mortality of parents, the music of a popular Mexican band, the "multiple lives" of cats, and Godzilla and King Kong movies were some of the topics he discussed. Carlos gradually began to appreciate both social interaction and books. In May, prompted by a photograph in a book, he initiated the following conversation:

Carlos: Do you like cows?
Freddy: (nodded head) And you?
C: Little ones.
F: Do you like cow's milk? I don't.
C: Yes. Yes. That's what we drink. It's cow's milk.
F: Not us.
C: We drink it, too. Cow's milk—you know what—is really warm. It's like they heated it up. It's really warm when they get it out of the "chi-chi" (Spanish slang for "nipple").
F: In Mexico, I've eaten that kind.
C: Is it good? (Freddy shook his head negatively.)
Uh-huh (affirmative). It's good with bread.
In April, Carlos insisted that a classmate attend to one of his books for the first time. Carlos previously had made use of a limited range of attention-getting strategies. They included tugging arms, emotional exclamations, and the attentional vocative, "Look!" Despite the form and appearance of attention-getting strategies, they rarely seemed to be serious efforts. He usually did not make eye contact, persist, request a response, or even look up to see if the classmate attended. He continued viewing his books while using these behaviors. The behaviors seemed to indicate only that he had found something interesting, not desire for social interaction. In April, with another quiet and serious reading companion, Carlos sought attention and persisted until he got it, making eye contact and insisting on a response for the first time.

In May, Carlos moved his chair closer to a reading companion to attend to the other student’s book. He previously had glanced at other students’ books from a distance, showing limited interest. This was a deliberate action and overtly signaled a new level of social interaction. He subsequently played a guessing game about the content of books, attended to a narration of a book, and collaborated on the production of a text.

Carlos never used the privacy position. He did not need assistance to obtain privacy. He simply would shut out other children from his focus of attention. He also was uninterested in engaging an audience, either pretend or actual. Consequently, it was not surprising that he never
engaged in teacher behavior. He typically was not willing to act as an audience for other students. He assumed the relatively passive role of surrendering attention to his own books and giving undivided attention to another student’s activity just once in the school year. On that occasion in May, he agreed to listen to a reading companion’s animated narration of *Bicycle Race* (Crews, 1985). Carlos became so involved that he cheered during the story.

Although he demonstrated a new openness by May, he remained selective about whom he chose to engage. He first tolerated, then came to enjoy, the company of a boy and a girl who were quiet and mature. He consistently enjoyed another girl and boy who, although somewhat immature, were quiet and shy. Almost all his open, lively, and verbal behavior took place in the company of one or more of these four children. He ignored or strongly resisted other children who were lively and verbal. He especially resisted Ricardo (the subject of the second case study), who repeatedly approached Carlos with attempts to engage in conversation and share books. To be tolerated at all, Ricardo had to adapt his behavior to Carlos.

Carlos did not engage in behavior that could be attributed directly to the influence of other students. Unlike some classmates, he never was observed watching another child’s behavior, then mimicking it immediately or within a short time. Late in the school year, he identified himself as characters in books. This practice (compare Virginia’s case study) was popular in class. Carlos showed
as much interest in casting classmates, particularly other boys, as in casting himself.

In summary, Carlos began the school year uninterested in books and social interaction. He slowly began to discover rewards in both. In February, he discussed the contents of a book with a classmate for the first time. In March, he began engaging in conversations. By May, he attended to other children's work and collaborated on narrations of books. He preferred mature, quiet, and shy children to more verbal ones.

Emergent-Reading Behaviors

The following sections trace Carlos's emergent-reading behaviors, specifically conceptions about literature and literacy, books and print.

Conceptions about literature and literacy. Carlos seemed to possess few "basic conceptions about literature and literacy" (Cochran-Smith, 1984). He did not perceive reading as an opportunity for social interaction. He had no reading role models at home. He did not consider reading an important activity or books a source of enjoyment. The data for Session 1 (see Table 18) seem to reflect these attitudes. He spent 21 seconds, 55 seconds, and 23 seconds, respectively, on the three books viewed during the session.

These times account for extremely low percentages of time on task. Carlos's time on task was different in nature than the rest of the class. Other students' time off task tended to be distributed throughout the session. Sometimes other students had trouble settling down at the beginning.
They often were distracted by classmates. Some time off task was due to transitions between books. Other times children abandoned their books to engage in unrelated conversation or showed signs of fatigue. In contrast, Carlos's time off task throughout the year tended to occur, with some exceptions, in a large block at the end of each SSR session. He viewed his books and when finished, sat unproductively until a timer bell signaled the end of SSR. Near the end of Session 1, he sat unproductively for a long time, then showed impatience by trying to mimic the bell by
making a similar sound with his tongue (as if he could will the session to end).

These large blocks of unproductive time also may represent the unusual attention Carlos paid to the camcorder. He generally ignored the microphone, but sometimes stared at the camera lens after finishing his books. Early in the year, he said he could see his own reflection in the lens and this seemed to intrigue him. His method of viewing books—which might be termed speed walking—allowed him extra time to contemplate equipment or explore other books. He rejected book exchange offers. His behavior and demeanor seemed to indicate he considered viewing three books his only duty. Having fulfilled it, he had no motivation to exert additional effort. These behaviors, captured in Session 1 in October, also were characteristic during the first six weeks of the school year (before videotaping).

In November he began to spend longer periods with books and to view more books than his three initial choices. By March he actively began to pursue exchanges of books after finishing his own selections. Increasing the number of books he viewed and time spent on each book produced a significant increase in time on task that continued through May. The lowest time recorded after this trend began was in March (53%) when, for some reason, he seemed unsettled. By May, when he chose National Geographic books almost exclusively (90%), his time on task reached 99% in Session 11. In Session 9, he spent a full 10 minutes
viewing a single book, *Zoos Without Cages* (Rinard, 1981). This constituted the most dramatic improvement in time on task of any student in the class.

Carlos made only one positive evaluative comment during the year in videotaped sessions. He was never observed engaging in behaviors such as smiling, hugging, or patting books. He showed other signs that he had learned to enjoy books. Their primary appeal to him seemed to be interesting photographs he could examine quietly. He especially was interested in animals.

Table 19 contains the distribution for Carlos’s reading behaviors for the 48 books he viewed during the sessions. When he did verbalize, it tended to be brief: often a single word such as "Bambi!" in response to a photograph of a deer. Even longer verbalizations primarily were labeling (e.g., "Look! A gorilla! Look! Lions! Tigers!").

Table 19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Carlos's Emergent-Reading Behaviors</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Silently studying</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussing book</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretend reading</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Occasionally he answered questions about the content of a book with brief explanations, usually one sentence. These percentages seemed to reveal the perception that books
contain interesting things to look at and ponder alone, but
there was no need to discuss or share these things with
others.

Carlos showed disinterest in stories. He made fewer
fiction selections as the year progressed. With the
exception of attention to "Snow White" (see Reading
Preferences) and Bicycle Race (Crews, 1985), he paid little
attention to fiction books. As might be expected, he did
not engage in any pretend readings. The only indication of
a nascent ability to pretend read came during Session 11 in
May, when he assisted a classmate named Freddy. Freddy had
chosen a humorous story about the attempts of some farm
animals to persuade a goat to leave an orchard. This story,
which had been read several times, became a class favorite.
Students especially enjoyed the ending, in which a tiny ant
succeeded when the larger animals could not. Carlos
supported Freddy’s efforts to retrieve the text of the
story. He agreed with Freddy and verbally reinforced what
Freddy said. Their collaboration also led to Carlos’s only
observed use of dialogue during the videotaped sessions.
(See Appendix F for the Spanish original.)

Freddy: When the boy sent him over there, right?
Carlos: They gave him a kick. The horse, too. The
dog, too. Also the...

F: Everybody. Not the ant.
C: Huh-uh. He didn’t return. (unintelligible) The
goat stopped him. "Boy! Boy!"
F: "Baaa. I’m busy. Better you go somewhere else."
C: "Somewhere else."
F: No one can. The little ant could.
C: Yes. He bit him.

Freddy stopped verbalizing, but continued to look at the book. A girl at the table wanted him to continue the story and tried to prompt him. Irritated, he challenged her with, "Let's see you read it. Read right here." She declined, so Freddy turned to Carlos.

Freddy: He knows it, don't you? Here. What does it say?
Carlos: "Boy! Boy! I can (unintelligible). Me-e-e! Me-e-e! Me-e-e! You go to the other side or I'll send you to the poop!"

(Laughter)
F: "You [go] to the other side." (unintelligible)
C: The little ant! Sting him! Sting him!
F: Jump! He climbed. He climbed. And... and he went in the ear and stung [him]! "Ah, it's better you go. It's better I leave."

In spite of the use of dialogue and the written-like text intonation, this collaboration was not classified as a pretend reading. Carlos did not assume the stance or demeanor associated with children's pretend readings. During the first portion, he employed a conversational tone and only appeared to be responding to a friend. During the later segment, he also seemed to perceive himself as merely answering a question. He never surrendered control or attention to his own book. He held it open throughout the
session and returned to it immediately after Freddy closed his book.

Although Carlos engaged in no pretend readings during the year, he made an earlier offer to tell a story. In March, attempting to induce a child to give him "The Hare and the Tortoise," he offered, "I’ll tell it to you." When the child ignored him, Carlos repeated the offer. Whether he was willing to tell the story to acquire the book, or his offer was merely a ploy, remains open to speculation. Given his behavior patterns, the second possibility seems most likely.

Carlos may have found it impossible to imagine himself as a reader. On one occasion, he seemed to try on the role, then abandon it. In March, he viewed a class-made book titled We Are Poets (Somos Poetas). Each page contained a poem written by a group of students and a large illustration in the center. At the bottom were the first and last names of the child who had illustrated the poem. The following excerpt from the stream-of-behavior chronicle for this session describes his behavior.

Carlos has the Somos Poetas book. He stares at a page then states a title, "El hipopótamo cochino" (The filthy hippopotamus). He states it as if he’s going to try to read. He doesn’t seem to know what else to say. He looks at the name of the illustrator at the bottom of the page but can’t decide which child it is. He turns the page and looks at the illustration. He seems to be trying to decide what to say. He looks at the
text for a clue then shakes his head in frustration. It's as if he's trying to "be a reader" but can't manage it. Either he's uncomfortable with the idea of created text or he just can't decide what to say.

Carlos generally demonstrated interest in stories only in response to another student's initiative. His attention to poems and songs also occurred in the same context. The videotaped sessions recorded Carlos demonstrating knowledge and interest in poetry and music. This was quite surprising because he seemed uninterested and reluctant to participate in group poetry and music activities. Early in the year, one reading companion viewed a book of traditional nursery rhymes in Spanish. She was trying unsuccessfully to recite a rhyme that referred to "burnt tortillas" for mother and "warm tortillas" for father. Carlos coached her patiently and persistently until she recited it correctly even though he himself became confused at one point. (See Appendix F.)

Carlos: Huh-uh. Look. The... the little burnt ones for mommy. The... the... the warm ones for daddy.

Martha: Ah. The burnt ones for daddy. The warm ones for...

C: Huh-uh. Look. The burnt ones for mommy. The... the warm ones for daddy.

M: Ah. The warm ones for mommy.

C: Huh-uh. No! The... the warm ones for mommy. The... the warm ones for daddy.

M: Ah. The burnt ones?
C: For... for mommy.

M: The burnt ones for mommy and...

C: The warm ones for daddy.

M: The warm ones for daddy.

In May, Carlos sang a traditional song at the request of a friend. The videotaped session also recorded Carlos occasionally humming or singing quietly while looking at his books.

Conceptions about books. From the beginning of the school year, Carlos demonstrated correct book orientation, beginning at the front and working page by page to the end. As he chose more and more nonfiction photography books, he adopted a less structured approach. Nevertheless, his behavior continued to indicate understanding of correct orientation.

On three occasions, in November, January, and February, he became disoriented while working from back to front. In all cases, he seemed confused that illustrations appeared on the back cover of books. They were not the same as front cover illustrations, and the pictures typically were smaller. The print on back covers was smaller and was not designed like a title. Carlos’s confusion by secondary illustrations also may have indicated lack of visual literacy and limited experience with books. In the first two instances, he seemed unable to reorient himself correctly. He also did not demonstrate any awareness that something was amiss. On the third occasion he quickly reoriented himself. This could be interpreted as evidence
of growth or the fact that the third book, from the "Spot" series, was so familiar.

Carlos attended almost exclusively to illustrations throughout the school year. In January—working with a book using the format of illustrations on the right page and text on the left page—he attended to the illustrated side exclusively. In February, he viewed a wordless picture book with illustrations on both left and right sides. Carlos was familiar with the story because the class had watched the accompanying video, yet he ignored the left illustrations. Although this behavior was not consistent, he reverted to it from time to time. Carlos often turned pages rapidly until he found an illustration or photograph which interested him. When engaged in rapid turning of pages, he tended to scan the right side only. By April, he began to attend more to both sides, adopting the practice of other children: looking first at the right side and then the left.

Carlos paid virtually no attention to book conventions throughout the school year. Although he often gazed at covers for extended periods, this generally happened after viewing books, when he was unoccupied at the end of an SSR session. He frequently traced the contours of the cover illustrations with his finger, apparently to relieve boredom. His attention to book covers rarely was accompanied by verbalization.

Carlos paid no attention to author or illustrator information, title pages, or tables of contents. He seemed somewhat confused regarding the concept of an illustrator.
In March, he sat with a student viewing a class-made book of original poetry. The top of each page contained a poem about a storybook character or nursery rhyme character. An illustration of the subject of the poem occupied the middle of the page. The first and last names of the student who had illustrated the poem appeared at the bottom of the page. Children who chose this book for SSR time almost always followed the practice of naming aloud the student illustrators as they turned pages. Carlos's companion asked him who had done the illustration on one page. Carlos immediately responded by stating the name of the storybook character. This indicated his unformed concept of an illustrator and that he attended exclusively to the illustration, not the text.

On four occasions Carlos recited a traditional Spanish ending for stories upon reaching the end of a book, although he engaged in no pretend readings. As he chose decreasing numbers of fiction books, he had fewer opportunities to recite this ending. It last appeared in a February videotaped session.

Carlos said aloud only five titles for books during the school year. Each time, he responded to illustrations without evidence of print awareness. As noted in the Reading Preferences section, he assigned the title "Cinderella" to a version of "Snow White," and a scatological title--"The Poopy Little Caterpillar"--to a copy of "The Little Red Hen." This second title was a successful attempt at language play with a classmate. Later
in the year, he insisted that an African tale about rabbits also was titled "The Little Red Hen." When challenged by his reading companion, he offered to prove the claim. Carlos took the book, turned each page, and finding no sign of a hen, closed the book without comment. With a puzzled expression, he returned to his own books. (It is possible this event was only an instance of being contrary with a child who often irritated him. It is also possible that he had confused the book and title with another African folk tale--previously read to the class--which involved a hawk and several hens as main characters.) His other two titles were in English: "Camels" for a book with a photograph of camels, and "Bears" for "Goldilocks and the Three Bears." These efforts were consistent with expectations given his minimal knowledge of English and limited verbalization overall.

Conceptions about print. Carlos was interested almost exclusively in illustrations, specifically photographs. He never was observed attending to print as classmates did, tracking text with his finger as if reading, for example. Since he engaged in no pretend readings during the school year, this might have been expected. He also did not engage in the limited attention to text common to other children, such as pointing to text while saying a title aloud. He did, however, demonstrate correct orientation early in the year when he pretended to write in a book using a left-to-right direction. Close examination of the data showed the nature of Carlos's attention to text was different. While
other students created oral texts, tracking print with their fingers, Carlos made oral references to the print. Rather than address print directly, Carlos acknowledged its presence and function (beginning in March). One time, for example, a child seated at the table with Carlos was pretend reading a book about Jean, a mischievous cat. Each left page stated what the cat wanted to do. Each right page contained the admonition, "No, no, Jean." This arrangement of visual elements and simple text enabled Carlos’s classmate to engage in a pretend reading she found satisfactory. Buoyed by her success, she tried again.

Sally: Look. Should I read it? "No, no, no, Jean."

(Laughter)

Carlos: Ah, because the teacher said it and you learned it.

S: Huh-uh.

C: Yes, it’s true.

At the beginning of May, he made a direct reference to the spelling of a word while playing a guessing game with a book. His hand covered a picture of a lion ("leon" in Spanish). His companion did not guess correctly, so he attempted to assist her with graphophonemic clues. (See Appendix F.)

Carlos: Who is it?

Martha: Uh... uh... uh...

C: It starts with the "I" and with the "0."

M: Oooooo...

C: With the "O," then with the "I."
When the classmate gave up, Carlos moved his hand away and announced, "Lion." It was notable that Carlos said the animal's name started with an "I" instead of an "L." The second time, he also reversed the order of the vowels, saying the "O" came first. His use of vowels that are correct in English, not Spanish, could be construed to indicate he attended to the print. A close examination of the videotape showed convincingly that he attended only to the illustration. He may have been aware of the spelling of the word from a different source such as English class. That would be inconsistent with Carlos's general level of functioning. It seemed more likely that he was trying to tell his companion the vowels in Spanish, but had made mistakes. (Overlooking the beginning consonant in favor of vowel sounds has been characteristic among Spanish-speaking students. English-speaking kindergarten students, in contrast, tend to focus on consonant sounds over more variable English vowel sounds. The more consistent and clearly enunciated vowel sounds of Spanish tend to dominate early literacy efforts among most Spanish-speakers. This explanation would be more compatible with Carlos's development.) More significant was that Carlos, who had paid little attention to print, incorporated graphophonemic information into his play.

Although Carlos engaged in no pretend readings, he did engage in some sophisticated behaviors. He demonstrated an emerging graphophonemic awareness during his guessing game with Martha. He collaborated with Freddy to retell the
story of the goat and the ant. He coached Martha as she learned to recite a nursery rhyme. He gave the appearance of wanting to engage in a pretend reading during his work with a poetry book. It may be of significance that all of these behaviors occurred with very familiar books (books that had been read to the class repeatedly).

In summary, Carlos began school with little appreciation for SSR time. He did not consider reading an important or enjoyable activity. As the year progressed, his time on task increased dramatically. Approximately half of his books were viewed without verbalization. The other half involved limited verbalization. He seemed uninterested in stories and did not engage in pretend readings, although he participated in two significant collaborations late in the school year.

From the beginning of the kindergarten year, Carlos demonstrated correct book orientation, but experienced some difficulty when books contained illustrations and print on the front and back covers. He paid little attention to conventions. He said aloud titles for books on five occasions.

Finally, Carlos showed interest in photographs and illustrations almost exclusively. He never was observed tracking text with his finger, but made verbal references to the presence and function of print.

Summary

This chapter presented the analyses of reading preferences, social behaviors, and emergent-reading
behaviors for four case-study children. Emergent-reading behaviors were examined in terms of conceptions about literature and literacy, books, and print. Chapter V summarizes and compares major attributes of the four children.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND DISCUSSION

More than 20 years of research studies have supported the understanding that by the time children reach kindergarten age in literate societies, they are well on their way toward learning to read and write (Teale & Sulzby, 1986). This relatively new area of study in the field of reading—emergent literacy—focuses on the period "between birth and the time when children write and read in conventional ways, ways that adults generally would identify as actually being reading and writing" (Teale, 1987, p. 45). Case-study research, both anecdotal and descriptive, has underscored important relationships between storybook-reading experiences and children's literacy development. Consequently, researchers and practitioners have expressed concern over the potential handicaps faced by children who enter school with few or no storybook-reading experiences. At the same time, educators increasingly have attempted to engage students in authentic reading situations rather than focus on isolated skills (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott & Wilkinson, 1985).

Many schools have responded to growing awareness of emergent literacy principles by implementing instructional
programs that foster literacy-rich environments. In some cases, programs have included Sustained Silent Reading (SSR), which provides a time during each day for students to read independently using self-selected materials (Berglund & Johns, 1983). Other kindergarten and first grade teachers have been reluctant to adopt SSR in their classrooms (Kaisen, 1987). Their reluctance has been attributed to problems in strictly enforcing the traditional SSR guidelines with children who do not yet read independently (Levine, 1984). More developmentally appropriate modified forms of SSR have been suggested (Hong, 1981; Kaisen, 1987), but researchers have not yet provided detailed descriptions or analyses of student behaviors when modified SSR practices are adopted.

The focusing question of this study was, "What are the book-reading behaviors of kindergarten students during modified Sustained Silent Reading?" To describe these behaviors, I collected data over the course of one school year by unobtrusively videotaping students during SSR. Videotaping allowed me to continue to function as a reading model for all students. Book selections also were recorded for every student. At the end of the school year, preliminary data analysis provided a rationale for choosing four case-study children. Continued data analysis produced detailed descriptions of these students' behaviors. The
format adopted for the summary facilitated direct comparisons of the children’s behaviors.

**Statement of the Problem**

The problem to be investigated was, "What are the reading preferences, social behaviors, and emergent-reading behaviors of bilingual education kindergarten students during modified Sustained Silent Reading?"

**Procedures**

A qualitative, observational case-study research approach was adopted to provide an authentic description of four children’s behaviors. Data collection began October 19, 1989 and continued through May 29, 1990 for a total of 87 school days. The time frame was the 1989-1990 school year, excluding the first six-week period. Approximately 1,258 minutes of Sustained Silent Reading sessions were videotaped and 2,787 book selections were recorded. Data collection included the entire class to avoid possible ethical conflicts between the dual roles of teacher and researcher. The qualitative data analysis techniques included multiple viewings of videotapes. These viewings facilitated production of stream-of-behavior chronicles (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984), transcripts, and standardized observation protocols. Reflective fieldnotes detailing my observations and associated thoughts as a teacher-researcher were made throughout the data collection and analysis phases of the study. A computerized database was created using
commercial software to record and analyze students' reading selections.

The initial focus of analysis—the entire class—narrowed after further analysis to nine target students. Later, four students were chosen to be subjects of fully developed case studies. These case studies explored the children's behavior in the areas of reading preferences, social behaviors, and emergent-reading behaviors. The study explored the individual differences, recurring patterns, and changes of behavior over time. The format adopted for summary presentation later in this chapter also permitted comparisons of the children's behaviors.

In summary, the research approach employed qualitative, longitudinal case-study data collection and analysis techniques to describe four bilingual education kindergarten children's behaviors during modified SSR.

Summary and Comparisons

In this descriptive study, I investigated student behaviors during modified SSR, focusing on reading preferences, social behaviors, and emergent-reading behaviors. Presentation of the four case studies in Chapter IV intentionally maintained the thick, rich description that enables a reader to vicariously experience SSR in a kindergarten classroom. The following section formats the Chapter IV information to facilitate review and comparison of major attributes of the four case-study children.
Reading Preferences

To measure one of the most direct indicators of children’s reading interests, I recorded SSR book selections between October 18, 1989 and May 29, 1990. Prior to February 19, 1990, I recorded selections only for children who were videotaped. When it became apparent that children’s selections were an important aspect of SSR, I began to record selections daily for the entire class, regardless of which students were videotaped. The book selections shown in Table 20 analyze all 687 book selections by the four case-study children into three major categories: fiction, nonfiction, and other. The data showed only selections children made at the beginning of each SSR session, not books acquired through exchanges with other children. Fiction and nonfiction were the two categories most often selected.

The relatively high percentages of nonfiction selections and low percentages of fiction selections by Ricardo and Carlos (males) compared to the selections by Virginia and Cecilia (females) do not indicate a gender difference. Data for the entire class showed these two boys’ selections represented the extremes (see Table 21). After Carlos and Ricardo, Cecilia made the highest percentage of nonfiction selections in the class. Two other boys made the highest percentages of fiction selections
(64%) among all students. Two other boys (9% and 11%) made fewer nonfiction selections than Virginia (15%).

Table 20

Book Selections by Category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Fiction %</th>
<th>Nonfiction %</th>
<th>Other %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ricardo</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cecilia</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlos</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. "Other" were ABC, baby, basals, class-made, concept, counting, holiday, poetry, predictable, and reference.

Table 21

Book Selections by Gender for the Entire Class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Fiction %</th>
<th>Nonfiction %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Folk/fairy tales were the most popular subcategory of fiction selections, as shown in Table 22.
Table 22

Folk/Fairy Tale Selections (F/FTS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>F/FTS as % of fiction</th>
<th>F/FTS as % of all selections</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ricardo</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cecilia</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlos</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Folk/fairy tale selections apparently were influenced by familiarity with specific books, as shown in Table 23.

Table 23

Folk/Fairy Tale Selections (F/FTS) by Familiarity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Unfamiliar %</th>
<th>Familiar %</th>
<th>Very Familiar %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ricardo</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cecilia</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlos</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Unfamiliar books had not been read to students in the school setting; familiar books had been read once; and very familiar books had been read repeatedly.
All four children showed a distinct preference for very familiar books. The girls preferred familiar over unfamiliar books; the boys' selections were divided evenly between familiar and unfamiliar books.

A permanent classroom library enabled these students to make repetitive selections for SSR as shown in Table 24.

Table 24

Repetitive Book Selections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Different</th>
<th>Repetitive</th>
<th>Repetitive Selections %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ricardo</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cecilia</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlos</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. A repetitive selection was any instance in which the same book was chosen two or more times.

The boys showed a higher rate of repetitive selections than the girls. As noted regarding Table 21, a gender difference should not be inferred from this data.

The children's three most repetitive selections characterized their overall interests and reflected the nature of their repetitive selections, as shown in Table 25.
(a fourth title was included for Ricardo because of a tie for third ranking order).

Any interpretation of children’s book interests based on frequency tabulations and percentages must weigh the methodological limitations carefully. Numbers do not reveal individual differences, influences, or trends adequately. A few examples demonstrate these limitations. Holiday books were not a major category of book selections for the entire class. For Cecilia, however, holiday books were 10% of her overall selections for the year. Children selected holiday books—particularly Christmas-related titles—throughout the school year. (Comprehensive data collection for the class did not begin until mid-February. If this data had been collected during the Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas seasons, the numbers might have been significantly higher. Closer investigation also would show that many holiday books were not placed in the classroom library until the corresponding holiday was near. Since children’s selections of Christmas books were recorded in May, they may have demonstrated the same interest in September if the books had been available.)

Carlos’s progressive interest in nonfiction can be shown quantitatively—February (27%), March (29%), April (72%), and May (90%)—but numbers do not explain his possible motivation. Carlos’s selections were almost exclusively animal books and this may have been attributable
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>No. of times selected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>De Tin Marín (Nursery Rhymes)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Little Red Riding Hood</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Snow White</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ricardo</td>
<td>Book of Mammals</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spiders</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tu Primer Libro de Contar (Counting)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tu Primer Libro de Síes y Noes (Concept)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cecilia</td>
<td>The Gingerbread Man</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It Didn't Scare Me</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Tale of Peter Rabbit</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlos</td>
<td>Animal Architects</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Animals in Summer</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zoos with Cages</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
to his recent arrival from a rural area of Mexico where he tended farm animals with his grandfather.

Virginia’s folk/fairy tale selections (20%) were exceeded by nine other children in the class. In reality, Virginia’s enthusiastic verbalizations regarding fairy tales were unequalled by other students, according to descriptive fieldnotes. She was the only child who reported owning fairy tales on videotape at home, and she considered herself an expert.

Cecilia’s selections of "The Gingerbread Man" (eight times) exceeded all other students’ repetitive selections of any single book during the year. The book’s appeal to her was explained, at least partly, by one of her conversations with a classmate during SSR, when she said her older brother had brought this book home from school. Her repetitive selections of ocean-related books (6%) involved multiple categories and apparently were prompted by a family vacation to a beach.

Field observation also disclosed that Ricardo often neglected his fiction selections. He preferred instead to attend to his own or other students’ nonfiction selections.

Overall, the case-study children made few evaluative statements regarding their book selections. Ricardo did not make any evaluative statements. Cecilia made evaluative statements early in the year and discontinued making them as she became less conversational. With one exception, all of
Virginia's statements were positive (she made the most evaluative statements of the four students). Carlos's two evaluative statements—one positive and one negative—pertained to exchanges of books with other children.

Regarding book exchanges, each child adopted a different approach. Virginia, highly possessive of her books, refused all exchanges at the beginning of the year but learned to propose and accept exchanges. Carlos initially rejected exchanges for a different reason. He was not interested either in his own books or other children's. He learned to exchange as he began to enjoy books over the course of the year. Cecilia exchanged books freely from the beginning, sometimes obtaining a promise of later exchange at the beginning of an SSR session, as an apparent gesture of friendship. Ricardo also exchanged books freely (even books he had not viewed and books that seemed to interest him) to accomplish social interaction objectives.

Social Behaviors

To describe the social context of SSR, I videotaped the four case-study children between October 19, 1989 and May 29, 1990 in groups of two to five students. In one session, Ricardo was videotaped alone. The 61 individual sessions for Virginia (15), Ricardo (20), Cecilia (15) and Carlos (11) represent 53 different sessions (some of these students were grouped in the same session). The sessions reviewed for this study, comprising 818 total minutes of videotape,
provided insight into the social purposes and related cognitive accomplishments of children during SSR.

The most salient aspect of the children’s behavior was their individual desire (or lack of desire) for social interaction. Virginia began the year uninterested in interacting with companions during SSR; she preferred to give undivided attention to her books. She responded to companions’ requests for attention with the minimum needed to avoid hurt feelings. As the year progressed, and other children’s book-related behavior became more mature, Virginia began to interact more. By the end of the year she seemed to enjoy her reading companions—so long as books were the mutual focus.

Ricardo thrived on and seemed to require constant social interaction to enjoy books. When grouped with children who rejected his attention, he became frustrated. For Ricardo, the appeal of SSR was talking with classmates, using books as a springboard to conversation. By the end of the year, he had learned to function more independently but remained open to social interaction.

Cecilia began the year seeking constant social interaction. Her interest in books derived from the illustrations. They reminded her of personal life events she wanted to discuss. She apparently could not understand why any companion would be reluctant to join in conversation. By mid-year, her conversations focused on
book content. By the end of the year, Cecilia successfully functioned as a solitary reader.

Carlos began the year showing minimal interest in either social interaction or his book selections. He seemed to resort to social interaction only as a response to extreme boredom while waiting for a session to end. He rebuffed companions' attempts to interact, especially highly verbal children who particularly seemed to irritate him. As the year progressed, and he began to enjoy books, he also learned to interact socially. He functioned best when grouped with relatively quiet, mature, or shy children.

All the case-study children used attention-getting strategies, the most common being the attentional vocative, "Look!" Virginia's range and use of these strategies was limited. Carlos showed interest in the form, but not the function, of these strategies. When he used them, it seemed to signal he had found something interesting, not that he was seeking attention. Late in the year, he began to demand direct responses from classmates. Cecilia used a limited number of strategies but, consistent with her desire for actual interaction, applied them persistently. Ricardo, who thrived on social interaction, developed a wide range of strategies and routinely used them.

Children's use of the privacy position (turning their chairs away from the table) also varied by individual desires and needs. This position seemed to decrease visual
and aural stimulation. Carlos never used it, perhaps because he found it easy to ignore companions. Virginia experimented with the privacy position but found it unsatisfactory because she could exclude companions from her field of attention other ways. The privacy position also interfered with her preferred mode of handling books (standing them upright on the table in front of her). Cecilia seemed to need the privacy position and used it effectively late in the school year, when she adopted more solitary behaviors. Ricardo rarely used the privacy position because it was incompatible with social interaction, his primary goal. He did experiment with it late in the school year, but responded immediately if anyone asked for his attention.

As was characteristic of the entire class, Virginia and Cecilia engaged in teacher play but the boys generally avoided it. Other students often sought an actual audience while playing teacher, but Virginia and Cecilia seemed satisfied to teach imaginary students. Ricardo never played teacher, but willingly accepted invitations to serve as an audience. Carlos ignored this activity completely.

In addition to these comparable categories of behavior, the case-study children demonstrated unique behaviors. Virginia enthusiastically identified herself as characters in books, an activity she learned from a classmate in February. Ricardo adjusted his behavior to his companions'
behavior to increase his prospects for social interaction. Cecilia, who valued friendship highly, emphasized being nice, following school rules, and staying on task. Carlos aggressively rebuffed attention from lively, verbal children, then became lively and verbal in the company of quiet, shy children.

Within the dynamic social context of their peer culture, the students accomplished important cognitive work. All the case-study children engaged in collaboration by the end of the year. (The cognitive tasks observed are described in the Findings section.)

Emergent-Reading Behaviors

To describe the emergent-reading behaviors of the four case-study children, I analyzed their SSR activity in terms of conceptions about literature and literacy, books, and print.

Conceptions about literature and literacy. Virginia, Ricardo, and Cecilia demonstrated understanding of basic conceptions about literature and literacy from the beginning of the school year. They consistently showed they considered reading an important and pleasurable activity. They expressed eager anticipation of daily SSR sessions and began their work enthusiastically. They maintained positive attitudes throughout the school year. Carlos seemed to have few, if any, basic conceptions about literature or literacy. He did not seem to enjoy SSR and spent much of his time
bored and frustrated after a cursory speed walk (unfocused page turning) through his books. By the end of the year, he seemed to enjoy books while still demonstrating behavior much different in nature than his classmates'. This change in SSR appreciation was evident in his increased percentages of time on task (16% in Session 1 to 99% in Session 11). Carlos showed the most dramatic change, not only among case-study children, but the entire class. This improvement was not conveyed adequately in average times on task for the year, as shown in Table 26.

Table 26

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>TOT %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ricardo</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cecilia</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlos</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although these figures approximate children's performance for the school year, they must be interpreted with caution. They do not reflect increases over the course of the year or the nature of Carlos's time off task (which tended to occur in a large block at the end of an SSR session). The nature of variations in children's behavior
also makes some direct comparisons inappropriate. Virginia tended to focus on her books with minimal social interaction. I classified most of her social interaction time as time off task. Ricardo's and Cecilia's social interaction, however, was an intrinsic part of their work activity. They spent more time talking with classmates, but I classified a large part of their social interaction as time on task.

Session lengths for the case-study children ranged from nine minutes (near the beginning of the school year) to 31 minutes (near the end). All four children maintained a relatively high rate of time-on-task behavior, even for long sessions (see Table 27).

Table 27

Average Time on Task (TOT) for Long Sessions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>TOT %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ricardo</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cecilia</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlos</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. A long session was 20-31 minutes.

The combined average time on task for the four children during long SSR sessions was 70%. (Time on task was defined
conservatively as time spent responding directly to books and interacting with classmates about book content. It excluded time spent settling in, making transitions between books, browsing, and visiting with others in ways unrelated to books. If the parameters for time on task had been more liberal—including browsing and transitions between books—time on task probably would have been higher.) The maximum number of minutes spent on one book during the year by Virginia (7.5), Ricardo (12.5), Cecilia (10.5) and Carlos (10) seemed to indicate their ability to invest significant time to respond seriously to books.

Emergent-reading behaviors were classified in three major categories: silently studying, discussing books and pretend reading. Discussing books was defined as students talking to themselves or classmates (e.g., "Do you like this dinosaur?"); labeling and commenting (e.g., "Santa Claus! He's fat."); and following the action (e.g., "He's going to jump"). Pretend readings were defined as recitations and retrieval of text, either with oral-like or written-like language. As shown in Table 28, responses varied widely.

The distribution of emergent-reading behaviors reflected the children's interest in books and modes of behavior. Virginia showed interest in books as a source of stories and primarily functioned as a solitary reader. Ricardo showed interest primarily in examining and discussing illustrations and photographs. Cecilia began the
Table 28

**Emergent-Reading Behaviors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Silently studying %</th>
<th>Discussing books %</th>
<th>Pretend reading %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ricardo</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cecilia</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlos</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. The unit of analysis was one book.

school year primarily discussing books with companions, but eventually began to show that she valued them for stories. She also learned to function independently as the year progressed. Her performances classified as discussing books occurred disproportionately during the first half of the school year. Carlos functioned almost exclusively as a solitary reader at the beginning of the school year. During the first half of the semester, 83% of his performances were silently studying books. During the second half of the year, only 33% were nonverbal performances.

Virginia and Cecilia seemed to regard themselves as able storytellers and readers; their pretend readings reflected this self-concept. Ricardo engaged in extremely limited pretend readings. When he did so, however, he
demonstrated sophisticated abilities. It appeared that he could pretend read, but chose not to. Carlos's behavior seemed to indicate he desired to engage in pretend readings, but could not. Despite the absence of pretend readings, Carlos demonstrated some sophisticated literacy behaviors, such as collaborations, coaching, and language play involving graphophonemic information. All these behaviors were in response to texts that were very familiar to him. Table 29 shows the relationship between pretend readings for the other three students and degree of familiarity.

Table 29

**Pretend Readings by Familiarity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Unfamiliar %</th>
<th>Familiar %</th>
<th>Very Familiar %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ricardo</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cecilia</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** Unfamiliar books had not been read to students in the school setting, familiar books had been read once, and very familiar books had been read more than once. Virginia and Cecilia engaged in pretend readings with some books that could not be identified from the videotapes (3% and 5%, respectively).
The combined familiar and very familiar category percentages indicated that all three children who engaged in pretend readings preferred books that had been read to them: Virginia (59%), Ricardo (100%) and Cecilia (70%). Only Virginia seemed to be attracted by the inherent challenge of unfamiliar books (38%).

Conceptions about books. The case-study children demonstrated correct book orientation, successfully locating the front covers and then working to the end of the book. They responded to nonfiction books in a less structured manner. Cecilia and Carlos showed some confusion about correct orientation when working with books with identical back and front covers or books with illustrations and print on the back covers. This disorientation may be attributable to their limited prior experiences with books.

Virginia and Carlos demonstrated a propensity to attend primarily to right pages of books, neglecting the left pages. This behavior tended to occur when they were browsing through books quickly. Cecilia, who was left-handed, tended to do the opposite, ignoring the right side and attending to the left. This behavior occurred most often when she also showed signs of fatigue.

Students paid varying degrees of attention to book conventions such as title pages and author/illustrator information. They all created titles for books. Table 30 shows the varying degrees of importance attached to titles.
Table 30

**Books Assigned Titles by Students**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ricardo</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cecilia</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlos</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student-created titles comprised actual titles of books (e.g., "The Gingerbread Man"); derivative titles (e.g., "The Three Little Bears' Girl" for "Goldilocks and the Three Bears"); original titles (e.g., "The Mystery of the Witch Who Knows How to Sew the Most"); and titles involving language play (e.g., "The Poopy Little Caterpillar"). With the exception of Cecilia, the case-study children created some simple English titles in spite of their limited English vocabulary.

**Conceptions about print.** The case-study children demonstrated knowledge that print carries meaning. Virginia first demonstrated correct tracking of a line of text in November. In February, she experienced some problems with orientation, tracking from right to left. In April, she demonstrated orientation problems with the format of text on the page. During the same month, she first attempted to
exercise some control over her tracking to make print match her oral text. She developed two strategies to accomplish this matching. In one, she started over and tried again. In the other, she produced nonsense sounds to compensate for remaining print. By the end of April, she was attending to individual words as she tracked print with her finger.

Ricardo first demonstrated correct left-to-right orientation during November, but was largely uninterested in tracking text throughout the school year. This was related to his predominantly conversational mode of behavior and his disproportionately high interest in nonfiction books. The few times he engaged in pretend readings, he directed all his energy into producing oral texts. His only observed tracking behavior involved the title of a book at the beginning of one pretend reading in April.

Cecilia experienced the most orientation problems, perhaps because of her left-handedness. In December she tracked print using a right-to-left orientation. The same month she alternated tracking print correctly and incorrectly. Although she used both hands, she was more inclined to track incorrectly with her left hand. She always verbalized while tracking, but made no attempts to control tracking to match the length of oral text.

Carlos first demonstrated correct left-to-right orientation when he pretended to write in a book during
November. He engaged in no other tracking during the remainder of the school year.

Regarding attention to graphophonemic information, Virginia mimicked a classmate's aspectual reading of a book during May, even though her behavior indicated she actually did not comprehend what the classmate was doing.

Ricardo engaged in language play with the beginning phoneme for "giraffe" in March. In April he experimented with the beginning phoneme of "Lucky" in conjunction with a pretend reading. (The actual book title was Cat and Canary.)

Cecilia demonstrated no response to graphophonemic information during the school year. She also failed to react to another child's aspectual reading. Carlos engaged in a guessing game using letter names during May.

Findings

The following sections present findings related to the case-study children's reading preferences, social behaviors, and emergent-reading behaviors during modified Sustained Silent Reading.

Reading Preferences

1. All four children had significant preferences. Their selections were purposeful; they did not simply choose books randomly or choose the most accessible books. They experimented, choosing books from series, books about
certain topics, and books from categories of literature, among other approaches.

2. Individual selections and even overall preferences for certain categories appeared to be influenced by personal experiences.

3. Preferences changed and evolved over the course of the school year.

4. Extremes of preference were evident in fiction and nonfiction choices between boys and girls who were case-study children. These preferences did not indicate a gender difference for the entire class, however.

5. Children made seasonal or holiday-related choices all year without regard to the holidays nearest in time.

6. Children made repetitive choices—just as children typically request repetitive storytime readings at home.

7. The most frequent repetitive choices reflected children's overall preferences, indicated by their reading selections and behaviors relative to specific categories of books.

8. Evaluative statements tended to be simple statements of whether or not they liked a book, generally unaccompanied by reasons.

9. The number of evaluative statements made by children (few and, in some cases, none) did not seem to indicate level of enjoyment of books.
10. Children’s willingness to exchange books was influenced by different factors: possessiveness of their selections; disinterest in any and all books; rule-following; and expressions of friendship.

11. Quantitative information did not accurately or completely reflect children’s book interests. Qualitative observation supplemented and, in some cases, made possible the reinterpretation of quantitative data.

Social Behaviors

1. Social context influenced the children’s behavior. Compatibility of personality seemed to influence behavior with books more than cognitive sophistication. The knowledge and abilities of children who could function as more able peers were largely inaccessible to a book-viewing companion who was not desired for social interaction.

2. The suitability of student groupings was flexible. Children who did not seem compatible at the beginning of the year appeared to get along well together later in the year. Children’s compatibility also could vary from day to day depending on their moods.

3. The success of student groupings was unpredictable. Children expected to be unsuitable for each other sometimes interacted well, and vice versa.

4. The size of a group affected children’s behavior. As expected at this age, dyads were especially successful. However, in cases where children were mismatched in terms of
need for social interaction, dyads left the sociable child without recourse. The conventional wisdom that "three's a crowd" (triads are problematic), did not hold true. Groupings of three students often resulted in productive, enjoyable sessions for the children. As a rule, the larger the group, the greater the reduction in time on task. Children who were distracted easily especially experienced problems in larger groups. Videotaped sessions in which the quality of behavior deteriorated and became a discipline problem, almost without exception, occurred in groups of four or five students.

5. Children were successful in adapting their own behavior and influencing others' behavior to accomplish social purposes.

6. The children's behavior was extremely diverse and unpredictable. Each individual demonstrated diverse behavior not only over time, but within a single SSR session.

7. The children began and ended the school year exhibiting different levels of desire for social interaction, and ability to work independently and in groups. They became more alike in this respect over the course of the year. Specifically, Virginia and Carlos learned to interact; Ricardo and Cecilia learned to function independently.
8. All the case-study children used attention-getting strategies to share books. The variety, frequency, and sincerity of their strategies depended on each child's need for interaction.

9. The children who were able to function independently from the beginning of the school year rarely used strategies to increase privacy. Those who began the year extremely dependent on social interaction made increasing use of these strategies as their reading behavior became more solitary. The frequency of use was influenced by the level of children's ongoing need for interaction.

10. The privacy position seemed to accomplish multiple purposes: (a) It reduced distractions, stimulation, and interference (both aural and visual). Sometimes when tables were spaced close together, it produced the opposite result by inadvertently attracting the attention of students at nearby tables. (b) It facilitated their teacher play by better enabling them to pretend they had an audience. (c) It allowed children to hear their own voices better. This seemed to help children during pretend readings, especially children with quiet voices. Cecilia had a quiet voice and used the privacy position specifically for pretend readings. (d) It served to notify other children that the reader wished to operate in a solitary mode and was unavailable for social interaction.
11. Girls assumed the role of teacher in teacher play. Boys generally did not. While some girls in the class sought and found actual audiences to serve as students, Virginia and Cecilia used pretend audiences exclusively. The boys considered the role of student (but not teacher) appropriate.

12. Within the context of social interaction, individual children revealed background knowledge, skills and academic needs. Virginia demonstrated her knowledge of the fairy tale genre while helping companions to interpret illustrations correctly. Carlos, who was predominantly nonverbal, revealed his ability to recite a nursery rhyme in the context of assisting another child. Cecilia repeatedly showed lack of background knowledge and visual literacy when interpreting illustrations (the misconceptions emerged during her conversations with companions). Ricardo demonstrated he was unsuited to solitary work and seemed to be a prime candidate for cooperative learning activities.

13. Children accomplished important cognitive work within a social context. Behaviors described in the Social Context section of Chapter IV included the following: (a) serving as a model of a serious, solitary reader; (b) demonstrating that reading is fun and pleasurable; (c) serving as a model for pretend readings; (d) serving as an audience for pretend readings; (e) discussing the content of books; (f) answering questions about the contents of
illustrations; (g) initiating and participating in language play; (h) modeling directional tracking; (i) modeling book conventions (e.g., titles and closing recitations); (j) overt teaching (coaching) of nursery rhymes and songs to classmates; and (k) collaborating in pretend readings to retrieve texts more effectively. During collaborations, students identified characters, provided vocabulary, suggested the appropriate event in a sequence of events, and held up one side of the dialogue.

**Emergent-Reading Behaviors**

Conceptions about literature and literacy.

1. At the beginning of the year, children varied widely in their personal appreciation of books. SSR seemed to significantly enhance children's enjoyment of books over time.

2. Although children's time on task varied widely from session to session, they maintained relatively high percentages of time on task, even with the conservative guidelines. They also maintained high time on task for long sessions (20-31 minutes).

3. The nature of children's time on task and time off task varied (e.g., all time off task in one block after viewing books, scattered throughout the session, etc.). This made direct comparisons difficult or inappropriate.

4. Students could concentrate on a single book for extended periods of time. The maximum number of minutes
spent on single books ranged from 7.5 minutes to 12.5 minutes.

5. Distribution of emergent-reading behavior categories reflected not only the level of children's abilities but the nature of their interest in books and their social purposes. As solitary children became more sociable, for example, the incidence of discussing books increased. As sociable children learned to function independently, discussing books decreased.

6. All four case-study children engaged in silently studying and discussing books. The girls engaged in higher percentages of pretend readings than the boys, but this did not indicate a gender difference for the entire class. Ricardo knew how to engage in pretend readings but chose not to do so. Carlos's behavior indicated he would have liked to attempt pretend reading; he was unsuccessful.

7. Children frequently responded to books with multiple strategies (e.g., intermittently silently studying and discussing a single book). This often made assigning a performance to one category difficult or inappropriate.

8. Choices of books for pretend reading were influenced by the degree of familiarity; all children preferred familiar and very familiar books. (Carlos engaged in no pretend readings but all his most sophisticated literacy behaviors involved very familiar books.)
9. All children demonstrated cognitively demanding work during SSR. Indicative behaviors included: striking books in frustration, shaking the head, starting over on texts, fidgeting in the chair, and demonstrating visible fatigue after pretend readings.

10. Children’s functioning with books appeared to demonstrate developmental properties. Emergent-reading behaviors became more sophisticated over the course of the school year (e.g., pretend readings and collaborations increased in frequency and complexity).

Conceptions about books.

1. All four children demonstrated correct book orientation. Books with identical front and back covers, and books with illustrations and print on both covers, presented difficulties for some children.

2. Right-handed children attended first (or primarily) to right pages of books; the opposite was typical for the left-handed child. These behaviors were most prevalent during rapid turning of pages or when students were fatigued.

3. All students assigned titles to books. This activity seemed more important to some children than others. The incidence of assigning titles ranged from 4% to 30% of books viewed.
4. Titles assigned by children were actual, derivative, or original. Corresponding with their limited English vocabularies, English titles tended to be simple.

Conceptions about print

1. All four students demonstrated knowledge that print carries meaning. Three of the children tracked print with their fingers during the school year. The fourth child made verbal references to print.

2. Tracking of print occurred almost exclusively during pretend readings.

3. Children who engaged in extensive tracking experienced some orientation problems. The left-handed child experienced a greater degree of difficulty. Their problems related to left-to-right orientation and unusual text formats.

4. One child developed strategies to control tracking so that it would match oral text. This child also attended to individual words near the end of the school year.

5. The two girls made no references to graphophonemic knowledge during the year. Virginia mimicked a classmate’s aspectual reading, but showed she actually did not understand the reader’s activity. Cecilia showed no noticeable reaction to a classmate’s aspectual reading. The two boys made use of graphophonemic knowledge during play.
Implications

The following sections present implications related to the case-study children’s reading preferences, social behaviors, and emergent-reading behaviors during modified Sustained Silent Reading.

Reading Preferences

1. Children’s access to a wide variety of books is an important asset to emergent literacy development. Extensive, well-developed classroom book collections are vital to the success of SSR.

2. The classroom library should contain multiple copies of some books, or multiple versions of stories, so demand created when the teacher reads a book aloud (or features a book in a literature unit) can be satisfied.

3. The classroom library should contain books that reflect children’s life experiences.

4. Seasonal or holiday book selections should be available all year.

5. The classroom library should contain many predictable books.

6. Simple nonfiction books (including predictable books) should be available, especially for children who express little interest in fictional stories.

7. To supplement rotating books checked out from the school library, the teacher should develop a permanent classroom collection that facilitates repetitive book
selections. Repetitive choices may be especially important for students who do not have access to books at home.

8. The classroom library should be well organized. A simple classification system (such as color coding) allows students to manage the collection, identify books within favorite categories, and make repetitive selections easily.

9. Children should be allowed to make their own SSR reading selections. School time should be set aside for this purpose. If children make advance selections (e.g., at the end of the day for the following morning), the classroom must be designed so books can be reserved (e.g., by placing them in cubbyholes or on tables where children sit during SSR time).

10. Teachers should provide an alternative source of books for students who finish their selected books but cannot effect an exchange with SSR companions. A book basket of predictable and very familiar books at each table would help children remain productive and on task.

11. Since children’s book selections are influenced strongly by familiarity, teachers should read from a wide variety of genres. Very familiar books are more cognitively accessible to children, so teachers should adopt an instructional format that includes multiple readings of books.
12. Teachers should avoid preconceived assumptions (especially those based on gender stereotypes) about which types of books will interest groups or individual children.

13. To accurately assess children’s reading interests, researchers and teachers should supplement quantitative book data with observation of behavior over time.

Social Behaviors

1. Videotaping should be considered for assessment of social dynamics and cognitive development.

2. Dyads are useful for assessment and research. They facilitate social interaction while keeping recorded voices distinguishable and intelligible.

3. Children occasionally should be assigned to solitary reading for purposes of assessment. Students in this setting seemed more aware that they were being videotaped, and tended to demonstrate their most sophisticated abilities. Videotaping seemed a way to elicit performance without the inhibiting presence of adults.

4. Teachers should consider forming SSR seating groups based on social compatibility.

5. Teachers should experiment with groups, avoiding static groupings. Groups should be permanent enough to create a sense of stability. One possible scenario is to assign tables where children sit daily, but choose pairs of children to sit at a separate table for videotaping. Table assignments should change periodically throughout the year.
6. SSR with an entire class seated together (e.g., in a circle) is counterproductive for the following reasons: (a) Teachers tend to enforce either silence or unnaturally forced whispering in this situation. Silenced or inhibited children find it difficult to carry out cognitive tasks that are important to their literacy development. (b) When children are allowed to interact freely in SSR, the visual and aural stimulation may make it difficult for some children to concentrate. The benefits derived from privacy strategies become largely inaccessible to children under these conditions. (c) In this situation, children find no one to interact with and everyone to interact with. The conditions that foster close, intimate collaborations are absent. (d) Teachers tend to assume physically dominant, central positions. This makes SSR exclusively a school culture activity and diminishes the peer culture atmosphere that characterizes successful modified SSR. (e) Children generally associate these settings with instruction in which they are often expected to be quiet listeners. More active, verbal behavior is often more productive during modified SSR.

7. Teachers should recognize that it is inappropriate to expect all students to adhere to a single mode of behavior.

8. The role of the teacher as a silent, solitary reader during SSR serves as a powerful model for young children to
adopt the same behavior. Ricardo and Cecilia progressively functioned as quiet, independent readers. Virginia and Carlos, however, became more verbal and social as the year progressed without an adult model of social interaction. The primary influence of the teacher on the success of SSR in this age group seemed to be modeling on-task reader behavior and communicating via that behavior that reading is important and pleasurable. This may mean that teachers of young children do not need to model reading behavior silently and independently during every SSR session. Teachers may be just as effective by alternating silent, independent modeling with socially interactive behavior. Teachers could sit with a single student—or one student on each side—and provide individualized story-reading and discussion experiences. Children from homes with literacy environments devoid of story-reading opportunities otherwise have little or no access to these valuable experiences.

Emergent-Reading Behaviors

1. SSR should be considered an essential component of the kindergarten literacy program. It affords children the opportunity to explore different book categories and to discover the benefits of cooperation. SSR provides students time to engage in important book-reading behaviors.

2. Teachers should reject recommendations in professional literature that SSR sessions not exceed 5-10 minutes based on the presumption that young children have
short attention spans. Teachers instead should begin the school year with appropriately timed short sessions and then extend the SSR session lengths as children’s abilities develop.

3. Researchers should reconsider the practice of classifying children’s performance with books into a single emergent-reading category (i.e., silently studying vs. discussing book). Children mix strategies extensively.

4. Teachers routinely should include repeated readings of books as part of the instructional program. Familiarity with books positively affects children’s subsequent ability to engage in pretend readings and other sophisticated behaviors. Familiarity also encourages more sophisticated reading behaviors.

5. Teachers should acknowledge and respect the diversity of students’ behaviors.

6. Videotaping during SSR can be a valuable assessment tool. It can provide teachers a wealth of new information about individual children. This information sometimes contradicts impressions derived from more casual observation. It also effectively documents children’s progress (or lack of progress) over time. Videotapes may reveal individual needs to be addressed. These may include global problems (e.g., lack of understanding that print carries meaning or inability to perceive oneself as a reader) and more specific problems (e.g., difficulties with
unusual text formats in books or confusion regarding back and front covers of books).

7. Teachers may need to give more attention to book convention issues, such as the concepts of authors and illustrators, and front and back covers. This may be particularly important for children who have few book-reading experiences.

8. Publishers should consider developmental issues when designing front and back covers of books. Children’s positive emotional response to photographs of authors and illustrators (especially photographs including children or pets) should be factored into design decisions.

9. Teachers who are responsible for children’s English-for-Speakers-of-Other-Languages (ESOL) instruction should consider using brief periods of SSR with very familiar books in English. This would allow children to try on the role of a reader of English. Teachers simultaneously could assess children’s progress informally.

10. Teachers should demonstrate patience and persistence regarding the implementation of modified SSR at the kindergarten level. Behaviors observed early in the year are merely the genesis of increasingly sophisticated reading behaviors.

In summary, the present study contributes to basic research, development, and teaching by providing a detailed
description of four children's reading preferences, social behaviors, and emergent-reading behaviors.

Recommendations for Further Study

Continued research is necessary to produce a comprehensive description of kindergarten children's independent behavior with books during modified Sustained Silent Reading. Even with similar populations, children's behaviors may vary widely from year to year. During the school year following this study, for example, only one student adopted a privacy position compared to many students in the study. During the year prior to this study, one popular boy showed keen interest in National Geographic magazines. As a result, these magazines became an extremely frequent SSR selection; the same level of interest was not replicated in any of five subsequent school years. During the 1993-1994 school year, all teacher behavior by students seemed to require a real audience. When one student played the teacher role, other children left their own chairs to sit cross-legged on the floor (recreating the physical environment of storytime).

Given the diversity of behavior from year to year in a single classroom, additional questions arise regarding children's behavior in other classrooms. What differences and similarities can be identified in the behavior of students representing other populations? Specifically, what
is the nature of SSR behaviors among children from literacy-rich home environments?

Further research also might be conducted to investigate modified SSR within the context of an entire instructional program. What teacher behaviors during storytime, for example, directly affect student performance during modified SSR?

Another recommended topic for study is in-depth analysis of children's social behaviors. In what specific ways does social interaction contribute to cognitive development? Detailed descriptions of children's collaborations, for example, would contribute to knowledge of peer influence.

Future research also might focus on a comprehensive examination of children's pretend readings. Transcripts of pretend readings provide a potentially important source of data for the study of comprehension, narrative competence, and linguistic development, among other areas.

Other studies could seek to explain and allay anxiety and misgivings—found among many teachers of very young children—regarding implementation of modified SSR in the instructional program. Studies that examine children's behavior from the beginning of the school year could provide valuable information. Teacher behaviors during introduction and initial implementation of modified SSR also should be documented.
Another subject for future research is potential exploitation of data collected during modified SSR for assessment purposes. Can an appropriate protocol be developed to allow teachers to assess children's reading interests, social needs, progress in reading behaviors, and perhaps most importantly, self concept as readers?

Finally, investigations of the potential uses of modified SSR in English-for-Speakers-of-Other-Languages (ESOL) instruction would make a significant contribution. A description of implementation, effectiveness, student behaviors, and assessment potential within ESOL settings probably would enhance instructional practice related to children's second language acquisition.

Summary

This study sought to answer the question, "What are the book-reading behaviors of bilingual education kindergarten students during modified Sustained Silent Reading?" The teacher-researcher collected data--videotapes, book selection records, and descriptive fieldnotes--over the course of a school year. Multiple videotape viewings yielded detailed stream-of-behavior chronicles, analysis of various aspects of behavior through the use of a protocol, and validation of observations by others. Analysis of the data produced a detailed description of the reading preferences, social behaviors, and emergent-reading behaviors of four case-study children. For each student, a
picture emerged revealing attitudes and self-concepts as readers. Virginia considered books, and the stories they contained, entertaining. She considered reading a pleasurable activity and viewed herself as a good reader. Her behavior and verbalization indicated she understood there was more to reading than the invented text she produced during pretend readings, but she did not seem concerned about the discrepancy. Ricardo considered books a source of visually interesting things. Although he engaged in few pretend readings, he also considered himself a competent reader. Cecilia considered reading a pleasurable activity. She made statements indicating she understood she wasn’t reading in the conventional sense. Although this concerned her, she still considered herself a capable reader. In spite of a difficult beginning, Carlos learned to enjoy books, especially nonfiction. He demonstrated a desire to engage in pretend readings late in the school year but did not view himself as a reader.
Epilogue

One day about a year after the conclusion of field research for this study, Virginia burst unexpectedly through my classroom door. "I can read! I can read!" the first grader exclaimed with obvious excitement. After congratulating her, I told her I was not surprised by the news. I expected it because she had been learning to read in kindergarten. "I know," she responded, "but now I can really read." Her mother, who had brought Virginia back to her kindergarten classroom to visit, reported that Virginia had done well in first grade at her new school.

Ricardo’s first grade teacher reported that he began reading fluently early in the school year. By mid-year, he was reading voraciously.

The same teacher reported that, after a slow beginning, Cecilia also learned to read. By the end of first grade, she was reading fluently at the first grade level.

Carlos’s first grade teacher reported that he only had learned a few sight words. At the end of first grade, she considered him a nonreader.

As a teacher and researcher, I continue to teach bilingual education kindergarten and regard modified Sustained Silent Reading as a vital part of the school day. Five years of modeling reading behavior and observing children, have convinced me to endorse the conclusions reached by O’Connor (1989):
If we as educators are truly committed to making this country a "Nation of Readers," we must start with our young readers. We must allow them to experience the joy, love and excitement of reading. This cannot be taught; it must be experienced. If the home does not provide a literacy-rich environment, the school must. If the home does not provide an encouraging, supportive adult, the school must. If the home does not provide modeling of reading behaviors, the school must. Educators can no longer rely on telling children to read—they must show them. (p. 148)
APPENDIX A

STANDARDIZED OBSERVATION PROTOCOL
Emergent Reading Behaviors

Sense-making Strategies
- Silently Studying
- Discussing Book
- Pretend Reading
- Aspectual Reading
- Recitation From Memory
- Holistic (Conventional)
- Browsing

Book Conventions
Orientation
- correct
- incorrect
Titles
- Actual
- Derivative
- Original
Miscellaneous
- Cover
- Title page
- Author/Illustrator
- Index
- Other

Print
Orientation
- correct
- incorrect
- control
- Graphophonemic Information

Evaluation
- simple
- purpose

Social Behaviors

Play
- book
- language
- guessing
- identification

Teacher Play
- pretend audience
- actual audience
- student

- Privacy position

- Coaching

- Collaboration
Child:
Date:
Event: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
Title:
Time On Task:

**Emergent Reading Behaviors**

**Sense-making Strategies**
- [ ] Silently Studying
- [ ] Discussing Book
- [ ] Pretend Reading
- [ ] Holistic (Conventional)
- [ ] Browsing

**Book Conventions**

Orientation
- [ ] correct
- [ ] incorrect

Titles
- [ ] Actual
- [ ] Derivative
- [ ] Original

**Print**

Orientation
- [ ] correct
- [ ] incorrect
- [ ] control
- [ ] Graphophonemic Information
APPENDIX C

SPANISH TEXTS: VIRGINIA
APPENDIX C

Spanish Texts: Virginia

Page 104: Virginia and Emilia

Emilia: ¿Sabes qué? El ...

Virginia: El chiquito borreguito.

E: El chiquito borreguito. "¿Me dejas pasar?"

V: "¡No!"

E: "¡No!"

V: "Por mis mocos. ¡Uuy!"

E: Y lo dejó pasar. Y el mediano.

V: Pero ése era la mamá y ése era el bebito.

E: Tíntala, tíntala, tíntala, tíntala. "¿Quién está allí? Estoy ..." ¿Qué?

V: "Estoy la mamá de la que pasó primero. Ahorita va a venir mi esposo."

E: "Puede pasar."

(Material omitted)

E: Tip, top, tip, top, tip, top, tip, top. "¿Quién es? ¿Quién es?"

V: "Soy yo. Soy el esposo ... soy el es ..."

E: "Soy el esposo de la borreguito. Lo regañaste. Ven para acá." ¡Pum! ¡Pum! Se fueron todos hasta que alcanzaron (unintelligible). Y colorín, colorado. Este cuento se ha acabado.
Page 105: Virginia and Emilia

Virginia: En la mañana, se comió una manzana. Otra mañana se comió dos peras. Se comió tres ... tres uvas. Se comió cuatro ... um ... ¿Cómo se llaman éstas?

Emilia: Cerezas.

V: Cerezas.

Page 106: Virginia


Page 112: El invierno

Book’s Text Virginia’s Text

Y las noches se llenan de luz. Salía una estrella que brillaba mucho. Y esto es la nieve.
Llega también el año nuevo y las casas se llenan de juguetes.

Saludaban a su familia mientras que el señor estaba corriendo. A la niña chiquita le trajeron un caballito. Al niño grande le dieron un (uninteligible) de indio. A la muchacha grandecita le trajeron (uninteligible) de payasito.

¡Es el invierno! Ya el oso estaba dormido.

Page 116: Virginia

Este cuento bonito lo hicieron (uninteligible) Meco ... Mica y su esposa Yasir (uninteligible). Lo hicieron bonitos y era de Christmas y de (uninteligible) y de (uninteligible) y de Easter.
APPENDIX D

SPANISH TEXTS: RICARDO
APPENDIX D

Spanish Texts: Ricardo

Page 135: Ricardo and Freddy

Ricardo: (in a mock frightened voice) ¡Mira! Cocodrilo se va a comer a un dinosaurio. Chiquito. Mira. ¿Qué es?

Freddy: Quiero atraparlo.

R: ¿Qué es éste?

F: Yo no sé.

R: Un lagarta.


R: ¿Y estos?

F: (unintelligible) Son malos.

R: (accompanied by a stabbing motion) Una vez me los mato a cuchillo.

F: Mira lo que mataron. Mira. Yo digo que malos.

R: ¿Verdad que éste era bueno?

F: Sí.

(Material omitted)

R: (accompanied by dying motions and sound effects) Todos estos son buenos y ése malo. Me lo mato a un cuchillazo en su mero pie.

F: No, no, no. No se pueden matar.

R: Le torzo la cabeza.

F: Este no, ¿eh?
R: No más a éste le torzo la cabeza. Me lo hago puros pedazos.

Page 141: Curious George Goes Sledding

Maestro, maestro. Préstame su monito. Para que lea conmigo. Para que lea su libro.


¡Mira! Tu bolita. Ahora vas a hacer una bolota. ¡Mira! Una bolota más. ¡Mira! ¡Mira! Ahorita vas a chocar con eso. ¡Fíjate! ¡Fíjate! ¡Fíjate! ¡Mira! ¡Iiiiiii!

¡Chocaste!

Se metió para adentro.


Y ahorita te vas a brincar con tu novia. Mira, ahorita vas a ... ¡Mira! Ahorita te brincaste con tu ... ¡Ahorita te brincaste con tu novia!

Mira, aquí estás y aquí vienes chocando. Y aquí chocaste.

¡Pom!

Page 146: Ricardo

(uninteligible) Ya se cambiaba. Y se lavaba los dientes. Se iba (uninteligible).

Pero luego ... pero un día, quiso ... Vio a los demás gatos. Lucky ... Lucky se iba ... se iba con su pajarito y todos
los amigos del pajarito. Y una tormenta le pasa.
Y mientras ... Lucky encontró un papalote (unintelligible).
Las antenas del ... de la TV. Y el viento voló y voló y
(unintelligible). Voló y voló y todos lo vieron como muy
lejos. (unintelligible) Pero luego Lucky (unintelligible)
subía y subía. Y él se divirtió porque no podía volar como
los pájaros. Y los pajaritos lo ... lo iban ... lo iban
alcanzando.
Y se lo llevó hasta arribota.
Y se divirtió.
Y miraba arriba y abajo.
Sobre de unos rascacielos.
Se asustó. Porque ... el viento lo llevaba. Y de hacia
arriba para abajo.
El tenía miedo de caer a las aguas. Hacia abajo.
(unintelligible)
¡Cómo bajaba! Sobre de sus pájaros. Sobre de sus pájaros.
Y se fue hacia ... hacia arriba para con sus ... Sus amigos
lo ayudaron.
Y les dijo adiós. Y lo puso (unintelligible) quisiera
volar. Y ya. Colorín colorado, este cuento se ha acabado.

Page 152: Ricardo

¡Aaaah! Esta es la matemática que yo quería.
Dos más dos son dos más dos no son tres.
Uno, uno, uno más uno son ocho.
Ocho Pinocho son ocho.
Siete más siete son siete.
Ocho más ocho son Pinocho.
APPENDIX E

SPANISH TEXTS: CECILIA
APPENDIX E

Spanish Texts: Cecilia

Page 162: Cecilia

Mira como se hicieron. (She pointed to a strong man.) Mi papá tiene una (unintelligible) y es fuerte. Esa sí la puede cargar mi hermanito pero un poquito. Mi hermanito tiene así, mira. Así. (She held up seven fingers.) ¿Y tú cuántos años tienes? Yo tengo así. (Cecilia showed five fingers. The classmate ignored her.) Pues yo tengo así. (She lowered her thumb and shrugged.) Después tenía así pero ya tengo así.

Page 162: Cecilia and Virginia

Cecilia: Mire, como es. Mira. Aquí va a caer nieve porque la nieve es más frío, ¿verdad que sí? Porque yo cuando me caía, yo me ensucié la ropa y después ya no tenía (unintelligible).

Virginia: Cuando cayó nieve, le voy a decir a mi mamá que sí vamos a jugar y a hacer un mono (unintelligible) porque ella sí sabe.

C: Yo ... Mi hermanito no tiene guantes, solo un gorro. Y yo tengo un gorro que me compró mi mami y unos guantes.

V: Yo no tengo guantes pero porque los dejé en mi caja de mi papá en otra casa.

Page 163: Cecilia and Nicholas

Cecilia: Y se cansó [a cow].
Nicholas: Le tiró el agua.
C: Sí. (unintelligible)
N: Lo andaban correteando.
C: Sí, lo andaban correteando. Mira. Se cansaron también.
N: El [the fox] le va a agarrar, ¿verdad?
C: Sí, él le va a decir la mentira. Le va a decir la mentira.
N: Y luego le va a comer. Le va a decir que se ponga aquí en la nariz (touching nose) y se le va a ir a la boca.
C: (laughing) Sí. Mira. Primero aquí y luego se sube aquí y luego aquí. Se lo va a comer. ¡Y yummy! ¡Y yummy! Y le gustó.

Page 171: Cecilia

Mira. Yo no puedo ... yo no puedo ... yo no puedo platicar este mucho (unintelligible). ¿Y tú?

Mira. Aquí tiene un poquito.

Después estaba leyendo con la niña. (unintelligible)
Después que estaban leyendo, le estaba platicando como es eso.
Nicholas: ¿Cómo dice acá? ¿Cómo dice aquí?

Cecilia: (Shrugged shoulders to indicate she didn’t know.)

¿Y tú?

N: No sé.

C: Mi hermanito sí sabe leer.

N: No.

C: Uh-huh. Porque tiene un libro que (unintelligible).
APPENDIX F

SPANISH TEXTS: CARLOS
APPENDIX F

Spanish Texts: Carlos

Page 185: Carlos


Page 188: Carlos and Freddy

Carlos: ¿A ti te gustan las vacas?
Freddy: (nodded head) ¿Y a ti?
C: Chiquitas.
F: ¿A ti te gusta la leche de las vacas? A mí, no.
F: Nosotros no.
C: La bebemos también nosotros. La leche de la vaca—¿sabes qué?—está bien calientita. Parece que se la calentaron. Está bien calientita cuando la sacan de la chi-chi.
F: En México ya he comida de esa.
C: ¿Está buena? (Freddy shook his head negatively) Uh-huh (affirmative). Está buena con pan.

Page 196: Carlos and Freddy

Freddy: Cuando la mandaron para allá el niño, ¿verdad?
Carlos: Le dieron una patada. También el caballo. También el perro. También el ...
F: A todos. A la hormiga no.
C: Huh-uh. Ya no volvió. (uninteligible) Se lo paró el chivito. "Niño! Niño!"
C: A otro lado.
F: Nadie le puede. La hormiguita sí lo pudo.
C: Sí, le dio una mordida.

Page 196: Carlos and Freddy

Freddy: El sí lo sabe, ¿verdad que sí? A ver, ¿qué dice?
Carlos: "¡Niño! ¡Niño! Yo puedo (uninteligible).
¡Miii! ¡Miii! ¡Miii! ¡Tú vete al otro lado o yo te mando al popó!" (laughter)
F: "Tú [vete] al otro lado." (uninteligible)
C: ¡La hormiguita! ¡Pícale! ¡Pícale!
F: ¡Jump! Subió. Subió. Y ... y en la oreja le metió ...
¡Y [le] picó! "Ah, mejor vete tú. Mejor me voy yo."

Page 199: Carlos and Martha

Carlos: Huh-uh. Mira. Los ... las quemaditas para mamá.
Los ... los ... los calientitos para papá.
Martha: Ah. Las quemadas para papá. Las calientitas para ...
C: Huh-uh. Mira. Las quemadas para mamá. Las ... las calientitas para papá.
M: Ah. Las calientitas para mamá.
C: ¡Huh-uh! ¡No! Las ... las calientitas para mamá. Las ...
... las calientitas para papá.
M: Ah. ¿Las quemaditas?
C: Para ... para mamá.
M: Las quemaditas para mamá y ...
C: Las calientitas para papá.
M: Las calientitas para papá.

**Page 204: Carlos and Sally**

Sally: Mira. ¿Lo leo? "No, no, no, Juana." (laughter)
Carlos: Porque lo dijo la maestra y tú lo aprendiste.
S: Huh-uh.
C: Sí, es cierto.

**Page 204: Carlos and Martha**

Carlos: ¿Quién es?
Martha: Eh ... eh ... eh ...
C: Comienza con la "I" y con la "O."
M: Oooooo ...
C: Con la "O," luego con la "I."
C: León.
APPENDIX G

SAMPLE STREAM-OF-BEHAVIOR CHRONICLE

AND OBSERVATION PROTOCOL FOR ONE BOOK
APPENDIX G

Sample Stream-of-Behavior Chronicle

and Observation Protocol for One Book

Tape #5, Counter 5362

VIRGINIA (Session 5) with Thomas and Ray

2/13/90

8:42-8:54

Virginia sits down with her body turned partially away from the table. She has her back to Thomas and her profile to Ray. She seems to be combining the teacher position and privacy position. She has a small stuffed bear she has brought from home that I wasn't aware of. She tries to position it in her lap to serve as her audience but ends up setting it on the table in front of her. She chooses Winter and opens it holding it in the teacher position. She states an original title—"The Mystery of the Snow"—in a rather loud voice and glances at Ray to see if he is attending. She seems uninterested in Thomas. It appears that she is going to engage in a pretend reading, but stops to attend to Ray's pretend reading of his book. When he arrives at the page of the kitten, she interrupts excitedly and identifies herself as the kitten. Then she returns to her own pretend
reading. She uses an extremely soft voice and is drowned out by Ray's voice. When she arrives at pages 19-20, she raises her voice and says, "A star would come out that would shine a lot." Thomas has a class-made book and says, "Jack made this one, didn't he? 'J.' 'J.'" Then he turns the page. Ray says, "This is Virginia." This attracts her attention and she turns to say, "Huh-uh. Oh, yes. Let me see."

Thomas: It says "Virginia" there.

Virginia: Oh, yes. It's mine. And that's Martha.

Connie's.

Thomas: Nicholas! How ugly.

Ray: Oooh! Nicholas! How ugly!

Virginia returns to her book and continues with her pretend reading. "They greeted their family while the man was running. They gave a horse to the little girl. They gave an Indian (unintelligible) to the big boy. They gave a clown (unintelligible) to the big girl. Now the bear is asleep. And snip, snap, snout. This tale's told out." At 8:46 she puts the book away and chooses a second book. [Note: All student dialogue originally was in Spanish. It has been translated into English for this appendix.]
Child:  Virginia  
Date:  2/13/90  
Event:  1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8  
Title:  El invierno  
Time On Task:  12:37  

Emergent Reading Behaviors  
Sense-making Strategies  
☐ Silently Studying  
☐ Discussing Book  
☒ Pretend Reading  
☐ Aspectual Reading  
☐ Recitation From Memory  
☐ Holistic (Conventional)  
☐ Browsing  

Print  
Orientation  
☐ correct  
☐ incorrect  
☐ control  
☐ Graphophonemic Information  

Evaluation  
☐ simple  
☐ purpose  

Social Behaviors  

Play  
☐ book  
☐ language  
☐ guessing  

Teacher Play  
☒ Pretend audience — little stuffed bear she had brought from home  
☐ actual audience  
☐ student  

☒ Privacy position — She combined both.  
☐ Coaching  

☐ Collaboration  

Book Conventions  
Orientation  
☒ correct  
☐ incorrect  

Titles  
☐ Actual  
☐ Derivative  
☒ Original — El misterio de la nieve  

Miscellaneous  
☐ Cover  
☐ Title page  
☐ Author/Illustrator  
☐ Index  
☐ Other
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