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CREATING CONTEXT WITHIN TEXT:
AN INVESTIGATION OF PRIMARY-GRADE CHILDREN'S
CHARACTER INTRODUCTIONS IN STORIES

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By
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*****

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1985

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To Bill and my parents
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CONVENTION PAPERS


- v -
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I. INTRODUCTION

Research on language acquisition has shown that the relationship between language and meaning is not a constant one. Initially, the linguistic channel carries little of the intended meaning. Children's messages are interpreted primarily from clues found in the physical context of the speech event, accompanying gestures and behaviors, and shared knowledge of experiences and intentions (Francis, 1975; Donaldson, 1978; Cook-Gumperz, 1977). Bloom's classic example (1970) of the phrase "Mommy sock" uttered in a variety of contextual settings illustrates the contextually dependent nature of children's earliest speech events. With development, however, more of the meaning is encoded in the linguistic channel, and language becomes less dependent on a contextual crutch.

Although it is clear that a progressive movement from contextually-dependent language to autonomous language exists, it is misleading to view this growth as the
gradual replacement of the former by the latter.¹ No doubt language matures beyond the "Mommy sock" stage, but context-dependent language continues as a common form of language, appropriate in certain situations. In fact, the description of ordinary adult conversational language provided by Olson and Torrance (1981) sounds quite similar to the description provided by language acquisition theorists of children's initial speech events.

Our suggestion is that in ordinary conversational language what is said provides only some cues to what the speaker intends. The shared prior knowledge, the shared perceptual context, preceding utterances in the conversation, the assumed biases of the listener plus prosody, intonation and stress cues all share in the expression and recovery of the speaker's intention. What is said or lexicalized is only a fragmentary representation of what was meant (p. 236).

Although in certain situations context-dependent language is appropriate and felicitous, in other situations more autonomous language is required. This contrast can be illustrated if a distinction is made between the reference frame of the communication event and the reference frame of the message event.²

¹ The distinction between context-dependent language and autonomous language is not meant to suggest that autonomous language is not context sensitive. In fact, both forms of language are constructed with regard to contextual considerations.

² Reichenbach (1947), in a detailed discussion of shifting time frames in communication events, describes
The reference frame of the communication event consists of information about the situation surrounding the actual verbalization (e.g., time, place, participants, props).

The reference frame of the message event consists of similar information about the situation surrounding the event being communicated (e.g., where and when did it take place, who was there).

In situations where the reference frame of a communication event and the reference frame of a message event coincide, context-dependent language is appropriate. The speaker does not need to delineate linguistically the components of the message's frame of reference since this information is available in the reference frame of the communication event. A statement such as "Put it over there" is understood in such situations because message event referents for the identity of the addressee and for the pronouns "it" and "there" can be found in the reference frame of the communication event. As long as we speak only of ongoing events found in the immediate situational context, context-dependent language is functional.

differences in speech time, reference time, and event time. Although time is only one aspect of reference frames, his work provided a theoretical foundation for the distinction between the reference frame of the communication event and the reference frame of the message event used in this study.
Fortunately, we are not restricted to talking about the present situation. Language affords us the opportunity of communicating past, future and imagined events. This function of language, however, operates under a different set of principles. No longer can the reference frame of the communication event be used to interpret the referents mentioned in the message event; now, referents in the message event must be verbally constructed. The following renditions of a familiar nursery rhyme illustrate the difference in the forms of language used when the reference frame of the communication event and the message event are shared (context-dependent language) and when they differ (autonomous language).

Shared Reference Frames

She fed them that stuff on the table. Then she spanked them and put them over there.

Different Reference Frames

There was an old woman who lived in a shoe. She had so many children she didn't know what to do; She gave them some broth without any bread; She whipped them all soundly and put them to bed.

These examples show that the use of context-dependent or autonomous language is not a matter of correctness but rather of felicity with regard to audience accommodation. For the purpose of this study, felicitous introductions of entities is defined as follows:
FELICITOUS INTRODUCTION: A linguistic structure which reflects awareness of audience perspective.

If the message is rooted in the "here-and-now" of the communication event, felicity can be achieved with minimal verbal construction of the message's reference frame. The message sender is justified in using referring expressions in conjunction with the immediate situation. However, if the message involves a different reference frame, requirements of felicitous language with regard to audience perspective are altered. In these cases, the message sender must verbally construct the referents to which the receiver has no access.

One obvious communication situation requiring autonomous language is the use of the written mode to address an abstract audience. In situations of this type, the communication event may be subdivided into the composing event and the receiving event. Typically, the receiving event does not coincide in time with the composing event; therefore, rarely does the receiver of a written message have access to situational information surrounding the transcription of the message. Hence, it is irrelevant whether the writer's message is rooted in a reference frame equivalent to or different from the composing event. Due to the separation of the composing
event and the receiving event, the reference frame for the message event must be linguistically encoded. In consideration of the message receiver's inaccessibility to situational features surrounding the composing event, Olson (1977) concluded that it is in the written mode that autonomous language reaches its extreme.

Even though the distinction between autonomous language and context-dependent language is neatly illustrated in the juxtaposition of formal written prose and everyday oral conversation based on ongoing events, it is a misconception to view this distinction as a dichotomy. Linguistically encoded messages fall along a cline ranging from highly context-dependent to highly autonomous. Additionally, it is overly simplistic to associate autonomous language with the written mode and context-dependent language with the oral mode. Context-dependent written language exists (e.g., note passing) as does autonomous oral language (e.g., oral storytelling).

**The Problem**

From this theoretical discussion of context-dependent and autonomous language, it appears that the task before children is not simply one of learning how to construct autonomous language. The more important task is to be
able to assess the degree to which the situation requires autonomous language. Of course, this distinction cannot be made without exposure to situations contrasting the use of context-dependent and autonomous language. Olson (1981) contended that context-dependent language is characteristic of preschool communications, but autonomous language is the form used in schools. Therefore, for many children, school entry is characterized by an abrupt immersion in an unfamiliar language form—the autonomous form of language associated with literacy. Olson attributed much of children's failure in school to an unfamiliarity with the language required.

Olson's contention that preschool communication is primarily of the context-dependent variety is supported by numerous studies (e.g., Francis, 1975; Donaldson, 1978; Cook-Gumperz, 1977). However, preschool exposure to autonomous language comes from at least one rich source—stories. Stories shared with children are centered on past events, real or pretend, set in a context different from the physical context surrounding the actual story-sharing activity. In addition, stories contained in books are addressed to an abstract "unknowing" audience. Consequently, this language form requires the verbalization of a reference frame: the characters and
setting of the story world imagined by the author must be constructed within the confines of the text.

Preschool children encounter stories in both receptive and expressive activities. Not only are they read and told stories, they also engage in relating real and pretend experiences of their own. As expected, these first attempts are marked by ambiguous reference to unestablished reference frames. Through adult scaffolding, however, children gradually become more skilled at verbalizing the needed reference frames for their narratives. Brown's (1973) observation of a young girl negotiating a "happening" with her mother provides a simple illustration of this process.

Sarah: The cat is dead
Mother: What cat?

Sarah provided information about a certain cat, assuming that her mother could identify the cat. What Sarah did not take into account was that a primary component of the message's reference frame, namely the main character, was not a part of the reference frame of the communication event and, therefore, not accessible to her mother. In pointing out her difficulty in finding a referent, Sarah's mother highlighted the need for verbally encoding frames of reference in particular situations.
The Focus of the Study

The major concern of the present study is children's ability to create context within text. Specifically, the focus is on the introduction of characters in stories. The study is grounded in the assumption that the felicitous construction of character introductions, like all language development, is variable rather than absolute (Bloom, 1970); therefore, it is assumed that features of the story-creating task will influence the felicity of character introductions.

The present study of linguistic encodings of character introductions is structured to reflect the hierarchical nature of language. The examination of character introductions is not reduced to an analysis of noun phrases. Rather, character introductions are viewed as the linguistic encoding of a noun phrase within a clause within a text within a contextual setting. Thus, the study necessarily entails not only classifications of felicity, but also categorizations of contextual features as well as categorizations of linguistic decisions made by the children themselves.

The story genre is a particularly apt language form for investigating the variability in children's ability to verbalize reference frames. Not only is it a form which
requires autonomous language both in its oral and written versions, it is also a genre which is familiar to children (e.g., Applebee, 1978; Mandler and Johnson, 1977). Given children's experiences with and demonstrated knowledge of this genre, it can be assumed that children's lack or inconsistent use of verbalized reference frames for story tasks is not due to an inability to construct autonomous language but to linguistic variables and/or contextual features surrounding and constituting the task (e.g., Bartlett & Scribner, 1982; King & Rentel, 1982).

A focus on character introductions is well-suited for a study of the verbalization of reference frames also. Although reference frames involve a variety of information concerning setting, mood, intentions, and past action, character establishment is the most basic component for story creations. Without character entities there would be no story.

**The Significance of the Study**

The significance of the study lies not in the particular focus upon character introductions in stories but in its more global setting of children's ability to deal with situations requiring autonomous text. Considering that children's success in school greatly depends on this
ability (e.g., Olson, 1981; Cook-Gumperz, 1977), it is a research area that needs attention. Setting sight on one specific feature of one specific genre of autonomous text is advantageous in that it sufficiently narrows the field of focus so that we can begin to describe the intralinguistic relationships affecting children's success in creating autonomous text. Only after these intralinguistic relationships are examined can we begin to interpret the effects of manipulative contextual factors and begin to better understand the problems children encounter in coping with the autonomous language of literacy.

The study is also significant in that it departs from an assumption underlying many language arts curricula. The present study does not operate under the assumption that language development can be described as a sequential mastery of isolated skills. Rather the operative constructs concerning language development for the present study are (1) that language abilities develop simultaneously, (2) that language abilities are best reflected in meaningful and functional communicative events, and (3) that the degree to which successful linguistic encoding is achieved in any particular situation remains variable throughout life. Thus, the present study is not bound to simplistic correct/incorrect classifications nor to the
examination of an isolated "skill." Instead, the complexity of the linguistic encoding process can be studied and the relationships of intralinguistic and contextual features can be described.

**Theoretical Frame**

The formulation of the problem was based on the distinction between the reference frame of the communication event and the reference frame of the message event. This theoretical frame was addressed in a previous section. The theoretical frame providing the foundation for the analysis procedures has only been mentioned in passing, however. The major construct serving as the basis of the analysis procedures is that the linguistic nature of character introductions reflects the hierarchical nature of language. Introductions are viewed in this study as a noun phrase embedded within a clause embedded within a text of a particular genre influenced by a social context. Issues involved at each of these levels are of great importance to the analysis procedures of the study.
The Noun Phrase (NP)

Typically a character is introduced in a written or oral story with a NP beginning with an indefinite determiner. Although the indefinite determiner signals non-identifiability, it also instructs the audience to open a specific file for the character (DuBois, 1980). Appearance of an indefinite determiner with a "character-like" noun does not always indicate an introductory NP, however. Indefinite determiners are utilized for numerous functions--only one being to signal the opening of a new character file. Indefinite NPs may be non-referential, referential-generic, referential-non-specific, or referential specific (DuBois, 1980). These four classifications are illustrated in the following set of clauses.

1. Snow White is a princess
2. A princess has servants
3. The queen wanted a princess
4. Once upon a time there was a princess

In (1), the underlined NP is non-referential. It functions as an attribute of Snow White and cannot be referred to with subsequent definite mention. In (2), the underlined NP is referential since it can hold its identity with subsequent mention; it is generic since its referent
is not responsive to the semantic distinction between singular and plural (e.g., "Princesses have servants" works just as well). The underlined NP in (3) is also referential but is non-specific since it does not presuppose existence of the referent. Only in (4) does the NP represent a unique entity which carries an assertion of existence and holds its identity over time, thus being both referential and specific. These distinctions are diagrammed in Figure 1.

![Diagram of Referentiality, Genericness, and Specificity of NPs]

Only NPs that are referential and specific represent story characters; consequently, the present study focuses
on NPs of this nature. Thus, character introductions can be further defined as the first textual mention of a referential-specific entity representing a human, an animal, or a personified object.

The opening of referential-specific character files is not restricted to indefinite references (Chafe, 1976; Prince, 1981; DuBois, 1980). Characters may be inferable from previously established characters as the following set of clauses illustrates.

5. Once upon a time in a far away place lived a beautiful princess
6. The queen was very jealous

Since it is assumed to be common knowledge that the princess introduced in (5) would have a queen as a mother (or stepmother), "the queen" can be introduced with definite reference in (6) based on inferable information.

Similarly, the establishment of situational frames allows the introduction of characters with definite reference.

7. Once upon a time a princess was locked up
8. The guard brought her a bowl of soup and a piece of bread once a day

A "prison" frame is established in (7) and sets the stage for a definite introduction in (8) of "the guard."
DuBois (1980) also observed that character introduc-
tions can be introduced as definite if a possessive adject-
tive or a relative clause provides identifying informa-
tion. Prince (1981) made a similar observation, referring
to this phenomenon as anchoring. This term is applied to
cases in which the first mention of an entity is identifi-
able because it is anchored in a previously identified
entity. Although Prince's examples were only of NPs
connected to an identifiable entity via a relative clause,
it seems reasonable to assume that anchoring would also
include character introductions tied to identifiable enti-
ties through possessive articles as noted by DuBois as
well as through prepositional phrases. The following
clauses illustrate these three types of anchoring.

9. A princess and her fairy godmother lived in a
castle

10. The keeper of the castle was very nice

11. The man who owned the castle was very mean

In (9) the new entity is related to a previously-intro-
duced entity with the use of a possessive determiner. A
prepositional phrase is used in (10) to anchor the new
entity to the previously-established castle in (9). In

3 DuBois restricted this practice to "unremarkable" infor-
mation, noting the difference in "The woman Bill passed
on the street last night was mean to him" and "The woman
Bill married last night was mean to him."
(11) a relative clause which includes explicit reference to the castle in (9) provides the motivation for the felicitous introductory definite NP.

Another character-introduction strategy permitting definite NPs is partitioning. If a set entity is established in previous text, a member of this set can be partitioned off with definite reference if enough information is provided to make the referent identifiable to the audience. Clauses (12) and (13) illustrate this strategy.

12. Once upon a time there were three princesses
13. The youngest one was very beautiful

In (12) a set of "princesses" is introduced indefinitely since the set is unidentifiable to the audience. Definite reference is used in (13) for the first mention of a single member of this set. This strategy is permissible since the superlative enables the audience to identify the specific referent in the set of referents. In contrast, "The princess was very beautiful" would not be a felicitous introduction since the referring expression does not allow the audience to identify a specific member of the set.

Definite introductions are also acceptable when the referent is a unique entity considered to be "common knowledge" (e.g., "The Pope," "Spiderman"). These
expressions are referred to by Halliday and Hasan (1976) as homophoric. Additionally, definite introductions are used if the referent is known to be part of a particular addressee's knowledge base (e.g., "the teacher"). These introductions are referred to by Prince (1981) as new-unused and by Hasan (1984) as restricted exophora. A homophoric encoding of an introduction represents an identifiable status for a generalized audience and, therefore, is classified as autonomous. An encoding involving restricted exophora, however, represents an identifiable status for only a restricted audience and, therefore, is context-dependent.

The concepts of definiteness and identifiablity as applied to NPs are of much concern to the present study of the textual creation of characters. What is essential to keep in mind, however, is that identifiability and definiteness are not equivalent concepts. Identifiablity is determined by the ability of the audience to interpret the intended referent from information in the available situation, shared knowledge, or prior text. Of course, for situations requiring autonomous language, the information bank is restricted to prior text and "common knowledge." Definiteness, on the other hand, is determined by a formal
classification of determiners.\textsuperscript{4} The present study must be concerned, therefore, with at least three classifications at the NP level: indefinite-felicitous and definite-infelicitous as well as definite-felicitous.

From this review of observations related to referential-specific expressions, an initial working definition for character introductions can be formulated:

\textbf{CHARACTER INTRODUCTION:} The first discrete and unique textual mention of a referential-specific entity representing a human, an animal, or a personified object.

This definition includes linguistic encodings marking referents which are identifiable to the audience through inference, anchoring, or partitioning since these encodings reflect a referent not previously mentioned as discrete and unique.

This review also facilitates the formulation of initial working guidelines for classifications of felicity:

\textsuperscript{4} Extensive discussions of the grammatical concept of definiteness as expressed in the English article system is provided by Christopherson (1939) and Kramsky (1972).
Unidentifiable Referents: An indefinite introductory NP is used to refer initially to a new character with a referent which is unidentifiable to the audience.

Common-knowledge Referents: A definite introductory NP is used to refer initially to a new character with a referent considered to be a part of common knowledge.

Textually-identifiable Referents: A definite introductory NP is used to refer initially to a new character with a referent which is inferable from previous text frames or which is related to previously-established referents through anchoring or partitioning.

The Clause

When we examine only the NPs in a study of referential-specific character introductions, the NPs may appear identical. But as we broaden our focus and consider the introductory clause, NP introductions often become quite distinct. Therefore, the present study has defined the parameters of a character introduction as the NP representing the newly-introduced character (new NP) and its immediate clausal environment.
IMMEDIATE CLAUSAL ENVIRONMENT: If the new NP is classified grammatically as a subject, object, or classifier of an independent clause, the immediate clausal environment equals the independent clause. If the new NP is not a subject, object, or classifier of an independent clause but is a subject, object, or classifier of a dependent clause, the immediate clausal environment is the dependent clause.

Examples of immediate clausal environments for character introductions follow. The T-unit (defined by Hunt, 1965, as an independent clause and all its dependent clauses) is used for illustrative purposes. Immediate clausal environments as defined by this study are underlined. New NPs are in caps.

14. A FOX saw the duck
15. The fox saw A DUCK
16. The fox went to HIS GRANDMOTHER's house
17. Once upon a time there was A FOX who ate ducks
18. There was a fox eating ducks
19. The fox who ate A DUCK wiped his mouth

Examinations of the immediate clausal environments of character introductions result in observations of numerous linguistic features. This study focuses on linguistic distinctions of function. Consider the following clauses with identical introductory NPs.
20. A princess was very sad
21. A princess was eaten by a dragon
22. A princess had three ugly stepsisters
23. A princess was behind the rock
24. A princess came up
25. A princess kissed a prince
26. A princess yelled
27. The prince saw a princess
28. Once upon a time there was a princess

First, a difference in NP function is apparent. An analysis of Clauses (20)-(28) shows a variety of semantic roles, even though the verbalizations of the NPs are identical. Using the semantic roles of experiencer, patient, agent, and goal explicated by Longacre (1983), we can distinguish the introductions by the function of each NP within its clausal environment. In (20) and (21) the introductory NPs can be classified as experiencer. According to Longacre, entities which assume roles of this nature do so in clauses in which the entity's "registering nervous system" is relevant to predication. The role of patient differs from the role of experiencer in that the entity's "registering nervous system" is not relevant to the predication. The predicate may involve descriptions of a predicated state, location, or action, but the
emphasis must be on the predication rather than the "feelings" of the entity. Clauses (22)-(24) illustrate introductory NPs in the role of patient. The role of patient with an action verb is similar to the role of agent, differing only in the degree of intentionality. The agent role, according to Longacre, involves an intentional instigation of a process or action; the patient role involves little or no intentionality. The action of an agent may be explicitly directed to another entity as seen in (25) or non-directive as seen in (26). The role of goal, illustrated in (27), is similar to the role of experiencer in (21). Both involve an action being directed toward them by an agent. For a goal, however, this directed action is mandatory; for an experiencer, it is optional (compare 20 and 21). The feature that distinguishes the experiencer role in (21) from the goal role in (27) is the degree of change in the entity. Being eaten constitutes a major change; being seen, however, is relatively unaffected. The introductory NP in (28) seems to defy conventional classifications of semantic roles. Although most closely associated with the definition of patient, the predication is of existence rather than that of state or location. Therefore, for this study, introductory NPs in formulaic existential constructions
will be classified as **existential patient** (cf. Halliday, 1967).

Although the function of the NP within its clausal environment is important to character introductions, DuBois (1980) contended that the function of the introductory clause within the text is also important. DuBois defined two types of discourse modes. The **narrative mode** was defined as clauses with the function of advancing the story. Briefly, these clauses serve as the foreground information and propel the narrative forward in time. The **descriptive mode**, according to DuBois, includes information of categorizations, descriptions, and relationships between participants—information that could be considered background. DuBois observed that introductory NPs appeared commonly in subject as well as non-subject positions of narrative clauses and in the subject position of descriptive clauses, but rarely in non-subject positions of descriptive clauses. It appears from this observation that not only is the function of the NP within the clause a distinguishing feature of character introductions, but the function of the clause within the text also provides distinguishing information.

Although categorizations of semantic roles can be made by analyzing NPs within their immediate clausal
environments, categorizations of felicity often require the aid of preceding text if inferencing, anchoring, or partitioning is involved. The next section addresses features of textual decisions which influence character introductions.

The Text

Just as new character NPs do not exist untouched by the clauses in which they are embedded, NPs and clauses do not remain untouched by the surrounding text. Inferable characters introduced at the NP as definite meet the requirements for felicity not at the NP or clausal level but at the text level. The prior textual establishment of frames provides the stimulation for inferable introductions. Similarly, it is the preceding text that permits anchoring and partitioning.

The ordering of character NPs and textual frames is not a random process but is girded by a process Chafe (1977) referred to as chunking. In a description of content-related processes involved in the reconstruction of an event, Chafe contended that the semantic material of an event has to be broken down into a linear ordering of "chunks" and "subchunks" before verbalization can take place. This chunking process provides the structure for
the text. After the chunking has been accomplished, elements of subchunks are assigned semantic roles at the clausal level (a process Chafe referred to as "propositionalizing") and then assigned a verbal representation (a process referred to as "categorizing"). From this description it is apparent that chunking and subchunking decisions made at the text level affect decisions at the clause level concerning the role of the clause within the text and the semantic role of the new NP within the clause. These decisions in turn affect decisions at the NP level concerning textual identifiability and, therefore, NP lexical representation (e.g., choice of determiner).

The Social Context

In the verbalization of any idea (including a story), lexical, syntactic, and textual decisions appear to form a hierarchy of complex interactions. However, the hierarchy does not end with the text but extends into its social context. Halliday and Hasan (1976) describe the context as consisting of field (concerns of content), tenor (concerns of relationships between participants), and mode (concerns of the channel of communication). Translating these three dimensions into the social setting for a
story, we can begin to see the range of variables introduced by the **immediate social context**. Issues of field, involving relationships between storycreator and story material, would include variables such as choice (e.g., Is the story topic assigned or chosen, a retelling or self-generated?). Issues of tenor, describing relationships between storycreator and audience, would include variables such as audience type (e.g., Is the story created for a friend, a teacher, a younger sibling?), atmosphere (e.g., Is the atmosphere supportive or critical?), and shared knowledge (e.g., Does the receiver have some knowledge of the message event?). Issues of mode would focus on the channel of transmitting the story (e.g., writing, oral composing).

The above issues deal primarily with the immediate social context for the storycreating activity. However, an **extended social context**, which includes prior experiences weighing upon the storycreating act, must be considered also. The extended social contexts for young storycreators involve the quality and quantity of children's previous exposure to stories and storycreation opportunities as well as their range of everyday experiences (e.g., what they talk about, what they see, what they visit, even where they go on vacation). Story
experiences such as being read to, reading for oneself, listening to the anecdotes of family and friends, even watching television result in a body of knowledge concerning story constructions. These experiences, along with the multiplicity of knowledge they acquire from just experiencing their world in less-structured formats, stimulate the semantic material for their storycreations as well as help scaffold the structure of these creations.

The theoretical discussion of language processing and social context variables implies a hierarchy of interrelated issues concerning character introductions. These issues range from the background one brings to the story-creating task to the selection of a determiner for the introductory NP. This hierarchy of issues is summarized in Figure 2.

Given the hierarchical nature of character introductions, variability in children's use of autonomous language to introduce characters in stories would not be surprising. What this study proposes is to investigate the variability within the discussed theoretical frame in an attempt to specify factors affecting felicitous character introductions. Although the study is focused narrowly upon character introductions, its broader theme is concerned with a better understanding of the linguistic
Extended Social Context
Immediate Social Context
Material and Filters for Language Production
Language Processing

Figure 2: A Hierarchy of Research Concerns

and contextual factors influencing children's development in the creation of contexts within texts.

The Secondary Nature of the Analysis

The present study is a secondary analysis of longitudinal data collected and analyzed by Martha King and Victor Rentel at The Ohio State University. The primary analysis, a project funded by the National Institute of Education, focused on the realignment of cohesive devices as children make the transition from oracy to literacy (cf. King & Rentel, 1981). Subsequent secondary analyses

5 See Rentel (in press) for a discussion concerning the theoretical importance of secondary analyses.
of the data base have contributed to a clearer picture of
the development of children's text-forming strategies by
using more refined measures of coherence (e.g., King &
Rentel, 1982; Rentel, King, Pettegrew, & Pappas, 1983;
Rentel, Kidd, & Kuhner, 1984). This particular study adds
another finer-tuned exploration of a different research
avenue suggested by the primary analysis. Specifically,
the initial work indicated that children's use of inappro-
priate context-dependent ties in written texts decreases
over time. It was the purpose of this study to analyze
this phenomenon within a framework reflective of the
current state of knowledge concerning children's ability
to create autonomous text.

Due to the ever-growing body of knowledge concerning
factors affecting children's text-forming strategies,
assumptions providing the foundation of the primary
analysis do not match exactly assumptions of the present
study. Specifically, the assumption that text-forming
strategies used in the oral mode are realigned to meet the
needs of the written mode has been reformulated with the
emphasis on a realignment of context-dependent language to
meet the needs of situations requiring autonomous language
(either oral or written). Although these two assumptions
are closely related, they reflect a fine distinction
stemming from an updated perspective on the nature of "school" language (e.g., Olson, 1981). Further, the questions for the present study are based on a history of research not available when the questions for the primary analysis were being generated. These modifications in assumptions and questions which mark the distinctions between the King-Rentel primary analysis and this secondary analysis reflect the cumulative nature of scientific inquiry. But the methods implicit in the primary analysis impose an inherent weakness on this secondary analysis. Specifically, methodological decisions were preset for the secondary analysis and could not be modified to address certain questions inspired by the more recent literature (e.g., negotiatory nature of text productions). Nevertheless, the King-Rentel longitudinal data provided a rich source for a preliminary investigation of children's ability to create autonomous text.

Overview of the Study

A review of the research on the felicity of referring expressions (referential-specific NPs) includes not only studies of entity introductions when the referent is not identifiable to the audience but also studies of referring
expressions when the referent is existing in previous text (anaphoric reference) or existing in the reference frame of the communication event (exophoric reference). Interestingly, a synthesis of this research shows variation in the successful linguistic encoding of all types of referring expressions for both children and adults as tasks vary. Developmentally, however, the success rate for the felicitous linguistic encoding of referring expressions improves dramatically during the primary grades—a phenomenon predicted by Olson's (1981) argument that the school setting (unlike the home setting) requires the comprehension and production of autonomous text. Although it is clear that contextual and linguistic factors contribute to the success rate for both children and adults, the research findings indicate that children below the age of nine are most susceptible to inhibiting task-specific factors. The review of literature on referring expressions is presented in Chapter 2.

Character introductions in first and second graders' written stories, dictated stories, and oral retellings were examined in the present study. The stories used were part of a longitudinal data base and provided contrasts not only in development, but also in mode (written vs. oral) and choice with oral mode held constant (create a
story vs. retell a story). In addition, the 1576 character introductions found in the stories provided a wide range of linguistic encodings for examination. These contrasts facilitated the investigation of the present study's general question.

Do developmental, contextual, and linguistic features affect the felicity of character introductions in children's stories?

Specific questions for the independent variables, development, mode, and choice, are provided in Chapter 3 along with further information concerning subjects, collection methods, and analysis procedures.

The analysis of character introductions proceeded in two stages. Stage I of the analysis consisted of a qualitative examination of the data. This stage of the analysis served several purposes: (1) to define linguistic classifications at the levels of NP and clause, (2) to identify different forms of felicitous and infelicitous character introductions, (3) to refine guidelines for felicity judgements, (4) to generate specific questions concerning linguistic variables, and (5) to design appropriate testing procedures based on the nature of the questions and on the nature of the data. A discussion of these classification systems, observations, questions, and testing procedures are found in Chapter 4.
The quantitative-testing procedures outlined in Stage I were carried out in Stage II of the analysis. Coding reliability and results of statistical testing are reported in Chapter 5. Observations from the qualitative analysis and results of the quantitative testing are synthesized in the final chapter of the study. Chapter 6 also includes limitations of the study, directions for future research, and implications for research and instruction.
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON REFERRING EXPRESSIONS

Studies concerned with the felicity of referential-specific referring expressions can be sorted into two major classifications. Studies of existing referents are concerned with referring expressions which point to a referent already existing in the text, in the reference frame of the communication event, or in the personal knowledge base of the message receiver. Studies of unidentifiable referents are concerned with referring expressions with referents which the message receiver cannot identify on first mention. Although concern with the felicity of referring expressions leads to investigations of both types of referents, the two will be discussed separately since issues relating to their felicitous use differ.
Literature on Introductions with Existing Referents

At least two distinctions can be made concerning the nature of referring expressions pointing to existing referents. First are distinctions of location of referent. If the referent is to be found in prior text, the expression is said to be anaphoric. If the referent is to be found in the communication situation or personal knowledge of the message receiver, the expression is said to be exophoric. Second is the distinction of partitioning. If the referent for the referring expression matches in identity and number with the pre-existing referent to which it is pointing, the expression is non-partitioned. If the referent for the referring expression is a subset of the existing referent to which it is pointing, the expression is partitioned. These distinctions are illustrated in Table 1. The research focusing on the anaphoric and exophoric versions of non-partitioned referring expressions will be reviewed first, followed by the research on the anaphoric and exophoric versions of partitioned referring expressions.
TABLE 1

Examples of Referring Expressions with Existing Referents along Two Dimensions

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<td>Non-Partitioned Referring Expressions</td>
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**Anaphoric.** Non-initial or anaphoric referring expressions are interpreted through previously-mentioned
entities in the discourse. A definite article and pronominalization are the most common forms of anaphora. These linguistic devices are used consistently for anaphoric mentions of non-partitioned entities from a very early age (Maratsos, 1976; Karmiloff-Smith, 1979; Warden, 1976). Unfortunately, this strategy is not always sufficient for the unambiguous encoding of an anaphoric expression. When multiple non-partitioned entities have been introduced into the text, the use of these linguistic devices does not guarantee identifiability for the message receiver (e.g., Sally and Vera were having a party. SHE was going to bake the cake). It is ambiguities of this type that have been the concern of several research studies.

Bartlett and Scribner (1981) asked third, fourth, fifth, and sixth grade subjects to write a narrative based on a common "starter idea." An examination of the referring expressions in these texts indicated that children's ability to refer unambiguously to a previously-mentioned non-partitioned entity is variable. Although ambiguous anaphoric expressions constituted only 4% of the total number of observed referring expressions, two-thirds of the children produced at least one ambiguous expression. Further, Bartlett and Scribner found that the proportion
of ambiguous expressions to total expressions was approximately the same from third to fifth grade but in sixth grade this proportion increased. They argued that the sixth grade subjects were creating more complex situations which required more than a simple definite reference to achieve felicity. An analysis of the textual environments surrounding ambiguous references indicated that, indeed, ambiguous references were more likely to occur in texts involving at least two characters of the same sex and/or same age than in texts not containing similar characters. These findings parallel Loban's (1976) classic longitudinal study of children language development which showed a steady decrease of ambiguous pronominalization until junior high when a sudden increase was observed.

In a study of adult subjects classified as "thought-disordered schizophrenics," "non-thought-disordered schizophrenics" and "normal," Rochester and Martin (1977) had subjects participate in three speech situations: (1) an unstructured interview, (2) a description and interpretation of ten cartoon pictures, and (3) a retelling of a narrative which was read to each subject. The findings showed that once entities had been established in speech texts, ambiguous anaphoric reference was miniscule for all classifications of subject across all tasks (less than 2%
of total anaphoric references). It could not be ascertained from the report, however, if "complex" situations described by Bartlett and Scribner contributed to the rare occurrences of ambiguous anaphoric reference.

Although subsequent textual mentions of an entity are usually of a definite nature, DuBois (1980), in a study of adult retellings of a silent film, noticed deviations from this pattern. He identified three major situations in which indefinite NPs were used for non-initial mentions. First were situations involving false starts. Second were situations involving digressions. Third were situations involving infelicitous first mentions. A repetition of an indefinite introduction is not surprising in situations involving false starts, but in the other two situations the distinction between initial and subsequent mentions is less clear. In cases of digressions, non-initial indefinite referring expressions may be a function of the storyteller's inability to keep track of the story. In essence, some entities are introduced twice. DuBois described the third situation as a "premature" definite introduction followed by an indefinite mention. In these cases, it would seem that the indefinite subsequent mention is functioning as the felicitous introduction; the initial definite expression is mentioned "before its time"
and functions as a "misplaced" anaphoric expression. Again, one could argue that the infelicity of the definite first mention is due to a problem of story structure.

It appears that texts produced by children and adults feature little ambiguous reference to previously-established entities. When abnormalities do occur, however, they seem to be more a function of a complex cast or an unstructured retelling rather than cognitive development.

Exophoric. Studies of non-partitioned exophoric referring expressions show a variability similar to that for non-partitioned anaphoric referring expressions. Although a swift development in the felicitous encoding of non-partitioned exophoric reference was noted by Maratsos (1976) and Brown (1973), Karmiloff-Smith (1979) outlined a much more complex development.

Maratsos and Brown, in two different studies, concluded that by the age of three, children are using the definite article consistently to refer to a non-partitioned entity which is identifiable to the message receiver due to its existence in the reference frame of the communication event. In an investigation of subjects ages three to nine, Karmiloff-Smith also observed that children between ages three and four used definite articles felicitously
for exophoric reference of this type with no deviations. However, between ages five and eight, she observed inappropriate occurrences of indefinite articles (e.g., there is one ball on the floor and the child asks for "A ball" instead of "THE ball"). She argued that this regression reflected an inconsistent control of the article system for the encoding of exophoric expressions. It was not until age nine that the consistent use of the definite article reemerged.

Partitioned Referring Expressions

Reviews of research on partitioned anaphoric and partitioned exophoric referring expressions will be discussed jointly since the overriding felicity issue in both is sufficient distinguishing information. Tasks used to study the ability to felicitously encode reference to an entity partitioned from a set of entities involve phoric pointing to sets in the communication situation (visibly-defined sets) as well as in story-like texts (verbally-defined sets). Two types of felicitous responses are possible in partitioning tasks. The subject can forego identifiability and use an indefinite determiner ("an X") or the subject can encode identifiability with a definite article plus some distinguishing information ("the X in
front"; "the smartest X"). If the subject opts for identifiability, but fails to point specifically to that identified entity with linguistic markers, the attempt is considered infelicitous. For example, if the visually- or verbally-defined set is three green frogs and the subject refers to "THE frog," the referring expression is considered infelicitous.

Using a variety of tasks involving stories (verbally-defined sets) and games (visually-defined sets), Maratsos (1976) concluded from data collected on subjects ages three to four that it is in this age span that children come to control the article system if an unidentified stance is taken ("a X"). However, he observed that only the "most able" four-year olds could encode the distinguishing information needed for an identifiable reference ("the smallest X"). Similar conclusions were reached by Brown (1973) in his analysis of naturalistic data collected on three young children. Brown too observed that although the use of indefinite and definite articles became stable between ages two-and-a-half and three-and-a-half, difficulties arose when knowledge of listener and speaker diverged.

Results from an investigation of partitioned referring expressions by Karmiloff-Smith (1979) indicated a
different developmental pattern. Karmiloff-Smith examined two versions of the condition involving visually-defined sets. In one condition, the subject had to ask for one of several similar objects (e.g., balls of different colors); in the second condition the subject has to ask for one of several identical objects (e.g., indistinguishable balls). In the first condition, Karmiloff-Smith found that nearly all three-year olds chose an infelicitous definite article for linguistic encoding. In the age bracket four to eight, children used a variety of encoding strategies, infelicitous definite articles ("THE ball") as well as felicitous definite articles with distinguishing information ("THE RED ball") and felicitous indefinite articles ("A ball"). Not until age nine did children consistently use one of the two felicitous encodings. In the second condition, results were similar. Control of the article system was not observed until age nine. From three to eight, felicitous indefinite articles and infelicitous definite articles coexisted even though a developmental increase toward indefinite articles was obvious. Similar findings were reported when verbally-defined sets were used in the context of a story.
**Factors affecting Felicity**

The majority of the investigations of non-partitioned and partitioned referring expressions with pre-existing referents recognized that although felicitous encoding is a skill affected by development, it cannot be considered an absolute skill attained at a certain point in time. Bartlett and Scribner (1981), Maratsos (1976) and Karmiloff-Smith (1979) observed that the complexity of the story affected the probability of successful linguistic encoding. Maratsos noted that the question used to elicit responses was also an influencing variable. Both Maratsos and Karmiloff-Smith concluded that the entity's semantic type (e.g., human, object) accounted for some variability, with human entities being more prone to infelicitous definite reference than non-human entities. Visibility of the referent also was noted by both Maratsos and Karmiloff-Smith as a confounding variable. In tasks in which the referent was only verbally acknowledged (story tasks), the children were less likely to use an infelicitous definite referring expression than in tasks in which the referent was visible (game tasks).

Although similar investigations were conducted and similar confounding variables were reported, similar interpretations were not always offered. Maratsos
interpreted his findings from a cognitive perspective, concluding that the difficulty young children have in certain cases of linguistic encoding is due to their egocentrism, an inability to take into account the perspective of the listener. Although Maratsos acknowledged that egocentrism is not a "unitary" condition but is affected by other variables, the concept forms the foundation for his interpretation.

According to Karmiloff-Smith, interpretations based on egocentrism assume that children know the adult-accepted functions of articles. She concluded from her findings that this assumption is invalid. Her alternative interpretation is based on the plurifunctional nature of articles. The two general functions she described are the descriptor function, served primarily by indefinite articles, which supplies additional information to entities (e.g., My dog is A poodle) and the determiner function, served by both definite and indefinite articles, which enables the addressee to pick out a referent among other possible candidates.

In charting the development of the function for which children utilize articles, Karmiloff-Smith described three phases. Phase I roughly spans ages three to five. During this phase, children use both indefinite and definite
articles felicitously in their descriptive function but rely heavily on extralinguistic features (e.g., pointing, existence in the physical setting) rather than the article system to convey determining information. According to Karmiloff-Smith, at this time children are unaware of the dual functions of the article system. During Phase II, encompassing ages five to eight, children begin to use linguistic means to mark the determiner function but often use redundant marking. For example, in making an exophoric reference to a non-partitioned ball, instead of using the succinct but unambiguous "THE ball," children during this phase often ask for "THE LITTLE RED ball." Maratsos (1976) reported a similar phenomenon under similar conditions. In the last phase, children come to terms with the plurifunctional nature of articles and overdetermination disappears.

**Literature on Introductions with Unidentifiable Referents**

Studies of referring expressions with unidentifiable referents are restricted to examining non-partitioned introductions since partitioned introductions assume existing set referents.
Non-Partitioned Referring Expressions

Referring expression with unidentifiable referents are felicitous only if the addressee's inability to identify the referent has been recognized and linguistically encoded. Tasks involving "blind" experimenters, physical barriers, and "unknown" audiences have been used in order to observe the linguistic encodings used to refer to entities which are not identifiable to the message receiver.

In a study set up by Warden (1976), children ages three to nine and adults were asked to perform two tasks: (1) describe a simple action event to a blindfolded experimenter, and (2) relate a wordless cartoon strip to a same-age person unfamiliar with the cartoon. In both tasks, all entities were visibly-identifiable for the speaker but unidentifiable for the listener. Warden's focus was on subjects' felicitous use of indefinite introductory phrases. (Definite-inferables were not mentioned, thus assumed to be irrelevant.) He found that children under age five predominantly used infelicitous definite introductory phrases, marking the introduction in accordance with their perspective rather than from the perspective of the listener. Interestingly, however, Warden reported that nearly all the children under age five used some felicitous indefinite introductions.
In Warden's two tasks, children between the ages of five and nine used felicitous introductions more than the younger subjects, but this strategy was inconsistent. King and Rentel (1982), in a longitudinal study of a similar age group, examined dictated and written "original" stories of Kindergarten, first-grade and second-grade children. They observed that for story tasks, there was a decline in infelicitous definite introductions of entities over observations (cases they referred to as "restricted exophora"). For both dictated and written texts, the proportion of infelicitous introductions to total introductions was miniscule by grade two. The developmental patterns showed that the decline was steeper for writing than for dictation. In a companion study, Pettegrew (1981) found that fluent first-grade readers employed fewer infelicitous introductions in their dictated and written stories than did less able first-grade readers.

Studies of older subjects' linguistic encodings of referring expressions with unidentifiable referents show disparate results. Bartlett and Scribner's (1981) study of third, fourth, fifth and sixth grade narratives written in response to a "starter idea," showed that it was the tracking of the entities though the text rather than the
introductions which were problematic. Similarly, Warden (1976) reported no problem with introductory phrases for nine-year-old and adult subjects in either of his two tasks. Rochester and Martin (1977), however, reported a difference in the occurrences of infelicitous introductions between "thought-disordered schizophrenics," "non-thought-disordered schizophrenics," and "normal adults" when they were asked to retell a simple narrative to an "unknowledgeable" listener. The percentage of infelicitous entity introductions to total entity introductions (a condition referred to as an ambiguous "addition") was quite low for "normal" adult subjects (2%). Both "thought-disordered schizophrenics" and "non-thought-disordered schizophrenics" had significantly higher percentages (19% and 12%, respectively). DuBois' (1980) analysis of adult retellings of a silent film resulted in less optimistic findings for "normal" adults. He found numerous occurrences of referring expressions which pointed to the film for interpretation—a context unavailable to the "listener."
Factors Affecting Felicity

The designs of the investigations of referring expressions with referents which are not identifiable to the message receiver help to identify several factors contributing to the success rate of entity introductions. First is the effect of development and the related construct of egocentricism. Warden (1976) argued that with development, children become more able cognitively to consider a different audience perspective. Reading fluency was noted as a contributing factor for first-grade children (Pettegrew, 1981). Social adjustment proved to contribute significantly in a study of adults (Rochester & Martin, 1977). Mode of communication appeared to reflect slightly different success rates for primary-grade children (King & Rentel, 1982).

Only Bartlett and Scribner (1981) and Dubois (1980) included in their investigations analyses of the linguistic encodings of introductory phrases. Bartlett and Scribner's results showed that when felicitous NPs were collapsed over grade levels, 16% of the introductory NPs were characterized by a definite article requiring inference, 22% by an indefinite article, and 10% by a proper name. NP types classified as "other" composed the remaining 52% of the introductory NPs. DuBois' focus was
on using linguistic factors to predict felicity. First, he noted the effect of the semantic type. He found that only 8 of 139 human introductory expressions were infelicitous definite. Additionally, he observed that all but one of the 8 were followed by some sort of self correction. In contrast, he observed that less "movable" and "independent" entities such as body parts and geographical locations were less likely to be introduced with an indefinite felicitous NP. He also noted the influence of the clausal function and the syntatic slot, observing that as long as the introduction was made in the subject or object slot of a narrative clause or in the subject position of a descriptive clause and if the introduction was made within the critical introduction period, the introduction probably would be "uneventful."

Although the variability in the designs provided information as to a range of variables contributing to the felicity of entity introductions, this variability also raised several untested questions concerning task-specific features. Specifically, does the visibility of the referents for the message sender affect felicity? Does the visibility of the listener for the message sender affect felicity? Does choice of text affect felicity?
Summary

At least three important constructs relevant to the present study emerge from the review of research on referring expressions.

1. **Felicitous encodings of referring expressions is not an absolute skill triggered by a particular point in cognitive development.** Although egocentrism is at times a factor in unsuccessful referring expressions, adults as well as young children can be affected by this perspective. This review suggests that egocentric behaviors surface sporadically, triggered by contextual and linguistic features of specific communication situations. However, the research does indicate that children below the age of nine are most susceptible to inhibiting task-specific variables.

2. **Criteria for felicity vary with the contextual and textual environment.** Introductory strategies judged as felicitous in one situation may not be judged as felicitous in another situation. Variability in audience access to the referent through the immediate situation, text, or personal knowledge is one differential factor. Similarly, variability in audience access to information which the
referent can be inferred from, anchored to, or partitioned from is another differential factor. Hence, judgements of felicity cannot be made by simply looking at an introductory NP within its introductory clause; judgements of felicity must be made based on a knowledge of the contextual and textual surroundings.

3. The English article system is plurifunctional in nature. Research shows that children recognize and use the descriptive function of the article system quite early; recognition and felicitous use of the system to convey determining information comes later and follows a much more complex path. An investigation of children's character introductions in stories is based on the assumption that the subjects have recognized the determiner function of the article system but use it inconsistently to encode felicitous introductions.
III. PROCEDURES

The present study is based on data from a project on children's writing development directed by Martha King and Victor Rentel at The Ohio State University and funded by the National Institute of Education. The portion of the parent data based used in this study consisted of oral retellings (n=108), dictated stories (n=108), and written stories (n=108) from 36 children gathered during Spring of their first grade year, Fall of their second grade year, and Spring of their second grade year. Not only did these stories represent longitudinal data, but they also featured contrasts in mode (oral vs. written) and choice with oral mode held constant (generate a story vs. retell a story). In addition, the 1576 character introductions found in the children's texts reflected a wide variety of linguistic decisions made in the encoding of character introductions. Since the theoretical frame of the study included the influence of linguistic decisions on felicity, the unit of analysis was the character introduction (N=1576) rather than the text (N=324).
Questions for Independent Variables

The framework for the present study acknowledges the influence of development as well as contextual and linguistic factors affecting felicity of character introductions. Development was featured in the data set as a contrast between texts gathered during Spring Grade 1, Fall Grade 2, and Spring Grade 2. Two social context variables were selected for study. Mode was represented by a contrast in oral and written stories. Choice was represented by a contrast in self-generated stories and retellings with oral mode held constant. Specific questions concerning these independent variables are as follows:

QUESTION #1 (DEVELOPMENT):
Do proportions of felicitous character introductions increase over time?

QUESTION #2 (MODE):
Are proportions of felicitous character introductions greater in oral stories than in written stories?

QUESTION #3 (CHOICE):
Are proportions of felicitous character introductions greater in self-generated stories than in retellings?

The first question reflects the most familiar conclusion of research on children's use of referring expressions. As children grow older they become more capable
cognitively of addressing the needs of an unknowing audience. The second question reflects the difficulty that children face in their initial encounters with the written mode. The transcription skills (e.g., spelling, handwriting) required in the written mode inhibit the language fluency characteristic of the oral mode (e.g., King & Rentel, 1982).

The third question addresses issues of the message sender's access to the reference frame of the message event. Karmiloff-Smith (1979) and Maratsos (1976) observed that in situations in which the message receiver had no access to the reference frame of the message event, proportions of felicitous referring expressions varied with respect to whether the referents were visually- or verbally-defined for the subjects. Visually-defined referents resulted in proportionately more infelicitous introductions than did verbally-defined referents. The contrast in self-generating and retelling a story reflects this issue. A self-generated story has no prior reference frame for the story creator but a retelling of an orally-shared picture story has both verbally- and visually-defined referents for the storyteller. Hence, the prediction is that felicitous character introductions are easier to construct in a self-generated story than in a
retelling since the retelling requires the subject to **reconstruct** a known reference frame whereas the self-generating task only requires the subject to **construct** a reference frame.

The formulation of questions concerning linguistic decisions made by the children were part of the analysis procedures and, thus, are discussed in the following chapter.

**Subjects**

The first requirement of subject selection was to select schools and classrooms in which children were encouraged to write during the primary grades.\(^6\) A second consideration was that the structure of the classrooms should be flexible enough to allow research associates to collect data without major disturbances in classroom operations.

Thirty-six subjects from two different schools were used in the study. School I was located in the central area of a large mid-western city. Designated as an alternative school, the school could be attended by children from any section of the city although priority was given

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\(^6\) The discussion of subjects and data collection procedures are paraphrased from the original study of the data base by King and Rentel. For more detailed information, see King & Rentel, 1981.
to children in the surrounding neighborhood. There was an attempt to balance the school population with regard to racial background, achievement, and socioeconomic status. School I was an open-space school with multi-grade groupings in each work area. It housed pre-kindergarten to grade six. Joint activities between children in different work areas were common but most of the instruction was individualized or small-group. Cooperation and communication between students and between students and adults was encouraged.

Twenty-four of the 36 subjects were students at School I. During the first-grade collection period, these subjects were distributed across five classroom teachers. During the two collection periods in second grade, they were distributed across six different teachers. Although approaches to literacy varied between teachers, all teachers were similar in their concern for children and their learning.

School II was located in the oldest part of the most affluent suburb in the metropolitan area. Like School I, it was an alternative school offering a less formal and prescriptive environment than most other schools in the district. It too used multi-grade groupings. The school was composed of three separate building or "pods" which
housed four groupings each. School II serves a Kindergarten through grade six population. Most instruction was individualized or conducted in small groups. Peer teaching/learning was considered an important element in the educational process.

Twelve of the 36 were students at School II. These students were distributed across two classrooms during Grade 1 and during Grade 2. Although the four teachers differed in the skills emphasized in literacy instruction, all four integrated literacy tasks with thematic units and placed a great emphasis on literature.

The oral retellings of an additional first-grade population (n = 40) were pulled from the parent data base to supplement the present study after observations of the initial stage of analysis indicated that the story for retelling had an effect on the retellings. This addition permitted a cross-sectional analysis of retellings with collection time (Spring Grade 1) held constant and the story for retelling varied. The subjects providing oral retellings for this supplementary analysis were also from School I and School II and reflected the same proportional distribution across the two schools as the previously-described population.
Data Collection

Three text production tasks involving constraints typically associated with the creation of an autonomous text were collected. The children were asked (1) to write a story of their own composition, (2) to dictate to an adult scribe a story of their own composition and (3) to retell a story that had been read to them from a picture story book to an adult posing as an uninformed listener. The details of these three tasks are outlined below.

Written Story

The instructions for the written story were simply to write a "pretend" story. Unfortunately, in some instances, particularly in Grade 1 collections, the children were not accustomed to writing original stories and did not respond to the non-directive instructions. In these circumstances, it was necessary to develop conditions that would stimulate writing. Often teachers helped children link the writing task to recent experiences—a field trip, a school performance, a shared story. The reference frames for the message events were varied, but in all written tasks, the reference frame surrounding the composing event was different from the reference frame for the message event; thus, a verbalized frame of reference for the latter was appropriate in all texts.
Sessions for written tasks were not limited in time. Normally, the children began the task in early morning and completed in an hour or so. Any children not finishing in this time kept their stories to work on in the afternoon or the next day. The following day the researcher read through each story with the story author. This step was necessary since some texts were uninterpretable without the help of the author.

**Dictation Story**

For the dictation task, children were taken individually to an available room where a tape recorder had been set up. The dictation session was tape recorded in order to insure accuracy of transcription. The children were instructed to make up "your very own story." They were told that their stories would be written down for them.

The scribe wrote each child's story in manuscript and positioned the written text so that the child could view the transcription process. Once dictation began, the scribe was careful not to interrupt the child's narrative. Any comments or instructions given by the child regarding the scribe's performance and/or the writing process were acknowledged but not encouraged. In cases when a child dictated an obvious retelling of a known story or a rhyme,
the adult scribe elicited a second dictated text for the data collection after encouraging the child to tell his/her own story.

**Oral Retelling**

An adult researcher took groups of four to six children to rooms where the story could be read without interruption. Before the story was read, the children were told that they would have the opportunity to share the story with a "visiting teacher" (another researcher) when the reading was completed. The story reader then read the story to the children with no extraneous comments. Time was provided for the pictures to be viewed during the reading. After the story was completed, the reader provided a second viewing of the pictures, showing each page in turn. Although comments were not intentionally elicited, spontaneous comments were accepted.

Following the reading each child was taken to a "listener" posing as the "visiting teacher." The number of listeners matched the number of children in each reading session so every child engaged in an immediate retelling. The listener was introduced as a visiting teacher who did not know the story but would like to hear it. The listener further explained that the retelling
would be taped so that the story could be shared with other teachers. The listener's job was to simply listen, not to collaborate in the retelling process.

Description of Stories for Retelling

Three different folktales were chosen for the collection of retellings. The primary criteria influencing story selection were quality of the story, reasonable length for retelling, and children's lack of familiarity with the story. The following stories were chosen:

Spring Grade 1 Collection:
Squawk to the Moon, Little Goose, by Edna Mitchell Preston, illustrated by Barbara Cooney (Viking, 1974).

Fall Grade 2 Collection:

Spring Grade 2 Collection:

The three stories vary with respect to number of characters as well as complexity of relationships between characters. The casts of Squawk and Salt are most similar. Both involve a major character with similar familial relationships: one parent and two siblings. In both stories, these familial entities are introduced prior
to the narrative action. Three other major characters appear in *Squawk* as the narrative proceeds (a "cloud" fox, a farmer, and a real fox). Three other major characters are introduced also as *Salt* evolves (a king and his daughter and a giant). *Magic Porridge Pot*, in contrast, involves only three major characters—two of a familial relationship (a girl and her mother) and one unrelated later-appearing character (an old woman).

**Data Preparation**

The children's texts were prepared as a part of the parent project. The preparation involved two stages. In the first stage, typescripts were made of each text. For the dictated stories and oral retellings, all verbalizations recorded during the sessions were included. For the written story, the children's texts were typed in traditional orthography. In the second stage of the data preparation, these typescripts were edited and divided into T-units (cf. Hunt, 1965). This stage involved eliminating filled pauses, word and phrase repetitions, stutters, corrections, false starts, and any verbal interactions extraneous to the story (e.g., "you like writing, don't you").
The typed transcriptions from the second stage of data preparation served as the data for the present study. Since the purpose of the study was to investigate linguistic decisions as well as contextual factors affecting felicity, it was necessary to use the character introductions as the unit of analysis rather than the text. From the typed edited transcripts, character introductions were identified and marked using a highlighter. Since surrounding text contributed to subsequent classifications of felicity, the character introductions were not removed from their stories but examined within their textual environments.

The identification of character introductions was based on the working definition of character introductions delineated in Chapter 1. This definition is reviewed below:

CHARACTER INTRODUCTION:
The first discrete and unique textual mention of a referential-specific entity representing a human, an animal, or a personified object.

The parameters for a character introduction extended to the boundaries of the immediate clausal environment. This definition, also explicated in Chapter 1, is reviewed below:
IMMEDIATE CLAUSAL ENVIRONMENT:
If the new NP is classified grammatically as a subject, object, or classifier of an independent clause, the immediate clausal environment equals the independent clause. If the new NP is not a subject, object, or classifier of an independent clause but is a subject, object, or classifier of a dependent clause, the immediate clausal environment is the dependent clause.

In cases in which multiple new NPs were contained in a single immediate clausal environment, the following restriction for counting character introductions was used.

In cases of multiple new NPs within a single immediate clausal environment, only new NPs with unique semantic roles and/or unique NP types are counted as separate character introductions. Multiple new NPs characterized by identical semantic roles and the same NP type are counted as one character introduction.

Judgements of NP type were based on the typology of introductory NPs delineated in Chapter 4. Examples of multiple new NPs within a single immediate clausal environment are given in Table 2. An example of the identification of character introductions in a sample text is presented in Appendix A.
TABLE 2

Examples of Counting Procedures
for Character Introductions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Immediate Clausal Environment</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A FOX ate A GOOSE</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Different semantic roles; Same NP type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A BOY and HIS MOTHER</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Same semantic role; Different NP type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>went for a walk</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A FOX and A BEAR</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Same semantic role; Same NP type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>went for a walk</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Analysis

After identification of the character introductions, data analysis proceeded in two stages. In Stage I, questions concerning linguistic variables and designs for the quantitative testing of the effects of selected contextual and linguistic variables on felicity were formulated based on a qualitative analysis of the data. Before these decisions could be made, however, conditions for judgements of felicity had to be refined; classifications for linguistic variables had to be constructed; and different forms of
felicity and infelicity had to be identified. Stage II involved the computation of coding reliability and the testing of the quantitative procedures delineated in Stage I. Specific information concerning questions and quantitative-testing procedures are presented at the end of the following chapter.
IV. QUALITATIVE REFINEMENT OF THE STUDY

Since the literature provided little insight into linguistic contributions to felicity, questions concerning linguistic variables and overall testing procedures were formulated from an extensive examination of the 1576 character introductions found in the sample texts. This process included defining linguistic classifications at the levels of NP and clause and identifying different forms of felicity and infelicity. From this preliminary work, refined guidelines for felicity judgements, questions for the study, and procedural decisions emerged.

Linguistic Classifications

For this study the parameters of a character introduction were defined as the NP representing the new entity (introductory NP) and its immediate clausal environment (introductory clause). Classification systems for these two levels of character introductions were constructed from the data.
Introductory NP

The children used a variety of indefinite and definite introductory NP types for both non-partitioned and partitioned introductions. These NP types are delineated in Tables 3 and 4. Percentages showing the distributional nature of NP types are included.

For non-partitioned introductions, an NP with an indefinite article was the most common form (40.2%). This classification included both conventional indefinite articles as well as unstressed "this" (e.g. "There was this man"). NPs with definite articles and anchored NPs were also popular forms of introductory NPs, composing 20.7% and 18.9% of total non-partitioned introductions respectively. Indefinite pronouns were also common but most of these represented a storyteller/participant (i.e., a first person referent) or an anonymous "crowd" (e.g., EVERYBODY came out of their houses). Proper names were used in some introductions to represent single entities and quantified NPs to introduce set entities. Other forms contributed less than 1%. When levels within indefinite and definite NP types were collapsed, the percentages showed that definite NPs were used slightly more than indefinite NPs (54.8% compared to 45.1%).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NP Type</th>
<th>% of Introductions (n = 1347)</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indefinite article</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>a(n) X; some X; another X; this X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or unstressed 'this'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantifier</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>three Xs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indefinite pronoun</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>someone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proper name</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>Toby the Tomcat; Superman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anchored</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>her X; the X who owned the dog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definite article</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>the X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definite pronoun</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>he; they; we</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**TABLE 4**

Typology of Partitioned Introductory NPs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NP Type</th>
<th>% of Introductions (n = 229)</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I 1. Indefinite article</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>a(n) X; another X; a brown X; this X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 2. Quantified subset</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>one of the Xs; some of the Xs;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 3. Definite article with non-distinguishing information</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>the X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 4. Definite article with distinguishing information</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>the mother; the littlest X; the rest of the Xs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 5. Anchored</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>his X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 6. Proper name</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>Little Goose; Cindy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 7. Definite pronoun</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>he</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 8. Miscellaneous</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The percentages for partitioned introductions showed that the children primarily used a definite article with distinguishing information or an indefinite quantified subset to represent a partitioned introduction (34.9% and 30.8% respectively). Proper names, definite anchored NPs, and NPs with indefinite articles were also observed as were NPs with definite articles with no distinguishing information. The latter, however, usually failed to encode identifiability and, therefore, were most often infelicitous. When levels within indefinite and definite NPs were collapsed, the results indicated that definite NPs were used more than indefinite NPs for partitioned introductions (62.0% compared to 35.2%).

Introductory Clause

The qualitative analysis showed clearly that all introductions were not created equally. Not only did introductions differ with respect to introductory NPs, but they also differed with respect to clause functions. Two major functional types of introductory clauses were identified. Some introductory clauses had only one function: to introduce a character(s). Other introductory clauses had two functions: to introduce a character(s) and, simultaneously, to ascribe some action, state, or location to the
character(s). Unifunctional introductory clauses were labeled simple presentations (SPs). Dual function introductory clauses were labeled complex presentations (CPs). A third category was needed for unclassifiable fragments. Table 5 presents the typology for introductory clauses constructed from the data. Special attention was paid to the conventional forms of simple presentations which surfaced. Percentages representing the number of occurrences of each introductory clause type to total character introductions are included.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introductory Clause Type</th>
<th>% of Total Introductions</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| SIMPLE PRESENTATION (SP) | 49.7                     | This description uses an existential verb which by definition can be subjected to a “there was” insertion. In cases of partitioned appositives, the “there was” is elided. | There once was A DOG*  
Once upon a time there lived AN OLD WOMAN  
Once upon a time there was THREE LITTLE BEARS--A FATHER BEAR, A MOTHER BEAR, and A BABY BEAR |
| SP: Existential          | (20.2)                   | A FOX came  
Outpopped A WITCH  
Then A LITTLE DUCK came along |
| SP: Self-Propelled       | 6.7                      | This construction involves the new entity in the role of patient but with a restricted verb type--verbs of motion which bring the entity to the scene (as opposed to “went”). | And then they met A DOG  
They saw A SEADIVER  
She went to HER COW  
Sally had A NEXT DOOR NEIGHBOR  
...who lived in a big house with TWO KIDS |
| SP: Goal                 | (21.2)                   | This construction involves the new entity in the role of goal. It always involves another entity acting either as patient or experiencer. | THIS is George  
I like BUGS BUNNY  
The story is about A DUCK  
The first picture was THE MOTHER GOOSE |
| SP: Context-Dependent    | 1.6                      | This construction does not describe a story action or state, but comments on a state of affairs external to the story line. There is always an exophoric reference to the reference frame of the communication event or the task itself. | |
| COMPLEX PRESENTATION    | 49.6                     | This construction involves the new entity in roles of patient, agent, or experiencer. It may appear singly or with another entity. | A MONSTER was up in a planet (patient)  
TWO FISH were playing cards (patient)  
THIS LITTLE BOY released him (agent)  
A DRAGON sat on him (agent)  
The fox ate A GOOSE (experiencer)  
A DUCK saw the fox (experiencer)  
THE LADY was sad (experiencer)  
 |
| FRAGMENT                 | 0.6                      | This environment does not qualify as a clause. | Once October night in a lonely house  
TWO PEOPLE |

* NPs in caps refer to introductory NPs. Other entities are assumed to be given.
The distribution of simple and complex presentations were surprisingly uniform (49.7 and 49.6% respectively). Simple presentations, however, showed much less variable (more conventionalized) linguistic forms. The most primitive of these forms was SP: Context Dependent. In this construction, new entities were presented in relation to an exophoric tie to self, a contextual picture, or some aspect of the story task. Simple presentations also included forms in which the character introduction was constructed from "within" the story rather than being grounded in a story-external link. These conventional forms were used by children profusely. The most restricted form was, of course, SP: Existential which is encoded in a "there was" construction for non-partitioned introductions. This form was particularly popular for story-initial introductory clauses--but was often used even if the story-initial clause did not include a character introduction.

1. There lived an old house
2. Once upon a time there was a boat
3. Once there was this bridge

Conventionalized SP: Self-Propelled and SP: Goal were popular among children also--a few children choosing to create stories consisting solely of conventionalized
character introductions. The following text, collected during the Fall of second grade, is an example of a written story sustained by character introductions.

Once upon a time there was a REINDEER. Along came a rabbit. Then along came a HORSE. And then they met a DOG. And then they met a COW. And then along came a CHICKEN. Then came a DUCK.

Although most children used character introductions along with other devices, texts consisting primarily of character introductions were not uncommon.

In contrast to the conventionalized forms characterizing simple presentations, complex presentations were much more variable with respect to verb type. Additionally, complex presentations appeared to be more difficult to manage.

4. THIS MAN HE was on the boat

5. Once upon a time THESE THREE BOYS THEY lived near a river

6. First MOTHER GOOSE OF THE STORY SHE was going to the next door neighbors

In these representative examples it seems that the children were unable to integrate fluidly the presentation and the descriptive functions and thus opted for introducing the character then pronominalizing the entity in order to ascribe the action, state, or location. The distinction
between simple and complex presentations suggested that complex presentations would be more difficult to encode felicitously since they required the coordination of two clause functions.

**Emergent Questions**

Several questions concerning the influence of linguistic decisions emerged in the process of classifying introductory NPs and introductory clauses:

a). Are distributions of non-partitioned and partitioned introductions across introductory clause types approximately the same?

b). Does choice of introductory clause type affect felicity? Specifically, are complex presentations more likely to be infelicitous than simple presentations?

c). Are distributions of NP types across felicitous introductory clause types approximately the same? Specifically, if felicity is achieved with a complex presentation, is the introductory NP more likely to be definite (e.g., inferable, anchored, partitioned) than indefinite?

The first question is a concern of design and was addressed immediately. The remaining questions were
dependent on further refinements (e.g., guidelines for felicity, procedural decisions) and, therefore, were put aside temporarily.

A distribution of introductory clause types by non-partitioned and partitioned entities was computed (see Table 6). Fragments, n=10, were not included since they were not classifiable as a clause type. These descriptive statistics showed that distributions of introductory clause types for non-partitioned and partitioned introductions were quite different. Simple presentations were preferred for non-partitioned introductions; in contrast, complex presentations were preferred for partitioned introductions. This observation in concert with the observation of differences in distributions of NP types indicated that non-partitioned and partitioned character introductions had different natures and needed to be analyzed separately.
TABLE 6

Distribution of Non-Partitioned and Partitioned Introductions by Introductory Clause Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clause Type</th>
<th>Partitioned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simple Presentation</td>
<td>744</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complex Presentation</td>
<td>595</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Identification of Felicitous and Infelicitous Forms

Before the primary focus of the study--the effects of linguistic, textual, and contextual factors on felicity--could be addressed, a better understanding of the varied forms of felicity and infelicity was needed. Working guidelines for judgements of felicity for context-creating character introductions were formulated prior to data analysis based on observations of Chafe (1977), DuBois (1980), and Prince (1981). These guidelines (as stated in Chapter 1) are reviewed below:
Unidentifiable Referents: An indefinite introductory NP is used to refer initially to a new character with a referent which is unidentifiable to the audience.

Common-knowledge Referents: A definite introductory NP is used to refer initially to a new character with a referent considered to be a part of common knowledge.

Textually-identifiable Referents: A definite introductory NP is used to refer initially to a new character with a referent which is inferable from previous text frames or which is related to previously-established referents through anchoring or partitioning.

An initial look at the data showed that these guidelines were not sufficient. Therefore, the data were scrutinized to identify other ways in which felicity could be achieved and to identify things that go wrong when infelicity results. This examination included NP, clausal, and textual considerations.

Observations of Different Forms of Felicity

The previously-established guidelines suggested that felicity can only be achieved for unidentifiable referents with an indefinite NP. Two types of character introductions were observed in the data, however, which were judged to be conventional strategies for character introductions but which represented unidentifiable referents encoded as definite NPs.
First, the use of an unidentifiable proper name was observed as a conventional, felicitous, and definite character introduction. The following examples from the data illustrate this phenomenon.

7. One sunny morning SUSAN and MARIE came running out of their houses
8. MOTHER GOOSE was putting on her hat and shawl
9. TOBY THE TOMCAT was his best friend
10. And soon they met MR. DUCK and MRS. DUCK

The unidentifiable proper names used for character introductions were sometimes common "people" names as seen in (7), but more often were descriptive names for animals as seen in (8)-(10).

Although the use of a proper name to represent an unidentifiable referent is accepted conventionally as a felicitous strategy for character introductions, the logic behind this acceptance is unclear. It may be speculated, however, that while the use of other definite felicitous strategies involves either unambiguous anaphoric pointing (i.e., inference, anchoring, partitioning) or appropriate exophoric pointing (e.g., common knowledge), the definite felicitous use of an unknown proper name does not signal for interpretation elsewhere but merely marks a slot for further description; in this sense, an unidentifiable
proper name acts like an indefinite NP rather than a definite NP when used as a first mention.

The use of the first-person pronoun "I" was also determined to be a conventional definite but unidentifiable form of character introduction. In stories of personal anecdotes, the pronoun "I" was used conventionally even when the identity of the author was unknown to the audience. In fact, an introduction of a storyteller/participant encoded as an indefinite NP would have sounded rather odd (e.g., "There was A GIRL who had an unusual experience. She was the author of this story."). On the other hand, when pronominalizations were used to introduce a third-person entity, the character introductions were considered infelicitous. The following character introductions contrast the difference between introductory pronominalizations of a first-person and third-person referent.

---

7 Mature writers may employ a pronominalized character introduction (or other form of unidentifiable definite NP) as a stylistic means of creating tension for immediate reader involvement. Such a strategy serves as a cataphoric (or forward pointing) device and always involves a carefully-planned unfolding of the character's identity. I assume that young children's uses of third-person unidentifiable pronominalizations do not reflect this conscious strategy but rather an inappropriate and infelicitous exophoric tie to a restricted knowledge base.
11. I went to my grandma's house

12. SHE was sad

In (11), the introduction of the storyteller/participant with a definite pronoun is considered acceptable even though the identity of the author is unknown to the audience. In contrast, the pronominalization of a third-person referent for an introduction in (12) is considered unacceptable.

The sample texts showed that the children in the study were well aware of the different rules for introducing first- and third-person entities. "I" was used invariably to refer to a storyteller/participant; however, introductory pronominalizations of a third-person major character were rare and some of these were self-corrected.

13. But well THEY—I mean THE PEOPLE ON THE PLANET—didn't actually think it's valuable

Since felicitous pronominalizations for character introductions are limited to first-person referents in personal anecdotes, this strategy was considered to be an extremely restricted form of character introduction and, therefore, excluded from further analysis. This decision resulted in the elimination of 38 character introductions.

Anonymous crowds often were represented with definite pronouns (e.g., EVERYBODY came out of their houses). These were not considered major characters, however.
Observations of Things That Go Wrong

Not only were felicitous character introductions observed which were unidentifiable but definite, indefinite introductions were observed which were infelicitous. Although these introductions "looked" felicitous within the boundaries of their NPs, various clausal and textual problems resulted in faulty introductions.

Orphaned Partitions. Many of the infelicitous introductions encoded with an indefinite NP were results of faulty partitioning. Usually the infelicity was caused by the omission of the set entity. Following are representative examples of introductions which were not preceded by a textual-establishment of a set entity.

14. ONE OF THE DUCKLINGS got out of bed
15. and SOME OF THEM never came out

Although these introductions "look like" felicitous partitioned introductions, an examination of their prior texts showed that there was no previously-established set entities to permit partitioned introductions. Therefore, introductions of this type were considered infelicitous.

Exceeding-the-Limits. A partitioning problem of another sort is illustrated in the following text.
Once there was TEN LITTLE BEARS. Then they saw
SOMEBODY coming down the street to get them.
Then ONE LITTLE BEAR got away. Then TWO LITTLE
BEARS got away. Then THREE LITTLE BEARS got
away. Then FOUR, then FIVE, then SIX, then
SEVEN, then EIGHT, then NINE, then TEN, then
ELEVEN, TWELVE, THIRTEEN, FOURTEEN, FIFTEEN,
SIXTEEN, SEVENTEEN, EIGHTEEN, NINETEEN, TWENTY,
TWENTY-ONE, TWENTY-TWO.

Partitioned introductions were constructed felicitously in
this text until the limit of the set was reached. After
ten little bears were partitioned, however, the remaining
introductions had no set entity. It seems in this particu­
lar text that the story-creating task was transformed
into a counting task, making the number of partitioned
entities irrelevant. In other texts, however, the
activity remained a story-creating task, but the story­
creator seemed to lose track of the number of partitions
that had been made from the set entity. Such was the case
of the set introduction of "two brothers" and subsequent
partitioning of "one brother" and then "one of the other
brothers."

Dangling Partitions. In other cases the set introduc­
tion preceded the partitioned entity, but the link between
the two was not clear.

16. (Previously-established set: DUCKS)
    And then A DUCK ran out

17. (Previously-established set: THESE POOR PEOPLE)
    So A LITTLE GIRL went to get some nuts and berries
In both (16) and (17), it is unclear whether the new entity is a part of or separate from the previously-established set entity.

**Redundant Introductions.** Indefinite but infelicitous introductions also appeared in text environments in which partitioning was not an issue. In some cases introductions were made which appeared at the clausal level to be a felicitous simple presentation with an indefinite introductory NP. Textual examination, however, disclosed an ambiguity. The following excerpts come from texts in which a "listing" of story characters was provided in the story-initial clause. Later in these texts an entity was introduced and it was unclear whether the entity was the same or different from one of the entities in the listing.

18. Listing: One winter day there was A RABBIT, A SNAKE, and A MOUSE
And the snake knew A FRIEND MOUSE

19. Listing: Once was THIS TWO MOUSES
and then the lady mouse had A FRIEND

In the texts from which (18) and (19) were taken, the number of characters involved in the stories corresponded with the number of characters in the story-initial "listing" clause--thus, indicating that the non-initial introductions were redundant and ambiguously suggestive of a non-existing referent.
Blame-It-On-The-Neighborhood. Other cases of indefinite but infelicitous character introductions were observed in which the infelicity focused on a problem in the surrounding immediate clause rather than a problem of the representation of the character entity. In some cases, the new NP was felicitously indefinite but its immediate clausal environment contained some context-dependent reference (e.g., The first picture was a duck). In other cases, a felicitous NP encoding was embedded in a clause fragment (e.g., Once these poor people). Since by definition the character introductions include the immediate clausal environments, inappropriate exophoric references within these boundaries or insufficient constructions of clausal parameters result in infelicitous classifications.

Forms of definite infelicitous introductions were more varied than indefinite infelicitous introductions. Classifications of things that went wrong with definite introductions are presented below.

Mind-Meld. The most common form of definite infelicitous introduction seemed to stem from the lack of construction (or reconstruction in the case of retellings) of the character entities in the message event's reference
frame. The children seemed to assume inappropriately that the reference frame for the message event was shared with the audience through some mystical mind-meld and proceeded to narrate the story based on an assumption of shared knowledge. This form is interpreted commonly as the result of an egocentric perspective (e.g., Maratsos, 1976; Warden; 1976), but observations of other definite infelicitous forms showed that this simple interpretation is not adequate.

Kings without Kingdoms. In Salt, the main character, Ivan, sails to a foreign land then proceeds to go consult with the king. In this textual environment, the definite introduction is felicitous since a king can be inferred from the textual introduction of a foreign land. Many of the children used definite introductions for their "kings" also, but failed to mention the excursion prior to these introductions. Although this form of infelicitous definite reference could be interpreted simply as an example of mind-meld, there is an added factor surfacing in this form which is not addressed in the previously-discussed form. Specifically, particular events in a story often set up inferencing for forthcoming character introductions. If these events are omitted, definite inferable introductions are foiled. Observations of infelicitous
definite introductions reflecting the king-without-a-kingdom phenomenon were most obvious in retellings in which important events of the original story were either forgotten or omitted. In contrast, this phenomenon was rarely found in written and dictated self-generated stories unless the self-generated story showed traces of a retelling. The created story of "Riba and the Three Bears" reflected the "borrowing" that characterized some of the self-generated stories. These "creative retellings" were susceptible to the king-without-a-kingdom phenomenon.

**Underdescribed Partitions.** In partitioning an identifiable referent from a set entity, linguistic encoding must enable the audience to distinguish the partitioned member from the rest of the set. If this distinction cannot be made, infelicity results. Both of the following examples are from the Spring Grade 1 retelling of *Squawk to the Moon*, Little Goose and both introduce the main character, Little Goose, as a definite partitioned member of a previously-established set of ducklings. Only one introduction, however, achieves felicity.

20. THE DUCKLING went outside

21. and THE LITTLEST DUCKLING went outside
Felicity is not achieved in (20) since the definitely-introduced entity cannot be distinguished from the rest of the set of ducklings. The superlative adjective in (21) encodes the necessary distinguishing information. Underdescribed partitions were most common in retellings of *Squawk* and *Salt* since the original story biased these texts toward a set entity with partitioned members. However, this phenomenon was observed in both written and dictated self-generated stories involving set entities.

**Unclaimed Relatives.** When familial relationships characterize the cast of characters, the conventional strategy is to use this relationship to aid in definite introductions. For example, if "a boy" has been introduced, the mother of the boy is usually introduced as "HIS mother" rather than "THE mother." In the former case, anchoring is used; in the latter, identification relies on an inference (i.e., that the boy has a mother). Children often failed to use available anchoring; although these unclaimed relatives were at times felicitous, they usually were awkward.

Once there was a tadpole ... and he landed in a little boy's bathtub. And THE MOM was cleaning the tub ...  

Even though we can infer that the mom belongs to the boy rather than the tadpole, a possessive anchoring would have
resulted in a less-awkward introduction of the mother. Sometimes, however, unclaimed relatives resulted in infelicity.

The duck has saw a fox ... THE MOTHER went to the farmer.

In this text, it is not clear whose mother is involved—the duck's or the fox's. Observations of unclaimed relatives were common to all tasks but concentrated in the representations of familial relationships in the retellings.

**Relational Absurdities.** In some introductions, children's confusion of kinship terms made the introduction impossible to interpret.

22. Well along time ago there was a girl and HIS WIFE

23. There was a woman and a little girl ... and THE SISTER suddenly found out what was wrong.

Both (22) and (23) are introductions in retellings of *Magic Porridge Pot*. In (22) not only is the gender of the possessive determiner confused, but the relation of the older woman to the girl is misrepresented as the relationship of "wife" rather than "mother." Similarly, in (23) "the sister" in the context of the entire text is obviously an anaphoric reference to "a woman" but the appropriate relationship is "mother." Relational absurdities
were found only in retellings in which children attempted, with varying degrees of success, to represent kinship.

**Chameleon Characters.** In some texts, it was unclear whether a new character was introduced or a previously-introduced character underwent a mystical transformation. "Skunks" were abruptly referred to as "squirrels," proper names were changed, and third-person entities became first-person entities. Whenever this phenomenon occurred it seemed to result from the storyteller "losing track" of the character in question. One young storyteller, recognizing the power of the storyteller (even of a retelling), insisted, however, that intentional transformations can be made:

Well, once upon a time there was three ducklings. Well, I'm telling the story about the ducklings--but they were goslings.

Chameleon characters were rarely found in retellings, with the exception of representations of the Russian characters in *Salt*. The Russian names were at time attempted (Vasily) but then changed to a more familiar proper name (Victor). Most occurrences of chameleon characters were observed in long, loosely-structured dictated created stories, suggesting that orally-created characters are more "fleeting" than characters of a retelling or of a written text.
The Omniscient Flaw. A storyteller's knowledge of up-coming story events results in some unusual foreshadowing. At times constructions were used which signaled to the audience that a referential-specific entity was not being introduced.

24. He didn't see a FOX

25. They went to catch a SHARK

Later use of anaphoric definite reference pointing to these entities suggested, however, that the children did intend referential-specific interpretations. Introductions such as (24) of the real fox in Squawk may have been influenced by the illustrations which showed the fox lurking behind the trees unbeknownst to Little Goose.

Missing-the-Point. The most blatant cases of missing-the-point were observed in the retellings of Squawk and, again, involved introductions of the real fox. In the original story, Little Goose first saw a cloud-shaped fox which was portrayed in the illustration as a very life-like fox. Later a "real" fox was introduced into the story. In an examination of these introductions, it was unclear whether definite introductions of the real fox reflected failure to reconstruct the character for the audience or whether the definiteness was due to the interpretation that the cloud-fox and the real fox were the
same characters. In the latter case, from the child's perspective, the definite representation of the real fox was a felicitous anaphoric reference to the previously-introduced fox.

Observational Conclusions

An examination of introductions within their texts showed numerous ways that felicity was foiled. These observations indicated that egocentrism, or failure to accommodate an "unknowing" audience, was not the only explanation for unsuccessful introductions. The examination showed that structural and semantic factors also contributed to infelicity.

This examination also disclosed that retellings were contributing more than their share to problems of infelicity. When introductions were sorted by tasks, the results indicated that the retelling task was more inhibiting to felicitous character introductions than the two self-generating tasks. The descriptive statistics in Table 7 reveal that character introductions in self-generated stories achieved felicity in approximately four-fifths of the cases. The retelling task was characterized by a higher rate of infelicity, however. Felicity was achieved in only about two-thirds of retelling introductions.
Further, the observations indicated that particular problems seemed to be stimulated by certain retellings and not by others. For example, problems of relational absurdities surfaced in the mother-daughter relationship in *Magic Porridge Pot* and in the king-princess relationship of *Salt*. This phenomenon did not plague *Squawk*, however, perhaps because names were provided for the mother-offspring relationship (Mother Goose, Little Goose) in the original story. In neither *Magic Porridge Pot* nor *Salt* were names given for the problem relationships. Similarly, no child provided names for the involved characters in the retellings of these stories.

### TABLE 7

Frequencies and Percentages of Infelicitous Introductions by Task

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Infelicitous Introductions</th>
<th>Total Introductions</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Written: Self-generating</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dictated: Self-generating</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>591</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Retelling</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>712</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further, the observations indicated that particular problems seemed to be stimulated by certain retellings and not by others. For example, problems of relational absurdities surfaced in the mother-daughter relationship in *Magic Porridge Pot* and in the king-princess relationship of *Salt*. This phenomenon did not plague *Squawk*, however, perhaps because names were provided for the mother-offspring relationship (Mother Goose, Little Goose) in the original story. In neither *Magic Porridge Pot* nor *Salt* were names given for the problem relationships. Similarly, no child provided names for the involved characters in the retellings of these stories.
Rather the children attempted to refer to these characters, often unsuccessfully, using relational terms.

Numerous other cases of story-specific infelicity forms were observed in the retellings. The phenomenon of missing-the-point was restricted to misinterpretations of the real fox in *Squawk*. Underdescribed partitions were most frequently observed in *Salt*, a tale involving three brothers, each which had to be partitioned in order to unravel the tale. In contrast, *Squawk* also involved three siblings, but only Little Goose required partitioning. The two remaining siblings remained undistinguished in the original story. Therefore, partitioning skills were not demanded in *Squawk* to the same extent that they were in *Salt*. Kings-without-kingdoms were most salient in stories in which inferable definite introductions were made in the original story. In both *Squawk* and *Salt* the main character goes to seek help from a character which is inferable from the published author's carefully woven text. Children's retellings, however, usually failed to reflect a similar detailed unraveling of the tale and thus failed to achieve an inferable character introduction.
A Closer Look at Retellings

The story-specific forms of infelicity observed in retellings led to comparisons of linguistic encodings of introductions in the original story and the linguistic encodings of introductions in the retellings. In particular, a source of concern was the near verbatim replications in the retellings of introductory clauses found in the original stories. Table 8 presents some of these near "matches."

These near "matches" suggested that the linguistic construction of character introductions in the original story was affecting linguistic decisions and possibly felicity of character introductions in retellings. Comparisons of the linguistic forms of the introductory clauses representing non-partitioned major characters in retellings and the introductory clauses of the same characters in the original stories showed, however, that characters were rarely introduced in the retelling with the same linguistic construction used in the original story (see Table 9).

Overall, simple presentations seemed to result in higher percentages of matches than complex presentations. Of course, this observation is difficult to interpret since conventional forms would be expected to appear with
TABLE 8

Examples of Imitative Character Introductions in Retellings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story</th>
<th>Introductory Clause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Squawk</td>
<td>Original Story:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>That is how it happened that THE FOX caught her (definite fox points to illustration in book)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Retelling Example:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>And that's how THE FOX caught her</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magic Porridge Pot</td>
<td>Original Story:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Cheer up, my dear,&quot; said A PLEASANT BUT CRACKLY VOICE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Retelling Example:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Don't cry&quot; said A VOICE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt</td>
<td>Original Story:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Now the king had A DAUGHTER, a beautiful princess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Retelling Example:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>And then the next day the king had A DAUGHTER, a beautiful daughter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 9

A Comparison of Character Introductions in Original Stories and in Retellings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Non-Partitioned</th>
<th>% Matches in Retellings</th>
<th>Original Story</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Introductory Clause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Character</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Squawk</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother Goose</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>CP: Agent</td>
<td></td>
<td>MRS. GOOSE put all her goslings to bed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ducklings</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>CP: Exp.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mrs. Goose put ALL HER GOSLINGS to bed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloud Fox</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>CP: Pat.</td>
<td></td>
<td>A WHITE FOX was sneaking up on the moon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>SP: Goal</td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;I must go and tell THE FARMER&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real Fox</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>CP: Agent</td>
<td></td>
<td>...THE FOX caught her</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magic Porridge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pot</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girl</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>CP: Pat.</td>
<td></td>
<td>A LITTLE GIRL and her mother lived in a small cottage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>CP: Pat.</td>
<td></td>
<td>A little girl and HER MOTHER lived in a small cottage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Witch</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>CP: Agent</td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Cheer up my dear&quot; said A PLEASANT BUT CRACKLY VOICE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchant</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>SP: Ex.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Long ago there lived A MERCHANT who had THREE SONS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three sons</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>SP: Goal</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ivan went into the city to bow before THE KING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>SP: Goal</td>
<td></td>
<td>Now, the king had A DAUGHTER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Princess</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>SP: Goal</td>
<td></td>
<td>...along came A GLOOMY GIANT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giant</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>SP: Self-Propelled</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
or without original story stimulation. The only introduc-
tions having extremely high percentages of matches associ-
ated with them were the introductions of the farmer in
_Squawk_ and the merchant in _Salt_. Both represent highly
conventionalized simple presentations which mark a signif-
icant point in the story structure. In _Squawk_ the major
character goes to seek help; it is at this significant
point that the farmer is introduced in a SP: Goal. In
_Salt_, the merchant is introduced in a conventional SP:
Existential clause at the outset of the story—another
well-known structural strategy.

This descriptive analysis suggests that the majority of
character introductions in children's retellings are not
affected by the linguistic form of their respective intro-
ductions in the original story unless the original intro-
duction is a conventionalized form connected with a major
story function.

An unsettling observation remained. An analysis of the
retellings showed that 55% of story-initial clause
introductions involved a complex presentation in the
retellings of _Squawk_ at Spring Grade 1 while only 7% of
the story-initial clause introductions involved such an
attempt in the retellings of _Salt_ at Spring Grade 2. 
Although this difference could be attributed to
development, the initial clauses of the stories themselves offered a different interpretation. Complex presentations were used primarily in the retellings of Squawk, a reflection of the complex presentation initial clause used in Preston's version. Similarly, existential simple presentations were used primarily in the retellings of Salt, a reflection of the existential simple presentation in Zemach's version.

In order to examine the possible effect of story-initial clauses, a comparison was made between the story-initial clauses in Spring Grade 1 retellings of Squawk and Spring Grade 1 retellings of Salt. The comparison was possible by pulling from the parent data base retellings of Salt gathered from a different population of children at Spring Grade 1. It was hypothesized that the retellings of Salt—a story with an existential simple presentation for its initial clause—would exhibit a greater proportion of initial clauses of an existential nature than the retellings of Squawk—a story with a complex presentation for its initial clause. The first clause of each text was coded as either SP:Existential or CP. Only 4 initial clauses did not fit one of the two classifications. These clauses were not included in the analysis. Table 10 shows the tabulated frequencies.
TABLE 10
A Comparison of Story-Initial Clauses across Stories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retelling</th>
<th>SP:Existential</th>
<th>CP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Squawk</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Story-initial CP)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salt</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Story-initial SP: Existential)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A chi-square analysis showed that there was a significant difference in the observed and expected frequencies, $X^2 (1, N = 72) = 15.51, p < .0001$. Freeman-Tukey deviates (Table 11) located the cells in which the differences were significant ($p < .05$).

The results indicated that if a story began with a complex presentation, more complex presentations were used as a story-initial clause than would be expected normally. Similarly, significantly less SP:Existentials were used for story-initial clauses in these retellings. If an original story began with a SP: Existential construction, significantly fewer complex presentations were used for story-initial clauses in retellings than would be expected normally.
TABLE 11

Freeman-Tukey Deviates for Analysis of Story-Initial Clauses in Retellings and Story-Initial Clauses in Original Stories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Story</th>
<th>Sp: Existential</th>
<th>CP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CP</td>
<td>-2.1*</td>
<td>2.0*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Squawk)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP: Existential</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>-2.2*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Salt)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at .05 level
These results suggested that the linguistic form of character introductions in the original story does affect the linguistic form of character introductions in the retelling—but primarily the influence is restricted to the character introduction in the initial clause of the story or to a simple presentation representing a major story function.

Refined Guidelines for Felicity Judgements

From the observations of Stage I, more specific guidelines concerning judgements of felicity were delineated. Table 12 presents these guidelines.
### TABLE 12
Revised Guidelines for Felicity Judgements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Referent Type</th>
<th>Felicitous NP Types</th>
<th>Restrictions*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unidentifiable</strong></td>
<td>NP with indefinite article</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referents</td>
<td>or unstressed &quot;this&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unfamiliar proper name</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NP with quantifier</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Indefinite pronominalization</td>
<td>1, 2, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inferable</strong></td>
<td>NP with definite article</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Anchored</strong></td>
<td>NP with possessive article</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referents</td>
<td>NP with relative clause</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NP with prepositional phrase</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Partitioned</strong></td>
<td>NP with indefinite article</td>
<td>1, 2, 5, 6, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referents</td>
<td>NP with quantifier</td>
<td>1, 2, 5, 6, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NP with definite article</td>
<td>1, 2, 5, 6, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Proper name</td>
<td>1, 2, 5, 6, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Anchored NP</td>
<td>1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Common-Knowledge</strong></td>
<td>NP with definite article</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referents</td>
<td>Proper name</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* CODES:
1=embedded within an appropriate clausal environment
2=representing a referential-specific entity
3=representing storyteller/participant
4=pointing to an identifiable and previously-established anchor
5=pointing unambiguously to a previously-established set
6=not exceeding limits of the set entity
7=providing information permitting identification of referent from other set members
Summary of Questions and Procedural Decisions

Questions for the Study

Questions concerning development and contextual influences on the felicity of character introductions were posited prior to analysis of the data, but questions concerning linguistic factors emerged from Stage I of the analysis. Questions left unaddressed in the first stage are reviewed below.

1. Do proportions of felicitous character introductions in self-generated stories increase with development?

2. Are proportions of felicitous character introductions greater in oral self-generated stories than in written self-generated stories?

3. Does choice of introduction clause type affect felicity? Specifically, are complex presentations more likely to be infelicitous than simple presentations?

4. Are distributions of NP types across felicitous introductions clauses approximately the same? Specifically, if felicity is achieved with a complex presentation, is the introductory NP more likely to be definite (e.g., inferable, anchored, partitioned) than indefinite?
Procedural Decisions

Data Restrictions. Decisions concerning data restrictions were based on the observations of the qualitative analysis conducted in Stage I. These decisions are summarized below:

1. To exclude introductions in retellings from quantitative analysis (n=712). Although the descriptive data showed that retellings were more inhibiting to felicitous encoding of character introductions than self-generating tasks, observations of specific story effects indicated that introductions in retellings were not free to vary to the degree that character introductions in self-generating tasks were. Therefore, quantitative comparisons between and across tasks were considered inappropriate for introductions in retellings.

2. To eliminate all representations of storyteller/participant since this is a restricted situation allowing felicitous introductory pronominalizations (n=38).
3. To exclude classifications of SP: context-dependent (n=26) and fragment (n=10) from further testing since these classifications automatically result in infelicitous classifications (blame-it-on-the-neighborhood) and, hence, are not free to vary with respect to felicity.

4. To analyze non-partitioned and partitioned introductions separately since descriptive analyses of distributions across introductory NP types and introductory clause types showed differing characterizations.

Statistical Procedures. The qualitative and multi-dimensional nature of the data and the asymmetrical nature of the questions led to the choosing of the logit log-linear model as the most appropriate statistical procedure. Although the data set violates the assumption of independence underlying log linear, this procedure is the only statistical analysis for frequency data which recognizes interaction effects. Unlike the positive bias associated with repeated measures in analysis of variance, the use of chi-square grounded analyses with repeated measures results in the retention of the null hypothesis more than it should (Kennedy, 1983). Thus, the log-linear procedure was used but acknowledged as a conservative analysis.
The response variables introductory clause and felicity were combined to a single response variable, introduction type, with four levels: SP/felicitous, CP/felicitous, SP/infelicitous, CP/infelicitous. Quantitative examinations of the first three questions were conducted in two separate 4x2x3 designs. Proportions of introduction type were examined across levels of mode and development. The same design was used for the investigation of non-partitioned introductions and for the investigation of partitioned introductions. Two chi-square analyses were performed to examine Question #4: the two felicitous introduction types were crossed with NP type (indefinite, definite) to form a 2x2 design which was used for both non-partitioned and partitioned investigations.

Variables used in the two logit log-linear procedures are outlined in Table 13. The log-linear program of BMDP (1983) was used for statistical computation. This program provided not only statistical information for model selection, but also statistics for follow-up procedures. Specifically, lambdas were examined to specify the direction of proportional difference between levels of the variables. The significance of these differences was determined with z tests.
TABLE 13
Frequencies for Logit Log-Linear Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Non-Partitioned (n=698)</th>
<th>Partitioned (n=104)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTRODUCTION TYPE (I)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I(1): SP/Felicitous</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I(2): CP/Felicitous</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I(3): SP/Infelicitous</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I(4): CP/Infelicitous</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEVELOPMENT (D)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D(1): Spring Grade 1</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D(2): Fall Grade 2</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D(3): Spring Grade 2</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MODE (M)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M(1): Oral</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M(2): Written</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Variables used in the two chi-square analyses are outlined in Table 14. The log-linear program of BMDP (1983) was used to compute the chi-square statistics. Freeman-Tukey deviates were used to locate significant departure from expected cell frequencies.
TABLE 14
Frequencies for Chi-Square Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Non-partitioned (n=584)</th>
<th>Partitioned (n=81)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTRODUCTORY CLAUSE TYPE (I)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I(1): SP/Felicitous</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I(2): CP/Felicitous</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTRODUCTORY NP (N)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N(1): Indefinite</td>
<td>338</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N(2): Definite</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
V. QUANTITATIVE INVESTIGATION OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Questions for the study and appropriate testing procedures were grounded in a qualitative analysis of the data (Stage I); hence, testing procedures reflect the nature of the questions as well as the nature of the data. The following quantitative testing analyses were performed.

1. Levels of introduction type (SP/felicitous, SP/fe­licitous, SP/infelicitous, CP/infelicitous) for non-partitioned character introductions (n = 698) were examined for homogeneity of proportions across levels of development (Spring Grade 1, Fall Grade 2, Spring Grade 2) and mode (written, dictated).

2. Levels of introduction type for partitioned char­acter introductions (n = 104) were examined for homogeneity of proportions across levels of development and mode.

3. Levels of introduction type for felicitous non-par­titioned character introductions (n = 584) were examined for significant departure from expected
frequencies across levels of NP type (indefinite, definite).

4. Levels of introduction type for felicitous partitioned character introductions (n = 81) were examined for significant departure from expected frequencies across levels of NP type.

The first two procedures made use of a 4x3x2 logit log-linear design. The final two procedures took the form of 2x2 chi-squares. The BMDP (1983) statistical package was used for all statistical procedures. Coding reliability of the response variables used in quantitative testing (introduction type, NP type) and the results from each statistical procedure are presented in this chapter.

**Coding**

The coding for the quantitative analysis was done by the investigator. Character introductions were identified within each of the texts. These character introductions were then coded using the four levels of introductory type (SP/felicitous, CP/felicitous, SP/infelicitous, and CP/infelicitous) and the two levels of NP type (indefinite, definite). Reliability of the coding schema was computed using a second coder. Eighteen of the texts were randomly selected and coded by the second coder. The
random selection was stratified across observation and mode. This process resulted in the selection of three texts from each cell—Development (3) x Mode (2). The two coders achieved a 99% rate of agreement in the identification of character introductions. In the classifications of these character introductions, a 97.8% rate of agreement was obtained for both introduction type and NP type.

**Introduction Type by Development by Mode**

Research on children's use of referring expressions led to the predictions that proportions of felicitous character introductions in self-generated stories would increase over levels of development and would be greater when the oral mode was utilized for story creations than when the written mode was utilized. The qualitative analysis of Stage I led to another prediction: the developmental trend toward greater proportions of felicitous character introductions would interact not only with the communication mode being used but also with the linguistic chunking decisions made by the children themselves. Specifically, the qualitative analysis suggested that chunking decisions resulting in complex presentations would be characterized by proportionately more infelicitous classifications than chunking decisions
resulting in simple presentations. Logit log-linear analyses using introduction type as the logit and development and mode as independent variables were used to test these predictions. Non-partitioned and partitioned character introductions were analyzed separately.

Non-Partitioned Character Introductions

In the examination of non-partitioned character introductions in self-generated stories, proportions of introduction type (I) were analyzed in a 4x3x2 logit log-linear design. Development (D) and mode (M) served as independent variables. The only logit model with a residual $L^2$ signifying an acceptable fit ($p < .05$) was the saturated model. This model included a first-order-logit interaction between development and mode. The results of tests of significance on residual $L^2$ and component $L^2$ are summarized in Table 15.

Although the component $L^2$ was significant for the main effects model due to development, the residual $L^2$ showed that the model did not fit the data well. This suggested that development was an important variable but needed to be examined in the context of the saturated model. An analysis of the residuum about the expected cell counts produced further evidence of the appropriateness of the
TABLE 15

Summary of Logit-Model Analysis:
Introduction Type by Development by Mode
(Non-Partitioned Character Introductions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fitted Model Marginals</th>
<th>Residual</th>
<th>Component</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>df</td>
<td>$L^2$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) DM,I</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>49.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) DM,DI</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>27.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) DM,DI,MI</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) DMI</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

saturated model. There were no instances where the standardized or Freeman-Tukey deviates either achieved or approached statistical significance at the .05 level.

The acceptance of the saturated model indicated that for some levels of introduction type, there were proportional differences between the two levels of mode and that these differences were not uniform over all levels of development. Lambdas were used to identify the specific levels of introduction type having proportional
differences between the written and dictation mode and to locate the levels of development in which these differences occurred. The significance of these differences was determined with z tests. Table 16 presents the lambdas and proportions for levels of introduction type by levels of mode for each level of development.

Proportional differences in introduction type between the two levels of mode were significant only at the first observation (Spring Grade 1) and only for felicitous complex presentations ($z = 2.824$). The directional sign of the lambdas indicated that proportionately more felicitous introductions in complex presentations occurred in dictated self-generated stories than in written self-generated stories at Spring Grade 1. These observations were reinforced by the patterns of proportions. A complex presentation was used felicitously in 29% of the character introductions in dictated stories at Spring Grade 1. Only 5% of the character introductions reflected a felicitous complex presentation in the written stories at the same observation time. Proportions of the remaining levels of introduction type were similar, however, at Spring Grade

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9 In order to ensure the collective risk of running nine independent z tests on the model, an enhanced level of significance, .006 (.05/9), was used. Thus, to be deemed statistically significant a critical z value of 2.75 was needed.
TABLE 16

Lambdas and Proportions for Introduction Type by Development by Mode
(Non-Partitioned Character Introductions)

| Intro. Type | Spring Grade 1 | | | Fall Grade 2 | | | | Spring Grade 2 | | |
|-------------|---------------|-----|-----|---------------|-----|-----|---------------|-----|-----|---------------|-----|-----|
|             | Written (n=698) | Dictated (n=698) | Written (n=698) | Dictated (n=698) | Written (n=698) | Dictated (n=698) |
|             | λ  | p  | λ  | p  | λ  | p  | λ  | p  | λ  | p  | λ  | p  |
| SP/Fel      | -.070 | .46 | .070 | .53 | .244 | .66 | -.244 | .56 | -.174 | .41 | .174 | .52 |
| CP/Fel      | -.564* | .05 | .564* | .29 | .277 | .24 | -.277 | .31 | .287 | .43 | -.287 | .35 |
| Sp/Infel    | .329 | .07 | -.329 | .04 | -.425 | .00 | .425 | .03 | .096 | .01 | -.096 | .01 |
| CP/Infel    | .305 | .44 | -.305 | .38 | -.096 | .10 | .096 | .11 | -.209 | .15 | .209 | .12 |

* Significant at the .05 level (9 independent z tests, .05/9 = .006, critical z value = 2.75)
1. All proportions representing levels of introduction type were similar at Fall Grade 2 and at Spring Grade 2.

The statistics in Table 16 indicate that within each level of development, proportions of introduction type were similar for the two levels of mode with the exception of felicitous complex presentations at Spring Grade 1. The similarity of these proportions indicated that a closer look at the proportions of introduction type across levels of development was warranted, a main effect noted in the model selection stage as well as in the review of research. A preliminary look at the proportions in Table 16 across levels of development (collapsing mode) suggested that proportions of felicitous complex presentations increased and proportions of infelicitous complex presentations decreased over time. Proportions of felicitous and infelicitous simple presentations, however, appeared to remain relatively stable across observations.

Lambdas were used to identify specific levels of introduction type showing proportional differences between the three levels of development when the levels of mode were collapsed. Lambdas and proportion for each level of introduction type by development are presented in Table 17.
### TABLE 17

**Lambdas and Proportions for Introduction Type by Development**  
(Non-Partitioned Character Introductions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intro Type</th>
<th>Spring Grade 1 (f=165)</th>
<th>Fall Grade 2 (f=227)</th>
<th>Spring Grade 2 (f=306)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>( \lambda )</td>
<td>( p )</td>
<td>( \lambda )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP/Fel</td>
<td>-.194</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CP/Fel</td>
<td>-.755*</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP/Infel</td>
<td>.624</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>-.281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CP/Infel</td>
<td>.324</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>-.228</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at .05 (6 independent \( z \) tests, \( .05/6 = .008 \), critical \( z \) value = 2.65)

Proportional differences in levels of introduction type were significant only for felicitous complex presentations. The lambdas in Table 17 show that the observed proportion of felicitous complex presentations was significantly less than expected proportions at Spring Grade 1 \( (z = -3.777) \) but significantly greater than the expected proportion at Spring Grade 2 \( (z = 3.357) \). No other proportions resulted in a significant difference. These
findings indicate that development contributes to a much greater extent to difference in successful use of complex presentations than of simple presentations.

A contrast of felicitous and infelicitous proportions shown in Figure 3 reveals, as expected, that felicitous character introductions increased slightly and infelicitous character introductions decreased slightly over time. What was more interesting, however, was the relative contributions of simple presentations and complex presentations to the increase in felicitous character introductions. Figure 4 plots a steady growth in children's use of complex presentations to achieve felicity.
Figure 3: The Proportion of Felicity as a Function of Observation Time

Figure 4: The Proportion of Felicitous Character Introductions as a Function of Introduction Type
In contrast, proportions of felicitous simple presentations remained relatively consistent with a slight decrease from Fall Grade 2 to Spring Grade 2. These findings suggest that increased proportions of felicity were not due to an increase in simple presentations—children appeared to be quite capable of introducing a character felicitously at the first observation if a chunking decision requiring a simple presentation was made. The increase was better characterized by an increased use of complex presentations to introduce characters felicitously.

**Partitioned Character Introductions**

When partitioned character introductions were examined using the four-level introduction type as the response variable and development and mode as independent variables, the null-logit model was selected as the model of best fit. The results of tests of significance on residual $L^2$ and component $L^2$ are summarized in Table 18.

Although the residual $L^2$ for each model easily attained the .05 level, an examination of component $L^2$ showed that neither the main effects of development and mode nor the first-order-logit interaction contributed significantly to the improvement of fit between expected and observed cell
TABLE 18

Summary of Logit-Model Analysis:
Introduction Type by Development by Mode
(Partitioned Character Introductions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Fitted Marginals</th>
<th>Residual df</th>
<th>$L^2$</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>Component df</th>
<th>$L^2$</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) DM, I</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14.36</td>
<td>.498</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) DM, DI</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10.54</td>
<td>.309</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>.701</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) DM, DI, MI</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.22</td>
<td>.399</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td>.230</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) DMI</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.22</td>
<td>.399</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

frequencies. An analysis of the residuum about the expected cell counts supported the selection of the null model. No standardized or Freeman-Tukey deviates achieved or approached statistical significance at the .05 level.

The acceptance of the null-logit model indicated that there were significant proportional differences between levels of introduction type for partitioned character introductions but that these differences were unaffected by development and mode. Lambdas and proportions of
levels of introduction type in Table 19 provide a profile of partitioned character introductions.

**TABLE 19**

Lambdas and Proportions for Introduction Type  
(Partitioned Character Introductions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction Type</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>$\lambda$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SP/Fel</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>.343</td>
<td>.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CP/Fel</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>.831*</td>
<td>.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP/Infel</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-.992*</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CP/Infel</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>-.182</td>
<td>.19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at .05 level (3 independent $z$ tests, .05 = .017, critical $z$ value = 2.41)

Table 19 shows that the proportion of felicitous complex presentations was significantly greater ($z = 3.143$) and the proportion of infelicitous simple presentations was significantly less ($z = -2.654$) than their respective expected proportions standardized to unity. These statistics indicate that complex presentations were
preferred over simple presentations for partitioned character introductions even though attempted complex presentations resulted in a higher failure rate (19/75 = 25%) than attempted simple presentations (4/29 = 13%). Since differentiations in development and mode did not contribute to the fit of the model, it was assumed that this profile of partitioned character introductions in self-generated stories was stable across written and dictation tasks and across differences in observation time.

**Felicitous Introduction Type by NP Type**

One question emerging from the initial qualitative analysis concerned the distribution of NP type (indefinite, definite) across levels of felicitous introduction type (SP/felicitous, CP/felicitous). The preliminary work suggested that complex presentations were more difficult to use felicitously—a prediction supported by the preceding two analyses. Further, the qualitative analysis led to the prediction that if a felicitous complex presentation was achieved, it would more likely be with a definite NP which is aided by textual support and/or common knowledge than with an unsupported indefinite NP. To test this prediction, chi-square
analyses of felicitous introduction type by NP type were performed on both non-partitioned and partitioned character introductions in self-generated stories.

**Non-Partitioned Character Introductions**

A 2x2 design of introduction type by NP type for non-partitioned character introductions yielded a significant $X^2$ indicating that at least one cell had observed frequencies which differed significantly from the expected cell frequency, $X^2 (1, N = 584) = 181.092, p < .001$. The Freeman-Tukey deviates listed in Table 20 show that all cells contain an observed frequency which differs significantly from the expected frequency.

The Freeman-Tukey deviates indicate that in cases where felicitous non-partitioned character introductions were achieved, the children tended to use indefinite introductory NPs with simple presentations and definite introductory NPs with complex presentations. These findings support the prediction that the more difficult complex presentations achieve felicity primarily with referents which can be inferred from or anchored in previous text or which are in the realm of common knowledge. In contrast, referents which are unidentifiable to the audience, if introduced
TABLE 20

Proportions and Freeman-Tukey Deviates for Felicitous Introduction Type by NP Type (Non-Partitioned Character Introductions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NP Type (n = 584)</th>
<th>Proportions</th>
<th>Freeman-Tukey Deviates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SP/Fel</td>
<td>CP/Fel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definite</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at .05 level, critical z value = 1.96

Felicitously, usually are encoded with an indefinite introductory NP embedded in a simple presentation. This analysis, however, was restricted to non-partitioned character introductions.

Partitioned Character Introductions

In the examination of felicitous introduction type by NP type for partitioned character introductions, no significant differences were found between observed and expected cell frequencies, \( X^2 (1, N = 81) = 2.989 \),
Table 21 displays the proportions and Freeman-Tukey deviates.

**TABLE 21**

Proportions and Freeman-Tukey Deviates for Felicitous Introduction Type by NP Type (Partitioned Character Introductions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NP Type (n=81)</th>
<th>Proportions</th>
<th>Deviates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SP/Fel (f=25)</td>
<td>CP/Fel (f=56)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indefinite</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definite</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proportions suggest that the general tendency is to use definite NPs in complex presentations and indefinite NPs in simple presentations, but differential use was not significant for partitioned character introductions.
VI. DISCUSSION

The final chapter presents the conclusions from the present study on children's character introductions in stories. In addition, limitations and directions for future research are discussed along with research and instructional implications.

Conclusions

The analysis of first and second graders' character introductions in both self-generated stories and retellings indicated that neither the linguistic forms of referring expressions for textually-new referents nor the recognition of an uninformed audience's needs are foreign to children in grade one. At the first observation, Spring Grade 1, children were using felicitous character introductions more often than infelicitous ones. This evidence coupled with the research on young children's use of conventional story introductions (e.g., Applebee, 1978) suggests that children come to school able to produce autonomous text in some situations. The findings further
showed that children's use of audience-accommodating linguistic forms for character introductions expands over time. The difference between felicitous and infelicitous proportions was more marked at Spring Grade 2 than at Spring Grade 1. The study did not indicate, however, that cognitive development resulting in less egocentric behavior was solely responsible for the expanding use of audience-accommodating referring expressions. Rather the study indicated that the contextual and linguistic environments of any given text-producing event contribute to the degree of autonomy achieved. The contributions of these factors are discussed below.

**Contextual Influences**

*Mode.* As had been predicted, the self-generated stories produced in the oral mode were characterized by more felicitous character introductions than those produced in the written mode; but this effect was restricted to children's first year in school and to complex presentations. In other words, at the first grade observation, modal differences were not found for simple presentations but were found for the more sophisticated complex presentations. The following excerpts from first-grade texts show this contrast.
In both excerpts, a character is introduced and positioned in a story location. The dictated excerpt accomplishes this task in one clause, the written text requires two. The study suggests that the dictated excerpt represents a more sophisticated introductory strategy which is used in oral creations but is not as common in children's initial written creations. By second grade, however, the variation in mode did not contribute to differences in character introduction strategies.

Assuming that most children do not engage in writing stories prior to Grade 1, the findings indicate that after one year of exploring writing as a medium, the language sophistication achieved in character introductions produced in the oral mode is matched by the sophistication of the character introductions produced in the written mode. This finding is a testimony to children's ability to adapt to and exploit a new communication mode.
Although it is reasonable to assume that the cognitive burden found in the transcription process of the written mode inhibits the language sophistication of children's initial written texts, the effect of the published written texts found in the classroom must be considered also. Deford (1981) has shown that written texts of first-grade children in traditional reading programs reflect the simple syntax of basal readers; in contrast, written texts of first-grade children in literature-based reading programs are characterized by more sophisticated language forms. This finding suggests that the language sophistication found in children's written texts is not only affected by the ease of the transcription process but also by the models of written text to which children are exposed.

The children in this study showed swift progress in updating the language forms for written character introductions so that they matched the sophistication of their dictated counterparts. It must be noted, however, that the children in the study were attending schools in which self-generated writing and literature experiences were incorporated into the curriculum beginning with Grade 1. Students not encouraged to express their thoughts in writing and not exposed to reading literature beyond the
basal readers during their initial school years may not achieve success with the written mode as early or as easily.

**Choice.** The qualitative analysis indicated that with regard to felicitous character introductions, children found it easier to put their own stories into words than to put somebody else's story into words. This contrast in children's use of context-creating linguistic strategies is illustrated in excerpts from one child's self-generated dictation and oral retelling at Spring Grade 1.

**Self-generated Dictation, Spring Grade 1:**

Once there was three little bears and a little girl named Riba...

**Oral Retelling, Spring Grade 1:**

See, the goose got out of bed...

This particular child succeeded in establishing a character reference frame in the self-generated dictated story but failed to establish a similar frame in the retelling at the same observation time.

One possible interpretation is that the two tasks are quite different. The self-generated dictation requires the construction of a reference frame and the oral
retelling requires a reconstruction of a reference frame. If the task involves a verbal- or visual-casting of story characters by someone else (e.g., the teacher) prior to retelling, the findings suggested that many children find it difficult to dismiss the previously-established reference frame and to "begin again" for a new audience. Children do not have to deal with this reconstruction process in self-generated stories, however. Reference frames for these stories need only be constructed.

The analysis also indicated that retellings were more susceptible to infelicity due to complexity of the story cast or story plot. If children are asked to cope with numerous characters in a complex plot, resulting infelicitous referring expression would not be unexpected. On the other hand, if children are allowed to generate their material, the analysis showed that they usually set reasonable limits, creating stories which are simple in plot and limited in cast.

Another variable contributing to the autonomy of children's reconstructed stories seemed to be the interpretation of the task. Some children appeared to treat the task as some sort of memory check and focused on delineating all the events. Other children were more concerned with using story language to create a text comparable to
the stories with which they were familiar. This difference can be seen in the initial excerpts from two retellings of Squawk to the Moon, Little Goose.

Example 1:
It's the story of Little Duck...The first picture was the mother was getting ready to go out to Mrs. Hen's house...

Example 2:
Well, once upon a time there was three ducklings...And they had a mother--like every other gosling would...

The author of the first text appears to be most concerned with sequencing the story correctly. The pictures are used as a sort of visual outline. The author of the second retelling, however, appears to be more concerned with creating a story-like text. The material of the original story is recounted using "story language." The conventional "Once upon a time" and the familiar "like every other X would" are just two examples of this author's attempt to reconstruct the material so that it "sounds" like a story. The comparison of these two retellings suggests that children function under different interpretations of retelling tasks.
Linguistic Contributions

Clause Function. Although the findings showed that the proportions of felicitous character introductions did increase from Spring Grade 1 to Spring Grade 2, the increase was attributed to more numerous occurrences of felicitous complex presentations. This finding indicated that developmental increases in felicitous character introductions reflected children's increasing ability to encode more than one narrative function in a clause. The use of unifunctional simple presentations was rarely a problem for children at any observation level. Even the youngest storytellers usually achieved felicity if the sole purpose of the clause was to introduce. Complex presentations were characterized by a much lower success rate, however. Instead of encoding both the introductory and the action/state functions in complex presentations, children usually focused only on the latter function and ignored the former, thus, treating the clause as singular in function.

For example, if a child wanted to encode information about a textually-new goose getting out of bed, one of two strategies was normally used. The child might subdivide the material into two chunks, resulting in an encoding such as "Once there was a goose. He got out of bed."
contrast, the child might treat the material as one chunk; if this strategy was chosen, the clause was usually encoded with only one function—the action function rather than the introductory function. Forms such as "The goose got out of bed" were commonly the result. Rarely did children encode both functions felicitously (e.g., "A goose got out of bed").

The increased use of felicitous complex presentations over time indicated that children first treat clauses as singular in function and only later use clauses for dual functions. This conclusion parallels the observation of Karmiloff-Smith (1979) that children initially use the plurifunctional article system in a unifunctional manner and the observation of Halliday (1973) that children initially express only one language function per utterance but later encode multiple functions.

**NP Definiteness.** The findings from the investigation not only showed that felicitous occurrences of complex presentations were proportionately less than felicitous occurrences of simple presentations, but also that when felicity was achieved in a complex presentation it was usually with a definite NP which signaled inference from prior text, anchoring to previously-introduced entities, or pointing to common-knowledge referents. Excerpts from
Instances of children introducing an unidentifiable referent with an indefinite introductory NP in a complex presentation were few (e.g., one sunny day A DOLLAR BILL was in a bank).

**Partitioning.** The analysis of children's character introductions showed different profiles for partitioned and non-partitioned character introductions. With respect to their introductory clausal environments, simple presentations were preferred for introductions of non-partitioned entities and complex presentations were preferred for introductions of partitioned entities. One possible interpretation of this phenomenon is that the functions of non-partitioned and partitioned introductions differ. Non-partitioned introductions serve to assert existence of
a character in a textually-created story world. In contrast, the existence of a partitioned entity has already been established through the assertion of the existence of its set. Because partitioned introductions presuppose existence in the story world, the purpose of these introductions is not unifunctional but two-fold: to distinguish a set member from other set members and to specify the reason an entity deserves special treatment as a unique entity. Therefore, to assert existence of a partitioned character in a simple presentation with no explanation supporting the need for the partitioning is often redundant and uninformative. Complex presentations, even though more difficult to construct felicitously, are needed. The following examples illustrate this issue.

Once there was three sons and a father

The father had an oldest son

(simple presentation)

The youngest son was kinda dumb

(complex presentation)

The analysis showed that partitioned introductions were not influenced by development and mode to the extent that
non-partitioned introductions were. Specifically, the analysis revealed differences in introductory clause types for partitioned introductions which were unaffected by variation in observation time or mode of communication. Complex presentations were preferred for partitioned character introductions even though this form resulted in a higher rate of infelicity across all observations and across all modes. This finding suggests that when children chose to create or are asked to recreate stories involving partitioned characters, problems surface which are not encountered in stories involving only non-partitioned characters.

**Limitations and Directions for Future Research**

The effect of the original story on retelling marks a factor often ignored in research of both retellings and self-generated stories. This finding suggests that children may shape their stories around a much more detailed story frame than proposed by most research on story schema. Certain stylistic formats and phrases of particular books or particular authors familiar to the children may be used in a retelling as well as in a self-generated story. Cook-Gumperz and Green (1984) described a narrative model used by a child which closely followed the
formatting and language used in picture books of Richard Scarry. The previously-mentioned work of Deford (1981) has noted the use of a basal reader style in the written narratives of first-grade children in traditional reading programs; she observed a more sophisticated literary style in the written narratives of children in a literature-based reading program.

With respect to prior exposure to books and stories, the present study attempted only to look at the connection between an original story and its retelling. The effect of children's experiences to books and stories was not considered in the investigation of self-generated stories, yet as Deford, Cook-Gumperz, and Green have pointed out, this is an important issue. Qualitative analyses of children's stories and their literacy experiences are needed to determine the degree to which the quality of books and stories children are exposed to affects their success in the written mode.

Another restriction of the present study was the limiting of the analysis to linguistic encodings. The operative assumption was that linguistic encoding failing to accommodate audience perspective reflects children's inability to address the needs of an uninformed audience. This assumption is valid within the context of the written
mode, but is not valid for research on children's ability to recognize the needs of an uninformed audience. Research by Michaels and Collins (1984) has shown that children at times use prosody to signal certain information concerning referent identity—information usually encoded linguistically by adults. These findings suggest that children may be aware of audience needs, but may use systems other than the linguistic channel to address these needs (e.g. stress, pitch, gestures). Oral narratives as well as children's oral readings of their written narratives need to be examined for uses of non-linguistic markers which signal audience accommodation.

A third important issue not addressed in the present study is the effect of text-negotiating processes. Even though self-generated stories were by design self-initiated, in actuality, many of the first-grade written texts were produced in connection with suggestions from the teachers. The lack of confidence the first-grade subjects showed in providing their own semantic material for narratives is not uncommon. Observations of the effect teacher-structured interactions have on retelling performances have shown the importance of studying young children's texts as products representing cooperative processes (e.g., Green, 1977; Michaels & Cook-Gumperz, 1979). Based
on these preliminary investigations, it is not unreasonable to assume that the task directions and negotiations between writer and teacher, writer and peer, and writer and self affect the shape of text. Further study of the effect of these interactions is needed so that teachers can provide an instructional atmosphere fostering growth in the use of the written mode.

A final limitation of the study which also suggests directions for future research focuses on children perceptions of the text-creating tasks. It was clear, particularly in first graders' written texts, that the children did not share common assumptions about task expectations. In the written task, some children seemed to interpret the task as to draw a picture and to compose a few comments about the picture. Others seemed to interpret it as to write as much as you can—with little regard given to the structure of a story. Some children strove for writing "perfection," using only words in their spelling vocabularies; others expressed their thoughts in more sophisticated vocabulary using inventive spellings. In the dictation task, some children seemed to value quality and produced well-structured stories. Others seemed to value length and produced rambling texts. The retelling task elicited different interpretations also.
Some children responded as if the task was a memory check. These children reconstructed the events very methodically. Others were more concerned with creating a story form and using conventional story language. By exploring the standards children function under, research on children's interpretations of literacy experiences would help teachers better understand and evaluate children's progress.

**Implications for Research**

The findings from this study not only provide directions for future research in children's productions of autonomous texts but also address theoretical issues underlying research of this type. What the findings suggest is that children's difficulty in creating context within text is linked in important ways to contextual features and linguistic decisions at the levels of text, clause, and NP. Therefore, analyses focusing on the autonomy of children's texts must incorporate some characterizations of linguistic decisions made by the children as well as of contextual features surrounding the literacy tasks. This study focused on two linguistic variables (introductory clause type and introductory NP type) and two contextual variables (mode and choice), but many more issues remain to be explored.
The present study also provides an analytic frame which is useful for research on children's literacy experiences. If the purpose in investigating children's early literacy experiences is to gain a better understanding of the approaches used by children in becoming literate text-receivers and text-producers, then relying exclusively on classification systems based on the mode of literacy used by adults is likely to be unproductive and even erroneous. Rather, research is needed that uncovers and classifies linguistic and contextual features which are important in children's transition into the realm of literacy. The conclusions drawn from research on this transitional period are bound by the insightfulness of the classification systems used. This perspective toward research suggests that the most useful methodology combines techniques of both qualitative and quantitative research.

Implications for Teachers and Administrators

The general concern of the study, in practical terms, was how to foster children's ability to cope in a literate community. The study focused on children's transition from a home community where context-dependent language was the norm to a school community where autonomous language was more common. By examining one specific aspect of one
specific kind of autonomous text (character introductions in narratives), several instructional and curricular implications surfaced.

First, children need to be exposed to quality models of autonomous text. The acknowledged effect of the original story on retellings suggests that children do model their text productions on "published" texts. Unfortunately, in many primary-grade classrooms, exposure to written text is limited primarily to the awkward "basalese" found in the material of the reading program. If these texts provide the most salient model for children's autonomous texts, it is not unreasonable to assume that the transition into the mode of literacy is inhibited rather than facilitated.

Second, children need to be encouraged to express their own ideas and stories in both the oral and written modes. Although this implication sounds rather simplistic, many primary-grade classrooms are characterized by little talking and even less self-generated writing experiences. Learning to create text of any type is reduced all too often to isolated skill practice of mechanical aspects of language (e.g., grammar, spelling, handwriting, punctuation). Literacy experiences involving children actively creating oral and written texts in meaningful situations are noticeably absent—crowded out by a plethora of workbooks and drill sheets.
The third implication stems directly from the second. In order to construct a curriculum that facilitates children's ability to function within the mode of literacy, conceptualizations of the building blocks of curriculum must be reconsidered. Most reading and language arts curricula are based on discrete skills which are taught and tested in non-descript settings. The findings from this study indicate that with respect to producing autonomous text, first-grade children do not need to be drilled on appropriate linguistic forms. These forms are already a part of children's language. What is needed, however, is a curriculum which "builds on" what children already know about language, facilitating the expansion of knowledge about autonomous text to a variety of purposes within a variety of contexts using a variety of linguistic forms representing a variety of linguistic functions. It is only through this contextual variation that children expand their ability to function in the mode of literacy. From an instructional perspective, children's success in becoming members of a literate community is facilitated when literacy experiences in the classroom are structured after the variety of communication modes, topic, audiences, and purposes found in the literacy tasks of the real world.
In short, children enter school capable of creating autonomous text in certain situations. The extent to which they use this capability is often determined, however, by the context surrounding the literacy experiences and the extent to which children perceive tasks as requiring autonomous language. If the literacy experiences are far-removed from the functions for which the mode of literacy was designed, many children may experience difficulty in recognizing the need for an autonomous form. In other words, children may be able to produce what is considered a literate form but may not understand that this is the form expected. On the other hand, the study also shows that, developmentally, primary-grade children progress toward less egocentric behavior. Because it is impossible to divorce the effects of cognitive development from the effects of "catching-on" to the rules imposed by a literate community, the study suggests that progress toward more autonomous texts is attributable not only to a gradual loss of an egocentric perspective but also to a closer alignment of teacher and student interpretations of the literacy assignments and to children's increasing ability to commandeer the multifunctional nature of language in varied contexts.
Appendix A

CODING EXAMPLE

Once there was a little girl.

Her name was Laura.

She was a good girl.

Every day she would go to the market to get some food.

She got some pears and ten cherries and three fish and paid the man then skipped home and gave her mom the food and ate their supper.

After supper Mom said, "Laura, where are you going?"

"Outside."

"Okay."

She went outside.

And a frog scared her.

And it was a dream.

<table>
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<th>Introduction Type</th>
<th>NP Type</th>
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<td>Indefinite</td>
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<tr>
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<td>CP: Infelicitous</td>
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BIBLIOGRAPHY


