An Assessment of Current Practices in Reading Comprehension Instruction

Barbara Stacy Rieckhoff
Loyola University Chicago

Follow this and additional works at: https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_diss

Part of the Education Commons

Recommended Citation
https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_diss/3669

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses and Dissertations at Loyola eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Loyola eCommons. For more information, please contact ecommons@luc.edu.

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 License.
Copyright © 1997 Barbara Stacy Rieckhoff
LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

AN ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT PRACTICES IN READING COMPREHENSION INSTRUCTION

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION AND EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

BY

BARBARA STACY RIECKHOFF

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

JANUARY 1997
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. Barney Berlin, my dissertation advisor, for his continued support and encouragement. His suggestions and ongoing faith in my ability to complete this, helped this project to its final form. I would also like to thank the other members of my committee, Dr. Robert Cienkus and Dr. Mary Jane Gray, for their constant assistance and guidance.

Special thanks to Dr. Harry Rossi, Superintendent of School District #30, who encouraged me to complete this project, and helped me to make my research a priority while serving as a building principal.

I am especially indebted to my parents, who at a very early age, inspired and instilled in me a love of learning and the belief that no goal was unattainable. Through their guidance, example and support, I have reached this goal.

I would like to acknowledge the help of my family, especially my sister who has served as a constant mentor to me throughout life. Finally, my deepest gratitude is to my husband, whose patience and understanding and undoubting faith in me helped this project to completion.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ................................................................. iii
LIST OF TABLES ........................................................................ vii
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS ........................................................... ix
ABSTRACT. ................................................................................. x

Chapter
1. INTRODUCTION ................................................................. 1
   Models of Reading
   Reform Movements in Education
   Cognitive Psychology and Research
   Focus of this Study

2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ............................................. 17
   Models of Comprehension
   Comprehension Instruction Research
   Metacognition and Strategy Training Studies
   Research on Metacognitive Awareness
   Prevalence of Metacognition in Materials
   Selection of a Framework for this Study

3. METHODOLOGY ................................................................. 46
   Background Information
   Research Design
4. RESULTS. .......................................................... 58
   Classroom Observations
   Teacher Surveys
   Student Interviews
   Administrator Surveys
   Textbook Review

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS. ....................... 100
   The Current State of Reading Comprehension Instruction
   A Model for Implementing Comprehension Strategies
   Recommendations
   Limitations
   Suggestions for Further Research
   Summary

Appendix

1. CLASSROOM OBSERVATION SUMMARY SHEET. ........ 115
2. TEACHER COVER LETTER. .............................. 118
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Summary of Observations by Grade Level and Subject Area.</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Summary of Observations by District.</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Summary of Total Teacher Behaviors Observed.</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Summary of Overall Minutes and Comprehension.</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Summary of Minutes Observed and Teacher Behavior by District.</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Summary of Teacher Behaviors by District.</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Breakdown of Comprehension Minutes Observed.</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Distribution of Years of Teaching Experience.</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Teacher Responses and Frequency for Assisting Comprehension.</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Teacher Responses and Frequency of Direct Instruction Strategies.</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Percentage of Teachers Utilizing Strategies.</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Percentage of Class Time to Given Areas.</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Percentage of Class Time Allotted to Specific Areas of Reading.</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Teacher Responses and Frequency for Important Skill Learned.</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Students Reported Reading Habits.</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Administrator Ranking of Areas of Reading Instruction</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
17. Percentage of Lessons Per Area of Reading ......................... 97
18. Range and Percentage of Lessons Allotted to Areas of Reading ........ 98
19. Percentage of Strategies Found in Textbooks ........................ 98
# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Rumelhart's Interactive Model of Reading</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Irwin's Basic Comprehension Processes</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to assess the current practices in reading instruction in relation to a cognitive psychology model of reading. This investigation evaluated the state of reading comprehension instruction since Dolores Durkin's landmark study of 1978. It identified any changes that have occurred given the most recent models of reading instruction as developed by cognitive psychologists. This study examined the extent to which those changes and trends have impacted the classroom teacher as well as the student. It investigated the amount of comprehension instruction occurring today in classrooms in grades 3 through 6 and the amount of direct strategy training and comprehension instruction currently taking place in those classrooms. In addition, this study assessed the level of understanding and the amount of training teachers have been given in the area of reading comprehension instruction in the last three years. The study also investigated the students' awareness and level of understanding of current comprehension monitoring strategies. Finally, an attempt was made to identify the resources available to teachers in teacher materials and resource guides.

Five different protocols were used for collecting and obtaining data for this study. The first one, the Classroom Observation Summary Sheet, was used to observe teacher behavior during reading and social studies classes.
The Reading Comprehension Instruction Teacher Survey assessed the teacher's level of understanding and use of comprehension strategies and their use in direct instruction. The Reading Comprehension Interview was used with students in grades 3 through 6. The Administrator/Staff Developer Survey represents a set of questions for school administrators. The Textbook Review Summary was used by the investigator to review materials from the reading and social studies texts in use at each school.

Results indicated that there has been little change shown in the amount of reading comprehension instruction that teachers provide for students at the intermediate grade levels. Teachers were observed to be assessing comprehension for a small percentage of their instructional time, however, they were not observed providing comprehension instruction to their students. Surveys and interviews with teachers, administrators and students indicated a fair amount of knowledge and understanding among current models of reading, strategies to apply and the area of metacognition. However, these results did not match up with what was observed in classrooms. A review of textbooks indicated that the manuals and texts are providing teachers with a sufficient amount of information on strategies and comprehension instruction. This study concluded that teachers may have a cursory understanding of this topic or may assume that their students are familiar with strategies for comprehension, but are paying little attention to this topic during instructional time.
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The last two decades of reading research have been significant in that there has been a major shift in reading theory and in some of the beliefs about the nature of the reading process. There has been a significant change in how the reading process has been viewed and thus the approach to teaching reading. The traditional “bottom up” models of reading instruction which focused on the decoding aspects of the reading task were replaced with the “top down” models, which focused on the reader’s processing of the text. These “bottom-up” and “top-down” models were later replaced by interactive models of reading. The interactive models presume that comprehension is tied to the reader’s active involvement and engagement with the text. “Focus on reading comprehension theory and research over the past two decades has moved from primary concern for the complexity of the text to the processing of the text by the reader.” (Klein, 1988). Research in the area of reading comprehension in recent decades has shown what kind of instruction is most effective as well as what kind of instruction is actually occurring in classrooms (Durkin, 1978). Such research has suggested the need for more direct instruction in the area of comprehension and the need for teachers to instruct students in specific strategies that will increase their understanding of
the material they read. This research has led to much discussion and continuous study in the area of strategy training and comprehension strategy instruction. The field of cognitive psychology has provided the backdrop for research and studies in the area of metacognition and cognitive strategy training. Intermediate and middle level students have exhibited a need for instruction in strategies that will assist them in their reading classes as well as in content classes. This study will examine the extent to which the changes and trends in reading theory and instruction have been experienced in the classroom by the teacher as well as by the student. This study will, in part, replicate the work done by Dr. Dolores Durkin in 1978, in assessing the amount of comprehension instruction occurring during reading instructional time. It will investigate the amount of comprehension instruction and metacognitive strategy training currently in use in today's elementary classrooms. In addition, it will assess the level of understanding and the amount of training teachers have been given in this area. It will assess students' understanding of the reading process and how they view the different types of reading that they are required to do. Finally, it will attempt to identify the resources available to teachers in teacher guides and manuals by reviewing these materials for evidence of methods for teaching comprehension instructional strategies and overall strategy training.

Models of Reading

Although the field of reading research is well over 100 years old, the concept of identifying a model for the reading process is only approximately 35
years old. (Samuels & Kamil, 1984). The early models of the reading process can best be described as “bottom up” models. That is, the focus of the behavior was placed upon the reader's eye movements and in particular, what was going on from the external processes involved. These traditional models represented reading as a set of isolated subskills. "Since the 1940's, mainstream reading instruction has relied on published basal reading programs, which provide teachers with a scope and sequence of skills and students with skills practice sheets, and reading texts characterized by controlled vocabulary of increasing difficulty." (Richardson, Anders, Tidwell and Lloyd, 1991) Researchers didn't always agree on the set of subskills that represented the reading process. However, such models were based on the notion of reading comprehension being a passive, static process. Gough's 1972 information processing model is an example of such a bottom-up processing model. The Gough model focuses on the visual processes occurring during reading. This model describes how text is processed from the time the eye first looks upon the printed words to the time that meaning is derived from the visual input.

The LaBerge and Samuels (1984) automatic information processing model is another example of a bottom-up model. This human information processing model displayed several functions. It attempts to show how attentional resources are displayed by both beginning and skilled readers. Next it describes the routes that information travels through the processing system. Finally, it attempts to describe how information is processed with each of the components of the system. This model attempts to explain the beginning as well as the skilled reader, and the automaticity that the skilled reader uses in processing the text. (Samuels and Kamil, 1984)
Such information processing models as those postulated by Gough and LaBerge and Samuels were criticized for being mostly linear in nature. That is, they have a series of non-interactive stages, and each stage does its work independently and passes its production to the next higher stage. According to Rumelhart, (1977) linear models contain a serious deficiency. They pass information along in one direction only and do not permit information contained in a higher stage to influence the processing of a lower stage. Rumelhart's interactive model explains how higher order psychological processing can influence lower level processing and vice versa. (Alverman & Qian, 1994).

In direct response to the "bottom-up" models, researchers proposed models that were very different in their description and depiction of the reading process. "The newer approaches to the teaching of reading are related to various notions of the construction of meaning" (Richardson, Anders, Tidwell and Lloyd, 1991). Such models have been called "top down" models. In these models, the focus of the reading process shifts to the actual printed page and the meaning that the reader creates when he interacts with the print.

A more recent type of model is known as an interactive model. In an interactive model, it is possible for information contained in a higher stage of processing to influence the analysis taking place at lower stages. Rumelhart's Interactive Model of Reading describes such a process. Rumelhart's model takes knowledge from a variety of sources. These include syntactical knowledge, semantic knowledge, orthographic knowledge and lexical knowledge.
Rumelhart’s Interactive Model of Reading suggests that higher order knowledge influences the processing at lower levels of analysis. Each of the knowledge sources indicated in Figure 1 exerts influence on the text processing and on a person’s interpretation of the text. Information from syntactic, semantic, lexical and orthographic sources converge upon the pattern synthesizer. The message center has the job of processing the information, storing it or holding it.

Another model, proposed by Stanovich, (1980) integrates a variety of concepts into an interactive compensatory model. Stanovich states:

"Interactive models of reading appear to provide a more accurate conceptualization of reading performance than do strictly top-down or bottom-up models. When combined with an assumption of
Goodman’s (1976) model of reading is a meaning based or whole language model as well. It is sometimes called the psycholinguistic approach to reading as Goodman has been responsible for defining reading as the “psycholinguistic guessing game”. His model, as the other two previously described, view comprehension as an active process which involves hypothesis testing or schema building. Readers make hypotheses about the plausible interpretation of the text as they are reading, and continually test these hypotheses against the available information. The reader is actively engaged with the text, and the meaning attached to the material is based on the reader’s background knowledge and understanding of the topic. (Samuels and Kamil, 1984).

Another well-known model that describes a meaning based process is Just and Carpenter’s model (1980). Their model of comprehension is based on a number of studies involving the eye movements of college students. This model assumes that the reader attempts to interpret each content word. It also assumes that each eye fixation lasts as long as the word that is being processed. Just and Carpenter’s model is a flexible one which can account for many different types of reading behavior.

Kintsch’s model is one that deals solely with the processes of comprehension. Developed by Kintsch and van Dijk (1978), this model suggests that comprehension is made up of several complex processes. This model has three types of operations. The meaning elements of a text are organized into a coherent whole. Then another set of operations compresses the whole meaning of the text into its gist. Then the third component generates
new texts from the memorial consequences of the comprehension processes.

The interactive models of reading clearly support the theory of reading that is presented in the most recent national reports on the study of reading.

Reading is defined as the following:

"Reading is the process of constructing meaning from written texts. It is a set of complex skills requiring the coordination of a number of interrelated sources of information." (Anderson, 1984)

Five generalizations come from the last decade of research on the nature of reading. They are as follows:

Reading is a constructive process.
Reading must be fluent.
Reading must be strategic.
Reading requires motivation.
Reading is a continuously developing skill. (Anderson, 1984)

Reform Movements in Education

A number of landmark reports, as part of a nationwide school reform effort also had an impact on changing how the process of reading was viewed. A landmark report, *Becoming A Nation of Readers* (1984) provided a broad view of reading instruction. This comprehensive report traced the development of reading comprehension instruction and concluded that comprehension must be taught via direct instruction. One of the recommendations of this report was as follows: "Teachers need to teach
comprehension strategies directly" (Anderson, 1984). It suggested that the most logical place for instruction in reading and thinking strategies was in science and social studies classes.

Other groups were concerned about the state of reading instruction as well. On April 1, 1976, the National Institute of Education (NIE) issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) describing the need for a Center for the Study of Reading whose central concern would be comprehension. The RFP described the following:

"A considerable, though not entirely adequate body of facts has been assembled about decoding but much less is known about the process of understanding written text. Researchers and practitioners, accordingly, have strongly urged the NIE to focus its attention and that of the field upon the problems of reading comprehension" (Durkin, 1978).

The RFP outlined the responsibilities this way:

"The Center will identify and implement means by which knowledge gained from research relevant to reading can be utilized in developing and improving practices for informal and formal reading instruction. The Center will also be involved in identifying means by which basic research on reading and linguistic communication can be made more relevant to practical problems in improving the level of reading comprehension" (Durkin, 1978)

In addition to this national report, one of the most significant studies of comprehension research was done by Dr. Dolores Durkin (1978). The primary reason for the observational study was to learn whether elementary school classrooms provide comprehension instruction, and if they do, to find out how much time is allotted to it. Middle and upper grades were selected for the study based on the assumption that there was less comprehension instruction at the primary grades. Durkin's research consisted of three sub-studies. One
study concentrated on fourth grade, as it is at this level that the process of learning to read transfers to reading to learn. The second sub-study was a study of schools. Grades three through six were observed in order to see whether individual schools differ in the amount of time they give to comprehension instruction, and whether various grade levels show differences. The third sub-study concentrated on individual children in an attempt to see what instructional programs look like from a child's perspective. Durkin's study of 39 classrooms at the 3rd through 6th grade levels found only 45 minutes of actual comprehension instruction during 17,997 minutes of observation in reading and social studies classes. Major findings of Durkin's research were as follows:

1. Practically no comprehension instruction was seen. Comprehension assessment was carried on through interrogation with an emphasis on the children's answers being right or wrong.

2. Other kinds of reading instruction were not seen with any kind of frequency. Teachers were not too busy teaching phonics, structural analysis or word meanings.

3. In addition to being interrogators, teachers also turned out to be assignment-givers. As a result, time spent on giving, completing, and checking assignments consumed a large part of the observed periods. A sizable amount of time went to activities categorized as transition and non-instruction.

4. None of the observed teachers saw the social studies period as a time to improve children's comprehension abilities. Instead, all were concerned about covering content and with having children master facts.

A follow-up study completed in 1981 by Durkin found basal reading manuals
to be lacking in direct instruction guidelines in reading.

Durkin's study was the impetus for much research and data collection in the area of reading comprehension. Rosenshine (1984) suggests that explicit rules which students could use to comprehend reading passages did not exist. Teachers were not utilizing direct instruction in strategies with their students. Studies suggested that students were spending more of their time for formal reading instruction with instructional materials than with the teacher. Goetz (1984) speculates that there are a number of reasons for the lack of direct instruction in reading comprehension. These include the assumption that skills and strategies will emerge without instruction, a focus on activity flow and control behaviors in classrooms, a focus on dominant specific content and teachers' lack of knowledge about how to teach comprehension. (Gamer, 1988).

The impact of such national reports, Becoming A Nation of Readers (1984) and Durkin's comprehension research was strongly felt by those in the field of reading. They provided strong evidence of the need for direct instruction in comprehension strategies. "Research has shown that children's learning is facilitated when critical concepts or skill are directly taught by the teacher." Comprehension is easier if students are instructed in strategies that cause them to focus their attention on the relevant information, synthesize the information and integrate it with what they already know. Children should not be left guessing about how to comprehend. The reports suggested that direct instruction needs to be distinguished from questioning, discussion, and guided practice. "Direct instruction in comprehension means explaining the steps in a thought process that gives birth to comprehension. It may mean that the teacher models a strategy by thinking aloud about how he
or she is going about understanding a passage. The instruction should include information on why and when to use the strategy. Instruction of this type is the surest means of developing the strategic processing that is characteristic of skilled readers.” (Anderson, 1984).

From these national reports and research results came a tremendous interest and awareness regarding the need for direct comprehension instruction and for specific strategy training for students. The acknowledgement of the active role of the reader and the need for the reader to interact with the text became evident. A number of strategies and methods for involving the reader with the text came into use. The idea of comprehension monitoring and the need for the reader to keep in touch with the moments that he was and was not understanding his reading became increasingly important. “The last decade has seen an explosion of a number of areas of reading comprehension. The focus has been on the text, the reader and the interaction of the two, on instructional approaches and upon a number of combinations of these variables. Six categories of research have had implications for the classroom teacher and for reading instruction. These are questioning, picture adjuncts, advance organizers, text structures, vocabulary and reading-writing relationships.” (Klein, 1988)

Cognitive Psychology Research

The issue of strategy instruction is one that has been addressed throughout educational history. The field of metacognition is not a new one. Brown cites work done by Thorndike (1917) and Dewey (1910), which
involved the planning, checking and evaluating done by readers. Cognitive psychologists have been responsible for current research that has brought the term and the concept of metacognition back into prominence. The past decade has provided an abundance of research in the area of metacognition and direct strategy instruction.

The study of metacognition is cited by many as one of the most influential trends in developmental cognitive psychology. There is a growing interest in studying the child's metacognitive status, or the knowledge and control that the child has over his or her own thinking and learning activities, including reading. Flavell (1978) has defined metacognition as "knowledge that takes as its object or regulates any aspect of any cognitive endeavor."

There are two types of metacognitive knowledge. This includes knowledge about cognition and regulation of cognition. Knowledge about one's cognition has to do with a person's knowledge about his or her own cognitive resources and the compatibility between the person as a learner and the learning situation. This has to do with one's ability to reflect on one's own cognitive processes, to be aware of one's own activities while reading or solving problems. The activities of regulating one's cognition have to do with self-regulatory mechanisms used by an active learner during an ongoing attempt to solve problems. These include checking the outcome of any attempt to solve a problem, planning one's next move, monitoring the effectiveness of one's action, and testing, revising and evaluating one's strategies for learning.

Brown has identified the metacognitive skills involved in reading. These are: clarifying the purpose for reading, identifying the important aspects of a message, focusing attention on the major content and not trivia, monitoring ongoing activities to determine whether comprehension is
occurring, engaging in self-questioning to determine whether goals are being achieved, and taking corrective action when failures in comprehension are detected. There are three main types of metacognitive skills. These include awareness, monitoring and deployment of comprehension strategies.

Baker and Brown (1982) describe two main types of reading for the purpose of understanding comprehension monitoring. These two types are reading for meaning and reading for remembering. Reading for meaning is described as an attempt to comprehend. Reading for remembering, or studying, involves all of the activities of reading for meaning and more. A number of expert theories of comprehension monitoring exist which attempt to explain and describe what is occurring when the reader attempts to monitor or self-regulate his reading.

The last decade has shown an increase in the study and analysis of comprehension instruction as it relates to independent reading. Most of the comprehension research of the past decade had come to rest on a theory of reading which acknowledges the active role of the reader. “Comprehension is a constructive process in which meaning is derived from the text and from interactions between the the text and the background.” This trend has led to a focus on higher levels of cognitive processing. As a result, instruction has focused on encouraging readers to develop and become aware of strategies which can apply in other reading situations. Current research indicates that making students aware of the strategies that successful readers use and allowing them to monitor their reading for these, will help them become skilled, independent readers. (Crain, 1988).
Focus of This Study

The focus of this study will be on the current state of reading comprehension instruction. It will be assessed through a variety of sources, by looking at the research questions from several perspectives. This study will attempt to identify what changes, have been made in comprehension instruction and what practices are present in today's reading and social studies classes at the elementary grade level. It will attempt to replicate the work done by Dolores Durkin in assessing the amount and type of reading and comprehension instruction currently in use. It will assess teachers' knowledge and training in the area of comprehension and strategy training. It will identify students' level of understanding of the different types of reading they engage in and the appropriate strategies they choose to employ. In addition, it will attempt to look at school districts and the amount of training they have given to this area of research in the past decade. It will incorporate discussions with decision makers as to what changes have been made in curricular areas to help students learn strategies and become more successful comprehenders. It will attempt to identify what actual changes in instructional practices have been made in classroom instruction and with students.

This study will address the following questions:

1. What impact has the change in how reading is viewed had on classroom instruction?

2. How much comprehension instruction was observed during reading and social studies class time?
3. What training or inservice /staff development opportunities have teachers experienced to assist them in direct strategy instruction?

4. How prepared are teachers to deal with this shift in focus in reading instruction to a more interactive model?

5. How have teachers responded to these changes?

6. How have schools helped to support this shift in reading instruction?

7. How successful have students been at incorporating these strategies in their learning/studying repertoire?

8. How clearly do students understand the need for reading strategy instruction?

9. Have curricular materials changed in their shift and focus as a response to changes in reading instruction and strategy training?

Chapter 2 contains a review of the literature on models of reading comprehension and studies of comprehension strategies and metacognitive strategies. It describes the research on metacognitive awareness and to what extent these strategies can be found in textbooks and teachers' manuals. The methodology and research design utilized to investigate the above questions are described in Chapter 3. The results of the classroom observations, surveys, interviews and textbook reviews are presented in Chapter 4. In Chapter 5 the research questions are discussed, the implications and limitations of the study are discussed, and suggestions for changes to
classroom reading instruction are made.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In this review, the literature on comprehension will be examined in order to serve as a backdrop for current practices in reading comprehension instruction. This chapter is divided into four parts. The first part is a review of definitions of comprehension as well as models of comprehension. It includes the comprehension processes as identified by Irwin (1991). Irwin breaks the comprehension processes into 5 types of processes that occur simultaneously during comprehension. Each of these involve various subprocesses. The five processes are as follows: Microprocesses, Integrative Processes, Macroprocesses, Elaborative Processes, and Metacognitive Processes.

In the second part of this literature review, research on comprehension instruction is discussed. A model for explicit instruction is described. Various definitions for comprehension are given. Comprehension strategies and guiding principles for comprehension instruction are given.

The third section discusses metacognitive skills and reading. Definitions of comprehension monitoring are discussed. Reading is categorized into two distinct categories—reading for meaning and reading for remembering.

In the fourth section of this review, research on metacognitive awareness is discussed. Studies concentrate on the developmental
awareness that is attached to children’s understanding of metacognitive strategies.

The final section explores the prevalence of metacognitive strategy and comprehension instruction in textbooks, instructional materials and teacher manuals.

Models of Comprehension

A number of models and definitions of comprehension exist which provide the framework for viewing comprehension and metacognitive strategy instruction. Following is a discussion of some of the most frequently cited definitions and a model as described by Irwin.

Comprehension is an active process in which each reader brings his or her individual attitudes, interest, expectations, skills and prior knowledge (reader context). The reader actively infers and interprets what is on the page based on what he or she brings to the task. (Irwin, 1991) Maria (1990) defines reading comprehension as a holistic process of constructing meaning from written text through the interaction of the reader’s knowledge, the readers’ interpretation, and the situation in which the text is read. Her definition suggests that the process of comprehension can be described in terms of three components: factors in the reader, factors in the text and factors in the environment. All of these factors interact to affect a reader’s comprehension.

Johnston’s (1981) definition of comprehension is as follows: “Reading comprehension is viewed as the process of using one’s own prior knowledge
and the writer’s cues to infer the author’s intended meaning.” Mosenthal (1984) suggests a “contexts pyramid.” This model is represented by a pyramid which indicates that what is comprehended is influenced by the individual reader’s characteristics, the text’s characteristics, and the situation related factors. These situation related factors include the teacher, the task and the setting or classroom. Irwin builds upon Johnston’s definition of comprehension to reach the following definition of comprehension:

“Comprehension can be seen as the process of using one’s own prior experience and the writer’s cues to construct a set of meanings that are useful to the individual reader reading in a specific context. This process can involve understanding and selectively recalling ideas in individual sentences (microprocesses), inferring relationships between clauses and sentences (integrative processes), organizing ideas around summarizing ideas (macroprocesses), and making inferences not necessarily intended by the author (elaborative processes). These processes work together (interactive hypothesis) and can be controlled and adjusted by the reader as required by the reader’s goals (metacognitive processes) and the total situation in which comprehension is occurring (situational context). When the reader consciously selects a process for a specific purpose, that process can be called a reading strategy.” (Irwin, 1991)

Irwin’s model of comprehension can be illustrated in Figure 2. Based on models of reading developed by Just and Carpenter, Kintsch and van Dijk and Rumelhart, Irwin’s model represents a view that correlates to instruction. Irwin’s model describes five processes that occur simultaneously during comprehension. These include Microprocesses, Integrative Processes, Macroprocesses, Elaborative Processes and Metacognitive Processes. Each of these processes involves various subprocesses within them.
Microprocessing describes the initial chunking and selective recall of individual idea units within individual sentences. "Chunking" is what the reader does to group words into meaningful phrases. The second step in
microprocessing is the selection of idea units to remember. This involves the reader's ability to remember those pieces of information that are important to retain the meaning of what has been read. Integrative processes describes the process of understanding and inferring the relationships between individual clauses and sentences. This involves the ability to identify pronoun referents, infer causation and sequence, and make other relevant inferences about the total situation being described. The next process is referred to as macroprocessing. This is the process of synthesizing and organizing individual idea units into a summary or organized series of related general ideas. The first step involved in this process is summarizing a passage. The second step in this process is using the author's general organizational pattern to organize one's own memory representation. In this way, the reader who utilizes the author's organization of material is able to remember more of the information. The fourth process is referred to as elaborative processing. These elaborations assist in recall of what has been read. Metacognitive processes are the final process in the total comprehension process. These refer to the conscious awareness and control or one's own cognitive processes. This involves the process of selecting, evaluating or regulating one's strategies to control comprehension and long-term recall. A number of strategies fall under this heading. They include study strategies, rehearsing, reviewing, underlining and note-taking. Other examples include knowing when inconsistencies occur or the reader's awareness that something is unclear. (Irwin, 1991)
Comprehension Instruction Research

One of the recommendations of the landmark reports in reading was the need for comprehension instruction. Clearly one of the most significant recommendations had to do with the need to include teacher directed instruction in comprehension strategies. During the 1980’s a great deal of research was focused on how best to teach comprehension strategies directly. A widely researched model, called explicit instruction, (Pearson and Dole, 1987) involves four phases for instructing students in comprehension strategies. This model utilizes four steps or phases. The first step is the teacher modeling and explanation of a strategy, followed by guided practice where students gradually gain more responsibility for the task. Then students have an opportunity for independent practice accompanied by feedback. The final phase involves the application of the strategy in real reading situations (Fielding and Pearson, 1994).

Durkin (1978) identified various definitions of comprehension instruction in an attempt to clarify what behaviors comprised comprehension instruction for the purposes of her observational studies. She concluded that comprehension instruction includes efforts a) to teach children the meaning of a unit that is larger than a word or b) to teach them how to work out the meaning of such units.

Tierney and Harste (1984) define comprehension strategies as those cognitive activities which good readers engage in to foster comprehension. These comprehension strategies may include the following: engaging background knowledge, goal setting, allocating attention, evaluating content, self-appraisal, self-correction, predicting, and self-questioning.
Fielding and Pearson's (1994) review of comprehension research indicated what guidelines should exist for comprehension instruction. These include large amounts of time for actual text reading, teacher directed instruction in comprehension strategies, opportunities for peer and collaborative learning and occasions for students to talk to a teacher and one another about their responses to reading.

The research on comprehension instruction can be divided into two main areas of discussion. The first involves increasing student understanding from text, which demonstrates the teacher's success at improving students' ability to understand and recall what has been read. These include strategies that can be used before reading, during reading, or after reading. Some strategies are utilized by the teacher prior to reading in order to assist in student comprehension of text. There are a variety of such strategies that teachers can employ on the behalf of their students. Some of these strategies include previewing of the material to be read, activating prior knowledge and investigating background knowledge and understanding of story vocabulary. Other strategies used by teachers are the use of analogies or advance organizers, use of objectives, pretests or story questions. There are other strategies that can be employed by the teacher during the actual process of reading. These include guided reading, the use of imagery, inserted questions, self-questioning, oral reading, study guides and lesson framework. Some strategies can be employed after reading. These include post reading questions, feedback following reading and oral discussion of material read. Baumann (1984) cited student success in getting the main idea following strategy instruction, while Hansen and Pearson (1983) established the success of using background knowledge in comprehending a story. Fitzgerald and
Spiegel (1983) examined the use of story structure as an aid in successful comprehension. Schunk and Rice (1991) investigated the effects of goals and goal progress feedback on reading comprehension self-efficacy and skill. Fifth grade remedial readers were taught comprehension strategy instruction on finding main ideas. Subjects were asked to answer questions, learn to use a strategy or learn to use a strategy with feedback provided. Students who received the feedback on their use of the strategy demonstrated significantly higher performance on the self-efficacy and skill tests than the other subjects who did not receive this feedback. The results indicated that remedial readers benefit from explicit feedback on their mastery of a comprehension strategy.

Davey (1986) introduced a strategy called a "think-aloud", with the teacher modeling for the student his own thoughts and feelings while reading. Alverman and Qian (1994) suggest that five strategies have been found effective at the elementary school level. These five strategies include using text structure to identify and comprehend main ideas, summarizing information, performing self-questioning, activating prior knowledge and elaboration through guided imagery.

Text structure refers to the hierarchical arrangement of sentences and paragraphs in a piece of written exposition. Dole et al., (1991) found that readers who are able to identify and use an author's top-level structure in processing informational text tend to distinguish important from unimportant information more readily than do readers who lack this kind of knowledge. According to Meyer (1980), use of the author's top-level structure enhances the reader's comprehension of main ideas and recall of specific details.

Summarization skills have proven to be a difficult skill that involves separating important from unimportant information. Summarization strategies
can be taught and have proven to be effective when instruction lasts for a substantial period of time. Palinscar and Brown (1984) and Taylor and Beach (1984) have conducted investigations that have established this success. The Palinscar and Brown study involved junior high students who were also learning self-questioning in conjunction with summarization. Taylor and Beach taught seventh grade students to use text headings, subheadings and paragraphs to develop an outline of the text.

Self-questioning has been shown to be effective at improving comprehension of text when done before, during and after reading. Palinscar and Brown's (1984) study involving junior high students noted improvements in comprehension when they taught self-questioning in conjunction with prediction, clarification and summarization.

The activation of prior knowledge is another strategy that has been found to be successful at the elementary school level. Pre-Reading Plans (Langer, 1984) and K-W-L approaches (Ogle, 1982) have proven effective at linking students' previous knowledge on a given topic with the topic that they are about to study. By linking previous knowledge on a given topic with questions to guide their reading, students have been successful at increases in comprehension when utilizing a strategy that taps their prior knowledge.

The strategy of elaboration through guided imagery attempts to add a symbolic construction to the text in a way to make it personally meaningful to the reader. Two different approaches to the construction of images have been investigated. The first involves constructing representational images, or images that exactly represent the content of the prose. Studies conducted by Alverman and Moore (1991) and Tierney and Cunningham (1984) provide evidence that elaboration through guided imagery can facilitate students'
learning from text, particularly at the secondary school level. Pressley (1976) successfully trained third grade students by teaching them a strategy for imagery. A second approach involves mnemonic images for learning information. Though less research has been done in this area, the mnemonic imagery has shown to be a successful strategy when trying to learn totally unfamiliar concepts. Peter and Lewin (1986) presented eighth grade students with passages about famous people, each of whom had a name that was readily convertible to an acoustically similar keyword. Use of the strategy increased the students’ recall of information for both good and poor readers. A second replication experiment found similar results.

The second area of research on comprehension instruction focuses on the student’s increasing ability to comprehend from text. These studies have looked at student’s comprehension abilities that could transfer to independent reading situations at a later time. The comprehension strategies include engaging prior knowledge, goal setting, identifying task demands, allocating attention, evaluating content, self-appraisal, self-correction, predicting and general metacomprehension training.

Engaging prior knowledge is a popular strategy teachers frequently use with their students. Recent research has looked at the student’s ability to monitor and engage his own prior knowledge independently. Hansen (1981) studied the effectiveness of instruction which was intended to make second graders more aware of how to utilize their prior knowledge. Her results reflected a localized effect as measured on transfer tasks. A follow-up study by Hansen and Pearson (1983) using fourth graders showed an advantage for those students receiving their training, and in particular for those who were poor readers. Carr (1983) examined the effect of a comprehension
improvement program consisting of a structured overview, cloze procedure and a self-monitoring checklist. The total strategy improved students’ ability to infer on passages not taught in the treatment in immediate and delayed testing.

Researchers have examined the reader’s awareness of task demands based on the knowledge that successful readers are more aware of the strategies that they use during reading in comparison to less successful readers. Pearson (1982) studied fourth, sixth and eighth graders’ ability to differentiate where answers to questions could be found. Trained students surpassed those not trained in the quality of their responses to questions, and in their use on a question-answer strategy that they had been taught.

Summarization ability is an area that has been extensively researched in the last two decades. Readers who are able to summarize key points have an awareness of when to allocate their attention to identify and which information they are reading is trivial and unimportant. Much research has supported the effectiveness of improving summarization skills. Day’s 1980 study with community college students provided summarization training with and without cueing. By providing students with rules for summarization, they improved in their ability to summarize, detect main ideas and delete trivial information. The training effects did vary based on the ability level of the student. Winograd (1984) examined the summarization skills of eighth graders. The results of the study indicated that most of the students were aware of the task demands of summarization. However, good and poor readers differed in what they considered important, in what they included in their summaries and how they transformed original texts.
Metacognition is defined as “one’s knowledge concerning one’s own cognitive processes and products or anything related to them” (Flavell, 1976). Brown (1982) breaks metacognition into two components: knowledge about various aspects of the learning situation and self-regulatory activities that learners use to produce comprehension. The first type of knowledge has to do with the ability to reflect on one’s own cognitive processes, to be aware of one’s activities while reading and solving problems. The second type of knowledge has to do with those self-regulatory mechanisms used by an active learner during an ongoing attempt to solve problems. (Baker and Brown, 1982). This includes such activities as checking, planning, monitoring, testing, revising and evaluating one’s strategies for learning. A third type of activity has to do with compensatory strategies. Paris, Lipson and Wixson (1983) provide an additional breakdown of types of metacognitive knowledge.

Declarative knowledge refers to the conscious awareness of the fact that you know something. Procedural knowledge refers to knowing how to do something, e.g. like skim a book, and contextual knowledge refers to knowing when and how to use a particular strategy. Metacognitive skills that are involved in reading include the following activities: clarifying the purposes of reading, identifying the important aspects of a message, focusing on major content rather than trivia, monitoring ongoing activities to determine whether comprehension is occurring, engaging in self-questioning to determine whether goals are being achieved and taking corrective action when failures in comprehension are detected (Brown, 1980). Jacobs and Paris (1987) divide metacognitive skills into two categories, self-appraisal and self-
management. Self-appraisal involves declarative knowledge about cognition, while self-management includes the planning, evaluating and regulating strategies.

Babbs and Moe (1983) have developed a model for metacognition related specifically to the reading task. These skills include the following: consciously intending to control the reading act, establishing the goal of the reading act, focusing on metacognitive knowledge, planning the regulation and monitoring of the reading act, and periodically assessing reading success. The authors of this model suggest that the reader assumes more responsibility for this knowledge and control. (Spires, 1990)

Research in the area of metacognition falls into two major categories. These two categories are reading for meaning and reading for remembering. Reading for meaning has to do with comprehension monitoring, or keeping track of how one's comprehension is proceeding. Reading for remembering involves identifying important ideas, study strategies and mastery of the material, and allocating study time appropriately.

Reading For Meaning

Comprehension monitoring involves keeping track of one's ongoing comprehension success, ensuring the process continues effectively and taking remedial steps when necessary (Baker and Brown, 1980). Irwin (1981) defines comprehension monitoring as evaluating the success or failure of the meaning making process and the regulating of strategies to remedy comprehension problems. Collins and Smith (1980) define comprehension monitoring as the student's ability to evaluate his or her ongoing comprehension processes while reading through a text. Ornstein (1990)
defines comprehension monitoring as "knowing when one understands or does not understand something and evaluating one's performance".

Theories of comprehension monitoring view comprehension as an active process of hypothesis testing or schema building. "Rumelhart's model suggests readers make hypotheses about the most plausible interpretation of the text as they are reading and test these hypotheses against the available information." Goodman (1976) believes that readers must test their hypotheses against the 'screen of meaning' and grammar by frequently asking themselves if what they are reading makes sense. The reader must monitor his choices so that he can recognize his errors and gather more cues when needed. (Baker and Brown, 1984).

Comprehension monitoring represents the reader's realization that he fails to understand and the knowledge of what to do when these comprehension failures occur. Whimbey's (1975) characterization of a good reader gives a clear description of how the act of comprehension monitoring takes place during reading.

"A good reader proceeds smoothly and quickly as long as his understanding of the material is complete. But as soon as he senses that he has missed an idea, that the track has been lost, he brings smooth progress to a grinding halt. Advancing more slowly, he seeks clarification in the subsequent material, examining it for the light it can throw on the earlier trouble spot. If still dissatisfied with his grasp, he returns to the point where the difficulty began and rereads the section more carefully. He probes and analyzes phrases and sentences for their exact meaning; he tries to visualize abstruse descriptions; and through a series of approximations, deductions, and corrections he translates scientific and technical terms into concrete examples."

Early research in the area of reading for meaning or comprehension
monitoring focused on a variety of methods for identifying when the reader is comprehending and when he is not comprehending. Some of the measures that have been studied include ratings of understanding or the reader's feelings of how well he is understanding the material that he is reading. Other methods researchers have investigated include self-corrections made by the reader during oral reading, studies of eye movements, eye voice span and reading time, the use of the cloze technique and self-reports during reading.

Myers and Paris (1978) and Forrest and Waller (1979) investigated the differences between good and poor readers and their awareness for regulating comprehension. Myers and Paris asked eight and twelve year old children questions about the effects of personal abilities, task parameters and cognitive strategies involved in reading. The younger children exhibited an awareness of some areas of reading such as interest, familiarity and length, the older children exhibited more knowledge about reading strategies and how to resolve comprehension failures. Forrest and Waller assessed children's skill at evaluating their understanding by using a confidence rating technique. Their study of third and sixth graders indicated that older children and those who were better readers were more successful at evaluating their performance on the comprehension test than younger and poor readers. Older and better readers were better comprehenders and demonstrated more knowledge about comprehension monitoring and fix-up strategies when they did not understand in comparison to younger, less able readers.

Studies on readers' self-corrections during reading suggest that good readers, even as young as first grade, monitor their own comprehension as they are reading. Clay (1973) reported significant differences between good and poor readers and their spontaneous corrections of errors. Weber's (1970)
study of first graders found good readers twice as likely to correct errors that were grammatically inappropriate.

In studies utilizing comprehension cloze procedures as a comprehension monitoring approach, good readers were found to make better use of contextual information. As a result, they were more successful on cloze tasks. Self-reporting during reading has also been studied in an effort to find differences in the strategy use between good and poor readers.

Later research completed on comprehension monitoring strategies that readers use involved a combination of the previously outlined approaches rather than single approach studies. Paris and Myers (1981) studied the comprehension and memory skills of good and poor readers at the fourth grade level in two studies. They investigated the students' ability to monitor comprehension of difficult and anomalous information. They used three forms of measurement. These included spontaneous self-corrections during oral reading, direct underlining of incomprehensible words and phrases; and study behaviors. Poor readers engaged in significantly less monitoring on all three measures and this correlated with poorer comprehension and recall scores.

A study of fifth graders' spontaneous monitoring and regulating of their reading was conducted by Owings, Peterson, Bransford, Morris and Stein (1980). Successful and unsuccessful students were asked to read and study stories that varied in degree of sense that they made relative to students' prior knowledge. The successful students spontaneously monitored as they read and studied; they were aware of the difficulty of learning the less sensible stories and they could explain why they were having trouble.

Nolan (1991) studied the effectiveness of combining two cognitive
strategies—self-questioning and prediction. Students in sixth, seventh and eighth grade received training in a metacognitive strategy that combined prediction and self-questioning. Results indicated that poor comprehenders who used the combined strategy performed much higher on measures of comprehension that those students who did not receive the intervention. An important finding of this study was that the metacognitive strategy benefited both those students whose reading comprehension was slightly below grade level and those whose comprehension was severely below grade level.

Miller (1985) studied the effects of general and specific self-instruction training during children’s comprehension monitoring performances during reading. Her study of average readers at the fourth grade level trained students in self-instruction and task specific self-instruction for detecting inconsistencies in text. Immediately following the training both procedures proved effective for enhancing children’s error detection ability. After three weeks the self-instructional students retained their performance superiority and both self-instructional procedures elicited greater performances than the teacher directed instruction.

Schmitt and Baumann (1990) however, found that metacomprehension was not being fostered in elementary classrooms because teachers were taking the responsibility for comprehension monitoring themselves rather than promoting these skills on the part of their students. Their study of students in first through sixth grade audiotaped the reading classes of the average students and found that teachers were controlling the metacomprehension behaviors rather that promoting them and helping students learn how to use these strategies independently.

Beal, Garrod and Bonitatibus (1990) conducted studies with third and
sixth grade students, training them in a self-questioning text evaluation strategy. A second study provided the results that learning a strategy for evaluating the comprehensibility of a text can help students make appropriate revisions to improve the text's communicative quality.

Baumann, Seifert-Kessell and Jones (1992) investigated the effectiveness of explicit instruction in think-alouds as a means to promote elementary students comprehension monitoring abilities. Fourth graders were taught think aloud strategies as well as Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) and a Directed Reading Activity. Students who learned the think aloud and the DRTA strategies were more skillful at comprehension monitoring than those who received traditional teacher instruction. Baumann et. al concluded that the think aloud instruction was highly effective in helping students acquire a broad range of strategies to enhance their understanding of text and deal with comprehension difficulties.

Payne and Manning (1992) studied the effects of a metacognitive instructional strategy for use with basal readers in improving comprehension strategy use and attitude toward reading. Results with fourth graders suggest that children can be taught how to use metacognitive reading strategies and techniques during basal reading instruction. Average fourth graders who received the training showed greater reading comprehension, greater knowledge about reading strategies and more positive attitudes toward reading than children who did not receive the training.

Walraven and Reitsma (1992) studied the effectiveness of strategy instruction for children with reading problems. Students in grades four to six received instruction in metacognitive and comprehension monitoring strategies during regular reading lessons. Results showed that the children
had an increase in awareness of strategies for reading comprehension, an increase in comprehension scores. These findings suggest a positive effect on the reading comprehension process.

Kinnunen and Vauras (1995) investigated the level of comprehension monitoring and level of reading comprehension of low and high achieving fourth graders. The results of their study indicated that the level of monitoring and the level of comprehension were related.

**Reading For Remembering**

Reading for remembering, or studying, involves all of the activities of reading for meaning and more. Metacognitive strategies for studying represent a small portion of the research on effective studying techniques. Studies have been completed in the area of selecting the main idea, text structure, self-questioning and macrorules. Brown and Smiley (1978) found that when given an extra period for study, children from seventh grade up improved their recall considerable for important elements of text. Bransford, Stein, Shelton and Owings (1981) found in their series of studies that less able students have little awareness of the text and task characteristics than should be noticed when studying. Andre' and Anderson (1978) developed a self-questioning study technique to locate sections of the text containing important points and to generate questions about them. Their research found that generating questions helped students learn the material better than if they just read and reread the text. Brown and Day (1983) identified five basic rules that are essential to summarization. Two of the five rules involve the deletion of unnecessary material. One is to delete trivial material and the other is to
delete material that is redundant. A third rule of summarization is to provide a superordinate term or event for a list of items or actions. The two remaining rules have to do with providing a summary of the main constituent unit of text, the paragraph. These include selecting a topic sentence or inventing a topic sentence when one is missing. Brown and Day’s study examined the ability of fifth, seventh and tenth graders to use the rules while summarizing. Even the youngest children were able to use the two deletion rules with 90 percent accuracy. Of the other rules, older students were more capable of using them successfully. Brown and Day suggest a developmental progression of these summarization skills.

Later research in reading for remembering or studying represents a change in focus from examining how, when and where students have difficulty studying to emphasis on interventions to help. These later studies include three factors that distinguish them from earlier research. These factors are: 1) attention to the metacognitive environment in which skills are trained 2) adequate diagnosis of the learner’s needs and 3) training in the context of reading with the goal of understanding and remembering (Baker and Brown, 1984).

Palincsar and Brown (1984) have been responsible for a series of training studies that concentrated on four main cognitive activities. These are summarizing, questioning, clarifying and predicting. These activities can be considered comprehension fostering and comprehension monitoring. Through a process called reciprocal teaching, the students and the teacher maintain a dialogue about the meaning of the text, while taking turns leading the discussion. In the early stages the teacher models for the students while slowly increasing their responsibility in the dialogue. She provides feedback
and coaching to the students through the dialogue. The majority of the research on reciprocal teaching has been conducted with junior high students enrolled in remedial reading classes. Following twenty days of employing the strategy of reciprocal teaching, positive results were shown. Students were able to employ strategies independently of the teacher. Progress was also initiated in daily measures of reading comprehension. In addition, students made progress in generalizing their use of the strategy to other content class settings as well. Compared to all of the seventh grade students, the trained students began the study with scores below the twentieth percentile rank. After the study, however, 90% of these students showed improvement, averaging a 36 percentile rank increase (Palinscar, 1986).

Palinscar and Klenk (1991) present dialogues with first and seventh graders to illustrate reciprocal teaching. They report success with this strategy for students who may have not yet mastered decoding skills.

Paris and Jacobs (1984) study of third and fifth graders examined the relation between children's reported awareness about reading and their actual reading comprehension skills. Students were presented a sequence of lessons including the skills of planning, regulation and evaluation while stressing the rationale of when and why to use appropriate strategies. Comparisons between pretest and post test measures revealed that the metacognitive instruction significantly increased students' reading awareness and their use of strategies. Paris and Jacobs conclude that students who are more aware of reading strategies also score higher on tests of reading comprehension and informed instruction in the classroom can improve both awareness and reading skills (Spires, 1990).

Taylor and Frye (1992) investigated the effects of instruction in
comprehension monitoring, reciprocal teaching, independent self-questioning and summarizing with fifth and sixth grade students in social studies classes. Procedures were carried out in weekly lessons over a four month time period. In three of four comparisons students receiving the strategy lessons became better at summarizing social studies materials than the control group who did not receive the strategy training.

Malone and Mastopieri (1992) investigated the effects of summarization and self-monitoring training on learning disabled middle level students. The results indicated that the students trained in the summarization procedures performed significantly higher on all dependent measures of reading comprehension.

Summary

The research on metacognitive strategies has proven that such strategies can be effective based on the most recent research conducted. Haller, Child and Walberg (1988) conducted a meta-analysis of metacognitive studies. They compiled and synthesized the results of 20 studies with a total student population of 1,553. The results of this analysis lend considerable support to the importance of existing metacognitive research as well as provide the impetus for more research in this area. The meta-analysis revealed that metacognitive training is effective most often with seventh and eighth graders. The metacognitive skills that most consistently produced significant results on post-test measures were detecting textual inconsistencies and using self-questioning as both a monitoring and a regulating strategy.
Research on Metacognitive Awareness

The research on metacognitive awareness is divided into two categories. There is a body of research on children's awareness of metacognitive strategies that explores how and when that knowledge develops. Other research has been gathered regarding teacher knowledge and understanding of metacognitive strategies at the adult level. This discussion will include research in both areas of study.

The concept of “knowing what you know” comes relatively late in child development. Piaget identified that in the preoperational stage children know how to think. However, it is in later stages of development that they can think about their own thinking. This occurs at the stage of concrete operations (Klein, 1988). Paris, Lipson and Wixson (1983) refer to the metacognitive awareness of available strategies as declarative knowledge. They suggest that readers also need procedural knowledge, which is the knowledge about how to use the strategies. Good readers appear to acquire these strategies through experience. Poor readers may not even be aware of their lack of understanding or may not know the strategies available to them or how to use them correctly. (Maria, 1990)

Kreutzer, Leonard and Flavell (1975) prototypic study attempted to assess children's knowledge of memory phenomena sampled from person, task and strategy categories. Children from kindergarten, first, third and fifth grades were interviewed individually. Differences between the older and young children were found. Conceptualizing memory ability was found to vary with occasion and with individuals. Older children recommended using category structure to memorize a set of pictures. The older students had more
means to assist in their recall. The major finding of this study was that younger children know substantially less than older children about the variables affecting their own memory performance. (Garner, 1988)

Myers and Paris (1978) assessed the variables that influence reading in an interview study with eight and twelve year old children. They modeled their study after the work of Kreutzer et al., but focused their work specifically on metacognitive knowledge about reading processes. Eighteen interview questions were asked in order to assess children's knowledge in three general categories: person, task and strategy. In the category of person variables, knowledge that subjects had about individual reading ability was assessed. Questions about the age motivation, sex, specialized skills and environmental limitations on reading abilities were included. Task variables measured children's knowledge about the effects of test mode, length of story, speed, preference, goals, structure of paragraphs and familiarity. Questions regarding strategy variables measured children's awareness of rereading, inference, imagery and comprehension monitoring as reading skills. The responses the children gave indicated that young children were unaware of the many important parameters of reading. They were not sensitive to task dimensions or the need to invoke special strategies for different materials and goals. They reported few strategies or reasons for checking their own understanding or progress and were not aware of characteristics of proficient readers. In contrast, older children were aware of the existence of various reading strategies, and were sensitive to when and how to use them. Myers and Paris suggested that the results from their study indicate that second graders perceive reading as an "orthographic-verbal translation problem" rather than as a "meaning construction and comprehension task". The young
children focused on the exact recall of the story rather than the general meaning, and they seemed unaware of the special characteristics of good readers and the special strategies for monitoring understanding.

Forrest and Waller (1980) studied the relationship between children’s age and their metacognitive knowledge about reading. They divided metacognitive knowledge into knowledge about decoding, knowledge about comprehension and knowledge about reading for a purpose. This interview study showed an increase in metacognitive knowledge about decoding, comprehension, and reading for a purpose with both higher grade and reading achievement level.

Myers and Paris (1981) studied strategy knowledge in relationship to reading ability. Poor readers were found to be less aware of the detrimental influences on comprehension of negative factors. Poor readers displayed more rating reversals, rating negative strategies as positive and vice versa.

Paris and Cross (1984) made an attempt to increase children’s metacognitive awareness and use of effective reading strategies. Third and fifth grade students were given an experimental curriculum, called Informed Strategies for Learning. Lessons on different strategies for facilitating reading comprehension were presented to the students. The students were trained in a number of strategies and in when and how to use them. The children who participated in the training made larger gains than did the children in the control group.

Wixson, Bosky, Yochum and Alverman (1984) have developed an interview procedure for assessing intermediate and middle school level children’s awareness of the demands of different reading tasks. The interview includes questions about strategies for classroom materials, including a basal
reader, or content textbook, and comprehension worksheets. The teacher-administered interview provides information about a student's awareness of appropriate reading methods and purposes. (Irwin, 1991)

Some research in metacognitive awareness has assessed the teacher's level of knowledge of metacognitive strategies as a way of better understanding classroom and instructional practice. Clift, Ghatala, Nans and Poole (1990) assessed elementary and secondary school teachers regarding their knowledge about task specific study strategies with a 25 item questionnaire and follow-up interviews. Almost all of the teachers reported an awareness of study strategies, particularly rehearsal strategies. Teachers did focus, however, on teacher directed activities for learning rather than student directed activities. They seldom reported helping students with where, when or why study strategies should be used. The results of this study suggest that teachers should be instructed on the nature and value of study strategies.

Schraw and Dennison (1994) assessed the metacognitive awareness of adults through the use of a 52 item inventory. Items fell into categories of knowledge about cognition and regulation about cognition. Eight scales that make up metacognition were assessed. These include declarative knowledge, procedural knowledge, conditional knowledge, planning, information management strategies, monitoring, debugging strategies and evaluation of learning. The results of this study suggest that there is little evidence in support of the eight sub components. Six factors rather than eight sub components were obtained, and they were different from those predicted. The results did support the two component model of metacognition, that is knowledge of cognition and regulation of cognition.
Prevalence of Metacognition in Materials

The prevalence of reading comprehension and metacognitive strategy instruction in instructional materials, teacher manuals and basal readers has been studied over the past two decades. Identifying such strategies in instructional materials would suggest that published materials have kept current in relation to the interactive models of reading and recent beliefs about the need for direct strategy and comprehension instruction.

Dolores Durkin (1981) examined the teacher manuals of five basal reading programs from kindergarten through grade six in order to assess the amount and type of comprehension instruction they provided. Similar to the classroom observations completed by Durkin (1978), the manuals gave more attention to assessment and practice than to direct, explicit instruction. Durkin defined comprehension instruction as:

"A manual suggests that a teacher do or say something that ought to help children acquire the ability to understand, or work out, the meaning of connected text."

Other activities included in her study included application, practice, review of instruction, preparation, assessment and study skills instruction. Her results suggested that procedures for teaching children how to comprehend tended to be brief in nature. Durkin concluded that the five basal manuals shared certain characteristics. One characteristic was the tendency to offer numerous application and practice exercises instead of direct, explicit instruction. When the instruction did appear in the manuals it made no attempt to connect what was being taught with how to read it. The activities became ends in
themselves, with no attempt made to apply strategies to future learning situations. Assessment was taken too seriously in the basal manuals according to Durkin. She noted excessive questioning, with a lack of attention to strategies that can be used to answer the questions.

Armbruster and Gudbrandsen (1986) assessed the amount of reading comprehension instruction in five social studies programs at the fourth and sixth grade levels. This study looked at student textbooks as well as the teachers' manuals. It viewed the promotional literature that came with the program as well as the scope and sequence charts. The researchers selected the skills that had to do with reading and studying. They noted much overlap of certain skills on the scope and sequence charts. Some of the activities were not well matched with activities. Skill labels were occasionally misused. They concluded that there was very little direct instruction in reading related skills in these social studies materials. What instruction was present seemed by the researchers to be inadequate. The programs rely on students to practice or apply skills without the benefit of instruction to students or teachers in how to perform or teach those skills. Armbruster and Gudbrandsen concluded that there seems to be confusion about "reading skills" and what constitutes them.

Schmitt and Hopkins (1990) examined the content of eight 1989 editions of major reading basal series in order to determine how and to what extent the lessons and activities promote metacomprehension behaviors for fostering independent strategic readers. The study examined the basal series page by page for evidence of strategy instruction. The results indicated that basal authors have made considerable efforts to incorporate activities and lessons that promote or foster strategic reading through comprehension skill instruction, through explicit strategy instruction and in the content of directed
reading activities that accompany reading selections.

**Selection of a Framework for This Study**

The observational studies of Dolores Durkin (1978) represent a piece of landmark research in the field of reading. The results of this study led a movement to future research and study in the area of reading comprehension. Durkin's findings of little to no comprehension instruction taking place set the stage for other researchers to confirm her findings and to begin to understand the reasons why comprehension instruction was not consistently occurring in reading and social studies classrooms. As a backdrop to Durkin's research, Rumelhart's Interactive Model of Reading (1977) presented a comprehensive view of the latest theory about the nature of the reading process. According to his model, the reader actively engages with the text for meaning to occur. Reading is presented as a constructive, meaning based process, with several levels of knowledge functioning at the same time for the reader to attach meaning to the text. Irwin's (1991) model of comprehension describes five processes that occur simultaneously during reading. In addition to Durkin's research and the interactive models of reading and comprehension processes being posited, the field of metacognition developed into an area of study that investigated thinking and study strategies and their critical role in the teaching and learning process. These three components provided the framework for this research study as it attempted to replicate the observational work done by Dolores Durkin and gain the perspective of the various participants in school today.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Background Information

The research of Dr. Dolores Durkin was a landmark study that provided a foundation for more research in the field of reading comprehension. The lack of time spent on actual comprehension instruction based on Durkin's 1978 findings suggested the need for further research and investigation as to why such practices were not occurring in reading classrooms.

What followed these surprising findings by Durkin and others were a number of national reports, released in the 1980's, which provided a backdrop for the research of this study. Educators were pushed toward better student performance after somewhat dismal results had been disseminated in a number of reports. These include A Nation at Risk, Becoming A Nation of Readers, the National Institute of Education Request for Proposal describing the need for a Center for the Study of Reading whose central concern would be comprehension and other state and local findings.

In addition to these movements, the theory and models of reading that became popular and widely accepted suggested an interactive model,
whereby the reader is actively engaged with the text. Comprehension processes were identified and the knowledge that reading involved a number of simultaneously occurring processes came to be understood and generally accepted by those in the field of reading.

The field of metacognition gained in prominence. More research and inquiry was conducted by cognitive psychologists regarding thinking skills, study skills, and the need to explore one’s ability to monitor one’s own thinking and learning. These four developments then, provided a framework upon which this study was conducted.

This study attempted to explore the research questions from a variety of perspectives in order to gain the total picture of current practices in reading instruction. Classroom teachers were observed to determine what amount of comprehension instruction was actually occurring in reading and social studies classes. The teachers who were observed were surveyed in order to gain an understanding of their knowledge of comprehension instruction and the appropriate strategies to teach. School administrators were surveyed in order to gain insight as to the school and/district’s level of training and commitment to teacher knowledge in this area of instruction. Students were interviewed in order to identify their level of understanding of the types of reading that they engage in and their knowledge of the types of strategies to use based on the types of reading that they are doing. Finally, textbooks were reviewed in order to determine if the necessary instructions for teaching strategies and comprehension skills were evident to assist teachers in their lesson planning.

The decision was made to replicate the work of Dr. Dolores Durkin because that study became a landmark for the field of reading research. It
was and continues to be a reference point for the state of comprehension instruction. This study was an attempt to, in part, repeat the work of Dr. Durkin by assessing the current state of reading comprehension. Thus, the observational data collection tool used for this study was the one used by Dr. Durkin in collecting data for her research. The decision to focus on grades 3, 4, 5 and 6 was because those grades had been identified by Dr. Durkin as those where comprehension instruction would be more likely to be occurring. Instruction in primary grade classrooms would tend to focus more on decoding skills than on comprehension skills. The Interactive Model of Reading posited by Rumelhart was used as the theory of reading by which to explore comprehension instruction because that type of model has been widely accepted by the field of reading. (Anderson, 1984)

In summary, this study was an assessment of the current state of reading comprehension instruction. Reading comprehension will be assessed through a variety of sources, looking at the research questions from several perspectives. The study will attempt to assess the current state of comprehension instruction by identifying what changes, if any, have been made in instruction and what current practice comprises. It will attempt to replicate the observational studies completed by Dr. Dolores Durkin in 1978 and assess teacher's knowledge and training in the area of comprehension and strategy instruction. The study will include interviews with students to determine their level of understanding of the different types of reading they engage in and the appropriate strategies they choose to employ. In addition, the study will identify what attempts at teacher training schools and school districts have made. It will also review the materials teachers in this study are using to identify evidence of strategy instruction. In summary, this study will
attempt to identify what actual changes in instructional practice have been made in classroom instruction and directly with students.

Following are the research questions that have guided the collection of data in this study:

1. What impact has the change in how we view reading had on classroom instruction?
2. How much comprehension instruction was observed during reading and social studies class time?
3. What training or inservice/staff development opportunities have teachers experienced to assist them in direct strategy instruction?
4. How prepared are teachers to deal with this shift in focus in reading instruction to a more interactive model?
5. How have teachers responded to these changes?
6. How have schools helped to support this shift in reading instruction?
7. How successful have students been at incorporating these strategies in their learning/studying repertoire?
8. How clearly do students understand the need for reading strategy instruction?
9. Have curricular materials changed in their shift and focus as a response to changes in reading instruction and strategy training?
Research Design

This study attempted to gather and collect data from a variety of sources. In selecting a methodology, it would appear that based on the type of research questions being asked, no single source could provide enough information to thoroughly answer the questions. This qualitative and quantitative study utilized a number of sources from which to gather data. These included teachers surveys, administrator and/or curriculum director surveys, student interviews and an examination of district wide staff development plans, classroom observations and a review and investigation of teacher manuals and materials. This method of collecting qualitative data is referred to as “triangulation”. Langenbach, Vaughn and Aagaard (1994) refer to triangulation as “a technique in which at least three independent sources are used to verify the trustworthiness of qualitative data”. Vockell and Asher (1995) refer to triangulation as “the process of using multiple operational definitions and/or multiple data collection strategies to measure an outcome variable. By zeroing in on the variables with different measures or procedures, the researcher is able to more validly measure that outcome.” Webb et al. (1965) is responsible for coining the term for this procedure. According to Huberman and Miles (1984), triangulation is supposed to support a finding by showing that independent measures of it agree with it or at least, don’t contradict it.

In this study of reading comprehension instruction, the quantitative data obtained from classroom observation minutes and teacher, administrator and textbook reviews/surveys was supplemented with qualitative data regarding comprehension instruction. Data was collected from five sources: classroom
observations, teacher surveys, administrator surveys, student interviews and textbook reviews.

**Classroom Observations**

Classroom observations were conducted in order to observe the amount and type of comprehension instruction occurring in reading and social studies classes in grades three, four, five and six. These observations occurred in four different suburban public school districts, in four different school settings, two in Lake County, Illinois and two in Cook County, Illinois. These districts represent middle to upper middle class communities. Twenty classroom observations were made which represented over 800 minutes of instruction in reading and social studies classes at the identified grade levels. Observations lasted a minimum of 40 minutes, with some totaling 50-60 minutes of instruction. Principals identified the classes to be observed by the researcher in an attempt to identify “best practice”. Both the principals and the teachers being observed were aware of the topic being studied, and in some cases, were familiar with the data collection instruments being used by the researcher in advance.

Dr. Dolores Durkin conducted her landmark study of comprehension instruction in 1978 in reading and social studies classrooms in grades 3 though 6. Her primary reason for conducting this study was to determine if elementary school classrooms provided comprehension instruction and if they did, what amount of time was allotted to it. Durkin utilized recording sheets to collect the data from her classroom observations. The recording sheet included the time, activity, audience or who was with the teacher at the specific
time and the source of the activity. She used one minute as the basic unit of
time and categorized the teacher behaviors specifically. Eight categories were
used to classify teacher behavior in relations to reading comprehension.
These include: Comprehension: instruction, review of instruction, application,
assignment, help with assignment, preparation for reading, assessment and
prediction. Other categories for teacher behavior were also identified. These
included such categories as phonics instruction, word meaning instruction,
assignment being given, assignment being checked, transition and non-
instructional. Forty-five classroom teacher behaviors in all were identified by
Durkin and observed and recorded in her study.

This study replicated the work of Durkin in the Classroom Observation
portion and utilized the behavioral categories indicated in Categories for A
Teacher's Behavior (Appendix 8) developed by Durkin and as shown on the
Classroom Observation Summary Sheet. (Appendix 1) The basic unit of time
was one minute or two minutes, depending on the frequency of change in
activity. The recording of the data was completed as in the Durkin study, with
the time, activity, audience and source being noted every other minute.
Responses from the Classroom Observation Summary were reported in
minutes and percentages.

Reading Comprehension Instruction Teacher Survey

A survey (Appendix 3) containing 20 multiple choice questions was
developed to determine the answers to the following questions:
1. What impact have interactive models of reading had on how teachers
view reading instruction?
2. What training have teachers had to help them learn about comprehension and metacognitive strategies?
3. What level of preparedness do teachers feel relative to newer models of comprehension instruction?
4. How have teachers responded to any changes in reading theory?
5. How responsive have schools been to teachers' needs to feel current in their knowledge and understanding of reading comprehension models and beliefs about comprehension instruction?

A sample of twenty suburban teachers was used for this study. The teachers who were observed for evidence and amount of comprehension instruction were asked to fill out the survey after the observation and complete it independently and then mail it to the researcher. The same teachers who were observed were surveyed in order to identify any connection and confirmation of their responses based on their instructional practices in the classroom. Twenty teachers in all were surveyed as well as three student teachers. The responses are reported in percentages.

Administrator /Staff Developer Survey

A thirteen item multiple choice survey (Appendix 6) was administered to four principals or staff developers of each of the four school districts studied. The survey attempted to identify the specific areas that these four districts had recently provided teachers with inservice training and the areas identified for future training and development programs. The survey attempted to identify
the amount of training that administrators felt teachers had experienced as well as their own knowledge as administrators regarding current theory and beliefs about reading instruction. They were asked to identify the amount of comprehension and strategy instruction present in the instructional materials currently in use in their district. An attempt was made to match what the administrator said regarding the materials via use of the Textbook Review also administered. The responses from the Administrator Survey were reported in percentages.

**Student Interview**

A student interview was utilized to determine students' understanding and perceptions of the types of reading that they participate in during reading and social studies classes. The Reading Comprehension Interview (Appendix 5) developed by Wixson, Bosky, Yochum and Alverman (1984) was developed in order to assess students' perceptions about classroom reading tasks. Developed by the authors for use with intermediate and middle level students, this interview assesses children's awareness of the demands of different reading tasks. The interview includes questions about student strategies for actual classroom reading materials including a basal reader, a content-area textbook and comprehension worksheets. A summary sheet is also part of the interview in order to analyze the student responses. "Through the use of an interview such as this, the teacher can gain valuable information about a student's awareness of appropriate reading methods and purposes." (Irwin, 1991)
This interview was piloted with a group of fifth grade students in a district that was not included in the four districts in the research study. Due to the students’ lack of understanding regarding the comprehension worksheets, this portion of the interview was not administered in the actual study. This can be attributed to the fact that some of the students indicated they did not use workbook type comprehension worksheets in their own reading classes. Thus, the interview was altered and totaled 10 questions relative to the classroom reading students are asked to complete. The students who were interviewed totaled 20 in all. They were students from the classrooms that were observed in this study and were identified by their teachers as capable students who would have a clear understanding about the process of reading. Teachers ranked each of the students for the researcher by identifying each of them as a "grade level reader", "below grade level reader" or "above grade level reader". The responses to the Student Interview are qualitative in nature and are reported in overlapping categories and similarities when possible.

Textbook Review Summary

The final piece of data collected for this study involved a review summary of the textbook in use in the classroom being observed (Appendix 7). The textbook review was directly matched to the subject observed, whether reading or social studies. The need to examine the instructional materials was based on an additional study carried out by Dr. Dolores Durkin in 1981. This was in response to her earlier study of comprehension instruction. Durkin
reviewed five basal reader series for evidence of comprehension instruction. Durkin defined comprehension relative to the review of basal readers. "A manual suggests that a teacher do or say something that ought to help children acquire the ability to understand, or work out, the meaning of connected text." Durkin identified the activities involving comprehension instruction to be found in the basal readers as the following: application, practice, review of instructional preparation, assessment and study skills instruction. In her study she examined each page in the manuals of five basal reader series and identified and recorded recommendations that matched any of the six definitions related to comprehension and any of the four study skills. Durkin's analysis of the manuals identified a close match between observed teacher behaviors and what was in the manuals themselves. That is, considerable time and attention was given to assessment and practice, but very little to direct instruction. A common characteristic throughout the manuals was the tendency to offer numerous application and practice exercises instead of direct explicit instruction. Durkin identified an abundance of assessment questions when they weren't necessary and a lack of explanation as to how to answer a question or strategies to get the answer.

While Durkin's research on basal manuals was correlated with the findings from her observational studies, this study attempted to identify any evidence of comprehension instructional strategies in the textbook or teacher manual. The Textbook Review Summary utilized in this study consisted of 6 multiple choice/multiple answer questions that attempted to identify if the textbook presented a theory or model of reading and whether it provided instruction in strategies to help students better understand the content material. It was administered or utilized by the researcher in reviewing each of
the books being used by the teachers in the classroom being observed. In this way, the researchers attempted to identify what assistance the teacher was receiving via the textbook in aiding the instruction of comprehension strategies. The responses to the Textbook Review Summary are reported in percentages.

In summary, a multiple methodological approach is utilized in this study. Data from five separate sources is addressed in order to answer the research questions. The results are reported in Chapter 4 by data source and discussed in Chapter 5 by research question.
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter describes the findings collected from the data sources utilized in this study: classroom observations, teacher surveys, administrator/staff developer surveys, student interviews and textbook reviews. The data from each source are reported separately in the sections which follow.

The purpose of completing these observations was to answer the following research questions.

How much comprehension instruction was observed during reading and social studies class time?

What impact has the change in how we view reading had on classroom instruction?

As this study replicated the work of Dr. Dolores Durkin, it is important to note the purpose of Durkin's study. She attempted to determine whether elementary school classrooms provide comprehension instruction, and if they do, to find out the amount of time allotted to it.
Classroom Observations

As indicated in Chapter 3, several observations were conducted in reading and social studies classes at the third, fourth, fifth and sixth grade levels.

Four districts in all were visited and the time frame for the classroom observations ranged from thirty-two minutes to fifty-eight minutes in length. The method of data collection from the classroom observations was, in part, a replication of the work done by Dr. Dolores Durkin in 1978 in her observations of reading and social studies classes in grades three, four, five and six.

Replication study

The classroom observations conducted in this study were a replication of the work done by Dr. Dolores Durkin in 1978. Three sub-studies were conducted by Durkin. First, she concentrated on fourth grade as that was thought to be the level where the curriculum would focus more on content than on other skills such as phonics or beginning reading decoding skills. Thus it was expected to be a more likely place to find comprehension instruction. The second part of the research was a study of schools. Grades 3 through 6 were observed to see whether individual schools differ in the amount of time they give to comprehension instruction, and whether various grade levels show differences. The third sub-study concentrated on individual children in an attempt to see what the instructional program looks like from the child's perspective. In Durkin's study, the same classes were observed for three
consecutive days. She and two other researchers completed all of the observations and utilized a recording sheet that indicated the time, the activity, the audience and the source. (Appendix 1). The basic unit of time used to record activities was a minute, but at times, a half minute was found to be more appropriate to the kind of activity being observed, and thus it was used as the unit of measure.

Comprehension was measured and defined for this study as it had been defined by Durkin for her study. Descriptors for each of the categories were used by the researcher to determine what category the teacher behavior should be considered and how it should be recorded. That is, comprehension: application was recorded if the teacher said or did something in order to learn whether comprehension instruction enabled the student to understand connected text. Other categories for comprehension included the following: Comprehension: assignment, Comprehension: helps with assignment, Comprehension: instruction, Comprehension: prediction, Comprehension: preparation and Comprehension: review of instruction. Durkin’s categories and descriptors were used to identify and measure the teacher behaviors in areas of comprehension as well as the other areas that were observed (Appendix 8).

Findings for this Study

The observations completed for this study took place in twenty classrooms in four different schools in four different school districts, two located in Cook County and two in Lake County, Illinois. All four school districts are located in predominantly white, middle to upper middle class
communities. The findings, therefore, reflect a suburban orientation and should not be generalized to more diverse, urban populations. The observations took place in grades three, four, five and six during reading or social studies instruction. The principals in each of the participating districts were contacted and asked to recommend the "best" teachers on their staff. Teachers were told the observer would be observing them providing instruction in reading or social studies, but were not given any information about the nature of the study. Twenty observations in all were included in this study. Fourteen observations were completed in reading classes and five in social studies classes. One class that was observed consisted of a combination of reading and social studies within one class period. Therefore, this was an additional observation in each of the two subject areas. These could be counted as half-observations. A summary of the observational minutes made by grade level and subject is shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Summary of Observations by Grade Level and Subject Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2 shows the number of total minutes observed in each grade level in each subject as completed in each of the four school district's visited. The amount of time observed in each district ranged from 207-224 minutes. Five third and five fourth grade classrooms were visited. Eight fifth grade classes and two sixth grade classes were observed.

Table 2

Summary of Observations by District

District 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>224</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

District 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>220</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2 (cont’d)

District 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td></td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

District 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Reading/Soc. St.</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td></td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total amount of observation time completed for this study was 872 minutes. One hundred and twelve minutes out of the total 872 minutes were observed to be in the area of comprehension and will be broken down into specific areas of comprehension. Table 3 represents the distribution of the total minutes of the amount of time observed in each teacher behavior category as well as the percentage of time allotted to each.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavioral Category</th>
<th>Time Observed</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment: checks</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>04.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment: gives</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>14.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment: helps with</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>12.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collects materials</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>00.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension: application</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>00.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension: assessment</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>05.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension: assignment</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>01.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension: helps with assignment</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>01.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension: instruction</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>00.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension: prediction</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>02.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension: preparation</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>00.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension: review of instruction</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>00.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>00.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagnosis: checks information</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>00.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagnosis: writes</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion: teacher directed</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>07.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distributes materials</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>01.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening: check</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>00.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening: preparation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>00.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listens</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>00.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listens: to oral reading</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>12.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map making</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>00.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Quantity</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map reading</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-instruction</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>04.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral reading: application</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral reading: instruction</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonics: application</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>00.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonics: instruction</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>00.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonics: review of instruction</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>01.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reads aloud</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>03.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review: oral</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>02.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silent reading: children</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>03.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural analysis: application</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural analysis: instruction</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>00.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural analysis: review of instruction</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study skills: application</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>00.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study skills: assignment</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>02.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study skills: instruction</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>02.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study skills: review</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustained silent reading</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tests</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>00.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>02.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word identification</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>01.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word meanings: application</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>01.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word meanings: review of instruction</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>01.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>872</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4 summarizes the total amount of time observed in all classrooms and the percentage of that time observed to be comprehension.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Table 4</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of Overall Minutes and Comprehension</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Minutes Observed:</td>
<td>872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minutes of Comprehension Observed:</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of time relating to comprehension:</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 summarizes the total minutes observed in each of the four school districts and the minutes and percentages that comprise comprehension instruction.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Table 5</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of Minutes and Observed Teacher Behavior by District</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Minutes</td>
<td>Minutes/ Comp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 1</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 2</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 3</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 4</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 presents a summary of the teacher behaviors observed by district. The total minutes observed is broken down into various teacher behaviors observed.
### Table 6

**Summary of Teacher Behaviors by District**

**District 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Behaviors</th>
<th>Minutes</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment: checks</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment: gives</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>16.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment: helps with</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>15.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collects materials</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension: assessment</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension: assignment</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension: helps with assignment</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension: prediction</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion: teacher directed:</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distributes materials</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listens: to oral reading</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>16.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-instruction</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reads aloud</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review: oral</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silent reading-children</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study skills: application</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tests</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word identification</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word meanings: review of instruction</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6 (cont’d)

### District 2

Total Minutes: 220  
Comprehension Minutes: 18

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Behaviors</th>
<th>Minutes</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment: checks</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment: gives</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>16.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment: helps with</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension: assessment</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension: preparation</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension: review of instruction</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion: teacher directed</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>12.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distributes materials</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening: check</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listens: to oral reading</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>14.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-instruction</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reads aloud</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review: oral</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silent reading: children</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural analysis: instruction</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study skills: assignment</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word identification</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word meanings: application</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### District 3

Total Minutes: 221  
Comprehension Minutes: 32

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Behaviors</th>
<th>Minutes</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment: checks</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>9.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment: gives</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>14.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment: helps with</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>14.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension: assessment</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 6 (cont’d)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Behaviors</th>
<th>Minutes</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension: assignment</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension: prediction</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension: preparation</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diagnosis: checks information</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion: teacher directed</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distributes materials</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listens: to oral reading</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-instruction</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review: oral</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silent reading: children</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study skills: assignment</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study skills: instruction</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word identification</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word meanings: application</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word meanings: review of</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### District 4

Total Minutes: **207**

Comprehension Minutes: **44**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Behaviors</th>
<th>Minutes</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment: checks</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment: gives</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>9.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment: helps with</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collects materials</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension: assessment</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>13.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension: helps with assignment</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension: prediction</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension: review of instruction</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion: teacher directed</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6 (cont'd)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Minutes</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listens: to oral reading</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map making</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-instruction</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonics: application</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonics: instruction</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonics: review of instruction</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reads aloud</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review: oral</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silent reading: children</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study skills: application</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study skills: assignment</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study skills: instruction</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word identification</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word meanings: review of instruction</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total amount of comprehension time observed in this study consisted of 112 minutes. This 112 minutes represents specific areas of comprehension and is shown in Table 7. The minutes for each specific area are given as well as the percentage these minutes represent relative to the total 112 minutes of comprehension observed.

Table 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific Area of Comprehension</th>
<th>Minutes</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Application</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>46.42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helps with assignment</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14.28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruction</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teacher Surveys

Surveys were administered to each of the twenty teachers who was observed in this study. Teachers were given the survey after the observation of their class and were asked to complete the twenty item questionnaire and return it to the researcher by mail. This was done in order to encourage the participants to take their time and give thoughtful responses to the questions.

The Reading Comprehension Instruction Teacher Survey (Appendix 3) was used as part of the data collected for a number of reasons. First, it was utilized in order to determine the extent to which the teachers had an understanding of the purpose of comprehension and strategy instruction. Second, it was used in order to see a match between what the teacher indicated he knew about comprehension and strategy instruction and what was evidenced by his actual teaching behaviors in the classroom. It is important to note that these teachers were identified as “among the best” by their principals as they were chosen to participate in this study. They are comprised of teachers from a variety of training, experiences, and background, and currently teach in two Lake County and two Cook County school districts located in middle to upper middle class communities. Therefore, the results do not reflect a perspective of urban settings, but rather suburban school districts.

Table 7 (cont’d)

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prediction</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of instruction</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


and communities. An assumption has been made that such districts would have benefit of regular inservice training, and therefore, in keeping teachers abreast of the latest research and theories of reading comprehension and strategy instruction.

**Nature of the Sample Surveyed**

The survey consisted of twenty items in all. The first five items explored the nature of the sample group, identifying the grade level taught, subjects taught, years of teaching experience, the highest degree earned, and most recent type of training received. Twenty surveys were administered and returned to the researcher. Five of the teachers who responded taught third grade and five taught fourth grade. Eight of the teachers were fifth grade teachers and two were sixth grade teachers. These teachers ranged in varying levels of experience from first year teachers to one teacher with 23 years of experience. The distribution for years of experience is shown in Table 8.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Years of Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8 (cont'd)

2 12
1 13
1 14
2 17
2 21
1 22
1 23
1 No response

Total: 20

Out of the twenty teachers surveyed in this sample, ten of the nineteen who responded on the item relative to years of experience had taught another grade level other than the current one. Their total number of years at the current grade level ranged from one to ten years of experience.

The range of educational background of the teachers participating in this study included teachers with a Bachelor of Arts degree to Master of Arts with additional coursework. The results are as follows: Three of the teachers indicated an educational background of Bachelor of Arts degree with two indicating Bachelor of Arts with additional coursework. Three teachers have a Masters' level degree while twelve of the sample had a Masters' level degree with additional coursework. That represented 60% of the surveyed sample. In addition to training, teachers were asked when they had received their highest degree. The purpose of this question was to explore the nature of their
training and whether it would have involved current practices and theories of reading. The years of preservice education ranged from 1977 to 1996. Nine of the respondents have completed their highest degree since 1990, while the remaining eleven received their most recent training over six years ago.

Reported Classroom Practices

Fifteen items on the survey related to the teachers' classroom practices and knowledge regarding comprehension instruction and strategies they regularly use. Eighteen of the respondents, or ninety percent of the sample indicated that they do provide direct instruction in comprehension in the subject they teach. Two of the respondents or ten percent of the sample indicated that they did not provide students with direct instruction in comprehension. Teachers were asked to describe what they were doing to teach their students comprehension. A variety of responses were given. Some of the responses named specific strategies or models while other responses were general in nature. Two teachers indicated that they do not provide direct instruction at all.

The following responses shown in Table 9 were given by the eighteen teachers when who indicated that they did provide direct instruction in comprehension or in helping students understand the subject that they teach. The actual responses and the frequency of each response is shown in Table 9.
Table 9
Teacher Responses and Frequency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Answering questions</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary review</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summarizing</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author's purpose</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context clues</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modeling</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prediction</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRTA</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-W-L</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notetaking strategies</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral checks</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral reading</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization material</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prereading</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preview</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semantic mapping</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SQ3R</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing questions</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written checks</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nineteen of the sample or ninety-five percent of the teachers indicated
that they do provide direct instruction in specific reading strategies in their responses to Question 7. One teacher responded that she did not provide direct instruction in specific reading strategies. Responses to this question gleaned a variety of strategies that teachers use. Table 10 indicates the responses and the frequency of the responses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K-W-L</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rereading</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SQ3R</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summarizing</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Mapping</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRTA-Directed Reading Thinking Activity</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphic Organizers</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraphrasing</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbook Organizers</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural Analysis</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semantic Mapping</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbalizing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highlighting</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding the Main Idea</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject Headings</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teachers were asked about their familiarity with metacognitive or comprehension monitoring strategies. Twenty percent of the teachers reported little to no familiarity with metacognitive strategies, while fifty percent indicated they were somewhat familiar with such strategies. Thirty percent indicated that they were very familiar with metacognitive strategies.

Teachers were then asked to indicate which strategies they actually taught in their classes by checking from a given list of strategies. They were asked to check all that applied to their teaching. This list was generated by the research done in this area and contains the most frequently used strategies for elementary students. Some teachers checked between four and five strategies, while others checked all of the strategies on the list. At least ten teachers gave additional strategies that they teach their students. These were categorized as "Other" and included the following: QAR, K-W-L, visual imagery, paraphrasing, webbing, drama, semantic mapping and verbalizing. Table 11 shows the percentage of use of the strategies that were presented to the teachers.

Table 11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comprehension Strategy</th>
<th>Number of Teachers</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prediction</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summarization</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reciprocal teaching</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rereading</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underlining</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 11 (cont’d)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Time 1</th>
<th>Time 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rehearsal</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elaboration</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-questioning</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outlining</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teachers were asked to indicate how much time they spent instructionally in certain areas in reading. These included the strategies on the aforementioned list, silent reading, phonics, structural analysis, comprehension strategies and study skills. This was asked as a way of finding out how teachers say they actually spend instructional time. Table 12 shows the percentage of class time for the given areas. Generally, teachers report frequent use of the comprehension strategies presented on this list and less frequent use of study skills, phonics and structural analysis skills.

Table 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Class Time to Given Areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use of Strategies Listed-Question 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class time for silent reading-Question 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class time for reading strategies-Question 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class time for phonics instruction-Question 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class time for structural analysis-Question 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class time for study skills-Question 15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teachers were asked to estimate the percentage of reading class time that they devoted to five specific areas of reading which include comprehension, phonics, structural analysis, study skills or other areas. This question was asked as a way of correlating the teachers' responses on the previous set of questions. The mean and median percentages are reported for each of the areas based on the teachers' responses. The category of “Other” included such responses as Bloom's Taxonomy, working on other subjects, teaching strategies and literal and inferential questions. Nineteen of the twenty teachers answered this item on the survey. One teacher did not answer with percentages, but rather responded that the time she allotted to these areas varied greatly. Responses are shown in Table 13.

### Table 13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Class Time Allotted to Specific Areas of Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean Percentage</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teachers were asked to choose how they helped students learn
unfamiliar material. Thirty-five percent indicated they would reteach the topic and thirty percent indicated they would review the subject. Thirty-five percent indicated they would check for student's understanding on a given topic.

Teacher training was explored for the purpose of identifying whether the teachers in this sample had been exposed to theories and models of reading and recent inservice and staff development in the areas of comprehension strategy instruction. Fourteen of the twenty teachers in the sample responded to this question. Six of those surveyed did not respond. A number of teachers responded by checking all three of the options. These included workshop, inservice and conference. Ten responses, though not necessarily representing ten individuals, were given for the workshop, while six responses were given for the inservice and 2 for the conference. A variety of titles were given to represent these numbers, although all of the respondents did not give the title of a workshop conference or inservice program that they had attended. Responses included a Masters' Degree in Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis on comprehension strategies, and a Masters' Degree in Learning Disabilities. Teachers had attended Pegasus(Publisher) workshops and whole language workshops. A reference to the University of Kansas Strategy Training was given as well as one to to generic textbook or publisher workshops. Specific workshop titles given were "Motivating Today's Reader" and "Infusing Critical Thinking".

Teachers were asked about their feelings toward the helpfulness of the teachers' manual in providing them assistance with teaching comprehension strategies. The purpose of this question was to determine if the teachers felt the support from the materials that they were currently using in teaching
comprehension strategies adequately. Eighteen of the twenty teachers responded to this question. Approximately twenty-eight percent indicated the manual was very helpful and thirty-nine percent indicated they found the teachers' manual to be somewhat helpful. Twenty-eight percent indicated the manual was of little help to them.

A final survey question asked teachers what skills they felt were most important for their students to have learned in their class. "What skills are most important for students to have learned before leaving your reading or social studies class?" The purpose of this open-ended question was to determine what skills teachers felt were important, particularly if they hadn't already been mentioned in this survey. Thirty-five different responses were given to this question with most teachers giving two to three responses to this question. Table 14 indicates the responses given as well as the frequency of those responses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension skills</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prediction</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previewing</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study skills</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizing and classifying information</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outlining</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 14 (cont’d)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summarizing</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning in order to understand</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to be an active learner</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to get help when you don’t understand</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to check for understanding</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In comparing the teacher’s years of experience with their use of strategies, no differences were found between new and experienced teachers. No differences were found between teachers with Masters’ degrees and those with Bachelor’s degrees. What was meaningful when comparing the new and experienced teachers was in their description of the types of strategies they used with their students. Teachers who had many years of experience provided responses for direct instruction strategies that were not necessarily strategies. Their responses included actual elements of comprehension such as main idea and conclusion. These were not strategies for helping students but rather specific areas of comprehension. The less experienced teachers who had more recent training utilized actual strategy instruction terminology when responding to the types of direct instruction they teach their students.

Student Interviews

Student interviews were conducted as part of this study as a means of
identifying the student's level of understanding about the types of reading they participate in and the need the reader has to use various types of strategies. The Reading Comprehension Interview (Appendix 5) developed by Wixson, Bosky, Yochum and Alverman was utilized as a way to assess students' awareness of the demands of different reading tasks. Students were asked the questions contained in this interview in a one-to-one situation. The students were interviewed by the researcher in the rear of their classroom or in the hall directly outside of the classroom. It is important to note that the final three questions on the worksheets were not administered with all of the interviews due to the fact that the students did not have a clear understanding of what the questions were asking. All twelve questions of the interview were administered to the students in the sample. The responses obtained on the interview provide information in three areas. First, they show what the child perceives the goal and purpose of classroom reading to be. Second, they indicate what criteria the child uses to evaluate his/her reading performance and finally, they indicate what strategies the child indicates he/she uses when engaging in different comprehension activities. The students in the sample consisted of ten 4th, 5th and 6th graders who were participants in the classroom observations. Teachers helped to identify the students who were interviewed. Some were the best readers in the class, while others were not necessarily the top readers in their classes.

The students interviewed were from the four schools and districts identified for this study. Of the ten, six were identified by their teachers as above average readers, two as grade level readers and two as below grade level readers. The student participants from District 1 consisted of three six
graders. District 2 participants were two fifth graders and the District 3 participants consisted of five fourth graders.

The first three questions on the interview asked students about their hobbies, interests and their reading habits. Students gave a variety of responses for hobbies and interests. Some of the students gave more than one response to this question. Certain responses overlapped in concept, although none of the responses was exactly the same from any of the students. Their responses included the following: adventures, fiction, biography, aromatherapy, rollerblading, imaginary things, mysteries, dogs, animals, fantasy, science, sports and stories. Table 15 shows the students responses about their individual reading habits.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Students Reported Reading Habits</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often do you read at school?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not much</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often do you read at home?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three times/wk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What school subjects do you like to read about?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Students were asked a series of questions about their social studies and reading books to identify their perceptions about the goal or purpose of classroom reading activities. A variety of responses was given by the students when they were asked about the reasons and purposes for their reading and social studies books. There were no meaningful differences between the responses given by grade level or district. In fact, there was a great deal of overlap and consistency found in the responses given for these questions. The reasons given for the purpose of the reading book included the following: to learn different types of stories, to learn about literature, to learn vocabulary, to learn about fiction and biography, to become a better reader, to become literate and to learn different types of writing. The purposes given for the social studies book include the following responses: to learn about different parts of the world, to learn regions, to learn history and facts and to learn about the country’s past.

The students were asked a series of questions to determine what criteria they used to evaluate their own reading performance. Students were asked about the best reader in their class and what qualities made them so. They were also asked what behaviors were necessary for getting a good grade in their classes. When students were asked what made someone a
good reader, their responses were consistent at the fifth and sixth grade levels with no meaningful differences to their answers. Good readers in reading class were described by both the fifth and sixth grade students as those who were fast at reading, made no mistakes when reading aloud, had large vocabularies and remembered what they had read. Fourth grade responses indicated that good readers paid attention to the punctuation when reading and read often. In characterizing the good student in social studies, responses were consistent across all grade levels. A good reader in social studies was described as someone who takes notes, remembers the facts and studies for tests.

Students were asked to describe themselves as readers and what characterized them in that way. "How good are you at reading this kind of material?" There was a consistency of responses from the fifth and sixth graders. They know they are good readers because they read the words correctly, understand what they read and don't make mistakes. Fourth grade responses were less specific and included such responses as "I can do it OK." They did not give specific behaviors regarding what makes them a good reader. In describing their own social studies skills, fourth and fifth graders had overlapping responses. These included: remember the facts, answer questions correctly, know the words. Once again, the fourth grade responses were not as specific and the fourth grade students had either no response to offer or just felt they read social studies materials OK giving no specific behaviors.

Students were asked to identify what they had to do to get a good grade in reading class. Fifth and sixth grade responses were similar in nature and
there was much overlap and consistency in their responses. These included the following: do the homework, read the material, do well on vocabulary tests, make no mistakes when reading aloud, and know the definitions to the vocabulary words. Fourth grade responses were more general in nature and less specific to the subject of reading. Fourth grade responses included such items as the following: never give up, work hard, listen and concentrate.

Similarly, students were asked what they had to do to get a good grade in social studies. Fifth and sixth grade responses included the following: do the work, read the book and outline it, do the projects, complete the questions at the end of the chapter correctly, take good notes and do well on quizzes. Fourth grade responses were again more general in nature. They included the following: work hard, listen carefully, concentrate and do the work.

The third area that was explored via the use of the student interview was the students' use of strategies when engaging in different reading activities. Questions asked of the students had to do with how they would remember information from a reading and a social studies book, and how they would go about finding answers to questions in the book. Finally, students were asked what the hardest part about answering questions in their reading and social studies book was. Responses to these questions had some similarities across all grade levels. Eighty percent of the total student sample indicated that reading the material over was the best way to remember something from the reading book. Other responses were to “make a riddle up” and to “summarize the story”. In remembering something from the social studies book, sixty percent of the total student sample indicated writing notes on the information would be the best way to do it. Other responses given
included reading the material over, memorizing the material, writing it down and making an outline of the material.

The next set of questions had to do with the best way to find answers to the questions in the book. The responses fell into similar categories by grade level, and not across grade levels. Fourth grade responses were the same for the reading and the social studies book. The responses included rereading the material, using the glossary and looking back at different parts of the story or chapter. Fifth grade responses centered around using the glossary if questions had to do with vocabulary, and reading over and skimming the material for the reading and social studies book. Sixth grade responses were the same for reading and social studies. Their responses included skimming and looking back for both types of books.

The final set of questions had to do with what students perceived to be the hardest part about answering questions from their reading and social studies books. Student responses differed across grade levels and subject areas. Fourth graders responded that the hardest part of answering questions from their reading books was when the answers were not really there in the story at all. One response indicated that it is hard to word the answers correctly, and another response indicated it was difficult to figure out how characters feel. Two responses indicated it was not hard, but easy to answer these kinds of questions. With regard to their social studies textbook, ninety percent indicated it was hard to find the answers in the social studies text, while ten percent had trouble with remembering the facts. Fifth grade students expressed difficulty with the questions from their reading book when it involved a detail or an unimportant fact. One fifth grader responded that nothing was
difficult. Essay questions were shown to be the difficult part about answering questions from the social studies book, according to the fifth graders, as well as answering questions about subjects that you don't like. Sixth grade students reported difficulty with their reading book when the answer was not present and with certain in-depth meanings. They reported difficulty with social studies questions in remembering all the facts and two of the three reported no difficulty at all with these types of questions.

Administrator Surveys

A thirteen item survey/questionnaire Administrator/Staff Developer Survey (Appendix 6) was administered to the administrators visited in the school districts in this study. The surveys were delivered to the administrators when the researcher was present in their school buildings to complete the classroom observations. Participants were asked to complete the survey at a convenient time and return them to the researcher by mail. The purpose of surveying the school administrators in this study was to determine if schools had been supportive to teachers in helping them learn the most current strategies for teaching reading comprehension. Administrators were asked to respond to questions regarding recent staff development and training programs and give their own perception of comprehension instruction.
Four surveys were delivered for completion by the school administrators and all were returned. In all three cases, the surveys were completed by the building principals, and in one case by the assistant principal. This was due to the fact the principals and assistant principals in all four sites were closely involved with teacher training and staff development planning activities.

The first four items on the survey had to do with background information regarding the district and the number of years the administrator had been in this position. Two of the schools visited had student enrollments under 300 hundred students and two had enrollments of between 300-500 students. Thus all four schools were small to medium in their size. Three of the respondents were full time building principals and one was a full time assistant principal. In her role as assistant principal, she was directly responsible for the staff development programs in her building, so she was the best candidate to respond to the questions on the survey. One of the respondents had been in his current position between 1-3 years while one of the respondents had been principal in that school for 3-5 years. Two principals had been in place for longer than five years.

Principals were asked about the number and type of staff development programs that their schools had participated in, as well as what programs were in place for future training sessions. In describing the number of staff development programs per school year, one school principal responded that they had more than five programs per year. All other school administrators (3) reported having 3-5 staff development programs per year. Seventy-five percent of the respondents reported recent programs in the area of special
education. Fifty percent of the respondents reported recent programs in cooperative learning and specific curricular areas such as math, science and health. In the category of “Other” the responses included recent programs in such topics as assessments, whole language and a motivational speaker. One response was given for a recent program in classroom management. When asked about topics for future planning, responses included science, technology, peer mediation, social studies, compacting, assessment, teaming, and collaboration and consultation models.

Administrators were asked about the types of ongoing support their school had in place for the teachers throughout the school year. Two administrators gave more than one response. Seventy-five percent responded that outside conferences and workshops were the primary method for ongoing training and support throughout the school year. Fifty percent indicated that classroom consultation was provided throughout the year. Twenty-five percent indicated that publisher training was provided for teachers throughout the school year. When asked about specific training in the area of comprehension monitoring and strategy instruction, twenty-five percent responded that their school had some, with fifty percent reporting very little and twenty-five percent reporting none at all.

Administrators were asked about the theory or model of reading espoused by their school or districts and whether they felt the reading and social studies materials in use were supportive of such a model. Three of the four respondents, or seventy-five percent of the sample surveyed, indicated the interactive model of reading was most commonly endorsed by their schools. One respondent indicated a meaning based model to be in place in
her school. Fifty percent of the respondents indicated that the reading materials currently in use supported the model of reading very much. Fifty percent indicated that the materials supported the model somewhat. One of the four respondents (twenty-five percent) indicated that materials included "Very Much" evidence of comprehension and strategy instruction, while three or seventy-five percent indicated "Some" evidence of comprehension and strategy instruction in their current reading materials. When asked about social studies materials, half of the administrators indicated that "Some" evidence of comprehension instruction could be found in these materials, while twenty-five percent indicated "Very Little" and twenty-five percent indicated "None at all" in these materials.

Administrators were asked to rank the four main areas generally taught in reading: phonics, structural analysis, vocabulary and comprehension, and indicate which was most important for students to receive direct instruction in. The responses are summarized in Table 16.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Reading</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonics</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural Analysis</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonics</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This study included a review of the textbooks and teachers' manuals that were in use by the teachers observed in this study. The purpose of analyzing the textbooks was to determine if the materials that teachers were using were current and up-to-date as evidenced by their inclusion of comprehension instruction and comprehension strategy activities. The textbooks were reviewed through the use of the Textbook Review Summary (Appendix 7) developed by the researcher. The survey consisted of six items to be matched against the textbook. The review sheets were filled out by the researcher on each of the textbooks in the study. The questions centered around the books providing a specific model or theoretical basis for reading instruction and the types of strategies and activities included in the book. The lessons were reviewed by the researcher, with a minimum of five lessons per textbook being reviewed for the areas identified by the summary sheet.

Eighteen textbooks in all were reviewed by the examiner. One text per observation was intended to be reviewed as the text correlated to the observations completed in twenty classrooms. However, two of the classes visited did not use any text at all for their reading class. As a result, eighteen actual textbooks were reviewed. Five of these eighteen represented a.
repetition of a book already reviewed at a different grade level. Therefore, thirteen different texts were examined for specific evidence of comprehension strategies. The textbooks that were reviewed are as follows:

**District 1:**

**District 2:**

**District 3:**

**District 4:**
- D.C. Heath Company. (1989) *Regions Near and Far*

**Textbook Summary Responses**

The review of the textbooks involved determining if the selected texts provided the reader with a model of reading theory. One hundred percent of the books reviewed did not have a model of reading theory represented
anywhere in the text or in the teachers' manual. In assessing the book's inclusion of comprehension monitoring, eight of the texts, or forty-four percent did have evidence of comprehension monitoring instruction, while ten of the eighteen or fifty-five percent, did not include such instruction. One hundred percent or all 18 texts did provide instruction in specific strategies for helping the student understand the text, whether social studies or reading text. Following is a list of the activities teachers are asked to use to help students better understand the content material within the textbook.

**Activities/Strategies to Increase Student Understanding**

- Preview and Predict Strategy
- New word Strategy
- Story map prediction
- Preview and self-questions
- Stop and think
- Adjust reading rate
- Skimming and scanning
- Summarizing stories
- K-W-L
- SQ3R
- Critical Reading and thinking
- Setting purpose
- Tapping prior knowledge
- Comparing maps
- Using Periodicals
The textbook review also looked at the amount of time the textbook allotted to specific areas of reading. By viewing at least five lessons, it was determined what percentage of a given lesson was devoted to each of the following areas of reading instruction: phonics, vocabulary, structural analysis and comprehension. Table 17 gives the percentages of lessons to the areas of reading by district.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Average Percentage of Lessons Per Area of Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phonics</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>26.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural Analysis</td>
<td>1.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>79.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average percentage of lessons in the textbooks reviewed in this study was seventy-five percent. This is represented in Table 18.
Table 18

Range and Percentage of Lessons Allotted to Areas of Reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Reading</th>
<th>Range of Percentage</th>
<th>Average %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phonics</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>20-55</td>
<td>23.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural Analysis</td>
<td>0-10</td>
<td>1.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>65-80</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The textbook review looked at specific strategies used in comprehension instruction and identified whether those strategies were present in the textbooks. Summarization was the only reading strategy that appeared in all 18 of the textbooks reviewed. Table 19 illustrates the evidence of other strategies and the percentage of time that they were present in the textbooks.

Table 19

Percentage of Strategies Found in Textbooks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summarization</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prediction</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elaboration</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 19 (cont'd)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outlining</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rereading</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Underlining</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comprehension</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monitoring</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reciprocal Teaching</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rehearsal</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-Questioning</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thirteen strategies were listed under the category of "Other". Some of these included cartooning, graphic organizers, notetaking, paraphrasing, previewing and rereading.

In this chapter, the research findings have been reported. In the next chapter these findings are analyzed and the research questions answered. Recommendations are made for facilitating further efforts to increase the amount of strategy and comprehension instruction into the classroom. The limitations of this study as well as suggestions for further research are presented.
CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section addresses the changes in comprehension instruction that have been observed or reported by the school sites that were visited in this study. Eight of the nine research questions are answered. The data reported in Chapter 4 will provide the basis for the answers to these questions. The second section discusses some of the more recent models for implementing comprehension strategies successfully. In the concluding section, the author presents recommendations for facilitating such changes as well as the limitations of the study. Suggestions for further research are discussed, and the study and its findings are summarized in the final chapter as well.
The Current State of Reading Comprehension Instruction

How much comprehension instruction was observed during reading and social studies class time?

The classroom observations conducted for this study took place in 20 reading and social studies classes at the third, fourth, fifth and sixth grade levels. The amount of comprehension was 112 minutes out of 872 or 12.84%. However, these results reflect no actual time spent on instruction. The 112 minutes account for time spent on comprehension assessment, comprehension assignment, comprehension prediction and preparation for comprehension. Over half of the comprehension that was observed was in the form of assessment. These results are in some ways similar to those found by Durkin in 1978. In some cases, the results are reflective of even less comprehension than what she found. Durkin's results indicated less than one percent of comprehension instruction (.63) and seventeen percent of comprehension assessment. While the results from this study do not represent a major difference from what was found by Durkin 18 years ago, they do show a marked increase in the amount of assessment of comprehension taking place in classrooms. This may be due, in part, to the major reforms currently taking place in the area of assessment. Teachers may be spending so little time on comprehension instruction for a number of reasons. They may be concerned about assessment in light of the increasing demands and accountability placed on students and teachers. They may be preparing students for standardized tests and multiple choice activities that face them in the future. State and national mandates along with national standards and
increasing expectations may have impacted teachers to spend more time on the assessment of comprehension and less time on the instruction of comprehension. In addition, trends in education have placed emphasis on whole language instruction and on the writing process. These types of programs may have less of an emphasis on comprehension activities and the direct instruction in strategies. It may very well be possible that teachers do indeed claim to know the strategies that students need to learn, but they may not know exactly how to teach these. Teachers may be instructing students in the same manner as they themselves had been instructed.

What is important to note when looking at the observation results is what the teachers are spending their time on during reading and social studies classes. The highest number of minutes were given to giving assignments (14.22%) helping with assignments (12.84%) and listening to oral reading (12.61%). In contrast, little to no time was spent in the area of study skills, word meanings, or phonics skills, which represent the major areas typically taught in reading classes.

The amount of comprehension instruction and overall comprehension observed in this study as in Durkin’s study is clearly not sufficient for students to become active strategy users. While there is no specific percentage of time that should be mandated for teachers to spend on comprehension, it is apparent that more time needs to be spent teaching students these critical skills. The newest models of reading suggest an active process where the child is engaged with the text through the construction of meaning and use of various strategies. This would imply that a great deal of time should be spent on comprehension, particularly in the instruction of strategies that students can use to become independent learners and comprehenders.
What training or inservice/staff development opportunities have teachers experienced to assist them in direct strategy instruction?

This question was answered directly through the results obtained on Administrator/Staff Developer survey. None of the respondents reported specific inservice programs in the area of direct strategy instruction, however they did indicate that their schools participated in ongoing training and workshops outside of school. Fifty percent reported classroom consultation was provided to the teachers throughout the school year.

This question was answered indirectly through the Teacher Survey in responses that had to do with level of education. Sixty percent of the sample of teachers have educational background, which include a Masters' Degree plus additional coursework. This would suggest that they had been part of a variety of opportunities to learn about strategy instruction and current comprehension research. It is possible that teachers feel they have enough training and exposure to say they know about the topic of direct strategy instruction. Many inservice programs are set up as one day workshops and programs, which represent enough time to expose teachers to a topic, but certainly not enough time to make them experts or master a concept. However, this may not be enough information and knowledge to actually teach these strategies to their students.
How prepared are teachers to deal with this shift in focus in reading instruction to a more interactive model?

Administrator respondents report that the interactive model is the one currently in use in their schools (seventy-five percent). All of the principals indicated the learning materials in reading provided support for the interactive model of reading, with one indicating the materials “Very Much” supported such a model. In contrast, the social studies materials do not offer the same amount of support for such a model. This may be due to the that social studies texts are not typically equated with comprehension models, but rather relate to other areas of reading. Teachers seem to be fairly confident that they are prepared to teach to the interactive model of reading. Ninety percent responded that they do provide direct instruction in comprehension. When asked for specific strategies that they use, teachers come up with numerous responses from an entire selection. They would, by their own admission, appear to be well prepared to deal with a shift toward an interactive model of instruction in reading.

How have teachers responded to these changes?

The answer to this question is not consistent across the different forms of data collection. Teachers report, as demonstrated on the Teacher Survey, tremendous use of a variety of strategies for helping their students understand the concepts that they are teaching. They gave numerous examples of activities they complete with their students to help them understand the content. When asked, they are able to provide numerous strategies for
actually providing direct instruction in comprehension. However, when observed, none of these strategies can be seen. This occurred in both subject areas, reading and social studies, and in all four grade levels observed.

There are a number of possible explanations for these results. Teachers may really be familiar with the strategies, but may be pressured to cover the content material and get through the textbooks, with little concern over how well students really are grasping the material. It is possible students are being exposed to the strategies, but that the way teachers are introducing them is not encouraging independent strategy users. Teachers may be assuming that students know these strategies and do not require additional instruction in them. It is possible that teachers may think they are familiar with these strategies in a global fashion, but in reality they may not be very well-versed on the topic of metacognitive strategy instruction and what importance this has for their students. It is possible that teachers have a hesitancy to say they they do not know about a topic.

How have schools helped to support this shift in reading instruction?

Schools have tried to provide appropriate training, as reported by the administrators who were interviewed in this study. However, they have not been specific to this particular area of study. As shown on the Teacher Survey, teachers report some understanding and familiarity about metacognitive strategies, however where they are gaining this understanding is unclear. They may be staying in touch with the research individually, rather than depending upon their school staff development programs to provide it for
them. Teachers may be gaining a bit of information about this topic in a
general way, but not enough specific information to incorporate it into their
teaching repertoires. Teachers may be learning about the topic of strategy
instruction via graduate coursework and other professional opportunities
outside of the school, such as professional journals or conferences and
workshops.

**How successful have students been at incorporating these strategies into their learning/studying repertoire?**

Based on the responses given on the Student Interview, students indicated a strong understanding of the different types of reading that they complete for social studies and for reading. They demonstrated a basic level of understanding of strategies and how they should be utilized depending upon their age and developmental level. Fourth graders were only able to respond generally about how to get a good grade. Their responses were very general in nature. In contrast, fifth and sixth graders had a much stronger understanding of such concepts. They were able to give specific things that students need to do to achieve in reading and social studies. Therefore, age was a factor in overall knowledge and understanding of strategy instruction.

**How clearly do students understand the need for reading strategy instruction?**

Based on their responses on the Student Interview, students appeared to have a general understanding of the need for strategy instruction. Students
(Eighty percent of total sample) clearly understood the strategy of rereading as one to that would help comprehension. When asked what they would do to remember information that their teacher had assigned from a book or story, they indicated that reading it over was the best way to do it. Once again, age became a factor in this area. Fourth graders clearly did not know how to go about answering difficult questions. Their strategies were not as specific, but general in nature. Some of their responses included “Try Hard” and “Look at again”. Fifth and sixth grade responses were much more substantive and indicated their greater level of understanding of different strategies and how and when to use them. Their responses included “Skim it over” or Reread” and “Take Notes” as meaningful strategies to answer questions.

Have curricular materials changed in their shift and focus as a response to changes in reading instruction and strategy training?

This question can be answered through the use of the results of the Textbook Review Summary. The results on this survey indicate that all the textbooks (one hundred percent), regardless of subject area, provide strategies for helping students understand text. In a general way, the textbooks devote sixty-five to eighty percent of their lessons to comprehension, rather than other areas of reading. All 18 texts included activities on summarization and 15 utilized prediction as a means of helping students understand. Numerous activities for helping build comprehension skills could be found in all of the texts.

These results seem to correlate with recent findings by Baumann and
Schmitt (1990, 1992) and others who have investigated the amount of strategy and metacomprehension material found in textbooks. Generally, the results have shown a marked increase in this area and much evidence of this topic in textbooks today.

A Model for Implementing Comprehension Strategies

Much research has been done on the topic of reading comprehension. It has been clearly established that comprehension can indeed be taught. Metacognitive instruction has been helpful at all grade levels, with more successes occurring at the seventh and eighth grade levels. While these strategies have proven successful, the challenging piece appears to be in how to implement them in schools so that their effectiveness can be felt. One critical method for teaching students strategies that can help them be better comprehenders is given. Fielding and Pearson (1994) have identified the key components for teaching students comprehension strategies. Their model involves four areas of instruction. These include authenticity of strategies, demonstration, guided practice and authenticity of texts. These are the critical elements for establishing success in comprehension instruction.

Authenticity of Strategies

This refers to the fact that strategies taught should be as much as possible like the ones that readers use when they comprehend successfully. It is recommended that there is a flexible application of the strategy rather than a rigid sequence of steps. The process should be modeled after that of skilled
readers, rather than of contrived situations.

**Demonstrations**

This is a critical piece to any successful strategy learning. Teachers must demonstrate for their students how to apply these strategies successfully. That includes what the strategy is, and does, and why it is used. Teachers need to clearly illustrate strategy use for their students whether by actively demonstrating a think-aloud or modeling aloud their own mental processes while they read. It is imperative that students are able to see these strategies in use, successfully, so that they can try them on their own.

**Guided Practice**

This step is an important one in the learning model. The students must have an opportunity to practice the model together with the teacher in a training phase, whereby they can receive feedback on how they are using it successfully, and if not, how to do so. Less strategic readers have an opportunity to have others share their thinking processes with them and gain insights into what the strategies look and sound like, when used. Palinscar and Brown's (1984) reciprocal teaching model is one in which more and more responsibility is handed over to the student. The teacher models the types of questions for the students, and gradually lessens the amount of structure she provides when she sees the student can do so on his own.

**Authenticity of texts**

Students need to practice these strategies using real, authentic types of reading. This needs to be modeled after the same kinds of reading they will
be doing. Using short workbook passages or contrived materials will not provide the student with the kind of opportunities he needs to learn to be successful with the strategies. Obviously, the students will more readily transfer the strategies to their real reading work if they have had the opportunity to practice in that same arena.

**Recommendations**

Based on all of the evidence collected in this study and the models for successfully implementing comprehension instruction, the researcher recommends the following changes to facilitate increased amounts of time spent on comprehension instruction.

1. Training should be done at the building level to familiarize teachers with various models for providing strategy instruction.
2. Current textbooks and teacher manuals which reflect strategy instruction should be utilized rather than teachers continuing to teach reading as they had been taught.
3. Teacher should demonstrate and model for their students specific strategies for comprehending text. This should involve all aspects of the strategy.
4. Students should participate in guided practice activities to become familiar with and gain in competence in using strategies.
5. Real life reading materials should be used for all strategy instruction.
6. Teachers should continue to be made aware of the ways in which they use instructional time with their students, particularly during reading and social
studies classes.

7. Increased instructional time should be spent on strategy instruction at all grade levels and in all subject areas.

8. Administrators should provide ongoing assistance to teachers to help facilitate training in the area of strategy instruction.

Limitations

There were five major limitations to this study. The first limitation had to do with the sample size and the composition of the population studied. The sample size of four school sites, two in Lake County and two in Cook County suburban districts did not provide meaningful information that could be generalized to a more diverse group. The communities of the study were predominantly white, middle to upper middle class areas. Thus the results reflect on that particular group alone, and do not provide information relative to larger, more diverse or urban settings.

The second limitation had to with the limited number of observational minutes collected. Twenty classroom observations in all were made for this study. This comprised only 872 minutes of instructional time. This does not necessarily reflect the sum total of what teachers are doing on a regular basis. While Durkin's study visited classrooms on three consecutive days, this study observed teachers on one day, one time only basis.

A third limitation was in the small number of students who were interviewed. This sample of ten is one half of the number originally intended by the researcher. Thus the information gained from these students does not give a clear representation of what strategies students are actually familiar
with.

A fourth limitation of this study had to do with the interpretation of Question 9 on the Administrator/Staff Developer Survey. This question may have been misleading and a clear interpretation may have not been possible.

One final limitation had to do with the small number of students interviewed in this study. The number of students interviewed was much fewer than the number originally projected in the initial outline for this study.

Suggestions for Further Research

There are a number of areas that could be pursued for further research on this topic. A total replication of Dr. Durkin’s work could be done to establish a more consistent and concise sense of what is occurring in classrooms based on increased hours of observational data. In addition, students from middle level grades could be interviewed, as this is the age when many strategies have been found to be most successful. The teacher and administrator surveys could be conducted as interviews in a way to gain more qualitative, in-depth information from these parties. Given the results that were received with the textbooks used in this study, it would be helpful to include a question in the teacher survey that asked teachers whether they used the textbook and how much they rely on it for their classroom instruction. Finally, this study should be conducted in an urban setting, to determine whether the situation is similar or very different in those locations.
In 1978, Dr. Dolores Durkin completed one of the most comprehensive observational studies in the field of reading. Durkin’s study, along with many reform movements that it ignited, changed the nature of the reading process and the models used to describe that process. This study attempted to assess the current state of reading comprehension instruction in order to identify what changes have occurred since that time.

Classroom observations of reading and social studies classes were conducted at the third, fourth, fifth and sixth grade level. Teachers were surveyed to determine what level of understanding they had on the topic of reading comprehension strategies. Students were interviewed to get a sense of their understanding of the different types of reading that they do and what their level of understanding is of various reading strategies. Administrators were surveyed in order to identify what training and/staff development programs had taken place in order to support teachers in strategy instruction. Finally, textbooks were reviewed in order to determine if current instructional materials support current models of reading and strategy instruction.

Multiple sources of data were utilized. The methodology included the observation of twenty reading/social studies classes. Twenty teachers from four school sites were surveyed. Ten students from three districts were interviewed and four building level administrators were surveyed to assess the support teachers had received. Finally, textbooks were reviewed by the researcher. Comparisons were made, when possible, to the results of Durkin’s study.

Following are the major findings of the study. First, little to no comprehension instruction was occurring in the classrooms visited. The
majority of time spent on comprehension was devoted to assessing it.

Second, teacher surveys determined that teachers had a wide range of knowledge regarding the subject of comprehension instruction and strategy use. This was not evidenced by their behavior in the classroom, but rather by their responses on the survey.

Third, students demonstrated general types of knowledge of strategies, however, it was developmental in nature, and may not have been well understood by fourth graders.

Fourth, administrators indicated that they supported the use of direct instruction for strategies, but could give little evidence of training time or money that had been allocated for this purpose.

Finally, textbooks were found to be very much in keeping with current comprehension instruction research and with providing teacher with appropriate activities and lessons for direct instruction. However, teachers were not necessarily using these materials and activities in their daily lessons.
APPENDIX 1
CLASSROOM OBSERVATION SUMMARY SHEET
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>AUDIENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CLASSROOM OBSERVATION SUMMARY SHEET

BEHAVIORAL CATEGORIES:
Assignment: checks
Assignment: gives
Assignment: helps with
Collects materials
Comprehension: application
Comprehension: assessment
Comprehension: assignment
Comprehension: helps with assignment
Comprehension: instruction
Comprehension: prediction
Comprehension: preparation
Comprehension: review of instruction
Demonstrates
Diagnosis: checks information
Diagnosis: writes
Discussion: teacher directed
Distributes materials
Listening: check
Listening: preparation
Listens
Listens: to oral reading
Map making
Map reading
Non-instruction
Oral reading: application
Oral reading: instruction
Phonics: application
Phonics: instruction
Phonics: review of instruction
Reads aloud
Review: oral
Silent reading: children
Structural analysis: application
Structural analysis: instruction
Structural analysis: review of instruction
Study skills: application
Study skills: assignment
Study skills: instruction
Study skills: review
Sustained silent reading
Tests
Transition
Word identification
Word meanings: application
Word meanings: review of instruction
APPENDIX 2
TEACHER COVER LETTER
Dear Teacher,

I am a graduate student at Loyola University currently working on my doctoral dissertation research. I am asking you to participate by completing the enclosed survey. The purpose of my research study is to assess current practices in reading comprehension instruction. The enclosed questionnaire will help me to identify the type of instruction that occurs most often in reading and social studies classrooms in grades 3 though 6. It will also assess the amount of training and support provided for you as a teacher in your school in the area of comprehension monitoring strategies. Your school has been randomly selected out of a group of Cook and Lake County schools to be a part of this study. It is important that your responses be included in the overall results. Please be assured that your responses will remain completely anonymous since all results will be reported in the aggregate. The number at the top of the survey will be used to help me manage the data.

Please take a few minutes to:
1. Read and respond to the items on the survey.
2. Mail the survey back to me in the self-addressed, stamped envelope no later than January 30, 1996.

I appreciate your participation in this research study. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Barbara S. Rieckhoff
APPENDIX 3
READING COMPREHENSION INSTRUCTION TEACHER SURVEY
READING COMPREHENSION INSTRUCTION TEACHER SURVEY

Name: ____________________(optional)

Check all that apply:

1. Grade levels taught:
   ___3 ___4 ___5 ___6

2. Subjects taught
   ___Reading
   ___Social Studies
   ___Both

3. Total number of years teaching ___
   Total years at this grade level (if different)___
   Total number of years teaching this subject (if different)___

4. Total number of years of education:
   BA degree___
   BA + additional course work___
   MA degree___
   MA + additional course work___
   Ph.D.____
   ____Other

5. In what year did you receive your highest degree?
   19___

6. Do you provide direct instruction in comprehension or in helping your
   students understand the subject you teach?
   ___Yes   ___No
   If Yes, please describe how you go about doing this.

7. Do you provide students with any direct instruction in reading
   strategies?
   ___Yes   ___No
   If Yes, what specific reading strategies do you teach to your students?
   (Name all that apply.)
8. Indicate your level of familiarity with metacognitive or comprehension monitoring strategies.
   ___Very Familiar  ___Little Familiarity
   ___Somewhat Familiar  ___No familiarity

9. Of the following strategies, which do you teach?
   (Check all that apply.)
   ___Prediction
   ___Summarization
   ___Reciprocal teaching
   ___Rereading
   ___Underlining
   ___Rehearsal
   ___Elaboration
   ___Comprehension monitoring
   ___Self-questioning
   ___Outlining
   ___Others_____________

10. How often do you ask students to use these strategies?
    ___Frequently
    ___Sometimes
    ___Seldom
    ___Never

11. Do you utilize class time for students to complete silent reading?
    ___Frequently
    ___Sometimes
    ___Seldom
    ___Never

12. Do you utilize class time for instructing students in reading comprehension strategies?
    ___Frequently
    ___Sometimes
    ___Seldom
    ___Never

13. Do you utilize class time for instructing students in phonics skills?
    ___Frequently
    ___Sometimes
    ___Seldom
    ___Never

14. Do you utilize class time for instructing your students in structural
analysis or word study skills?
___Frequently
___Sometimes
___Seldom
___Never

15. Do you utilize class time for instructing students in study skills?
___Frequently
___Sometimes
___Seldom
___Never

16. Approximately what percentage of class time do you use for each of these?
___Reading comprehension
___Phonics
___Structural analysis
___Study skills
___Other __________________

17. If your students are not familiar with the content, what strategy do you use most often to help them learn the material?
___Reteach
___Review
___Check for understanding

18. What training have you received in comprehension instruction or strategy instruction for your students?
___Workshop
___Inservice
___Conference
Please describe the title(s). ____________________________________________

19. How helpful do you find the teacher's manual in providing direction and assistance in comprehension and strategy instruction?
___Very helpful
___Somewhat helpful
___Little help
___No help at all
___Manual just described ___Reading ___Social Studies

20. What skills are most important for students to have learned before leaving your reading or social studies class?
# READING COMPREHENSION INTERVIEW

## Reading Comprehension Interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom teacher:</td>
<td>Reading level:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Directions:** Introduce the procedure by explaining that you are interested in finding out what children think about various reading activities. Tell the student that he or she will be asked questions about his/her reading, that there are no right or wrong answers, and that you are only interested in knowing what s/he thinks. Tell the student that if s/he does not know how to answer a question s/he should say so and you will go on to the next one.

General probes such as "Can you tell me more about that?" or "Anything else?" may be used. Keep in mind that the interview is an informal diagnostic measure and you should feel free to probe to elicit useful information.

1. What hobbies or interests do you have that your like to read about?
2. a. How often do you read in school?
   b. How often do you read at home?
3. What school subjects do you like to read about?

**Introduce reading and social studies books.**

**Directions:** For this section use the child's classroom basal reader and a content area textbook (social studies, science, etc.). Place these texts in front of the student. Ask each question twice, once with reference to the basal reader and once with reference to the content area textbook. Randomly vary the order of presentation (basal, content). As each question is asked, open the appropriate text in front of the student to help provide a point of reference for the question.

4. What is the most important reason for reading this kind of material?
   Why does your teacher want you to read this book?
5. a. Who's the best reader you know in__________?
   b. What does he/she do that makes him/her such a good reader?
6. a. How good are you at reading this kind of material?
   b. How do you know?
7. What do you have to do to get a good grade in__________ in your class?
8. a. If the teacher told you to remember the information in this story/chapter, what would be the best way to do this?
   b. Have you ever tried _________?
9. a. If your teacher told you to find the answers to the questions in this book what would be the best way to do this? Why?
   b. Have you ever tried _________?
10. a. What is the hardest part about answering questions like the ones in this book?
    b. Does that make you do anything differently?

**Introduce at least two comprehension worksheets.**

**Directions:** Present the worksheets to the child and ask questions 11 and 12. Ask the child to complete portions of each worksheet. Then ask questions 13 and 14. Next, show the child a worksheet designed to simulate the work of another child. Then ask question 15.

11. Why would your teacher want you to do worksheets like these (for what purpose)?
12. What would your teacher say you must do to get a good mark on worksheets like these? (What does your teacher look for?)

**Ask the child to complete portions of at least two worksheets.**

13. Did you do this one differently from the way you did that one? How or in what way?
14. Did you have to work harder on one of these worksheets than the other?
   (Does one make you think more?)

**Present the simulated worksheet.**

15. a. Look over this worksheet. If you were the teacher, what kind of mark would you give the worksheet? Why?
    b. If you were the teacher, what would you ask this person to do differently next time?

**Source:** K. Wilson, A. Bosky, M. Yochum, and D. Alvermann, "An Interview for Assessing Students' Perceptions of Classroom Reading Tasks," Reading Teacher 37 (1984), 349. Reprinted with permission of the authors and the International Reading Association.
### Summary Sheet: Reading Comprehension Interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom teacher:</td>
<td>Reading level:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grade:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. What does the child perceive as the goal or purpose of classroom reading activities?  
   (see questions 4 and 11)  
   - Basal reader:  
   - Content textbook:  
   - Reading worksheets:  

2. What criteria does the child use to evaluate his/her reading performance?  
   (questions: 5, 6, 7, 12, and 15)  
   - Basal reader:  
   - Content textbook:  
   - Reading worksheets:  

3. What strategies does the child indicate s/he uses when engaging in different comprehension activities? (questions: 8, 9, 10, 13, and 14)  
   - Remembering information  
     - Basal reader:  
     - Content textbook:  
   - Answering questions  
     - Basal reader:  
     - Content textbook:  
     - Reading worksheets:  

---

APPENDIX 5
ADMINISTRATOR/STAFF DEVELOPER SURVEY SURVEY
ADMINISTRATOR/STAFF DEVELOPER SURVEY

Please respond to each item with one answer only unless indicated.

1. What is the size of your school or district?
   ___Under 300 students
   ___300-500 students
   ___500-1000 students
   ___1000-2000 students

2. What is your position in this school or district?
   ___Staff Development Coordinator
   ___Central Office Administrator
   ___Building Principal
   ___Superintendent or Asst. Superintendent
   ___Other ________________________

3. How many years have you been in your current position?
   ___Less than one
   ___1-3
   ___3-5
   ___More than 5

4. What is the number of staff development programs per school year in your school or district?
   ___More than 5
   ___3-5
   ___1-2
   ___None

5. What are some areas of focus of most recent staff development workshops or inservices in your school or district? (Check all that apply.)
   ___Special education topics (ADD, Inclusion)
   ___Cooperative learning
   ___Classroom management
   ___Other__________________
   ___Specific curricular areas
6. What topics are planned for future workshops or inservice days?
   ____________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________

7. What types of support are provided for teachers in the area of reading instruction?
   ___Send them to outside workshops/conferences
   ___Publisher/materials training
   ___Classroom consultation
   ___None

8. How much training have teachers in your school community had in the area of comprehension monitoring or strategy instruction?
   ___Quite a bit
   ___Some
   ___Very little
   ___None

9. What theory of reading is most commonly endorsed in your school or district?
   ___Interactive model
   ___Phonetic model
   ___Meaning based
   ___Other _______________________

10. Do the reading materials used support the model of reading in place in your school or district?
    ___Very much
    ___Somewhat
    ___Very little
    ___Not at all

11. What evidence of comprehension and strategy instruction is present in reading materials used in your school or district?
    ___Very much
    ___Some
    ___Very little
    ___None at all
12. What evidence of comprehension and strategy instruction is present in social studies materials used in your school or district?
   ___ Very much
   ___ Some
   ___ Very little
   ___ None

13. What areas of reading instruction are most critical for teachers to provide direct instruction for in their classes? (Please rank 1-4. 1 = most critical)
   ___ Phonics
   ___ Vocabulary
   ___ Structural analysis
   ___ Comprehension
TEXTBOOK REVIEW SUMMARY

Name of Textbook:
Date of Publication:
Subject:

1. Does the textbook present a theory or model of reading?
   ___Yes
   ___No
   ___If yes, describe the model presented.

2. Does the textbook provide instruction in comprehension monitoring?
   ___Yes
   ___No

3. Does the textbook provide instruction in specific strategies to better understand the content within?
   ___Yes
   ___No
   If yes, tell what strategies are taught.

4. What does the book ask the teacher to do to help students' understanding of the content material?

5. What percentage of a given lesson is intended for the following areas as suggested by this textbook?
   ___Phonics
   ___Vocabulary
   ___Structural analysis
   ___Comprehension

6. Which of the following strategies are included in this textbook? (Check all that apply. If checked, tell how many references to that strategy.)
   ___Prediction
   ___Summarization
   ___Reciprocal teaching
   ___Rereading
   ___Underlining
   ___Rehearsal
   ___Elaboration
   ___Comprehension monitoring
   ___Self-questioning
   ___Outlining
   ___Others
APPENDIX 7
CATEGORIES FOR A TEACHER'S BEHAVIOR
CATEGORIES FOR A TEACHER'S BEHAVIOR

Assignment: checks- If a teacher spends time with 1 or more children in order to check answers connected with an assignment.

Assignment: gives- All reading assignments get this description except those dealing with comprehension or study skills.

Assignment: helps with- If teacher assists 1 or more children with an assignment that does not focus on comprehension of connected text or on study skills.

Collects materials- This category should be used when a teacher collects something.

Comprehension: application- If the teacher does or says something in order to learn whether comprehension instruction enables children to understand connected text.

Comprehension: assessment- This category is assessment related to comprehension and includes questioning children about something they have read.

Comprehension: assignment- If teacher gives assignment that requires the comprehension of connected text, the behavior goes here.

Comprehension: helps with assignment- If a group or individual is having problems with a comprehension assignment and the teacher helps, this is used.

Comprehension: instructions- Use this category whenever a teacher does/says something to help one or more children understand or work out the meaning of more than a single word.

Comprehension: prediction- If a teacher says something that asks the students what will come next, then this category is used.

Comprehension: preparation- This includes everything a teacher does to prepare for reading before it begins.

Comprehension: review of instruction- If teacher offered earlier comprehension instruction and now takes the time to review or repeat it, use this category.
Demonstrates- Teacher shows something.

Diagnosis: checks information- If teacher checks written information pertaining to diagnosis of instructional needs, use this category.

Diagnosis: writes- Use this category if the teacher writes something that pertains to an instructional need.

Discussion: teacher directed- Use this whenever discussion takes place.

Distributes materials- If a teacher takes time to give materials to individuals, the activity goes here.

Listening: check- This will be used whenever a teacher attempts to find out what was comprehended in a listening activity.

Listening: preparation- If the teacher does something prior to the start of a listening activity that is meant to help children comprehend, the activity is described with this label.

Listens- If a teacher is listening to something other than oral reading, the activity is assigned to this category.

Listens: to oral reading- If a teacher spends time listening to individuals or a group read aloud, the activity goes under this category.

Map making- If a teacher does something like sketch a map, use this category.

Map reading- This category is for teacher directed activities related to maps that do not involve reading any text.

Non-instruction- This heading is to be used whenever a teacher spends time doing something that is not instructing anybody in reading.

Oral reading: application- If a teacher directs 1 or more children to put into practice when he has been stressing.

Oral reading: instruction- If a teacher spends time on ways to improve the oral delivery of written material, use this description.

Phonics: application- If the teacher has children practice what has been taught, the effort goes here.

Phonics: instruction- If a teacher provides instruction in some aspect of
phonics, the activity is classified under this category.

Phonics: review of instruction- This is for times when a teacher goes over previous phonics instruction.

Reads aloud- If the teacher reads aloud to 1 or more children, use this category.

Review: oral- If a teacher directs an oral review of what was done or studied earlier, put the behavior here.

Silent reading: children- The individual or group with whom the teacher is working is reading silently, and the teacher waits.

Structural analysis: application- If the teacher is directing an activity in which 1 or more children are using or applying what was taught earlier about word structure, it is put under this heading.

Structural analysis: instruction- If something about the structure of derived, inflected, or compound words is taught, use this category to describe the teacher's efforts.

Structural analysis: review of instruction- If the teacher goes over something taught previously, use this category.

Study skills: application- If the teacher is directing an activity in which 1 or more children are using or applying what was taught earlier about a study skill, use this description.

Study skills: assignment- If the teachers gives an assignment in study skills, use this description.

Study skills: instruction- If the teacher gives instruction in a study skill, use this category.

Study skills: review- If earlier instruction about a study skill was given, put the activity under this category.

Sustained silent reading- If both the teacher and children read silently, the activity is Sustained Silent Reading.

Tests- Use this description if the teacher is engaged in an effort to test in a formal way.
Transition- When work is necessarily done as one activity shifts to another, the time for the shift is Transition.

Word identification: practice- If teacher directs activity concerned with word practice, use this category.

Word meanings: application- Use this category if what was taught about word meanings is being used by children under the supervision of the teacher.

Word meanings: review of instruction- Use this description if teacher repeats or goes over earlier instruction with word meanings.
REFERENCES


VITA

The author, Barbara Stacy Rieckhoff, is the daughter of the late Dr. George Charles Stacy and Marion Kehl Stacy. She was born May 5, 1956, in Evanston, Illinois.

Her elementary school education was obtained at Queen of All Saints School in Chicago and her secondary education at the Academy of the Sacred Heart in Chicago, Illinois where she graduated in 1974.

Mrs. Rieckhoff attended Maryville College of the Sacred Heart in St. Louis, Missouri where she received a Bachelor of Arts degree in May of 1978. In January 1984, she received a Master of Arts degree from DePaul University, where she received Special Education Endorsement in Reading and Learning Disabilities. In 1985 she completed her administrative coursework at National Louis University which led to the obtaining of a General Administrative/General Supervisory Endorsement.

Beginning in 1978, Mrs. Rieckhoff worked as a classroom teacher in the Archdioceses of St. Louis and Chicago and with inner city special education students in an alternative school setting. From 1987 to 1994 she worked in the Lake Forest Public Schools as a special education teacher, coordinating teacher and Assistant Principal. In 1994 she became a Principal at Willowbrook Elementary School in the Northbrook/Glenview District #30 School system.
DISSERTATION APPROVAL SHEET

The dissertation submitted by Barbara Stacy Rieckhoff has been read and approved by the following committee:

Barney M. Berlin, Ph. D., Director
Associate Professor, Curriculum and Instruction
Loyola University Chicago

Robert C. Cienkus, Ph.D.
Associate Professor, Curriculum and Instruction
Loyola University Chicago

Mary Jane Gray, Ph.D.
Professor Emeritus, Curriculum and Instruction

The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval by the committee with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is, therefore, accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Nov 19, 1996
Date

Signature