THE ATTITUDES OF GOOD AND POOR MALE READERS

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by

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ABSTRACT

From a review of literature related to reading disability, emotional disturbance, identification and attitude formation in young children, it was hypothesized that a major factor in reading disability in boys is the inability of masculinely-oriented boys to accept the feminine values found in the typical primary classroom.

The attitudes of twenty-one good male readers and twenty-one poor male readers at the grade two level were measured by means of <u>Osgood's Semantic Differential</u>. The two groups were matched for age, I. Q. and socio-economic status.

An analysis of the data indicated that the identification patterns of good and poor male readers revealed by their responses to items on <u>Osgood's Semantic Differential</u> do not differ significantly. However, the direction of the obtained differences was rather consistently in support of the hypothesis. The predictions in this paper could be broken down into forty-two items; eighteen of these predictions were clearly implied. Thirty-seven of the obtained differences between good and poor male readers were in the direction predicted by the hypothesis. The probability of obtaining such consistency can not be attributed to chance.

From the present findings two suggestions are made: (1) more refined studies may reveal significant differences in the identification patterns and attitudes of good and poor male readers; (2) a child's pattern of identification may be a contributing factor rather than <u>the</u> factor involved in reading failure. Suggestions for further study concerning the introduction of more masculine elements into the primary classroom are proposed.

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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

I. INTRODUCTION

The measure of society's failure to enable each child to gain a basic competency in reading is revealed by the numbers of children and adults who encounter serious reading difficulties. Harris claims that in the United States during World War II hundreds of thousands of draftees could not meet a grade four literacy test.¹ Gray says that from 20 to 30 per cent of the pupils in the United States encounter difficulty in doing required reading.² Statten estimates that 10 to 15 per cent of the school children in Canada are retarded in reading.³

While gross numbers indicate the size of the problem, a closer look reveals that the majority of retarded readers

¹Albert J. Harris, <u>How to Increase Reading Ability</u> (New York: David McKay Company, 1961), p. 3.

²William S. Gray, "The Teaching of Reading," <u>Encyclopedia of Educational Research</u> (New York: MacMillan Company, 1950), p. 1001.

³T. Statten, "Behaviour Patterns, Reading Disabilities and Electroencephalograph Findings," <u>American Journal of</u> <u>Psychiatry</u>, 11:205-206, September, 1953. are boys. Preston claims that boys make up 72 per cent of the retarded readers.⁴ Statten, speaking of Canadian children, estimates that 80 to 90 per cent of retarded readers are boys.⁵ From these figures it is clear that some factor, or constellation of factors adversely affects the reading ability of boys.

Many factors, operating singly or in any combination, are believed to be related to reading difficulty: low intelligence, mixed dominance, lateral eye-muscle imbalance, low socio-economic status, laziness, childhood diseases, auditory defects, verbal disability, lack of motor control, immaturity, and dyslexia. Jamposky has categorized cases of reading disability into three main classes: (1) brain injured, (2) children who are unable to associate concepts and symbols and to integrate written material, and (3) children with normal potential for learning but who cannot learn to read for exogenus reasons and those factors causing emotional problems.⁶

⁴Mary I. Preston, "The Reactions of Parents to Reading Failure," <u>Child Development</u>, 10:173-79, September, 1939.

Statten, <u>loc</u>. <u>cit</u>.

⁶Gerald G. Jamposky, "Psychiatric Considerations in Reading Disorders," <u>Reading Disorders</u>, Richard M. Flower and Lucie I. Lawson, editors (Philadelphia: F.A. Davis Company, 1965), pp. 61-72.

This study is concerned with children who fall into Jamposky's third category since it deals with the attitudes of poor male readers and their associated maladjustment. The literature reviewed will be limited to research about emotional factors related to reading disability; and to studies concerning the formation of attitudes in young children.

II. THE PROBLEM

<u>Statement of the Problem</u>. This study will attempt to discover the existence or absence of any distinctive pattern of identification in good and poor male readers. This study will also compare certain attitudes of good and poor male readers.

III. DEFINITIONS OF THE TERMS USED

<u>Identification</u>. Identification refers to a form of behaviour wherein a child copies the behaviour of another-usually an adult authority figure. The child assumes that the self-stimulation arising from these imitative acts is identical to the feelings of the model.

<u>Attitude</u>. An attitude toward the concepts measured in this study is operationally defined as a profile on Osgood's

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<u>Semantic Differential</u>.⁷ An attitude varies along three major dimensions: evaluation (good or bad), potency (weak or strong), and activity (fast or slow).

<u>Concept</u>. A concept is a complex reaction or disposition toward such a reaction to any given stimulus. The reaction occurs within the organism and presumably has a neurological basis. However, as a matter of convenience, the term concept will refer to the stimulus object itself although the reaction occuring within the organism is always necessarily implied.

<u>Good Male Reader</u>. A good male reader is a boy in grade two who falls at or above the 75th percentile of the sample of male second grade students measured on the reading sections of the <u>Stanford Achievement Test</u>, Form W.

<u>Poor Male Reader</u>. A poor male reader is a boy in grade two who falls at or below the 25th percentile of the same sample of male second grade students measured on the reading sections of the <u>Stanford Achievement Test</u>, <u>Form W</u>.

⁷Charles E. Osgood, George J. Suci, and Percy H. Tannenbaum, <u>The Measurement of Meaning</u> (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1957), passim.

IV. DELIMITATIONS

<u>Subjects</u>. A sample of children was required that might reasonably be expected to have acquired the widelyaccepted attitudes that obtain in the predominantly white, middle-class, urban culture. Therefore the subjects were limited to grade two boys of European origin living in an urban area.

This study assumes that the majority of children in this society (1) are taught by women in grades one and two, and (2) do not repeat any grade. In an attempt to obtain a sample that would faithfully reflect such a situation the subjects had a female teacher in grade one and a female grade two teacher at the time of the study.

Exclusions. In an attempt to exclude those subjects whose attitudes towards the concepts measured might be significantly affected by factors other than those under consideration the following exclusions were made: potential subjects who (1) showed any gross physical or mental anomalies, (2) had repeated any grade or (3) came from a broken home.

<u>Significance</u>. Since this study is considered to be exploratory in nature, it was not considered necessary to choose an extremely rigorous level of significance. The .05 level was selected.

CHAPTER II

STATEMENT OF PREVIOUS RESEARCH

I. EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE RELATED TO READING DISABILITY

Blanchard has discussed the possibility that reading disability may be related to the retardation of the child's psycho-sexual development. While admitting that not all reading disability is invariably of a complex psychogenic origin, she indicated that in many cases failure in learning to read may be part of a child's more general difficulty in achieving normal emotional growth.¹

Robinson claimed that 41 per cent of the seriously retarded readers have emotional difficulties² while Witty set the figure at 52 per cent.³ After summarizing two hundred studies concerned with reading retardation, Russell concluded that emotional difficulties usually appear as part of a

¹Phyllis Blanchard, "Psychogenic Factors in Some Cases of Reading Disability," <u>American Journal of Orthopsychiatry</u>, 5(4):361-74, October, 1935.

²Helen M. Robinson, <u>Why Pupils Fail in Reading</u> (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), p. 225.

³Paul Witty, "Reading Success and Emotional Adjustment," <u>Elementary English</u>, 27:281-96, May, 1950.

constellation of factors in reading retardation.⁴ However, Fernald stated that out of seventy-eight cases of extreme reading disability only four came to school with histories of emotional instability.⁵ Bond and Tinker have said:

> Occasionally a child has become emotionally unstable before he ever begins school. The basis of this maladjustment may be either constitutional or home environment or a series of unfortunate incidents during early pre-school years. Whatever the basis ... these children are unable to achieve the co-operation and sustained effort required in learning to read.⁶

Gates found that "poor readers of adequate intelligence neither display any characteristic personality pattern nor are they consistently inferior in any personality or emotional trait." However, he also claimed that 75 per cent of seriously retarded readers have emotional problems. He pointed out that in 25

⁵Grace M. Fernald, <u>Remedial Techniques in Basic School</u> <u>Subjects</u> (New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1943), p. 8.

⁶Guy L. Bond and Miles A. Tinker, <u>Reading Difficulties</u>, <u>Their Diagnosis and Their Correction</u> (New York: Appleton-Century-Cofts, Inc., 1957), p. 107.

⁴David H. Russell, "Interrelationships of Language Arts and Personality," <u>Elementary English</u>, 30:167-80, March, 1953.

per cent of these children the emotional disturbance was caused by the reading disability.⁷ Blanchard indicated that reading disability may cause emotional disturbance unless compensatory factors such as success in other areas are present.⁸

It may be seen from this review that some study has been made of the relationship between emotional disturbance and reading disability. However, very little research has attempted to establish the antecedent factors related to reading disability and emotional disturbance. Roswell and Natchez have written:

> The psychologist's main concern is not merely to find out whether there is or is not evidence of emotional disturbance in a child with reading disability; signs of emotional disturbance will be his most likely discovery. What has to be assessed is the nature, degree and complexity of the emotional problem ... the ways in which the emotional maladjustment is related to the reading disability ... how it may have arisen and ... how it may affect future school achievement.⁹

⁷Arthur I. Gates, "The Role of Personality Maladjustment in Reading Disability," <u>Journal of Genetic Psychology</u>, 59:77-83, September, 1941.

⁸Phyllis Blanchard, "Reading Disability in Relation to Maladjustment," <u>Mental Hygiene</u>, 12:772-78, October, 1928.

⁹Florence Roswell and Gladys Natchez, <u>Reading Disa-</u> <u>bility</u>, <u>Diagnosis and Treatment</u> (New York: Basic Books Inc., 1964), p. 56.

From the evidence presented to this point in this paper, it can be seen that the relationship between emotional disturbance and reading disability has not been clarified. It is not known whether emotional disturbance precedes reading disability or results from reading disability, or whether a reciprocal relationship exists between these two conditions. An example of the undesirable situations produced by the inconclusive state of knowledge concerning the relationship between these two factors is illustrated by Gann who delayed involving subjects in her experiment until they were in grade three because "it was thought unwise to judge subjects to be in difficulty before a fair opportunity had been permitted for abilities to develop."¹⁰ While Gann's position has much to recommend it owing to the fallibility of testing instruments in the early grades, it does mean that some children have met with repeated public failure for two years in an environment where skill in reading is held at a premium. By the time a child is in the third grade the relationship between reading failure and emotional disturbance may have become so entangled that the task of establishing dependent and independent variables may be impossible.

¹⁰Edith Gann, <u>Reading Difficulties</u> and <u>Personality</u> <u>Organisation</u> (New York: King's Crown Press, 1945), p. 41.

Emotional disturbance may be thought of as involving a situation that is incongruent with an individual's expectations or values.¹¹ For the purposes of this report, it is held that the totality of a person's values regarding a given topic comprises his attitude toward that topic. It will therefore be useful to look at the work that has been done in investigating the formation of attitudes in young children.

II. ATTITUDE FORMATION IN YOUNG CHILDREN

Some of the earliest work in attitude formation was done by Freud. In <u>An Outline of Psycho-Analysis</u> he described the process of identification which is normally completed by the age of five or six.¹² Freud's conception of identification involving the Oedipus complex and castration fears has been questioned¹³ but a more strictly defined description of identification has been developed by Lazowick. Lazowick sees identification as involving two people, a subject and a model.

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¹¹Sydney L. Pressey, J. E. Janney, and R. G. Kuhlen, <u>Life: A Psychological Survey</u> (New York: Harper Brothers, 1939), p. 564.

¹²Sigmund Freud, <u>An Outline of Psycho-Analysis</u>, trans. James Strachey (New York: Norton, 1949), pp. 90-91.

¹³Andrew Salter, <u>The Case Against Psycho-Analysis</u> (New York: Citadel Press, 1964), p. 95.

The model is seen by the subject to give a complex set of reactions in response to a stimulus. For example, the father on returning home, may react with a smile, pleasantly toned speech and a kiss on seeing his wife. When this complex response occurs certain cues are frequently present; the smell of a certain type of perfume, the wife's clothing, the smell of supper cooking, etc. If any of these cues are presented alone -- for example, the smell of the wife's perfume when the wife herself is absent--then some reduced portion of the original complex response may occur, perhaps a brief smile of reminiscence. This response itself acts as a stimulus and produces self-stimulation. It is this self-stimulation which is the "meaning" of the perfume. The subject at first imitates the model's complex reaction to the stimulus (the mother) without any understanding. The same process of association and self-stimulation takes place within the subject. When the cues (perfume, cooking, talking, etc.) associated with the original stimulus (mother) produce the same kind of response in the subject, the subject is said to be identifying with the model.¹⁴ Children are normally rewarded for imitating the

¹⁴L. M. Lazowick, "On the Nature of Identification," Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 51:175-83, 1955.

same-sexed parent and sex-appropriate behaviour. Identification is seen in this paper as the means whereby children become aware of sex-roles in our society.¹⁵ Since this paper is concerned with the influence of the sex of the child on his adjustment and learning capabilities in the classroom, it will be useful to see if the development of sex-role behaviour, established through the identification process, is maintained. If identification is a viable process then children in our society should be aware of sex-roles and they should normally express, as indicated by Freud, a sex-role preference by the age of six.¹⁶

III. SEX-ROLE DEVELOPMENT IN YOUNG CHILDREN

Brown defined sex-role behaviour as "behaviour associated with one sex or the other that the individual would like to adopt or that he perceives as the preferred or more desirable."¹⁷ Fauls and Smith who worked with five year old

¹⁵Jerome Kagan, "Acquisition of Sex-Typing and Sex-Role Identity," <u>Child Development Research</u>, M.L. Hoffman and L.W. Hoffman, editors (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1950), pp. 137-67.

¹⁶Freud, <u>loc. cit.</u>

¹⁷Daniel G. Brown, "Sex-Role Preference in Young Children," <u>Psychological Monographs</u>, 70(No.421):1-19, 1956.

children presented their subjects with pairs of pictures showing a child and two parents. One picture showed a child involved in a masculine play activity and the other a contrasting feminine play activity. They found that (a) boys tend to choose masculine activities more frequently than do girls, and that (b) both sexes perceived the parents as preferring sex-appropriate activities more often than preferring sex-inappropriate activities.¹⁸

Brown administered the <u>"IT" Scale for Children</u> (ITSC) to seventy-eight boys and sixty-eight girls of five and six years of age. The IT Scale presents the child with an ambiguously sexed child stimulus figure. The subject is required to make choices with regard to certain sex-appropriate and sexinappropriate activities for the stimulus figure. Since the stimulus figure is of an indeterminate sex, it is assumed that the subject's choices are projections of his own judgements. Brown found large and significant differences between the sexes in their choices on the IT Scale. He suggested that definite and relatively dichotomous sex-role patterns

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¹⁸Lydia B. Fauls and Walter D. Smith, "Sex-Role Learning of Five Year Olds," <u>Journal of Genetic Psychology</u>, 89:105-17, 1966.

exist in young children.¹⁹ In a later study Brown noted that children as young as two years of age begin to understand the concepts of male and female, and masculine and feminine. He suggested that preference for one sex-role begins to emerge by about the third year.²⁰ Hartup and Zook adminstered the IT Scale to three and four year old children. They concluded that (a) girls and boys, at the age of four years exhibit more sex-appropriate choices than do children at three years, and (b) that both boys and girls responded with more sex-appropriate choices when the ambiguously sexed figure in the test was referred to by the subject's own name than when it was called "IT".²¹ These studies indicate that children are aware of the sex-roles in our society and have usually established a sex-role preference by the time they come to school. It should be valuable to look at investigations concerning the differences in attitude between boys and girls toward school.

¹⁹Brown, <u>loc. cit</u>.

²⁰Daniel G. Brown, "Sex-Role Development in a Changing Culture," <u>Psychological Bulletin</u>, 55:232-42, July, 1958.

²¹Willard W. Hartup and Elsie A. Zook, "Sex-Role Preferences in Three and Four Year Old Children," <u>Journal of</u> <u>Consulting Psychology</u>, 24:420-26, October, 1960.

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IV. SEX PREFERENCES IN SCHOOL

Brown claimed that beginning at the kindergarten level and extending through the fourth grade, boys show a much stronger preference for aspects of the masculine role than girls show for aspects of the feminine role.²² Fitt. working in New Zealand, measured the attitudes of 12,488 children between the ages of seven and eighteen. His findings indicated that girls show a more favourable attitude than boys towards school at each educational level.²³ Butterworth and Thompson investigated age and sex differences in relation to preference for comic books in children aged eleven to fifteen years. They found that boys selected books with masculinity, adventure and success; girls chose books with femininity, adolescence, romance and humour.²⁴ Tenenbaum worked with sixth and seventh grade children. In his sample he found that (a) girls were more favourable to school than were boys, (b) teachers were liked more by girls than by boys, and (c)

²²Brown, <u>loc</u>. <u>cit</u>.

²³A.B. Fitt, "An Experimental Study of Children's Attitudes to School in Auckland, N.Z.," <u>British Journal of</u> <u>Educational Psychology</u>, 26:25-30, February, 1956.

²⁴Robert E. Butterworth and George G. Thompson, "Factors Related to Age-Grade Trends and Sex Differences in Children's Preferences for Comic Books," <u>Journal of Genetic</u> <u>Psychology</u>, 78:71-96, March, 1951.

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children selected by the teacher as problem children had markedly less favourable attitudes towards school than children as a whole.²⁵ Bonney investigated sex differences in social success. He found that sex differences in social success were not large but there was a high degree of consistency in favour of girls.²⁶

V. THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE TEACHER TO SEX DIFFERENCES IN ATTITUDE

In the classroom the teacher probably has most influence on the formation of attitudes in young children. Meyer and Thompson took time sample observations on three grade six classes taught by women. They found that boys received significantly more disapproval than girls.²⁷ Lippitt and Gold observed that teachers generally made more critical remarks to boys and gave more encouragement to girls.

²⁵S. Tenenbaum, "Attitudes of Elementary School Children to School, Teachers, and Classmates," <u>Journal of</u> <u>Applied Psychology</u>, 28:134-41, April, 1944.

²⁶ M. E. Bonney, "Sex Differences in Social Success and Personality Traits," <u>Child Development</u>, 15:63-79, March, 1944.

²⁷William J. Meyer and George G. Thompson, "Teachers' Interactions with Boys as Contrasted with Girls," <u>Psychological Studies in Human Development</u>, Raymond G. Kuhlens and George G. Thompson, editors (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1963), pp. 510-18.

When children were divided as to whether they were judged by their peers to be high or low in leadership qualities (social power) large sex differences appeared in the low leadership ability group. Teachers were much more encouraging to low power girls than they were to low power boys.²⁸ Spaulding found that boys considerably exceed girls in the frequency of disapproval from the teacher for violation of rules. Moreover, teachers criticizing boys were likely to use a harsh or angry tone; criticism of girls was more likely to be conveyed in a normal voice.²⁹ Sears and Feldman concluded from a review of studies concerning achievement on standardized tests and teachers' grades that "from the limited evidence we have it seems that girls are given higher grades than boys despite the fact that boys achieve at least as well as girls...."³⁰

²⁸R. Lippitt and M. Gold, "Classroom Social Structures as a Mental Health Problem," <u>Journal of Social Issues</u>, 15:40-50, 1st Quarter, 1959.

²⁹Robert L. Spaulding, <u>Achievement</u>, <u>Creativity and</u> <u>Self-concept Correlates of Teacher-Pupil Transactions in</u> <u>Elementary Schools</u>, Cooperative Research Project No. 1352 (Washington: Office of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1963), p. 20.

³⁰Pauline S. Sears and David H. Feldman, "Teachers' Interactions with Boys and Girls," <u>The National Elementary</u> <u>Principal</u>, 46:30-35, November, 1966.

Perhaps more important in the formation of children's attitudes towards school is not what adult observers see teachers doing, but what the children believe the teacher does. McNeil obtained first grade children's ratings on teacher behaviour towards boys and girls in reading groups. The children felt that boys had fewer opportunities to respond than girls and that more negative comments on their performance were received by boys than by girls.³¹

As early as 1932, C. W. St. John observed that:

... the fundamental cause of boys' inferiority in educational achievement is a maladjustment between boys and their classroom situation and particularly their teachers. It is believed that this maladjustment is due largely to the inability of teachers to adapt themselves to interests and characteristics of personality and behaviour of boys which teachers weigh heavily in marking ... 32

Bell has pointed out that most primary teachers are women. He claims that children will maintain the same kind of relationship to the teacher as they have had with women in their pre-school years. A boy normally identifies with his father

³¹John D. McNeil, "Programmed Instruction Versus Usual Classroom Procedures in Teaching Boys to Read," <u>American Education Research Journal</u>, 1:113-20, March, 1964.

³²C.W. St. John, "Maladjustment of Boys in Certain Elementary Grades," <u>Educational</u> <u>Administration</u> <u>and</u> <u>Supervision</u>, 18:659-72, December, 1932.

and he may find it difficult to join in activities suggested by the teacher since to do so would require the partial surrender of his masculinity. If, maintains Bell, the cost of this surrender in terms of guilt and conflict is too great the boy may resist a satisfactory academic adjustment.³³

The preceding studies strongly suggest that boys who experience difficulty in learning to read may do so as a result of having rejected the feminine values they find in the typical primary classroom. It may also be that boys who read well may be those who are more easily able to accept feminine values. Studies concerning the nature of retarded readers offer evidence both in support and contradiction of such conclusions.

VI. PERSONALITY PATTERNS FOUND IN RETARDED READERS

Spache, using the Rosenzweig Picture Frustration Test, found retarded readers between six and ten years of age to be more aggressive than average readers. The aggression of the retarded readers appeared most clearly in pictures of

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³³J.E. Bell, "Emotional Factors in the Treatment of Reading Difficulties," <u>Journal of Consulting Psychology</u>, 9:125-31, May-June, 1945.

children. In situations in which there was frustration from adults, it seemed that children learned to avoid open conflict by passive behaviour.³⁴ Natchez, working with grade five and six children, found some poor readers who were aggressive but also found others who were passive and withdrawn.³⁵

Some studies suggest that retarded readers exhibit basically feminine characteristics. Monroe and Backus found retarded readers to be dependent on the mother and to be infantile in manner and interests. The authors suggest that such children resist learning to read since it represents a step in growing up.³⁶ Coleman, Borston and Fox found that boys with reading disability commonly had a background of a domineering mother and a father who appears to provide an inadequate model for masculine identification.³⁷ Anastaiow

³⁴George D. Spache, "Personality Characteristics of Retarded Readers as Measured by the Picture Frustration Study," <u>Educational and Psychological Measurement</u>, 1:186-92, May, 1954.

³⁵Gladys Natchez, <u>Personality Patterns</u> and <u>Oral Reading</u> (New York: New York University Press, 1959), p. 89.

³⁶Marion Monroe and Bertie Backus, <u>Remedial Reading</u>: <u>A</u> <u>Monograph in Character Education</u> (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1937), p. 38.

³⁷J.C. Coleman, F.L. Borston and J. Fox, "Parental Attitudes as Related to Reading Disabilities in Children," <u>Psychological Reports</u>, 4:47-51, 1st Quarter, 1958.

found that boys with feminine characteristics did not read significantly less well than boys who were strongly masculine although the mean reading achievement for "feminine" boys was lower than the mean for "masculine" boys.³⁸ Henderson, using a "social distance" task reported that retarded readers between the ages of seven and fourteen years of age are characterized by a high degree of dependency and place themselves closer to the mother than the father.³⁹ Kimball, working with adolescents found underachievers to have a poor father relationship, to be passive, to have a feminine orientation, and to be unable to express negative feelings directly.⁴⁰

VII. SUMMARY

A relationship between reading difficulties and emotional disturbance has been established but the nature of this relationship has been insufficiently investigated.

³⁸N. J. Anastaiow, "Success in School and Boys' Sex-Role Patterns," <u>Child Development</u>, 36(4):1053-66, December, 1965.

³⁹E. H. Henderson, "Self-Social Constructs of Achieving and Non-Achieving Readers," <u>Reading Teacher</u>, 19(2):114-18, November, 1965.

⁴⁰Barbara Kimball, "Case Studies in Educational Failure During Adolescence," <u>American Journal of Orthopsychiatry</u>, 23:406-15, April, 1953.

Studies concerned with the process of identification and the establishment of sex-role patterns in young children indicate that children are capable of clear discrimination involving sex-typed behaviour and have established a sex-role preference before they enter school. In the primary and intermediate grades where the majority of teachers are women, girls appear to receive some preferential treatment over boys. This difference in treatment is recognised by the children as early as grade one. Studies concerned with retarded and underachieving readers have produced contradictory findings. Some investigators have found that male retarded readers exhibit predominantly masculine traits while others have found them to be femininely-oriented.

CHAPTER III

HYPOTHESIS

I. GENERAL HYPOTHESIS

From the studies presented in this paper a general hypothesis has been formulated as follows:

A major factor in the poor reading of many boys is that they are highly masculinely-oriented and reject the values found in the typical primary classroom.

A corollary of this hypothesis is that poor male readers will have significantly different attitudes from good male readers towards reading, their parents and their teachers. The direction of these differences can be predicted.

The hypothesis states that poor male readers are masculinely-oriented, i.e. they will (1) tend to identify closely with their fathers and with super-masculine stereotypes such as is portrayed in the cartoon figure of Batman, and (2) will tend to be more rejecting of females, e.g. their mothers and their female teachers. They will also tend to reject items strongly associated with female figures. The character "John" in <u>Off to School</u>¹ in the basal reading series used in the public schools of British Columbia is presented to grade one children in a highly femininelyoriented setting. From the hypothesis it is possible to predict that poor male readers will tend to reject the fictional character "John". It is further assumed that these patterns of identification will be reflected in the comparative semantic distance scores when the attitudes of good and poor male readers are measured on <u>Osgood's Semantic Differential.</u>²

II. SPECIFIC PREDICTIONS

Specific predictions may conveniently be cast in a matrix shown in Table I. Where the word "Poor" appears in a cell it is predicted that the semantic distance between the concepts generating the cell will be significantly greater for poor male readers than for good male readers. Where the word "Good" appears in a cell it is predicted that the semantic

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¹Sheila Egoff, <u>Off to School</u> (Vancouver: Copp Clarke Publishing Co. Ltd., 1960), passim.

²Charles E. Osgood, George J. Suci, and Percy H. Tannenbaum, <u>The Measurement of Meaning</u> (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1957), passim.

distance between the two concepts generating the cell will be significantly greater for good male readers than for poor male readers. The number appearing in each cell will be used to refer to the prediction associated with that cell.

TABLE I

SPECIFIC PREDICTIONS OF THE RELATIVE SIZE OF SEMANTIC DISTANCES INDICATED BY GOOD AND POOR MALE READERS' RESPONSES TO OSGOOD'S SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIAL

	"Feminine" Concepts			Masculine Concepts	
	John	My Mother	My Teacher	My Father	Batman
My Ideal Self	Poor	Poor	Poor	Good	Good
	1	2	3	4	5
My Self	Poor	Poor	Poor service	Good	Good
	6	7	8	9	10

A second set of predictions may be made concerning the attitudes of the subjects toward the grade one pre-primer, the characters appearing in this pre-primer, and the subjects' parents. The first book that most children meet in the public schools of British Columbia is <u>Off to School</u>.³ The book tells

³Egoff, <u>op</u>. <u>cit</u>., passim.

of the activities of a middle-class family: Mother, Father, John, Janet, and Anne. It is predicted that good male readers will be generally more accepting of these concepts than will poor male readers. In order to test the hypothesis certain specific predictions may be made.

Good male readers will give significantly higher ratings on <u>Osgood's Semantic Differential</u> to the concept they have of the following stimuli than will poor male readers:

11. Off to School, 4

12. John,

13. Janet,

14. Janet and John's Mother,

15. Janet and John's Father.

It follows from the discussion concerning the semantic distance between the subjects' self concepts and the concepts they have of their parents and teachers that good male readers will rate "feminine" concepts more highly than "masculine" concepts. Exactly the reverse will hold true for poor male readers. To further test the hypothesis, a third set of predictions may be made.

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⁴Ibid.
Good male readers will give significantly higher ratings on <u>Osgood's Semantic Differential</u> to the concepts they have of the following stimuli than will poor male readers:

16. My Teacher,

17. My Mother.

Poor male readers will give a significantly higher rating to the concept they have of the following stimulus than will good male readers:

18. My Father.

Finally, it is predicted that when the three major dimensions of attitude are considered separately, the poor male readers will not differ significantly from good male readers toward the concepts measured on the evaluative dimension but will differ significantly on the activity and potency dimensions of attitude.

All of the foregoing predictions may be summarized in a visual representation of what Osgood calls "semantic space". Figure 1 shows the predicted relative positions of some of the concepts dealt with in this study. It should be noted that Figure 1 attempts to represent three dimensions of attitude in a two dimensional space. Such an attempt inevitably



Figure 1. A Theoretical Model of the Semantic Space Surrounding Good and Poor Male Readers.

results in some distortion. The evaluative dimension extends vertically, that is to say if concept \underline{A} is higher on the page than concept \underline{B} it is predicted that the group concerned will rate concept <u>A</u> more highly than concept <u>B</u>. The potency dimension extends across the page and the same relationship between concepts obtains as is described for the evaluative To be accurate, the activity dimension should be dimension. interpreted as depth but in Figure 1 it has been represented as a diagonal line. Thus if concept X is further along a diagonal that runs from lower left to upper right, or any line running parallel, than concept \underline{Y} , it means that it is predicted that the group concerned will rate concept X more highly on the activity dimension than concept \underline{Y} . A complication arises here since an increase along the activity dimension appears to involve an increase along the evaluative dimension. This correlation is not the case. Since it is predicted that no significant difference will appear on the evaluative dimension, a rise on the page may generally be interpreted as an increase along the activity dimension.

CHAPTER IV

COLLECTION OF THE DATA

I. DESIGN

The original design of the study called for matched pairs of subjects but so few acceptable matches could be made that a matched-group design was adopted.

The revised design of the study required two groups of boys who were comparable in chronological age, intelligence, school experience and socio-economic background but differing significantly in reading ability. The attitudes of these two groups towards certain concepts felt to be relevant to school, reading, their parents and themselves were measured with <u>Osgood's Semantic Differential.</u>¹ Many of the attitudes measured related to first grade education and ideally, first grade students should have been used. However, testing instruments at this grade level are sunreliable and thus second grade students were employed instead.

¹Charles E. Osgood, George J. Suci, and Percy H. Tannenbaum, <u>The Measurement of Meaning</u> (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1957), passim.

It was considered desirable to collect together a sample of subjects that would faithfully reflect the attitudes of the majority of white second grade boys living in an urban culture. Such a sample, it was felt, would allow the maximum amount of generalization of the findings. It was assumed that the majority of children in the first and second grades are taught by women. Thus only children who had had a female first grade teacher and were presently being taught by a female second grade teacher were included in the sample.

Following the same principle the following exclusions were made:

- (1) children with gross mental or physical abnormalities,
- (2) children from broken homes,
- (3) children who had repeated any grade,
- (4) children who came from any background other
 - than European.

In the selection of classrooms for the sample, it was required that they roughly reflect the socio-economic strata of the urban area wherein the study was held. Accordingly, one school was chosen from an area that served a working class population, one that served an upper class area, two from a middle class area and one from a mixed socio-economic area. Judgement of the social strata which a particular school served was made by the elementary supervisors working in the school district concerned. Since none of the areas was "pure" in regard to their social stratification, no breakdown of the data was made on a socio-economic basis.

Of the nine second grade classes remaining when all the successive criteria had been met, seven were selected at random. A survey of the boys in these seven classrooms indicated that the main basis for exclusion would be ethnic background. It was felt that to exclude subjects from the initial testing procedures on an ethnic basis might be interpreted as a form of prejudice. To avoid any embarrassment in regard to ethnic differences the reading and intelligence tests were administered to all the boys in the seven classrooms selected. Only those results of the subjects who met the requirements of the study were considered for further testing.

The ninety subjects who remained after the exclusions had been made were ranked on the basis of their mean achievement score on the word meaning, paragraph meaning and word study skill sections of the <u>Stanford Achievement Test</u>, Form W. Twenty-two subjects falling at or above the 75th percentile were designated as good male readers. The same number of

subjects falling at or below the 25th percentile were designated as poor male readers. The mean chronological age of the good male readers was 7.71 years, s = .37. The mean chronological age of the poor male readers was 7.94 years, s = .45. The difference between these means was not significant (p).05). I.Q. scores from the Otis Quick Scoring Mental Ability Test, Form As which was given as part of the school's regular testing program were available. The mean I.Q. for the good male readers was 111.4, s = 7.82. The mean I.Q. for the poor readers was 107.9, s = 8.39. The difference between these means was not significant (p).10). Socioeconomic status was assessed on the basis of the father's occupation through the use of the <u>Blishen</u> <u>Scale</u>.² The mean score on the Blishen Scale for the good male readers was 45.77, s = 5.13 and for the poor male reading group, 47.43, s = 5.06. The difference between these means was not significant (p).10).

A pencil and paper test developed from <u>Osgood's</u> <u>Semantic</u> <u>Differential</u> was administered in booklet form to the good

²Bernard R. Blishen, "The Construction and Use of an Occupational Scale," <u>Canadian</u> <u>Journal of Economic and Political</u> <u>Science</u>, 24:519-31, November, 1958.

male readers and the poor male readers. A copy of the booklet with accompanying instructions appears in Appendix A. Those boys who fell between the 25th percentile and the 75th percentile when the entire sample was ranked on the basis of their reading achievement received no further testing.

The validity and reliability of the differential has been discussed extensively by Osgood. Also, adaptations and recommendations for the use of the differential with young children has been discussed.³ Maltz used Osgood's differential to measure the attitudes of subjects ranging from grade two to college level. He concluded that while the concepts of young children are less consistent than at higher age levels, <u>Osgood's Semantic Differential</u> is a useful and valid instrument for measuring the concepts of children.⁴

II. SCREENING

The first page of the test booklet is a teaching page. The subjects in groups of four to eight were shown the meaning of each box on the page and shown how to express their

³Osgood, <u>op</u>. <u>cit</u>., pp. 125-88.

⁴Howard E. Maltz, "Ontogenic Change in the Meaning of Concepts as Measured by the Semantic Differential," <u>Child</u> <u>Development</u>, 34(3):667-74, September, 1963.

attitudes through the use of the boxes. It was necessary to establish that subjects were responding in a meaningful way. Pages 2, 3, 4 and 5 form a screening device. The concepts appearing on these four pages were selected on the assumption that certain aspects of each concept were regarded in stereotyped ways. For example, it was assumed that a bubble is generally regarded as soft, weak, dull and slow. A rock is hard and strong. It was further assumed that the subjects shared many of the stereotyped views of the concepts selected. Of the thirty-six scales on the four concepts, fourteen were assumed to be viewed by the subjects in a predictable way. Reference to Figure 2 may aid in clarification of the procedure. Any child who checked fewer than ten of the preselected points was assumed to have misunderstood the instructions and his responses were not included in the analysis of the data. Two subjects were eliminated on the basis of the screening test. Thus the number in each group was twenty-one.

III. SCORING

Osgood has indicated that attitudes are composed of three major dimensions: evaluation (E), potency (P), and

activity (A).⁵ The nine scales appearing below each concept contain three bi-polar scales for each dimension of attitude. The pairs of adjectives were all taken from Osgood's <u>Measurement of Meaning</u>.

- E: Good-Bad, Happy-Sad, Nice-Not Nice.
- P: Weak-Strong, Rought-Smooth, Hard-Soft.
- A: Slow-Fast, Sharp-Dull, Hot-Cold.

A five point scale was used. Each adjective was designated positive or negative, e.g. Good, Hot and Rough are positive; Sad, Slow, and Soft are negative. The most negative category was alloted a score of one; the most positive category was given a score of five. A score of three represents a neutral attitude. Since three scales were used for each dimension, the highest possible score profile for any concept is 15, 15, 15; the lowest possible score is 3, 3, 3. Figure 3 may aid in clarifying the meaning of the boxes. The variation in box size was introduced as an additional cue to the meaning of the box.

⁵Osgood, <u>op</u>. <u>cit</u>., pp. 31-75.



Figure 2. An example of the use of a screening page in a pencil and paper adaptation of <u>Osgood's Semantic Differential</u>.

*The subject must select either one of the boxes underlined. If a scale has no boxes underlined it indicates that no assumption was made about the generality of any attitude toward the concept in question. The response to such scale was not counted in the screening procedure.



Figure 3. An example of the meaning of the boxes used in a pencil and paper adaptation of <u>Osgood's Semantic</u> <u>Differential</u>.

* The box size was introduced as an additional cue to the meaning of the box.

CHAPTER V

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

I. SEMANTIC DISTANCE

The meaning of semantic distance can best be explained with the aid of an example. A subject may rate two concepts in the following way:

	E	P	. A
Myself	15	11	10
My Father	15	15	14

The semantic distance between these two concepts is obtained by summing the squares of the absolute difference and finding the square root, thus:

	E	P	A	
Myself	15	11	10	
My Father	<u>15</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>14</u>	
	0	4	4 ^{ta} .	Absolute difference(d)
	0	16	16	d ²
·	ź	$d^2 =$	32	
	\sim	$d^2 =$	5.66	
Semantic Dista	nce (D) =	5.66	

Osgood has indicated that the distribution of D is not known but is probably not normally distributed.¹ Therefore tests for the significance of the differences between the D scores obtained by good and poor male readers was made with the Mann-Whitney U Test.² None of the obtained differences between the D scores which appear in Tables III and IV reached an acceptable level of significance. However, there is a consistency of direction of the D scores which cannot be explained by chance. If the matrix (Table I) used for predictions 1 - 10 is recast (Table II) with the addition of a plus sign where the prediction was in the correct direction and a minus sign where the prediction was in the wrong direction, it can be seen that nine out of the ten D scores are in the direction predicted.

A sign test³ was applied to this array of D scores. The probability of obtaining such a result by chance is .0107 which is beyond the .05 level of significance and closely approaches the .01 level.

¹Charles E. Osgood, George J. Suci, and Percy H. Tannenbaum, <u>The Measurement of Meaning</u> (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1957), p. 101.

²Merle W. Tate and Richard C. Clelland, <u>Non-Parametric</u> <u>and Short-Cut Statistics</u> (Danville: Interstate Printers and Publishers, 1957), p. 89.

³Sidney Siegal, <u>Non-Parametric Statistics</u> (New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1956), pp. 68-75.

TABLE II

THE RESULTS OF PREDICTIONS 1 - 10 GIVEN IN TABLE I

"Feminine" Concepts		Masculine Concepts			
	John	My Mother	My Te <u>a</u> cher	My Father	Batman
My Ideal Self	Poor	+ Poor 1	+ Poor + 2 3	Good + 4	Good - 5
Myself	Poor	+ Poor 6	+ Poor + 7 8	Good + 9	Good + 10

- + Indicates that the observed difference in D score was in the direction predicted by the hypothesis.
- Indicates that the observed difference in D score was contrary to the direction predicted by the hypothesis.

Figure 4 shows the semantic space surrounding good and poor readers. The figure was constructed from the data concerning the relevant concepts in Table VII. It should be noted that certain distortions occur in the Figure 4. The nature of these distortions has already been discussed in Chapter IV. Where two concepts appear to be very close or over-lapping some impression of the actual semantic distance between them can be gained from close inspection of Table VII or by reference to Table V where the semantic distance scores between all the relevant concepts appear.

TABLE III

SEMANTIC DISTANCES(D) BETWEEN "MY IDEAL SELF" AND CERTAIN OTHER CONCEPTS OF GOOD AND POOR MALE READERS WHEN BASED ON MEAN GROUP RATINGS ON

	My Ideal	Self
	Good Male Readers	Poor Male Readers
John	2.38	3.91
My Mother	2.06	3.90
My Teacher	1.52	2.72
My Father	0.90	0.88
Batman	1,22	0.55

TABLE IV

SEMANTIC DISTANCES(D) BETWEEN "MYSELF" AND CERTAIN OTHER CONCEPTS OF GOOD AND POOR MALE READERS WHEN BASED ON MEAN GROUP RATINGS ON OSGOOD'S SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIAL

	Myself		
	Good Male Readers	Poor Male Readers	
John	1.64	2,13	
My Mother	1.23	2.01	
My Teacher	0.35	1.23	
My Father	1.49	1,26	
Batman	1.82	1.96	

TABLE V

SEMANTIC DISTANCES(D) FOR GOOD AND POOR MALE READERS BETWEEN CERTAIN CONCEPTS WHEN BASED ON MEAN GROUP

RATINGS ON OSGOOD'S SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIAL

	Good Male Readers	Poor Male Readers
My Mother - My Father	1.58	2.92
My Mother - My Teacher	1.10	1.552
My Mother - Batman	2.9	3,33
My Mother - John	. 45	1.03
My Father - My Teacher	1.712	1.9
My Father - Batman	2.10	.78
My Father - John	2.2	3.04
Batman - My Teacher	1.96	1.96
Batman - John	3.2	3.61
My Teacher - John	1.09	1.20



Readers as indicated by their responses on <u>Osgood's</u> <u>Semantic Differential</u>.

II. GROUP ATTITUDES TOWARD THE CONCEPTS MEASURED

The Kolmorgorov-Smirnov two sample test was applied to the distributions of the total ratings (EPA) for the two groups on each concept. To reach the .05 level of significance the difference between the cumulative scores in each distribution had to be eight or greater. 4 As can be seen from Table VI good male readers rated concepts numbered 11 to 17 higher than do poor male readers but the difference was not significant. Good male readers rated the concept numbered 18 higher than do poor male readers but again the difference was not significant. However, seven of the eight predictions were accurate to the extent that they predicted the direction of the obtained difference. A null hypothesis posing the supposition that there is no real difference between the groups on the overall attitudes of the subjects to the concepts measured would predict that approximately half of the differences would fall away from that predicted by the hypothesis and approximately half would fall in a direction that would support the hypothesis.

⁴Siegal, <u>op</u>. <u>cit</u>., pp. 47-52.

TABLE VI

THE MEAN TOTAL RATINGS (EPA) FOR GOOD AND POOR MALE

	Good Male Readers	Poor Male Readers	Kolmorgorov- Smirnov's D	р
Off to School	30.05	28.00	5 +	ک ⁰⁵
John	31,85	29,55	5 +	>• ⁰⁵
Janet	30.3	27.45	5 +	ک •05
Janet and John's Mother	31.1	29.75	4 +	≻• 05
Janet and John's Father	34.6	32.65	5 +	>.05
My Teacher	34.0	31.0	7 +	ک •05
My Mother	33.8	29.8	6 +	>.05
My Father	34.5	33.8	5 -	>.05

READERS ON OSGOOD'S SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIAL

 Indicates that the observed D (Kolmorgorov-Smirnov) was in the direction predicted by the hypothesis.

- Indicates that the observed D (Kolmorgorov-Smirnov) was contrary to the direction predicted by the hypothesis. A sign test applied to the direction of the test results revealed that the probability of obtaining the observed results by chance is .0352 which is significant beyond the .05 level.

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was also applied to each dimension of attitude for each concept. As can be seen from Table VIII the differences between the attitudes of good and poor male readers reached significance in only two cases. The evaluation (E) dimension of the groups' attitude toward Janet was significantly different but was in the opposite direction to that which was predicted. The potency (P) dimension of the groups' attitude towards My Mother was also significant and was in the direction that supported the hypothesis. These significances must be regarded as having occurred by chance since in twenty-four applications of tests for significance, only two tests reached significant levels. This result is one that is very close to one that could have been predicted by chance. However, of the twenty-four tests made for significance twenty of them were in the direction predicted. Although each individual test did not reach a significant level, a null hypothesis would predict that approximately half of the differences would be in favour of

TABLE VII

THE MEAN RATINGS ON THREE DIMENSIONS OF ATTITUDE OF GOOD AND POOR MALE READERS MEASURED ON

	Good Male Readers	Poor Male Readers	Kolmorgorov- Smirnov's D	p
Off to School				
Evaluation	11.75	10.8	3	>.05
Potency	9.45	8.2	7	>.05
Activity	8.85	8.2	4	>.05
John				هنه نک پیک کار به دی کار
Evaluation	12.8	12.8	3	>.05
Potency	9.0	8.3	5	5.05
Activity	10.0	8.4	6	ý.05
Janet				
Evaluation	12.6	12.8	8	<.05
Potency	8.75	7.55	5	>.05
Activity	9.0	8.65	4	5.05
Janet and John's Mother				
Evaluation	14.75	12.65	2	>.05
Potency	8.5	8.5	4	>.05
Activity	9.7	8.65	3	>.05
Janet and John's Father				
Evaluation	12.75	12.65	3	2.05
Potency	10.55	10.0	5	>.05
Activity	11.3	10.0	6	>.05
My Teacher				
Evaluation	13.45	12.75	4	>.05
Potency	9.5	9.15	3	>.05
Activity	11.15	9.15	6	▶.05

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OSGOOD'S SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIAL

TABLE VII (CONTINUED)

.

	Good Male Readers	Poor Male Readers	Kolmorgorov- Smirnov's D	P
My Mother				
Evaluation	12.75	13.7	4	>.05
Potency	9.15	7.95	9	<.05
Activity	10.4	8.75	7	.05¢
My Father				
Evaluation	12.65	13.4	4	>.05
Potency	11.0	10.15	4	>.05
Activity	10.95	10.7	2	>.05

TABLE VIII

DIFFERENCE SCORES GENERATED BY THE APPLICATION OF THE KOLMORGOROV-SMIRNOV TWO SAMPLE TEST TO THE MEAN RATINGS OF GOOD AND POOR MALE READERS ON THREE DIMENSIONS OF ATTITUDE REVEALED BY

OSGOOD'S SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIAL

مان بر بی وی منابع بی مانا بر بر میرین برای بر برای از معروب میشند. ان بر بزری می مانا بی مانا بی برای بر بی میرین بر بی میرین بر بی بر بی بر این میرون که محمد میرون کار از این ا		وي الكرور بين التركي بالمركز والم	الدين المراجع المراجع المسلحة المراجع	
	E	P	A	
Off to School	+3	+7	+4	
John	+3	+5	+6	
Janet	-8*	+5	+4	
Janet and John's Mother	+2	+4	-3	
Janet and John's Father	-3	+5	+6	
My Teacher	+ 4	+3	+6	
My Mother	-4	+9*	+7	
My Father	+4	-4	-2	

* Indicates significance.

+ Indicates that the difference was in support of the hypothesis.

- Indicates that the difference was contrary to the hypothesis.

the hypothesis and approximately half against. Therefore difference scores appearing in Table VII were recast in Table VIII and a sign test applied to each dimension. On the evaluative dimension (E) the probability of obtaining the observed result by chance was .36 and is therefore attributable to chance Bas was predicted. On the potency dimension the probability of obtaining the observed scores by chance was .035 and thus cannot be attributed to chance. On the activity dimension (A) the probability of obtaining the observed results is .145. Such a result does not meet the .05 criterion adopted for this study, but in accepting the null hypothesis one may in fact be committing a type II error; p is small enough that one would be interested in looking at this aspect of the data in a replication of the study.

CHAPTER VI

IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY AND SUMMARY

I. DISCUSSION

The results shown in Table I indicate that good and poor male readers do not differ significantly in the semantic distance between themselves and the concepts measured. However there is a consistency of direction in favour of the present hypothesis that is extremely unlikely to have occurred by chance. Such results suggest to the writer that there exists real differences in identification patterns between good and poor male readers but that this study has not been able to demonstrate clearly their existence. The cause of such failure is probably two-fold. First, the limitations of the study which would include the small size of the sample, the use of group rather than individual tests for assessing. reading achievement and intelligence, and the relatively gross definition of a poor reader. It is possible that if such shortcomings were remedied in a future study, more promising results might be obtained. Secondly, it may be that the identification pattern of the male reader is only a contributing factor rather than <u>the</u> factor involved in reading disability. Such a conclusion is in accord with the widely held conviction that reading disability results from a constellation of factors rather than from any single cause.¹

A comparison of the theoretical model of the semantic space surrounding the subjects and the model resulting from the present measurements show interesting relationships. For poor male readers the concepts of "My Father", "Batman" and "My Ideal Self" all cluster together with the concepts of "My Teacher", "John" and "My Mother" at a great distance. This is the pattern that was predicted. For good male readers the pattern is basically the same except that it lacks the extremes of the semantic space of the poor male readers. The "feminine" concepts are rejected but the rejections are not as great as the rejections of these concepts by the poor male readers. The masculine concepts are close to the ideal self concept but not as close as they are for the poor male readers. Such patterns suggest that poor male

¹David H. Russell, "Interrelationships of Language Arts and Personality," <u>Elementary English</u>, 30:167-80, March, 1953.

readers are indeed masculinely-oriented but that good male readers are not particularly femininely-oriented.

One other finding of particular interest is the relative rejection of John by both good and poor readers. Such a result, if confirmed in subsequent studies, should be given serious consideration by all those concerned with educating young children. John is the "hero" of the first book that most children in British Columbia meet in school. The lack of identification with a main character may well have a depressing effect on the reading ability of most boys. The results reported here indicate that it might well be worthwhile investigating the effects of introducing more dynamic and masculinely-oriented reading materials into the primary classroom.

The close identification of good male readers with their female teachers and the relative rejection of these teachers by poor male readers suggests what has been suspected in many studies comparing teaching methods and materials--namely that the teacher variable is probably a very important factor in the learning process.

Further research might include studies to discover the effect of the introduction of male teachers into the primary classroom. Such an inovation need not necessarily require a full-time male primary teacher. Rather there might be lessons or visits from high prestige males such as the principal, vice-principal or sports teacher. Such visits could be on a regular or irregular basis.

With regard to the second and third sets of predictions (11-18) it should be noted that while the significances obtained may have occurred by chance, the consistency of the direction of the difference on the potency dimension is very unlikely to have been a chance occurrence. It may be that given a set of concepts of equal goodness the masculinelyoriented boys make their choices on the basis of potency. The findings also suggest that a masculinely-oriented boy's choice along the activity dimension is of importance but to a lesser degree than along the potency dimension.

It should be noted that on their own, results indicating that poor male readers rate school-related concepts lower than good male readers, are not too revealing. It would seem obvious that pupils who fail consistently and publicly for almost two years would not hold the institution where that failure occurred in a very favourable light.

However, it is hoped that the two sets of results presented in this paper--one concerning the identification patterns of male readers (1 - 10) and the other the appraisal of schoolrelated topics (11 - 18)--may help to unravel the emotional disturbance-reading disability complex discussed in the review of the literature. Related studies have shown that most boys have certainly adopted an identification pattern before they come to school. It is hoped that this study has at least suggested that certain identification patterns and reading failure are related. Such a conclusion leads to the risky but almost inevitable supposition that a masculine pattern of identification, in our present school system, contributes to reading failure.

II. SUMMARY

From a review of literature related to reading disability, emotional disturbance, identification and attitude formation in young children it was hypothesized that a major factor in reading disability in boys is the inability of masculinely-oriented boys to accept the feminine values found in the typical primary classroom.

The attitudes of twenty-one good male readers and twenty-one poor male readers at the grade two level were measured by means of <u>Osgood's Semantic Differential</u>. The two groups were matched for age, I.Q. and socio-economic status.

The analysis of the data indicated that the identification patterns of good and poor male second grade students revealed by their responses to items on <u>Osgood's Semantic</u> <u>Differential</u> did not produce any significant differences. The direction of the differences was rather consistently in support of the hypothesis. The predictions in this paper could be broken down into forty-two items; eighteen of these predictions were stated explicitly and a further twenty-four clearly implied. Thirty-seven of the obtained differences between good and poor male readers were in the direction predicted by the hypothesis. The probability of obtaining such consistency cannot be attributed to chance.

The differences in ratings of good and poor male readers to the school-related concepts measured were not significantly different but again there was a consistency in the direction of the differences which was in support of the hypothesis and could not be explained on the basis of chance.

From the present findings two suggestions are made: (1) more refined studies may reveal significant differences in identification patterns and attitudes toward schoolrelated topics in good and poor male readers; (2) a child's pattern of identification may be a contributing factor rather than <u>the</u> factor involved in reading failure. Suggestions for further study concerning the introduction of more masculine elements into the primary classroom are proposed.

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APPENDIX

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APPENDIX A

INSTRUCTIONS

Open your booklets at page one. At the top of the page you will see a picture of a rocket. Under the picture is the word ROCKET. I want to find yout how you feel about a rocket. Now look at row number one. Put your finger under the number ONE. (Check)

By number one it says FAST. Put your finger under the word FAST. Now start off from the word FAST and go along the line until you come to a word at the other end. That word at the other end says SLOW. Put your finger under the word SLOW. (Check) Good.

How do you feel about a rocket? Is it fast or slow? (R) - Response) Yes, it is fast. Is it very fast or just pretty fast? (R) Yes, it is very fast, so we shall put a cross in the big box nearest the word FAST. See, here. (Indicate on the replicated page.) Go ahead and mark your own sheet. (Check)

Now look at number two. By number two it says WEAK. Put your finger under the word WEAK. (Check) Good. Now go along the line. Can anybody guess or read what it says at the other end of the line? (R) Yes, it says STRONG. Is a rocket weak or strong? (R) Yes, it is strong. Now, is a rocket very strong or only just fairly strong? (R) Yes, it is very strong. So we will put a cross in the big box nearest the word STRONG. See, here. (Indicate on the replicated page.) Go ahead and mark your own papers. (Check)

Now look at number three. By number three it says _________(pause). (R) Yes, it says SHARP. Put your finger under the word SHARP. Put your finger under the word at the other end of the line. What does that word say? (R) Yes, it says DULL. Is a rocket sharp or dull? (R) Yes, it is sharp. Now think, is a rocket very sharp like a needle, or only fairly sharp like a pencil? (R) (Allow for varying opinions.) Conclude: You wouldn't prick your finger on a model of this rocket. I think its best if we call it pretty sharp, but not very sharp. So we will put a cross near but not right next to the word SHARP. Here. (Indicate on the replicated page.) Go ahead and mark the cross in your own books. (Check)

Now look at number four. It says HAPPY. Go along the line. What do you find at the other end of the line? (R) Yes, it says SAD. Its very important that you don't mark a cross until we have finished talking because I want to show you something. How do you feel about a rocket? Happy or sad?

(Allow for varying responses. Indicate where each one should go. If no one expresses a neutral opinion, conclude: If you don't feel happy or sad about a rocket you put a cross in the tiny box right in the middle of the line.) Go ahead and mark your own booklets.

Now look at number five. By number five it says SMOOTH. Put your finger under the word SMOOTH. (Check) Good. What word do you find at the other end of the line? (R) Yes, it says ROUGH. Now do this one on your own. How do you feel about a rocket? Is it rough or smooth? Is it very rough, fairly rough, neither rough nor smooth, fairly smooth, very smooth. (Indicate each expression with the appropriate box on the chart.) You decide and put a cross that shows how you feel about a rocket. Remember, put only one cross on this line. Go ahead. (Check)

Now look at number six. What does it say by number six? (R) Yes, it says HOT. Who can guess or read what it says at the other end of the line? (R) Yes, it says COLD. Think if a rocket is hot or cold. Very hot, fairly hot, neither hot nor cold, fairly cold, very cold. (Indicate on the chart.) Go ahead. Only one cross remember. (Check)

Look at number seven. It says BAD and ______ (pause) (R) Yes, GOOD. Put a cross in the box that shows

how you feel about a rocket. Only one cross on this line.

Number eight says SOFT and HARD. Go ahead.

Number nine says NICE and NOT NICE. Put just one cross to show how you feel about a rocket.

PAGE TWO

Now turn over to page two. You see a picture of a cat. Put your finger under the word CAT. (Check) The words that tell how you feel are just the same as the words on the first page, but now we are thinking about a cat.

Look at number one. By number one it says FAST. What does it say at the other end of the line? (R) Yes, it says SLOW. Put a cross in the box that shows how you feel about a cat. Very fast, fairly fast, neither fast nor slow, fairly slow, or very slow. (Indicate on the chart.) Remember, only one cross. Go ahead. (Check)

Now look at number two. It says WEAK. What word will we find at the other end? (R) Yes, STRONG. Mark in how you feel about a cat. Is it weak or strong? Very weak, fairly weak, neither weak nor strong, fairly strong, very strong (Indicate each box.)

Now look at number three. It says SHARP. What does it say at the other end of the line? (R) Yes, it says DULL. Decide how you feel about a cat. Go ahead. (Check) Now look at number four. It says HAPPY - SAD. Just put one cross to show how you feel.

Number five says SMOOTH - ROUGH. Remember, only one cross.

Number six says HOT - COLD. Number seven says BAD - GOOD. Number eight says SOFT - HARD. Number nine says NICE - NOT NICE.

PAGES THREE AND FOUR

Go through pages three and four in a similar manner to page two.

PAGE FIVE

Now turn to page five. Here we see a picture of a lion. Under the picture there is a word. What do you suppose it says? (R) Yes, it says LION. I want to find how you feel about a lion. The words that tell how you feel are just the same as those on all the other pages. You can do this page on your own. Ask me if you want to know a word. Don't go on to the next page, page six, until I tell you to do so. Are there any questions? (Pause) All right - go ahead. (Check)

PAGE SIX

Now turn to page six. At the top of page six you can see a picture of a boy. Can anyone tell me the boy's name? (R) Yes, it is John. Has anyone ever read a book about John? (R) Yes, he's in the grade one reader that you had last year. On this page I want you to show me how you feel about John. Remember to put only one cross on each line. If you want to know a word please ask me. Go ahead. (Check)

PAGE SEVEN

Now turn to page seven. Can anyone tell me the title of this book? (R) Yes, its <u>Off to School</u> that you all read in grade one. On this page show me how you feel about <u>Off to</u> <u>School</u>, the book that you read last year.

I think you will be able to do the rest of the book by yourselves now. Before I let you go on I want you just to look at the rest of the pages and then we will come back and do them.

> Turn to page eight. Here you see Janet, John's sister. Page nine, Janet and John's mother.

Page ten, Janet and John's father.

Now look at page eleven. There's no picture here. What does the word say? (R) Yes, it says MYSELF. What do you

think about yourself?

Turn to page twelve. This says MY _____ (pause). (R) Yes, FATHER. What do you think about your father?

Now turn to page thirteen. Does anybody know who this is? (R) Yes, of course, its BAIMAN. Say how you feel about BAIMAN on this page.

Look at page fourteen. It says "WHAT I WOULD LIKE TO BE". I want you to mark the boxes that show not how you feel you are but how you feel you would like to be.

Page fifteen says MY MOTHER.

Page sixteen says MY TEACHER.

Now turn back to page eight where you see a picture of Janet. Start from here and work your way right through the book. If you can't go on I shall help you. When you have finished one page go right on to the next one until you come to the end of the book. Are there any questions? (Pause) All right. Go ahead. (Check that each child starts back at page eight.)









Nice

Not nice

Page 2



cat





Bubble





rock













Janet







Janet and John's father

			free-separatest reserves
1. Fast			Slow
2. Weak	arrander (*		Strong
3. Sharp			Dull
4. Hoppy			Sad
5. Smooth		Constant No. (Cont.)	Rough
6. Hot			Cold
7. Bad	- Scing		Good
8. Soft	(autority) Autority		Hand
7. Nice			Not nice

Myself







Batman



Myself, as I would like to be.



My Mother

