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Investigation of audience response to prose literature when perceived through silent reading oral interpretation and readers theatre

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AN INVESTIGATION OF AUDIENCE RESPONSE TO PROSE LITERATURE
WHEN PERCEIVED THROUGH SILENT READING, ORAL
INTERPRETATION, AND READERS THEATRE

by

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1965

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT
OF THE PROBLEM

Introduction

Much has been written in regard to the general importance of audience response in the communication situation; but only a limited amount of experimental research has occurred relevant to certain dimensions of audience response with which this study is concerned. Specifically, the present investigation seeks to study the effect of different methods of presentation on audience response to prose literature. A number of writers have suggested that further research is needed in the area of listener response. Keith Brooks referred to the general dearth of available literature on the nature of audience response and suggested that additional study be undertaken relative to the effects of personality, the effect of content value in material being perceived and in particular, the effect of various methods of presentation.¹ Chloe Armstrong and Paul D. Brandes in their textbook, The Oral Interpretation

of Literature, noted recent information derived from experimental studies concerned with the effects of silent and oral reading, with empathetic response and with communicative behavior in general; they also pointed to the need for continued empirical research in these areas.\(^2\)

In addition to the concern for research in the general area of audience response, the present investigation given to study audience response to prose literature when perceived by silent reading, oral interpretation and Readers Theatre, may be useful particularly to teachers of literature who are interested in evaluating methods of teaching literary materials in terms of effect on the student-reader. At the present time, information on oral interpretation as a method of teaching literature is for the most part subjective; and only a meager amount of information on Readers Theatre as a method of teaching literature is actually available.

Regardless of the lack of empirical support, writers in the area of Oral Interpretation seem to regard their subject primarily as a method of literary study, a worthwhile approach to the teaching of literature in terms of student response. Through the years proponents of the art have acclaimed the excellent effect

it has had on students of literature and the valuable results that have been achieved through its use as a teaching technique. The majority of these claims, however, have been based on the relatively limited observation and subjective experience of teachers actually using the method. Theodor Lipps in a discussion of the nature of empathetic response commented that, "unless a man actively appreciates an object by sharing part of himself with it, the object has no meaning for him." A sizable amount of subjective testimony indicates that Oral Interpretation may bring a student closer to such an active "sharing of himself" with the literary object. In the opinion of many teachers, students who encounter literature through oral interpretation reach a more intense and meaningful depth of experience and appreciation than do students who come upon literature by means of conventional methods of instruction. At present the field of Oral Interpretation lacks any scholarly consideration of a "reader-centered" method of teaching literature. As Bacon and Breen have pointed out:

Literary critics have shown the greatest interest in the questions "What is literature?" and "How is it written?" Comparatively few have shown interest in the question "How is it read?" The relationship between the writer and his manuscript has been explored extensively, while

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the relationship between the writer's manuscript and its reader has on the whole been neglected.\textsuperscript{4}

The need for experimental evidence on the effect of Oral Interpretation as a method of teaching literature has been discussed by a number of authors. In a recent article concerning potentials for research in Oral Interpretation, Mark S. Klyn suggested a number of areas for experimentation and the rationales for their study including oral interpretation as a teaching technique:

A first area in which, I think, we need to know a great deal more than we do is that of the real effects on students of oral interpretation as a mode of literary study. We want empirical definitions and measures of these effects, which would enable us to refine our conventional premises about the value of such study for students, and, hopefully, to support them.

The pervasive lack of experimental evidence in support of the value of Oral Interpretation as a method of literary study was also referred to by Armstrong and Brandes:

At present, oral interpreters are judged largely on a subjective basis. There appear to be several channels, the exploration of which may offer worthwhile indications to assist these subjective interpretations. The future holds improved methods of evaluating oral reading not only subjectively, but also objectively. An appropriate combination of


the two should enable students of oral interpretation to accelerate their learning processes.6

Oral Reading Versus Silent Reading

Information available on the comparative effects of silent reading versus oral reading presents a functional approach to an investigation of the effects of both presentational methods on audience response to prose literature. A brief review of the research of problems closely related to the one at hand follows.

In 1953, James D. Young undertook an investigation designed to compare the effects of oral reading, silent reading, and listening on vocabulary growth. Using approximately 150 college students as experimental subjects, Young compared a group which read five stories orally with two groups, one of which read the same stories silently and the other of which listened to the five stories on audio tape. All three groups, before and after the presentation of the five stories, were tested with a vocabulary measuring instrument. Among his findings, Young reported that the oral reading group showed a significantly higher gain in vocabulary scores over the group of listeners and a gain, though not significant, over the silent reading group.7

6Armstrong and Brandes, op. cit., p. 304.

Results of Young's study would seem to indicate the superiority of silent and oral reading to listening in terms of vocabulary growth, as well as the possibility of silent reading being a somewhat inferior method to reading aloud.

In an experimental investigation of the comprehension of prose materials by audiences responding through silent reading and oral reading, Raymond E. Collins also noted findings which were commendatory to oral reading. Two paired groups were exposed to a set of seven prose literature selections which were ranked according to difficulty on a continuum ranging from "very easy" to "very difficult." The prose literature selections were presented to one group by means of silent reading, while the other group listened to an oral presentation of the materials. In the report of the results, significant differences in comprehension favoring the oral reading group for the "very easy," the "easy," and the "fairly difficult" selections were noted. In the other four levels of literary selections, experimental subjects in the oral reading presentation group made higher scores, though not significantly, than did the subjects in the silent reading group. Collins reported that the over-all (or main) effect of the oral reading presentation group was significantly greater than that of the silent reading
group. Again, the results of this study appear to testify to the general effectiveness of an oral reading method of presentation.

In 1963, Keith Brooks and Sister I. Marie Wulf-tange investigated various dimensions of listener response to oral interpretation of three short stories when presented through three methods of communication: face-to-face; audio tape; and television. The experimenters designed and validated six tests for measuring listener response to the following four factors: (1) aesthetic response, (2) degree of interest, (3) judgment of quality of technique, and (4) comprehension of content. The study was designed to indicate differences between the methods of presentation and between the stories in the four respects. Findings of the study pertinent to the one at hand were that (1) the content value of the story significantly affects at least some of the dimensions of listener response, (2) the face-to-face method is significantly superior to the audio method as a means of eliciting aesthetic response, and (3) that the audio method is not significantly different from the face-to-face method in

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evaluating technique. These findings would tend to indicate that the face-to-face oral reading presentation is the superior method of performance when the purpose is to arouse a relatively full aesthetic response to the literature.

In 1964, Daniel Witt investigated audience response to two types of dramatic literature, realism and anti-realism, when presented by acting, Readers Theatre and silent reading. The subjects (122 college students) were randomly assigned to one of six experimental conditions: (1) an Acting production of a realistic play, (2) a Readers Theatre presentation of the same realistic play, (3) a silent reading of the same realistic play, (4) an acting production of an anti-realistic play, (5) a Readers Theatre presentation of the same anti-realistic play and (6) a silent reading of the same anti-realistic play. Audience response was recorded on Raymond G. Smith's Semantic Differential For Theatre Concepts following presentation of the realistic or anti-realistic play in each experimental condition. Data gathered were then analyzed to determine

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9 Brooks and Wulftange, op. cit., pp. 73-79.


differences in audience response to form of drama and method of presentation, for the four factors measured by the Theatre Differential: (1) Manner (action), (2) Seriousness, (3) Ethical Value and (4) Esthetic Value. Results pertinent were:

1. The method of presentation and perception of materials significantly influences audience response to the "meaning" of dramatic materials in terms of Manner (action), Seriousness and Ethical Value.

2. Audiences rated dramatic materials significantly more serious (Seriousness) and more valuable (Ethical Value) when acted or presented by Readers Theatre than when read silently.

3. The Semantic Differential for Theatre can be employed to measure similarities and differences in audience response to dramatic materials and to methods of presentation and perception.

The results of this investigation seem to suggest that for dramatic materials, method of presentation does have a measurable effect on audience response; that Readers Theatre is somewhat superior to silent reading as a method of presentation; and that the Semantic Differential for Theatre is a useful instrument for measuring audience response in terms of method of presentation.

Readers Theatre

Survey of the literature available on Readers Theatre reveals that there are many and varied opinions of what constitutes a Readers Theatre presentation. The
form may be identified by a number of labels, such as Platform Theatre, Concert Theatre, Interpreters Theatre, Multiple Reading, Group Reading, and Staged Readings. Additional names could be included, but for the purposes of this study the term, "Readers Theatre," designated in the Quarterly Journal of Speech listing of productions will be used.

As an approach to oral interpretation, Readers Theatre has been frequently described in terms of the various, distinguishing aspects of the medium. Keith Brooks speaks of it in terms of a "group activity in which the best of literature is communicated from manuscript to an audience through the oral interpretation approach of vocal and physical suggestions."12 Johnnye Akin describes it as a "form of oral interpretation in which all types of literature may be projected by means of characterized readings enhanced by theatrical effects."13 In recent years this particular art form has experienced a popular revival on the professional stage and in the academic institutions throughout the country. The first production to achieve exposure nationwide dates from the


1951 *Don Juan in Hell* theatre production given by a drama quartet which featured the late Charles Laughton, Charles Boyer, the late Sir Cedric Hardwicke, and Agnes Moorehead. This was followed by the Laughton-directed production of *John Brown's Body* with Raymond Massey, Judith Anderson, the late Tyrone Power, and a chorus of twenty additional readers. From the impetus of these original nationwide presentations the number of professional Readers Theatre productions has continued to enlarge. Included among the more recent major productions are: Paul Shyre's presentation of three volumes from Sean O'Casey's autobiography, *Pictures in the Hallway, I Knock at the Door*, and *Drums Under the Windows*; Brecht on Brecht directed by Gene Frankel; *The Hollow Crown* presented by the Royal Shakespeare Company of London; Jerome Kilty's adaptation of the letters of George Bernard Shaw and Mrs. Patrick Campbell entitled *Dear Liar*; Chekhov's *Stories* presented off-Broadway; *The Diary of Adam and The Diary of Eve*, presented in a program given at New York's Town Hall; and *The World of Carl Sandburg*, a program of his prose and poetry.

In commenting specifically on the form of Readers Theatre, Margaret Nielsen stated:

*Readers Theatre* involves oral interpretation of a carefully cut script, usually by three to five readers, without memorization, special costumes, lighting, props, or sound effects, portraying their roles by means of vocal expression and facial expression alone,
a narrator possibly providing transitional, expository lines for clarification.\textsuperscript{14}

In a recent text on the oral interpretation of literature, Brandes and Armstrong discussed the form of Readers Theatre in terms of the more formal "staged reading":

\ldots the staged reading should not be confused with the play reading, dramatization, or choral reading. A group of theatre lovers, sitting around in their host's living rooms, reading a play with each person taking part, is an enjoyable experience, but it is not theatre reading.

The staged reading, as its name implies, is a compromise between drama and oral interpretation, in which readers adopt a limited amount of technique of the theatre without making any pretense of "giving a play." It encourages more movement on the part of the readers than is generally found in oral interpretation, but not necessarily so. It is characterized by the simultaneous appearance of two or more readers before the audience, using scripts, seated or standing in a variety of arrangements. The use of stools and lecterns is a fairly common practice.\textsuperscript{15}

In defining oral interpretation, Don Geiger has summed up a number of factors which relate directly to the form of Readers Theatre. He says:

\ldots oral interpretation is an unformulable amalgam of acting, public speaking, critical reaction, and sympathetic sharing.

\ldots It\textsuperscript{16} presumes to be, like other kinds of literary interpretation, a critical illumination


\textsuperscript{15}Armstrong and Brandes, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 289.
publicly offered in behalf of literature.\textsuperscript{16}

Among the few writers who have given more than surface attention to Readers Theatre are Grimes and Mattingly, authors of the recent text, \textit{Interpretation: Writer, Reader, Audience}. They discussed, as did Brandes and Armstrong, characteristics of the form, advantages of Readers Theatre and techniques of presentation. In addition they commented on the aesthetic aspects involved, specifically in terms of artistic imagination:

\ldots Throughout the performance the individual interpreters must maintain a sense of location or environment, imagining vividly the place of the action and realizing the movement of others within the scene.

\ldots If the interpreters fully accept the medium of Reader's Theatre, imagining details of setting, lights, costume and action, the audience will do the same and will reject "imaginary gardens with real toads in them" /Marianne Moore/.

The ultimate challenge in Reader's Theatre is to create a unified whole and not to leave the audience feeling that five or six people have been in front of them, holding scripts and reading, but bearing no relation to one another.\textsuperscript{17}

Generally, there are no established rules governing the techniques employed in Readers Theatre. Methods of presentation vary considerably in both form and substance.

\textsuperscript{16}Don Geiger, \textit{Oral Interpretation and Literary Study} (South San Francisco: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1958), pp. 6 and 41.

according to the literary material selected, the readers who are participating, the individuality of the director, and the nature of the performance environment. An individual performer may read one or several different parts and at times, one or two narrators are used to read exposition, description, or any other material not included in the dialogue. Most often, characterization does not attempt to represent or recreate the literary character, rather it employs more subtle techniques to suggest a particular type of portrayal. The main focus is predominantly on the literary material and on the audience with the readers connoting only indirect contact with other readers. There is generally limited use of gesture and bodily movement and when either is used it is suggestive rather than actual. Lighting, sound, properties, costume, make-up and other theatrical effects are used to varietal extents and sometimes circumvented altogether. In most Readers Theatre productions the arrangement of the stage or performance area is regarded as significant and the attempt is made to achieve a balanced composition with aesthetic appeal. Separated from technique, Readers Theatre has as its major objective effective communication of the literature within the realm of a unified production.

Still largely experimental in nature, Readers Theatre nevertheless has unique advantages as a method of
presenting literature which have gained considerable recognition, particularly in terms of audience response.

As Leslie I. Coger has pointed out:

... Whether playwrights create new material... or adapters arrange scripts from plays or other forms of literature, they are seeking to stimulate the audience and are demanding of the audience a special type of creative participation. This is the essence of Interpreters (Readers) Theatre. ... 18

The advantages encountered with Readers Theatre as a way of presenting literature to an audience have been taken into consideration from a number of viewpoints. David E. MacArthur spoke from a teacher's point of view of the advantages of Readers Theatre in terms of the benefits that his students in oral interpretation received:

... They [benefits] are invaluable. Confidence and poise can be developed through these experiences; they also provide the students with the opportunity for imaginative and creative expression, and also enable them to mature as performers by constantly encountering different audiences with different reactions to the same material. Last but not least, their world of knowledge and pleasure can be enriched and broadened by delving into the best of the world's literature. 19

Additional, more technical advantages were pointed out by Armstrong and Brandes:

18CGoer, op. cit., pp. 158-159.

one of the contributions of the oral interpreter is his wide range in the selection of his materials. Such an advantage is particularly operative in the staged reading, for there are many plays which, because of their unusually large casts, elaborate setting, and expensive costumes, are seldom produced on stage. But through the technique of theatre reading, these plays can come alive to many audiences. The novel, the short story, and the short novel also offer a full repertoire for chamber theatre. A long narrative poem that is seldom read silently can become a dramatic experience through the medium of the staged reading.

Armstrong and Brandes went on to say that a second advantage of the form was in its capacity to bring the audience close to the literature, particularly when a narrator is used to channel the author's intent directly. The time element was felt to be a third advantage in regard to the fact that a full-length novel or play in Readers Theatre form could be presented to an audience within an hour. In terms of the experiences encountered in Readers Theatre, Armstrong and Brandes noted a fourth advantage:

. . . a group of oral interpreters can learn much from each other in their preparation for staged reading. A beginning actor has much to gain from being in productions with experienced personnel. He learns to "play with" and "play to" the veteran, gaining a sense of timing from his exchange of lines. The novice oral interpreter can do likewise.

In this brief review, Readers Theatre was regarded not as a substitute for conventional theatre but rather, a distinct form of dramatic presentation of varied types of

20Armstrong and Brandes, op. cit., p. 291.
21Ibid., p. 293.
literature. Distinguishing aspects of the form were noted chiefly in regard to the emphasis which was deemed aural appeal with audience attention concentrated on the written word. It was pointed out that no single form of presentation has been established, and that while many different approaches are employed, the purpose is more consistently presentational than representational and more literary than dramatic. Although techniques used in the form vary considerably, they were felt to adhere generally to the techniques of oral interpretation more closely than to the techniques of acting. The dramatic, literary presentation calls for a type of audience participation in which the written material is "shared" and an emotional involvement is achieved. The form evokes the audience's power of imagination either during or after the performance. The fundamental negative response to Readers Theatre was that in focusing on the literature the form was merely simulating a whole dramatic event, not actually bringing it into existence. The advantages of Readers Theatre were held to be practical inasmuch as a quantity of rarely produced material could be brought to an audience within an efficient period of time, with minimal expense and with considerable reduction of common production problems. Aesthetically, the form was considered advantageous in terms, particularly, of creative and artistic experimentation with interpretive style and dramatic design. In
essence, Readers Theatre was viewed as a distinct form of oral interpretation and drama in which component elements and procedures of both forms are employed in combination to produce an accordant creative experience.

If the degree to which a student is able to appreciate or understand a literary work is truly dependent upon the degree to which he is able to actively involve himself in the material, then Readers Theatre which "makes literature an exciting experience for those who participate as well as those who listen,"22 appears extremely worthy of careful consideration as a potential method of teaching literature. Readers Theatre seems to offer artistic, educational and practical benefits to the student and professional performer alike. In terms of an over-all basis for literary appreciation it is an art form which would appear to hold experiential advantages for most any truly interested person.

The Semantic Differential

A currently popular and propitious technique for the investigation of connotative meaning is the Semantic Differential, an instrument of measurement developed from the experimental research of Charles E. Osgood and his associates at the Institute of Communications Research of the University of Illinois. The Semantic Differential includes a means of determining the dimensions by which an

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22Ibid., p. 293.
individual forms an evaluation of the concept being appraised and a method of selecting a group of scales to provide the accorded index. A scopic description of the procedure may be found in The Measurement of Meaning, a full account of the Osgood, et al. studies, and a limited treatment of the procedure has been given by Raymond G. Smith in the November, 1959, issue of Speech Monographs.

A sizable amount of material is available on the broad uses of the Semantic Differential in research studies related to many various fields of investigation. One such area is concerned with personality and psychotherapy. As Osgood has pointed out, "personality can be regarded as essentially a meaningful construct developed out of interpersonal interactions, and therefore the general techniques of the Semantic Differential form of measurement should be applicable." The instrument has also been employed in the search for the bases of individual differences in semantic factor structure, in regard to the effect of intelligence on the factor structure, for example, or differences

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related to age or discrimination-ability. A number of studies have been conducted and others are still under consideration which relate to the development of a personality description instrument employing aspects of the Semantic Differential. Such an instrument would have the advantages of providing for comparability across subjects, thereby reducing to a large extent the difficulties of analyzing each individual person being studied.

C. S. Moss found the differential useful as a means of evaluating the nature and function of dreams and more specifically, tests of the psychoanalytic theory of a dream censorship mechanism. Other studies concerned with investigating cross-cultural meaning systems have deemed the Semantic Differential approach potentially highly important as an instrument for comparing the attitudes, beliefs and values of people throughout the world. Although considerable further research is regarded as necessary, the practical significance of differential measurement in relation to the study of cross-cultural meaning systems can theoretically be envisioned. As Moss has stated:


27Ibid., p. 50.

Apart from the fact that such investigations would make explicit subtle attitudes, meanings, values, and beliefs held by people in other countries, the simple demonstration of a shared semantic framework for human thinking, regardless of race or nationality, should in itself encourage international understanding, and the clear isolation of differences in concept and scale meanings should enable us to do a better job of talking to each other.29

The wide diversity of research recently completed or underway, involving use of the Semantic Differential was also reviewed by Moss.30 According to his survey, the Semantic Differential has been used to show significant shifts of audience attitude toward different emotionalized concepts such as "Negro" and the "desirability of public discussion of sex problems." It has been employed to explore the relationship of the meaning of selected concepts such as "the ideal student" to the achievement and scholastic ability of college students, and it has served to aid an investigation of the development of meaning in children. Furthermore, the differential has been employed in a study of the assessment of public attitudes toward mental health professions, in an investigation which differentiated between chronic and acute mental patients on the basis of their relative identification with hospital and community and in a study which measured the intended and conveyed meaning of messages for the purpose of exploring clarity

30Ibid., pp. 51-52.
of communication.

Three Osgood-type semantic differential instruments have been designed and developed specifically for quantitative research in the field of speech by Raymond G. Smith. They include a Semantic Differential for use with speech-related concepts, a Semantic Differential for speech correction concepts, and a Semantic Differential for theatre concepts. The differential designed specifically for the measurement of concepts related to the theatre arts serves as the data-gathering instrument of this study. It has a wide range of application and has been used, for example, to measure changes in concepts resulting from formal course training, audience reactions to various plays, and audience reactions to variations in performances. As Smith has suggested it might also be used to measure audience reactions to various styles of acting, to the effects of different patterns of costume, color, lighting, make-up or stage design.

31 Smith, op. cit., p. 264.
the March, 1961, issue of *Speech Monographs*, Smith commented on the potential significance of the theatre semantic differential as a research technique:

> ... *it* should provide a useful new measuring instrument for persons interested in conducting experimental research in the theatre arts. ... The potential of the instrument must still be explored, but judging from the wide range of applications which has been found in other subject areas by Osgood and others, it seems safe to predict that it can be a useful research tool in the theatre arts.36

In a study designed to investigate the validity of Smith's differential factors and scales relative to actual dramatic performances, some minor weaknesses in Smith's selection of scales and identification of factors were noted. The major criticism was based on the feeling that concepts used by Smith were too indefinite and overly generalized. Nevertheless, in the final discussion of his study, David Thayer commented that although improvement should be possible, "as of now, Smith's analysis is our best available semantic differential tool for research in theatre."37 In noting the methods of measuring the empathetic responses of audiences, Armstrong and Brandes felt that Smith's theatre differential was particularly effective:

> ... the semantic differential, because it purports to avoid direct measurement, has considerable potential as a measuring device for empathy. If we can assume that the semantic differential

36Ibid., p. 8.

developed in 1961 Raymond Smith's Semantic Differential for Theatre Concepts can measure factors also operating during oral reading, we need not even wait for the development of a semantic differential for oral interpretation before beginning investigation...38

The Semantic Differential has by no means been fully exploited as a research tool. It is still undergoing considerable experimentation. Although the differential has been used extensively and regarded by many disciplines as a tool of broad usefulness, many methodological problems remain to be solved.39 Although the scope of the instrument has not yet been determined it is generally recognized as a valid measuring device. As Moss has said:

> The knotty problem of the "meaning of meaning" itself has not been resolved to everyone's satisfaction... However, the results of these studies do testify to the fact that the semantic differential is measuring "something" consistently and in meaningful fashion, and that, in this respect, it is already a useful instrument.40

Generally, many and varied research projects employing the Osgood-type semantic differential have regarded it as a useful and significant (in terms of potential) technique for quantitative research. Although experimental findings have indicated a need for further modification of Smith's adaptation of the instrument, the Theatre

38Armstrong and Brandes, op. cit., p. 303.
40Moss, op. cit., p. 53.
Differential is, in general, still considered the best available technique for research in the theatre arts.

**The Problem**

**Statement of the Problem**

The purpose of this investigation is to study audience response to prose literature when perceived by three methods of presentation: silent reading, oral interpretation by a single reader, and Readers Theatre, as measured by the Semantic Differential for Theatre Concepts designed and developed by Raymond G. Smith.

**Importance of the Study**

The importance of this investigation rests fundamentally in the importance of all educational research which constantly seeks more efficient and effective methods of teaching the nation's young people. The concern of this study, further, reflects the significance of prose literature as a major source of knowledge and of reading as the most functional "key" to education. In more specific terms, this experiment seeks data on audience response to varied methods of presenting prose literature in direct response to the continual request and growing need for experimental research in the field of oral interpretation, and in hope of obtaining information which may prove helpful to teachers as a means of assessing methods of teaching prose literature.
Definition of Terms Used

**Silent Reading.** This term was interpreted as meaning the act of a solitary person translating unpronounced words of written material visually as opposed to repeating them aloud. Silent Reading was described as a method which permits repetition of preceding material as well as simultaneous contemplation of the material. Distractions encountered in the presence of an audience are not faced by the silent reader.\(^1\)

**Oral Interpretation.** Throughout the report of this investigation, the term, "oral interpretation," shall be held to mean an individual reader's perception and communication to an audience of the intellectual, emotional, artistic and stylistic qualities of a piece of literary material. In oral interpretation the response which is sought is determined by the author's intention, and it is therefore the task of the oral interpreter to evoke or "re-create" the desired response in his audience by means of a well trained voice and body.\(^2\)

**Readers Theatre.** This term shall be interpreted as meaning a distinct form of dramatic presentation of varied types of literature in which the major emphasis is upon aural appeal with the audience attention concentrated

\(^1\)Grimes and Mattingly, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

on the literature. No set methods of presentation or techniques have as yet been established for Readers Theatre.\textsuperscript{143}

**Prose Literature.** In the context of this investigation prose literature will be regarded generally as all imaginative printed material reflecting the creative expression of an author, which has been written in the narrative form of the common spoken language without meter or rhyme.\textsuperscript{144}

**Hypothesis**

The hypothesis for this investigation stated in the null form is: There is no significant difference in audience response to prose literature when perceived by the three methods of presentation: silent reading, oral interpretation by a single reader and Readers Theatre.

**Limitations of the Study**

This study is limited to an experimental investigation of audience response to prose literature when presented by silent reading, oral interpretation by a single reader, and Readers Theatre. There will be no critical appraisal of the prose literature selected, nor

\textsuperscript{143}Coger, *op. cit.*, pp. 157-164.

any attempt to critically or aesthetically evaluate the
methods of presentation and perception in this investi-
gation. In all respects, the findings obtaining through
the experimental exploration of this problem will be in-
formational and interpretive rather than critical.
CHAPTER II

METHOD AND PROCEDURE

The experimental procedure of this study was developed in six main stages: (1) the selection and preparation of the instrument for measuring audience response, (2) the selection and assignment of the subjects for the experiment, (3) the selection and preparation of the materials for oral interpretation and Readers Theatre presentation, (4) the selection and rehearsal of "readers" for the oral interpretation and Readers Theatre performances, (5) the production of the same performances, and (6) the organization and treatment of the data. These six stages overlap in some respects, but considering them independently facilitates a clearer view of the relationship between the various parts of the investigation.

Selection of Subjects

The subjects used in this study consisted of an entire group of high school students who were enrolled from June 28 through July 17, 1965 in the 1965 High School Speech Institute, a summer workshop in speech, directed and sponsored by the Department of Speech at the University
of Montana on the University campus located in Missoula, Montana. The subjects were randomly divided into three sub-groups. In total, ninety-two subjects took part in the experiment, which resulted in unequal N's across method of presentation treatments with thirty subjects in the silent reading group, thirty-three subjects in the oral interpretation group, and twenty-nine subjects in the Readers Theatre group. The majority of subjects used were from seventeen to eighteen years of age and had attained a twelfth (seniors) or eleventh-grade (juniors) education in secondary school. A few subjects consisted of students sixteen years of age who had attained a tenth-grade (sophomores) education in secondary school. All of the student-subjects in accordance with an attendance requirement of the Speech Institute represented the upper third of their respective high school classes in terms of scholarship and academic achievement. Inasmuch as admission to the Speech Institute was, in part, determined by a personal recommendation from the principal of the respective student's school, it was assumed that subjects used in this study were generally qualified to give a meaningful response within the test situation. Although students who attended the High School Speech Institute were from all areas of the United States, the

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45Ralph Y. McGinnis, General Information Bulletin of the 1965 High School Speech Institute, Speech Department, Montana State University, Spring Quarter, 1965.
majority of these students were from the State of Montana. In almost all instances the students had had previous experience in speech activities on the high school level. The amount of specific training in speech and/or speech related areas varied among individuals, but, generally, all students had completed at least one semester or quarter course in speech on the secondary school level. Over-all, it was assumed on the basis of enrollment in the Speech Institute, that these students had more than a perfunctory degree of interest in either speech or speech related activities. In this study no effort was made to correlate subjects according to sex, background, personality, race, etc.

**Experimental Setting**

Since the concern of this study was closely related to an interest in methods of teaching prose literature to high school students, the setting attempted to effect, as nearly as possible, the atmosphere of an actual classroom situation. Two rooms in the Liberal Arts Building, located on the University of Montana campus, served as the experimental area. The rooms were suited to this experiment inasmuch as they were spacious enough to accommodate the number of subjects, and were originally designed to function as classrooms. Effort was made to

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46 Ibid.
reduce to minimum the distraction factors inherent in the experimental environment, and both the oral interpretation and Readers Theatre presentations were given within normal classroom viewing and listening distance.

**Experimental Design**

This study was designed to investigate the effects of three methods of perception and presentation on audience response to prose literature. The specific procedures were arranged according to three experimental conditions involving one of each of the three methods of presentation. In experimental Group A, subjects experienced a silent reading presentation of the prose literature selection. In experimental Group B, subjects experienced an oral interpretation (by a single reader) presentation of the same prose literature selection, and in experimental Group C, subjects experienced a Readers Theatre presentation of the same prose literature selection. During the course of all experimental conditions no mention was made of "oral interpretation," "Readers Theatre" or "delivery"; the attempt was to prevent subjects' perception of the total event from being influenced by anything other than the specific set desired.

The specific procedures for Experimental Condition A or silent reading presentation (control) were conducted in the following manner. Prior to the time of the
experiment, a copy of the manuscript (prose literature selection) was placed, face down, on each desk. After all subjects had entered the room and were seated, the door was closed and no one else permitted to enter the room or take part in the experiment. An assistant to the investigator then read the following instructions:

Would you please put all books and papers on the floor and make yourselves comfortable. We are interested in learning more about the way in which students like yourselves respond to (written) material such as you will see in a moment. We will be very grateful for your attention and cooperation during this investigation. When the results of our study have been collected and evaluated, we will share them with you. You should have on your desk a manuscript. Please read the manuscript through thoroughly and carefully; you will have ample time to complete a careful reading of the material. When you have finished reading it one time, place it face down on your desk. Please do not talk to your neighbor or discuss the reading material when you have finished. Are there any questions? . . . You may begin reading.

When all subjects indicated they had finished reading the material by turning it face down on their desks, the following instructions were read:

Has everyone finished reading the story? Would you please pass the manuscripts to your right. Please do not talk to your neighbor.

After the manuscripts had been collected, the semantic differential booklets (see Appendix A) were distributed. When subjects had received the booklet, the following instructions were read:

Would you please turn to the first page and read the instructions silently while I read them aloud.
Do not turn to the second page until you are asked to do so.

After reading the instructions for use of the semantic differential and instructing the subjects to complete the sample scale, the following message was read:

Are there any questions? Would you please turn to the second page and fill in the scales. When you have finished the scales on the second page, please complete the questionnaire on the last page. You may begin.

When the subjects had completed the whole booklet, the assistant to the investigator asked that they be passed to the right. When all booklets had been collected, the investigator thanked the subjects and asked that they not talk about the experiment until the following day. All subjects were then dismissed from the room.

The setting for Experimental Condition C (Readers Theatre) differed from the setting of Experimental Condition A (silent reading) in that five reading stands, approximately three feet apart, were placed in line, across the area in front and to the center of the subjects' desks. Behind each stand was a high stool. The entrance (and exit) for the readers was in front and to the right of the area in which the subjects were seated. In Experimental Condition B (oral interpretation) the single reading stand and high stool for the interpreter were centered directly in front of the area in which the subjects were seated. The desk and lectern used by the investigator for conducting the instructional procedures in Experimental
Condition A (silent reading), was not present during either Experimental Condition B (oral interpretation) or Experimental Condition C (Readers Theatre). The male reader wore dark trousers and a dark shirt. The female readers wore dark street-length skirts, dark sweaters and heels.

For Experimental Condition B or oral interpretation presentation and Experimental Condition C or Readers Theatre presentation, the same introductory procedures were followed that were used in Experimental Condition A except that the following instructions were read by the investigator:

Would you please put all books and papers on the floor and make yourselves comfortable. We are interested in learning more about the way in which students like yourselves respond to material such as you will see in a moment. We will be very grateful for your attention and cooperation during this investigation. When the results of our study have been collected and evaluated, we will share them with you. Please do not talk to your neighbor or discuss the material you are about to see. Are there any questions? . . . Then we will begin.

The investigator then asked the readers (or reader) to enter the room. At the close of the performance, after the readers (or reader) had left the room, the semantic differential booklets were distributed to all subjects. When all subjects had received the booklet, the same instructional procedures were followed that were used in Experimental Condition A (silent reading presentation).

In each experimental condition the emphasis was upon the subjects' "over-all impression" of the event they
were to witness. At the times in which each condition of the experiment were conducted, the investigator (and the assistant in Experimental Condition A) remained seated in a chair at the back of the room, directly behind the subjects. Effort was made to remain silent and expressionless in order to minimize any physical cues which the subjects might have interpreted as indicative of an approval or disapproval evaluation of either the content of the test material or the way in which it was being presented.

The data gathering instrument of the present investigation consisted of a three-page, mimeographed booklet. The first page of the booklet included a full set of instructions on the use of the semantic differential and a sample scale using a concept to be judged which was unrelated to the purposes of the actual investigation. The second page of the booklet included, in order, the eleven scales of the Theatre Semantic Differential. In addition, three scales were introduced by the experimenter to offset possible interpretation of the measuring instrument. The valueless scales which were used were the following:

Rough: __:___:___:___:___:___:___:___:___: Smooth
Black: ___:___:___:___:___:___:___:___:___: White
Long: ___:___:___:___:___:___:___:___:___: Short

The third page of the booklet took the form of a questionnaire in which information was obtained on the subjects' age, sex and grade-level in school. In addition, subjects gave
their names and home addresses and indicated whether or not they had previously read the material presented to them during the experiment. In the case of familiarity with the material, they were asked to indicate the author. A complete reproduction of the semantic differential booklet used in this experiment will be found in Appendix A.

The experiment took place on Wednesday morning, June 30, 1965. From the commencement of the first experimental treatment to the conclusion of the third, the course of the entire experiment took approximately two hours. Experimental Condition B (oral interpretation) began at 10:00 a.m.; Experimental Condition A (silent reading) and Experimental Condition C (Readers Theatre), conducted simultaneously in separate rooms, began immediately following the completion of Experimental Condition B.

Throughout the course of the experiment, no conversation was permitted among subjects within conditions and precaution was taken to avoid the possibility of inter-group communication both during and after the immediate time of the investigation.

Selection of Prose Literature

The prose literature selection chosen to serve as the test material for this investigation was a short story by Jerome David Salinger, titled, *A Perfect Day For Banana-fish*. This particular work was chosen on the basis of the fact that it represents the later, and more major period of
Salinger's writing, and therefore his craftsmanship as an accomplished and recognized novelist.\textsuperscript{47} In the original, the story numbers only twenty-six pages which facilitated a meaningful cutting without undue immolation of the author's style and artistic unity in organization. For the most part, the story was written in the third person singular interspersed with a sizable amount of direct dialogue. The style of language, therefore, adapted readily to both Readers Theatre and an oral interpretation presentation. The four major characters in the story and the addition of a narrator provided "parts" for five readers in the Readers Theatre presentation of the material. This number of readers sufficiently represented the most commonly used form of Readers Theatre,\textsuperscript{48} and also proved to be efficient in terms of workability and rehearsal procedure. Further, it was felt that this particular short story had a good deal of dramatic appeal and would, therefore, sustain the interest of the silent reading group as well as enhance the audience participation in both the oral interpretation and Readers Theatre groups. The level of language used in the story presented no undue difficulty. The words used were in all respects typical of the current


spoken language and were thought likely to be within the standard vocabulary of the average high school student. The relatively simple structure of the sentences and overall clarity of the author's style of writing would seem to place the "story" of the material within the high school students' scope of understanding. Generally, A Perfect Day For Bananafish was felt to be an expressive and functional example of contemporary prose literature.

The writing of J. D. Salinger was selected to serve the purposes of this study first, because as an author, Salinger is largely regarded as one of the few original, skillful and truly significant writers in America today and second, because his work has considerable appeal, particularly among the younger generation of readers. Whatever their differences, most Salinger critics seem to have in common the general impression expressed by H. A. Grunwald:

...the extraordinary thing about Salinger is that somehow he will not stay classified. In his work, the sum of the parts adds up to more than the whole. He preoccupies us more than the question of all his virtues and all his shortcomings would suggest. There are other good writers whose work may be better than Salinger's but who do not hold our imagination--or for that matter, irritate us--in nearly the same way.50

Grunwald went on to note the wide range of responses Salinger is able to evoke in his critics:


50Grunwald, op. cit., p. ix.
All critics find themselves in the author they review, and they read their own philosophy into his; but Salinger seems to allow a far greater variety of interpretation than almost any other contemporary writer.\footnote{Ibid., p. xxvi.}

In the opinion of most critics, the young in particular have made Salinger their laureate, not only because he "speaks their language" but also because he expresses some of their discontents and meets their needs. As Granville Hicks has stated:

> There are, I am convinced, millions of young Americans who feel closer to Salinger than to any other writer. In the first place, he speaks their language. He not only speaks it; he shapes it, just as Hemingway influenced the speech of countless Americans in the twenties. The talk of his characters is, so to speak, tighter than right. . . .
>
> In the second place, he expresses their rebellion. Most of my students, so far as I could tell, were as nonpolitical as Holden Caulfield \[the major character in J. D. Salinger's novel, The Catcher in the Rye\]. They spoke of the lack of interest in political and social problems as characteristic of their generation, a phenomenon to be neither praised nor condemned but simply accepted. Yet they were far from complacency, and they delighted in Holden's attacks on meanness, stupidity, and especially phoniness. They admired his intransigence, too, . . . and rejoiced in his gestures of defiance.\footnote{Granville Hicks, "J. D. Salinger: Search for Wisdom," \textit{Saturday Review} (July 25, 1959), p. 18.}
The young like to read about the young. Salinger writes briefly (no need to lug home a big book or something, Lord help us, not available in paperback). He demands of his readers nothing in the way of literacy or political interest. . . . Salinger flatters the very ignorance and moral shallowness of his young readers. He suggests to them that formal ignorance, political apathy and a vague tristesse are positive virtues.53

Alfred Kazin has suggested that regardless of Salinger's comparatively "untapped" potential as a major literary force of the present century, he is still "everybody's favorite":

In one form or another . . . Salinger is a favorite with everyone . . . but above all, he is a favorite with that audience of students, student intellectuals, instructors and generally literary, sensitive and sophisticated young people who respond to him with a consciousness that he speaks for them and virtually to them, in a language that is peculiarly honest and their own, with a vision of things that captures their most secret judgments of the world.54

In general, it appears the fundamental appeal of Salinger's work can be traced to the optimistic nature of his most dominant theme. The nature of this major theme was discussed in an account of J. D. Salinger assembled by Time Magazine:

. . . whatever its form, it will express the essence of Salinger's time, embodied in the only theme Salinger has ever written about—the predicament of the good, sensitive man in a private world of love and death. It is his


54Alfred Kazin, "J. D. Salinger: Everybody's Favorite," The Atlantic (August, 1961), pp. 43-44.
rare skill to make even goodness credible. He is a sentimentalist, but his sentiment is counter-weighted by a colloquial, ironic style, and it has not impaired his judgment. More important, he is one of today's few serious authors who write about their characters--about man--with hope.  

Generally, the work of J. D. Salinger was considered to be an advantageous and useful model of contemporary prose literature, suitable to the purposes of this investigation, because foremost critics of American literature have deemed his work worthy of discussion and in most respects, praise and, because the nature of his writing commands a vast audience, particularly among the young people of mid-century America.

Cutting Procedures

For the purposes of this study a cutting taken from the original short story selection, A Perfect Day For Bananafish, served as the test material. In using a cutting rather than the original selection, the underlying consideration was that the particular effect of either a silent reading, oral interpretation or Readers Theatre presentation would in part be reflected through the specific form of the written material generally accorded each. Since the emphasis of the investigation was on the effect of presentation methods on audience response, the cutting was made on the basis of adapting the original material to a

form which would readily lend itself to oral interpretation and Readers Theatre presentation without undue immolation of the design or artistic qualities in the short story also necessary for silent reading presentation. This involved the deletion of some words and passages according to a pattern which placed the narrative focus on the major characters. Although this in turn resulted in some condensation of the original development, it at the same time enabled the material in the Readers Theatre script to be projected by means of "characterized readings." In this same regard, the silent reading manuscripts was reproduced in the form of the original short story and cut only in the instances necessary to maintain uniformity in content with the material used in the other two presentation treatments. The actual test material in the form of the short story manuscript and the Readers Theatre script have been reproduced in Appendix C.

Casting and Rehearsal Procedures

The student-performers who served as "readers" in Experimental Condition B (oral interpretation) and Experimental Condition C (Readers Theatre) of this study were selected from a group of high school students enrolled in a drama workshop, sponsored by Sentinel High School and directed by Mrs. Ronald Johnson, a drama and English teacher at Sentinel High School, located in Missoula,
Montana. According to Mrs. Johnson, the twenty-five students who attended the summer workshop had all had previous experience and training in the theatre arts and could therefore be assumed capable of presenting an artistic and effective performance of the literature on a high school level. "Try-outs" were held during the first class-session of the workshop on June 14, 1965, from 9:00 to 12:00 a.m. At that time all of the students participating in the workshop were given an opportunity to read the prose literature manuscript which was written in the form of a Readers Theatre script. In the opinion of the experimenter the "best" readers from that group were cast for roles in the Readers Theatre presentation. Five students in all, one male and four females, were chosen and assigned parts for the experimental performance in Readers Theatre. The most effective reader of these five also served as the "single reader" in the Oral Interpretation presentation (Experimental Condition B). All selections of the student-performers employed in the study were made by the experimenter in accordance with the suggestions of their instructor, Mrs. Johnson. By arrangement, the experimenter rehearsed the five student-performers for a

56Statement by Mrs. Ron Johnson, English teacher and Drama Coach at Sentinel High School, Missoula, Montana, personal interview.

57The rehearsal schedule was planned according to the times Mrs. Johnson indicated her students would be free to work with the experimenter.
period of sixteen hours in total. The rehearsal schedule consisted of a two-hour practice session per day, for a period of eight days. Rehearsals began on Tuesday, June 15, and ran through Thursday, June 24. No rehearsals were scheduled on the weekend of June 19-20, and an extra "dress" rehearsal was held on the day preceding the actual experiment. The daily practice sessions which were held in the theatre auditorium of Sentinel High School, took place between the hours of 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.

The main objective of the experimenter during the rehearsal sessions was to direct the student-performers toward a unified production and presentation of the literature in a theatrical form. Diction, interpretation of the material and the communication of the author's meaning (or intent) were the major areas of emphasis throughout the course of rehearsal. Suggestion and creative participation on the part of the student-performers was encouraged in order to observe the general effect of both methods of presentation (oral interpretation and Readers Theatre) on high school students actually participating in the "performing-end" of both dramatic-literary events.

In addition to participating in the group rehearsals for the Readers Theatre presentation, the student who served as the "single reader" in the oral interpretation presentation was rehearsed individually by the experimenter. The same objectives underlying the group rehearsals
were stressed in the rehearsal of the individual reader; and again, major emphasis was placed on understanding and interpreting the material with the goal of effective communication of the author's intent.

In an effort to prevent accidental feedback to the experimental subjects, no explanation of the "emphasis" or exact purposes of the study was given the student-performers participating as readers in the experiment.

Data Gathering Instrument

The Semantic Differential for Theatre Concepts designed and developed by Raymond G. Smith served as the data gathering instrument for the experimental research undertaken in this study. The function and scope of the Semantic Differential for Theatre as a method of measuring the empathetic responses of an audience was discussed in Chapter I. In the opinion of several authors it was felt to be the best available semantic differential tool for research in the area of theatre arts. The wide range of applications which have been found for this instrument in studies closely related to the one at hand, seemed to

58 See Chapter I, section on the Semantic Differential.

indicate its potential usefulness as a measuring device for this investigation.

In summary, three audience groups of subjects composed of a total of ninety-two high school students enrolled in the 1965 Summer Speech Institute at the University of Montana participated in the experiment. Each group of subjects experienced one of three experimental conditions: (1) a silent reading presentation of prose literature (control group), (2) an oral interpretation presentation of the same prose literature, and (3) a Readers Theatre presentation of the same prose literature.

Each group was asked to indicate their "Over-all Impression" of the event they experienced by marking the adjectival bi-polar scales on the Semantic Differential for Theatre Concepts. Analysis of the data attempted to determine whether or not there were significant differences between audience responses to the three methods of presentation. The statistical treatment of the data and the results of the investigation will be presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

As stated in the preceding chapter, the ninety-two subjects selected for this investigation were randomly assigned to one of three experimental conditions. In Experimental Condition A, subjects experienced a silent reading presentation of the prose literature selection. In Experimental Condition B, subjects experienced an oral interpretation (by a single reader) presentation of the same prose literature selection; and in Experimental Condition C, subjects experienced a Readers Theatre presentation of the same prose literature selection. Following each presentation, a Semantic Differential for Theatre Concepts was administered across experimental treatments to all subjects.

Elimination of Subjects

Of the original ninety-two subjects who took part in the investigation, thirteen indicated on the questionnaire that they had either read the prose literature selection or had had some experience with the material prior to the time of the experiment. These subjects were eliminated in order to control the variable of previous contact with the literary material used in this study. Therefore, in
total, data were obtained from the remaining seventy-nine subjects. Twenty-six of these subjects were in Experimental Condition A (silent reading), with twenty-nine in Experimental Condition B (oral interpretation) and twenty-four in Experimental Condition C (Readers Theatre).

**Analysis of Data**

Prior to the treatment of data, the three scales on the Semantic Differential (Rough-Smooth, Long-Short, Black-White) which had been included by the experimenter to offset possible interpretation of the measuring instrument, were eliminated. The factor scores for each subject were then determined by averaging the individual scale ratings and calculating a mean factor score for each of the three treatments. The four factors of the Semantic Differential and the particular scales which measure them, and the scale weights used for the various cells of scales measuring the factors of the Semantic Differential, are reproduced in Appendix B. When factor scores for all subjects had been obtained, they were then averaged to find the group mean factor scores of each experimental treatment for the four factors measured by the Semantic Differential: Factor I or Manner (action), Factor II or Seriousness, Factor III or Ethical Value, and Factor IV oresthetic Value. Mean factor scores for the prose materials are reported according to the three methods of presentation.
treatments in Table I. All data obtained in this investigation were analyzed statistically by means of simple randomized analysis of variance. The five per cent level of significance was required for all statistical tests. A * test was used to evaluate the statistical significance of differences among method of presentation groups means when required by a significant F score.

Results of the analysis of variance for Factor I or Manner (action) as measured by the scales—Calm—Excitable and Hot-Cold—led to retaining the null hypothesis comparing the effects of silent reading, oral interpretation and Readers Theatre methods of presentation on audience response to prose literature. As shown in Table II, analysis of the data for this factor resulted in a nonsignificant F ratio. This finding suggests, therefore, that any occurring variation among method of presentation treatments for this factor is attributable to chance variation only.

Results of the analysis of variance for Factor II or Seriousness as measured by the scales—Light-Heavy, Serious-Humorous, and Tense-Relaxed—caused the null hypothesis for audience response in the silent reading, oral interpretation and Readers Theatre methods of presenting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Methods of Presentation</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Silent Reading</td>
<td>Oral Interpretation</td>
<td>Readers Theatre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor I</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manner (Action)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor II</td>
<td>4.86</td>
<td>5.37</td>
<td>5.81</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seriousness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor III</td>
<td>4.62</td>
<td>5.09</td>
<td>5.03</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical Value</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor IV</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esthetic Value</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE II

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR TESTING DIFFERENCES AMONG METHOD OF PRESENTATION GROUPS MEANS FOR FACTOR I OR MANNER (ACTION) ON THE SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variance</th>
<th>Degrees of Freedom</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F* Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Treatments (A)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.4141</td>
<td>3.725</td>
<td>2.8113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Treatments (W)</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>100.730</td>
<td>1.325</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>108.171</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*F = ms_A / ms_W The F required for significance at the five per cent level is 3.13.
prose literature to be rejected. As shown in Table III, analysis of the data for this factor resulted in a significant $F$ ratio, which indicates that variation among method of presentation treatments can be attributed to differences in the presentational methods effects on audience response to prose literature. Results of the $F$ test called for application of the $t$ test to assess differences between individual pairs of means. A significant difference between Readers Theatre and silent reading methods of presentation was revealed; all other comparisons were nonsignificant. These results are presented in Table IV.

Results of the analysis of variance for Factor III or Ethical Value as measured by the scales—Honest- Dishonest, Valuable-Worthless, and True-False—led to acceptance of the null hypothesis for audience response to silent reading, oral interpretation and Readers Theatre methods of presenting prose literature. As shown in Table V, analysis of the data for this factor resulted in a nonsignificant $F$ ratio. Thus, the analysis indicates that any differences between means of the treatment groups is attributable only to chance variation.

Results of the analysis of variance for Factor IV or Esthetic Value as measured by the scales—Beautiful-Ugly, Pleasurable-Painful, and Pleasing-Annoying—require retaining the null hypothesis for effects of silent reading, oral interpretation and Readers Theatre presentations on audience
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variance</th>
<th>Degrees of Freedom</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Treatments (A)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.257</td>
<td>5.628</td>
<td>4.549*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Treatments (W)</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>94.080</td>
<td>1.237</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>105.337</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*F = ms\_A / ms\_W* The F required for significance at the five per cent level is 3.13.
TABLE IV

THE STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN METHOD OF PRESENTATION TREATMENTS MEANS FOR FACTOR II OR SERIOUSNESS ON THE SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treatments</th>
<th>Difference Between Means</th>
<th>t value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Silent Reading-Oral Interpretation (AB)</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>1.728</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silent Reading-Readers Theatre (AC)</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>3.012*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Interpretation-Readers Theatre (BC)</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>1.433</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Indicates significance at the five per cent level. A value of \( t = 1.96 \) is required for significance at the five per cent level.
### TABLE V

**SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR TESTING DIFFERENCES AMONG METHOD OF PRESENTATION GROUPS MEANS FOR FACTOR III OR ETHICAL VALUE ON THE SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIAL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variance</th>
<th>Degrees of Freedom</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Treatments (A)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.395</td>
<td>2.197</td>
<td>1.522</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Treatments (W)</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>119.720</td>
<td>1.443</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>124.115</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*F = ms_A/ms_W*  
The F required for significance at the five per cent level is 3.13.
### TABLE VI

**SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR TESTING DIFFERENCES AMONG METHOD OF PRESENTATION GROUPS MEANS FOR FACTOR IV OR ESTHETIC VALUE ON THE SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIAL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variance</th>
<th>Degrees of Freedom</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Treatments (A)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.152</td>
<td>.076</td>
<td>.0839</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Treatments (W)</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>68.790</td>
<td>.905</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>68.942</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*F = ms_A/ms_W*  The F required for significance at the five per cent level is 3.13.
response to prose literature. As Shown in Table VI, analysis of the data for this factor resulted in a non-significant F ratio. Again, data indicate that any occurring variation among method of presentation treatments for this factor is attributable to chance variation only.

In summary, results of this investigation reveal the following: (1) that the method of presentation and perception of prose literature significantly influences audience response to the "meaning" of prose literature in terms of Seriousness; (2) that audiences rated prose literature as significantly more serious (Seriousness) when presented by Readers Theatre than when read silently; (3) that the method of presentation and perception of prose literature does not significantly influence audience response to the "meaning" of prose literature in terms of Manner (action), Ethical Value or Esthetic Value; and (4) the Semantic Differential for Theatre can be used to measure similarities and differences in audience response to prose literature and to methods of presentation and perception.

The following chapter will summarize the entire study and discuss possible implications of the results obtained in this investigation.
CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The central purpose of this investigation was to examine the effects of three methods of perception and presentation—silent reading, oral interpretation by a single reader and Readers Theatre—on audience response to prose literature.

The test material selected to represent prose literature was a cutting taken from Jerome David Salinger's short story, A Perfect Day For Bananafish. Two manuscripts were prepared using this selection. The first was reproduced in the form of a Readers Theatre script and the second as a short story. Five readers rehearsed the Readers Theatre script for Readers Theatre presentation, and one of the same five readers rehearsed the same Readers Theatre script for oral interpretation presentation.

For methods of presentation, three experimental conditions were provided: (1) silent reading of the short story manuscript (control), (2) oral interpretation by a single reader of the Reader Theatre manuscript, and (3) Readers Theatre presentation of the same Readers Theatre script. Approximately one-third of the subjects
were exposed to the test material through silent reading, another third through oral interpretation presentation, and the remaining third through Readers Theatre presentation. To evaluate the effects of presentational method on audience response, the same form of R. G. Smith's Semantic Differential for Theatre Concepts was administered under the same conditions to all subjects at the conclusion of each presentation.

Four response dimensions of the Semantic Differential were examined: Factor I or Manner (action), Factor II or Seriousness, Factor III or Ethical Value and Factor IV or Esthetic Value. Treatment means of test scores within all four dimensions of response were evaluated for statistical significance.

Analysis of variance for differences among silent reading, oral interpretation and Readers Theatre yielded a nonsignificant F ratio of 2.81 for Factor I, Manner (action), and a nonsignificant F ratio of 1.52 for Factor III, Ethical Value. Likewise, methods of presentation variance as indicated by an F ratio of .0839 did not differ significantly for response Factor IV, Esthetic Value. On the other hand, a significant F ratio of 4.55 was obtained in the analysis of variance for differences among method of presentation treatments for Factor II, Seriousness. Therefore, on the basis of these results, the null hypothesis for audience response to silent reading, oral
interpretation, and Readers Theatre presentations of prose literature was rejected for response Factor II, Seriousness; the null hypothesis, however, was not rejected in the case of all other factor comparisons.

Limitations of the Findings

In general, the experimental design of this study proved workable. The method appears to be a sound approach to comparative small group research. There were, however, some aspects of the procedure which, if revised, would likely provide a more conclusive control over some of the experimental variables. Regarding the prose selection used in this study, it should be noted that subject matter (or topic) may have had some influence on audience response. In this respect, it is possible that reaction to the content of the selection could have in some way conditioned subjects' perception of the method of presentation through which they experienced the material. In addition, the author's style of writing may have had some effect on audience response. Although the selection used in this study was regarded as a justifiable representation of prose literature, any generalized interpretation of the data will necessarily reflect attributes of the experimental sample. Therefore, in this regard, findings of this study should be interpreted with care.

Since subjects used in this investigation
represented the upper third of their respective high school classes in terms of academic achievement, it is possible that their level of intelligence had some effect on audience response. In particular, subjects in the silent reading group may have had a greater aptitude for reading and comprehension than the average high school student. Since no attempt was made to determine amount of skill or training in speech-related activities, it is also possible that subjects with previous experience in Readers Theatre, or more likely, oral interpretation could perceive and, in turn, respond to Readers Theatre and oral interpretation presentations in a manner dissimilar to that of inexperienced subjects. The potential influence of prior training or experience in either of these particular speech activities on subjects' response judgments to these activities as methods of presenting prose literature seems, however, to have been taken care of in the random assignment of subjects to experimental groups.

The fact that the investigator for the purposes of this experiment used a selective cutting of the original prose material may have had an effect on audience response inasmuch as something of the artistic composition of the literary work may have been lost. However, precaution was taken to preserve all but a few of the less substantive words of the original material and in light
of the very limited amount actually subtracted, the possibility that this factor may have influenced audience response does not appear very great.

There was, in addition, some question of whether or not a prescribed time limit in the silent reading group would in any way influence results. It was decided that "ample" time would be provided for a careful reading of the material with no set limit. At the conclusion of all treatments, the silent reading presentation had taken twelve minutes, the oral interpretation presentation, fourteen minutes, and the Readers Theatre presentation, fifteen minutes. The question of time limitation appears to have had no immediately observable influence on the outcome of results.

Implications

The research results appear to have a number of implications which could be of value within as well as beyond the immediate concern of this study. In regard to the significant results obtained in this investigation, the most important implication of the findings is in the relationship of silent reading and Readers Theatre. The traditional notion that silent reading is equally as effective as other more active methods of presentation in terms of audience response was strongly upheld by the lack of significant differences in audience response with respect
to Manner (action), Ethical Value and Esthetic Value. The one factor in which Readers Theatre brought a significantly higher mean score was in terms of Seriousness. The overall conclusion based upon the results of this investigation is that silent reading, oral interpretation and Readers Theatre are equally valuable methods of presenting prose literature with the exception of the Seriousness dimension of response. As described in the preceding chapter, analysis of data showed that the differences among means for the three experimental groups for Factor II (Seriousness) were significant in the silent reading-Readers Theatre comparison and nonsignificant in all other instances. Specifically, these findings indicate that subjects respond to prose literature as more serious when presented by means of Readers Theatre, and as less serious when presented through silent reading. In this instance, results agree with the findings of the Witt study in which audiences were found to rate dramatic materials as significantly more serious (Seriousness) when acted or presented by Readers Theatre than when read silently. In light of the evidence, it may be concluded that the method of presentation and perception of materials significantly influences audience response to the "meaning" of literary materials in terms of Seriousness.

61Witt, op. cit., p. 92.
These results, supported by Witt's research, would seem to suggest that Readers Theatre is superior to silent reading as a method of presentation when the purpose is to arouse a relatively serious response to the literature. It is to be noted, however, that high school students, such as those who served as subjects for this experiment, are for the most part highly familiar with the silent reading method of presentation. As a result, the tendency may have been to regard Readers Theatre as a more formal, and therefore, more serious event than the comparatively familiar and less formal-appearing, silent reading method of presentation.

On the basis of the statistically significant results obtained, the chief conclusion of this study is that Readers Theatre is at least for some purposes a valuable method of presentation which would appear to be advantageous to teachers of prose literature and oral interpretation as well.

In addition to the implications derived from the statistically significant results of this study, there are further implications based solely on inspection of the observed data which are of apparent value, particularly in view of parallels which can be found in the Witt study. As pointed out in Chapter I, Witt investigated audience response to dramatic literature when presented by acting, Readers Theatre and silent reading; college
students served as the subjects for the experiment and Raymond G. Smith's Semantic Differential for Theatre Concepts was employed as the data gathering instrument. In light of their similarity, implications of the results of the Witt study and the one at hand seem to gain scope and support through comparison. However, it is to be expected that findings do not correspond in every instance due, perhaps, to the choice of material, or possibly because of different subject populations. In regard to this consideration and the fact that further discussion of the implications of the present study will be on the basis of observed data only, it is therefore important that any interpretation of the following implications or comparisons be undertaken with a degree of caution.

In reference to the study at hand, inspection of the observed data for Factor I, Manner (action), seems to suggest a strong possibility that differences could occur among method of presentation treatments in terms of their effect on audience response as either more or less active. In light of the comparatively high F ratio obtained in the analysis of the data for this factor, it would appear that with larger groups, and perhaps different literary selections, statistical significance could be obtained. Again, regarding observed data for Factor I, Manner (action), it could be hypothesized that the dispersion between the silent reading group mean (3.75) and the oral interpretation
group mean (3.06) signifies a trend toward more active (Manner) perception by a subject of the prose literature when read silently, and less active (Manner) perception of the material when presented orally with the subject responding only in a listening capacity. It is also possible to perceive the lesser difference between the silent reading group mean (3.75) and the Readers Theatre group mean (3.64) as perhaps indicative of some characteristic ability of a Readers Theatre presentation to hold the attention of an audience more readily than an oral interpretation presentation. In respect to this possibility, it is noteworthy that for all response dimensions with the one exception of Factor III (Ethical Value), the group mean for Readers Theatre presentation treatments yielded a consistently higher observed score than did the group means for oral interpretation presentation treatments. Although not supported by statistical significance, this apparent tendency might be attributable to the feeling of some writers in the area of oral interpretation that group presentations are able to evoke a more energetic level of audience involvement with the literary material than a presentation in which the degree of audience participation is dependent solely upon the ability of one reader to stimulate interaction between audience and the material being presented.

The variation among observed mean scores of method
of presentation treatments for Factor III (Ethical Value) does show a slight tendency for oral interpretation and Readers Theatre presentation treatments scores to be somewhat higher than the score obtained for the silent reading method of presentation treatment. Results obtained for this response dimension, although non-significant, do appear to follow the same general distribution of the statistically significant results reported by Witt for the same factor on the Semantic Differential. In his study, Witt noted that audiences rated dramatic materials as significantly more valuable (Ethical Value) when acted or presented by Readers Theatre than when read silently. In light of Witt's significant results, and the apparent tendencies of the study at hand, it is possible to speculate that in a basic repetition of this research with only slightly altered experimental variables, the null hypothesis for silent reading and Readers Theatre methods of presentation could be rejected.

To the extent that these same data may be generalized, they provide further implications which would appear meaningful, especially to teachers of prose literature and oral interpretation. If, contrarily, further investigation were to reinforce the statistical conclusion of this study that no significant differences exist between silent reading and Readers Theatre methods of presentation in terms of value perception, Factor III
(Ethical Value), then attempts to account for the lack of significant difference would be in order. It would then be possible to theorize that silent reading which permits comprehension of material at an individual rate affords an opportunity for the subjects to "perceive" the value of a literary work. Whereas, a Readers Theatre presentation which necessitates comprehension of the material at the readers' rate of delivery could plausibly curb or in some way detract from the extent to which a listener is able to respond to the value (Ethical Value) of the selection. Empirical support of such an assumption would then seem to indicate that while a Readers Theatre presentation could be used to arouse interest in a literary work, and possibly, an awareness of its value, it would not necessarily serve as an adequate substitute for silent reading when the purpose was to evoke a response on the part of the student within the framework of a learning experience which had as its main objective an operational understanding of the content value in a literary work. The general conclusion to be drawn from this assumption is apparent: if silent reading is equally as good as other methods of presentation in terms of stimulating effective student response, the responsibility of casting, rehearsals and general preparation of a Readers Theatre presentation may just as well be avoided. Attempts to account for lack of significant difference between
silent reading and Readers Theatre in this manner are mere speculation, although it might be reasoned that it is easier to perceive the value of a work through individual effort in a silent reading situation than from the comparatively less responsible position of a listener.

Analysis of data for the response dimension of Factor IV (Esthetic Value), summarized in Table VI, reveals that method of presentation is not a significant factor in accounting for any variance in audience response to prose literature among treatments. There was, however, a noticeable difference in the observed mean scores obtained for method of presentation treatments between the silent reading group and the Readers Theatre group with the latter having the higher observed mean score. This tendency was consistent with the patterns of increase noted earlier between silent reading and Readers Theatre presentation treatments observed mean scores for Factor II (Seriousness) and Factor III (Ethical Value). The simple recurrent pattern observed between these methods of presentation treatments means for three of the four response dimensions measured by the Semantic Differential, together with the corresponding trends of increase reported in studies similar to the one at hand, using the same instrument of measurement, suggests a need for further experimentation in the area of quantifying effect of these methods of presentation on audience response to
literary materials. Simply, in the general interests of more effective communication, this point seems important enough to deserve extensive exploration.

In light of the nonsignificant results obtained for three out of four dimensions measuring effects of presentational method on audience response, perhaps the most important implications of this study are in the teaching of prose literature. For all factors, with the exception of Factor II (Seriousness) mean scores for methods of presentation showed no significant differences between silent reading, oral interpretation, and Readers Theatre. Prior to any discussion of the lack of significant difference between Readers Theatre and oral interpretation presentations, it is noteworthy that in every factor comparison with the exception of Factor III (Ethical Value) the observed mean scores of the Readers Theatre group were slightly higher than the observed mean scores of the oral interpretation group. In regard to this observed tendency, the following implications are to be interpreted with care.

The lack of significant differences between Readers Theatre and oral interpretation presentations suggests that in terms of audience response to prose literature, the two methods are equally effective. The close, inter-relationship between Readers Theatre and oral interpretation in terms of literary focus and type of audience participation was reflected in the similarity of audience
response to the two forms. In other words, the lack of
significant difference seems to emphasize the areas in
which the two methods correspond; these areas of basic
similarity are to be expected for as Akin stated, "Readers
Theatre is a form of oral interpretation,"\(^{62}\) and as Coger
has pointed out "oral interpretation is the heart of
Readers Theatre."\(^{63}\) In this regard, the implication for
teachers is that in presenting prose literature, the ele-
ments which are similar in Readers Theatre and oral inter-
pretation will predominate to the extent that there will
be no significant difference in the effects of either form
on students' response to the literary material. In this
respect, there would be no apparent advantage in using one
form over the other if the sole purpose were to stimulate
effective student response to the material. This is not
necessarily the case, however, in the presentation of other
forms of literature. In regard to dramatic literature, for
example, the Witt research revealed a significant differ-
ence for some dimensions of response in the effect of
Readers Theatre and oral interpretation presentations.\(^ {64}\)
The general conclusion, therefore, would be that the dis-
similar aspects of the two forms of presentation are more
likely to be operative and, thereby, apparent when used to


\(^{63}\)Ibid., p. 158.

\(^{64}\)Witt, *op. cit.*, p. 94.
present dramatic material than when used to present prose literature.

To pursue the implications of no significant differences between all three methods of presentation—silent reading, oral interpretation and Readers Theatre—it would appear that the idea that prose literature is a form of written material created for silent reading is substantially supported in terms of Manner (action), Ethical Value and Esthetic Value. That is, the nonsignificant differences obtained for these three dimensions of response indicate that silent reading is not inferior to the more active methods of perception and presentation. This data suggests that perhaps by distinctive characteristics, the composition of prose is intended for silent reading and any attempt to relate this literary form to other, active methods of presentation would either limit or depreciate the potential effect of the material. In this regard, it is interesting to compare the present study's implications for teaching prose literature with those recorded in the Witt study, for teaching dramatic literature. In light of the results of his investigation, Witt concluded that "silent reading, the method of perception used in many courses in dramatic literature, is an inferior method of experiencing drama." He went on to suggest that "the implications to teachers of dramatic literature should be clear: dramatic literature needs visual and aural
stimulation to achieve its full effect."⁶⁵

In combination, implications of both studies tend to stress the inter-relationship between form of literature and method of presentation, and suggest, especially, that in regard to realizing full effect, particular methods of presentation are superior ways of experiencing particular forms of written material. Furthermore, implications of both studies would seem to indicate that the composition of certain forms of literary material is directed toward a particular medium of expression, and that the full effect of the material is most likely to be achieved when it is experienced through the method of presentation for which it was originally intended. These conclusions to some extent support Gordon Craig's contention that "the word written to be spoken and the word written to be read are two entirely different things."⁶⁶ In any respect, it is to be noted that the combined implications of results obtained from both the present study and the Witt study remain speculative until through future research more definitive statements can be made.

Summarizing in the context of this study, it would appear to be highly improbable for subjects' response to prose literature in terms of its value, Factor III

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 93.

(Ethical Value), and Factor IV (Esthetic Value) to be effected in any respect by the method of presentation. In addition, findings of this investigation indicate that it is unlikely that subjects' perception of prose literature as either more or less active, Factor I Manner (action) is in any way attributable to variation in methods of presentation. On the other hand, results of the present study do reveal a significant difference in methods of presentation effects on audience response to prose literature in terms of subjects' perception of the material as more or less serious, Factor II (Seriousness). Specifically, the Readers Theatre method of presentation appears to evoke a response in which the prose material is regarded as significantly more serious than when presented by silent reading. Results of this study confirm, in part, existing experimental evidence on the effect of method of presentation on audience response, and suggest areas in which further experimentation would be desirable.

Suggestions for Further Research

A seemingly worthwhile line of research could be centered around the effect of method of presentation on audience response to a set of literary selections ranked according to seriousness on a continuum ranging from "very serious" to "very humorous." It would appear that such research would contribute meaningfully to the little at
present known about the particular response patterns of high school level audiences.

Another question of possible interest pertaining to Readers Theatre and oral interpretation would be to examine the effect of "number of readers" on audience response. Such research might contribute new information to the concept of audience attention in that the number of readers participating in various forms of interpretation presentations may have an observable effect on the degree or level to which an audience is able to become actively involved in the literary material being presented.

Inasmuch as it is difficult to determine to what extent response to method of presentation is influenced by subjects' behavioral perception of a particular selection of literature, it might prove worthwhile in future research to expand the design of this study to include various forms or styles of prose literature. Such an investigation would permit observation of the various interaction effects of the same methods of presentation on audience response to a more representative sample of the entire body of prose literature.

In general, the application of this study's findings to the teaching of prose literature is apparent. It is not necessary to search for the "absolute" method, the "best" form of presentation, when it appears that the
traditional silent reading approach is as effective as methods to which it is being compared. The apparent equality of silent reading for some dimensions of response does not, however, negate the implied potential of oral interpretation and Readers Theatre as methods of presenting prose literature, but rather suggests the desirability and need for further experimentation.
APPENDIX A

THE SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIAL BOOKLET

Instructions

The purpose of this experiment is to study audience response. We would like to know your over-all impression of the event you have just experienced. It is important, in marking the following scales, that your choices be made solely on the basis of your feelings about the event. There are no "correct" or "incorrect ratings." We are only interested in how students like yourselves respond in this situation.

On the next page you will find a set of scales. You are to respond to the event on each of these scales in order. If you feel the event is EXTREMELY UGLY or EXTREMELY BEAUTIFUL, you should place a mark as follows:

UGLY : X: _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ : BEAUTIFUL
Or
UGLY : _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ : X : BEAUTIFUL

If you feel the event is QUITE UGLY OR QUITE BEAUTIFUL, you should place your mark as follows:

UGLY : _ _ : X : _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ : BEAUTIFUL
Or
UGLY : _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ : X _ : BEAUTIFUL

If you feel the event is only SLIGHTLY UGLY or SLIGHTLY BEAUTIFUL, then your indication should be as follows:

UGLY : _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ : X : _ _ : BEAUTIFUL
Or
UGLY : _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ : X _ : _ : BEAUTIFUL

If you feel NEUTRAL about the event on the UGLY-BEAUTIFUL scale, then you should place your mark in the middle space:

UGLY : _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ : X : _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ : BEAUTIFUL
IMPORTANT: (1) Place your marks in the middle of the spaces, not on the boundaries:

(this) (not this)

UGLY :____:____:____:X:____:____: BEAUTIFUL

(2) Be sure to check every scale.

(3) Do not check more than one space on each scale.

Here is a short example to work using a different concept to be judged:

AMERICAN HISTORY

SIMPLE :____:____:____:____:____:____: COMPLEX

(Make your X mark according to the way you feel the concept American History is related to the scale. Is it EXTREMELY SIMPLE or EXTREMELY COMPLEX, QUITE SIMPLE or QUITE COMPLEX, SLIGHTLY SIMPLE or SLIGHTLY COMPLEX, or NEUTRAL on this scale?)
**Rating Form**

**OVER-ALL IMPRESSION OF THE EVENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UGLY</th>
<th>BEAUTIFUL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LIGHT</td>
<td>HEAVY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HONEST</td>
<td>DISHONEST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROUGH</td>
<td>SMOOTH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORTHLESS</td>
<td>VALUABLE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CALM</td>
<td>EXCITABLE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANNOYING</td>
<td>PLEASING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LONG</td>
<td>SHORT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SERIOUS</td>
<td>HUMOROUS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRUE</td>
<td>FALSE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAINFUL</td>
<td>PLEASURABLE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COLD</td>
<td>HOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLACK</td>
<td>WHITE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TENSE</td>
<td>RELAXED</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data Sheet

Name _________________________________

Home Address __________________________
(City) (State)

High School _____________________________

Fresh.____ Soph.____ Jr.____ Sr.____ Other______

Age ______________

Male ________ Female ________

Have you read the material presented to you before today?

Yes ________ No ________

If yes, indicate the author: ____________________________

Comments: _________________________________________

__________________________________________________

__________________________________________________

__________________________________________________

__________________________________________________
APPENDIX B

SCALE WEIGHTING FOR THE SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIAL FOR THEATRE CONCEPTS AND SEMANTIC SCALES
MEASURING THE SEMANTIC FACTORS

Scale Weighting for the Semantic Differential for Theatre

### Semantic Scales Measuring Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scales</th>
<th>Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Calm-Excitable</td>
<td>Factor I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot-Cold</td>
<td>Manner (action)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light-Heavy</td>
<td>Factor II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious-Humorous</td>
<td>Seriousness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tense-Relaxed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honest-Dishonest</td>
<td>Factor III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valuable-Worthless</td>
<td>Ethical Value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>True-False</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beautiful-Ugly</td>
<td>Factor IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pleasurable-Painful</td>
<td>Esthetic Value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pleasing-Annoying</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C

SHORT STORY MANUSCRIPT FOR THE SILENT READING
PRESENTATION AND READERS THEATRE SCRIPT
FOR THE READERS THEATRE AND ORAL
INTERPRETATION PRESENTATIONS

Short Story Manuscript for the
Silent Reading Presentation

A Short Story

There were ninety-seven New York advertising men
in the hotel, and, the way they were monopolizing the long­
distance lines, the girl in 507 had to wait from noon till
almost two-thirty to get her call through. She used the
time, though. She read an article in a women's pocket­
size magazine. She washed her comb and brush. She took
the spot out of the skirt of her beige suit. She moved
the button on her Saks blouse. She tweezed out two freshly
surfaced hairs on her mole. When the operator finally
rang her room she was sitting on the window seat and had
almost finished putting nail lacquer on the nails of her
left hand. While the phone was ringing, she replaced the
cap on the bottle of lacquer and--it was the fifth or
sixth ring--picked up the phone.

"Hello," she said, keeping the fingers of her
left hand outstretched and away from her white silk dressing gown.

A woman's voice came through. "Muriel? Is that you?"

The girl turned the receiver slightly away from her ear. "Yes, Mother. How are you?" she said.

"I've been worried to death about you. Why haven't you called? Are you all right?"

The girl increased the angle between the receiver and her ear. "I'm fine. I'm hot. This is the hottest day they've had in Florida in---"

"Muriel, we're very worried about you. Your father wanted to wire you last night to come home, as a matter of f---"

"I'm not coming home right now, Mother. So relax."

"Muriel. My word of honor. The doctor said Seymour may completely lose contr---"

"I just got here, Mother. This is the first vacation I've had in years, and I'm not going to just pack everything and come home," said the girl.

"Well, tell me, did you talk to the psychiatrist?"

"Well, sort of," said the girl.

"What'd he say?"

"Oh nothing much. He asked me if Seymour's been sick or something. So I said---"

"Did he say he thought there was a chance he might
get—you know—funny or anything? Do something to you?"

"Not exactly," said the girl. "He had to have more facts, Mother. They have to know about your childhood—all that stuff."

"Muriel, I'm just going to ask you once more—are you really all right?"

"Yes, Mother," said the girl.

"Your father said last night he'd be more than willing to pay for it if you'd go away someplace by yourself and think things over. You could take a lovely cruise. We both thought—"

"No, thanks," said the girl, and uncrossed her legs. "Mother, this call is costing a for—"

"When I think of how you waited for that boy all through the war—"

"Mother," said the girl, "we'd better hang up. Seymour may come any minute."

"Where is he?"

"On the beach."

"On the beach? By himself? Does he behave himself on the beach?"

"Mother," said the girl, "you talk about him as though he were a raving maniac—"

"I said nothing of the kind, Muriel."

"Well, you sound that way. Mother, listen," said the girl, and stood up. "I'll call you tomorrow, maybe."
"Muriel, now listen to me. Call me the instant he does, or says anything at all funny--you know what I mean. Do you hear me?"

"Mother, I'm not afraid of Seymour."

"Muriel, I want you to promise me."

"All right, I promise. Goodbye, Mother," said the girl. "My love to Daddy." She hung up.

Four year-old Sybil Carpenter sat insecurely on a huge, inflated beach ball, facing the ocean, while her mother was putting sun-tan oil on Sybil's shoulders. Set loose, at last, the little girl ran immediately down the flat part of the beach, stopping only to sink a foot in a soggy, collapsed castle. She was soon out of the area reserved for guests of the hotel. She walked for about a quarter of a mile and then suddenly broke into an oblique run up the soft part of the beach. She stopped short when she reached the place where a young man was lying on his back.

"Are you going into the water, see more glass?" she said.

The young man turned over on his stomach, letting a sausaged towel fall away from his eyes, and squinted up at Sybil. "Hey. Hello, Sybil. I was waiting for you."

"Are you going into the water?" Sybil said.

"I'm seriously considering it. I'm giving it plenty of thought, Sybil, you'll be glad to know."
Sybil prodded the rubber float that the young man sometimes used as a head-rest. "It needs air," she said.

"You're right. It needs more air than I'm willing to admit," he said.

Sybil stooped and began to dig in the sand. The young man got to his feet. He looked at the ocean.
"Sybil," he said, "I'll tell you what we'll do. We'll see if we can catch a bananafish."

"A what?"

"A bananafish," he said, and bent over to pick up the float which he secured under his right arm. "I imagine you've seen quite a few bananafish in your day," the young man said.

Sybil shook her head.
"You haven't," said the young man, and with his left hand, he took Sybil's hand.

The two started to walk down to the ocean.

When they finally reached the water, the young man dropped the rubber float on its back. They waded out till the water was up to Sybil's waist. Then the young man picked her up and laid her down on her stomach on the float.

"Don't let go," Sybil ordered. "You hold me, now."

"Miss Carpenter. Please. I know my business," the young man said. "You just keep your eyes open for any bananafish. This is a perfect day for bananafish."
"I don't see any," Sybil said.

"That's very understandable. Their habits are quite peculiar. Quite peculiar. He kept pushing the float. The water was not quite up to his chest. "They lead a very tragic life," he said. "You know what they do, Sybil?"

She shook her head.

"Well, they swim into a hole where there's a lot of bananas. They're very ordinary-looking fish when they swim in. But once they get in, they behave like pigs. Why, I've known some bananafish to swim into a banana hole and eat as many as seventy-eight bananas." He edged the float and its passenger closer to the horizon. "Naturally, after that they're so fat they can't get out of the hole again. Can't fit through the door."

"Not too far out," Sybil said. "What happens to them?"

"Well, I hate to tell you, Sybil. They die."

"Why?" asked Sybil.

"Well, they get banana fever. It's a terrible disease."

"Here comes a wave," Sybil said nervously.

The young man took Sybil's ankles in his hands and pressed down and forward. The float nosed over the top of the wave. The water soaked Sybil's blond hair, but her scream was full of pleasure. With her hand, when the
float was level again, she wiped away a flat, wet band of hair from her eyes, and reported, "I just saw one."

"Saw what, my love?"

"A bananafish."

"My God, no!" said the young man. "Did he have any bananas in his mouth?"

"Yes," said Sybil. "Six."

The young man suddenly picked up one of Sybil's wet feet, which were drooping over the end of the float, and kissed the arch.

"Hey!" said the owner of the foot, turning around.

"Hey, yourself! We're going in now," he said.

The young man pushed the float toward shore until Sybil got off of it. He carried it the rest of the way. Then Sybil said goodbye, and ran without regret in the direction of the hotel. He picked up the towel and plodded alone through the soft, hot sand toward the hotel. On the sub-main floor of the hotel, which the management directed bathers to use, a woman with zinc salve on her nose got into the elevator with the young man.

"I see you're looking at my feet," he said to her when the car was in motion.

"I beg your pardon?" said the woman.

"I said I see you're looking at my feet."

"I beg your pardon. I happened to be looking at the floor," said the woman, and faced the doors of the car.
"If you want to look at my feet say so," said the young man. "But don't be so God-damned sneaky about it."

"Let me out of here, please," the woman said quickly to the girl operating the car.

"I have two normal feet and I can't see the slightest God-damned reason why anybody should stare at them," said the young man. "Five please."

The young man got off at the fifth floor, walked down the hall, and let himself into 507. The room smelled of new calfskin luggage and nail lacquer remover.

He glanced at the girl lying asleep on one of the twin beds. Then he went over to one of the pieces of luggage, opened it, and from under a pile of shorts and undershirts he took out an Ortgies calibre 7.65 automatic. He released the magazine, looked at it, then reinserted it. He cocked the piece. Then he went over and sat down on the unoccupied twin bed, looked at the girl, aimed the pistol, and fired a bullet through his right temple.

Readers Theatre Script for the Readers Theatre and Oral Interpretation Presentations

Narrator: There were ninety-seven New York advertising men in the hotel, and, the way they were monopolizing the long-distance lines, the girl in 507 had to wait from noon till almost two-thirty to get her call through. She used the time, though. She read an
article in a woman's pocket-size magazine. She washed her comb and brush. She took the spot out of the skirt of her beige suit. She moved the button on her Saks blouse. She tweezed out two freshly surfaced hairs on her mole. When the operator finally rang her room she was sitting on the window seat and had almost finished putting lacquer on the nails of her left hand. While the phone was ringing, she replaced the cap on the bottle of lacquer and--it was the fifth or sixth ring--picked up the phone.

Mrs. Glass: Hello.
Mother: Muriel? Is that you?
Mrs. Glass: Yes, Mother. How are you?
Mother: I've been worried to death about you. Why haven't you called? Are you all right?
Mrs. Glass: I'm fine. I'm hot. This is the hottest day they've had in Florida in---
Mother: Muriel, we're very worried about you. Your father wanted to wire you last night to come home, as a matter of f---
Mrs. Glass: I'm not coming home right now, Mother. So relax.
Mother: Muriel. My word of honor. The doctor said Seymour may completely lose contr---
Mrs. Glass: I just got here, Mother. This is the first vacation I've had in years, and I'm not going to just
pack everything and come home.

Mother: Well, tell me, did you talk to the psychiatrist?

Mrs. Glass: Well, sort of.

Mother: What'd he say?

Mrs. Glass: Oh nothing much. He asked me if Seymour's been sick or something. So I said---

Mother: Did he say he thought there was a chance he might get--you know--funny or anything? Do something to you!

Mrs. Glass: Not exactly. He had to have more facts, Mother. They have to know about your childhood--all that stuff.

Mother: Muriel, I'm going to ask you once more--are you really all right?

Mrs. Glass: Yes, Mother.

Mother: Your father said last night he'd be more than willing to pay for it if you'd go away somewhere by yourself and think things over. You could take a lovely cruise. We both thought---

Mrs. Glass: No, thanks. Mother, this call is costing a for---

Mother: When I think of how you waited for that boy all through the war--

Mrs. Glass: Mother, we'd better hang up. Seymour may come any minute.

Mother: Where is he?

Mrs. Glass: On the beach.
Mother: On the beach? By himself? Does he behave
himself on the beach?

Mrs. Glass: Mother, you talk about him as though he were
a raving maniac——

Mother: I said nothing of the kind, Muriel.

Mrs. Glass: Well, you sound that way. Mother, listen,
I'll call you tomorrow, maybe.

Mother: Muriel, now listen to me. Call me the instant
he does, or says, anything at all funny—you know what
I mean. Do you hear me?

Mrs. Glass: Mother, I'm not afraid of Seymour.

Mother: Muriel, I want you to promise me.

Mrs. Glass: All right, I promise. Goodbye, Mother. My
love to Daddy.

Narrator: Four year-old Sybil Carpenter sat insecurely
on a huge, inflated beach fall, facing the ocean, while
her mother was putting sun-tan oil on Sybil's shoulders.
Set loose, at last, the little girl immediately ran
down to the flat part of the beach, stopping only to
sink a foot in a soggy, collapsed castle. She was
soon out of the area reserved for guests of the hotel.
She walked for about a quarter of a mile and then
suddenly broke into an oblique run up the soft part
of the beach. She stopped short when she reached the
place where a young man was lying on his back.

Sybil: Are you going into the water see more glass?
Seymour: Hey. Hello, Sybil. I was waiting for you.

Sybil: Are you going into the water?

Seymour: I'm seriously considering it. I'm giving it plenty of thought, Sybil, you'll be glad to know.

Narrator: Sybil prodded the rubber float that the young man sometimes used as a head-rest.

Sybil: It needs air.

Seymour: You're right. It needs more air than I'm willing to admit.

Narrator: Sybil stooped and began to dig in the sand. The young man got to his feet. He looked at the ocean.

Seymour: Sybil, I'll tell you what we'll do. We'll see if we can catch a bananafish.

Sybil: A what?

Seymour: A bananafish. I imagine you've seen quite a few bananafish in your day. (She shook her head.) You haven't?

Narrator: The young man bent over, picked up the float, and secured it under his right arm. Then, with his left hand, he took Sybil's hand. The two started to walk down to the ocean. When they reached the water, the young man dropped the rubber float on its back. They waded out till the water was up to Sybil's waist. Then the young man picked her up and laid her down on her stomach on the float.

Sybil: Don't let go. You hold me now.
Seymour: Miss Carpenter. Please. I know my business. Just keep your eyes open for any bananafish. This is a perfect day for bananafish.

Sybil: I don't see any.

Seymour: That's understandable. Their habits are very peculiar. Very peculiar. They lead a very tragic life. You know what they do, Sybil? (She shook her head.) Well, they swim into a hole where there's lots of bananas. They're very ordinary-looking fish when they swim in. But once they get in, they behave like pigs. Why, I've known some bananafish to swim into a banana hole and eat as many as seventy-eight bananas. Naturally, after that they're so fat they can't get out of the hole again. Can't fit through the door.

Sybil: What happens to them?

Seymour: Well, I hate to tell you, Sybil. They die.

Sybil: Why?

Seymour: Well, they get banana fever. It's a terrible disease.

Sybil: Here comes a wave.

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reported:

Sybil: I just saw one.
Seymour: Saw what, my love.
Sybil: A bananafish.
Seymour: My God, no! Did he have any bananas in his mouth?
Sybil: Yes. Six.

Narrator: The young man suddenly picked up one of Sybil's wet feet, which were drooping over the end of the float, and kissed the arch.

Sybil: Hey!
Seymour: Hey, yourself! We're going in now.

Narrator: The young man pushed the float toward shore until Sybil got off of it. He carried it the rest of the way. Then Sybil said goodbye, and ran without regret in the direction of the hotel. He picked up his towel and plodded alone through the soft, hot sand toward the hotel. On the sub-main floor of the hotel, which the management directed bathers to use, a woman with zinc salve on her nose got into the elevator with the young man. He said to her when the car was in motion:

Seymour: I see you're looking at my feet.
Woman: I beg your pardon?
Seymour: I said I see you're looking at my feet.
Woman: I beg your pardon. I happened to be looking
at the floor.

**Seymour:** If you want to look at my feet, say so. But don't be so God-damned sneaky about it.

**Woman:** Let me out of here, please.

**Narrator:** The girl operating the car stopped it and the woman got out without looking back.

**Seymour:** I have two normal looking feet and I can't see the slightest God-damned reason why anybody should stare at them. Five, please.

**Narrator:** The young man got off at the fifth floor, walked down the hall, and let himself into 507. The room smelled of new calfskin luggage and nail-lacquer remover. He glanced at the girl lying asleep on one of the twin beds. Then he went over to one of the pieces of luggage, opened it, and from under a pile of shorts and undershirts he took out an Ortgies calibre 7.65 automatic. He released the magazine, looked at it, then reinserted it. He cocked the piece. Then he went over and sat down on the unoccupied twin bed, looked at the girl, aimed the pistol, and fired a bullet through his right temple.
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