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## MASTERS THESIS

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Author: Espen Tesaker	..... (signatur author)
Supervisor: Rebecca Anne Charboneau Stuvland	
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## Abstract

This thesis examines the effect that illustrations in authentic novels have on comprehension, reading enjoyment and the experience while reading for students attending the last year in primary school. The research will take place in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) setting with Norwegian students. The basic assumption of the study is that the illustrations have a positive effect on the majority of the students' experience while reading.

The study examines students from a Norwegian 7<sup>th</sup> grade classroom, due to their understanding of the English language, and their maturity in their mother tongue. The text they will read is a chapter from the first book in the Harry Potter series, of which the author is J. K. Rowling. They will also read the same chapter from the illustrated version of the same book, where the illustrator is Jim Kay. The book will be read in English, and the interviews and questionnaire will be in Norwegian. This is due to two elements: The students must be able to read and understand the text fairly well, and they must be able to discuss the topics they encounter when reading during the interviews afterwards. This ensures that no transmission of data becomes lost because of any students lacks skill in articulating their experience in English.

The study makes use of both a qualitative and quantitative approach, with interviews being qualitative and a questionnaire representing the quantitative. The choice of semi-structured interviews was due to the focus on the participants own articulation of their experience while reading. This led to open interview questions and a goal of making the interviews more like a conversation than answering questions, in turn making the interviews more flexible and less rigid. The findings from the interviews and questionnaire were then analyzed through the lens of multimodal and image-text theory, along with theories concerning how illustrations could benefit readers who struggled with reading texts.

The responses towards the research questions posed in this study indicate that illustrations do have an effect on the experience while reading. Among others, the findings show that illustrations can support struggling readers in the foreign language to extract more from the text, that they can increase enjoyment of the reading experience and a greater ability to retell the contents of the text after reading it.

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## 1 Introduction

This thesis will examine the effect that illustrations in authentic novels have on the participants' comprehension of the text, reading enjoyment and their experience while reading the text. It will explore this idea in an English as a Foreign Language-classroom (EFL), during the last year of primary school. It is of great interest to understand if and how it makes the reading experience different. The basic assumption of the study is that illustrations have a positive effect on the majority of the students' experience while reading. To address this assumption, these research questions were created:

- 1) What effect does the illustrations have on the foreign language reading experience?
- 2) Do the illustrations work with or against your own imagination?
- 3) Is it limiting the participants interpretation of the text, or does it help open up for more than one interpretation?
- 4) Do illustrations make a text more enjoyable to read?
- 5) If you have read the text before, and are reading it again with illustrations, has it changed the way you view the setting or characters in the text?
- 6) Can the illustrations deepen the understanding of the read text and help the reader pick out more information than is possible without illustrations?

The study will take place in a 7<sup>th</sup> grade class, due to their current level of understanding of the English language, and their maturity in their mother tongue. The book they will read a chapter from is "Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone", by J. K. Rowling (1997). They will also read the same chapter in the illustrated version of the same book, namely "Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone: Illustrated Edition" (Rowling, J. K. and Jim Kay, 2015). Participants need to understand what they are reading in a foreign language well enough so that they can explain and discuss their reading experience. This also demands enough fluency in the Norwegian language, to be able to meaningfully articulate their experience in the following interviews. An important detail is that the book will be read in English, which in Norwegian schools is a foreign language, but the interviews will be held in Norwegian. The reasoning for this is rather simple. Two things are important to be able to gather data that is fruitful: The children must be able to read and

understand the text, at least to a certain degree, and they must be able to discuss those topics that come up during the reading when they participate in the interviews afterwards. The two points combined makes holding the interviews in Norwegian the most sensible option, considering the age of the participants of the study. This means that they will be able to read it in a foreign language, but will be free to discuss the ideas and thoughts they had while reading in their mother tongue, which will make it much easier to keep the interview form as close to a conversation as possible. In addition, it will ensure that the transmission of data becomes as accurate as possible, as there is less risk that the pupils were not able to express their thoughts accurately.

The research of this thesis will be conducted through the use of qualitative and quantitative methods. The qualitative aspect will be based on semi-structured interviews (Borg, 2006). Aggleton (2017) emphasizes that in her project children's voices were to be the primary source of data, as this will bring forth data "that may not be anticipated by a theoretical approach alone" (231). This argument is very compelling, and has led to the choice of interviews as the main research method. In this interview method (semi-structured interviews) the participants are asked a series of mostly open questions, and the goal is to help them talk as openly and freely as possible about the topics that are being put forth (Borg, 2006). In effect, it means that the interview will look more like a conversation than a formal exchange of information when done right (Kvale, 1994). In turn, this means that there must be flexibility incorporated into the interview plan, to prevent the conversation from being too rigid.

A pilot study was done to validate the research method and to check if the interviews would yield interesting findings (Kezar, 2000). Considering the nature of the interview method and the focus on children's voices, it was vital to complete a pilot study to ensure that the data collected was meaningful in such a way that they can help answer the research questions posed above. It is important that the interview is conducted in a way that is both structured enough so that data from multiple interviews can be used for the same analysis, but that the interviews also allow for unexpected data which could turn out to be important findings.

There are several important theorists which will provide a theoretic background, and the discussion will build upon these. To begin with, there are scholars who for some time have stated that extensive reading is important to cultivate literacy (Grabe, 2009). There is evidence that this applies to foreign language teaching as well (Grabe, 2009). Given this information, it is sensible to provide research on what makes reading more accessible and enjoyable to readers, and especially young readers. Along these lines, Jen Aggleton (2017) claims that there is a lot of research available regarding the impact of visuals in picture books, but that there is very little scholarly research how illustrated novels affect its readers. In other words, there is a gap regarding this research field. Just like Aggleton's article, the hope is that this thesis can contribute to filling a specific part of this gap, namely using illustrated novels in the EFL-classroom. Seeing as though there is not a lot of specific research in this area, Aggleton will be a primary source for the literature review. Aggleton also suggests that for readers "the presence of illustrations could provide additional and possibly conflicting ideas, which they must marry with the meaning they create from the words" (232). Put differently, a meaning which a reader made while reading a book without illustrations, might be challenged by reading that same book again with illustrations. This could in turn lead to greater depth of discussion of the topics discovered in a text, especially in a classroom context.

Central to the impact of visual images in novels is the concept of Louise Rosenblatt's Reader-Response theory (1938), to which Roland Barthes (1977) has made important contributions in later years. The core concept of this theory is that our experiences have a major influence on our reading, and that we are trying to make meaning when we read a text and not simply receive information. If we are active when reading, and are trying to make meaning through our own experiences, what does that mean for putting text and illustrations together? Barthes' text-image relationships are a very important foundation on which to discuss the findings of this study, as the relationship between text and image is utmost important when trying to establish what effect the illustrations and the text together have on the participants' reading experience.

Nikki Gamble (2013) has presented an idea that has an important link to this thesis and the concept of illustrated novels. Gamble calls it "visual representation of text", and she explains

how children use their own visualization of a story they have read when retelling it, and how viewing the story in a “visual form can support understanding of story structures” (59). What this implies is that children tend to understand the story structure of stories they have read if they can visualize them. Illustrations in novels are an interesting tool in this regard, as they provide a visual baseline which can be referred to and expanded upon between readers who try to retell the story, either in a classroom context or when reading for pleasure. It is also highly relevant when it comes to reading in an EFL-classroom. Images speak to the reader in whatever language they understand best, which means that a reader who struggles with the level of writing in a text can likely still understand the visual images and therefore develop thoughts that might not have been possible otherwise.

Together, this theoretical background will prove vital to discuss the findings from this study. The findings from both sets of interviews and from the questionnaire were examined, and were used to make comparisons between the groups as a whole and to make comparisons between the individual participants. Their statements and the comparison of these were then used to establish if they, together with the theoretic background, presented satisfactory answers towards the research questions.

The thesis is divided into six main chapters, including the introduction. Chapter 2 provides the theoretical background for the study, dealing with multimodality, the reading experience, the connection between enjoyment and motivation while reading and Barthes’ central image-text relationships. Chapter 3 presents the choice of methodology, combined with the description of the materials used during the study. Chapter 4 is where the study’s findings are presented, while chapter 5 examines the findings through a more theoretical lens, and starts a discussion with the main theories presented previously in the study. Finally, chapter 6 ties together the main conclusions which can be drawn from the study, based on the research questions presented in the introduction, while also suggesting for further study.



## 2 Theory

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter will explore the text the participants have read during the study, as well as introduce theorists and their perspectives connected to the subject of illustrations and reading experience. It will also introduce several studies which were vital to the project's inception and development. The most notable were the article by Aggleton from 2017, which outlines practices regarding interview and focusing on student voices as the primary source of data that were very influential, especially when deciding on which methods to use when gathering and processing the data. By following Aggleton's research, it also became interesting to explore Barthes' thoughts on between text and illustrations, including their connections and their different states. Barthes' image-text relationships are very relevant, which is presented in a collection of his works named "Image – Music – Text" (1977). He also presented the concept of the "death of the author" (Barthes 148) in his essay of the same name, also present in the collection mentioned above. This is very relevant considering we have two authors contributing to the same work, and their interpretations may have implications as to different interpretations made by the reading participants of this study. Closely related to Barthes' ideas, we have Bateman and his thoughts on the concept of multimodality (2014). He implies that a multimodal text can create "meaning multiplication" (Bateman 6), which is highly relevant to the chosen text for the participants to read in the study, as it contains both text and illustrations, making it a multimodal text. It is also very important to discuss the term "reading experience" and its related definitions, as in the case of this thesis it is very relevant which definition one uses. In addition, introducing the text chosen for this study is critical, namely a selected chapter from *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (1997). The author of the book is J. K. Rowling, and it is important to mention the illustrating artist Jim Kay, which contributed to the illustrated version released in 2015. Both author and illustrator are relevant to mention because both the original print version and the illustrated print version are used in this study.

## 2.2 The text

To process the following information on the theory, findings, and discussion parts of this thesis, it is important to have some knowledge regarding the selected text used in this study. The participants of this study have read a single chapter from *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (1997), written by J. K. Rowling. The illustrations that are found in the illustrated version of the book is made by Jim Kay (illustrated version was first published in 2015). The chapter the participants have read is chapter five, which is named "Chapter 5: Diagon Alley". This will not be a direct rendition of the text, but a compact, summarized version of the chapters leading up to and including chapter five.

During the first four chapters, the main protagonist, Harry Potter, loses his parents and goes to live with his aunt and uncle. His parents are killed by an evil wizard. Harry survives and the evil wizard (Voldemort) vanishes. Harry Potter is given credit for Voldemort's disappearance and becomes famous throughout the wizarding world. Harry himself is clueless about this. Although his parents were wizards, Harry's aunt and uncle despise magical people, including Harry's late mother and father. In their own best interest, his aunt and uncle try to ignore or punish whenever something that might be magical happens with Harry. They want to distance themselves from anything remotely magical. His life is miserable, and he is not treated well by his aunt and uncle. One day, he receives a letter from a magical school. His aunt and uncle are furious, and are insistent that Harry will not be allowed to go. They do everything in their power to keep Harry from receiving or reading the letters sent to him. Finally, they escape the house to seek refuge on a hut situated on a rock at sea, thinking the post will not reach them there. The last event that took place in the narrative before chapter five, is that Hagrid, a very large person who works at the magical school in mentioned in the letter to Harry, comes to the hut on the rock to deliver the letter and its message to Harry Potter in person. The school and its administrators know that Harry has not been getting the letter they have sent him on multiple occasions. Hagrid reveals to Harry that he is a wizard, and that he has been accepted at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Discovering that Harry's aunt and uncle have kept information about his parents hidden, Hagrid explains the story of how Harry's parents died, that Harry survived, and that the evil wizard Voldemort vanished. Hagrid reveals that Harry is famous

because the disappearance of Voldemort is attributed to Harry. The letter informs Harry of all the necessary items he must procure before the school starts, and Hagrid promises to take him to London to make all the necessary purchases the very next day. This is where the chapter five, which were read by the participants, start. Summary of chapters 1-4 of “Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone”, written by J. K. Rowling in 1997.

Chapter five starts the next day, and Harry Potter and his new friend Hagrid travels to London. They travel first by boat, which Hagrid makes move on its own with a tap from his apparently magical umbrella. After the trip to land by magical boat, Harry accompanies Hagrid on the underground train. They arrive in London and enter a small pub called The Leaky Cauldron. In it, Harry discovers for the first time how famous he is for making the Voldemort, only referred to as “You-Know-Who” in the wizarding world, vanish. They go out the back of the pub, after greeting many people, and Hagrid again uses his magical umbrella to tap a brick in the brick wall in front of them. The wall opens into an archway, and they enter Diagon Alley, a famous wizard-shopping street hidden from all the non-magical people in London. Harry is a bit overwhelmed by the experience, but Hagrid is familiar with the place and takes Harry to the bank first, in which they travel by minecart deep under London. He discovers that his parents have stored money for him, and with a large bag of wizard coins he sets out to get his supplies. Hagrid takes him to buy books, clothes, alchemical supplies for potions class, and a wand. The alchemical supplies consist of magical ingredients Harry has never heard of, and the clothes are measured and made on the spot. Entering the store where wands are sold, he discovers that wands choose the wizard, not the other way around. He meets several witches and wizards, among them Madam Malkin (who owns the clothing shop and seems very pleasant), Mr. Ollivander (who sells wands and are quite mysterious) and a pale boy who Harry finds rather rude and prejudiced. Harry meets this boy when being measured for his new clothes. At the end of the chapter, when they have purchased all the necessary items to attend Hogwarts, Hagrid takes Harry to the train that will take him back to his aunt and uncle. Harry is then given a train ticket to his new school, Hogwarts, which departs later in the fall. After giving Harry the ticket, Hagrid suddenly vanishes. This concludes chapter five. Summary of chapter five of “Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone”, written by J. K. Rowling in 1997.

## 2.3 Theoretic perspectives

This subsection has the main purpose of introducing and extrapolating interesting and relevant research with ties to the selected definition of reading experience which this thesis is examining. The relevant studies will be presented, and explored in manners which mainly allow for use of their contents and ideas in the discussion chapter later in the thesis.

### 2.3.1 Defining “reading experience”

Before introducing the main theorists that are important for discussing the findings of this thesis, it is helpful to explore the term “reading experience”. It often has two different definitions, and it is not trivial in the instance of this thesis which one is used. When trying to map the potential effects when students read two different printings of the same book (one with illustrations, and one without), one very common expression requires unpacking: reading experience. One encounters two different uses for this expression. The first, and a common usage of this expression, is related to how much experience a given individual has with the general activity of reading words and texts. In “Matthew Effects in Young Readers: Reading Comprehension and Reading Experience Aid Vocabulary Development”, Kate Cain and Jane Oakhill examine possible evidence for the phenomenon that the existing difference between good and bad readers evolve and increase over time. In doing so they rely on data related to this definition of reading experience. Cain and Oakhill argue that “children who read more will come across a greater number of words and get more practice at decoding words and have greater opportunities to enhance their knowledge of morphology and spelling than less avid readers” (432). They imply that the more words an individual has read, the better they will become at recognizing and interpreting words in the future. They connect this version of reading experience to future understanding of words and spelling when reading. In other words, Cain and Oakhill state that the more reading experience (or the more experience in the reading activity) an individual attains, the more that individual will understand of what they read. In essence, this definition of reading experience as discussed by Cain and Oakhill is referring to the amount of practice a given individual has in the reading skill.

The other definition comes from trying to explain or explore the experience an individual has while reading a text. In “Plotting the reading experience: Theory/practice/politics” (2016),

Paulette M. Rothbauer et al. explores this second definition of reading experience. They argue that this definition, the experience while reading a text, is very difficult to gather data from directly. Rothbauer state that “no reading experience can be seen (or researched) except through an articulation. The reading experience is a corporeal phenomenon that we can never fully understand” (116). They claim that this definition of reading experience takes place in its entirety inside our body, or more precisely inside the brain. In other words, the experience of reading a text is impossible to observe directly by an observer. The argument is that researchers who wish to study the reading experience of the definition presented by Rothbauer must rely on the individual’s ability to know and recognize their own emotions and thoughts and, on top of that, that the individual is able to explain and share this information with the observer.

In effect, what this means is that there are instantly multiple layers of interpretation on any given exploration and research connected to the experience an individual has while reading a text. Rothbauer explains it by arguing that when listening to a reader articulate their reading experience “we as researchers witness their witnessing, even as the reader of this essay adds another layer of witnessing” (116). Unpacking this gives us a clearer insight into the statement from Rothbauer concerning the exploration of the reading experience in an individual: the individual reads a text, experiences it, and relays that experience as well as he can to the researcher. The researcher then “witness” the retelling by the chosen individual, and relay their own experience of this retelling in their article or book. In other words, Rothbauer claims that if one reads a scientific article regarding the experience of an individual while reading, they will experience a retelling, of a retelling, of the experience by the participant in the study. This is vital to be aware of when trying to discover possible effects on reading experience. The reason for this is that the gathered data can potentially change their form or content (or both) when moving from the mind of the individual to the researcher’s words on a page.

Another important aspect of the reading experience according to Rothbauer is in what way it is influenced by the world around us. Put differently, in what ways are the selected individual who is reading a text influenced by books, movies, TV-series, the news, social media or perhaps even reading the very same book previously. Rothbauer clearly state that “reading is affected by the historical, social and collective contexts in which the subject is situated. All of

these factors are part of and affect reading and help determine whether the reader has a good reading experience” (51). By this argument, the individual is affected by goings on in the world and the context in which they are situated, which in turn Rothbauer argue influences the reading experience. The implications of what Rothbauer show in their arguments reveals that it is of paramount importance to map the context the reader is situated, especially the context which is likely to impact the individuals reading experience. This will of course vary from case to case, but to give an example: If a researcher is trying to figure out what the participants think of a given text or version of a text when reading it for the first time, it is paramount that they discover beforehand if the participants in question have read the selected text.

### 2.3.2 Aggleton (2017)

Having established a definition for the term reading experience, we can start exploring how it is connected to reading illustrated texts. A study by Aggleton (2017), “What is the Use of a Book Without Pictures? An Exploration of the Impact of Illustrations on Reading Experience in *A Monster Calls*”, questions in what way illustrations influence the reader’s experience while reading a text. The study examines if there is a notable difference when children between the ages of 11-14 read the same novel but in two different prints: with and without illustrations. The novel in question is called “A Monster Calls”. This novel was written by Patrick Ness in 2015 and illustrated by Jim Kay. The novel is in written in English, and the students all speak English as a native language. Aggleton remarks that there is plenty of research done with regards to picture books, but states that there is an apparent lack of research on the subject of illustrated novels (231). The research she mentions about illustrated novels (Goodman 2009, Marshall 1988, MacCann & Richard 1973), which found that generally illustrations in novels caused distractions for children reading them, she views as anecdotal evidence. Aggleton is attracted by arguments presented by Evelyn Arizpe and Morag Styles (2003). Based on the findings demonstrated by Arizpe and Styles, Aggleton states that “listening to the children's voices when dealing with children’s texts can ... lead to results that may not be anticipated by a theoretical approach alone” (231). In other words, listening to what the children tell you about their experience can be more revealing and interesting than statistics about their reading habits and understanding. In turn, this made Aggleton narrow down her focus on the interview-method as the primary data

collection method for this study, and centering the interviews on the children involved. What this entails is that she put a large emphasis on their experience when reading the text, letting the participant's experience be the center of attention and not her questions predetermined questions. This in turn leads to a line of questioning where it is important to listen and follow up when the children mention something that could be of importance, but do not explain it explicitly on their own accord.

Using six participants, Aggleton divided them into two groups. One group read the illustrated version, the other read the non-illustrated one, and both groups were given three weeks to read it at home. She then proceeded to conduct interviews with one participant at the time, before having a group discussion afterwards. In the study Aggleton used a qualitative method in order to produce "a richness of data that enables children's voices to be heard more fully" (234). She also instructed the participants to create an initial response, which could be drawn, written or both. Aggleton chose to use mostly open questions, and to not limit the participants in any way, enabling them to share experiences and thoughts she probably would not ask about. In her analysis, Aggleton focused on "engagement, interpretation, picturing" (235), in addition to narrative rhythm. Engagement covered the general attitude towards the book, with regards to how much the participants enjoyed the storyline and characters and their emotional investment in the reading experience. Interpretation covered how the participants considered multiple possible meanings or interpretations during their reading, while also looking to gather data regarding the impact of illustrations regarding the different interpretations laid forth, specifically if the illustrations limited how many interpretations were possible. Lastly, picturing examined the ability to visualize the contents of the text in form of characters and places presented without the illustrations to help them.

### 2.3.3 Illustrations as a supportive tool for struggling readers

When trying to map the effect of illustrations on the reading experience, one important aspect is to be able to explore how readers react to visual representations of the text. In "A picture is worth a thousand words: Using visual images to improve comprehension for middle school struggling readers" (2003), Anne Nielsen Hibbing and Joan L. Rankin-Erickson argue that, especially when a reader does not have the necessary skill set to understand and comprehend

the text well, pictures can be a very important supportive tool for a good reading experience. They state that “a picture is truly worth a thousand words for students who struggle with reading comprehension” (Hibbing & Rankin-Erickson 769). They argue that this is especially the case when the student has a sociocultural context which has prohibited them from learning and understanding certain words or phrases, or when they are using all their willpower to decode these words. This leaves little energy left to conjure up mental images of what is happening in the text. In other words, having illustrations or pictures present in the text can help alleviate the strain and workload of students below the required skill level required of the text, making them able to get a better understanding of the text they are reading. With that understanding they can then put context to the concepts found in the text that are reinforced by the illustrations present in the text.

Related to being presented visual images in texts when reading, Nikki Gamble explores the use of mental images made from the text in children. In “Exploring children's literature: Reading with pleasure and purpose” (2013), Nikki Gamble explores children and their responses to reading. In chapter four she addresses the issue of visuals in texts, and how children use this to process and retell stories they have experienced. Gamble states that “children’s understanding from a young age can be assessed and developed through their picturing of a story. They will often use such pictures as the basis for their own retellings” (59). What this means is that children make images of what they read or experience, for their own use when processing or having to retell the story. This is important and significant for this study, as being supplied illustrations of the text one is reading can aid in creating these images and make it easier to retell and for the reader to process the text they are experiencing. Connected with the previous paragraph, we now have a theory for readers to be able to understand more when having pictures in the text they are reading, and in turn this can help them form mental images which they then will use to process and retell the contents of the text they have read. Using the illustrations in this way can in essence make the combination of text and image to become something more than the separate pieces are by themselves.

Many of the theories and ideas presented in this chapter have a lot in common with a term presented by Lev. S. Vygotsky in his book called “Mind in Society” (1978). This term is known



as “the zone of proximal development” (Vygotsky 84). This “zone” Vygotsky argued is the space just above the current developmental level of a child, where they can achieve and learn more with helpful supporting factors than they would be able to on their own. Vygotsky argued that the current development level is where a child’s understanding is situated and that the zone of proximal development is where they are reaching for presently. He states that “what a child can do with assistance today she will be able to do by herself tomorrow” (87). What Vygotsky means by this is that presenting children with a supporting structure, which they can lean on to try and learn things they could not achieve on their own, makes them learn these newer skills faster and make them part of their current development level. In other words, the zone of proximal development is argued by Vygotsky to represent a skill level that is only within a child’s reach with a supportive structure to help them get there. In addition to this, the instant the child has mastered this skill, the zone of proximal development has moved to the next skill level, which again is only within reach of the child with the supportive structure. This supporting structure could be parents, teachers, or peer students. This theory is relevant to the thesis because of its potential application of the nature of the illustrations presented in the illustrated printing of the text which have been read by the participating students. This idea presents the possibility that the illustrations can be supporting structures that help the students achieve a higher level of understanding or enjoyment from the text than they would be able to without them.

#### 2.3.4 Multimodality and Barthes (1977)

This aspect of text and image become more than their separate parts are discussed in “Text and Image - A critical introduction to the visual/verbal divide” (2014), by John A. Bateman. Bateman discusses the text-image relationship that has arisen from the birth of multimodality. To explain multimodality, it is important to first show an example of monomodality. This can be an academic text. What a monomodal form is then, is communication which is limited to one “mode”, in this case through reading words. Multimodality then represents the other direction, reading a literary work which requires the use of multiple modes at once. A non-textual example might be the weather forecast. It requires the ability to understand written language, images, spoken language, symbols and even language specific to the weather forecast such as temperature. Bateman discusses the implications of placing the text-image relationship in the

field of multimodality and argues that one idea that should be considered when discussing this relationship is “meaning multiplication” (6). What Bateman means by this concept is that when using two (or more) modes simultaneously, the information possible to transfer to the recipient/reader is greater than these two modes when used separately. This is very relevant to the current study, as the main goal of this thesis is to examine the differences in the reader’s experience and understanding while reading a single text in both monomodal and multimodal print. In this manner, this study might to reveal if Bateman’s definition of meaning multiplication is relevant and a practical starting point when conducting research that involves illustrated novels and their effects on the experience while reading a text.

When discussing the relationship between texts and images, it is necessary to mention Roland Barthes’ work as very important. Two major theoretical contributions that are relevant to the thesis, both from his work called “Image - Music - Text” (1977), will be presented: (a) categories of interpretation and (b) the author, and its so-called “death”. First, Barthes establishes a particular theory very important for the research of this thesis, which concerns the possible interpretations of any given image. To describe these categories of interpretation, Barthes named them “anchorage”, “relay” and “illustration.” Together, these three terms can be used to describe the functional relationship any text and image have between one another.

Anchorage is used to describe the text-image relationship when the text is the deciding factor of what the image is showing. The text is the anchor which you can, or in some cases must, refer to in order to fully understand what the image represents. When discussing the implications for this type of relationship, Barthes states that “the text replies - in a more or less direct, more or less partial manner - to the question: what is it?” (39). In other words, anchorage is often used to describe a situation where the image does not have a clear meaning without a text that is attached to it. A common and clear example of this is a newspaper image, with its attached caption-text. Barthes statements suggest that until you read the caption-text, which grounds or anchors the image to an explanation which you understand, the meaning of the image would in most cases, at best, not be obvious on its own. He also makes it clear that this relationship is not balanced equally, and that “anchorage is control” over the meaning of the image (Barthes 40).

Anchorage then is used to control what meaning the image is supposed to convey to its viewers, by way of the attached text.

Relay is the second function used by Barthes to describe the text-image relationship. He argues that they both make more sense when combined. Here the power relationship is more balanced, and each part contributes to the other. Barthes states that this text-image relationship is not that common with a fixed image, but that a good example of this relationship can be comics, cartoons, and film. Looking at how the images and texts in these art forms work together, Barthes argues that “the words, in the same way as the images, are fragments of a more general syntagm and the unity of the message is realized at a higher level, that of the story” (41). When considering a comic strip, or comic book, each image and piece of text then is a separate fragment that contains meaning, and each fragment is also a key to unlocking the meaning of a different fragment. This way, the story and the meaning of the comic strip is rarely legible without the combined efforts of image and text working together in a much more harmonious power balance. Of course, Barthes state that this balance is only theoretical, and the scales usually tip in one direction or the other, and this balance can perhaps even change from one page to the next. Taking a comic book as an example: one page can be mostly dialogue without any noteworthy information being presented in the visual form of the illustrations, while the next page only contains illustrations with not a single word on the page.

Thirdly, illustration is the last general relationship argued to exist between text and images by Barthes. He states illustration is the traditional way of thinking about images, and acts as the reverse to anchorage (Barthes 25). Barthes argues that where anchorage serves as a way of enforcing a meaning in an image, an illustration serves its purpose when it enhances and expands the text it is based upon. A good illustration is an image which shows something that needs to be illustrated for the text to become richer. To illustrate this point, Barthes declares that “in the traditional modes of illustration the image functioned as an episodic return to denotation from a principal message (the text) which was experienced as connoted since, precisely, it needed an illustration” (25). Said differently, illustrations provide a supportive role to the text it is based upon, expanding the available amount of information.

The implications for the text-image relationships on our research are both obvious and subtle. It is important and helpful to have these categories to be able to properly identify the illustrated text used in the project. In addition to this, there is a possibility that during the data collecting interviews the participants will not be unified regarding what category the illustrated text they have read belongs in. It is also possible that they define different sections of the text in different categories. It will close to impossible to inform and ask them questions directly on these categories, as they are too advanced for a 7<sup>th</sup> grader in the Norwegian school system. On the other hand, one can try to extract what the participants think of the illustrations during their second reading. This can be related to the categories presented by Barthes, but does not have to be as complicated as the definition of categories presented in Barthes' book. The question can be reduced in scope, but give answers in the same directions. One example could be asking the participants if there were images in the text that showed them information that they found helpful or interesting, which the text did not give on its own. This would then be an indicator if the students thought the illustrations to be illustrations by the definition presented by Barthes. This will be a vital part of the analysis of the current study because there might be, and perhaps should be, disagreements about this from different readers. Are there any readings which have gained enough traction that it is viewed as the correct interpretation that should inform the artist how characters should look, how the setting should feel when looking at an illustration of it? If there is not, then it would stand to reason that the images and the text would be placeable in perhaps all the categories of Barthes image-text relationships at the same time. In other words, you could put the printed text in question along with its illustrations in any of the three boxes of image-text relationship created by Barthes, or perhaps in more than one box simultaneously.

Barthes' (1977) second major theory that is useful for this thesis because of his thoughts of the author, and its so-called "death". In the chapter called "The Death of the Author," Barthes argues that the author should not be considered a part of the text. Stating that the text deserves to be viewed as a separate entity, without the taint of its author, he argues that "the removal of the Author ... is not merely an historical fact or an act of writing; it utterly transforms the modern text" (Barthes 145). What he implies by this, is that instead of having to guess what the author means, we as readers are free to shape our experience while reading the text without any other

influence from the author than the text itself. What is, and was, revolutionary about this claim is that it opens any text for a whole range of interpretations, which no author has the right to claim is wrong or skewed. Arguing this case, Barthes claims that “once the Author is removed, the claim to decipher a text becomes quite futile” (147). There is no rightful interpretation. In other words, there is no true reading to any text. Barthes goes on to argue that keeping the author in mind while interpreting a text not only informs you about the possible interpretations of the text, which he argues is a negative outcome, but it could end it limiting the text in a major way. He argues that not being able to see past the creator of a given text will end up closing off possible venues of thought regarding that text.

Barthes also claims that we should not focus solely on the text but give more focus to the fact that a text without a reader is simply ink on a page. It is worthless and should not be given as much value. The text, however, becomes alive when it is read. He argues that only the reader can unlock the vast potential hidden inside it. Therefore, the most prominent part of any given text is the reader. To illustrate this, Barthes states that “the reader is the space on which all the quotations that make up a writing are inscribed without any of them being lost; a text’s unity lies not in its origin but in its destination” (148). The core here is how a text is not fully complete without a reader to interact with it. This is one of Barthes’ main arguments that: in order to fully enable the reader, society needs to distance ourselves from the influences of the author. As Barthes himself ends this chapter, “the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the Author” (148).

#### 2.3.5 Kirchhoff (2013) – Connecting motivation and enjoyment

One aspect of this study is to try and establish the participants own evaluation of enjoyment, and if it varies with the different prints of the chapter when they read them. Two terms which quickly becomes important are “motivation” and “enjoyment”. In her article named “L2 extensive reading and flow: Clarifying the relationship” (2013), Cheryl Kirchhoff argues that these two terms are connected. When discussing motivation related to extensive reading in a foreign language, she states that “motivational intensity (reading amount and time) and enjoyment were closely connected, increasing and decreasing together” (194). What this means for us, is that if we can find a connection between having illustrations in a text and that these

increases enjoyment while reading it, it might be a significant signal that these types of illustrations can also cause more motivation for readers of the text to progress. After discussing the connection between motivation and enjoyment when reading in a foreign language, she defines motivation as “the mental and emotional processes that precede a person’s decision to act and the intensity in which to continue the action” (Kirchhoff 194). By this definition connection between enjoyment and motivation becomes more solid. It seems clear by the arguments from Kirchhoff that it is difficult, in the landscape of extensive reading in a foreign language, to be motivated to read a text that you are not able to enjoy. A low motivation makes it hard to enjoy the reading, a low enjoyment makes it hard to find motivation to read. On the other hand, a high motivation can make the reading more enjoyable, and a high enjoyment can make a reader more motivated to keep reading. The reason this is important for us is because of the reason why Kirchhoff connects these to “Flow Theory” (196).

Flow theory was presented in “Flow: The psychology of optimal experience” by Csikszentmihalyi in 1990, when trying to discover what he termed the “optimal experiences” (1) of human beings. Conducting a study to discover what makes human beings experience optimal and sublime, he asked participants in different countries all over the world to explain what makes an optimal moment enjoyable beyond normal everyday occurrences. He states that one of the interesting finds during the study was “how similarly very different activities were described when they were going especially well” (Csikszentmihalyi 3). Optimal enjoyable moments is argued by Csikszentmihalyi have a lot in common, even when originating from different sports or activities. Csikszentmihalyi also state that this included when the participants had difference of nationality, gender, age or class. He went on to define nine major components for enjoyment, and at least one of these components was mentioned by every participant in the study (though often they mentioned more or all of them).

These goals were later developed by Csikszentmihalyi and made more compact, and is now presented thus in the article by Krichhoff (196):

### *The Conditions of the Flow Experience*

1. *Goals are clear*
2. *Feedback is immediate*
3. *Skills match challenges*
4. *Concentration is deep*
5. *Control is possible*
6. *Problems are forgotten*
7. *Self-consciousness disappears*
8. *The sense of time is altered*
9. *The experience becomes autotelic*

It is important to mention that the conditions are put in two different overarching categories: conditions 1-5 are achieved by specific design, while conditions 6-9 are only achieved by experiencing flow (Kirchhoff, 196). Though all conditions are important when it comes to explaining and defining aspects relevant to enjoyment and motivation, there are some which is useful to make more central regarding the current thesis. The most important of these components for this thesis are nr 3, and nr 6-8. These last three conditions can be summarized in a common expression, namely “loosing yourself” in a book, TV-series or a hobby. This term is used to describe what happens when you are participating in an activity and forget that you have your own problems and the current goings-on in your life at present, and taking part in it makes you lose track of time. All these aspects are connected to the conditions presented by Kirchhoff, and she argues that they are essential conditions in order for a person to experience Flow, or an “optimal experience”. The third component is perhaps the most vital to us, because of the connection it has with motivation and enjoyment.

The third condition required to experience flow, or having an optimal experience, is according to Kirchhoff to have the challenge match the skill of the individual doing the task. She states that one the most important distinctions is that the challenge must require some level of skill, and you do not achieve an optimal experience if you achieve something simply anybody could do. She continues this line of argument when she says that “the most important characteristic of activities that trigger flow is a good fit between a person’s skills in an activity and the challenges of the activity” (Kirchhoff 196). This is deemed essential by Kirchhoff, and is

important to us because of the potential role the illustrations could have in this study. If there are more signs of “Flow”, or the “optimal experience” when the participants have read the illustrated printing of the text, it could signal an indication that the illustrations change the difficulty to a more appropriate level of skill inhabited by the participants.

#### 2.3.6 Implications of the theory presented

Before we move on the findings of the study, it is important to state the implications of the important theoretical perspectives outlined above. The implications of Barthes theories and arguments are vital. First assessing the argument for different text-image relationships, considering that *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone* (1997) has been illustrated, an argument can be made for the illustrations to be exactly that: illustrations. They are made by an artist after the text was written in full, and the text still maintains its autonomy of being complete even without the illustrations. This would mean that the illustrations add to the text, providing extra details and enriching the text. At the same time, there is also an argument to be made for the text to be the anchorage for the images presented. If so, the images should accurately match with what the author wrote or meant in the text, and if there is deviation from this, the deviations will be treated as errors while the textual representation of the illustration would represent the correct meaning. Lastly, there is the possibility that the illustrations themselves provide information that is deemed vital or important in synergy with the text, as to represent the text-image relationship called relay. When this is the case, there will be passages where the illustrations help make certain meaning-making possible, where the text alone would not suffice. All of these are possibilities when encountering an illustrated text and is important to be aware of when processing and analyzing the collected interview data.

Secondly, and connected to the previous paragraph, we have the relationship between the reader and author. The interesting thing in this instance is that the illustrator is not the author of the text itself. Therefore, they too must be in the position of the reader before they can contribute to what in the end becomes a literary work. In this way, what happens is that the illustrator interacts with the text for his or her reading, through their illustrations, to become part of the reading experience. We now have three forms of communication to consider. We have the text on its own, the illustrations which are based off one particular reading of said text, and the



combination of the two in the illustrated version. Tightly connected with this idea, we have the idea proposed by Rothbauer who states that “no reading experience can be seen (or researched) except through an articulation”. This creates an important tool in which to analyze interpretations when dealing with participants reading experience. It is also possible to use this tool when dealing with the potential interpretations done in the illustrations themselves.

In addition to this, we have the important aspect of challenge for the appropriate skill level of the participating students, as proposed by Kirchhoff. This is a very helpful idea when trying to establish the differences in reading experience when reading the same text in two different printed versions. Discovering if illustrations help students, by making the text a more appropriate challenge with regard to their skill level, could be significant. This also plays into the definition of Vygotsky’s zone of proximal development, where the illustrations can be that supporting structure which can be of help to the reader if the text is just out of reach of their own skill level.

### 3 Methodology

#### 3.1 Introduction

This study will make use of both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. In “Research Methods for Political Science: Quantitative, Qualitative and Mixed Method Approaches” (2020), David E. McNabb argues that there are specific differences between qualitative and quantitative research methods. Concerning qualitative data gathering, McNabb states that it leans towards “inductive, theory-generating, subjective” data, while quantitative data gathering tend more towards “deductive, theory-testing, objective” data (241). In short, qualitative data is more subjective while quantitative data is more objective. In the case of this study, the interview data will consist of subjective articulation from the participants in which they can help guide the line of questions, while the questionnaire will only collect answers to predetermined questions, in which the questions is without the influence from the students. The

mix between qualitative and quantitative make it possible to compare the subjective findings from the interviews to more a general, objective data set. We are then operating with three bases for interpretation of the collected data: theory, the interview data, and the questionnaire data. This lets us triangulate towards any possible findings with accuracy, having multiple angles to look at the data from. This makes it possible to discuss and see if the findings from the interviews and questionnaire reflect each other and reflect the theoretic background.

### 3.2 Design

The data were collected through interviews and a questionnaire. The interviews were qualitative and in the form of semi-structured interviews as depicted by Borg in "Teacher cognition and language education: Research and practice" (2006). Semi-structured interviews involve asking a set of predetermined questions, but also "allowing the conversation a certain amount of freedom in terms of the direction it takes" (Borg 236). In other words, conducting semi-structured interviews may yield data that are not inherently targeted by the questions you ask. This method will support the aim of exploring the experience the participants have while reading, because it can be difficult to provide questions which on their own make the participants open up about the reading experience they just had. Since the interview subjects will be approximately 12 years old, the flexibility inherent in semi-structured interviews can also be beneficial, since being interviewed can make anyone nervous. Allowing for the conversation to be taken in most directions allows the students to feel like they are contributing, even though they did not feel like they have a great answer directly to the question posed. This will also allow for the students to bring their own thoughts and beliefs to the conversation in an organic way. The students will read both the illustrated version and the non-illustrated original printing of a single chapter in the same book. If this was not done, then the findings would be greatly influence by the possibility of individual differences, if one group reads without illustrations and one group with them, it is very hard to quantify what differences are due to the illustrations. Comparing their own experiences makes the role of the illustrations more visible and easier to quantify.

The questionnaire was chosen as an additional tool for gathering data, in order to be able to have different sets of data when doing analysis. The questionnaire is a quantitative data collection method, which makes use of questions specified prior to the data collection, and is

completely rigid, unlike the semi-structured interview model, which is more subjective and fluid. The questionnaire data provides more objective data based on the questions presented. This data from the questionnaire gives us more a more general idea of what the students in the relevant age groups experience when reading the chosen text, which will then be put up against the findings from the interviews to see if there are any surprising differences.

### 3.3 Instruments and materials

For this study, the chosen material is a single book, but in two different versions: Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, both with illustrations and without them. The series about the "Boy Who Lived" is well-known, and it has been attractive to children and adolescents for over two decades now. Choosing a book that is relevant to younger audiences when learning to read their first or second language was considered important for this study. A similar study conducted by Jen Aggleton used a book called "A Monster Calls", written by Patrick Ness (2011), illustrated by Jim Kay. This study addresses similar research questions to the Aggleton study, but uses a different text, namely the Harry Potter series, which is also illustrated by Jim Kay. The first book in the series, "The Philosopher's Stone", was first published in 1997, and was not illustrated before 2015. This necessarily makes the illustrations in the two novels very different. While Jim Kay had access to the text from "A Monster Calls" while illustrating that book, his illustrations were created before the public had access to them, and before there were made any movies or fan art of the text. When considering the Harry Potter-series, the books and movies had been available to the public for years at the time "Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone" was released as an illustrated book. When illustrating "A Monster Calls", he was able to help bring definition to a book which nobody had read before. When illustrating one of the most popular children's books of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, however, there is less obvious room for artistic freedom. It is hard to imagine that Jim Kay did not feel any pressure to create the illustrations in a way that would satisfy the large audience around the globe. This might mean that the artist has been less bold than was possible. At the same time, it might be an advantage for the illustrations to not be too bold, considering that the illustrations can then still give room for the readers own imagination. It might make the visuals presented easier to align with what the readers already have imagined.

Ideally, it would be interesting to have the participants read the whole book twice, seeing as how you can ask very different and more subtle questions regarding plot, themes, and character development. Due to the chosen data collection method, it was necessary to limit the scope of what the participants should be given to read. Because the participants would have to read the selected text twice, a single chapter was thought to be an appropriate amount of text for this study. The chapter chosen is chapter 5, which contains the passage about Diagon Alley and Harry Potter's first visit there. There are plenty of illustrations, and the main reason that this chapter was chosen was that it seemed to resonate with the questions from the interview guide. Two examples are the illustration of the Harry Potter and Hagrid in the boat (see figure 1 in Findings) and the shopping street named Diagon Alley (see figure 3 in Findings). Therefore, it was deemed probable to gather more data than many of the other chapters available.

The interview guide was modelled after the chosen research questions. This allows the questions to extract as much relevant data during the interviews as possible. For this study, considering the popularity of the book, the first thing the interviewer must establish is how much the participants know about the Harry Potter characters and setting. It is important to have a clear idea what new information the students gain from reading the text during the study. Given that the main aim of this study is to establish what effect illustrations have on the experience while reading a text, the questions are mainly focused on personal opinions and their understanding of the text and later the illustrations as well.

### 3.4 Participants

The students in the study attended 7<sup>th</sup> grade at a Norwegian elementary school. The reason for choosing this age level is two-fold. First, the students at this age level have a decent understanding of the English language and will therefore have a good chance of being able to read the chosen text without too much strain. They are also old enough that talking about their own experiences is possible. Second, conducting a research project requires allotted time with the participants. Since they would ideally read both texts and do both interviews in quick succession, ideally during the same school day, it was much more manageable to work with one primary school teacher. At this grade level, as opposed to lower secondary school, teachers are mostly in charge of multiple subjects in a class and are often able to plan a whole day for their

class without having to rely on colleagues to agree with a proposed schedule. The intended sample size was a full 7<sup>th</sup> primary school class of 20-30 students, but because of limitations outside of the researcher's control, the participants were part of a 7<sup>th</sup> grade class consisting of eight students, in which seven participated.

### 3.5 Procedure

The whole class of seven students read the given text without illustrations first. Then the class were split into two groups to be part of an interview regarding the non-illustrated text, one group at a time. When the interview process is over for both groups, the whole class read the same text again, but the illustrated version this time. Following that, a second round of interviews took place. At the end of the second round of interviews, the whole class answered a questionnaire related to the experiences they had while reading.

The interviews were conducted in groups of four students (one group had three students, the other had four). The main reason behind doing a group interview instead of individual interviews, goes back to the definition of semi-structured interviews. Since the intention is for the interviews to be more like a conversation (Kvale, 1994), and to make it a space where the participants are comfortable of talking about what they have read, having a group of students being interviewed together made the most sense. In addition to making the interview a better space for flowing conversation, if their responses border on difficult terrain, either when it comes to understanding, or in ways they can express what they are thinking, they can help each other articulate their experiences. This enables the participants to explain themselves better and in more depth without the interviewer having to facilitate and steer the conversation. One of the major decisions was to hold the interviews in the Norwegian language. The reasoning for this is that because during the semi-structured interviews the students are required to talk freely and to participate in a conversation, which can be too demanding in a foreign language for students at the chosen age level. The aim is for the dialogue to take place between both the participants and the interviewer, but also between then participants themselves because they are interviewed as a group. The basis for the interview is that the participants will retell the story as a group, and then discuss elements (characters, places or scenes) that were interesting to them. The students will also discuss how they think the characters look after reading the non-illustrated

version, so as to have a better reference point when discussing the illustrations in the later interview.

The interview based itself on the structure of the interviewer asking questions, and letting the participants answer, either as an individual, or by form of group exploration and conversation. Following the response, the interviewer stepped in if necessary, either to explore a statement that could be an interesting data point, or to make sure the conversation stays on the topic. An example of this can be if the participants start discussing a scene, but they go astray and start talking about a different chapter or different book in the Harry Potter-series.

The interviews will be recorded with both video and audio, and later the audio will be transcribed. Transcribing the interviews after the fact leaves the interviewer with more time and focus to pay attention to the participants and how the conversation is going. The main reason for including video recording is for the possibility of gathering even more data. As an example, this would be how the students use the text in front of them while they speak. They can point at different images while retelling the story. They could point at certain images to explain things they did not understand when they read the text without images, or perhaps point a certain image to visualize how different a character or setting was from the way they had originally imagined it.

To ensure the best possible data collection during the interviews, a pilot study was conducted (Kezar, 2000). The importance of a pilot project in this instance is very high, especially considering how the participants can help steer the conversation and that the interview subjects are rather young. It is of the utmost importance that they feel comfortable sharing the experience they had while reading, as this is the data that is at the heart of this study. Therefore, being prepared and being able to test out the questions and way of interviewing is crucial. The pilot project examined a smaller test group: one group of four students. This allows a proper test of the conditions which will be present during the study: the reading and the main interviews. It is important to be able to try out the interview guide to see if questions needed to be added, subtracted, or reworded. It also gives the interviewer a sense of what to look for during the flowing conversation that is

meant to take place, knowing when to interrupt a participant while talking to get at the heart of something they mentioned or when to further prompt for learners to elaborate their answers.

### 3.6 Analysis

The analysis will make use of the data from the questionnaire and the data collected during the interviews. The transcription will be made anonymous (false names are given to the participants), as there are not any relevant data to collect regarding the participants personal information. The data from both the interviews and questionnaire will be analyzed through the lens of relevant theory, as to be able to answer the different research questions. Among the important theory that will be used to discuss the findings are Barthes (1977) and his categories of text-image relationships, Gamble (2013) and her argument concerning how children make mental images while reading to help with comprehension and the ability to retell the story afterwards, and Hibbing and Rankin-Erickson (2003) who argue that to struggling readers illustrations can be a major supportive tool to help them comprehend more of the text while reading it.

## 4 Findings

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter will present the findings from both the interviews and questionnaire. The first section will discuss the findings from the interviews. This will be followed by a separate section on the questionnaire and the data collected from it. The interviews were structured as group interviews, with two separate groups. This type of interview, by its own merit, will entail that not every participant will answer every question, and not every participant will be equally engaged with the group discussion ignited by questions posed. In both groups there was a fair amount of participation from all the students. However, one student in each group participated distinctly less than the others, but both of them responded somewhat.

The presentation of the findings from the interviews will be structured around the questions asked the participants. More precisely, the starting questions presented are more

general and broad questions, which then continues on with more specific questions as the presentation of findings proceed. Choosing to start with an overview of the participants knowledge about Harry Potter and the associated world was decided in order to make it easier to map what they are learning from the readings of the text. When it comes to core structure of the findings, a question or group of questions will be presented, and then the answers from both groups will follow. This is done to be able to clearly follow the potential similarities or differences in opinions and replies from the participants. Regarding the groups mentioned, the interviews were done with two groups. Each group had three students, and there was a mixture of girls and boys in both groups. The exception is that one group gained one more student on the second round of interviews. The groups were as follows:

- Group A: Kristian, Jona, Martha
- Group B: Tommy, Natalie, Jennifer (& Mia during the second interview)

The participation in the study was anonymous. Therefore, students participating have been given false names for purposes for reporting the results of the study, and following developments concerning the different participants.

## 4.2 Interviews

The interviews took place over the span of two subsequent days, with the reading being done as soon as possible prior to the interviews. The reading itself was done in the classroom. The students were given time until they were finished, and the students who finished early were allowed to spend time with other activities in silence. The reading time with the two different text versions was about the same. Every participant was done with the reading in about 60 minutes of effective reading, though some students were faster. The lessons lasted 45 minutes, so there was a break in the form of a recess in both readings. In the case of this study, it was possible to do the reading directly before the interviews. The reading was to be done with two different printings of the same book. The first day, the students were interviewed about their reading of the selected chapter of J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* in its original form, without illustrations. The following day the students were interviewed related to their reading of the very same chapter, but from a different, illustrated version. This particular version has both illustrations in it, and a slightly different formatting of the text (though the text



itself is not altered at all, except for the forementioned formatting). The illustrations are done by Jim Kay. This is a different printing of the same book, but the formatting of the text and the inclusion of Jim Kay's illustrations makes it look very different on the page. The students were informed prior to each interview that they were allowed to bring the texts with them, and that they could refer to it as much as they would like.

The start of the first interview was used to make sure the students had filled out the respective papers on allowing the interviewer to document the process, and to generally make them aware of the process they were embarking upon. The two groups which participated in the interviews were both rather calm and relatively responsive to my small-talk and preliminary questions, and seemed comfortable with the situation. Regarding the quotations from the interviews, they have been translated from their original wording in Norwegian to English. The participants read the text in English, but the interviews were done in Norwegian. Translating the quotations will supply a more uniform reading experience for the thesis.

#### 4.2.1 Reading the un-illustrated version – Day 1

##### 4.2.1.1 *The world of Harry Potter*

One of the first subjects that was touched upon during the interviews on the first day, was what familiarity the participants had to what was to them described as “the world of Harry Potter”. In other words, it was important to establish what type of connection they have to the established universe of Harry Potter, either through the books, movies or merchandise available. The first group was group A, which consisted of Jona, Kristian and Martha. What turned out to be a highly important response this question was that everyone in the group had some knowledge on the topic. All three students had seen at least parts of the movies (Martha had only seen the first half of the first movie), and Kristian and Jona had both read some of the books. Of the three participants of group A, only Kristian had read the books in English previously. Kristian was also the most well-versed in the world of Harry Potter, and he stated:

*Kristian: Yes, I have seen all the movies and read all the books. I have read all them in Norwegian, multiple times, and some of them in English too.*

Jona for his part was pretty sure that he had read two of the books in Norwegian, and seen at least three of the movies. An important note is that none of the participants in group A had read the illustrated version before, which entails that all the imagery was new to them. All in all, there is sufficient reason to believe that Jona, Kristian and Martha have at least partial knowledge regarding the setting and its characters.

The second group (group B) consisted of Natalie, Jennifer, Tommy and Mia (Mia was not present during the first day of the project, but did the reading she was supposed to. This is the reason why she is not quoted regarding the reading without illustrations). On being asked the same question regarding their knowledge of the Harry Potter setting and its characters, there was a wider spread and less prior knowledge. Both Natalie and Mia were adamant that they had never watched or read anything from the Harry Potter-series before, leaving them with only the vague knowledge that it existed. As Natalie put it:

*Natalie: I know nothing. I have heard of it, but I don't know anything about it at all.*

Tommy and Jennifer on the other hand, had some prior experience. Jennifer had seen the first movie, and Tommy thought he had seen two, maybe three of the movies. Neither of them had read any of the books. This created an interesting starting point, as none of the participants in group B had read the books at all, and only half of the group had prior knowledge from the movies.

#### *4.2.1.2 Retelling the story*

After establishing what they knew about the setting and the characters within it, the students were tasked with retelling the story they had just read. In group A, Jona started off with an answer which sums up the overarching story of the chapter they had just read, while also adding details which were not in the text they were given:

*Jona: Harry Potter has to get his stuff for Hogwarts. Before they can start, they need schoolbooks and stuff like that. He also met a boy, and they became friends eventually. And then they discover that they will belong to the same house, at Hogwarts.*

The first part of this is true and is the summarized plot for the chapter they read. The second part about the boy turning into a friend is not part of this chapter. There are probably some memories from his prior experiences with Harry Potter that got mixed up when retelling the story. The most sensible explanation for where this information comes from, is that Jona is actually talking about Ron Weasley which later becomes one of Harry Potter's best friends. But Harry does not meet Ron until he is on the train to school. Kristian interrupts, and questions if that is what really happens. He takes up the retelling of the story, and said:

*Kristian: Yeah, he goes with Hagrid to Diagon Alley, and buys equipment and other stuff for school. Also, everyone liked Harry Potter because he was... he was kind of special.*

Again, the retelling is rather broad and general, focusing on the overarching story rather than page-to-page events. I then asked Kristian what was special about Harry Potter, and he replied:

*Kristian: Well, Voldemort killed his parents, and he couldn't kill Harry Potter. He just couldn't. It didn't work.*

It is a rather precise response. When asking about retelling the story with a bit more detail, there was a lack of response. They found it hard to remember specific scenes and characters, and though some memories came eventually it took a lot of nudging and hints to make them able to retell them. Being reminded that they could refer to the text and that we were in no hurry did not make much of a difference. It seemed like they felt embarrassed for looking it up in the text, and even though I tried to counteract this emotion it seemed to have little effect.

Group B was mostly of the same mind regarding this particular task. When asked to retell the text they had just read, Natalie answered in much the same way as Jona had previously:

*Natalie: Harry Potter was together with another guy, can't remember the name of him. And Harry Potter was supposed to start some school, and then they went to get things Harry Potter needed, which were on a list.*

*Tommy: There was an owl there. With a letter. That confused me a bit.*

As we can see, Natalie presents the overarching story presented in the chapter quite well. Harry Potter joins his friend, Hagrid, as they buy schoolbooks and equipment so that he can start at his new school. After this, it is rather hard to pull more memories out of them without using a large amount of prodding and hints. As an example, when asked where they bought the books and equipment for Harry Potter's school, Natalie answered:

*Natalie: I think it was in London? Under the ground, perhaps?*

This is partly correct, and partly wrong. They are in London, in a wizard street called Diagon Alley. A part of the wizard bank, Gringotts, is underground, but Diagon Alley itself is not. Tommy pointed out a more specific moment from the very start of the story. The owl was delivering a newspaper. It was not the letter containing the list of required equipment mentioned by Natalie. However, he was unable to expand upon it, and so were the others in the group. These inconsistencies may indicate that the students found the text challenging to read, which in turn makes remembering a more difficult task.

#### *4.2.1.3 The experience while reading the text*

Moving on from the previous task, we touched upon the experience they had while reading. When talking about this, it is again important to distinguish between the terminology of "reading experience", which often refers to the amount of experience a person has concerning reading in general. In other words, how many books or texts have the person in question read. The other way this term can be used is to discuss and present the experience a subject has *while* reading a given text. This last one is the term which will be discussed in this thesis.

When starting with group A, I asked the participants to describe their experience while reading the text, Jona answered:

*Jona: It was all right. The text was pretty OK. It was sectioned into paragraphs, so it was easy to see how far along you were if you took a break or had to go out for recess.*

As we see here, Jona is referring to the text as it is structured on the page. For him, having shorter, more manageable paragraphs was a positive influence on the experience while reading the text. Kristian also had a perspective concerning this point:

*Kristian: I really like the way the story flows. It makes you really get into the narrative.*

Here we see a closer focus on the story and less on how the words are structured on the page. When talking more closely about this statement from Kristian, Jona agrees with this, and adds why he finds the text engaging and exciting.

*Jona: It's like, when you finish a page, you don't know what will happen on the next page. It's hard to think what will happen next.*

Kristian and Martha agree with this last statement, with Kristian being more in agreement with this statement than Martha. Kristian also describes the eagerness to turn the page, and how the story is exciting and fun to read at the same time. Kristian also states that he likes the way J. K. Rowling writes, with emphasis on that she writes in a way that is easy to understand what is meant, and at the same time easy to imagine how things or characters which are described look. Martha is more careful with her praise than Kristian was of the writing quality of the text, but agrees that the text was written in a way that made her want to read on more than she usually did. This seems to be a sign that the students gain enjoyment from reading the text, and that the story is engaging to the reader, drawing them into the narrative.

When asking the same question of what experience group B had while reading the text, their answers revealed them to be of similar minds. The consensus was that they thought the experience was enjoyable and that the story was interesting and exciting. In particular, one of the students who had never encountered Harry Potter and the accompanying universe before, Natalie, was extra excited about retelling her experience.

*Natalie: I've never read about Harry Potter before, and I thought it was new, and pretty interesting. I also thought the story had a lot of suspense, which made me eager to read more of it.*

Jennifer was of the mind that the whole experience was rather boring. When asked if she could describe if there was anything in particular that was boring, it turned out that she had a general disinterest in reading. After a few more interactions, she managed to explain that she didn't think the text in itself was that bad. It was OK, and perhaps above average, though her distaste for

reading made it hard to appreciate it. Tommy's reaction and thoughts hold the middle-ground on this point, as he thought it was good but not extraordinary. Though being conservative with his praise, he did go on to say that he found the story exciting to read. He also really liked the fairy-tale aspect of it, and for him that was a very positive part of reading the text.

#### 4.2.1.4 *The characters and their personalities*

Perhaps the most important role these interviews have is to facilitate the study of this difference between reading a text with illustrations and without them. One of the chosen ways to try to solve this problem was to ask the students to identify the different characters and in addition describe them as best they could when reading the text without illustrations. When armed with this data, it becomes possible to discuss differences between the participants own versions of the characters and places they meet in the story, and the way the illustrations presented these same characters in the second reading. When possible based on their answers (not all students were of a mind to answer every question, even when prompted), what makes the most sense is to discover differences between the interpretations of each student. When this is not possible, the analysis will focus on the group effort. In other words, comparing interpretations from the group as a whole of the original printed version with the same group's interpretation of the illustrated text. They were also given instructions prior to the reading, and before answering these questions, that they should to the best of their abilities remember the characters and their appearance based on what they read, and not their remembrance of the visuals given to them from watching the movies.

The first task was to make a list of characters they remembered, and how they behaved and acted in the story. When given this question, group A started thinking. After a few moments, Jona started listing up the ones he could remember:

*Jona: We have met Hagrid, isn't that his name? And we have met Harry Potter of course...*

*We also met the goblins - there were two, I think. And a boy. That's the ones I remember.*

After a few short exchanges between the group, they arrived at a few more characters, and Kristian listed those up as well:

*Kristian: When we meet the boy, there is also a lady, who measures clothes. And the man who sells wands. In addition to those, there are all those people in the pub they visit, what was that name... The Leaky Cauldron.*

This is a comprehensive list of the characters they meet in the chapter they read, though had they done the interviews individually they might not have remembered as many characters or details about them. All the major characters that we meet are mentioned, though not all of them by name. One of the goblins in the bank is mentioned by name in the text, but this is not mentioned. The same can apply to the people in the Leaky Cauldron, but it is important to note that there are indeed a lot of people, and quite a few names, in that sequence of the story.

Satisfied that they had remembered as many characters as they could, we then proceeded to analyze how the participants thought the characters acted in the story. Here Martha came with the first comment:

*Martha: I thought they were odd. I didn't always understand why they did everything that they did. I mean, mostly other people than Harry.*

This may be an indication that the student has not fully understood parts of the text. On asking what she meant by this, she reiterated, and said that some parts were hard to understand because of the language. On the other hand, other parts she could read and understand the words, but thought the behavior of many characters to be strange. This last idea was shared by the other two in her group, which the most important description of the characters in general was that they were strange and mysterious. To present a few examples of this, the students said this was true for the boy in the shop, the man who sold wands and the goblins. Jona tried to explain what was odd about them, and said this:

*Jona: It was the way they thought and talked about what was happening. They were weird.*

This could be referring to the many magical words and names that are used in the text, and it could also include the way Hagrid is speaking with a strong accent. I asked him what he meant by his statement, and Jona said that it was due to the words which often were very weird to him.

An example of this can be the names of different shop, with examples of a store which sells owls: “Eeylops Own Emporium” (Rowling 56), the bank “Gringotts” (56) or the wizarding sport called “Quidditch” (60). A couple of examples of speech can be a woman looking at ingredients in Diagon Alley, which proclaim: “Dragon liver, sixteen Sickles an ounce, they’re mad...” (Rowling 56), or the Mr. Ollivander (the wand-seller) which describes different wands to Harry: “Maple and phoenix feather. Seven inches. Quite whippy. Try-“ (65). With these examples it is possible to understand that Jona thought they behaved strangely and that he thought some of them and their way of speaking and acting unusual.

After having gone through the characters and their behavior, the next point of discussion was to try and explain what the characters in the chapter looked like. The first character group A decided to address was Harry Potter. They were extremely accurate in their descriptions of Harry Potter as compared to the written description in the book, commenting on his small stature, his glasses and his scar shaped like a bolt of lightning. The interesting thing is that in this particular chapter, Harry Potter isn’t described directly in the text at all. The only thing about him mentioned directly in the text is the lightning scar, when the wand-seller touches it when Harry is buying a wand. This can indicate that the participants have drawn from another source of knowledge, such as them having read the book before or from seeing the movies. It is also possible to have seen images or commercial posters of the movies on the internet. The students took turns talking about Harry Potter, and the rest merely nodded when another student spoke. The second “character” they described, was a goblin. Trying to come up with a creature to use as an example, Jona states:

*Jona: I think the goblin looks rather like Dobby, just without the sack (pillowcase) that Dobby wears. I mean, they are small.*

This presents an interesting situation where the student has drawn from his previous knowledge from either a book or movie, namely the second in the series. Dobby the house-elf does not appear until the second volume in the Harry Potter-series. Other than that description, the participants of group A could not come up with more details on the visuals of the goblins. Turning



the attention over to Hagrid received more traction, however. Kristian immediately responded with:

*Kristian: I have always imagined that he is very tall. Like, super-big. Also a bit shabby.*

*Jona: I would describe him as looking like my grandfather. My grandfather has beard all over the place, and is always wearing a brown coat.*

*Martha: It was hard for him to take the escalators. So he must to pretty big.*

This character seems to have caught the students' attention just as much as Harry Potter himself has, and this might have to do with Hagrid's presence in the chapter they have read. He is a character that participates in the events from the start of the text until the end of the chapter. Also, the fact that according to the text he is very large, makes him a character that perhaps has a more memorable impact when the author is setting a new scene or unfurling and describing events. A couple of examples of this from the text are "not only was Hagrid twice as tall as anyone else," (Rowling 52) and "Hagrid was so huge that the crowd parted easily" (53). As we can see, the remarks from the students are rather accurate. When asked about the people present in the Leaky Cauldron, the students do not seem to remember as much about their appearance, and this is also true of the Mr. Ollivander, the man who sells Harry Potter his magic wand. In the text the wand-seller is described as "an old man" (Rowling 63) and Harry states that "those silvery eyes were a bit creepy" (63).

Group B also made the journey through the characters they discovered in the text. Here it seems their memory is a bit less precise. The characters they mention are Harry Potter, Hagrid, the goblins at the bank and the seller of magic wands. Their answers were also less precise in language and descriptions than group A's answers had been, with the example of when Natalie tried to describe the seller of magic wands. Kristian from group A simply said: "the man who sells wands". This is not highly descriptive but still precise in that you know which character he is referring to. Natalie from group B on the other hand said:

*Natalie: There was one person which Harry Potter bought something from.*

After a bit of cooperation, they agreed that she had meant the wand-seller. As this example shows, when trying to remember the characters presented in the chapter they had read, group B were more unsure of their own memories and were hesitant to answer. Through the interview process with group B, there was more need to emphasize that there is a total absence of correct answers to the questions they were given. This was done in order to make them understand that this is not a test which they would be praised or reprimanded from afterwards. In other words, this was told to them, not because any description of a character is correct when in relation to the text, but because I, the researcher, am trying to map their exploration and understanding of the text they have read and the ability to then retell that to me. This reminder did lead to answers coming forward, and often they knew more than what they at first assumed. One example of this is the quote from Natalie above. She was hesitant to speak out since she felt like she did not know enough. When giving her answer shown above, after assurance that any answers were great, the group latched on to it and made discoveries together from their memories about the wand-seller. They added something of his appearance, which they collectively thought old and frail. In addition, they explored how they experienced his behavior, which they agreed was eerie and mysterious. This is in line with what is stated in the text, as mentioned above related to group A's presentation of the wand-seller.

When discussing how the characters behaved and presented themselves throughout the text, the answers here were in tune with the ones presented by group A. Though the amount of description was not the same, they arrived at largely the same conclusions towards the characters' behavior. The wand-seller and the goblins were odd and mysterious creatures, and they acted in a way that made them distinctly different from the other characters presented in the chapter they read. Jennifer referred to the wand-seller in a way that

*Jennifer: He was almost scary. I didn't like him.*

Having reached the end of their listing of characters and their personalities, we come to the description of the characters in question. Again, group B used fewer words, and less clarity, to inform about mostly the same impressions. Tommy began describing Harry Potter in the following way.

*Tommy: Harry Potter. He's a nerd. Glasses.*

When asked to explain the meaning of this statement, Tommy stated that his meaning was a bit more nuanced. He saw Harry Potter as a character which was shy, embarrassed about his own looks and that he is not one of the cool kids. The others support this explanation, and the only thing which were added to this explanation was that Harry Potter was not that tall. Moving over to Hagrid, they were less sure of how to describe his looks, until Natalie put forth:

*Natalie: The guy Harry traveled with during the beginning (of the text). I have never seen him, but I think he looks like an old teacher, and has very bushy hair all over his face."*

As we can see, this is mostly the same impression that the first group had as well. The other students jumped in to add that he is very big. Again, the look of Hagrid seems to be more realized in the minds of the students in the study compared to other characters that are presented. This might be because the descriptions of him make him stick out mentally as much as he is supposed to do physically in the book, due to his vast size. In addition, Hagrid is one of the characters most present in the chapter the students have read, which could mean the constant reminder serves to solidify the mental image the readers make of him.

When asked about the goblins, each student in the group gave their own small input as to the visual look of the creatures:

*Tommy: Very, very ugly.*

*Natalie: Like trolls. Probably very small.*

*Jennifer: Yes, small.*

It seems to have made an impression on them that the creatures have a distinctly ugly appearance, and the comment that includes "like trolls" can seem to suggest that the students read these creatures as individuals that are not accepted in the wizarding world. Lastly, they tried to muster up images of the man selling wands, and only Tommy had an image he wanted to contribute:

*Tommy: Old I think. Old with a big belly.*

This is only partially accurate. He is described as old, but there is no mention of body size at all.

#### 4.2.1.5 *Memorable moments*

At the end of the first day with interviews, I asked the students if there was anything, they would like to point out which made an impression on them while reading the text, for example a moment in the story, a character or perhaps a building. Jona from group A was quick off the mark with a couple of things he remembered better than others after the reading:

*Jona: When Harry Potter was down in the bank, when he found out how much money he had stored in the bank. That was pretty cool. Also, the moment where they hit the brick wall three times, that I remember. And when Harry Potter saw the brick wall open up into a door, he was so surprised. That stuck with me.*

Above Jona presented two moments in the story where Harry Potter himself is rather excited and elated. It might be that that he simply shares the wonder Harry Potter experiences in these moments, and therefore they become moments of joy and wonder for him as well. It might also be a possible error in communication from the interviewer, where Jona is trying to find moments in the story where the text describes the moment itself as exciting to a character (Harry Potter in this case). In any case, these moments, in particular the one where the brick wall opens up into an archway, are a grand introduction to the magical world. This happens almost simultaneously for both Harry Potter and the reader, as the reader does not have much knowledge about magic or its associated culture at this point either. The way it is described in the book is after Hagrid has formed the archway in the brick wall, he “grinned at Harry’s amazement” (Rowling 56). This interpretation by the student is quite accurate compared to the way it is presented in the text.

When asked the same question, Martha answered that she thought it was a bit boring and a bit long, also mentioning that reading is not one of her favorite activities. Adding to this, she says:

*Martha: I don’t think there was a lot of stuff happening. In addition, I am not very fond of the Harry Potter-series.*

Participating as well as she could, she admitted to simply not enjoying the reading and the universe in general. In turn, no particular moment stood out to her. Kristian thought on the question while the others answered, and when it was his turn, he started talking about the wand-seller:

*Kristian: Mr. Ollivander. He is a weird person, and he sort of sticks out to me. He was special, in a way. Like, for instance, he could remember very well. Actually, he could remember every wand he had ever sold. Sort of creepy, in a way.*

When asked about their reading, and if they had moments in particular that stood out to them from the text, group B chose different moments. Natalie was very excited when retelling something that happened while they were in the bank:

*Natalie: There was a moment, and Hagrid was with Harry Potter. There was a place where they could get trapped inside the wall, that was really thrilling to read. I remember the feeling of tension well.*

The moment she is talking about refers to when they are underground, far below London. A goblin is helping them open a vault, and tells Harry Potter that if the door is not opened in the proper manner, the person doing this incorrect opening would be sucked in and trapped inside the door.

Tommy mentioned an overarching idea, which stuck with him and mentioned two distinct episodes which fit the criteria of his idea:

*Tommy: I really like the traveling bits. Especially the magic travelling. It reminds me of fairy tales, which I like a lot. Both the boat and when they drive the magical minecarts.*

The boat ride is when Harry Potter and Hagrid are taken from a hut at sea and back to the mainland. In this instance Hagrid uses his umbrella to make the boat move of its own accord, while he reads the magical newspaper. The second moment is when the goblin is taking them to the vaults by “driving” a minecart down deep under London, again by magical means.

#### 4.2.2 Reading the illustrated version – Day 2

On the day following the first interview, the students started the day by reading the chapter again. This time they read the illustrated version, with illustrations by Jim Kay and slightly different formatting of the text. They ended up using almost exactly the same amount of time on the second reading as they did with the first reading, where the last student was done by approximately 60 minutes, but some students were faster. Even though they had read this exact text the day before this time frame was not surprising, given that the text now had a slightly new format and the inclusion of illustrations. They were then given the questionnaires to fill out. After that was completed, they were interviewed in the same groups as the day before. Before the interview started, they were again told that they could use the text given to them (the illustrated one) while answering the questions during the interview.

##### 4.2.2.1 *Notable differences between the readings*

At the start of the interview, it was natural to discuss the students general first impressions of the differences between reading the same texts in different formats. When asked if they thought the experience was different, the students in group 1 all agreed that it was. As a couple of examples of their comments regarding this initial impression, Jona and Martha both had comments that exemplified the general viewpoints of the group,

*Jona: It was easier to keep up with the story when we had pictures in addition to the text.*

*Martha: Both times I read the text, I thought it was confusing because I didn't quite get the story and narrative. But the pictures made it easier to interpret and follow along, and that made me understand more.*

As we can see from these statements, the illustrations did indeed make a difference to them while reading, and seemingly in a positive direction. Jona stated that it made a difference in keeping up his concentration while reading and made it easier to understand the plot as it unfurled. For Martha, it helped with her total understanding of the text, as the illustrations made the text easier to maneuver and interpret the characters and places presented to her, which she gave an example: Hagrid and Harry sitting on a bench. It made her realize how huge Hagrid was. Kristian on the other hand, who previously stated that he loved the books and had read them

previously, was of a different mind. He gave a clear answer when asked if the images made a difference for him when reading, saying that he did not think they helped him with the story or understanding the text in general. If anything, he gave the impression that he preferred reading the text without illustrations, as it made it easier for him to maintain his own images of the characters and places present in the text. Even so, he thought that reading the illustrated version made it easier to discuss and talk about afterwards, and one example he made was how much easier it was to answer questions and discuss the text in the interview setting that he was participating in currently. In particular, he thought it was much easier when discussing a part of the text to find it quickly when with the format present in the illustrated version, and to then be able to participate in the discussion. Even though they were allowed to do this in the first interview, Kristian stated that the text was much harder to navigate than the illustrated one, though he was not conscious about that fact until he had read the illustrated version.

When posed the same question, group 2 gave similar answers. The general attitude leaned towards the illustrations making the reading experience distinctly different, and when discussing what type of difference, the general feeling in the group was that the illustrations had a positive effect. Though the general sentiments were similar throughout the group, the level of agreement was different. While Jennifer thought the illustrations made a small difference, Natalie and Mia thought it made a vast difference. This is made clear particularly through Natalie's own comment:

*Natalie: Yes, the difference is very apparent to me. When I read the text with illustrations in it, it was much easier for me to understand and imagine how things looked and how things happened.*

She explained that the level of understanding and ability to imagine how things looked or happened when reading the text was elevated because of what the illustrations provided. In other words, Natalie thought the illustrations helped her stimulate her imagination, and specifically helped her image things visualized in the illustrations themselves. Mia concurred when hearing Natalie speak, and simply added how much she liked the images and that looking

at them was pleasing, and that this was interesting to do in addition to reading the text. Tommy was a tad more conservative, but he did like and enjoy having illustrations in the text.

*Tommy: Yeah, I liked having pictures in the text. Some things were easier, in a way.*

When asked to extrapolate what “some things” were, it became apparent that what he meant was that the illustrations helped him understand what was happening in the story and made it easier to remember how people or things looked like after completing the text.

#### *4.2.2.2 Recollection for a second time*

It was considered interesting to see if the recollection of the story was higher, now that the participants had read the text with illustrations. Asking them to recount what happened in the text again, group 1 gave a rather accurate retelling with Kristian in the lead this time.

*Kristian: Harry Potter wakes up on the island, and since Hagrid is asleep, Harry Potter pays the owl with money. Then Hagrid wakes up before they go to London. They take the subway, before they come in to... the... Leaky Cauldron, and there they knock on the brick-thing and enter Diagon Alley. There they go to Gringotts first, and get some of Harry's money and the other secret thing. Then they go to buy school equipment.*

This is a pretty accurate summary of a large part of the chapter. With a few prompts, and help from the rest of the group, they remembered most of the major events from the story. As a group, they touched on the goblins in the bank, they discussed the wand-seller and the boy in the clothes-shop. During the retelling they did not touch upon the boat ride from the island. An interesting thing to note is that although they were told before the start of the interview that they could review the text and the illustrations, this group did not do this during their answers to this particular question. This was communicated before the interviews started, and prior to this question in particular.

When trying to retell the story they had read again, the students in group 2 were also better at remembering and presenting the retelling during the interview after having read the illustrated version. As a small example excerpt, this is how they retold the story together.



*Tommy: He wakes up on a bad mattress. They go to London to buy schoolbooks, and goes under London and stuff, in the bank that is.*

*Natalie: The used a boat. It was moved by magic, I think. Something with an umbrella. A pink one.*

*Mia: The place with shops. Weren't there a lot of strange houses? Ones that were a bit skewed and lopsided, and had lots of strange signs and names on them?*

*Natalie: Yeah, I remember too. (looks up the illustration of Diagon Alley)*

*Some things are very colorful, but others are very dark and almost sad.*

An obvious difference between the two groups is shown here. Group 1 did not use the text they were given at all when retelling the story, but group 2 did. They used it as reference and to illustrate to each other what situation they meant or which building/character they were talking about. Again, this was an accurate retelling of the story, touching on important scenes (travelling to London, the bank, the boy in the clothes shop and the wand-seller) and tying them together. Of the events that they seemed to retell more vividly was the shopping street itself, meeting the goblins and the pale boy in the clothes shop. Events they did not touch upon during this retelling is the pub (The Leaky Cauldron) through which they enter Diagon Alley. They also do not mention the ending of the text, just like group 1, where Hagrid is telling Harry Potter about the evil wizard and how Harry's parents died.

#### *4.2.2.3 Do the participants think the illustrations are of help to them while reading?*

After doing the retelling for the second time, they were asked if they could point out any specific scene, place or character that they now felt were easier to understand, having read the illustrated version. The question was posed this way to help them reflect on whether their recollection of the events and characters they met in the illustrated text were stronger and clearer than in the original text. In total, there are nine illustrations depicted in chapter five of the illustrated version. It is important to mention that three of these illustrations covers a large portion of two pages at once. When posed this question, group 1 had a few illustrations that they

wanted to address. The first was the image of Hagrid when he and Harry Potter are travelling by boat to London. The illustration is presented as figure 1 below, which is made by Jim Kay and presented in the “Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone” (Rowling and Kay, page 54-55).

*Kristian: It’s not quite like it is in this picture, not really. The umbrella’s way too small. It’s not how it is...*

*Jona: Yeah, I agree. It’s wrong. Something about the umbrella makes this picture weird. It’s really small...*

*Kristian: Yes, exactly. Weird. And not in a positive way.*

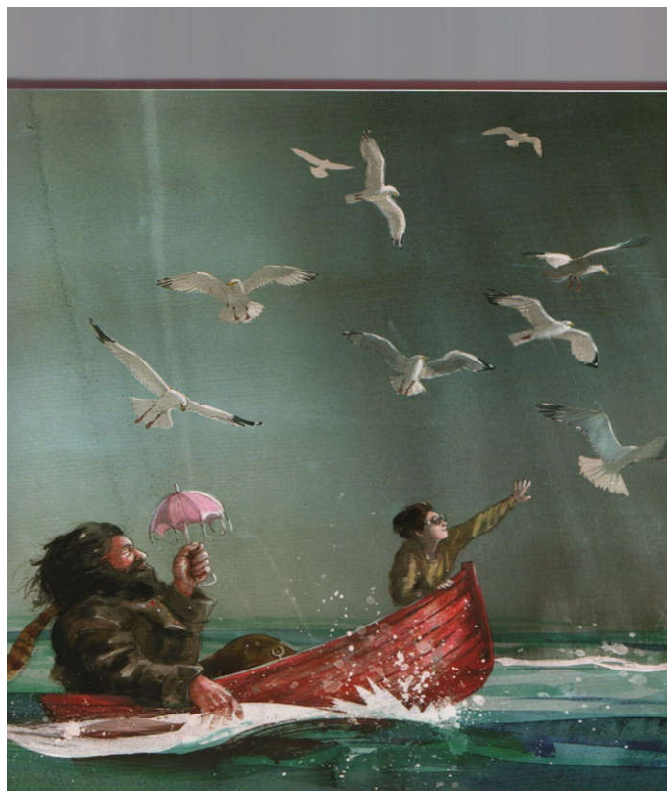


Fig. 1. Jim Kay’s illustration of Hagrid and Harry in the boat on their way to London. Rowling, J. K., and Jim Kay. *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone: Illustrated Edition*. Bloomsbury Children’s Books, 2015. Page 55.

In the minds of some of the readers in this study, this illustration is disturbing the text, more than being a cooperative force together with it. The way it is described in the book is that “Hagrid pulled out the pink umbrella again, tapped it twice on the side of the boat and they sped off towards land” (Rowling 51). Both Kristian and Jona were not happy with the way the umbrella was portrayed, and in turn that impacted their opinion on the whole image. Their own visualization of a certain part of the image was too far removed from the imagination of the illustrator, and this caused a disturbance in the reading for both the participants in question. In other words, because the illustration was too different from the students’ own imagination, the image served as a disruption instead of a potential scaffold to enhance the reading experience. For Martha this had not been an issue, but when discussing it as a group she also agreed that the umbrella was a bit tiny.

On the other hand, Martha had previously given the impression that she found reading to be a difficult activity to participate in. Though she still confirmed that to be true after reading the illustrated version of the text, she gave the impression that the images made easier.

*Martha: I often think reading is hard and boring, so it was more fun with images. I thought the images made things simpler. I appreciated that. When I could look at the images when I needed to visualize how a person or place looked, it made it easier and less difficult.*

For Martha reading is difficult. The statement she makes indicates that the images give her more tools to understand what she is reading, and therefore she is more apt to enjoy the process more. In this sense, the illustrations can be seen as a helping structure that enables Martha in this case to understand more than she would do on her own. She again mentioned the illustration of Hagrid and Harry sitting on a bench, as this helped her understand more of the situation than she did when she only read the text.

Besides his criticism of the image of Hagrid holding the umbrella, Jona seemed to indicate that his enjoyment of reading the text increased by having images alongside the text in the illustrated version.

*Jona: I thought the experience was more fun with images.*

After asking him to explain how it was more fun, Jona gave an answer like the one above by Martha. He stated that the images made the text easier to read, and in turn easier to visualize and understand. For him, that increased understanding and aid in visualization meant that the text became more enjoyable to read and in turn more fun. When asked as a group if there were any images that made a particular impact on them while reading, or that were helpful in aiding their visualization of certain characters and/or locations, the group agreed that it was the image of the boy in the clothes shop. This illustration is presented below as figure 2.

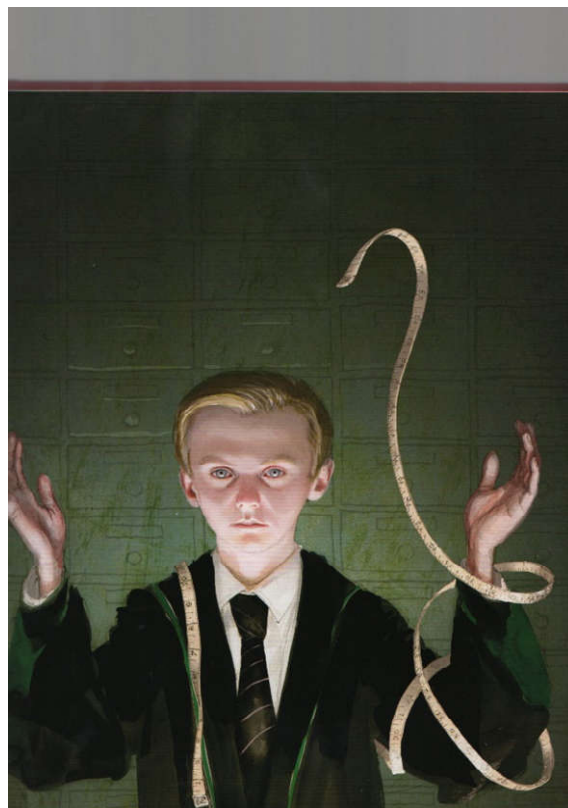


Fig. 2. Jim Kay's illustration of the pale boy in the clothes shop. Rowling, J. K, and Jim Kay. *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone: Illustrated Edition*. Bloomsbury Children's Books, 2015. Page 67.

Examples of descriptions of the boy in the text are where Harry thinks "He was liking the boy less and less every second" (Rowling 60). In addition to this, there is that reveal the boy to consider

himself of high class and is quite disgusted by those beneath him, as shown by him disagreeing with letting witches and wizards who are born to non-magical parents being allowed in magic schools: “They’re just not the same, they’ve never been brought up to know our way” (Rowling 61). The essence of his statements on this topic is that people who are too unlike me should not be allowed to do the things I do. The sense and portrayal of this character was as they had imagined it while reading the un-illustrated version, but the image helped solidify and increased their interpreted feeling of “scary and evil”, which the group felt described this character accurately.

Faced with the same question, group 2 were mostly of the opinion that the images were a positive influence and helpful to them while reading the illustrated version of the text. Tommy was positive to the impact the images had on his experience of reading the text, and voiced that he thought “they were mostly helpful.” When asked to elaborate what he meant by mostly, he began explaining how he thought there were good and bad things about the illustrations.

*Tommy: I liked some, but not all of it. They were sometimes drawn in a weird way, and had a lot of weird things. Sometimes it was just too much in one image.*

In other words, Tommy did think the images were helpful and made it easier to visualize characters and locations. Importantly, this did not happen all the time. In some scenarios he experienced an overload of information from the images presented to him, and that made it more difficult to interpret and understand the text he was reading. In these instances, the images added to the difficulty, instead of making the reading easier and/or flow better. An example Tommy used to explain his point was Jim Kay’s illustrations of the shopping street named “Diagon Alley”, which depicts the shopping street over the span of 4 pages (Rowling and Kay, page 60-63). Part of the shopping street-illustration is found in figure 3 below.



Fig. 3. Part of Jim Kay's four-page illustration of Diagon Alley, the wizard shopping street. Rowling, J. K, and Jim Kay. *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone: Illustrated Edition*. Bloomsbury Children's Books, 2015. Page 62-63.

Tommy simply thought there was too much going on in these illustrations, and the presentation of the shopping street collided with his own visualization of the place. This collision became an example of how some of the illustrations became disruptive during the reading experience, instead of being a positive influence on it.

When asked to show images that made a specific impact on them or were particularly helpful in aiding their visualization of characters and/or locations, Natalie showed two pictures. One is the already mentioned image of Hagrid and Harry travelling to London by boat, and the other was the boy in the clothes store. Tommy pointed to the image of the goblins in his own text, which is found on page 65 of the illustrated version (Rowling and Kay 65).

*Tommy: One thing that was much easier to remember and imagine in my head was the goblins.*

The goblins were previously described by both Tommy and the group in general after their first reading to be "very ugly" and to "look like trolls, but probably very small ones". Asking Tommy what made him state that it made it easier to remember the goblins, reveals that the major reason for this is how well the image suited the image he had already made up of the goblins. Therefore, they served as a good memory and visualization point for Tommy.

However, we also have a contesting opinion between the two groups. Group 1 had a collective opinion that the image depicting Harry and Hagrid in the boat was too different, and therefore a disturbance to them while reading the text. The disturbance was mostly caused by the umbrella, and its size. Group 2, on the other hand, thought this image was one of the more evocative ones that inspired them and helped them imagine both the journey to London and the size of Hagrid. When showing and explaining about the picture of Hagrid and Harry in the boat, group 2 thought that the image was exciting and funny at the same time. They also made comments about how this picture made it much easier to picture how Hagrid is supposed to look, which indicates that the image was evocative when it comes to describing Hagrid in particular, both when it came to his size, but also the way he behaved in the way he sat in the boat and held his pink umbrella. As mentioned above, the way it is described in the book is that Hagrid taps the boat with his wand. In addition to that, straight afterwards, Hagrid starts reading a newspaper, so sitting and holding his umbrella like he does in the illustration is not described in the text.

Interestingly, both groups have chosen the illustration of the pale boy in the clothes shop. They have chosen this illustration for the exact same purpose. Both groups have stated that the image visualizes what they already had in mind for the character when they read the un-illustrated version. Additionally, the important, distinguishing feature of this particular image is that it confirms and enhances the participants' from reading the first text.

*Mia: He doesn't look very kind. He seems rich and mean. A bit full of himself.*

*Natalie: He looks evil. He just looks scary and evil.*

This correlates very accurately to what group 1 thought of the character as well, as they also used the descriptors "scary and evil" when talking about the boy in the image. This seems to indicate a couple possibilities. The descriptions in the book are accurate and done in a way that is easy to understand, or the image itself show signs of being evil and scary that is easy to pick up and interpret that way. It may also be that both these possibilities are true, and that they work together.

#### 4.2.2.4 *The images themselves*

Another question the participants were asked was to discuss their view on the illustrations in the own right, in the manner that was possible. Some overlap was expected to happen, but having them try to look at the illustrations for their own sake makes it easier to interpret what statements are connected to the reading of the text and what is due to the images themselves and their style. Group 1 had mostly positive comments about the illustrations:

*Jona: They are pretty good. They describe things pretty well.*

*Kristian: I think many of the images are cool.*

*Martha: The images are nice. They work well.*

One interesting thing to note here is that Kristian is quite pleased with the illustrations overall, but has been quite adamant about that they disrupt his imagination when he is reading the illustrated text.

Group 2 has rather similar statements and seems to agree on the overarching opinion that the illustrations are good and made well.

*Natalie: The images were cool.*

*Mia: They were great.*

*Natale: Lots of color.*

*Mia: Lots of details, so a lot to look at. Some images were even funny.*

*Jennifer: I thought they were good. They are nice.*

*Tommy: They were drawn in a weird way, at least a bit. Good, but not quite perfect.*

Most of the participants appreciate the illustrations when viewed separate from the text they have read, which has also been the tendency when viewing them together with the text. As mentioned, Mia thought there even was additional humor to be found in some illustrations, to which an example was Hagrid and Harry in the boat to London (see figure 1, page 46). In addition, the participant who has uttered the least amount of appreciation for the images in combination



with reading the text (Kristian) still made a clear statement that he liked the images and that he thought they were interesting and cool on their own. In that sense only Tommy had an issue with the technique or method of drawing/painting on some of the illustrations, with one example being the previously mentioned illustration of “Diagon Alley” (see figure 3, page 50). Other than that, the rest of the participants appreciated the illustrations for their own qualities.

#### 4.2.2.5 *Comparing the illustrations to the visualization from the movies*

Given that all except one participant had seen some part of at least the first movie in the Harry Potter series, it made sense to make them compare their impressions from the movies and from the illustrations in the text they have read. When asked about what they thought about the different forms of visual help, Jona said:

*Jona: I would rather read the book first, and then seen the movie afterwards, if I could choose. The movie disrupts the images I make when I read.*

I think ask him if he feels the same about illustrations.

*Jona: No, because images can be viewed while reading. They work together, sort of.*

*Kristian: The images and the text are on the same team, in a way.*

*Jona: Yeah, like that.*

Here we have an interesting statement. When comparing the relationship with the text, Jona finds the movies disturbing to his own ability to picture what is happening while reading the text. On the other hand, an illustrated version of a text “are on the same team”, they cooperate. To Jona illustrations create the opposite of a disturbance, they create a practical aid to visualize what is happening in the text.

In addition to this, they were asked if they thought it was practical to have two sets of visual help when reading the text, both from the movies and from the illustrations.

*Martha: The good thing is that you can pick the image that you like the best for a character or place. But it is hard to not mix them.*

In other words, being able to choose can be a good thing, but mixing them up and forgetting which image comes from which source is not a good thing, according to Martha.

Group 2 was also asked if they thought about the differences between the illustrations and the movies, and if they had opinions on which visual aid was better or more helpful while reading the text. Natalie had not seen any of the movies at all, so was not of an opinion. Jennifer and Tommy had similar opinions:

*Tommy: If there is both a book and a movie with the same title, I usually read the book and watch the movie. The order is not that important. Then I compare the differences. I think movies often express what is happening in a better way. It is clearer than books.*

*Jennifer: I think both forms are okay. I manage to see them as two different things. But I like movies better.*

It seems that both Jennifer and Tommy think that moving images create a more complete and valuable visual aid for them to use when reading a text than illustrations do. The opposite of what Jona from group 1 thought.

#### 4.2.2.6 *Last comments*

At the end of the interview, each participant was asked what they thought of the experience reading the text and discussing it afterwards. Most of the responses were positive.

Group 1:

*Martha: I think reading is hard, and it was a bit hard now too. It was a bit more fun with images, more fun than usual. Talking about it was interesting. More fun than normal classroom teaching.*

*Jona: It was fun to read Harry Potter. I thought it was exciting.*

*Kristian: I like reading, so I thought it was fun. It is nice to have read the book with images, but I will probably not do it again. I liked my own fantasy better, as I mentioned.*

Group 2:

*Natalie: It was exciting and interesting. Fun!*

*Tommy. It was interesting. Sort of many pages, but not really. It was ok.*

*Mia: It was a lot more fun than ordinary school, but I am not sure if I would have done it at home.*

*Jennifer: I think reading is boring. The images were nice, they made the experience slightly more like a movie. But still not great.*

As a summary, we can see that most of the students liked participating in the project. They overall like reading the text and appreciated the illustrations. Notable exceptions were Kristian who did not appreciate the illustrated version, as that disrupted his own imagination more than it stimulated and aided him, and Jennifer who thought the whole reading process was a bit tough.

#### 4.3 Questionnaire

The questionnaire is composed of 12 short questions. The reason this was implemented as a data-gathering tool in addition to the interviews was to be able to look for comparisons and transcendent answers that show up in multiple forms of data on the same subject. The original idea was to perform the data collection in a normal class of 25-30 students and get a few smaller groups from that class to do interviews. That would in turn mean that the questionnaire would encompass more students than were subject to the interviewing process. However, as the events of selecting a class unfolded and the subject class was found, it was a smaller class than originally imagined. It was composed of eight students where seven wanted to participate. In other words, only the people who have been interviewed as part of this project have participated in the questionnaire responses. The questionnaire data is analyzed and will be used to compare with their answers from the interview. The researcher acknowledges that there may be differences between how a student would respond to a written question answered anonymously and a question posed during an interview in front of their peers. The questionnaires in graphical form can be found at the end of the document.

#### 4.3.1 The twelve questions – Presented in text

The different choices given for the participants to reply to the statements presented are as follows: “disagree a lot”, “disagree”, “don’t know /can’t decide”, “agree” and finally “agree a lot”. They were only allowed to choose one answer on every question.

The first statement which the students responded to was “I think the text was interesting to read” to which the vast majority agreed. Four of the students answered that they “agreed”, while two responded that they “agreed a lot”. Results indicate that most of the students found the text interesting

The second statement which the student responded to was “I think the text was fun.” Here, the answered were much more varied. Of the seven respondents, one said they “agree a lot”, two said they “agree”, two stated that they “don’t know / can’t decide” and two replied that they did “disagree” with the statement. This result is more varied, and though the majority though the text was interesting, there is more an even split between the students regarding if the text was fun.

The third statement to which they responded was “the text was long”, to which all participants answered “agree” (two) or “agree a lot” (five). The major consensus was that the students found the text long.

Statement four was “I immersed myself in the story.” Large majority chose “agree” (three) or “agree a lot” (two), while one responded with “disagree” and one student “didn’t know / can’t decide”. A majority of the students became immersed in the story while reading it.

The fifth statement the students responded to was “I experienced a different level of immersion when I read with and without illustrations.” Nobody disagreed at all with this statement, but a majority of four people answered “don’t know / can’t decide”, while of the remaining three people two chose “agree” while a single student chose “agree a lot”. This can indicate that the question was unclear, or that there wasn’t enough of a difference to make them choose an answer other than “don’t know / can’t decide”.

Statement six reads “the illustrations (pictures) had a positive effect on the reading experience”. Nor this question received any forms of disagreement. Four students answered that they “agree”, while two answered “agree a lot”. This data indicates that the illustrations had a positive effect on the students reading experience.

The seventh statement they made replies to was “the pictures gave me more information than what the text alone did.” Though one student put “disagree” as their response, five of the students responded with “agree a lot” and one student with “agree.” From this data, one can suggest that the students were able to gather more information from their reading when the illustrations were present in the text.

The eighth statement was “the text was difficult to read,” to which the majority of the students (four) responded with “disagree. One student selected “agree” and the last one selected “don’t know /can’t decide” as their response. This was the only situation where one of the students had forgotten put an answer to the statement, which leaves us with six responses, instead of seven which is the case for the other eleven questions. The data seem to indicate that the students did not find the text difficult to read.

Statement nine consisted of the statement “the text was hard to understand” has mostly the same results as the previous statement. Four students responded with “disagree”, while two responded with “don’t know / can’t decide” and a single student responded with “agree”.

The results of the tenth statement, “the pictures helped me understand some parts of the text which was difficult to understand when I read the text without pictures”, are leaning more in the positive direction. Two students responded with “agree a lot”, while three responded with “agree”. The last two students did one response each, one stated that they “don’t know / can’t decide” and last one responded with that they “disagree.” A majority of the students seems to have increased understanding of the text with illustrations present, than compared to reading the text without them.

Statement eleven was “If I were to read the whole book, I would like to read the version with pictures in it,” to which the vast majority agreed. Five of the students responded that they “agree a lot”, and one agreed. The vast majority of the students would want to read the entire

book with illustrations, giving the indication that the text was more enjoyable with the illustrations in it.

The last statement to which they were to respond was “I enjoyed reading without the pictures, as the pictures disturbed the images I had already made of the characters and places they visit. Of the seven respondents, five said they “don’t know/can’t decide”, whereas one disagrees a lot and one agrees a lot. This suggests that most of the students were unable to determine whether the one or more of the illustrations were enough of a disturbance to want to purposefully read without them. Another possibility is that the question was hard to understand, and therefore there is a large response to the “I don’t know /can’t decide” choice.

## 5 Discussion

### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter will discuss the findings present in chapter 5, and discuss its connection with relevant theories presented in the chapter 3. The first section will discuss the findings from the interviews. The second section will discuss the findings from answers on the questionnaire, following a final section which will compare the findings from the two different data gathering methods. The findings from the interviews will be divided and discussed in sections, in relevance to different research questions. Firstly, there will be a discussion section surrounding the students who had a self-proclaimed positive influence from the illustrations on their reading experience, and then there will be a discussion section regarding the students who felt the impact of the illustrations impacted both positively and negatively towards their reading experience. After this, there will be a discussion regarding the questionnaire, and a small comparison of the findings from the interviews and questionnaire.

### 5.2 Examining the findings from the interviews

#### 5.2.1 Positive influences on the reading experience

Turning to the interview findings will help us explore potential responses to the research questions of this thesis. The first and overarching main research question was regarding how the

illustrations affect the reading experience. The second research question is concerned with if the illustrations work with or against the readers imagination, and this is connected to the third research question which is concerned with if there are any factors which limits possible interpretations of the text. The fourth research question was regarding if the illustrations make the text more enjoyable to read. The fifth research question is concerned with if the illustrations presentation of the setting and its characters change your previous imaginings of these. Lastly, research question six focuses on if illustrations deepen the understanding of the read text.

Following is a presentation of four students, two from each group, and their own articulations on if the illustrations in the text are a positive influence towards their reading experience, in terms of enjoyment, motivation and understanding. These students are Martha and Jona from group A, and Natalie and Mia from group B. This section will connect their thoughts and responses to theory and discuss their implications towards the different research questions. This section will incorporate three research questions, which are research questions one (the illustrations affect the reading experience), four (the illustrations make the text more enjoyable to read) and six (illustrations deepen the understanding of the read text).

Starting with Martha from group B, and her statement on reading in general, it is apparent how illustrations being present in the text was a positive influence on her reading experience:

*Martha: I often think reading is difficult and boring, so it was more fun with images. I thought the images made things simpler. I appreciated that. When I could look at the images when I needed to visualize how a person or place looked, it made it easier and less difficult. (Findings, p. 20)*

This statement conveys that the images made reading more fun and easier. In effect, it made the reading experience more enjoyable. This response is a direct answer to the research question which asks if illustrations make the text more enjoyable. There is an important connection, which is reading being more fun when it is easy enough. Put differently, when the reading skill required is lowered to a point where the reader is more comfortable, there is more enjoyment in the reading experience. There is also a very important thing to notice in her choice of words, namely using difficult and boring together. Both these findings match well the observations made by

Kirchhoff (2013), that there is a very important balance between enjoyment and difficulty. This also encompasses a statement from Jona in group A, which stated:

*Jona: I thought the experience was more fun with images. (Findings, p.21)*

When asked to expand upon what he meant by the statement, he explained that the illustrations gave him an increased understanding and an increased ability to visualize, which led to the text being a bit easier to process. This in turn made the text become more fun. The indication seems to be that there is a strong connection between the reading skill required to understand and internalize the contents, and that the illustrations help make up for any skill gap in place between the individual students and the text in question. Combining this finding with the theory from Kirchoff (2013), it indicates that illustrations do make the reading experience more enjoyable. However, the findings combined with the theory from Kirchhoff also suggest that the correlation is stronger if there is a gap between a student's skill and the skill required to understand the text in question. In other words, if the illustrations help the students understand more of the text, then the illustrations also help lead to a more enjoyable reading experience. This is an answer to research question six, which is connected to if illustrations deepen the readers understanding of the read text.

Of the seven participants, only Mia from group B was not present during the first interview. She did however participate in the reading of both texts, which gave her the same access to the same level of comparison as the other participants. Mia can be categorized as the same type of student as Martha. She did not inherently like reading, and often found it a boring activity. She did however, like Martha, appreciate the illustrations and what they contributed to her reading experience. When describing what the illustrations were like to her, she stated that they contained:

*Mia: Lots of details, so a lot to look at. Some images were even funny. (Findings, p.24)*

This, to Mia, was a supply of many potential aids to visualize the various items presented in the text. In addition, to her, the illustrations sometimes added humor to the reading experience. This adding of humor is a well-represented case of Barthes' definition of "illustration" (1977). To Mia, it was not present in the text, but the illustration provided humor that she could grasp and



comprehend. Natalie, from group B, also stated that having illustrations available made the text easier to comprehend and to visualize the characters and places presented in the text.

The four previous statements when viewed together indicate that there are quite a few students who are very adamant towards how illustrations in a text changes their reading experience. The students had similar experiences where they enjoyed the reading experience more when there were illustrations present in the text, which also led to a report of more reading motivation. This finding provides a similar connection to Kirchhoff's discovery of the correlation between motivation and enjoyment, as they are tightly linked (2013). Natalie, from group B, stated that having illustrations available made the text easier to comprehend and to visualize the characters and places presented in the text. This makes a strong argument, and also serves as a direct response to research questions one (the illustrations affect the reading experience), four (the illustrations make the text more enjoyable to read).

These findings are an accurate description of the concept behind Vygotsky's "zone of proximal development" (1978). When the reader just has the text in a foreign language to help them understand what they are reading, for some of the participants of this study the text is too hard to grasp well. On the other hand, when they have illustrations to help them alongside the text, it becomes easier for the participants to comprehend, understand and visualize the characters and places presented to them. In other words, according to Vygotsky this happens because the students' reading ability is just below the required skill level to understand the text on their own. The illustrations then represent the supportive structure that is necessary to reach the skill level required to understand the material. By using Vygotsky's observations about how children learn and understand material, there are strong indications that the illustrations represent a possible supporting structure for some readers when reading a text in a foreign language.

That the illustrations add something to the experience leads us to make use of the theory from Gamble (2013). She argues that children use images to be able to process and later retell a story they have experienced through reading. The students' statements on how the illustrations made the reading easier to handle and helped them visualize the different characters and places

present in the text they read, indicates that it has a large correlation with the arguments presented by Gamble (2013). The illustrations can be argued to have a significant effect on what the reader is able to process and understand, but in addition they can help improve the ability to retell the story afterwards. This sense of the illustrations helping a reader make more sense of the text, the visualization of the characters and places and the retelling afterwards, as the developed argument from Gamble suggests, is present all of the above statements.

To add depth to the above statements on the supportive quality of the illustrations, again it is sensible to make use of Barthes' theories on the different text-image relationships. It stands to reason that if Martha, Jona, Mia and Natalie noticed a difference between the two readings, that something had changed. One reason could simply be that they are reading it the second time, and therefore there is more familiarity of the text. At the same time, these four students were all very explicit in crediting the illustrations for the change in question. Assuming the illustrations have something to do with the change in experience, it is sensible to suggest that the illustrations themselves have changed something about the reading experience for these particular students. This can be argued to be Barthes' category of "relay" (1977). This type of relationship is used by Barthes when describing a more harmonious text-image relationship. When applying the concept of relay to the findings from the statements of the four students above, some students need a supporting structure for them to be able to understand the contents of the text, such as the illustrations. For students who fall beneath the required skill level to comprehend and understand the text on its own, it can be suggested the text is not complete without the illustrations. For Martha, Jona, Mia and Natalie this change meant that because the text and illustrations worked together to make the text more accessible to a lower skill level-reader, they had an easier time reading and understand the contents of the text. Because of this change in difficulty, they enjoyed the reading more. When presented with a challenge that is out of reach, it is imperative that the person is supported by some measure in order to be able to reach that goal.

While the illustrations do not seem to be a perfect solution to all readers in all situations, it does seem to make a difference to the four readers presented above. This finding is supported by the discoveries from Hibbing and Rankin-Erickson, who argue that pictures have the potential

to be an important tool to facilitate a positive reading experience for readers who do not possess the necessary skill set to understand and comprehend a text well on their own (2003). To understand how this can work, one can compare reading a book to climbing a mountain. A mountain that seems impossible to climb, and one that is hard but doable, might not differ much in actual size. In the case of this particular project, the text itself is the same. The format has changed a bit, and there are illustrations present in the illustrated version. If one takes into consideration the ideas by Barthes, however, a text is not a complete entity: it needs a reader (1977). This concept enables the argument that the text becomes different with every reader that encounters it. In that sense, it is sensible to state that the text can be incomplete without illustrations, if the reader in question needs them to understand the text more completely. Remember, the mountain might not actually vary that much in size, depending on format and inclusion of illustrations. However, the difference of perspective with the readers who struggle, where the challenge goes from impossible to manageable, matters a lot to that individual who must climb the mountain in question. The findings seem to indicate that an illustrated book changes the challenge from impossible to manageable for some of the participants of this study, both with regards to comprehension, but also, and essentially, increased enjoyment during the reading experience.

As mentioned in the theory chapter, there is a real possibility that more than one of Barthes' categories regarding the text-illustration relationship can be true at the same time. While the findings seem to indicate that the illustrations fall under Barthes' definition of "relay", there is also an argument that the illustrations are just that: "illustrations" (Barthes 1977). This kind of text-image relationship happens when, according to Barthes, the images add something to the text that is not there on its own. Barthes himself argues that this definition of illustration plays a supportive role to the text. It adds something to the equation. One important factor that is vital to consider in this scenario is that the students are reading a text in a foreign language. What is important about this is that the illustrations themselves contain very little to no writing at all. In this sense, they are communication that is not mainly based on a specific language, allowing people of different nations to see the same thing. There is one factor that can be disruptive to this argument. Even though there might not be a language barrier in that the

students do not understand the foreign words necessary, there might be cultural elements that disturb their understanding; a cultural barrier. The cultures of Britain and Norway are not identical. However, the cultures are not vastly different, and there were no signs of cultural barriers during the interviews with the students.

### 5.2.2 Mixed influences on the reading experience

In similar fashion, this was true for the remaining three students as well, but on varying levels. Tommy voiced his opinion that the illustrations were helpful to him, and that they had a positive influence on his ability to visualize characters and locations, but that this was not true for all the illustrations.

*Tommy: I liked some, but not all of it. They were sometimes drawn in a weird way, and had a lot of weird things. Sometimes it was just too much in one image. (Findings, p.22)*

This statement reveals that Tommy found some of the illustrations helpful, and some of the illustrations disruptive. Considering that the illustrations were partly helpful, and partly disrupting, it is difficult to assess what level of positive influence the illustrations had on the overall reading experience. In trying to illustrate what a reader of this category experienced when reading the illustrated version of the text compared to the non-illustrated one, it is helpful to use the text-image relationship categories defined by Barthes (1977), namely “illustration” (25) when the influences of the illustrations are positive, and a mix between “anchorage” (40) and “relay” (41) when the illustrations provide negative influences. When the illustration influences the reading experience in a positive direction, it seems clear from the findings that they add something to the experience for the reader. This can either be support in form of aiding the visualization of characters and places in the text, or help in comprehending and retelling the contents of the text they have read. However, when the illustrations serve to be a negative influence on the reading experience, the findings tell us that there is a sense of disconnection between what the reader visualizes and comprehends. One illustration that was pointed out by Tommy himself was, according to Tommy, an illustration which was disruptive to his reading experience. The illustration in question was that of “Diagon Alley”, and is spaced out over four continuous pages (see figure 3, see page 50). This illustration was described by Tommy as

presenting “too much” information when he was reading, and this amount of information overload through the pictures served as a negative impact on his reading experience.

Kristian also found the illustrations to be disruptive to his visualization of characters and events from the text. Even though he stated that the illustrations were well made and, in most cases, beautiful, they did not work in tandem with his imagination regarding the different characters and places presented in the text. In other words, he enjoyed his own mental depictions of things presented to him in the text more than the ones presented by the illustrations in the text by Jim Kay.

Being the only participant who stated that he was fond of reading and that he had read all the books prior to being a part of this project, it is not surprising that this particular participant was the one with this viewpoint. Having read the text previously, without illustrations, has ensured him more opportunities to produce his own visual presentation of what is presented in the text. Based on the amount of reading Kristian had done prior to the project, and how he described himself as fond of reading, it also presents a different viewpoint to an argument presented earlier, when discussing skill requirement and the impact of illustrations on comprehension. Barthes’ illustrations (1977) provide support, and additional information that is not there without said illustrations. The argument was that when discussing participants who did not have the required skill level to comprehend and read the text presented to them, the text is not complete to them without the illustrations. To Kristian however, this seems to be the opposite.

*Kristian: It’s not quite like it is in this picture, not really. The umbrella’s way too small. It’s not how it is... (Findings, p.20)*

This statement is from Kristian’s discussion of the illustrations of Hagrid and Harry in the boat (figure 1, see page 46). The discussions with Kristian seem to indicate that his experience of the text is complete without the illustrations, contrary to that of the majority of the other students. In that sense, it is possible for the illustrations to present a character or scene in a way that does not merge with his Kristian’s own visual images. “It’s not how it is” tells us that he in fact experiences disruption in his reading, and that illustrations in that sense has a negative impact

on his reading experience. It detracts from his enjoyment of the text, and in turn could be argued to influence his motivation. Which is supported by his statement which says:

*Kristian: I like reading, so I thought it was fun. It is nice to have read the book with images, but I will probably not do it again. I liked my own fantasy better, as I mentioned. (Findings, p.27)*

The first sentence in this quote is indicative that Kristian's sentiment was that he enjoyed the reading in spite of the illustrations. What this means is that Kristian in effect is saying that if he did not enjoy reading so much, he might not have found the experience to be fun. Also, he states that he would probably not read any of the Harry Potter books in illustrated form again. This is a strong argument for the illustrations' potential to be disruptive and have a negative impact on the reading experience. An argument that arises from this finding is connected to Barthes' view on the author, where he states that in order for the reader to exist, the author must die (1977). This has many implications, but the important one for this research, is how Barthes establishes that the text itself is devoid of influence from the author when it is complete. In other words, whatever the author meant is irrelevant in Barthes' mind, the text is done and there is no point guessing what it meant in the mind of the author. To Barthes, the reader is now in charge of what the text means. To Kristian's experience with the illustrations, this concept represents the differences in interpretation of J. K. Rowling's original text. Rowling has created the wizarding world in her mind, and has shared it through a textual interpretation of her thoughts in the format of a book. Jim Kay reads this book, and Kay's interpretation of Rowling's interpretation is then represented in his illustrations. Each layer adds room for multiple interpretations. This argument is supported by the theory from Rothbauer, which states that each layer of explanation of the presented idea (Rowling's writing and Kay's illustrations are apt examples) adds a layer interpretation. To Kristian, Kay's illustrated interpretation of Rowling's wizarding world might not be as accurate as he believes his own mental illustrations of Rowling's wizarding world is. This is clear answer to research question two, regarding if illustrations work with or against the reader's imagination.

The only positive thing that Kristian saw in the illustrations, apart from being nice to look at, was that they made it easier to talk about and retell the story after reading it. He stated that he did not use the text to look up images during the interview, even though he could, but he thought the format made it easier to mentally access and remember when discussing the text. This finding also suggests that the idea of Gamble is accurate, in the sense that children who read use mental images to remember and retell stories they have read (59). In other words, the illustrations had a self-proclaimed positive effect of Kristian's ability to retell the story, even though they were disruptive towards how he imagined the characters and places in the text to look. It is difficult to ascertain with certainty if this is due to the illustrations being a common point of reference between the participants in the interview, leading to an easier explanation and understanding of what situation or character is being discussed. It could also be the case that the format of the illustrated version made it easier to mentally navigate when Kristian was trying to retell the story.

Lastly, Jennifer had a rather neutral attitude towards the illustrations. She was adamant about how she disliked the reading activity as a whole and did not enjoy the project that much. She did not experience much of a difference between the two readings.

*Jennifer: I think reading is boring. The images were nice, they made the experience slightly more like a movie. But still not great. (Findings, p.54)*

According to Jennifer, the illustrations made the reading experience slightly more like a movie. There was a self-proclaimed, very slight improvement in terms of enjoyment when reading the illustrated version, but not enough to make her state that the reading was enjoyable. There might be multiple reasons for this. One explanation can be that even with the illustrations, the skill level required for accessing and understand the text was still too high for Jennifer. Another, simpler reason, might be that it is simply because she did not enjoy reading the story and would think it boring no matter how many illustrations were added. Her statement indicates that watching the story told as a movie is more appealing to her.

### 5.2.3 Helping the reader pick out more information

Looking closely at the retellings of the story done by the participants of the study, there seems to be a definite improvement in recalling and retelling the story the participants have read after reading it a second time with illustrations. It is clear from the findings that group A retold the story with much more accuracy after having read the illustrated version, compared to what they managed after only having read the original printed version without illustrations. This also applied to group B. There was more detail, and they more accurately remembered characters, places and important moments in the story presented in the text. Group A did not use the text, with or without illustrations, as a reference when being interviewed, even though they were encouraged to do so. Group B on the other hand did reference various images after reading the illustrated version during the second interview.

The fact that there was more detail in both groups, considering that only one of the groups chose to use the illustrated text while doing the interview, is an indication that the participants had extracted more information from the text during their second reading. This is consistent with the concept discussed by Gamble. Her argument about how children mentally use visual images of a story to help retell it after they have read it is strongly connected with this part of the findings (Gamble 2013). Especially to the students who have stated and explained how it was easier to imagine and visualize the characters and places in the text with illustrations present, these illustrations represent a supportive tool for them to create mental images that will help them understand and aid in retelling the story afterwards. The illustrations help them put events, characters and places into a system, which makes both sorting them and looking them up after more manageable.

### 5.2.4 Did the illustrations change how the readers view characters in the text?

Though there were some students who experienced a richer visualization of the various characters and places in the text, none of the students experienced drastic changes. Rather, there are multiple examples of how their original interpretation was enhanced by the illustration. A couple of examples of this is how Tommy's interpretation of the goblin was confirmed Kay's visual



rendering of the creature in the illustration, and how both groups felt the illustration of the pale boy in the clothes shop was confirming their initial impression and visualization, but enhancing it.

Tommy was a bit torn regarding the illustrations, as he felt they were both a negative and positive influence on his reading experience. As previously mentioned, he thought Kay's representation of Diagon Alley was too cluttered and contained too much information (see image XX in Findings). On the other hand, he did appreciate some of the other representations of Kay's. Talking about if any illustrations were helpful to them while reading, Tommy answered:

*Tommy: One thing that was much easier to remember and imagine in my head was the goblins. (Findings, p.48)*

When he explained why this was easier for him to remember, Tommy stated that the illustration matched his own visualization of the goblin creature (see image XX in Findings). In turn, this made him sure that he had made the right connections and interpretations, and helped him remember it more vividly.

The second example concerns the pale boy in the clothes shop (figure 2, see page 48). In this situation, both group A and B were of the opinion that the boy was "scary and evil", which was the term both groups agreed upon after discussing the character during the first interview when only having read the text un-illustrated. This was also how they described the illustration of the pale boy, after having read the illustrated version. This last part can be seen in the statement below:

*Mia: He doesn't look very kind. He seems rich and mean. A bit full of himself.*

*Natalie: He looks evil. He just looks scary and evil. (Findings, p.49)*

It is the case that this description of the pale boy in the illustrations is rather close to their original description, prior to even having seen the illustration of him. When they discovered that the illustration of the pale boy matched their own interpretation of him, they were invigorated and excited, even though they did not like the character all that much.

In essence, there were not any findings of large gaps between the readers own interpretations and how the illustrations presented characters and places in the text, except one specific example: Harry and Hagrid in the boat (figure 1, see page 46). It is important to mention that this view was only present in group A, as group B thought it was a vivid and interesting illustration that to them was overall positive to their reading experience. However, there were multiple examples where the interpretation and illustration matched very well, serving as a confirmation to most of the participants that their own interpretation were on the right track when trying to visualize those particular moments presented in the text. This is an argument for that Jim Kay's illustrations are well "anchored" (Barthes 1977) to J. K. Rowling's original text, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (1997). It also serves as an answer to research question five, regarding if illustrations changed the way the reader viewed the setting or characters in the text.

#### 5.2.5 Are the illustrations limiting the possible interpretation?

In the same sense as the previous sub-chapter, there is an argument to be made that the illustrations can limit interpretation. The same evidence would be used, but for a slightly different purpose. When the participants found that some illustrations confirmed their own initial interpretation of a character or scene, they found the illustrations as a sort of proof that they had got it right. This can have the effect of rendering other possible interpretations, however likely or unlikely, as incorrect. If a reader creates an interpretation of a goblin from reading the text, and then that interpretation is confirmed by the illustration in the illustrated version, the question becomes: Is that reader ever going to question his interpretation again, and revisit it to try and discover if it was a good or bad interpretation? The answer from the findings of the current study indicates that as unlikely. In summary, illustrations do not seem to have a direct impact on freedom of interpretation, but can lead to confirmation bias with regards to how well one's own interpretation matches that presented in the illustration in question.

### 5.3 The questionnaire

As mentioned above, there were some findings which indicated that four of the seven students who participated found the illustrations to make the reading experience more enjoyable, it made the students able to visualize more of what was happening in the text, and made them comprehend the text better. Regarding this, it is especially important to discuss the answers to statement six, seven, ten and eleven.

Statement six is concerned with if the “illustrations (pictures) had a positive effect on the reading experience”. On this statement there was a major agreement, which signals that the students as a group thought this to be correct. The students themselves thought the illustrations had a positive effect on their reading experience. As Rothbauer discusses concerning the collection of data regarding the reading experience, there is not data except that through articulation (2016). In other words, there is no way to measure the reading experienced directly, except through articulation, which is what is presented here. Since the nature of a questionnaire removes the requirements for the participants to articulate the sentence they respond to, it can be argued that the responses to this question facilitates an accurate transmission of the students reading experience. In turn, this is a strong response to the research question one, regarding what effect does the illustrations have on the reading experience, namely a positive effect.

Statement seven also had an overwhelming agreement from the students. The statement is concerned with if “the pictures gave me more information than the text alone did”. Considering the positive response to this statement, it is a strong indication that the participants of this study have had positive effect on their ability to extract information from the text with the help of illustrations. This is consistent with the findings from Hibbing and Rankin-Erickson, who state that illustrations can be a helpful, supportive tool for readers who are below the required level of skill for a given text (2003). Considering that an overwhelming majority of the participants responded that the illustrations gave them more information, this serves to indicate that the illustrations, on average, are a positive influence to extracting information from a text. Considering that statement ten was also responded to with a majority, and concerned if “the pictures helped me understand some parts of the text which were difficult to understand when I read the text

without pictures”, there is a strong argument for illustrations having a positive influence on the reading experience with regards to understanding and information-gathering.

Statement eleven concerns whether, if they had to read the whole book, they would read the book with or without illustrations. Here as well there were an overwhelming majority who were positive to reading the book with illustrations, which is a strong indication that the illustrations were a positive influence on the reading experience for the participants.

#### 5.4 Comparing findings from the interviews and questionnaire

As is apparent from the interview findings and the questionnaire findings, there are some similarities. The questionnaire shows a large support for the argument that the illustrations are a positive influence on the reading experience, leading to better understanding, better ability to visualize events and characters presented in the text and more enjoyment while reading. This finding is rather similar to findings from the interviews, especially regarding the four students which reported positive attitudes towards illustrations and their effects on their reading experiences. The interview findings concerning these four students showed that they experienced better ability to retell the story afterwards, better visualization of characters and places and more enjoyment while reading. These findings are consistent with the theory from Hibbing and Rankin-Erickson, regarding how important pictures can be for struggling students (2003). They also fit with theory from Gamble (2013), which suggest that children are better able to retell and understand stories if they produce mental images of the happenings in the text. In this scenario, the illustrations help the readers make these mental images by presenting suggestions as to what they can use to retell the story later. Together, this makes for a strong argument to be made for that Norwegian children have an improved foreign language reading experience when illustrations are involved.

#### 5.5 Limitations

There are several limitations that influenced the development and completion of the study. First and foremost, is a limitation present because of the time period this thesis was written in, 2020-2021. The Covid-19 pandemic started during the spring of 2020, and is still ongoing as this thesis

reaches its completion during the summer of 2021. What this limitation in particular has done for the thesis is that it has been very hard to find suitable schools and classes to be able to have interviews as part of the data collection method. Therefore, the study is based on a small class of eight students, instead of what was originally meant to be a standard Norwegian 7<sup>th</sup> grade class of between 20-30 students. This has impacts on the study, especially concerning the questionnaire, and how these data points are now part of a less objective data set, due to less respondents. Another important limitation is that to be able to provide copies for the participants, only one chapter could be selected, due to copyright laws. Having students read only a part of the story, leaves much to be desired in form of descriptions, character development and the overarching story. This is also due to the time restrictions, as reading the whole book in English twice for Norwegian 7<sup>th</sup> grader would give the project to large of a scope for this thesis. Another possible limitation is that the interviews was recorded with both audio and video. Though this was done for the interviewer to be more attentive towards the participants, not all people like being recorded. In turn, there might be situations where they would have responded more naturally or with a higher frequency during the interviews had they not been recorded. Choosing a Harry Potter novel can also be seen as a limitation as it is very well known, and many children fall in love with the movies and books rather early. Another limitation that should be considered very important is that they participants read the same text twice. This means that it is difficult to account for what information is due to the introduction of illustrations and what information is simply observable because it is the second time they have read the same text. For the researcher, there are limitations as well. Having a semi-structured interview model requires skill in interviewing subjects, which the researcher for this study is somewhat lacking. It is possible that the lack of precision and timing of follow-up questions have caused a loss of valuable data, which could have been collected by a more experienced interviewer.

## 5.6 Prior knowledge and influences

It seems reasonable to assume that having illustrations seems to aid and help the reader in some capacity, though how much is very hard to gauge. Though the illustrations can be the contributing factor, there can be other reasons for this too. Among them is that they are reading it a second time or that they are more familiar with the interview setting during the second round of

interviews. Concerning influences on the participants present before the study, almost all the participants had some prior knowledge of the Harry Potter universe. Everybody except one student (Natalie) had seen some parts of a movie or multiple movies, and Kristian from group A and Tommy from group B had read at least one book previously. Kristian is the only participant who has read all the books in the series. Natalie had neither read the books nor seen the movies, though she acknowledged that she had heard about the franchise, in so far as knowing the name Harry Potter. This implies that most of the participants of the study have possible previous imprints of the story, its characters and places that are presented in the text. This is important to bear in mind when discussing the potential in the findings. Here it is suitable to apply part of Rothbauer's theory on how readers are influenced by the worlds around us (Rothbauer 51). The reading experience is altered depending on what context and previous relevant information the reader has at their disposal, and this includes in this case knowledge about the movies or books in the Harry Potter series. A point of note about this study is that none of the participants have read the illustrated version before, meaning that, even if they have seen the movies or read the books, their meeting with the illustrations is completely new.

Related to this, it is important to keep in mind the arguments of Rothbauer about the impossibility of observing the reading experience directly (Rothbauer 116). The implications of this theory are that there could be a vast difference between what the participants of a study regarding the reading experience is able to retell, and what knowledge or information they have actually acquired. This is due to the nature of how verbal (or written) communication is the only pathway to transfer information about a reading experience from one human being to the next. Therefore, it is also important to note that since the reading is done in English, but the interviews and questionnaire are done in Norwegian, there might be an additional barrier between the information flowing from the participants to the observing researcher. The decision to have a difference in the text language and interview and questionnaire language is due to the participants mother tongue and age. Since the participants have Norwegian as their mother tongue and are attending 7<sup>th</sup> grade at the time of the study, having English as the interview language was found to likely to make a larger barrier between the participant and observing researcher.

## 6 Conclusion

What has been explored in this study is the effect of the illustrations in “Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone” on the reading experience for Norwegian 7<sup>th</sup> graders when reading the text in English. After the students had read the text first without illustrations and secondly with illustrations, the findings were collected through the use of semi-structured interviews and a questionnaire. The findings collected during the interviews and from the questionnaire were then analyzed by use of relevant theory. The main reason for the analysis was to establish if any of the findings replied to the research questions presented in the introduction:

1. What effect does the illustrations have on the foreign language reading experience?
2. Do the illustrations work with or against your own imagination?
3. Is it limiting the participants interpretation of the text, or does it help open up for more than one interpretation?
4. Do illustrations make a text more enjoyable to read?
5. If you have read the text before, and are reading it again with illustrations, has it changed the way you view the setting or characters in the text?
6. Can the illustrations deepen the understanding of the read text and help the reader pick out more information than is possible without illustrations?

Concerning findings related to the second research question, there were examples of the illustrations both working with or against the participants imaginations. While two out of the seven students experienced one or more moments during the illustrated reading where the illustrations proved to be disruptive to their reading experience, the remaining five students found the illustrations to be a positive influence, in the sense that it worked together with their imagination. The findings show that this could be an expansion of their previous visualization of a character or place in the text in a direction they agree with, and similar findings suggest that the participants found many illustrations to be what they had imagined.

Connected to the previous research question is the findings which replies to the third research question (limiting the participants interpretation of the text). The findings suggest that if the readers agree with the way the illustrations present the given character or place as they

themselves have imagined it while reading the text, they are likely to conform to that visual representation of that specific character or place. In this way, there is an argument for the illustrations to serve as a limitation on possible visual interpretations. The opposite seems to happen when the reader's imagination does not agree with the illustrations' representation. In this case, the findings indicate that the reader demonstrably distances themselves from the representation in the illustration and choose to keep their own visualization, and assert to themselves that their imagination is the better, truer version of what is present in the text.

Concerning if illustrations increase enjoyment while reading the text (research question four), the findings strongly indicate that this is the case for some students. Though one of the seven students did not appreciate the illustrations, most of the responses obtained during the interviews stated that the text was more enjoyable to read with illustrations present in the text. Illustrations improved the reading experience. In addition to this, however, is another layer of argumentation. When combining theory with the findings, the discovery is that there is a tight link between enjoyment during the reading experience and a suitable level of challenge for the reader. In other words, if the challenge is too high, the enjoyment is lowered, simply because they cannot access enough of the information and story presented to them in textual form. Illustrations changes this, which as many as four of seven participants stated to be the case. The findings show that illustrations help readers attain more information if they thought the text was challenging without them. In turn, this increased the enjoyment of the reading experience. What these findings indicate is that there is a connection between illustrations and enjoyment, while findings also suggest that the illustrations help with extracting more information. This extra extraction of information is also important to facilitate increased enjoyment during the reading experience.

The fifth research question, which focuses on if the illustrations made the participants change their perception of, or the way they viewed, the characters and places presented to them in the text. The findings here were that the students who had made similar predictions about appearance or other characteristics to the presentation in the illustrations, were pleased with this outcome. The students who had different opinions about visuals or other characteristics, just kept the ones they had made, and did not engage much with what was presented to them in the



illustrations. The only important distinction is that in some cases the illustrations helped the students visualize something that was more extreme than they had originally thought, even though the idea they had was heading in the same direction. An example of this is Hagrid and his size, which all of the students were aware of before reading the illustrated version, but some was happy to realize that he was even bigger than they had imagined. Otherwise, there are no findings to suggest that the illustrations change the students' perceptions of characters and places.

The question regarding if the illustrations can deepen understanding and help readers pick out more information (research question six), has a lot of findings supporting it. Four of seven students were very positive towards the impact the illustrations had on their reading experience, with special focus on the attaining of information and ability to comprehend the text. Their own statements show how the illustrations invigorated their will to read, even though some of them stated that they didn't enjoy reading. This in turn helped them acquire more information from the text than they were able to during the first reading without illustrations. The findings combined with theory suggest here, as mentioned above, that there is a tight link between enjoyment while reading and a well-suited difficulty of the text in question. The results indicate that the presence of illustrations help balance out the gap in difficulty, and therefore ensure a more enjoyable, informative and comprehending reading experience.

The results overall indicate that illustrations do in fact have an effect on the reading experience (research question one). The study has found evidence to support that illustrations can improve reading enjoyment, how much information a student is able to acquire throughout the reading, their comprehension of the contents of the text, and their ability to retell what they have read afterwards. This is a strong indication that readers in a foreign language who struggle might extract great benefits from reading an illustrated novel, as it supports them in ways that are experienced by the reader themselves, and visible to the observer.

The presented findings in this study indicates that there is a need for further study in the effects of illustrations on the reading experience, in the foreign language or otherwise. It would be interesting to gather more research towards participants reading the entire book, instead of

one chapter which was the case for this thesis. This would enable a different opportunity to examine plot points and character progression, and to discover if the illustrations affect these at all. In addition, it would be interesting to discover how much of the increased enjoyment, comprehension and gathering of information that is attributed to the illustrations, which is in fact due to reading the same text twice. Another potential fruitful avenue of research relates if there are observable differences in the effect of illustrations when the participants read in their mother tongue and when they read in a foreign language, as illustrations and images are mostly non-textual in the sense of letters and words. Lastly, a potential research opportunity arises from asking if there is a difference between full-page illustrations or in-text ones, and if their effect of the reading experience is different from one another.

There is much that this study has not touched upon, and illustrations in novels and their effect of the reading experience is a field of research that should be investigated more thoroughly. There is much potential and ground left to cover. The ability to increase reading enjoyment and motivation should not be overlooked, especially if we want new generations to keep learning to fall in love with reading. In the digital age which our world has now become, this is perhaps more important than ever. Maybe, just maybe, illustrations in novels designed for youth and young adults can be a possible solution. There certainly are indications that they have a strong positive effect on the reading experience. In that way, perhaps illustrations really *are* magical.

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