Language and Literacy
Langue et littératie

Anglophone Picturebook Shared Reading in Chinese Families: A Typology Exploring Parent-Child Interaction Patterns

Ying Zou

Cite this article

Zou, Y. (2023). Anglophone Picturebook Shared Reading in Chinese Families: A Typology Exploring Parent-Child Interaction Patterns. *Language and Literacy / Langue et littératie*, *25*(2), 1–27. https://doi.org/10.20360/langandlit29644

Article abstract

This study examined parent-child interactions during foreign-language shared reading of Anglophone picturebooks at home by Chinese parents. It is among the first to probe foreign-language shared reading in the home setting. Data was obtained from in-depth ethnographic observation of seven parent-child dyads and from interviews, with a survey comprising 565 parent respondents providing background for this wider evidence. A grounded theory approach was applied to generate a new, five-part typology of Chinese parents' English picturebook reading practices. This new typology reveals the diversity of parent-child interaction processes by categorizing them according to five foci: the literal focus, the literacy skill focus, the literary focus, the exploratory focus and the digital focus. The findings of this study may have a reciprocal effect on the study of first- and second-language shared reading practices and can be applied to analysis of or intervention in shared reading, at home or in school settings.

Anglophone Picturebook Shared Reading in Chinese Families: A Typology Exploring Parent-Child Interaction Patterns

YING ZOU
China Three Gorges University

Abstract

This study examined parent-child interactions during foreign-language shared reading of Anglophone picturebooks at home by Chinese parents. It is among the first to probe foreign-language shared reading in the home setting. Data was obtained from in-depth ethnographic observation of seven parent-child dyads and from interviews, with a survey comprising 565 parent respondents providing background for this wider evidence. A grounded theory approach was applied to generate a new, five-part typology of Chinese parents' English picturebook reading practices. This new typology reveals the diversity of parent-child interaction processes by categorizing them according to five foci: the literal focus, the literacy skill focus, the literary focus, the exploratory focus and the digital focus. The findings of this study may have a reciprocal effect on the study of first- and second-language shared reading practices and can be applied to analysis of or intervention in shared reading, at home or in school settings.

Keywords: shared reading; picturebooks; parent-child interaction

Introduction

Compared with the popularity of shared reading, there is a significant research gap when it comes to understanding shared reading in English at home in non-Western contexts, despite the growing phenomenon of parents reading their children picturebooks in English in Asian countries such as China. It should be noted that the large volume of long-standing research into shared reading focuses primarily on monolingual children's first-language development and these studies have established the importance of shared reading, and have provided evidence of how home literacy practices contribute to children's language acquisition and its correlation to children's literary and cognitive development (Baker, 2013; Hamilton, 2013; Hamilton et al. 2016; Niklas et al., 2015; Roberts et al., 2005; Sénéchal & LeFevre, 2002; Zhang & Koda, 2011).

In the few studies concerning second-language shared reading for bilingual children at home, the focus has been on how shared reading positively influences children's second-language acquisition (Boyce et al., 2004; Caspe, 2009; Chow et al., 2010; Collins, 2005; Kalia, 2007; Lau & Warning, 2007; Sun, 2012; Uchikoshi, 2006; Zhang, 2016; Zhang & Koda, 2011). For example, a longitudinal ethnographic study

in the United States by Kabuto (2010) examined how a child became a bilingual reader and demonstrates the important role of shared reading in literacy practices at home. Boyce et al. (2004), Uchikoshi (2006), and Caspe (2009) examined shared reading between Latin American mothers and their children in the United States. Their findings demonstrated that exposure to English books was associated with bilingual children's spoken language and general literacy skills in English.

Even fewer studies have examined English as a foreign language home-literacy practice. Different from English as a second language, English as a foreign language here refers to learning English mainly through formal instruction in the classroom setting and rarely using it as a communication language in daily life in many countries. Therefore, most foreign-language shared-reading research has examined reading in the classroom rather than in home settings (Lau & Warning, 2007; Mourão, 2016; Sheu, 2006). A few foreign-language shared-reading studies have also shown that foreign-language shared reading contributes to foreign-language ability. For example, shared reading may aid in learning a new language (Bland, 2013), increase English vocabulary skills among Portuguese preschoolers (Collins, 2005), or improve spoken English in India (Kalia, 2007). Research from Hong Kong emphasised the importance of English reading in school for children's English language learning (Lau & Warning, 2007). However, reading for pleasure, as a promising reading principle in academic or educational policy, is seldom discussed in a foreign- or second- language context (Audet et al., 2008; Clark & Rumbold 2006; Department for Education, 2012; Krashen, 2004; Sipe, 1999).

Furthermore, these foreign-language shared reading studies have focused mainly on linguistic considerations rather than on how parents and children actually share books together. Studies examining foreign-language shared-reading practices with preschool-aged children are severely lacking, leaving a gap in both the academia and in the information available for designing home reading intervention programmes. How foreign-language shared reading exactly happens at home and how parents and children interact are not well understood and have not yet been thoroughly investigated yet. This study attempts to fill this research gap. The aim of this study was to identify and analyse parent-child interaction patterns and children's responses during picturebook reading in English. In doing so, this study provides a better understanding of the new phenomenon and how it happens.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study includes grounded theory with an ethnographic approach. As only a few previous studies have focused on foreign picturebook shared reading at home, a grounded theory approach was applied to observe parent/child dyads, from developing coding categories to summarising the reading patterns, and to investigate this phenomenon without scholarly boundaries, using the analysing process as a means of extracting information from data (Newby,

2014). The grounded theory approach is a bottom-up process of sifting primary data and allows interpretations to be built up from the data itself. The ethnographic observational method, or the so-called micro-ethnographic approach (Bloome et al., 2005), was applied during the observations. It involves immersing the researcher in the families and the cultural setting to observe their behaviours, educational approaches, and general literacy environments, and taking close analysis of it.

Dialogic reading, as an analytical and methodological framework, also forms the groundwork for many shared reading studies, including this study. Reading to children is not in and of itself enough to improve children's language abilities; how parents interact with children during shared reading events is critically important. The Adult and Child Interactive Reading Inventory (ACIRI) and Dialogic Reading Inventory (DRI) are observation tools of dialogic reading and are promising evidence-based shared reading strategies. The ARICI contains three major categories: enhancing attention to text, promoting interactive reading and supporting comprehension, and using literacy strategies. The DRI contains 17 items on adult-child literacy behaviours in four categories for both adults and children: print awareness/alphabet knowledge, phonological awareness, comprehension/vocabulary, and attention to text (Dixon-Krauss et al., 2010). Both instruments have been implemented in many intervention studies, demonstrating significant success in improving children's early literacy skills (Beschorner & Hutchison 2016; Chow et al., 2010; Fleury & Schwartz, 2017; Lim & Cole, 2002; Strouse et al. 2013; Whitehurst et al., 1988; Whitehurst et al. 1994). However, they have not provided evidence for how home literacy practices contribute directly to print knowledge (Evans & Saint-Aubin, 2005), such as decoding skills. On the other hand, as Heath's (1983, 1986) ethnographic research and other shared reading studies have demonstrated, shared reading interactions are varied, enculturated to different social classes, and influenced by community beliefs about reading (Anderson et al., 2012; Carlson et al., 2017; Vincent & Ball 2007).

While dialogic reading teaches skills that parents can apply to shared reading practices, reader-response theories emphasise readers' experiences and cultural or social stance with texts (Iser, 1987; Rosenblatt, 1978; Sipe, 2000). Therefore, the reader-response theory 'assumes a rich diversity of response' (Sipe, 2000, p. 256). In previous shared reading literature, children's responses have often been simplified and not discussed within the contexts of their cultural backgrounds (Sipe, 2000). Many empirical shared reading studies that applied the reader-response theory included participants ranging from preschoolers who read wordless picturebooks (Arizpe, 2009) to university students (Arizpe & Hodges, 2018; Arizpe & Styles, 2004; Brooks & Browne, 2012). These studies not only provided insights into children's understanding and interactional responses, but have also inspired this present study in terms of research methods, especially the approaches used to examine children's verbal and emotional responses during shared reading.

Research Methods and Data Collection

This study utilized a mixed-methods study design, including a questionnaire involving 565 parents, ethnographic observations of seven families' shared reading events, and a semi-structured interview with at least one parent from each family during a six-month period. The previous stages of the questionnaire and interview have been reported in another article (Zou, 2023), and the observations of the seven families, which are most relevant to the focus-findings of shared reading interaction patterns, are reported in this paper.

Seven families' demographic data were collected from a larger sample pool of 565 families who answered a questionnaire in the previous stage of this same study. The large sample size (n=565) for the first stage of data collection made it possible to develop a strategy for selecting the observation families. As previous studies (Dixon-Krauss et al., 2010; Heath, 1983; Lareau, 2011) have demonstrated that interaction strategies during shared reading differ across social classes, all participants who said they were willing to participate in the follow-up research were divided into five different income groups. At least one family from each group was selected; within the groups, observation participants were randomly chosen. Table 1 presents the basic demographic data of the seven selected families.

Table 1.

General information relating of the seven observed families

Family	Xiaoxia	Xiaotian	Anna	Qiqi	Yueyue	Weiwei	Xiaohu
Age and Gender	2 Years and 9 Months Old, Female	4 Years and 4 Months Old, Male	4 Years and 2 Months Old, Female	4 Years and 1 Month Old, Female	18 Months Old, Male	4 Years and 10 Months Old, Female	5 Years and 11 Months Old, Male
English Picture Books at Home	200-500	> 500	20-100	20-100	101-200	101-200	< 20
Frequency of Reading English Picture Books	2-4 Times a Week	Almost Every Day	2-4 Times a Week	Once a Week	Once a Month	Almost Every Day	Almost Every Day
Annual Family Income(Yuan)	200,001-500,000	< 50,000	> 500,000	200,001-500,000	100,001-200,000	50,001-100,000	50,001-100,000
Parent's Education Level (degree)	Bachelor	Master's	Bachelor	Bachelor	Master's	Bachelor	Bachelor
Parent's Self-Reported English Level	Fluent Speaker	Fluent Speaker (Lived in the UK for 2 Years)	Fluent Speaker	College Level 4	College Level 6	Simple Conversation	College Level 4
Child's Self-Reported English Level	Simple Conversation	Simple Conversation	Simple Words	Simple Conversation	Learning to Talk	Simple Words	Simple Conversation

The data for analysis in this study were mainly derived from the observations conducted with the seven families, with some direct quantitative data from the questionnaire also informing the analysis. The formal observations were video-recorded and transcribed in their entirety. To better get to know the participants and not draw too much attention from the children in the reading sessions, the researcher visited the families, played with the children and talked with the parents several times intensively over the course of a six-month period. Ethnographic observation data were drawn from research journals concerning free play and family activities, observational field notes, and original photographic data collected by the researcher. Through her visits, the researcher tried to make sense of and corroborate the responses received in the questionnaire about literacy environments, children's English and Chinese levels, and parents' general parenting approaches.

To enable the researcher to obtain data in a natural setting, the participants were asked to read the books in a location where they felt comfortable; most of them chose bedtime reading in a bedroom setting, while others chose a library or living room setting. A recording camera was set up before each observation. Some children became curious about the camera, but sooner or later, most of them ignored it. The researcher's presence changed the parent/child dynamics at first; she played and talked with the children for around 30 minutes until the children were no longer curious about the camera and became accustomed to her presence. The researcher also played with the children to become familiar with the family members and reduce the observer effect, also known as the 'Hawthorne Effect' (McCambridge et al., 2014). When the reading session began, as a non-participant researcher, the researcher normally left the room, leaving the camera positioned to capture the parent/child dyad's verbal and non-verbal (e.g. physical intimacy and facial expressions) interactions. As per the approach suggested by Cohen et al. (2011, p. 457), the following data were collected from observations: the physical setting (the reading environment and physical proximity), the human setting (the characteristics of the family relationships), the interactional setting (the verbal and non-verbal interactions), and the programme setting (the observed reading routine).

Altogether, 20 observation sessions were conducted. All the data were imported into the Nvivo software programme and then categorised, transcribed, translated, and coded to develop a comprehensive picture. As most of the shared reading interactions were question-and-answer exchanges, and to better understand the interaction patterns in the following section, the question type categories are presented in Table 2 along with some examples from the data. The researcher consulted the most prevalent shared reading interaction tools-namely ACIRI (Dixon-Krauss et al., 2010; Whitehurst et al., 1988) and the DRI (Debruin-Parecki, 1999, 2004), and referred to the studies of Anderson et al. (2012), Ard and Beverly (2004), and Berke (2012) about how to categorize question types during the mother-language shared reading and also added new categories according to the observations in the different context of this study.

Table 2

Question types

Question Type	Examples From this Study	Cognitive Demand Level
Confirmation (Questions asking for agreement or disagreement or soliciting yes/no answers)	'He doesn't like rain, does he?' 'They are looking out [of the window], aren't they?'	Low
Literacy (Questions about decoding, phonics skills, or language comprehension)	'Can you read this part? Which words?' 'What is the third one? Pack, right?'	Low
Management (Questions that draw attention, request a page turn, demand discipline, ask the child to mimic the action, or negotiate book choice)	'Will you tell me which book we're going to read first?' 'Can you shake your head?'	Low
'Wh' Questions (Questions about knowledge and facts: who, what, where, when, why)	'See who is inside this box?' 'George is sad. Why?'	Medium
Completion, Reasoning, and Explanation (Questions that ask the child to complete the story or provide an elaboration, or ask him/her to mimic the action)	'We are going to catch a-' 'The Mama called the doctor, the doctor said-'	Medium

Clarification or Prediction (Questions that illicit information about the characters and events, or ask the child to guess the plot or ending)	'What is she looking at?' 'Do you think George is smart now?'	High
Comprehension (Questions that ask how and why something occurred)	'What does "disappointed" mean?'	High
Association (Questions that ask the child to connect the story to personal experience or other books)	'What should you do if you think someone is great?' 'What makes you angry?'	High
Aesthetic (Questions about attitudes or the child's feelings about the book)	'What do you think of this book?'	High

Data analysis

The qualitative data were then analysed using a grounded theory approach according to a threefold process: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding (Charmaz, 2006; Dörnyei, 2007; Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Therefore, the coding process is not the discovery of meaning but its creation. During the first stage of open coding, data units were identified and described them with codes by highlighting and tagging with descriptive labels that best described any relevant main points, such as 'parent's reading experience', 'reading routine', and 'extracurricular activities'. Upon completion of the open coding, second-level axial coding began. During this stage, many initial codes were developed and categorised. Some closely related categories that could be clustered together under a broader label; for example, 'translate to Chinese' and 'ask children to translate' were both consolidated under the 'translation and meaning confirmation' code. In this way, the researcher could use the umbrella term 'translation and meaning confirmation' as a category. By consistently doing this, these main coding structures emerged from the data, and most descriptive codes were categorised into five interaction foci: the literal, the literacy skill, the literary, the exploratory focus, and the digital.

After open coding and axial coding, a coding scheme was achieved, which became the analytical tool and the basis for selective coding. The selective coding stage involved the selection of codes related to the core themes and concepts. The researcher

looked more closely at the dialogue of interactions that fit into the five developed interaction foci. Codes were then deleted, added, or revised to reflect current shared reading patterns. The five reading foci were further tested during the selective coding process. Lastly, considering the research questions and categories, the remaining needed codes were then developed, the categories were successively modified, and a five-part typology of English picturebook shared reading patterns was formed.

Results

The study results provide a comprehensive picture of how parents and children share English picturebooks and their interactive behavioural foci. First, the characteristics of the interaction focus will be explained, including what it looks like, with an example and explanation of whether the parents and children are focused on words or pictures, the kinds of books the parents and children chose, the home literacy environment, their communication language choices, and the negotiation process. The questions asked during the shared reading according to the question categories that are summarized in the previous section will be analyzed. Finally, the children' s responses and the parent-child physical proximity will be described.

Literal Focus: Parents and Children Are Engaged in Exact Translation

The literal focus in English picturebook shared reading among Chinese families engages parents and children in exact translation and meaning confirmation. Parents lead the reading process and translate every sentence or word in the book; children internalise what they learn from these reading experiences and sometimes translate without waiting for their parents' requests. Xiaohu's father's shared reading was very typical of this pattern.[1] Here is a dialogue taken from his reading of one of the *Elephant and Piggie* books:

> Father: 'We are going to do everything today. We are going to run'.
> **What does** 'run' **mean?**
> Xiaohu: **I don't know**. (Father does the action of running.) **Run**.
> Father: 'We are going to skip'. **Skip**. 'Nothing can stop us'. **Nothing can stop us**.

As we can see, after Xiaohu's father read the sentence, he translated it into Chinese; sometimes he translated the whole sentence and sometimes only the keywords. Weiwei's mother asked straightforward translation questions, such as 'How

---

[1] For all the dialogue in this study, the transcription is to be read as follows: words in bold signal my translation into English of dialogue held in Chinese by the participants; words in regular font are a transcription of the English used by the participants in the original discussion; words in quotation marks are quotations from picturebooks; and words in brackets signal my comments or descriptions of non-verbal information.

do you say that in Chinese?' Translation is sometimes bidirectional, from Chinese to English or vice versa. It may be initiated by parents or children. Consequently, children gain the habit of translating immediately after reading. However, not every child in the study liked their parents to translate. When Weiwei's mother started to explain in Chinese, Weiwei said, 'No, just read it'. Weiwei seemed to want to enjoy the flow of the story, but her mother had become used to translating.

For this shared reading pattern, parents tend to restrict book-related talk while concentrating on the print words rather than the pictures in the books. For example, Xiaohu's father used his finger to follow almost every single word of the book *No, David* and asked, '**What is this?**', expecting Xiaohu to decode. Parents using this focus encourage their children's pointing actions because those actions enable the parents to check whether their child can decode the words and know the Chinese translation.

Families who follow this pattern like to choose a large number of graded readers which have an obvious pedagogical goal, in addition to trade pictuebooks. In Xiaohu's and Weiwei's families, their parents or teachers chose picturebooks for them, which made the book negotiation process simpler. When families following this pattern select trade picturebooks, such as *No, David* or the *Elephant and Piggie* series, they use these for the purposes of literal translation and meaning confirmation because of their own experiences of language education. Those translations and meaning confirmations are mostly literal. However, other important picturebook characteristics—counterpoint, irony, pictures and interplay (Nikolajeva & Scott, 2001), for example—are ignored. Parents in these families tended to speak little English and more Chinese during reading, so the children received more Chinese input than English.

In this pattern, parents also tend to ask questions that promote confirmation, translation, management and other low-cognition tasks. For example, parents' questions in this study usually ended with the query 'right?'; and they already had an answer in mind, expecting their children to answer 'yes' or 'no'. When Xiaohu and his father read the *Elephant and Piggie* book, for example, Xiaohu's father confirmed his understanding with questions like '**He doesn't like rain, right?**' Weiwei's mother did the same, asking, '**They are looking outside, right?**' Parents would also ask other literacy questions, such as '**What is this word?**', or management questions to maintain discipline, such as '**Can you sit properly?**', but they seldom asked complicated or open questions. On the other hand, the children liked to ask the Chinese meaning of the English words. Xiaohu often asked, '**What is this word?**' and expected his parent to tell him the Chinese meaning. In this literal reading pattern, therefore, although parents confirm children's understanding through questioning, this type of understanding is limited to literal translation and is different from the comprehension focused pattern discussed later in this paper.

Both the children and the parents utilizing this particular focus seemed to regard reading English picturebooks as a pedagogical task- a kind of 'study' or 'homework', mostly sitting at a table rather than on a bed or sofa. The parents and children also kept

a certain distance from one another to maintain a basic level of discipline. The consistent translation impulse may cause more code-switching and thus a greater mental burden for the children. Consequently, in this reading pattern, the children showed reluctance and boredom most of the time. Xiaohu was sometimes unwilling to continue reading and checked how many pages were left. Weiwei's response was similar; she sometimes transferred her attention to the scenery outside the window. The parents realised their children's frustration, too. Xiaohu's father tried to encourage Xiaohu to read: '**This is our last book, OK?'** They finished all the reading '**tasks**' (Xiaohu's father's words) on that day, although three very short books took them nearly an hour, with many distractions.

Literacy Skill Focus: Parents and Children Are Engaged in Developing Reading Skills

The literacy skill focused reading pattern was the most prevalent among the families observed. Shared book reading using this pattern focuses on reading skills or pedagogical goals such as knowledge of letters, phonics, orthographic skills, decoding skills, vocabulary, rather than on the construction of meaning. At most times, the reading process in this reading pattern involves the children reading first and the parents providing assistance. Compared with the previous focus, parents and children using this focus pay more attention to English language literacy skills than to literal translation.

Xiaohu's and Weiwei's families' reading demonstrated the characteristics of this focus. For example, Xiaohu's father frequently asked Xiaohu to read after him: '**Let's practise. Read after me, OK?** Back'. When Xiaohu was frustrated with reading, his father helped by pointing to the words and said, '**I point, you read, OK? This is B, back.'** When Weiwei's mother started to read, Weiwei spontaneously joined her mother and they read together, trying to decode the words. For example:

Mother: **Shall I read to you?** 'This is a mud pie'.
Weiwei and mother: 'Putting water, messing sand, tip it out, pat it
flat, this is a mud pie'.

Families engaging in this reading pattern like to point to words rather than pictures because their focus is predominantly on reading skills. Children sometimes look at the details in illustrations to confirm the meaning of words rather than exploring the pictures for their own sake. In this focus, the children's attention is deliberately directed towards the printed text by their parents and they often use their fingers to trace the words when reading, which is opposite to the findings of many mother-tongue shared reading empirical studies (Evans et al., 2008). However, the children constantly resist reading the words. When Weiwei's mother suggested reading an English picturebook, for example, Weiwei said, '**I don't want to read, I just want to see the pictures**'.

Accordingly, parents using this pattern also like to choose a large number of graded readers, and parents initiate conversations about the printed words. A typical sentence in Xiaohu's reading book, for example, was 'What's this? It is a cat. What's this? It's a kite'. The content in such books is basic and educational, not as exciting as the narrative stories in other trade picturebooks. These books, which are not designed for entertaining children, have lower linguistic requirements compared to mainstream picturebooks. The parents in the families choosing these books tended to speak both Chinese and English equally and sometimes delivered explanations in Chinese.

In this reading pattern, parents also spend a long time on book negotiations, such as how many books will be read during a reading session or which books are too 'difficult' based on the English language requirement. When Weiwei was not willing to read, for example, her mother suggested, '**Just one more book, OK?**' The children in this study had their own preferred books and were not willing to read these graded readers. After Weiwei began to read a book that her mother gave to her, she started by reading 'Tom…', then put it down and said, '**No. I want to learn…**' Both Xiaohu's father and Weiwei used the word 'learn' instead of 'read' when they chose a book, which reveals the way that parents utilizing this focus regard reading as a kind of 'study' or 'homework'.

In this focus, parents liked to ask questions about literacy skills, for example, how to decode words, test children's phonic skills, and ask confirmation questions or numerous management questions during the book negotiation process. Xiaohu's father liked to test his child's phonics skills, asking, for instance, '**What is the third one? Pack, right**?' The parents discouraged interactions during shared reading; the children were expected to decode, listen and wait. The parents frequently stopped reading to ask questions about literacy skills, and the stories were fragmented into small bits of information and word clusters.

In this pattern, the children were discouraged from asking wide-ranging questions, and the questions that the parents asked made low cognitive demands. When Qiqi asked her mother what 'disappear' means, for example, her mother simply offered one equivalent Chinese word without explanation. When Qiqi interrupted with questions or requests for explanations, Qiqi was told, '**Just read**'. Instead of discussing the story, the parents focused on reading through the text. Similarly, the children's questions often showed no sign of prediction or comprehension and failed to link the story to their lives or other books. The children also liked to ask low cognitive questions about pronunciation, how to decode and the meanings of words. A previous study by Anderson et al. (2012) found that 'children who had observed a model asking print-related questions asked more of such questions than children who had not seen this modelling' (p. 1142). The findings in this study similarly reveal that asking 'what' type questions is a learned behaviour.

Parents utilizing this reading pattern in this study emphasised strict parental discipline and adopted didactic, expert roles. They chose to sit at a study table rather

than on a bed or couch, maintaining the distance appropriate for a formal study session. Some parents set restrictions on reading posture or used a negative tone of voice during reading; Xiaohu's father, for example, said '**Please sit well**'. He spent a considerable amount of time on discipline which caused tension between himself and Xiaohu.

When Xiaohu struggled with reading sentences, he gradually lost patience. Struggling with 'Kite' and 'Cat', he pretended to cry and, later on, started to actually cry. He was frustrated at not doing well. However, his father continued, '**Just try, OK? What is this called?** L, i, what is it?' and carried on to the end. As exchanges such as this demonstrate, the children's frustrations caused them to have low motivation for English picturebook reading. When Weiwei's mother called her back to read, asking '**Do you want to know the story?**', Weiwei answered, '**I don't**'. It is possible that the tension between the children's focus on the pictures and their parents' insistence on decoding the words contributed to the children's reluctance to read in this literacy skill-focused pattern. Because of the tension, the reading process seemed long and full of negotiation.

Literary Focus: Parents and Children Are Engaged in Reading Pleasure

The characteristics of the literary focused shared reading pattern are analogous to the first language shared reading patterns described in previous literature (Sipe, 2000; Torr, 2007; Zhang, 2018). Parents using this focus pronounce sounds and turn them into 'words' that connect to the pictures, using physical movements and facial expressions to help children understand the basic concepts. Sometimes, parents repeat words and expand them into well-formed sentences in English or Chinese. Compared with the first two foci, parents and children using this focus applied a totally different approach; they regarded enjoying books and consolidating the parent-child bond as higher priorities than literacy skills. The parents and children become immersed in the meaningful stories; however, in the process, the children gained linguistic input naturally.

In the observed families engaging in this approach (Xiaoxia's, Xiaotian's, and Yueyue's), parents used lively, sometimes exaggerated voices to read. Xiaoxia's mother read, 'I am scared.' and mimicked the sounds of thunder. When Xiaotian's mother read the *Peppa Pig* book, her intonation and voice changed frequently according to the content. The parents in the study demonstrated many skills to engage their children and sustain their children's attention, using child-adjusted language and expressions or by speaking as if they were a book character. Xiaoxia's mother pretended to cry or yawn, repeating these actions all through the reading process. She sometimes let Xiaoxia cuddle a toy—a soft bunny to mimic the action of a book character—and said, 'Little rabbit does like this, Aah, aah'. Xiaoxia was encouraged to mimic the actions in the story and to play with the book.

In these examples, the children learned to listen, waiting for the appropriate pause to show off their book knowledge, and regularly practised these learned

interaction skills. Yueyue was 18 months old, and he had just begun to express himself using words in both English and Chinese or by pointing to the pictures. His mother asked him to lift the flap in his book, asking, '**What is here? Can you lift the flap?**' He came back and held the book, performing the action of driving and making driving sounds. On another occasion, Yueyue pretended to brush his teeth using a pen when he saw a baby in the book did so. Yueyue's mother said in the interview that she was surprised that sometimes Yueyue would take out the books and read by himself for more than two minutes before he was one year old. Yueyue was starting to build a positive relationship with books. Examples like this also suggest that, as with the first two foci, if parents use a specific reading strategy, children learn it.

In this reading pattern, the parent/child dyads engage in only minimal exploration of the words in their books. Instead, they focus on linking sounds with pictures; words are only the format of the sound or the representation of the pictures. Parents might, for example, point to the pictures as part of a pointing and naming game that functions as a language acquisition device, in which the children rely on the images to construct meaning. Yueyue's mother showed him in the picture what 'Knock at the door' means. When Xiaoxia and her mother sang 'See the tractor driver loading the trailer', they sang it slowly and they both pointed to the vehicles in the picture. The children in this study using the literary focus were able to identify visual clues relating to the story, describing story elements or pictures. Their focus was on the visual details and story narrative.

Parents and children using this focus pattern read a wide range of trade picturebooks, including toy books, pop-up books, narrative storybooks, or any books they find interesting or that draw the children's attention. They seldom read graded readers. A typical book chosen by readers using this focus consists of numbers or letters, nursery rhymes, or 'real-life' stories about family life. For younger children like Yueyue or Xiaoxia, parents using this focus like to choose books that children can respond to, answer questions about, point to objects in, make animal sounds for and touch, or toy books that children can participate in or play with.

Parents and children who use this focus speak English together as often as possible, sometimes with straightforward Chinese explanations. When they do use Chinese to explain, they do not use literal translation. For example, Xiaoxia asked, '**What is** disappointed?' Rather than using Chinese equivalent words, Xiaoxia's mother explained, '**Disappointed means if you want yogurt**, **but you can't find it in your lunch box**, **you will feel** 'disappointed', **do you understand?**'

Parents and children using this focus in the study spent quite a long time on their book negotiation, but the children were freer and displayed more initiative compared to the children using the first two shared reading foci. These families also had a lot of child-friendly furniture; picturebooks at home were placed within reach of the children and the bookshelves were decorated with literary-based stimuli, which allowed the children to choose the books for themselves. Xiaoxia often suggested book titles to her

mother, saying, for example, '**This one. Cat book**'. She was familiar with her bookshelf and could reach the books she wanted from the bookshelf by herself. Although Xiaoxia's mother also selected some books to read, they did not regard them as a 'must'. She asked Xiaoxia's opinion on almost each book:

> How about *I am a Bunny?* **We haven't read it for ages. Or these?**
>
> How about *Papa and Moon*? (No) **OK, choose for yourself.**

In this interaction pattern, parents frequently ask 'wh-' questions (what, where, when, why, how, who) to help children engage with the story. They also like to ask knowledge, completion and explanation, as well as comprehension questions. For example, Yueyue's mother asked, 'See who is inside this box? Does he want to go out?' Parents in the study utilizing this focus responded to what their children said and frequently asked more questions. However, these parents did not insist on a correct answer. When the children's answers were unexpected, parents maintained the reading flow and ignored minor errors. Xiaoxia's mother always looked at her and confirmed her responses. In the literal and literacy skill focused patterns, parents seldom displayed this kind of patience; either the parents or the children translated or read through immediately. In contrast, in the literary focus, both parents and children accepted book-related activities as entertainment. Children also frequently asked their parents questions, and these were mostly 'Wh-' questions. Xiaoxia asked, for example, '**What is the rabbit talking about? What is she looking at?**' She showed great interest in the narratives; by asking questions, she initiated many interactions with her mother.

Parents utilizing this focus also attempt to maintain physical proximity and to develop the parent/child bond. Rather than sitting at a table, as in the two previous reading patterns, children utilising this focus usually sit on their parents' laps on a cosy sofa or other relaxed place. In this reading pattern, parents read picturebooks to children and do not ask the children to read, which makes the reading process more relaxed. Both parents and children feel enthusiasm for reading and reading together is seen as a pleasant activity. Children in this reading pattern often ask their parents to read books to them, which was not observed in the families utilizing the first two foci.

Exploratory Focus: Parents and Children Are Engaged in Knowledge and Discovery

In exploratory focused reading pattern, parents and children discuss the details of pictures, predict plot events, express their opinions towards characters, and engage in complicated discussions. Parents sometimes explain the content in English, encouraging their children to think about the non-literal aspects of the story. Compared with the previous focus, parents and children belonging to this focus engage in more cognitively demanding questions and discuss more freely in English.

Parents using this focus also regard picturebooks as toys and playthings, becoming aware of multimodality and creating their own play scenes. When Xiaoxia shared a toy book with her mother, they spent a little while working out how to tie the shoelaces in the book: 'Step 1, 2, 3, 4, this is step 1, step 2, step 3, 4, 5. OK, first, you

are going to do step 1. Step 1, just like this.'. By doing this, they explored the non-literal aspects of the story.

Children approaching reading through this focus take the initiative to predict, to offer ideas about the story and to make comments about what will happen next. They may also spontaneously recall information from the story. For example, when she read the book *Peppa Goes Swimming,* Xiaoxia guessed George's feelings and said that George was sad when he was left out. Similarly, during one reading session, Xiaotian predicted the plot, saying 'I**t should be here**' and '**he is lost**'.

Parents approaching reading through this focus elaborate on the texts or pictures by connecting them to other books. Both children and parents are familiar with different books and make connections through intertextual talk, which is known as 'semiotic intertextuality' (Torr, 2007). Torr's study identifies two qualitatively different types of intertextuality: semiotic intertexts refer to other semiotic texts such as picturebooks and television; while autobiographical intertexts refer to children's life experiences. When Xiaotian mentioned a book during shared reading, his mother then spoke about *The Snowman* storybook and recalled with Xiaotian why the snowman melted at the end of that book. It seems that picturebooks and book talk are part of the daily life of readers with this focus; both parents and children internalise picturebooks through book talk.

Parents approaching reading through this focus also relate the book's content and their children's responses to personal experiences or make connections between the themes of the book and things that occur outside the book, which is known as 'autobiographical intertextuality' (Torr, 2007). For example, when Yueyue's mother invited her to read a baby book, she said, '**we just had breakfast, didn't we? Let's see what this baby has eaten, OK?**' By connecting book content and life experiences, children of parents using this focus naturally start to build the concepts of autobiographical intertextuality and self-identification. Adults with this focus reward and encourage 'book talk' to suspend and make sense of reality, even when it is not directly relevant to the book or the ongoing conversation. For example, when Xiaoxia and her mother were reading the book *Creepy Carrots*, her mother said, 'Little rabbit likes to eat carrots, not a biscuit, so you want to give a biscuit to mummy, right?' Both parents and children with this focus use the knowledge of what books or characters do to legitimise their behaviour. In observing readers with this exploratory focus, many semiotic intertexts were found as autobiographical intertexts because of both parents' and children's rich literary experiences. Sipe (1999) emphasised that personal interpretations and responses are vital for children to learn 'how to move through from the efferent to the aesthetic stages' (p. 58). Both literary focus and exploratory focus show the characteristics of aesthetic reading (Rosenblatt, 1978). For these children, stories are a way to organise book experiences and life experiences by personalising connections.

In this reading pattern, parents and children focus on both pictures and words as a whole to create the story and to facilitate the children's comprehension. Parents

sometimes point to the pictures to draw attention to the details. With their rich book experiences, children have the linguistic and literary ability to do likewise. The parents' and children's goals are story comprehension and the derivation of pleasure from reading the book. The parents are very flexible in terms of embracing reading strategies but engage naturally in rich book talk with their children.

Additionally, parents with this focus are also flexible in their choice of various trade picturebooks and do not consider whether they are too 'difficult'; they also give their children some freedom to choose the books. They spontaneously discuss the book in English on most occasions. Some families using this focus read more English picturebooks than Chinese ones. Usually, the children know what they want to read, taking the books directly from the bookshelf by themselves. The reading environment is usually inviting. An abundance of picturebooks of various types is accessible to these children.

When it comes to communication language choices, the exploratory focus involves more complicated questions than the foci discussed earlier, including clarification or prediction questions, aesthetic questions, and association questions linking the content to the reader's personal life and other books; these types of questions demand high cognitive engagement. In the reading episodes observed for this focus, both children and parents asked for additional explanation or gave more commentary. For example, 'jealous' is a complicated word for three-year-olds. When Xiaoxia's mother read this word, she said, 'Is she jealous? Why? Her dad is hugging her brother'. She explained it in great detail and engaged in deep discussion with Xiaoxia. By asking questions, parents attempted to elaborate on the text and encourage the children to use more sophisticated words to generate more discussion. This pattern therefore displays several characteristics of dialogic reading skills (Whitehurst et al., 1994). For example, after introducing a book, parents in this study sometimes asked the child to recall the story by asking, 'Remember XX?', encouraging them to make a 'semiotic intertext' with other stories or authors. Parents also frequently solicited predictions or asked their children to recall information or to complete the story. For example, when Xiaoxia and her mother shared the book *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* together, for the repeating rhymes, when Xiaoxia's mother said, 'We are going on a-', Xiaoxia completed the sentences without hesitation. Parents also asked their children all types of 'wh-' question freely and discussed the answers together accordingly. For example, Xiaoxia's mother said, 'Who else is playing in the tree?' or 'George is sad. Why?' Xiaotian's mother posed more challenging or open-ended questions, such as 'What is very heavy?' Children using this focus tend to ask more cognitively demanding questions about facts, pose clarification questions or enquire about narrative elements like setting, characters and plot.

Families belonging to this reading pattern have acquired rich knowledge from books. For example, Xiaotian and his mother talked about the 24 solar terms in the traditional Chinese calendar, and Xiaotian knew a poem about it from a book. Xiaoxia

asked most of her questions in Chinese but demonstrated that she could understand the stories in English very well. Her questions included '**What is this cat looking at**?' and '**Mummy, why doesn't Peppa Pig put one foot in?**' When Xiaotian saw a picture, he analysed the plot: '**They will block the people behind them**'.

Many children's responses and interactions from this pattern were similar to descriptions in Sipe's (2000) categorisation of impulses: the hermeneutic impulse, the personalising impulse and the aesthetic impulse. Children using this focus tend to request more information about their books and quite often ask their parents to reread the book. Both parents and children are enthusiastic book lovers and regard shared reading as a pleasant activity. They keep in close physical proximity, sitting on the sofa or bed, and the atmosphere is relaxed and joyful.

Digital Focus: Parents and Children Engage in Interaction with Technology

Different from the other four foci, in most situations, the digital focus is an add-on to the other foci; it is rare for parents to provide only digital resources to their children. Almost all the families observed in this study used digital learning resources to a greater or lesser extent to facilitate reading. Resources included reading pens, digital books, tablet or smartphone apps, CDs and videos. The parents' focus in the digital reading pattern is to cultivate independent digital usage and to therefore intervene as little as possible. They seldom communicate the book's content, and their children prefer to become immersed in the device and the content by themselves. Parents expect digital resources to assist them in exploiting the potential of language learning or reading while simultaneously reducing the amount of parental effort required.

Anna likes to read digital English picturebooks on her iPad. The device monitors her pronunciation and asks her to repeat the text. When Anna pronounces a word correctly, the colour on the screen turns blue and she receives a star award. She felt excited and showed what she had achieved to her mother. Reading pens are another popular tool. The reader points the pen at a paper book with an invisible code printed on it, which allows the pen to read out the words. Each reading pen can only be used on certain books, such as books in the same series or books from the same publisher. Xiaoxia has a green caterpillar-shaped pen, and her mother indicated in the interview that she usually uses it for the children's magazine *High Five;* Xiaoxia's mother bought another reading pen used only for Pearson books, which is not compatible with books from other publishers.

Parents using the digital focus also allow their children to listen to CDs or audio files regularly. The concepts of 'Moerduo'[2] and the 'critical period' for second

---

[2] Literally, 'to grind the ears'; originally from Stephen Krashen's concept of comprehensible language input, this term indicates learning from listening.

language acquisition (Meisel, 2011) have been used widely in relation to language learning and are frequently mentioned by the mass media. That is why most of the parents in this study let their children listen to some recordings or songs of books, regardless of which focus they used.

An increasing number of studies have recently demonstrated that digital reading can be beneficial when there is a mediating adult to assist with story comprehension and vocabulary outcomes (Shamir et al., 2012; Takacs et al., 2014). From the data, we can see that Chinese parents take full advantage of digital resources to make up for their disadvantages in English language ability and to ease the parental burden. Despite the investment, Xiaoxia's mother said she did not want to rely on CDs or digital tools for shared reading. She said that she had learned from several books that a mother's voice was the most beautiful and beneficial for a baby. Connections between digital use and other foci were observed. Families who used the literal and literacy skill focused shared reading patterns were more likely to rely on digital resources because they were more focused on language skills; families who followed the literary and exploratory focused shared reading relied less on digital resources because they valued the physical bond and the pleasure more than the possible benefits which they perceived could be gained from traditional shared reading.

Almost all children liked digital resources, and some of them actively preferred to read digital versions rather than paper versions. In addition to the instant reward from the app, Anna's mother said Anna's enjoyment stemmed from her sense of control and achievement through reading and playing at her own pace on the iPad. However, the warmth of parent-child interactions decreases significantly when reading digital books: in this study, for example, there was less laughter, less communication and fewer shows of affection when reading with a digital focus.

Summary of The Five Foci

In summary, Table 3 describes the main foci of the observed families.

Table 3
The interaction foci of the seven families in English

Name of the Child	Main Focus of Shared Reading in English
Xiaoxia	**Literary focus and Exploratory focus**
Xiaotian	**Exploratory focus**

Anna	**Literacy skill focus and Digital focus**
Yueyue	**Literary focus**
Qiqi	**Literacy skill focus**
Xiaohu	**Literal focus**
Weiwei	**Literacy skill focus;**

According to Lancy et al. (1989), parents can be classified as either expansionists or reductionists in their approach to reading activities. Reductionists see reading time as an exercise and force children to use their skills in decoding. Children of reductionist parents try to finish books quickly, although they often fail to do so and do not find shared reading to be an enjoyable experience (Lancy et al., 1989). Data from this study suggest that parents who have a literal or literacy skill focus are reductionists; they have focused goals and do not encourage free discussion. By contrast, expansionists emphasise parent/child collaboration; parents respond to their children's responses and remain in close physical proximity with them, while the children are anxious to learn and enjoy reading. In this study, observations suggest that parents who have a literary or exploratory focus are expansionists. In addition, according to Rosenblatt's (1978) and Sipe's (1999) concepts, the literal and literacy skill foci are related to an 'efferent stance', whereas the literary and exploratory foci show the characteristics of an 'aesthetic stance'. The literary and exploratory foci also echo the principles of dialogic reading, although these foci display more complexity in terms of interaction levels and emphasise children's responses during shared reading. Moreover, consistency was observed between the parents' behaviours and the children's learned behaviours and responses. Briefly, parents' understanding of shared reading, based on researcher's observations, to a large extent determines how they interact with their children, and the kinds of books they would choose.

The five patterns have distinct characteristics; for example, the literal or literacy skill focus shows the tendency to be pedagogical, and the literary or exploratory focus is more aesthetic. In a real reading scene, one particular family may show the features of more than one of these five patterns. It may depend on who reads to the children or what reading materials are used. The patterns demonstrated by the seven families and the different patterns they displayed when they read echo Golden and Gerber's (1990) description of shared reading as a semiotic event, which is shaped by the parents and children with a particular text. For example, when Xiaohu and his father read graded level books, they mostly applied the literal or literacy skill foci and spent less time on the illustrations, whereas when they read the book *No, David* or a book from the *Five Little Monkeys* series, which had livelier stories and vibrant illustrations, they were more likely to apply a literary approach and discuss the illustrations and plot events in the story.

These five foci also have internal connections. Many families who primarily utilise the literal focus also utilise or switch to the literacy skill focus because of their similar principles. Similarly, the literary focus often develops into an exploratory focus because the parents' principle that reading is for pleasure, belong to both foci. Sometimes, this transition is related to the children's age but can also be about the accumulation of reading experiences. With natural cognitive development, children who have immersed themselves with their parents in literary shared reading find it easy to transition to an exploratory interaction focus when they become older. There may be no clear-cut distinction for each family, but some typical characteristics of these different foci were demonstrated.

Conclusion and Implications

The findings of this study are significant for several reasons. First, they demonstrate that foreign-language shared reading 'for pleasure' is possible, as evidenced by the observations of the literary and exploratory foci in this study. Second, rather than a linear relationship, data from the current study extend previous shared reading studies by demonstrating a more complicated relationship between shared reading interactions and children's responses than has been previously supposed. Shared reading is characterised by different foci that may result in different attitudes and responses towards books. The findings in this study indicate the diversity of shared reading behaviours across different families, social contexts, and languages. Third and foremost, because the current shared reading theories and tools apply only to mother-language shared reading or classroom settings, this new typology describes shared reading practices outside of these contexts and presents a new grounded theory that (a) synthesises and identifies parents' interaction patterns and (b) focuses on young children's responses to these five foci. It is the researcher's hope to develop a theoretical tool that is both flexible and updatable and can be applied to understanding and analysing various types of interaction in contexts other than mother-language shared reading and that may stand the test of time.

This study has many possible implications. The five foci described could lead to additional questions about the similarities and differences between reading practices in different languages, which could offer insights into and aid in developing strategies for first- and second-language shared reading or for reading practices in general. It is hoped that these foci on foreign-language shared reading will also facilitate conversations about first- and second-language acquisition. Furthermore, there are implications for language teachers, parents, and educational practitioners who may gain insights and inspiration from the study regarding home literacy in second-language development. For example, the findings may assist schoolteachers in working more productively with parents and children to determine where to invest effort and resources in children's reading in school and how to improve interaction levels. There are also implications for policymakers designing and conducting early literacy intervention programmes, allowing them to make parents aware of the interaction process or equip them with skills. This typology consisting of five

interaction foci may provide policymakers with both assessment tools and approaches for implementing improvements.

References

Anderson, A., Anderson, J., Lynch, J., Shapiro, J., & Eun Kim, J. (2012). Extra-textual talk in shared book reading: A focus on questioning. *Early Child Development and Care, 182*(9), 1139-1154. https://doi.org/10.1080/03004430.2011.602189

Ard, L. M., & Beverly, B. L. (2004). Preschool word learning during joint book reading: Effect of adult questions and comments. *Communication Disorders Quarterly, 26*(1), 7-28. https://doi.org/10.1177/15257401040260010101

Arizpe, E. (2009). Sharing visual experiences of a new culture: Immigrant children in Scotland respond to picturebooks and other visual texts. In J. Evans (Ed.), *Talking beyond the page: Reading and responding to picturebooks*. (pp.134-151). Routledge.

Arizpe, E., & Hodges, G. C. (2018). *Young people Reading: Empirical research across international contexts*. Routledge.

Arizpe, E., & Styles, M. (2004). *Children reading pictures: Interpreting visual texts*. Routledge.

Audet, D., Evans, M.A., Williamson, K., & Reynolds, K. (2008). Shared book reading: Parental goals across the primary grades and goal–behavior relationships in junior kindergarten. *Early Education and Development*, *19*(1), 112-137. https://doi.org/10.1080/10409280701839189

Baker, C. E. (2013). Fathers' and mothers' home literacy involvement and children's cognitive and social emotional development: Implications for family literacy programs. *Applied Developmental Science, 17*(4), 184-197. https://doi.org/10.1080/10888691.2013.836034

Berke, M.G. (2012). *Deaf parents with children and hearing parents with hearing children: A comparison of shared reading experiences.* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. University of Colorado, Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences.

Beschorner, B., & Hutchison, A. (2016). Parent education for dialogic reading: Online and face-to-face delivery methods. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, *30*(3), 374-388. https://doi.org/10.1080/02568543.2016.1178197

Bland, J. (2013). *Children's literature and learner empowerment*. Bloomsbury.

Bloome, D., Carter, S.P., Christian, B.M., Otto, S., & Shuart-Faris, N. (2005). *Discourse analysis and the study of classroom language and literacy events: A micro ethnographic perspective*. Routledge.

Boyce, L. K., Cook, G. A., Roggman, L. A., Innocenti, M. S., Jump, V. K., & Akers, J. F. (2004). Sharing books and learning language: What do Latina mothers and

their young children do? *Early Education and Development*, *15*(4), 371-386. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15566935eed1504_2

Brooks, W., & Browne, S. (2012). Towards a culturally situated reader response theory. *Children's Literature in Education*, *43*(1), 74-85. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10583-011-9154-z

Carlson, S., Gerhards, J., & Hans, S. (2017). Educating children in times of globalisation: Class-specific child-rearing practices and the acquisition of transnational cultural capital. *Sociology*, *51*(4), 749-765. https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038515618601

Caspe, M. (2009). Low-income Latino mother' booksharing styles and children's emergent literacy development. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, *24*(3), 306-324. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecresq.2009.03.006

Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. Sage.

Chow, B.W., McBride-Chang, C., & Cheung, H. (2010). Parent–child reading in English as a second language: Effects on language and literacy development of Chinese kindergarteners. *Journal of Research in Reading*, *33*(3), 284-301. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9817.2009.01414.x

Clark, C., & Rumbold, K. (2006). *Reading for pleasure: A research overview*. The National Literacy Trust.

Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2008). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. Sage. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781452230153

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2011). *Research methods in education*. Taylor & Francis.

Collins, M. F. (2005). ESL preschoolers' English vocabulary acquisition from storybook reading. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *40*(4), 406-408.

DeBruin-Parecki, A. (1999). *Assessing adult/child storybook reading practices. CIERA report No.2-004.* University of Northern Iowa.

DeBruin-Parecki, A. (2004). *A guide to using the adult/child interactive reading inventory.* Paul H. Brookes Publishing.

Department for Education. (2012). Research evidence on reading for pleasure. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/284286/reading_for_pleasure.pdf

Dixon-Krauss, L., Januszka, C.M., & Chae, C. (2010). Development of the dialogic reading inventory of parent-child book reading. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, *24*(3), 266-277. https://doi.org/10.1080/02568543.2010.487412

Dörnyei, Z. (2007). *Research methods in applied linguistics: Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methodologies*. Oxford University Press.

Evans, M.A., & Saint-Aubin, J. (2005). What children are looking at during shared storybook reading: Evidence from eye movement monitoring. *Psychological Science*, *16*(11), 913-920. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9280.2005.01636.x

Evans, M.A., Williamson, K., & Pursoo, T. (2008). Preschoolers' attention to print during shared book reading. *Scientific Studies of Reading, 12*(1), 106-129. https://doi.org/10.1080/10888430701773884

Fleury, V.P., & Schwartz, L.S. (2017). A modified dialogic reading intervention for preschool children with autism spectrum disorder. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, *37*(1), 16-28. https://doi.org/10.1177/0271121416637597

Golden, J. M., & Gerber, A. (1990). A semiotic perspective of text: The picture story book event. *Journal of Reading Behavior*, *22*(3), 203-219. https://doi.org/10.1080/10862969009547707

Hamilton, L. G. (2013). *The role of the home literacy environment in the early literacy development of children at family-risk of dyslexia.* [Doctoral dissertation, University of York]. White Rose eTheses Online. http://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/4823/

Hamilton, L. G., Hayiou-Thomas, M. E., Hulme, C., & Snowling, M. J. (2016). The home literacy environment as a predictor of the early literacy development of children at family-risk of dyslexia. *Scientific Studies of Reading: The Official Journal of the Society for the Scientific Study of Reading*, *20*(5), 401-419. https://doi.org/10.1080/10888438.2016.1213266

Heath, S. B. (1983). *Ways with words: Language, life, and work in communities and classrooms*. Cambridge University Press.

Heath, S. B. (1986). The functions and uses of literacy. In S. De Castell, A. Luke, & K. Egan, (Eds.), *Literacy, society, and schooling: A reader* (pp.15-26). Cambridge University Press.

Kabuto, B. (2010). Code-switching during parent-child reading interactions: Taking multiple theoretical perspectives. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, *10*(2), 131-157. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468798409345109

Kalia, V. (2007). Assessing the role of book reading practices in Indian bilingual children's English language and literacy development. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, *35*, 149-153. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-007-0179-2

Krashen, S.D. (2004). *The power of reading: Insights from the research*. (2nd ed.). Libraries Unlimited.

Iser, W. (1987). *The implied reader: Patterns of communication in prose fiction from Bunyan to Becket*. Johns Hopkins University Press.

Lancy, D. F., Draper, K., & Boyce. G. (1989). Parental influence on children's acquisition of reading. *Contemporary Issues in Reading*. *4*, 83-89.

Lareau, A. (2011). *Unequal childhoods: Class, race, and family Life*. University of California Press.

Lau, P.S., & Warning, P. (2007, July 16-20). The basis of their reading experience: Progress on reading to learn in Hong Kong primary schools, *The International Association of School Librarianship 2007 Conference Proceeding*, Taipei.

Lim, Y. S., & Cole, K. N. (2002). Facilitating first language development in young Korean children through parent training in picture book interactions, *Bilingual Research Journal*, *26*(2), 367-381. https://doi.org/10.1080/15235882.2002.10668716

McCambridge, J., Witton, J., & Elbourne, D. R. (2014). Systematic review of the Hawthorne effect: New concepts are needed to study research participation effects. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology*, *67*(3), 267-277. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclinepi.2013.08.015

Meisel, J. M. (2011). *First and second language acquisition: Parallels and differences*. Cambridge University Press.

Mourão, S. (2016). Picture books in the primary EFL classroom. *Children's Literature in Language Education Journal, 3*(2), 25-43.

Newby, P. (2014). *Research methods for education* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Niklas, F., Tayler, C., & Schneider, W. (2015). Home-based literacy activities and children's cognitive outcomes: A comparison between Australia and Germany. *International Journal of Educational Research, 71*, 75-85. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2015.04.001

Nikolajeva, M., & Scott, C. (2001). *How picturebooks work*. Routledge.

Roberts, J., Jurgens, J. & Burchinal, M. (2005). The role of home literacy practices in preschool children's language and emergent literacy skills. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research*, *48(2)*, 345-359. https://doi.org/10.1044/1092-4388(2005/024)

Rosenblatt, L. M. (1978). *The reader, the text, the poem: The transactional theory of the literary work*. Southern Illinois University Press.

Sénéchal, M., & LeFevre, J. (2002). Parental involvement in the development of children's reading skill: A five-year longitudinal study. *Child Development, 73(2)*, 445-460. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8624.00417

Shamir, A., Korat, O., & Fellah, R. (2012). Promoting vocabulary, phonological awareness and concept about print among children at risk for learning disability: Can e-books help? *Reading and Writing, 25*, 45-69. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-010-9247-x

Sheu, H. (2006). The challenges of using English picture story books with primary school students in Taiwan. *English Teaching, 30*(4S), 39-60.

Sipe, L. R. (1999). Children's response to literature: Author, text, reader, context, *Theory Into Practice*, *38*(3), 120-129. https://doi.org/10.1080/00405849909543843

Sipe, L. R. (2000). The construction of literary understanding by first and second graders in oral response to picture storybook read-alouds. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *35(2)*, 252-275. https://doi.org/10.1598/RRQ.35.2.4

Strouse, G. A., O'Doherty, K., & Troseth, G. L. (2013). Effective coviewing: Preschoolers' learning from video after a dialogic questioning intervention. *Developmental Psychology*, *49(12)*, 2368-2382. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0032463

Sun, Q. Y. (2012). Construction of English reading strategy of children based on the English picture books, *Journal of Foreign Language Studies*, *1*, 267-268.

Takacs, Z.K., Swart, E.K., & Bus, A.G. (2014). Can the computer replace the adult for storybook reading? A meta-analysis on the effects of multimedia stories as compared to sharing print stories with an adult. *Frontiers in Psychology, 5*, 1-12. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2014.01366

Torr, J. (2007). The pleasure of recognition: Intertextuality in the talk of preschoolers during shared reading with mothers and teachers. *Early Years: An International Journal of Research and Development*, *27*(1), 77-91. https://doi.org/10.1080/09575140601135163

Uchikoshi, Y. (2006). English vocabulary development in bilingual kindergartners: What are the best predictors? *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, *9(1)*, 33-49. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1366728905002361

Vincent, C., & Ball, S. (2007). 'Making Up' the middle-class child: Families, activities and class dispositions. *Sociology*, *41*(6), 1061-1077. https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038507082315

Whitehurst, G. J., Falco, F. L., Lonigan, C. J., Fischel, J. E., DeBaryshe, B. D., Valdez- Menchaca, M. C., & Caulfield, M. (1988). Accelerating language development through picture book reading. *Developmental Psychology, 24*(4), 552-559. https://doi.org/10.1037/0012-1649.24.4.552

Whitehurst, G. J., Arnold, D. S., Epstein, J. N., Angell, A. L., Smith, M., & Fischel, J. E. (1994). A picture book reading intervention in day care and homes for children from low-income families. *Developmental Psychology, 30(5)*, 679-689. https://doi.org/10.1037/0012-1649.30.5.679

Zhang, D.B., & Koda, K. (2011). Home literacy environment and word knowledge development: A study of young learners of Chinese as a heritage Language. *Bilingual Research Journal*, *34*(1), 4-18. https://doi.org/10.1080/15235882.2011.568591

Zhang, H.H. (2016). Parent-child reading in English via picture books. *Journal of Nanchang College of Education*, *3*, 98-101.

Zhang, Y.M. (2018). The strategies of reading for pleasure in kindergarten, *Elementary Education Research*, *13*, 86-88.

Zou, Y. (2023). "You can choose": Didacticism and the struggle for power in Chinese parent/child dyad book choices. C*hildren's Literature in Education*, *54*(2), 236-254. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10583-022-09476-x

Author Biography

Ying Zou is a lecturer at China Three Gorges University. She earned her PhD at the University of York, UK. Her research centers on shared reading, early childhood literacy, children's literature and picturebooks. Her recent publications and conference presentations include shared reading in family domain, analysis of canonical Chinese picturebooks, and children's literature in educational settings.