

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN PARENT VOLUNTEERS PROVIDE LITERACY
SUPPORT FOR PRESCHOOL STUDENTS USING INTERACTIVE
READ ALOUDS IN A PRIVATE READING CENTER?

A DISSERTATION

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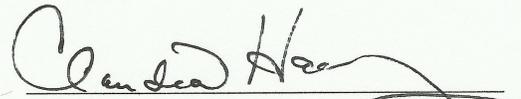
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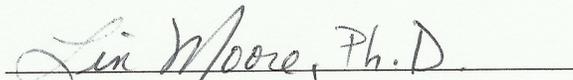
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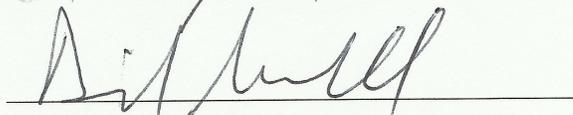
I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Kimberly Southwell entitled "What Happens When Parent Volunteers Provide Literacy Support for Preschool Student's using Interactive Read alouds in a Private Reading Center?" I have examined this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy with a major in Reading.



Claudia Haag, Ph.D., Major Professor

We have read this dissertation and recommend its acceptance:

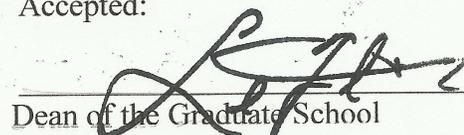






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DEDICATION

To my husband, Brian, for your endless support and believing in me. To my three daughters, Savanna, Sophie and Sadie, your encouragement and being my inspiration to achieve this goal and to never quit.

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First, dreams are not achieved without a team of support. I wish to thank my committee members, and my parents and child/dyads who volunteered their time in allowing me to conduct my research and study.

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ABSTRACT

KIMBERLY SOUTHWELL

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN PARENT VOLUNTEERS PROVIDE LITERACY SUPPORT FOR PRESCHOOL STUDENTS USING INTERACTIVE READ ALOUDS IN A PRIVATE READING CENTER?

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The purpose of this study was to examine and measure how a read aloud training program could be used to train parents in the early reading behaviors of preschool children in a private reading tutorial center. Two groups of parent-child dyads consisting of 17 pairs (parent-child) each were selected to fill the groups, experimental and control. A quasi-experimental research design was used in this study with parents in the experimental group being trained in one-on-one interactive read alouds in a reading center or home (natural setting) with print referencing behaviors. The study lasted 8 weeks and consisted of four phases: (a) student pre-assessments and parent survey, (b) parent volunteer training, (c) read aloud sessions and observations, and (d) post-assessments. The findings showed there was a significant difference in test scores between parents in the control group and those in the treatment group on the post-assessment tests. Likewise, there was a significant difference between the control group children and those children in the treatment group, with the treatment group outscoring the control group on the post-assessment tests. Further studies should be conducted using

a qualitative phenomenological design in order to elicit the experiences of parents who provide literacy support to their preschool children.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Literacy development, a cumulative process beginning in early childhood and continuing throughout the school years, is connected to a child's earliest experiences with books and stories (Morrow, 2005; Wade & Moore, 2000). Educators agree building blocks for language, reading, and writing development are developed based on a child's early literacy experiences (Baler & Scher, 2002). Research also has shown that children's experiences in early years are crucial for lifelong success in reading and literacy achievement (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985; Dickinson & Tabors, 2001; Gest, Freeman, Domitrovich, & Welsh, 2004). Children who enter kindergarten possessing the basics of early literacy skills have greater reading success in their early years of school than do children without a background in early literacy skills (National Reading Panel, 2000). In addition, while reading achievement is important in childhood, it continues to be important in the adult years as well. Those who struggle with reading in school are in danger of academic failure. They are also more prone to have emotional and social problems such as financial difficulties, criminal behavior, or illegal drug use. (Hagtvet, 2000; Whitehurst, 2001). Because early literacy development is essential to a successful academic future, the most effective methods for fostering literacy should be developed even before a child reaches kindergarten (Bus, van Ijzendor, & Pellegrini, 1995; Porter De Cusati, & Johnson, 2004).

This quasi-experimental study utilized a family literacy approach, which means that the family was partnered with the private reading center and given instruction on how to support early literacy skills. The parents learned how to engage their child in developing concepts about print and word awareness behaviors. The concepts of print and word awareness skills include such things as (a) recognizing that books have titles, authors, and illustrators; (b) learning to hold the book; (c) turning pages; (d) pointing to the word being read; and (d) distinguishing print from pictures. Developing such concepts aids a child's literacy development.

The read aloud training program for parents or caregivers, which was conducted at a private reading center, provided students and families with additional support to expand the children's foundations of literacy while supporting them in learning to read and encouraging them to become lifelong readers. Two read aloud sessions with parent and child (pre and post) were videotaped at the private reading center. The parent and child weekly read aloud sessions taking place in the family's home were not videotaped.

Background of the Study

This study was based on the theories of constructivism (Piaget, 1926; Vygotsky, 1978; Dewey, 1997), reader response theory (Rosenblatt, 1938), early literacy development (Clay, 1975) and family literacy (Senechal & LeFreve, 2002; Whitehouse & Colvin, 2001). The areas of research related to this study include; Family Literacy and Parent Involvement, Role of Read Alouds in Early Literacy Development, and Concepts about Print, Print Referencing and Parental Support.

Family Literacy and Parent Involvement

Parents play a key role in their children's literacy development and school success (Taylor, 1983; McIntyre, 2007). Numerous studies show a parent's involvement is a critical component in a child's development as a great deal of learning occurs in the home before children enter school (Baker & Scher, 2002; Caspe, 2014; Hiebert & Person 2000; McIntyre, 2007). Parental involvement in early literacy is directly connected to academic achievement and supports the whole notion of having parents who are not only modeling literacy behaviors but also supporting and scaffolding the process for their children. One way lifelong literacy begins is in a literacy-rich home environment.

Teachers, parents, and children need to work together to create the best environment for learning (Bus et al., 1995; Gest et al., 2004; Payne, Whitehurst, & Angell, 1994). When they do work together, children can be expected to have positive transitions for school success (Caspe, 2014; Ferguson & Clark, 2007; McIntyre, 2007; McIntyre, Eckert, Fiese, DeGennaro, & Wildenger, 2007). Ways of increasing parental involvement need to be explored so that parents can become involved in supporting their child's literacy development both at home and at school. If parents are to be invested in the process, early literacy centers and schools need to provide parents with easy to use, success-based strategies as well as the tools to develop early literacy skills with their child (Edwards, 2010, 2011; Invernizzi, 2000; Juel, 1996; Justice, 2010; Lonigan, 2004).

Early literacy development must have the support of parents in the preschools and as well as at home. Additional research has shown the benefits resulting from parent

involvement within the classroom (Porter & Johnson, 2004). Porter and Johnson conducted a case study and found that preschoolers who spent a consistent amount of time working on literacy activities with parents were better able to excel in word recognition than the other preschoolers who were not placed with their parent volunteer in the same classroom. Other studies have shown that families who make a conscious effort to work alongside their schools positively influence their children's early literacy development (Snow, Barnes, Chandler, Goodman, & Hemphill, 1991; Torgesen, 1998). In response to these findings, schools have been advised to advocate family and parent involvement (Epstein, 2001; Teale, 1984).

One way parents and early caregivers can reduce the potential risk of future reading challenges for children is by reading to them (Clay, 2000; Taylor, 1983; Teale, 1981). Even after children begin school, it is important for parents to stay involved and continue to help support early literacy development. Read alouds are a key avenue to parents remaining involved in their child's early literacy development.

Role of Read Alouds in Early Literacy Development

Research has shown that although many avenues exist through which early literacy can be developed, reading aloud to children is a unique and powerful technique that helps them develop essential literacy skills (Bus, 1995; Lonigan, 2004; Scarborough & Dobrich, 1994; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998). Studies across several decades have revealed that read alouds are crucial to early literacy development in children (Edwards, 2011; Ferguson-McGann & Clark, 2007).

Reading aloud to children has been shown to heighten their enthusiasm for books as well as having a positive impact on their literacy development (Biemiller, 2001, 2005; Taylor, 1983; Teale, 1981; Teale et al., 1984, Taylor, 1983; Trelease, 2006). Although simply listening to a parent or teacher read may produce substantial benefits for young children's early literacy skills, studies have shown that interactive read alouds greatly enhance children's reading skills. Read alouds incorporate reading to children and encourage active participation in book discussions, such as responding and asking questions about the text, rather than merely listening to an adult read (Dickinson & Tabors, 2001; McGee & Schickedanz, 2007). Furthermore, Holdaway (1979) explained that read alouds are most effective when children become active participants, such as participating in shared reading through chiming in on predictable lines of text and through active book discussions, when reading aloud, language skills can also be enhanced by taking part in the discussions and questioning the text as well as making future predictions about the story (Dickinson & Tabors, 2001). When these discussions are part of a read aloud, children are better able to grasp and understand new words and concepts they might have otherwise missed if they were simply listening to their parent or teacher read a book (Biemiller, 2001, 2005; Caspe, 2014; Teale, 1981; Teale et al., 1984).

For interactive read alouds to be entirely effective, they cannot solely be supported by the efforts of a child's teacher but must be implemented by parents as well. Taylor (1983) examined the theoretical basis of parental read alouds being a key factor in successful literacy development. She advocates that a child's success as a reader begins

much earlier than the first day of school. Reading and a love for reading begins at home. Parents can promote story enjoyment and literature appreciation by reading aloud with their child while expanding their vocabulary and instilling their love of reading. Reading aloud also creates a special time for parents to bond with their children. Another key factor addresses also helping a child to develop concepts about print (Clay, 2000) or print referencing (Justice, Ezell & Justice, 2000; Justice & Sofka, 2010)

Concepts about Print, Print Referencing and Parental Support

Clay (2000), in her work surrounding concepts about print, argued that schools need to assess each child's level of understanding of print, as well as their misunderstandings of print conventions in order to help teachers know what their students are attending to in print and what they still need to learn (p. 23). Zucker, Ward, and Justice's (2009), in their research around print referencing, found that print referencing can be incorporated into any parental or teacher read aloud-fiction, nonfiction, and poetry all while promoting literacy development. Print referencing, according Zucker et al. (2009), promotes getting readers interested in print by asking questions about a book and highlighting the forms, function, and features of print during read alouds (Clay, 2002; Justice, & Ezell, 2004; Smolkin et al., 1988; Teale et al., 1981). Both print referencing and word awareness abilities have been noted as being important components in emergent and early literacy development. Ezell and Justice (2000) found that when an adult supported a child's own use of print referencing, there was an increase in children's verbal interactions with print.

Research has focused on the significance of parental involvement and reading aloud to children, and many studies have shown how training supports parents' learning how to read with their child (Casper, 2014; Edwards, 2011, Edwards, Paratore, & Roser, 2009; McIntyre, 2007; McIntyre et al., 2007). However, little to no research has been done that reveals the impact of using concepts about print and print and word referencing training for parent support programs within a private reading center. Additionally, to date, much research can be found on parent reading programs used in preschool centers, university child center labs, federal programs like Head Start and with certain populations like individuals from a low socioeconomic background and English Language Learners (ELL; Edwards, 2010, 2011; Edwards, Paratore, & Roser, 2009; Paratore & Edwards, 2011). However, no studies have been found that document parent training in private reading centers.

Statement of Problem

The difference in children who come to school with many hours of read aloud book experience verses those children who come with little to no read aloud book experience places many children at a severe disadvantage when entering a formal school setting (Snow et al., 1998). Parents in partnership with teachers can make a big difference in providing support for emergent literacy behaviors and skills. The general problem is the need to determine the type of reading training for parents that can be implemented to ensure that children do learn necessary reading skills in early childhood. Specifically, this study was used to investigate a parent as literacy support model as one

way to encourage early reading development by training parents to support their child's early literacy behaviors. A private tutorial center was the setting for this study. Historically, schools have had good intentions in launching traditional parental reading support programs; however, parental involvement is problematic for the following operational reasons: (a) an inability to execute the training programs with ongoing guidance, (b) a decrease in teacher budgets, and (c) a minimal available time for overextended teachers leading to the cancellation of the program (Wasik, 1993). Thus, effective training is typically delivered but then compromised when literacy support from parents or adults is not ongoing or consistent (Sipes, 2011, 2012). Additionally, school-based tutoring programs are directly affected by decreasing school budgets. Usually, tutors hired are certified teachers and paraprofessionals; however, the reality of low wages factor into teacher-tutor retention, ultimately affecting the program's success. Lastly, teachers are stressed, being overcommitted to additional programs outside their daily classroom duties. Clearly, these factors combine to create an unenthusiastic setting for any potential program to be successful. Therefore, families need additional options to seek outside sources for reading support.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to examine and measure how a read aloud training program within a private reading center can be used to teach parents of preschool children how to support their child's early reading behaviors.

Research Questions

The three research questions for this study are the following:

1. To what extent does a literacy read aloud training program for parents influence the parents' interactive reading behaviors, as measured by ACIRI Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory (DeBruin-Parecki, 2007), when reading aloud with their children?
2. To what extent does parents' use of interactive read alouds influence the literacy behaviors as measured by ACIRI Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory of their preschool children?
3. What feedback do parents provide about the family literacy program?

Definitions

The following are terms used in this research:

Concepts about print: A measure for determining what the child knows about the way spoken language is represented in print (Clay, 2002).

Interactive read aloud: An interactive read aloud is a systematic method of reading that allows “teachers to scaffold children's understanding of the book being read, model strategies for making inferences and explanations, and teach vocabulary and concepts” (McGee & Schickedanz, 2007, p. 743). Research has repeatedly suggested children learn reading skills more effectively when they are actively engaged; asking and answering questions about the book and making predictions as the book is being read rather than sitting passively listening to the teachers (McGee & Schickedanz, 2007).

Print referencing: Print referencing specifically refers to an adult's use of verbal and nonverbal cues in order to focus a child's attention on "the form, features, and functions of written language" (Justice & Ezell, 2004, p.185). The print referencing cues include nonverbal cues such as pointing to print and verbal cues include asking questions about print (Justice & Ezell, 2004; Zucker et al., 2009). According to Justice and Ezell (2004), there are five key types of print referencing cues. The two nonverbal cues are (a) "Pointing to print in which an adult points to narrative print or print embedded in illustrations, (b) Tracking print in which adults track the print while reading the narrative" (Justice & Ezell, 2004, p. 186). The three verbal cues are

(a) Questions about print in which children are asked such things as Do you know this letter? What do you think this says? (b) Comments about print which include such things as "that's an A". This says 'Get out!' and (c) Requests about print which include Show me where the "O" is. Help me read these words" (Justice & Ezell, 2004, p. 186).

Reading skills: The specific abilities that enable an individual to read independently the written form of language to read anything written with independence (Justice & Pullen, 2003). According to Leipzig (2001), reading skills enable a reader to construct meaning from print. To have good reading skills, an individual must be able to (a) identify the words in print, (b) construct a meaning for those printed words, and (c) develop reading fluency by connecting the word with its meaning so that reading becomes automatic and accurate (Leipzig, 2001). While virtually all 4- and 5-year-old

children can communicate and learn from oral language, very few can read because they cannot identify printed words (Leipag, 2001).

Reading support program: An intervention program that provides an evidence-based enrichment program, where children construct their own understandings while the teacher supports the child (Clay, 2001).

Significance of the Study

Using a quasi-experimental approach, research was conducted to investigate whether providing parents with read aloud training sessions would provide the parent with the necessary literacy support so they can help support their child's literacy learning at home in a natural setting. Interactive read-alouds practicing print and word awareness and story discussions will be the primary skills implemented in the one-on-one parental reading program for preschool children.

By establishing and evaluating the benefits of parent support programs; this study may encourage more parents to become contributing partners in their child's education. This parental support is seen to fill an enormous need for preschool literacy programs (Caspé, 2014). As Ferguson-McCann and Clark (2007) noted, the importance of scaffolded or transitional literacy support programs from home to school, cannot be underestimated; only 20% of U.S. schools have any type of transition programs in place to support young children and their families entering kindergarten. The results of this study may help administrators and teachers develop more transition programs like the one examined in this study in order to improve connections between early childhood

programs and elementary schools. It is important that schools reach out to families before children enter kindergarten (Ferguson-McCann & Clark, 2007; McIntyre et al., 2007).

Additionally, possible benefits from this research may be a better understanding of current practices. Parent literacy support research may prompt learning centers or schools to adopt similar interactive read aloud training programs for parents in their preschool programs, thus, providing a more enhanced parental literacy program (Wade & Moore, 2000). The information gained from this research study may improve instructional practices for volunteer parents while enhancing print and word awareness knowledge for preschoolers.

Limitations

This study has particular limitations present, some of which may have influenced the research outcomes. The participants in this study may have encountered some challenges:

1. The willingness of the parents to participate impacted the depth of the data collected.
2. The study was limited to one private reading center.
3. The demographics of the community were upper-middle class.
4. The parent participants volunteered so the sample taken may not be a true representation of the population for this study.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this study was to examine and measure how a read aloud training program can be used to train parents in the early reading behaviors of preschool children in a private reading tutorial center. This chapter includes a review of the pertinent literature related to family literacy and early literacy development and is divided into five sections. The chapter opens with a discussion of the important theories in education. Section 2 includes a discussion of language development especially in the early years of life (birth to 5 years of age). Section 3 includes the research area of family literacy. Section 4 contains a review of the research on parent involvement in their children's early literacy development. Section 5 is divided into three major areas: (a) Language Development, including the subtopics of Early Literacy and Emergent Literacy, Clay's Observational Survey of Early Literacy Achievement, Print Referencing; (b) Language to Literacy including Family Literacy and Family Literacy Programs; and (c) Parent Involvement, including the importance of parent involvement in schools.

This chapter reviews the literature on early literacy as well as family literacy. Previous research has shown that a child's success in school is directly affected by parent involvement. Clay (2005) was the first researcher to note that early literacy begins a long time before the child enters a formal classroom. Other researchers have noted that it is essential that children be introduced to books and reading well before the time they can

actually read on their own (Clay 1966). Interacting with a child through storytelling encourages the child to become interested in printed material, opening the way to eventual storytelling by the child. (Holdaway, 1979).

Parent involvement with teachers can increase a child's success in school throughout all the years of education. Much research has been done on the importance of parent involvement in tutoring children (Baker et al., 2000; Brown et al., 2005; Morris 2003; Neuman, 1995). Researchers such as Juel (2005) have suggested that parents or community volunteers need to be trained if they are to be effective. The current study was used to show what the effects are on a preschool child's literacy development and whether training parents, as Juel and others have suggested, results in a more prepared parent as literacy supporter to help the child in their reading development.

Educational Theory

This section includes a discussion of Piaget's, Vygotsky's, Dewey's, Rosenblatt's, and Holdaway's theories. These theories are the most relevant to the present study.

Constructivist Theory

Much educational methodology and many teaching approaches have been greatly influenced by the theoretical works of Piaget and Vygotsky. Both theorists are major influences in instructional methods based on the theory of constructivism and maximizing a child's full cognitive potential. Piaget and Vygotsky, both constructivists, practiced approaches to intelligence and learning based on the belief that people construct

their own knowledge of the world through daily living. They differed slightly in the way they interpreted constructivism. Piaget believed that individuals learn through the construction of one logical structure after another (Gray, 2002). Piaget believed that children's logic and modes of thinking differed from that of adults in the beginning (Piaget, 1977). Piaget believed that intelligence came from experience and action. For example, a Piagetian constructivist classroom provides a variety of activities that will not only challenge a student, but will meet the needs of children with different ways of learning while inspiring new ideas that can help children develop their own informative thinking.

Piaget introduced multisensory learning environments, which involved concrete learning experiences with hands-on opportunities to see, hear, touch, taste, and smell. These experiences were encouraged and provided building blocks for enhanced learning opportunities, such as reading comprehension and critical thinking.

Vygotsky (1978), on the other hand, believed that development first takes place in the social arena, when the child observes parents' behavior, listens to the parents' speech, and tries to imitate what he or she sees. Thus, Vygotsky introduced the social aspect of learning into constructivism (Gray, 2002). This pattern builds upon Piaget's theory of children understanding the world around them and builds upon the experiences they are familiar with while discovering their environment. Furthermore, with parents making corrections when needed and providing greater challenges when appropriate, the child

eventually becomes more competent and information becomes internalized, as language becomes represented in the mind as thought.

Vygotsky (1978) was noted for his development of zone of proximal development (ZPD). In his work, he argued that when students are at their ZPD within a learning task, a teacher who provides appropriate assistance or scaffolding will give the student enough of a boost to achieve the task. Bruner, like Vygotsky, places great emphasis on the social nature of learning, arguing that other people should help a child develop skills through the process of scaffolding. The term *scaffolding* first appeared in the literature when Wood, Bruner, and Ross (1976) described how tutors interacted with preschooler to help them solve a reading problem. This definition of scaffolding is very similar to Vygotsky's notion of the zone of proximal development. According to Bruner; “Scaffolding refers to the steps taken to reduce the degrees of freedom in carrying out some task so that the child can concentrate on the difficult skill they are in the process of acquiring” (Bruner, 1978, p. 19).

Hence, once a student masters a task, the scaffolding can then be gradually removed, and the student will be able to complete the task again, successfully and independently. Scaffolding is an educational term that means that an adult or a knowledgeable other adjusts the level of support, or scaffolding, given to a child in any given task. As the child becomes more competent in any task, the knowledgeable other reduces the scaffolding needed by the child to perform the task (Vygotsky, 1978).

Scaffolding is considered the distance between what a child can do independently and

what the child can do if helped by an adult or more advanced peer. Vygotsky believed that practicing ZPD and scaffolding promoted independent problem solving using adult guidance or in a collaborative environment with more capable peers.

Thus, Piaget and Vygotsky's research around learning has changed the practice of education. Current research clearly supports constructivist learning practices using collaborative approaches that allow students to learn by connecting new information to what they already know and by formulating a higher level of meaning and understanding new material. The implications of constructivism and how it is applied has shaped the foundation for constructivist education (Gray, 2002).

Dewey (1938) was also a pioneer in the intellectual learning environment who believed that the school's purpose was to educate children according to a theory of social experience. Dewey argued that children need interaction rather than authoritarian rule and thus instruction should allow for individual learning differences in students (Baldacchino, 2008). Dewey (1938) stated that educators must engage with students and expand their experiences within the classroom setting that promotes exploration, thinking, and reflection. Social interaction and an action environment are both critical for successful learning. This learning process of experiential learning through real life is consistent with constructivist's theories and is not carried out by students acting alone (Baldacchino, 2008).

Dewey (1938) saw the process of developing children's learning through experiences with objects and conversation about those experiences. As a result, Dewey's theory for education promoted recognizing the whole child.

Rosenblatt's Transactional Theory

Reading books, according to Rosenblatt's transactional theory involves a transaction between the reader and the text (Rosenblatt 1938, 1978). Each interaction is a unique experience in which the reader and text continuously influence each other. This interaction is commonly referred to as reader response theory. This is not a singular act but it is a connection that supports the transaction between reader and the text (Rosenblatt 1938, 1978)

In Rosenblatt's transactional theory, she argued that language is used in the process of connecting transactions with text. She claimed that reading and sharing one's thoughts can help students; particularly, older readers create a deeper understanding of literature while appreciating the need for acceptance. This, in turn, validates a sense of commonality with peers, identifies experiences of literacy characters while discussing the similarities found.

Transactional theory is constructivist in nature as it emphasizes the active role of the reader in creating meaning. Typically this *creating* is done naturally, based on a reader's background and the person's interpretation of a reading.

Rosenblatt (1938, 1978) reported that there are different kinds of reading: aesthetic and efferent. *Aesthetic* reading—or reading for pleasure is experiencing the

poem, the story while *effeient* reading is reading to gain meaning. Rosenblatt maintained that the act of reading was a dynamic "transaction" between the reader and the text.

Natural Learning Model

Holdaway (1979) believed that all children can learn how to read by experiencing the text over and over; hence, he developed the natural learning model to explain the reading process. The four processes in Holdaway's natural learning model are

1. Demonstration: Teacher directs, demonstrates, models, explains, questions, initiates and guides exploration. Learners observe demonstrations and absorb the feeling of being in a literate community.
2. Participation: Teacher induces active involvement within the class. Reading is shared at this stage. Learners participate, negotiate meaning cooperatively and question.
3. Practice: Teacher enables, supports, and encourages children to dominate the reading. Learners practice being a reader, gain personal competence in using the skills of literacy, self-regulate by taking personal responsibility for application, and correction.
4. Performance: Teacher rewards, monitors and records new increments of skill. Learners share, perform, dramatize, display new increments of competence and experience the powers and joys of literacy. (Holdaway, 1979, p. 133)

By following the four-step process (which is recursive in nature, in his learning model, children are scaffolded into the reading process. In Holdaway's model, the educator

continues to scaffold naturally the process from demonstrations of reading into shared and guided practice culminating in the child's ability to perform or read on their own.

Holdaway (1979) argued that one way children learn to read is by being read to and by pretending to read storybooks by themselves; in other words, the teacher models reading for the children and the children are given the opportunity to imitate what the teacher does until they are able to do the reading on their own. Young children who are read to frequently spend much time with their own favorite storybooks pretending to read them and reenacting some of the characters' behavior in the books. In one of his studies, Holdaway observed a number of 2 to 5 year olds reading their favorite storybooks and was impressed with the effort children put into recapturing the meaning of the stories. According to Holdaway, "[The children] have remembered very little of the surface verbal level: what they have remembered most firmly is the meanings" (p. 44). The children in the study were not memorizing the story, but were working to reconstruct the storyline "using the rhythms and sounds of language in which they first heard the message" (p. 45). These theories all explain the importance of constructivism in developing a read aloud intervention program.

In the following section, the importance of language development and its connection to literacy is discussed along with a discussion of Clay's theory of emergent literacy.

Language Development and Emergent Literacy

Several key researchers, such as Clay (1966) and Cazden, John, and Hymes (1972), were responsible for the beginning concentration of research looking at language and literacy learning. This area of focus led to an interest in emergent literacy (Clay, 1966), which describes how very young children interact with books, even when they cannot yet read or write in a conventional sense (Cazden et al., 1972; Clay, 1966). As researchers have suggested, all parts of language are interrelated such as oral, auditory, reading, writing, and viewing (Cazden et al., 1972; Clay, 1966).

Oral Language Development

Theorists and researchers argued that early literacy development is a cumulative process that begins in early childhood and continues throughout the school years, is connected to a child's earliest experiences with books and stories (Cazden et al., 1972; Clay, 2000; Neuman, 1998; Neuman & Bredekamp, 2000; Teal & Yokota, 2000; West, Denton, & Germino-Hausken, 2000; West, Denton, & Reaney, 2000). Additional findings indicate that children's experiences in early years are crucial for lifelong success in reading and literacy achievement (Dickinson & Tabors, 2001; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). Further, findings revealed that oral language plays a key role in building a foundation for reading. Generally, children who acquire well-developed oral language skills are more likely to become successful readers.

In his study of oral language responses in first and second graders using picture storybook read alouds, Sipes (2011) suggested that language and critical thinking skills

improve in children as young as first and second grade through teachers working on textual analysis, intertextual connections, personal connections, and helping students become engaged in the story by using creative expression. Sipes suggested that using playful language to enhance a response while interacting with stories encourages active participation. For example, during a read aloud, a teacher would allow children to act out the story or insert a familiar student's name into the story.

Teale and Yokota (2000) in their study on 4 and 5 year old preschool children argued that a literacy-rich environment is critical for the foundation of oral and written language to emerge. Given the support of this type of setting, students were better prepared to work on other literacy skills including phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. This in turn, led to more emphasis on school-like family literacy activities being practiced at home, which promotes children's success in school. These activities include making a grocery list with pictures and participating in finger play.

The study of language development has provided a great deal of information about children's development as literacy learner, and the connections between language and literacy development (Copple & Bredekemp, 2009; Jalongo, 2008). Research has found that oral language plays a key role in building a foundation for reading (Berk, 2009; Pena & Mendez-Perez, 2006; Schickedanz & Casbergue, 2009). Generally, children who acquire well-developed oral language skills are more likely to become

successful readers (Snow, 1995). In this next section, the definition of early literacy will be discussed, and Clay's contribution to early literacy is examined as well.

Early Literacy and Emergent Literacy Defined

Early literacy has been defined as what children inherently know about (a) communication; (b) language, verbal and nonverbal; (c) reading and writing before they are able to actually read and write conventionally (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998; Teal & Sulzby, 1989). To become literate, children must learn about print forms of language and use them to communicate. This process begins at birth and children in literate communities come into contact with written language from infancy.

Adults in literate communities consciously bring a child into contact with print by reading books to the children or by giving them toys, which have print on them (Clay, 1966). Children are also more likely to encounter print in their environment. All this exposure to print starts the process of learning to read and write. Clay (1966) called this process of learning to read and write *emergent literacy*, a term first introduced by Clay to describe how young children interact with books, even before they can read or write in the conventional sense. Emergent literacy consists of the "skills, knowledge, and attitudes that are presumed to be developmental precursors to conventional forms of reading and writing and the environments that support these developments" (Lonigan & Whitehurst, 1998, p. 849). According to Braunger and Lewis (1998), "In a very general sense, emergent literacy describes those behaviors shown by very young children as they begin to respond to, and approximate reading and writing acts" (p. 16).

In 1966, Clay disputed the belief that real reading started for children when they were in a formal school setting and were reading from textbooks. Clay argued that the belief that reading began in the formal classroom ignored all the important milestones in young childhood that occurred before the child could read independently (Clay, 1966, 1985). As an example Clay (1985) cited the biggest breakthrough in learning to read—that is recognizing that the marks on paper mean something (Clay, 1985). Children are unaware that the adult is reading something called words to them; they think it is magical the way the adult can read the same book the same way each time (Clay, 1985). The child assumes the adult is reading the picture and so the child’s first attempts at reading are pretending to read by sprinkling in some words and phrases they remember from previous readings of the book. According to Clay (1998), to be effective reading instructors, teachers must look at early literacy learning through the eyes of children and listen to how the children talk as they converse. Clay (1998) argued that writing also needs to be made a powerful partner of reading. Reading and writing develop hand in hand.

Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement

Clay (2005) created an *Observational Survey of Early Literacy Achievement*, which is widely used by classroom teachers and by researchers. The survey is administered by teachers as a standardized informal assessment, which adheres to the characteristics of what Clay calls “sound measurement instruments, including standard tasks, standard administration, real-world tasks to establish validity, and ways of knowing

about reliability of observations” (Clay, 2005, p. 45). As Clay (2005) argued, measuring early literacy behaviors is very complex and has to be based on systematic and careful observation. The *Observation Survey of Early Literacy Achievement* includes a systemic way of observing early reading and writing behaviors. All the subsections, or tasks, in the survey were developed through careful research (Clay, 2005), the survey includes the six tasks that Clay found to be important in order to do a careful assessment of a young child’s emerging literacy. The tasks include the following.

- ***Letter Identification*** to determine which letters the child knows in anyway; letter name, the sound the letter makes, or a word that begins with the letter.
- ***Word Test*** to determine if the child is building a personal resource of sight word vocabulary.
- ***Concepts about Print*** to determine what the child knows about the way spoken language is represented in print.
- ***Writing Vocabulary*** to determine if the child is building a personal resource of known words that can be written in every detail.
- ***Hearing and Recording Sounds in Words*** to assess phonemic awareness by determining how the child represents sounds in graphic form.
- ***Text Reading*** to determine an appropriate level of text difficulty and to record student behaviors when reading continuous text (using a running record). (Clay, 2014, para 3)

Print Referencing

Clay (2000) showed that emergent literacy is a very important and observable period of reading development. She argued that the print knowledge children learn helps them know how to handle a book and recognize print conventions as well as understand that word and letters are used to convey a message. This emergent stage of literacy usually occurs from ages 3 to 5 (Clay, 2000). Besides developing important knowledge about print, emergent readers are gaining skills in oral language and phonological awareness (Clay, 2000). According to Clay, developing these skills will help the young readers achieve word recognition and reading comprehension skills later (Clay, 2000).

Zucker et al. (2009) extended Clay's argument about emergent literacy and suggested that there are various stages that children must pass through as they become literate. Specifically, these stages of knowledge that young readers must learn through print referencing are the following: "(1) Print as an object of meaning, (2) Book organization and print conventions, (3) Alphabet knowledge, [and] (4) Concept of word" (Zucker et al., 2009, p. 64). Using the emergent skills that Clay identified, several important studies were conducted on the importance of print referencing. Justice (2002) proposed that emergent readers' print knowledge is enhanced when using print referencing with young readers. Print referencing includes alphabet knowledge, concept of word, book language, vocabulary, while building listening and comprehension skills.

Other researchers such as Justice and Ezell (2001) evaluated the effect of participating in book-reading sessions on 30 preschoolers from low-income households

enrolled in Head Start. Based on a pretest measure of their print awareness, two groups were created: the experimental and control. The experimental group participated in shared-reading sessions that included a focus on print. Control-group children participated in shared reading sessions with a picture focus. Post-testing indicated that children who participated in print-focused reading sessions outperformed the control-group on three measures of print awareness (Words in Print, Print Recognition, and Alphabet Knowledge). The experimental group showed the most significant growth in knowledge.

In a subsequent study, Justice and Ezell (2002) examined instruction strategies that would improve 4-year-old children's verbal and nonverbal responses to print while being read to by an adult. Twenty-four graduate students in speech-language pathology were matched based on their previous clinical experience with young children. The children were assigned to either an experimental group or a control group. Both groups were given pretest and posttest assessments. Results showed that both groups made fewer references to print at the pretest time. The experimental group, however, used all five-reference types at posttest time significantly more often than the control group at posttest. In addition, the children of the treated adults who had received instruction significantly increased verbal utterances about print.

Read Alouds

Although there are many avenues through which early literacy can be developed, research agrees that reading aloud is a unique and powerful technique which helps

children grow necessary literacy skills. This section includes the importance of read alouds and how children learn from books when they are actively involved and provide historical background that developed interactive read alouds as a method which are crucial to early literacy development in children.

Importance of read alouds. Historically, reading aloud is noted as being the most critical key to developing early literacy skills (Trelease, 1979). Trelease, a former journalist, noted something about children's reading while he was doing a story on public school classrooms. The *Read-Along Handbook* (1979) was an outgrowth of what he noticed while visiting the classrooms. Trelease hypothesized that reading aloud to children directly corresponded to a child's heightened enthusiasm for books/literature. Not only did read alouds affect children's interest in books, but they also had a positive effect on children's behavior and overall progress in their reading development and early literacy skills (Trelease, 1979). Trelease was also a strong proponent of Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) because he believed having teachers participate in silent reading with their student encouraged a love for reading in the child. Theorists and teachers alike have argued that early literacy development is a cumulative process that begins in early childhood and continues throughout the school years and is connected to a child's earliest the experiences with books and stories (Camborne, 1988; Clay, 2002; Dickinson & Tabors, 2001; Justice, & Ezell, 2004; Piaget, 1929; Smolkin et al., 1988; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998; Teale et al., 1981; Teale & Yokota, 2000; Trelease, 1979). According to

Clay (2000), children's experiences in early years are crucial for lifelong success in reading and literacy achievement.

The process of learning book-orientation procedures allows a student some familiarity with the story, thereby, enhancing critical analysis, discussing prior knowledge of a book topic through a wide variety of genres, exploring word-meaning full of rich vocabulary, asking purposeful questions, using think-alouds and summarizing the conclusion to a story (Trelease, 1979). Researchers have found there is a powerful impact on literacy development by using a more interactive format.

Interactive read aloud lessons. Although interactive read aloud lessons have been less thoroughly documented in the literature than after-reading discussions that are often used with a typical read aloud, their potential for effective practices should be investigated further. Interactive read alouds incorporate aspects of Camborne's (1988) condition of learning. Camborne's theories state that children do not learn from demonstrations by passively absorbing information. Rather, to learn, children must be engaged with the demonstration. Camborne's beliefs are supported by Piaget's (1929) constructivism theory which supports the belief that learners communicate with each other, sharing their knowledge and experiences in order to create new knowledge.

Effective interactive read aloud practices. Best practices, as they relate to literacy development for preschoolers, can be implemented by using parents as reading support with read alouds used in an interactive manner; these practices promote discussions that foster oral language growth through book experiences (Cunningham,

Perry, Stanovich, & Stanovich, 2004; Edwards, 2010, 2011; Edwards, Paratore, & Roser, 2009; Paratore & Edwards, 2011). Studies have shown that teachers are dissatisfied with the traditional storybook reading that places the listeners into a passive role.

Book talks have been used as tools to engage people in discussion about books (Nollen, 1992; "Teacher Book Talks" As a Professional Development Tool.). Starting in the 1950s, Book Talks were started in order to engage teenagers in reading because so many American children were reluctant readers who thought that reading was *uncool*. By the 1980s, book talks were created for adults, and by the 1990s, book talks had been developed for young children. These book talks were focused on teaching young children to read, mostly using picture books (Nollen, 1992). Therefore, it would be helpful to provide book-talks as a rich literacy experience to encourage dialogue through an interactive read aloud session (Danielson, 1996; Ernst von Glasersfeld Homepage, 2006; Vergunst & Piazza, 2010).

Suwannakhae (2012), in her dissertation, had two purposes for her early literacy study. The first purpose was to examine family literacy activities “with preschool-aged children and parental expectations of their children's development and future school success as reported by Asian immigrant families” (Abstract). The second purpose was to observe the interactive reading behaviors between parents and their preschool-aged children. Correlations were used to measure the effects between parental reading behavior categories and child behavior categories. Suwannakhae found that half of the

parents had no difficulty with reading when they were in school. Most parents spent little or no time taking their child to the library, and they allowed their children to watch television daily from 1 to 3 hours. From the administration of the Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory (ACIRI), Suwannakhae (2012) found the following:

The highest means scores were in the category "Enhancing Attention to Text," while the lowest mean scores were in the category "Using Literacy Strategies." In terms of the relationships between parental reading behavior categories and child behavior categories, the findings demonstrated that the relationships between parental reading behavior categories and child behavior categories were found to be significantly correlated in a positive manner. (Suwannakhae, 2012, Abstract)

There has been some research investigating the effectiveness of read aloud programs when the preschool child has a disability, are from low income families, or are students at risk of failure. Ezell, Justice and Parsons (2000) examined the efficacy of parent-child book reading program designed to increase early literacy skills of preschoolers with communication disorders. Four parents and their children were selected for a five-week program that included training for the parents in conducting guided reading practice. The study results showed that participation in the program positively influenced children's concepts about print. Additionally, the parent participants believed the program to be of benefit to their children as well as to themselves. Ezell et al. discussed the findings in terms of how effective parent-child read alouds were for preschoolers with communication disorders.

Smolkin, Conlon, and Yaden (1988) and Smolkin, Yaden, Brown, and Hofius (1992) supported by Trelease (1979) believed that read alouds are a way to get children actively involved in reading and a way to increase children's love for reading. Smolkin et al. (1988) conducted a study in which they investigated the questions that seven children, aged 3 years 2 months to 5 years 3 months, asked about the print aspects of the book they read in a read aloud with their teachers. The findings showed that the questions were about the print in every part of the picture book, including the illustrations, the body of the text, front matter, and even the end pages. Smolkin et al. (1992) looked at how read alouds with their parents affect three year-old children. The findings showed that the child's story book genre, visual design choices, and discourse structure affected the responses given by preschool to picture books during parent-child read alouds.

Thus, during an interactive book-talk reading session, engagement would include pointing to the story title, predicting what might happen next, and retelling story events (Danielson, 1996). Read alouds can be used to assess and support oral language and vocabulary development through multiple readings, during which the reader helps the child become the storyteller by gradually using thought-provoking questions to move the child beyond naming objects in pictures to thinking more about what is happening in the pictures, and how this relates to the child's own experiences (Daniels, 2000; Fox, 2001; Trelease, 1979).

Family Literacy

In this section, family literacy is defined and related to theories that influence a child's learning. Various views and perspectives existing in developing family literacy programs are analyzed. These theories and best instructional practices for learners are examined and their methodologies are compared and provide samples that support those theories and how they relate to effective instruction today.

According to Morrow (1995), family literacy is defined as the ways families and their extended families use literacy within their homes and communities. Historically, the value of family and their influence greatly impacted literacy dating back 150 years ago. (Phillips 1996). Three scholars' work has had a strong historical influence on the field. In 1983, Taylor proposed the concept of family literacy, arguing that reading and writing were embedded into the daily lives of the middle-class with whom she worked. Taylor's ethnographic study documented young children's attempts at reading and writing including writing notes, product labels, and environmental signs. Taylor (1983) concluded that these parents did not intentionally set out to teach their own children literacy skills. Rather, by simply encouraging children to participate in different literacy activities, parents and other family members supported early literacy development.

Like Taylor's research, Heath (1983) sought to understand how young children's language development is affected by the cultural communities they grow up in. This research was significant because of the need for better methods for minorities in the working class. Heath's (1969/1978) study looked at three communities in the Piedmont

Carolinas just a few miles apart from each other. She studied the language development through each community to better understand their particular language socialization. Heath's study found that the language expectations of the school and the mills were significantly different from the values and expectations of home communities. Heath argued that values are formed by family structures, religious groups, and concepts of childhood, which place language being dependent with the values and behaviors of their social groups. Heath's work supports a constructivist's view upon language and importance of adapting to a communities language and *ways of talking*. Heath's research was important because of the push for better educational methods to increase the success of minority and working class students in school. Therefore, a child's literacy development depends greatly on community behavior, which is societal.

Similar to Taylor and Heath, Moll's (2004) ethnographic research in bilingual literacy examined the lives of working-class Mexican American students in the barrio schools of Arizona. Moll's ethnographic study involved interviewers gathering data about the heritage, education, and labor history of the students' family by talking with the members. The data revealed that these Mexican American families had abundant knowledge in agriculture, mining, mechanics and electricity with entrepreneurial skills. The results from Moll's (2004) study urged participating teachers to look at each student's funds of knowledge: their knowledge, assets, and experiences, rather than what they did not have. Instead, Moll suggested that teachers help students find meaningful activities that involve the development of a more positive view of their culture. Building

upon the home to school connection, Moll further concluded that schools should provide teachers with a better understanding of how to acknowledge the funds of knowledge students bring with them to school and help bilingual and minority children achieve literacy while fostering their sense of community to give working-class children a richer education.

As the studies above show, family literacy theory overlaps emergent literacy theory in that home experiences and the knowledge and experiences children bring into the classroom contribute greatly to a child's literacy success or failure. Even as schools strive to provide the best reading instruction, research confirms the importance of children's home environments being rich in literacy experiences.

In her writing dealing with family literacy, Morrow (1993) suggested that teachers can learn a lot from parents who create a language-rich, literate home environment. Morrow recommended that teachers and researchers stop focusing on family deficits and start examining the positive things that families do such as language interactions or storybook reading. Similar to Moll (1994), and Morrow's (1993) research findings, Yaden (2000), and Strickland (1989) also reported that emergent literacy years, birth to 5 years old, are critical and proposed that the focus of research be on developing and improving what children and their families already have.

Sometimes, family literacy occurs naturally during the routines of daily living. For example, environmental print is a part of each child's daily lives such as drawings or writings to share ideas; composing notes or letters to communicate messages; making

lists; reading and following directions; or sharing stories and ideas through conversation, reading, and writing (Clay, 2000). In the next section, family literacy reading programs are examined.

Family Literacy Programs

One of the earliest organized reading support programs was the Howard Street Tutoring Program, which was started in 1979 (Morris, 1993). The program lasted 10 years and involved after-school tutoring of second- and third-grade students who were struggling in reading. The children came to the center twice a week for one-on-one tutoring that lasted an hour. The tutors did read alouds with their assigned readers. The children were administered a pre and post-assessment twice in the school year. They took the pretest at the start of the tutoring year and the post-assessment at the end of the tutoring year (Morris, 1993). An evaluative study of the program was done by Morris 5 years after the program ended. The results of that study suggested that two big goals were achieved in the program: First, posttest results showed that the program had successfully improved the reading ability of low-achieving primary grade children. Second, the program had operated successfully for 10 years because there was an onsite supervisor who was a reading specialist and who was available to support the tutors in their volunteer tutoring. The Howard Street Program was a model program that set the standards for other projects to come. The program directors were able to figure out what worked and what did not. The largest problem they had was in finding enough tutors year after year (Morris, 1993)

Another key program, called the Family Fluency Program, originated in New Jersey for second grade students and parents from low socio-economic areas in the first decade of the twenty-first century (Morrow, Kuhn, & Schwanenflugel, 2006). Teachers were trained and delivered a 90-minute program to students daily. Parents then received three evening workshops practicing with their participating children a variety of fluency building skills such as Echo Reading, Choral Reading, Partner Reading, Repeated Reading to support their children at home.

Like the Family Fluency Program, Family Storyteller (1977) was a program aimed at a particular socioeconomic region that valued family partnerships. This program was founded in Nevada and used storytelling as a reading development strategy. The program offered reading workshops to school families and their communities. The goal of the program was to get books to children and improve children's early literacy skills. The positive response from parents and families resulted in children making significant gains in their enjoyment of reading as well as parents gaining understanding of print concepts.

A similar family based literacy program, SHELLS (Support at Home Early Language Literacies) is an early literacy intervention program developed for rural and remote communities (Snow, C. E., Taborsa, P. O., Nicolson, P. A., & Kurland, B. F). It is a home-based program for parents (children aged 0-3). Home visits, telephone contact, group meetings, and newsletters are the means of communication. The program aims to support parents or caregivers in their roles as their children's first literacy teachers as well

as to learn more about the foundations of literacy. The outcome from SHELL shows positive change in family literacy experiences and increased parental confidence in their roles as literacy educators.

Recent studies dealing with family literacy and tutoring have suggested that because of the increasing number of at-risk readers, schools are facing a literacy crisis that requires a strong literacy foundation (Beck, 2004; Dickinson, McCabe, & Anastasopoulos, 2003; Santoro, Baker, Chard, & Howard, in press; Sharif, Ozuah, Dinkevich, & Mulvhill, 2003). As research has shown, prevention programs are a more effective approach (IRA, 2000; National Reading Council, 2011) than traditional literacy programs. To meet these demands, it is crucial for schools to provide children with literacy preparation they need to be successful learners (Allington, 2005; Gordon, Morgan, Ponticell, 2004; Maheady & Mallette, & Harper, 2006; Schwartz, 2005). Neuman (1995) found programs that are properly implemented with qualified trained tutors are coupled with community and organizational support, as well as adequate pedagogy of reading instruction, enabled students to gain a rich literacy experience.

When Congress introduced the America Reads Challenge Act of 1997, the U.S. Department of Education Secretary Richard W. Riley, declared “Literacy is about reading, but it is more about participating in the community, understanding the world around you, becoming a better citizen, and taking advantage of opportunities—ensuring that every child reads independently by the end of third grade” (National Service

Resources, 2009, para. 4). An effort to achieve this goal placed one million volunteers in schools to tutor children in reading.

The numerous studies reviewed in this section share findings of programs/studies in volunteer tutoring. One such study by Invernizzi (2000), the co-founder of Book Buddies, reported on a program that provides low-cost, one-on-one tutoring to first graders who are having difficulty learning to read. This comprehensive tutorial approach was developed for community volunteers as an alternative one-on-one intervention for children at risk for reading failure. Trainers and tutors use a how-to resource that provides guidelines for setting up a successful tutorial program in the early grades and presents a field -tested lesson format for individualized instruction in reading, writing, and phonics (Invernizzi, 2000). Tutors provide two 45-minute tutoring sessions to their tutee each week. Some of the Book Buddy features are (a) a volunteer recruiter solicits community members to tutor children in first and second grade; (b) volunteers come from all walks of life, aged 18-75; (c) tutors receive training twice a year in research-based methods by Book Buddies coordinators, most of whom are reading specialists; (d) the tutors receive ongoing support from the coordinators by writing lesson plans and providing feedback and additional training; and (e) each coordinator supervises 15 volunteer tutors and the children they tutor (Invernizzi, 2000).

In 2003, the Book Buddies program was running at five of the six elementary schools in Charlottesville, Virginia. In 2003, there were 125 tutor-student pairs. Ninety-six tutors returned, and of those, 66 (69%) have tutored for at least three years. Although

the results were somewhat inconclusive based on the qualitative study having no comparison group, poor attendance amongst some of the students receiving fewer sessions could have affected outcomes. Additionally, critics stated the increase in reading scores could also be a result of parent involvement and motivation and not a result of the tutorial program itself (Wasik, 1993).

Most of these reading support programs were implemented as a way to encourage literacy development in young children. Recently, in 2013, a spinoff of the Book Buddy program was inspired by the creator of the program's 10-year-old son, Sean. Kristi Rodriguez, creator of the program, had a son who struggled with reading at school. Rodriguez brought Sean to her workplace to read to the cats as a way of getting Sean to read more. Sean loved reading to the cats so much that he asked his mother to take him to read to the cats again. She hypothesized that if her son enjoyed reading to the cats then other children would like to read to animals as well. The program was implemented, and since that time, Sean's reading ability has increased immensely, and he has started reading to his dog at home. That said, an additional creative literacy movement has occurred in helping children become better readers by adding pet animals to a read aloud session.

Some research has investigated the effectiveness of read aloud programs when the preschool children have a disability, are from low income families, or are students at risk of failure. Ezell, Justice and Parsons (2000) examined the efficacy of a parent-child book reading program that would increase early literacy skills of preschoolers with

communication disorders. Four parents and their children were selected for a 5-week program that included training for the parents in conducting guided reading practice. Participation in the program positively influenced children's concepts about print. Additionally, the parent participants believed the program to be of benefit to their children as well as to themselves. Ezell et al. (2000) discussed the findings in terms of how effective parent-child read aloud was for preschoolers with communication disorders. Ezell et al.'s study is similar to the recent spinoff of Book Buddies program that targets at-risk readers and special-needs children by using animals as a read aloud buddy in order to build confident readers.

Edwards's (1995) Parents as Partners in Reading Program sought to establish a partnership in place where teachers and parents learned together. Support programs that provided building collaboration between parents and teachers are important to a program's success. Edwards' (1995) Parents as Partners Program focused on training parents in book reading techniques; the purpose of the parent book reading was to coach parents on user friendly strategies that could assist the teacher. The training program consisted of 23 two-hour sessions. Best practices, as they relate to literacy development for preschoolers, can be implemented by using parent supporters as tutors with read alouds used in an interactive manner; these practices promote discussions that foster oral language growth through book experiences (Cunningham, Perry, Stanovich, & Stanovich, 2004; Edwards, 2010, 2011; Edwards, Paratore, & Roser, 2009; Paratore & Edwards, 2011).

Like Edwards' (1995) Parents as Partners in Reading Program, Epstein (1987) found that schools also affect parent involvement levels and evidence shows that parents want to become involved but are not allowed to have open communication with the school. Conventional avenues for involving parents in school can be closed to parents due to specific cultural knowledge. Epstein's (1995) findings were similar to Heath and Moll's ethnographic study in that parents have a lot of difficulty adapting to the school culture especially in non-English speaking communities, but cultural knowledge is power and it can prevent parents from participating fully.

Henderson and Berla (1994) in an article "A New Generation of Evidence," reported that the family is critical to student achievement. When parents are involved in school, children go farther in school and the schools they go to are better. "Regardless of socioeconomic status or race, studies show a direct correlation between parental involvement and a child's academic achievement (Walberg, 1984; Wentzel 1994; Williams 1994)" (Hawes & Plourde, 2005).

Similar research was found by Phillips (2006) who reported essential elements of an effective family literacy program are critical, including proper curriculum, program design, implementation, and program evaluation. Equally important are the relationships between literacy use in families and students' academic achievement. Another researcher, Wasik (1993), advocated parent education to help families actively participate in their children's education at home or school.

Snow (1998) proposed that parental involvement inspires positive attitude and expectations play an important role in their children's attitude toward reading and literacy development. Thus, learning brings the family together allowing home to be the center for learning. In fact, programs were developed for immigrant parents which helped them preserve their native languages at home, while supporting their children's reading in another language. These studies are similar to Heath and Moll's ethnographic study, which embraced the participants' culture. For example, the Intergenerational Literacy Program was started in 1989 with the goal of supporting families in working with their children, both in achieving the instructional objectives of their child's school and for achieving a positive attitude towards learning. The program involves teaching parents how to help their children. The program offers literacy classes to immigrant parents so that they can improve their own opportunities as well as support their children's education in America, while at the same time maintaining their existing literacy and language within their family.

Adults in the program are (a) provided instruction in reading and responding to literacy materials of adult interest; (b) provided a selection of children's books, strategies and ideas for use with their children; and (c) encouraged to share their children's stories and drawings and to discuss literacy events, and their importance, in their lives and the lives of their children. (Intergenerational Literacy Program, 2011, para. 3). Preschool children are offered a free English literacy program during adult morning and evening

classes. The courses are open to preschool children in the morning and school-aged children in the evening. The ages usually range from 1 to 11 years of age.

The Books and Beyond program is a comprehensive research-based recreational reading program. The goal of the program is to increase reading outside the classroom and helps parents promote literacy at home. The program was created to integrate the cognitive, motivational, and social aspects of reading. The program's main goal is to help children at any achievement level become independent readers and improve the way the child views books and reading in general. The program has six aims: (a) motivate children to love reading and books, (b) engage parents as partners in their child's education, (c) offer staff development, (d) develop partnerships with the community, (d) provide additional time for children to practice reading skills, (e) help families learn to moderate and (f) learn to moderate their television viewing (Book and Beyond, 2012).

Books and Beyond (2012) is still an operating program which has been evaluated through a comparison methodology. The tutored group was compared with an untutored group in 17 matching pairs. The evaluation showed that the tutored group performed better than the comparison group on word recognition and passage reading.

The current study was conducted at a private reading center and examined whether a read aloud program would enhance parent training in read aloud methods. The evaluation used in this study was similar to the one used in the Book Buddy Program; however, the current study was set in a private reading center. To the researcher's knowledge this is the only reading program conducted in a private reading center that

included parental instruction in how to conduct a read aloud session that involved pre and post evaluations. The elements of the program compared were the programs' name, age/grade, student eligibility, description of parents-caregivers or other personnel required, program description, training, materials required, cost, when read aloud sessions occur, and evaluation.

Parent Involvement

Despite the fact that there is a growing amount of research suggesting that family literacy programs have good intentions, the critics claim that sometimes, they are inadvertently undermining the very families they attempt to help (Edwards, 2010, 2011; Edwards, Paratore, & Roser, 2009; Paratore & Edwards, 2011; Vergunst & Piazza, 2010).

The younger the children are when parents become active in their learning process, the more they excel (Heath 1983; Taylor, 1983; Moll, 1994). It is critical to incorporate family literacy into the formative years of school, providing a solid foundation for a child's learning experience as well as for building reading skills for all children, creating a more parent-involved, community-based program.

The Positive Outcomes of Literacy Training for Parent Involvement Programs

Wasik and Slavin (1993) of John Hopkins University reviewed the reading achievement of various tutoring programs using parents or community volunteers as reading support. Wasik reviewed studies that identified a control group and information indicating who was being compared, when the comparison was made, and what test was used. According to Wasik and Slavin (1993), tutoring programs typically involved

certified teachers, and paraprofessionals. They found the following factors to be important for success: (a) a certified teacher, trained as a reading specialist who facilitates the program; (b) continuous feedback to the tutors on the tutoring sessions; (c) high-quality training; and (d) structured tutoring sessions. Much recent research has been conducted that supports the research of Invernizzi (2000), Juel (2005), and Wasik and Slavin (1993), showing how to develop tutoring programs that are effective, especially read aloud ones (Edwards, 2010, 2011; Edwards, Paratore, & Roser, 2009; Paratore & Edwards, 2011; Vergunst & Piazza, 2010).

The Negatives of Parent Involvement Programs

Wasik's study of successful parent programs revealed that historically schools have good intentions in launching traditional family literacy programs, but some problems have occurred: (a) decreased teacher budgets, (b) minimal times available for extended teachers, and (c) decreased family literacy budgets. Wasik concluded that all too often, effective family literacy training is typically delivered then compromised when teaching support is not ongoing and programs simply dissipate. Usually, parents' intentions are good, but often families find themselves overcommitted, which affect their training attendance and hence the program's success. Lastly, teachers are stressed with being overcommitted to additional programs outside their daily classrooms duties. Clearly these factors create an unenthusiastic setting for potential programs to succeed.

Juel (2005) of Stanford University examined the strategies and methods that contributed to effective tutoring and added to the understanding the tutoring process. Juel

(2005) suggested parents or community volunteers need to be trained if they are to be effective. Untrained parents or community volunteers might prove to be more of a hindrance than a help to any program.

Research has suggested that although some tutoring programs have not been as effective as others, most programs that have incorporated a strong model of training and supporting parents or community volunteers working with young children has shown positive effects on their literacy development (Edwards, 2010, 2011; Edwards, Paratore, & Roser, 2009; Paratore & Edwards, 2011; Vergunst & Piazza, 2010). In fact, much research has confirmed that involving parents into a reading program as providing reading support can aid in the development of reading skills in children (Baker, Gersten, & Keating, 2000; Brown, Morris, & Fields, 2005; Edwards, 2010, 2011; Edwards et al., 2009; Paratore & Edwards, 2011; Teal, 1981). However, considerably more research needs to be done to ensure that tutoring by parents will result in meaningful benefits to their children. The educational theories and research examined in this chapter support the instructional procedures for parents who serve as parental supporters of their child's reading education in kindergarten (Baker et al., 2000; Brown et al., 2005; Morris 2003; Neuman, 1995).

Summary

The literature examined in this review indicates the need and value for developing quality parent-led, reading-support programs as a means for promoting early literacy in children. Research supports that implementing effective training and program is not easy,

but worthwhile (Dickinson et al., 2003; Edwards, 2010, 2011; Edwards, Paratore, & Roser, 2009; Paratore & Edwards, 2011; Vergunst & Piazza, 2010). Further, limited research does indicate that parent or caregiver supporters can be successful if they are trained and follow specific guidelines (Teale, 2003).

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to examine and measure how a read aloud training program within a private reading center can be used to teach parents of preschool children how to support their child's early reading behaviors.

The three research questions for this study were:

3. To what extent does a literacy read aloud training program for parents influence the parents' interactive reading behaviors, as measured by ACIRI Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory (DeBruin-Parecki, 2007), when reading aloud with their children?
4. To what extent does parents' use of interactive read alouds influence the literacy behaviors as measured by ACIRI Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory of their preschool children?
3. What feedback do parents provide about the family literacy program?

This chapter describes the methodology of the study following these elements:

(a) research design; (b) setting; (c) parent-training sessions, including context and procedures; (d) participants; (e) data collection and procedures; (f) data sources and instrumentation; (g) four phases of the study; (h) data analysis; (i) limitations; and (j) summary.

Research Design

A quasi-experimental research design was used in this study to examine and measure parent-child interactive read aloud behaviors. The research data included using a survey instrument to gain family information and learn more about the family literacy activities. Parental training sessions were provided for the treatment group by the researcher. Video recordings of parent-child interactive sessions were taken both pre and post literacy training sessions.

Setting: The Reading Center

The training sessions for parents in the treatment group were on-site at a private reading center in a suburb of a large Southwestern metropolitan area. The reading center was selected for reasons of convenience and familiarity, as the researcher owns and operates the center.

The philosophy of the reading center is to provide students with a solid foundation of early reading behaviors, thereby minimizing the potential need for reading intervention in later years. The curriculum model is based on the work of Dewey, Rosenblatt, and Clay. The reading center's philosophy for the family literacy program is based on the work of Taylor (1983), who advocates for the importance of parents becoming actively involved in their child's education.

The small classrooms apply the constructivist setting of Piaget, Vygotsky and Dewey, all of which are inspired instruction of learn-by-doing, which encourages student interaction in small groups of two to three students and allows for individual learning

differences in students. Active movement throughout the reading center is encouraged with language-based children's songs using music and movement, all of which are Dewey-inspired instruction.

Tenets of Clay's (2013) literacy processing theory are implemented in the reading center's early literacy program. At the reading center, emergent literacy is developed through inter-relating all parts of language such as speaking, listening, reading, writing and viewing, which are all components of Clay's (2013) literacy processing theory.

The reading center's typical preschool curriculum consists of teaching letter or sound recognition, concepts of print, print and word awareness, using interactive read alouds, print referencing, and guided reading. Oral language activities include songs that emphasize rhyme, using teacher-lead guitar or musical shakers for syllable-counting, theme-based units. Interactive read alouds support practicing print referencing such as asking questions and commenting about print and discussing story. Enrolled students attend weekly scheduled hourly sessions for a small group of two to three students in a class and pay a monthly tuition fee.

For the present study, the parent training sessions and taped video sessions of read alouds, which are discussed further in the next section, were held in a large 600 square-foot reading center, which is a warehouse building that has been converted into a writing lab/library with classroom tables.

Participants

Selection Process

The researcher sent all parents of preschool children attending the reading center a letter informing them of the study and inviting their participation. Interested parent participants contacted the researcher by e-mail. The first 34 parents to respond were the participants in the study, along with their child, composing the candidate pool. Seventeen of the candidates were selected for immediate participation in the experimental/treatment group. The remaining 17 parents were placed in a control group. The parents in the control group were notified that they would begin receiving the treatment at a date to be determined, which would fall at the end of the 8-week treatment period of this study.

With no fewer than 17 per treatment group, the design provided statistical power of 80% for detecting differences of large magnitude. All parent participants were pre-assessed on demographic characteristics. Concerns for nonequivalence of the two parent groups were addressed by comparing parent pre-assessments between the two groups, with reassignment of groups until any detected differences were minimized by *t* tests for quantitative data and chi-square goodness-of-fit tests for nominal data. As the focus of the study was on child outcomes, comparisons of the children in each of the two groups were made on pre-assessments of relevance to reading, so that a statement about pretreatment equivalence was possible. Nevertheless, the analysis of covariance plan for data analysis served to equalize the groups in view of pretreatment differences.

Parent Participants

A parent participant in this study was a parent or caregiver of a preschool student participating in this study. The researcher scheduled meetings at the center with participants to provide an overview of the program, answer questions regarding the research study, and obtain signed parental consent forms, following Institutional Review Board (IRB) permission (Appendix A).

Student Participants

Students whose parents gave consent for their participation were also participants in the study. The participants consisted of two groups of 17, one experimental group and one control group. In the reporting of data, the researcher used pseudonyms to protect participants' anonymity.

Researcher Background/Role of Researcher

The researcher is presently pursuing a doctoral degree in reading. Her experience includes nearly 20 years in education primarily teaching preschool, kindergarten, and first grade as well as an early childhood director. As the elementary school's reading resource teacher, she created an on-site reading support program for struggling readers. She then also began to privately tutor students in reading from other schools from her home. Soon she opened a private reading center to help children develop a strong foundation in early literacy and provide reading intervention for struggling readers.

Due to the nature of this research and chosen methodology, the researcher served as both the investigator and as the teacher-researcher. The teacher-researcher role in this

study included providing training for parents and using early reading strategies with their preschool children. The researcher was also responsible for sending parents of preschool children attending the center a letter informing them of the study and requesting their participation. During this process, the researcher collected letters of consent (see Appendix A) from interested parent participants who contacted the researcher by e-mail. The first 34 parents to respond were selected to participate in the study, along with their child. Seventeen of the candidates were randomly selected for immediate participation in the experimental/treatment group. The remaining 17 parents were placed in a control group. The parents in the control group did not receive training during the study and were notified that they would begin receiving the treatment at the end of the 8-week treatment period of the study.

Data Sources and Instrumentation

The following data sources were used: Stony Brook Family Reading Survey (SBFRS; Payne, Whitehurst, & Angel, 1994, see Appendix C); Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory (ACIRI) (DeBruin-Parecki, 2007; see Appendix D); Parent Read Aloud Checklist (see Appendix E); and the Parent Exit Survey (see Appendix F). Additionally parents were given a handout of literacy strategies for read alouds (see Appendix G) and a list of reading books for children ages 3 to 5 (see Appendix H) these instruments are described below.

Stony Brook Family Reading Survey

SBFRS is a 42-item Likert-type questionnaire, which was designed for rating parental behaviors and attitudes that encourage intellectual or academic growth of their preschool children. The SBFRS has been used with Head Start families to gain a better understanding of parental educational influences. An adapted version from SBFRS, Part I *Family Information* and Part II *Family Literacy Activities* was approved for use by Suwannakhae (2012) who had created the tool for her own dissertation. The ACIRI is accepted by many literacy researchers as an accurate evaluation tool to help teachers measure the interaction between parent and child in the home environment.

Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory

The ACIRI (DeBruin-Parecki, 2007) was used to evaluate both parent and child behaviors during the practice interactive reading session. Video-recorded observations documenting the behaviors of the 17 parent and child participants were scored by the researcher, a research assistant, and a doctorate student (CITI certified).

The ACIRI was created by DeBruin-Parecki (1999) as an observational tool to use in assessing adult and children's reading behaviors. According to DeBruin-Parecki, the ACIRI was designed to help teachers work with both children and adults find what their instructional needs were and to promote good instruction. The ACIRI is used to evaluate 12 literacy behaviors that fall into three categories: "(a) enhancing attention to text, (b) promoting interactive reading/supporting comprehension, and(c) using literacy strategies" (p. 2). The instrument was an outgrowth of a pilot study with Even Start, which was

designed to provide children from high-risk families support and educational services. The pilot study involved 29 mothers and their children. These dyads were observed frequently at the mothers' homes. The parent and child were administered the ACIRI in September and again in May. The findings showed that both parent and child improved over time in all three categories, indicating that the more comfortable the parent was with reading with their children the higher their ACIRI scores were (DeBruin-Parecki, 1999).

Reliability of Instrument

According to DeBruin-Parecki (2007) reliability was established by the researchers being familiar with interactive reading behaviors, classifying the scoring systems, and being accurate and consistent in scoring. Should multiple people be rating the same dyads, a discussion and understanding was needed to ensure that everyone was using the scoring tools accurately.

In a study by Rodriguez, Hines, and Montiel (2009), reliability was determined by calculating percentages of agreement for 25% of the sample used this instrument with a population of Mexican American mothers using interactive reading strategies of low-and middle-SES background. Data showed a gain in the mothers who frequently pointed their children's attention to the printed text, infrequently promoted interaction with their children about what was in the books, and rarely used more complex literacy strategies. An additional dissertation researcher, Suwannakhae (2012), used this measurement tool in her study when investigating family literacy activities with preschool aged children and parents' expectations of their children's development and future school success as

reported by Asian immigrant families. Data revealed that relationships between parental and child reading behavior categories were found to be significantly connected in an encouraging approach. These two dissertation studies were used to provide a framework for procedures in this current dissertation study.

Exit Survey

At the end of the study, parents filled out an exit survey that provided feedback about their satisfaction with the outcomes of the read aloud program. The survey included questions, such as the following: Did you feel welcomed and useful at the center? Did you feel prepared and more knowledgeable about how to implement interactive reading and print referencing at home? How did the children respond to the one-on-one learning time? Would you consider continuing the program? I am interested in learning more techniques to support my child's literacy development.

Data Collections and Procedures

The study was conducted from July 2014 until September 2014 and lasted 8 weeks and consisted of four phases: (a) Parent-child dyad treatment and control groups video-taped pre-assessments and parent survey given, (b) Parent training, (c) Midpoint workshop, and (d) Parent-child dyad treatment and control group videotaped post-assessments including final videotaped read aloud session. A timeline by week of the study can be found on the following page.

Table 1

Timeline of the Study

Phase	Week	Task
I.	1	Obtained consent from parents in both groups
	2	Conducted student pre-assessments Distributed and collect parent surveys
II.	3	Conducted parental training for treatment group
III.	4	Implemented read aloud sessions and complete checklists
	5	Implemented read aloud sessions and complete checklists
	6	Implemented read aloud sessions and complete checklists Participated in midpoint workshop
	7	Implemented read aloud sessions and complete checklists
	8	Implemented read aloud sessions and complete checklists
	9	Implemented read aloud sessions and complete checklists
	IV.	10

Time Requirements for Each Participant Group

The control group (parents/guardians) were videotaped during a read aloud session at the beginning and end of the study for a time commitment of 35 minutes. The treatment group (parent/guardian) met for four sessions (two training sessions and two videotaped read aloud sessions—pre and post-assessments). Parents were also encouraged to read aloud two times per week during the 8-week period. Maximum cumulative time commitment for the treatment parent/guardian group was approximately 5.25 hours.

The child treatment group met for 2 sessions. (2 videotaped pre-assessment and post-assessment read aloud sessions) Maximum cumulative time commitment for the children was approximately 4.25 hours.

Four Phases of the Study

Phase One: Student Pre-assessments of Interactive Reading Inventory

During Phase One, once consent was obtained, the investigator sent the Family Literacy Activity Survey via e-mail and requested that the parents complete the form and return it to the center via hard copy or e-mail. If the parent did not have e-mail, address, they were provided a copy at the center or the survey was mailed to them.

Next, all parents were invited to the reading center for a pre-assessment and were video-recorded during observations of parent-child read alouds documenting the 17 parent and child dyads were scored by the investigator and the secondary rater; who is a Reading Recovery teacher with 13 years of teaching experience and is currently working towards a doctorate in reading education. Having investigator and a secondary rater ensured the reliability of the findings as there was less chance of bias. Once all video tapes will analyze separately, the researcher and second rater will then compare their findings.

The investigator proceeded with the research study by conducting parent-child pre-assessments using DeBruin-Parecki's (2007) ACIRI. The students came to the center in the early afternoon for a scheduled 45-minute session during a 1-week period. The assessments were given in a private classroom after center hours. The investigator looked closely at student participants' interactive reading behaviors with a parent.

Phase Two: Parent Training

After pre-assessments were administered, the investigator provided a parental training workshop at the center for parent/guardian participants enrolled in the literacy support program. The parent training workshop was held at the reading center in a multipurpose room on a Sunday afternoon for parents in the treatment group only. In a whole-group setting, the investigator reviewed each component of weekly parental observation checklist. Using an oversized big book displayed in the center of the classroom for visibility, the investigator coached all parents on implementing interactive read aloud sessions.

Areas addressed included enhancing attention to text such as book orientation as well as promoting interactive reading and supporting comprehension through read aloud discussions and print and word referencing. Other areas consisted of concepts about print; using print to speech, word-by-word; one-to-one matching, letter identification; and letter/sound correspondence as well as story predictions, recall, and the child's ideas about the story. The investigator explained and modeled for the parents how to implement interactive read aloud behaviors during read alouds such as children book selection, maintaining physical proximity, promoting interactive reading through supporting comprehension by asking and answering questions with their child.

The parents also received instructions on observing their child's print and word awareness during the read aloud and completing the parent checklist after each session. The parents then practiced with another parent as the investigator observed, guided, and coached.

Lastly, for the book take home program, parents received one new book and an Observation Checklist per week to use in the parent-child dyads home reading sessions. At the parent training session a 5-minute open forum for questions and comments were provided. Before parents were dismissed from the workshop, they were asked if anyone felt the need to go through the training again. In closing, the investigator thanked parents and/or caregivers for attending session and inviting them to contact investigator at any time for support.

The following table shares the procedures for the training session.

Table 2

Details of Procedures for Training Session

Time	Topic	Discussion details
5 min	Introduction Overview	Welcome treatment parents: Purpose of parent training: To improve reading behaviors in parents
5 min	Explain the details of study pre/post	Review videotaping procedure for taped read aloud sessions-Pre-assessment/Post-assessment tool.
20 min	Introduce how to implement an interactive read aloud	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure that you read books that your child can understand. • Read your child's favorite books with him or her over and over to help your child recognize and words. • Choose books that show your child's interests
	Coaching: Modeling while sitting on a sofa in center of multipurpose classroom	Maintaining physical proximity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage your child to sit on your lap • Make sure your child is close to you • Make sure the book becomes the child's focal point
	Coaching	Promoting interactive reading and supporting comprehension <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give your child compliments and say when something is done well • Be sure that your child feels part of the reading (e.g., child should be able to touch/hold the book, turn the pages, and ask if your child would like to turn the pages). • Be sure to point pictures, words, or letters

Review each component of
parental observation checklist

Using the text from an oversized big book for viewing concepts about
print/print referencing:

For example:

- “Show me one letter”. Do you know the name of that letter?”
- “Show me another letter? What sound does that letter make?”
- “Show me two letters”.
- “Show me a capital letter”.
- “Show me a lower case letter”.
- What sound does that letter make?
- “Show me a period”
- “Show me one word”.
- “Show me a sentence”.
- “Show me where to start”.
- “Where do I go from there?”
- “And where do I go from there?”
- Tell me what happened in story
- Tell me what happened next

Print referencing: Nonverbal references:

- point to print: Adult points to print or pictures
- Tracking print: Adult tracks the print while reading

Verbal references:

- Questions about print: do you know this letter? Do you know what it says?
- Comments about print: That’s an A. This says “Get Out!”
- Requests about print: Show me where the O is.

		<p>Word awareness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Show me where the little words are on this page” • “Show me where the big words are on this page” • “Show me the first word on this page • “Show me the second word on this page” • “Show me the last word on this page” • “How many words are on this page” • “Show me the space between two words” • “Point to the words as I read”
	Coaching	<p>Interactive questioning:</p> <p>Asking and answering questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask your child about things he or she may recognize • Be sure to stop and listen before answering when your child does ask you a question • After pre-assessments are given, the investigator provided a parental
15 min	Parent-to-Parent rehearsing:	Parents practice reading behaviors listed above with another parent. The investigator will observe, guide, and coach the parents rehearsal sessions.
	Materials	Book take home program: parents receive one new book & observation checklist per week to use in their home reading sessions. (They are then to read the same book 2x that week?)
	books/bag	

10 min	Reviewing components for the read aloud sessions using ACIRI checklist.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children book selection 2. Maintaining physical proximity 3. Promoting interactive reading 4. Supporting comprehension 5. Asking and answering questions
5 min	Q & A	Open forum for questions, comments
1 min	Closing: additional training	Before parents are dismissed from the workshop, they will be asked if anyone feels the need to go through the training again.
	Closing	Thanking parents and/or caregivers for attending session and inviting them to contact investigator at any time for support.

Phase Three: Parent/Guardian Child Read Aloud Sessions and Observations

During phase three, parents implemented one-on-one read aloud sessions with their child in their home, occurring two times a week for six weeks. During the one-on-one read alouds at home, parents engaged their children using interactive reading behaviors learned in the training session. After each home session, parents completed the checklist marking the behaviors they observed during their at home read aloud session. These sessions in the home were not videotaped.

During the study, each child was also attending the private reading center classes two times a week where small groups of children engaged in early reading activities, After their regular scheduled reading session, the investigator provided each family with two books to use during their home read aloud sessions, along with two parent checklists. Books, selected by the researcher, were prepackaged for parents to take home, Authentic, diverse children's literature was selected based on the print and visual features of the books while considering each child's interests. A variety of research-based selection of books with different developmental levels was displayed on a table in front of the classroom. The selected age appropriate books for young children were chosen, specifically for the study group (3 to 5 year olds). Selection of Age Appropriate Books handout was provided (see Appendix I).

The one-hour midpoint parent training workshop was held again at the reading center in a multipurpose room on a Sunday afternoon for parents in the treatment group for approximately 1 hour only. In a whole-group setting, the investigator reviewed each

component of weekly parental observation checklist. Using an oversized big book displayed in the center of the classroom for visibility the investigator coached all parents on implementing interactive read aloud sessions.

As a review from the first parent training, the investigator demonstrated literacy areas such as enhancing attention to text such as book orientation as well as promoting interactive reading and supporting comprehension through read aloud discussions and print and word referencing. Other review topics consisted of concepts about print using print to speech, word-by-word, one-to-one matching, letter identification, and letter/sound correspondence as well as story predictions, recall, and the child's ideas about the story. The investigator explained and modeled for the parents how to implement interactive read aloud behaviors during read alouds such as children book selection, maintaining physical proximity, promoting interactive reading through supporting comprehension by asking and answering questions with your child.

The parents also received additional instructions on observing their child's print and word awareness during the read aloud and completing the parent checklist after each session. The parents then practiced with another parent, and the investigator observed, guided, and coached.

Phase Four: Parent/Guardian Child Post-assessments

During phase four, the investigator conducted video-recorded 34 parent and child dyads observations of read aloud sessions documenting the reading behaviors for post-assessments for both the treatment and control group using the ACIRI. The students came

to the center with their parent or guardian in the early afternoon at a scheduled 45-minute for a private parent-child session during a one-week period. The assessments were given one at a time, in a private classroom after center hours. This session was not used as part of their regular weekly session. At the end of the study, parents filled out an exit survey that provided feedback to the investigator about their satisfaction with the read aloud program. The investigator sent the parents the exit survey via e-mail and requested that the parents complete the form and return it to the center via hard copy or e-mail within one week. The parent was also able to pick up a copy of the survey at the center or request that the survey be mailed to them.

The investigator proceeded with the research study by conducting parent-child pre-assessments using DeBruin-Parecki's (2007) ACIRI. The students came to the center in the early afternoon for a scheduled 45-minute session during a one-week period. The assessments were given in a private classroom after center hours. The investigator looked closely at student participants' interactive reading behaviors with a parent.

Data Analyses

The analysis was ongoing using the ACIRI. An analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test for treatment effects. Post-test measurements were used as dependent variables, while available pretreatment information served as covariates. An ANCOVA provided for a comparison of the posttest means between the treatment and control groups, while controlling for differences on pretests and other available data such as ages of parents and of children, sex of child, pretests of variables that are directly

relevant to reading achievement, attendance at the program, and investigator's estimates of parent compliance with the treatment regimen and the degree to which the child was read to at home regardless of treatment condition. An ANCOVA will portray outcome means that would be expected if the treatment and control subjects were to have been "equalized" prior to the experimental application of the treatment conditions.

Summary

Chapter III includes the methodology of this quantitative quasi-experimental research study, detailing how the effects of parent volunteers involved using basic literacy instructional methods they used inside a private reading center or at home in a natural setting. A description of the procedure for data collection and analysis was provided along with details about the participants, setting, and the limitations of the case study. The results of the study and answers to the research questions are presented in chapter IV.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to examine and measure how reading-support programs involving trained parents can strengthen early reading behaviors of preschool children attending a private reading tutorial center. This study investigated the interactive reading behaviors of parents and their preschool children, focusing on attention to text, promoting interactive reading, supporting comprehension as well as applying literacy strategies.

This chapter describes the results for the research study derived from surveys, parent training/coaching and video recordings. Additionally, a video recording was taken during a parent/child dyad, both (pre and post) of a book reading sessions designed to observe parents' reading behavior and review the child's behavior and responses during the interaction. The contents of this chapter explain the findings as related to the research questions.

This chapter is divided into several sections; section one includes data collected from participants about their family; demographic information which includes survey results on families involved in the study, including gender, age, education level, ethnicity, family structure, and socioeconomic status using zip codes. Section two contains the data collected from Stony Brook Family Reading Survey (SBFRS), a 42-item Likert-type questionnaire, which was designed for rating parental behaviors and attitudes that

encourage intellectual or academic growth of their preschool children. Section three includes a discussion of the pre-and post-assessments tests using the ACIRA instrument and includes an analysis of each individual test item, present in figures. In Section four, the parent-child dyads engaged in a read aloud sessions were observed and the data on the investigator's checklist using the ACIRI are discussed. Section five reviews parents' exit survey data that provided feedback to the investigator about their satisfaction with the read aloud program. Section six includes a synthesis of each category and overall findings for each research question and introduces chapter 5.

Survey Results

Section One: Family Information/Demographic Data for Participants

Demographic data were collected from the 34 parents in this study using Family Literacy Survey. All participants agreed to be in the study and signed letters of consent before any data were collected. The following Figures 1-10 summarize the demographic information collected. The parent demographic information included parent age groups, ethnicity, native language spoken in home, parent educational level, parent household income, ages of children, gender of children, and participants enrolled in preschool programs. The videotaped sessions were analyzed separately, the researcher and rater compared findings. On two occasions the investigator and the rater had conflicting scores. A discussion occurred over the two scores. In order to establish reliability for the ratings, we averaged the two scores and used the average for the final result.

Age of participants. The age of the parents participating in the study were reported. Twelve (70.6%) listed their age-group as 36-45 years old. Five (29.4%) listed their age group as between 28-35. The data are summarized in the Figure 1 below.

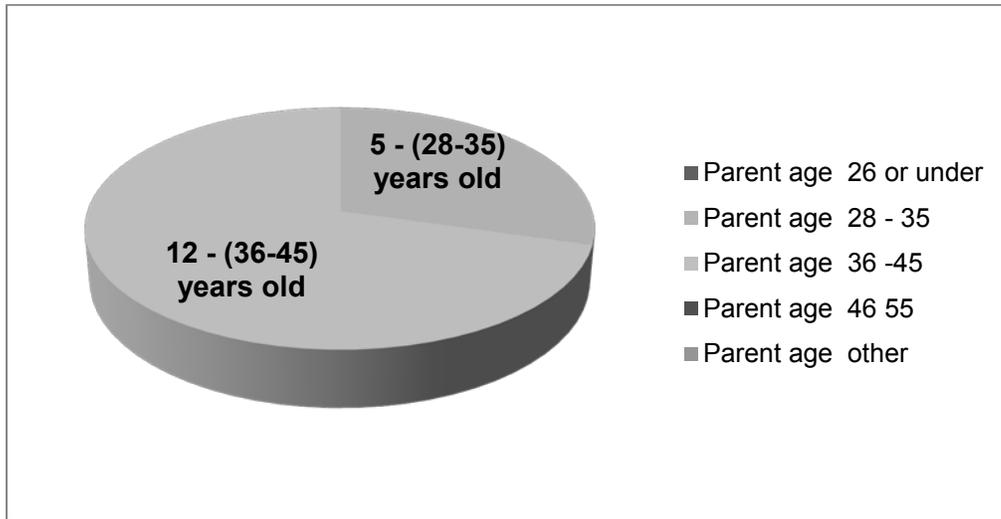


Figure 1. Age of participants

Parents' country of origin. Twelve (70.6%) of the participant households birth parents were born in the United States. Two (11.8%) were born in Mexico. Two (11.8%) were born in India. One (5.8%) had parents born in Korea. Figure 2 below summarizes this data.

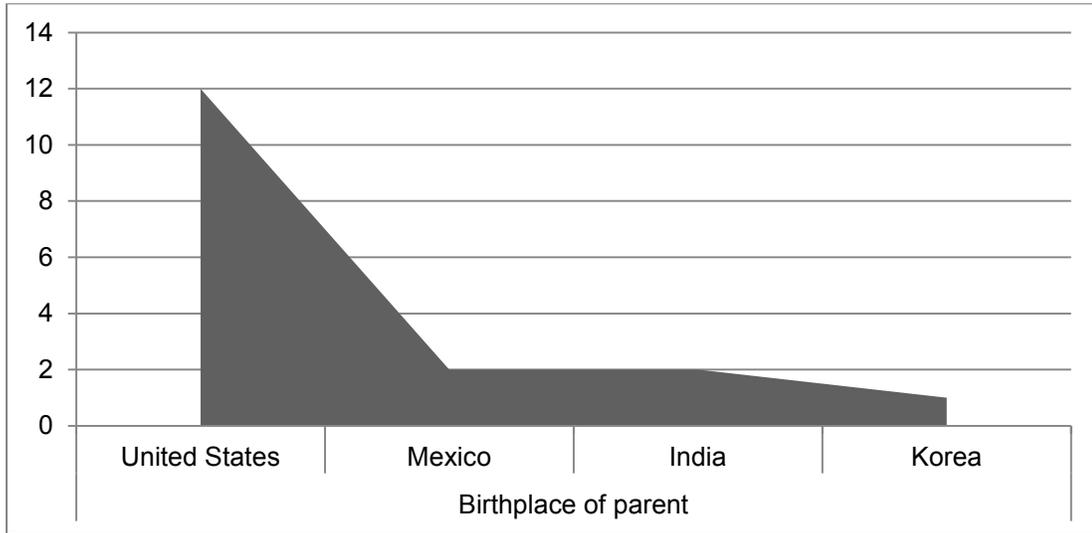


Figure 2. Parents' country of origin

Home language. Parents were asked to identify the native language spoken the home. Twelve (70.6%) responded that English was the primary native language. Two (11.8%) responded that Spanish was the native language. Two (11.8%) responded that Hindi was the native language, and one (5.8%) responded that Korean was the native language spoken in the home. The Figure 3 below illustrates this information.

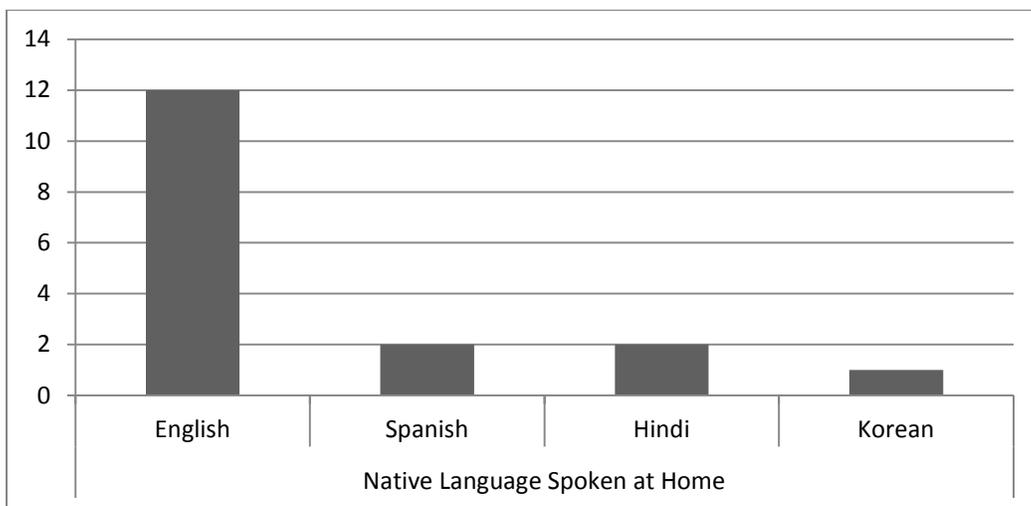


Figure 3. Home language

Parents’ educational completion. The parents were also asked for the highest level of education they had obtained. One (5.9%) had a high school degree only. Three (17.6%) had a high school degree and some college/trade school credits). Five (29.4%) had a 2-year college degree. Seven (41.2%) had obtained a 4 year college degree. One (5.9%) has obtained a master’s degree. The breakdown of education levels is illustrated in Figure 4 below.

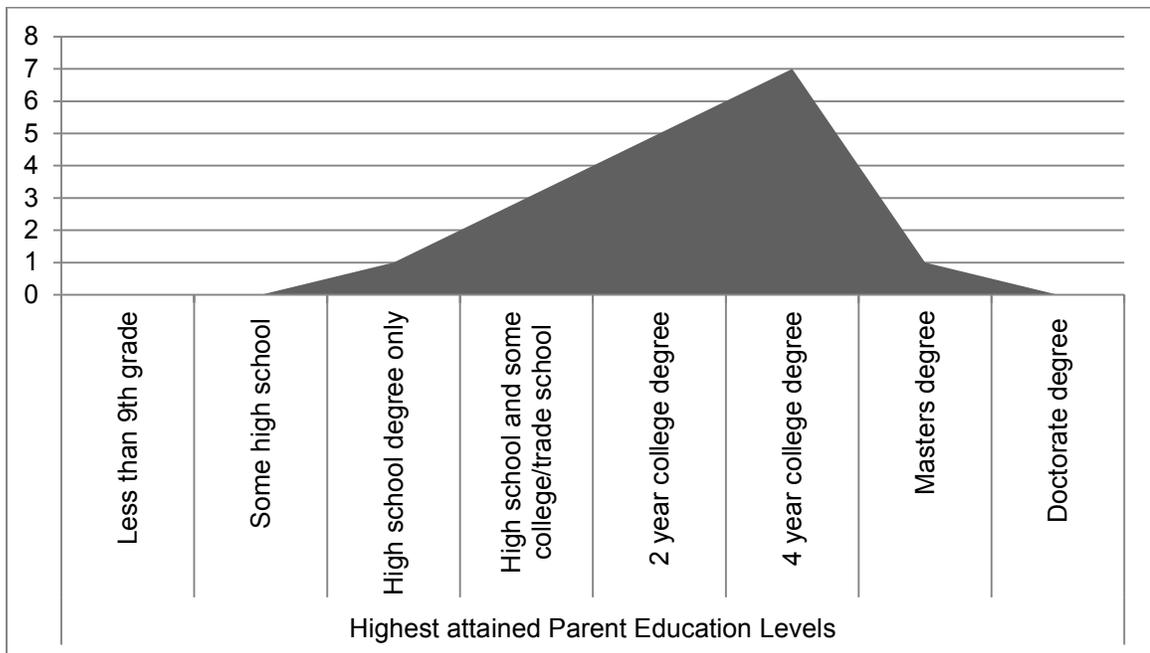


Figure 4. Parents’ educational completion

Parents’ total household income. Parents were asked to provide information on total household income. Twelve households (70.6%) indicated their household income was \$130,000 and over. Two households (11.8%) reported that their household income ranged from \$110,000 to \$129,999. One household (5.9%) reported household income of

\$90,000 to \$109,999, and one household (5.9%) reported household income of \$80,000 - \$89,999. One household did not answer the income question.

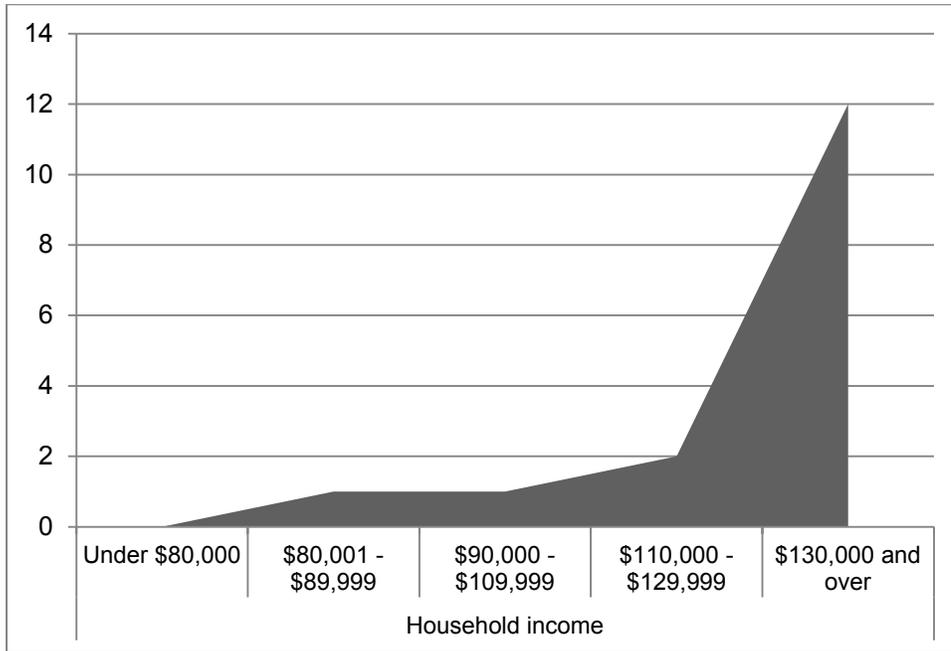


Figure 5. Parents' total household income

Preschool Children's Information

Parents were asked to provide information regarding their child's age, gender and preschool attendance. The findings are provided with details in the following figures or tables.

Ages of children. The breakdown of the children's ages is summarized in Figure 6 below. Seven (41.2%) of the children were 5 years old. Seven (41.2%) of the children were 4 years old. Three (15.6%) of the children were 3 years old. The data are summarized in the chart below.

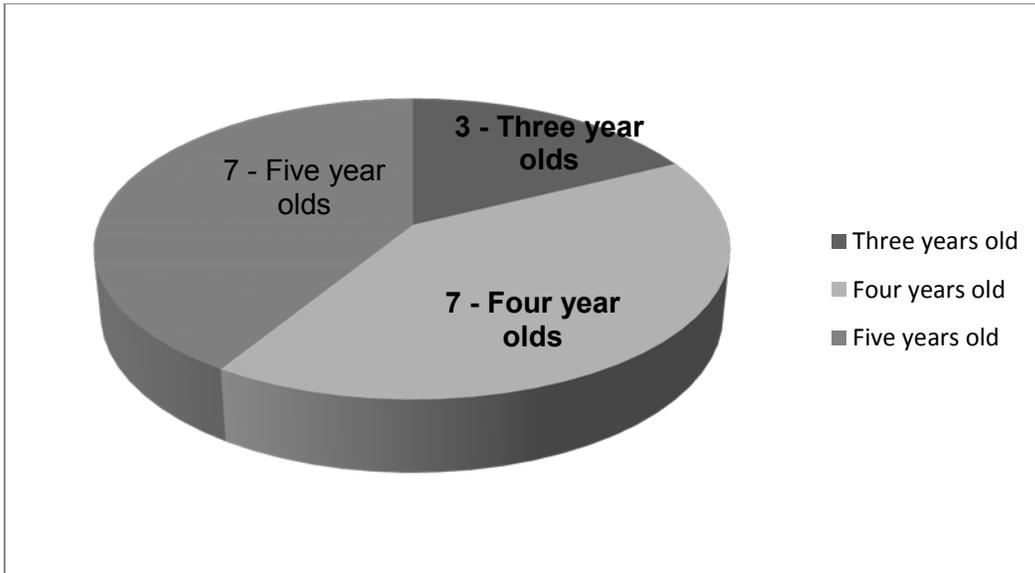


Figure 6. Ages of children

Children by gender. Nine (52.9%) of the students in the study were female. Eight (47.1%) of the students in the study were male. The Figure 7 below graphically shows this breakdown by gender.

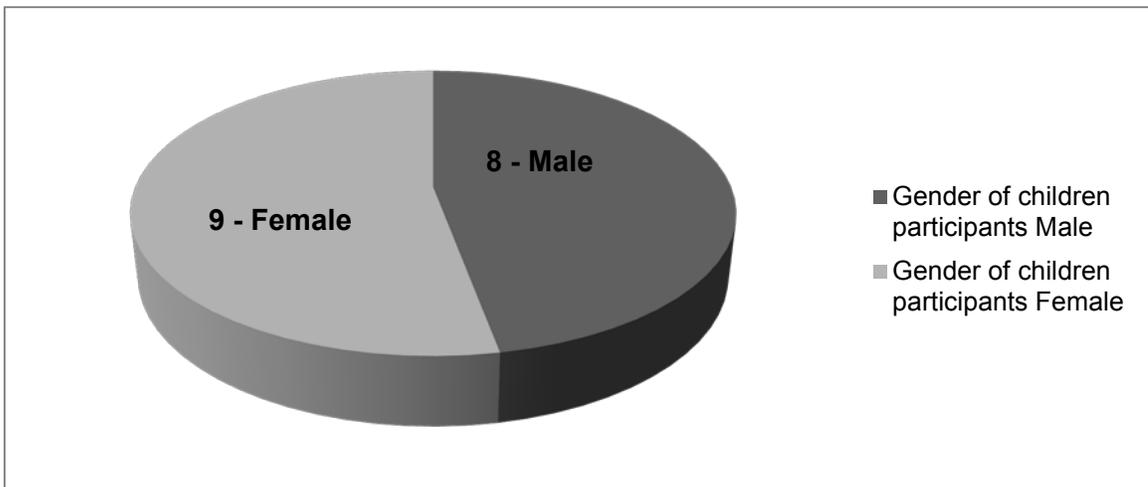


Figure 7. Children by gender

Preschool programs enrollment. Parents were also asked if their children participate in preschool programs. Fifteen (88.2%) of the participants stated that their children had participated in preschool programs. Two (11.8%) stated that their children did not participate in any preschool programs. The data are summarized in the Figure 8 below.

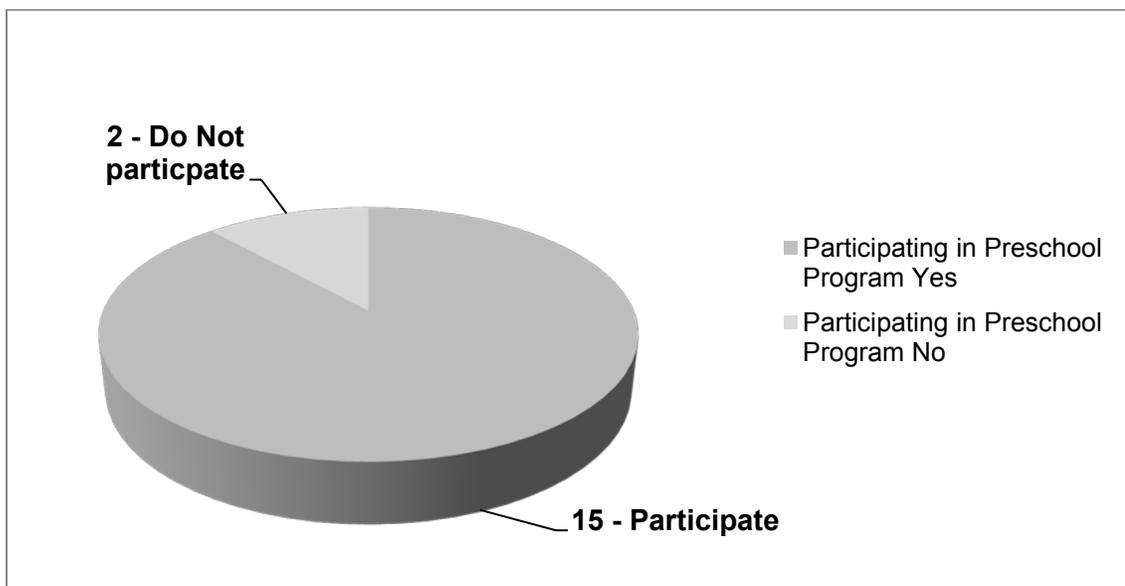


Figure 8. Preschool program enrollment

Section Two: Family Literacy Activities (Part II) using Stony Brook Family Reading Survey

The data collected from Stony Brook Family Reading Survey (SBFRS) was gathered from questions in section two of the Family Literacy Survey (adapted from Suwannakhae, 2012). In this section of the interview, there were seventeen questions related to parent schooling histories, parent expectations of their child's development, and what the family did for recreational time. Specifically, two of the questions relating

to parental history were used to find out more information about the parent's own school history and also if they had personally experienced any reading difficulties in school.

Regarding child development issues, participants were asked to provide background on the preschooler's speech development and other health concerns. Also included were the family's activities such as how often they took their child to the local library, and estimates of how much daily time was spent daily watching television by both child and parent. Two areas were examined that dealt with family literacy activities such as participants, reading activities, frequency of those reading activities, and library attendance. Parent participants were also asked to share their level of reading enjoyment, who initiated reading/story time, as well as the number of books in their child's home library.

Parents school history. Parents were asked to recall how many children in their family had difficulties in school, such as low grades, grade level retention, or requiring any special education programs. Of the 17 respondents, 14 parents (82.35%) reported of none having problems in school. Two parents (11.76%) indicated that they had one child in their family that had problems in school. One parent (5.88%) shared they had experienced problems in school as a child. As seen in table 3 below.

Table 3

Frequencies and Percentages of Children in Your Family Who had Problems in School

	<i>F</i>	%
None	14	82.35%
Mild difficulty	0	0.00%
Moderate difficulty	2	11.76%
Severe difficulty	1	5.88%

(N=17)

Questions in part II were asked to investigate reading difficulty when they were in school. They were asked to rate their level of reading difficulty from “none”, “mild difficulty,” “moderate difficulty” and “severe difficulty”. They most frequent reply from the parents (88.24%) was they did not have reading difficulty when they were in school. Two parents (11.76%) indicated that they had “mild difficulty” with reading in the past.

Table 4

Frequencies and Percentages of Parents' Reading Difficulty

	<i>F</i>	%
None	15	88.24%
Mild difficulty	2	11.76%
Moderate difficulty	0	0.00%
Severe difficulty	0	0.00%

(n=17)

Family activity time. Under family activity time questions, parents were asked to report how many hours they were out of the home on a typical day, including work, school, activities, etc. Parents were asked to report how many hours per day they were out of the home during these activities. The most frequent response of seven parents (41.18%) was "3-5 hours a day" out of the home, followed by (58.82%) of the ten parents

who reported spending "5 to 10 hours" out of the home. None reported that they spent more than 13 hours a day out of their homes.

Table 5

Time Spent Outside of the Home in Hours

	<i>F</i>	%
0-2 hours	10	58.82%
3-5 hours	7	41.18%
5-10 hours	0	0.00%
10-13 hours	0	0.00%
More than 13 hours	0	0.00%

(n=17)

Library attendance. The participants were asked how many times they take their preschooler to the library ranging from a scale from hardly ever to almost daily". The majority of the parents, specifically twelve parents (70.59%) reported went to the library at least one time per month, while five parents (29.41%) acknowledged they went to the library once or twice a month.

Table 6

Frequencies and Percentages of Library Attendance

	<i>f</i>	%
Hardly ever/never	0	0.00%
Once or twice per month	12	70.59%
Once or twice per week	5	29.41%
Daily	0	0.00%

(n=17)

Child's speech development. The participants were asked at what age their child said his/her first words, not including babbling. The response shows eight children

(47.06%) uttered their first word between the ages of seven months and 12 months followed by nine children (52.94%) uttered their first word between thirteen months and eighteen months.

Table 7

Age in Months for Child's First Words

	<i>f</i>	%
0-6 months	0	0.00%
7-12 months	8	47.06%
13 months - 18 months	9	52.94%
19 months - 24 months	0	0.00%
over 24 months	0	0.00%

(n=17)

Another question dealt with the parent's concern about their child's speech development. A majority of the fourteen parents (82.35%) reported that they were not concerned with their child's current speech development, with three parents (17.65%) reporting that they were "moderately worried." Table 10 displays the levels of parental concern about their child's speech development.

Table 8

Parents' Concern about Child's Speech Development

	<i>F</i>	%
No, never,		
Yes, Mildly worried	14	82.35%
Yes, moderately worried.	3	17.65%

(n=17)

Family siblings. Participants were also asked about their child’s siblings who are younger than the child in the study. Three parents (17.65%) had at least one child younger than the child in the study, while seven parents (41.18%) reported having at least one child younger than the child in the study and seven parents (41.18%) reported having at least two children younger than the child in the study.

Table 9

Number of Children Younger Than the Preschool Age Child

	f	%
0	3	17.65%
1	7	41.18%
2	7	41.18%
3 or more	0	0.00%

(n=17)

Television time. Parents were asked how much time per day did they watch television. Six categories were offered with only one selection: “none,” “less than an hour,” “from 3 up to 5 hours,” “from 5 up to 7 hours”. Below are the responses for television viewing characteristics. A majority (88.24%) fifteen parents acknowledged that they watched television up to three hours per day while only two parents (11.76%) reported watching 3 up to 5 hours daily. There were no respondents who did not watch television at all in a typical day (as shown on table 10 below).

Table 10

Time Parent Spent Watching Television per Day

	<i>f</i>	%
None	0	0.00%
< 1 hour	0	0.00%
1 up to 3 hours	15	88.24%
3 up to 5 hours	2	11.76%
5 up to 7 hours	0	0.00%
> 7 hours	0	0.00%

(n=17)

The respondents were also asked for the typical amount of time their child spent watching television on a typical day. A majority of parents (64.71%) shared that their child watched between 3 up to 5 hours per day, while five (29.41%) of parents indicated their preschoolers watched 1 to 3 hours of television daily, and one (5.88%) parent reported their child watched at least 1 hour or more of television per day.

Table 11

Time Children Spent Watching Television per Day

	<i>f</i>	%
None	0	0.00%
< 1 hour	1	5.88%
1 up to 3 hours	5	29.41%
3 up to 5 hours	11	64.71%
5 up to 7 hours	0	0.00%
> 7 hours	0	0.00%

(n=17)

Family reading activities. Parents were asked to provide the level of reading enjoyment, specifically six parents (35.29%) of the respondents say they enjoy reading while nine (52.94%) responded to “some”, and one parent spouse (5.88%) “very much enjoy”. Only one (5.88%) did not enjoy reading at all.

Table 12

Parents Reading Enjoyment Level

	<i>f</i>	%
Not at all	1	5.88%
Some	9	52.94%
Moderately	6	35.29%
Very much	1	5.88%

(n=17)

Six questions were asked to parents about the family reading activities including the number of picture books they owned, at what age did they begin to read to their preschool aged child, the level of enjoyment during reading time, the frequency that family members to read to the preschool aged child, and how often the preschooler asked the parents to read to the child.

Participants were asked to rate their spouses enjoyment of reading. According to the responses, eleven parents (64.71%) of the spouses enjoy reading to some extent, while four (23.53%) stated their spouses enjoyed to read only moderately. Only two parents (11.76%) said their spouses do not enjoy reading at all (detailed in the following table).

Table 13

<i>Spouse Reading Enjoyment Level</i>		
0	<i>f</i>	%
Not at all	2	11.76%
Some	11	64.71%
Moderately	4	23.53%
Very much	0	0.00%

(n=17)

Parents were asked at what age parents or another family member began to read to their preschool aged child, twelve of the parents (70.59%) reported that they or another family member began to read to the preschooler at 7-12 months. However, five (29.41%) of the respondents reported reading to their child at just 0-6 months of age. The lists the ages of the respondents acknowledging to have begun reading to their child.

Table 14

<i>Child's Age When First Read To</i>		
	<i>f</i>	%
0-6 months	5	29.41%
7-12 months	12	70.59%
13-18 months	0	0.00%
19-24 months	0	0.00%
>24 months	0	0.00%

(n=17)

Parents were asked to indicate the number of picture books they have in the house, and six parents (35.29%) reported that they owned approximately 11-20 picture books, while another ten parents (58.82%) indicated that they had between 21-40 picture books in their homes. One parent (5.88%) had over 40 picture books.

Table 15

<i>Number of Picture Books per Family</i>		
	f	%
0-2	0	0.00%
3-10	0	0.00%
11-20	6	35.29%
21-40	10	58.82%
> 40	1	5.88%

(n=17)

In regards to the child’s reading enjoyment, parents were asked to report how much their preschooler enjoyed being read to. Five parents than half of the respondents felt that their children's level of enjoyment with interactive reading was "adequate." Seven parents (41.18%) reported their child's level of satisfaction and appreciation as "very much" when they were read to. Additionally, two parents (11.76 %) of parents gave a "loves it" rating when describing how their child reacts to having a parent or other family members read to them. However, only three parents (17.65%) reported their child enjoyment of being reading to by family or caregiver is being “a little”.

Table 16

<i>Child’s Level of Enjoyment with Reading</i>		
	f	%
A little	3	17.65%
Pretty much	5	29.41%
Very much	7	41.18%
Love it	2	11.76%

(n=17)

Participants were asked how often they read a picture book to their child. Twelve parents (70.59%) reports they read a picture book to their child 4-7 times per week, while

three parents (17.65%) said they read to their child 1-3 times per week. Only two parents (11.76%) stated they read to their child three times per week or less.

Table 17

Parents Read to Children

	<i>f</i>	%
< 1 time per week	2	11.76%
1-3 times per week	3	17.65%
4-7 times per week	12	70.59%

(n=17)

In regards of reading initiation, parents were asked how often the preschool aged child requested their parents read to them. One (5.88%) of the parents reported that their children asked a parent to read with them "once or twice a week" and another thirteen parents (76.47%) reported that their children asked a parent to read to them "once to three times a week", while three (17.65%) of the parents said that their child asked to be read to three to seven times a week.

Table 18

Children Asked To Read To

	<i>f</i>	%
< 1 per week	1	5.88%
1-3 per week	13	76.47%
3-7 per week	3	17.65%

(n=17)

The participants were asked how often they observed their preschool aged child looking at books by himself or herself. One parent (17.65%) reported that their child looked at book by themselves one or twice a week, while eleven (64.71%) looked at books by him or herself one-to three times a week with three parents (17.65%) shared that their child looked at book by themselves three to seven times a week.

Table 19

Children Looked at Books Him/Herself

	<i>f</i>	%
< 1 per week	3	17.65%
1-3 per week	11	64.71%
3-7 per week	3	17.65%
(n=17)		

Section Three: Results of Video Recorded Observations of Interactive Reading

Session

This section includes results of the pre-assessment and post-assessment data from the Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory (ACIRI) including an analysis of the individual test items presented in figures below. The video recording of book read aloud sessions were used to collect data of parents read as well as children responses during interactive reading. The Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory (ACIRI; DeBruin-Parecki, 2007) was used for scoring the video recorded observations. The ACIRI evaluated 12 literacy behaviors in 3 different categories: (a) enhancing attention to text, (b) promoting interactive reading/supporting comprehension, and (c) using literacy strategies. Refer to ACIRI instrument in Appendix.

Video recorded observation documenting the parent and child behaviors were scored using the ACIRI. The descriptive statistics included frequencies and percentages used to report demographic information such as age, gender, relationship to child, ethnicity, and home language. Means and standard deviations were used to describe the categories in ANCOVA. An analysis of variance was conducted on the pre-assessment and post-assessment test scores for students and parents. Means and standard deviations were used to show the categories.

Figure 13 below shows the Parent-Child Reading Behaviors. The four measured behaviors are:

1. Child-Adult seeks & maintains physical proximity.
2. Child-Adult pays attention & sustains interest.
3. Child-Adult holds book and turns pages on his/her own or when asked.
4. Child-Adult initiates or responds to book sharing which takes his/her presence

into account. The scoring is based on a 0-3 scale, 0-*No Evidence*, 1-*Infrequently* (1 time), 2-*Some of the time* (2-3 times), 3-*Most of the time*. Figure 12 below illustrates the improvements provided by the training.

Enhancing attention to text. Figure 9 below shows the measurements both pre and post parental training for the child in the enhancing attention to text category. For the seeks and maintains physical proximity the value increased from 1.47 to 2.06. Pays attention and sustains interest grew from .88 to 1.88 during the study. Holds book and

turns pages values increased from .71 to 2.06. Initiates or responds to book sharing behavior exhibited positive growth from .53 to 1.71 during the study.

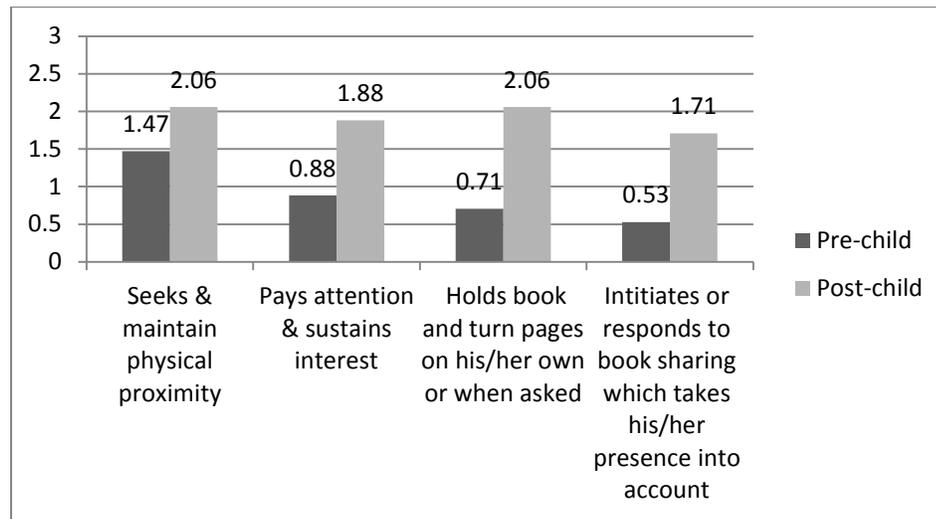


Figure 9. Enhancing attention to text—child

Figure 10 below shows the measurements both pre and post parental training for the adults in the enhancing attention to text category. For seeks and maintains physical proximity the value increased from 1.35 to 2.18. Pays attention and sustains interest grew from .76 to 2.06 during the study. Holds book and turns pages values increased from .65 to 2.12. Initiates or responds to book sharing behavior exhibited positive growth from .71 to 2.06 during the study.

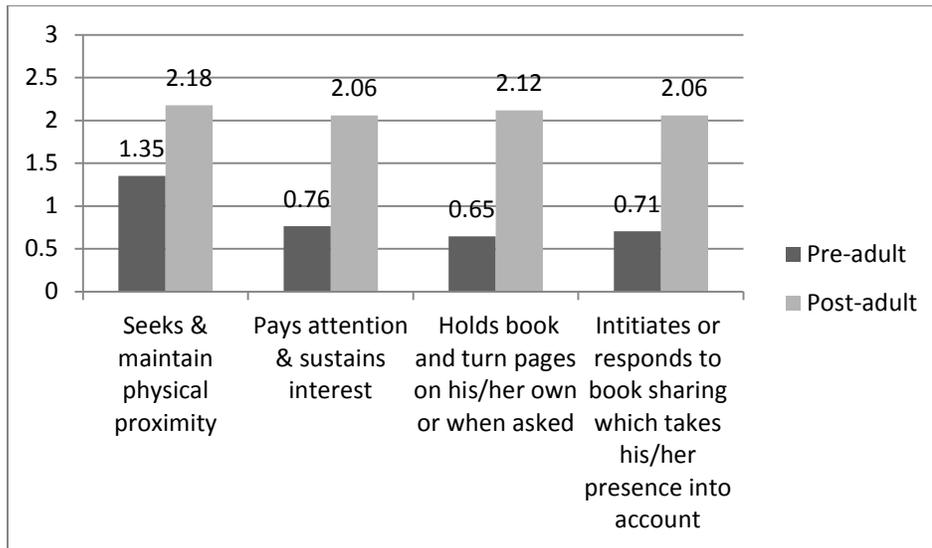


Figure 10. Enhancing attention to text—parent

Using literacy strategies. The following charts displaying the Using Literacy Strategies category for the treated child-Adult. This category consists of four measured behaviors:

1. Child responds to parent and/or identifies visual or meaning pictures are meaning cues related to the story.
2. Child is able to guess what will happen next based on picture cues.
3. Child is able to recall information from the story.
4. Child spontaneously offers ideas about the story.

The scoring is based on a 0-3 scale, 0-*No Evidence*, 1-*Infrequently* (1 time), 2-*Some of the time* (2-3 times), 3-*Most of the time*. Figure 14 below illustrates the Pre/Post scoring of the behaviors. All behaviors exhibited positive improvements following the training.

Figure 11 below exhibits the measured scores for the children, for the using literacy strategies behaviors that were measured during the study. Responds to parent and/or identifies visual cues related to the story him/herself showed a positive increase from .53 to 1.76. Able to guess what will happen next based on picture cues increased from .76 to 2.06 during the study. Able to recall information from the story scores increased from .47 to 1.71. Spontaneously offers ideas about the story showed positive growth from .53 to 1.82.

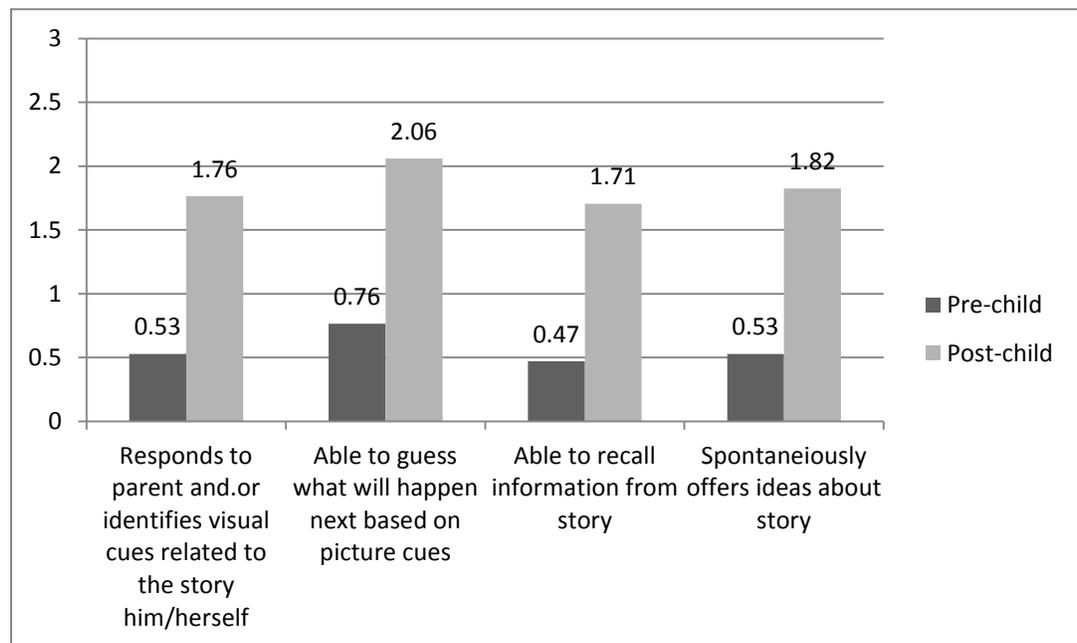


Figure 11. Using literacy strategies – child

The Figure 12 below exhibits the measured scores for the adults, for the using literacy strategies behaviors that were measured during the study. Responds to parent and/or identifies visual cues related to the story him/herself showed a positive increase

from .65 to 1.94. Able to guess what will happen next based on picture cues increased from .71 to 2.12 during the study. Able to recall information from the story scores increased from .59 to 2.12. Spontaneously offers ideas about the story showed positive growth from .47 to 2.06.

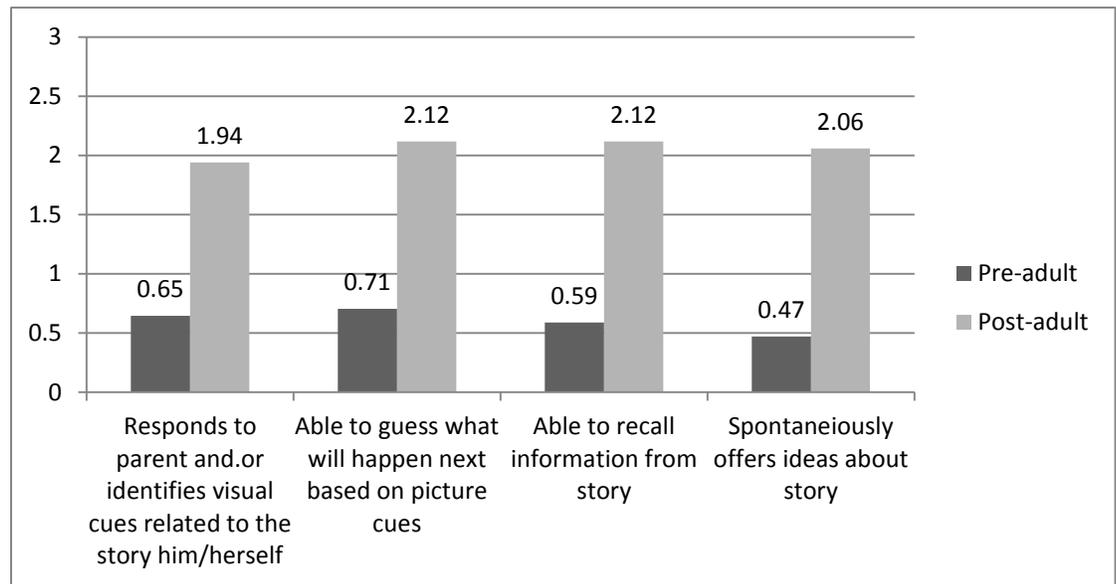


Figure 12. Using literacy strategies - parent

Promoting interactive reading and supporting comprehension. The following charts display the Promoting Interactive Reading & Supporting Comprehension category.

This category consists of four measured behaviors:

- 1 Responds to questions about book
2. Responds to parent cues or identifies pictures & words to his/her own.
3. Attempts to relate book content to personal experiences.
4. Poses questions about the story & relate topics.

The scoring is based on a 0-3 scale, 0-*No Evidence*, 1-*Infrequently* (1 time), 2-*Some of the time* (2-3 times), 3-*Most of the time*. Figure 17 below illustrates the Pre/Post scoring of the behaviors. All behaviors exhibited positive improvements following the training.

Figure 13 below exhibits the measured scores for the specific behaviors in the Promoting Interactive Reading & Supporting Comprehension category for the children. Responds to questions about book showed positive increase from .47 to 1.41. Responds to parent cues or identifies pictures & words to his/her own shows an increase from .59 to 1.94. Attempts to relate book content to personal experiences .59 to 1.65. Poses questions about the story & relate topics rose from .29 to 1.65.

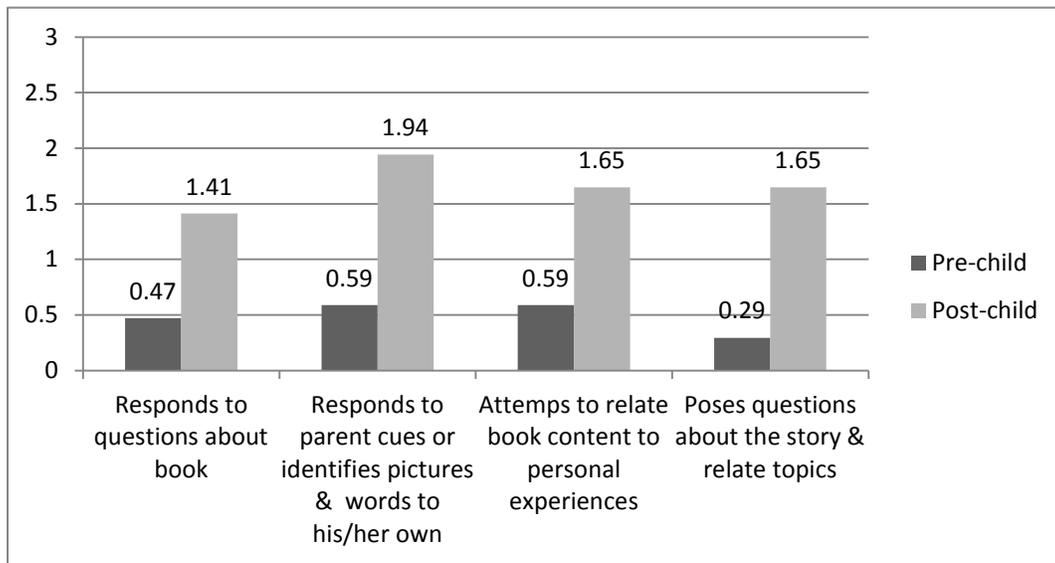


Figure 13. Promoting Interactive Reading & Supporting Comprehension – child.

Figure 14 below exhibits the measured scores for the specific behaviors in the Promoting Interactive Reading & Supporting Comprehension category for the parent.

Responds to questions about book showed positive increase from .53 to 2.06. Responds to parent cues or identifies pictures & words to his/her own shows an increase from .65 to 2.12. Attempts to relate book content to personal experiences.47 to 1.82. Poses questions about the story & relate topics rose from .53 to 1.82.

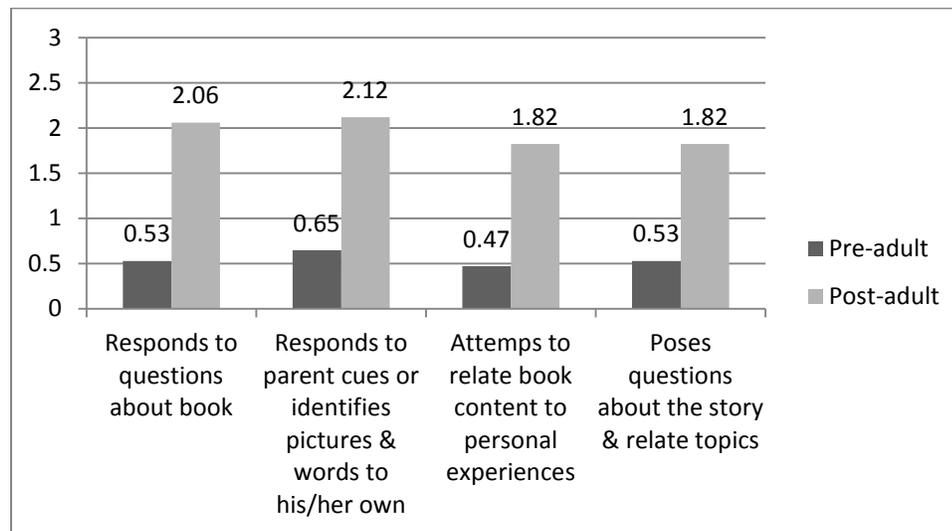


Figure 14. Promoting Interactive Reading & Supporting Comprehension – parent

Descriptive statistics. This section further examines the scores on the ACIRI. An ANCOVA was run to compare the differences in means. Analyses showed that there were significant differences between persons as well as between groups (see Table 20 and Table 21). This interaction of persons and groups failed to reject the null hypothesis. For interaction of persons, adults scored higher on the ACIRI than children did overall. For interactions of groups, the treatment group scored higher overall than did the control group on the ACIRI, representing a statistically significant difference.

Table 20

Tests of Within-Subjects Contrasts

Source	Type III sum of squares	<i>df</i>	Mean square	<i>F</i>	Sig.	Partial eta squared
Persons	15.422	1	15.422	7.679	.009	.204
Persons *	6.100	1	6.100	3.038	.092	.092
Adult enhancing_pre persons *	23.790	1	23.790	11.84	.002	.283
Child enhancing_pre persons * group	.070	1	.070	.035	.853	.001
Error(persons)	60.247	30	2.008			

Table 21

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Type III Sum of squares	<i>df</i>	Mean square	<i>F</i>	Sig.	Partial eta squared
Intercept	121.091	1	121.091	25.620	.000	.461
Adult enhancing_pre	5.306	1	5.306	1.123	.298	.036
Child enhancing_pre	5.175	1	5.175	1.095	.304	.035
group	269.984	1	269.984	57.122	.000	.656
Error	141.793	30	4.726			

The ANCOVA resulted in a significant and large effect between groups. No other effects (Persons or the interaction of persons and groups) rejected the null hypothesis.

The treatment group scored higher overall than did the control group.

ANCOVA also resulted in a significant though small magnitude interaction of persons and groups. Treated adults had a larger average than their treated child counterparts, while among the control participants the children had a larger average than that of the control group adults. However, the primary findings echo those identified for Enhancing: Treated participants had a higher average than did the control participants, and this represented magnitude statistically significant difference

Table 22

Tests of Within-Subjects Contrasts

Source	Type III sum of squares	<i>df</i>	Mean square	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	Partial eta squared
Persons	4.102	1	4.102	2.986	.094	.091
Persons *	.287	1	.287	.209	.651	.007
Adult promoting_Pre Persons*	3.131	1	3.131	2.279	.142	.071
*Child promoting_Pre Persons * Group	11.923	1	11.923	8.679	.006	.224
Error(Persons)	41.213	30	1.374			

The ANCOVA analysis failed to reject the null hypothesis and showed that there was a statistically significance on the ACIRI scores between treatment adults and treatment children, with adults scoring higher than children. Likewise, the results of the

ANCOVA analysis showed that control group children score higher on the ACIRI than the control group adults. Overall, the treatment group score significantly higher than did the control group on the ACIRI.

Section Four: Observation of Parent-Child Dyads in Read Aloud Session—

Treatment and Control Groups

In reflecting on the observations of parent-child dyads that were rich in diversity both in culture and the parent's occupational backgrounds, it was apparent each participant wanted their child to value reading. However, the notable difference was not the child's behavior, but more importantly how each parent responded to their child's reading behaviors.

The researcher observed the child-parent dyads including both a pre and post assessment research study. Table 23 shows the means, median and standard deviations found at the first observation point for the treatment and control group and Table 24 shows the means, median and standard deviation for this treatment and control group. As Table 23 and Table 24 show the mean differences between the two groups show a significant difference.

Table 23

First Observation Checklist-Treatment and Control Group

Observation	<i>Treatment</i>		<i>Control</i>	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
<i>Concepts about print</i>				
Locates front of book	4	0	2.24	0.97
Directionality	3.76	0.44	1.41	0.51
Punctuation marks	3.71	0.47	1.52	0.51
Word reading	3.65	0.49	1.52	0.51
<i>Letter ID</i>				
Capital, lower	3.76	0.44	1.82	0.73
Sound	3.70	0.47	1.41	0.51
<i>Print referencing</i>				
Print awareness	3.65	0.49	1.94	1.09
Word awareness	3.71	0.47	1.41	0.51
<i>Read aloud</i>				
Story discussion	3.47	0.62	1.53	0.51

Note. 1 = no observed strategy; 2 = observed once; 3 = observed several times; 4 = observed many times.

Table 24

Means and Standard Deviation of Post Checklist-Treatment and Control Group

Post Observation Checklist-Treatment and Control Group

Observation	<i>Treatment</i>		<i>Control</i>	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Concepts about print				
Locates front of book	4	0	3.47	0.62
Directionality	4	0	2.24	0.97
Punctuation marks	4	0	1.82	0.73
Word reading	3.76	0.44	1.52	0.51
Letter ID				
Capital, lower	4	0	1.94	1.09
Sound	4	0	1.82	0.73
Print referencing				
Print awareness	3.65	0.49	1.94	1.09
Word awareness	3.76	0.44	1.41	0.51
Read aloud				
Story discussion	3.65	0.49	1.53	0.51

Note. 1 = no observed strategy; 2 = observed once; 3 = observed several times; 4 = observed many times.

Table 24 shows gain in the mean scores on the post assessment, which includes an analysis of Concepts About Print, Letter ID, Print Referencing and Comprehension show treatment group. Analysis of end of program data for the control group showed minimal gains.

Section Five: Parents' Exit Survey

Parents were asked to complete an exit survey, answering 1 = *no* and 2 = *yes* to four of the questions. Table 25 shows the responses from the control-group parents; Table 26 displays the responses from the treatment group. As shown in the two tables, there were some differences between the control group and the treatment group on Questions 2, 3, and 4, with the treatment group agreeing more that they felt better prepared to help their child at home with reading, that their child had a positive experience with the one-on-one learning time, and that they would consider continuing in such a program. On Questions 1 and 5, both groups expressed that they felt welcomed at the center and that they would like to learn more techniques to help their child read at home. The treatment group showed only a slightly higher mean on these two questions than did the control group.

Table 25

Parent Exit Survey: Treatment and Control Group

Questions	Treatment		Control	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1. Did you feel welcomed and useful at the center?	1.82	0.39	1.82	0.72
2. Did you feel prepared and more knowledgeable about how to implement interactive reading at home?	1.82	0.39	1.41	0.5
3. How did your child respond to the one-on-one learning time?	2.00-	0	1.41	0.5
4. Would you consider continuing the program?	1.82	0.39	1.23	0.39
5. I am interested in learning more techniques to support my child's literacy development.	2.00-	0	1.82	0.72

Note. 1 = no; 2 = yes; For Questions 3 only; 1 = no difference; 2 = positively.

Summary

This chapter presented the findings of the study. Section one describes the demographic variables involved in the study, including gender, age education level, ethnicity, family structure and socioeconomic status. Section two revealed in observations that parent and child behaviors were demonstrated and measuring by the Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory (ACIRI). The highest means scores were classified as "Enhancing Attention to Text", and nearly equivalent to that was "Using Literacy Strategies"; while the lowest mean scores were classified as "Promoting Interactive Reading & Supporting Comprehension".

Section three shows responses from the Stony Brook Family Reading Survey (SBFRS), that 70.6% indicated English was the primary language spoken in the home. The results of the family literacy activities indicate that 85% of the parents were not having any reading difficulty when they were in school and only 15% recall their reading affecting their grades, and none were retained. In regards to speech and language delays, only 15% had concerns, and 10% of the children in study received speech services for articulation, but had successfully completed speech services. Parents reported that they spent time outside home an average of 2-4 hours a day and visited the library "once to three times each month" with their preschool aged child. Parents revealed that they spent from 1 to 2 hours watching television per day, and they, or caregivers, allowed their preschool aged children to watch television three to five hours

daily. With respect to parents reading for enjoyment, more than half expressed they enjoyed reading, but 79% shared they have little time for recreational reading.

Family reading activities showed, almost 70 % of the parents stated that they owned approximately 20-30 picture books. Thirty percent (30%) reported they, or the caregiver, began to read to the preschooler from birth to 5 months and (70%) read to their preschooler at 6-12 months. Sixty-five percent (65%) of the respondents reports that their children requested being read to “two to three times a week”, while 80% reported children looked at books by him/herself. Generally, 85% of the parents reported when their preschool aged child was read to, they actually enjoyed it.

As revealed in Section four, the parent-child dyads engaged in read aloud sessions were rich both in cultural diversity, parental occupational backgrounds; however similar in valuing educational standards and importance of early literacy. Analysis of Concepts About Print, Letter ID, Print Referencing and Read Aloud show the mean differences between the treatment group and control group being significant. Additionally, the prominent distinction was not the child’s behavior, but more importantly how each parent responded to their child’s reading behaviors.

Section five reviews parents’ exit survey feedback show satisfaction with the read aloud program. Specifically, the Parent Exit Survey showed there were some differences between the control group and the treatment group agreeing more that they felt better prepared to help their child at home with reading, that their child had a positive experience with the one-on-one learning time, and that they would consider

continuing in such a program. Both groups expressed that they felt welcomed at the center and that they would like to learn more techniques to help their child read at home. The treatment group showed only a slightly higher mean on these two questions than did the control group.

In section six, overall, adults scored higher than did children, and the treatment group scored higher overall than did the control group, and this represented a moderate to large effecting the base.

CHAPTER V
SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine and measure how a read aloud training program can be used to train parents in the early reading behaviors of preschool children in a private reading tutorial center. The study was conducted at a private reading center in Texas where most parents were college graduates and were committed to ensuring their children are exposed to the skills they need to develop good reading habits. Two groups of parent-child dyads consisting of 17 pairs (parent-child) were selected to fill the experimental and control groups. The parents in the experimental group were trained in how to conduct read aloud sessions with their child so as to enhance their child's pre-reading skills, such as, print recognition and letter and word recognition. The parents in the control group were not given any training in conducting read aloud sessions. Overall, the findings in the study suggested that based on the multiple means of assessment used that both parents and children benefitted from read aloud sessions if the parents had been trained to conduct the reading sessions.

Findings by Research Questions

The three research questions for this study are the following:

1. To what extent does a literacy read aloud training program for parents influence the parents' interactive reading behaviors, as measured by ACIRI

Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory (DeBruin-Parecki, 2007), when reading aloud with their children?

2. To what extent does parents' use of interactive read alouds influence the literacy behaviors as measure by ACIRI Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory of their preschool children?
3. What feedback do parents provide about the family literacy program?

Research Question One

Question one asked; To what extent does a literacy read aloud training program for parents influence the parents' interactive reading behaviors, as measured by the Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory (ACIRI; DeBruin-Parecki, 2007), when reading aloud with their children? The findings showed that the parents who were trained in read alouds scored higher on the ACIRI than the parents who did not receive training did. The ACIRI evaluated 12 literacy behaviors for parents and child in three different categories: (a) enhancing attention to text, (b) promoting interactive reading/supporting comprehension, and (c) using literacy strategies. The experimental group showed significantly higher scores on most measures on the ACIRI especially in the following literacy behaviors. Under "enhancing attention to text" the greatest improvement came in *holds book and turns pages*; values increased from .65 to 2.12. For "promoting interactive reading", the greatest growth was shown in *responds to parent cues or identifies pictures and words to his/her own* and showed an increase from .65 to 2.12. Under "using literacy strategies", the experimental parent group had the

greatest gain in *spontaneously offers ideas about the story* showed positive growth from .47 to 2.06. Overall, the findings showed that there were significant differences found between the experimental and control groups in literacy behaviors in all three categories on the ACIRI.

Research Question Two

Question two asked, to what extent does parents' use of interactive read alouds influence the literacy behaviors as measured by ACIRI Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory of their preschool children?

Under "enhancing attention to text" the greatest improvement came in *holds book and turns pages values*, which increased from 0.71 to 2.06, which was also the highest literacy behavior for adults. For "promoting interactive reading", the greatest growth was shown in *poses questions about the story and related topics*, which rose from .29 to 1.65. Under "using literacy strategies", the experimental children group had the greatest gain in *able to guess what will happen next based on picture cues*, increased from .76 to 2.06 during the study. The greatest gains in the child experimental group occurred in the category of literacy strategies.

Overall, the observations of parent-child dyads examined clearly indicated the need for and the value of developing quality parent led reading-support programs as a means for promoting early literacy in children. Research showed that implementing effective training for a read aloud program is not easy, but worthwhile for families. The observations validated the belief that parents can be successful if they are trained and

supported, and the outcome supports the importance of a parental reading program for preschool children.

Research Question Three

Question three asked, “What feedback do parents provide about the family literacy program?” This question was answered by an exit survey that given to parents in the experimental and control groups. Parents were asked to respond 1 = *no* and 2 = *yes* to four of the questions. The findings showed there were some differences between the control group and the treatment group on questions two, three, and four with the treatment group agreeing they felt better prepared to help their child at home with reading, that their child had a positive experience with the one-on-one learning time, and that they would consider continuing in such a program. On Questions one and five, both groups expressed that they felt welcomed at the center and that they would like to learn more techniques to help their child read at home. The treatment group showed only a slightly higher mean on these two questions than did the control group.

Based on those finding, it can be concluded that the parents who were part of the experimental group felt better equipped to do read alouds with their children. Parents in the experimental group also felt that their child really enjoyed the one-on-one time with their parent. Parents who did not receive training in conducting read alouds did not feel as comfortable reading in a one-on-one situation. Interestingly, both groups were comfortable at the center, suggesting that parents must feel comfortable at their children’s schools in order for them to become more involved in a parental reading

support program. Additionally, both sets of parents felt welcomed at the private reading center and they were happy to have the opportunity to learn more about how to increase their child's early literacy skills.

Discussion

The findings in this study suggest that training parents and children in reading development programs can make their reading time together more productive and enjoyable. The benefit of training both children and adults cannot be underestimated, because training enhances self-confidence and helps parents and children become more confident in their reading.

Findings from the parent-child dyad observation showed three points. First, the way a child accepts the read-aloud session is affected by the relationship between parent and child. Second, regardless of their cultural background, children can enjoy the new experience of reading with their parent, especially if the parent has been taught the skills and questions they need to use in a read aloud session. Third, when parents are specifically trained in how to conduct a read aloud with their child, they are more likely to be at ease in conducting such sessions and are able to accomplish certain literacy goals at every session. For instance, it may not occur to a parent that such literacy strategies as showing a child how to hold a book, how to find the title of the book, and what is shown on the front cover are necessary to teach the child better literacy skills. Training shows parents how important these literacy strategies are and gives to the parents the skills they need to help their own child.

Previous research has supported these three findings. Much research has shown a parent's involvement is an important component in a child's development as a great deal of learning occurs in the home before children enter school (Baker & Escher, 2002; Casper, 2014; Hebert & Person 2000; McIntyre, 2007). Much research has also noted that it takes teachers, parents, and children working together to create the best environment for learning (Bus et al., 1995; Gets et al., 2004; Payne, Whitehurst, & Angell, 1994). When these stakeholders do work together, children can be expected to have success in school (Casper, 2014; Ferguson & Clark, 2007; McIntyre, 2007; McIntyre, Eckert, Finesse, DeGeneres, & Widener, 2007).

Additional studies have shown that families who make an effort to work alongside their schools positively influence their children's early literacy development (Clay, 2000; Snow, Barnes, Chandler, Goodman, & Hemphill, 1991; Turgescent, 1998). Porter and Johnson (2004) conducted a case study and found that preschoolers who spent a consistent amount of time working on literacy activities with parents were better able to excel in word recognition than the other preschoolers who were not placed with their parent as the parental support reader in the same classroom. Parent involvement in their children's academic life promotes closeness between parent and child and helps the school system do its job more effectively. (Epstein, 2001; Teal, 1984).

Finally, the success achieved in the parental support program using read alouds showed that previous research was correct to identify how successful these programs can be although read alouds are not the only effective way to increase a child's early literacy

skills. Research has found that reading aloud to children is a unique and powerful technique that helps them develop essential literacy skills (Bus, 1995; Lonigan, 2004; Scarborough & Dobrich, 1994; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 1998). Studies over many years have revealed that read alouds are crucial to early literacy development in children (Edwards, 2011; Ferguson-McGann & Clark, 2007).

The findings in the present study confirm and support previous research regarding the importance of the parent-child-school partnership in the development of early literacy skills in children. One way to enhance a child's literacy is for more parent support programs to be developed at private and public schools in America.

Recommendations

Based on the findings in this study, the following recommendations are made:

- There should be partnerships created between parents and public and private preschools and schools along with various community organizations such as churches, or community-based organizations who could provide parental reading support programs for the local preschools. Community involvement in a parental reading support program would benefit all children, regardless of race, or socioeconomic status.
- A school could use their Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) to recruit parents for reading support programs. Parents should be offered training in being a parent for a reading support program, and they could be convinced to participate based on the free training they would receive and be able to use

with their own child at home as well as a parental reading support program at preschool or elementary school.

- Schools should develop a reading library for Grades kindergarten to 2 so that parents could checkout two books at a time to practice read aloud sessions at home with their child. This library could be funded by the PTA and would ensure that even children from the lowest socioeconomic status could still have books at home to read nightly with their parent.
- It would also be important to offer reading classes for parents who may speak English as a second language in the evening. Research has suggested that parents who read are more likely to have children who read.

The goal of all these recommendations is to ensure that children learn everything they need to know about reading in order that they can achieve success in all subject areas and grow up and be productive citizens.

Further Studies

The current study involved the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data. It might be good to conduct a phenomenological study in which parents who have been trained in read aloud techniques are interviewed in order to gather their perspective about utilizing parents for reading support, how they experienced doing a read aloud session with their own child, and their opinion on how read aloud training could be improved.

A longitudinal study would help solidify the previous research, which has shown that having parents for reading support programs in the classroom can benefit the child's academic achievement. Children in two different classrooms, where one class had a previously trained parent/guardian or every day to help the teacher with reading groups and the other class had no parent/guardian for reading support, could be tested on reading outcomes at the start of the school year, and at the end of the school year in order to compare any differences between the two groups. The children would be followed for three years from kindergarten through second grade. Such a study could help determine the benefits that can be achieved in the classroom when the teacher has trained parents for reading support programs in their classroom every day of the school year. The findings could provide evidence for preschool center directors or administrators that it is worthwhile to recruit a parental reading support program for every class throughout the school year and that funds directed for such a program would be well spent.

Limitations

As is the case in all studies, there were several limitations to this present study. The first limitation was the small number of participants. It would have been beneficial to have more participants, but the short time period made it necessary to limit the number of parent-child dyads. More dyads would have been impossible to train and observe in the 8-week period unless other research assistants could have been enlisted to aid in all the administration of tests, video-taping, and observations.

Another limitation was the setting used for the study. The research was conducted in a private reading center where parents pay to have their child enrolled in the reading program; that means that the parents are not from low socioeconomic backgrounds. Thus, the findings in this study may only be generalizable to child and parents who are the same economic status as the parents in this study. The third limitation is that the private reading center used in this study is owned and operated by the researcher. Because the center is the researcher's own, it is possible that there was some bias in the observation of the experimental parent-child dyads. The researcher may have over emphasized any gains that she noticed because she was energized by the changes she saw. Hence, the researcher tried to keep in mind any biases she might have about the read aloud program when doing the observations so as much as possible researcher bias could be eliminated.

Summary

This chapter includes a summary of the findings in this study recommendations based on those findings and some limitations of the present study. The purpose of this study was to examine and measure how a read aloud training program could be used to train parents in the early reading behaviors of preschool children in a private reading center. Two groups of parent-child dyads consisting of 17 pairs (parent-child) were selected to fill the groups, experimental and control. The overall findings in the study supported previous research that has suggested parents are an important part of scaffolding a young child's emergent literacy (Baker & Scher, 2002; Edwards, 2010; Snow, 1998). The findings showed the there was a significant difference in test scores

between parents in the control group and those in the treatment group on the post-assessment tests. Likewise, there was a significant difference between the control group children and those children in the treatment group, with the treatment group outscoring the control group on the post-assessment tests. Additionally, at the final observation, the treatment group showed noticeable gains in letter recognition and print awareness. Parents in both treatment and control groups reported that they wanted to continue doing read alouds with their children and would like to have more training in helping their child with reading and writing.

This study added to the literature on early literacy development by showing that by getting parents to partner with their child's school to help their preschool child develop better early literacy skills. This was the first time such a study was conducted at a private tutoring center. Other studies have been conducted at public institutions where there were a high number of low socioeconomic students. According to the demographic information from the parents at the site of the study, the children came mostly from families that had higher than usual incomes, meaning that they are more likely to have had the advantages afforded upper-middle and middle-class children. It is more than likely that the children have books they own and opportunities to go to many places, unlike lower-income children. Involving parents into the child's education at any income-level cannot only enhance that child's love of reading, but improve the parents' reading skills a well. It is important that all children be provided an opportunity to be

read to by others and to read to others themselves. No matter what the setting is for a child's education, it is important that the child feels valued as well as challenged.

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Appendix A
IRB Approval Letter



Institutional Review Board
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
P.O. Box 425619, Denton, TX 76204-5619
940-898-3378
email: IRB@twu.edu
<http://www.twu.edu/irb.html>

DATE: August 5, 2014

TO: Ms. Kim Southwell
Department of Reading

FROM: Institutional Review Board - Denton

Re: *Approval for What Happens When Parent Volunteers Provide Literacy Support For Preschool Students Using Interactive Read Alouds in a Private Reading Center? (Protocol #: 17687)*

The above referenced study has been reviewed and approved at a fully convened meeting of the Denton Institutional Review Board (IRB) on 6/6/2014. This approval is valid for one year and expires on 6/6/2015. The IRB will send an email notification 45 days prior to the expiration date with instructions to extend or close the study. It is your responsibility to request an extension for the study if it is not yet complete, to close the protocol file when the study is complete, and to make certain that the study is not conducted beyond the expiration date.

If applicable, agency approval letters must be submitted to the IRB upon receipt prior to any data collection at that agency. A copy of the approved consent form with the IRB approval stamp is enclosed. Please use the consent form with the most recent approval date stamp when obtaining consent from your participants. A copy of the signed consent forms must be submitted with the request to close the study file at the completion of the study.

Any modifications to this study must be submitted for review to the IRB using the Modification Request Form. Additionally, the IRB must be notified immediately of any adverse events or unanticipated problems. All forms are located on the IRB website. If you have any questions, please contact the TWU IRB.

cc. Dr. Connie Briggs, Department of Reading
Dr. Claudia Haag, Department of Reading
Graduate School

Appendix B
Approved Consent Forms

Texas Woman's University Consent to Participate in Research

Title: What happens when parent volunteers provide literacy support for preschool students using interactive read aloud in a private reading center?

Investigator: Kim Southwell..... ksouthwell@readingranch.com
469-235-064

Advisor: Claudia Haag, PhD..... CHaag@twu.edu
(940) 898-2226

Explanation and Purpose of the Research

You and your child are being asked to participate to participate in a research study for Mrs. Kim Southwell's dissertation at Texas Woman's University. The purpose of this research is to examine and measure how reading-support programs using trained parents can strengthen early reading behaviors of preschool children in a private reading tutorial center. Mrs. Southwell will send you, as parent of a preschool children attending the center, a packet through the U.S. mail, that will include the following: (a) a letter informing them of the study and requesting their participation; (b) a Letter of Consent to sign should they decide to participate in the study; and (c) an enclosed self-addressed, postage-paid envelop to be used to return the signed Letter of Consent. The first 34 parents to return the signed consent letter by U.S. mail will be the participants in the study, along with their child. Consent forms can only be returned by U.S. mail. Hand-delivered consent forms will not be accepted so that confidentiality can be protected.

Those who volunteer to participate in this study will be divided into two groups. I will take all the names of the participants and place them into a box. I will randomly pick half of the names for one group, and the remaining names will be placed into the other. By conducting this study, I hope to learn how using parents who have been trained to conduct read alouds will better prepare their children in reading when they start school. The study may also positively encourage parental involvement.

Time Requirements for Each Participant Group:

Control group (parent/guardian):

- Reviewing and signing consent form 20-30 min
- Child's preexisting data
- No added time for child because all the assessments being given to all who attend the Reading Center.
- Maximum cumulative time commitment for the parent/guardian is approximately 30 minutes.

Treatment Group (parent/guardian):

- Will meet for four sessions

_____ initial Page 1 of 4



- Pre-assessments will take approximately 15 minutes
- Introductory orientation meeting/workshop will last 1 hour
- Midpoint of the study coaching workshop is approximately 45-minutes
- Parent/guardian and child dyads Read Aloud sessions at home is approximately 3 hours
- Post-assessments will take approximately 15 minutes
- Maximum cumulative time commitment for the parent/guardian is approximately 5.25 hours

Child Treatment Group:

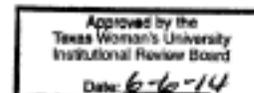
- Will meet for three sessions
- Pre-assessment will take approximately 15 minutes
- Midpoint of the study coaching workshop is approximately 45-minutes
- Parent/guardian and child dyads Read Aloud sessions at home is approximately 3 hours
- Post-assessments will take approximately 15 minutes
- Maximum cumulative time commitment for the children is approximately 4.25 hours.

At the midpoint of the study, you and your child in the treatment group will come to the center in the afternoon for a scheduled 45-minute session during a 1-week period for an individual guidance workshop. The primary investigator will observe you and your child engaged in a read aloud session and complete the primary investigator checklist. Using the information on the checklist, the primary investigator will offer constructive feedback and suggestions, guiding you and your child to more effective read aloud sessions. All interactions will be video recorded. The maximum cumulative time for each treatment child is 4.25 hours.

Potential Risks

The following is a list of potential risks in the study:

- There is a potential risk of coercion. Your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time.
- You may feel emotional discomfort when being video-taped.
- The researcher will make every effort to be unobtrusive in the video-taped read aloud session.
- You may feel uncomfortable watching yourself on tape and be concerned that you did not do the read aloud correctly, causing you to be embarrassed. Since you will be experiencing this instructional technique for the first time, the teacher/primary investigator will model the techniques supporting the students during the process to minimize emotional feelings of discomfort.



- Anonymity cannot be guaranteed in this study. In the reporting of data, the names and identities of you and your child will not be disclosed, and the primary investigator will use pseudonyms to protect your anonymity.
- Another risk in this study is loss of confidentiality. Confidentiality will be protected to the extent that is allowed by law. The results of the study will be reported in scientific magazines or journals, but pseudonyms will be used for all participants.
- You may feel emotionally stressed by allowing your child to participate. Your child is accustomed to being involved in participatory activities and reflections so he/she is less likely to be emotionally stressed by videotaping.
- Your child's instruction at the Reading Center will not be affected by his/her participation or nonparticipation in the study.
- Being part of the study will have no effect on your child's instruction services received at the Center. Being part of the study is voluntary, and you have the option of withdrawing from the study at any time without any consequences.
- All materials collected in the study, such as the video tapes and the observation checklist, will be secured in a locked file cabinet in the primary investigator's office. Only the primary investigator will have access to the information.

The primary investigator will try to prevent any problem that could happen because of this research. You should let the primary investigators know at once if there is a problem, and they will help you. However, TWU does not provide medical services or financial assistance for injuries that might happen because you are taking part in this research.

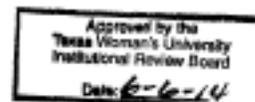
Participation and Benefits

The child's involvement in this study is completely voluntary and you may withdraw your child from the study at any time without penalty. The results of this observation will potentially benefit families by providing evidence of reading strategies used by parents with preschool children. At the completion of the study a personalized summary will be mailed to you upon request, which will include parent and child interactions noting positive behaviors.

Questions Regarding the Study

You will be given a copy of this signed and dated consent form to keep. If you have any questions about the research study you should ask the primary investigators, their phone numbers are at the top of this form. If you have questions about your child's rights as a participant in this research or the way this study has been conducted, you may contact the Texas Woman's University Office of Research and Sponsored Programs at 940-898-3378 or via e-mail at IRB@twu.edu.

_____ initial Page 3 of 4



Signature of Participant

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

*If you would like to know the results of this study tell us where you want them to be sent:

Email: _____

Or

Address:

Approved by the
Texas Woman's University
Institutional Review Board
Date: 6-14-14

APPENDIX C

Stony Brook Family Reading Survey, Part I and II

Part I: Family Information

1) How old is your preschool aged child?

3 years old

4 years old

5 years old

2) What is the gender of this child?

Female

Male

3) Is this child currently enrolled in a preschool program?

Yes

No

4) How many days a week does your child attend a preschool program?

None

1 day

2 day

3 day

4 day

5 day

5) How many children are there in your family who are younger than your preschool aged child?

None

1

2

3

More than 3 (How many?___)

6) How many children are there in your family who are older than your preschool aged child?

None

1

2

3

More than 3 (How many?___)

7) What is your relationship to the child?

Mother
parent) _____

Father

Grandmother

Grandfather

Step-mother

Step-father

Not biologically related (guardian, foster

8) What is your age?

Under 26 years-old
specify)

28-35 years old

35-45 years old

46-55 years old

Other (please

9) How many adults (counting yourself) live in the same home with the child?

1

2

3

4

More than 4 (How many)_____

10) How many years of schooling have you completed

- Less than 9th grade
- Some high school, but did not finish
- High school degree
- High school, some college or trade school
- 2-year college degree
- 4 year college dress
- Masters degree
- Doctorate degree
- Other (please specify)

11) How many years of schooling have your spouse completed

- Less than 9th grade
- Some high school, but did not finish
- High school degree
- High school, some college or trade school
- 2-year college degree
- 4 year college dress
- Masters degree
- Doctorate degree
- Other (please specify)

12) If you were born outside the United States, please specify the country in which you were born.

13) If your spouse was born outside of the United States, please specify the country in which your spouse was born.

15) What language is usually spoke in your home? (may select more than 1 answer)

- Thai
- Arabic
- Bengal
- Chinese
- Filipino
- Lao
- Hindi
- Japanese
- Korean
- Mandarin
- Urdu
- Vietnamese
- English
- Other (Please specify) _____

16) In English is not your native language what is your understanding of written English? Please rate your level of understanding on a scale of 1-7?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

17) Is English your spouse's native language? Yes No

18) Employment Status: Please check your status

Hourly wages
Employed-salaried
Self-employed
Looking for work
Homemaker
Student
Retired
Other (please specify)

19) What is your household income?

Less than \$10,000
\$10,000 to \$19,999
\$20,000 to \$29, 999
\$30,000 to \$39,999
\$40,000 to \$49, 999
\$50,000 to \$59,999
\$60,000 to \$69, 999
\$70,000 to \$79,999
\$80,000 to \$89,999
\$90,000 to \$109,999
\$110,000 to \$129,999
\$130,000 or more
Other (please specify)

Part II: Family Literacy Activities

- 1) How many children are there in your family who had problems in school (e.g., low grades, held back, special education classes)?

None 1 2 More than 3 (How many?) _____

- 2) How much difficulty did you have with reading when you were in school?

None Mild difficulty Moderate difficulty Severe difficulty

- 3) How many hours a day are you out of your home (work, school, shopping, etc)?

0-2 3-5 5-10 10-13 more than 13

- 4) How often do you go to the library with your preschool aged child?

Hardly ever Once or twice month Once or twice a week

- 5) At what age an age or months did your preschool aged child say his or her first word other than babbling such as “mama” or “dada”, etc?

0-6 months 7-12 months 13months to 1.5 years 1.5 years to 2 years later than second birthday

- 6) Have you ever been worried that your preschool aged child’s speech as not developing normally?

No never Yes, mildly worried Yes, moderately worried Yes, very worried.

- 7) How much time per day do you spend watching TV?

None Less than an From 1 up to From 3 up to From 5 up to More than 7
 hour 3 hours 5 hours 7 hours hours

- 8) How much time per day does your preschooler spend watching TV?

None Less than an From 1 up to From 3 up to From 5 up to More than 7
 hour 3 hours 5 hours 7 hours hours

- 9) How much do you enjoy reading?

Not at all Some Moderately Very Much

10) How much does your spouse enjoy reading?

Not at all Some Moderately Very Much

11) At what age did you or another family member begin to read to your preschool age child?

0-6 months 7-12 months 13months to 1.5 years 1.5 years to 2 years later than second birthday

12) Approximately how many picture books do you have in your home for your preschool aged child's use?

0-2 3-10 11-20 21-40 more than 40

13) If your preschool aged child is read to, how much does your child enjoy it?

A little Pretty much Very much Loves it

14) How often do you or another family member read a picture book with your preschool aged child?

Hardly ever Once or twice a month Once or twice a week Almost daily

15) How often does your preschool aged child ask you to read to him/her?

Hardly ever Once or twice a month Once or twice a week Almost daily

16) How often does your preschool aged child look at books by himself or herself?

Hardly ever Once or twice a month Once or twice a week Almost daily

Appendix D
Adult/Child Interactive Reading Inventory

ADULT AGE _____ DOB _____
 CHILD AGE _____ DOB _____

PRE _____ COMFORT LEVEL OF ADULT
 POST _____ High _____ Moderate _____ Low _____

SCORE (0-3)
 3 = MOST OF THE TIME (4 or more times)
 2 = SOME OF THE TIME (2-3 times)
 1 = INFREQUENTLY (1 time)
 0 = NO EVIDENCE

Adult/Child Interactive Reading Inventory

Teacher's Name _____ General Comments: _____
 SCORE _____

	Adult's Name: Case # Date: OBSERVATION		Child's Name: Case # Date: OBSERVATION
I. Enhancing Attention to Text 1. Attempts to promote and maintain physical proximity 2. Sustains interest and attention through use of child-adjusted language, positive affect and reinforcement 3. Gives child opportunity to hold book and turn pages 4. Shares book with child (i.e. displays sense of audience in book handling when reading)		I. Enhancing Attention to Text 1. Child seeks and maintains physical proximity 2. Child pays attention and sustains interest 3. Child holds book and turn pages on his/her own or when asked 4. Child initiates or responds to book sharing which takes his/her presence into account	
II. Promoting Interactive Reading and Supporting Comprehension 1. Poses and solicits questions about the book's content 2. Points to pictures and words to assist child in identification and understanding 3. Relates book content and child's responses to personal experiences 4. Pauses to answer questions child poses		II. Promoting Interactive Reading and Supporting Comprehension 1. Child responds to questions about book 2. Child responds to parent cues or identifies pictures and words on his/her own 3. Child attempts to relate book content to personal experiences 4. Child poses questions about the story and related topics	
III. Using Literacy Strategies 1. Identifies visual cues related to story reading (i.e. pictures, repetitive words) 2. Solicits predictions 3. Asks child to recall information from the story 4. Elaborates on child's ideas		III. Using Literacy Strategies 1. Child responds to parent and/or identifies visual cues related to the story him/herself 2. Child is able to guess what will happen next based on picture cues 3. Child is able to recall information from story 4. Child spontaneously offers ideas about story	

NAME OF BOOK: _____

AUTHOR: _____

Andrea DeBruin Parecki 6/97

Appendix E
Parent Read Aloud Checklist

Week No. _____

Please place a checkmark in the appropriate column. Numbers represent the score for each checkmark.

Strategies	Not observed (1)	Observed once (2)	Observed several times (3)	Observed many times (4)
------------	------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------------------	-------------------------------

Concepts About Print

- Locates front of book
- Directionality
- Punctuation Marks
- Word Reading

Letter ID

- Capital, lower
- Sound

Print Referencing

- Print Awareness
- Word Awareness

Read Aloud

- Story Discussion

Appendix F
Parent Exit Survey

Please fill out the exit survey which will provide feedback about your satisfaction of the read aloud program.

1. Did you feel welcomed and useful at the center? (circle)

Yes

No

Somewhat

Comments:

2. Did you feel prepared and more knowledgeable about how to implement interactive reading and print referencing at home? (circle)

Yes

No

Somewhat

Comments:

3. How did the children respond to the one-on-one learning time? (circle)

Yes

No

Somewhat

Comments:

4. Would you consider continuing the program? (circle)

Yes

No

Somewhat

Comments:

5. I am interested in learning more techniques to support my child's literacy development.

Yes

No

Somewhat

Comments:

Appendix G

Literacy Strategies for Read Alouds

Adult Child Interactive Reading Strategies

Children Book Selection

- Make sure that you read books that your child can understand.
- Read your child's favorite books with him or her over and over to help your child recognize and words.
- Choose books that engage your child's interests

Maintaining Physical Proximity

- Encourage your child to sit on your lap
- Make sure your child is close to you
- Make sure the book becomes the child's focal point

Promoting Interactive Reading and Supporting Comprehension

- Give your child compliments and say when something is done well
- Be sure that your child feels part of the reading (e.g., child should be able to touch/hold the book, turn the pages, and ask if your child would like to turn the pages).
- Be sure to point to pictures, words, or letters
- Give the characters in the book different voices
- Use words you are sure your child knows as you talk and read through the book

Asking and Answering Questions

- Ask your child about things he or she may recognize
- Be sure to stop and listen before answering when you child does ask you a question

Appendix H

A List of Books Used for Parent-Child Interactive Reading Sessions

The following children’s books are examples of books that can be used for read alouds or books that were sent home each week during the study. The parents or caregivers were instructed to use the books below during their interactive reading session at home.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHIES:

3 YEAR OLDS SELECTION OF AGE-APPROPRIATE BOOKS:

Title/author	Annotation
Green Eggs and Ham by Dr. Seuss	Sam-I-am is as persistent as a telemarketer, changing as many variables as possible in the hopes of convincing the nameless skeptic that green eggs and ham are a delicacy to be savored.
Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak	When Max is sent to his room for misbehavior, his imagination helps him to run away to where the wild things are and collect his thoughts.
Go, Dog. Go! by P.D. Eastman	Silly book about dogs doing silly.
Dr. Seuss's ABC by Dr. Seuss	Cute book about letters and the alphabet.
The Monster at the End of this Book by Jon Stone	A book about a monster at end of the book that surprises Grover, from Sesame Street.
The Rainbow Fish by Marcus Pfister	The rainbow fish is proud of his own beauty but learns an important lesson about vanity in this book.
Snuggle Puppy! by Sandra Boynton	Singeable songs about a parent’s love for their child.
Blueberries for Sal by Robert McCloskey	A book about what happens when Sal and her mother meet a mother bear and her cub.
Richard Scarry's Best Storybook Ever! by Richard Scarry	The book consists of classic stories, alphabet, and counting stories.

Title/author	Annotation
Blue Hat, Green Hat (Boynton Board Books) by Sandra Boynton	A silly book designed to emphasize colors and which talks about putting clothes on various animals and why it is often difficult.
Madeline by Ludwig Bemelmans	The first in a series of books that was about living in an old house in Paris that was covered with vines, lived twelve little girls in two straight lines They left the house, at half past nine...The smallest one was Madeline.
The Little Engine That Could by Watty Piper	A book about a little engine that wasn't as strong as the big shiny engines, but proved he could do anything if he tried.
Knuffle Bunny: A Cautionary Tale by Mo Willems	Trixie, Daddy, and Knuffle Bunny take a trip to the neighborhood Laundromat, but someone got left behind, and the day goes wrong as dad is in charge of the day...
Hand, Hand, Fingers, Thumb by Al Perkins	Typical Dr, Seuss book with repetitive words and rhymes, centering on hands, fingers, and thumbs/

4 YEAR OLDS SELECTION OF AGE-APPROPRIATE BOOKS:

Title/author	Annotation
The Cat in the Hat by Dr. Seuss	A book about what happens when two children are left at home alone and a cat with a big hat comes in and wrecks the house.
Fishing Into Potato Salad by Othen Donald Dale Cummings	A book about digging through the potato salad and finding all sorts of things you'd never expect—the things are presented in beautiful and colorful pictures.
Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak	Max is disobedient so he is sent to his room where his mind transports him to a forest

Title/author	Annotation
	filled with monsters.
Four is a little, Four is a LOT by Cheska Komissar	A book about turning 4 years old and using numbers with objects shows how 4 can be a lot (like in watermelons) or a little (as in blueberries).
If You Give a Mouse a Cookie by Laura Joffe Numeroff	A book about giving a mouse a cookie and how that one act will lead to the mouse wanting a glass of milk, a mirror, nail scissors and on and on.
Are You My Mother? by P.D. Eastman	A book about a hatching bird whose mother has left the nest for a short while. He hatches and doesn't see his mother and goes on his quest to find his mother.
An Elephant Is On My House: And Other Poems By O. D. D. Cummings by Othen Donald Dale Cummings	A book of cute and fun poems for preschool children.
Make Way for Ducklings by Robert McCloskey	A book about a mother duck who is looking for a safe place to raise her ducklings. A policeman helps the mother duck find a safe place.
Turtle Wish by Murielle Cyr	A magical book about the first moment of a baby's turtle's life.
Go, Dog. Go! by P.D. Eastman	Book created with single-syllable words in rhythmic repetition, and introducing colors and prepositions. An easy book for children to learn to read.
Olivia by Ian Falconer	This is the story of a little pig who wears her family out, especially her brother Ian, who copies her every move. The family still says they love her anyway.
The Little House by Virginia Lee Burton	A book about moving the family home from the crowded city to an open sprawling space.
Dr. Seuss's ABC by Dr. Seuss	Classic book on the alphabet.
My Sister Is My Best Friend: A Trilingual Story	A book about two sisters that do everything together. This is written in three different

Title/author by Nicole Weaver	Annotation languages.
The Rainbow Fish by Marcus Pfister	A book about a beautiful fish who finds friendship and happiness when he learns to share.

5 YEAR OLDS SELECTION OF AGE-APPROPRIATE BOOKS:

Title/author	Annotation
Goodnight Moon by Margaret Wise Brown	Little bunny's goodnight to his room and goodnight to the moon.
The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle	A ravenous caterpillar that eats his way through the book to turn into a very fat caterpillar.
Moo, Baa, La La La! by Sandra Boynton	Comedic book about a series of funny errors that are made.
Guess How Much I Love You by Sam McBratney	Two main characters, Big Nutbrown Hare and Little Nutbrown Hare try to outdo each other in how much one loves the other.
Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? by Bill Martin Jr.	Brown bear says he sees something and on the next page
Pat the Bunny by Dorothy Kunhardt	Show and touch book. First you see the symbol of the bunny, then the child can feel the bunny.
Good Night, Gorilla by Peggy Rathmann	A gorilla steals the security guard's keys and lets all the animals escape and they go to security guards house.
But Not the Hippopotamus by Sandra Boynton	All the animals have wonderful things to do, and they scamper off to do them on every page...But Not the Hippopotamus!!! (a phrase repeated at the end of each page,

Title/author	Annotation
	to young children's delight). But then, something wonderful happens. The happy hippo is invited to join the others! And off he runs, full of joy.
The Going-To-Bed Book by Sandra Boynton	<i>The Going to Bed Book</i> , an ark full of animals watches the sun go down and then prepares for bed. They take a bath ("in one big tub"), find pajamas, brush their teeth, do exercises up on deck (imagine an elephant jumping rope, a moose lifting weights, and a pig doing handstands), and finally say good night.
Chicka Chicka ABC by Bill Martin Jr.	
Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed by Eileen Christelow (Retold by)	Five little monkeys ready themselves for bed, and say goodnight to their mother. Then, really getting down to business, they launch into some serious bed-jumping and get injured
Love You Forever by Robert Munsch	The mother sings to her sleeping baby: "I'll love you forever / I'll love you for always / As long as I'm living / My baby you'll be."
Oh, the Things You Can Think! by Dr. Seuss	Book about letting the imagination out to run free.
On the Night You Were Born by Nancy Tillman (Goodreads Author)	A book about how special every child is who is born to their parents.
There's a Wocket in My Pocket! by Dr. Seuss	Rhyming book about nonsense