

# Language Learning as Group interactions in dialogic book reading in kindergarten

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**Abstract**— This article discusses the interaction of children in groups during the reading of a dialogue book as a second language learning at school. An English native instructor at a kindergarten school is observed and recorded activities while reading picture books to children aged 5-6 years in a small group reading situation. Data analysis method used is qualitative content analysis. This study reveals that there are various group interactions, but it can provide opportunities for children to learn the language. Teachers in kindergarten also use a variety of learning strategies that involve linguistic and cognitive levels as classroom learning with children. The research will increase teachers' understanding of the importance of introducing language in kindergarten settings and can be useful for teachers to attend language training, especially English.

**Keywords**—group interactions, dialog reading, kindergarten, language learning

## I. INTRODUCTION

Interaction in reading books between adults and children is one of the efforts in supporting the development of language and cognitive early childhood. Much research on the theme of this research relates to the practice of teachers in both theoretical and conceptual forms of empirical research reports. Much of the research is about strategies and certain aspects of book reading practices that are considered effective for measuring or evaluating different practices of reading activity in different contexts.

There are three widely-learned and widely-studied adult-child-reading activities: 'Shared Book Reading,' 'Interactive Joint Reading Books' and 'Reading Dialog Books'. Three different methods or types of reading relate to the extent of child participation during reading sessions [1]. A more detailed definition of each type can be found at What Works Clearinghouse as cited in [1]. Introduces the term 'Shared Book Reading' to refer to the "model for teaching children who embark on literacy skills, such as learning text tracking and one-to-one voice-mail relationships, while reading books with enlarged text" [2]. It is also defined as a reading session where there are adults reading books for one child or a small group of children without requiring extensive interaction of them [1]. In addition, this term has been used interchangeably with the term 'Reading a Joint Book', and both have become the most commonly accepted terms in a research study on the practice of reading adult-child books.

In addition to 'Reading A Book Together', there is another method called 'Reading Joint Books Interactive'. This includes practices that adults can use when reading with

children, which is intended to improve language skills and literacy of preschoolers. During reading books together, adults read books for children individually or in groups and use one or more interactive techniques that are planned or structured to actively involve children in the text (IES, 2015). In this practice, there are special techniques used before, during, and after reading books such as asking the child to answer questions, giving explanations, making the child try to read and point to pictures or words. More specifically, Morrow in [3], identified nine interactive reading behaviors performed by adults, namely: (1) Inquiring; (2) dialogue and scaffold responses; (3) offering positive praise or reinforcement; (4) providing or expanding information; (5) clarification information; (6) presenting information; (7) direct the discussion; (8) share personal reactions, and (9) concepts related to life experiences. Importantly, adults engage in one or more interactive techniques to draw attention to aspects of the text being read.

The third type of reading is called "Dialogic Book Reading" is an adult and a child changing roles so the child learns to be a speaker with the help of an adult who serves as an active listener and reviewer [1]. In other words, adults respond to communication actively to become listeners and speakers. It supports theories underlying language acquisition mechanisms that argue that "the practice of using language, feedback on language and appropriate adult-child interaction scaffolded in the context of reading picture books all facilitate the development of the language of young children" as in [4], [5].

Some research findings found that the two most effective reading interventions were interactive and dialogical reading of books, both using techniques and strategies to stimulate children to participate by asking questions, encouraging descriptions, soliciting elaborations and completing parts of the story. Furthermore, reading a dialogue book is found to be a more structured procedure in its application [1].

An ongoing large-scale quantitative experimental research project has also been initiated by a team of researchers from the Faculty of Psychology at the University of Justus-Liebig Giessen, who investigated the effectiveness of reading a dialogue book. But information is limited to childhood teachers who often do book reading activities - especially reading dialogue books, and how they can be considered as potential language learning contexts.

Therefore, current research is conducted to see how an English native instructor teaches dialogical reading for children aged 5-6 years. This study is limited to one nursery

school that was studied and focused on learning the second language in the school through group interaction. So that later this research can contribute to further research.

The rest of this paper is organized as follow: Section II describes the literature review. Section III describes the material and proposed methodology. Section IV presents the obtained result and following by discussion. Finally, Section V concludes this work.

**II. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Adult strategy refers to verbal strategies that encourage children, evaluate, increase knowledge and help children to remember. What is meant by evaluating means correcting the error location as a strategy as encoded and "extending" the idea of "deciphering" [6]. However, what makes reading a dialogic book especially different from other types of reading activity is that it highlights the children and thus allows them to play a more active role as storytellers [4]. Therefore, adult activities in this strategy should support (or scaffold) children to actively participate in the process of reading the book.

Other studies have revealed that adults use certain forms of language as one of their strategies during reading a shared book, called "decontextualize language" [7]. Decontextual language is formally defined as "concepts and ideas removed from the immediate situation and used to convey information to audiences sharing limited information with speakers or being removed from the physical context" [7]. Decontextual language in reading activities is found in speech use that denotes cognitive activity (e.g. "thinking", "knowing", and "believing"), discussion of cohesive word definitions and narratives.

In reading activities, children have been found to participate by labeling pictures, commenting on images / stories, repeating what readers (adults) say and talking about personal experiences, [8],[9],[10]. Barrera and Bauer in [11] developed this categorization of verbal behavior, first relating to story structure. Children are observed to focus on things like: (1) Arrangement; (2) characters; (3) theme; (4) plot episodes, and (5) resolutions. Their second category is related to meaning, with children showing the following behaviors: (1) Labeling; (2) detail; (3) interpret (association, elaboration); (4) prediction; (5) drawing from his own experience; (6) the definition of words, and (7) narrational behavior. The third category of verbal behavior mostly concerns prints, such as: (1) Questions or comments about letters; (2) questions or comments about the vote; (3) questions or comments about words; (4) read the word; (5) reading sentences, and (6) book management. The fourth category focuses on illustrations; the fifth category is about the total number of questions, and the six see the total number of comments.

Regarding aspects of bi- and multilingualism, Barrera and Bauer in [11] suggest that previous research did not really focus on how bilingual children engage in shared reading activities conducted by adults with different native languages. This situation is commonly found in Afkaruuna's kindergarten, where an English extracurricular teacher speaks English handling of children with a Javanese language background who acquires English as their second

language. Thus, this study may be able to offer a unique perspective different from previous studies.

**III. MATERIAL & METHODOLOGY**

This study aims to describe some of the concepts and problems of reading practice especially in reading dialogical books in kindergarten schools. The teacher's strategy and the child's behavior will be observed in group interaction during the reading activity of the book, theoretically assuming that the interaction has some potential for the second language learning process of the kindergarten children.

This research is designed as a qualitative research. The main data in this study is a video recording of the practice of reading a dialogical book conducted by a teacher in kindergarten who reads a picture book to a small group of 5-6 year olds who are learning English as a second language. The duration of each reading session is oriented from 10 minutes to 45 minutes. Book reading sessions are conducted in the classroom as additional extracurricular activities in kindergarten.

**IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

This section presents the results obtained and following by discussion.

*A. Group interaction during the practice of reading a dialogue book.*

Group interaction in this study in which teachers have conversations with more than one child on the same topic and sequence context. In the form of this interaction, it is observed that teachers and children both take turns initiating interactions. Children interact not only with teachers but also with peers. The following transcript quotation will provide several different examples of group interaction during reading a dialogue book in Table I:

TABLE I. GROUP INTERACTION DURING THE PRACTICE OF READING A DIALOGUE BOOK.

Example 1	
Child	What is she doing? (apa yang perempuan itu lakukan?)
Teacher	Well, what is little girl? (benar, apakah dia seorang gadis kecil?)
Child 2	She is the little girl who looked for doll (dia adalah gadis kecil yang mencari boneka)
Teacher	Look, what is hidden in doll? Lets for looked for the doll. (Lihatlah, apa yang tersembunyi di dalam boneka? Mari kita mencari dimana boneka itu)
Child 4	Ooooh Mom, I know... The doll in the beside the bed (oooh bu, saya tahu... Bonekanya ada disamping kasur)
Teacher	Ooh, right.. What is colour the doll? (ooh, benar.. apa warna boneka itu?)
Child 2	Red mom, but what is the hidden in the doll? (merah bu, tapi apa yang tersembunyi di boneka?)
Teacher	There are squisy in the doll. (apakah squisy itu bu?)
Child 2	What is squisy mom? (apakah squisy itu buk?)
	Ooh, squisy is toys that have the ability to return to shape because of the original based SPONS (ooh, squisy adalah mainan yang mempunyai kemampuan untuk kembali ke bentuk semula karena berbahan dasar SPONS)

From Table I above, a long stretch of interaction sequence was observed which included a series of discussion of the teacher with three participating children, namely Child 1, Child 3 and Child 4. The interaction was initiated by the child (Child 3) then responded to by the teacher (E) with a question of his own, which became the trigger for the other children's responses.

## V. CONCLUSIONS

Finally, research shows the result that group interaction during the reading of the dialogue book that is assumed can contribute to language learning. Dialectical book reading emphasizes the interaction between adults and children, where children should be actively supported to tell stories. Another result of this study indicates that when the type of book reading activity performed in a small group is more influential than the teacher teaching in front of the class because peer interaction is very important at the age of kindergarten, and the children interact more with themselves and people other.

Instructional teacher strategies such as encouraging children to be active, correcting child mistakes and modeling during group interactions are found in this study to be a childhood language learning and vocabulary lesson. In addition, the results of this study provide an illustration that teachers need to prepare appropriate learning strategies and appropriate for children in support of learning, especially in group interaction during reading activities.

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