Chapter 5: Study 2 - Introducing the participants

Introduction

This chapter describes the participants recruited for Study 2. First, the participants' backgrounds are reported, including mothers' education and parents' social class according to their occupation. A portrait of each dyad is then provided using data obtained through interview. For each dyad, family structure, home literacy opportunities and practices, shared reading interactions and mothers' views and experiences of literacy are described.

The participants

The participants were eight mother-child dyads from two contrasting socio-economic backgrounds. Four of the participants were recruited from a geographically deprived area and four lived in a more affluent city district. Table 5:1 illustrates mothers' highest level of education for each set of participants. All participants had completed secondary school and a half had gone on to achieve higher qualifications. Only one of these was from the deprived area. Both mothers who completed a University degree lived in the more affluent area of the city. All children were aged 3:0 to 3:4 at the beginning of the study.

Table 5:1 Mothers' education (highest level)

University/college degree or higher	Dyad 1, Dyad 4
Some college ('A' Levels)	Dyad 3
Some college (vocational)	Dyad 5
Completed secondary school	Dyad 2, Dyad 6, Dyad 7, Dyad 8
Before 16	

Figure 5:1 shows the National Statistics socio-economic classifications and Table 5:2 gives mothers' social class according to this classification. Two had professional occupations, although one had taken time out to care for her two young children at the time of the study. One worked as a manager for a advertising company. Three of the participants were classed as social class 6; two worked part-time as sales assistants and one worked full-time in a factory.

Figure 5:1 National Statistics socio-economic classification

The National Statistics Socio-economic Classification Analytic Classes		
1	Higher managerial and professional occupations (e.g. teachers, doctors)	
	1.1	Large employers and higher managerial occupations
	1.2	Higher professional occupations
2	Lower managerial and professional occupations (e.g. junior managers, police, nurses)	
3	Intermediate occupations (e.g. skilled manual and clerical)	
4	Small employers and own account workers	
5	Lower supervisory and technical occupations	
6	Semi-routine occupations (e.g. sales assistants, factory workers, drivers)	
7	Routine occupations (e.g domestic workers, labourers)	
8	Never worked and long-term unemployed	

From 'National Statistics Online' available from http://www.statistics.gov.uk/ [Accessed 3/11/02]

Table 5:2 Mothers' social class according to occupation

Social Class	
1.1	
1.2	Dyad 1 - teacher Dyad 4 - physiotherapist
2	Dyad 2 – lower managerial (advertising)
3	Dyad 3 – bank worker
4	
5	
6	Dyad 5 – factory worker Dyad 6 – shop assistant Dyad 8 – shop assistant
7	
8	Dyad 7 – never worked

Fathers' occupations are reported in Table 5:3.

Table 5:3 Fathers' social class according to occupation

Social Class	
1.1	
1.2	Dyad1 - teacher Dyad 4 - surgeon
2	Dyad 3 - vicar
3	
4	
5	Dyad 2 - builder Dyad 5 - builder Dyad 7 - plumber Dyad 8 – plasterer
6	Dyad 6 - taxi-driver
7	
8	

Introducing the dyads

Dyad 1: Catherine and her mother

Family structure

Catherine lived with her mother, stepfather and her baby half brother (aged 5 months). She spent weekends at her father's house. Both mother and stepfather were primary school teachers (Key Stage 2), her mother having completed a degree followed by a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). Catherine's mother was on maternity leave at the beginning of the study and went back to work part-time (two days a week) half way through the study. Catherine's grandparents cared for Catherine when her mother was working. She attended a private nursery in the afternoons.

Catherine's mother said that she had no training in the teaching of reading whatsoever. She felt that her year of teacher training had poorly prepared her for teaching reading, and that she had acquired her knowledge of teaching reading while teaching. She said she felt that the fact that she was a teacher had very little effect on the way she read with her daughter:

'I read with expression because I read to my class. I suppose that's the one thing that teaching does teach you. But I don't see a direct link for me. I just see being a parent as being a completely different thing to being a Y5 teacher'.

Home literacy opportunities and practices

Catherine had access to numerous books, including alphabet books and storybooks. She did not possess any expository books, although she loved looking at maps and atlases with her stepfather. Catherine visited the library most weeks with her grandmother. Catherine's mother had read at least once a day with Catherine up until very recently, although Catherine had just begun insisting she read books to herself, and she now did this every night at bedtime.

Shared reading interactions

Although Catherine's mother wanted to read regularly with her daughter she was managing to read less frequently than she would have liked (around four or five times a week), since Catherine had decided to read to herself. Catherine usually selected two or three books to read with her mother and occasionally Catherine's mother helped with the selection. Catherine liked to turn the pages herself.

When asked to describe features of their reading interactions, Catherine's mother commented:

'We very rarely just read a book; we always talk about a book. We look at the pictures and talk about what we can see, and what might happen. And if she can remember, she'll start telling the story'.

This comment indicated Catherine's mother's awareness of strategies she employed to aid her daughter's understanding, in particular her use of predicting.

Catherine often made comments about pictures and asked her mother to point out certain words. Catherine's mother and grandmother had actively tried to teach letter identification through interaction when reading together and by playing letter games. She was now able to assign many phonemes to graphemes and sometimes tried to find words during shared reading interactions.

Mothers' views and experiences of literacy

Catherine's mother loved reading and read for pleasure whenever she could, although since having her second child there had been little time for this. She felt that she had a major part in helping her daughter learn to read saying:

> *'I know that you're taught things at school but I think there's a limited amount of time a teacher can spend with a child'.*

Dyad 2: James and his mother

Family structure

James lived with his mother, father and five-year-old sister. His mother was white and his father black (Afro-Caribbean). James' mother worked part-time, one day a week self-employed as a cosmetics consultant and two days a week for an advertising company. On the three days his mother worked, James attended private nursery all day, from 8:30am until 6pm. James' mother was brought up in a working class family in a deprived area, and considered herself to be 'working class'. She left school with five 'O' levels. Her husband was self-employed and worked as a builder. They now lived in a large private house in the south of the city.

Home literacy opportunities and practices

James' mother read with her son at least once a day, more on the days they were at home together. These reading sessions always involved reading more than one book. The living room cupboard was filled with children's books; James' mother estimated there were *'a couple of hundred'*. Most were narrative picture books but there were also books about television and film characters such as *Teletubbies* and *Tweenies*. Occasionally James' mother bought magazines for the children to read. The family belonged to a library although they were not frequent visitors.

James' mother had started reading with James when he was a tiny baby. She said these were mainly nursery rhymes, '*because I was trying to familiarise myself with nursery rhymes from when he was little... we got quite a repertoire!*'

One of the reasons James' mother kept the books in the living room was so that they were accessible for the children, and she felt this encouraged them to look at books alone. James frequently chose a book from the cupboard and looked at it, and if he knew the story quite well he would tell it in his way or read it to a teddy.

Shared reading interactions

James' mother described how they talked about the pictures, discussed what was happening and how characters were feeling during their shared reading interactions. Sometimes James pointed out features of illustrations his mother had not noticed. James' mother was also aware of the fact that she changed her voice to *'make it sound exciting'*. She was concerned that her son enjoyed the shared reading interactions saying:

> *'If he looks like he's getting bored then we'll get another book. I'm not here to make him just sit and be sort of 'read at'. It's got to be enjoyable for both of us'.*

Mothers' views and experiences of literacy

James' mother's experiences of learning to read were positive ones and she read for pleasure whenever she had time. However, she could not remember being read to as a child. She felt that she had a large part to play in helping her son learn to read, and that repetition was one of the most important features in learning to read.

Dyad 3: Sarah and her mother

Family structure

Sarah lived with her mother, father and six-year-old sister. Her father was a vicar in the local church and her mother did not work. Sarah's mother had left school at

18 with 'A' levels and then went on to work in a bank, although she was not working at the time of the study. Sarah attended a playgroup every weekday morning.

Home literacy opportunities and practices

Sarah and her sister had almost a hundred books, the majority of which were narrative picture books. Sarah's mother named Shirley Hughes as an author she really liked. She also recognised her daughter's love of repetition in traditional books like the Gingerbread Man. Sarah's mother commented that Sarah liked to be read Ladybird Books as bedtime stories. There were a number of books from Disney films in the collection. Sarah and her mother visited the local library weekly up until Sarah started at playgroup.

Occasionally Sarah read to herself or to one of her toys for short periods. Sarah's mother commented:

> *'Often she'll look through books on her own and she'll say "I want that one tonight, mummy, at bedtime", and I imagine that she knows what the pictures are like but she wants to know what the story's about'.*

Sarah's favourite book at the time of this interview was *Noddy.*

Shared reading interactions

Sarah's mother or her husband read with Sarah at least once a day. They had been reading to her since she was a few months old. If Sarah's father put the girls to bed he liked to make up his own stories rather than read a book. When asked to describe some of the features of their reading interactions Sarah's mother said:

> *'Quite often she'll pinpoint things in the pictures. I try to keep the story going but also give her space to explore the story in the pictures'.*

Sarah's mother felt that Sarah enjoyed shared reading, although interactions had to be kept quite short because it was difficult to keep her focused for a long period.

Mothers' views and experiences of literacy

Sarah's mother had positive experiences of learning to read; she had been a confident reader and was often chosen to read aloud in class. She read novels and magazines for pleasure every day. She felt that children learned to read initially through word recognition:

> *'I suppose if they see a clock for example, and someone writes 'clock' underneath it they'll learn to recognise that that word says clock'.*

Dyad 4: Chloe and her mother

Family structure

Chloe lived with her mother, father and baby brother (aged 10 months). Her mother did not work, although she had trained and worked as a physiotherapist before having children. Her father was a doctor and at the beginning of the study was training to be a surgeon. Chloe attended a private playgroup in the mornings.

Home literacy opportunities and practices

Chloe had around 30 of her own books and she also borrowed ten from the library every three weeks. Most of these were narrative picture books, but there were some nursery rhyme books and alphabet books as well. Chloe's mother had been reading with Chloe since she was around four months old, and they now read together more than once a day; in the afternoon when Chloe chose a pile of books, and at bedtime when she had two stories read to her. After her bedtime stories Chloe usually looked at books on her own, making up stories and using different voices for different characters.

Shared reading interactions

Chloe's mother described how she asked her daughter questions about what had happened or was about to happen. Sometimes they described the pictures. Chloe

usually asked questions about the pictures. When asked whether she did anything to try to help Chloe with reading she replied:

> *'Sometimes I put my finger along the lines. I'll say things like 'this is the beginning' and then at the end I'll say 'that's the end!' I don't know if that helps'.*

Mothers' views and experiences of literacy

Chloe's mother could remember being read to by her parents as a child, and she read for pleasure now when she had time. She thought that children learned to read by copying adults, although she felt unsure about commenting further about this.

Dyad 5: John and his mother

Family structure

John was an only child who lived with his mother and father. John attended state nursery in the mornings. Both of his parents worked full-time, his father was a builder and his mother worked in a factory. John's mother had attended college after school and had obtained an NVQ. She did not work on Friday afternoons, and always managed to collect her son from nursery then. On the days his mother worked, his grandmother collected him from nursery.

Home literacy opportunities and practices

John loved books and had access to between 50 and 80 of his own. These were mainly narrative picture books although there were also alphabet and number books, and a small number of expository books. Until John started nursery they used to visit the library weekly and spend up to two hours looking at books. John and his mother also read magazines together. John's mother was the only mother to mention the role of the computer in helping her child with reading; they sometimes played letter games together on the *Bob the Builder* website.

Shared reading interactions

John and his mother read together most nights at bedtime, although his father and grandmother also read with him. John's mother put a lot of emphasis on teaching concepts such as numbers, counting and colours. When asked to describe what happened during shared reading interactions she said:

> *'Well I usually read the story if there's only just a few words, then we point things out and talk about what colour things are, and we count things. Sometimes he'll say, "look at this ... what colour's that?" and count things'.*

Recently John had begun to notice print and wanted to know what things said. John often looked at books alone, making stories up from the pictures or retelling the story from memory. He had recently started asking his mother what words said in books, magazines and on the computer.

Mothers' views and experiences of literacy

John's mother loved reading and read for pleasure every day. She took a book to work with her to read on the bus and in her breaks. She felt that it was very important for John to be an able reader because *'you need reading for everything'*. She was particularly concerned because John's father had struggled with reading at school and was anxious for John not to experience the same difficulties. John's father still had some reading difficulties,

> *'Just reading a newspaper, you know, it's not that he can't read at all, but it takes him a long time to read things'.*

Dyad 6: Charlotte and her mother

Family structure

At the beginning of the study, Charlotte lived with her mother, grandmother and grandfather. A month or so later, Charlotte and her mother had found a house of their own with Charlotte's mother's new partner, although they still spent a lot of time at

Charlotte's grandparents' house. Charlotte spent weekends at her father's house with her teenage half brothers. Her father was a taxi-driver. Her mother worked part-time as a shop assistant and had left school aged 16. In the school holidays Charlotte was cared for by her grandparents when her mother was working, although sometimes she went to work with her mother.

The last time I visited the family, Charlotte appeared somewhat unsettled and subdued. There had been some problems with her father, who she had not seen for three weeks. In addition, Charlotte's mother and her new partner had split up.

Home literacy opportunities and practices

Charlotte had around twenty books, most of which were activity type books with flaps to encourage interaction. She also liked *Mr. Men* books and nursery rhymes and enjoyed reading *Teletubbies* and *Tweeny* magazines. Charlotte and her mother had visited a library regularly until recently, when Charlotte's mother and father split and they moved away from the area. Charlotte's mother and grandmother both read with Charlotte at least once a day and had been reading to her since she was about 18 months old.

Shared reading interactions

Charlotte's mother described what happened when they read books together. Charlotte usually turned the pages while her mother read. Sometimes Charlotte liked to re-read the story to her mother from memory, with the help of picture clues.

Mothers' views and experiences of literacy

Charlotte's mother enjoyed reading and read for pleasure when she could, usually several times each week. She felt that at the moment she had a big part to play in helping Charlotte learn to read. However, when Charlotte started school her mother felt that Charlotte would be taught things that she could not teach. Charlotte's mother had begun pointing out words as they read together and she was now able to identify her

name and certain letter sounds. Charlotte's mother believed that Charlotte should learn that, *'reading is educational and it's also enjoyable as well'.*

Dyad 7: Sam and his mother

Family structure

Sam was an only child who lived with both parents. Sam's grandparents and aunt lived very close by and Sam was sometimes cared for by this extensive family network. Sam's mother had left school at 16 and had never worked, and her husband worked as a self-employed plumber. He often worked a seven-day week and sometimes worked away from the area. Sam attended state nursery in the mornings.

Home literacy opportunities and practices

Sam had about 20 of his own books and he and his mother also visited the local library every week to borrow books. Sam and his mother had been visiting this library since Sam was born. Most of his books were information books and counting books, and he also had a number of picture storybooks. His father bought him a magazine almost every evening and Sam enjoyed looking at these on his own.

Shared reading interactions

Sam and his mother read together around three times a week and had been doing so since he was born. Sam's father and grandmother also read to him regularly. Sam's mother said that often Sam asked questions when they read together although other times he just liked to listen to the story. Often he liked to read a story back to his mother, who said:

> *'He always starts it "once upon a time" and at end of book he'll go "the end"'.*

Sometimes Sam's mother asked her son questions and sometimes they engaged in counting routines.

Mothers' views and experiences of literacy

Sam's mother had been read to regularly as a child and said she could read before she even started school. She read for pleasure about once a week. She thought that children learned to read by being read to, responding to adults while reading and learning to respect books.

Dyad 8: Emma and her mother

Family structure

Emma's mother had left school at 16 and now worked part-time as a sales assistant in an off license. Emma had a ten-year-old brother and her father worked as a plasterer. Emma attended state nursery in the mornings. Like Sam, Emma had an extended family network of aunts, grandmas and great-grandmas living close by, and she was cared for by various members of the family when her mother was at work.

Home literacy opportunities and practices

Emma had access to around thirty books, although her mother said she was not really interested in them. Some of her Disney books had been passed down from her brother, but she also had a few of her own, for example lift the flap books, *Winnie the Pooh*, counting and *Ladybird* books. Emma's mother also bought *Fun to Learn* magazine for her daughter occasionally. She was a library member, although she visited very infrequently. However, Emma was not a member because her mother said, *'I daren't lend her library books; she'll probably rip them!'*

Emma sometimes looked at the Argos catalogue alone, but showed little interest in looking at books alone. Emma rarely asked to be read to, preferring to interact with her mother around other activities, such as playing with dolls.

Shared reading interactions

Emma's mother had been reading to Emma weekly since she started nursery a few months earlier. Before that Emma read with an adult only when she asked somebody to read with her, and this had been very infrequent since she had shown little interest in books.

Emma's mother described what happened when they read, saying *'she'll just sit and, well, listen to me read it'*. Emma quite enjoyed sharing short picture books containing just a few words with adults now.

Mothers' views and experiences of literacy

Emma's mother read magazines for pleasure. When asked to give her views about how she thought children learn to read she said, *'I suppose going over the same book over and over again, and getting familiar with the words'*.

Summary and discussion of interview data

Family structure

Three of the children were only children; the remaining five had one sibling (three were older, two were younger). Only one child was from a single parent family and one had a stepfather at home. Both children regularly visited their fathers. All other children lived with both parents. All children attended either a private playgroup or nursery several times a week. Four children attended nursery every weekday morning or afternoon and four attended either every day or several times a week.

Home literacy opportunities and practices

All children had access to books at home. Numbers of books varied between families although the types of books were similar. Most common were picture storybooks and traditional tales, with books about characters from popular culture also being favoured. Most had alphabet books, but expository books were very uncommon.

All dyads were library members, although frequency of visits varied, with four mothers making weekly visits, three visiting infrequently and one saying she did not go since she had moved away from that area. When asked who read with the child, all mothers named themselves first, although fathers and grandparents were also involved in all but two cases.

All children except Emma used books alone with varying degrees of frequency, some every night. Emma was also the only child whose mother said she did not have a favourite book, although she had had a favourite as a baby (this finding contradicts Emma's mother's earlier comment that she did not read to Emma until she was three).

Shared reading interactions

All except one mother read with their children at least several times a week, and all these dyads had been reading together since the children were at most 18 months old. Mothers were asked to describe what happened when they read together. Only one mother in the sample acknowledged asking questions. Others described the interactions as more of a discussion, using phrases such as '*we talk about...*' and '*she comments...*'. Two mothers talked about the child reading the book after the mother had read it, and one added that the child asked questions after reading. One mother described reading as a somewhat 'one-way' activity, with the mother reading while the child listened.

There was also variation in the way mothers described the content of the interactions. Most described discussions about the pictures and some also commented that children selected their own books and turned the pages. These low-level demand utterances were mentioned by seven out of the eight mothers. Three mothers (from dyads 1, 2 and 4) also described using high-level demand utterances, namely *predicting, inferring* and *clarifying* in their reading interactions.

John and Sam's mothers emphasised counting and colour naming routines as a part of their interactions. Only two mothers talked about print awareness (dyads 1 and

5), both of whom described teaching literacy skills in response to their children's interest.

Two mothers talked about their children reading stories themselves, either making up a story from the pictures or retelling a story from memory.

Children's interest in shared reading varied. Six children really enjoyed reading and asked to be read to virtually every day. These same children often chose to look at books alone. Mothers of the two children who did not enjoy reading to the same extent said their children enjoyed short books and asked to be read to very infrequently.

Mothers were asked what they thought their children enjoyed about these interactions. Seven felt that the physical closeness between the adult and child was one of the most enjoyable aspects of shared reading for the child. Most also mentioned enjoyment of the story and the pictures.

Mothers' views and experiences of literacy

All mothers said that they themselves had had positive experiences of learning to read and all read for pleasure magazines, newspapers or books when they had time. None had received advice about the teaching of reading, although the mothers whose children attended the nursery within Sure Start all mentioned that they had been given a leaflet giving tips for reading with children. Most mentioned following the words with your finger as being important.

Mothers were asked how they thought children learned to read. Unsurprisingly perhaps, most found this a very difficult question, although all gave an answer. Four mothers thought that children began to recognise words through reading the same book again and again. Memory was mentioned by one mother, as was copying the adult. Two mothers answered more vaguely, saying children learned to read through adults talking to them about books and stories.

All mothers felt they had a part to play in their child's reading. When asked why reading was important, the majority mentioned needing reading throughout life, for school, day-to-day activities or work. Only one mother mentioned enjoyment in answer to this particular question, although others mentioned enjoyment at other points throughout the interview. Surprisingly perhaps, when asked why they thought reading was important, all mothers mentioned functional benefits, for example, *'to read signs, recipes and deal with money'*.

This chapter has described mothers' own perceptions of literacy opportunities, activities and experiences. In order to determine the extent to which these were reflected in observed practices, a number of shared reading interactions were observed. The following chapter investigates the nature of shared reading interactions further by describing the observational findings.

Chapter 6: Study 2 - Shared reading interactions: case studies of each dyad

Introduction

This chapter describes the structure and content of shared reading interactions for each of the eight dyads introduced in the previous chapter. Such in-depth and comprehensive analysis is crucial in order to gain a full insight into the complexities of shared reading interactions. Qualitative methods were used to examine features of the interactions described in this chapter. For each dyad, an overview of the books read over the four sessions is given under the heading 'books chosen by dyads' (see Chapter 3 for a description of the focus for each session). This is followed by a brief description of the methods used to select these books. Aspects of the whole interaction, including features such as the socio-emotional climate and length of interactions are then briefly discussed. An exploration of distinctive features of mothers' and children's roles follows. These aspects of each dyad's shared reading interactions are then summarised. The summaries also relate the findings from this chapter to mothers' interview responses (discussed in Chapter 5); in particular how their perceptions about their shared reading interactions related to their observed practices. A discussion of the findings for all eight dyads is provided at the end of the chapter.

For each dyad, extracts of interactions are provided to illustrate points made. As described in Chapter 3, in some cases the extracts exemplify typicality, in others they are examples of behaviours used infrequently. In other cases still, extracts have been used which highlight interesting behaviours. Whatever the case, an indication as to the frequency of such behaviours is given.

Dyad 1: Catherine and her mother

Book selection

Session 1: Familiar books (from children's own books)

A was once an Apple Pie (Lear, 1994)

Dr Seuss's ABC (Dr. Seuss, 1980)

Session 2: Unfamiliar narratives (from books selected for the study)

Fidgety Fish (Galloway, 2001)

Handa's Surprise (Browne, 1994)

Session 3: One familiar narrative, one unfamiliar expository (from books selected for the study)

Handa's Surprise (Browne, 1994)

Farm Animals (Dorling Kindersley, 1999)

Session 4: Familiar narrative (from children's own books)

Handa's Surprise (Browne, 1994)

Catherine's mother was one of only two who allowed her daughter free choice of books to be read in Session 1. Catherine selected an alphabet book (*A was once an Apple Pie*) then chose another book of this genre (*Dr. Seuss's ABC*). Catherine's mother encouraged her daughter to select an unfamiliar book to read in Session 2. Catherine was unsure at first, so her mother helped by sorting the books they knew from those they did not. They had read all except four of the books previously, and Catherine chose *Handa's Surprise*. It later became apparent that Catherine had chosen this book because she knew the story, having seen it on television.

The interaction as a whole

The sessions usually began with Catherine's mother making her daughter comfortable on the settee beside her. Catherine's mother always read with a relaxed and confident manner, which appeared to have a positive effect on her daughter, who was a little more apprehensive. Catherine's mother frequently looked at her daughter, checking her understanding and interest. Indeed, the amount of eye contact was a noticeable feature of this dyad and seemed to be very powerful form of communication. It created a shared intimacy, which contributed towards the relaxed socio-emotional climate. Catherine's mother usually held the books as they read, with Catherine turning pages occasionally.

The mother's role

Catherine's mother always introduced the book in some way before reading, often asking what Catherine thought the book was about. There was usually some discussion about the front cover illustration, and on a number of occasions she asked her daughter to identify the initial letters of the book titles. These introductions appeared to gain Catherine's interest. Catherine's mother also suggested her daughter help with the reading on a number of occasions.

Catherine's mother always read confidently with expression. Her concern for her daughter's understanding always appeared to be high, as demonstrated by the number of explanations and questions. She frequently praised and encouraged her daughter and made more connections from books to her daughter's experience than any other mother. The following example from *Farm Animals* is typical. In this and all following extracts, the actual words of the written text being read aloud are shown in underlined italics, and the talk of mothers (M:) and children (C:) is shown italicised. Non-verbal aspects of interactions are shown in brackets:

M: A mother hen lays her eggs and sits on them to keep them warm. Did you know that? (Looks at Catherine)
C: Yeah.
M: Mmmm.
C: To keep her babies warm.
M: That's right. To keep her babies warm. Like I kept Jack warm in my tummy I suppose.
C: Yeah.
M: And I kept you warm too.

Catherine's mother made a number of connections from books to the real world, requesting information or providing definitions, for example, '*owls wake up at night; they sleep usually during the daytime, and they fly about at night*'.

This mother used print references and the language of books more than any other mother. In the following example, she drew her daughter's attention to the title and the author, although she did not refer to these literary features by name:

M: Fidgety Fish (Points to title). Right. You turn the pages then. (Opens book)
C: Let's read it!
M: Let's read it! Ooo look, that's a nice picture, isn't it?
C: It is a nice picture. Fidgety Fish.
M: Fidgety Fish. Ruth Galloway (Points to words)
C: By Ruth Galloway.
M: Right.

Catherine's addition of the word 'by' when repeating the author's name shows that she had some understanding of what an author was, and this was clearly a routine the she and her mother had practised before.

Catherine's mother asked frequent questions about phoneme-grapheme relationships. In the following example, which demonstrates Catherine's developing understanding of letter knowledge, the letter <h> was shown next to a picture of a hen with some chicks (in this example, the written letters or graphemes are shown inside the symbols < >, while the letter sounds or phonemes are shown inside the symbols / /):

M: What letter's this? (Points to <h>)
C: A... a little chick.
M: It's like a chick, isn't it? But what letter's that?

C: Chicken!
M: Mmmm, could be a chicken, but it begins with [Points to <h>] a .... [Pauses]
C: /ch/ [Looks at mother] /h/!
M: /h/. So what is it then if it's a /h/?
C: h for hoop
M: h for hoop; that's true. /h/ for... (Points to hen)
M and C: (Simultaneously) HEN!

There were very few examples of intertextuality in any of the reading interactions observed. The following extract is an example of media influence on shared reading:

M: Z was once a piece of zinc... a piece of zinc! (Look at each other)
C: Tinkly winky!
M: Tinky Winky! What's he doing in this book? Hey?
C: Tinky Winky!

In this example, Catherine's mother appeared surprised at the reference to zinc (although this was a familiar book). Catherine used her phonological awareness to create a rhyme for 'zinc', demonstrating understanding of the genre; this was indeed a rhyming book.

On the few occasions Catherine was distracted momentarily, her mother quickly refocused her attention by making a comment or asking a question. Catherine's mother was very supportive when Catherine was asked to read to her. She asked open-ended questions such as '*what happened?*' and also read parts of the text, then paused to allow Catherine to complete phrases she knew. She encouraged her with comments such as *'I like listening to you read'*.

Catherine's mother always made a number of comments after reading books. This discussion usually appeared to be an attempt to consolidate Catherine's understanding.

The child's role

Catherine made many comments and asked questions, mainly relating to pictures, but also in response to her mother's questions about phoneme-grapheme relationships. In one book they had read several times, Catherine attempted to repeat sections of text after listening to her mother reading these sections. Catherine's mother supported her attempts, repeating phrases slowly to facilitate her daughter's reconstruction. When reading a more familiar book, Catherine attempted to read the book with her mother, reciting large chunks of text simultaneously.

There were only momentary lapses of concentration in the interactions as a whole. Catherine's engagement and enjoyment were very clear and were largely sustained throughout the duration of each session.

Although she generally had a good level of comprehension, Catherine demonstrated occasional lack of understanding. *Handa's Surprise* tells the story of a little girl carrying a basket of fruit on her head to give as a gift to her friend in a neighbouring village. Each page shows a different animal stealing a piece of fruit from the basket, unbeknown to Handa. In the following example, taken from this book, Catherine's lack of understanding only became apparent because her mother asked such a pertinent question:

M: Does Handa know they're taking away her fruit?
C: (Nods)
M: She does, does she... Mmmm. I think she doesn't know!

In the unfamiliar expository book *Farm Animals*, Catherine was particularly interested in the labels that surrounded the pictures (see Chapter 3, Figure 3:2). She sometimes asked her mother what the words were. On other occasions she identified these labels, usually with a little prompting from her mother, with the help of picture clues and her knowledge of phoneme-grapheme relationships. An example of one such interaction follows:

M: Do you know what that says? (Points to word 'Moo' coming from cow's mouth)
C: Mouth
M: Nearly.... Could say mouth. 'Cos it has got a picture of a mouth, but what noise do cows make?
C: Moo
M: Moo, that says Moo!

However, in spite of her competence and confidence when interacting with her mother, Catherine was reluctant to read a book herself. Her mother helped Catherine choose a familiar book to read (*Handa's Surprise*), but she obviously did not want to read herself. She spoke in a very quiet voice, and played nervously with her hair. Often her voice trailed off; she appeared to lack confidence to repeat phrases she had memorised from the text. She told her mother she could not remember parts of the book, in an apparent attempt to draw her mother into some interaction. The reading itself was stilted with only short phrases used by Catherine at a time. It consisted of some phrases that she had memorised from the book ('*the sweet smelling guava*') and some picture descriptions ('*he's taking the mango!*').

Summary - Dyad 1

Catherine's mother used a wide variety of behaviours when reading with her daughter. She made more comments and asked more questions about print, particularly phoneme-grapheme relationships, than any other mother in the study. There were many examples of direct teaching of such knowledge. Catherine's mother always responded to her daughter's comments even when these occurred as interruptions. She tended to follow her daughter's interest; often lengthy discussions followed one of Catherine's comments. Catherine demonstrated a high level of interest and understanding throughout the readings, responding to her mothers' questions and making comments.

Dyad 2: James and his mother

Book selection

Session 1: Familiar books (from children's own books)

Duck in trouble (Hawthorn, 1992)

Tickle, tickle (Oxenbury, 1987)

Teletubbies: Tinky Winky's Bag (BBC Consumer Publishing, 1997)

Eeyore's Lucky Day (Disney Enterprises, Inc.,1999)

Session 2: Unfamiliar narratives (from books selected for the study)

Fidgety Fish (Galloway, 2001)

Suddenly (McNaughton, 1996)

Session 3: One familiar narrative, one unfamiliar expository (from books selected for the study)

Suddenly (McNaughton, 1996)

Farm Animals (Dorling Kindersley, 1999)

Session 4: Familiar narrative (from children's own books)

The Three Billy Goats Gruff (Stimson, 1993)

James was also allowed free choice of books to read in Session 1. His selection was taken from a cupboard in the living room that was so full of children's books it would not close. It was unclear how James made his selection. He chose four books that were a variety of familiar storybooks, including one about the popular television characters, *Teletubbies*. In selecting a book to read for Session 2, James chose *Suddenly* after looking at the front cover. The reason for his choice soon became apparent; James mother explained that his favourite stories involved wolves and pigs.

The interaction as a whole

Both mother and child always appeared relaxed and comfortable with each other and in the presence of the video camera. This is reflected in the fact that James and his mother selected four books to read for the first session; they did not appear at all anxious to finish the sessions, as did some other dyads (particularly mothers). Their shared reading interactions also contained some of the longest discussions (episodes). James sat next to his mother on the settee and his mother usually held the book and turned the pages.

The mother's role

James' mother usually introduced the book in some way, discussing the front cover illustration or predicting what the story might be about. She read with expression and animation. A distinctive feature of her style was the speed of her reading, although this did not seem to detract from James' understanding. When reading familiar books, she frequently read part of the text and then paused as a prompt for James to complete phrases. She used rising intonation towards the end of her utterances as a sign that James should complete them.

James' mother demonstrated corrective modelling on a number of occasions. In the following example, she corrected her son, who repeated the correct term without being asked:

C: There's a statue (Points to shadow)
M: A shadow; a shadow, you mean, rather than a statue?
C: Yeah. That's the shadow.
M: A shadow. Your shadow looks very big, doesn't it, when we go outside? Oh, does the piggy's shadow look big there?
C: (Shakes head)

In this example, to consolidate James' understanding, his mother also made a connection to his experience using the new vocabulary and asked a further closed

question relating back to the text. After reading this book, several minutes after the example above, James demonstrated that he had internalised the new word and its meaning:

C: Look, and that's the wolf's shadow.
M: It is, isn't it? It's very big.

There were other examples of sensitive corrective modelling. These always included an explanation or definition, for example:

C: That's a swan.
M: No, that one's a duck. It's not a swan because it's got a little neck, so it's not quite is it?

James mother used high-level demand utterances, such as predicting and clarifying, although one of the most noticeable features of her interaction style were her references to the real world. In the following interaction, which stemmed from the book *Farm Animals*, James' mother guided her son to describe the production of milk, from cow to supermarket shelf. In this example, which was one of the longest recorded episodes among all eight dyads, she began with a reference to her son's experience and the discussion that followed related to real world knowledge:

M: It says Farmers milk their cows every day, so that we have fresh milk to drink. You like milk don't you?
C: Aah.. look, at.... at... he's eating some grass while, while the other ones are going to the farm.
M: Are they going to the farm to the dairy?
C: Yeah, to dairy.
M: And what happens at the dairy? Can you remember?
C: You get milk.
M: That's right and where does the milk go?
C: It goes in to..... it comes out from their bottom.
M: Well, it comes out from their udders, doesn't it? Here, look, like this lady's got there. And then where does it go after they take it out? Can you remember?
C: Then it goes into.... They put pipe onto their others... (udders)
M: Yeah they put a pipe on, don't they?
C: Yeah and then it comes out from their others (udders) into the pipe and then it goes .... into another pipe....
M: And then it goes into a tanker.
C: Ummm

M: Yeah and then they take it to the factory, don't they? And then where does it go to?
C: Don't know.
M: Into bottles?
C: Yes.
M: So that we can buy it in the shops?
C: Yeah... and then the lorries come and they collect it and take it to the factory.
M: Mmm.
C: And take it to the factory to get .... to a cold factory... so it can get settled.
M: Right. And what can you make from milk, can you remember?
C: And then it goes in to the supermarket or shops.
M: That's right, and then we can buy it. What do you make from milk, can you remember?
C: Errr ..... don't know!
M: What did we talk about the other day.....
C: I don't know mummy!
M: Cheese.
C: Cheese.
M: And.... Yogurt.
C: Yogurt.
M: Yeah; your favourite things.

In this example James' mother guided her son's responses. She asked a number of open-ended questions, such as '*what happens at the dairy*?' and '*then where does it go to?*' although she appeared to have preconceived ideas regarding the content of the replies. Her desire to control was a distinctive feature of her reading style. She attempted to guide her son's responses even during the session in which James had been asked to read to his mother. In this session, rather than allow him to retell the story in his own words, she prompted him through the story, beginning sentences and encouraging him to complete them. It appeared that she wanted James to tell the story exactly as it was written, rather than construct the story in his own words.

When reading *Eeyore's Lucky Day*, a book of James' choosing with a substantial amount of text, his mother read the text while he listened. James remained engaged throughout the reading. Although there was some interaction, usually relating to the illustrations, interaction occurred far less frequently than any other book read by this dyad.

The child's role

James enjoyed the shared reading interactions around all the books he had selected himself and remained engaged throughout. However, when he and his mother were asked to read books selected for this study (*Fidgety Fish* and *Farm Animals*) he was initially unco-operative. His mother dealt with his resistance effectively, interrupting his protests with an invitation to participate:

M: Ooh the Fidgety Fish, and I know somebody else who's fidgety. Who else is fidgety?
C: I don't know.
M: You! You're very fidgety aren't you!
C: (Pushes book away) I don't want that one.
M: No, we've got to have a look because we've never ever seen this book before. Let's have a read shall we? Are we ready?
C: No, no, I ....
M: Oh! How many fishes can we see on there?
C: Lots...
M: Lots and lots and lots and lots!!!! Oh, what's this?
C: Crab.
M: It's a snail I think. 'Cos it's got a little house, hasn't it? Shall we have a look what it says then? Fidgety Fish....

Although James did not resist his mother's reading of the book, he responded only to simple questions involving labelling or describing. He declined to respond to the majority of questions and comments towards the end of the book.

Most shared reading interactions between James and his mother however, were lively and full of interaction. James made imaginative comments and asked complex questions, sometimes demonstrating the fact that he did not always fully understand the meanings contained within books. For example:

M: Uh oh, what's happened?
C: He's got paint all over him.
M: He has; and what colour's the paint, do you know?
C: Green
M: It is
C: And it fell on the fence.
M: Well I think they started to paint the fence and left it there didn't they? Do you think?
C: Yeah.
M: There's a bush there, isn't there?
C: And he fell in the mud.

M: He did; well he fell in the paint.

In this example, James appeared to lack understanding (suggesting that the paint fell on the fence) and also to confuse the words 'mud' and 'paint'. The example above demonstrates James' attempts to understand the meanings contained in books and also his mother's attempts to explain these meanings.

Summary - Dyad 2

James' mother seemed to control the interactions. This is demonstrated by her attempts to guide James' responses, thereby determining the content of the interactions. The frequent use of completing utterances also suggests her desire to direct the interactions. Although this dyad engaged in lengthy episodes, these tended to be initiated and sustained by James' mother. However, the fact that James contributed to them demonstrates that he must have had some interest in the topics being discussed. James was perhaps the most articulate child in the study. He enjoyed shared reading interactions and usually responded well to his mother's style of reading.

Dyad 3: Sarah and her mother

Book selection

Session 1: Familiar books (from children's own books)

Peace at Last (Murphy, 1996)

Session 2: Unfamiliar narratives (from books selected for the study)

Fidgety Fish (Galloway, 2001)

Peepo! (Ahlberg and Ahlberg, 1981)

Session 3: One familiar narrative, one unfamiliar expository (from books selected for the study)

Peepo! (Ahlberg and Ahlberg, 1981)

Farm Animals (Dorling Kindersley, 1999)

Session 4: Familiar narrative (from children's own books)

Daisy goes to Playgroup (Bradman and Lamont, 1999)

Sarah's mother selected the familiar book to be read in the Session 1. She knew her daughter enjoyed *Peace at Last* and felt it provided opportunities for interaction. When choosing a book to read in Session 2, Sarah's mother encouraged her daughter to look inside to see whether she liked the pictures. Sarah initially selected *Where the Wild things are* (Sendak, 2000), although her mother thought this too frightening and encouraged her to select a different book. Sarah then looked through another book (*Handa's Surprise*), turning each page and making comments about the pictures. She finally settled upon *Peepo!* after looking at the front cover illustration. Her mother flicked through the book to check its suitability.

The interaction as a whole

Both Sarah and her mother appeared relatively relaxed during the interactions. Sarah either sat on her mother's lap or beside her on the settee. Sarah's mother usually held the book and turned the pages. The socio-emotional climate was generally positive.

The mother's role

In contrast to James' mother, Sarah's mother read extremely slowly, although she too read with expression. She often followed the text with her finger when reading and occasionally used hand movements for emphasis and as a strategy for encouraging Sarah's interest.

Sarah's mother controlled the interactions and guided her daughter's responses. She occasionally asked open-ended questions, although like James' mother she appeared to have her own ideas regarding the content of Sarah's responses. Sarah and her mother were looking at an underwater illustration from *Fidgety Fish*, showing fish with bubbles coming from their mouths. In the following example, Sarah's answer to her mother's question was a simple reason explanation, although the response was not what her mother had in mind:

M: Why do you think there's bubbles there?
C: Because they think they're blowing them.
M: Are they blowing the bubbles?
C: Yes.
M: Do you think so? Where do fishes live?
C: (Points)
M: In the .... (Pauses)
C: Rocks.
M: In the rocks? Under the water? That's maybe why there's bubbles there.

In this example, it seemed as though Sarah's mother expected the response to her initial question to be '*because they're under the water*'. Although her Sarah's response was factually correct, that is, bubbles were being blown by the fish, this was not the required response. Her mother asked what she perceived to be a simpler question, although again Sarah did not give the response her mother expected. The episode ended with Sarah's mother providing the 'correct' response and linking this back to the original question. There were a number of other examples in which Sarah's mother adjusted her questioning, asking progressively simpler questions when her daughter was unable to give required responses.

Sarah's mother usually responded to her daughter's comments and questions, although this was not always the case. Occasionally, she dismissed them, particularly when they occurred as interruptions. In the following example, from *Fidgety Fish*, Sarah's attention was captured by the thought that there might be a big fish in the story:

M: He sped faster than a rocket...
C: There's no big ones is there?
M: No, not there. And glided gently like a swan...
C: Not here
M: No. And glided gently like a swan...
C: There's a big one! (Points)
M: (Laughs) Is that a big one?
C: Yes
M: Can you let mummy finish the sentence? Just a minute. And glided gently like a swan...

Rather than pausing to discuss the aspect of the story that so intrigued Sarah, her mother appeared to be interested only in finishing reading the text on that page. This was a feature of her reading; her main aim seemed to be to read the text, particularly in unfamiliar narratives. Later on in the same book Sarah's mother again ignored her daughter's question:

M: ... the Big Fish's tummy began to feel very funny indeed. It rumbled and grumbled, it turned and it tumbled.....
C: What's that? (Points)
M: What's what darling? Let's just finish this little bit... (Resumes reading)

The structure of the shared reading interactions for this dyad, therefore, was to read the text and then discuss the pictures or story relating to that page. Sarah's mother responded to her daughter's comments and questions when Sarah adhered to this structure. In the following example, from *Farm Animals* she responded to her daughter's question as to whether sheep's wool was soft with a detailed explanation, making connections to both Sarah's experience and to the real world:

C: Is it soft? (Strokes photograph of sheep)
M: Well, that's just paper but it really is soft if you were to touch a real sheep. That's them taking the coat off, look. That's how you take the coat off.
C: No... that's....
M: It's just like getting your hair cut really, isn't it?
C: It's getting long, that one's coat.
M: Mmmm. It's not hard to knit. It feels much better in the end, 'cos it's not as hot now.

The child's role

Sarah enjoyed the interactions and usually remained fully engaged throughout. She often interrupted her mother with comments about the pictures or text. We have already seen that her mother did not like these interruptions, preferring to read the text on the page before any discussion. The following example from *Farm Animals* illustrates that Sarah may have preferred a different style of reading to her mother:

> *M: Ducks usually live near the farmyard pond or stream. They search for food in the water.*
> *C: No don't read it – I'll just do....*
> *M: You want to what? You want to look at them?*

Sarah's requests that her mother not read the text were heeded on this occasion, and a short interaction about ducks and ducklings followed. After this discussion, Sarah turned the page and requested her mother talk about the illustrations without reading, saying, '*do this one now. Don't read it!*' Sarah appeared to control the interaction around this book, directing her mother and initiating a number of episodes.

Like James, Sarah occasionally misunderstood the meanings contained within books. *Fidgety Fish*, the unfamiliar narrative book read by all eight dyads shows a close up of the main character, a little fish called Tiddler, coming out of the Big Fish's stomach when he burps (see Chapter 3). Sarah seemed to think he was now a Big Fish, because the illustration shows him to be very large at this point in the story. Although her mother tried to explain, Sarah did not seem to understand and would not accept her mother's reasoning. At the end of the episode, her mother accepted her daughter's description of the size of the fish in the illustration:

> *M: Whoosh! Out shot Tiddler...*
> *C: And he's a big fish!*
> *M: Well he's a little fish coming out of the big fish's mouth.*
> *C: No. He's a big fish now.*
> *M: Well he's a big fish compared to these ones here, isn't he?*
> *C: But they're little, (Points) and they're little, (Points) and he's big (Points).*
> *M: Yeah, he's bigger than them. That's right.*

Sarah often tried to join in the reading of the text in familiar books and there was a good deal of eye contact between mother and child when this took place. She was confident and uninhibited in all reading interactions, and appeared to really enjoy reading to her mother in front of the camera in Session 4. In this session, Sarah made up a detailed story using picture clues from the selected book. The story she told bore little resemblance to the actual text. Her reconstruction was performed very slowly and in an almost stilted manner, with little expression and great emphasis on each word. Perhaps this was how she had heard her six-year-old sister read.

Summary – Dyad 3

Sarah's mother liked to be in control of the interactions. This level of control extended to book selection practices; Sarah's mother checked books for their suitability before allowing her daughter to read them. One of the most noticeable features of Sarah's mother's reading was that she preferred to read the text on the page before any discussion. She did not like to be interrupted while reading. This was difficult for Sarah, who expressed great interest and wanted to talk about features of the illustrations as soon as she noticed them. Sarah's mother was concerned that Sarah was not always interested in reading (see Chapter 5), although this was not apparent in any of the observed interactions. Sarah appeared engaged and interested throughout.

Dyad 4: Chloe and her mother

Book selection

Session 1: Familiar books (from children's own books)

Owl Babies (Waddell, 1994)

Peepo! (Ahlberg and Ahlberg, 1981)

Session 2: Unfamiliar narratives (from books selected for the study)

Fidgety Fish (Galloway, 2001)

Suddenly (McNaughton, 1996)

Session 3: One familiar narrative, one unfamiliar expository (from books selected for the study)

Suddenly (McNaughton, 1996)

Farm Animals (Dorling Kindersley, 1999)

Session 4: Familiar narrative (from children's own books)

Where's Spot? (Hill, 2000)

Chloe's mother selected the books to be read in Session 1, choosing two library books. Chloe's mother played a large part in selecting the book to read and keep in the second session. She picked *Suddenly* because she recognised the main character, Preston Pig from the television. Chloe's final choice of book to read to her mother (*Where's Spot?*) was her own.

The interaction as a whole

Chloe usually sat close to her mother on the settee, creating a shared intimacy. Mother and child appeared relaxed with one another and were clearly used to reading together. Chloe's mother usually held the book, sometimes following the words with her finger. From time to time, Chloe turned the pages.

The mother's role

Chloe's mother appeared nervous initially and her reading of the first book contained few comments. However, she did appear to relax as she read the second book and in subsequent interactions. Although she did not generally read with as much

expression as the mothers of dyads1 and 2, she became animated when reading about exciting or unexpected events.

Chloe's mother's concern for her daughter's understanding was evident. In the following example, the dyad had just finished reading the book *Suddenly* for the first time. This is the story of a wolf that tries to catch a pig. Every attempt to catch the pig is thwarted, and the wolf is shown having a number of falls and crashes. At the end of the story there is an illustration of the wolf being carried on a stretcher towards an ambulance with its siren blazing. A sign points to the 'wolf hospital'. The following example began with a simple question, and when it became clear that Chloe's understanding was limited, her mother initiated a lengthy explanation:

> *M: Where do you think they're taking him?*
> *C: I don't know.*
> *M: I think they're taking him to the wolf hospital. And that's saying nee naa nee naa nee naa.*
> *C: Why are they taking him to the hospital?*
> *M: Well look, he's all bandaged and bruised because he's had lots of accidents, hasn't he?*
> *C: Yeah.*
> *M: What sort of accidents did he have? (Pause) What happened to him? (Turns back to look) What did he do, let's see....*

At this point she turned back to the first page and described what had happened to the wolf. She went through the book in this way, questioning Chloe as to what had happened to the wolf each time. Realising her daughter had not understood the connection between the wolf's accidents and his trip to hospital, she initiated a lengthy episode in an attempt to make this connection explicit.

There were other examples of Chloe's mother's concern for her daughter's understanding. She made a number of references from books to Chloe's own experience and to the real world. In the following example, from *Farm Animals* she explained the meaning of shearing sheep first by referring to the real world and then to Chloe's experience:

M: In early summer farmers shear their sheep. Do you know what that means?
C: (Nods then shakes head)
M: That means they take all their woolly coat off.
C: Why?
M: Because they use their wool to spin... to make jumpers. So you know your jumper that Granny Neave knit? That's made from wool and wool comes from the sheep.

Chloe's mother returned to the sheep-shearing theme later in the book when discussing the picture of a sheepdog, although the interaction relating to shearing appeared to be somewhat incidental:

M: Look, here's the doggy herding the sheep. Can you see look?
C: Yeah.
M: He's chasing them to put them in a pen.
C: Why?
M: To help the farmer put them away.
C: Why?
M: Because he might not want them in the field all the time. He might want to put them in the pen so he can shear them. Can you remember what shearing means?
C: (Shakes head)
M: Can you remember what they do? When they shear the sheep? Cut their coats, isn't it? They take off their coats. Why do they take off their woolly coat?
C: I don't know.
M: To make ... (Pauses)
C: Wool.
M: To make wool. And what do we get from wool?
C: Cardies. Woolly cardies.
M: Yeah, Granny Neave knits all her cardies, doesn't she?
C: Yes, for night time.

In this example, Chloe's mother seemed to mention shearing almost inadvertently, although she immediately saw it as an opportunity to check the extent to which her daughter had remembered their earlier discussion. Chloe's mother's also encouraged her daughter to predict and infer what was happening in books. This appeared partly to be an attempt to check Chloe's understanding.

Like other mothers, Chloe's mother made many references to details in illustrations, encouraging her daughter to label and describe. In one of the familiar

books, she also encouraged her daughter to complete phrases. She did not attempt to control the interactions (as did the mothers from dyads 2 and 3). She allowed a wide variety of responses to her open-ended questions.

The child's role

Chloe always enjoyed reading with her mother. She responded to her mother's questions and comments and asked a number of questions herself. She was an articulate child who knew her own mind. The following example is an interaction from *Peepo!*, which is about the day-to-day life of a baby boy in the 1940s (or thereabouts). The baby is pictured wearing a long nightdress, and as a result Chloe was convinced he was a girl:

M: Here's a little baby, one two three, stands in his cot....
C: (Interrupts) It's a girl!
*M: Is it a girl? But it says 'stands in **his** cot'. Do you think it's a girl? Why do you think it's a girl?*
C: Because she has a dress on.
M: Yeah, it's a nightie, isn't it?
C: Yes.

Rather than try to explain, on this occasion Chloe's mother conceded and agreed to refer to the baby as a girl. Each time she inadvertently referred to the baby as a boy (even when reading the text), her daughter corrected her.

Chloe demonstrated her knowledge of the natural world on one occasion. The following example also highlights her preoccupation with gender. Chloe's mother was reading the text in *Farm Animals* when Chloe interrupted, pointing at a photograph of a duck, saying:

C: Look at that!
M: He's upside down isn't he? Showing off his bottom!
C: It's a girl!
M: Is it a girl? How do you know it's a girl?
C: It's the mummy.
M: How do you know it's the mummy?
C: It doesn't have colours on it.
M: Yes, the daddies are nice colours aren't they?
C: Yes.

Chloe's explanation as to how she knew the duck was female was correct. The two examples above also highlight Chloe's mother's willingness to follow her daughter's interest, even though she had just been interrupted. This example illustrates how Chloe's mother asked pertinent open-ended questions to encourage her daughter to explain her reasoning.

In addition to making comments and correcting her mother, Chloe asked questions on many occasions and could be persistent when she did not get the response she required. This example follows on from the interaction reported earlier (*Suddenly*) in which the wolf was on his way to hospital:

> *C: What is the wolf sitting in?*
> *M: It's the wolf hospital. They must have wolf doctors and wolf nurses. And wolf ambulance men.*
> *C: Yeah.*
> *M: Ambulance wolves!*
> *C: Yeah. And what is the wolf sitting in?*
> *M: That's called a stretcher. 'Cos he can't walk 'cos his feet are so sore, look. He's got a bandage up his legs. He can't walk so they carried him on a stretcher.*

Chloe also asked a number of high-level questions. Her mother always responded to her daughter's questions with explanations. After reading *Fidgety Fish*, she asked:

> *C: Why was he... why was he in the Big Fishes?*
> *M: He got snapped up. Because he thought it was a big dark cave, didn't he? But it wasn't a big dark cave; it was the fish's mouth.*

Like James (dyad 2), Chloe demonstrated assimilation of vocabulary during shared reading interactions. In *Fidgety Fish*, the word 'snap' is used to describe the Big Fish eating the little fish. Chloe's mother had also used the word root 'snap' (see the example above). In the following example, Chloe used this word later in the session when reading a different book (*Suddenly*). At the beginning of this book, the wolf is

shown standing on a dustbin behind a wall waiting for Preston Pig to walk by. Chloe's mother asked her daughter:

> *M: What do you think he's going to do?*
> *C: He's going to snap Preston.*
> *M: You think? Yeah, I think he's going to try and jump on him! (Turns page)*

Chloe's mother did not reinforce her daughter's response by repeating it on this occasion, possibly because she considered that her daughter had used the word inappropriately. Instead she provided a description of what she thought might happen using a more precise description.

Chloe was very reluctant to read to her mother in the last session. She was generally unresponsive to her mother's prompts.

Summary – Dyad 4

The most noticeable feature of Chloe's mother's reading was her attention to explanation and prediction. She was particularly receptive to her daughter's comments and virtually always followed Chloe's interest, even when she had been interrupted. Chloe responded well to her mother's reading style, asking questions when she did not understand and making comments to initiate interactions. However, when asked to read to her mother, she was reticent. There was no evidence of explicit skills teaching in any of the interactions for this dyad. Teaching was very subtle and did not usually appear to be deliberate.

Dyad 5: John and his mother

Book selection

Session 1: Familiar books (from children's own books)

Dear Zoo (Campbell, 1997)

The Big Red Bus (Hindley, 1996)

Jingler (Santoro, 1999)

Thomas' Picture Day (Awdry, 2000)

Session 2: Unfamiliar narratives (from books selected for the study)

Fidgety Fish (Galloway, 2001)

Owl Babies (Waddell, 1994)

Session 3: One familiar narrative, one unfamiliar expository (from books selected for the study)

Farm Animals (Dorling Kindersley, 1999)

Owl Babies (Waddell, 1994)

Session 4: Familiar narrative (from children's own books)

Curly the Pig Board Book (Amery, 1995)

John's mother selected one of the books to read in the Session 1. She had chosen the book *Dear Zoo* because she said John enjoyed it and was able to read sections from memory. The other three books read in this session were chosen by John from a small selection in the living room. In Session 2, John's mother encouraged John to select an unfamiliar book. With little hesitation, he chose *Owl Babies* and told us later that it had been read to him at nursery.

The interaction as a whole

John's mother appeared relaxed throughout the shared reading interactions, although John was apprehensive at the beginning of the initial session. John sat beside his mother or on her lap. This contributed to a positive socio-emotional climate between mother and son. John's mother usually held the books and turned the pages.

The mother's role

John's mother read with expression and often became quite animated when reading. In familiar books, she often paused towards the end of a sentence or phrase to encourage John to complete it. She used this strategy frequently. In less familiar books more time was spent explaining the story and pictures.

John's mother used more skills routines and teaching than any other mother. The majority of skills interactions were questions about numbers, as in the following example, although she also asked questions about colours. In this example she asked John to identify the number on a bus, prompting him so that he could provide the correct answer:

M: Do you know what number he is?
C: Yeah.
M: What number?
C: (Pause). Don't know.
M: You do. What number is it? What comes after number nine? (Pause)... Nine...(Pause)
C: Ten.
M: Ten. Good boy!

Later in the same book, an illustration shows some teddy bears holding on to the back of the bus. The text on this page reads '*keep off the road, stay at the side, never hang on for a secret ride*'. After reading this text, John's mother drew his attention to a small detail in the picture. However, John was more interested in the main picture, and his mother followed his lead, answering his questions with enthusiasm and imagination:

M: Look at that, what's that? (Points to worm)
C: A worm. (Points to driver) What's he saying?
M: He's saying 'Get off my truck; that's very naughty'
C: What's he saying (Points to ice cream man)
M: Even ice cream man. He's shouting 'Get off!'
C: Is he shouting to that bear?
M: Yeah. To that bear (Points) and that bear (Points). 'Go on get off! It's naughty.' They're naughty boys, aren't they?
C: What are they hanging on for?
M: I don't know, because they're being naughty. You should never ever do that, should you? They're climbing on. I don't know!
C: What for?

M: Because they said they want a ride, but it says Never hang on for a secret ride. You might fall and hurt your head.

The above example highlights this mother's use of semantic contingency, or following her child's interest. Her detailed descriptions of illustrations included inference and explanation. This type of interaction was typical for John and his mother.

John's mother made a number of predicting utterances, although she used explanation more frequently. In the following example, she referred to the real world, like the mothers from dyads 1 to 4:

M: The winter coats are spun into wool. When it gets warm they take all that wool off, like that, shear it all off and make it into jumpers.
C: Why?
M: That's what they make with it. That's what sheep are for. They, they make wool out of their coats.
C: They the coats?(Points)
M: That's the coat, yeah. And it gets right thick and then they shear it all.

When her son could not respond to her questions, John's mother adjusted her questioning, asking progressively less demanding questions. In the following example, from *Fidgety Fish*, Tiddler had just been eaten by the Big Fish:

M: BURP! And... What do you think happened?
C: What?
M: What do you think happened when the big fish burped?
C: (No response)
M: What do you think happened to little Tiddler?
C: (No response)
M: Is he going to come out there?
C: (No response)
M: Do you think he'll come out? Shall we have a look? (Turns page)

This example began with an open-ended question; the second and third questions qualified the first with specific information to focus John's attention on the event. The next question was of a much simpler closed yes/no type, yet still John did not answer. His mother repeated the question in a slightly different form and without pausing for a

response turned the page, apparently resigned to the fact that he was not going to respond.

John's mother had an original strategy for dealing with her son's reluctance to read to his mother in Session 4. She pretended that their two budgerigars wanted to hear John read, and when he remained unwilling, she engaged in an imaginary conversation with them. In this imaginary conversation, the two birds had told her that they did not believe John knew how to read the story. John's mother insisted that he did, but whispered that he had to show them that he could read it. The strategy worked. Although John was hesitant and needed prompting frequently, he engaged in a retelling of the story.

The child's role

John usually appeared to enjoy the interactions, although he did not contribute as much as some of the other children. He listened intently to his mother's reading and responded to her simple questions. Occasionally, when his interest was raised, he sought clarification from his mother, asking '*what for?*' repeatedly as in the following example:

> *M: That bird's pinching that ice cream!*
> *C: What's he pinching it for?*
> *M: He's pinching it 'cos that little boy's not looking! And he's dropped his ice cream on the floor look!*
> *C: What for?*
> *M: Because that car's bumped into them, because they've gone on the road. You shouldn't go on road should you?*

On the whole John's utterances were short; he was not a child to engage in lengthy interactions. In spite of his mother's attempts to draw him into conversations, he rarely engaged in picture descriptions or speculated about characters in books.

On a number of occasions John appeared to be trying to consolidate his understanding of the meaning of reading. In the following example from *Dear Zoo*, he asked his mother to identify two signs, which she read:

C: What's that? (Points to a sign on the side of a box)
M: That says (Points to each word) From the zoo.
C: What's that? (Points to arrow)
M: That's an arrow, pointing upwards.
C: What for?
M: 'Cos it's saying This way up so that they don't tip the monkey upside down. So they sent me a ... (Pause)
C: Does that say 'down'?
M: No that doesn't say anything; that's just a pink box.

John's last utterance, in which he pointed to a box and asked '*does that say down?*' suggests that he was not yet able to differentiate between illustrations and print.

John also struggled to understand certain illustrations. For example, in Session 1, a double page showed Big Bus parked on the first page and the same bus driving around town on the second page. John asked whether there were two buses, to which his mother explained that it was the same bus in a different picture.

Summary – Dyad 5

John's mother's reading style involved a number of contrasts; she used the (somewhat restrictive) completing and skills utterances frequently, yet always followed her son's interest, attempting to draw him into the interaction. This was possibly due to the fact that John's contributions to the interactions were rather limited; his mother encouraged contributions as they occurred. Overall however, there was quite a contrast between the reading styles of John and his mother. John's mother provided lengthy and detailed descriptions and explanations, while John rarely engaged in description or speculation himself.

Dyad 6: Charlotte and her mother

Book selection

Session 1: Familiar books (from children's own books)

What time is it, Peter Rabbit? (Potter, 1998)

Brave Little Train (Baxter, 1997)

Session 2: Unfamiliar narratives (from books selected for the study)

Fidgety Fish (Galloway, 2001)

Hop on Pop (Dr. Seuss, 1980)

Session 3: One familiar narrative, one unfamiliar expository (from books selected for the study)

Hop on Pop (Dr. Seuss, 1980)

Farm Animals (Dorling Kindersley, 1999)

Session 4: Familiar narrative (from children's own books)

The Dog (Burningham, 1995)

In Session 1, Charlotte's mother asked her daughter to select a book to read. Charlotte chose a book, but her mother told her to find *Peter Rabbit*. This book provided opportunities for interaction; it was a board book containing a clock face inset with moveable hands. Charlotte's mother encouraged her daughter to choose a book without help from her mother in Session 2. Charlotte selected *Hop on Pop* because she liked the front cover illustration.

The interaction as a whole

Roles were established at the beginning of the majority of sessions, with Charlotte's mother asking her daughter to turn the pages. Charlotte and her mother were involved in some lengthy shared reading interactions. There were frequent

interactions around different topics (episodes), with Charlotte initiating almost as many such episodes as her mother. The atmosphere varied from somewhat tense (in just one of the sessions) to quite relaxed (in the remaining three sessions).

The mother's role

Charlotte's mother usually introduced books by reading the titles on the front covers, often pointing to the words as she read. She did not discuss what books might be about or talk about them after reading. Charlotte's mother read in a quiet, somewhat monotone voice. She did not look at her daughter while reading to focus her attention, as did the mothers in dyads 1 to 5. However, she engaged in eye contact when asking questions or making comments. Charlotte's mother employed a number of behaviours when reading. For example, she praised her daughter frequently. Many of her utterances were taken up with managing her daughter's behaviour, in particular her lapses in concentration, and she had a variety of strategies for dealing with this declining interest. These included tapping Charlotte gently to refocus her attention and asking questions just as her attention was waning.

The amount and type of interaction varied somewhat between books. In *Peter Rabbit*, interaction focused around changing the clock face to the correct time, which was clearly a difficult task for Charlotte. Charlotte's mother requested her daughter make the correct time on every page, rather than perhaps mother and child taking turns to do this task. There was little talk about the pictures or the story and Charlotte's attention wandered to the extent that part way through the reading she said *'I don't like this story!'*

The second book read in this session, *Brave Little Train*, contained much more text, and Charlotte's mother read the whole story without omitting or restructuring any of the text. In this book, much of the interaction focused around turning pages and

managing behaviour. Charlotte made a number of premature attempts to turn pages and she lost concentration totally towards the end, getting up and walking to the middle of the room. After a number of unsuccessful attempts to encourage Charlotte to return so that they could finish the book, her mother abandoned the interaction. Charlotte's mother felt that this was not a typical shared reading interaction. She said that Charlotte was usually more amenable when they read together at bedtime and that she was not used to reading during the day. She also felt that her daughter was conscious that the interaction was being recorded.

Charlotte's mother made few attempts to explain events in the books to her daughter and did not usually try to clarify events that may have been difficult to understand. The following example is an extract from *Fidgety Fish*. In this part of the book, the little fish, Tiddler, is shown swimming inside the Big Fish:

> *M: It looked much more exciting than his cave back home, and Tiddler swam in... He's a big one, isn't he? Do you think it is a cave?*
> *C: (Nods)*
> *M: I don't (Turns page and takes sharp intake of breath).....SNAP!*
> *C: What is it?*
> *M: Where is he? (Turns page and takes sharp intake of breath) Tiddler was trapped in a Big Fish! Look, he swam in his mouth! (Points and laughs)*

Charlotte's mother appeared to recognise that this episode may require additional explanation and asked a question to check her daughter's understanding. When Charlotte gave an incorrect response, demonstrating a need for clarification, Charlotte's mother simply disagreed without offering any additional comment. Charlotte questioned her mother who responded with another question, until finally she offered a simple explanation as to what had happened. Charlotte's mother rarely asked questions to check her daughter's understanding. Attempts to clarify events were usually brief and in the form of comments, although she did sometimes respond to Charlotte's questions, for example:

M: Dad is sad, very very sad. He had a bad day. What a day dad had!
C: Why?
M: He must have been working too hard.

The child's role

Charlotte appeared to enjoy the majority of shared reading interactions, and sometimes asked her mother to read unfamiliar books a second time. She appeared confident and uninhibited, making frequent contributions to the interactions. Charlotte sometimes interrupted her mother's reading to make comments and ask questions.

Charlotte showed an awareness of print that was facilitated and encouraged by her mother. On one occasion, she instructed her mother to follow the words with her finger saying '*put your hand like that*', demonstrating what she wanted her mother to do. She showed awareness that print carries meaning and was beginning to demonstrate an understanding of one-to-one correspondence, as illustrated in the following example:

M: My brother reads a little bit. Little words like 'if' and 'it' (Points to words)
C: I'll read it..... (Pushes mother's hand away) if.....(Points to different word)
M: (Points to words) if... and.... it...
C: if... it (Points to different words)
M: If (Points)....and
C: (Interrupts) And... it (Points to 'it')
M: Good girl.

On another occasion, Charlotte asked '*what does that say?*' pointing to the print. This appeared to be another example of her growing awareness that print carries meaning. Her mother ignored the question and continued reading.

Charlotte's confidence is highlighted in the following extract, in which she announced that she was going to read an unfamiliar book. Her mother provided encouragement:

M: It says Farm Animals (Points to each word)
C: I'm going to read this one. (Opens book)
M: Oh are you going to read this one?

C: Lots of animals!
M: Start from the beginning then.
C: (Turns to hen page) Chicken were little chicken! (Pause) I can't read it!
M: (Laughs)

Like many of the other children, Charlotte appeared to lack understanding of the meanings within books on several occasions. In the following example, her confusion was a result of a misunderstanding of her mother's comment. Rather than clarify what she had meant, Charlotte's mother made an unrelated comment and continued reading:

M: He dived and he flipped, he leapt and he dipped. Look, see. Look at all the paths he's made, look (Follows path with finger) like an aeroplane.
C: Is that an aeroplane?
M: That's him there ... (Resumes reading)

In the last session, Session 4, Charlotte appeared rather subdued; she was not her usual exuberant self. Her mother explained that she was feeling rather unsettled; Charlotte's mother had split from her partner. In addition, there were problems with Charlotte's father and she had not seen him for three weeks. Charlotte's mother sensitively prompted and encouraged her daughter to retell the story.

Summary – Dyad 6

Perhaps the most noticeable feature of this dyad's interactions was Charlotte's frequent interruptions and comments. Her mother attempted to manage the interactions, directing her daughter to respond in particular ways. She also used much praise and encouragement. Charlotte's confidence could have been, at least in part, a result of her mother's frequent praise. There were few lengthy discussions about particular features or events in books.

Charlotte and her mother started to read two books in which Charlotte lost interest. In the first, *Peter Rabbit*, it appeared that too much time was spent on a task

that was perhaps too difficult for Charlotte, that is, setting the clock hands to times given in the text. It may have been a more successful interaction if Charlotte had been asked to set the clock to just one or two times. The second largely unsuccessful interaction was around the book *Brave Little Train,* which contained large sections of text. Charlotte's mother read this in a somewhat monotone voice and there was very little interaction. Perhaps Charlotte was not yet at the developmental stage when she could '*sit and listen like an audience*' (Bus, 2000). In the remaining sessions, which contained more appropriate interaction, Charlotte's interest was maintained throughout.

Dyad 7: Sam and his mother

Book selection

Session 1: Familiar books (from children's own books)

Little Fluffy Duckling (Hutchins, 1990)

Our Baby (Bradman, 1995)

Session 2: Unfamiliar narratives (from books selected for the study)

Fidgety Fish (Galloway, 2001)

The Very Hungry Caterpillar (Carle, 1970)

Session 3: One familiar narrative, one unfamiliar expository (from books selected for the study)

The Very Hungry Caterpillar (Carle, 1970)

Farm Animals (Dorling Kindersley, 1999)

Session 4: Familiar narrative (from children's own books)

The Very Hungry Caterpillar (Carle, 1970)

Sam's mother selected the books to be read in Session 1. She said she had selected these particular books because Sam had shown an interest in both. Sam chose

the book to read in Session 2, immediately selecting *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, which his mother thought he had not read before. However, after reading, it became apparent that Sam knew the book and he told us that it had been read to him at nursery.

The interaction as a whole

Sam and his mother tended to participate in very short shared reading interactions, often containing little mutual engagement. Episodes tended to be very short, consisting of around two or three turns. The socio-emotional climate tended to be positive in that mother and child sat close together and there was a good deal of eye contact during interactions. At the beginning of each session however, the atmosphere was usually rather tense, although Sam's mother usually began to relax after a few minutes. She said that her nervousness was due to concern that Sam might misbehave in some way during the interactions.

The mother's role

Sam's mother made fewer utterances than any of the other mothers. The majority of interactions were taken up with reading the text itself. She tended to read in a somewhat monotone voice, increasing the pace occasionally, but not altering the pitch of her voice at all. Occasionally, she made comments about the pictures or text as she turned the pages.

A relatively high proportion of Sam's mother's utterances involved managing her son's behaviour. For example, in the first reading of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, Sam attempted to turn the pages before his mother had read the text. She resisted his attempts to turn the pages, telling him to '*hang on*' and '*wait a minute*', although her son continued this behaviour. At this point, the strategy changed, and Sam's mother increased the speed of her reading to keep up with Sam's premature page turning.

Sam's mother rarely gave explanations and made very few high-level demand utterances generally. In the part of *Fidgety Fish* in which the little fish is shown swimming inside the 'cave' (the Big Fish), Sam's mother did not offer any additional comments, merely mumbling '*uh-oh*' as she turned page. She gave no explanation as to what might have happened, preferring instead to focus on picture descriptions, saying '*look at his face!*' The following example, taken from *Farm Animals* is an exception:

M: What noise do cows make?
C: Moo
M: Good boy. Oh look, that one's got horns! (Points)
C: That one hasn't (Points)
M: No, 'cos it's just a baby.

In this example, Sam's mother involved her son by asking him to identify animal noises and drew his attention to a picture detail. When Sam made a comment about the photograph, she offered a reason-explanation.

The child's role

Sam generally appeared to enjoy the interactions and usually remained fully engaged, listening to his mother read. He made a number of initiated comments about illustrations, sometimes relating to his own experience, for example:

C: That's like my scooter, mummy!
M: Yeah.

Sam's mother usually acknowledged his comments; she rarely took these as opportunities to engage her son in further interaction.

Sam enjoyed routine and repetition in books. For example, when reading *Farm Animals* his mother had asked him to identify the noises made by the animals on each page. On the last page, a picture of a sheepdog, she forgot to do this, and Sam was quick to identify her omission:

C: You haven't asked me what noise they make.
M: What noise do they make?

C: Yeah, woof woof.

The most notable feature of Sam's role during reading was his desire read books after his mother had read to him. He attempted to do this even with the expository book *Farm Animals* which he had heard only once:

C: Mum, can I have a go now?
M: Go on then. Do you want mummy to help you find the pictures?
(Turns pages)
C: Umm. (Long pause) I can't read, mummy, that.
M: Well, you just tell me what pictures are then.
C: Once upon a time.... What noise they make?
M: Moo
C: Moo.

There are a number of noteworthy points in this example. The first is Sam's mother's support and encouragement, which was not so apparent when she was reading to Sam. Secondly, Sam's unfamiliarity with the expository genre was clear in his inappropriate use of the phrase '*once upon a time*'. Although used in an inappropriate context, use of this phrase demonstrates Sam's knowledge of traditional stories. Thirdly, Sam's use of the phrase '*what noise they make*?' appeared to be an attempt to play the role of his mother. The expectation was that she should play the role of the child, answering his questions. The reading of this book continued in this way to the end.

Sam's mother offered support and encouragement in another of Sam's re-readings. On this occasion, she had just read *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* for the first time, with very little interaction. Sam requested to read the book to his mother. The following extract shows the actual text on the right hand side and the associated interaction between mother and child on the left:

Interaction	Actual text
C: Me read it now. M: You read it then... (Closes book and passes it to C)	

C: Me can't remember words (Opens book) M: You think what they were then. C: (Finds second page) I don't know M: What is it? (points) C: Caterpillar. M: And what does he eat? C: I don't know. M: What's that? C: Apple. M: (Turning pages and pointing) C: Two pears. M: (Points to each plum in turn) C: One, two, three plums. M: (Turns page and points to each strawberry in turn) C: One, two, three, four, six. M: Strawberries C: One, two, three, four, five, six. M: (Laughs) C: (Turns page) One cherry cake, one ice cream, one cucumber, one ... M: (Whispers) cheese C: Cheese, one... M: Salami C: One lollipop, one chocolate, one bun, one melon. M: (Turns page) C: ...Much better! M: (Turns page) C: A cocoon... house .... (Turns page) And he... butterfly. The end. M: Good boy!	He started to look for some food. On Monday he ate through one apple. But he was still hungry. On Tuesday he ate through two pears, but he was still hungry. On Wednesday he ate through three plums, but he was still hungry. On Thursday, he ate through four strawberries, but he was still hungry. On Friday he ate through five oranges, but he was still hungry. On Saturday he ate through one piece of chocolate cake, one ice-cream cone, one pickle, one slice of Swiss cheese, one slice of salami, one lollipop, one piece of cherry pie, one sausage, one cupcake, and one slice of watermelon. That night he had a stomach ache! The next day was Sunday again. The caterpillar ate through a nice green leaf and after that he felt much better. Now he wasn't hungry any more – and he wasn't a little caterpillar any more. He was a big fat caterpillar. He built a small house, called a cocoon, around himself. He stayed inside for more than two weeks. Then he nibbled a hole in the cocoon, pushed his way out and... He was a beautiful butterfly!

In this example, Sam's mother supported her son but did not correct his mistakes, for example, when counting. She provided prompts when he struggled to label something. Sam remembered key phrases (*much better*) and novel vocabulary (*cocoon*) from the actual text, although his reading of the story was a long way from the actual text.

Summary - Dyad 7

Sam and his mother tended to participate in relatively short interactions. Sam's mother offered limited explanations of book events; her main aim seemed to be to read the text. Sam usually appeared to enjoy the interactions. He listened to his mother while she read and made a number of comments about the illustrations. Sam liked to read the books to his mother. This appeared to be an opportunity to adopt the adult role, and he enjoyed asking questions for his mother to respond to. Sam's mother adopted a more interactive role when her son read to her. She was supportive, prompting him and praising his efforts.

Dyad 8: Emma and her mother

Book selection

Session 1: Familiar books (from children's own books)

Each Peach Pear Plum (Ahlberg and Ahlberg, 1989)

Session 2: Unfamiliar narratives (from books selected for the study)

Fidgety Fish (Galloway, 2001)

Peace at Last (Murphy, 1996)

Session 3: One familiar narrative, one unfamiliar expository (from books selected for the study)

Peace at Last (Murphy, 1996)

Farm Animals (Dorling Kindersley, 1999)

Session 4: Familiar narrative (from children's own books)

Peace at Last (Murphy, 1996)

Emma's mother had given a lot of thought as to which book to read in the first session and appeared apprehensive about it. After the session, she commented that she had '*picked a short one!*' She said that Emma liked to find the characters hidden in *Each Peach Pear Plum.* Emma's mother had initially identified a small number of books from which one would be chosen to read in this initial session. She and her daughter had read each one to see which would provide the most opportunities for interaction. However Emma's mother felt that the majority of these (which were *Read it yourself Ladybird books*) were lacking in quality, and Emma did not seem to enjoy them. She commented that Emma liked short, simple books without too much of a story. None of the other mothers described such elaborate book selection practices.

Emma's mother encouraged her daughter to select a book to keep in Session 2. Emma selected *Peace at Last* from the pile without hesitation and it later transpired that this book had been read to her at nursery.

The interaction as a whole

Emma and her mother tended to participate in relatively short shared reading interactions with relatively little interaction. Emma usually sat on her mother's lap when reading, creating a shared intimacy that contributed to a positive socio-emotional climate. However, while Emma's favoured position on her mother's lap provided physical closeness, eye contact could only be made with difficulty. On occasions, the atmosphere seemed somewhat tense.

The mother's role

Emma's mother appeared a little uneasy during the first session, although she was less tense in subsequent sessions. She read with little expression and did not engage her daughter in any interaction about the book before or after reading. Emma's mother made a high proportion of utterances to manage the interaction, although these were not in response to difficult behaviour. They tended to be concerned with Emma's physical needs (for example: '*are you comfy?*').

Emma's mother made a high proportion of comments about the pictures and used praise and evaluation. She asked questions that encouraged Emma to point, rather than make a verbal response. In the following example, Emma's mother corrected her daughter when she responded by pointing to the wrong picture detail:

M: I spy Robin Hood....
C: (Points)
M: That's wicked witch. (Looks at Emma)
C: (Points)
M: That's witch's cat. Can you see Robin Hood?
C: Hmmm?
M: Who's shooting them arrows?
C: (Points) There.
M: Who is it?
C: (Still pointing)
M: Can you see him? Who's shooting them arrows?
C: It's that.
M: He's here... Yey! (Turns page)

Emma's mother simplified her questioning after realising Emma might not know who 'Robin Hood' was. She qualified her question with a picture description ('*Who's shooting them arrows?*'), and Emma was then able to identify the character. This was typical of her reading style; she demonstrated an ability to simplify her questioning when Emma struggled to respond to her initial questions.

Emma's mother rarely offered explanations or engaged in high-level demand utterances. In the following example, from *Fidgety Fish*, she questioned her daughter as to whether she thought the fish was about to swim into a cave:

M: It looked much more exciting than his cave back home, and Tiddler swam in... (Points) Does it look like a cave?
C: No.
M: (Turns page) SNAP! Uh-oh
C: Crocodile.
M: (Laughs)

When Emma gave a negative response to her mother's question, she did not engage her in a discussion as to might have happened to the little fish. Instead she turned the page and continued reading. Emma reasoned that the Big Fish was a crocodile, another opportunity for interaction. Rather than discuss her thoughts however, Emma's mother laughed and resumed reading. The following extract, from *Farm Animals*, is a rare example of Emma's mother correcting her daughter and providing clarification:

M: That's a mummy sheep, that, and they call them ewes.
C: She... she's had her head... she's had her things (horns)... she's had them cut off, hasn't she?
M: No, 'cos that's just a baby; that's a baby one; a lamb.

Emma's mother demonstrated a number of strategies for dealing with her daughter's behaviour on the one occasion she did not want to read a book (*Farm Animals*). First she suggested that they read the book to see whether Emma liked it and when this suggestion met with an unenthusiastic response, she suggested they just look at the pictures. This suggestion was given a positive response. Emma's mother usually read all the text on a page before discussing the illustrations. However, on this occasion she initiated a series of simple interactions involving labelling farm animals and their babies.

The child's role

Emma appeared to enjoy the shared reading interactions although she usually contributed relatively little. She tended to listen and to respond to her mother's simple questions and requests, often by pointing. She asked very few questions.

Like Sam in dyad 7, the most notable feature of Emma's shared reading was her desire to read familiar books to her mother, even when she had not been asked to do this. Unlike Sam in dyad 7, however, Emma did not usually wait until her mother had finished reading the book before she began her readings. In the following example, Emma's mother had just began to read *Peace at Last*, which was familiar to the dyad, when her daughter interrupted:

> *C: Mum just listen to me! Mrs. Bear, she fell asleep and began to snore. Snore, snore Mrs. Bear said. I don't know, Mrs. Bear (Turns page).*
> *M: Shall we turn over 'cos he's in boy's bedroom now. Oh no, said Mr Bear...*
> *C: Oh no, Mr Bear. I can't stand this!*

In this extract, Emma's mother tried to resume reading, but her daughter began to read simultaneously with her. As the interaction went on, it became apparent that Emma wanted to continue reading and her mother began to allow her to take more control. Towards the end of the book, Emma's mother encouraged and prompted her daughter to read the story:

Interaction	Actual text
C: So he went off into the garden.	So he got up and went to sleep in the garden. Well, you would not believe what noises there are in the garden at night!
"Snuffle snuffle, twit twoo," meow said the cats on the wall.	"Too-whit-toowhoo!" went the owl. "Snuffle snuffle," went the hedgehog " Miaaaow!" sang the cats on the wall.
"Oh no," Mr Bear, "I can't stand this."	"Oh no!" said Mr Bear "I can't stand THIS."
So he went off to sleep in the .... [Turns page] car.	So he went off to sleep in the car
Nice and comfortable. And, and dicky birds were singing... and birds were singing.	It was cold in the car and uncomfortable but Mr Bear was so tired that he didn't notice. He was just falling asleep when all the birds started to sing and the sun peeped in at the window.
M: (Laughs) C: (Pause) "Too-whit..." M: What about sunshine? C: Errr... I can't remember it! M: You can't remember it?	"Tweet tweet" went the birds
C: No. M: What does he say? C: "Oh no".... Sun sun sun! "Oh no," Mr Bear "I can't stand this!"	Shine, shine went the sun "Oh no!" said Mr Bear "I can't stand THIS."
So he went off to sleep back in the bed.	So he got up and went back into the house. In the house, Baby Bear was fast asleep, and Mrs. Bear had turned over and wasn't snoring any more. Mr. Bear got into bed and closed his eyes.
Peace at last. Blblblblllllll said alarm clock.	"Peace at last," he said to himself. BRRRRRRRRR! Went the alarm clock, BRRRR!
Did you sleep well dear? .....Did you sleep well dear? M: (Prompting) Not very well. C: Not very well dear. (Turns page) And postman's been. M: And postman's been C: (Closes book) M: Oh that were good!	Mrs. Bear sat up and rubbed her eyes. "Good morning, dear," she said. "Did you sleep well?" "Not VERY well, dear," yawned Mr. Bear. "Never mind," said Mrs. Bear. "I'll bring you a nice cup of tea." And she did.

Emma's reading, like Sam's, included actual phrases from the text. Emma used the repeated phrase '"*Oh no,*" *Mr. Bear*', omitting the word 'said'. To Emma, perhaps this phrase sounded like a narrator sympathising with Mr. Bear's unfortunate plight. Although direct speech is used in the actual text, Emma reported very little direct speech in her reading, that is, she rarely used verbs such as 'said'. Emma also changed Mr. Bear's car experience from 'cold and uncomfortable' to 'nice and comfortable' and used '*sun, sun, sun*' to refer to the sun shining. Emma's referral to the postman, not mentioned in the text, appears to be a reference to the first reading of the book in which Emma and her mother engaged in an interaction around the letters shown in the illustration. For Emma perhaps, this was part of the text.

Interestingly this reading (taken from Session 3) was more true to the actual text than Emma's reading of the same book in Session 4. This may be because she had not been asked to read to her mother in Session 3; it was a spontaneous act.

Summary - Dyad 8

Emma and her mother appeared to enjoy their shared reading interactions. A high proportion of Emma's mother's comments were related to managing the interaction and particularly making sure her daughter was comfortable. She made comments and asked simple questions about the illustrations, although she offered few explanations and rarely encouraged Emma to predict. Emma made simple comments about the pictures and responded to her mother's questions, although the aspect of shared reading interactions she most enjoyed was reading to her mother from memory. Emma's mother prompted and encouraged her when she did this.

Discussion

There were a number of differences in mothers' perceptions of their shared reading interactions, reported in Chapter 5, and their actual practices, reported in this chapter. It is clear therefore, that simply asking parents to describe how they read with their children is not sufficient to fully appreciate of the nature of shared reading interactions. It is necessary to make observations because mothers are not always fully aware of the strategies and behaviours they are using. While general features of the interactions were described accurately in interview, more detailed aspects were omitted altogether. For example, none of the mothers talked about making connections from books to their children's experience, although most used this strategy to some degree. A number of behaviours reported in interviews were observed in the shared reading interactions however; for example, mother readings followed by child readings. In addition, four mothers mentioned receiving a leaflet from nursery offering reading tips. It was clear from the observations that all these mothers were implementing some of the tips given, such as following the words with their fingers.

All mothers in this study encouraged their children to select some, if not all of the books to read, thereby fostering their interest in reading (Morrow, 1983). James (dyad 2) was clearly used to choosing all his own books to read, and it was difficult to encourage him to read any books that were selected for him. None of the other children displayed such strong views. In the first session, in which dyads selected their own books to read, only two mothers allowed their children a completely free choice of books. In the second session, seven mothers encouraged their children to choose from a selection of books. Their selection of these books was not random. Although asked to choose books that they did not know, four of the children chose books that were familiar to them, unbeknown to their mothers. One dyad selected a book because they recognised the main character from the television. Two of the remaining three children

made their selections after carefully studying the front covers, opening and flicking through the books first. This finding supports the limited research in this area (Roberts et al., 1997) that young children do not select books randomly.

Mothers tended to choose books they perceived offered opportunities for interaction. One mother selected a book that her child had previously read. Others chose books that their child enjoyed. Another had originally initially selected a *Read it yourself Ladybird book*, designed for beginning readers, but had rejected it because she perceived that the text was not appropriate for shared reading interactions. Although none of the mothers mentioned the illustrations it seems likely that this is a factor when selecting books. The fact that most mothers played a part in selecting at least some of the books to be read is likely to be a feature of the contrived situation; mothers wanted to ensure books were suitable and were likely to choose books they knew their children enjoyed. They are unlikely to engage in elaborate selection processes in their everyday shared reading interactions.

The structure and content of shared reading interactions varied from dyad to dyad. Some researchers have attempted to assign reading styles to mothers, for example, *describers, comprehenders* or *collaborators* (Haden et al., 1996) or *managers* and *teachers* (Rabidoux and MacDonald, 2000). However, identifying styles does not capture the subtleties of the interactions. It may be more meaningful to define shared reading using different combinations of behaviours, as shown in Table 6:1. In this table, column headings were selected after surveying the qualitative data for salient features of interactions. The difference in levels of interaction between dyads was one of the most striking features of the data. It was also important to summarise features of mothers' and children's reading behaviours, since these formed the basis of interactions. Surveying the qualitative data enabled judgements to be made regarding the extent to which mothers used explicit teaching strategies. Hannon's (2000) *teaching spectrum*

places instruction at one end and facilitation at the other. Classifying mothers' reading behaviours according to this spectrum provides additional insights into the nature of teaching and learning within shared reading interactions. The final heading, mother-child roles, is important because it relates to levels of control and has an influence upon the socio-emotional climate.

Levels of interaction between the dyads varied from highly participatory for dyads 1 and 2, to largely text focused in dyads 7 and 8 (DeBaryshe, 1995). Children generally remained engaged throughout both text focused and participatory types of interaction. Levels of interaction and mother-child roles also varied within dyads across genre. This is discussed in Chapter 9.

Mothers who followed their children's interest, responding to their questions and comments tended to be facilitators. While all mothers used directives to a greater or lesser degree (for example '*you turn the pages, then*') the presence of such comments did not necessarily constitute an instructional style of reading. Instruction was taken to mean direct teaching, for example, of skills such as counting or phoneme-grapheme relationships. In addition, mothers who controlled the interactions, deciding which aspects of the book were discussed were classed as being towards the instruction end of the spectrum. Often these mothers had preconceived ideas regarding the answers to their questions. Three mothers appeared to be both instructors and facilitators; for example, Catherine's mother (dyad 1) taught phoneme-grapheme relationships and word recognition but followed her daughter's interest, thereby extending the interactions. Children generally responded well to both instruction and facilitation.

Table 6:1 Summary of reading behaviours

	Levels of interaction	Mothers' behaviours	Child behaviours	Teaching spectrum (mother)	Mother-child roles
Dyad 1	High	Wide range of behaviours used, particularly explaining, predicting and print focus	Fully engaged throughout. Many responses and comments	Both instruction and facilitation used. Instruction centred around print and phoneme-grapheme relationships	Mother and child as equal participants; mother followed child's interest
Dyad 2	High	Used a variety of behaviours, particularly completing	Usually engaged throughout. Many responses and comments	Instruction oriented. Emphasis on completing and skills	Mother controlled the interactions guiding child's responses. Child played an active role
Dyad 3	Moderate	Focused on illustrations, predicting and making connections to child's experience	Initiated a high proportion of comments	Instruction oriented	Mother controlled the interactions. Child played active role
Dyad 4	Moderate-high	Focused on illustration descriptions, prediction and explanations	Usually engaged throughout. Many questions and comments	Facilitation oriented	Mother followed child's interest. Child played an active role
Dyad 5	Moderate-high	Attempted to draw child into interactions using behaviours including completing and skills teaching. Discussion focused around illustrations; some predicting and inferring	Limited contributions to the interactions. Some simple questions.	Both instruction and facilitation used	Mother always followed child's interest. Child as audience
Dyad 6	Moderate	A high proportion of managing utterances and praise. Interactions around illustrations	Initiated a high proportion of comments. These were sometimes ignored by mother	Both instruction and facilitation used	Mother as reader and questioner, confirming child's responses; child played an active role
Dyad 7	Low	A high proportion of managing utterances. Interaction around illustrations	Read books to mother after reading. Usually fully engaged	Facilitation oriented	Mother as reader, child as audience. These roles reversed when child read to mother
Dyad 8	Low-moderate.	A high proportion of managing utterances. Interaction around illustrations	Read books to mother. A high proportion of non-verbal responses to mother's questions.	Facilitation oriented	Mother as reader and questioner; child as audience, responder and reader

The roles of mothers varied from controlling interactions to following children's interest. Children's roles varied from active to the more traditional, somewhat passive, in which they largely listened. In dyad 1, mother and child appeared as equal participants, with both shaping the interactions.

There were some similarities in the content of shared reading interactions for the eight dyads. All mothers drew their children's attention to illustration details, asking them to label and describe. All mothers evaluated their children's responses, sensitively correcting them when they were wrong and repeating and praising their correct responses. All made comments to manage the shared reading interactions, directing their children's attention when necessary. However, it was the extent to which mothers used such behaviours and the additional utterances they used that differentiated them. These aspects of interactions were analysed in more detail using quantitative methods and are discussed in Chapter 8.

Varying levels of interaction and child motivation were observed for each dyad across the four sessions. For example, two of the most co-operative and responsive children, Catherine and Chloe, were reluctant to read to their mothers in Session 4. This highlights the fact that it is essential to observe a number of shared reading interactions for each dyad if a true insight is to be achieved.

An interesting feature of the shared reading interactions described above is the fact that Sam and Emma (from dyads 7 and 8) both made frequent attempts to read books to their mothers, whereas none of the other children spontaneously did so. Sam and Emma were the children of dyads participating in the lowest levels of interaction. Perhaps the readings provided these children with opportunities to engage in extended interactions as both mothers increased their levels of prompting and encouragement when their children began reading. The readings also enabled these children to take control of the interactions.

This chapter has begun to address the first research question for the study, '*How do parents (mothers) and children read together?*' using qualitative methods. It was also possible to begin to investigate the third question, '*Which behaviours promote language and literacy development?*' using interpretation. A number of behaviours observed appeared to contribute to a relaxed socio-emotional climate that was considered conducive to language and literacy learning. For example, all mothers used behaviours to gain or maintain their children's interest. These included reading with increased expression and animation, asking questions when children were beginning to lose interest, or diverting children's attention to illustration details. Repeating and confirming correct responses contributed to a relaxed atmosphere and helped to reinforce children's utterances. Interactions around illustrations, that is, labelling and describing, helped to focus children's attention and aided vocabulary acquisition; skills teaching encouraged acquisition of number and colour concepts; following children's interest encouraged motivation and lengthy discussions, and connecting events in books to children's experience encouraged child interest and helped to increase understanding.

Since virtually all mothers' behaviours helped to facilitate child interest and interaction, it was considered pertinent to investigate whether some behaviours enhanced not only children's interest and interaction but also development. For example, there was evidence that children could assimilate new vocabulary through the mother's use of corrective modelling (dyad 2). There was also evidence that lengthy decontextualised interactions, like the one shown for dyad 2, encouraged abstract thought and an ability to use decontextualised language. Less extensive discussions involving decontextualised interactions also encouraged children to think in the abstract. For example, mothers were able to check their children's understanding of the text through use of high-level demand questions, often encouraging them to provide reason-explanations and give plausible predictions.

The analysis illustrates that all mothers used some dialogic techniques to a greater or lesser degree. These included asking questions, evaluating children's responses and following children's interest (semantic contingency). The mothers of dyads 1, 4 and 5 demonstrated the greatest semantic contingency (see Chapter 1 for an explanation of semantic contingency). We have seen for example, that although dyad 2 engaged in lengthy episodes, these were rarely semantically contingent. Rather, James' mother guided these episodes, asking progressively more demanding questions. The extent to which dialogic techniques were employed is examined in more detail in Chapter 8, and implications of these findings are discussed in Chapter 11.

To summarise, we have seen that all mothers employed a variety of behaviours during shared reading which appeared to contribute to language and literacy development, and that children generally responded favourably and enjoyed the interactions. This chapter has also highlighted substantial differences between the shared reading interactions of the eight dyads. Chapter 8 investigates these differences further through quantitative analysis of the data. The following chapter, Chapter 7, describes the coding system devised for analysing the data quantitatively.

Chapter 7: Study 2 - Developing a coding system

Introduction

While a brief overview of methods of analysis is provided in Chapter 3, a more thorough description of the coding system used in the analysis is warranted. It is the quantifiable aspects of shared reading interactions that are the focus of this chapter.

This study utilises discourse analysis, which is concerned with the linguistic analysis of naturally occurring speech or written discourse (Stubbs, 1983). This study analysed features of language according to their function, rather than their structure. This is based on the theory of systemic-functional linguistics (Halliday, 1985; Matthiessen, 1996). There are four main theoretical claims made by systemic-functional linguists regarding language:

1. Language use is functional
2. Function is used to make meaning
3. These meanings are influenced by the social and cultural context in which they are exchanged
4. The process of using language is a semiotic process of making meanings by choosing

These four principles, that language is functional, semantic, contextual and semiotic, form the basis of the systemic-functional approach to language. In systemic-functional linguistics therefore, the study of language goes beyond the sentence or clause level to conversational exchanges.

A comprehensive coding system was needed in order to further explore the first research question, '*How do mothers and children read together?*' and also to further investigate the question '*Which behaviours promote language and literacy development?*' Shared reading interactions were coded in three parts as in the previous

chapter; the interaction as a whole, the mother's role and the child's role. This chapter begins with the rationale for coding for the interaction as a whole. This is followed by the most extensive section; development of a coding system for mothers' utterances. Finally the rationale for coding of child utterances is discussed. A summary of the coding system is provided at the end of the chapter. The coding system utilised a combination of inductive ('bottom up') and deductive ('top down') methods, that is, codes were developed both from analysis of the data by adaptation from already formed codes.

The interaction as a whole

It was considered necessary to examine features such as the amount of interaction between mother and child and the length of topics of conversation, because it has been suggested that these may be associated with enhanced language and literacy development. The system therefore was devised to include *turns, episodes* and *moves*. These are described below.

Turns were classed as all moves and occasionally non-verbal behaviour, relating to a given topic by one person before either that person changed the topic or the other person spoke. Turns were counted for both mother and child. A turn could be verbal or non-verbal when it formed part of the interaction, for example, pointing or nodding could be classed as a turn. Page turning was classed as a turn only when there was verbal reference to it, for example, when the mother asked the child to turn the page and the child responded, both behaviours were classed as turns. Page turning with no verbal reference was not classed as a turn. When the child was asked a direct question and gave no response, this was classed as a turn, because the mother had requested a response. *Episodes* consisted of a series of turns related to a given topic. Episodes were

often ended when one member of the dyad turned a page or when mothers resumed reading. Episodes were coded for:

- Which member of the dyad initiated the episode
- Total number of turns in the episode
- The number of turns for each member, within each episode
- The number of episodes within the session

Turns and episodes have been identified in a small number of existing research studies, most notably by DeLoache and DeMendoza (1987).

The transcripts were broken into *moves* for both mothers and children. For the purpose of the current study a move was a word or a group of words which made up a unit of meaning. Moves were the smallest unit of meaning, for example,

C: He fell over.
M: He did. Has he bumped his head again?

In this example, the child made one move and the mother made two. The term *move,* taken from discourse analysis was used in an educational context by Campbell (1981) to define an '*utterance or part utterance which serves a pedagogical function*'. Moves were used to define comments made by parents and teachers hearing children read in a study by Hannon and his colleagues (1986). Moves have been referred to using a number of terms, such as *units* (DeLoache and DeMedoza, 1987), *extratextual comments* (Haden et al., 1996), *turns* (Greenhough and Hughes, 1998), *insertions* (Phillips and McNaughton, 1990) and *messages* (Hasan, 1996).

The mother's role

Mothers' moves were classified according to their function, level of demand, and form. Dialogic moves were also identified. The rationale behind these aspects of the coding system are described in more detail below.

Functions of mothers' moves

In addition to counting numbers of mothers' moves, it was considered necessary to classify these according to their type. This was essential in order to fully investigate the research questions. Coding systems from existing literature were surveyed and transcripts for the present study were also examined. Each mother move was coded according to its perceived intention and fifteen categories emerged. The majority of categories had been identified in previous studies under a variety of names. These are listed in Table 7:1. For example, *orientation, management, directions* and *control* were different names for the same type of function, and were therefore placed in the same category; that of *managing.*

Table 7:1 Categories of mothers' moves

Category	Categories identified in the literature
Managing	Orientation (DeLoache and DeMendoza, 1987) Management (Greenhough and Hughes, 1998) Directions (Hannon et al., 1986) Control (Rabidoux and MacDonald, 2000) Interaction (Sorsby and Martlew, 1991)
Evaluating	Types of feedback – repetition, praise, correction, expansion, topic continuation (DeBaryshe, 1995) Feedback (DeLoache and DeMendoza, 1987) Evaluation (Greenhough and Hughes, 1998) Confirmations (Haden et al., 1996) Positive feedback and negative feedback (Hannon et al., 1986) Verbal emotional direction (Pellegrini et al., 1985)
Labelling and describing	Descriptions (Haden et al., 1996) Labelling and identifying (Greenhough and Hughes, 1998) Labelling and commenting (Kaderavek and Sulzby, 1998)
Completing	Pauses (Kaderavek and Sulzby, 1998)
Paraphrasing	Story line presented in oral form and modification of text (Kaderavek and Sulzby, 1998) Frequency of paraphrasing (Pellegrini et al., 1985)
Skill building	No equivalent category identified
Expanding	Expanding child's response (Kaderavek and Sulzby, 1998)
Bridging	Bridging (Neumann, 1996) Book to life examples (Rabidoux and MacDonald, 2000)
Referring to the real world	General knowledge (Haden et al., 1996)
Developing vocabulary	No equivalent category identified
Clarifying	Making sense (Greenhough and Hughes, 1998) Establishing meaning (Hannon et al., 1986)
Predicting	Predictions/inferences (Haden et al., 1996) Encouraging speculation (Hannon et al., 1986) Cause-effect inferences (Pellegrini et al., 1990)
Referring to literacy	Print knowledge (Haden et al., 1996) Print related insertions (Phillips and McNaughton, 1990)
Other	Other (Haden et al., 1996)

Fifteen categories of move were identified for the study. This enabled every move made by mothers to be coded. The categories are summarised below and brief descriptions are provided.

The 15 categories used to identify adult moves were:

1. Managing	Getting the child involved or managing behaviour (*'Let's read this!'*)
2. Evaluating	Correcting or confirming a response (*'That's right'*); repeating child's response; corrective modelling (*'A shadow you mean, rather than a statue'*)
3. Labelling	Labelling pictures or identifying characters (*'Where's Robin Hood?'*)
4. Describing	Identifying the function and/or attribute of an object or character (*'He's wearing a brown hat!'*)
5. Completing	Encouraging the child to complete a known part of the text, usually by pausing (*Mother: 'I want my ....'; Child: 'Mummy!'*).
6. Paraphrasing	Modifying text or presenting the story in an oral form (*'The man at the shop kicked him out'*)
7. Skill building	Demonstrating skills (*'One... two...'*) or encouraging skills routines (*'Can you count them?'*)
8. Expanding	Extending child's utterance with additional information (Child: *'He's too fat'*; Mother*: 'Do you think he's too fat to go in?'*)
9. Bridging	Making connections from book content to child's own experience (*'We saw a goose at the farm, didn't we?'*)
10. Referring to the real world	Making connections from book content to knowledge of the world (*'Owls wake up at night; they sleep during the daytime and fly about at night'*).
11. Developing vocabulary	Checking understanding of specific vocabulary and/or explaining (*'Do you know what shearing means?'*)
12. Clarifying	Facilitating understanding of the story (*'Does Handa know they're taking away her fruit?'*)
13. Predicting	Requesting / providing information not yet indicated in text (*'What's going to happen when he does his burp?'*) and inferring (*'It must be quite heavy that, do you think?'*)
14. Referring to literacy	Reference to the language of books or print (*'That's not the beginning, that's the end!'*) and grapheme-phoneme relationships (*'That's a /h/'*)
15. Other	Intimacy (*'Are you comfy?'*) and exclamations (*'Uh-oh!', 'Wow'*)

Demand levels of mothers' moves

While it was useful to analyse mothers' moves in terms of the fifteen specific categories identified above, it was also helpful to impose a second layer of analysis onto these categories. Distancing theory (Sigel, 1982) described in Chapter 1, relates parental interaction behaviour (including reading) to the demands placed on the child's

77cognitive-verbal processes. Parents' reading behaviour can be categorised according to the comprehension processes and thinking effort required, and the related cognitive and language skills it helps to develop.

Procedural behaviours are a type of meta-communication referring to the mother-child interaction, directing behaviour or attracting attention. In the present study procedural moves consisted of the categories *managing, evaluating* and *other.* Low-level demand moves are directly related to the book and consist of simple labelling, describing and summarising. Six categories of move in the current study were classed as being of lower demand; *labelling, describing, completing, paraphrasing, skill building* and *expanding.*

Medium-level demand behaviours are defined as those involving new information, connected to the personal experience of the dyad. These moves occur less frequently and in the present study included only the category *bridging.* Such information usually requires little demanding mental activity since it is often contextualised. High-level demand moves are more decontextualised and cannot be made sense of through the contexts of the immediate situation, the book, the pictures or the shared personal experience. Moves referring to literacy were considered to be decontextualised and were therefore included here. The categories included as high-level demand were *referring to the real world, predicting, clarifying, developing vocabulary* and *referring to literacy.* Table 7:2 illustrates the fifteen categories and shows how they have been categorised according to Sigel's (1982) distancing theory.

Table 7:2 Demand levels of mothers' moves

Move category:	Demand level
Managing	Procedural
Evaluating	
Other	
Labelling	Low-level demand
Describing	
Completing	
Paraphrasing	
Skill building	
Expanding	
Bridging	Medium-level demand
Referring to the real world	High-level demand
Developing vocabulary	
Clarifying	
Predicting	
Referring to literacy	

Forms of mothers' moves

In addition to classification of adult moves, it was also necessary to identify mother's speech act type. This is important because questions encourage interaction whereas statements do not. Analysing numbers and types of questions in relation to statements and directives would provide a more comprehensive insight into shared reading interactions. Classifying questions according to their type was also important because certain types of questions tend to elicit more elaborate responses than others. For example, children may provide extended responses to open-ended questions, whereas closed questions elicit one-word responses.

A number of studies have identified the forms of mothers' moves to a greater or lesser extent (DeBaryshe, 1995; DeLoache and DeMendoza, 1987; Leseman et al., 1995; Pellegrini et al., 1985). The forms of move identified in the current study were statements (and directives) and questions. A number of different types of questions were coded; these were *tag questions, what questions, where questions, yes/no questions* and *open-ended questions.*

Examples of each form of move are given below:

- Statements and directives: '*You turn the pages*' and '*I liked that book!*'
- Tag questions (or rhetorical questions): '*We saw some geese at the park, didn't we?*'
- What questions (requiring a verbal response): '*What's that?*', '*What's the wolf doing?*', '*How many fish are there?*'
- Where questions (requiring a non-verbal response): '*Where's the dog?*', '*Can you see the baby owls?*'. However, where questions that required a verbal response (such as '*Where's he going?*') were classed as what questions.
- Yes/No questions (requiring a yes/no response): '*Did you like that story?*'
- Open-ended questions: These were questions requiring a detailed response from the child, for example, '*What's happened now?*', '*How do you think they open the egg from the inside?*'

Dialogic reading techniques used

The coding system would allow an analysis of some of the dialogic reading techniques used by mothers because exploring the extent to which mothers used dialogic reading behaviours without being trained in the techniques was of interest.

The particular moves considered to be 'dialogic' were:

- Turns per episode – dialogic reading emphasises the importance of asking several questions about a particular topic. It also stresses the importance of following the child's interest. Turns per episode may be a good indicator of this since children tend not to contribute if they have little interest in the topic being discussed.

- *Evaluating* moves – dialogic reading emphasises the importance of feedback; praise, encouragement and prompting children when they have difficulty answering questions.
- *Expanding* moves – dialogic reading stresses the importance of expanding children's responses and encouraging children to repeat the expanded response.

Although *labelling* and particularly *describing* are targeted by the dialogic approach, they are not included here because it is the *form* of these moves that is important in dialogic reading. For example, a mother's description of an illustration would not be classed as a dialogic technique, whereas a question encouraging a child to respond with a description of an illustration would (that is, a *what* question). The other two types of dialogic moves considered here therefore, were specific forms of move:

- What questions
- Open-ended questions

When investigating dialogic moves, it is also important to analyse the actual numbers of move per book made by mothers, since one of the main aims of dialogic reading is to increase the amount of interaction in shared reading.

Mothers' use of language and literacy words

Mothers' use of metalinguistic verbs was also considered in this coding system, as it has been reported that such words are related to children's vocabulary skills (Pellegrini et al., 1990). Words associated with the language of books were also included here. The metalinguistic words counted in this study were *say, tell* and *talk*. Terms associated with the language of books were *page, read* and *book*.

The child's role

Functions of children's moves

A coding system comparable to that used for mothers' moves was needed to code children's moves. A system that enabled coding according to the cognitive level of children's moves was devised. Child moves were categorised as *procedural, low-level, medium-level or high-level.* However, surveying the transcripts revealed that not all children's moves could be described in this way. Some children also attempted their own readings of books and also chimed along with their mothers when reading books that were familiar. Two additional categories were therefore devised: *reading* (attempts to read text independently), and *chiming* (simultaneous reading with mother). Surveying the transcripts also revealed a number of incorrect or inadequate responses to mothers' questions. These could not be classified in any of the above categories, although it was considered important to categorise such responses, since this may enable assessment of the extent to which mothers were tuned in to children's ability levels (Sorsby and Martlew, 1991). Another category, *incorrect* response was therefore identified. This category included an inability to respond when the mother had requested a response. A few *incorrect* responses might be perceived as beneficial, since this might imply that mothers were using challenging questions within the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1934/1987). A great many incorrect responses, however, might suggest that the mother was not tuned in to the child's developmental level, asking a series of difficult questions the child was unable to answer.

Unrelated and *inaudible* comments were also coded. A number of research studies classed *inaudible* (Phillips and McNaughton, 1990) and *unrelated* (Phillips and McNaughton, 1990) or *off topic* (Haden et al., 1996) utterances. These were useful categories for the current study.

The coding system for the child reflected that of mothers as far as possible. *Procedural* moves included managing and evaluating moves plus all simple responses to mothers that were considered to be interactional (such as yes/no responses and repeating). *Low-level* moves included picture references (*labelling* and *describing*), skill building, and completing. *Medium-level* moves related to bridging while *high-level* moves included references to the real world, predicting, clarifying, referring to literacy and responding to vocabulary definitions. The remaining categories were unique to children. Inability to respond and answers such as 'I don't know' were categorised as *incorrect.*

Nine categories of move were therefore identified. These categories are now summarised:

1. Procedural:	Moves relating to the interaction rather than to the book itself (*'Let's read it!'*) and simple responses to mothers' questions
2. Low-level:	Labelling and describing illustrations (*'He falled off the roof!'*), completing and skills routines (*'I'm going to count them now... One, two, three, four!'*)
3. Medium-level:	Connecting events in books to own experience (*'That's like my scooter, mummy!'*)
4. High-level:	Predicting (*'He's going to snap Preston'*), explaining (*'Because he went out the back door'*), referring to literacy (*'That says /h/ for Handa'*), referring to the real world (*'You know piglets go in mud too'*)
5. Reading:	Reading the text from memory (*'Mrs Bear, she fell asleep and began to snore'*)
6. Chiming:	Simultaneous reading with mother
7. Incorrect:	Incorrect responses to mother's questions, inability to answer (*'I don't know'*) and no response
8. Unrelated:	Moves not relating to the interaction (*'I can hear that owl'*)
9. Inaudible:	Moves that could not be coded because they could not be understood or heard.

Forms of children's moves

The forms of children's moves were coded into one of three categories. These were *statements* and directives, *responses* to mothers' moves and *questions*. This is important as it allows for judgements regarding responsiveness to mothers' questions, while numbers of questions asked can be an indication of the level of child interest. *Responses* included non-verbal responses to mothers' moves (such as pointing or nodding).

Haden et al. (1996) and Pellegrini et al. (1990) categorised child behaviours using such a system.

Children's use of language and literacy words

Children's use of metalinguistic verbs and literacy words were also considered in this coding system. These were the same as those for mothers.

Advantages and limitations of the coding schemes for mothers and children

The coding system was very detailed in that it allowed for coding of all verbal utterances and some non-verbal behaviour. This enabled a depth not present in the majority of quantitative studies. In addition, the system enabled moves to be analysed according to their functions while also enabling a more general analysis according to Sigel's psychological distancing model.

This study therefore attempted to examine many aspects of shared reading interactions, and as such is a holistic study. The benefits of such an approach were that a true insight into such interactions could be achieved. In addition, the whole interaction was coded, for example, sometimes children wanted to read books to their mothers after reading; these interactions were included in the coding. The advantage of

this is that it allowed a more comprehensive understanding about real reading interactions.

A limitation of the coding system was that within each level of demand (low, medium and high) there was no differentiation between more and less demanding forms of move. For example, mothers' high-level demand moves were classed as such whether they were statements or open-ended questions, even though high-level demand moves were more demanding when used with an open-ended question.

Summary

The detailed coding system developed for the present study included a number of key elements from other studies plus original features. It was designed to address the research questions posed in this study. The main features of the coding system can be summarised as follows:

The interaction as a whole

Aspects of the interaction as a whole included turns, episodes, turns per episode and moves (mother and child).

The mother's role

Functions and demand levels of mothers' moves

Mothers moves were coded according to their functions and their demand level. Moves that related to the interaction were called procedural moves and consisted of *managing, evaluating* and *other* moves. Low-level demand moves related to the immediate context and consisted of *labelling, describing, completing, paraphrasing, skill building* and *expanding*. Medium-level demand moves were more decontextualised and related the child's experience to events in the books; these were

bridging moves. High-level demand moves were the most decontextualised, requiring some abstract thought. These consisted of *referring to the real world, developing vocabulary, clarifying, predicting* and *referring to literacy.*

Forms of mothers' moves

Mothers' moves were also coded as to whether they were statements or questions. Questions were coded according to their type; these were *tag* questions, *what* questions, *where* questions, *yes/no* questions and *open-ended* questions.

Mothers' use of language and literacy words was also coded.

The child's role

Functions of children's moves

Children's moves were also coded according to their functions. Nine categories of moves were identified, these were *procedural, low-level, medium-level, high-level, incorrect response / no response, reading, chiming, inaudible* and *unrelated* moves.

Forms of children's moves

Children's moves were also coded according to their form; these were responses (to mothers' questions), statements and questions.

Children's use of language and literacy words was also coded.

Chapter 8: Study 2 - Shared reading interactions: quantitative analysis

Introduction

This chapter provides a quantitative analysis of shared reading interactions using the coding system described in the previous chapter. The quantitative analysis is backed up with references to qualitative data where appropriate. In Section 1, the structure of shared reading interactions as a whole is discussed, that is reading behaviours that were common to all or most of the dyads. The interactions are discussed under the headings identified in Chapter 7, that is the interaction as a whole, followed by the mother's then the child's role. In Section 2, aspects of reading are compared for each dyad. The purpose of this comparison is to analyse the extent of differences and similarities between aspects of shared reading interactions for each dyad. In Section 3, relationships between features of shared reading interactions are explored using correlational analysis. The main findings are discussed at the end of the chapter.

Section 1: Features of shared reading interactions

The interaction as a whole

This refers to aspects of the interaction such as duration, turns and episodes. Duration of interaction was on average almost six minutes for each book, (see Table 8:1). This table also shows that the total number of turns averaged around 79 per book.

Table 8:1 Features of interactions

	Mean per book
Duration of interaction (minutes)	5:54
Total turns	78.6
Episodes (mother initiated)	11.6
Episodes (child initiated)	6.1
All episodes	17.6
Turns per episode	4.7

The mean number of discussions around particular topics, or episodes was almost 18. Mothers initiated more episodes, on average almost twelve, with children initiating just six per book. The length of those discussions is perhaps more important than the number of different discussions per book, and is shown as turns per episode. The mean number of turns per episode was 4.7. The length of discussions usually depended upon the child's interest in the topic being discussed. Short interactions involving just two or three turns tended to consist of picture labels and descriptions, whereas longer discussions typically began this way but moved on to more decontextualised interactions, such as explanations, prediction and inference type comments.

Table 8:2 shows that mothers made an average of 61.2 moves per book whereas children made a mean of 37.6 moves. These figures can be expressed as percentages of the total numbers of moves made. Mothers made almost 62 per cent of all moves and children around 38 per cent of all moves.

Table 8:2 Mean numbers of moves per book and percentages of moves

Mothers' moves	61.2
Child moves	37.6
Percentage of total moves - mother	61.9%
Percentage of total moves - child	38.1%

The mother's role

Functions of mothers' moves

Table 8:3 gives the mean totals and percentage values of the types of moves made by mothers. The moves used most frequently are shown at the top of the table, and those least frequently at the bottom. The moves are defined in Chapter 7. Figure 8:1 provides a graphic illustration of these data. The most frequently used moves involved some kind of evaluation of the child's behaviour. Moves relating to pictures in the book (*describing* and *labelling*) also occurred frequently. It is interesting that

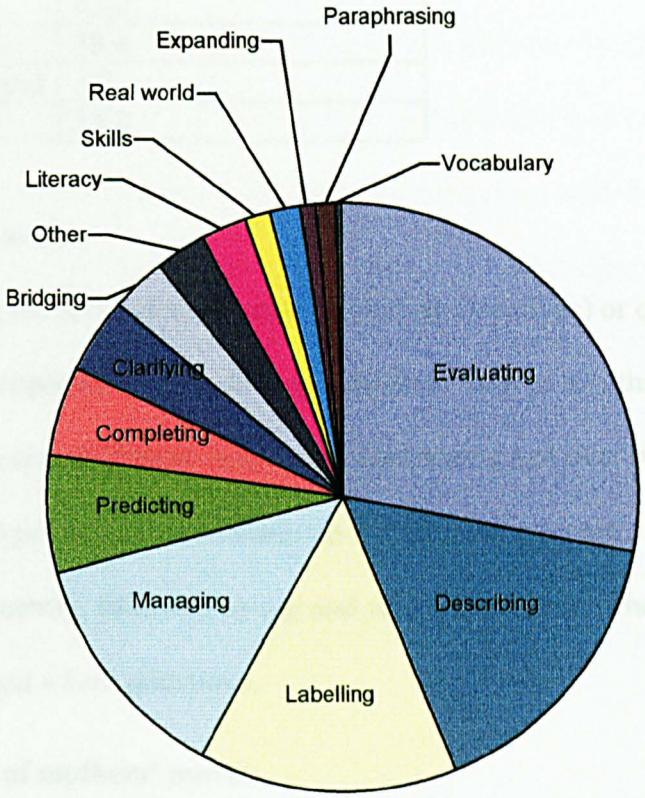
describing moves occurred slightly more frequently than *labelling* moves. This is likely to be a reflection of the children's ages and the growing sophistication of their language skills. Had the children been several months younger, it is likely that there would have been more *labelling* than *describing*. Moves to manage children's behaviour and the interaction (*managing* moves) were also made relatively frequently.

Table 8:3 Means and percentages of mothers' moves

	Mean per book	Percentage of total moves
Evaluating	17.1	27.9
Describing	9.7	15.8
Labelling	8.7	14.2
Managing	7.8	12.7
Predicting	4.1	6.6
Completing	3.0	4.8
Clarifying	2.5	4.1
Bridging	2.0	3.2
Other	1.6	2.6
Literacy	1.5	2.5
Skill building	1.0	1.6
Referring to the real world	1.0	1.5
Expanding	0.6	1.0
Paraphrasing	0.6	0.9
Developing vocabulary	0.3	0.4

Predicting, completing and *clarifying* occurred less frequently, as did *bridging, other* and *literacy*. Five categories of move each comprised fewer than two per cent of the total, namely *skill building, referring to the real world, expanding, paraphrasing* and *developing vocabulary*.

Figure 8:1 Categories of mothers' moves



Mothers' moves and demand levels

Chapter 7 describes how the fifteen categories identified above were further grouped according to Sigel's psychological distancing model (Sigel, 1982). Table 8:4 shows that by far the most frequent types of move were procedural moves, at just over 43 per cent. These types of moves related to the interaction and did not involve any level of distancing. They comprised *managing, evaluating* and *other* moves. Just over a third of all moves were of low-level demand (38.4 per cent). Around one move in every six involved a high-level of demand (15.2 per cent). Medium-level demand moves, which related events in books to the child's own experience, occurred least frequently at 3.2 per cent.

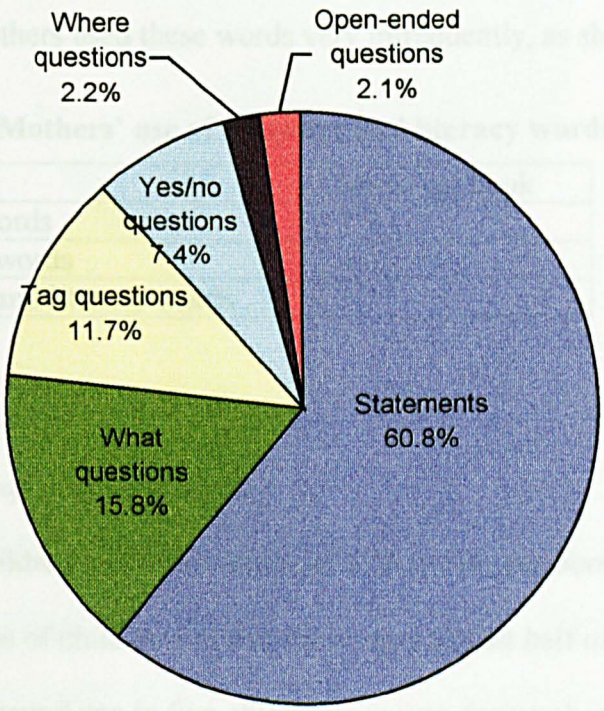
Table 8:4 Demand levels of mothers' moves

	Percentage of total moves
Procedural	43.2
Low-level demand	38.4
Medium-level demand	3.2
High-level demand	15.2

Forms of mothers' moves

Moves took the form of statements (including directives) or questions. Figure 8:2 illustrates the proportions of the forms of mothers' moves and their associated values. Statements occurred most frequently, comprising just over 60 per cent of all moves. Different types of questions made up the other 40 per cent. *What* questions occurred most frequently, followed by *tag* and *yes/no* questions. The least common were *open-ended* and *where* questions.

Figure 8:2 Forms of mothers' moves



Dialogic behaviours

Mothers' moves were also analysed in terms of the numbers of dialogic behaviours used. Lengthier discussions are viewed as important in dialogic reading because they indicate high levels of interaction. In this study, there were an average of 4.7 turns per episode, meaning that each member of the dyad contributed an average of just over two turns to each conversation. *Evaluating* and *expanding* moves have been targeted by the dialogic reading approach because they are viewed as beneficial for facilitating language development. *Evaluating* comprised 27.9 per cent and *expanding* just one per cent of total moves. *What* questions and *open-ended* questions comprised 17.8 per cent of total moves. Questions discouraged by dialogic reading, closed *yes/no* questions and *where* questions, comprised a total of 9.6 per cent of moves.

Mothers' use of language and literacy words

Mothers used these words very infrequently, as shown in Table 8:5.

Table 8:5 Mothers' use of language and literacy words

	Mean per book
Literacy words	2.7
Language words	3.0
Language and literacy words	5.7

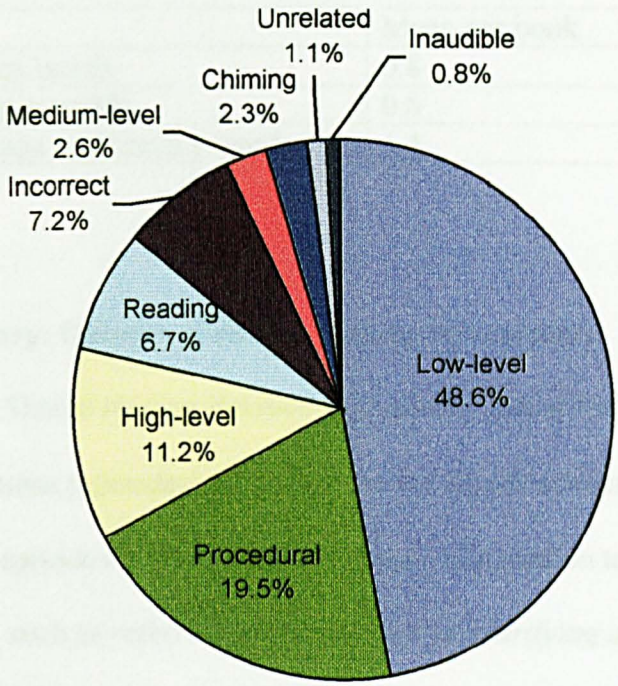
The child's role

Functions of children's moves

Children made an average of 37.6 moves per book. Figure 8:3 illustrates the percentages of child moves and shows that almost half of all moves were *low-level* moves. Around one in five children's moves during shared reading were *procedural*, that is, they related to interactional features. A relatively high proportion of these procedural moves were simple yes/no responses to mothers' *tag* questions. While such moves may not be important in terms of contributing to children's language and literacy

development, their presence or absence can positively or negatively influence the socio-emotional climate of shared reading interactions. *High-level* moves comprised just over 11 per cent of all children's moves and *medium-level* moves consisted of almost three per cent. Almost seven per cent of all moves were attempts at independent *reading*, around two per cent were *chiming* moves (simultaneous reading with mother). Just over seven per cent of all moves were inadequate or *incorrect* responses to mothers' questions.

Figure 8:3 Functions of children's moves



Forms of children's moves

Table 8:6 illustrates the forms of children's moves. The most frequent form of move was statements and directives at 50 per cent, followed by responses to mothers' questions at almost 40 per cent. Children's spontaneous questions were the least frequent form of moves at just over 10 per cent.

Table 8:6 Forms of children's moves

	Percentage of total moves
Responses	39.5
Statements	50.0
Questions	10.5

Children's use of language and literacy words

Table 8:7 shows that children, like mothers, used language and literacy words very infrequently.

Table 8:7 Children's use of language and literacy words

	Mean per book
Literacy words	0.8
Language words	0.6
Language and literacy words	1.4

Summary: features of shared reading interactions

Shared reading interactions typically lasted for around six minutes. Short interactions (episodes) tended to involve simple references to illustrations, whereas longer episodes tended to begin this way and lead on to more cognitively demanding moves, such as *referring to the real world, clarifying* or *predicting.*

For mothers, simple picture references and questions (*describing* and *labelling* moves) were the most frequent of the low-level demand moves. *Predicting* and *clarifying* were the high-level demand moves that occurred most frequently. Sixty per cent of moves were statements and directives, with questions making up the other 40 per cent. Of these, the least frequent types of questions were open-ended questions.

Mothers made an average of 61.2 moves per book, whereas children made an average of just 37.6 moves per book. Almost half of mothers' moves were procedural; that is they related to communicating and controlling the interaction. Of these, the majority (28 per cent) involved providing evaluation and feedback to the child. Almost

thirteen per cent related to managing the interaction. In contrast almost 20 per cent of children's moves were *procedural*, often involving simple responses to mothers' questions. Children made proportionally more *low-level* moves and proportionally fewer *high-level* moves than their mothers (11.2 per cent versus 16.2 per cent). Just over seven per cent of children's moves consisted of an incorrect response to the mothers' query, or no response.

The analysis showed that almost 29 per cent of mothers' moves could be classed as 'dialogic moves', in that they involved feedback and expansions of children's responses. Only 18 per cent of the forms of moves could be classed as dialogic (that is, *what* questions and *open-ended* questions).

Section 2: Comparison of dyads' reading interactions

This section describes the quantitative features of each dyad's shared reading interactions in such a way that they can be compared with one another.

The interaction as a whole

Table 8:8 shows the mean length of shared reading interactions for each book. Sam and his mother (dyad 7) participated in by far the shortest interactions whereas dyads 1, 3 and 6 tended to participate in the longest interactions.

Table 8:8 Durations of shared reading interactions

	Duration of shared reading per book (mean in minutes)
Dyad 1: Catherine and her mother	7: 24
Dyad 2: James and his mother	5: 57
Dyad 3: Sarah and her mother	7 :08
Dyad 4: Chloe and her mother	5: 51
Dyad 5: John and his mother	5 :07
Dyad 6: Charlotte and her mother	7: 26
Dyad 7: Sam and his mother	3: 43
Dyad 8: Emma and her mother	4: 55

Table 8:9 shows the mean numbers of turns and episodes for each dyad per book. In addition to participating in the shortest interactions, dyads 7 and 8 also participated in the lowest number of turns per book. Dyad 6 (Charlotte and her mother) participated in by far the highest number of episodes, of which almost half were initiated by Charlotte. Emma (dyad 8) actually initiated more episodes than her mother and was the only child to do this. Sam and his mother tended to participate in the shortest episodes (that is, turns per episode) followed by Emma and her mother. Dyads 2, 4, 1 and 3 participated in the longest episodes.

Table 8:9 Mean numbers of turns and episodes per book

	Dyad 1: Catherine and her mother	Dyad 2: James and his mother	Dyad 3: Sarah and her mother	Dyad 4: Chloe and her mother	Dyad 5: John and his mother	Dyad 6: Charlotte and her mother	Dyad 7: Sam and his mother	Dyad 8: Emma and her mother
Turns	103.0	92.3	87.3	102.6	73.4	83.1	33.1	48.0
Episodes	18.7	17.6	18.7	17.4	15.9	24.6	12.1	16.0
Mother initiated episodes	13.1	13.2	11.8	13.1	12.8	13.6	7.0	6.8
Child initiated episodes	5.6	4.3	6.8	4.3	3.1	12.4	5.1	9.2
Turns per episode	5.4	6.3	5.3	5.8	4.9	3.7	2.4	3.4

Table 8:10 and Figure 8:4 show the mean numbers of moves per book and percentages of total moves for each mother and child. Dyad 1 averaged the most moves per book and dyad 7 the least. Although the variation in numbers of moves between these two dyads is substantial, this is a somewhat expected finding, since dyad 1 participated in some of the longest interactions and dyad 7 the shortest.

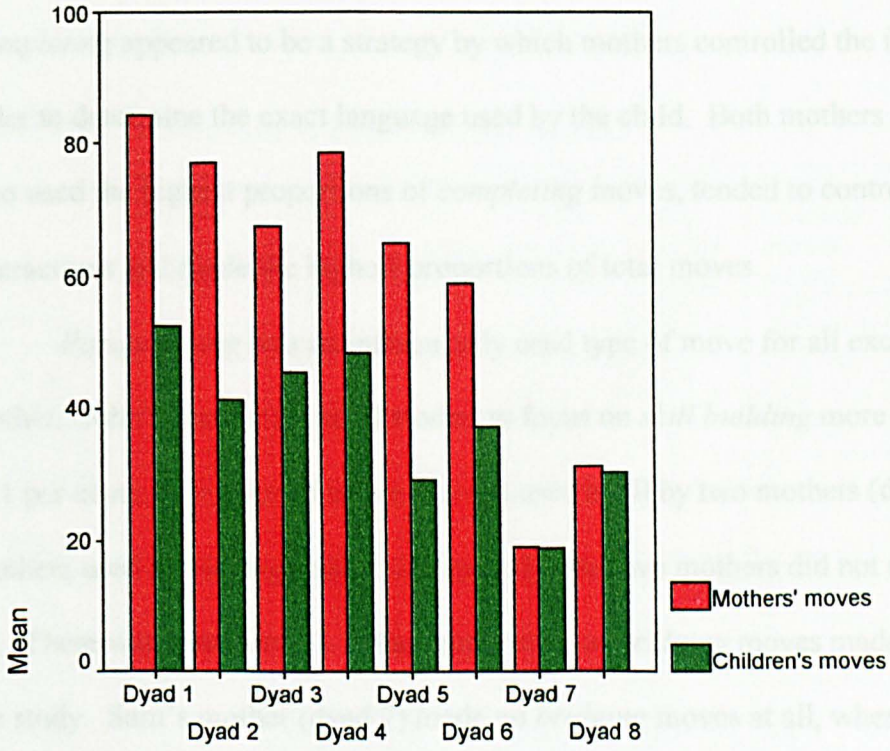
In all but two cases, mothers made substantially more moves than their children; between 60 and 70 per cent of all moves were made by mothers and between 30 and 40 per cent by children. Sam and Emma however, made almost as many moves as their mothers. This was due to the fact that both children tended to engage in frequent and spontaneous reading of texts. John (dyad 5) made the lowest proportion of moves in

relation to his mother, followed by James. Both these mothers tended to control interactions.

Table 8:10 Mean numbers of moves per book and percentages of total moves

	Dyad 1: Catherine and her mother	Dyad 2: James and his mother	Dyad 3: Sarah and her mother	Dyad 4: Chloe and her mother	Dyad 5: John and his mother	Dyad 6: Charlotte and her mother	Dyad 7: Sam and his mother	Dyad 8: Emma and her mother
Mothers' moves	84.3	76.8	67.5	78.6	64.8	58.7	19.0	31.2
Child moves	52.6	41.0	45.7	48.4	29.2	37.0	18.6	30.2
% of total moves – mother	61.6%	65.2%	59.6%	61.9%	68.9%	61.3%	50.6%	49.2%
% of total moves – child	38.4%	34.8%	40.4%	38.1%	31.1%	38.7%	49.4%	50.8%

Figure 8:4 Mean numbers of moves per book



The mother's role

Functions of mothers' moves

Table 8:11 illustrates the proportions of each category of move used by the eight dyads. Mothers of dyads 7 and 8 used relatively high proportions of *managing* moves,

whereas dyads 1, 2 and 4 used relatively low proportions of such moves. Proportions of *evaluating* moves, which in every dyad represented the most commonly used moves, were relatively stable across the eight dyads, ranging from 21.8 per cent for dyad 5 to 32.6 per cent for dyad 1. There was quite a range for *labelling*, from 8.4 per cent for dyad 2 to 21.9 per cent for dyad 8. Proportions of *describing* moves were relatively similar for all eight mothers. Interestingly, the mother from dyad 8 who used the highest proportion of *labelling* moves used the lowest percentage of *describing* moves (10.2 per cent), while the mother from dyad 2 who used the lowest proportion of *labelling* moves used some of the highest proportions of *describing* moves.

Completing moves were used frequently by mothers from dyads 2 and 5 and to a lesser extent, dyad 8. Other mothers used this type of move much less frequently. *Completing* appeared to be a strategy by which mothers controlled the interactions, in order to determine the exact language used by the child. Both mothers of dyads 2 and 5, who used the highest proportions of *completing* moves, tended to control the interactions and made the highest proportions of total moves.

Paraphrasing was an infrequently used type of move for all except Sam's mother. John's mother (dyad 5) tended to focus on *skill building* more than any other (4.1 per cent). This type of move was not used at all by two mothers (dyads 4 and 8). Mothers used *expanding* moves infrequently, and two mothers did not use this move at all. There was some variety in the proportions of *bridging* moves made by mothers in the study. Sam's mother (dyad 7) made no *bridging* moves at all, whereas mothers from dyads 1 to 3 used these moves more frequently (between 3.9 and 5.6 per cent).

Referring to the real world was used very rarely or not at all by the majority of mothers. James' mother (dyad 2) used the highest proportion of this type of move at 3.5 per cent. The mothers from dyads 1, 2 and 4 used this type of move relatively infrequently while three other mothers (dyads 6, 7 and 8) did not use this move at all.

Developing vocabulary was also used infrequently by all mothers. The mother of dyad 4 made the highest proportion of *expanding* moves, at almost three per cent, but two mothers did not use this move at all. The high-level demand *developing vocabulary* move was used most frequently by the mother of dyad 8, at just over one per cent. Three mothers did not use this type of move.

Clarifying was used most frequently by Chloe's mother (dyad 4) and least often by Sarah's mother (dyad 3). Chloe's mother also used the highest proportion of *predicting* moves (10.7 per cent) whereas Sam and Emma's mothers (dyads 7 and 8) used fewer than one per cent of such moves.

Catherine's mother (dyad 1) made by far the most *literacy* references; at 8 per cent this is more than three times more than any other mother. All mothers made use of this move to a limited extent.

Table 8:11 Percentages of total mothers' moves

	Dyad 1: Catherine and her mother	Dyad 2: James and his mother	Dyad 3: Sarah and her mother	Dyad 4: Chloe and her mother	Dyad 5: John and his mother	Dyad 6: Charlotte and her mother	Dyad 7: Sam and his mother	Dyad 8: Emma and her mother
Managing	8.6	10.0	15.6	9.5	12.9	17.5	21.8	21.4
Evaluating	32.4	26.6	28.2	26.6	21.8	32.6	24.1	32.6
Labelling	11.4	8.4	17.5	15.5	18.9	11.9	17.3	21.9
Describing	13.1	18.0	14.5	17.1	17.5	15.1	18.8	10.2
Completing	2.2	10.3	2.2	2.4	9.3	0	2.3	4.8
Paraphrasing	0.3	2.2	0.3	1.1	0.3	0	4.5	0
Skill building	0.3	1.7	1.7	0	4.1	2.2	2.3	0
Expanding	1.2	0.4	0.7	2.7	0.9	0	0	1.6
Bridging	5.6	3.9	4.9	2.0	1.5	2.3	0	0.5
Real world	2.9	3.5	0.3	2.0	0.3	0	0	0
Vocabulary	0	0.9	0.7	0.6	0.2	0	0	1.1
Clarifying	5.4	4.3	1.0	6.6	3.8	4.1	2.3	1.6
Predicting	7.6	6.4	8.6	10.7	5.5	4.6	0.8	0.5
Literacy	8.0	1.7	1.5	0.9	1.2	1.5	2.3	1.1
Other	1.0	1.7	2.2	2.6	1.9	7.5	3.8	2.7

Mothers' moves and demand levels

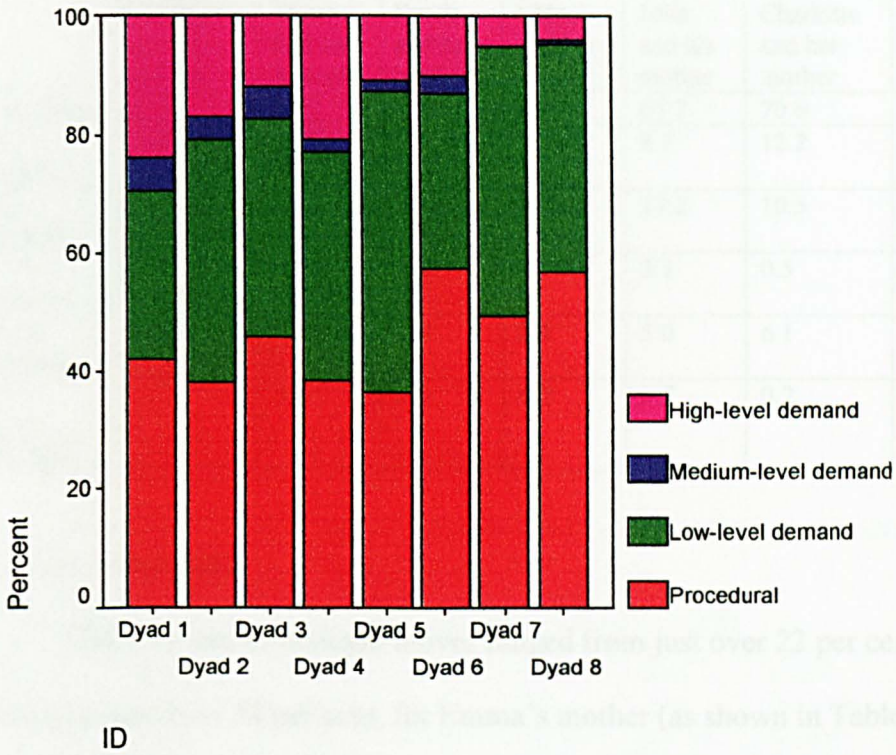
The categories of move identified above were further categorised according to their perceived level of demand. Table 8:12 shows that dyads 6 and 8 made the highest

proportion of procedural moves and dyads 2, 4 and 5 the lowest. The highest proportions of low-level demand moves were made by John's mother (dyad 5) and Sam's mother (dyad 7), and the lowest by Catherine's mother (dyad 1) and Charlotte's mother (dyad 6). Medium-level demand moves have already been discussed above under *bridging* (see above). Mothers of dyads 1 and 4 made the highest proportion of high-level demand moves (around a quarter). The lowest proportions were made by mothers of dyads 7 and 8 (four to five per cent). These relative proportions are illustrated graphically in Figure 8:5.

Table 8:12 Percentages mothers' moves in terms of demand levels

	Dyad 1: Catherine and her mother	Dyad 2: James and his mother	Dyad 3: Sarah and her mother	Dyad 4: Chloe and her mother	Dyad 5: John and his mother	Dyad 6: Charlotte and her mother	Dyad 7: Sam and his mother	Dyad 8: Emma and her mother
Procedural	42.0	38.4	45.9	38.6	36.5	57.7	49.6	56.7
Low-level demand	28.5	41.0	37.0	38.7	50.9	29.2	45.1	38.5
Medium-level demand	5.6	3.9	4.9	2.0	1.5	2.9	0	0.5
High-level demand	23.9	16.8	12.1	20.7	11.0	10.2	5.3	4.3

Figure 8:5 Percentages of mothers' moves in terms of demand levels



Forms of mothers' moves

Table 8:13 shows that the mothers of dyads 6 and 7 used the highest proportions of *statements* and directives, at over 70 per cent. The lowest proportions of *statements* (just over 50 per cent) and therefore the highest proportions of questions were used by the mothers of dyads 2 and 4. *Tag* questions, used by mothers to facilitate interaction by offering the child an opportunity to speak, were used most commonly by the mothers of dyads 1, 2 and 6. Use of *what* questions ranged from just under ten per cent (Emma's mother) to just over 20 per cent (Chloe's mother). Sam's mother used no *where* questions at all, whereas for Emma's mother they comprised seven per cent of moves. Emma's mother also relied most heavily upon closed *yes/no* type questions, with over 12 per cent of all her moves comprising such questions. *Open-ended* questions were used relatively infrequently by all mothers. Emma's mother asked no *open-ended* questions at all, whereas the mothers of dyads 2 and 4 used over four per cent of such questions.

Table 8:13 Percentages of forms of mothers' moves

	Dyad 1: Catherine and her mother	Dyad 2: James and his mother	Dyad 3: Sarah and her mother	Dyad 4: Chloe and her mother	Dyad 5: John and his mother	Dyad 6: Charlotte and her mother	Dyad 7: Sam and his mother	Dyad 8: Emma and her mother
Statements	62.0	51.7	62.5	53.8	65.7	70.6	72.9	62.0
Tag questions	15.3	16.6	8.9	8.9	8.2	12.2	7.5	9.1
What questions	11.7	18.0	17.0	20.6	17.2	10.5	18.1	9.6
Where questions	0.7	0.7	3.2	4.2	3.3	0.5	0	7.0
Yes/no questions	8.7	8.4	7.4	8.4	5.0	6.1	0.8	12.3
Open-ended questions	1.7	4.6	1.0	4.2	0.7	0.2	0.8	0

Dialogic behaviours

Mothers' use of dialogic moves ranged from just over 22 per cent, for John's mother, to just over 34 per cent, for Emma's mother (as shown in Table 8:14). In contrast, Emma's mother used dialogic type questions the least frequently, at just under ten per cent (see Table 8:15). The highest proportion of dialogic type questions were used by Chloe and James' mothers, at over 20 per cent. Sam's mother asked the lowest proportion of *yes/no* and *where* type questions (under one per cent) and Emma's mother used the highest proportion of such moves (over 19 per cent). There was a huge range in the total numbers of move made by each mother (see Table 8:10) from 19 moves per book for Sam's mother to 84 for Catherine's mother.

Table 8:14 Percentages of dialogic moves

	Dyad 1: Catherine and her mother	Dyad 2: James and his mother	Dyad 3: Sarah and her mother	Dyad 4: Chloe and her mother	Dyad 5: John and his mother	Dyad 6: Charlotte and her mother	Dyad 7: Sam and his mother	Dyad 8: Emma and her mother
Evaluating	32.4	26.6	28.2	26.6	21.8	32.6	24.1	32.6
Expanding	1.2	0.4	0.7	2.7	0.9	0	0	1.6
Total	33.6	27.0	28.9	29.3	22.7	32.6	24.1	34.2

Table 8:15 Percentages of forms of move encouraged and discouraged by dialogic reading

	Dyad 1: Catherine and her mother	Dyad 2: James and his mother	Dyad 3: Sarah and her mother	Dyad 4: Chloe and her mother	Dyad 5: John and his mother	Dyad 6: Charlotte and her mother	Dyad 7: Sam and his mother	Dyad 8: Emma and her mother
Encouraged (*Open-ended* and *what)*	13.4	22.6	18.0	24.8	17.9	10.7	18.9	9.6
Discouraged (*Yes/no* and*where*)	9.4	9.1	10.6	12.6	8.3	6.6	0.8	19.3

Mothers' use of language and literacy words

Table 8:16 shows that all mothers used such words very infrequently.

Table 8:16 Mothers' use of language and literacy words

Mean per book	Dyad 1: Catherine and her mother	Dyad 2: James and his mother	Dyad 3: Sarah and her mother	Dyad 4: Chloe and her mother	Dyad 5: John and his mother	Dyad 6: Charlotte and her mother	Dyad 7: Sam and his mother	Dyad 8: Emma and her mother
Literacy words	4.3	1.8	5.3	1.4	2.9	2.3	1.3	2.8
Language words	5.6	6.7	1.8	2.7	4.1	0.7	0.1	0.5
Language & literacy words	9.9	8.4	7.2	4.1	7.0	3.0	1.4	3.3

The child's role

Functions of children's moves

Table 8:17 shows the percentages of moves in each category made by children. There was a large range (between 16 and 45 per cent) in proportions of *procedural* moves made by children, with Sam (dyad 7) using the highest and Chloe (dyad 4) and John (dyad 5) the lowest proportion of such moves. The range for *low-level* moves was also large at almost 30 per cent (29.0 to 58.6 per cent). *Medium-level* moves occurred much less frequently, with Emma (dyad 8) making no references to her own experience, while the other seven children made between 1.3 and 6.1 per cent of such moves.

Some of the most striking contrasts were apparent for *high-level* moves, where the range was from fewer than one per cent (Sam; dyad 7) to almost 20 per cent

(Catherine; dyad 1 and Chloe dyad 4). James (dyad 2) and John (dyad 5) also made high proportions of *high-level* moves, while Emma (dyad 8) and Sarah (dyad 3) made very few such moves.

Table 8:17 Percentages of children's moves

	Dyad 1: Catherine and her mother	Dyad 2: James and his mother	Dyad 3: Sarah and her mother	Dyad 4: Chloe and her mother	Dyad 5: John and his mother	Dyad 6: Charlotte and her mother	Dyad 7: Sam and his mother	Dyad 8: Emma and her mother
Procedural	25.6	17.9	18.8	16.4	16.5	26.6	45.4	24.9
Low-level	37.0	52.3	58.6	49.6	54.9	44.1	29.0	39.6
Medium-level	2.5	1.3	3.4	2.1	0.9	4.4	6.1	0
High-level	18.7	14.2	1.6	18.4	11.9	4.6	0.2	1.4
Incorrect	4.9	8.4	7.5	4.9	12.1	9.3	4.3	7.0
Reading	3.2	3.8	5.8	0	2.5	1.5	14.4	22.3
Chiming	6.2	1.0	2.7	3.3	0.4	0	0	4.8
Unrelated	0.5	1.1	0.7	0	0	8.2	0	0
Inaudible	1.2	0	0.8	2.2	0.7	1.2	0.5	0

John (dyad 5) and Charlotte (dyad 6) used the highest proportions of *incorrect* responses or no responses. Sam and Emma used by far the highest proportions of independent *reading* moves, while Catherine used *chiming* more than any other child. Charlotte used more *unrelated* moves than any other child.

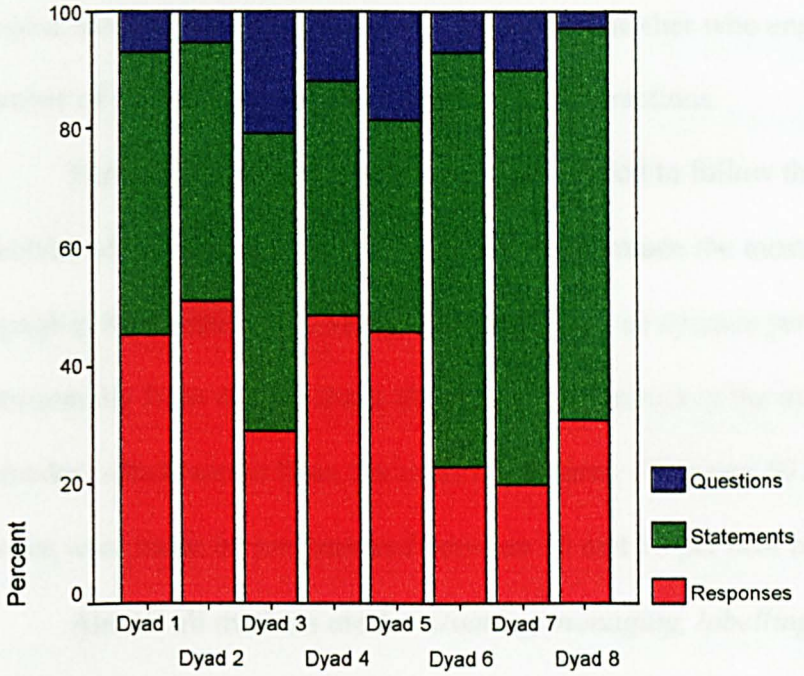
Forms of children's moves

Table 8:18 shows the forms of each child's moves and Figure 8:6 shows this information graphically. Catherine, James, Chloe and John all made a high proportion of *responses*, indicating that their mothers asked them many questions. Sarah, Charlotte, Sam and Emma made high proportions of *statements*, which suggests that these were spontaneous comments deriving from their own interest. Sarah and John used the highest proportions of *questions*.

Table 8:18 Percentages of forms of children's moves

	Dyad 1: Catherine and her mother	Dyad 2: James and his mother	Dyad 3: Sarah and her mother	Dyad 4: Chloe and her mother	Dyad 5: John and his mother	Dyad 6: Charlotte and her mother	Dyad 7: Sam and his mother	Dyad 8: Emma and her mother
Responses	45.4	51.0	29.2	48.4	46.0	23.2	20.0	30.9
Statements	47.6	43.6	50.0	39.5	35.4	69.9	70.0	66.3
Questions	7.2	5.4	20.8	12.1	18.6	7.0	10.0	2.8

Figure 8:6 Percentages of forms of children's moves



Children's use of language and literacy words

Table 8:19 shows that like her mother, Catherine used the most language and literacy words.

Table 8:19 Children's use of language and literacy words

	Dyad 1: Catherine and her mother	Dyad 2: James and his mother	Dyad 3: Sarah and her mother	Dyad 4: Chloe and her mother	Dyad 5: John and his mother	Dyad 6: Charlotte and her mother	Dyad 7: Sam and his mother	Dyad 8: Emma and her mother
Literacy words	1.1	1.0	1.2	0	0.2	1.4	1.4	0.2
Language words	1.4	0.4	0.8	0.3	0.7	0.4	0	0.3
Language & literacy words	2.6	1.4	2.0	0.3	0.9	1.9	1.4	0.5

Summary: comparison of reading interactions

There were substantial differences in the reading behaviours of the eight dyads, especially for the mothers. Of particular interest were the actual numbers of moves made by mothers in each shared reading interaction, which ranged from 19 to 84. However, this has to be considered within the context of the duration of each interaction; the mother who made the highest number of moves also engaged in the longest shared reading interactions, whereas the mother who engaged in the fewest number of moves participated in the shortest interactions.

Numbers of turns made by each dyad tended to follow the same pattern as numbers of mothers' moves, that is mothers who made the most moves tended to engage in high numbers of turns. While numbers of episode per interaction did not vary substantially from dyad to dyad, there were differences in the mean length of those episodes, which varied from 2.4 turns to 6.3 turns. Between 50 and 70 per cent of moves were made by mothers and between 30 and 50 per cent by children.

Almost all mothers used *evaluating, managing, labelling* and *describing* moves most frequently. The remaining eleven moves were used to varying degrees. When the fifteen moves were grouped according to perceived level of demand, it became apparent that there were substantial differences between the eight mothers. Use of procedural moves ranged from 36 per cent to almost 58 per cent and use of low-level demand moves ranged from 27 to 50 per cent. Of particular interest were high-level demand moves, which ranged from just over five per cent to over twenty five per cent. There were similar differences in the forms of mothers' moves. Two mothers used almost as many questions as statements, whereas two mothers used over 70 per cent of statements.

One child made an average of 18 moves per book whereas three children averaged over 40 moves per book. Again however, it is important to consider duration of interaction when dealing with actual numbers, rather than percentages.

Section 3: Relationships between features of shared reading interactions

Section 2 reported individual quantitative data for each dyad. This section examines the relationships between various aspects of the shared reading interactions for the eight dyads using correlational analysis. The correlations shown are for the eight dyads rather than actual numbers of interactions. A number of correlations were conducted in this part of the analysis. Care must be taken in interpreting the results in this section, since with an alpha level of .05, around one in twenty correlations will be positive by chance.

The interaction as a whole

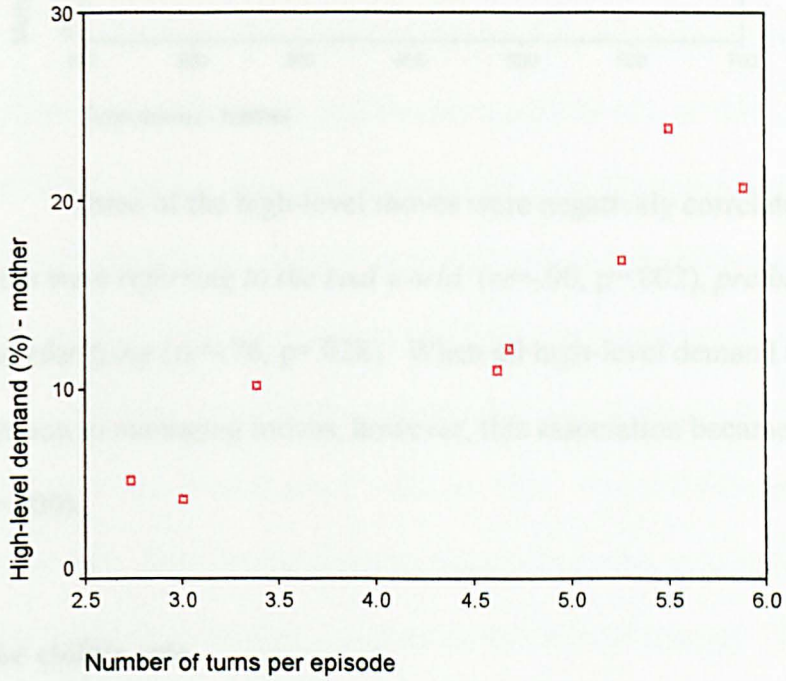
As expected, duration of interaction was associated with features of the interaction as a whole, that is, longer interactions contained more moves, turns and episodes. However, one interesting finding emerged relating to the interaction as a whole that was not a result of duration of interaction. Number of turns per episode was related to total number of turns (Spearman rank correlation coefficient, r_s=.83, p=.010), to mothers' moves (r_s=.81, p=.015) and total number of child moves (r_s=.91, p=.002). This suggests that mothers and children who engaged in the most interaction tended to have longer discussions about each particular topic.

The mother's role

Percentages of mothers' high-level demand moves were positively correlated with mothers' use of *open-ended* questions (r_s=.76, p=.028). This is to be expected, since the majority of *open-ended* questions were also high-level demand. *Open-ended* questions were also positively correlated with turns per episode (r_s=.79, p=.021) suggesting perhaps that such questions were associated with longer interactions.

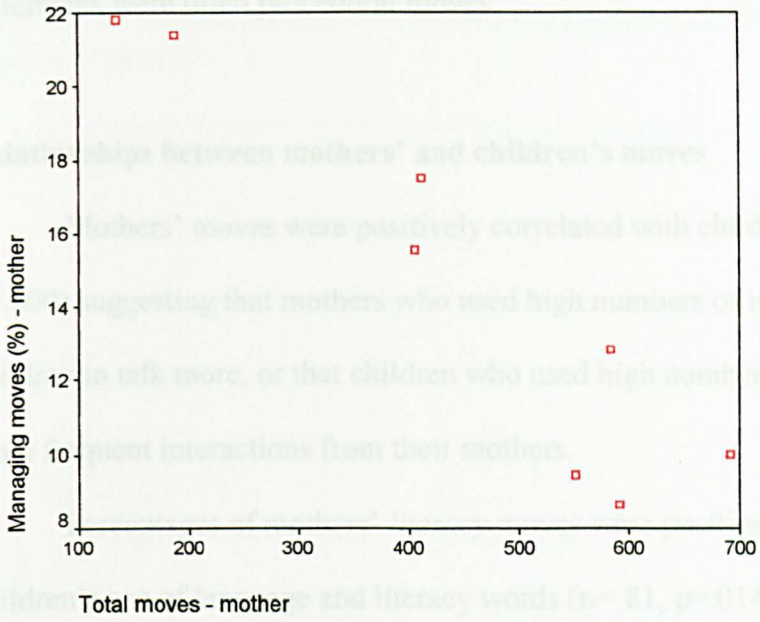
Turns per episode was positively correlated with percentages of mothers' medium-level demand moves (r_s=.79, p=.021) and high-level demand moves (r_s=.91, p=.002), see Figure 8:7. The high-level demand moves specifically associated with turns per episode were *referring to the real world* (r_s=.85, p=.007), *clarifying* (r_s=.71, p=.047) and *predicting* (r_s=.91, p=.002). Numbers of turns per episode were not significantly correlated with procedural or low-level demand moves. This finding suggests that more decontextualised interactions tended to comprise lengthier episodes.

Figure 8:7 Correlation between mothers' high-level demand moves and turns per episode



Turns per episode was negatively correlated with mothers' *managing* moves (r_s=-.98, p=.000). This suggests that mothers who engaged in relatively short episodes tended to be those who used high proportions of *managing* moves. Proportions of *managing* moves were also negatively correlated with total mothers' moves (r_s=-.86, p=.007, see Figure 8:8), that is, the more moves mothers made, the lower the proportion of *managing* moves they made.

Figure 8:8 Correlation between mothers' *managing* moves and total mothers' moves



Three of the high-level moves were negatively correlated with *managing* moves; these were *referring to the real world* (r_s=-.90, p=.002), *predicting* (r_s=-.79 , p=.021) and *clarifying* (r_s=-.76, p=.028). When all high-level demand moves were considered in relation to *managing* moves, however, this association became even stronger (r_s=-.98, p=.000).

The child's role

Turns per episode was positively correlated with children's *high-level* moves (r_s=.86, p=.007) and children's responses to their mothers (r_s=.74, p=.037). Turns per episode was negatively correlated with child statements (r_s=-.71, p=.047). This finding suggests that children's *high-level* moves and responses to mothers' questions tended to form part of longer episodes. Children's use of statements was associated with shorter interactions.

Percentages of children's *high-level* moves were correlated with percentages of children's responses (r_s=.76, p=.028). This suggests that *high-level* moves tended to be

responses to mothers' questions. Percentages of children's statements were positively correlated with percentages of procedural moves (r_s=.88, p=.004) suggesting that statements were often procedural moves.

Relationships between mothers' and children's moves

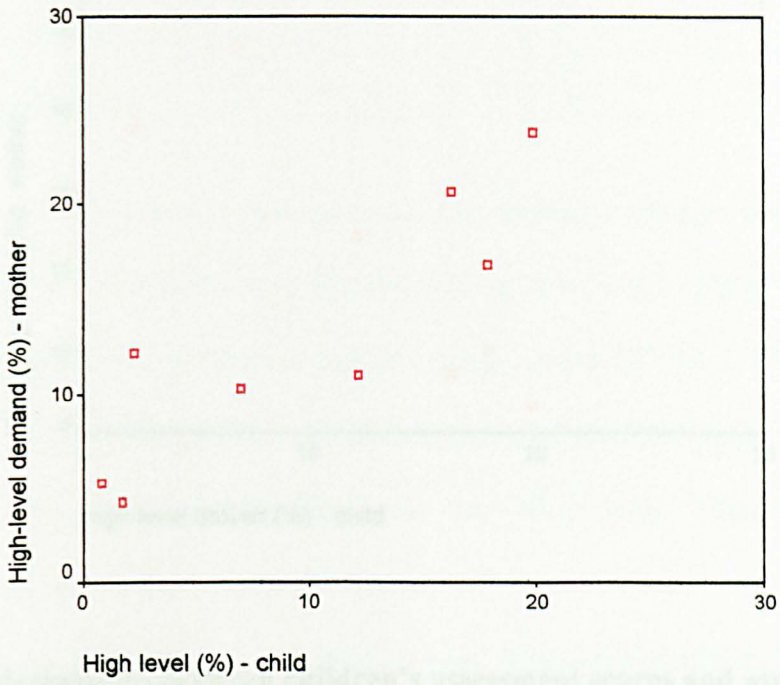
Mothers' moves were positively correlated with children's moves (r_s=.78, p=.000) suggesting that mothers who used high numbers of moves encouraged their children to talk more, or that children who used high numbers of moves tended to elicit more frequent interactions from their mothers.

Percentages of mothers' *literacy* moves were positively correlated with children's use of language and literacy words (r_s=.81, p=.014). This finding suggests that either mothers who used the language of books encouraged an increased use of language and literacy words in their children, or that children using higher numbers of such words elicited more moves relating to the language of books from their mothers.

Mothers' use of high-level demand moves was positively correlated with children's *high-level* moves (r_s=.98, p=.000). Figure 8:9 illustrates this relationship graphically. This finding suggests that mothers who used high-level demand moves encouraged their children to use decontextualised language. The qualitative data support this finding. More specifically, mothers' use of *referring to the real world* and *clarifying* moves were positively associated with children's use of *high-level* moves (r_s=.90, p=.002 and r_s=.81, p=.015 respectively). Conversely, mothers' *managing* and *other* moves were negatively correlated with children's use of *high-level* moves (r_s=-.98, p=.021 and r_s=-.76, p=.028 respectively). Figure 8:10 illustrates this relationship. However, there was no negative correlation between all procedural moves (which include *evaluating* moves) and children's *high-level* moves. This reflects the fact that

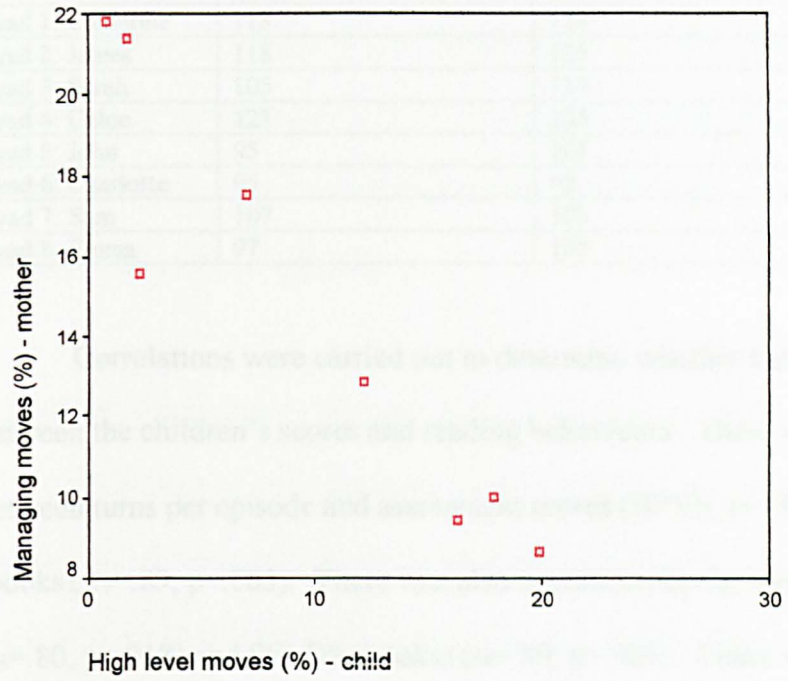
evaluating moves were used heavily by all mothers and were not linked to any particular type of behaviour.

Figure 8:9 Correlation between mothers' high-level demand moves and children's *high-level* moves



As expected, there was a strong correlation between mothers' use of questions and children's responses to their mothers (r_s=.83, p=.010) indicating that mothers who asked high proportions of questions had children who made high proportions of responses. Conversely, mothers' statements were negatively correlated with children's responses (r_s=-.83, p=.010).

Figure 8:10 Correlation between mothers' *managing* moves and children's *high-level* moves



Relationships between children's assessment scores and aspects of shared reading interactions

Children were assessed on three measures of language and literacy at the end of the study. The results can be seen below in Table 8:20. The standardised score indicates the degree to which a child's score deviates from the average for children of the same age (a score of 100). Five children achieved greater than 100 on the EOWPVT while seven did so on the BPVS. This was not, therefore a 'normal' sample; the assessment scores revealed that overall the children had performed above the norm on tests of expressive and particularly receptive vocabulary.

Table 8:20 Children's assessment scores

	EOWPVT standardised score	BPVS standardised score	SELDP (books) score
Dyad 1: Catherine	113	118	12
Dyad 2: James	118	125	10
Dyad 3: Sarah	105	117	10
Dyad 4: Chloe	121	125	12
Dyad 5: John	95	105	11
Dyad 6: Charlotte	95	92	9
Dyad 7: Sam	107	105	7
Dyad 8: Emma	97	105	6

Correlations were carried out to determine whether there were any associations between the children's scores and reading behaviours. There was a relationship between turns per episode and assessment scores (BPVS, r_s=.84, p=.01; SELDP (books), r_s=.89, p=.003). There was also a relationship for mothers' moves and BPVS (r_s=.80, p=.018) and SELDP (books) (r_s=.89, p=.003). There were no relationships for child moves and assessment scores.

Mothers' *managing* moves were negatively related to BPVS (r_s=-.75, p=.033) and SELDP (r_s=-.93, p=.001). Two other mothers' moves were positively correlated with BPVS and SELDP (books); *referring to the real world* (BPVS, r_s=.86, p=.007; SELDP [books], r_s=.78, p=.023) and *predicting* moves (BPVS, r_s=.75, p=.033; SELDP [books], r_s=.84, p=.009). High-level demand moves overall were associated with these two assessment scores (BPVS, r_s=.75, p=.033; SELDP [books], r_s=.86, p=.007). There was no significant relationship between mothers' use of *literacy* moves and SELDP. Mothers' use of statements was negatively associated with BPVS (r_s=-.80, p=.018), whereas *open-ended* questions were positively associated with EOWPVT (r_s=.87, p=.005) and BPVS (r_s=.92, p=.001).

Children's use of *high-level* moves was associated with SELDP (books) scores (r_s=.82, p=.013) while the child move *reading* was negatively correlated with SELDP (books) (r_s=-.71, p=.048). Children's use of statements was also negatively correlated with SELDP (books) (r_s=-.77, p=.025). The last two findings are particularly

interesting. Children using high proportions of statements tended to be from dyads whose mothers asked fewer questions, and their shared reading experiences tended to be less interactive. Similarly, the qualitative data suggest that the children in this study who engaged in high proportions of *reading* moves were those whose shared reading experiences were somewhat less interactive, and tended to take the role of mother reading followed by child reading.

Summary: relationships between features of shared reading interactions

This analysis provides an interesting insight into the relationships between various aspects of shared reading interactions, although the results of any correlational analysis must be interpreted with some caution, as discussed in Chapter 3.

The main findings can be summarised as follows:

- Dyads participating in high numbers of turns and moves tended to engage in longer episodes.
- Mothers who used high proportions of medium and high-level demand moves tended to engage in longer episodes.
- Mothers who used the highest proportions of *open-ended* questions tended to be those who participated in the longest episodes.
- Children who used the highest proportions of *high-level* moves tended to participate in the longest episodes.
- Mothers who used high proportions of *managing* moves tended to participate in shorter episodes.
- Children who used high proportions of statements tended to participate in shorter episodes.
- Mothers' moves were positively correlated with children's moves.

- Mothers' use of high-level demand moves was positively correlated with children's use of *high-level* moves.
- Mothers' use of *managing* moves was negatively correlated with children's use of *high-level* moves.

Children's assessment scores were positively correlated with the following features:

- Turns per episode (BPVS, SELDP [books])
- Mothers' moves (BPVS, SELDP [books])
- Mothers' use of *referring to the real world* and *predicting* moves (BPVS, SELDP [books])
- Mothers' use of high-level demand moves (BPVS, SELDP [books])
- Mothers' use of *open-ended* questions (EOWPVT, BPVS)
- Children's use of *high-level* moves (SELDP [books])

Children's assessment scores were negatively correlated with the following features:

- Mothers' *managing* moves (BPVS, SELDP [books])
- Mothers' use of statements (BPVS)
- Children's *reading* moves (SELDP [books])
- Children's use of statements (SELDP [books])

Discussion

This chapter attempted to address the research question, '*How do mothers and children read together?*' by examining the general structure and content of shared reading interactions using quantitative methods. There are some interesting similarities

and differences between the findings of this study and those reported elsewhere. For example, the findings for the structure of shared reading interactions, that 62 per cent of moves were made by mothers and 38 per cent by children, are similar to those reported in Leseman et al. (1995). In the present study almost 40 per cent of all mothers' moves were in the form of a question, whereas Leseman et al. (1995) noted that only 21 per cent were questions. This disparity could possibly be a result of cultural differences; the study conducted by Leseman and his colleagues was carried out in the Netherlands. In support of previous research, this study also found that mothers were more likely to initiate episodes, thereby choosing the topic for discussion. Other features of shared reading interactions not previously investigated include, for example numbers of turns per episode. Episodes were relatively short, averaging 4.7 turns and usually began with references to illustration details. The data also revealed that the most commonly used types of mothers' moves were *managing, evaluating, labelling* and *describing.* These four moves comprised seventy per cent of the total.

While an overview of the data facilitates understanding of the structure and content of shared reading interactions generally, a more comprehensive insight was gained from comparing individual interactions of the eight dyads in the study. There were some striking differences in the content and structure of a number of features, particularly for mothers. One of the most noteworthy findings of this analysis was the huge variation in numbers of moves, varying from means of 19 per book to 84 per book. The data also revealed that two of the mothers made around the same number of moves as their children. This was because both children in these dyads participated in lengthy re-readings of the books they read, all of which were coded for moves.

Mothers in this study used a number of dialogic reading behaviours although they had not been trained in the techniques. However, they varied in the extent to which they used these behaviours. *Evaluating* was commonly used by almost all the mothers,

whereas *expanding* was used to a very limited degree. Only 18 per cent of all moves were in the form of *what* or *open-ended* questions, encouraged by dialogic reading. The majority of moves were in the form of statements or directives. This finding suggests that mothers could be taught to increase their frequency of use of such questions.

Addressing the third research question, '*Which behaviours promote language and literacy development?*' is difficult. In a study such as this, with an observational design, identifying such behaviours relies to a large extent on judgement and interpretation. It would be difficult to make these judgements on the basis of the correlational analysis alone. The validity of the interpretation can be improved by triangulating findings of those highlighted in this chapter (using quantitative methods) with those from Chapter 6 (using qualitative methods). In Chapter 6 it was acknowledged that most moves made by mothers helped to promote language and literacy development, in that they tended to draw children into interactions and increase their interest in reading. However, it was also noted that mothers' decontextualised high-level demand moves were particularly beneficial because they encouraged their children to make decontextualised responses. This finding is supported by the quantitative analysis, that is, the children of mothers who used the most high-level demand moves tended to use high proportions of high-level moves. Conversely, the children of mothers who used the fewest high-level demand moves tended to use low proportions of high-level moves. Mothers who used the most high-level demand moves tended to be those who used the highest number of moves overall and tended to engage in longer discussions about particular topics. The analysis in Section 1 showed that episodes tended to begin with simple discussions about illustrations, moving on to higher level, more decontextualised interactions. Thus, longer episodes were likely to be an indication of some high-level interaction and also indicated good co-operation between mother and child.

Managing moves were an essential part of the shared reading interactions. However, high proportions of such moves were sometimes an indication of tension. High proportions of these moves were used when mothers needed to control their children's unco-operative behaviour, lack of interest or interruptions. The finding that *managing* moves were negatively correlated with children's use of *high-level* moves reflects this.

Mothers who asked high proportions of questions tended to encourage higher levels of participation from their children. *Open-ended* questions appeared to be particularly beneficial types of questions, since there was some evidence that these encouraged high-level thought in children (see Chapter 6, dyad 4). These questions were used to a very limited extent by all mothers. Dialogic reading discourages certain types of questions (that is, *where* and *yes/no* questions) because they encourage non-verbal and limited responses in children. However, it may be argued that such questions are more beneficial than statements, since they at least encourage some level of participation from children.

This chapter also examined children's assessment scores in relation to shared reading behaviours. Assessment scores were associated with mothers' moves, turns per episode, use of high-level demand moves and *open-ended* questions. Children's use of *high-level* moves was also positively correlated with the SELDP (books). This is an interesting finding because the SELDP requires children to use high-level language in recounting events in the story. Neither of the other two vocabulary assessments makes such high-level demands on children. Children who achieved the lowest assessment scores tended to use high proportions of *reading* moves and made high proportions of statements. Their mothers tended to use high proportions of *managing* moves and statements. This implies that the shared reading interactions of lower scoring children tended to lack interaction, with both mothers and children making high proportions of

comments, without asking or answering as many questions as dyads of higher scoring children.

Chapter 6 and the current chapter have examined how mothers and children read together and have begun to identify reading behaviours that may promote language and literacy development. So far this investigation has focused on the sample as a whole, that is, the eight dyads and their associated reading behaviours. Wider issues have not been addressed. The next two chapters therefore, investigate some of factors that may affect shared reading interactions. Chapter 9 explores genre, familiarity and mother-child roles while Chapter 10 looks at socio-economic factors.

Chapter 9: Study 2 - Effects of genre, familiarity and mother-child roles on shared reading interactions

Introduction

This chapter begins to address research question 2 '*What factors influence mother-child reading interactions?*' by investigating the nature of shared reading interactions for different types of books, levels of book familiarity and reading roles. Each shared reading interaction was categorised according to the type of book read (narrative or expository), level of familiarity (familiar or unfamiliar) and reading roles (mother led or child led) as described in Chapter 3. To recapitulate, these categories were:

- Familiar narrative books (between 2 and 6 books per dyad)
- Unfamiliar narrative books (2 books per dyad)
- Unfamiliar expository book (1 book per dyad)
- Child reading of familiar book (1 book per dyad)

Three of the interactions were around narrative books whereas one was around an expository book; two interactions involved familiar and two involved unfamiliar books, three were mother led and one was child led.

It should be noted that when selecting one of the two unfamiliar narrative books, four children selected books that were familiar, most having listened to the stories at nursery, unbeknown to their mothers. After careful consideration, these interactions were assigned to the *unfamiliar* category, because although the children were somewhat familiar with the books, the mothers were not. It is also necessary to note that one dyad (dyad 1, Catherine and her mother) selected alphabet books to read when choosing books from their own collection. Although alphabet books are a genre in their own right, they have been included as *familiar narratives* here because the two books

selected were in fact very like descriptive narrative books; each page showed a detailed illustration and was accompanied by rhyming text describing the illustration. All other dyads selected narratives to read in the first session.

This chapter examines aspects of the interaction as a whole, the mother's role and the child's role for each of the four book readings using quantitative methods. These methods include the Friedman test (the non-parametric equivalent of the repeated measures ANOVA) as described in Chapter 3. The quantitative analysis is supported by references to qualitative data. The findings are summarised and their implications are discussed at the end of the chapter.

Analysis of shared reading interactions

Comparing mothers' and children's behaviours across the four types of interaction is considered important in order to determine similarities and differences between the interactions. For example, one type of interaction may be associated with higher numbers of mothers' or children's moves. Such findings could have implications for the design of future intervention programmes. Firstly, aspects of the interaction as a whole are compared, followed by the mother's, then the child's role.

The interaction as a whole

Table 9:1 shows that three of the book readings were very similar in mean durations, being around five and a half minutes for child readings, familiar and unfamiliar narratives. The lengths of unfamiliar expository interactions were much longer, being almost eight minutes. The Friedman test however, revealed no significant differences for duration across all four types of interactions (Chi-square = 3.684; df = 3; p=0.298).

Table 9:1 Durations of interactions

	Duration of shared reading interaction per book (mean in minutes)
Familiar narrative	5.38
Unfamiliar narrative	5.31
Unfamiliar expository	7.58
Child reading	5.27

Book readings were further quantitatively analysed by examining numbers of episodes, turns and moves. Table 9:2 shows the numbers of turns and episodes (or interactions on a particular topic) for each type of book reading. There were significant differences between the total numbers of turns on the Friedman test (Chi-square = 16.671; df= 3; p= .001) with by far the highest number of turns occurring in expository book reading interactions.

Because mother initiated episodes, child initiated episodes and total episodes were three comparisons within a variable (that is, they were all episodes), an adjustment for the increased probability of a type I error was made by adopting a nominal alpha level of 0.05 / 3 = 0.016 (Bonferroni correction) as described in Chapter 3. There were significant differences in numbers of episodes for the four types of book reading (Chi-square = 12.45; df= 3; p= .006) and also for mother initiated episodes (Chi-square = 16.367; df= 3; p= .001). In the expository book readings there were over twice as many episodes as in the child reading interactions.

Table 9:2 Features of interactions

Mean per book:	Familiar narrative	Unfamiliar narrative	Unfamiliar expository	Child reading
Total turns * **	**68.5**	**64.8**	**137.5**	**80.0**
Episodes (mother)*	**11.5**	**12.3**	**17.0**	**5.5**
Episodes (child)	5.6	7.0	7.6	4.5
Total episodes *	**16.7**	**19.3**	**24.6**	**10.0**
Turns per episode* **	**4.1**	**3.4**	**5.5**	**8.6**

***** p<.001, * p<.016 (Bonferroni correction)**

Number of turns per episode provides an indication of the amount of discussion around a particular topic. There were significant differences between the four types of book reading for turns per episode (Chi-square = 17.85; df= 3; p=.000). Although the child reading interactions contained the fewest episodes, by far the highest number of turns per episode occurred in these interactions that is, there was far more discussion around each topic than in any of the other interactions. The fewest turns per episode occurred in unfamiliar narratives. This means that in the child readings, dyads discussed a small number of topics, but these were discussed for longer on average.

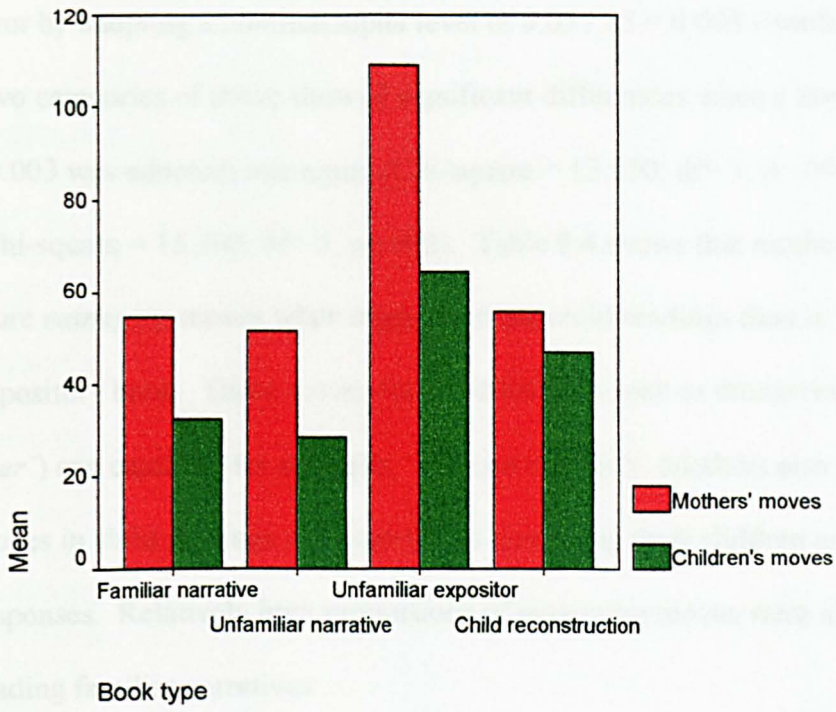
Table 9:3 shows that there were significant differences between numbers of mothers' moves (Chi-square = 15.076; df= 3; p=.002) and child moves (Chi-square = 10.050; df= 3; p=.018). Figure 9:1 shows these differences graphically.

Table 9:3 Mean numbers of moves per book and percentages of total moves

	Familiar narrative	Unfamiliar narrative	Unfamiliar expository	Child reading
Mothers' moves **	**53.7**	**51.1**	**108.9**	**55.5**
Children's moves *	**33.5**	**28.4**	**64.3**	**46.6**
Percentage of total moves - mothers	61.6	64.3	62.9	54.4
Percentage of total moves – children	38.4	35.7	37.1	45.6

*** p<.05, ** p<.01**

Figure 9:1 Mean numbers of moves per book



It is interesting to compare mothers' and children's moves for each of the book readings, as shown in Table 9:3 and Figure 9:1. The percentage of mothers and children's moves were very similar for the three mother led interactions. However, in the child readings, mothers made only slightly more moves than children.

The results in this section must be interpreted with caution however, since features such as numbers of turns, moves and episodes also depend to some extent on the length of the interactions. Only turns per episode and percentages of mothers' and children's moves are independent of duration of interactions.

The mother's role

Functions of mothers' moves

Table 9:4 gives the percentage values of the types of moves made by mothers. The Friedman test was carried out for each of the 15 categories of move to determine whether there were any significant differences between categories of move and reading

interactions. An adjustment was again made for the increased probability of a type I error by adopting a nominal alpha level of 0.05 / 15 = 0.003 (Bonferroni correction). Two categories of move showed significant differences when a nominal alpha level of <0.003 was adopted; managing (Chi-square = 13.950; df= 3; p=.003) and *evaluating* (Chi-square = 15.300; df= 3; p=.002). Table 9:4 shows that mothers made three times more *managing* moves when engaged in the child readings than in readings of the expository book. These moves included features such as directives (for example, *'turn over'*) and cajoling (for example, *'you can read it'*). Mothers also used more *evaluating* moves in child readings, prompting and correcting their children and repeating their responses. Relatively high proportions of *managing* moves were also made when reading familiar narratives.

There were large differences in the percentages of *completing* moves for the different books, although the differences were not significant. *Completing* tended to be a strategy used by mothers when reading familiar books to increase interaction, child motivation and memory. As such, very few *completing* moves occurred when reading unfamiliar books. Child reading interactions contained by far the highest levels of *completing* moves, at almost 12 per cent. These high proportions reflect mothers' attempts to draw children into the interactions as a strategy to encourage them to adopt the leading role.

Table 9:4 Percentages of mothers' moves

	Familiar narrative	Unfamiliar narrative	Unfamiliar expository	Familiar: child reading
Managing *	**18.1**	**14.3**	**8.4**	**24.3**
Evaluating *	**28.5**	**20.1**	**27.9**	**37.3**
Labelling	10.4	17.9	20.9	6.6
Describing	11.9	13.9	21.6	11.8
Completing	6.9	2.2	1.2	11.6
Paraphrasing	0.3	3.0	0.3	0.7
Skill building	2.2	2.3	0.5	0
Expanding	1.0	1.2	0	1.0
Bridging	2.2	1.9	5.7	1.3
Referring to the real world	0.8	0.1	2.8	0.2
Developing vocabulary	0.3	0.5	0.4	0.3
Clarifying	6.2	7.2	3.2	0.6
Predicting	6.2	9.2	2.1	2.8
Literacy	1.7	2.7	2.7	0.8
Other	3.3	3.4	2.2	0.6

***p<.003 (Bonferroni correction)**

There were large but not significant differences in proportions of *labelling* and *describing* moves. The highest proportions of such moves occurred in expository book readings, although there were also relatively high proportions of these moves in unfamiliar narratives. This suggests that when reading unfamiliar books mothers paid more attention to illustration details than when reading familiar books. Viewing illustrations for the first time appeared to generate enthusiasm and consequently discussion between mothers and children.

The highest proportions of *bridging* moves occurred in readings of the unfamiliar expository book; *bridging* moves for the other three book readings were similar. This may be due to the book's topic of farm animals, which many children seemed to have experiences to draw upon, for example:

> *M: Baby hens are called chicks. They're like the ones that you had at your nursery aren't they? Remember? And they all kept jumping, didn't they, out of their box?*
> *C: But they've grown into hens now.*
> *M: They probably have. Yeah.*

Referring to the real world moves, which occurred relatively infrequently overall, occurred more in interactions around the unfamiliar expository book than any other, for example:

> *M: A ewe has her lambs in the springtime. What else happens in the spring- time?*
> *C: I don't know.*
> *M: What flowers do we get in Spring?*
> *C: Tulips*
> *M: Yes.*

Clarifying and *predicting* moves occurred most frequently when reading unfamiliar narratives. These book readings provided optimal opportunities for such moves; the lack of familiarity meant that opportunities for *predicting* were maximised, and children's levels of understanding could be ascertained through questions about the stories.

Mothers' moves and demand levels

Mothers' moves were grouped according to their perceived level of demand for each book reading. Table 9:5 gives the percentage values and Figure 9:2 provides a graphic representation of the data. The nominal alpha level was adjusted to .01 (.05 / 4; Bonferroni correction). Using $p<.01$, the Friedman test revealed that there were significant differences only for procedural moves (Chi-square = 13.200; df= 3; p=.004). This was to be expected, since significant differences had already been shown for *managing* and *evaluating* moves, and these were both included within the category of procedural moves. The highest proportions of procedural moves occurred in the child reading and when reading familiar narratives.

The highest proportions of low-level demand moves were made when reading the two unfamiliar types of book, particularly the expository book, although these differences were not significant. The highest proportions of high-level demand moves

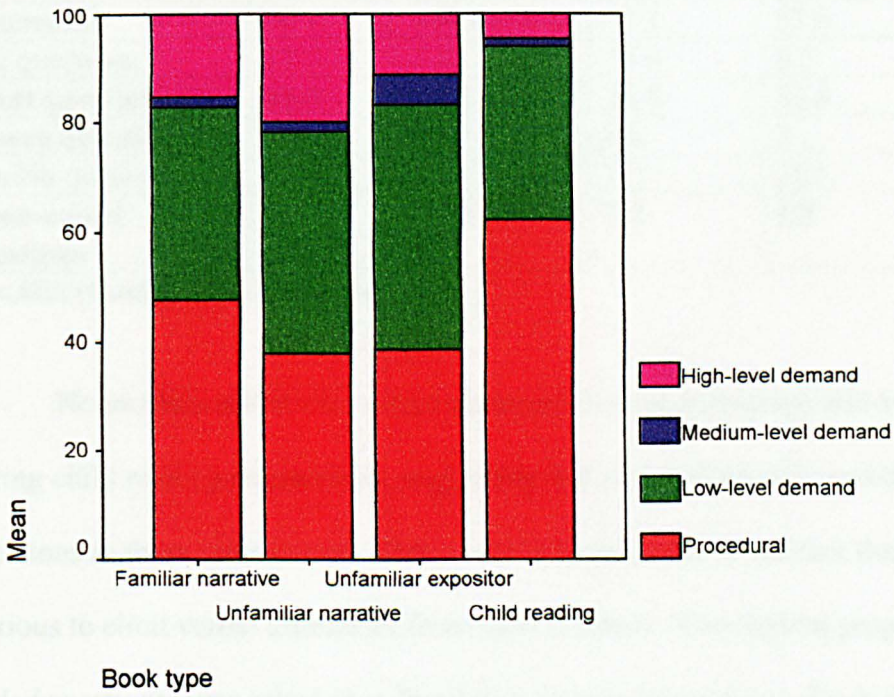
were made when reading unfamiliar narrative books and the fewest during child reading interactions.

Table 9:5 Percentages of mothers' moves in terms of demand levels

	Familiar narrative	Unfamiliar narrative	Unfamiliar expository	Familiar: child reading
Procedural *	**49.8**	**37.8**	**38.6**	**62.2**
Low-level demand	31.7	40.5	44.5	30.8
Medium-level demand	2.2	1.9	5.7	1.3
High-level demand	16.2	19.8	11.3	5.7

***p<.01 (Bonferroni correction)**

Figure 9:2 Percentages of mothers' moves in terms of demand levels



Forms of mothers' moves

Table 9:6 illustrates the percentage values of the forms of mothers' moves. The total number of statements versus questions varied little over the four book readings, although the highest proportions of questions were asked in child reading interactions. The Friedman test was carried out after adjusting the nominal alpha level to 0.008 (0.05 / 6; Bonferroni correction). There were significant differences for *what* questions (Chi-

square = 16.950; df= 3; p=.001), *where* questions (Chi-square = 15.300; df= 3; p=.002) and *open-ended* questions (Chi-square = 17.300; df= 3; p=.001). The highest proportion of *what* questions occurred in child reading interactions and the lowest in unfamiliar narratives. This is a somewhat unexpected finding because relatively high proportions of *labelling* and *describing* moves were associated with unfamiliar narrative books, and *what* questions are often related to such moves. There were high proportions of *what* questions for both expository and child reading interactions.

Table 9:6 Percentages of forms of mothers' moves

Total Moves	Familiar narrative	Unfamiliar narrative	Unfamiliar expository	Familiar: Child reading
Statements	60.1	58.4	63.3	57.6
Tag questions	17.3	15.3	10.0	6.3
What questions *	**11.5**	**9.2**	**20.9**	**23.8**
Where questions *	**3.6**	**3.7**	**0.4**	**0**
Yes/No questions	6.2	9.4	5.1	10.5
Open-ended questions *	**0.7**	**3.9**	**0.5**	**1.8**

***p<.008 (Bonferroni correction)**

No mothers asked *where* type questions (which encourage non-verbal responses) during child reading interactions, suggesting that they deliberately avoided such questions in these interactions. This could have been due to the fact that mothers were anxious to elicit verbal utterances from their children. The highest proportions of *open-ended* questions were asked in unfamiliar narrative interactions. Such questions are often associated with *clarifying* and *predicting* moves (for example, '*what's going to happen*?') and we have already seen that such moves occurred most frequently in unfamiliar narrative interactions. Almost two per cent of all moves were *open-ended* questions in child reading interactions, suggesting that mothers asked such questions as a strategy to elicit extended responses when engaged in these type of interactions.

Dialogic moves

Table 9:2 shows significant differences for numbers of turns per episode for each book reading, with child reading containing the highest levels and unfamiliar narratives the lowest. Table 9:4 shows that there were significant differences in *evaluating* moves for types of reading, with the highest being made in the child reading interaction and the lowest in the unfamiliar narrative. This is interesting given that dialogic reading programmes tend to utilise only unfamiliar narratives. There were no significant differences across types of book readings for *expanding* moves. Table 9:6 indicates significant differences for both *what* questions and *open-ended* questions. This shows that the unfamiliar narrative tended to elicit the lowest proportions of *what* questions and the highest proportions of *open-ended* questions. The expository book elicited by far the highest number of moves (see Table 9:3).

Mothers' use of language and literacy words

There were no significant differences between the book readings for language and literacy words (see Table 9:7), although mothers used over twice as many such words in unfamiliar expository and child reading interactions than when reading familiar and unfamiliar narratives. In the child reading interactions, this was due to mothers' attempts to coax children into retelling stories; they frequently used *literacy* words, for example, '*you **read** it now*' and '*you turn the **pages***'. The relatively high number of *language* words used in expository book reading interactions appeared to be a result of the book's content. Mothers typically made comments such as, '***tell** mummy what noise a horse makes*' and '*what does a dog **say**?*'

Table 9:7 Mothers' use of language and literacy words

Mean per book	Familiar narrative	Unfamiliar narrative	Unfamiliar expository	Familiar: Child reading
Literacy words	2.5	2.5	2.1	4.4
Language words	1.6	1.6	7.4	6.1
Language and literacy words	4.1	4.1	9.5	10.5

The child's role

Functions of children's moves

Table 9:8 shows the percentage values of the types of moves made by children. The Friedman test was carried out for each of the categories of move after adjusting the nominal alpha level to 0.005 (0.05 / 9). There were significant differences for *medium-level* moves (Chi-square = 14.803; df= 3; p=.002), *reading* (Chi-square = 16.548; df= 3; p=.001) and *chiming* (Chi-square = 13.769; df= 3; p=.003). Children used the highest proportions of *medium-level* moves when reading familiar narratives, although mothers used higher proportions of such moves in expository interactions. It is possible that children's familiarity with the books encouraged them to make connections to their own experience, whereas perhaps in less familiar narratives their attention was focused on attempting to understand the stories. The following example was typical of an unprompted *medium-level* move made when reading familiar narrative books:

M: Teletubbies love Tubby toast, don't they?
And Teletubbies...
C: [Interrupts] I wish we could have Tubby Toast and chocolate on it.

Table 9:8 Percentages of children's moves

	Familiar narrative	Unfamiliar narrative	Unfamiliar expository	Familiar: child reading
Procedural	25.9	24.7	17.7	21.1
Low-level	44.5	47.5	52.3	37.7
Medium-level *	**3.8**	**0.7**	**0.1**	**0.7**
High-level	8.4	10.3	11.3	5.2
Incorrect	4.4	11.8	8.7	9.9
Reading *	**4.8**	**2.6**	**3.6**	**25.5**
Chiming *	**4.4**	**1.5**	**0**	**0**
Unrelated	2.9	0.1	0	0
Inaudible	0.7	0.8	1.3	0

***p<.005 (Bonferroni correction)**

Children used the highest proportions of *chiming* moves when engaged in interactions around familiar narratives. These moves were most commonly used when reading repetitious or rhyming books. For example, Emma and her mother (dyad 8) selected a book with a repeated phrase (*Peace at Last*). Emma enjoyed joining in with the phrase *'Oh no' said Mr. Bear, 'I can't stand this!'*. Catherine (dyad 1) used *chiming* moves when reading two familiar rhyming ABC books with her mother, having memorised the exact text. The following example is from *Dr. Seuss's ABC*:

> *'Big B, little b, what begins with B?*
> *Barber, baby, bubbles and a bumble bee'*

In Chapter 8, Table 8:17 confirms that these two children used more *chiming* moves than all the other children. This is explained by the fact that these two children selected familiar books with repetition and rhyme.

An expected finding was that children made the highest proportions of *reading* moves during child reading interactions. However, some children attempted to read unfamiliar books (as reported in Chapter 6). A second expected finding was that *chiming* occurred most frequently in familiar narrative interactions. The fact that these moves also occurred to a lesser extent in unfamiliar narrative interactions is a reflection of the fact that four of the children selected books that they were somewhat familiar with.

Children made the most *high-level* moves when reading unfamiliar narratives and expository books, and the fewest when engaged in child reading interactions. The lowest proportions of *incorrect* responses to their mothers were made when reading familiar books. It is likely that children were more able to respond correctly to their mothers' questions during these book readings because they had acquired a good understanding of the stories through repeated readings. It could also reflect the fact that mothers were not as likely to ask such challenging questions when reading familiar books as compared with unfamiliar books.

Forms of children's moves

Table 9:9 illustrates the forms of children's moves. A nominal alpha level of 0.01 was adopted (0.05 / 3; Bonferroni correction) which revealed no significant differences for book type and responses, statements or questions. It is worth noting however, that children asked the highest proportions of questions when reading unfamiliar books, particularly in expository book reading interactions. They asked very few questions when engaged in child reading interactions. Because asking questions may be a sign of heightened interest, this suggests that children were most engaged when reading unfamiliar books. Children made the highest proportions of responses to their mothers when reading familiar and unfamiliar narratives. The highest proportions of statements were made when engaged in the child reading.

Table 9:9 Percentages of forms of children's moves

	Familiar narrative	Unfamiliar narrative	Unfamiliar expository	Familiar: child reading
Responses	50.3	42.9	34.0	33.5
Statements	41.9	45.5	48.6	60.2
Questions	7.8	11.6	17.4	6.4

Children's use of language and literacy words

Children used such words very infrequently, as shown in Table 9:10 and there were no significant differences between the four types of book reading. Like mothers, children used the most language and literacy words in the unfamiliar expository and the child reading interactions.

Table 9:10 Children's use of language and literacy words

Mean per book	Familiar narrative	Unfamiliar narrative	Unfamiliar expository	Familiar: child reading
Literacy words	0.5	0.8	1.5	1.4
Language words	0.4	0.3	1.0	1.3
Language and literacy words	0.9	1.1	2.3	2.6

Summary: Effects of genre, familiarity and mother-child roles on shared reading interactions

To summarise the findings reported in this chapter, an overview of each of the four types of book reading interaction is presented here. Table 9:11 summarises these data in table format.

Familiar narrative

Readings of familiar books were characterised by some of the lowest numbers of turns and turns per episode. Relatively small numbers of child moves also occurred in these interactions. These interactions contained relatively high proportions of mothers' procedural moves. This could be due to the fact that two children's attention wandered when reading familiar narratives (Charlotte, dyad 6 and Sam, dyad 7), and their mothers employed a number of strategies to refocus their interest, as reported in Chapter 6.

Mothers used the highest proportions of *skill building* moves and relatively high proportions of *completing* moves when reading familiar narratives. *Predicting* also

occurred relatively frequently, although less frequently than in unfamiliar narratives. These interactions contained relatively low proportions of *open-ended* questions.

Mothers tended to adjust their behaviours when reading unfamiliar and familiar books. Each dyad selected a book to read as an unfamiliar narrative, which they kept to read as a familiar book in the next session. This enabled a direct comparison between books to be made. When reading the book as a familiar narrative, mothers often focused on the same illustration details and asked the same questions they had asked in the previous sessions, when the books were unfamiliar, for example:

M: Look here, what does he see?
C: Mummy cooking
M: Peepo! Oh that's very clever. You remembered that didn't you?

Unfamiliar narrative

Readings of unfamiliar narratives contained the lowest numbers of turns and turns per episode. This may have been due to the fact that mothers seemed to prefer to read the stories rather as discuss them. Both mothers and children made the lowest numbers of moves when reading these types of books. One mother commented that she had to concentrate more when reading a book for the first time than when reading a familiar book. This comment appeared to reflect the majority of mothers' behaviours; although there was some interaction, it seemed that the primary objective of most was to read the text. Their concern for their children's understanding sometimes appeared to be a secondary consideration.

Mothers made proportionally more *clarifying* and *predicting* moves and asked proportionally more *open-ended* questions in these interactions than in any others. In *Fidgety Fish*, the unfamiliar narrative read by all dyads, all mothers made some high-level demand moves, such as *predicting*, although they did not always give their children time to respond. For example, Sarah's mother (dyad 3) asked her daughter a

closed *predicting* question, '*do you think it was a cave he swam into?*', while Catherine's mother (dyad 1) asked a much more demanding open-ended question, '*what sort of cave do you think that is?*'

Mothers made the lowest proportions of *evaluating* moves in these interactions. One possible explanation for this is that children made the lowest numbers of moves when reading unfamiliar narratives. Because children made fewer moves, there were fewer opportunities for mothers to make *evaluating* moves.

Unfamiliar expository

These interactions were of the longest duration and contained the highest numbers of mothers' moves. One reason for the high number of moves could be the fact that mothers appeared less anxious to read the text than in narrative books. A number ignored the text on one or two pages, sometimes at their child's request, engaging in lengthy interactions around the illustrations instead. As a result, mothers used more *labelling* and *describing* moves here than in any other interaction. This could partly explain why the duration of interactions for the expository book were so much longer than the other books, since discussing illustrations took longer than for reading text. It also accounts for the relatively high numbers of episodes as dyads discussed a variety of aspects of illustrations.

Children made the highest numbers of moves in these interactions and asked the highest proportion of questions. Mothers made the lowest proportions of *managing* moves. It is reasonable to assume there is a link here; because children's interest was high, as indicated by the high numbers of moves and proportions of questions, mothers did not need to make as many moves to control the interactions and direct their children's behaviour.

Table 9:11 Features of each type of shared reading interaction

	Familiar narrative	**Unfamiliar narrative**	**Unfamiliar Expository**	**Child reading familiar narrative**
Interaction	Relatively few turns per episode and turns.	Fewest turns per episode	Longest duration. Highest number of episodes.	Fewest number of episodes. Highest number of turns per episode.
Mother's role	Relatively high proportions of *managing* moves. Highest proportion of *skill building* moves. Relatively high proportion of *completing* moves. Lowest proportion of *open-ended* questions.	Highest proportion of *clarifying* and *predicting* moves. Relatively high proportions of *labelling* and *describing* moves. Highest proportion of high-level demand moves. Highest proportion of *open-ended* questions. Lowest proportion of *evaluating* moves.	Highest number of moves. Highest proportion of statements. Highest proportions of *labelling* and *describing* moves. Highest proportion of *bridging* (medium-level demand) and *referring to the real world* moves. Lowest proportions of *managing* moves.	Highest proportions of *managing, completing* and *evaluating* moves. Lowest proportions of high-level and medium-level demand moves.
Child's role	Highest proportions of *chiming* moves. Highest proportions of *medium-level* moves.	Fewest child moves. Highest proportions of *incorrect* moves.	Most child moves. Highest proportions of *high-level* moves. Highest proportions of questions.	Highest proportion of *reading* moves. Lowest proportions of questions.

Child reading of a familiar book

There were substantial differences in the way mothers supported their children when engaged in traditional, mother led shared reading interactions and interactions in which the child read to the mother. These are summarised in Table 9:12. Although children's behaviour during story readings has been studied previously, the mother's role in supporting the child is an issue that has received little attention from researchers.

Table 9:12 Characteristics of mother and child led shared reading interactions

	Child led interactions	**Mother led interactions**
The interaction as a whole	Similar percentages of moves made by mothers and children. Relatively few episodes. Similar numbers of episodes initiated by mothers and children. High numbers of turns per episode.	Around 60% of moves made by mothers; around 40% made by children. Higher numbers of episodes. More episodes initiated by mothers. Lower numbers of turns per episode.
The mothers' role	High proportions of procedural moves, especially *evaluating* and *managing* moves. Low proportions of medium and high-level demand moves. High proportions of *what* questions. No *where* questions. Some *open-ended* questions.	Lower proportions of procedural moves. Higher proportions of medium and high-level demand moves. Lower proportions of *what* questions. Some *where* questions. Some *open-ended* questions.
The child's role	High proportions of *reading* moves. Few questions asked.	Low proportions of *reading* moves. Questions asked.

Mothers and children made similar proportions of moves in the child reading interactions. While these interactions contained the lowest numbers of episodes, these were lengthier than in other interactions. This appeared to be due to mothers' strategies for encouraging children to retell stories. Most asked a series of questions designed to elicit verbal responses in the form of story readings from their children, for example:

M: What are they doing?
C: They're looking at the river.

M: And why are they looking at the river?
C: They want to get across.
M: Oh right. So what do they have to do then?
C: They have to go along the bridge.
M: Oh!
C: And they can't.
M: Why?
C: Because the.... the troll is under there!
M: Who?
C: The troll....
M: Oh right. And what happens if people go on the bridge?
C: He gobbles them up.
M: What does he say?
C: Hmmm... trip trapping over my bridge!
M: Pardon?
C: Who's trip trapping over my bridge?
M: He does, doesn't he?

Mothers used the highest proportions of *evaluating* moves when engaged in these interactions. Although there were no significant differences for mothers' use of *completing* moves across the four types of book reading, the highest proportions of such moves occurred in the child readings. Mothers used the most *managing* moves, often making attempts to cajole children into reading.

The majority of mothers' moves in these interactions were procedural and low-level, highlighting the fact that the objective of mothers' moves appeared to be to elicit a verbal response, rather than concern for children's understanding. The data show that mothers were particularly adept at adjusting their questioning to elicit responses from their children. Although they may not have been conscious of the strategies they employed, they knew how to elicit the most elaborate responses from children during child readings. They avoided *where* questions, which encourage non-verbal responses, asked high proportions of *what* questions and used relatively high proportions of *open-ended* questions.

Children asked very few questions in these interactions, demonstrating an understanding that they were expected to adopt the leading role. As expected, children used the highest proportions of *reading* moves when retelling stories.

Discussion

This chapter has begun to address the research question '*What factors influence parent-child reading interactions?*' by examining mothers' and children's behaviours when reading different books under different conditions. There were significant differences, many of which occurred when comparing total numbers of aspects of the interactions (such as moves, turns and episodes). There were also a number of significant differences in the form of mothers' moves for types of book reading.

Some of the most noteworthy differences were between aspects of the mothers' role in narrative and expository books. When reading narratives, mothers tended to make fewer moves, particularly when reading books for the first time. They tended to focus much more on the text, making only cursory comments to facilitate their children's understanding. In contrast, in expository book interactions reading the text did not appear to be so important. Some mothers read only selected parts, and focused instead on discussing the pictures. As a result, there was more participation around expository than narrative books from both mothers and children. Indeed, mothers made twice as many moves when reading the expository book as when reading any other. These findings support other limited research in this area (Heath, 1983; Pellegrini et al., 1990).

Pellegrini et al. (1990) found that mothers tended to use more high-level demand moves when reading expository books with their children. In the current study however, mothers made relatively low percentages of high-level demand moves in these interactions. However, it is important to note that the figures reported here were percentages and we have already seen that actual numbers of moves were twice as high when reading the expository book. The qualitative data suggested that most mothers used at least some high-level demand moves in expository interactions, while two engaged in extended decontextualised discussions. These are highlighted in Chapter 6.

Another noteworthy feature of these findings was that mothers tended to adopt a number of dialogic reading type techniques when engaged in child reading interactions. For example, almost a quarter of their questions were *what* questions, and they asked more questions after children had responded to their initial questions. Mothers used the highest proportions of *evaluating* moves in these interactions, which included dialogic features such as repeating children's utterances, helping when they were unable to respond, praising and encouraging. Mothers used none of the discouraged *where* type questions in these interactions. The child readings contained the second highest proportion of *open-ended* questions, at almost two per cent. However, mothers did use high proportions of closed *yes/no* questions. This analysis suggests that the mothers in this study implicitly adopted some dialogic type techniques when attempting to encourage their children to retell a story in their own words.

There were differences *within* the narrative genre that have not yet been discussed. Certain moves, particularly mothers' moves, occurred more frequently in some narratives than others. We have already seen that the child move *chiming* occurred more frequently in books with repetition and rhyme. Mothers' moves around illustrations, such as *labelling* and *describing,* occurred frequently in books with detailed drawings, such as *Peepo!* This book contains some elements of stories, such as a setting and characters, but rather than having a sequence of events, it is a descriptive book, with each page depicting a scene of people going about their daily routines. The text in this book also encourages *labelling*, with the final line on each page reading '*what does he see?*' There were many incidences of *labelling* (including *where* questions) among dyads who selected this book, and few examples of high-level demand moves.

There was more scope for high-level demand moves such as *predicting* and *clarifying* in books containing obvious sequences of events, problems and resolutions,

such as *Suddenly*. This book tells of a pig followed by a scheming wolf. Each page shows the pig walking around in imminent danger, with the wolf hiding and waiting to pounce. The mothers from both dyads that selected this book (James, dyad 2 and Chloe, dyad 4) made high proportions of high-level demand moves and asked relatively high proportions of *open-ended* questions (see Chapter 8). The book lends itself particularly well to high-level demand *open-ended* questions such as '*what's going to happen?*' While there are occasions to ask such questions in *Fidgety Fish*, there are opportunities for such interactions on every page of *Suddenly*.

Similar differences may also exist within the expository genre, that is, different topics or styles of book may lend themselves particularly well to different types of mothers' and children's moves. However, because only one expository book was used in the current study, it was not possible to explore such differences within this genre.

The effects of genre, familiarity and mother-child roles on shared reading interactions have been investigated in this chapter in an attempt to address research question 2, '*What factors influence parent-child shared reading interactions*'. The literature reviewed in Chapter 1 suggests that other factors, particularly SES, may also be important. The next chapter therefore examines some of the similarities and differences in shared reading interactions for lower and higher SES dyads.

Chapter 10: Study 2 - Relationships between mothers' education, parents' occupation and shared reading interactions

Introduction

Chapter 9 investigated the effects of genre, familiarity and mother-child roles on shared reading interactions. We have seen that such factors do indeed influence mother-child reading. Further analysis of this question involved investigating patterns of shared reading interactions associated with socio-economic factors, since the literature suggested substantial differences in this area (see Chapter 1). Three indicators of SES are commonly used; these are income, education and occupation. Of these, mothers' educational level has been shown to be the best predictor of children's attainment (Mercy and Steelman, 1982).

Chapter 5 outlined the educational and occupational backgrounds of the eight dyads, with four dyads being selected from a relatively affluent geographical area and four from a somewhat deprived geographical area. Rather than comparing the two dichotomous groups, it was considered more rigorous to attempt to rank the eight dyads according to mothers' educational level, given that this is generally thought of as the best predictor of children's achievement. Correlational analysis could be used to determine whether there were any significant associations between reading behaviours and mothers' education.

The chapter begins with an explanation of how such a ranking scale was devised. The analysis then follows the format of the previous chapter; that is, first aspects of the interaction as a whole are explored in relation to the ranking scale, followed by associations between the ranking scale and aspects of the mother's then the

child's role. The section exploring the child's role includes an additional investigation of the ranking scale and children's assessment scores.

Devising the educational-occupational ranking (EOR) scale

An attempt was made to rank the participants in this study according to mothers' educational level as described above. Using the data from Table 5:1 in Chapter 5, it was possible to provide a ranking for each dyad according to mothers' educational level, as shown in Table 10:1. A ranking of eight was given for the highest educational level and one for the lowest. However, there were a number of tied ranks, since a number of mothers were at the same educational level.

Table 10:1 Rankings according to mothers' education (highest level)

	Educational level	Ranking
Dyad 1	University/college degree or higher	7.5
Dyad 4	University/college degree or higher	7.5
Dyad 3	Some college ('A' Levels)	6
Dyad 5	Some college (vocational)	5
Dyad 2	Completed secondary school	2
Dyad 6	Completed secondary school	2
Dyad 7	Completed secondary school	2
Dyad 8	Completed secondary school	2

Because of the high number of tied ranks, it was necessary to investigate additional SES measures in order to increase the chances of allocating a separate ranking to each dyad, particularly the four mothers at the lowest educational level.

Mothers' occupations were ranked using the system described above and this enabled some separation of the four mothers at the lowest educational level. Table 10:2 shows, however, that tied ranks still exist for dyads 1 and 4 and dyads 6 and 8.

Table 10:2 Rankings according to mothers' occupation

	Social Class	Ranking
Dyad 1	1.2: teacher	7.5
Dyad 4	1.2: physiotherapist	7.5
Dyad 2	2: lower managerial	5
Dyad 3	3: bank worker	3.5
Dyad 5	6: factory worker	6
Dyad 6	6: shop assistant;	3.5
Dyad 8	6: shop assistant	3.5
Dyad 7	8: never worked	1

Further discrimination of these bands was achieved by investigating fathers' occupation. A ranking of eight was given for the highest occupation and one for the lowest. The resulting table can be seen below:

Table 10:3 Rankings according to fathers' occupation

	Social Class	Ranking
Dyad 1	1.2: teacher	7.5
Dyad 4	1.2: surgeon	7.5
Dyad 3	2: vicar	6
Dyad 2	5: builder	3.5
Dyad 5	5: builder	3.5
Dyad 7	5: plumber;	3.5
Dyad 8	5: shop assistant	3.5
Dyad 6	6: taxi-driver	1

The rankings for mothers' education, mothers' occupation and fathers' occupation were added to provide an overall ranking, as shown in Table 10:4.

Table 10:4 Dyads' rankings for educational level and occupation according to social class classification

	Mothers' educational level	Mothers' occupation	Fathers' occupation	Rank Totals	Overall Ranking
Dyad 4	7.5	7.5	7.5	22.5	8
Dyad 1	7.5	7.5	7.5	22.5	7
Dyad 3	6	5	6	17	6
Dyad 5	5	3.5	3.5	12	5
Dyad 2	2	6	3.5	11.5	4
Dyad 8	2	3.5	3.5	9	3
Dyad 6	2	3.5	1	6.5	2
Dyad 7	2	1	3.5	6.5	1

Two sets of tied rankings still existed at the upper and lower end of the educational-occupational rankings since, according to the National statistics socio-economic classification, a surgeon and teacher (dyads 4 and 1) are in the same social classification. However, it may be argued that surgeons spend longer in training, and are more handsomely remunerated than teachers, and I have therefore ranked dyad 4 higher than dyad 1. Dyads 6 and 7 also had the same rank totals. However, because the mother of dyad 6 was currently employed, this dyad was ranked above dyad 7, the mother of which was not employed.

Table 10:4 shows that the three highest ranking dyads lived in the affluent area of the city. Dyad 5 from the geographically more deprived area was ranked above dyad 2 who lived in the more affluent area of the city. The three lowest ranking dyads (dyads 8, 6 and 7) all lived in the more deprived geographical area. It is now necessary to investigate this 'educational-occupational ranking' (EOR) in terms of its relationship to certain reading behaviours.

The interaction as a whole

Spearman rank correlations were carried out for EOR and various shared reading behaviours to determine whether there was any association between them. There were

weak to moderate associations for EOR and duration of interaction, turns and episodes (see Table 10:5). However, there was a very strong significant positive correlation between EOR and turns per episode, showing that the higher ranking dyads engaged in lengthier discussions around topics.

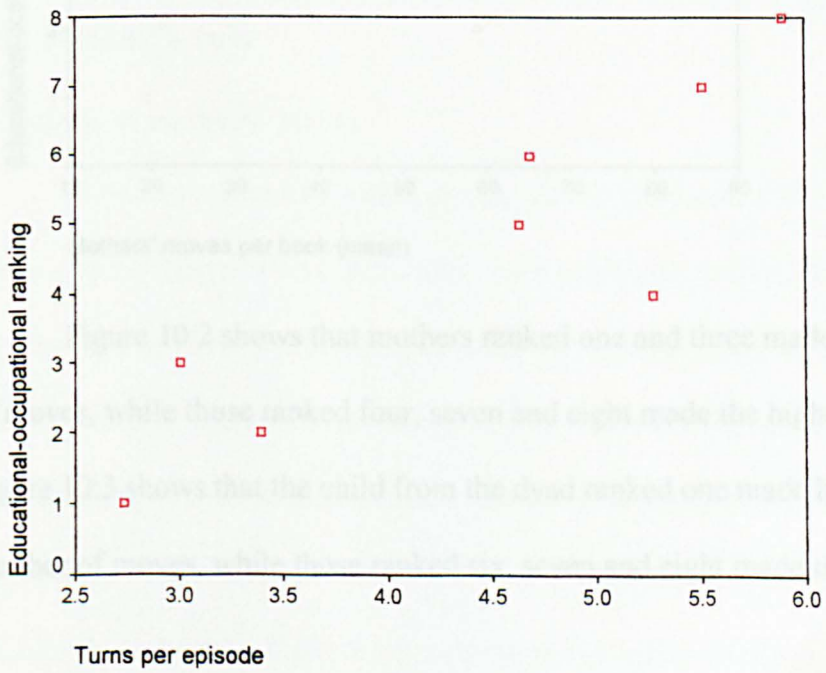
Table 10:5 Correlations between EOR and features of interactions

	Spearman rank correlation
Duration of interaction	.14
Turns	.60
Episodes (mother)	.18
Episodes (child)	-.37
Total episodes	.10
Turns per episode	**.91 ****

**** p<.01**

Figure 10:1 shows the relationship between EOR and turns per episode graphically. There appear to be two distinct groups in this graph, with the three lowest ranking dyads making an average of just over two to 3.5 turns per episode. The remaining five dyads made an average of 4.5 to six turns per episode.

Figure 10:1 Correlation between EOR and turns per episode



Both mothers' and children's moves were strongly correlated with EOR, as shown in Table 10:6. These relationships were positive indicating that higher numbers of moves were associated with higher ranking dyads while lower numbers of moves were associated with lower ranking dyads. These associations are shown graphically in Figures 10:2 and 10:3.

Table 10:6 Correlations between EOR and mothers' and children's moves

	Spearman rank corrrelation
Mothers' moves	**.88 ****
Children's moves	**.81 ***

*** p<.05; ** p<.01**

Figure 10:2 Correlation between EOR and mothers' moves per book

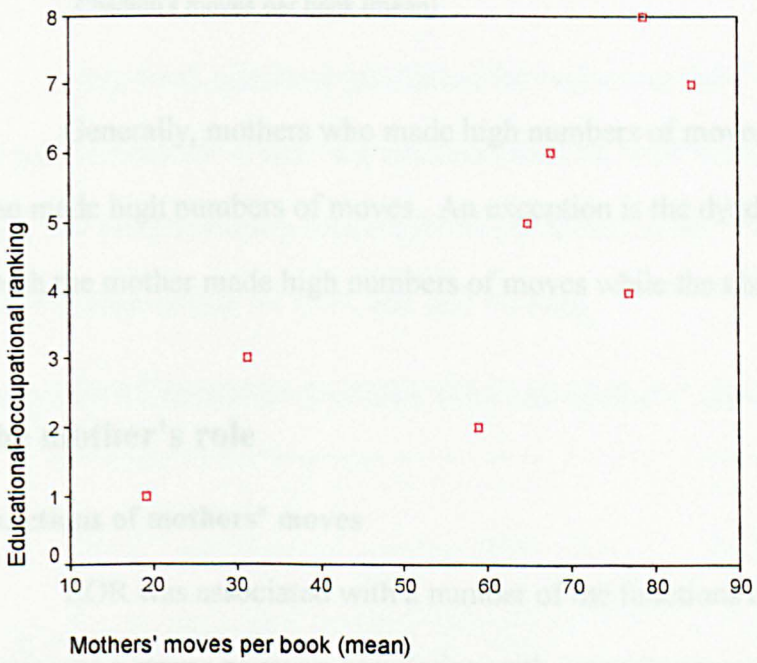
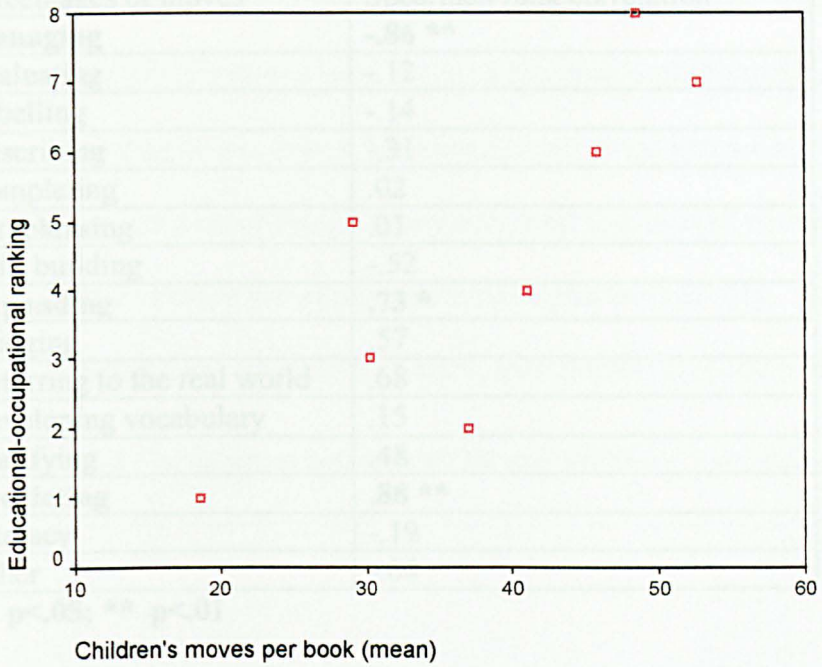


Figure 10:2 shows that mothers ranked one and three made the lowest numbers of moves, while those ranked four, seven and eight made the highest numbers of moves. Figure 10:3 shows that the child from the dyad ranked one made by far the lowest number of moves, while those ranked six, seven and eight made the highest.

Figure 10:3 Correlation between EOR and children's moves per book



Generally, mothers who made high numbers of moves tended to have children who made high numbers of moves. An exception is the dyad ranked five on EOR, in which the mother made high numbers of moves while the child made relatively few.

The mother's role

Functions of mothers' moves

EOR was associated with a number of the functions of the mother's moves. There was a strong negative correlation with *managing* moves, showing that the highest ranking mothers used the lowest proportions of *managing* moves, whereas the lowest ranking mothers made high proportions of such moves (see Table 10:7). Figure 10:4 illustrates this relationship and shows that the three mothers who used the lowest proportions of these moves were those ranked eight, seven and four, while those ranked one and three used the highest proportions of *managing* moves.

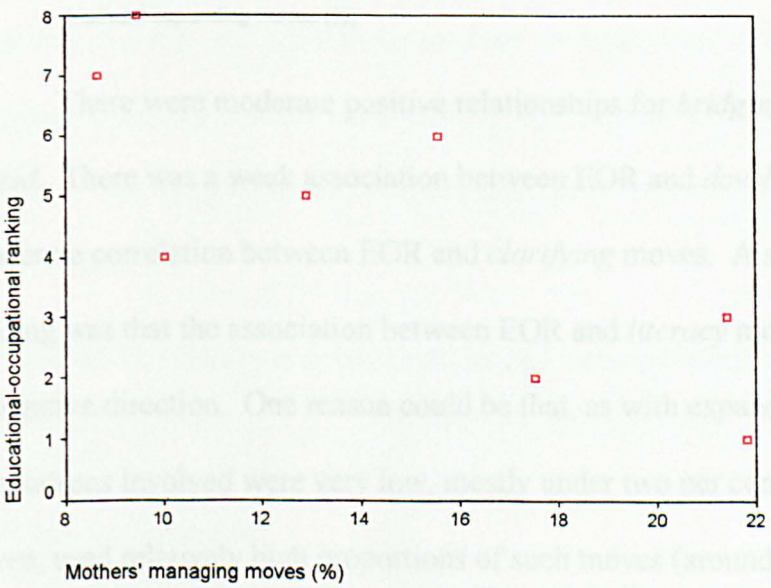
Table 10:7 Correlations between EOR and functions of mothers' moves

Percentages of moves	Spearman rank correlation
Managing	**-.86 ****
Evaluating	-.12
Labelling	-.14
Describing	-.31
Completing	.02
Paraphrasing	.01
Skill building	-.52
Expanding	**.73 ***
Bridging	.57
Referring to the real world	.68
Developing vocabulary	.15
Clarifying	.48
Predicting	**.88 ****
Literacy	-.19
Other	-.64

*** p<.05; ** p<.01**

Very weak relationships existed for *evaluating, labelling* and *describing*, while the associations for *completing* and *paraphrasing* were virtually zero, indicating that there was no relationship between EOR and these moves. There was a moderate negative relationship for EOR and *skill building.*

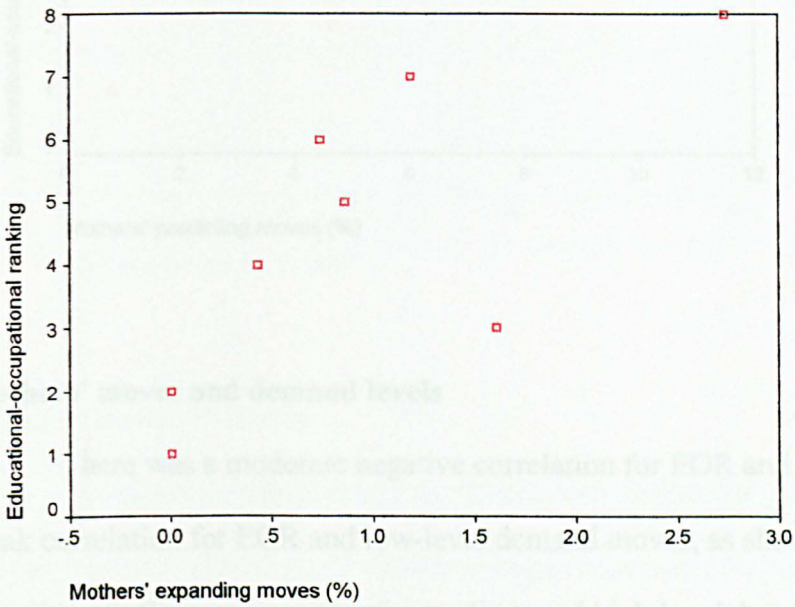
Figure 10:4 Correlation between EOR and mothers' *managing* moves



The association between EOR and *expanding* moves was significant with a correlation coefficient of .73. However, it is important to note the actual percentages of

expanding moves used by all mothers were very small. Figure 10:5 shows that the percentages ranged from zero to just under three per cent, and that the second highest percentages of such moves were made by the dyad ranked three on EOR. Although the association may be genuine, it has already been noted that when a large number of correlations are carried out, as in any statistical test, around one in twenty will be significant by chance (assuming a nominal alpha level of .05). Caution must be used when investigating correlations in such small percentages and such a small sample.

Figure 10:5 Correlation between EOR and mothers' *expanding* moves

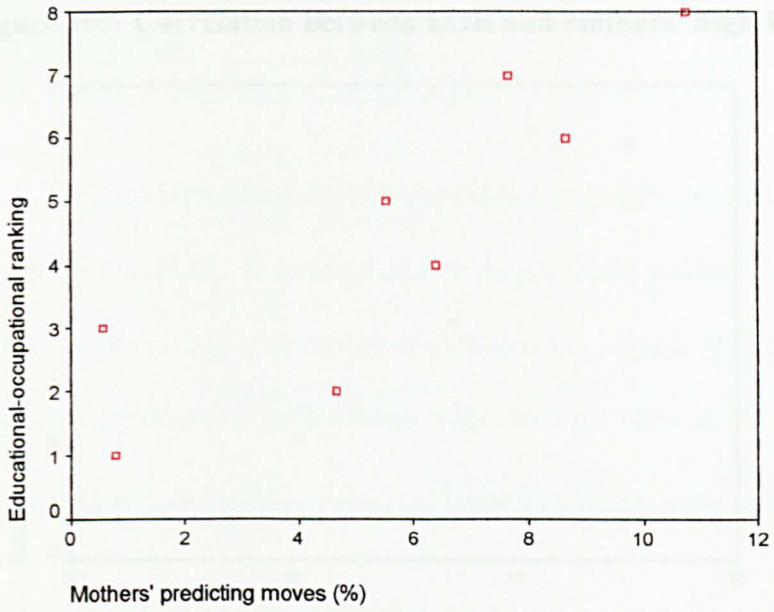


There were moderate positive relationships for *bridging* and *referring to the real world*. There was a weak association between EOR and *developing vocabulary* and a moderate correlation between EOR and *clarifying* moves. A somewhat unexpected finding was that the association between EOR and *literacy* moves was very weak and in a negative direction. One reason could be that, as with expanding moves, the actual proportions involved were very low, mostly under two per cent. Only one dyad, ranked seven, used relatively high proportions of such moves (around eight per cent).

Predicting moves showed a strong association with EOR. Figure 10:6 shows that the actual percentages of moves involved were higher than for *expanding* moves,

with the mothers ranked one and three making the lowest proportions of such moves and mothers ranked six, seven and eight using the highest.

Figure 10:6 Correlation between EOR and mothers' *predicting* moves



Mothers' moves and demand levels

There was a moderate negative correlation for EOR and procedural moves and a weak correlation for EOR and low-level demand moves, as shown in Table 10:8. The direction of effect was positive for medium and high-level demand moves, indicating that higher ranking mothers used higher proportions of such moves than lower ranking mothers. The correlation for EOR and high-level demand moves was very strong and significant at .01.

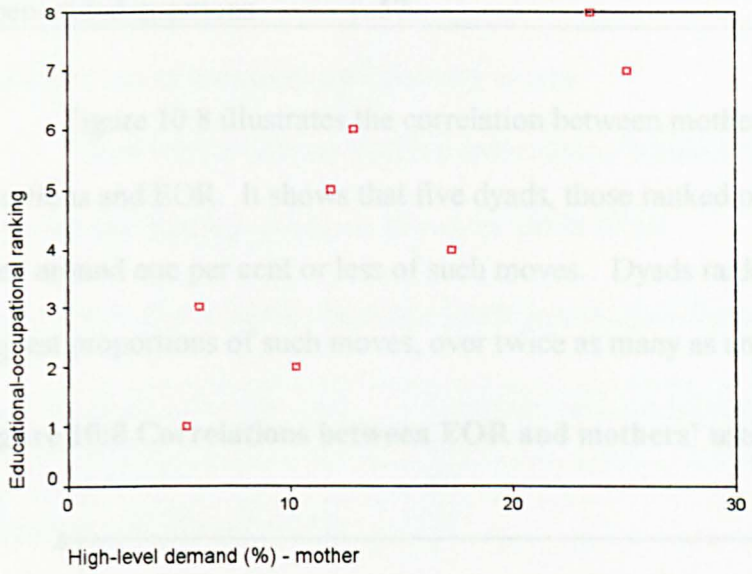
Table 10:8 Correlations between EOR and demand levels of mother's moves

Percentages of moves	Spearman rank correlation
Procedural	-.57
Low-level demand	-.24
Medium-level demand	.57
High-level demand	**.83 ****

**** p<.01**

Figure 10:7 illustrates the association between EOR and high-level demand moves, showing that dyads ranked seven and eight used the highest proportions of such moves, while dyads ranked one and three used the lowest proportions.

Figure 10:7 Correlation between EOR and mothers' high-level demand moves



Forms of mothers' moves

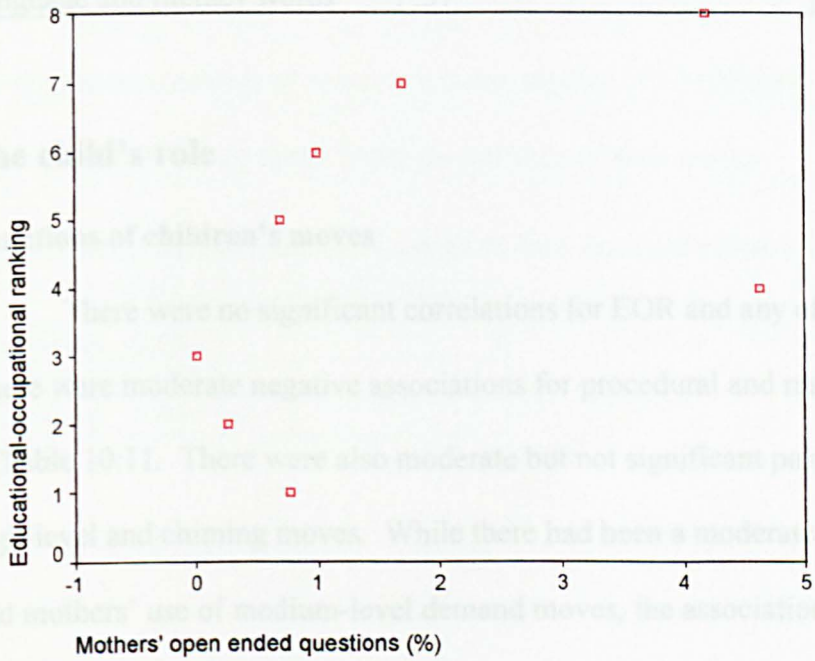
There were no statistically significant correlations for EOR and the forms of mothers' moves. There was a moderate negative correlation between EOR and mothers' use of statements, as shown in Table 10:9, indicating that mothers ranked lowest on EOR tended to use higher proportions of statements and directives than higher ranking mothers. There was a moderate positive correlation between EOR and *open-ended* questions indicating that higher ranking mothers tended to use higher proportions of such questions. All other types of question (*tag* questions, *what* questions, *where* questions and *yes/no* questions) had weak to moderate associations with EOR.

Table 10:9 Correlations between EOR and forms of mothers' moves

Percentages of moves	Spearman rank correlation
Statements	-.55
Tag questions	.17
What questions	.24
Where questions	.48
Yes/No questions	.38
Open-ended questions	.57

Figure 10:8 illustrates the correlation between mothers' use of *open-ended* questions and EOR. It shows that five dyads, those ranked one, two, three, five and six, used around one per cent or less of such moves. Dyads ranked four and eight used the highest proportions of such moves, over twice as many as any other mother.

Figure 10:8 Correlations between EOR and mothers' use of open-ended questions



Dialogic moves

Table 10:5 shows a significant positive association between EOR and turns per episode. There was also a significant positive association between EOR and *expanding* moves, but only a very weak association between EOR and *evaluating* moves. There

were only weak positive correlations for EOR and what questions and moderate correlations for EOR and *open-ended* questions. There were significant positive correlations for EOR and mothers' moves per book, indicating that higher ranking mothers tended to participate far more around books.

Mothers' use of language and literacy words

There were moderate positive associations between EOR and mothers' use of language and literacy words, as shown in Table 10:10.

Table 10:10 Correlations between EOR and mothers' use of language and literacy words

Total numbers of words used	Spearman rank correlation
Literacy words	.43
Language words	.62
Language and literacy words	.57

The child's role

Functions of children's moves

There were no significant correlations for EOR and any of the children's moves. There were moderate negative associations for procedural and reading moves, as shown in Table 10:11. There were also moderate but not significant positive associations for high-level and chiming moves. While there had been a moderate association for EOR and mothers' use of medium-level demand moves, the association was much weaker for EOR and children's use of medium-level moves.

Table 10:11 Correlations between EOR and functions of children's moves

Percentages of moves	Spearman rank correlation
Procedural	-.50
Low-level	.31
Medium-level	.24
High-level	.67
Incorrect	.17
Reading	-.57
Chiming	.64
Unrelated	-.11
Inaudible	.06

Forms of children's moves

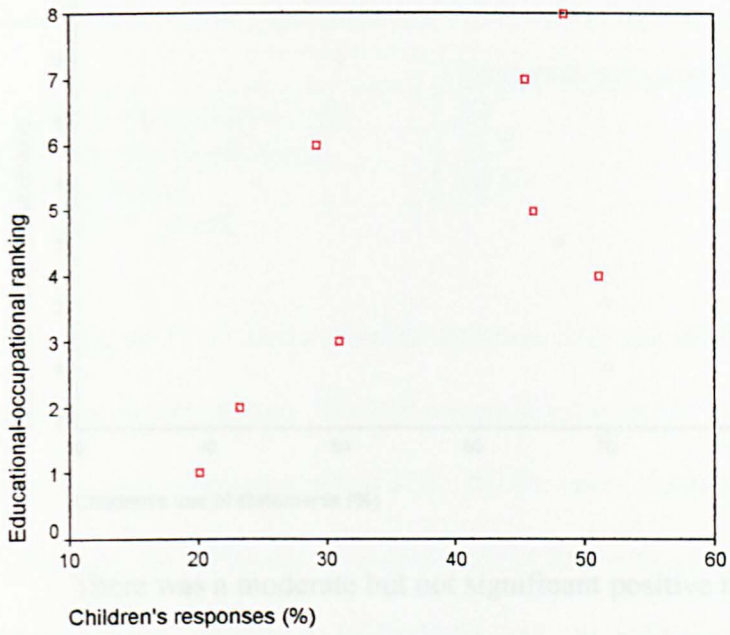
There was a moderate but not significant positive association between EOR and children's responses to their mothers, as shown in Table 10:12. Figure 10:9 shows this relationship and suggests that it is the children from dyads ranked four and six that prevent the relationship from being stronger. The child from the dyad ranked four made the highest proportions of responses to his mother of all children. The child from the dyad ranked six made many fewer proportions of such moves.

Table 10:12 Correlations between EOR and forms of children's moves

	Spearman rank correlation
Responses	.62
Statements	**-.74 ***
Questions	.45

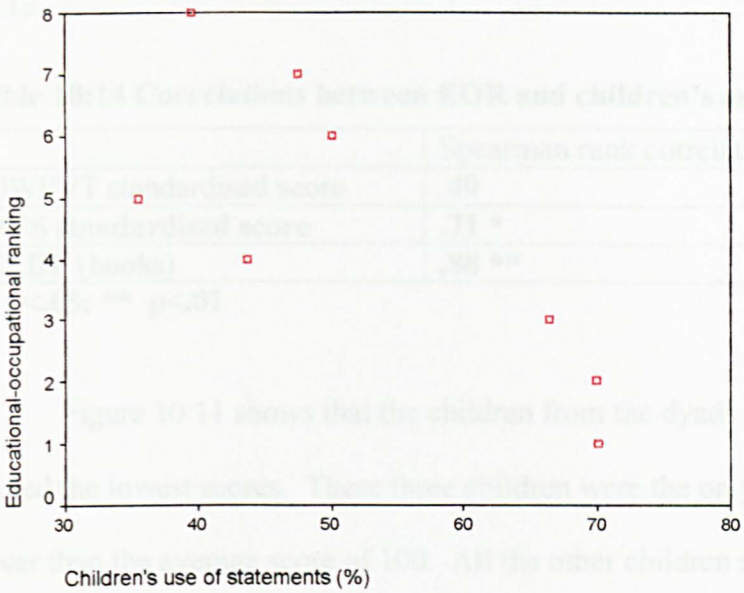
*** p<.05**

Figure 10:9 Correlations between EOR and children's responses to mother's questions



There was a significant negative relationship between EOR and children's use of statements. This relationship is shown in Figure 10:10 and indicates two distinct groups, one consisting of five children (ranked four to eight) and the other of three (those ranked one, two and three). Around 70 per cent of all moves made by the children of dyads ranked one to three were statements, whereas for children in dyads ranked one to five this figure was 50 per cent or lower.

Figure 10:10 Correlation between EOR and children's use of statements



There was a moderate but not significant positive relationship for EOR and children's use of questions.

Children's use of language and literacy words

There were weak to moderate positive associations between EOR and children's use of language and literacy words. None of these associations was significant, as shown in Table 10:13.

Table 10:13 Correlations between EOR and children's use of language and literacy words

Total numbers of words used	Spearman rank correlation
Literacy words	.43
Language words	.62
Language and literacy words	.57

EOR and children's assessment scores

The analysis revealed a moderate positive association between EOR and EOWPVT scores, as shown in Table 10:14. Stronger and significant positive relationships existed for BPVS and SELDP (books) scores. The relationships between

EOR and scores for each assessment are shown graphically in Figures 10:11, 10:12 and 10:13.

Table 10:14 Correlations between EOR and children's assessment scores

	Spearman rank correlation
EOWPVT standardised score	.49
BPVS standardised score	**.71 ***
SELDP (books)	**.88 ****

*** p<.05; ** p<.01**

Figure 10:11 shows that the children from the dyads ranked two, three and five gained the lowest scores. These three children were the only ones to achieve scores lower than the average score of 100. All the other children scored well above 100. Once again, the child from the dyad ranked four prevented the relationship from being stronger, achieving the second highest score. In addition, the child from the dyad ranked one also over achieved, at least in terms of EOR.

Figure 10:11 Correlation between EOR and EOWPVT standardised scores

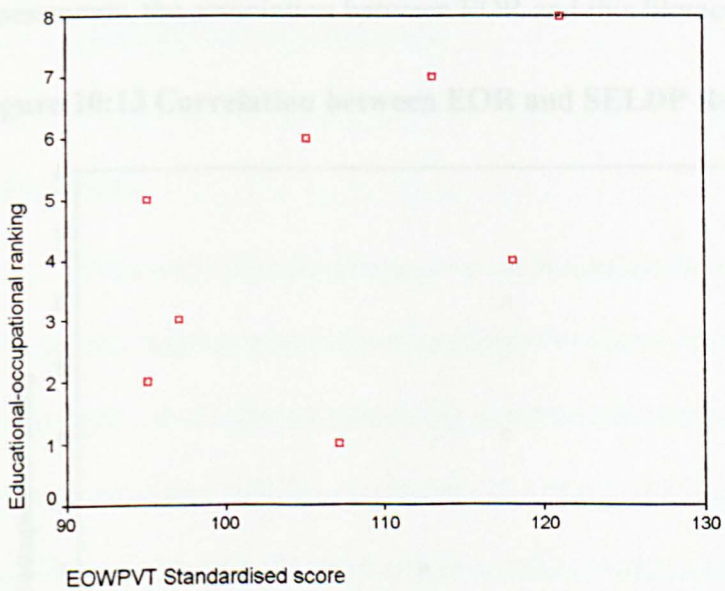
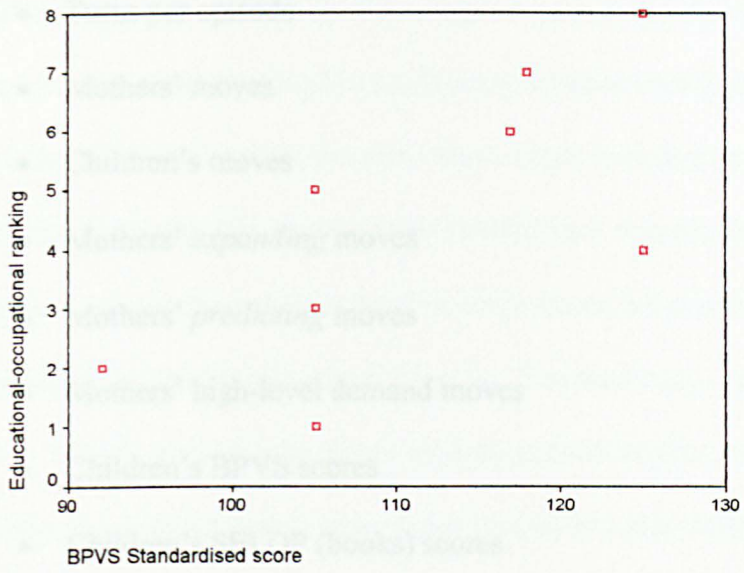


Figure 10:12 illustrates that only one child, ranked two, achieved a score below 100. The child ranked one achieved a higher score, but again, the child ranked four scored very highly; a score of over 120. As in the EOWPVT, the children ranked one

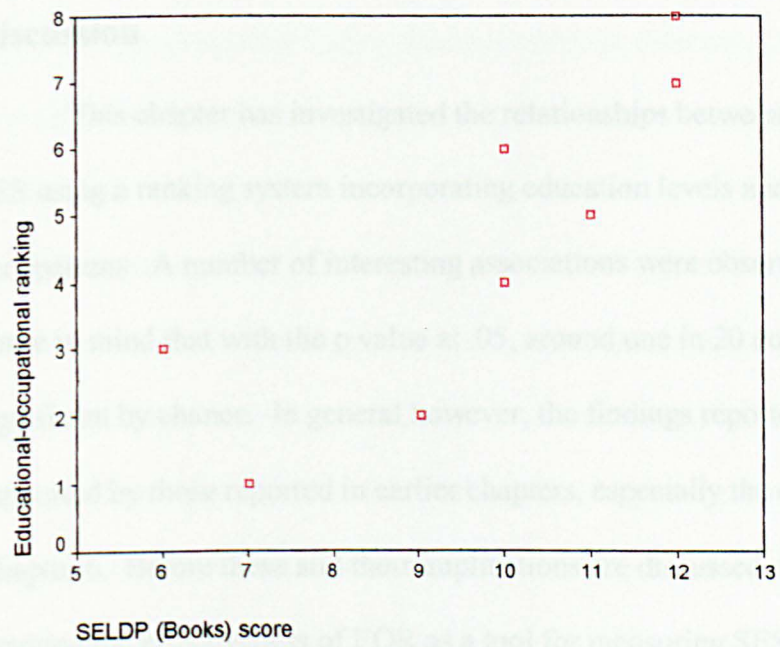
and four scored higher than would have been expected according to EOR. This graph, however, illustrates a significant positive relationship.

Figure 10:12 Correlation between EOR and BPVS standardised scores



The strongest relationship was achieved for the SELDP (books) and is shown graphically in Figure 10:13. Although the range of scores is smaller than for the other assessments, the association between EOR and this literacy measure is clear.

Figure 10:13 Correlation between EOR and SELDP (books) scores



Summary

There were significant correlations between EOR and a number of reading behaviours. To summarise, the significant positive correlations were for EOR and:

- Turns per episode
- Mothers' moves
- Children's moves
- Mothers' *expanding* moves
- Mothers' *predicting* moves
- Mothers' high-level demand moves
- Children's BPVS scores
- Children's SELDP (books) scores

There were significant negative relationships between EOR and:

- Mothers' *managing* moves
- Children's use of statements

Discussion

This chapter has investigated the relationships between reading behaviours and SES using a ranking system incorporating education levels and social class according to occupations. A number of interesting associations were observed, although it must be borne in mind that with the p value at .05, around one in 20 correlations will be significant by chance. In general however, the findings reported in this chapter are supported by those reported in earlier chapters, especially the qualitative analysis in Chapter 6. Before these and their implications are discussed, it is first necessary to examine the effectiveness of EOR as a tool for measuring SES.

The use of EOR highlights the importance of not over-generalising the effects of education and occupation on shared reading behaviours. Although generally EOR was appropriate, the dyad ranked fourth typically 'over achieved'. In most cases, scattergraphs showed this dyad scoring similarly to dyads seven and eight. This dyad, James and his mother, lived in a relatively affluent area of the city, and James' mother clearly had aspirations for her son. She and her husband were proud of their working class backgrounds and very open about their lack of educational qualifications. James' mother in particular valued education and viewed her role in her children's education as crucial for her children's school success. A second case is also worthy of discussion here. Shared reading behaviours for Sam and his mother, ranked one on EOR, tended to follow a similar pattern to other dyads ranked towards the lower end of EOR. However, Sam scored over 100 for each of the two standardised vocabulary assessments (see Chapter 8; Table 8:20), that is, higher than expected for his age. It would be incorrect to state that children of mothers at the lower end of EOR under-achieved. Although there were relationships between EOR and both BPVS and SELDP (books), only one child scored slightly below 100 on the BPVS. The remaining seven children performed higher, in some cases far higher, than expected for their age. It is only possible to say that children of dyads ranked higher on EOR tended to perform better on these assessments.

This study found that mothers who ranked higher on EOR tended to interact with their children more frequently during shared reading interactions. Others have reported similar results for mother-child conversations (Hoff-Ginsberg, 1994; Hoff, 2003), that is, higher SES mothers produce more speech and sustain conversations longer than lower SES mothers. This study too, found an association between EOR and lengths of discussions; dyads ranked higher on EOR tended to engage in longer episodes, suggesting that they were involved in more detailed discussions about

particular aspects of books. Often these interactions began with low-level demand moves (such as *labelling*), moved on to *describing* moves and then to high-level demand moves, such as *clarifying* or *predicting*. The fact that mothers ranked lower on EOR tended to use fewer turns per episode suggests that opportunities for using high-level demand moves were missed. Higher numbers of turns per episode also suggest greater semantic contingency, in which each turn builds upon the focus and meaning of previous turns and topics being discussed are of interest to the child (although we have seen in the case of dyad 2 in Chapter 6 that long episodes are not necessarily semantically contingent).

There was a significant positive relationship between mothers' rankings on EOR and high-level demand moves. This is an important finding, suggesting that lower ranking dyads engaged in far fewer decontextualised discussions. A number of studies have emphasised the importance of such language skills for children's later language and literacy success (Snow, 1983; Wells, 1987; see Chapter 1).

There was a significant negative relationship between mothers' rankings on EOR and their use of *managing* moves. This suggests that mothers ranked lower on EOR directed their children's behaviour more frequently and exerted more control over interactions than higher ranking mothers. The qualitative analysis in Chapter 6 suggested however, that some higher ranking mothers used other types of behaviours and moves to control interactions (see Chapter 6; dyad 2 and dyad 3). For example, although mothers' *completing* moves were not usually perceived to be a managing technique, they were nevertheless used with good effect on occasion to regain children's waning attention and resume control of the interactions.

There were some associations between EOR and dialogic type behaviours, with higher ranking mothers engaging in lengthier discussions and expanding their children's

responses more frequently. While higher ranking dyads asked more questions, the relationships between EOR and questions were not significant.

Like mothers, children of lower ranking dyads tended to make fewer moves than higher ranking dyads. Children of lower ranking dyads also made more statements than their higher ranking counterparts. This suggests that children in lower ranking dyads, who were asked lower proportions of questions, were more used to initiating comments.

This chapter has further addressed the research question '*What factors influence mother-child reading interactions?*' by examining differences in reading interactions between dyads according to their educational and occupational level. The interactions of higher ranking dyads typically involved more interaction and topics tended to be discussed for longer. Mothers ranked higher on EOR tended to use more decontextualised language, referring to abstract situations, for example, in another place (*referring to the real world*), the past (*clarifying*) or the future (*predicting*). Higher ranking EOR children made more moves overall and more high demand moves. We now need to consider the implications of these findings.

Chapter 11: Discussion of findings and implications for future research

This chapter summarises the main findings and explains how these contribute to what is known about mother-child shared reading interactions. The chapter begins with a summary discussion of Study 1, situating findings within the literature and describing how knowledge of the area has been extended. Study 2 is then discussed, key findings are highlighted and their situation within the literature is outlined. The unique features of the study are also noted. The importance of the findings of Study 2 are then discussed in relation to Study 1. The implications of both sets of findings for future research are discussed.

How this research contributes to knowledge regarding parent-child shared reading interactions

Study 1: A dialogic reading programme

This thesis aimed to identify and develop shared reading behaviours that promote language and literacy development. Firstly, a dialogic reading programme, which aimed to enhance children's language and literacy skills by teaching parents specific techniques for reading with their children, was replicated. An experimental study like this had not been undertaken in the U.K. before. The effects found by Whitehurst and his colleagues (for example, Whitehurst et al., 1988; Valdez-Menchaca and Whitehurst, 1992) could not be replicated, although there were significant gains for early literacy development. The literacy domain had been largely overlooked in the original Whitehurst studies. In the Whitehurst studies, there had been no investigation into parents' views of the dialogic reading programme. This study further extended the dialogic reading programme by seeking parents' views of the programme and

techniques. Results showed that parents valued the programme and felt that their children had benefited from it. Importantly, the majority welcomed the prescriptive nature of the programme. As one parent commented:

> *'They ought to start the programme in nursery because parents don't know how to read with children. They give you the books but they don't tell you what to do'.*

The findings of Study 2 have some important implications for dialogic reading. Before these are discussed, it is necessary to summarise the findings of Study 2, explain how these relate to existing research and how they add to our knowledge of mother-child shared reading interactions.

Study 2: An observational study of mother-child shared reading interactions

Study 2 was undertaken to investigate the nature of mother-child reading and to attempt to identify reading behaviours that enhanced language and literacy skills. Observational studies have previously tended to adopt either an ethnographic methodology (Heath, 1983; Minns, 1990; Taylor 1983) or a more systematic approach, involving coding of behaviours (Haden et al., 1996; Leseman et al., 1995; Pellegrini et al., 1990; Sorsby and Martlew, 1991). This small-scale observational study adopted a combination of the two methods and was therefore original in the depth and sophistication of analysis it employed. The depth was achieved through detailed qualitative analysis only possible with a small number of participants, while the sophistication concerned the detailed nature of the quantitative analysis, in which all verbal utterances were coded. This detailed level of analysis, coupled with the fact that the study involved a number of observations, enabled a comprehensive and original investigation of shared reading interactions within today's context of literacy.

Mothers and children employed a wide variety of behaviours when engaged in shared reading, which varied from dyad to dyad. Qualitative analysis showed that all

mothers attempted to make the shared reading experience an enjoyable one for their children, sitting close together, encouraging children to select books. They attempted to gain children's interest using a variety of strategies, such as reading with expression, using eye contact and drawing children's attention to picture details. Mothers' roles ranged from controlling to responding to children's interest. Children whose mothers followed their interest, rather than guiding their responses, generally appeared to be the most engaged. The exception was James' mother, who tended to control the interactions although her son usually responded with interest. The episodes of this dyad were often long although they were rarely semantically contingent. In dyad 1, mother and child behaved as equal participants, both structuring the interactions, and child interest was very high.

Mothers' behaviours ranged from instruction to facilitation oriented. Children were usually tuned to their mothers' styles of reading and responded appropriately.

Children's behaviours ranged from asking questions and making comments to simply responding to their mothers' questions. Longer episodes tended to become decontextualised discussions.

Lengths of interactions, the amount of interaction, type of interaction and form of interaction all varied considerably. The amount of interaction varied within as well as between dyads, depending on the type of book being read. The example of James and his mother highlights this point. This dyad, for the most part, engaged in highly participatory shared reading interactions, although when reading a narrative with a substantial amount of text, there was little interaction and James displayed an ability to sit and listen (as described in Chapter 6). This finding suggests that Bus and van IJzendoorn's (1995) scale of interactive reading (see Chapter 1) is somewhat misleading; some dyads may move back and forth from highly interactive to text-focused readings, depending on the type of book as well as the developmental level of

the child. This finding supports Panofsky's (1994) view that while shared reading interactions change as children develop, the shift cannot be viewed as a stage like model (see Chapter 1). While the lowest levels of interaction occurred in narratives with a substantial amount of text, the highest occurred in the unfamiliar expository book.

The type of interaction varied between and within dyads, although four categories of mothers' move dominated (*managing, evaluating, labelling* and *describing*), comprising around 70 per cent of all moves. Mothers made high-level demand moves relatively infrequently. They asked questions of their children to varying degrees; around 40 per cent of all mother moves were questions. These findings for the most part, support the work of others (Leseman et al., 1995).

The findings of this study suggest that virtually all observed behaviours used by mothers help to promote language and literacy development, since at the very least they help to raise children's interest levels. Although the findings suggest that *managing* moves play a less significant role in children's development than other types of move, they are nevertheless an important part of interactions, since it is only possible for mothers to engage children in higher-level demand moves when they have children's attention. Table 11:1 shows the potential effects of mothers' moves for children's language and literacy development. In this table, the effects of the medium and high-level demand moves are derived from the findings of this study, while the effects of the low-level demand moves derive more from the literature reviewed in Chapters 1 and 2.

Table 11:1 Potential effects of mothers' moves

Move	Effects
Procedural moves	
Managing	Help to direct and control interactions.
Evaluating	Help to build self-esteem and consolidate understanding. Corrective modelling helps to build vocabulary.
Low-level demand moves	
Labelling	Encourage vocabulary development.
Describing	Encourage language development.
Completing	Encourage phonemic awareness and memory.
Paraphrasing	Assist comprehension.
Skill building	Encourage knowledge of counting/number/colour concepts.
Expanding	Aid language development.
Medium-level demand moves	
Bridging	Encourage some level of decontextualised discussion and aids understanding.
High-level demand moves	
Referring to the real world	Encourage decontextualised discussion and aid understanding.
Developing vocabulary	Enhance understanding of vocabulary through discussion of word meanings.
Clarifying	Encourage decontextualised discussion of previous events. Aid comprehension by helping children order story sequences, identify main occurrences and make explicit some of the implicit connections.
Predicting	Predicting moves encourage decontextualised discussion of future events. Inferring moves encourage decontextualised discussion about what characters might be saying/feeling.
Literacy	Encourage print awareness and understanding of books.

Children used mainly *low-level* and *procedural* moves. *Medium* and *high-level* moves were used less frequently, although there was evidence that high-level moves were often responses to their mothers' use of such moves. *Chiming* was used most frequently in familiar rhyming books and those with repeated phrases. *Chiming* can enhance phonological awareness skills, which are known to play an important role in early reading (Adams, 1990). We have seen that *reading* moves were used most commonly by two children in particular, and that such moves can enhance early literacy skills. *Incorrect* responses to mothers had been included as a category in this study partly to determine the extent to which mothers were tuned to their children's

capabilities, although there were no significant findings for this category. Like mothers' moves, children's moves were evaluated according to their potential for language and literacy development. The potential outcomes of children's moves are summarised in Table 11:2.

Table 11:2 Potential outcomes of children's moves

Moves	Significance for language and literacy development
Procedural	Help to sustain interactions.
Low-level	Encourage vocabulary development and language skills, phonemic awareness, memory, counting/number/colour skills
Medium-level	Encourage some level of abstract thought.
High-level	Involve abstract thought and verbalisations in the past, present or future.
Incorrect	Potentially significant in the responses they elicit from mothers, such as explaining, rephrasing and asking simpler questions.
Reading	Encourage early literacy skills, memory and self-esteem.
Chiming	Encourage memory and phonological awareness.
Unrelated	Limited benefit.
Inaudible	Not applicable.

Mothers who used high numbers of moves appeared to encourage their children to speak more. It is also likely that talkative children encouraged greater participation from their mothers. Mother-child interaction is beneficial for child development, language and cognitive development (Hart and Risley, 1995; Hoff, 2003; Huttenlocher et al., 1991; Huttenlocher, Levin and Vevea, 1998). Hart and Risley (1995) found that children who were frequently engaged in conversations with their mothers acquired vocabulary and had higher IQs at age three than those who did not have opportunities for conversations. High numbers of mothers' and children's moves during shared

reading interactions were therefore considered to be particularly beneficial for children's language development. An important contribution to knowledge is that low levels of interaction may enhance children's literacy skills, since the children from the two dyads who participated in the lowest levels of interaction were those who engaged in frequent spontaneous re-readings of books. The children's re-readings tended to encourage their mothers to increase their levels of interaction. For one of the children, the re-readings were an opportunity to swap roles; the child became the leader and questioner and the mother became the respondent.

The importance of decontexualised language skills for later literacy development is well documented (Heath, 1983; Leseman et al., 1995; Snow, 1983, 1991; Snow and Tabors, 1993; Wells, 1985). It has already been noted that high-level moves and decontextualised language are similar, although decontextualised language refers to extended discourse forms, while distancing may involve single utterances. This study confirms findings from other research (Leseman et al., 1995; Sorsby and Martlew, 1991) that high-level demand moves made by mothers are associated with high-level responses in children. Leseman et al. (1995) showed that mothers' low-level demand moves were negatively correlated with children's high-level moves. While these findings were not replicated, the present study showed that mothers' *managing* moves were negatively correlated with children's high-level moves.

This study has added to the work of others (Leseman et al., 1995; Sorsby and Martlew, 1991) by showing that mothers' medium and high-level demand moves tended to occur as part of lengthier episodes. These episodes often began with low-level demand moves. High-level demand questions tended to be asked later in the episode, as follow-up questions.

In the present study, both mothers' and children's use of metalinguistic verbs and literacy words was extremely low, although mothers' use of literacy moves were

positively correlated with children's use of language and literacy words. Others have found metalinguistic verbs to be positively associated with children's vocabulary skills (Pellegrini et al., 1990). The majority of mothers in the study rarely asked questions or drew children's attention to print, even in books where print was a particularly salient feature (such as *Farm Animals*). This finding supports other research in this area (Ezell and Justice, 2000), although two mothers in the present study did make many more references to print than the others. The children of these mothers also demonstrated an interest in print, whereas children of mothers who did not draw children's attention to print did not look at or talk about print. This finding too, supports the work of Ezell and Justice (2000).

Study 2 investigated some of the factors that may affect shared reading interactions. Expository books tended to encourage interaction between mothers and children, whereas in unfamiliar narratives, mothers paid less attention to their children's understanding, thereby inhibiting interaction somewhat. Mothers gave much more support and tended to employ more dialogic type strategies when children were asked to read familiar books to them. This is an important addition to knowledge. Although Sulzby and Teale (1987) investigated the parents' role in children's reading of books, their research was a case study of one dyad, and their results were not discussed in relation to other types of book reading interactions. Study 2 also found that children tended to repeat discussions initiated by their mothers in previous sessions when they attempted to read books from memory, confirming the findings of Bus (2000).

The families who participated in Study 2 were from varying socio-economic backgrounds and there were substantial differences in their shared reading behaviours. However, all employed a range of strategies to encourage their children's development and maintain their interest in reading. Chapter 10 showed that there were relationships between shared reading behaviours and a measure of SES based on mothers' education

and parents' occupation. Dyads ranked higher on EOR interacted far more when engaged in sharing books than lower ranking dyads. These findings support those of others (Hoff-Ginsberg, 1991; Hoff, 2003). The finding that higher ranking EOR dyads made high-level demand moves more frequently than lower ranking dyads confirms the findings of Leseman et al. (1995) and Heath (1983) who demonstrated that white low SES parents rarely related book contents to children's own experiences. The current research extends understanding of the differences between shared reading interactions of dyads from varying socio-economic backgrounds by showing that lengths of episodes were strongly related to EOR. While Hoff-Ginsberg (1994) found that high SES dyads tended to engage in lengthier episodes, her research relates to mother-child interaction generally and not shared reading interactions specifically. Phillips and McNaughton (1990) found that the high SES dyads in their study engaged in lengthy episodes, although their sample involved only high SES dyads; they could not, therefore compare these with the interactions of lower SES dyads.

Interview and observational evidence from this study does not support the findings of Heath (1983) that many lower SES parents do not view their children as appropriate conversational partners. It is more likely that there are differences in the interactional styles and language use of lower and higher SES parents, which are apparent in adult-adult as well as adult-child speech (Hoff-Ginsberg, 1991; Ninio, 1980).

This study found shared reading interactions to be a jointly constructed activity between mother and child. While some mothers directed the interactions to a large extent, others were happy to follow their children's interest. The majority of behaviours mothers used when reading were beneficial, although the evidence from Study 2 and the literature reviewed in Chapter 1 suggest that medium and high-level demand moves are particularly important for young children's language and literacy development.

Implications of Study 2 for dialogic reading

Dialogic reading aims to enhance children's vocabulary by teaching parents to use a number of techniques designed to encourage children to adopt an active role when reading. The theory behind dialogic reading appears sound in that it is based on previous research (see Chapter 2 for an overview of these theories); the use of evocative techniques, such as asking *what* questions to encourage children to say more; the use of informative feedback including expansions, and teaching mothers to be sensitive to their children's development, or progressive change.

In Study 2 there was an example of a mother encouraging novel vocabulary use in her child through corrective modelling (Chapter 6, dyad 2). This finding confirms the effectiveness of *evaluating* as a strategy for enhancing children's vocabulary development.

In dialogic reading, discussions centre on illustrations, and as such the techniques can be thought of as mainly low-level demand (Reese and Cox, 1999), encouraging largely low-level responses in the child. Although the second part of the dialogic reading programme encourages increased use of *open-ended* questions, which often involve high-level demand moves (for example, '*What's going to happen?*'), dialogic reading is primarily a low-level demand programme.

Some have argued that simply listening to stories is more beneficial for children's development than engaging in low-level demand interactions (Wells, 1987), because listening to stories can encourage children to think in the abstract and concentrate on the linguistic message. Leseman et al. (1995) too, posited that shared reading interactions may not be effective at all unless they result in extending conversations on a high demand level. The findings of the present study support neither the contention of Leseman et al. (1995) nor that of Wells (1987). This research finds that both listening to stories and engaging in low-level interaction may promote

language and literacy learning. While the findings of Study 2 suggest that high-level interactions are particularly beneficial, there is evidence that procedural and low-level interactions result in novel vocabulary use. Low-level interactions also lead on to medium and high-level interactions. We have seen that interactions often begin with simple *labelling* or *describing* and move on to higher-level discussions.

The low-level techniques encouraged in the dialogic reading programme, namely *labelling* and *describing* (through use of *what* questions) can help to build children's interest and develop vocabulary. Evaluating children's responses through praise and encouragement can help to build self-esteem, while corrective modelling can help to develop vocabulary. However, as Study 2 revealed, these types of behaviours comprised a large proportion of shared reading interactions even when mothers had not been trained in the dialogic techniques, suggesting that the programme may encourage techniques that mothers already use. It is, of course possible that dialogic reading could help mothers to increase the frequency of their use of these techniques with training. One of the most important findings of Study 2 however, was that when children were asked to take control of the reading, their mothers supported them by increasing the frequency of dialogic techniques. These mothers had had no training in dialogic reading techniques.

Study 2 revealed that mothers rarely used two of the techniques introduced in the second part of the dialogic reading programme, namely *open-ended* questions and *expanding* moves. There were very few reports of mothers in the dialogic reading programme in Study 1 using these techniques, even after training. This suggests that mothers found these techniques difficult to implement; instead they preferred to utilise the techniques that were more familiar to them, such as asking *what* questions.

Dialogic reading emphasises the importance of following the interests of the child, or semantic contingency. Study 2 found this strategy to be beneficial in that it

contributed to a relaxed socio-emotional climate and helped to increase child interest. As such this may facilitate language and literacy development. This finding supports the contention of Snow (1983), that semantic contingency can contribute to literacy development, and contradicts the argument of Leseman et al. (1995), that following the child's interest is not effective unless these initiatives are on a high level.

The findings reported in the chapter regarding genre and familiarity have important implications for future reading intervention programmes. Dialogic reading programmes use only narrative books. It may well be argued that such programmes might achieve better results by employing expository books, since these interactions were the longest, contained the highest numbers of moves, highest proportions of mothers' *labelling, describing* and child questions. Indeed, unfamiliar narratives did not elicit as much interaction on first reading as might have been expected. This finding supports other limited research in this area that there tends to be more participation around expository than narrative texts (Heath, 1983; Pellegrini et al., 1990; Sulzby and Teale, 1987). Future dialogic reading programmes should employ a combination of narrative and expository texts containing detailed illustrations.

However, the qualitative analysis showed that three children at one point expressed a dislike of the expository book or a desire for their mothers not to read the text. As a compromise, future dialogic reading interventions could use a combination of expository and narrative books. Narrative books used in future programmes should be unfamiliar initially, although dyads should be allowed to keep the books for several weeks. This would ensure that dyads benefited from reading unfamiliar books that became familiar over time.

The findings of Study 2 suggest that higher SES dyads tended to use more dialogic behaviours than lower SES dyads. Higher SES dyads engaged in more

interaction, longer episodes and tended to expand their children's responses more frequently.

Dialogic reading is an intervention programme designed to encourage language development through increased interaction. It does not aim to enhance higher cognitive skills such as comprehension and print awareness. Studies by Whitehurst and his colleagues (Whitehurst et al., 1988; Whitehurst, Arnold et al., 1994) found that gains on standardised vocabulary tests were diminished nine months after intervention. While encouraging increased interaction may be beneficial, behaviours that encourage higher-level cognitive skills and decontextualised interactions also promote language and literacy learning.

Implications of findings for future research

This thesis, with its rich and varied data, has implications for further research. It is possible to suggest elements for a reading intervention programme for parents and three-year-old children, drawing on findings from Studies 1 and 2. The findings of Study 2 suggest that while it may be appropriate to attempt to increase levels of interaction through intervention, other strategies may also be beneficial for early language and literacy development.

The findings show that mothers talked and asked questions about illustrations quite naturally. We have seen that these strategies are beneficial for children's language development, although intervention programmes cannot be considered effective if they encourage mothers to engage in strategies they already use. The findings of Study 2 suggest that all mothers used high proportions of procedural and low-level demand moves and much lower proportions of medium and high-level demand moves. While procedural and low-level demand moves are considered essential for managing interactions, maintaining children's interest and enhancing a range of other skills (see

Table 11:1), increasing the proportions of medium and high-level demand moves utilised would provide further opportunities for enhancing children's language and literacy development. Parents need to be encouraged to increase their use of decontextualised language, thereby encouraging children to engage in such skills. The focus for future intervention research should be on decontextualised, medium and high-level skills and print awareness. Because of the sophistication of these skills, it is likely that gains would only become apparent after a substantial period. Programmes should be flexible and consider parents' views and comments about implementation of techniques. Findings from Study 1 suggest that parents would welcome an approach offering discussion, flexibility and support.

Conclusions

This final section summarises the main findings of Study 1 and Study 2. However, before reviewing the conclusions of the thesis, it is first necessary to look at the strengths and limitations of the research.

Strengths and limitations of Studies 1 and 2

The two main limitations of Study 1 have already been discussed in Chapter 4, but to reiterate briefly, these related to the fact that I was involved in the assessment process, which threatened the validity of the research. The second limitation related to the small sample size.

There are a number of limitations of Study 2. The first was discussed in Chapter 3 and relates to potential changes in behaviour as a result of observation. Attempts were made to minimise such changes by ensuring that the first shared reading interactions were not included in the analysis. In addition, the observational data were triangulated with interview data. The size of the sample also raises questions about the external validity, or generalisability of the research. However, the sample size of eight was selected after careful deliberation to enable shared reading interactions to be studied in great depth. It was anticipated that the sample size was large enough to allow some generalization about the nature of shared reading interactions.

Another limitation related to the fact that the dyads read different books, some of which facilitated prediction and inference while others facilitated labelling and describing. An attempt was made to limit this weakness by ensuring that dyads read two books that were the same, as well as selecting some books of their own choosing. Allowing dyads to select their own books was a deliberate attempt to keep the shared reading interactions as natural as possible. This method also enabled book selection practices to be observed.

With these strengths and limitations in mind, it is now possible to consider the research questions, beginning with Study 1.

1. **What is the nature of families' home literacy practices before the programme?**

- Literacy practices, particularly interactions around books, are occurring in the majority of homes. However, home literacy experiences vary substantially between families.

2. **Can parents be taught to use dialogic reading techniques?**

- Parents can be taught to implement the techniques to some extent. They increase their use of simple questioning but do not ask more open-ended questions or use *expanding* as a strategy.

3. **What is the value of a dialogic reading programme?**

- Parents value the programme and feel it should be offered to other families.
- Parents feel the programme benefits their children.
- There is some evidence that the programme enhances children's early book skills.
- There is no evidence that the programme enhances vocabulary skills.

Because Study 1 had rather limited effects, a re-examination of shared reading behaviours was considered necessary. A detailed study of mother-child shared reading interactions was undertaken. The research questions for Study 2 are addressed in turn.

1. **How do parents and children read together?**

- There are substantial differences in the ways mothers and children read together.
- Children's choices of book to be read are not random. They tend to select books for their content, illustrations or those which are familiar.
- Mothers use a variety of techniques for maintaining their children's interest

including reading with expression, drawing children's attention to picture details and following children's interest.

- All mothers use some dialogic techniques. Almost one third of moves involve feedback, although there are only small proportions of expansions. Fewer than 20 per cent of moves involve the type of questioning favoured by dialogic reading.
- Over 80 per cent of mothers' moves are procedural and low-level demand; medium-level and high-level demand moves comprise fewer than 20 per cent of the total.
- Lengthy episodes often begin with low-level demand mothers' moves and move on to high-level demand moves. They often result in children's high-level responses.

2. What factors influence parent-child reading interactions?

- The type of book affects interactions, with expository books generating the most interaction and unfamiliar narratives the least.
- Mothers use high proportions of dialogic techniques when supporting their children's attempts to read to them.
- There are associations between EOR (educational-occupational ranking) and certain shared reading behaviours. Dyads ranked higher on EOR engage in lengthier episodes, make more moves and use high-level demand moves more frequently than those ranked lower on EOR.

3. Which behaviours promote language and literacy development?

- The majority of mothers' behaviours appear to contribute to children's learning.
- High levels of interaction appear to promote language development, insofar as mothers who participate in high levels of interaction tend to elicit more talk from their children.

- There is evidence that mothers' high-level demand strategies promote language and literacy development.
- There is evidence that the length of discussions around each topic discussed (episodes) also promote language and literacy skills.

It is hoped that this research will provide an insight into the capabilities of parents, the opportunities they provide for their children and wide range of interaction behaviours they employ, as well as their receptiveness to collaboration and research. It has been a privilege to work with these families.

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Hill, E. (2000). *Where's Spot.* Frederick Warne and Co.

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McNaughton, C. (1996). *Suddenly.* Collins Picture Lions.

Murphy, J. (1996). *Peace at last.* Macmillan children's books.

Oxenbury, H. (1987). *Tickle, tickle*. Prentice Hall and IBD.

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Prater, J. (1995). *Once upon a time*. Walker Books.

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Sendak, M. (2000). *Where the wild things are*. Red Fox Picture Books.

Stimson, J. (1993). *The three billy goats gruff*. Ladybird Books.

Waddell, M. (1994). *Owl babies*. Walker Books.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Books used in dialogic reading study (Study 1)

Ahlberg, A. and Ahlberg, A. (1981). *Peepo!* Puffin Picture Books.

Ahlberg, A. and Ahlberg, A. (1989). *Each peach pear plum.* Puffin Picture Books.

Ahlberg, A. and Amstutz, A. (1999). *Monkey do!* Walker Books.

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Carle, E. (1995). *The very hungry caterpillar.* Picture Puffins.

Dale, P. (1990). *Ten in the bed.* Walker Books.

Dr. Seuss (1980). *Hop on pop.* Picture Lions.

Inkpen, M. (1992). *Kipper.* Hodder Children's Books.

Lacome, J. (1995). *Walking through the jungle.* Walker Books.

McNaughton, C. (1996). *Suddenly.* Collins Picture Lions.

Murphy, J. (1996). *Peace at last.* Macmillan Children's Books.

Rosen, M. and Oxenbury, H. (2001). *We're going on a bear hunt.* Walker Books.

Ross, T. (1987). *I want my potty.* Collins Picture Lions.

Sendak, M. (2000). *Where the wild things are.* Red Fox Picture Books.

Waddell, M. (1994). *Owl Babies.* Walker Books

Zion, G. (1992). *No Roses for Harry.* Red Fox Picture Books.

Appendix 2: Study 1 – Initial interview

About the family

How old [child] is now?

Does she/he have any older brother or sisters at home?

Does she/he have any younger brother or sisters at home?

Who else is there at home? [e.g.partner/spouse]

child] regularly looked after by anyone else?

Sharing books

Does [child] show any interest in books?

Does [child] have books around at home that are for her/him?

How does [child] use books?

Has she/he had a favourite book? If yes – details

Roughly how many books would you say are for him/her?

Do you keep books where he/she can get them for herself/himself or does someone have to get them for him/her?

Does anyone at home get to sit down and read a book with [child]?

Can you give me any idea how often that happens?

What sort of reading materials do you read or look at together?

Do you remember how old [child] was when you started reading to him/her?

Can you tell me what happens when you share a book with your child?

[Prompt if necessary: Do you make a point of doing anything in particular when you read with him/her?]

Does anyone else read with her/him? Who?

Do you think [child] ever sees you or anyone else in the family reading books?

View of literacy, expectations for child and view of parent role

Do you have any memories of learning to read or books you remember from when you were a child?

Do you think you have a part to play in [child's] reading development? What do you do?

How important do you think what you are doing now is for [child's] reading later?

Where would you say you get your ideas for how to help [child] with reading?

Appendix 2: Study 1 - Post-programme interview

Can you remember why you agreed to take part in this programme?

How has it been?

How did you find the training sessions?

How did you find doing the things that were suggested at the sessions?

How often, on average, did you manage to read with [child] while the programme was running?

Did you feel being in the project as a pressure?

What do you think it's done for [child]?

Did the programme make a difference to how you read with [child]?

Did the programme make a difference to how often you read with [child]?

Has this programme affected what you've done with your other children?

How do you feel about the length of the programme?

How did you find the programme books?

Do you think being in the programme *will affect how you read with [child] in future?*

What was the best thing about the programme?

What was the worst thing about it?

Has the programme made any difference to you – apart from affecting [child]?

Would you be in favour of this sort of project being offered to families in future? Why?

What do you think other families would get out of it?

Is there anything else you want to say about the project?

Appendix 3: Study 2 – Interview

A. About the family

How old is _____ now?

Does he/she have any older brothers or sisters at home?

Does he/she have any younger brothers or sisters at home?

Who else is there at home? [e.g. partner/spouse]

B. Using literacy at home

Does ___ have books around at home that are for her/him?

Roughly how many books would you say there are for her/him?

Can you give me an idea of the sorts of books they are?

Does he/she have any storybooks? Information books? Alphabet books? Number books? Traditional storybooks? Books from films/TV characters etc.

Can you tell me some of the titles of those books?

Do you think _____ ever sees you or anyone else in the family reading?

What sort of reading material? [Books; magazines: newspapers]

Are you a member of a library?

How often do you visit the library?

C. Reading together

Does anyone at home get to sit down and read a book with ____?

Do you read anything other than books together?

Who reads with _____ most often?

Does anyone else read with her/him? Who?

How often on average does someone read with ___?

How old was ____ when you started reading to him/her?

Can you tell me what happens when you share a book with your child?

What sort of things do you do?

Does ____ usually make comments when you read a book together?

What sort of things?

Do you think that ___'s comments and responses when you are reading together affect the way you read to her/him? How?

If you felt that ___ was loosing interest in the book you were reading, what would you do?

D. Child's attitudes

Does ___ enjoy shared reading?

What do you think ____ enjoys about shared reading at the moment?

Is there anything he/she doesn't like about it?

Does ____ use books alone? How often?

For about how long?

What sorts of things does he/she do when she/he looks at books alone?

Has she/he had a favourite book?

Does ____ ask to be read to? How often

D. Own experiences of learning to read and views on literacy

Do you have any memories of learning to read?

Would you say these were positive experiences?

Do you read for pleasure now? How often?

Have you ever had advice about the teaching of reading?

Have you been involved in any other literacy programmes or school based sessions on helping your child with reading and writing?

Have you ever bought, borrowed or made anything to help ___ learn to read or write?

How do you think children learn to read?

Do you think you have a part to play in helping __ to learn to read? How?

Are there things you do to help ___ learn about reading?

What sorts of things?

Where would you say you get ideas for how to help ___ with reading?

Do you think there are any benefits of reading to young children?

Do you think your reading together will help him/her with reading?How?

How do you think ___ will do in reading and writing at school?

Do you think it's important for him/her to be good at reading? Why?