The discourse of pre-school storytime:
a Text World Theory account

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Abstract

This thesis presents the first extended Text World Theory (cf. Gavins, 2007; Werth, 1999) account of pre-school storytime discourse. In doing so, it combines ethnographic methods of data collection with the text-world analytical framework and examines naturalistic video data of parent-child dyads participating in routine storytime practices at home. The project has three central aims: to investigate how naturally occurring read-aloud activities between an adult and young child operate; to extend the use and capabilities of Text World Theory by applying it to storytime discourse; and to provide insight into the pre-schooler's early experiences of fiction.

The cognitive-linguistic analysis of some of children's very earliest interactions with literary texts offered in this thesis provides a unique insight into storytime practices and the early cognition of reading. As a result, the thesis makes a number of original contributions to the fields of literacy and education research, picturebook scholarship, and cognitive stylistics. In the first and second instances, the analyses presented throughout this work provide a holistic account of early reading activities that extend existing research on pre-school reading and pre-school readers from both an experiential and ontological perspective. Furthermore, I offer an original contribution to cognitive stylistics in the form of my application and development of the Text World Theory framework. Throughout this study, I demonstrate the suitability of Text World Theory to a context-sensitive examination of the experiences of young readers and the exploration of the storytime practices that introduce them to written fiction.

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.0 Aims and parameters

This thesis is the first Text World Theory (Gavins, 2007; Werth, 1999) account of pre-school storytime discourse and offers an original contribution to the fields of cognitive stylistics, literacy and education research, and picturebook scholarship. It focuses on young children's very earliest interactions with literary texts in a domestic setting, which I argue provide the cognitive foundations for later reading. I adopt an ethnographic Text World Theory approach (see detailed outline of this approach across Chapter 3), analysing video data of at-home read-aloud practices captured in real-time. The study comprises three main aims: to investigate how naturally occurring read-aloud activities between an adult and young child operate; to extend the use and capabilities of Text World Theory by applying it to storytime discourse; and to provide insight into the pre-schooler's early experiences of fiction.

'Storytime' refers to the practice of an adult reading a written narrative aloud to a young child or children. It is an identifiable literacy event that is widely recognised by parents and researchers as a positive activity that contributes to children learning to read (see Barton, 1994; also see review in Chapter 2, Sections 2.1 – 2.2.1). These practices are most commonly associated with picturebook texts, a genre that is synonymous with young children (see Desai, 2004; also see review in Chapter 2, Sections 2.3 – 2.3.3), and they are surrounded by a number of social and cultural pressures (see overview in Chapter 2, Sections 2.1 – 2.2.1). The importance of these practices on early development and schooling success has been emphasised in previous research, but these studies often fail to account for whole discourse situation and rarely take naturally-occurring events as their focus. This study aims to extend existing research on pre-school reading by examining, in detail, the routine read-aloud practices of real families, where parents regularly share picturebooks with their pre-school children aged between 2 and 4 years old (see Chapter 3 for a full overview).

The ethnographic Text World Theory approach adopted in this thesis combines ethnographic methods of data collection with the text-world analytical framework (see Chapter 3). This approach to storytime is the first of its kind and I argue that it addresses a gap in existing research by uniting context, text, and reader (see review across Chapter 2) providing a more holistic account of early reading whilst offering a cognitive account of the experience of engaging with picturebooks specifically. Pre-school reading practices remain relatively untouched by Text World Theory and by cognitive stylistics more broadly (see review in Section 2.4.4), but it is my belief that the conceptual structure and ontological

underpinnings of the framework are well suited to the examination of storytime practices and the experiences of pre-school readers. The Text World Theory framework enables the methodical breakdown of *all* discourse into distinct conceptual levels which allow a fully context-sensitive exploration of communication. The usefulness of the framework in the analysis of written literary texts, including multimodal fiction and spoken discourse (see review in Section 2.4.2) has been addressed and exemplified by a number of scholars to date (see Sections 2.4 – 2.4.3). I argue, therefore, that Text World Theory possesses the capacity needed for the examination of storytime practices, where both written and face-to-face communication exist co-dependently. Text World Theory is employed in the current work to map both the face-to-face discourse present during interactive reading and the child's first-hand experience of the fictional texts being presented to them.

I extend Text World Theory in two key ways throughout this work. First, I apply it to pre-school read-aloud discourse for the first time and in doing so present an original augmentation to the framework in the form of a new conceptual level: the 'performance-world' (see Section 4.3). The concept of the performance-world enables the framework to better account for storytime practices and throughout my study I simultaneously introduce, test, and develop this augmentation whilst employing it to present a rigorous account of early read-aloud activities. Second, I argue that the combination of Text World Theory with ethno-methods and the naturalistic data they produce enhances the framework's approach to context and the concept of the discourse-world (see Gavins, 2007: 1-34 for an overview). Given the scope of this project and the ground it sets out to cover, it is hoped that the specific explorations and developments presented throughout this thesis not only inform, but act as a foundation for the future testing and further augmentation of Text World Theory, specifically in relation to other types of read-aloud and scaffolded discourse.

The approach adopted throughout this study addresses fundamental gaps in research on pre-school reading and in how Text World Theory is employed and aligns the two in order to present a unique account of storytime that is both context-sensitive and cognitively-oriented.

1.1 Thesis Outline

The thesis consists of seven chapters. The current chapter has provided a brief introduction to the aims of my research and has highlighted the analytical focus and parameters of my study. Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 provide the theoretical and methodological background to the analyses presented across Chapters 4 – 6. In Chapter 2, I provide an overview of the key

theoretical foundations underpinning the focus and approach adopted in this thesis. This chapter is split into two halves. The first provides a review of existing research on pre-school reading practices and defines the pre-school reading context under investigation (Sections 2.1 – 2.3.3). I identify a number of gaps in existing research during this review and argue for a more holistic approach to storytime activities (Section 2.3.4). To this end, the second half of the chapter provides a critical introduction to the cognitive-linguistic model of discourse-processing adopted in this work: Text World Theory. Across Sections 2.4 – 2.4.3, I introduce the key tenets and structure of the framework; explore relevant existing work and advances in Text World Theory research; and identify a number of gaps in current text-world scholarship. Section 2.4.4 then focuses on the suitability of the framework for exploring storytime discourse and for developing a cognitively-oriented approach to read-aloud practices. The final sections of Chapter 2 (2.5 – 2.5.4) focus on the pre-school reader and provide an overview of relevant research pertaining to pre-school cognition.

In Chapter 3, I outline my mixed-methods approach (Section 3.1) to data collection and analysis and provide a narrative overview of how I carried out my project. This chapter focuses on the naturalistic aims of my research and explicates how these aims influenced my ethnographically-oriented and 'bottom up' research design. In Sections 3.2 – 3.2.1, I outline my ethnographic approach to participant recruitment and data collection in particular, before turning my attention to the data itself. Sections 3.3 – 3.3.1 focus on introducing the storytime participants that took part in my study and Section 3.4 provides details about the storytime video data they produced for this project. These storytime videos make up the core dataset around which my analysis is based. Finally, Sections 3.5 and 3.6 provide an overview of my analytic approach to my storytime data once it had been collected.

The next three chapters present a detailed insight into the video data I collected. These chapters are thematically structured in line with the aims of this thesis, with each one focusing on key concepts relating to storytime that emerged during my analysis. Each of my analysis chapters possesses a dual aim: they not only present a rigorous exploration of pre-school read-aloud activities, but introduce, test, and develop an original augmentation to the Text World Theory framework.

Chapter 4 focuses on the read-aloud context and is centrally concerned with the storytime discourse-world (Gavins, 2007: 9 -10; Werth, 1999: 17). In this chapter, I explore the contextual, behavioural, and linguistic similarities observed across my dataset. I focus on the transcripts from my storytime video recordings and introduce and examine the role of the 'storytime schema' in early reading activities (see Sections 4.1 – 4.1.3). I argue that this

schematic knowledge is able to account for the shared understanding across all of my participants of what storytime practices involve. I look in particular at the physical nature of these activities and, in Section 4.2, I offer a detailed account of the storytime discourse-world. Drawing on this close analysis of the interactive discourse situation, I argue that storytime presents a number of challenges to the current Text World Theory framework and in response I introduce a new conceptual level: the performance-world. Sections 4.3 – 4.3.3 provide a preliminary introduction to this development, paying particular attention to how it better addresses key features of the storytime context.

Chapter 5 takes for its focus storytime talk and examines exactly how adult and child participants communicate during storytime practices. In this chapter I investigate patterns in spoken discourse across my video data and identify two core types of talk that I argue make up read-aloud discourse: 1) read-aloud talk/performance and 2) other additional talk either about the read-aloud talk/performance or some other topic. The introduction and role of the performance-world in the analysis of storytime is extended further in this chapter as I examine how participants construct text-worlds (Gavins, 2007: 10-13; Werth, 1999: 87) for both the picturebook text being shared (read-aloud performance) and all other spoken discourse around it (additional talk). Most notably, in Section 5.1, I draw attention to the conceptual variation displayed amongst storytime participants and argue that, whilst they are engaged in a joint reading activity, the process of text-world construction is not a joint one. Instead, I propose that participants construct their own individual text-worlds and then work together to assimilate these conceptual constructs in order to negotiate a shared experience of the picturebook text being shared (Section 5.1.1). I go on to introduce the concepts of 'interactive comprehension' and 'conceptual toggling' in Section 5.2, which I argue best represent the conceptual work being done by adults and children during storytime. Patterns in the additional talk present in storytime practices, specifically, are examined in detail throughout this chapter with features of both adult-talk (Section 5.2.1) and child-talk (Section 5.2.2) being explicated. I argue that storytime sees participants engaged in a practice that requires them to conceptually combine aspects of text, image, and talk during the construction of text-worlds for a written discourse. In line with this argument, I present the performance-world as a conceptual mediation space that is able to account for the interactive – and multimodal – nature of discourse processing during early reading. I also consider the significance of the episodes of negotiation and assimilation that take place during storytime activities and suggest that they accommodate other forms of learning which often take precedence in the discourse situation (see Section 5.3).

The central focus in Chapter 6 is storytime ontology. This chapter explores the child's relationship with, and experience of, fiction and the ontologically distinct realms depicted in picturebooks during these early reading practices. Throughout this chapter, I examine the role of the performance-world as an in between conceptual space that represents the progression from reality to imagination. In the opening section of this chapter, I introduce an ontological continuum into the performance-world and argue that storytime practices are defined by some level of ontological instability, whereby text (Section 6.2), performance (Section 6.2.1), pictures (Section 6.3) and talk (Section 6.4) work to soften the boundary between reality and fiction. I argue that this softening enhances the child's engagement with a fictional realm and ultimately teaches them about ontological differentiation. In the final section of this chapter, I draw together key components from across this thesis and focus on what young children are taught about reading and about fiction during storytime activities. The child's tendency to mimic the adults who read to them is foregrounded and evidence of early fictional immersion is discussed.

Chapter 7 provides a concluding discussion of the overall findings of my research. I relate these to my original research aims and questions, and I also suggest a number of potential avenues for future work which have been opened up by this thesis.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.0 Preview

In this chapter, I provide an introduction to both the storytime reading context under investigation throughout this thesis and the cognitive approach that is employed in the exploration of these reading practices. The first half of the chapter is primarily dedicated to defining the pre-school reading context. I address the key characteristics of early reading, before moving on to consider why we read to young children (Section 2.1.1) and explore the specific benefits of 'at-home' reading (Section 2.1.2). These opening sections foreground the situated nature of storytime practices and draw attention to the social, cultural, and economic factors that affect pre-school reading. I then provide an overview of relevant existing research which examines these practices. The review conducted here focuses on two broad fields of work associated with early reading: first, education and pedagogy, which includes research that focuses on 'practice and context' and primarily takes into account the role of the adult in 'shared-reading' environments (Section 2.2 - 2.2.1); and second, a stylistic or text-oriented approach that focuses predominantly on the picturebook texts associated with young children (Section 2.3 - 2.3.3).

In the second half of the chapter, I provide a detailed introduction to Text World Theory, the key analytical framework employed throughout this study (Section 2.4); I review the framework's key tenets and structure (Section 2.4.1), existing work and recent advances in the field (Section 2.4.2), alongside relevant gaps in current text-world research (Section 2.4.3). I argue for the suitability of the framework for the analysis of pre-school reading and in the development of a cognitively-oriented approach to storytime (Section 2.4.4). Finally, in Section 2.5, in order to develop my cognitive approach to storytime discourse further, I provide an overview of relevant existing research that focuses specifically on pre-school cognition, knowledge and experience (Section 2.5 - 2.5.4).

2.1 Pre-school reading: defining the research context

> Reading to children is an activity which is easily identifiable and obviously
> related to literacy. By 'obviously' I mean that adults read to children, that it is
> taken for granted that reading to children is 'a good thing' and that it contributes
> to their learning to read […] It is an identifiable literacy event, recognised both by
> parents and by researchers, and is even named as **story time.**
>
> (Barton, 1994: 140–141)

Barton foregrounds three key elements about pre-school reading practices – or, 'storytime' – in the quote above: they are easy to recognise; they have many positive associations; and they are linked to literacy and the process of learning to read. In this section, I will briefly address each of these key characteristics in turn. The reader, context, and texts associated with storytime practices are instantly familiar. Barton foregrounds the innate sense that pre-school reading practices are a shared practice, and more specifically, an act carried out by adults *for* children. Storytime is, essentially, a read-aloud practice that is shared between two co-present participants: a young pre-literate child and a mature literate narrator. Moreover, pre-school children require texts that are matched to their reading ability and experiential knowledge. Nodelman and Reimer state that 'when most people think of books for children, they think first of picture-books: short books that tell stories or convey information with relatively few words but with pictures on every page' (2003: 274) (also see Section 2.3 for a review of work on picturebook texts). It is these shared picturebook read-aloud practices that are the focus of the current study, specifically those storytime activities that take place at home in a domestic setting, between parents and their children.

What is more, reading to children is viewed universally as a positive activity that impacts not only the child's relationship with reading and books, but many aspects of their lives. Drawing on research in the form of parent diaries, Cochran-Smith notes that early experiences with stories and books 'can play a part in language and concept development, influence later attitudes towards reading, and stimulate and broaden young children's imaginative development' (1984: 12) (see Sections 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 for further discussion on the developmental benefits of reading to young children). The positive associations connected to storytime practices are numerous; however, one of the most prevalent associated outcomes of reading to young children is the link to literacy and, in particular, to reading development.

Barton refers to storytime as a 'literacy event' (1994: 140-141), which Barton and Hamilton go on to define as 'activities where literacy has a role […] Events are observable episodes which arise from practices and are shaped by them. The notion of events stresses the situated nature of literacy, that it always exists in a social context' (2000: 8). Barton's work is embedded within the 'New Literacy Studies' paradigm, which evolved out of a broader 'social turn' in academic scholarship and views literacy as a social practice (see Barton, 1994; Barton, et al., 2000; Gee, 2000a; 2000b; Barton and Hamilton, [1998] 2012; also see Gillen and Hall, 2013 for an overview). The New Literacy Studies are based on the view that 'reading and writing only make sense when studied in the context of social and cultural (and

we can add historical, political and economic) practices of which they are but a part' (Gee, 2000b: 180). Essentially, the New Literacy Studies movement foregrounds the socially and culturally situated nature of reading. Like Barton, and the New Literacy Studies movement more widely, I adopt a view that storytime exists in a social context and is surrounded by cultural and social pressures, expectations, and influences. I propose that these social and cultural factors are what make storytime a recognisable practice and throughout this thesis, I endeavour to account for both the immediate and the wider socio-cultural contexts that influence early reading experiences.

In the subsections that follow, I review some of the key contextual factors that influence storytime practices, focusing first on why we read to young children, on the concept of 'emergent literacy' (Teale and Sulzby, 1986), and on the 'socially powerful institution' of education (Barton and Hamilton, 2000: 12), before reviewing research that looks at the relationship between reading and the home. Section 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 extend the introduction to storytime practices and situate pre-school reading more firmly in its socio-cultural context.

2.1.1   Why we read to pre-school children: emergent literacy

We read to pre-school children because 'one thing we know about early reading is the importance of hearing stories read aloud' (Ross et al., 2006: 73). This is 'common knowledge' (Scarborough and Dobrich, 1994: 245). Teale also comments on the ubiquitous belief that 'reading to pre-school children is a good thing' (Teale, 1981: 902), and he goes on to say that 'it is an activity through which children may develop interest and skill in literacy' (1981: 902). Wells' influential study *The Meaning Makers* (1986), which focuses on young children's language and literacy development between the ages of one and ten, also found that the sharing of stories is one of the most valuable types of early reading activity. This link between early reading and literacy underpins much of the current research on storytime practices, which focuses predominantly on the concept of 'emergent literacy' (see Teale and Sulzby, 1986). Put simply, 'emergent literacy consists of the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that are presumed to be developmental precursors to conventional forms of reading and writing […], and the environments that support these developments (e.g. shared book reading)' (Whitehurst and Lonigan, 1998: 849). Storybook reading, specifically, is considered a major area of research activity in this field (see Yaden et al., 2000: 427), with the pre-school years being considered a key stage in the development of 'emergent literacy skills' (see Teale and Sulzby, 1986). The term 'emergent literacy' is typically attributed to Clay (1966); however, it was developed in more detail by Teale and Sulzby (1986). Their

work was the result of a paradigm shift in literacy research and a move away from the concept of 'reading readiness' which, according to Teale and Sulzby, affected people's thinking about literacy development in two significant ways:

> First, it leads them to conceptualise the early childhood period (and the behaviours of the child during this period) as precursors to "real" reading or writing, implying that only after the child has mastered the various subskills of reading readiness does the real part begin. Second, and closely related, it tells teachers and parents that learning to read and write begins in a school-like setting where these readiness skills can be taught.

(Teale and Sulzby, 1986: xiv)

Ages one through five, then, were regarded as the period in which oral language and reading readiness are developed, with 'real' writing and reading starting for children only after they enter school (Teale and Sulzby, 1986: xv). However, the emergent literacy paradigm challenges the traditional reader readiness approach and draws on the development of two key trends: (a) cognitive approaches to issues of learning; and (b) renewed interest in the first few years of life as a period of critical significance in development (Teale and Sulzby, 1986: xiv). The emergent literacy paradigm contends that young children are doing critical cognitive work in literacy development during the years from birth to six (Teale and Sulzby, 1986: xvii) and as such, it places the onset of literacy acquisition at birth rather than at the introduction of formal reading instruction in school (Ross et al., 2006: 73; also see Gillen and Hall, 2013: 6-7 for a brief history of this paradigm shift). The idea that literacy development begins long before children start formal instruction places greater significance on the pre-school years and on early literacy experiences, such as storybook reading at home.

In addition, current early-years education in the United Kingdom, where the present study took place, draws on emergent literacy research by recognising the developmental significance of the period between birth and age 5, and specifically encourages caregivers to read to their children. The statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), published by the Department for Education (DfE), sets out the standards for learning, development and care of children from birth to 5 (DfE, 2017). The framework introduction states that 'children develop quickly in the early years and a child's experiences between birth and age five have a major impact on their future life chances' (DfE, 2017: 5). The EYFS statutory guidance suggests that education programmes must involve activities and experiences for children with regards to literacy, as follows:

Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

(DfE, 2017: 8)

The early learning goals surrounding reading specifically include: children read and understand simple sentences; use phonic knowledge to decode regular words and read them aloud accurately; read some common irregular words; demonstrate understanding when talking with others about what they have read (DfE, 2017: 11). Children are also expected to learn how to listen attentively to stories, accurately anticipating key events and responding to what they hear with relevant comments, questions or actions (DfE, 2017: 10). These early learning goals are expected to ensure a child's 'school readiness' and give the child the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life (DfE, 2017: 5).

Whilst the statutory framework is aimed at school leaders, school staff, childcare providers and childminders, in more formal settings, other supporting material for parents exists alongside it. A non-statutory guide developed by 4Children and supported by the Department of Education in the UK called *What to expect, when?: Guidance to your child's learning and development in the early years foundation stage* (4Children, 2015) is provided for parents. *What to expect, when?* is a simple guide that takes parents through the expectations of each age band in the EYFS and provides information on how they can support their children's learning and development. The guide opens by reminding parents that 'children develop more rapidly during the first five years of their lives than at any other time' and from the outset claims that 'it is important that your child grows up to be a good communicator and a keen reader' (4Children, 2015: 2). Parents are encouraged to share books with their children and are reminded that children enjoy being read to (see 4Children, 2015: 4-33).

The EYFS and the parental guidance that accompanies the framework urges carers, teachers, and parents to recognise the early years as a period of emergent literacy and encourage children's learning and development *before* they start school. Reading to children is specifically foregrounded as a key activity that aids a child's learning. As such, the current education system places a level of expectation and pressure on early-years providers and on parents to read to their children in order to enhance their child's development. What is more, whilst Morrow et al. note that 'through frequent storybook readings, children become

familiar with book language and realise the function of written language' (2009: 84), reading to children is associated with aspects of childhood development that go *beyond* book knowledge and simply teaching a child how to decode letters and words.

Listening, speaking, reading and writing are seen as interrelated and as developing concurrently (Ross et al., 2006: 73); thus, reading to children is viewed as an activity that promotes the development of these other basic literacy skills. Furthermore, Morrow et al. claim that reading 'good' stories to children can be used to help appropriate social behaviour (2009: 2); foster the development of healthy emotional attitudes; and encourage the exchange of ideas and the development of thinking skills, including observing, comparing, classifying, organizing, summarising, and evaluating (2009: 1-5), whilst building a desire for and interest in reading (2009: 84; also see Cullinan, 1987; Huck, 1992). The benefits of reading to young children are, therefore, linked to many areas of development, which include: language and vocabulary development (see for example: DeTemple and Snow, 2003; Duursma et al., 2008; Elley, 1989; Morrow et al., 2009; Ninio and Bruner, 1978; Sénéchal, 1997; Sénéchal and Cornell, 1993; Stahl, 2003; Vivas, 1996; Whitehurst et al., 1988); intellectual and cognitive development (see for example: Adrian et al., 2005; Adrian et al., 2007; Kalb and van Ours, 2014; Morrow et al. 2009; Ohgi et al., 2010; Sato et al., 2016); social and emotional development (see for example: Adrian et al., 2007; Morrow et al., 2009; Nikolajeva, 2012, 2013, 2014a); as well as success in beginning reading and reading achievement, improved comprehension skills, and eagerness to read (see for example: Cosgrove, 1989; Cullinan, 1992; Durkin, 1966; Elley, 1989; Gambrell, 2002; Kalb and van Ours, 2014; Meek, 1988; Monroe, 1951; Morrow and Gambrell, 2001; Teale 1986).

Essentially, as Teale observes, 'reading to a child can be a most important facet of his or her becoming literate, and even of *overall early childhood development*' (Teale, 1981: 902, *my emphasis*). We read to young children, therefore, because it is viewed as a positive activity that not only aids the child's reading and literacy, but enhances their overall development during the early years. Moreover, the concept of emergent literacy and the current early-years curriculum, within which the developmental benefits of reading are embedded, place a specific social pressure on parents to read to their children at home. In the next section, I review research that focuses specifically on the benefits of reading at home and on the factors that influence these practices.

2.1.2 The benefits of reading at home: academic achievement and socio-economic factors

The developmental benefits of reading to young children are primarily associated with where reading begins: at home. Saracho claims that 'for more than three decades, studies have shown that when parents read to and with children, their children's literacy is developed' (1997a: 4; also see Morrow et al., 2009; Saracho, 1997b; Teale and Sulzby 1986). Morrow et al. also argue that 'children who are read to regularly by parents, siblings, or other individuals in the home and who have family members who read recreationally become early readers and show a natural interest in books' (2009: 84; also see Bus, et al., 1995). The context of the home and the family, then, are considered one of the most salient influences on children's development (Christian et al., 1998: 502).

Over the last few decades, early years education and schools have come to see parents as allies and partners in the teaching of reading (Harrison, 2000: 21) and one of key ways in which success at home is measured is in terms of a child's 'school readiness' and academic achievement (see Christian, et al., 1998; Fantuzzo et al., 2000; Leseman and de Jong, 1998; Scarborough and Dobrich, 1994; Smith and Dixon, 1995). Although it is widely recognised that children who are read to at home are more likely to do better in school, researchers have been quick to note that 'children differ widely in their acquired knowledge about books and reading at the time of school entry' (Scarborough and Dobrich, 1994: 246; also see Christian et al., 1998; McCormick and Mason, 1986). The differing abilities of pre-school children entering school has been attributed specifically to their experiences at home, and in particular, to their socio-economic status (see Buckingham et al., 2014; D'Angiulli et al., 2004; Hecht et al., 2000; Smith and Dixon, 1995; Payne et al., 1994).

Buckingham et al. note that studies consistently show that socio-economic status (SES) is positively related to literacy, from emergent literacy up to the commencement of formal schooling, right through to primary school, and into secondary school (2014: 428). Scarborough and Dobrich agree, arguing that children from lower SES and non-mainstream cultural communities possess a less-extensive knowledge of literacy by the time they begin school, which results in poorer school achievement (1994: 246-247). Smith and Dixon's comparative study of 4-year-olds from low- and middle-class families also identified a 'restricted knowledge of literacy that begins early and affects many children from economically poor homes' (1995: 248).

In their exploration of *why poor children are more likely to become poor readers* (2014), Buckingham et al. observe that 'socio-economic status exerts its influence on early literacy primarily through its association with other factors', one of which is the 'quality of the home learning environment (HLE)' (428). A number of existing longitudinal studies have

found the HLE to be of substantial influence on the quantity and quality of pre-school reading practices at home (see Christian et al., 1998; Fantuzzo et al., 2000; Leseman and de Jong, 1998; Saracho 1997a, 1997b; Scarborough and Dobrich, 1994; Smith and Dixon, 1995). In addition, charities such as BookTrust and the National Literacy Trust focus specifically on helping parents create effective HLEs (see BookTrust, 2019; National Literacy Trust, 2017). Broadly defined, the early HLE is a measure of the availability of literacy resources in the home, cultural enrichment, and reading-related parenting practices during the years 0-5 (Buckingham et al., 2014: 432). Lower socio-economic status households tend to have lower quality HLEs (Buckingham et al., 2014: 432; also see Christian et al., 1998; Leseman and de Jong, 1998). Research suggests that there are two key factors that can be attributed to low quality HLEs: opportunities to participate in literacy-related activities, and parental involvement.

Leseman and de Jong view the home as an environment that can be characterised by 'opportunities for literacy-related activities and by processes of appropriation of knowledge, skills, and values in these practices through socially arranged forms of participation' (1998: 298). They refer to this participation as 'apprenticeship' that is marked by 'interpersonal instruction and guidance by parents', identifying joint picturebook reading as a 'prototypical form of literacy apprenticeship' (1998: 298). However, children growing up in a low socio-economic status family with a lower quality HLE are much less likely to experience crucial early literacy-cultivating experiences like apprenticeships in shared reading (see Buckingham et al., 2014: 439; Christian et al., 1998: 502; Leseman and de Jong, 1998: 207; Morrow et al., 2009: 6; Scarborough and Dobrich, 1994: 246). Smith and Dixon, for example, found that 'during the first 4 years of life, young children of poor parents are generally read to less often and have fewer meaningful interactions with printed materials than middle-class children do' (1995: 248). Teale's influential study (1986) on the relations between home background and pre-school children's literacy also observed a specific lack of storybook reading in low-income families (1986: 196). Teale (1986) found that 'families with greater amounts of spendable income can afford to buy more literacy materials for the home; but, also, more income generally means more purchasing of goods, services, and entertainment'. Thus, the middle-income family is at an advantage because its members come in contact with more print (Teale, 1986: 193). In addition, Teale argues that both cultural as well as social structural factors influence how, to what ends, by whom, and when literacy is used (1986: 194). For example, Teale identifies the role of social institutions, such as the church (1986: 194), and specifies that a parent's job can have an impact on literacy in the home; parents of

middle-class homes, for example, tend to have jobs where literate pursuits are integral to their working routine, and filter into the everyday activities of the home, creating more opportunities to participate in literacy-related activities (1986: 195).

The production of relevant apprenticeship opportunities relies, therefore, on 'parental involvement' (see Christian et al., 1998; Fantuzzo et al., 2000; Leseman and de Jong, 1998; McCormick and Mason, 1986; Saracho 1997a; 1997b; Sénéchal and LeFevre, 2002). McCormick and Mason found that parents of rural and lower SES children are not as effectively involved with encouraging their child's interest in print as are higher-SES parents (1986: 112). In addition, parents from higher-income groups reported a higher level of support for activities related to reading than parents from lower-income groups, with many professional parents claiming to read to their children every day (McCormick and Mason, 1986: 93). Essentially, shared book reading is a practice that is associated with high quality HLEs and high levels of parental involvement, which are more likely in homes of high SES.

In summary, then, reading to young children is associated with positive social, cultural, and economic factors that emphasise the prevailing view that 'the good parent must be doing something to promote their young children's literacy learning and produce them as school-ready educable subjects' (Nichols et al., 2009: 73). Parents are told that they play a 'vital role' in supporting their children's learning and development (see FoundationYears, 2018; 4Children, 2015), which includes reading to their children at home and they are encouraged to do so (also see BookTrust, 2019; National Literacy Trust, 2017). As Whitehurst and Lonigan observe, 'shared book reading […] speaks of love, the importance of the family unit, and parental commitment to a child's future. Shared reading embraces goals of educational advancement, cultural uplift, and literate discourse' (1998: 848) of which parents are aware. Storytime is surrounded by cultural, social, and economic pressures that affect when, where, how and if the practice is carried out. What is more, Barton claims that parents who read to their children are aware of the pedagogical benefits of this activity (1994: 141). As a result, I argue that pre-school reading practices are inherently pedagogic, with literacy development being an inescapable feature of the context of reading; we associate reading to young children with some level of teaching and learning, regardless of where it takes place. In the sections that follow, I review research that focuses specifically on pedagogical factors relating to storytime practices.

2.2 Learning to read: pre-school reading as a pedagogic practice

The inherent pedagogic nature of storytime practices and the link between read-aloud

activities and early childhood development underpins the majority of existing research on pre-school reading practices. Previous approaches to pre-school reading are predominantly concerned with the pedagogic implications of reading to young children and focus on storytime as a time to learn. Existing research in the fields of early-years education and child development, for example, has explored the benefits that the 'shared-book experience' can have on a child's developing language and literacy skills (see Aram et al., 2013; Beauchat et al., 2009; Bus et al., 1995; Mol et al., 2010; Slaughter, 1993: 1–14; Wasik and Hindman, 2014; Zucker et al., 2013).

Teale observes that since the end of the 1980s 'a great deal of research and development activity has focused on reading aloud for instructional purposes' (2003: 110). Accordingly, researchers have attempted to identify not only *what* children learn during early shared reading practices, but *how* they learn it. Observational studies have shown that the regularity of storytime practices, and more specifically, the quality of the practice, impacts the child's experience, and any other potential developmental outcomes (see for example Cochran-Smith, 1984; Kindle, 2011). In order to understand which aspects of the practice make it a beneficial activity, researchers have sought to examine 'the conditions under which reading aloud to children has been effective' (Lane and Wright, 2007: 669); these studies and their findings are the focus of the next section.

The pedagogical theory and practice of reading to young children has also been the subject of a number of full-length handbooks, textbooks, and edited collections aimed at parents, teachers, or both (see for example: Kleeck et al., 2003 Morrow et al., 2009; Slaughter, 1993). These publications provide information and guidance on what happens during storytime practices, and how parents, carers and educators can enhance learning during read-aloud activities. The pedagogical approach to pre-school reading is thus closely linked to the 'widespread promotion' of high quality read-alouds (Lane and Wright, 2007: 668). This has influenced the production of a number of resources and guides for both parents and educators outside of academia (see for example: 4Children, 2015; BookTrust, 2019; National Literacy Trust, 2017). BookTrust, an independent reading charity, states that 'reading can transform lives' and their Bookstart program aims to 'help families read together every day and inspire children to develop a love of books and reading' (BookTrust, 2019). In addition, the Bookstart website provides resources and reading tips for both parents and educators. The National Literacy Trust, another independent charity, provides similar resources (National Literacy Trust, 2017), with a specific focus on disadvantaged children. These charities promote findings from academic research and make them accessible and

employable for parents and teachers.

2.2.1 Reading to young children: *how* to read aloud 'properly'

Research that adopts a pedagogic perspective on early reading practices has focused mainly on the context of reading, as opposed to the text or the reader. The practice of reading aloud and the 'read-aloud context', in particular, have been key topics of investigation across the fields of education and pedagogy (see short reviews in Lane and Wright, 2007: 668 – 669; Teale, 2003: 109 – 111; also see Fletcher and Reese, 2005).

The practice of reading aloud to young children has been given many names, such as the 'shared-book experience' (Slaughter, 1993) or 'shared reading' (Kindle, 2011); 'storyreading' (Cochran-Smith, 1984); 'picture-book reading' or 'book-reading' (Snow and Ninio, 1986); and 'storytime' (Barton, 1994). However, although the title of the practice often differs, researchers agree on the key characteristics of the practice, which are broadly defined here as reading aloud to children in an interactive manner that fosters the development of language and listening comprehension, as well as print-based skills (see Kindle, 2011: 14; Schickedanz and McGee, 2010: 323). Researchers maintain that all shared reading experiences between an adult and young child have the potential to positively impact that child's learning and development and they focus primarily on how to derive the 'maximum benefit' from shared reading experiences (see Elster, 1994; Kindle, 2011; Lane and Wright, 2007; Schickedanz and McGee, 2010; Teale, 2003).

This focus on the efficacy of shared reading practices has led to the identification and creation of specific reading interventions, or frameworks, that make read-aloud practices 'better' (Aram et al., 2013; Beauchat et al., 2009; Elster, 1994; Jordan et al., 2000; Mol et al., 2010; McGee and Schickendanz, 2007; Whitehurst et al., 1999; Zevenbergen and Whitehurst, 2003). Many of these reading interventions are derived from observational studies that take place in pre-school classrooms, or in the home (see Elster, 1994; Kindle, 2011; Saracho, 1997b). Kindle's comparative study (2011) of the reading styles of four pre-school teachers during shared reading activities in the classroom found that varied reading styles create vastly different opportunities for learning. Kindle concludes that teachers need to approach reading with greater intentionality and purpose in order to get the maximum benefit out of the practice. Lane and Wright (2007) also argue that 'a systematic approach to reading aloud can yield important academic benefits' (2007: 668). They go on to suggest that 'by employing research-based methods, teachers and parents can maximise the effectiveness of reading aloud, thereby enhancing the reading experiences and the achievement of students' (2007:

674). It is widely accepted that a systematic approach to reading aloud provides the best outcomes and a 'better quality' shared reading event.

Teale (2003) identifies four key features of shared reading practices in the classroom that he claims are 'especially worth considering as we seek to understand how reading aloud can contribute most significantly', these are: how much to read aloud; what to read; how to read; and fit to the curriculum (2003: 116-128). Schickedanz and McGee's (2010) review of shared story interventions also found that the quantity of shared reading, and more specifically, the quality of parent and teacher dialogic interactions was important. On the whole, research that has focused on the read-aloud context, has recognised the significance of *how* and *when* children are read to, and thus foregrounded the role of the adult in read-aloud practices.

The adult's reading style, in particular, has been at the forefront of existing research on read-aloud practices with some researchers suggesting that 'it may not be reading to children per se that is beneficial, but the way in which children are read to that exerts beneficial effects on their literacy-related activities' (Reese et al., 2003: 37). Studies show that teachers and parents spontaneously adopt different reading styles during book reading activities and these widely variant approaches are associated with both positive and negative outcomes (Ross et al., 2006: 74; see Dickinson and Keebler, 1989; Kindle, 2011; Martinez and Teale, 1993; Reese et al., 2003). Dickinson et al. (2003) observe that teachers differ on when and to what extent they engage children in conversations as they read, in the nature of questions they ask, and in the extent to which their reading includes dramatic qualities that help hold the children's attention (2003: 93). They go on to note that all of these factors have an impact on the children's engagement and may affect their learning (2003: 93). Similarly, Schickedanz and McGee (2010), like Kindle (2011), note that the different styles of shared reading produce different results and suggest that combining styles may produce a wider range of outcomes for both comprehension and vocabulary and for comprehension and print awareness (2012: 327). The manner of teachers' and parents' read-alouds, then, differentially impacts children's literacy.

Accordingly, a number of intervention studies have been carried out which examine specifically how adults interact with children during storybook reading (see for example: Aram et al., 2013; Bus et al., 1995; Milburn et al., 2014; Mol et al., 2010; Reese et al., 2003; Wasik and Hindman, 2014; Zucker et al., 2013). These studies focus on how parents and educators can improve their read-aloud methods and often attempt to manipulate style variables in order to guide the precise effects of adult's mediation during storybook reading,

looking at what adults say, and when and how they say it (Yaden et al., 2000: 429; also see Dickinson and Smith, 1994; Jordan et al., 2000; Justice et al., 2010; Whitehurst et al., 1988; Zucker et al., 2010).

Aram et al. (2013) and Mol et al. (2010) found that providing behavioural guidance for the adult in the read-aloud situation can have a positive effect on the types of literacy skills a pre-schooler develops and the rate at which they develop them. A technique known as 'dialogic reading', where adults are taught how to interact with their child during picturebook reading in order to encourage their active engagement, is recognised as a specific storybook reading intervention that aids the development of emergent literacy skills (Whitehurst et al., 1988; also see Whitehurst et al., 1999; Zevenbergen and Whitehurst, 2003). More specifically, Wasik and Hindman's (2014) exploration of effective interventions for enhancing pre-school vocabulary found that more teacher talk about target vocabulary was linked to greater child learning (2014: 1051). Milburn et al. (2014) also claim that the types of conversation the adult engages the pre-school child in 'create opportunities for children to practice using vocabulary and syntax' (2014: 106). In addition, studies have shown that the way in which parents engage with their children during shared reading can have a significant impact upon a child's cognitive development. Ohgi et al. (2010) found that rich interactions involving social and verbal engagement between parent and child during picturebook reading facilitate brain activation of the frontal area, which suggests that picturebook reading might foster cognitive, learning and language development. Adrian et al. (2007) found that exposure to discourse about mental states during picturebook reading can facilitate the continued development of children's understanding of the mind. Elsewhere, Adrian et al. (2005) argue that frequency of picturebook reading at home, alongside the parent's use of mental state terms, is related to the child's developing Theory of Mind (see discussion in Sections 2.5 – 2.5.4). Overall, Mol et al. (2010) argue that interaction before, during and after shared reading sessions benefitted children's learning, thus emphasising the significance of extra-textual talk during read-aloud practices.

Existing research on the read-aloud context, then, draws attention to the interactive nature of these activities and places significance on the adult-child communication that takes place during shared book reading. Researchers have described shared-book reading as an 'interactive method of reading books aloud […] during which the adult encourages the children's engagement in book-related conversation' (Milburn et al., 2014: 109). Phillips and McNaughton (1990) view storybook reading in the home as a social practice through which children learn about how to construct meaning from storybooks. They found that reader and

child employ interactive procedures that focus almost exclusively on narrative, using questions and statements aimed at clarifying and integrating the passage being read in order to construct meaning (1990: 210). Zucker et al. (2013) also argue that the features of extra-textual conversation by adults are critical in terms of producing rich and interactive shared reading that can benefit a child's participation and, in turn, their language and literacy development (2013: 1437). Saracho's research on family literacy also recognises that '*quality* parent child interactions can develop the children's literacy abilities' (1997a: 9*, my emphasis*). However, researchers suggest caution in promoting one reading style or behaviour above all others. As Reese et al. note 'engaging the child in active participation during book reading is almost always better than straight reading of the text, but beyond that principle, the type of interaction is best varied from book to book, day to day, and child to child' (2003: 52). Extra-textual talk, and 'quality' interactions during read-aloud practices, then, are deemed important with or without specific interventions.

Snow and Ninio's (1986) influential study of parent-child interactions during picturebook reading led them to identify a set of 'contracts' that children come to learn when engaged in picturebook reading with a parent. The 'contracts of literacy' refer to 'the basic rules related to the use of books and the meaning of texts' (Snow and Ninio, 1986: 116). Snow and Ninio suggest that children learn a number of tacit 'contracts' and 'meta contracts' about reading and comprehending texts during book-reading sessions which they deem more important than 'learning which might also occur about letter recognition, grapheme-phoneme correspondences, or sight-word reading' (1986: 121, 137; see Snow and Ninio, 1986 for full discussion of the contracts of literacy). Cochran-Smith's (1984) ethnographic study, *The Making of a Reader*, also includes close analysis of story-reading interactions and highlights the potential 'complexity of the discourse' that teachers are able to construct as they discuss books with children (Dickinson et al., 2003: 93; also see Cochran-Smith, 1985). Cochran-Smith concludes that the story-reading interactions she analyses can be seen as 'scaffolding dialogue' wherein, 'the specific questions, comments, and incomplete phrases of the adult story-reader provided a foundation which child listeners could use to sort out and integrate various aspects of stories […]' (1984: 264).

The concept of the adult as a 'scaffolding' partner is common across existing research on read-aloud practices and the main body of this work is situated within the fields of education and literacy development (see Henderson et al., 2002; Pentimonti and Justice, 2010; Wood et al., 1976; Yelland and Masters, 2006). Scaffolding involves the adult 'controlling' those elements of the task that are initially beyond the learner's capacity (Wood

et al., 1976). The term is linked to an apprenticeship model of cognitive development, in which adult scaffolding of children's early interactions eventually results in children's independent cognitive skills (see Vygotsky, 1978; also see Section 2.5.1 for full review on scaffolding, psychology and pedagogy). Reese et al. (2003) provide the following example of scaffolding in a book reading situation: 'the adult may engage the child by asking him or her to turn pages or label pictures; as the child becomes proficient at this activity, the adult may require him to read simple words, until eventually the child can read the book alone' (36). Furthermore, Mjor (2010: 179) suggests that 'parents, when guiding their children in meaning-making processes, seem to be concerned about presenting the text as relevant to the child, about relating it to his or her own life experiences'. Mjor goes on to argue that sometimes there is a lack of balance between a text and the child's ability to play the role of the implied reader and that, in such instances, the adult is faced with a meaning-making challenge (2010: 183). When adults read picturebooks to children, they first interpret the text themselves then they analyse how the child will be able to find it meaningful; as a result, the parent 'adapts the book to the child' (2010: 185 -189). Similarly, Adrian et al. recognise that in the story-book context, 'adults' discourse focuses especially on what children have not yet mastered' (2005: 684). Thus, whilst some researchers have focused specifically on the application and outcome of structured 'scaffolding interventions' during shared-book reading (see for example: Ankrum et al., 2014; Pentimonti and Justice, 2010), the adult's actions are seen to scaffold the child's experience with or out without systematic guidance.

Overall, existing research on read-aloud practices that adopts a pedagogic perspective makes a correlation between the pre-schooler's experience of shared reading activities and the adult's behaviour; researchers attribute a level of control and authority to the adult during read-aloud practices and have sought to exploit their potential as a 'guide' or 'scaffold' during the activity. Whilst the research discussed in this section draws attention to the interactive nature of read-aloud practices and the importance of extra-textual talk, it does so with a specific focus on the role of the adult. As a result, the reading context and adult behaviour is foregrounded, whilst the text and the pre-school reader receive very little attention. What is more, the reading context is usually subject to experimental manipulations with the pedagogical benefits at the forefront of the research; researchers often observe the application of specific behavioural frameworks for adults, which means that much of the extra-textual talk that they refer to is constructed and forced. Essentially, there is a lack of focus on naturally occurring storytime practices, especially those that take place in the home, and researchers often fail to account for the combined analysis of context, text, and reader.

2.3 Words and pictures: reading picturebooks

The second body of research that surrounds pre-school reading practices, focuses on the texts that are read to pre-school children: picturebooks. Nodelman defines these texts as 'books intended for young children which communicate information or tell stories through a series of pictures combined with relatively slight texts or no texts at all' (1988: vii). Elsewhere, Nodelman and Reimer claim that the picturebook is 'the most common form of children's literature' and that 'it is also a form almost exclusively reserved for children' (2003: 274). Desai agrees and argues that 'it is hard to imagine literature for young children today without pictures. The genre is almost synonymous with the term "picturebooks"' (2004: 408). Evidence of the genre's popularity can also be found across bookstores and online purchasing and reviewing sites that have dedicated categories for these texts (see Amazon 2019; GoodReads 2019; Waterstones 2019). The link between children's fiction and pictures is widely accepted and as a result, the category of the 'picturebook' has evolved into its own distinct genre for young children, specifically those who belong to the 'pre-school' or 0-5 years age-group.

Picturebook texts only began to be taken seriously as an object of academic study during the latter years of the twentieth century, and it is since then that research on the topic has grown (see Lewis, 2001: 31; also Bader, 1976; Colomer, et al., 2010; Kiefer, 1995; Kümmerling-Meibauer, 2014, 2017; Kümmerling-Meibauer et al., 2015; Lewis, 2001; Nikolajeva and Scott, 2000, 2006; Nodelman, 1988; Nodelman and Reimer, 2003; Sipe, 1998, 2001, 2012; Sipe and Pantaleo, 2008). Lewis notes that 'although books have always been illustrated, the special form of text that we now call the picturebook is a relatively new invention' (2001: xiii); he quotes *Ways of the Illustrator* by Joseph Schwarcz (1982) and *Words About Pictures* by Perry Nodelman (1988) as the first two 'major works' to address the form and nature of these texts. Lewis goes on to say that the emergence of the picturebook was 'gradual' (2001: xiii) and this steady development has been mirrored in academic research. Initially, a historical perspective dominated the field and scholars focused on the emergence and development of the picturebook, before moving on to consider these texts as either art forms or educational tools (see reviews in Colomer et al., 2010: 1-2; Kümmerling-Meibauer, 2014: 4-6; Kümmerling-Meibauer, 2017: 3-5). In more recent years, there has been an increase in studies on these texts from an array of different disciplines (see reviews in Colomer et al., 2010: 1-2; Kümmerling-Meibauer, 2014: 4-6; also see Kümmerling-Meibauer et al., 2015; Sipe and Pantaleo, 2008); indeed, Colomer et al. note that 'picturebooks have never received such enthusiastic critical attention as they have in

recent years' (2010: 1). In one of the most recent edited collections of picturebook research, Kümmerling-Meibauer notes that there is a broad agreement amongst scholars that a more elaborated understanding of how picturebooks work requires an interdisciplinary approach, considering recent findings in literary studies, linguistics, art history, child psychology, cognitive studies, literacy studies and picture theory (2014: 5; also see Kümmerling-Meibauer, 2017). Picturebook research, then, is a relatively new discipline that is continuing to evolve. In the following subsections, I review three main areas of work that surround these texts.

2.3.1 Picturebooks as aesthetic objects

The picturebook is considered an 'art form' by many researchers whose work centres on the role of the visual and artistic technique in picturebook interpretation (see for example: Doonan, 1993; Sipe, 2001; Stanton, 1998). This approach to picturebooks focuses on the aesthetic influences of images in these texts and takes into account how compositional factors such as: colour, line, shape, texture, point of view and framing can influence a text's narrative and the reader's experience of that text (see Doonan, 1993; Moebius, 1990; Nodelman, 1988: 40-76; Sipe, 2001).

In *Words about Pictures*, Nodelman focuses specifically on the illustrator's role in creating meaning in picturebooks (1988). Nodelman addresses the communicative function of the image by taking into account the differing methods and mediums adopted by the illustrator, which include: image-styles, such as cartooning; visual weight and the creation of focus; and the depiction of action in images. Nodelman uses textual examples throughout his work to show that 'picture-book illustration is inevitably a representational art […] concerned with the ways things look and the meanings that attach to such appearances' (1988: 93–94). For Nodelman, the specific composition of images in a picturebook can aid the mood and meaning of the overall picturebook narrative.

Doonan adopts a similar approach in *Looking at Pictures in Picture Books* where she completes a close analysis of two picturebooks following a 'first glance', defining her method as an attempt to find 'the source of my pleasure' (Doonan, 1993: 47). Doonan claims that it is the images and the visual that guide and provide the most affecting and experiential aspects of picturebook reading. Doonan states that whilst we might get the story told from the text in a matter of minutes, 'there are as many more stories waiting to be made as times we are prepared to re-search the illustrations' (1993: 58); pictures provide an abundance of interpretative pathways through a text. This view is also shared by Kiefer in *The Potential of*

Picturebooks (1995) where she defines the picturebook as 'a unique art object, a combination of image and idea that allows the reader to come away with more than the sum of the parts' (1995: 6). For Kiefer, picturebook reading is an exclusive experience that is individual and changeable, and reliant, in part, on the illustrations within the text.

Research that focuses on the unique character of the picturebook as an art form foregrounds the role of the visual and argues that in picturebook reading, it is the images, primarily, that inform the literary experience. Researchers argue that in order to account for the experience of reading these texts, we must account for the experience of reading pictures. However, very few researchers provide empirical evidence of children reading pictures in context and instead base their findings on their own subjective analysis of very few texts (see for example: Doonan, 1993; Nodelman, 1988).

What is more, whilst the central focus of the research discussed above is the visual features of picturebooks, Doonan recognises that when we read these texts, we 'read the two texts [text and image], put them together, and create a composite text – one that exists in the maker's head only' (Doonan, 1993: 58). Nodelman also acknowledges that picturebook narrative communication relies on the combination of differing communicative methods – words and pictures. Thus, researchers who focus on the visual aesthetic aspects of picturebook reading hint at the multimodal nature of these texts and provide some indication about the complex meaning-making processes involved in their interpretation (see Doonan, 1993; Nodelman, 1988; Sipe, 2001). However, once again, researchers regularly fail to provide empirical evidence and speculate about the reader's experience. Nevertheless, this recognition of the relationship between words and pictures is what feeds the approach taken by the majority of picturebook scholars.

2.3.2 The relationship between words and pictures: image-text configurations

The majority of existing research surrounding picturebooks has focused on how the two core sign systems, words and pictures, interact (for an overview, see Lewis, 2001: 31-45). In fact, as Kümmerling-Meibauer notes, regardless of the increase of interest in picturebook studies in recent years, even current studies 'attest that the question of how text and image in picturebooks work together to create narrative *remains at the fore* of contemporary picturebook research' (2014: 5, *my emphasis*). A leading approach within this field has been to 'categorise picturebooks according to the different ways in which words and pictures are perceived to interact' (Lewis, 2001: 38). Accordingly, researchers have explored emerging patterns and themes in text-image relationships in picturebook texts and produced

frameworks, taxonomies and definitive labels in an attempt to make sense of these relationships (see Agosto, 1999; Nikolajeva and Scott, 2000, 2006; Nodelman, 1988: 193–221; Schwarcz, 1982; Sipe, 1998, 2012).

Agosto's text-image typology (1999) highlights a key trend in this area and focuses on categorising text-image interaction based on just two main categories: 'augmentation', when texts and illustrations each amplify, extend and complete the story that the other tells (270); and 'contradiction', when the texts and illustrations present conflicting information (275). Agosto claims that this typology provides a means of exploring how two different forms of meaning work together. However, one of the most recent and most sophisticated text-image typologies has been created by Nikolajeva and Scott (2000, 2006), who criticise previous researchers like Agosto for ignoring the 'wide diversity of word-image relationships' (2006: 8). Nikolajeva and Scott embrace this diversity and identify a 'broad spectrum of word/image interaction' that stretches from equivalence to a dissonance. The key text-image dynamics that they identify include: symmetrical, consonant, complementary, expanding or enhancement, counterpointing and sylleptic (2000, 2006). Like Agosto's typology (1999), these dynamics span from words and images that have 'two mutually redundant narratives' to having 'two or more narratives independent of each other' (Nikolajeva and Scott, 2006: 12). Nikolajeva and Scott can be seen to take existing common classifications, such as Agosto's (1999) 'augmentation' and 'contradiction' and Schwarcz's (1982) 'congruency' and 'deviation' and further subdivide these categories in order to identify a number of additional relationships that sit in-between these two extremes. Nikolajeva and Scott see their approach as a means of unlocking the 'intricacies of picturebook communication' (2006: 262). They are interested in how pictures and text make meaning together and claim that their taxonomy can be used for analysing the presentation of literary features such as setting, characterisation, point of view and temporality in picturebooks (2000: 226).

Martinez and Harmon (2012) provide further insight into the investigation of image-text relationships and literary elements. Their content analysis of a selection of picturebooks for younger and older readers focuses on how pictures and text work together to develop plot, character, setting and mood. Martinez and Harmon conclude that 'younger children must often rely on illustrations for critical information about all literary elements' in comparison to older readers who need to be more attuned to the text (2012: 337). However, Martinez and Harmon argue that *all* readers of picturebooks must engage in a 'dual processing of visual and text information' since each information source is 'experienced in a different way' (2012: 337).

The concept of 'dual processing' has been pervasive throughout the history of picturebook scholarship (see for example Doonan, 1993; Lewis, 2001; Nodelman, 1988; Sipe, 1998). Researchers acknowledge that a picturebook story is told by *two* sign systems and 'the reader must consider both forms of media concurrently in order to comprehend the books' stories' (Agosto, 1999: 267). Sipe defines this relationship between images and text in a picturebook as a 'synergy', where 'both the text and illustration would be incomplete without the other' (Sipe, 1998: 98). Sipe goes on to argue that the different processing demands of reading the written and reading the visual makes the meanings in word-picture relationships inexhaustible. Similarly, Lewis argues that the reader is required to '*find routes* through the text that connect words and images' (2001: 32, *my emphasis*). Thus, picturebooks give adults and children the opportunity to 'engage in an unending process of meaning making' and 'constructing new worlds' (Sipe, 1998: 107); picturebook reading can be a complex and unpredictable process.

On the whole, the research discussed above draws attention to the need to account for both textual and visual modes when assessing narrative interpretation and meaning-making when reading picturebooks. Moya's (2011, 2014) work on the ways in which images and words engage readers during picturebook reading directly addresses the intersemiosis between the verbal and the visual. Moya argues that a multimodal approach is what is needed if we want to examine how the combination of the visual and verbal modalities, as opposed to the isolated occurrence of each, can produce a more enriched meaning to the overall story-text that is produced (2011: 2990). However, whilst researchers like Moya (2011, 2014) and Nikolajeva and Scott are able to provide a significant insight into 'the way words and pictures collaborate in telling stories' (2006: 26), often, their findings are based on textual analysis alone and they only speculate about a reader's experience. As a result, there is a clear lack of focus on both the reader and the context of reading. In the next section, I consider work that has attempted to fill this gap by addressing children's responses to picturebook texts, specifically within a pedagogical context.

2.3.3   Pedagogy and picturebooks: visual literacy and reading pictures

Nodelman notes 'the early use of pictures for their informational value obviously relates to the longstanding conviction that books for children should have a primarily educational purpose' (1988: 3). Subsequently, a key trend in picturebook research has been the exploration of how children make sense of, and respond to, picturebooks, with a focus on identifying any developmental benefits associated with reading these texts.

Most notably, Arizpe and Styles' (2003) study *Children Reading Pictures* focuses on children aged between 4-11 years old reading and responding to three picturebook texts; it is one of the few systematic attempts to investigate how visual texts are read by children. Arizpe and Styles conclude that 'it was no surprise to find that children were extremely good at analysing the visual features of text' claiming that 'children noticed, admired, wondered at and puzzled over diverse visual features…' and 'they read colours, borders, body language, framing devices, covers, endpapers, visual metaphors and visual jokes' (2003: 224). Similarly, Kiefer found that 'when allowed to formulate their own meanings regarding picturebooks, children's comments were uncannily intuitive' (1995: 40). Thus, researchers have found that children certainly interact with and react to the visual aspects of picturebooks, often without specific guidance. Kiefer goes on to suggest that 'early experience with pictures in the meaningful and supportive context of picturebook reading may be necessary to lay the foundation for visual literacy as well as literary and aesthetic understanding' (1995: 9). As such, Kiefer foregrounds the link between picturebook reading and potential areas of child development, particularly visual literacy. Visual literacy refers to an individual's ability to discriminate, comprehend, and interpret specifically *visible or visual* communication, including actions, objects and symbols, such as pictures; the term can be seen to extend the meaning of 'literacy', which is traditionally associated with the interpretation of a written text.

The concept of visual literacy development has been adopted by a number of picturebook scholars, especially those who consider these texts an art form (see Section 2.3.1). In *Looking at Pictures in Picture Books* (1993), for example, Doonan states that picturebooks can aid the aesthetic development of its readers. For Doonan, picturebooks are a potential teaching-tool that can help a child's developing 'visual sense', enabling them to 'make meaning from visual information', whilst providing an introduction to 'art appreciation' (1993: 48). However, Pantaleo argues that youth are not naturally visually literate (2015: 114), regardless of their apparent ability to interact with pictures intuitively (see Arizpe and Styles, 2003; Kiefer, 1995). Instead, Pantaleo argues that 'in order for students to become visually literate, they need explicit instruction – pedagogy that focuses on visual design, composition principles, and image analysis that will then affect their selection, employment, understanding and interpretation of the modal affordances of image' (2015: 114). O'Neil agrees, arguing that 'picturebooks offer many opportunities for emergent and novice readers to develop visual literacy. […] As we teach our children to read, we can and should use picturebooks to teach them how to read the images as well' (2011: 222). Accordingly, a

number of researchers have focused specifically on ways to enhance children's visual literacy during picturebook reading, usually within the classroom.

Both Doonan (1993: 48-71) and Kiefer (1995: 143 – 200) provide example frameworks and lesson plans for how picturebooks can be studied effectively in the classroom. Other researchers have foregrounded the importance of teaching elements of visual art and design to children in schools in order to develop students' visual literacy skills (see Pantaleo, 2014, 2015, 2016; Pantaleo and Walker, 2017). Pantaleo encourages classroom teaching on physical aspects of picturebooks such as: colour; point of view; typography; framing; line; perspective; narrative structure and claims that 'teachers need to design lessons that demonstrate the value and importance of looking carefully at images, and of considering the significance of various affordances of this semiotic resource' (Pantaleo, 2016: 251-252; also see O'Neil, 2011; Pantaleo, 2014; Pantaleo and Walker, 2017; Sipe, 2001).

Essentially, these researchers recognise the significance of looking carefully at picturebook artwork; allowing children to interact with pictures; and the opportunities picturebooks offer for the development of visual literacy. Kiefer (1995) also draws attention to the potential of picturebooks as a tool for teaching children about the process of literary interpretation, a view also shared by Cochran-Smith (1984) and Sipe (2000; 2001; 2008). Sipe (2008) argues that whilst there is an abundance of work on how reading to young children affects their literacy learning, there is relatively little work on young children's literary interpretation of stories (2008: 3-4); he foregrounds Cochran-Smith's study (1984) as a notable exception to this and praises her use of literary theory, and her assessment of children's abilities as literary critics (Sipe, 2008: 79 – 81). In his own work, Sipe adopts a reader-response approach and studies children's verbal responses to picturebooks. Sipe identifies five conceptual categories from the analysis of children's talk which he argues represent five different facets of literary understanding: the analytical, the intertextual, the personal, the transparent, and the performative (2008: 85 – 87). Sipe argues that children as young as five years old can demonstrate impressive literary critical abilities and he urges teachers to engage in storybook readalouds that encourage the development of literary understanding. Similarly, Lehr's (1991) investigation of children's responses to literature found that children as young as four were able to engage with elements of 'theme' in picturebook stories. Elsewhere, Nikolajeva comments on the picturebook as a tool for teaching empathy, emotional literacy, and Theory of Mind (Nikolajeva, 2012, 2013, 2014a); however, she offers no empirical evidence of this.

Whilst the work discussed above provides some insight into the pedagogical uses of

picturebooks, this field of research focuses primarily on classroom contexts and older, school-aged children; storytime practices that take place in the home, and younger pre-school-aged children receive very little attention. What is more, although Pantaleo argues that 'visual literacy involves both cognitive and affective dimensions with respect to the reception and the expression of visual communications' (2015: 114) there is no clear link, analysis or discussion of cognition across this field of work. Nevertheless, Kiefer states that 'studying children's responses to picturebooks in these classroom settings has convinced me that picturebooks can and do provide children with purposeful talk, increase their literacy, deepen their response to books, and open up their awareness of art and aesthetics.' (1995: 41); picturebooks can enable, enhance, and guide learning (also see Kümmerling-Meibauer et al., 2015).

2.3.4 Research on pre-school reading: a review

In the preceding sections, I have provided a review of existing research that surrounds the topic of pre-school reading. In Section 2.1, the socio-cultural, historic and economic context within which pre-school reading practices are situated was reviewed; in Section 2.2, the pedagogic influences that surround pre-school reading were foregrounded and reviewed; and in Section 2.3, picturebook research was the key focus. The approaches examined in these sections highlight the contextual pressures on pre-school reading as well as their pedagogic importance. I have also highlighted where picturebook scholars foreground the multimodal nature of pre-school discourses and the need to account for visual devices during picturebook reading. However, all of these existing approaches to pre-school reading have focused on *either* the context of reading – specifically reading aloud – often under experimental conditions and in line with early years educational aims, *or* on the construction of meaning in picturebook texts based on the relationship between image and text; context and text are rarely analysed together. The studies reviewed above also rarely take into account a whole text and they often make subjective observations about how image/text configurations could be interpreted by hypothetical readers. What is more, although the picturebook genre is basically synonymous with the pre-school age group (Desai, 2004: 408; also see Section 2.3 of this review), there is very little research that involves pre-school aged children.

Existing research has failed to account for the experience of real readers and their natural reading practices. Throughout this thesis, I argue that an approach to pre-school reading is needed that can combine the analysis of text, context, and reader, whilst accounting for the natural production of storytime practices and the pre-schooler's cognitive

idiosyncrasies. Consequently, I advocate a cognitive approach to early reading practices. I propose that such an approach will enable a comprehensive analysis of these practices and I employ the cognitive-linguistic framework Text World Theory towards that end. In the sections that follow, I introduce Text World Theory in greater detail, reviewing the framework's key tenets and structure, existing work and current advances, and the suitability of the framework for the analysis of pre-school reading.

2.4 Text World Theory: an introduction

Text World Theory is a cognitive-linguistic model of discourse processing. The text-world framework is grounded in the cognitive sciences, taking specific influence from the fields of cognitive linguistics and cognitive psychology; the framework therefore approaches language in light of what is known about the mind and brain. Text World Theory (hereafter TWT) is essentially a 'world model' that adopts the 'text-as-world' metaphor (see Ryan, 1998) and recognises the world-creating properties of language (cf. Gavins, 2007:11). The basic premise of Text World Theory is that when human beings participate in *any* given discourse, they produce mental representations of it in their minds; in TWT these mental representations are known a 'text-worlds'. What is more, the framework was developed as a means of understanding language in context and is based on phenomena which 'actually *occur*' (Werth, 1999: 1). As a discourse framework, then, TWT is concerned not only with how a text is constructed, but how the context surrounding that text influences its production and reception (Gavins, 2007: 8). TWT is committed to the exploration of the human experience of discourse and claims to be sensitive to 'all situational, social, historical, and psychological factors which play a crucial role in our cognition of language' (Gavins, 2007: 9).

Text World Theory was originally the brainchild of Professor Paul Werth, who set down the theory's foundations in a series of papers published in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Werth, 1994; 1995a, 1995b, 1997a, 1997b), and a posthumous monograph, *Text Worlds: Representing Conceptual Space in Discourse* (1999). Since Werth's death in 1995, Text World Theory has sustained the interest of the academic community, and has received much attention, scrutiny and development by other scholars (see Section 2.4.2 below). Most notably, Gavins' (2007) introduction to Text World Theory provides the most extensive augmentation to the framework. Gavins (2007) provides a comprehensive account of the core tenets of the theory, providing a number of key revisions and extending the framework in the process (also see Section 2.4.1). Since the publication of her *Text World Theory: An Introduction*, most subsequent work on TWT has adopted Gavins' (2007) model and it is

Gavins' version of TWT which is followed throughout this thesis.

The interest that TWT has generated and maintained over the years has seen it become a 'canonical stylistic-analytical framework' within the fields of stylistics and cognitive poetics where the theory has made the most impact (Lahey, 2014: 284). Lahey foregrounds three main strands of research that influenced the early development of Text World Theory, the first being Werth's dissatisfaction with mainstream generative linguistics which placed analytical focus on decontextualized single sentences. Werth criticised the objective approach of generative linguists who focused on manipulating language in a manner that must be as 'context-free' as possible (Werth, 1999: 20). Instead, Werth claimed that his approach placed particular emphasis on 'the importance of **knowledge**, the central role of human **experience**, the inescapable effects of the **situation**, and the **discourse-driven** nature of these processes' (Werth, 1999: 22, *emphasis in original*); for Werth, the starting point for linguistic analyses should not be the sentence or the text, but the *discourse* (Lahey, 2014: 285).

Possible Worlds Theory (hereafter PWT) was also particularly influential to the formation of Werth's model (see Bradley and Swartz, 1979; Goodman, 1978; Kripke, 1972, 1985; Lewis, 1973, 1986; Pavel, 1986; Plantinga, 1974; Rescher, 1975). PWTs have their origins in eighteenth-century theological philosophy (Leibniz ([1713] 1985) and were initially developed as a means of calculating the truth value of hypothetical entities and situations. PWTs, then, are a form of propositional logic which categorise ontological domains in terms of actuality and possibility. The central notion underlying all PWTs is that 'the world we recognise as our **actual world** is only one of a multitude of possible-worlds' (Gavins, 2007: 11, emphasis in original). Lahey (2014: 286) observes that from a linguistics point of view, the PWTs of modal logic has served as a corrective to certain limitations with truth-conditional models of semantics by providing 'a framework by which we may talk about the various ways in which things may have been otherwise'. Most notably, TWT borrows some of its basic architecture from PWT, especially with regards to the concept of a 'world' as a representation of a particular state of affairs. However, Werth observes several limitations with the possible-worlds model. Werth argues that possible-worlds are both '*over-specific* because they are "tailormade" to a single proposition', and '*under-specified* because as worlds go, they are minimalistic, containing none of the complexity of anything speakers would recognise as a world' (1999: 70, *my emphasis*). Possible-worlds theories, then, lack sensitivity to context and are unable to account for the complexity of human cognition and language in use, which are key aims in Text World Theory.

The final major influence on the early formation of TWT concerns development in the

discipline of cognitive linguistics, within which TWT is firmly situated (see Gavins, 2007: 6). Lahey claims that TWT's link to cognitive linguistics is not only evident in 'Werth's explicit commitment to a usage-based, cognitivist-experientialist viewpoint', but is also apparent in 'TWT's adoption of a wide variety of mechanisms from other cognitive theories' (2014: 287), which include: schema theory (Schank and Abelson, 1977), mental space theory (Fauconnier, 1994), frame semantics (Fillmore, 1982, 1985), conceptual metaphor theory (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: Lakoff and Turner, 1989), and prototype theory (Lakoff, 1987; Rosch, 1978). While each of these theories have been applied effectively to text analysis, they are usually employed independently. TWT, however, incorporates central insights from each theory into its own approach and therefore provides greater 'explanatory power for the discourse stylistician, who must address all of the cognitive processes described by the above theories' (Lahey, 2014: 287).

Overall, Werth criticised previous approaches to discourse for their lack of commitment to experientialism and their lack of sensitivity to context. Werth defines discourse as 'a language event: it is the language *together with the context* which supports it' (1999: 46, *my emphasis*). He views language as 'a phenomenon which is intimately bound up with human experience' (1999: 19) and he aimed to create a theory that could account for how human beings experience language in context. Essentially, a TWT approach to discourse is a holistic one which examines every interrelated aspect of the language event, rather than splitting it into separate decontextualized parts. TWT's all-encompassing aims are what makes it an attractive approach to pre-school reading practices; TWT enables the combined analysis of text, reader, *and* context and thus fills a gap left by previous research on early reading practices. In the following section, the ways in which TWT achieves its comprehensive account of discourse are discussed and the key tenets and structure of the theory are explored in greater detail.

2.4.1   Key tenets and structure

Werth (1999) claims to have devised a methodological approach that could be applied to *all* discourse-types, and states that the subject-matter of his monograph is 'no less than "all the furniture of the earth and heavens"' (1999: 17). These ambitious claims centre around Werth's aims to analyse actual language in use, and in particular, to account for the role of context. Although Werth (1999) acknowledges the difficulties associated with the study of context, TWT addresses this complexity by adopting an analytical structure that separates *every* discourse into a series of distinct conceptual levels: the discourse-world, the text-world,

and modal-worlds (Gavins, 2007). These conceptual levels will be introduced briefly in this section, but will continue to be the focus of further discussion in relation to specific augmentations made throughout this thesis.

The first of TWT's conceptual layers, the discourse-world, is the space in which a language event takes place; it is the immediate situational context that surrounds human beings as they participate in discourse. Werth argues that 'uses of language presuppose occurrence in a context of situation' known as the 'discourse-world' and he goes on to define this as a construct that is based on perception, backed up by knowledge of the elements perceived, and founded on 'real' external circumstances (Werth, 1999: 17). The discourse-world thus contains a minimum of two human 'participants' and all of the objects and entities that surround them as they communicate. What is more, TWT's commitment to experientialism means that it regards discourse participants as 'fully psychologised' (see Whiteley, 2010: 30). As such, the discourse-world also includes each participant's knowledge, beliefs, memories, hopes, dreams, intentions and other mental aspects (see Gavins, 2007: 9-10; Whiteley, 2010: 30; Werth, 1995a: 52; Werth, 1999: 83-86). Werth claims that 'all discourses take place in some kind of discourse-world', the specifics of which can have substantial influence on the language event (1999: 85). The first level of TWT then, 'offers a means of exploring how a range of contextual factors have the potential to impact upon both the construction and comprehension of a given discourse' (Gavins, 2007: 10).

The role of participant knowledge, in particular, is key to the TWT framework and its approach to context. According to Werth (1999: 95), the informative mode of language means that communication consists of the transfer of knowledge from private to public ownership during a process known as 'incrementation'; this process of knowledge incrementation is what forms 'the primary basis of *all* discourse' (Gavins, 2007: 21, *my emphasis*). What is more, Werth argues that this process of knowledge exchange relies on each participant's *existing* 'knowledge-base' which he divides into four core areas: perceptual, experiential, linguistic, and cultural knowledge (Werth, 1999: 94 – 115; also see Gavins, 2007: 21 – 23). From a TWT point of view, then, communication is both 'the means by which knowledge is transferred between human beings *and* the process by which those human beings interconnect the new knowledge structures they encounter […] with *existing* beliefs, immediate perceptions and previous experiences' (Gavins, 2007: 24, *my emphasis*). However, Werth recognises that the knowledge of any individual is too vast for *all of it* to be deployed every time an individual participates in discourse. He argues that there exists an 'enormous retrieval problem' known as 'the problem of knowledge partition (i.e. dividing

one's total knowledge up into usable chunks)' (1999: 103), but he goes on to provide a solution; Werth suggests that knowledge retrieval is governed by the principle of 'text-drivenness' (1999: 104, 149).

The principle of text-drivenness is integral to understanding how participants employ their existing knowledge stores during discourse comprehension and thus the construction of text-worlds. Werth argues that all participants enter into a discourse-event with a certain amount of knowledge which they draw upon as they communicate (1999: 47). These knowledge stores can be vast and they differ from person to person, but the 'principle of text-drivenness' governs which areas of knowledge are activated during communication. This principle states that *only relevant* areas of a participant's knowledge base are activated during discourse processing, and that these selected areas are cued by the text. For example, Gavins (2007) notes that when reading a novel by Thomas Hardy, readers need only activate those areas of knowledge specifically required by the text, such as farming in the nineteenth century, the name of the Dorset/Wessex countryside, human relationships and so on. Knowledge relating to football matches or how to reboot a computer remain redundant since they are not referred to in the text (Gavins, 2007: 29). In face-to-face conversation, knowledge retrieval and transfer are negotiated in a more explicit manner as participants take turns at speaking and creating the text, thus jointly negotiating the relevant context as the discourse progresses. The text-driven process of knowledge incrementation, then, is ultimately a negotiation between discourse participants and the text. Werth argues that as this negotiation proceeds, 'the context is *constructed* by the participants into an agreed set of 'facts'' which he calls the 'Common Ground' (1999: 117, *my emphasis*; for Common Ground see also Werth 1999: 117 – 155). According to Werth, *all* discourse is a 'joint venture for building up a Common Ground' (CG) (1999: 85).

Werth defines CG as follows:

(i)   At any given point in the current discourse, all those propositions which have been expressed and tacitly accepted; together with;

(ii)   Any propositions evoked by (i) from general or mutual knowledge, though not necessarily expressed.

(Werth, 1999: 49)

The theory of CG adopted by Werth is most closely aligned with the work of psycholinguist Herbert Clark and his research on language comprehension (see Clark 1996; Clark and Carlson, 1981; Clark and Marshall, 1981; Clark et al. 1983). Clark defines the CG as shared information between participants who are engaged in communication (Clark, 1996; Clark and

Carlson, 1981). According to Clark, the CG between two people consists of their 'mutual knowledge, mutual beliefs, and mutual suppositions' (Clark and Carlson, 1981: 320); for Clark, mutuality plays a significant role in communication. For Werth, the CG reflects the 'the totality of information which the speaker(s) and hearer(s) have agreed to accept as relevant for their discourse', through a process of text-driven negotiation (Werth 1999: 117 - 120). Werth argues that the CG is constantly *shifting* as a discourse proceeds: new information is regularly being added whilst old information is modified or decays in light of later propositions (1999: 120).

The notion of the CG in TWT has received some criticism, with Whiteley arguing that it is 'perhaps the most flawed aspect of Werth's account of the discourse-world' (2010: 33). In fact, Gavins' (2007) omits the concept altogether in her contemporary introduction to TWT, the version of TWT largely adopted in this thesis. Whilst I recognise that aspects of Werth's explication of the CG are highly underspecified and thus lacking in explanatory power (see Whiteley 2010: 33), the notion of the CG is a useful concept to consider when it comes to examining the storytime discourse-world (see Chapter 4). As I will go on to argue across Chapters 4 – 6 of this work, both the negotiated nature of discourse and the notion of a shared common goal are particularly salient in storytime practices, where participants who have very different knowledge-bases work together to make sense of a single shared text. The notion of CG directs attention towards the specifics of the context being negotiated in the discourse-world of a particular discourse, which make it a valuable tool for examining the role of knowledge in communication.

As participants in the discourse-world communicate with one another, they construct mental representations of the discourse in their minds called 'text-worlds'. Put simply, the text-world is 'the situation depicted by the discourse' and participants construct these worlds in order to conceptualise and understand the language being produced (Gavins, 2007: 10-13; Werth, 1999: 87). Unlike the discourse-world, the text-world is a 'total construct' that is dependent on resources of memory and imagination, rather than direct perception (Werth 1999: 17), although text-worlds may relate to the immediate discourse-world context (Whiteley, 2010: 34). Text-worlds are described by Werth as being 'text-driven' whereby 'the text determines which areas of knowledge – even pragmatic knowledge – have to be evoked in order to understand it' (Werth, 1999: 87, 149 – 151; also see definition above).

Texts provide two types of information which contribute to the construction and maintenance of text-worlds: 'world-building elements' (Gavins, 2007: 36; Werth, 1999: 185 - 190) and 'function-advancing propositions' (Gavins, 2007: 56; Werth, 1999: 190 – 204). The

world-building elements of a discourse form the basic building blocks of a text-world and provide the deictic parameters of this conceptual space (Gavins, 2007: 36; also see Whiteley, 2010: 35). Linguistically, world-building elements include deictic and referential terms such as: spatial locatives and adverbs (e.g. in Sheffield, there), demonstratives (e.g. these, that); verbs of motion (e.g. come, go), temporal locatives and adverbs (e.g. in ancient times, yesterday); variations in tense, definite articles, noun phrases and personal pronouns (Gavins, 2007: 35 - 52; Werth, 1999: 180 - 190; Whiteley, 2010: 35). These terms provide the spatial and temporal boundaries of the text-world and establish when and where it is located, who and what is present within it, and the properties and relationships between these elements. Furthermore, whereas sentient entities in the discourse-world are referred to as 'participants' (Werth 1999: 189), at the text-world level, sentient entities are referred to as either 'characters' in Werth's (1999) version of the theory, or 'enactors' in Gavins' (2007); following Gavins (2007), I adopt the term 'enactor' throughout this thesis. The term enactor, borrowed from Emmott (1997), is more suitable for representing the concept of multiple versions of the same entity across worlds and it captures the sense that entities populating the text-world are not necessarily characters (van der Bom, 2015: 33; Whiteley, 2010: 35). Gavins defines enactors as 'simply different versions of the same person or character which exist at different conceptual levels of a discourse' (Gavins, 2007: 41). Enactors at the text-world level are assumed to be 'equivalent to participants in the discourse-world, thus possessing knowledge, memories, hopes, dreams, beliefs, and emotions, etcetera' (Whiteley, 2010: 35).

Function-advancing propositions are those items in the discourse which, set against the deictic background constructed by the world-building elements of the text, propel the discourse forward in some way and thus inform the ongoing construction of the text-world (Gavins, 2007: 56). Function-advancers encode actions or processes in the 'foreground' of the text-world. Gavins (2007: 56) identifies three main categories of function-advancing process: material (involving some kind of animate or inanimate actor), mental (involving a sensor and perceptions, cognitions or reactions) and existential (simply describes the existence of a text-world element) processes. The type of function-advancing proposition found in a text depends on the intended function or purpose of said text. For example, function-advancing propositions in narratives are seen to have a plot-advancing role; in a descriptive passage, they are scene and person-advancing; and in an instructional text, they are said to be goal-advancing (Gavins, 2003: 131; Werth, 1999: 191; Whiteley, 2010: 35).

Function-advancers are closely linked to the communicative goal of the discourse and as such, they can vary as the structure and content of a text evolves.

In Werth's original version of Text World Theory, he proposed that the third and final conceptual level of discourse was the 'sub-world' (1999: 210 - 259). Sub-worlds originate *within* text-worlds but represent some kind of shift away from the parameters of the matrix text-world from which they emerge (Whiteley, 2010: 37). Werth employed the term sub-world to refer to worlds created by spatial, temporal, and attitudinal shifts in a discourse and identified three mains types: deictic, attitudinal, and epistemic (Werth, 1999: 216). However, Gavins' (2007: 52) has since argued that the prefix 'sub' is misleading since it suggests that new worlds are always positioned in a subordinated relationship with their originating world. Instead, Gavins (2007) replaces 'sub-worlds' with two, more precise world-categories: world-switches and modal-worlds (also see Gavins, 2001, 2005). As Lahey notes, most theorists have now dispensed with Werth's terminology preferring to employ Gavins' modifications which are better equipped for addressing modality in discourse (2014: 289) and it is Gavins' modifications (explicated below) which are adopted in this thesis.

A 'world-switch' occurs whenever the spatial and/or temporal boundaries of a text-world shift (Gavins, 2007: 48 -50). Examples include flashbacks, flashforwards, and instances of direct speech and direct thought in narrative. According to Gavins, when a world-switch is cued in the text, discourse participants are required to construct a new text-world through which the distinct time-zone, and thus the discourse at hand, can be conceptualised (Gavins, 2007: 48). World-switches are triggered by deictic cues in the discourse that signal a change in time and place. Modal-worlds, on the other hand, are created by modalised propositions in the text which express a participant's attitude to a particular subject. Modal-worlds, therefore, are ontologically remote from the originating text-world and usually contain some as-yet-unrealised situation (Gavins, 2007: 94; also see Whiteley, 2010: 38). Following Simpson's modal grammar (1993), Gavins (2007: 91 - 125) identifies three types of modal-world (also see Gavins, 2003, 2005a): 'the boulomaic modal-world' (cued by expressed wishes or desires: *want, wish, hope*); 'the deontic modal-world' (cued by expressions of obligation or duty: *must, should, it is forbidden*); and 'the epistemic modal-world' (cued by expressions of knowledge and belief: *think, know, possibly)*. Epistemic modal-worlds are also created by expressions of hypotheticality, such as conditionals (e.g. if you do that, I'll eat my hat) which create remote, unrealised situations without the presence of specific epistemic lexical or grammatical features (Gavins, 2003: 132; also see Whiteley, 2010: 38). Instances of free indirect thought and speech also create epistemic modal-worlds,

alongside focalised narratives since the world-building and function-advancing elements are filtered through the unverifiable perspective of a particular enactor (Gavins, 2003: 132).

The structure of TWT allows for the in-depth exploration of the different conceptual levels of discourse and therefore provides a framework capable of the examination of an entire discourse event. Essentially, TWT, with its cognitive basis and commitment to experientialism, unites text and reader and is able to analyse discourse in context. By drawing on cognitivist principles in its analytical practice, TWT enables a detailed insight into the cognition of language during communication, which results in a more rigorous and systematic analysis of how human beings produce, interpret, and experience discourse.

2.4.2   Existing work and advances in Text World Theory

As noted earlier, Werth claimed that TWT was a methodological approach capable of accounting for the cognitive processes behind the production and interpretation of *all* forms of human communication; Werth believed that TWT could be applied to all forms of discourse. However, Werth's own use of Text World Theory was limited to extracts from literary texts, particularly examples from nineteenth- and twentieth-century realist narrative fiction. As a result, the majority of Text World Theory research that followed the publication of *Text Worlds* (Werth, 1999) has focused on testing the boundaries of the theory against other discourse types. To date, Text World Theory has been augmented and developed through its application to a range of text types, including poetry (see Gavins, 2007, 2010a, 2010b 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2020; Gavins and Stockwell, 2012; Giovanelli, 2013; Hidalgo Downing, 2002; Harbus, 2012, 2016; Lahey, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2010; McLoughlin, 2013, 2014, 2016; Nahajec, 2009; Semino, 1995; Stockwell, 2002, 2009, 2016); drama (Cruickshank and Lahey, 2010; Gibbons, 2016; Lugea, 2016); film (Lugea, 2013; Marszalek, 2016); novels of varying genre and period (Bridgeman, 2001; Gavins, 2000, 2001, 2003, 2013; Hidalgo Downing, 2000a, 2000b; Norledge, 2016; Nuttall, 2014; Whiteley, 2011, 2016), including multimodal and experimental texts (Gibbons, 2008, 2012); various non-fictional discourses (Gavins and Simpson, 2015; Gavins and Whiteley, 2019; van der Bom, 2015, 2016), including political discourse and newspaper articles (Browse, 2013, 2016; Chilton, 2004), route directions (Mendes, 2005), advertisements (Gavins, 2007; Hidalgo Downing, 2000c; Marley, 2008) and instructional texts (Gavins, 2007); as well as pedagogical practice (Cushing, 2018, 2019; Cushing and Giovanelli, 2019; Giovanelli, 2010, 2016; Giovanelli and Mason, 2015). Whilst pre-school reading practices and young readers remain relatively untouched by the TWT framework (with the exception of Jackson, 2011,

2013, reviewed in detail in Section 2.4.4), existing work and advancements surrounding drama, multimodality and pedagogy are of particular interest to the current discussion, due to the types of text and context they address.

Cruickshank and Lahey (2010) provide the first application of TWT to dramatic play-texts and I argue that their work is, in many ways, the most comparable application of TWT to a read-aloud context. Their work on play-texts recognises the complexity of conceptualising a written discourse that is also set to be performed. As part of their analysis, Cruickshank and Lahey introduce two new types of text-world to the TWT framework: the 'fictional-world' and the 'staged-world' (2010). Cruickshank and Lahey recognise that when a text is written to be performed, readers construct *two* representations of the discourse: one that corresponds to the enactment of the play upon some imagined stage (the staged-world) and one that corresponds to the fictional world of play (the fictional-world). Readers of play-texts are said to 'toggle' between these two worlds throughout the discourse (2010: 88). Cruickshank and Lahey note that staged-worlds in particular are cued through 'activation of participant knowledge of a play's potential for performative enactment' providing some insight into how the mere potential of performance affects the conceptual experience of written discourse (2010: 88).

Gibbons' work on multimodality and experimental literature has also led to the introduction of a new world-type in TWT: the figured trans-world (Gibbons, 2012). This new world-type encompasses the reader discourse-world and the prominent text-world of a fictional discourse, and accounts for the ontological instability of the boundary between the actual world and the world(s) of a novel. Gibbons argues that a figured trans-world is generated 'when the reader is required and/or directed by the text into a performative role in the discourse-world, a role that calls upon corporeal activity and insinuates, to greater or lesser extent, active reader involvement in the narrative' (2012: 80). The figured trans-world thus addresses a concretised form of trans-world projection triggered by some multimodal texts, whereby the reader's performance in the discourse-world simultaneously represents 'their figured representation of the action in the narrative text-world' (Gibbons, 2012: 80). As a *trans*-world, this new world-type does not assume the absolute 'transportation' or compression of worlds, but maintains the rigid ontological boundaries between text-world and discourse-world (Gibbons, 2012: 80). Crucially, it accounts for 'the reader's self-awareness and heightened involvement with the book as object, as narrative, and as literary experience' (Gibbons, 2012: 80). Gibbons' work promotes the effective use of TWT in the

exploration of texts that employ multimodal devices, such as picturebooks. However, the framework is yet to be applied extensively to this genre.

Another interesting development in recent years has been the introduction of TWT to pedagogical contexts, specifically the secondary school classroom (Cushing, 2018, 2019; Cushing and Giovanelli, 2019; Giovanelli, 2010, 2016; Giovanelli and Mason, 2015; Zacharias, 2018). Research by Giovanelli (2010, 2016), Giovanelli and Mason (2015), and Cushing (2018, 2019) explores the use of TWT as a pedagogical tool in the secondary school English classroom. Giovanelli considers the use of TWT as a tool for teaching poetry to students (2010, 2016), while Giovanelli and Mason (2015) extend Giovanelli's (2010) work and explore the use of TWT as a 'beneficial tool for the teacher to think and plan with' (2015: 49). Giovanelli and Mason (2015) argue that the framework creates more opportunities in the classroom for students to demonstrate 'authentic reading'. Cushing (2018, 2019) adopts a similar approach and explores the role of TWT as part of a reader-response pedagogy for teaching poetry and grammar in the secondary school classroom. The introduction of TWT to pedagogy has extended the capabilities of the Text World Theory framework. In particular, Giovanelli and Mason (2015), Giovanelli (2010; 2016), and Cushing (2018) have highlighted the potential role of TWT in teaching children about reading and literary texts. Furthermore, Taylor's (2018) work on text-worlds in children's creative writing introduces the framework to the primary school setting and emphasises its usefulness in exploring younger children's learning and development in literacy. Away from the English classroom, Zacharias (2018) offers a text-world account of how abstract scientific concepts are constructed and linguistically represented in the secondary school science classroom. Whilst the approaches to TWT and pedagogy to date have often focused on structured classroom contexts and have overlooked pre-school children, this body of research has shown that there is a place for TWT within education. Pre-school reading is closely related to pedagogy because of its potential for literacy and cognitive development in children (see Section 2.1.1 of this chapter) and I propose that TWT provides the analytical tools for the exploration of pedagogy at home as well as in the classroom.

Whilst Werth (1999) argued that TWT could be applied in the analysis of any discourse situation, his own work and the majority of work by other scholars that followed has focused predominantly on written discourses, and even more specifically on written *literary* texts. As a result, text-world theorists to date have examined primarily independent reading contexts and therefore individual minds. There has been very little focus on face-to-face communication and on interactive reading contexts, which are key in the exploration of

pre-school reading practices. Recent research by van der Bom (2015) and Peplow et al. (2016) has addressed this gap in TWT scholarship and provided some advancement of the theory with regards to these discourse-types (also see Canning, 2017).

Van der Bom (2015) notes that it is striking that Werth states multiple times that the most prototypical kind of a language event is face-to-face communication and yet fails to examine spoken face-to-face interaction himself (2015: 50). In order to address this area of neglect, van der Bom (2015) applies Text World Theory to extended examples of face-to-face interview discourse, obtained through ethnographic methods, for the first time (also see van der Bom, 2016). Although van der Bom makes suggestions for the framework's further development with regards to expressions of emotion and direct speech in spoken discourse (2015: 228 – 229), she nevertheless provides evidence of TWT's capabilities for dealing with discursive interaction. Van der Bom's work (2015, 2016) is also the first piece of research to combine TWT with ethnographic methods; this approach is central to this thesis too and will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

Peplow et al.'s (2016) research on the discourse of reading groups provides a further advancement in TWT through its application of the framework to interactive reading contexts where both face-to-face communication *and* a written literary text are present. Throughout *The Discourse of Reading Groups* (2016), Peplow et al. apply TWT to reading-group discourse in order to illuminate the 'rich and complex' nature of these discourses (2016: 193). Most notably, Peplow et al. recognise that participants in face-to-face reading groups engage in different types of talk shifting between 'literary talk' and 'non-literary topics' (2016: 21-24). As such, the text-worlds participants construct may depict *either* 'a literary text (as in a discussion of the text itself) or any other possible topic (when other matters are discussed)' (2016: 37). Peplow et al.'s work provides some insight into TWT's capabilities surrounding social reading contexts that mirror certain aspects of the preschool read-aloud context.

2.4.3   Text World Theory: gaps and assumptions

As noted above, TWT has been applied to a range of discourse types in recent years, but literary texts have proved to be the most popular discourse for testing the framework. Moreover, as I pointed out in Jackson (2011, 2013), Text World Theory has to date lent much of its attention to the independent reading of often complex fictional narratives by competent literate adults, who have the appropriate cognitive, personal and cultural knowledge stores to conceptualise such language. The dominant focus on independent adult readers has limited

the exploration of other types of reader and other reading contexts, specifically pre-adult readers and the shared read-aloud context.

Essentially, existing applications of the TWT framework not only privilege complex literary texts, but assume the immediate and unproblematic construction of a text-world by a competent adult reader. However, as I will go on to show in this thesis, the construction of a distinct text-world based purely on written discourse would prove difficult for a pre-school child, not least because of their developing mental faculties. Pre-school children are a different type of 'reader' to those that text-world theorists have previously focused on.

Both Whiteley (2010: 30) and van der Bom (2015: 18) highlight Werth's intention to account for the role of a number of 'mental faculties' (beliefs, knowledge, memories, imagination, intentions, dreams, and hopes) that feed into and affect the discourse-world (see Werth, 1995a, 1999) and then critique his failure to do so (see also Gavins, 2007: 21). Whiteley claims that Werth's failure to engage with these faculties is a 'notable omission' that creates a problematic gap in the model of the discourse-world (2010: 30). This omission is of particular interest to the investigation of young inexperienced pre-school children, whose cognition is still in the process of developing. The pre-school 'reader' poses a challenge to the TWT framework due to their limited experiential knowledge-stores and other cognitive capabilities upon which TWT is based. The multimodal picturebook texts that are the focus of the current investigation are also problematic for TWT as perceptual and multimodal features of fictional discourse have received very little attention in TWT scholarship, with picturebooks receiving no attention at all (with the exception of Jackson, 2011, 2013).

In her exploration of multimodality and experimental literature, Gibbon's observes that TWT 'implicitly treats *language* as a facilitator to literary experience', (2012: 35, *my emphasis*). Gibbons recognises that part of TWT's strength is its focus on how linguistic structures trigger different text-worlds because it provides a systematic and rigorous approach to discourse (2012: 35). However, Gibbons is quick to note that the predominant focus on linguistic structures is problematic in the exploration of multimodal discourse, where visual components are often key to comprehending a text. In order to address the neglect of multimodality in TWT research, Gibbons advocates a 'multimodal cognitive poetics', an interdisciplinary critical synthesis that combines cognitive poetics, visual perception and multimodal studies (2012: 39-45). Most notably, Gibbons presents an augmentation to the TWT framework in order to facilitate a better understanding of the ontological intricacies of multimodal fiction. Gibbons provides evidence of the role that TWT can play in the

exploration of multimodal texts, but recognises the need to expand the framework in order to accommodate the effective analysis of these texts. However, once again, Gibbons work focuses specifically on complex multimodal printed novels for *adults* and makes assumptions about the reader's ability; a gap remains for the cognitive multimodal exploration of pre-school picturebook discourses and more specifically the experience of 'reading images'.

Finally, alongside the neglect of pre-school children, and pre-school texts, TWT is yet to address the read-aloud context, where a literary text is shared between two face-to-face discourse-world participants. The research by Peplow et al. (2016), applying TWT to spoken reading group discourse and noted in the previous section, mirrors the read-aloud context in a number of ways. The authors are careful to differentiate reading group discourse (social reading) from common conceptions of 'literary reading' (solitary reading). They argue that 'reading, and particularly literary reading, is often thought of as an individual activity: a lone reader engaging with a text. The reader is usually silent' (2016: 1). In comparison, they define 'reading' in reading groups as a 'joint, collaborative activity, in which people share interpretations and create new ones within their interaction. Reading is anything but silent' (2016: 1). Peplow et al. identify patterns of shifting talk (between literary talk and non-literary talk) in reading group discourse that can also be observed in pre-school read-aloud practices. However, there is one significant difference between reading group discourse and storytime discourse: participants engaged in reading group discourse have already read and interpreted a text and are involved in a practice of discussing that literary text retrospectively; participants involved in storytime practices, however, are involved in the online discursive processing of a literary text, *whilst* that text is being read aloud and talked about. What is more, Peplow et al.'s study again focuses on adult participants. The pre-school read-aloud context, then, is a complex interactive reading context, which TWT is yet to explore in detail.

Overall, Text World Theory applications thus far have in the majority neglected young participants with developing cognitive abilities; limited applications to literary texts to those texts that are written for adults; ignored, for the most part, the effects of multimodality on discourse-world interaction and text-world construction; and overlooked interactive reading contexts. As such, there are a number of gaps in TWT research that need to be addressed when it comes to the exploration of pre-school read-aloud practices. I will propose in this thesis that the framework requires some augmentation in order to accommodate pre-school read-aloud discourses. Nevertheless, I also propose that the TWT framework provides a workable analytical structure with a cognitive basis that will facilitate the complete exploration of storytime.

2.4.4 Text World Theory and storytime: towards a cognitive approach

In Jackson (2013; also see Jackson, 2011), I applied the TWT framework to pre-school read-aloud discourse for the first time. I paid particular attention to the unique features of the picturebook read-aloud situation, which I identified as: interactive reading between participants of differing cognitive ability; reading fiction as a joint endeavour; the interpretation of multimodal texts and semiotic combination; and 'ontological blurring' during discourse comprehension. I explored the topics of deixis, image, page, voice and multimodality through the combined analysis of empirical read-aloud data and the stylistic content-analysis of a set of popular pre-school picturebooks. Throughout, I claimed that pre-school discourses engage readers through what are essentially discourse-world modes and as a result, the role of the discourse-world in the construction of pre-school text-worlds gains prominence. In order to account for these features, I proposed an augmentation to the original TWT framework that I argued would better its capabilities for handling pre-school read-aloud discourses.

This augmentation was the identification of an additional conceptual level – the 'discourse-text-world' – generated between the discourse-world and the text-world during pre-school storytime. I proposed that the discourse-text-world is an interactive text-world construction which provides a conceptual platform for the combination of multiple semiotic meaning-making elements, including read-aloud narration, vocal performance and images. In addition, I argued that throughout pre-school discourses, the boundary between fiction and reality appears to constantly shift and the usually ontologically distinct conceptual levels of the discourse-world and the text-world seemingly 'blur' together. The discourse-text-world provided a means of assessing the effects of this shifting and I was able to show that the level of conceptual processing required by the pre-school child during a read-aloud is reduced, which allows the discourse to appear outwardly 'simple' (Jackson, 2013: 48). Significantly, the ontological structure of the TWT framework enabled the augmentation made in Jackson (2013) which aided the analysis of how participants construct meaning during picturebook read-aloud situations. The discourse-text-world will be discussed in further detail in Section 4.3 of this thesis.

Although the application of TWT to pre-school discourses in Jackson (2013) was the first of its kind, there has been a broader call for a cognitive approach to children's literature in recent years. Stephens notes that the 'cognitive turn' in literary criticism, which is closely linked to the development of cognitive poetics and TWT, has only recently entered the field of children's literature (2013: v). Kümmerling-Meibauer has also commented on the

inclusion of cognitive studies in the realm of picturebook research specifically, describing it as an 'auspicious approach' that is 'still in its fledging state' (2017: 5). One of the most notable and comprehensive cognitive accounts of children's literature to emerge is Nikolajeva's *Reading for Learning: Cognitive Approaches to Children's Literature* (2014b). Nikolajeva argues that her approach to children's literature is 'informed by cognitive literary theory' and she uses the term 'cognitive criticism' as a blanket term for the different 'labels' given to the 'cognitive turn' (Nikolajeva, 2014b: 122, also see: Nikolajeva, 2012, 2014a). Nikolajeva's work is focused on 'whether works of literature can convey knowledge, and if so, how this happens'; literature is viewed as both a socialising and educational tool. Significantly, Nikolajeva recognises that 'what cognitive criticism has so far not paid attention to, apart from brief observations, is the profound difference between young and adult readers' (2014b: 10). I made similar claims in Jackson (2013: 6–9) and Nikolajeva goes on to state that:

> Given the importance that cognitive critics ascribe to readers' capacity to engage with texts, it is surprising that they have not considered what happens if this capacity is absent or underdeveloped, and how texts may deliberately compensate for this obstacle. Obviously, anything relevant for a reader with fully developed cognitive skills might prove problematic when discussing a reader whose cognitive skills are in the making.

<div align="right">(Nikolajeva, 2014b: 10)</div>

Thus, Nikolajeva recognises the impact of the child's cognitive capacity on the ways in which they engage with fiction and simultaneously criticises current cognitive approaches to literature for not accounting for the emerging cognitive skills of young readers. However, Nikolajeva refers to an 'abstract, constructed reader' (2014b: 15) throughout her work, and the specificity of her 'novice reader' is never wholly clear; her reader is able to read independently and achieve 'deep reading' but has poor, or developing, linguistic, experiential, and cognitive skills. Nikolajeva, therefore, does not account for the pre-literate pre-school reader and what is more, she provides no empirical evidence to back up any of her other claims.

Kümmerling-Meibauer and Meibauer advocate a similar critical approach in their paper 'Towards a Cognitive Theory of Picturebooks' (2013), in which they claim that a 'cognitive theory of picturebooks is needed' that takes into account the 'fundamental relatedness of picturebooks to the cognitive development of children' (2013: 143; also see Kümmerling-Meibauer and Meibauer, 2017). Kümmerling-Meibauer and Meibauer note that when

frameworks such as cognitive poetics are applied to children's literature, there is a 'restriction on certain aspects of cognition to be observed' (2013: 144). They go on to dismiss approaches such as cognitive poetics for its preoccupation with concepts such as metaphor, scripts and blending, in favour of an approach that takes into account the child's maturing cognitive abilities. Nikolajeva claims that the process of obtaining 'cognitive children's literature is […] a matter of developing a radically new, children's literature specific theory based on cognitive criticism' (2014b: 13). Kümmerling-Meibauer and Meibauer adopt a similar view, arguing that 'a deeper understanding [of children's literature] might be achieved when the total cognitive development of children is related to the works of art created for them', thus a 'new' cognitive theory is needed (2013: 156).

I agree with this criticism of current cognitive approaches and believe that the specific cognitive abilities of the pre-school child need to be taken into account if we are to understand how picturebooks are being experienced and comprehended (see Jackson, 2013; also see Section 2.5 of this chapter). However, whilst I accept some of the critical aspects of the approaches discussed above, I believe that cognitive poetics – and TWT in particular – has the potential to address the gaps that both Nikolajeva (2014b) and Kümmerling-Meibauer and Meibauer (2013, 2017) have identified.

In Jackson (2011, 2013), I provided evidence for the efficacy of the TWT framework in the analysis of pre-school reading practices. Furthermore, I would propose that the application of TWT to pre-school discourses in Jackson (2013) addresses Nikolajeva's call for a 'radically new, children's literature specific theory' (2014b: 13). Significantly, the augmentation to TWT that was introduced in my previous work was specific to the experience of young readers and enabled a more in-depth analysis of how young children experience literary discourses. I therefore argue that the approach adopted in Jackson (2013), which combined TWT, insights from developmental psychology and cognitive development, empirical evidence and textual data warrants further investigation and I will be treating it as a pilot study for the present thesis.

In Jackson (2013) I found that the 'pre'-literate status of pre-school children and their cognitive capacity, which affects their ability to mentally represent discourse, meant that the progression from the discourse-world to the text-world was a particular feature of read-aloud storytime which required further understanding. However, although Jackson (2013) made effective use of empirical evidence that provided seemingly 'natural' examples of reading aloud at home, these videos were short and no other contextual or ethnographic data about the participants involved was collected; as a result, there was a great deal of contextual

information missing. Thus, in order to extend and develop the work of Jackson (2013), I propose that what is required in the present study is a more advanced approach to both pre-school cognition and the context of reading.

2.5 Pre-school readers: cognition, knowledge, and experience

Throughout this thesis, I advocate a cognitive approach to pre-school read-aloud discourses and in Section 2.4 I introduced the cognitive-linguistic model Text World Theory as the main analytical framework employed throughout this study. Whilst the benefits of a text-world approach were highlighted, I also criticised the framework – and cognitive poetics more widely – for making assumptions about the cognitive capabilities of adult readers and thus failing to account in detail for the experiences of very young readers. By overlooking the pre-literate reading experience, current cognitive approaches to reading overlook the formative years of the cognition of literature, which I argue are key to understanding later adult experiences. Instead, what is needed is an approach to reading and discourse that takes into consideration the cognitive-developmental status of the pre-schooler, and indeed of all readers, and how this impacts their experience and interpretation of discourse. With this in mind, in the final sections of this review, relevant aspects of the pre-school mind and cognition will be considered in order to tailor the cognitive approach adopted in this thesis to the pre-school child specifically, and consequently to aid the analysis of read-aloud discourse and the pre-school literary experience in Chapters 4, 5, and 6. The pre-school child, as a discourse participant and, more specifically, as a 'reader' of fiction is the central focus of these sections. I begin in this section with a review of research that considers what young children know about reading; in Section 2.5.1, I focus on the pre-school mind and explore executive function and symbolic understanding in pre-school children; Section 2.5.2 considers how the child's 'Theory of Mind' affects their ability to process fiction; Section 2.5.3 assesses the pre-schooler's conceptual and perceptual processing abilities; and finally in Section 2.5.4, I focus on the pre-schooler's capacity for ontological differentiation.

What pre-school children know about reading, fiction and books usually relies most heavily on their level of literacy acquisition and their previous experiences of reading in their home environment (also see Section 2.1.1 and 2.1.2). As we have seen in Section 2.1 above, the child's knowledge about reading is closely linked to the concept of emergent literacy and, according to the emergent literacy paradigm, the onset of literacy acquisition begins at birth (see Teale and Sulzby, 1986). Essentially, children aged between 2 and 4 years old retain a level of literacy acquisition that they have developed since that point, but they are still in the

process of actively learning and developing relevant knowledge stores. Applebee's work (1978) on the child's 'sense of story' concludes that children as young as 2 show signs of recognising the simple conventions of a story, such as a formal opening or title, formal closing, and consistent past tense (37). However, Applebee goes on to highlight the child's gradual experiential relationship with stories and argues that children only come to recognise that stories are in some way different to other uses of language and that they are a mode of communication in their own right over time and through experience (36). During the pre-school years, then, children develop a sense of what, how and why we read; pre-schoolers accumulate knowledge about reading based on their day-to-day experiences, including story reading events, and their literacy environment.

Kontos (1986: 63 - 65) foregrounds the role that adult role models, in particular, have on a pre-schooler's knowledge and interest in reading, claiming that 'as in many other areas of development, a major reason young children want to learn is that they see the people they admire doing it' (1986: 64). Kontos draws on research by Teale (1984) and highlights how reading to young children gives them 'a sense of what reading is about, introduces them to the form and structure of written language, and acquaints them with literacy conventions' (1986: 63). Gill also argues that 'sharing picturebooks with children is one of *the most important ways* teachers and families encourage children to learn (and love) to read' (2015: 37, *my emphasis*). A pre-schooler's knowledge about reading, then, is closely associated with book-reading practices that take place at home; however, many researchers have also highlighted the role of other daily literacy activities that occur incidentally, such as the child's exposure to environmental print which includes: signs, labels, and logos. Research suggests that these activities 'help children learn about literacy as much as story reading […]' (Martens, 1996: xii). Henderson (1986) also argues that what children know about reading is the product of their experiences with text, and not due to an innate sense or ability surrounding the activity. Henderson notes that 'we cannot make reading happen artificially' (1986: 70) and states that 'if children are not exposed to literate behaviour at all, they will not learn to read and write' (1986: 71). For Henderson, the source of information that enables a child's knowledge about reading is 'overt literate behaviour' (1986: 70).

In addition to the effect of contextual and environmental factors, young children's knowledge about reading is often measured by their metacognition and their metalinguistic awareness surrounding the activity (see Carter and Stokes, 1982; Jacobs and Paris, 1987; Yaden and Templeton, 1986). Research suggests that young children *do* possess a level of metacognitive awareness surrounding reading; more specifically, young children have been

found to display a level of ability and achievement linked the activity even before any formal instruction begins (Carter and Stokes, 1982). Carter and Stokes note that young children possess substantial information about words and letters, stories, and the organization of books prior to acquiring a mature understanding of reading (1982: 175). However, researchers have observed that 'different children use different strategies' when it comes to early reading activities (see Carter and Stokes, 1982: 173), and young children have been found to display some confusion surrounding the activity. In their review of research on children's metacognition about reading, Jacobs and Paris (1987) note that young children did not always know the goals of reading, or the function of letters, words, or punctuation (260: also see Reid, 1966). Furthermore, Jacobs and Paris claim that beginning readers are often confused about whether they should read the pictures or the print (1987: 260; also see Clay, 1979: 72 - 97). Yaden argues that children have 'disparate notions as to what behaviour comprises the act of reading and the necessary steps that they must take in getting ready to become a reader' (1986: 61). The child's metacognitive awareness and their 'notion' of reading relies heavily on the contextual and environmental factors mentioned above. As Mason notes 'children who are guided by parents to attend to letter, signs, and labels and are given opportunities to read, spell, and print words, learn some of the essential rudiments of reading even before going to kindergarten' (1980: 203). Thus, the child's metacognitive awareness and their experiences at home – specifically with regards to 'parental help' (Mason, 1980: 203) – are closely intertwined.

In general, existing research on what pre-school children know about reading, books, and fiction foregrounds the subjective and ongoing developmental nature of their knowledge and draws attention to the link between home-reading practices and the child's developing sense of reading and becoming a reader. Whilst the research reviewed here focuses predominantly on experiential and contextual factors relating to pre-school knowledge about reading, there are a number of significant developmental cognitive factors that play a role in a child's early experiences of fiction.

2.5.1   Pre-school cognition: psychology and the pre-school mind

The pre-school child, aged between 2 and 4 years old, is the subject of much cognitive and psychological developmental research, not least because the preschool years represent a period of remarkable brain plasticity and sensitivity to environments and experiences (Fitzpatrick and Pagani, 2012: 205; also see for overview: Goswami, 2011; Valsiner and Connolly, 2003). Executive function (EF) is a term that describes the set of higher-order

cognitive skills that allow us to control our thinking and behaviour. These functions allow one to 'manage and supervise thoughts, to regulate behaviour to solve a problem, to select a purpose, and to plan the path to achieve the desired results' (Shaul and Schwartz, 2014: 750). Significantly, EFs are recognised as critical components of children's cognitive and social functioning (Carlson et al., 2014: 2) and the first five years of life are said to play a significant role in their development (Garon et al., 2008: 31). Garon et al. (2008) argue that the core components of EF develop during the pre-school period and form a critical foundation that will set the stage for the development of higher cognitive processes well into adulthood (2008: 31). What is more, Shaul and Schwarz's (2014) study of the specific contribution of EFs to pre-academic skills found that EFs play a significant role in emergent literacy. Furthermore, Fitzpatrick and Pagani (2012: 206) argue that in the classroom specifically, EF is likely to support productive learning behaviour by helping children hold information on line during problem solving tasks, efficiently direct attention to relevant stimuli, and suppress automatic responses in favour of thoughtful action. The foundational components of executive function are working memory, inhibition, and 'shifting' or cognitive flexibility (see Best and Miller, 2010: 1641).

Repovš and Baddeley suggest that 'working memory has proved to be an important part of the cognitive system, providing the ability to maintain and manipulate information in the process of guiding and executing complex cognitive tasks' (2006: 16). Working memory (WM) is a multi-component cognitive model that keeps our mind focused on goals, allowing us to maintain and update them (see Gathercole et al., 2004; Repovš and Baddeley, 2006; Towse and Cowan, [2005]2013). The links that have been made between WM, pre-schoolers, and attention or goal-maintenance are of specific interest to the current discussion. Significantly, pre-school children are recognised as having a low working memory capacity, which means that they are more prone to goal neglect or failure to execute a goal even though it is understood (Marcovitch et al., 2007: 559). Marcovitch et al. posit that pre-schoolers have difficulties with attentional control. Their study of pre-schoolers' goal maintenance showed that 'consistent activation of the goal state is critical for goal maintenance in pre-schoolers' (2007: 562).

Furthermore, Towse and Cowan acknowledge that, during a reading span task, 'engaging in reading comprehension for a presented sentence leaves memory activity on hold' ([2005] 2013: 23). Towse and Cowan note that 'when reading processing is slow, either because of some developmentally immature apparatus, weak strategies, or experimentally imposed delays, then memory representations are left to wither for longer'([2005] 2013: 23).

This results in lower estimates of working memory, particularly for young children and poor readers ([2005] 2013: 23). Thus, a low working memory capacity can be related to the pre-schooler's ability to comprehend written texts; Hitch et al. found that 'working memory spans *were good predictors* of children's attainment in reading and arithmetic' (2001: 196, *my emphasis*). Fitzpatrick and Pagani also investigated the specific link between working memory and reading achievement and found a positive association between early working memory scores and classroom engagement (2012: 205). They went on to conclude that 'toddler working memory can reliably forecast persistent, focused, and goal-directed behaviour in kindergarten' (Fitzpatrick and Pagani 2012: 210).

The pre-schooler's working memory is affected by two other key EF components: low-level inhibitory control and cognitive flexibility (see Garon, et al., 2008; Miyake et al., 2000). Inhibitory control is responsible for stopping or inhibiting responses to irrelevant stimuli while pursuing a cognitively represented goal; this includes being able to suppress distractions so that goal-appropriate behaviour can be achieved (Carlson and Moses, 2001: 1033). Cognitive flexibility is the ability to change and update goal-oriented behaviour, or switch between tasks, in response to changes in our goals and/or environment (Cragg and Chevalier, 2012: 209). Until these skills reach an adult level, pre-schoolers struggle to inhibit any immediate or routine responses to their environment, they are distracted easily and find it difficult to switch focus when tasks or goals change.

I argue that these insights from psychology could potentially inform the analysis of how pre-schoolers experience literary discourses. It can be assumed that, unlike an adult reader, a pre-school child would struggle to concentrate on a text, or on comprehending a fictional discourse for a prolonged period of time. Furthermore, short repetitive narratives that require a lower working memory span and attention-grabbing or 'goal activating' behaviour from adults during read-aloud discourses could achieve much in the way of maintaining the child's literary engagement. I propose that an awareness of the child's low working-memory span, inhibitory control and cognitive flexibility could, therefore, inform the interpretation of any potential extra-textual talk from participants during reading aloud; the scaffolding behaviour of adults; and the success of different pre-school texts.

Low-level symbolic understanding is another defining feature of pre-school cognition that affects children's early experiences as a reader. During the first years of life, children must master symbolic systems and objects in order to communicate efficiently; this ability is significant when it comes to comprehending written fictional discourses with pictures. However, as Peralta et al. (2013) note 'symbolic objects, such as pictures, scale-models and

maps, are physical objects and, at the same time, symbols of the entities they represent' (266). Comprehending the representational character of these objects can be a challenge for young children because of the 'double nature' of symbolic systems and objects. Young children have difficulties considering both the object itself and the abstract relation to what it stands for at the same time, also referred to as 'dual representation' (DeLoache, 2004: 69).

Researchers in child psychology investigating the specific relationship between dual representation and the child's understanding of print have found that young children misunderstand how the meaning of print is determined, often assuming that the meaning of a written word can change according to its proximity to potential referents; children understand print as a direct reflection of contextual meaning (Bialystok, 2000; Bialystok and Martin, 2003; Collins and Robinson, 2005). These findings suggest that during pre-school read-aloud practices, the child relies on much more than the printed linguistic structures of the discourse in order to make sense of the text. What is more, Bialystok and Martin (2003) suggest that children's experiences of storybooks, where pictures and text are arranged on the page, encourage this erroneous interpretation of print. According to Bialystok and Martin (2003), during picturebook reading, the pictures and text arranged on the page of the book converge on the same set of meanings. As a result, storybooks reinforce the misconception of determining meaning by proximity by presenting large, colourful pictures and small amounts of print, all of which culminates in the story. Nevertheless, Bialystok and Martin claim that their study highlights the importance that pictures have for children who do not yet understand the relation between print and the meanings they encode (2003: 240–241).

Whilst research on symbolic understanding and print provides some insight into the pre-schooler's preference for visual meaning (also see Section 2.5.2 below) during the comprehension of written discourses, this is not to say that young children possess an innate ability to comprehend pictures. Callaghan et al. (2012) found that the children's explicit knowledge of the representational function of pictorial symbols matures in the late pre-school years. DeLoache and Burns (1994) found that a rapid developmental change surrounding this ability takes place between 24 and 30 months of age. Callaghan et al. go on to argue that a pre-schooler's knowledge of the representational function of pictures develops more rapidly in cultures that strongly promote the symbolic use of pictures in early life (2012: 320). Peralta et al. also recognise that in the acquisition and comprehension of symbolic objects, adult instruction is integral (2013: 272). Thus, once again, experience in context and parental help plays a significant role in the development of dual representation in children.

On the whole, the cognitive processes that underpin complex, goal-oriented behaviour and goal maintenance in young children are underdeveloped. Young children also struggle with dual representation and they find it difficult to perceive objects as a representation of something else. With regards to print and reading, research shows that young pre-schoolers do not yet grasp that the meaning of written words is relatively fixed and they rely to some extent on pictures. Some of the key cognitive abilities that we associate with adult readers, then: the ability to focus and pay attention for long periods of time; the ability to understand and comprehend symbolic representation, particularly written texts, are features of a reader that a pre-school child does not yet possess. However, pre-schoolers are *actively engaged* in developing these skills.

Peralta et al. note that 'a crucial factor in cognitive development is the instruction or informational support children receive in social contexts' (2013: 266). According to Peralta et al. (2013: 272), this type of mediation, usually by adults, 'awakens cognitive processes' and reveals 'the subtle interplay between learning and development' that was first proposed by Vygotsky (1978). Vygotsky developed a theory based on the role of context, within which social, cultural, and historical forces play a part in development (see Daniels, 2011: 674). Vygotsky's work in psychology has also had considerable influence on pedagogical practice, specifically with regards to the concept of 'scaffolding' (also see Section 2.2.1). As I explained earlier in this chapter, the term 'scaffolding' is linked to an apprenticeship model of cognitive development, in which adult scaffolding of children's early interactions eventually results in children's independent cognitive skills. The theoretical background for scaffolding is linked to Vygotsky's (1978) concept of the 'zone of proximal development', which is defined as:

> The distance between the child's actual developmental level as determined by
> independent problem solving and the level of potential development as
> determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration
> with more capable peers.
>
> (Vygotsky, 1978: 86)

Essentially, Vygotsky believed that guided interactions with a more skilled peer could facilitate a child's learning and encourage them to internalize that peer's thinking and strategy surrounding the scaffolding activity (Yelland and Masters, 2006: 363–364).

In terms of pre-school reading, the concept of 'scaffolding' provides a means to investigating how adults guide children in literary interpretation; taking into account any extra-textual talk, the relationship between the adult and child(ren), and any other

instructional support during story-book reading will provide some indication about what children are learning about reading fiction. What is more, I would argue that during pre-school read-aloud discourses, adults are not only involved in a process of teaching children to read words, but are actively involved in the transmission of the cognition of literature; adults teach children how to comprehend literary narratives and how to engage with fictional worlds. Essentially, if children successfully 'internalise their peer's thinking and strategy' surrounding fictional interpretation, it can be expected that exploring scaffolding techniques used by adults in the read-aloud context will provide a specific insight into what children are learning about the cognition of literature. Moreover, an awareness of all of the cognitive factors and concepts discussed above, and those covered in Sections 2.5.2 – 2.5.4 below, will allow a more efficient analysis of the early literary experiences of pre-school children.

2.5.2   Theory of Mind, fiction, and the pre-school reader

The concept of 'Theory of Mind' (hereafter ToM) has received significant attention in both the fields of developmental psychology *and* literary studies. Consequently, ToM is a feature of pre-school cognition that is particularly relevant to the current discussion. In this section, I define ToM in detail, focusing on its definition in psychology before exploring its role within literary studies. The aim of this section is to explicate the usefulness of accounting for this concept when exploring the pre-school literary experience.

ToM refers to the ability that neurotypical human beings have to ascribe mental states to themselves and others, whilst understanding that the beliefs of others might be different from their own. It is well documented that human beings are not born with a ToM and that they do not acquire a fully-functioning ToM until around the ages of 4 and 6 (Wimmer and Perner, 1983). The most common means of investigating the attribution of a ToM are false belief tasks that are usually variants of two basic procedures: 'unexpected transfer' and 'unexpected content' tasks (for an overview see Apperly, 2011: 12–14). Children under 5 years of age usually fail these tasks because they fail to take into account the theoretical mind of another human being, thus failing to understand how another human being will judge a situation; failure of false belief tasks is also related to the child's low-level symbolic understanding (see Callaghan et al., 2012). These results are indicative of the pre-schooler's tendency to favour perceptual factors over conceptual factors; young children are convinced by what they have seen and employ little conceptual effort in order to understand the discourse from any other perspective.

A frequent interpretation of the pre-schooler's tendency to fail false belief tasks is that

'young pre-schoolers do not yet possess a mental representational conception of the mind' (Flavell, 1999: 23). In order to mentally represent a situation that is different from their own perspective, human beings must employ self-projection. However, the pre-schooler's conceptual processing capacity is underdeveloped and they rely on their own egocentric perspective in order to make sense of different discourses; pre-schoolers struggle to self-project into any situation that contradicts their own perspective. This suggests that their ability to imagine and comprehend a fictional discourse – a discourse that requires a mental representational conception of the mind, because it does not correspond to the child's own perspective – is impeded. Instead, pre-schoolers are more likely to engage with fictional discourses that they are able to access – on some level – in the real world, because these discourses require a lower-level of self-projection and conceptual processing.

In recent years, ToM has been adopted into literary studies; however, this has been met with some caution by scholars who have highlighted the shifting definition of the term and drawn specific attention to the disparity between its use by psychologists and its use by literary critics (see Belmonte, 2008; Stockwell, 2009: 139). For the psychologist, ToM has been a vehicle for understanding the evolutionary differences between human and non-human social cognition, clinical differences between neurotypical human cognition and atypical states and developmental differences between different stages of cognitive maturation. However, for the literary critic, ToM has been a vehicle for understanding the relations between characters in a text and readers, and between narrator and reader (Belmonte, 2008: 192). Belmonte claims that the neuroscientist and the literary critic 'may believe that they are speaking with each other when they actually are speaking past each other' (2008: 192).

Whilst I recognise the differences in the two approaches addressed above, I argue that the literary critic's interpretation and usage of ToM is still based in some way on the psychological foundations of the term. Thus, for the purposes of this thesis, I maintain that not only do both the psychological perspective *and* the literary critic's perspective have something to offer the current discussion, but that they are linked by the simple belief that neurotypical human beings possess and employ a ToM. It is important to note, though, that the developmental psychologist would claim that a pre-school child does not have a fully developed ToM. Therefore, I propose that existing claims made by literary critics about the role of ToM in literary interpretation not only overlook the experiences of early readers, but simultaneously highlight potential aspects of reading fiction that a pre-school child might struggle to comprehend.

The most well-known application of ToM to literary reading is by Zunshine (2006). Zunshine argues that 'Theory of Mind makes reading fiction possible' (35); she goes on to state that fiction engages our ToM and that it is the ability of fiction to play with our 'evolved cognitive architecture' which results in our enjoyment of these texts (2006: 9). Specifically, Zunshine highlights the role of ToM in our interpretation and engagement with narrators and fictional characters. Zunshine claims that we are able to run and track a ToM for each narrator and character in a fictional text and as a result we can account for their actions, motivations, thoughts and feelings in detail, which informs our experience of reading. However, Zunshine's argument is based on a fully developed ToM and therefore calls into question the pre-schooler's ability to engage with fictional minds, enactors and entities.

Within the field of psychology, the development of a ToM in young children is considered a significant step towards cognitive maturation; ultimately, ToM understanding develops alongside EF and the other core cognitive processes discussed in Section 2.5.1 (see Guajardo and Cartwright, 2016: 29). In line with this observation, I would argue that in order to account for the experience of pre-school readers, ToM – as a developing feature of pre-school cognition – must be taken into account. Some psychologists have linked ToM to reading comprehension more generally, although as Guajardo and Cartwright note 'more work is necessary to tease out the particular ways in which theory of mind understanding supports the development of reading comprehension from preschool throughout the lifespan' (2016: 40). I therefore propose that accounting for the pre-schooler's psychological ToM will help to define its role within the literary realm. As a feature of cognition that is linked to conceptual processing, metarepresentational ability, self-projection and understanding others' thoughts and actions, adopting the concept of ToM into the study of early experiences of fiction will achieve much in the way of understanding how early readers build, maintain and update fictional worlds. I aim to present a better 'interdisciplinary fusion' of ToM and literature (Belmonte, 2008: 192) throughout this thesis, which will aid the analysis of the pre-schoolers' ability to comprehend and experience fiction.

2.5.3   Conceptual vs. perceptual understanding

The ability to conceptually represent discourse in the mind is a feature of cognition that underpins a Text World Theory approach, which assumes the purely conceptual construction of text-worlds by readers with mature conceptual thinking. However, research suggests that pre-school children more readily process perceptual information over conceptual information

(Fisher, 2011). Fisher (2011) provides the following distinction between conceptual and perceptual factors:

> Perceptual factors are those that are *directly observable* and readily perceived by the organism (e.g., that leopards and jaguars look similar); conceptual factors are characterized as *those that cannot be observed directly* and need to be learned or inferred from what is known (e.g., that leopards and jaguars belong to the same animal family).

(Fisher, 2011: 253 – 254, *my emphasis*)

Ultimately, conceptual understanding refers to an individual's ability to process information in the mind and in line with existing mental concepts; whereas perceptual understanding refers to an individual's ability to process information through more explicit sensory means, such as vision. The child's preference for visual meaning is closely linked to their developing ToM, their lack of a mental representational conception of the mind (see Section 2.5.2), and to their low-level symbolic understanding which leads them to rely on pictures (see Section 2.5.1). In this section, I focus on the pre-schooler's capacity for conceptual processing and assess how this ability might affect their experience as an early reader.

Fisher's research asks 'is processing of conceptual information as robust as processing of perceptual information early in development?' (2011: 253). Fisher employs a flexible categorisation task in her exploration of pre-school information processing, during which pre-school children are asked to categorise test items with a target item, based on either conceptual or perceptual shared characteristics. Fisher found that whilst 'by 3 years of age children ably process both perceptual and conceptual information when presented with well-known objects', the processing of conceptual information remains more fragile than the processing of perceptual information (2011: 261). This means that conceptual information is unlikely to take precedence over perceptual information early in development (2011: 262).

In addition, Yu carried out a study which focused specifically on the relationship between visual perception and children's interpretations of picturebooks (2012). Yu claims that 'three to five-year-old children are characterized by a reliance on their perception because they see what appears to them' (2012: 292). Yu carried out observations, surveys and interviews with young children and their parents and found that the pre-schooler's ability to process and organise visual information guides their interpretation of a story (2012: 298); essentially, visual perception assists children in identifying and classifying information, and a child's interpretation of meaning is therefore subject to visual perception (2012: 292-293). Yu's work suggests that the pre-schooler's ability – and tendency – to describe what they see

and to take time visually interacting with an object is one of the earliest steps towards fictional comprehension.

Research suggests that perceptual features, particularly images, play a pivotal part in the way in which pre-schoolers comprehend information, and in particular, fiction. The work discussed in this section (also see Sections 2.5.1 and 2.5.2) suggests that visual and perceptual understanding is acquired much earlier, or is stronger, than conceptual understanding in young children. Accordingly, I argue that the impact of perceptual features and the role of perceptual processing gains significance when exploring the pre-school literary experience. For young children, the experience of reading fictional discourses is *not* the predominantly conceptual activity that it is for adults, but one that is scaffolded by visual features that aid comprehension. In Jackson (2013), I argued that the use of images in picturebooks reduces the imaginative work, or the conceptual processing, needed in the construction of a fictional world, whilst providing a particularly engaging visual feature of the discourse (25 – 26). However, further research is needed in order to fully comprehend the impact of perceptual factors on young readers and their conceptual activity.

2.5.4 Pretend play and the fantasy-reality distinction

Morison and Gardner note that the enjoyment of literature and drama for both adults and children is 'predicated on the capacity to distinguish reliably between the realms of fantasy ("make-believe" or "pretense") and reality' (1978: 642). Indeed, the concept of building fictional worlds through the imaginative and conceptual processing of linguistic input, which underlies Text World Theory, relies on a human being's ability to differentiate between the two ontological domains of reality and fiction. Ontological differentiation enables readers to conceptualise the people, places and events described in a text as existing and taking place in a separate spatio-temporal setting to the actual reading of the text. The ability of adult readers to mentally construct ontologically distinct domains is often taken for-granted by researchers; however, as suggested above, the pre-school child lacks a 'mental representational conception of the mind' (Flavell, 1999: 23) and therefore, potentially struggles to make sense of discourses that do not correspond to reality and their own perspective.

The child's ability to differentiate between fantasy and reality has been the focus of a large body of work within the fields of development psychology and cognitive development (see for example: Bunce and Harris, 2014; DiLalla and Watson, 1988; Martarelli and Mast, 2013; Morison and Gardner, 1978; Sharon and Woolley, 2004; Zisenwine et al., 2013). Previous studies have shown that children as young as 2 years old are able to distinguish

between fantasy and reality; however, the ability to do so continues to develop until at least 7 years old (Martelli and Mast, 2013: 142; also see DiLalla and Watson, 1988; Morison and Gardner, 1978). Martelli and Mast note that 'at the age of 3 to 4 years, children *start* to explore, in a more refined manner, the limits of fantasy' (2013: 142, *my emphasis*). During development, young children have been shown to confuse fantasy and reality and researchers have found that the use of 'fantasy classifications and explanations […] increases steadily with age as does the capacity to sort on that basis when so instructed' (Morison and Garner, 1978: 647).

DiLalla and Watson's (1988) influential study of interruptions in child's play found that young children's differentiation between fantasy and reality could be explained through a developmental sequence that involves the gradual construction of a boundary between the two realms. Children begin at stage one with no boundary at all: fantasy and reality are treated as one real-world and all events are viewed as occurring on one plane in a temporal sequence. At this stage, the child is often unaware of crossing the boundary between the two realms. Next, a fuzzy boundary develops: a child has the ability to recognise the existence of two realms but has inefficient control of the boundary between them. The child then develops a rigid boundary and gains more control over the border between fantasy and reality; they move easily from one realm to another. Eventually, the child develops an integrated boundary between the two realms whereby fantasy is seen as a subset of the greater world of reality (1988: 287).

Similarly, Sharon and Woolley's study of children's understanding of the fantasy and reality distinction found that rather than misplacing or confusing the boundary between real and fantastical entities, 'young children are still in the process of actively constructing it' (2004: 308). These studies show that the ability to differentiate between the real and the non-real is learned and develops during the pre-school years. Furthermore, these findings suggest that young children *are* aware of a distinction between what is real and what is non-real from a very young age, but their ability to control this distinction is weak. Bunce and Harris (2014) found, for example, that young pre-schoolers are able to make accurate *authenticity* judgements about fictional characters, but struggled with ontology judgements. However, poor control over the boundary between fantasy and reality does not mean that the pre-school child is incapable of building and comprehending a fictional world.

A study by Skolnick and Bloom reinforces the idea that young children have a solid grasp of the 'division between reality and fantasy' (2006: B16). Their exploration of the fantasy/fantasy distinction found that children, like adults, judge the characters from different

fictional worlds to be fictional to each other, which indicates that children divide the fictional space finely, perhaps creating a new fictional world for each story that they encounter (2006: B16). Skolnick and Bloom reject the hypothesis that 'children make only a binary reality/fantasy distinction, lumping all fictional characters into a single world' (2006: B16). Further to these findings, Van de Vondervoort and Friedman's (2014) study of pre-school children and fantastic fiction found that pre-schoolers are able to infer the general rules that govern the events and entities in fantastic fiction and then use these rules to predict what events will happen in the fiction. Van de Vondervoort and Friedman conclude that young children are able to appreciate that fictions extend beyond the entities and events that are explicitly mentioned. These findings are consistent with the view that children view fictions as occupying their own worlds (2014: 1598).

The child's play behaviour is also considered evidence of the their ability to differentiate between fantasy and reality; DiLalla and Watson's (1988) influential study on the fantasy-reality distinction, discussed above, was based specifically on interruptions in child's play. Morison and Gardner note that:

> in view of the proclivity of young children to engage in pretend play and to refer to certain elements in their own experience as pretend, it seems misleading to claim that they cannot distinguish between the real and the pretend […] it is more accurate to describe the distinction as one that is less well articulated and less firmly established in young children.

(Morison and Gardner, 1978: 648)

The topic of pretend play in pre-school aged children has received significant attention within the fields of developmental cognition and psychology, given that it 'emerges like clockwork at 18–24 months of age' (Lillard et al., 2011: 285). Significantly, in pretence 'one has a mental representation, which is different from reality, and one is projecting it into reality' (Ganea et al., 2004: 213). Thus, pretend play provides evidence that children are able to act in accordance with a mental representation. However, researchers have questioned whether pre-school aged children understand the role that knowledge, intention and the mind play in pretence (see Davis et al., 2002; Ganea et al., 2004; Lillard et al., 2011; Rosen et al., 1997). These studies have focused specifically on the pre-schooler's ability to recognise pretence as a mental-state and have provided evidence that young children show an early understanding of the role of the mind in pretending.

Leslie claims that the 'emergence of pretense is not seen as a development in the understanding of objects and events as such, but rather as the beginnings of a capacity to

understand cognition itself' and he goes on to claim that pretence is 'an early manifestation' of a ToM (1987: 416; also see Section 2.5.2). Similarly, Rosen et al.'s study of pre-schoolers attributions of mental states in pretence found that as children gain more experience in pretend play, they begin to develop representations of their pretenders' thoughts (1997: 1141). Davis et al.'s approach extends this view of pretence by recognising that 'once children begin to engage in pretense […] they have developed the ability to form representations of representations' (2002: 26). Their study of young children's understanding of the roles of knowledge and thinking in pretence found that children as young as three years old are able to comprehend the mental nature of pretending. Davis et al. conclude that the ability to pretend is a sign of the early competence in understanding mental states (2002: 40). Significantly, these studies link acts of play and pretence in the pre-school years directly to the child's developing metacognitive abilities, specifically 'metarepresentation', a cognitive skill which Zunshine argues is key to how human beings interact with fiction (2006: 65-67).

Furthermore, in their overview of pretend play and cognitive development, Lillard et al. recognise that, alongside providing insight into metarepresentation, pretend play may assist other aspects of social cognition, which include: decentration – the ability to take other perspectives into account; and role-taking – becoming emotionally and mentally like the characters they impersonate (2011: 298 – 302). Whilst Lillard et al. (2011) are referring specifically to social cognition – acts that drive social understanding – these roles associated with pretend play echo analytical perspectives adopted in literary studies that focus on how readers engage with fictional texts. As such, it is possible that links can be made between pretend play in the pre-school years and the pre-schooler's ability to engage with fictional worlds and their enactors.

It is clear, then, that the ability to differentiate between fantasy and reality is learned and forms part of the pre-schooler's developmental cognition that improves as they grow older. Zisenwine et al. (2013: 195) found, for example, that children under 5 years of age were more likely to confuse fantasy and reality than children over 5 (also see Martarelli and Mast, 2013; Woolley and Cox, 2007). As a result, the pre-schooler's control of the boundary between fiction and reality can be weak and sometimes becomes confused; this could have a considerable impact on the pre-schooler's experience of literary narratives. Nevertheless, existing work suggests that not only are young children capable of differentiating between ontological realms, they are also capable of building multiple and detailed text-worlds. What is more, the potential links made above between pretend play and fictional engagement suggest that taking into account a pre-schooler's habits in pretend play may provide a

significant insight into their ability and methods of engaging with literary discourses. Rosen et al. note that previous observational studies have found that 'children who engage in more frequent role play demonstrate earlier mastery of various perspective-taking tasks associated with metarepresentation' (1997: 1134). Ganea et al. also observe pretence understanding as 'an important avenue into how young children conceptualise the mind' generally (2004: 213). Thus, I argue that it is possible that a child who engages in high levels of high quality imaginative play with peers is able to comprehend and engage with fictional texts more effectively; the imaginative play behaviours of pre-school children could provide clues about their cognition of literature.

2.6 Review

The aims of this chapter were twofold: to introduce the storytime reading context under investigation in this thesis, and to explicate the cognitive approach that is adopted in the exploration of these reading practices.

In the first half of the chapter, I introduced the topic of pre-school reading in detail and provided a summary of existing research surrounding read-aloud practices. I identified a number of key features associated with pre-school reading practices, which included: the influence of socio-cultural and economic factors (Section 2.1 – 2.1.2); the pedagogic and interactive nature of the practice (Section 2.2 – 2.2.1); and the multimodal complexity of the picturebook texts that are read during pre-school storytime (Section 2.3 – 2.3.3). I maintain that each of these features – particularly the contextual pressures, the role of the scaffolding adult and extra-textual talk, and the need to account for the process of reading both text and image – must be taken into account when investigating early reading experiences. However, I criticised existing approaches to pre-school reading for failing to account for the combination of context, text, and reader. I also highlighted the lack of focus on *naturally-occurring* reading practices that take place in the home, and specifically those practices that include pre-school-aged children. What is more, although a number of existing approaches to pre-school reading foreground the link between storytime and cognitive development, very few researchers attempt to account for the role of cognition in detail, if at all. In response to the gaps identified in existing research on pre-school reading, I advocated a cognitive approach to the early reading experience; this cognitive approach was the focus of the second half of this chapter.

In Section 2.4, I introduced the cognitive-linguistic framework of Text World Theory, and I argued that a text-world approach to storytime discourse will improve the analysis of

early literary experiences. Whilst I argued for the suitability of the framework for investigating storytime discourse, I noted that current Text World Theory applications have overlooked the pre-adult literary experience. Ultimately, the approach taken in this thesis answers a wider call amongst academics working with children's literature for a cognitive approach that is *specific to young readers* (Sections 2.4.4). With this in mind, and in order to tailor my TWT approach to pre-school readers, Sections 2.5 – 2.5.4 provided an introduction to some of the key features of the pre-school mind and to elements of pre-school cognition that are relevant to the current examination of how young children experience fiction; the aim of these sections was to highlight some of the key differences between adult readers and pre-literate children. I argued that fundamental processing and cognitive capabilities that we associate with adult readers – such as, executive function and attention; symbolic understanding; mental representation and conceptual processing; ontological differentiation – are still in the process of developing in young children. As such, when we take into account the pre-school child, we need to revise the automaticity with which we associate these skills with fictional comprehension. The pre-school child is imaginative and capable of constructing ontologically distinct worlds. However, they possess very little control over the fictional realms they create or are introduced to, and they are easily distracted; they process perceptual information far easier than conceptual information, but they are constantly improving and evolving their cognitive skill set.

I have particularly noted that a number of researchers have considered the specific effects of parent-child picturebook reading on a child's developing cognition. Adrian et al. (2005; 2007), for example, discuss the link between picturebook reading and Theory of Mind. They argue that there is a positive association between the frequency of parent-child book reading at home and the use of mental state terms by mothers during shared book reading with the child's success on false belief tasks and therefore the development of their theory of mind. Elsewhere, Ohgi et al. (2010: 228) found that mother's engagement with their young children during picturebook reading was consistently associated with increased neural activity of frontal lobes, an area of the brain associated with cognitive processes such as executive function, attention, memory, socio-emotional development and language. Essentially, rather than focusing on how the child's cognition affects their experience of reading, these researchers focus on how the experience of reading affects the child's cognition. Thus, the developmental stage at which pre-school cognition sits means that the link between cognition and reading is two-fold: an awareness of the pre-schooler's cognitive capabilities informs the analysis of their experience, whilst at the same time reading to the

young child can help enhance and develop those aspects of cognition that aid our understanding of their experience.

Overall, this chapter has provided the contextual and theoretical foundations that underpin both the topic under examination and the approach taken throughout this thesis. In Chapter 3, I focus on my methodology and introduce the naturalistic empirical approach I adopted in order to explore pre-school reading practices.

Chapter Three: Methodology

3.0 Preview

In this chapter, I provide a narrative overview of how I conducted this project. I discuss the methods used to collect and analyse the data in this thesis and introduce the storytime participants and storytime video data that is the main focus of my study.

In Section 3.1 I provide an overview of the mixed-methods cognitive approach that I adopt in this project. I outline my aim to conduct a naturalistic study of storytime that was influenced, in part, by existing reader-response research. I begin by introducing my methodological design, focusing on my ethnographic approach to data collection and my 'bottom-up' approach to data analysis. I argue throughout that the naturalistic mixed-methods approach is the best approach for investigating pre-school read-aloud practices. In Sections 3.2 – 3.2.1, I introduce my ethnographic method of participant recruitment and data collection and discuss how I carried out this aspect of the project. In Section 3.2, I define ethnography, situating my own approach alongside existing research, and introduce a number of ethnographic tools that were used in my research.

In Section 3.3 and 3.4, I turn to the data I collected for my study. Sections 3.3 – 3.3.1 focus on introducing the storytime participants that took part. Section 3.3 focuses on the group as a whole and introduces the demographic that they belong to, emphasising the higher socio-economic status (SES) and high quality home learning environments (HLE) of the participants involved in my project. Sections 3.3.1 – 3.3.5 then focus on introducing each of my storytime participants in turn, providing a core profile of each child and a summary of their key storytime and playgroup behaviours. In Section 3.4, I provide details about the storytime video data my participants produced for this project; I focus on the process of creation, transfer, and storage of this data. I also provide a brief overview of the storytime data I collected, commenting on the total amount, average length, and content of these videos.

Finally, in Sections 3.5 and 3.6, I provide an overview of my approach to the storytime data I collected. I begin in Section 3.5 with the introduction of NVivo – the key qualitative data analysis software employed in this thesis – where I discuss how my data was stored, organised and coded. I end in Section 3.6 with a more detailed description of the analytic method adopted in this study.

3.1 A mixed-methods cognitive approach

Throughout this thesis, I adopt a mixed-methods cognitive approach to storytime discourse. I argue that this methodological approach is best suited to the exploration of early childhood literacy practices, and in particular shared read-aloud activities, due to the complex nature of these discourse situations. Pre-school reading practices, as defined in Chapter 1 and discussed in detail in Chapter 2 of this thesis, consist of a shared reading experience between two – or sometimes more – participants of differing cognitive capability, experiential knowledge and reading-ability. During these storytime practices, participants engage with complex multimodal picturebook texts that require them to make sense of at least two sign systems. They make sense of these through discursive interaction with one another, which enables them to find a unique – and often unpredictable – route through the picturebook text together. I maintain that both the text being read *and* the discourse context are multimodal. What is more, these read-aloud practices are embedded within wider social, cultural, and economic contexts, with specific links to literacy and education (see review across Sections 2.1 – 2.2.1). Thus, the immediate discursive storytime context, the wider socio-cultural context, the multimodal text, and the reader(s) involved in pre-school reading practices are all intricately linked, with each aspect playing a key role in the interpretation and analysis of the whole reading practice. An approach that considers 'discourse in context' is therefore essential in order to provide a complete account of these read-aloud activities.

As discussed in Section 2.1, I adopt a sociocultural-perspective on storytime practices, influenced to some degree by the New Literacy Studies paradigm which argues that 'reading and writing only make sense when studied in the context of social and cultural (and we can add historical, political and economic) practices of which they are but a part' (Gee, 2000b: 180). Essentially, like Benwell (2009: 300), I consider reading a 'socially situated, localized activity, contingent upon the context in which it is produced' and in Section 2.1, I foregrounded my aim to account for both the immediate and the wider socio-cultural contexts that influence early reading experiences. In order to achieve these aims, from the outset of this project, I endeavoured to carry out a 'naturalistic' study of early literary reading that had an empirical core and focused on *real* readers and *real* reading activities (see Swann and Allington, 2009: 248). My research design was therefore influenced by recent developments in reader-response criticism and real-reader research, specifically the empirical study of literature (ESL) and the naturalistic study of reading (NSR); a brief review of these approaches and their impact on my methodology is carried out below.

The reader as 'the producer of meaning' has been at the heart of late 20th century and early 21st century literary criticism, following a general shift away from a focus on the author

as meaning-maker and the text as meaning-container (see, for example, Barthes, 1977; also Allington and Swann, 2009; Peplow et al., 2016: 4-14; Peplow and Carter, 2014; Whiteley and Canning, 2017 for discussions). According to Peplow and Carter (2014: 440), this shift led to 'the establishment and growth of 'reader-response' criticism within literary departments, most famously associated with Culler ([1975] 2002), Fish (1980), and Iser (1978)'. Peplow et al. (2016: 4) note that these theorists 'sought to produce readings of literary texts that emphasised the way a text was engaged with by a reader'. However, far from being 'real', the 'reader' remained a largely theoretical construct throughout this field of work. Nevertheless, whilst 'relatively little research has been conducted into real readers in traditional literary criticism' (Peplow and Carter, 2014: 441) the impact of this reader-centred approach to literary study had a lasting impact, particularly in the discipline of stylistics and cognitive stylistics (see discussion in Peplow et al., 2016: 4-6, and Whiteley and Canning, 2017: 74). Peplow and Carter (2014) identify two broad approaches to real-reader research within stylistics that are relevant to the current discussion: the empirical study of literature (ESL) and the naturalistic study of reading (NSR).

The empirical study of literature (ESL) rejects a theoretical 'reader' construct and instead typically employs experimental methods in the analysis of the responses of real readers (Allington and Swann, 2009: 223; for a comprehensive overview of the history of ESL, see Miall, 2006). However, whilst the introduction of empirical methods to literary studies enables researchers to address a real reader, the experimentalist approach has been criticised for its low 'ecological validity', defined by Hall (2008: 31) as: 'the very basic demand that a study actually tells us about the phenomenon it purports to tell the researcher and the readers of that research about and not about a suggestive but frustratingly parallel research universe'. Whiteley and Canning note that the experimental tasks, questionnaires and the thinking-aloud methods associated with ESL 'disrupt or mediate the process of reading they seek to examine' (2017: 76). ESL methods often involve the manipulation of texts and reading contexts to 'control potentially extraneous variables and enable the precise measurement of operationalised features of reading' (Peplow et al., 2016: 5). As such, these studies create artificial conditions that offer only 'limited insight' into a reader's experiences (Benwell 2009: 303) and thus fail to examine instances of real reading. Instead of these experimental approaches, Hall argues for more 'nuanced qualitative or ethnographic approaches which respect the complexity of the phenomena under investigation' (Hall, 2008: 21). Swann and Allington (2009), whose work on reading groups seeks to provide 'evidence of reading activity outside of the artificial environment' (2009: 248), provide a distinction

between 'experimental' studies associated with ELS and 'naturalistic' studies that address Hall's call for empiricism with greater ecological validity.

A 'naturalistic study of reading' (NSR), by contrast with an experimental approach, seeks to investigate contextualised reading practices, involving 'readers in their usual environment, engaged in habitual reading behaviour', with texts presented in their typical form, and readers interacting freely with texts and each other (Swann and Allington, 2009: 248). Studies within NSR typically take an ethnographic approach to data collection and employ qualitative methods of data analysis (Whiteley and Canning, 2017: 77).

The NSR approach is best suited to the exploration of a pre-school reader and storytime reading practices for a number of key reasons. First, the shared multimodal nature of storytime practices means that they are physical, discursive and unpredictable. As a result, I maintain that the only way in which to provide an account of how participants are interacting with the text and with one another is to capture and explore these practices in real time. ESL methods ignore the natural context of reading, which I have argued is fundamental to understanding storytime. Second, pre-school children, who are the main focus of the current study, are not suited to the same reader-response methods associated with ESL; these methods have previously focused on the subjective experiences of adult-readers and are not suited to young-readers. The pre-schooler's level of cognitive capability, control of language, and lack of experiential knowledge means that they are unable to reflect on their reading in the same way as an adult. Finally, NRS approaches emphasise reading as social practice that is carried out discursively in particular interactional contexts (Whiteley and Canning, 2017: 76). Peplow and Carter (2014: 442) note that 'to date, much of this research has focused on the book club as a site of 'natural' reading (e.g. Benwell, 2009; Hartley, 2001; Swann and Allington, 2009; Peplow, 2011) with researchers typically observing, recording and transcribing group's meetings'. Linguistic analysis of this reader interaction is then carried out using frameworks from interactional sociolinguistics, conversation analysis or discursive psychology (see for example: Benwell, 2009; Peplow et al., 2016) which 'emphasise the way literary interpretation is socially embedded and constructed through talk on a turn-by-turn basis' (Whiteley and Canning, 2017: 77). Whilst these approaches focus more specifically on how *adults* interact and use talk during reading group discussions, their methods are well-suited to the socially-situated and spoken nature of storytime practices, where participants are required to make sense of a literary text through discursive interaction.

From the outset of my study, I was interested in naturally-occurring reading that takes place in the home and one of the key aims of this project was to gather data from within this

domestic context. I aimed to capture readers taking part in routine read-aloud activities at home, engaging with picturebook texts of their choice and interacting with one another as they usually would. Throughout, I aimed to conduct an empirical study that was 'minimally-controlled' (see Steen, 1991) with as little interference, or mediation from the researcher as possible (see Benwell, 2009). In Jackson (2013), which acted as a pilot study for the current project, I adopted a similar approach and gathered empirical video data of bedtime stories, recorded by parents or family members in the home, and forwarded to me without a researcher ever being present. Whilst this data provided a significant insight into storytime practices, there were a number of limitations.

In Jackson (2013) my dataset was made up of only three videos with each representing a single storytime instance from three separate adult-child dyad participants who I had never met. This meant that the study was limited since I was unable to comment on the routine behaviour of either the individual pairs, or the group as a whole. In addition, in Jackson (2013) I did not undertake my own analysis of the texts that were being read in the storytime videos and therefore a comprehensive consideration of text, reader and context was not achieved. Nevertheless, the collection and use of video data provided valuable examples of naturally-occurring storytime practices. I therefore decided to focus on collecting video evidence of storytime practices in the current study too; however, I adopted a more ethnographically-oriented research design, influenced by NSR, that enabled me to collect the most reliable and fully contextualised data possible. I endeavoured to recruit participants to record at least one set of between one and four storytime videos that reflected routine read-aloud practices that take place in their home over a period of months (for more details see discussion across Sections 3.2 - 3.4 below). In order to address the gaps in Jackson (2013), I adopted an ethnographic approach to participant recruitment and data collection and introduced additional data collection methods such as observation, fieldnotes, and interviews.

I aimed to recruit participants through a face-to-face method, using ethnography to meet parents with pre-schoolers, get to know them, and build trust before asking them to take part in the video recordings. The reasoning behind this decision was twofold. First of all, video recordings produced by parents provide insight into an otherwise private context; by gaining access to homes and asking participants to record their own data, on their own terms, 'we gain access to a particular kind of naturally-occurring' reading activity (Benwell, 2009: 301) with very little mediation from the researcher, which results in more 'natural' data. I also engaged my participants in a follow-up interview once I had collected all of my video data. It was my hope that the combination of observation and interviewing would give my

research participants the opportunity to tell me something of the wider context of the reading practices that were captured in the video data, thus extending my understanding of that data (see Swann and Allington, 2009: 250). It was crucial for me to gain the trust of my participants so that they would be comfortable recording and contributing data to my project that was not only reflective of their habitual practices but that required them to remain active in the project for a prolonged period. Second, adopting an ethnographic perspective during data collection allowed me to develop the preliminary work conducted in Jackson (2013) by allowing me to not only to build up more robust reader-profiles for each of my participants and their routine reading behaviours, but to explore the wider context within which these readers and their practices are situated. I explore ethnography as method in detail in the next section.

The different data collection methods employed in this thesis focused specifically on gathering naturally-occurring data that reflects the actual context of reading, rather than a context that was artificially generated. I ended my data collection period with three different types of data: written fieldnotes, video recordings, and audio recordings. It should be noted that my main focus throughout was collecting recorded data of storytime practices that take place in the home and for that reason, the video data I collected was key. The additional ethnographic and interview data served to provide a better understanding of the reading practices captured in the videos. Overall, the combined value of my ethnographic, video, and interview data presented a detailed insight into the discourse situation under investigation that would not have been attained using only one of my methods of data collection.

In line with my naturalistic approach to storytime, my research was qualitative and data-driven, with my analysis conducted in a 'bottom-up' fashion. Swann and Allington (2009: 249) note that with a naturalistic approach to reading – and especially one that deals with the 'somewhat slippery' stuff of naturally-occurring discourse – researchers cannot control their data and must take it 'as it comes'; whilst researchers might have certain interests and specific research questions in mind, Swann and Allington argue that with an ethnographic approach these must be 'let go' if not reflected in the data collected (2009: 249; also see discussion in Peplow and Carter, 2014: 442).

My central interest was in capturing natural reading behaviours and exploring what happens during a child's earliest encounter with literary fiction. This included asking key research questions such as:

- How are picturebook texts employed?

- How do participants interact with the text/story/fiction and with one another?
- How do reader differences, such as cognitive capability, experiential knowledge, and reading ability affect the reading experience?
- How do wider contextual pressures influence storytime practices, if at all?

Once my data had been collected, I identified salient discourse features based broadly on these preliminary research questions. However, I allowed the video data to guide me towards what was significant. I then applied Text World Theory to these discourse features in order to rigorously and systematically analyse them and their effects. Throughout my Text World Theory application, I adopted additional models and frameworks where needed that enabled the most efficient and accurate analysis of my data; these decisions were again guided by the data I had collected. Essentially, in order to account for the aspects of text, reader, and context foregrounded in the questions above, I adopted an eclectic discursive approach to my storytime data.

3.2 Ethnography as method

Ethnography is defined by Leeds-Hurwitz as:

> a method used to describe everyday human behavior, relying heavily on participant observation in natural settings. This means the researcher participates in the behavior jointly with those studied, who would be engaging in this behavior whether or not the researcher was present. In addition to participating, the researcher documents what occurs in some way, through taking fieldnotes, photographs, audiotapes, and/or videotapes, as part of the effort to learn the meanings the behavior holds for participants.

(Leeds-Hurwitz, 2005: 327)

Essentially, ethnographic methodologies endeavour to understand how a specific context and the people within that context interact and operate by focusing on naturally-occurring behaviour. Ethnography has an empirical nature and adopts a bottom-up orientation to data. It is therefore well-suited to the exploration of naturally-occurring reading practices, and especially those reading practices where the context of reading is particularly significant.

The evolution of the term ethnography is most closely associated with the fields of anthropology and sociology (see discussions in: Baszanger and Dodier, 2004; Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007: Leeds-Hurwitz, 2005); Leeds-Hurwitz's definition above refers most closely to the use of the term within these two disciplines. However, in the twentieth century, the term has evolved and been adopted into a number of different fields and disciplines (see

Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007: 1–2). Leeds-Hurwitz notes that 'as with other methods developed by other disciplines, ethnography proved attractive and was adopted by scholars in a variety of fields, including sociology, education, sociolinguistics, and communication' (2005: 339). Hammersley and Atkinson (2007:2) note that ethnography 'tended to get swallowed up in a general multidisciplinary, movement promoting qualitative approaches'. As a result 'its sense has been reinterpreted and recontextualised in various ways' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007: 2) and many of the new conceptions of ethnography that have emerged move away from the anthropological aims of trying to identify a culture as a whole (Baszinger and Dodier, 2004: 9). Instead, ethnography and ethnographic methods are used to focus more on limited sets of practices, events, or actions, and often in specific contexts. A distinction has therefore been made between three approaches to ethnography: doing ethnography; adopting an ethnographic perspective; and using ethnographic tools (see Green and Bloome, 1997: 183 for full definition). These three approaches reflect greater to lesser degrees of orientation to theories from anthropology (see review in Heath and Street, 2008: 120–122). My methodology is most closely aligned to an 'ethnographic perspective'. I do not conduct an ethnography in the strict anthropological sense; however, I adopt an approach and a set of tools that are highly influenced by this field in order to conduct a naturalistic study of a specific set of human behaviours.

The main focus of this project is pre-school read-aloud practices that take place in the home. The specific set of human behaviours under investigation in this thesis therefore relate to one specific *literacy event* rather than the whole of people's lives (see Barton, 1994: 140 – 141; Barton and Hamilton, 2000: 8). I endeavoured to find out as much as possible about my participants' habitual storytime practices and I adopted a number of ethnographic tools in order to do so, which included: participant observation, fieldnotes, interviews, and video and audio recording (for more details see discussion across sections 3.2 – 3.5 below). These tools enabled me to gain access to the participants and collect data, whilst allowing me to better understand that data during both the collection process and the analysis that followed.

The use of ethnography in education and literacy research has a long history which reflects a more general shift in the field towards an emphasis on the social nature of literacy (see Gillen and Hall, 2013: 8–10). Schieffelin (1986: viii) notes that 'literacy, viewed as a cultural phenomenon that interacts with certain social processes, is best studied by adopting an ethnographic perspective' which 'allows the researcher to find out the meaning of events for those who are involved in them' (Schieffelin, 1986: viii). Teale (1986: 174) also promotes the use of 'naturalistic inquiry' when it comes to investigating practices related to emergent

literacy and claims that 'a naturalistic approach facilitates observation of the process as it occurs in the everyday context of home, community, and social institutions'. Gillen and Hall (2013: 8-9) note that 'uncovering the nature and significance of literacy within family and community life required diverse tools to suit different sites, and ethnography, with its focus on detailed description, the evolving themes, the valuing of participants perspectives, and the development of different relationships between researchers and subjects, allowed extremely detailed research to flourish'.

Most notably, Cochran-Smith's study (1984) of 'storyreading' adopts an ethnographic perspective that is similar to my own. Throughout, Cochran-Smith combines several different methods for gathering information about storyreading and claims that an ethnographic perspective is 'not simply a collection of techniques, but a way of looking at and interpreting human behaviour, from which a number of methods can be derived and developed' (1984: 24). Cochran-Smith emphasises the bottom-up nature of ethnographic research and claims that her methodology is the result of a combination of different techniques that were adopted to suit the unique features of the research situation; as specific events emerged as key events and as the relationships between particular events became apparent, research techniques were 'devised and modified to accommodate them' (1984: 24-25). Cochran-Smith's work (1984; also see Cochran-Smith, 1982) also highlights the potential of a naturalistic approach for informing the researcher's account of the child's literary experience during early literacy events. Cochran-Smith argues that 'literacy event analysis (and more specifically [...] literary event analysis) can begin to illuminate some of the questions related to current investigations of *the origins of the reading process*' (1982: 48, *my emphasis*). Throughout, Cochran-Smith foregrounds the need to analyse these literary events in terms of and in relation to 'the particular contexts in which these experiences occur' (1982: 42). Like Cochran-Smith, I propose that by using an ethnographic perspective to look at early literacy 'we can learn what children and adults in particular settings are *actually* doing with print and how they are doing it. We can get at *the real nature* of what is going on in one classroom, one preschool, or one home setting' (1984: 254-255, *my emphasis*).

Ethnography can be considered both process (or method) and product and, in many ways, like van der Bom (2015), I view ethnography as both. Van der Bom argues that she sees ethnography as 'a process, or method of data collection, on the one hand, and as an outcome of that process of data collection, on the other' and goes on to note that 'the process of ethnographic data collection is necessarily deeply intertwined with its outcomes' (2015: 60). At the start of my project, I engaged in ethnographic participant observation in

playgroup settings in order to recruit participants who would be willing to record their storytime activities at home (see Section 3.2.1 for a full introduction to the playgroup settings involved in my study). However, whilst the aims of this initial ethnographic work were ultimately participant recruitment, the observations, fieldnotes, and informal interviews I conducted within the playgroup setting greatly influenced my interpretation of the storytime videos I collected and went on to analyse.

I entered playgroups where I was able to get to know my participants and build trust with them, effectively using 'friendship as method' (see Tillman-Healy, 2003; also see Section 3.2.1 for a full account of how I recruited, entered, and interacted with playgroups). This process of ethnographic participant recruitment meant that I was able to construct robust reader-profiles for the parents and children that took part in my storytime study. I got to know my participants well as I engaged with them on a weekly basis for a significant period of time, which also allowed me to explore the contexts and communities within which these readers and their practices were situated. When I arranged follow-up interviews with my participants at the end of my project, each of my 5 participants invited me to their homes for the morning or afternoon, which I view as testament to the researcher-participant relationship that developed during my project (also see Section 3.4.1). The relationship I developed with my participants through my ethnographic work in playgroups helped me gain access to their at-home reading practices and went some way to reducing the 'observer's paradox' (Labov, 1972a, 1972b); not only was I not present during the video recordings, but participants were creating and handing over video data to a person that they knew well, as opposed to a researcher that they had never met before or only met on a number of occasions (also see Section 3.4). It should be noted that many researchers argue that the observer's paradox can never fully be resolved (see Milroy, 1987: 29-60) and that there is no such thing as completely 'natural' data. Whilst I agree with this in part, I propose that the ethnographic tools I employed in this project reduced the impact of the observer's paradox and produced the most naturalistic data possible.

3.2.1 The ethnographic context

My decision to focus on at-home reading practices was fed by my belief that reading aloud in the domestic setting provides evidence of *the earliest* encounter that a pre-school child will have with literary texts, prior to their experiences at pre-school or nursery. In order to gain access to the private domestic setting I needed to meet and recruit parents of pre-school children who read regularly to their child and would be willing to record the storytime

activities that take place in their home. This requirement led me to approach playgroups as a potential site for participant recruitment.

Playgroups in the UK are a specific space for pre-school aged children to socialise, learn and play (for a more detailed history of 'the playgroup movement' and the development of the Pre-school Learning Alliance see: Crowe, 1983; Early Years Alliance, 2019; Johns, 1966; Lloyd *et al.*, 1989). They are normally an organized group, usually run by parents, volunteers, or the local authorities. In this project, I worked with groups that fall into the category of the 'traditional playgroup'. These groups are parent-led, as opposed to being government or council-run, and they are often associated with families from higher socio-economic backgrounds (Lloyd et al., 1989: 81). These groups can vary in structure, but all are commonly expected to provide a selection of activities and care for pre-school children in a safe environment, where parents are also given the opportunity to socialize. Playgroups are run during school term-time and are usually no longer than a three hour (maximum) morning or early afternoon session running once or twice a week. The playgroup, then, is a specifically 'pre-school space' where parental involvement is seen as a distinguishing characteristic (Lloyd et al., 1989: 85). Playgroups therefore provided the perfect environment for me, as a researcher, to get to know parents of pre-school-aged children, which was instrumental to the success of this project.

My aim was to recruit and work with families from at least two playgroups that were located in a similar area of Sheffield. I made this decision for a number of reasons:

1. Working with more than one playgroup would increase the amount of data I was able to collect;

2. Working with more than one playgroup located in similar areas of the city – and with similar socio-cultural and economic values – would allow me to make comparisons between groups and comment on the reading behaviours of a community that was slightly wider than a single playgroup;

3. In terms of practicality, I needed to travel to and between playgroups easily for a prolonged period of time.

I do not have children of my own and so the process of identifying and recruiting traditional playgroups to take part in my study took two forms: online research and 'word-of-mouth'. Through an initial search online, I discovered a number of useful sites that listed active playgroups in the City of Sheffield including: Little Sheffield (this site has since shut down, see: TheStar, 2017), Netmums (2018), Yell (2018), and LocalLife (2018). However, the sheer volume of information online about the different playgroups and toddler groups that existed

in Sheffield was overwhelming. There was also considerable variety in what was listed and included under the label 'playgroup' across online sites and some of the information provided was incorrect. In order to narrow down my search, I spoke to colleagues at the University of Sheffield who I knew were parents. I asked them if their children attended or had attended a playgroup in the last couple of years. This ethnographic word-of-mouth approach was extremely useful and it helped me build up a better view of which playgroups were still active and popular in the areas of Sheffield that interested me.

A colleague was able to put me in touch with a friend of hers, who, in turn, was able to help me contact two current playgroup leaders. Prior to contacting the playgroups, I researched each of the suggested groups in some detail as I wanted to make sure that they met my research aims. The location, cost, time and day, and the structure of each playgroup was taken into account; this was to ensure that each site had enough similarities to make the data from each comparable. Once I had conducted these checks, my contact details and some information about my research project was passed along to the two playgroup leaders via my colleague's friend. This introduction helped me develop trust quickly with these playgroup leaders, and I was able gain access to two playgroups in Sheffield, which will be referred to throughout as:

1. Fundays (pseudonym)
2. Playdays (pseudonym)

Both of these groups were located in the affluent South-West area of the City of Sheffield, approximately one mile away from each other. Both groups took place in a church hall and were organised and run by members of the church congregation. Each group ran once a week during term-time: Fundays for an hour and a half between 10:00 and 11:30am; and Playdays for 2 hours between 9:45 and 11:45am. Every week, each group was attended by a minimum of 20 adults, all of whom attended with at least one child aged between birth and four years old. I refer to these attendees throughout as my 'playgroup participants'.

Both Fundays and Playdays followed a very traditional playgroup structure, which I have split into 4 parts:

1. Free-play (1): parents arrive with their children and the children engage in 'free-play' with one another and a selection of toys that are provided by the playgroup. The groups are usually organised into different 'spaces' or 'areas' where certain activities and/or games are set out, for example: cars, book corner, jigsaws. During this time, there are also planned activities and crafts for the children to complete in a

designated 'craft' area, such as: card-making and painting; children complete and label these crafts and take them home at the end of the group.

2. Snack-time: mid-way through the group, all children sit together and eat snacks provided by the playgroup; this also includes tea and coffee for parents.

3. Free-play (2): more 'free-play', craft and activity time.

4. End of session: all attendees come together at the end of the group and engage in an end of session activity, which includes either a shared storytime, singing, or both.

Throughout, parents are free to interact with other adults at the group whilst their children play. The structure and layout of the groups meant that I was able to observe and interact with all attendees easily.

I began attending each playgroup's weekly session and during my time at each group, I engaged in ethnographic fieldwork, carrying out participant observation and making fieldnotes (also see further description of participant observation and fieldnotes below). It should be reiterated that I did not enter the playgroup setting intending to carry out a 'playgroup ethnography' as such, but to meet and recruit participants who would be willing to record storytime videos. In the first instance, my fieldwork was therefore a method of participant recruitment. However, it soon became apparent – especially once my storytime participants had been recruited – that my fieldwork was an extremely effective method of natural data collection which aided my interpretation and analysis of storytime.

Fetterman defines fieldwork as a method that includes 'working with people for long periods of time in their natural settings' (2010: 33); it enables the researcher to develop a more context-driven understanding of their participants and of their associated practices. Fieldwork provides the researcher with an insight into the lives of research participants from the point of view of the participants themselves (cf. van der Bom, 2015: 72). Attending a playgroup is often one of the earliest experiences that a child has of this type of social space before they start school. Parents who attend a playgroup with their children usually do so on a weekly basis for a period of up to 4 years, and sometimes longer if they have more than one child; this was certainly true of the playgroup attendees I met during my ethnographic work. For these families, the playgroup setting can be one of the most familiar spaces for a pre-school child outside of the domestic setting. Within the playgroup space, parents and children adopt familiar roles and engage in familiar practices each week, which essentially make up a community of practice (see Eckert, 2000; Meyerhoff, 2006; Wenger, 1998; also see Section 3.6.1 of this chapter). Playgroup attendees are relaxed within the playgroup environment because it is a familiar and natural setting for them and as such it provided a space where I

was able to learn about my storytime participants in great detail. Fetterman notes that when ethnographers conduct fieldwork in a natural environment, they are able to observe people and their behaviours given all 'the real-world incentives and constraints' and he adds that 'this naturalist approach avoids the artificial response typical of controlled or laboratory conditions' (2010: 33).

I conducted participant observation at Fundays between April 2015 – July 2016 and at Playdays between September 2015 – July 2016. It should be noted that although this participant observation lasted around 11months – or one full 'term-time' year – I was researching playgroups and was in contact with the playgroup leaders from around March 2015. I collected my final storytime video data in August 2016 and conducted follow-up interviews with my participants through September 2016. Thus my total period of ethnographic-based research lasted around 18 months between April 2015 and September 2016. I was also in contact with my storytime participants for a period following my playgroup fieldwork and data collection.

During my initial introduction at each playgroup, I made clear that whilst I wanted to spend time at the playgroup and was interested in the practices that take place there, I was also looking for parents to take part in recording some storytime videos at home; this information was provided on an information sheet that was handed out at the first playgroup session (see Appendix A). I made clear that becoming a storytime participant would be completely voluntary and I waited a couple of weeks until I was more settled and integrated into the groups before I started to approach playgroup participants to see if they would be interested in recording storytime videos. During these first few weeks, I used my time at the playgroup sessions to get to know the parents and children who attended regularly. My participant observation at this point was focused on identifying potential storytime participants and observing the common practices and the shared views that surrounding the topic of 'reading at home' specifically.

As a participant observer during my playgroup fieldwork, I immersed myself in the playgroup culture and the regular activities of each group (Fetterman, 2010: 37). I usually arrived early to help set up and organise the groups; this included things like: setting out toys; organising craft tables; preparing snacks and drinks; taking money upon entry; and I also stayed at the end of each session to help tidy away. During the playgroup sessions, I sat and chatted with parents and children, I also helped supervise children at the group and carried out other tasks that aided the running of the groups. My willingness to arrive early, leave late, and help out throughout the sessions meant I quickly became an active and integrated

member of each group. My age, gender, and education also contributed to how I entered the groups and how accepting they were of me. The playgroup, historically, is seen as a female-centred environment associated with the female parent (see: Early Years Alliance, 2019; Liebmann, 1996; Lloyd et al., 1989) and although I do not have children of my own, as a 26 year-old woman I was the same/similar age to some of the mothers I met at the groups. As mentioned, both playgroups were located in affluent areas of Sheffield associated with a higher-SES. I worked with middle-class families associated with a higher income bracket and I discovered that the majority of the parents at the group had a university education. Parents were familiar with how a university research procedure is carried out and I found that a number of parents had taken part in university-based research on previous occasions. As such, as a group, they were not intimidated by my presence, or my reasons for being there.

Within the first 2-4 months of the project I had recruited a set of five storytime participants. Two of these parent-participants approached me stating that they read regularly to their children at home and would be happy to record and contribute a number of storytime videos to my project. My other three participants were recruited after a short period of participant observation. During my first couple of months at the playgroups, I got to know these participants well. I talked to them regularly and knew that they read at home with their children. I also observed that they were regular attendees at the playgroup sessions. After a number of weeks, I approached these participants and asked if they would be interested in completing some storytime videos for my project and they were happy to participate. All of my storytime participants were given an information sheet which provided more specific details about what their storytime participation would involve (see Appendix B; also see Section 3.4). Once these participants had been recruited, much of my participant observation and the accompanying fieldnotes focused specifically on these parent-child dyads. I was able to use my fieldwork to conduct informal interviews with my storytime participants, observe their reading activities at the playgroup sessions, and observe children's pretend play behaviour throughout my project (see discussion in 2.5.4). In many ways, once my storytime participants had been recruited, I was able to conduct 'mini ethnographies' of these participants each week.

In total, I conducted participant observation for approximately 125 hours and in that time I produced around 315 pages of fieldnotes. During this time, I was also collecting storytime video data from my storytime participants, who I continued to see each week at the playgroup sessions (also see Section 3.4). The fieldnotes that I produced were a subjective account of my time at each weekly playgroup session. They included descriptions of

witnessed events and interactions that I had engaged in with both adults and children. Fieldnotes were my main method of data collection during my participant observation. I specifically chose not to make any audio or video recordings during my playgroup fieldwork and I specified this on all of the early information I handed out about my project to my playgroup participants (see Appendix A). I made the decision not to take any recording devices into the field for a number of reasons. First, I did not intend to conduct a full ethnography of the playgroup space itself; my main focus was on storytime practices in the home and therefore there was no need to record at the playgroup. Second, specifying that I would *not* be making any audio or video recordings at the playgroups made recruiting playgroups – and later, storytime participants – easier; I did not want to make participants feel uneasy about attending their playgroup because they were wary of being observed. Third, playgroups have a fluctuating membership that can change on a weekly basis and although I made the effort to speak to all members of the group regularly, it would have been difficult to control consent effectively if any kind of recording device was being used during the sessions; this constant need to check consent would also have been very disruptive to the group. Finally, using a recording device in a playgroup setting would have produced minimal data as there is far too much going on during each session; it would also have increased the observer's paradox exponentially. In addition to the points mentioned above, I also felt that taking a recording device into the field would have made my presence as a researcher 'stand out' and it was always my aim to integrate with the parents at the playgroup and build up a level of confidence and trust with them so that they were able to talk to me honestly and so that those who volunteered to take part in the video recordings were more likely to behave 'naturally'.

In a similar vein of not wanting to draw attention to myself as a researcher, I did not make any fieldnotes during the playgroup sessions. Instead, I focused on interacting with playgroup participants – and later my storytime participants. Immediately after each session, I made a detailed set of bullet pointed notes that I would write up into a more extensive account later the same day. I documented everything that I could after each session, not knowing what would and would not be useful. I also made the effort to reflect on these fieldnotes regularly and I used them to guide my behaviour in the weeks that followed. I made notes about anything I wanted to follow up on at the next weekly session, including who to talk to, and any specific information or topic that had come to light that I wanted to find out more about.

DeWalt and DeWalt (2011: 10) argue that the practice of participant observation provides several advantages:

1. it enhances the quality of the data obtained during fieldwork;
2. it enhances the quality of the interpretation of data, whether those data are collected through participant observation or by other methods. Participant observation is thus both a data collection and an analytic tool;
3. it encourages the formulation of new research questions and hypotheses grounded in on-the-scene observation.

The participant observation I conducted during my project and the fieldnotes I produced as a result were advantageous for these reasons and a number of others specific to my project. My initial decision to observe and document my time at playgroup was led by my aim of conducting a naturalistic study of my participants and their reading habits. The ethnographic nature of my data collection meant that I was able to get to know my participants well and this in turn enhanced the quality of the storytime data I obtained, and later, my interpretation of that data. As my project progressed and my storytime participants began forwarding their videos to me, I was able to tailor aspects of my participant observation in order to focus in on these participants and their reading practices in particular. At this point in the project, my fieldnotes began to focus more specifically on building a profile for my storytime participants and I used the patterns of recording and reviewing my fieldnotes to guide my investigation of their reading habits at home specifically.

Research ethics were a key consideration from the beginning of my project because it involved human participants, including young children, who are considered 'potentially vulnerable' (University of Sheffield Ethics Policy, not dated). Moreover, ethnography, by its definition, can be experienced as intrusive in nature as it generally involves integrating oneself into a community of people and researching their lives (cf. van der Bom 2015: 86). Ethics were therefore always at the forefront of my mind and my research design. I adopted the ethical guidelines set out by the University of Sheffield Ethics Policy for Research Involving Human Participants, Data and Tissue and I made sure that my participants were informed about the project throughout. I had two sets of information sheets and consent forms: one for playgroup participants (see Appendix A) and another set for storytime participants (see Appendix B). During the first session I attended for each playgroup, I briefly introduced myself and handed out an information sheet about my project to playgroup participants, which included a consent form for parents to sign (see Appendix A); a 'master' consent form was also completed by the playgroup organisers. Playgroup participants were

given time to read, review, ask questions and make a decision about whether they were happy to participate in my research. All participants had access to my contact details throughout the project and were free to contact me at any point during the project. The second set of information sheets and consent forms (see Appendix B) were handed out only to those parents who were interested in recording storytime videos at home and completing a follow-up interview for my project. Throughout, I made sure that whenever an adult gave consent they were aware that they were also providing consent for their child(ren). Participants were kept up-to-date at every stage of the project; they were free to ask questions and/or withdraw at any point.

3.3 Storytime participants

In total, I recruited and worked with five sets of storytime participants during this project. These participants and their storytime practices are the focus of the analysis in chapters 4, 5, and 6. Each set of storytime participants are made up of the one child-participant and one adult-participant I met at during my playgroup fieldwork, and their families. Of the five sets, two were recruited from Playdays and three were recruited from Fundays. All of my participants were regular weekly attendees at their respective playgroups; they all arrived on time to each session and stayed for the duration, actively engaging in all of the available activities. I met them all within the first couple of weeks of my fieldwork and was therefore in regular contact with them for a period of between 11-15 months, during which time I gathered data on them and their routine reading behaviours. Each of my sets of storytime participants contributed at least 5 storytime videos to my project during this time (see Section 3.4).

In line with the initial aims of this project (see Chapter 1), all of my child-participants were aged between 2 and 4 years old and were unable to read independently. The youngest child-participant turned 2 years old at the very beginning of the project, and the oldest child-participant turned 4 years old just two months before my fieldwork ended. I was therefore able to collect data of children reading at every point of my targeted age-range.

Of the children recruited at playgroup, two were male and three were female. Although I focused specifically on just one child from each family, all of the five pre-school children that I recruited had at least one sibling (see subsections 3.3.1 - 3.3.5 below). Of the adults recruited at playgroup, four were female and one was male. All of these adult-participants were one half of a heterosexual married couple that shared a home with their spouse and children. As noted in Section 3.2.1, the playgroup is considered a particularly

female-centred environment (see: Early Years Alliance, 2019; Liebmann, 1996; Lloyd et al., 1989) and so the gender imbalance in the parent-participants recruited during my fieldwork was not a surprise. It is also common in the playgroup setting for only one parent to attend with their child(ren). However, the fact that I had more contact with only one – usually female – parent during my fieldwork was unproblematic; the focus throughout my project was on reading practices that take place in the domestic setting and these were represented more fully in the video data I collected. Ultimately, although I recruited specific parent-child dyads at playgroup, the fieldwork data and video data that I collected focused on *all* the members of that dyad's family, and reflected the routine reading practices that take place in their homes, which often included both parents.

The families involved in my study all lived in affluent areas of the city of Sheffield that were not far from the playgroups that they attended. All of my participating families were middle class and were in a higher income bracket. All of the parents involved in my project – except for one, who had given up a teaching job to raise her children – worked; the majority were either teachers, or were trained in some aspect of medicine. The families also identified as being religious and most attended church regularly. The degree to which my participants identified with the church, and the influence it played on their at-home reading practices, varied. However, following Teale (1986), I would argue that families who identify as being religious and engage in religious practices such as bible reading, tend to participate in a high rate of literacy-based practices at home. Families who attend church regularly are often viewed as having a high quality home learning environment (HLE), which is usually also a sign of higher SES (see for example: Teale, 1986: 186; Buckingham et al., 2014; and the discussion in Section 2.1.2 of this thesis); this was certainly true of my storytime participants.

All of my parent-participants told me that there were books 'all over the house' and that their children had access to books at any time of day; I found this to be true when I visited each of their homes in order to conduct a follow-up interview. All of my parent-participants claimed to read to their children regularly and emphasized the role of 'the bedtime story' in their home. Parents often used the phrase 'we read all the time at home' and would specify that reading was one of their child's 'favourite activities', or that their child 'loves books/stories'. Alongside reading to their children, parents were keen to emphasise their own reading behaviours and many also stated that their family used the local library regularly. All of my participants, at some point, commented explicitly on the benefits and

importance of reading to their children from a young age and most claimed to have been reading to their child since birth.

During my playgroup fieldwork, I observed all of my participants engaging in book-reading activities during the playgroup sessions. My parent-child dyads would regularly spend time in the 'book corner' section of the playgroup space reading the books that were available. My child-participants would also regularly go and select a book from 'book corner' by themselves and either spend time exploring the text alone or more often bring it back to an adult to be read aloud. I also noticed that if one adult began reading a text aloud to their own child then my child-participants would often go and listen regardless of whether they had been invited to or not. It was clear that reading and being read to was a fun and enjoyable activity for the children involved in my study and one that they would often choose over other play-activities. I read to all of my storytime child-participants on at least one occasion during my playgroup fieldwork.

The families involved in my study would also pursue additional reading and literacy-enhancing activities across a number of platforms that were often based on the child's book-related interests at the time. For example, my participants discussed activities such as:

- completing 'the Gruffalo trail'; a walk based on the popular picturebook *The Gruffalo* (Donaldson, 1999)

- visiting theme parks that are based on well-known stories or characters, such as Thomas Land which is based on Thomas the Tank Engine from *The Railway Series* created by Awdry in 1945

- attending book readings by favourite authors; one family had recently attended a reading and book signing by one of their favourite authors, Julia Donaldson

- attending theatrical adaptions of favourite books, such as stage productions of *Room on the Broom* (Donaldson, 2001) and *The Gruffalo* (Donaldson, 1999).

Alongside these activities, families would often use themes and the topics in the books that they are reading as inspiration for crafts at home, or as a basis for certain play behaviour or games. Books and reading were embedded within these families' lives and influenced their actions on a daily basis.

As a group, my participants clearly adopt the 'the good parent' logic that Nichols et al. (2009) discuss, which focuses on parents promoting literacy learning in their children. For example, although all of the children that were recruited to take part in my study were unable to read independently, I observed that all of these children were engaged in early letter-

naming, letter-recognition, phonics and simple spelling training with the adults around them. This level of parental involvement is most commonly associated with homes of high SES (see discussion in Section 2.1.2).

My final five storytime participants, then, belong to a very specific group-demographic associated with higher SES and high quality HLEs. During each playgroup session, I observed, interacted with, and informally interviewed these five participants and over the duration of my fieldwork, I was able to build up a profile for each of them. I collected information on topics such as: family life, including parental occupation and childcare; routine reading habits and behaviours; the child's routine play behaviours; the child's reading and linguistic abilities; and adult views on reading and literacy. After every playgroup session, I would write up all of my observations and key interactions with these participants into detailed field notes (see Section 3.2.1). I was then able to tag these fieldnotes with participant names and key topics using NVivo software (see Section 3.5). This meant that during the data analysis stage of my project (see Section 3.5 and 3.6 below), I was able to quickly locate information specific to certain participants. I then used all of this ethnographic detail alongside my analysis of their storytime video data.

This information is summarized in the subsections that follow, where I introduce each of my participants in turn, focusing on their domestic reading habits (see Sections 3.3.1 – 3.3.5). It should be noted that all names in this study, including references to organisations, are pseudonyms in order to protect the privacy of individuals participating. I introduce my participants in age-order, from youngest to oldest. Each subsection opens with a table that details the child's core profile and is followed by a short discussion that provides an overview of the family's routine reading habits and a summary of the child's common storytime behaviours.

3.3.1 Elijah and Eleanor

Child-participant	Elijah
Age	2 years old
Siblings	Noah, 2 years older
Parents	Eleanor (mother) Thomas (father)
Playgroup profile	Elijah attended Fundays every week with his mother. Elijah was a quiet member of the playgroup and although he participated in a range of activities at Fundays including craft, free-play and reading, he always stayed very close to his mother.

	Elijah's age meant that his behaviour, linguistic abilities, and confidence changed and developed significantly during my fieldwork. During the time I spent with Elijah, his language abilities gradually developed which meant that he was steadily able to communicate more easily, which in turn improved his confidence. By the end of my fieldwork, Elijah was able to communicate easily, but was very shy.
Reading habits at home	Elijah had a regular bedtime story routine and was also read to regularly during the day when he was at home with his mother and his brother was at school.
Storytime video totals	All videos contributed (including false starts): 8 Final complete storytime videos: **8**

At the time of their recordings, Elijah and Eleanor would regularly sit down together and read during the day; their video data focused on capturing these daily reading routines.

Eleanor and Elijah would read a selection of up to 3 picturebooks at a time that they had either chosen together or that Elijah had selected. These texts were a mixture of old and new picturebooks that the family owned. The pair usually sat together wherever they were comfortable and their video data revealed that this was often the sofa in the family room or on the floor. Elijah's older brother features in one of the storytime videos because he was home from school; however, he did not engage in the read-aloud practice very much and was instead busy reading his own book.

3.3.2 Amy and Denise

Child-participant	Amy
Age	2 years old
Siblings	Joseph, 2 years older
Parents	Denise (mother) Andrew (father)
Playgroup profile	Amy attended Fundays every week with her mother. Amy was an active and confident member of the playgroup and she participated in all of the available activities at the group including craft, free-play and reading. Amy's age meant that her behaviour, linguistic abilities, and confidence changed and developed significantly during my fieldwork. During the time I spent with Amy, her language abilities gradually developed which meant that she was steadily able to communicate more easily, which in turn improved her confidence. By the end of my fieldwork, Amy had excellent linguistic skills and was able to communicate easily.

Reading habits at home	Amy had a regular bedtime story routine and was also read to regularly during the day when she was at home with her mother and her brother was a school.
Storytime video totals	All videos contributed (including false starts): 13, including 5 false starts Final complete storytime videos: **8**

At the time of their recordings, Denise and Amy would regularly sit down together and read during the day; their video data focused on capturing these daily reading routines.

Denise and Amy would read a selection of up to 4 stories at a time together. They usually sat wrapped in a blanket on a sofa or chair in the family room. It was common practice for Amy to select the picturebooks that they were going to read; this family had bookshelves in both the family room of the house and the children's bedrooms. The texts they read were a mixture of old and new picturebooks that the family owned or had been given as gifts. The family also often read library books. Joseph did not feature in the video data, but it was normal practice within this family for Amy to be read to without her brother present.

3.3.3 Claire and Sally

Child-participant	Claire
Age	2-3 years old (Claire had a birthday right in the middle of my fieldwork)
Siblings	Chloe, 2 years younger Olivia, 3 years younger
Parents	Sally (mother) Graham (father)
Playgroup profile	Claire attended Fundays every week with her mother and siblings. Claire was very active at the playgroup sessions and would participate in a range of activities, including craft, free-play and reading. Claire engaged in all kinds of different play-behaviour, including role-play and imaginative play. Claire was a very confident communicator and had very good linguistic skills.
Reading habits at home	Claire had a regular bedtime story routine and was also read to regularly during the day when she was at home with her mother.
Storytime video totals	All videos contributed (including false starts): 11, including 1 false start Final complete storytime videos: **10**

At the time of the recordings, Claire had a regular bedtime story routine and was also read to regularly throughout the day; the family's video data provided evidence of both of these practices. In each case, the reading practice was led by both Claire and Chloe choosing at least one book each to be read and then Sally would read these books to both girls at the same time. Chloe was present in all of the storytime videos, although she didn't always engage in the storytime activity, or pay attention, when a book that Claire had chosen was being read. The books that Claire chose were a mixture of old and new books that the family owned or had been given as gifts. Sally told me that they buy and borrow all kinds of books all of the time and regularly make use of local charity shops and the local library. Claire usually selected more popular narrative picturebook fiction, whereas Chloe was more likely to choose a concept book or texts aimed at a younger age group.

3.3.4 William and Matthew

Child-participant	William
Age	3 years old
Siblings	Emma, 1 year younger
Parents	Matthew (father) Rosie (mother)
Playgroup profile	William attended Playdays every week with his father and sibling. William was very active at the playgroup sessions and would participate in a range of activities, including craft, free-play and reading. William engaged in all kinds of different play-behaviour, but especially imaginative, or pretend play and role-play. William was a very confident communicator and had very good linguistic skills.
Reading habits at home	William had a regular bedtime story routine and was also read to during the day when he was at home with his parents, if possible.
Storytime video totals	All videos contributed (including false starts): 25, including 7 false starts Final complete storytime videos: **18**

At the time of the recordings, William had a regular bedtime story routine that was very structured. Although this family did read at other times of the day, they specified that the 'bedtime story' was one of the most dominant reading practices that took place in their home; the majority of their video data focused on capturing this bedtime story routine. Every evening, William would choose three stories just before bed for his parents to read to him.

The read-aloud activity usually took place in a large chair in William's bedroom, or on William's bed. William was read to regularly by both parents. Alongside choosing what texts to read, William also decided in what order his parents should read the texts. The stories that William chose were a mixture of old and new books that the family owned or had been given as gifts; they included a mixture of bible stories for children with more 'popular' picturebook fiction. The family also often read library books that William had chosen and borrowed from the local library. An interesting reading-related behaviour that I discovered with this family was the association between reading as a reward for good behaviour. For example, if William misbehaved then he would only be allowed 2 books before bed and not 3. This type of rule embedded reading as something positive within the domestic context.

Emma features in some of the video data I collected from this family; however, the majority of data shows only William being read to by one of his parents. Matthew and Rosie informed me that this was their usual practice; however, they went on to tell me that their reading habits had changed recently. Matthew and Rosie had been reading to William and Emma together for a while, because Emma was so young and would sleep through the activity. However, at the time of my data collection, William and Emma were rarely read to together because their parents felt that the Emma struggled to focus on the text being read and they didn't want her distracting or ruining storytime for her older brother. Emma had also reached a stage where her parents could read more age-appropriate texts to her, such as concept books. Instead, one parent would read to one child separately but simultaneously each night.

3.3.5 Eva and Jessica

Child-participant	Eva
Age	3 years old
Siblings	Oliver, 2 years younger
Parents	Jessica (mother) Daniel (father)
Playgroup profile	Eva attended Playdays every week with her mother and sibling. Eva was quite shy and quiet during the playgroup sessions and she tended to stay close to her mother and brother throughout. Jessica described Eva as a very sensitive child. However, once she had settled at the group she took part in most of the organised activities and she would play with other children. Eva had good linguistic skills and could communicate easily.

Reading habits at home	Eva had a regular bedtime story routine and was also read to during the day when she was at home with her family, if possible.
Storytime video totals	All videos contributed (including false starts): 5 Final complete storytime videos: **5**

At the time of the recordings, Eva had a regular bedtime story routine and was read to every night by either her mother or her father. The video data collected from these participants focused on capturing this bedtime story routine and included examples of both parents reading to Eva at bedtime. Oliver did not feature in the video data, but this reflected the usual practice for this family with Jessica telling me that Oliver would not yet 'settle for a story'.

Eva's bedtime routine usually included her parents reading the same couple of texts on rotation for a week or two. After a couple weeks, Eva and her parents would change this selection of texts for new ones. These texts usually included all kinds of popular picturebook fiction. Both Eva and Oliver have a personal book shelf above their beds where they keep their books and it is these books that get rotated every other week. Every evening – often with a cup of warm milk – one of Eva's parents would read to her whilst they sat together on her parent's bed. Jessica told me about halfway through my fieldwork that they had started to read chaptered texts with Eva as well as her usual picturebooks, the example she gave was *George's Marvellous Medicine* (Dahl, 1981). However, Jessica told me that Eva had found some of the content a little too overwhelming and so they had 'paused' this chaptered reading activity.

The brief introductions provided above are based on the amalgamation of information gathered from my fieldwork, video data, and interview data. It should be noted that the time I spent with my participants was extensive and I was able to observe and learn about their home life, reading practices, and other behaviours in great detail. However, this thesis focuses on their *domestic* storytime practices specifically, and thus I have been careful to include and comment on only relevant aspects of their lives and relevant aspects of my experiences with them over an 11-15 month period. In the introductions above, for example, I have avoided detailed accounts of *my* experiences reading to each child-participant whilst at playgroup and of their play-behaviour in the playgroup context. Nevertheless, where relevant throughout this thesis – and especially in analysis chapters 4, 5 and 6 – I will incorporate more detailed accounts of my playgroup observations and experiences. In the following section, I discuss the video data that my storytime participants produced, providing an

overview of the information my participants received prior to and during recording, and how the video data was created, transferred, and stored.

3.4 Video data

The domestic setting is a private context, where *natural and routine* practices take place. In this context, parents and their children have a very familiar relationship with one another and have established patterns of communicative behaviour. In line with the aims of this thesis, then, an empirical study of this context can be expected to provide the most naturalistic and reliable evidence of early pre-school reading practices. Furthermore, I endeavoured to collect video data – as opposed to other data formats, such as participant-observation or audio data – due to the nature of storytime practices. Storytime involves at least two participants sharing a multimodal text; these participants interact not only with one another, but with the text they are reading together and with the environment that surrounds them. I was aware from the beginning of the project, then, that visual elements of the context, including comprehension aids such as gesture, would be vital to understanding storytime practices. As noted in Section 3.1, as far as it was possible, it was important for me to capture and explore these practices happening in real time. I therefore chose a data collection method that would allow me to *see* the practice as it took place, providing naturalistic data that could be replayed and reviewed multiple times.

Once I had recruited all of my storytime participants and the parents had agreed to take part in recording storytime videos at home, they were given an information sheet and consent form which provided more specific details about what their participation would involve (see Appendix B). From the start, it was important for me to let parents know that I was interested in their *routine* read-aloud practices and *natural* story-telling behaviours and that I was not there to judge their reading practices in any way. I told participants that I was simply interested in 'the natural read-aloud situation involving a child and an adult-narrator' and I assured parents that there was 'no wrong or bad example of reading' as far as my project was concerned (see Appendix B). Parents were also told not to worry about any 'acts of spontaneity' that might occur whilst they were recording and were encouraged to include them, if they felt comfortable doing so. In addition to the comprehensive information sheet supplied to participants, I was in contact with them on a weekly basis at playgroup and was able to provide further details about my project; participants were free to ask me questions about the project at any time. My ethnographic work thus provided a platform where I was able to discuss my project – including my aims, interests, and expectations – with my

participants face-to-face; this enabled me to build clarity and trust with my participants, whilst allowing me to check on their progress regularly.

My aim for all of the video recordings I collected was that they be as natural as possible and for that reason, I decided that I would not be present during any recordings. I hoped that this decision would lower the impact of the observer's paradox, which I believe it did; however, it also placed a lot of responsibility on my participants to regularly record themselves at home. I did not want the project to sound intimidating and I took steps throughout to make sure that their participation was as easy as possible.

Parents were initially asked to film between one and four routine storytime activities that took place in their home. They were told that they could choose the number of videos that they wanted to contribute to the project and that, if they chose to record more than one video, they did not have to record all of these videos at once. Instead, participants were given the option to record their videos over a period of weeks, or months. Over the course of my project, and at the request of the parents involved in my study, I agreed a number of specific 'video deadlines' with parents. These dates gave parents something to aim for and acted as a 'reminder' to record. Participants were told not to worry about the quality of the video data as long as both the adult and child could be seen and heard in each recording. Parents were also given the option of using their own video recording equipment, including the use of mobile phone cameras, if appropriate and convenient. Parents were reassured that they would be in command of the video data at all times and they were given the option to review all of their videos before sending them on to me.

I provided video recording equipment for those participants who requested it. Again, this was easy to arrange because I saw my participants every week at playgroup. Four out of my five participants chose to use a video camera, which I supplied, to record their storytime videos, and the fifth used a mobile phone with a high quality camera. Once my participants began recording their videos, I arranged the most convenient and secure method of file transfer possible for each of them. For those participants who chose to record the majority of their data on a video camera supplied by me, they simply returned the camera to me and gave me permission to upload their videos from the recording device to a secure desktop; I then returned the cameras to the participants and we repeated this process. The parent who chose to use their mobile phone for the majority of the recordings suggested they transfer their storytime data to me via a shared folder created on the password-secure file-sharing site Dropbox (Dropbox, 2019). Over the duration of the project, a number of my participants also chose to forward some video data that they had gathered on their mobile phones to me via the

messaging app WhatsApp (WhatsApp, 2019). Participants who chose to forward data via these online sites or mobile applications would notify me when they had sent a video and I would transfer and save the data to a secure desktop, before deleting the video from my own phone.

I collected 62 video files in total; the overall total of videos contributed by each of my storytime participants varied (see summary in Sections 3.3.1 - 3.3.5) and not all videos collected were used in my final analysis (see discussion below). However, all participants created between five and eighteen final storytime videos that contained viable evidence of the storytime practices under investigation in this thesis.

In order to capture their routine reading practices, each of my participants would set up a camera just before they began reading to their child, usually placing the recording device on a nearby surface that could capture the practice; only around 13 of my videos were filmed by another member of the family. The videos usually include only those participants involved in the storytime practice. My videos represent a mixture of bedtime story reading practices and other reading practices that take place at home during the day. The videos also vary in length, lasting anywhere between 3 minutes and 25 minutes.

The 62 videos I collected make up the core dataset for this project. Once the recordings had been forwarded to me by my participants, they were uploaded and saved to a secure university desktop and were deleted from the original recording device or online/mobile data-transfer platform. During a first viewing of these videos, I checked their quality and content and immediately discarded 13 videos that included false starts and failed to capture a storytime practice; videos where the sound quality and visual framing was poor were also discarded at this stage. The remaining 49 videos were then imported into the qualitative data analysis computer software NVivo for analysis (see Section 3.5). In the initial stages of my analysis, I watched all of these videos a number of times and made general notes about the things I observed (see Section 3.5). I found that two out of my five participants had included a number of videos that showed reading activities other than the parent-child read-aloud which was the focus of this study, and as a result a further 7 videos were discarded from my core dataset at this stage, because they did not meet my research criteria. However, whilst these additional videos were not included in my final tagging and analysis, they still contributed to the ethnographic background of each of these families and provided further evidence of their routine reading habits, which aided my interpretation of the other storytime videos they produced. My final core dataset thus contained 42 storytime videos, which I went on to analyse in detail. The majority of these videos show parents reading more than one

story to their child in succession with some stories appearing more than once across the dataset. As such, my storytime videos provide evidence of around 49 picturebook stories being read by adults to pre-school child (See Appendix C for a list of the picturebook texts that appear in my video data). I made sure to obtain a copy of the picturebook texts that were being read in each video for any relevant stylistic analysis and in order to better understand what participants were looking and pointing at during the storytime activities contained within my dataset. I used the initial viewings of my video data to prepare for a follow-up interview.

3.4.1 Interviews

Once my video data had been collected, I conducted a follow-up interview with each of my storytime participants. This interview was mentioned on the original 'video recordings' information sheet (see Appendix B), where I gave parents the option to take part in an informal discussion with me about their participation in the project once it had ended. All of my participants agreed to a follow-up interview, and all five of my participants invited me to their homes to carry out the interview. Each interview was audio recorded and took the form of an informal discussion that lasted just over an hour; both the adult and child-participants from my storytime videos were present. Parent-participants were also asked to sign a separate consent form before participating in this interview (see Appendix D). These interviews followed the first viewing of all of my video data and provided me with the opportunity to ask my storytime participants a final set of questions about their videos and their reading habits before my fieldwork ended. The interview also gave my participants a chance to ask me any questions about the project.

Prior to each interview taking place, I reviewed all of the video data and all of the fieldnotes relevant to each specific parent-child dyad and collated a set of notes about each of my storytime participants and their reading practices; these notes highlighted any gaps in my knowledge about these participants and foregrounded areas of interest. I used these notes to guide the informal discussion that took place. The interviews I conducted focused broadly on topics such as:

- reading routines at home
- the adult's reading style
- the picturebook texts that were read in the videos
- general views on reading

Ultimately, the data collected during these follow-up interviews focused specifically on strengthening my understanding and interpretation of the video data that I had already collected.

3.5 NVivo

NVivo is a computer aided qualitative data analysis software that is purpose-built for qualitative and mixed-methods research (see NVivo, 2020). The software is specifically designed for researchers who employ multiple methods to collect data from multiple sources. NVivo provides a space to import, store, and organise all types of data in one platform, and provides tools to categorise, classify, visualise, and analyse that data. The NVivo software, therefore, suited the qualitative approach that I adopted from the outset of this project.

The naturalistic approach to data collection I adopted in this thesis meant that I collected large amounts of data in three different formats, namely: written fieldnotes from my ethnographic work with my storytime participants; video recordings of my participants' naturally-occurring storytime practices; and audio recordings of informal interviews with my storytime participants. Whilst I focus predominantly on the video data I collected throughout this project – and more specifically, on the storytime practices captured in these videos – these video recordings are intricately linked to information contained in both my fieldnotes and my interview data. NVivo provided a platform where I was able to store, view, and analyse each aspect of my dataset together. NVivo is also particularly well-suited to the analysis of multimodal data, like the storytime videos I collected, and this was another factor that contributed to my decision to employ the NVivo software; NVivo enables the researcher to view videos *whilst* transcribing, tagging, and making any other additional notes on the data at the same time. Ultimately, NVivo provided the tools needed to handle and organise the complex dataset collected during this study.

I imported my textual and video data into NVivo. I chose not to upload the audio data from my follow-up interviews because I did not intend to tag and analyse the discourse contained in this data. The follow-up interviews did not contain any new information and were instead saved as separate audio files and used for reference and extra context as and when relevant. Once imported, I was able to organise my fieldnote data and my video data into a series of folders and sub-folders. Fieldnotes were organised into two main folders which were named after the specific playgroup at which the written observations had been made. Within these main playgroup folders, my fieldnotes from each week were imported as separate documents that were chronologically titled and dated, for example 'Fundays

30.06.2016 Week Thirty Five'. Video data was organised into five main folders named after each of my storytime participants and within these folders the video data itself was further divided into folders that were date-specific, for example 'set three (completed May-July 2016)'. Organising my data in this way made it easy to handle and access.

Once all of my data had been imported into NVivo and had been organised into different folders, I was able to start tagging, or coding, the data and creating nodes which represented, in the first instance, my general emergent observations and aided the early identification of commonalities and differences across my dataset. During the initial coding stage, I focused specifically on my video data and created nodes for items such as linguistic features; turn-taking patterns; conversational themes including what was said and who said it; physical behaviours such as gesture, including pointing to the text and other objects; and other observations related to the immediate context, such as ritualistic storytime behaviours which included things like where participants were sat and who was holding the text being read. Whilst I focused predominantly on coding my data using a bottom-up approach, some of the nodes I created were also guided by my specific research interests; for example, where I predicted some specific textual, stylistic or cognitive influence, I created a node. This process of my coding was more concept-driven and included nodes such as: ontology, world-building, and theory of mind (ToM). My fieldnotes were coded into similar themes, but also included additional nodes specific to the home context, playgroup context, and the demographic of my participants. Coding each aspect of my data meant that I was able to observe patterns across my whole dataset and thus develop my observations in more detail. I also created participant-specific nodes (e.g. 'Matthew and William') and was able to use these nodes to collate masses of data that were specific to my individual storytime participants.

NVivo, then, enabled me to store and organise large amounts of different types of data in one place. The ability to view all of my data on one platform and tag it meant that I was better able to make links between the different types of data that I had collected. For example, I was able to link reading behaviours observed in my storytime videos with play behaviours that I observed during my fieldwork, and I was able to connect these findings to any relevant demographic information obtained during the data collection period. I was able to use NVivo to begin identifying key themes and topics of interest across my dataset which then became the focus of further analysis and often guided my research by influencing the different approaches and frameworks I adopted during my analysis (see Section 3.6 - 3.6.3). The way in which NVivo is structured meant that once additional analytical frameworks had

been adopted, or certain key topics were identified, I was able to return to my data and create additional nodes, or new sub-nodes, that matched my analytical focus at that time, which again helped to organise my data for analysis; I returned to NVivo again and again and created nodes, folders and notes around my data in order to suit the framework and focus that I was working with at the time.

3.6 Analytical method

The main approach I used to analyse my tagged dataset was the Text World Theory framework (see Sections 2.4 - 2.4.4 for a full overview). However, whilst the suitability of this framework as a means of examining pre-school read-aloud discourses was proven in the pilot study I conducted in Jackson (2013), I still endeavoured to allow my data to speak for itself throughout this project. This decision was led by my ethnographic research-design and my commitment to conduct a naturalistic study of storytime. Thus, in order to allow the 'proper' analysis of my data, I adopted a bottom-up, data-driven approach, which allowed the realities of my storytime data to dictate the specific areas of investigation. This approach meant that I resisted imposing a specific framework on to my data until I had collected, reviewed, and began analysing all of the data together. I made no assumptions about my data prior to its initial coding and early examination; it was my hope that this would result in the development of the most rigorous method of analysis for my data, due to it essentially being based on, and therefore best-suited to, the data I had collected.

The initial coding I conducted in NVivo focused simply on identifying salient discourse features across my dataset (see Section 3.5). This emergent coding process involved me watching my storytime videos in full a number of times whilst reviewing my fieldnote- and interview data in detail. The process of re-visiting my data over and over again was a method of analysis in itself and it allowed me to familiarise myself with my data and to identify similarities and common features across the dataset as a whole. Once my storytime video data had been tagged for commonalities, themes, and other noteworthy features, I selected a number of topics for further exploration. Once these themes and topics had been selected, I collated and transcribed key extracts from my storytime videos in greater detail (for the transcription conventions used throughout this thesis see Appendix E). This process of (re)watching, tagging, transcribing, and collating key extracts my data revealed the complex nature of the discourse-situation and led to a number of different methods and approaches being adopted alongside Text World Theory. The following sub-sections outline these and explain their relevance to my study.

3.6.1 Communities of practice

In the initial stages of my analysis, I adopted a communities of practice (CofP) approach, which I applied to my ethnographic data. Over the course of my ethnographic fieldwork, I became extremely familiar with the people and practices at the two playgroups involved in my study. As I participated in the groups and made fieldnotes, I was struck by how similar the groups were to one another and I began to develop a bullet-pointed list of similarities between each group; this list focused primarily on the groups' practices, and later, their shared beliefs, including features specific to the demographic they belonged to. For example:

- Structure of the group, including layout, schedule, and activities
- Adult and child playgroup-behaviours
- Group behaviours and expectations
- View on reading
- Views surrounding schooling
- Impact of religion
- Family structure and routines
- Occupation of parents

Whilst the playgroups were selected because of their similar locations and associated demographic (see Section 3.2.1), this did not necessarily guarantee similar practices and behaviours within each group. However, over the course of my fieldwork, I became aware that each playgroup functioned in very specific ways that were similar to one another. What is more, at the end of my data collection period, once I began to review and analyse all of my data together in NVivo, I realised that the storytime practices that each of my participants had recorded were also very similar. Thus, my data revealed that my storytime participants were engaged in very similar practices at playgroup *and* at home, specifically when it came to literacy and reading. My interest in reading as a social practice that is embedded within wider social, cultural, and economic contexts, then, led me to consider the role of playgroup attendance on at-home reading practices in greater detail.

CofP is an approach to social life that aims to account for our actions by seeing them as rooted in practices and tasks (Peplow, 2012: 30). The approach was initially developed by educationalists Lave and Wenger (1991) as a means of describing and understanding how professional communities induct and train new members, and perpetuate set routines for accomplishing specific tasks; in short, the CofP is a domain defined by a process of social learning that is tied up with the notion of learned social behaviour (see Meyerhoff and

Strycharz, 2013: 430). Since its conception, the CofP model has been adopted into a number of academic fields and disciplines including: pedagogy, business studies, and economic geography. As a result, a number of groups have been identified as communities of practice, including: family GPs, internet forums, and the family (see Peplow, 2012: 31). The CofP model has also been employed extensively within the field of sociolinguistics (see for example Eckert, 2000) and researchers have used CofP to explore language practices in a diverse range of contexts.

Wenger argues that 'communities of practice are everywhere' (Wenger, 1998: 6) and Lave and Wenger define a CofP as 'a set of relations among persons, activity, and world, over time and in relation with other tangential and overlapping communities of practice' (1991: 98). Lave and Wenger go on to note that the term 'community' in the CofP model implies 'participation in an activity system about which participants share understandings concerning what they are doing and what that means in their lives and for their communities (1991: 98). Thus, the CofP model takes us away from 'community' defined by a location or by a population and instead focuses on a community 'defined by social engagement' (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 1992: 95). According to Peplow (2012: 32) 'for CofP researchers, social actions should be seen as a product of a specific community, and a community must be studied in detail so that these social actions can be understood'. Playgroups in the UK are a unique space with very specific aims and practices that I argue are influenced by socio-economic and cultural factors; I therefore see playgroups as central examples of CofPs.

A CofP is defined by Eckert (2000: 35) as 'an aggregate of people who come together around some enterprise. United by this common enterprise, people come to develop and share ways of doing things, ways of talking, beliefs and values – in short, practices – as a function of their joint engagement in activity'. According to Wenger (1998: 73), CofP have three constitutive features which must be upheld if a grouping is to be considered a CofP: mutual engagement, a joint enterprise, and a shared repertoire. In the discussion that follows, I explore each of these features in turn and apply them briefly to the playgroup context in order to demonstrate the suitability of the CofP framework for the examination of my ethnographic data.

Mutual engagement is the most basic requirement for a CofP. A CofP only comes into existence because of the 'direct and personal' contact between members as they 'engage in actions whose meanings they negotiate with one another' (Meyerhoff, 2006: 189; Wenger, 1998: 73). Ultimately, members of a CofP make a *conscious* endeavour to engage socially with other members and it is this mutual engagement that defines a participant's membership

in the CofP. Playgroups typically meet on a regular weekly basis at the same time and on the same day; some playgroup participants also meet socially outside of the playgroup sessions. Those who attend the weekly sessions make a conscious effort to do so and do so voluntarily; it is often the case that the same set of members attend each week, with little variety in attendance for up to 12 months at a time. Playgroup members are, therefore, involved in regular face-to-face interaction, a level of mutual engagement which the playgroup is based upon.

The concept of a 'joint enterprise' encompasses the idea that members of a CofP get together in order to pursue some shared objective or purpose. Wenger notes that the joint enterprise is 'defined by the participants in the very process of pursuing it' (1998: 77). It is essentially a result of a collective process of negotiation and reflects participants' negotiated response to their situation (Wenger, 1998: 77). Wenger notes that joint enterprise is not merely a stated goal, but 'creates among participants relations of mutual accountability that become an integral part of the practice' (1998: 78). Relations of accountability might include (see Wenger, 1998: 81):

- What matters and what does not
- What to do and not to do
- What to display and what to withhold

The shared objective of the playgroup focuses on providing a space for pre-school-aged children to learn and play, whilst providing an opportunity for parents to socialise. The joint enterprise of the playgroups I attended also clearly focused on the social and educational goals of the child. In both groups children were encouraged to learn through play and interaction with other children, and by engaging in a number of other regular activities, such as crafts. Parents were also encouraged to recognise the benefits of the playgroup context for their child's development; I propose that this is one of the main reasons for them attending the group in the first place. As a result, parents consciously engage with other parents at the group – and other children – in ways that emphasise this joint enterprise; this engagement entails anything from participating in activities, maintaining relationships, and engaging in certain types of talk. In addition to negotiating positive developmental outcomes for their children through socialising and interacting themselves, adult-members also work together to establish relationships that aid the smooth running of the weekly sessions.

The combination of mutual engagement and joint enterprise, over time, results in the shared repertoire of a CofP. The shared repertoire is the 'way of doing things' within the CofP

that the community has 'produced or adopted in the course of its existence' (Wenger, 1998: 83); they become habitual and routine practices that members adopt as they partake in the mutual engagement with one another towards a shared purpose. Essentially the members' shared repertoire is made up of resources for negotiating meaning. Wenger notes that the repertoire of a CofP can include: routines, words, tools, stories, symbols, genres, actions, and other concepts that the community has produced or adopted in the course of its existence (1998: 83). The playgroups shared repertoire is immediately recognisable through the structured and routine manner in which the sessions are carried out. Over the course of my fieldwork and in order to integrate more fully into the playgroups I was working with, I had to work towards understanding each group's shared repertoire, and this meant paying close attention to things like: the different roles that certain members of the group adopted; how they spoke to one another; what they talked to one another about; and how the group was run.

Overall, I propose that each of the playgroups I attended possessed the three constitutive features of a CofP. What is more, although each CofP is conceived of as being unique, my fieldwork revealed strong similarities between the two playgroup CofPs I worked with during my research. As a result of this observation, I was led to consider the similarities across the two groups and in doing so, I began to view my participants as part of one larger social group, who were defined in part by their playgroup attendance.

A key feature of belonging to a CofP is the *conscious* choice to attend and participate. As such, I argue that the parent-attendees I engaged with at playgroup were making an informed decision about how they wanted to socialise both themselves and their child. This decision is shared by each adult who regularly attends the playgroup and it comes to define the playgroup CofP. What is more, Eckert notes that 'people's access and exposure to, need for, and interest in different communities of practice are related to where they find themselves in the world, as embodied in such things as class, age, ethnicity, and gender' (2000: 39). As noted in Section 3.2.1, traditional playgroups like the ones I attended, are associated with parents from a higher socio-economic background (see Lloyd et al., 1989: 81). Thus, I argue that the two playgroup CofPs I identified during my ethnographic fieldwork can be viewed collectively as representative of a specific set of practices associated with a larger subset of higher-SES families.

The more time I spent with each group, the more aware I became of the 'good parent' identity that was being negotiated by participants, specifically with regards to literacy. Members would regularly discuss topics such as schooling, childcare, children's achievements, and literacy activities that take place at home; these shared discourses were

part of each group's shared repertoire and they created positive views surrounding parenthood and literacy. Reading itself was viewed as a positive practice that should be carried out at home, and every parent I spoke to claimed to do so regularly. I therefore argue that the shared repertoire within the groups I attended included the view that reading to young children at home is a practice associated with positive social, cultural, and economic factors; what is more, these views on reading were tied up with a prevailing view of parenthood that is based on the idea that 'the good parent must be doing something to promote their young children's literacy learning and produce them as school-ready educable subjects' (Nichols et al., 2009: 73).

Meyerhoff and Strycharz note that 'individuals may belong to or participate in a number of different communities of practice and their memberships are mutually constitutive. The kind of role that they play in a CofP will partly reflect their own personal history and goals, and also the goals of the group that is jointly engaged in those practices' (2013: 432). Furthermore, Eckert states that members of a community of practice will be members of other communities of practice and that 'these communities of practice may be more or less overlapping, more or less interacting, more or less consonant' (Eckert , 2000: 36). It is therefore possible that the examination of one CofP will provide some level of insight into other aspects of members' lives; a CofP analysis of the playgroup, for example, holds the potential to provide some insight into members' practices at home, particularly within the family and the domestic context, which has also been conceived of as a CofP (see Hazen, 2002). My video data shows that my storytime participants who belong to similar SES backgrounds partake in read-aloud activities at home that are very similar and that matched aspects of the shared repertoire of their playgroup CofP regarding reading at home, good parenting, and literacy development. As such, I argue that it is possible to link up my findings and experiences during my ethnographic fieldwork with the storytime analysis of my video data and thus generalize my findings – within the limits of my dataset – as representative of the reading practices of a specific social group.

Essentially, analysing playgroups as a CofP provided some insight into the group-behaviours and practices of my participants in one specific arena and I was able to use the CofP model to explore and aid my understanding of the context within which at-home reading practices are situated for a specific social group. However, whilst the CofP approach provides a framework for analysing group behaviours, including the structure, maintenance and meaning-making practices within these spaces, it was not appropriate for use in the analysis of the storytime practices themselves. Instead, throughout my analysis, I consider all

of my participants as members of a CofP where reading at home is valued highly and this perspective helps me produce a better study of 'contextualised' reading practices, specifically with reference to the social, cultural, and economic context of my readers and their at-home reading practices.

3.6.2 Conversation Analysis

Storytime is essentially a spoken discourse and part of my analytical method included transcribing extracts from my video data that I had identified as being particularly salient. During the initial stages of my analysis and the preliminary transcriptions that were made, the complexity of the talk-in-interaction that was present in my data became clear and I began tagging my data for salient features such as: turn-taking patterns; conversational themes; interruptions; mistakes and repair; laughter; and speaker-roles, including utterances I perceived as displaying 'controlling talk' (also see Section 3.5); as well as specific prosodic features, such as voice quality and loudness. In order to account for these communicative techniques in full and present a fine-detailed linguistic analysis of how my participants were interacting with one another during storytime, I applied concepts and terminology from Conversation Analysis (CA) throughout my analysis.

Defined by Hutchby and Wooffitt as 'the systematic analysis of talk produced in everyday situations of human interaction' (2008: 11), CA emerged as a pioneering approach to language because it was one of the first to consider everyday talk as a phenomenon that was worthy of analysis. One of the most distinctive methodological traits of CA is its focus on the process of transcription and transcribed tape recordings of 'actual interactions'. Essentially, CA provides a linguistic model of interaction that focuses specifically on the study of *naturally-occurring* conversation.

The most central fundamental assumption informing CA is that ordinary talk is a 'highly organised, socially ordered phenomenon' (Hutchby and Wooffitt, 2008: 11). As such, CA researchers are concerned with the sequential organisation of social interaction and they focus specifically on conversational structures such as the organisation of turn-taking, including overlap and repair, and conversational sequencing such as adjacency pairs; participants in conversation are seen as 'mutually orienting to, and collaborating in order to achieve, orderly and meaningful communication' (Hutchby and Wooffitt, 2008: 1).

Whilst the main focus in CA is primarily the organisation of talk, CA researchers also address key characteristics of speech delivery such as: tempo, pitch, loudness, vowel quality and voice quality. Some phoneticians have criticised CA researchers for their method of

transcribing these features of talk, claiming that CA transcription is 'inconsistent and arbitrary' (Kelly and Local, 1989: 204), and arguing that there is much to be gained analytically from paying more serious attention to phonetic phenomena (Hutchby and Wooffitt, 2008: 73). However, CA researchers argue that the noting of prosodic characteristics in CA transcription is linked to a different aim; 'to get as much of the actual sound as possible into our transcripts, while still making them accessible to linguistically unsophisticated readers' (Sacks et al., 1974: 734; Hutchby and Wooffitt, 2008: 73). The specific aims and constraints of this thesis, however, do not require the production of a detailed phonetic analysis. For this reason, the central benefit of the CA transcription conventions for speech delivery was that they provided me with an adequate means of accounting for, and discussing, simple prosodic features that were relevant in my data. Like Peplow (2012), I adopt a form of 'applied CA' throughout my thesis (see Peplow, 2012: 55 for distinction between 'pure' and 'applied' CA). Thus, my application of CA to my storytime data is selective and I choose to draw on CA terminology where I find it useful, and in combination with other approaches; like Peplow who argues that 'a linguistic methodology is only as good as it is useful in its application', I tailor CA to my own analytical needs and to the realities of the spoken data I have collected (2012: 51).

Ochs (1979: 44) notes that the process of transcription itself is 'a selective process reflecting theoretical goals and definitions' and she goes on to highlight the role of 'selectivity' during transcription, foregrounding the *need* for researchers to use the transcription process in order to reflect their own research interests and goals. Essentially, although I adopted a bottom-up approach that was data-driven, I nevertheless transcribed instances of my data that I identified as salient based on my own research aims and interests. My application of CA during this transcription process, then, helped me develop a more systematic understanding of what was happening in my data during episodes of storytime discourse. CA, as part of a mixed-methods discursive analytical approach, thus enhanced my examination of 'what was said *and how'* and therefore allowed me to get a better handle on my data by paying close attention to relevant interactional details. On the whole, I see CA as providing a useful set of terms and transcription conventions for the analysis of spoken data, and I frequently draw on these in my analysis of storytime discourse.

3.6.3 Text World Theory

Text World Theory (see Sections 2.4 - 2.4.4 for a full outline) is employed as the key analytical framework throughout this thesis because I believe that it is ideally suited to the

study of pre-school read-aloud discourses. In this section, I discuss the suitability of the framework in greater detail with specific reference to the data I collected and the main aims of this thesis.

The aims of this thesis are twofold: it sets out to provide a detailed account of early literary experiences in order to produce a better understanding of some aspects of the formative years of the cognition of literature, whilst working towards the provision of a specifically cognitively-oriented framework for pre-school reading that can be employed in future approaches to pre-school discourses. In order to achieve these aims, I set out to account for all interrelated aspects of the storytime discourse event, which began with my endeavour to collect the most natural data possible. The initial coding process of my storytime video data worked towards identifying the significant features of the discourse event. Ultimately, the early coding I conducted in NVivo revealed a number of key features of storytime discourse that were associated with either the text, reader, or context of these early reading practices. What is more, I discovered during the early analysis of my storytime data that it was difficult, if not near impossible, to separate instances of participant talk from the text being read and from other physical actions carried out by participants, without affecting the account of the discourse in a significant way.

Thus, whilst storytime is often considered to be an act of 'reading', the reality of these discourse situations is that reading is only one part of the overall storytime experience. For this reason, my analytical method needed to address aspects of the discourse event that went beyond the simple stylistic analysis of a text, or the linguistic analysis of the spoken read-aloud data. Essentially, key to understanding storytime practices in detail is being able to account *simultaneously* for: the participants (or *readers*) involved in the read-aloud practice, including the ways in which they communicate with one another and the text being read; the *text* that is being read aloud, including the stylistic features of these picturebook discourses; and the *context* within which this text is read. Text World Theory enables the interrelated analysis of these aspects of the discourse through its commitment to experientialism and the analytical structure it provides (also see Section 2.4).

From the outset of this project, I have been focused on the analysis of discourse-in-context and I chose to adopt a naturalistic approach, collecting data that would provide evidence of actual language in use (Werth, 1999). As set out in Section 2.4.1, in order to account for the complexities of studying language in context, and thus the analysis of how contextual factors play a role in the processing and production of discourse, TWT separates *every* discourse into a series of distinct conceptual levels: the discourse-world, the text-world,

and modal-worlds (Gavins, 2007; Werth 1999). I adopt this analytical architecture throughout this thesis, applying it to my storytime data in order to provide a full account of the entirety of the discourse event.

The benefits of being able to separate the storytime discourse represented in my video data into different conceptual levels and then explore the relationship between these levels was key during my analysis, specifically with regard to the progression from the discourse-world to text-world(s) during storytime practices. TWT's ontologically-delineated structure enabled me to explore in detail how participants involved in storytime practices were communicating with one another and how this communication was impacting on their experience of both the literary text being read and the storytime practice as a whole.

In addition to the context-sensitive and ontologically organised nature of TWT, the cognitive basis of the framework was also beneficial to my analysis. TWT offers a cognitive approach to discourse production and processing. It is grounded in the cognitive sciences and approaches all language in light of what is known about the mind and brain (see Lakoff, 1990: 40). As such, it provided the best framework for analysing both language and cognition together, which enabled me to account for cognitive idiosyncrasies of pre-school children and both the production and reception of storytime discourses.

Storytime discourse includes *both* face-to-face communication and the simultaneous comprehension and interpretation of a written literary text. Whilst TWT has been applied to these contexts separately, apart from my own pilot studies in Jackson (2011 and 2013), there is no comparable application to the pre-school read aloud context (see Section 2.4.2). Thus, in order to account for storytime, I not only implemented a number of augmentations to the framework itself (see Chapters 4, 5, and 6), but drew on a number of methods and approaches in order to improve the application of the framework. Specifically, throughout my analysis, I draw on the CofP model and insights from CA (see discussion in Sections 3.6.1 and 3.6.2). In the first instance, it was my data that led me to adopt these methods into my overall approach; however, CA and CofP targeted only specific features of my data: a CofP approach enabled me to consider the influence of playgroup attendance and playgroup behaviours on at-home reading practices; and CA allowed me to identify, analyse, and discuss a number of significant communicative patterns across my dataset. As my analysis progressed, it was clear that neither a CofP approach or a CA analysis could provide the level of detail needed to fully understand storytime discourse. It became clear that a theory of either language *or* context *only* would not be enough to explain the complexities of my dataset and that Text World Theory offered a more comprehensive and interconnected approach. Nevertheless, I

view CofP and CA as approaches that inform and improve my TWT application, making it better capable of accounting for both the context and language of storytime discourse.

TWT, then, as an approach that aims to account for the context of discourse in detail, suited my research aims and interests. However, although the framework claims to take experientialism seriously, I propose that it needs to extend its exploration of the context of language events, particularly when the wider social context of the discourse is of significance and/or the immediate discourse context is particularly complex, as is the case with storytime practices. I argue that some discourse situations require a more rigorous approach to context and I propose that a significant gap continues to exist in TWT research regarding the use of methodologies that explore context in detail, such as ethnography. Ethnographic methodologies that aim to understand how a specific context and the people within that context interact and operate will provide valuable insights into the ways in which specific discourses are produced and processed by participants; ethnographic methodologies also often lead to the collection of more naturalistic data that provide the best evidence of discourse-in-context.

For these reasons, like van der Bom (2015), I focus on data that I obtained during my ethnographic fieldwork and combine this with my TWT application. What is more, I argue throughout that the integration of ethno-methods with a TWT approach enhances the framework's ability to account for the role of context. Nevertheless, I echo van der Bom's argument that 'although there is a need for further research in order to develop our understanding of the discourse-world, *it is also because of the discourse-world that Text World Theory provides an excellent platform for the analysis of how contextual factors play a role in the processing of discourse*' (2015: 58, *my emphasis*). Thus, whilst I draw on ethnography, CofP, and CA throughout my analysis in order to enhance my TWT application, I simultaneously recognise and emphasise that it is the analytical structure of TWT that enables the systematic exploration of context in the first place.

3.7 Review

In this chapter, I have outlined the mixed-methods cognitive approach to storytime adopted in this thesis. I have introduced my naturalistic approach to the analysis of reading and discussed how this influenced my methodological design (Section 3.1). I provided a narrative overview of how I conducted my project, focusing first on how I recruited my storytime participants (Sections 3.2 – 3.2.1), before introducing these participants in detail (Sections 3.3 – 3.3.5) and the storytime data they supplied (Sections 3.4 – 3.4.1). I then turned my focus to

how I handled my storytime data once it had been collected (Section 3.5) and provided more specific details about my analytic approach (Section 3.6).

From the outset, I aimed to collect the most natural, and therefore reliable, data possible of at-home storytime practices happening in real time. In order to achieve this, I adopted an ethnographic approach to participant recruitment and data collection. This enabled me to familiarise myself with my participants and gain their trust. It not only enabled me to build robust reader-profiles for each of them, but it also influenced the video data that they later produced and forwarded to me; participants were more relaxed both recording and forwarding their video data and they were happy to participate in the project for a number of months. When combined, my ethnographic fieldnotes, storytime video data, and interview data provide a complex and highly contextualised dataset that reliably represents the routine reading behaviours of a specific community of middle-class families in Sheffield.

Overall, this thesis combines an ethnographic approach to data collection with a cognitive discursive-analytic approach to the data that was collected, essentially integrating ethnography into a TWT exploration of pre-school reading. The combination of these methods results in a more context-sensitive and context-specific approach, enabling me to present a rigorous insight into pre-school reading and the early cognition of literature, based on naturalistic and reliable data.

Chapter Four: Storytime

4.0 Preview

The preceding chapters in this thesis have provided the theoretical and methodological background to the analyses presented in this chapter and Chapters 5 and 6 that follow. In this chapter, I apply Text World Theory for the first time in the analysis of storytime discourse, focusing in particular on the read-aloud context and how the physical situation associated with these practices underpins and affects early reading experiences. In Section 4.1, I address the contextual, behavioural, and linguistic similarities associated with the initiation of storytime practices that were evident across my dataset and explore the role of schematic knowledge during pre-school reading activities. The storytime schema is introduced and examined across Sections 4.1.1 – 4.1.3 in order to shed light on the common communicative behaviours and expectations associated with the picturebook read-aloud context. Section 4.2 is then dedicated to the detailed exploration of the storytime discourse-world (DW). I examine how the physical situation associated with early reading activities and the 'settling in' routines observed across my video data pre-empt a storytime performance whereby participants – drawing on their schematic knowledge – act in accordance with a conceptual understanding of the read-aloud context. In Section 4.2, I argue that a number of fundamental features associated with the storytime context complicate the application of Text World Theory (TWT) to the read-aloud discourse situation. Subsequently, in Section 4.3, I introduce an augmentation to the TWT framework: the performance-world (PerfW). Sections 4.3 – 4.3.3 provide a preliminary introduction to the concept of the PerfW, focusing on its ability to account for reader-roles (see Section 4.3.1), co-present readers (see Section 4.3.2), and a shared text (see Section 4.3.3).

Throughout this chapter, the analysis focuses on Amy and Denise's *Stick Man* storytime video (for full transcript see Extract 4.0, Appendix F; also see Appendix E for transcription conventions). The *Stick Man* storytime video has been selected for use as the case study for this chapter because of the prototypical 'settling in' procedure that is exemplified at the beginning of the video and the way in which storytime rules are reinforced and maintained throughout the practice. It should be noted that all prototypical examples employed throughout this thesis and the analyses that accompany them are representative of findings across my dataset (hence the categorisation of these examples as 'prototypical'); all analyses are backed up by additional examples from across my storytime data. The decision to include one main prototypical case study in each chapter means that each chapter presents

one complete contextualised storytime reading practice, as opposed to fragmented examples throughout. The presentation of complete and fully contextualised storytime examples is central to my arguments surrounding these practices.

4.1 Reading routines and the storytime schema

Pre-school reading practices are widely recognised as having a specific structure, through which different routines and associated behaviours are carried out (see Cochran-Smith, 1984; Chambers, 1991; Meek, 1988). Cochran-Smith's ethnographic study of young readers found that children who participate in group storyreading events at nursery-school come to internalise a particular set of rules for these group reading events (1984: 102 - 124). Cochran-Smith refers specifically to behaviours associated with reading practices that takes place in a classroom environment. However, Meek has observed that 'most children come to school with a crop of reader-like behaviours and an awareness of what they expect reading to be like' (1988: 7). The view that children enter pre-school or school with some knowledge of reading is prevalent in literacy research, where it is closely associated with schooling success (see discussion in Section 2.1.2). This view presupposes a level of literacy learning at home, and of storyreading, in particular, and this was evident across my dataset. Participants who volunteered and produced storytime videos for this project were given the following information (see Appendix B for complete information sheet):

What is the project's purpose?
The project is being run by Sarah Jackson, a postgraduate researcher from the University of Sheffield. I am interested in how pre-school children (between the ages of 2-4) experience stories and story-telling. Specifically, this project is interested in the natural read-aloud situation involving a child and an adult narrator. I am particularly interested in what happens when children are read stories at home, when a parent/guardian and pre-school child sit with a story-book and read it together as part of their everyday routine (such as a bedtime story). I hope to obtain video recordings of 'story-time' from a number of households.

What will participation involve?
I will ask you to film one or a set of around 4 routine 'story-times' that take place in your home. No researchers will be present and you can use your own video equipment. The videos do not need to be of high quality and can be filmed on a mobile phone camera. If you choose to record more than one video, you do not have to record the videos all at once, you can record the videos over a period of weeks. The number of videos you wish to contribute is optional.

It is important for you to understand that it is your natural story-telling behaviour which is of interest to me, which includes both routine behaviour and acts of spontaneity; there is no wrong or bad example of reading with a young child. I am simply interested in what happens in natural, everyday situations. As far as possible, it is hoped that both adult and child will ignore the video equipment and enjoy their usual 'story-time' in the normal way. You will be in command of the video at all times and will be able to review it before you send it on to me. We will arrange a convenient and secure method of file transfer so that you can forward your video recordings to me.

Figure 4.0 *Extract from video recording information sheet and consent form*

Essentially, although this information provided my participants with details about the storytime context that I was interested in exploring, it did not specify which part of the practice was of interest, nor how participants should behave. Nevertheless, all of the storytime videos that my five participant reader dyads produced shared contextual, behavioural, and linguistic features. *Extract 4.0 Amy and Denise's* Stick Man *Storytime Video* (see Appendix F) represents a number of these commonalities across my data; lines 1-100 of Extract 4.0 are of particular interest to the current discussion and form the basis of the analysis across Sections 4.1.1 – 4.1.3. It should be noted that all long extracts from my video data, like *Extract 4.0*, have been transcribed and inserted into Appendix F, where they are presented in chronological order according to when they first appear in this thesis. A detailed account of the transcription conventions used throughout this work, including an overview of the speaker-roles present in my transcripts, can also be found in Appendix E.

Lines 1-100 in Extract 4.0 (see Appendix F) provide a prototypical example of the initiation and very beginning of a storytime reading practice between Amy (2yo) and her mother, Denise. In brief, Amy and Denise spend time 'settling in' to their environment (lines 1-23) before they even open the book, *Stick Man* (Donaldson and Scheffler, 2008) (lines 24-25). Across this span of turns, the adult focuses on encouraging the child to sit down next to her and get comfortable (lines 4, 10, 12-13); to listen (line 21); and to focus (lines 16, 19). The child, following the adult's directions, prepares herself for the practice. Amy fetches her toy snake before making her way back over to her mother and allowing herself to be lifted onto the sofa next to her mother and under a blanket (line 6 - 13). Once the book has been opened and the adult begins reading the text aloud (line 32), the child initially falls silent and focuses on the pages in the picturebook, which the adult is holding in front of them both. I also observed similar patterns of behaviour carried out by adult-child reading dyads during my playgroup ethnography.

Overall, my data provided evidence that storytime participants carry out very similar reading routines and rituals, adhering to a set of norms that they associate with the discourse situation. I propose that the similarities I observed across my dataset are present because of a 'storytime schema' that participants bring with them to the discourse situation and share with their co-participant in the discourse-world (DW) (also see: Jackson, 2013; and review of the DW in Section 2.4.1). Schema theory was originally an approach developed in cognitive science where it was used by researchers in artificial intelligence as a means of replicating human cognition and language (see Schank and Abelson, 1977; also see for summary Gavins, 2007: 3; Stockwell, 2002: 77). Schema theory ultimately makes claims about how people

organise and access their background knowledge. Theorists proposed that human cognition is structured around scripts: knowledge stores containing information about familiar types of events and situations (Gavins, 2007: 3). Relevant associated chunks of human knowledge are formed into schemas. Humans beings then hold these knowledge stores, or schemas, in their memory and are able to recall them in order to make sense of new situations; thus, humans do not make sense of new scenarios and experiences afresh, but instead cope with unfamiliar situations by comparing them with familiar sequences of events held in memory (Mason, 2016: 139). For example, most people have a 'restaurant schema' that they employ whenever they visit a restaurant. The restaurant schema contains information about what to expect and how to behave in a restaurant situation. This schema is based on previous experiences of being in a restaurant and is regularly updated to suit new restaurant experiences.

Similarly, the 'storytime schema' is made up of a participant's prior knowledge and experiences of reading fiction in a storytime context and it guides their behaviour in similar situations (see Werth 1999: 94 – 116; Gavins 3-4, 21 – 23; also see Section 2.4.1). Based on the similarities observed across my dataset, I propose that this storytime schema underpins the storytime discourse under examination throughout this thesis. However, schema theory is relevant for an additional reason within this context: the child in the discourse situation is actively in the process of developing their storytime schematic knowledge.

Kail observes that 'even young children have much script knowledge' and are able to readily describe the events associated with familiar situations (1990: 94). Flavell et al. (2002: 106) also note that 'in addition to representing a one-time event, a young child also can construct a *script* – a generalised, temporally and spatially organised, sequence of events about some common routine with a goal'. According to Flavell et al. (2002: 107) these scripts form 'general mental templates or molds that tell the child how things are "supposed to go" in such familiar routines'. Siegler states that by the age of 3 children are able to represent routine activities in the form of scripts, claiming that children possess scripts for eating at their day-care centre and at restaurants, attending birthday parties, going about their daily routine and engaging in other familiar activities (1998: 204). Researchers in the field of cognitive development thus recognise that young children are in possession of scripts and schematic knowledge which they are able to employ in their day-to-day lives; scripts have also been linked directly to the child's experience of stories and their ability to remember stories (see Flavell, 2002: 107; Siegler 1998: 205). However, research also suggests that young children are *still forming* basic scripts and schemas (Flavell et al., 2002: 260; also see Farrar and Boyer-Pennington, 1999; Farrar and Goodman, 1992).

Schemas are not static or innate, but are dynamic conceptual structures that are accrued and fine-tuned through experience. Throughout this thesis, I investigate some of the very earliest interactions with books that human beings experience. As such, I propose that the storytime discourse under examination in this project provides an insight into the *very earliest* schema for the activity of reading that we develop: the storytime schema. I argue that the storytime schema is a knowledge store that both my adult and child participants possess, but one which the child is still in the process of developing; the storytime schema and the specific associated scripts employed by my participants are therefore different for adults and children in the discourse situation. Essentially, I propose that the storytime schema which underpins the discourse under investigation throughout this study is simultaneously being taught to and developed by children in the discourse situation by an adult who has well-established storytime schematic knowledge. The application of schema theory in the following analyses, then, provides a tool for examining what knowledge and routine behaviours are contained within the storytime schema and how that knowledge is developed, accrued and preserved during early reading practices. At the same time, the analyses examine how schematic knowledge affects the experiences of both participants involved in the interaction.

Furthermore, as Gavins (2007: 3) and Stockwell (2002: 77) both emphasise, schemas are a socioculturally defined mental protocol for negotiating a situation that is determined both by individual experience and cultural practice; schema theory is a useful tool for highlighting the sociocultural norms of a specific set of people, whilst allowing for the analysis of individual nuances amongst my participants (also see Mason, 2016). The application of schema theory to early reading practices therefore facilitates the exploration of the pre-school child's developing sense of what it means to read within a specific demographic.

Whilst schema theory has been widely adopted into numerous academic disciplines, in the discussion that follows I employ the established terminology used in cognitive linguistics, following Stockwell (2002). This current project adopts a cognitive-linguistic approach throughout and as such this terminology is most closely aligned to my project's aims and objectives. Stockwell provides a set of key terminology relating to the creation, evolution, maintenance and management of a schema (2002: 79 – 80):

- Schema accretion: where new facts are added to an existing schema, enlarging its scope and explanatory range.
- Tuning: the modification of facts or relations within the schema

- Schema preservation: where incoming facts fit existing schematic knowledge and have been encountered previously.

- Schema reinforcement: where incoming facts are new but strengthen and confirm schematic knowledge

I view the storytime schema as a predominantly 'situational' script used by participants to 'negotiate commonly experienced events' (Stockwell, 2002: 77). In the linguistic field a script is defined as 'the conceptual structure drawn from memory to assist in understanding utterances' (Stockwell, 2002: 77). Ultimately, we employ schematic knowledge in order to process and make sense of discourse. Whilst the schematic knowledge that each participant possesses is completely individual, of interest to the current discussion are the strong similarities between my parent-child dyads that were observed across my data. In particular, I observed that my storytime participants engaged in common behaviours both *before* and *after* the book in the discourse situation had been opened. I argue, therefore, that schematic behaviours can be split into three key categories: triggering the activity; preparation to read; and reading. In the following sections (4.1.1 – 4.1.3), I combine schema theory with a close analysis of my storytime data in order to examine these three key areas. I explore how the storytime schema is triggered and what knowledge is preserved and reinforced during the early reading practices of my specific set of storytime participants.

4.1.1 The storytime schema: getting ready to read

The storytime schema is triggered in the discourse situation as soon as an adult and child decide that they want to read a book together. This decision can include:

- verbally expressing a desire to read, or asking a co-participant if they want to read (linguistic header)

- actively picking up a text to read (instrumental header)

- recognising that a time/place is associated with reading and therefore expecting to do so, i.e. bedtime (situational/locale header)

These key behaviours act as storytime schema 'headers' (see Schank and Abelson, 1977; Stockwell, 2002) which signal to discourse participants that they are about to engage in a specific type of discourse event. I observed all three of these schema headers across my storytime data, and often in combination. At playgroup – a situational header in itself – instrumental triggers were common and were usually accompanied by some verbal comment. I regularly observed children choosing a book and handing it to an adult (instrumental) whilst expressing a desire to read or be read to (linguistic), without any other prompt. All of the

parents who took part in my study made claims that their children engaged in similar behaviours at home when it came to initiating storytime, and that they too regularly initiated the reading activity in this way. At home, all of my storytime participants had regular reading routines, which meant that situational schema headers also played a significant role in the domestic setting. Bedtime stories, in particular, were described by parents as being very structured activities that were often embedded within a wider 'bedtime routine' which included having dinner, bathing, changing into pyjamas, reading stories, and then going to bed. Schema headers are necessary in order to define when and which script should be called into play in a particular situation (see Schank and Abelson, 1977: 46).

In Extract 4.0 (see Appendix F), Amy and Denise have already chosen a book, *Stick Man*, and Amy is already sat on the sofa when the video begins. So, it can be assumed that this parent-child dyad made the decision to read together prior to pressing record; this can be assumed of the majority of my video data. Therefore, all of the activity captured in Extract 4.0 and across my video dataset is the product of participants applying and behaving in accordance with their own individual storytime schema, which has been triggered in the discourse situation by some linguistic, instrumental, or situational header, or a combination of these. Once the storytime schema has been instantiated, in order for it to remain relevant, or non-fleeting (Schank and Abelson 1977: 46 - 48), participants draw on certain knowledge stores and begin to behave in a way that matches their conceptual understanding of what storytime practices involve. Given the behavioural similarities exemplified in Extract 4.0 and across my storytime videos, I propose that the initiation of these practices and the process of getting into position during storytime is an important part of these early reading activities.

In Extract 4.0, prior to the book being opened and read aloud by Denise, participants engage in a settling in procedure (lines 1 - 25). The settling in procedure involves participants locating themselves in a particular spot, sitting together in a specific way, getting comfortable, and preparing the child to sit, look, and listen, whilst removing any potential distractions. In Extract 4.0, this settling in procedure is triggered in the discourse by a linguistic header produced by the adult in line 1. In line 1 the adult participant begins her turn with the discourse marker 'right', which signals to her co-participant that she is about to begin a new part of the conversation, or introduce a new topic. The question that follows 'have you got stick man? (Extract 4.0, line 1) provides her co-participant with an indication of what this new topic is: the picturebook. The use of discourse markers in this way, at the very beginning of a storytime practice, was common across my dataset with 'okay' and 'right' being the most prevalent markers used by adults. At this point in the discourse, these

markers are a linguistic header that signal to the child that the adult is ready to begin the storytime practice, and that the child should also get ready to begin reading. The verbal guidance that the adult provides structures the practice for the child who is still constructing and developing their storytime schema.

In her study of group storyreading in a nursery school, Cochran-Smith identified a similar set of interactional patterns which she referred to as 'readiness interactions' (1984: 110-124). Cochran-Smith (1984: 169) found that at the beginning of a storyreading event, adult storyreaders would spend time talking about appropriate behaviour (both verbal and nonverbal) during storyreadings and encouraging individual children to behave accordingly; the storyreader ultimately uses these interactions to enforce the 'norms' of group storyreading throughout the practice (1984: 110). Cochran-Smith argues that the underlying message of these interactions is clear: '*first* you indicate that you are ready to be "a reader" by sitting, listening, and looking appropriately, *then* you may begin to read (or listen to) a book' (1984:170). Across my dataset, storytime participants engaged in similar 'readiness interactions' which focused on behaviours such as: getting comfortable and 'being ready', book choice, the concept of shared reading, and eliminating obvious distractions. These interactions, usually led by the adult in the discourse situation, set the stage for the reading that follows and essentially show participants settling in to their environment and preparing to 'be a reader'.

Across lines 1-23 (see Extract 4.0, Appendix F), Amy and Denise spend time getting comfortable. In line 4, the adult states that she is 'going to wear the blanket' and as she sits down on the sofa she wraps a blanket around her shoulders. In doing so, the adult in the discourse situation produces an action that preserves the schematic knowledge that participants should get comfortable and prepare themselves for a reading activity before the reading begins. The child in the discourse situation then mimics the adult's speech and behaviour. The child begins by directly copying the adult's speech about wearing the blanket (line 6), including the first person reference 'I'; however, she abandons this utterance. Instead, Amy claims 'i need the-i need the snake!' (line 6) and she climbs off the sofa and wanders off-screen to a different part of the room. The child's use of the verb 'need' in this instance displays a level of requirement in the discourse. Amy's use of the boulomaic modal lexical verb 'need' and her return to the sofa with the toy snake once retrieving it signal her compliance with this 'settling in procedure': the child thinks about what *she* needs to do and where *she* needs to be before the reading begins. However, the child's actions are guided by the adult. In line 10, just before the child returns to the sofa with the snake, the adult produces

another discourse marker 'Ok', but this time she pats the sofa next to where she is sat. Again, the adult repeats the linguistic pattern in line 1: 'discourse marker + header' except she follows the discourse marker in line 10 with a behavioural header: patting the sofa – rather than a linguistic header: a question – which encourages the child to sit down next to her. In response, Amy returns to the sofa and allows herself to be lifted onto the sofa next to her mother.

Throughout these storytime practices, adults produce different types of headers in order to re-instantiate schematic knowledge and its associated behaviours for the child who is still developing their basic storytime schema. The adult's actions also address the child's low working memory and attentional control. In line with Marcovitch et al.'s (2007) observations, the 'discourse marker + header' pattern observed in the adult's discourse can be seen to consistently activate the 'goal state' of the activity which is 'critical for goal maintenance in pre-schoolers' (2007: 562; also see review in Section 2.5.1).

Across my storytime videos, adults would enforce the idea that participants needed to prepare to read by settling down and getting comfortable. Parents used verbal statements and questions (linguistic headers), such as 'comfy?' and 'are you ready?' to activate this goal, or less explicit nonverbal behaviours such as positioning their child in a certain way, or picking up a book (instrumental headers). Certain behaviours were also often triggered by participants' situational knowledge and expectations (situational headers), such as a story following a change into pyjamas and preceding getting into bed. Regardless of the specific trigger, all participants made sure that they were sat comfortably together before the adult started to read the book aloud. Specific seating arrangements were therefore embedded within the storytime schema as a result of adult guidance that re-instantiates and preserves certain schematic behaviours.

All of the children in my storytime videos showed a level of familiarity with the 'getting comfortable and being ready' ritual, with some of the older children commenting on it explicitly:

1	CP:	it's going to be bedtime after this (quick) story *(=child sits down on the sofa with the*
2		*book)*
3	AP:	((whispers)) yeah *(adult sits down and takes the book from the child)*
4	CP:	Dogger
5	AP:	hhhh Dogger
6	CP:	get comfy mum °xxxx and get ready for bed° *(=adult opens the book to the first page)*
7	AP:	O̲nce there was a soft brown toy named dogger *(=adult points to page as she reads*
8		*the word dogger)*

9   […]

Extract 4.1 Claire and Sally's Dogger storytime video: getting ready to read

In this extract, Claire's (CP) schematic knowledge surrounding storytime is clear in her verbal and non-verbal behaviours. Claire notes that the practice precedes bedtime (line 1) whilst positioning herself on the sofa without any explicit instruction to do so. Once Sally sits down next to her, Claire voluntarily allows Sally to take the book from her. Claire then addresses her mother directly and tells her 'get comfy mum xxxx and get ready for bed' (line 6). Claire adopts an authoritative role usually associated with the adult in the discourse situation here and produces talk which reflects her previous experiences of the practice and reveals something about her current expectations in the discourse situation: storytime is a cosy and relaxing activity that takes place before bed. Cochran-Smith argues that after being read to regularly children 'extract patterns of behaviours that accompany reading' (1984: 120) and I propose that these patterns are accrued to the child's storytime schema. In Extract 4.1, Claire draws on schematic knowledge associated with 'getting ready to read' and settles into the practice without explicit instruction from the adult. Instead, Claire provides guidance for the adult based on her previous experiences. In Extract 4.0, once Amy has retrieved the snake she 'needed' and returned to the sofa, the adult picks her up and positions her close to her underneath the blanket. Amy complies with this action and I argue that her willingness to do so provides evidence that she recognises this sequence of events as a normal part of the practice. This ritual effectively reinforces and preserves her schematic knowledge associated with storytime preparation.

Once participants are sat on the sofa, Denise asks Amy 'do you want to put it [the snake] down while we're reading?' (Extract 4.0, line 16). This question emphasises two things: first, the first person plural pronoun 'we' foregrounds the joint nature of the practice and second, that in order to read, you need to focus on the text without distraction. Up until this point in the discourse, the adult has shown no negative response to the child fetching the snake and when the child introduces the snake's eyes as 'judy and jason' in line 11, the adult provides feedback and responds (line 14). As a result of this behaviour, the adult's question in line 16 appears as a non-confrontational suggestion. The question-format of the utterance also appears to give the child the option to make the decision. Amy agrees that they should put the snake down (line 18) and in line 19, the adult asks 'shall we put him over there?' and pats the cushion next to the child. This utterance is of interest for two reasons: first, the adult again uses the first person plural pronoun 'we' but this time to refer to an action, thus

presenting the action in the discourse as shared and something that the two are doing together; second, the adult refers to the snake with the third person singular pronoun 'him', switching from 'it' in line 16. In doing so, the adult personifies the toy and immediately gives it a level of autonomy in the discourse situation, which she later uses for schema reinforcement (see below). The nature of this 'we' utterance means that the child is in charge of placing the snake down which, especially when matched with the questioning in the discourse, reinforces the notion that putting the snake down was the child's idea. What is more, by allowing the child to move the snake, she physically enacts this decision which is more memorable, and therefore more likely to stick in the child's mind as an action she completed during this practice. Then, drawing on the personification of the toy enacted through her speech in line 19, Denise attributes the snake the ability to hear and uses its autonomy for schema reinforcement, stating 'he can listen too, can't he? Maybe he doesn't know about stick man' (line 21). I argue that by interacting with the toy in this way, the adult engages in playful behaviour whereby the snake momentarily becomes a third text-receiver in the DW. Furthermore, I propose that the adult here recognises that at this point in the discourse the snake is foregrounded in the child's DW and is receiving the majority of the child's attention. The adult thus, drawing on their co-participant's actions and talk in the DW, uses the snake to foreground the behavioural norms of the practice, namely that the child needs to listen and also that the text itself is a form of knowledge exchange (in this case about *Stick Man*). Denise is also able to bring the discourse back round to the book *Stick Man.* Across lines 16 - 22, the adult manages the child's focus from snake to story through her talk and 'deletes' the toy as a distraction. Reading is presented as a shared activity that requires the child's full attention. Nevertheless, I argue that the adult's decision to include the toy snake in the discourse and to use it to re-focus the child is a form of play that makes the discourse more fun for the child; I observed a number of similar interactions across my data. During such interactions, the communicative aims of reading and play exist side by side and I suggest that repeated instances like these work to emphasise the idea that reading as an activity is fun and enjoyable.

The norm of 'listening', then, is embedded within these readiness interactions and whilst Denise uses the Snake to foreground this behavioural norm in Extract 4.0 (see Appendix F), some parents commented on it explicitly:

1   *(parent and child are already sat together on the sofa)*
2   CP: [xxxx

3	AP:	[do you want to read this one? *(=holds text up so that the child can see it)*
4	CP:	(it's little)
5	AP:	the <u>H</u>airy book *(=opens book)* are you ready? you listening? *(=opens page onto first*
6		*double page spread)*
7	CP:	yep *(= child looks up from toy in his hands and towards the pages of the book)*
8		[…]

9 ***Extract 4.2*** *Elijah and Eleanor's Hairy (1) storytime video: listening*

In Extract 4.2, the adult participant asks the child 'are you ready? you listening?' (line 5). The adult's questions here explicitly link being ready with the activity of listening for the child. Once again, the question format of the discourse engages the child because they are required to respond. The child's response in line 7 'yep' is matched with the child looking up at the picturebook pages. These actions provide evidence that he recognises what his role is in the discourse and what actions this role entails: when ready to read, he must listen *and* look. This norm of the practice is embedded within the 'getting comfortable' procedure which sees adults and children adopting a seating arrangement so that they can both see the pages of the picturebook that is about to be read aloud. In Extract 4.0 line 21-22, the adult picks up the book and holds it directly in front of herself and the child, which encourages joint attention and reinforces the idea that the child must be able to see the book during the practice. Picking up and positioning the book in this instance acts as an instrumental header that reinforces this norm in the practice; however, parents often referred to this aspect of the practice with verbal triggers:

1		*(children are climbing onto the sofa as the adult makes her way across)*
2	CP:	read this story *(=passes the book to the adult)*
3	AP:	ready? *(=children sit next to one another on the sofa)*
4	CP:	that's an apple moon xxx[xxx-
5	AP:	[oo I need to fit in the middle, move over *(children move*
6		*over together and don't let mum in the middle)* oh are you going there, ok *(adult sits*
7		*down next to the children)* Right, Claire can you see? *(opens book)*
8	CP:	no I can't see
9	AP:	ooo here we go *(=flicks through opening pages and child moves to the other side of*
10		*her mum, where she can see)*
11		[…]
12		

Extract 4.3 *Claire and Sally's King Elk storytime video: looking*

In Extract 4.3, the two children in the discourse are playful and do not let their mother sit in between them. As a result, the adult must sit next to them at the end of a row of three. In line 7, the adult produces the discourse marker 'right', whilst opening the book, which indicates

that she is about to begin reading and she asks Claire, who is sat at the other end of the row of three, 'can you see?'. The child replies 'no I can't see' (line 8) but rather than the adult explicitly telling the child to move, the child does so independently as the adult produces another marker 'here we go' and begins to turn pages in the book. In this extract, the adult's question foregrounds the norm 'I need to see' for the child in the discourse situation. However, again the question format in line 7 presents this concept as something for the child to think about and act on. The child is given ownership of her actions in the discourse situation and she decides to move so that she can see the book. I propose that the child's decision to move provides evidence of her acting in accordance with her storytime schematic knowledge by recognising that the norms of the practice require her to be able to see the book being read.

Book choice was another prevalent feature of these readiness interactions. In Extract 4.0 the adult asks the child 'have *you* got stick man?' (line 1, *added emphasis*); in Extract 4.1 it is the child who is holding the text at the beginning of the reading; in Extract 4.2, the adult asks the child 'do *you* want to read this one?' (line 3, *added emphasis);* and in Extract 4.3 the child is holding the book before passing it to the adult and saying 'read this story' (line 2). Across my dataset, book choice was foregrounded by the adult as a part of the 'readiness interaction' but ownership of this decision was usually handed over to the child. Across my interview data, parents stated that it was their children who chose what texts they would read. Similarly, when adults and children engaged in read aloud practices together at playgroup, I observed that the child was always in charge of book choice. Children were either told to choose something by an adult, or the child would choose a text and approach an adult with it. In cases where a child was having more than one story during a single storytime episode, the child was usually in charge of deciding what order the books were going to be read:

```
1   AP:    which one are we having first then? (=adult moves child from chair so that he can sit
2          down first)
3   CP:    what?
4   AP:    which one are we having first? (=adult sits down in 'big chair' and child's attention
5          turns towards books)
6   CP:    this one about god (.) no jesus. (=child picks up a book and shows it to his father and
7          then allows himself to be lifted onto his father's lap)
8   AP:    ((whispers)) jesus
9   […]
```

Extract 4.4 *William and Matthew's Easter Story and more storytime video: book choice*

In the example above, the adult asks the child twice 'which one are we having first?' (line 1, 4). The use of questions by adults during this book choice ritual was common with adults employing a variety based on the following key formations:

- Which one (should)?
- What should?
- What stories?
- Shall we (read)?
- Do you want?

Again, the use of questions by the adult present the child with a choice and gives them ownership of the decision. Moreover, questions engage the child with the practice by requiring them to think in order to produce a response. In Extract 4.4, William's (CP) verbal response is 'this one about god' (line 6) and it is matched by the non-verbal action of picking up a book and handing it to his father. William does not hesitate when making this decision and he does not ask for, or appear to expect, any confirmation from the adult: book choice is his decision and each time William is allowed to complete this sequence, this aspect of the storytime schema is reinforced.

All of the different features of the settling in procedure discussed above provide evidence of participants indicating that they are 'ready to be a "a reader"' (Cochran-Smith, 1984: 170). Throughout these readiness interactions the adult uses their spoken discourse and their actions to reinforce and preserve schematic knowledge about how to prepare to read, thus teaching the child that there are certain norms associated with the practice. Verbal and non-verbal behaviours in the discourse situation show children how to act whilst encouraging children to think about how to act. Preparation to read is a core part of early reading practices and forms part of the schematic knowledge surrounding these practices. Across my dataset, children showed a strong awareness of the norms enforced by these readiness interactions. Following these interactions, the book is opened and the adult begins to read the text aloud, which signals the end of the settling in procedure. As a result, there is a significant shift in the discourse and participants adopt different roles in the discourse situation in accordance with their own individual storytime schema and script(s) that are more closely associated not with preparing to read but with the practice of reading itself.

4.1.2 The storytime schema: reading and how to read

The book in the discourse situation is a significant instrumental header – within the situational header associated with the storytime activity – that triggers certain schematic

knowledge about *how* to read (also see Sections 4.2 and 4.3.3 for discussion of the role of the book in the discourse situation). In line 24 of Extract 4.0 (see Appendix F), Denise produces her third 'discourse marker + header (linguistic)' of the interaction so far: 'Ok stick man. here he is'. This utterance follows the settling in procedure: participants are now sat comfortably together, have moved all distractions, and are ready to read. However, most importantly, the text is in front of them (see line 21-22). The discourse marker 'Ok' produced by the adult therefore once again signals to the child that she is about to embark on a new part of the conversation, but in this instance alerts the child to the fact that they will now read the book *Stick Man.* Furthermore, the proximal demonstrative 'here', third person pronoun 'he', and the present tense 'is' in the phrase 'here is he' which follows the 'discourse marker + header (linguistic)' pattern foregrounds the here and now of the book and the character 'stick man' in the discourse situation. This phrase triggers a shift in the discourse away from the here and now of the DW and the practice of settling down to the here and now of the book in the discourse situation.

Amy instantly recognises that the shift is taking place and as Denise produces the discourse marker in line 24, her gaze shifts in the DW from the toy snake towards the book that her mother is holding in front of her. Amy then mimics her mother's talk and repeats 'here he is' (line 26), the line in the discourse that I argue foregrounds the 'here and now' of the book. The child's next utterance in line 28 is a specific observation made about a character pictured in the text and thus, it is clear that the child's attention is now focused on the book.

Once participants are ready to read and are focused on the book, they adopt specific roles in the discourse situation that are assigned to them through the storytime schema: the adult adopts a read-aloud narrator role and the child settles into a listener role. These roles have different sets of behavioural and linguistic norms attached to them and they create a further shift in the discourse from 'beginning reading' to 'performing reading'. In Extract 4.0, as soon as the adult begins to read the written discourse in the book aloud (line 32), adopting her read-aloud narrator role (transcribed in all extracts used within this thesis as AN: adult-narrator; see overview of transcribed speaker-roles in Appendix E), the child falls silent and listens, assuming their 'listener-role' in the discourse.

Once the read aloud begins, participants remain in the same position until the adult closes the book at the end of the story. Participants read the book from start to finish, in order, and the book remains the focus of the discourse throughout. In Extract 4.0, once participants have settled into their storytime reading position and are ready to read (see

Section 4.1.1), they do not move. Denise holds the picturebook up so that both herself and Amy are able to see the pages. This was common across my dataset, and except for instances where children helped with page-turning, the adult remained in control of the physical text throughout: holding and positioning it; turning the pages; and managing the time participants spent on each page. The child on the other hand, willingly gives up the text to the adult as Amy does at the beginning of Extract 4.0. The way in which the adult holds the text and controls the reading mimics adult reading practices: reading one page at a time in the correct order, and thus exemplifies to children how they should interact with books. I argue that these early reading practices therefore introduce, maintain, and reinforce knowledge surrounding how to treat and use books. Children are able to accrete this knowledge and store it in their storytime schema; each time children experience events in a similar manner, the schema is preserved and reinforced.

Perhaps one of the most obvious observations to make about storytime is that participants enter the discourse situation expecting to read a book with someone else and, more precisely, participants expect a book to be read aloud by one participant (the adult) to the other (the child). The schematic roles that each participant adopts in the discourse situation is evidence of this expectation; however, the adult does not *just* read a text aloud during storytime and the child does not *just* fall silent and listen. One of the earliest and most significant findings that emerged from the video and ethnographic data I collected, was the level of talk, that was *not* the adult's read-aloud performance, around and about the picturebook. In Extract 4.0, across the 71 turns that make up the extract, only 20 are instances of the adult actually reading the lines from the picturebook *Stick Man* (see AN and AC turns in transcript; also see note on transcribed speaker-roles in Appendix E). Other scholars have recognised and discussed the interactive nature of these practices, referring to them as 'social interactions' and 'interactive negotiations' (see Cochran-Smith, 1984: 125 - 173; also see Section 2.2.1), and I argue that these are embedded within the storytime schema. Ultimately, there are two main types of discourse taking place simultaneously: the read-aloud narrative performed by the adult *and* additional talk between participants about the read-aloud narrative and/or the book, or some other shared topic (see Chapter 5 for a detailed examination of storytime talk). Participants come to the discourse situation expecting both. These linguistic and interactional norms come to be associated with storytime practices and filter into the storytime schema. Once again, every time the sequence conforms to these expectations, the schema is reinforced.

The 'we' of the discourse (see discussion in Section 4.1.1 above), usually repeated during readiness interactions, underlies these communicative norms of the practice, which are based on the idea that participants are reading together. Adults across my dataset not only engaged children in additional talk about the picturebook, but would regularly encourage them to join in with the read aloud. In Extract 4.0, line 78, (Appendix F) the adult reads the narrative line 'stick man is floating, he floats on and on, stick man, oh stick man, beware of the…' but she does not complete the narrative line. Instead, her intonation rises at the end of her utterance, as she waits for the child to complete the line for her. Although the child's response in line 79 ('trick') is incorrect, Amy nevertheless recognises the adult's invitation for her to join in with the read aloud and she does so without having to be asked explicitly. The adult engages the child in this way twice more during the read-aloud practice (see lines 97-98 and 137-138). Communicative patterns like this not only foreground the joint nature of the practice, but encourage the child to listen to the words that are being read aloud, thus foregrounding their significance in the discourse situation.

Alongside 'reading' the words in the text, children are guided towards the pages of the book and to the pictures, in particular. In Extract 4.0, lines 32-33 the adult reads the narrative lines 'stick man lives in the family tree with his stick lady love and the stick children three'. In latching talk that follows, the adult immediately asks the child 'can you see them? where are the three children?' (line 34) thus, directing Amy to search the images for text-world enactors that were just mentioned in the read-aloud discourse. This behaviour is encouraged throughout the storytime practices contained in my dataset (also see discussion of scaffolding talk and engagement activities in Chapter 5). Adults effectively show children how to interact with picturebooks, namely engaging with pictures and matching up words and images whilst reading (also see extended analysis of lines 32-34 of Extract 4.0 in Chapter 6, Section 6.1) .

All of the children involved in my study provided evidence of their awareness that the book and pictures were an important part of the practice. Throughout the read-aloud activity, the child's gaze remains, for the most part, focused on the pages of the picturebook. What is more, much of the child's discourse refers to the images in the text, as opposed to other narrative features (also see discussion of child's talk and perceptual processing in Section 5.2.2). In Extract 4.0, one of the first comments that the child makes once the book has been opened is about the picture that she can see. Amy observes 'Oh closing his eyes and smell the flower' (line 28) and playfully enacts what she can see; Amy is referring to the image below:

Figure 4.1 *Title image from* Stick Man *(2008)*

The child's comments come just after the book has been opened and provide evidence that her initial instincts are to interact with the images in the text. The child's language is also matched to the adult's in line 24. Amy employs the third person pronoun 'his' to refer to the text-world enactor she is talking about and adopts the present continuous tense with 'closing'; thus, adopting the same 'here and now' attitude towards the book and its contents. Furthermore, the child's utterance overlaps and cuts short the adult's talk in line 27. The child, then, produces this talk without any guidance or encouragement from the adult in the discourse situation. Instead, I argue that the child's behaviours show her complying with schematic knowledge that she possesses surrounding how reading works, which includes information such as: engage with the images and what you can see; engage with your co-participant.

4.1.3 The storytime schema: what is reading?

Based on the evidence in my dataset, I propose that the storytime schema contains a version of the following schematic knowledge, which participants come to expect from the discourse situation:

- Participants will sit together in a comfortable space
- An adult will read a text aloud
- The child will sit quietly, look and listen
- Both participants will be able to see the text at all times

- Participants will look at the pictures of the text throughout the reading
- All participants are free to touch and interact with the text at any point during the discourse
- All participants are free to talk, ask questions, and interact with their co-participant at any point during the discourse

It also appears from my dataset that it is expected that reading will be interactive, visual, and fun. The storytime schema is constantly preserved, reinforced, accreted, and tuned during early reading practices, especially for the pre-school child, who has a very limited experience of reading. Schema reinforcement and schema preservation, led by the adult in the discourse situation, is crucial for the child's development into a mature literate adult.

In Extract 4.0 line 46 (Appendix F), for example, the child begins a turn that overlaps and thus interrupts the adult. The child addresses her mother directly with 'mummy' and she then begins to flick through pages in the picturebook before stopping further ahead in the story on a page that is familiar to her from a previous reading. Amy then declares 'member the cat is scared of father christmas?' (line 49). During this instance, Amy disrupts the norms of the practice. The adult responds with 'oh yes, the cat is scared isn't he, you'll get to that bit in a bit' (lines 51-52) and she immediately returns to the page that they were reading before the interruption. The adult here reinforces the norm that when reading a book, we follow the pages in a certain order, from start to finish; this is a feature of reading that we internalise as adults and that the child will need to learn in order to become an efficient reader. Ultimately, when the norms of the practice break down, the adult is there to reinforce them and they do this throughout the activity.

Repeated practices like the prototypical case study discussed above (see Extract 4.0, Appendix F) gradually teach children about reading, including how to read and behave around books. Like Cochran-Smith, I argue that across my dataset 'there was little doubt that the children knew both what to expect of the story reader and what was expected of them' (1984: 115). Children are 'active learners' throughout storytime (see Cochran-Smith, 1984: 120). Eventually, as they become more experienced readers, children begin to mimic the schematic roles associated with the adult in storytime reading practices. For example, later on in the *Stick Man* transcript in line 138 (see Extract 4.0, Appendix F) Denise once again encourages Amy to complete a narrative line. Amy immediately completes this line (see line 139, Extract 4.0), but she also manipulates her voice in ways very similar to the adult in the discourse situation, elongating her pronunciation and raising her intonation. Similarly, in Extract 4.5, William asks his father if he will sit on his lap (line 1) and then he specifies that

he will show/hold the book and turn the pages (line 7). These are all actions associated with the adult's role in the practice, but are nevertheless behaviours that William has come to internalise and adopt as appropriate for reading through repeated storytime activities with his parents.

1	CP:	could you sit on my lap *(=positions self on the edge of the family's 'reading chair')*
2	AP:	stand up
3	CP:	owuh *(stands up and lets father sit in the reading chair)*
4	AP:	I'll squash you
5	CP:	I-I might break my legs
6	AP:	no:: come on then *(=child allows father to lift him onto this father's lap)*
7	CP:	erm, I'll show the-I'LL HOLD it and turn the pages I will turn the pages a::nd hold
8		the book *((father opens book))* and you can re::ad it
9	[…]	

Extract 4.5 *William and Matthew's Catch Me and more storytime video: mimicry*

Storytime practices, then, are not just about reading a text together, but are about learning about books, reading, and how to behave. Across my dataset, reading took place in a safe and comfortable space, and children read a text of their choice, which they usually owned. Throughout the reading, children were given time and space to respond, interpret and experience the book that they had chosen; they read this book all the way through from start to finish, with no fragmentation. Children were also free to interact with their co-participant at any point during the discourse. Moreover, embedded within these practices were additional teaching and interactive games (also see Section 5.3), usually introduced by the adult in the discourse situation. All of these features of the practice exist simultaneously and as a result young readers end up with a holistic reading experience in which multiple discourse elements combine to create an engaging, informative and fun interaction with a book. The success of these features of the practice rely on meaningful interaction between a pre-school child, a more knowledgeable partner, and a text. The physical situation is therefore paramount during these early reading practices.

In their review of research on picturebook reading, Fletcher and Reese (2005) foreground the importance of taking into account the three key components of storytime practices: the adult, the child, and the text. In particular, Fletcher and Reese advocate a transactional approach: 'in which characteristics of the three components of the reading interaction (i.e parent, child and book) are viewed as interacting across time' (2005: 94). Pellegrini and Galda who consider 'joint reading as a context' argue that 'adults do not

merely socialise children, but children and adults have dynamic effects on each other, and these interactions vary, in turn, depending on the demands of the specific task at hand' (2003: 309). They go on to explore context as transactional and claim 'there is a transactive relation between individuals and their social and physical surroundings. Individuals take an active role in choosing and creating context; they do not merely respond to it' (2003: 309). Pellegrini and Galda present a 'model of social context for joint interaction around text' and suggest that individual-level factors, social relationships, and aspects of the texts being read 'all influence each other in a dialectal fashion and are realised in the social interactions between participants' (2003: 311). Ultimately, the parent, child, and book in these situations interact in ways that are specific to the language event and this is based, guided and led largely by the physical situation: the context that participants have created.

The significance of the specific contextual set-up of storytime practices has also been highlighted in recent research that has sought to investigate the differences between parent-child joint reading of print book versus electronic formats (see Krcmar and Cingel, 2014; Munzer et al., 2019). In these studies, the storytime practices under investigation in this thesis are often viewed as the 'traditional book condition' (Krcmar and Cingel, 2014). Researchers have found that when parents and children read traditional print books together, they engage in more high quality interactions than with electronic texts and as a result the child's comprehension is higher; print books elicit a higher quality parent-toddler reading experience. Munzer et al. suggest that 'parents reading electronic books with toddlers should consider engaging as they would with print' (2019: 8). These studies recognize that 'traditional' print book storytime practices have their own set of norms and operate in specific ways that can potentially be replicated in other environments. On the whole, research suggests that traditional storytime practices have key contextual elements that are fundamental to how participants experience the discourse. These key aspects of the practice (i.e the child, the adult and the text) and the way in which they interact are core to understanding these practices fully.

The physical closeness, in particular, between parent-child dyads that underpins many storytime practices has also been remarked upon by researchers. Fletcher and Reese (2005: 97) note that 'parental warmth during book reading would be expected to affect the child's sense of affiliation and relatedness to that parent, and speculatively to engender a positive attitude towards books from an early age'. Munzer et al. (2019) also draw attention to the role of nonverbal aspects of storyreading and in a BBC article relating to their study are quoted as claiming 'non-verbal interactions, including warmth, closeness and enthusiasm, helped create

positive associations with reading that will likely stick with children as they get older' (BBC, 2019).

My data revealed that storytime is an intimate and personal practice between an adult and a child where physical, alongside verbal, interaction is meaningful. Across my dataset, participants are sat very close together and adults regularly lean towards their children to hug them, or kiss them. I observed similar behaviours during my playgroup ethnography. The following quotes are taken from my fieldnotes:

- 'Charlotte was sat on her mother's knee […] with her head leaning back against her mother's chest…'
- 'Elijah and his mother sat very close together on the bean bag. Elijah's hands were on top of his mother's'

This physical closeness was also remarked upon by parents during my interviews; specific responses from Sally and Denise, respectively, are presented below:

- 'I really like it. It is a good time for them [the children] to feel like you're having a real one-to-one interaction with them'
- 'There's something about sitting down with a book that calms people down. It's a really special time together - a really precious time, I think […] there's a real intimacy about reading stories together and I recognise that and look for it […] I am deliberately looking for opportunities to spend time with just me and Amy where she's got solely my attention.'

Essentially, the domestic reading setting is one of familiarity and I argue that the specific nature of these practices and the way in which the adult, child, and text interact are what comes to define this DW.

Overall, the contextual, behavioural and linguistic norms exemplified in Extract 4.0 (Appendix F) indicate that participants who possess a storytime schema view reading as an interactive practice, where books are shared and discussed in the DW, and where a book is read aloud by a literate narrator to a pre-literate listener. Reading for pre-schoolers is, for the most part, a spoken discourse, rather than the silent conceptual process we associate with reading as adults. Moreover, reading is a physical event. As Extract 4.0 exemplifies, storytime participants are engaged in an array of activities surrounding the book being read which include the settling in routine and interacting with one another both verbally and nonverbally. The specific way in which participants communicate during these practices relies on the precise nature of the storytime context. The knowledge contained in the

storytime schema, then, is just as much about the physical situation and the activities that surround the text, as it is about reading the text itself. As such, I argue that the DW of storytime is of primary significance and the precise nature of this DW is the focus of the next section.

4.2 The storytime discourse-world: an interactive read-aloud context

The storytime DW is illustrated in Figure 4.2. It should be noted, just as van der Bom (2015: 118) observes, that 'few conventions exist within Text World Theory (TWT) to govern the diagramming of discourse-worlds'. Throughout this thesis, I will adopt a style that is similar to the diagramming used for text-worlds (see Gavins, 2007) when representing the storytime DW and other conceptual levels of the discourse (also see Section 4.3). According to TWT conventions, text-worlds (TW) are represented diagrammatically as a box which usually contains the temporal, spatial, and social deictics of the structure; the predominant time-zone of the TW, its location, and the enactors including other objects present are listed. Horizontal and vertical arrows are used within TW diagrams to account for relational processes or material processes, respectively (see Gavins, 2007: 53-72). Arrows are thus employed in order to represent some form of relationship between entities and/or foreground significant attributes of entities present in the TW. Arrows and other connecting and/or dividing lines are also used to link up a TW with other TWs, modal-worlds, or other key aspects of the discourse in order to represent some relationship or development. In Figure 4.2, I adopt similar conventions: the DW is represented as a box where the key elements of this conceptual level are listed; arrows are used to denote key attributes and/or relationships between entities within the DW; and a dividing line is used to represent the split nature of the structure. Gavins (2007: 40) notes that 'the purpose of text-world diagrams is to aid the analysis of a discourse, rather than to fully represent it' and this is the approach I adopt throughout my work. It is my view that the diagrammatic conventions employed in TWT analysis provide a systematic way of exploring not only the contents of conceptual structures, but the relationships between different conceptual levels of a given discourse. I hope to use these conventions in order to explore the DW in more detail, and in particular the progression from the DW to TW(s).

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│ Discourse-world                                 │
├──────────────────────────┬──────────────────────┤
│ Participants:            │ Participants:        │
│ Author          ◄────────┼──► Adult / narrator  │
│ Illustrator              │ (Proxy TEXT-PRODUCER)│
│ Editor                   │                      │
│ Designer               S │                      │
│                        P │ Child / listener     │
│                        L │ (TEXT-RECEIVER)      │
│                        I │                      │
│ Time and Location:     T │ Time and location:   │
│ SPLIT between          T │ SHARED               │
│ participants             │ between participants │
│                          │                      │
│                          │ Objects: BOOK and    │
│                          │ all other objects    │
│                          │ and entities in the  │
│                          │ immediate situation  │
│                          │                      │
│                          │ Knowledge of         │
│                          │ participants:        │
│                          │ Storytime schema     │
│                          │                      │
│ TEXT-PRODUCER            │        TEXT-RECEIVER │
└──────────────────────────┴──────────────────────┘
```

Figure 4.2 *The storytime discourse-world*

The DW represented in Figure 4.2 is based on the schematic practices that I observed across my dataset (see Sections 4.1 - 4.1.3); it provides a general view of the storytime DW. In order to account for the DW of the *Stick Man* storytime practice introduced in Section 4.1 (see Extract 4.0, Appendix F) specifically, the adult and child labels in Figure 4.2 can easily be substituted for Denise and Amy, respectively, with the 'objects' category being filled by all the objects and entities that surround them as they read; these entities, including the toy snake, are partially represented in the screenshot from their storytime video, presented below in Figure 4.3. However, participants are also surrounded by a number of objects, entities, and other sensory input that are not captured on video, but nevertheless have the potential to impinge upon the discourse at any time.

[Image removed for participant confidentiality]

Figure 4.3 *The discourse-world of Amy and Denise*

As Figure 4.2 shows, the DW is split. Gavins argues that this is the case for most written texts where the producers of the written discourse and the receivers of the written discourse occupy separate spatial and temporal locations (2007: 26). In Figure 4.2, this split is represented by the TEXT-PRODUCER and TEXT-RECEIVER labels that sit on either side of a 'SPLIT' division line; the author, illustrator, editor and designer occupy one half of the split DW, and the adult and child occupy the other side of the split DW. According to Gavins, this spatio-temporal split between text-producer and text-receiver means that:

> the immediate material environment of the discourse becomes of secondary
> importance to the textual elements which form the main point of contact between
> participants […] the impingement of an object or other physical discourse-world
> elements on the discourse itself becomes less likely in split discourse-worlds,
> since such elements cease to be mutually perceivable by the participants. Only the
> text remains as a source of information from which knowledge can be
> incremented.

(Gavins, 2007: 26)

However, the precise nature of the TEXT-RECEIVER half of the split storytime DW complicates Gavins' claim. Previous applications of TWT to readers of written discourse have focused predominantly on solitary adult readers. In such instances, participants are

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usually involved in silent conceptual interaction with the written discourse in a split DW. However, this is not the case during storytime.

Storytime DWs contain at least two text-receivers, co-present participants reading the *same* text at the *same* time: an adult (in this case Denise) and a pre-school child (in this case Amy). These participants enter into the discourse situation wilfully and bring with them all of their previous knowledge about reading which is stored in their storytime schema (see Sections 4.1 - 4.1.3; also see Section 2.4.1 for overview of knowledge, negotiation, and Common Ground in the DW). Whilst the preceding sections focused predominantly on commonalities contained within the storytime schema, it is important to remember that the individual storytime schemas that the child and the adult bring to the discourse situation vary enormously. Schemas, for the most part, are built up from existing knowledge based on previous experiences of a situation; however, storytime participants have very different levels of experiential knowledge. Pre-school children, given their age and associated reading and cognitive abilities, do not have a large store of experiential knowledge relating to reading of any kind; for the pre-school child, the storytime schema *is* their reading schema. By comparison, adults who enter the storytime discourse situation usually have a large store of experiential knowledge relating to not just storytime, but to reading fiction more generally; literate adults are likely to have knowledge and experience of: being read to by others; learning to read; reading fiction (and other texts) silently and independently; and reading aloud to others. The way in which participants behave in the discourse situation depends on these knowledge stores. As such, storytime participants have very different roles and expectations in the storytime DW.

For example, only one of these text-receivers is able to read the written discourse as it appears in the text: the adult. The pre-school child's pre-literate status in the DW means that they are unable to read the words in the picturebook without a literate adult, which means that the adult is required to adopt a 'narrator-role' in the discourse, represented in Figure 4.2 by the 'Adult / narrator' label under participants. By contrast, the child adopts a listener-role in the DW, represented by the 'Child / listener' label under participants. Participants enter into the storytime DW expecting to adopt these roles (see Section 4.1.2). It is important to note here that my use of the term 'adult-narrator' throughout this work differs from traditional definitions of 'narrator' within literary studies. Traditionally, in the fields of stylistics and narratology, the term 'narrator' is associated with the analysis of narrative fiction and refers to an agent *within* a text who 'narrates or engages in some activity serving the needs of narration' (Rimmon-Kenan, 2002: 91). The narrator, then, is considered a *fictional* entity and

is examined as a product of the fictional discourse in line with other narratological and stylistic concepts present in literary fiction such as narrative voice, point of view, types of narrator/narration, focalisation, narrative levels, and deixis (see for example: Gennette, 1980; Rimmon-Kenan, 2002: 91; Stockwell 2002: 41 – 49; Simpson, 1993). However, my use of the term 'adult-narrator' does not refer to a fictional entity, but instead to a real-world speaker-role adopted by a participant in face-to-face discourse (also see Appendix E for further information about speaker-roles and the transcription conventions used in this thesis). The term 'adult-narrator', then, is used throughout this thesis to refer specifically to the adult's role in the discourse as the literate participant who reads a written discourse aloud. The terms 'adult-narrator' and 'read-aloud narrator' are somewhat synonymous; however, the 'adult' prefix is employed here to determine *which* participant specifically in the discourse situation is reading the shared written discourse aloud. My data revealed that the child participant is capable, and at times encouraged, to adopt a read-aloud narrator role during storytime practices; this potential role in the discourse: 'child-narrator' (transcription convention CN), is accounted for in Table 4.1, but requires further investigation which sits outside the remit of the current work. 'Child-narrator' and 'adult-narrator' can thus be viewed as two key subsets of the 'read-aloud narrator' role that I identified across my storytime data; a role which refers to a real-world participant giving a spoken performance of a written - usually fictional - discourse. I thus make a distinction throughout this work between two different types of narrator: first, *real-world* read-aloud narrators associated with my analysis of spoken storytime discourse: the adult-narrator (AN) and child-narrator (CN); and second, following Rimmon-Kenan (2002: 92), 'fictional narrators' which refer to the purely textual entities associated with traditional literary study. In line with the aims and focus of this thesis, the adult-narrator role takes precedence throughout and it is important to recognise, for example, that this adult read-aloud narrator often performs the fictional narrator's role in the picturebook text during their storytime performance. The child's assumption that the adult will adopt this narrator-role is closely linked not only to their inability to read, but to their limited store of knowledge about written fiction and reading; I would argue, for example, that the pre-schooler has very little notion of the author while this knowledge may play an important role in the adult participant's response to the text.

Real readers construct an idea of an author, whom they have no actual access to, based on other writings by that author and other sources about the author's life and works (for a full discussion see Stockwell, 2002: 42 -43). Existing TWT applications assume that readers experience the split DW of written narratives with this notion of the author as text-producer

and the text as the key source of information. However, during storytime, only the adult in the TEXT-RECEIVER half of the split DW is likely to understand the ontological and physical split in the DW between the text-producers and the text-receivers (see my discussion of fictionality in Section 2.5.4). In Figure 4.2, the adult's conceptual understanding of the split in the DW is represented by an arrow that connects the adult in the text-receiver half of the DW with the participants in the text-producer half of the DW, crossing the SPLIT line; no such line exists for the child. In fact, this split is likely to remain unperceived by the child.

All of the child's previous experiences of reading up until this point tell them that they are required to sit and listen to an adult and look at pictures (see Sections 4.1 - 4.1.3). Although some adults read the author's name aloud before beginning reading and often intimated that the book was in control of the discourse with comments such as 'let's wait and see, shall we?' and 'let's see what happens', there was very little discussion about the author and illustrator and their role in the discourse as text-producers across my dataset. The child, therefore, relies on the adult in the DW to produce the picturebook narrative and guide the reading practice. I propose, then, that the pre-school child in the storytime DW views the adult as their text-producer and the book as the thing in the DW that will be produced. In Figure 4.2, the child's conceptual understanding of the adult as text-producer in the DW is represented by the 'proxy TEXT-PRODUCER' role that sits beneath the 'Adult / narrator' label. For the child in the discourse situation, the actual text-producer is of little interest. Instead, when the adult reads a text aloud to a child, it is their spoken discourse, alongside the pictures in the text, that provide the key information that the child needs to construct a TW for a picturebook. Unlike existing TWT applications to written texts, then, it is the precise nature of the TEXT-RECEIVER half of Figure 4.2, rather than the communication across a conceptual split, that is fundamental to understanding early reading practices.

In the TEXT-RECEIVER half of the storytime DW (see Figure 4.2) the three key components of storytime – the adult, the child and the text (Fletcher and Reese, 2005; also see Section 4.1.3) – share space and time. This shared spatio-temporal environment means that the storytime participants are able to communicate with one another and engage physically with the book, their surroundings, and each other, at any point in the discourse; early reading practices are, therefore, a joint endeavour that is inherently interactive. The co-presence of the text-receivers ultimately means that there are more active contexts with the potential to impact on the discourse. In Extract 4.0 (Appendix F), the way in which Amy's toy snake enters and re-enters the interaction (see lines 6 - 30 and 109 -130) is evidence of how certain aspects of the context can at any point become relevant to one or more storytime

participants and thus enter into the discourse situation. The freedom of all participants to foreground any aspect of the immediate environment and contribute to the discourse at any point during the joint practice means that storytime can be unpredictable; there is often no way of knowing when someone will contribute, what they will contribute, and what the outcomes of that contribution will be. Across lines 179 – 186 in the *Stick Man* transcript (see Extract 4.0, Appendix F), for example, Amy interrupts (line 181) her adult-narrator (Denise) in order to provide commentary on what she can see in the pictures. Denise did not ask Amy to describe the presents shown in the image. However, once Amy produces the overlapping utterance beginning with a loud and elongated 'ERM' in line 181, which clearly exemplifies her intention to speak, her talk and the topic it introduces: the presents in the images in *Stick Man* become the focus of the discourse in the read-aloud DW. Across turns 181 – 185, Denise and Amy discuss these images, before Denise quickly picks up the read-aloud narrative again in line 186 in latching talk that signals the end of the talk about pictures that Amy introduced. Similar instances take place throughout the *Stick Man* storytime video (see Extract 4.0, Appendix F) and across my dataset more generally (see discussion of interactive comprehension in Chapter 5, Section 5.2). The TEXT-RECEIVER half of the storytime DW, ultimately, represents face-to-face spoken communication between an adult and a child.

It is important to note that although Section 4.1 provides an analysis of how the storytime schema is triggered within the DW through different behavioural, linguistic and contextual cues, the initiation of the DW itself between Amy and Denise is not captured in my video data. The adult and the pre-school child are involved in a DW prior to their decision to read a text together. This DW surrounds their face-to-face communication as adult and child in a shared immediate material environment, where all elements perceivable by the participants have the potential to impact the discourse. I propose that once either one of the participants suggests reading as an activity and the storytime schema is triggered, a distinct storytime DW becomes embedded within this initial discourse situation. The spatio-temporal location of storytime participants thus rarely changes and as such, the face-to-face communicative relationship that the adult and child share just prior to the reading event taking place remains pertinent throughout the activity. For example, storytime participants continue to have access to one another, just as they would during other face-to-face spoken interaction; this access is represented in Figure 4.2 by a two-way arrow that connects the adult and child. This means that throughout storytime, participants are free to interact with one another as they usually would; they are able to interrupt, ask questions, and talk to one another at any point and about anything during the read-aloud practice. Also, all objects in

the initial DW remain mutually perceivable and participants' shared knowledge of both how storytime is carried out and of one another remains relevant. In comparison with the solitary silent adult reader, then, where the physical DW becomes secondary to textual elements, storytime activities are interactive spoken practices, where the materiality of the discourse situation remains pertinent.

Nevertheless, once the storytime schema has been triggered, the purpose of the situation shifts and participants begin adhering to the new norms of an embedded discourse, engaging in the wilful and joint endeavour that is storytime. Essentially, I propose that once the text becomes the shared focus of the discourse, all participants enter into a split DW relationship with the author, illustrator , editor and designer. Whilst this split is unperceived by the child, it still affects the underlying purpose of the discourse; all participants in the TEXT-RECEIVER half of the DW behave differently when they begin to interact with the text (see Section 4.1.2). This shared communicative aim of the discourse is what constrains the unpredictable nature of the practice to an extent. However, it is often up to the adult to maintain this goal state for the pre-school child (see Marcovitch et al., 2007; also see discussion about header re-instantiation in Section 4.1.1). In the *Stick Man* video (see Extract 4.0, Appendix F), for example, each time the toy snake distracts Amy, Denise makes sure to shift the focus back towards the picturebook. In order for storytime to be 'successful', then, participants must communicate in a beneficial and coherent manner that helps make sense of the picturebook being read and, as I exemplified in Sections 4.1 – 4.1.3, they amend their DW behaviours accordingly. One of the key ways in which they do this is by adopting a number of roles in the embedded storytime situation.

As noted in Section 4.1.2 and as illustrated in Figure 4.2, participants in the read-aloud context are assigned these different roles in line with their storytime schema: the adult is both narrator and proxy text-producer whilst the child is both listener and the key text-receiver. Furthermore, I argue that the DW relationship that underpins the communication means that the existing parent-child relationship that participants share remains relevant. These roles are summarised in Table 4.0 below, alongside the transcription conventions employed to represent them throughout this thesis:

Participant	Discourse-world reader roles	Description	Transcription conventions
Adult	Parent	Produce talk that mimics usual face-to-face relationship with child.	AP – adult-participant
	Proxy text-producer	Reflects the conceptual understanding of the adult as text-producer in the discourse-world. For the child in the storytime context, the actual text-producer is of little interest. Instead, when the adult reads a text aloud to a child, it is their spoken discourse that provides the key world-building information that the child needs to construct a text-world for the picturebook story.	
	Read-aloud narrator	Produces read-aloud performance of written discourse, including narrator voice and character performances, alongside the adult's own reaction to the text.	AN – adult-narrator AC – adult-character
Pre-school child	Child	Produce talk that mimics usual face-to-face relationship with parent.	CP – child-participant
	Main text-receiver	Reflects the conceptual understanding of the child as text-receiver in the discourse-world. Paired with the conceptual understanding of the adult as proxy text-producer. Reinforces storytime schematic aim of producing a text for (first and foremost) the child in the discourse situation.	
	Read-aloud listener	Audience to the read-aloud narrator's performance.	CP – child-participant

Table 4.0 *Storytime discourse-world reader-roles.*

Each of these roles relates to either the everyday relationship participants share (adult and child), or the embedded read-aloud activity that they are involved in (narrator, listener, text-producer, text-receiver). However, these roles blend together seamlessly during storytime practices. Throughout the *Stick Man* transcript (see Extract 4.0, Appendix F), for example, neither participant announces what role they are adopting in the discourse. Instead, these roles are ingrained within each participant's storytime schema and their communicative aims. Nevertheless, I argue that these different roles each carry out a specific purpose in the discourse that is linked to the two main types of spoken discourse that make up storytime (also see Section 4.1.2):

(1) The read-aloud performance of the written text, usually by the adult: AN, AC

(2) Additional talk and discussion between both participants about (1) or any other topic: AP, CP

In the *Stick Man* transcript, the read-aloud narrator role(s) – adult-narrator (transcribed: AN) and adult-character (transcribed: AC) – are linked directly to the adult's performance of the

written discourse *Stick Man* (2008), whereas Denise's parent-role (transcribed: AP) tends to engage with the child directly and plays more of a part in making sure the child is paying attention and understands what is happening in *Stick Man*.

However, I propose that whilst the specific purpose of these roles can vary, the shared nature of the read-aloud context means that *all* roles and their accompanying discourse are received and experienced by a co-present participant. Of particular interest in the current discussion is the child's apparent DW relationship with their 'proxy text-producer'. This face-to-face relationship with a familiar text-producer during the comprehension of a written discourse complicates the usual pattern of knowledge incrementation during reading (see review of incrementation in Section 2.4.1). Existing applications of TWT to literary reading contexts have focused predominantly on the solitary reading behaviours of adults. During these reading practices, the split in the DW between text-producer and text-receiver means that only the text remains as a source of information from which knowledge can be incremented. However, the face-to-face context of read-aloud discourses means that the adult remains as a constant source from which knowledge can be additionally incremented for the pre-school child, and vice versa in some instances (see discussion of storytime talk across Chapter 5).

Moreover, throughout storytime, even though participants are engaged in a practice that is predominantly associated with written discourse, spoken discourse takes precedence. As such, comprehension aids such as intonation and gesture, which we usually associate with face-to-face communication (Gavins, 2007: 26) remain pertinent. In the same way that participants are able to make reference to and foreground the immediate environment that surrounds them at any point during the discourse, they are able to use their bodies and voices in specific ways to communicate. These elements of the discourse are key contributing factors to how the read-aloud performance and all other talk is conceptualised and experienced throughout the practice, which is why they are transcribed in some detail in the transcripts throughout this thesis (see Appendix E) (also see discussion of multimodal combination in Section 5.1.3).

What is more, participants are usually reading a very specific type of multimodal text: a picturebook, which requires them to combine and make sense of a minimum of two different modes: words and pictures (see review across Sections 2.3 - 2.3.3). This text also acts as a key instrumental header that triggers certain behaviours in the DW (see Section 4.1.2). I argue, therefore, that the text itself presupposes some level of DW interaction, both physically and verbally between participants in the read-aloud context. The DW thus plays a

more significant role in the comprehension of a written discourse during early reading practices compared with the solitary experiences of adults reading fiction; far from becoming of secondary importance to textual elements, the immediate material environment often takes precedence during storytime and plays a key role in the production, comprehension and experience of TWs.

In Jackson (2013: 6) I argued that thus far in the literary realm, text-world theorists have lent much of their attention to the independent reading of often complex fictional narratives, by competent literate adults. During these adult reading practices, readers construct TWs based mainly on information contained within the text being read and, as such, there is little or no focus on the reader's DW. During these reading practices, the TW for the literary discourse evolves directly from a reader's solitary interaction with the text in the DW. I argue, therefore, that the conceptual processing that takes place during these practices can be illustrated as in Figure 4.4.
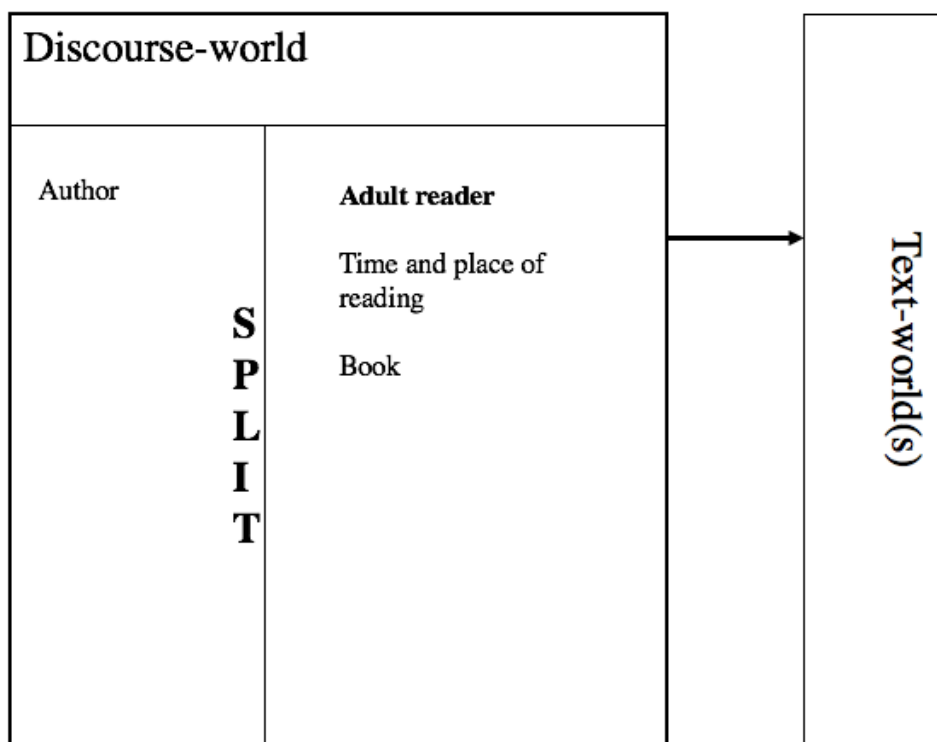
Figure 4.4 *Conceptual processing during adult reading practices*

However, whilst storytime is a reading practice which sees participants engaging with a written text, it more strongly replicates face-to-face interaction. In the *Stick Man* video (see Extract 4.0, Appendix F), for example, Denise and Amy enter the discourse situation

knowing that in order to make sense of the text *Stick Man,* they must behave and communicate in specific ways with one another (see Sections 4.1). Thus, in order for storytime participants in a read-aloud context to construct a TW(s) for that fictional discourse, they must first interact with the text and with one another and they do so by adopting schematic roles in the discourse and 'performing' storytime rituals (see Sections 4.1 - 4.1.3). Unlike the solitary adult reader who usually relies solely on the contents of the text being read and their own conceptual knowledge and experiential stores in order to make sense of a written discourse, Denise and Amy rely on each other and on a multitude of other DW features in order to process the written text. The TW for the written discourse, then, is *not* constructed directly by a participant reading written words in the DW, but from face-to-face interaction with a co-participant and physical interaction with the text as an autonomous object. I propose, therefore, that Figure 4.4 is too simplistic when it comes to representing the conceptual experience of storytime practices; it does not account for the heightened role of the DW in TW construction, which is essential to understanding storytime discourse. The application of TWT to storytime is further complicated by the differing abilities of the co-present participants involved, which influences the different roles they adopt in the discourse once the storytime schema has been triggered. Read-aloud participants in the storytime DW described above are already acting in accordance with an embedded discourse situation which, in line with their schematic knowledge, is affecting their behaviour; a concept not currently accounted for by the DW construct in the current TWT framework.

The read-aloud context is an intricate blend of existing DW relationships with a structured reading practice. I argue that in current TWT terms, the storytime DW presents features most closely associated with face-to-face communication, and not communication with a written discourse, which complicates the application of TWT to these discourses. The precise nature of the read-aloud context and the co-present readers means that storytime participants are faced with a number of contextual and interactional features of the discourse to contend with and process prior to them constructing, or *in order for* them to construct, a TW(s) for the picturebook that they are reading. In order to better account for the storytime DW, including its increased role in text comprehension, I propose that TWT requires an augmentation. This augmentation and its role in analysing storytime discourse is the focus of the next section.

4.3 The performance-world

In this section, I introduce a new conceptual level to the Text World Theory framework (TWT), which aims to extend its capabilities in relation to read-aloud practices: the performance-world (PerfW). Whilst the initial features and benefits of the PerfW will be exemplified in this section and the subsections that follow (4.3.1 – 4.3.3), the augmented TWT framework presented here will be employed throughout this thesis as I explore pre-school read-aloud discourse in detail.

The performance-world is a development of an initial augmentation that I termed the 'discourse-text-world' (DTW) in my pilot study for this thesis (Jackson, 2011, 2013). I claimed that the DTW:

> is distinct from the discourse-world and the text-world […] but as the name
> suggests, it retains features of both. Like the text-world, the discourse-text-world
> is generated through discourse-world interactions; however, the location, time,
> and objects of this conceptual level remain the same as the discourse-world.

(Jackson, 2013: 10)

Essentially, I introduced the discourse-text-world as a concept that addressed the ontological progression from the DW to the TW during pre-school read-aloud practices (Jackson, 2013: 9). I argued that this conceptual level accommodated the complex ontological shifting that takes place during storytime and exists as a 'conceptual scaffold' during pre-school reading practices (Jackson 2013: 10). Whilst some of the features and capabilities of the discourse-text-world will be revisited here, this thesis extends the preliminary introductions and applications in Jackson (2011) and (2013) in order to present a fully developed framework that is better able to account for not just pre-school read-aloud discourse, but other types of read-aloud and scaffolded discourse, as well as further contexts that include pre-literate participants. In line with these aims, the label 'discourse-text-world' has been revised to better reflect the role of this new conceptual level 'in context'.

The PerfW is generated as soon as the storytime schema is triggered and participants begin communicating with one another in line with their schematic knowledge. Across lines 1-25 of the *Stick Man* transcript (see Extract 4.0, Appendix F), for example, participants engage in a settling in procedure. In Section 4.1.1, I argued that this was part of a 'getting ready to read' routine, which is a key feature of storytime discourse. Speaking directly to Amy in the DW, Denise says 'right have you got stick man?' (line 1). Denise uses the discourse marker 'right' and a linguistic reference to the book *Stick Man* to signal to Amy that she is ready to begin the reading activity; participants then continue to prepare for the activity (see Section 4.1.1). At this point in the discourse, Denise and Amy have entered into

a split DW relationship with the TEXT-PRODUCERS of *Stick Man* and thus all talk they produce can be considered part of the storytime practice. However, whilst one of the key aims of storytime is to read a book together, the talk across lines 1-25 in the *Stick Man* transcript is not particularly text-specific, but instead reinforces the read-aloud context. Thus, I argue that the TW(s) of *Stick Man* is not constructed via the utterances of the immediate situational context of the participants; Figure 4.4 is therefore not applicable to Extract 4.0.

Instead, these 'settling in' utterances and behaviours in the DW are the product of participants adopting roles associated with their individual storytime schema; participants are essentially 'performing' these roles within the read-aloud context (see Section 4.2). As such, I argue that a conceptual shift has already taken place. I propose that even at this early point in the discourse, participants conceptualise their position as distinct from the original split storytime DW situation and in turn produce and process talk through a conceptual filter that is specific to the embedded read-aloud context. Thus, the initial utterances in the face-to-face storytime DW depict a distinct read-aloud situation, rather than the TW for a written discourse being read, which prompts the construction of an additional conceptual level: the performance-world (see Figure 4.5).
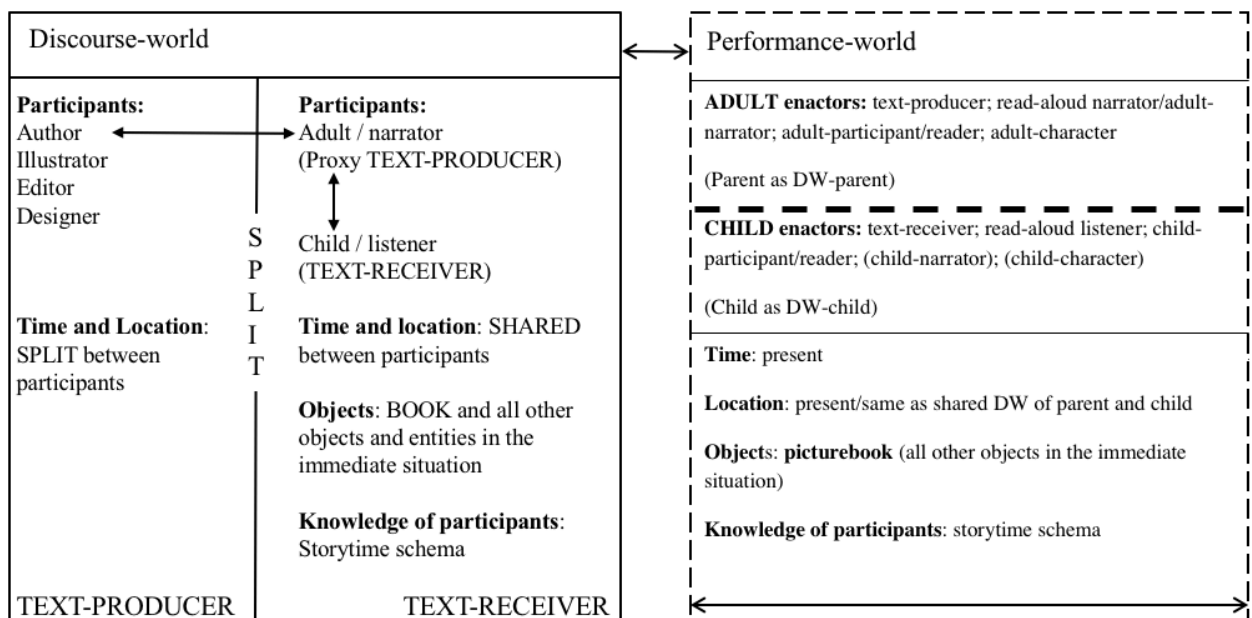
Figure 4.5 *The Performance-world: generation*

As Figure 4.5 illustrates, the PerfW replicates, for the most part, the TEXT-RECEIVER half of the storytime DW: the read-aloud context. The face-to-face relationship between participants is maintained and the child, the adult, and the book, all share space and time and

have access to one another. In many ways, the PerfW mimics features of the DW (see Section 4.2): the adult and child's existing relationship thus remains pertinent at this conceptual level (also see discussion of toggling across Chapters 5 and 6). However, there are a number of significant differences which address key features of the read-aloud context and aid the analysis of storytime discourse. I address each of these key differences in the following subsections (4.3.1 – 4.3.3) beginning in Section 4.3.1 with a focus on storytime roles and the representation of participants as 'enactors' in the PerfW.

4.3.1 The performance-world and storytime enactors

Gavins defines enactors as 'simply different versions of the same person or character which exist at different conceptual levels of a discourse' (2007: 41). In the preceding sections, I have noted that participants adopt different roles during storytime in line with their schematic knowledge (see Section 4.1.2 and Section 4.2). Moreover, participants produce different types of spoken discourse to suit these roles (see Section 4.2; also see discussion of interactive comprehension in Chapter 5 and the extended analysis of toggling talk in Chapter 6). I propose that when participants adopt these roles in the storytime DW, they project into a situation-specific role which is accounted for at the performance-world level of the discourse. Across my dataset, therefore, I argue that the speech that participants produce once the storytime schema has been triggered belongs to a different 'version' of their DW self: one 'performing' storytime rituals. Parallels have been drawn previously between adult-child shared reading practices and the concept of performance (see for example: Moschovaki and Meadows, 2015; Parsons, 2004; Zhang et al. 2016). In particular, work that focuses on the adult's self-conscious role as an 'actor' during read-aloud practices (see Zhang et al, 2016; Moschovaki and Meadows, 2015) and the picturebook's role as a 'script' (see Parson, 2004; Zhang et al., 2016) during storytime have foregrounded the performative nature of these early reading experiences (also see discussion of performance in Section 6.2.1). I propose, then, that participants in the storytime DW effectively 'perform' the activity and adopt a number of behaviours and roles in order to do so effectively.

As Figure 4.5 illustrates, numerous potential enactor-roles exist in the PerfW. Throughout the *Stick Man* transcript (see Extract 4.0, Appendix F), and all transcripts throughout this thesis, the transcribed speaker-roles outnumber the number of participants involved in the storytime practice (see Appendix E). In the *Stick Man* transcript, the adult is represented as adopting a minimum of three different roles throughout the read-aloud practice: adult-participant (AP), adult-narrator (AN), and adult-character (AC). Each of these roles achieves

a different purpose in the discourse; however, they all blend seamlessly together throughout the storytime practice. Across lines 60 - 81 of the *Stick Man* transcript (see Extract 4.0, Appendix F), for example, turns produced in the different adult enactor-roles can be seen to latch together. Denise easily switches from a character-performance (AC) to narrating the story (AN), to providing additional talk about the text (AP) without a problem. Moreover, Denise engages Amy on two occasions across lines 75-77 and lines 78-81 and in each instance Amy responds immediately displaying no confusion or uncertainty. I propose, then, that the PerfW is better able to account for the different reader-roles that participants are required to adopt during storytime. It provides a conceptual space where the child and adult participants are represented as enactors of their DW selves. As such, it adds detail and precision to the additional DW roles that were introduced in Section 4.2; an updated version of the storytime reading roles table is presented below:

Participant	Discourse-world reader roles	Description	Performance-world enactor roles	Description	Transcription conventions
Adult	Parent	Produce talk that mimics usual face-to-face relationship with child.	Parent	Produce talk that mimics usual face-to-face relationship with child.	AP
			Proxy text-producer		
			Read-aloud narrator / adult-narrator	Produces read-aloud performance of picturebook written discourse	AN
			Reader	Produces talk as reader of the text, including reactions to the fictional discourse.	AP
			Characters (adult-character) / Text-world enactors	Speech which reflects the direct speech of a character in the fictional discourse.	AC
Pre-school child	Child	Produce talk that mimics usual face-to-face relationship with parent.	Child	Produce talk that mimics usual face-to-face relationship with parent.	CP
			Main text-receiver		
			Read-aloud listener		CP
			Reader	Produces talk as reader of the text, including reactions to the fictional discourse.	CP
			(Read-aloud narrator/child-narrator)	Produces a read-aloud performance of picturebook written discourse.	CN
			(Characters (child-character) / Text-world enactors)	Speech which reflects the direct speech of a character in the fictional discourse.	CC

Table 4.1 *Storytime reader-roles: updated*

As Table 4.1 represents, the 'discourse-world reader-roles' column now contains only one role per participant which is in agreement with the ontological rules pertaining to the DW in current TWT. Furthermore, the total number of roles attributed to each participant has

increased, exemplifying the PerfW's ability to aid the breakdown and examination of each. The way in which the relationship between these PerfW enactors is represented at this level of the discourse is also significant.

4.3.2 The performance-world and co-present readers

In the PerfW (see Figure 4.5.1), although the face-to-face relationship between participants is maintained, the child-enactor(s) and the adult-enactor(s) are separated by a dotted line.
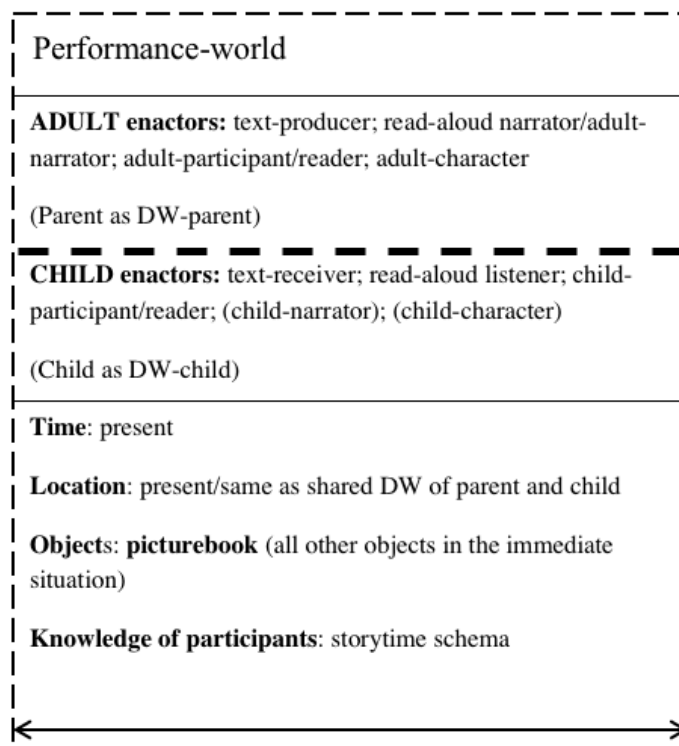
Figure 4.5.1 *The Performance-world: a closer look*

One of the key complicating features of the storytime context is that we have a shared reading experience between two, or sometimes more, participants who usually know one another extremely well but who differ in cognitive capability, experiential knowledge, and reading ability. The read-aloud context thus involves multiple text-receivers of a single physical book, all of whom experience this written discourse differently in line with their own knowledge stores. The PerfW accounts for this contextual and experiential feature of the discourse by providing a conceptual space where participants exist together and yet are separated, which enables the analysis of the shared experience without neglecting the individuality that persists throughout these practices. The PerfW, then, better accommodates the concept of co-present readers. This dividing line is also representative of how each

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participant conceptualises their own and their co-participant's role in the discourse. For example, the pre-school child expects the adult to read the text aloud whilst they listen and this expectation affects the way in which that pre-school child views the adult in the discourse-situation and vice versa. Furthermore, whilst the dividing line addresses experiential *differences*, the dotted format of the line simply represents the permeable nature of this division. Essentially, the face-to-face relationship between the adult-child which underpins storytime is maintained and participants remain accessible to one another regardless of the role a participant adopts.

4.3.3 The performance-world and the shared text

The PerfW also addresses the relationship participants have with the text during storytime, both conceptually and physically. Once the storytime schema has been triggered, the book becomes the central focus of the discourse. In the PerfW (see Figure 4.5.1), the text shares time and space with the adult and child enactors who are free to refer to or interact with it at any point. What is more, I argue that the book is foregrounded as the *only* object conceptually present in the PerfW with all other objects and entities in the immediate situation encouraged, usually by the adult, to be conceptually backgrounded, or deleted. In Figure 4.5.1, the picturebook is highlighted in bold, whilst all other objects and entities in the discourse situation are bracketed.

In Extract 4.0 (see Appendix F), for example, this conceptual foregrounding of the text and backgrounding of other objects and entities can be seen happening with Jason and Julia, Amy's toy snake. During the 'getting ready' procedure across lines 1-25, Denise gradually brings the focus of the discourse around to the book *Stick Man* and away from the toy snake with which Amy is preoccupied (also see discussion in Sections 4.1.1 and 4.1.2). In line 24 of Extract 4.0, Denise produces a discourse marker + header (linguistic) turn: Ok stick man. here he is; Denise accompanies this turn by opening the book *Stick Man*. The adults talk and actions in this instance foreground the text in the discourse situation. In response, Amy's gaze shifts towards the text and away from the toy snake. Later on in the *Stick Man* extract, a similar interactional pattern takes place. Approximately half-way through the *Stick Man* storytime practice across lines 110-137, the storytime ritual breaks down. Across lines 110 - 113, Denise stops reading the text aloud and addresses Amy in the DW with the second-person pronoun 'you': 'can I just move you along a bit' (also see discussion of the 'here-and-now' level of interaction in Section 4.2.1). Denise then lifts Amy up a little and moves her backwards and towards her on the sofa; however, these actions create a disruption to the

storytime reading rules (see Sections 4.1 - 4.1.3). The adult's talk and actions distract the child and her gaze shifts away from the text and instead her focus falls on the toy snake once again (lines 112-113), which she picks up (line 115). In line 115 Amy produces talk about the snake, whose name has now changed, 'those are jason and julia'. Denise registers the child's talk by backchannelling what she has said in line 116, but she then attempts to continue reading *Stick Man* in latching talk in line 117, which is emphasised with an increase in volume. However, Amy is still distracted by the toy snake and across lines 119 - 126, Denise repeats part of the settling in procedure observed across lines 1-25 of Extract 4.0: Denise moves the snake out of the way and uses it to foreground and reinforce the behavioural norms of the practice: to look and listen without a distraction. This ritual foregrounds the text as the key object in the discourse-situation by directing the child's attention away from other objects and entities. However, Amy interrupts Denise's attempt to read *Stick Man* once again in line 128. In response Denise produces a more direct instruction to focus on the text across lines 129 - 130: 'let's put him down while we're watching and then you can look at the pictures can't you'. This utterance foregrounds the shared nature of having to look at the book (we're watching) and specifically the child's (you) need to look at the pictures in the book. Following this utterance, Denise immediately begins to read *Stick Man* (line 131) but she further engages Amy and directs her towards the book in discourse situation by immediately asking her a question about the picture in the book (lines 131 - 133). The questions 'where's the sword (.) which one's the sword?' require Amy to focus on *Stick Man* once again and she shifts her gaze back towards the text and the reading continues.

Throughout this interaction, Denise encourages Amy to maintain her read-aloud listener role in the PerfW and to conceptually foreground and remain focused on the text in the PerfW, conceptually backgrounding the toy snake in the DW. The nature of the practice means that anything from the DW (the immediate situation) can enter into the storytime practice. However, for the bracketed items in Figure 4.5.1 to become relevant they must be foregrounded *in the discourse*: Amy achieves this with Jason and Julia, by physically picking up the snake and talking about it. The shared read-aloud context means that when this happens, the DW item becomes foregrounded as part of the discourse situation in the PerfW. Whilst any DW item can be foregrounded in the discourse at any time, it is usually fleeting in comparison to the foregrounding of the text. However, whilst the foregrounding of Jason and Julia across lines 110-137 serves no purpose other than to distract in the discourse-situation, some DW items are foregrounded and employed purposefully for comprehension during

storytime (see discussion of text-to-life practices and ontological blurring in Chapter 6). Nevertheless, their role in the discourse is still usually fleeting in comparison to the text.

Across my dataset, I found that this shared focus on the text and its foregrounding in the PerfW is what maintains and controls the practice. Even during my observations at playgroup, where the potential distractions are multiplied significantly, adult-child pairs could be seen to hold their focus on the physical text and thus complete the storytime practice in full. Thus, the initial utterances that depict the read-aloud situation and prompt the construction of the PerfW, simultaneously foreground the book as a key feature of the discourse. The text itself is then consistently foregrounded during the read aloud and as a feature of the immediate material environment that DW participants share, because the text itself is linked to the main aim of the discourse. In Figure 4.5.1, the picturebook is represented in bold at all times, which reflects its persistence throughout the activity. As a mutually perceivable object in the shared reading context, it controls the gaze of both participants and centres and guides the spoken discourse that takes place once the storytime schema has been triggered.

Once the text has been introduced and foregrounded in the discourse situation, storytime participants are essentially engaged in the practice of interacting with and constructing TWs for this text. In the PerfW, the book exists alongside the read-aloud enactors, which emphasises the relevance and significance of the three-way interaction between adult, child, and text. At this level of the discourse, the text is as much a part of the storytime performance as the enactor-roles that the adult and child adopt; the text is represented as a third significant component and I argue that its autonomy as an object to interact with is emphasised. Whilst the book is an autonomous object in the DW of *all* readers of written literary fiction, I propose that the concept of the 'text-as-object' takes on greater prominence during storytime given the shared nature of the practice and the multimodal nature of the text (also see detailed examination of materiality in Chapter 6, Section 6.2).

Picturebooks engage readers visually with large, brightly coloured images; eye-catching fonts; interesting page layouts; specifically placed page-turns; and so on (also see discussion of picturebooks in Section 6.2). Physical movements like turning the page, pointing to images, and even touching images are part of the experience of reading these texts. These physical aspects of storytime are a comprehension aid available to adult and child readers, alongside other physical elements like gesture. One of the key ways in which Denise finally gets Amy to engage with the text and take her attention away from the toy

snake across lines 110-137 in Extract 4.0 (Appendix F) is to ask her a question about the pictures in the text (line 133): Amy is required to search the images and point to something that she has identified as the answer. This method of engagement was common across my storytime data when parents wanted to engage their children generally, and when participants were dealing with a distraction like Denise in lines 110-137 of Extract 4.0. The use of images as an accessible and tactile feature of the discourse immediately foreground the book in the discourse situation, which means that its objectivity/autonomy often takes precedence in the discourse-situation. In the PerfW, then, the cross-world existence of the book, as an object which each participant interacts with physically, is key. The foregrounded autonomy of the text in the PerfW also relates to the child's lack of a notion of the author (see Section 4.2). Rather than engaging with the text conceptually in the DW and building TWs out of this interaction, the book exists in the PerfW as a physical object that is to be 'performed' by the adult and discussed and interacted with by all participants involved in the practice.

The TWs for these picturebook discourses, then, are not constructed directly by a participant independently reading written words in the DW, but from structured face-to-face interaction with a co-participant and physical interaction with the text as an autonomous object. These face-to-face and physical interactions take place and are conceptualised at the PerfW level of the discourse and as such, it is from utterances and actions produced at *this* level of the context that participants construct TWs. In the chapter that follows, I develop my concept of the PerfW further through the examination of storytime talk and picturebook comprehension.

4.4 Review

In this chapter, I have provided a detailed introduction to storytime and presented an augmentation to the current TWT framework. Drawing on the similarities observed across my dataset, the opening sections of this chapter focused on the storytime schema (Sections 4.1 - 4.1.3). I argued that all of my storytime participants came to the discourse situation with some schematic knowledge about how to behave during these practices. Moreover, I proposed that storytime activities present a complex discourse situation, owing to the fact that the schematic knowledge in use is being both taught to and developed by the pre-school child throughout the duration of the discourse. In the early sections of the chapter, schema theory was shown to be a useful tool for examining and understanding not only the similarities in behaviour shared by my storytime participants, but also how and what children are learning about books and reading. The discussion across Sections 4.1 – 4.1.3 foregrounded the

relevance of the physical situation that surrounds storytime participants and thus emphasised the significance of the DW.

In Section 4.2, I provided a detailed explication of the storytime DW. Throughout this discussion, I drew attention to the complexity of this discourse situation: it involves at least two text-receivers, who have varying experiential knowledge stores, cognitive capability, and reading ability. As such, each participant's storytime schema is different with adult-participants and child-participants possessing different expectations of the discourse situation and adopting a number of different roles. Overall, the storytime DW is a joint and thus interactive reading event, where co-present participants work together to make sense of a single written discourse. I went on to argue that, during these early reading practices, spoken discourse takes precedence over the written and, unlike solitary readers of written texts, comprehension relies on the face-to-face relationship a child shares with a co-present reader. The text, then, is *not* the main source of information from which knowledge can be incremented and as a result, rather than becoming of 'secondary importance', the immediate material environment of the discourse remains pertinent throughout storytime. What is more, I propose that participants in the storytime DW are already acting in accordance with an embedded discourse situation, which is affecting their behaviour. In Section 4.2, I observed that these features of the picturebook read-aloud context present a number of challenges to the TWT framework and in the final sections of this chapter (4.3 – 4.3.3), I introduced an augmentation as a means to resolving these issues.

I argued that the initial utterances in the storytime DW do not prompt the construction of a TW(s), but instead initiate the PerfW. The PerfW provides a conceptual space that sits in between the DW and any TW(s) and accounts for the interactive, shared, and embedded nature of storytime practices. Across sections 4.3 – 4.3.3 I provided a preliminary introduction to this new conceptual level of TWT. I proposed that the PerfW addresses key complicating features of the storytime DW with greater efficiency, namely: the different reader-roles and schematic behaviours adopted by participants (see Section 4.3.1); the concept of co-present readers (see Section 4.3.2); the role of a singular shared multimodal text (see Section 4.3.1); and the heightened role of the materiality of the DW during text comprehension.

Overall, the PerfW, as its name suggests, acts as a conceptual stage, through which participants 'perform' storytime together, adopting their appropriate roles in the discourse, like actors on a stage, in order to construct TWs. I propose, therefore, that it is from

interaction at the PerfW level of the discourse that TWs are formed. In Chapter 5, I extend my introduction of the PerfW further and examine its role in the analysis of storytime talk.

Chapter Five: Sharing Fiction

5.0 Preview

Chapter 4 provided a detailed look at the storytime discourse-world (DW) and read-aloud context. Storytime practices were shown to represent an embedded discourse situation which sees participants drawing on schematic knowledge and acting in accordance with a conceptual understanding of the communicative event. I argued that adults and children engaged in storytime practices possess a number of expectations about how these early reading activities are carried out and adopt a number of roles in the discourse situation in line with the aims of the activity. I proposed therefore that the initial utterances produced during storytime prompt the construction of an additional conceptual level: the performance-world (PerfW). In a brief introduction (see Sections 4.3 - 4.3.3), the PerfW was shown to accommodate the analysis of the shared, interactive, and embedded nature of storytime activities; it is better able to account for the complexities of the storytime DW.

In this chapter, I extend my concept of the PerfW further and examine its role as a conceptual stage during storytime comprehension. In Section 5.1, I focus on the role of the PerfW in text-world (TW) construction and draw attention to the conceptual variation displayed amongst participants who are ultimately engaged in a joint reading activity. Section 5.1.1 goes on to introduce the concept of TW assimilation, whereby storytime participants negotiate similar experiences of a shared text. The negotiated nature of early reading practices is explored further in Section 5.1.2 where the social nature of storytime practices is examined in more detail and the concept of 'shifting discourse' is introduced. In Section 5.1.3, I focus on the multimodal nature of storytime practices and argue that the PerfW addresses this multisensory experience by offering a conceptual mediation space. Section 5.2 then moves on to explore exactly how TW assimilation is achieved and examines spoken patterns found in my storytime data; the concepts of 'interactive comprehension' and 'conceptual toggling' are introduced here. Section 5.2.1 and Section 5.2.2 extend the discussion on the discourse of co-present readers and explore significant patterns in both adult-talk and child-talk, respectively. Finally, Section 5.3 considers the pedagogic nature of storytime practices and draws attention to the importance of the PerfW as a conceptual space that is able to account for a discourse in which reading is only part of the overall practice. The prototypical case study analysed in this chapter is Eva (child) and Daniel's (adult) *Paddington* storytime video (for full transcript see Extract 5.0, Appendix F; also see Appendix E for transcription conventions).

5.1 Storytime text-worlds

In Chapter 4, I argued that the PerfW is a conceptual space that is generated by read-aloud discourse. It should be noted that the PerfW is likely generated in situations other than pre-school reading; however, this would require further exploration and sits outside the remit of this thesis. So far, I have argued that storytime presents an embedded discourse situation and that read-aloud discourse is the result of adults and children acting in accordance with schematic knowledge surrounding early reading activities. I have proposed that once the storytime schema has been triggered in the discourse-world (DW), participants' conceptualisation of the discourse situation shifts and the PerfW is generated (see Section 4.3).

Storytime participants, in line with their own individual schematic knowledge stores, adopt certain roles and behaviours in the discourse situation that are distinct from their 'normal' DW (see discussion across Sections 4.1 - 4.2). However, this conceptual and behavioural shift, whilst distinct from the DW does not qualify as a text-world (TW), if a TW is considered an ontologically distinct construct. Instead, the spatio-temporal location of participants in the PerfW remains unchanged and participants continue to draw on their DW relationship and surroundings (see Section 4.2 and Figure 4.5.1 for a more detailed introduction to the parameters of PerfW). Moreover, the PerfW does not represent the mental representation of a single participant's experience of a given discourse; it is not the *product* of TW interaction. Rather, the PerfW is in many ways a mental representation of the DW in which participants psychologically project a version of their DW self into the reading practice, and conceive of themselves as actively involved in and performing a storytime activity (for a similar concept see Gibbons' (2016) 're-presentation text-world'); it is a reaction to the context as opposed to a specific text. It is from this level of the discourse that TWs are constructed. Conceptually, therefore, I argue that the PerfW sits in between the storytime DW and any TWs that participants create (see Figure 5.0 below). I present the PerfW as a cognitive stepping stone that plays a significant role in TW construction, facilitating the progression from the DW to the TW during storytime (also see: Jackson, 2013; and my further discussion of ontology in Chapter 6).

Once a storytime practice begins, then, I argue that the initial utterances produced prompt the construction of the PerfW by both the adult and child participants. Each participant adopts their respective role(s) in this embedded discourse situation (see Section 4.3.1) and projects into the PerfW with the specific intention of reading a picturebook together. In line with current TWT scholarship, I propose that participants thus follow a

singular line of conceptual progression from DW → PerfW → TW like that shown in Figure 5.0 (below). However, although the PerfW, like the DW, is presented as a shared space that accounts for the joint comprehension of one text, it is important to note that each participant experiences the discourse individually. Applications of TWT to reading contexts thus far have focused predominantly on modelling the conceptual processing of solitary adult readers, or on adult readers' retrospective reading group discussions following the solitary reading event. TWT is yet to address reading practices, like storytime, where multiple participants are actively engaged in the comprehension of a singular written text at the same time (also see Section 2.4.2).

TWT maintains that, as a language event progresses, *each* participant constructs a TW of the discourse in *their own* mind (Werth, 1999; Gavins, 2007). So, if we consider the TW to be each individual participant's mental representation of the discourse, then participants cannot share a TW, regardless of the level of joint practice they engage in throughout the language event. Instead, each participant involved in the read aloud builds their own TW of the picturebook discourse, which is completely independent of anyone else's. In the PerfW, these experiential differences are represented by a line that separates the adult and child read-aloud enactors. This dotted dividing line represents the permeable nature of the relationship between participants who, whilst ultimately experiencing a written discourse independently, continue to have access to – and often rely on – one another during comprehension (see discussion in Section 4.3.2). I therefore propose that the shared readership exhibited in storytime practices is best and most accurately represented in Figure 5.0.

Discourse-world

Participants:
Author
Illustrator
Editor
Designer

Participants:
Adult / narrator
(Proxy TEXT-PRODUCER)

Child / listener
(TEXT-RECEIVER)

Time and Location: SPLIT between participants

Time and location: SHARED between participants

Objects: BOOK and all other objects and entities in the immediate situation

Knowledge of participants: Storytime schema

S
P
L
I
T

TEXT-PRODUCER

TEXT-RECEIVER

Performance-world

ADULT enactors: text-producer; read-aloud narrator/adult-narrator; adult-participant/reader; adult-character

(Parent as DW-parent)

CHILD enactors: text-receiver; read-aloud listener; child-participant/reader; (child-narrator); (child-character)

(Child as DW-child)

Time: present

Location: present/same as shared DW of parent and child

Objects: picturebook (all other objects in the immediate situation)

Knowledge of participants: storytime schema

Text-world (adult)

Deictically remote: time zone and location as defined by the text.

Objects: defined by text

Negotiation

Text-world (child)

Deictically remote: time zone and location as defined by the text.

Objects: defined by text

Figure 5.0 Storytime text-worlds: conceptual processing during storytime

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As Figure 5.0 illustrates, each participant involved in the storytime practice constructs a TW(s) based on utterances, activities, and interactions that take place at the PerfW level of the discourse. These TWs are labelled 'text-world (adult)' and 'text-world (child)' in the above diagram.

Across my dataset, there was evidence of co-participants' varied attention, focus, and understanding during storytime practices. At the very beginning of Daniel (adult) and Eva's (child) *Paddington* storytime video (see Extract 5.0, Appendix F), for example, Daniel states 'I remember this one, this is a good one' (line 12 -13) to which Eva responds 'don't remember it' (line 15). These early utterances immediately highlight an experiential difference between the adult and the child with the story *Paddington at the Carnival* (henceforth *Paddington*) (Bond and Alley, 2014, see Appendix C for full reference). Daniel's utterance, in particular, suggests that he possesses a fairly rich narrative schema for the text (see Mason, 2016 for introduction and discussion of narrative schemas): not only does he claim to remember the story, but he is able to provide an evaluative comment about it. In contrast, Eva claims to possess no obvious narrative schema for *Paddington* at this point in the discourse. At the time each participant produces these utterances, only the title page of the story has been observed in any detail, with the first page of story being open only briefly. Nevertheless, it can be assumed that even at this early point in the discourse – and based purely on minimal visual information and existing knowledge stores – TW (adult) and TW (child) are already different.

Whilst the example discussed above is taken from the beginning of a storytime practice, my video data provided evidence of adult and child TW variation at different points throughout the activity. Later on in the *Paddington* transcript for example, across lines 110 – 122 (see Extract 5.0, Appendix F), the potential dissimilarity in TW (adult) and TW (child) is exemplified further when Eva interrupts her father to ask the question 'what is he doing?' (line 111); participants are approximately half-way through *Paddington* (Bond and Alley, 2014) at this point in the discourse. Eva is referring to an image in *Paddington* (Bond and Alley, 2014) which is shown below in Figure 5.1.

[Image removed due to copyright reasons]

Figure 5.1 What is he doing?

Daniel responds to Eva immediately stating 'he's fishing' (line 112) to which Eva again responds with a question (see line 113). Over the course of these turns, it is clear that Eva's initial interruption referred specifically to her confusion over why the TW enactor Paddington seems to be pulling so hard on his fishing rod (see Figure 5.1). Eva is aware that he is fishing and even uses the correct fishing terminology 'rod' in her rephrased question in line 113. Daniel is then required to provide an explanation that clears up Eva's confusion, which he does across lines 116 -120 (also see discussion of adult-talk and scaffolding in Section 5.2.1). However, all of the information that Eva needed to understand what is happening in the story at this point in the discourse is contained within the written text of *Paddington* (Bond and Alley, 2014). This written information is relayed to Eva in the few turns of read-aloud performance by the adult-narrator (AN, AC) preceding her interruption
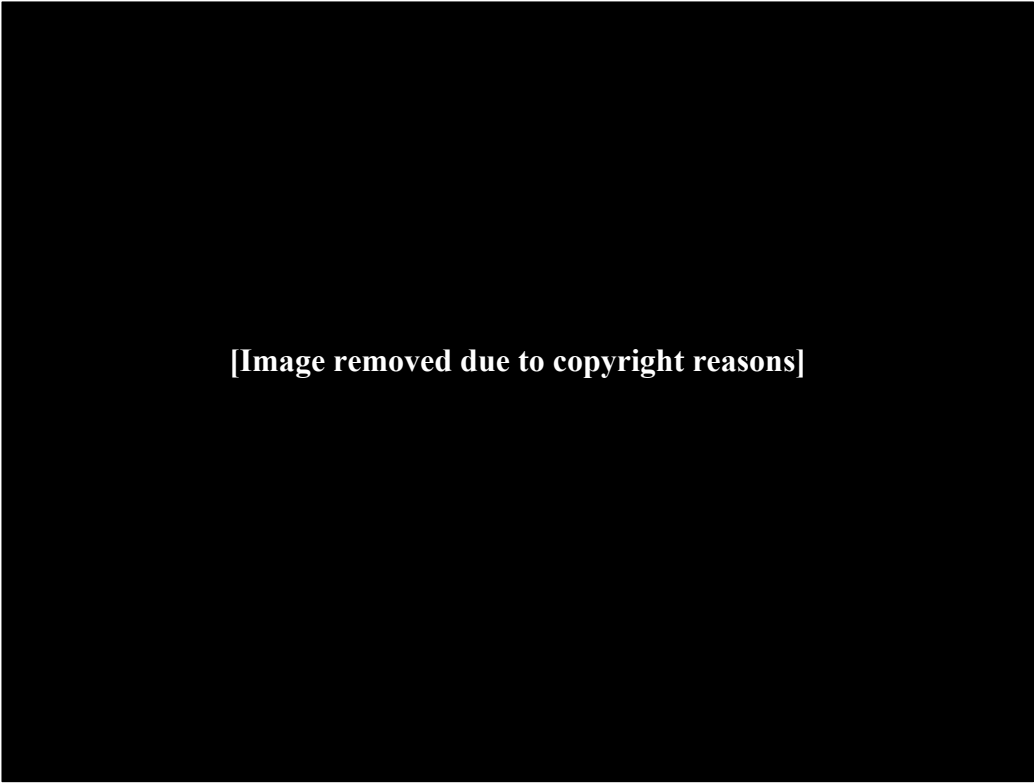
(see lines 105 – 108 in Extract 5.0, Appendix F). The read-aloud narrative provides the following relevant information:

- Paddington felt a 'tug' on the fishing line (line 105)
- Paddington thinks the tug on the fishing line might be 'too big' to fit in his jar (line 106)
- Paddington feels like the tug on the fishing line is a whale (line 108)

Drawing on Nikolajeva and Scott's work on image-text relationships in picturebooks (2000, 2006), I argue that the image shown in Figure 5.1 is in a complementary relationship with the text being read aloud: words and pictures are ultimately telling the same story and filling each other's gaps (2006: 14; also see Section 2.3.2 for a full discussion on text-image typology). The adult in the discourse situation thus has no reason to believe that their TW for *Paddington* would be different to the child's at this point. Nevertheless, Eva struggles to interpret what is happening in the story due in part, presumably, to a lack of knowledge surrounding the activity of fishing. It is clear that at the point in the discourse that Eva interrupted to ask a question, her TW of the story so far was different to her father's. However, Eva's interruption and confusion was still relevant to what was happening in *Paddington.* Amy and Denise's *Stick Man* storytime video provides a more extreme example of what happens when TWs do not match (see lines 89 – 100 in Extract 4.0, Appendix F for full transcript). Across lines 89-90 Denise adopts an adult-character role (AC2) and performs the speech of the TW enactor 'Stick Man'. However, before she finishes these lines, Amy interrupts, overlapping the adult's character performance with the observation 'THOSE are little sausages' (line 91). As she makes this observation, Amy leans forward towards the pages of the picturebook and points to the 'those' that she is referring to. Figure 5.2 shows the page that the participants are reading:

[Image removed due to copyright reasons]

Figure 5.2 *Little sausages*

There are a number of things happening here that suggest that the child's TW for the read-aloud discourse is dissimilar to the adult's TW for the same read-aloud discourse at this point in the practice.

First, the nature of the child's interrupting talk: Amy ignores turn-taking rules in the discourse when she makes this observation and produces overlapping speech that ultimately cuts short her co-participant's turn. I propose that Amy's need to express this observation with such immediacy provides specific information about where her attention is focused at that time in the discourse. Amy's actions also suggest that she attributes some level of importance to this aspect of the text at the time of production (also see discussion of child-talk in Section 5.2.2). Second, the language Amy uses presents this turn as a definitive statement about what she can see: the use of the demonstrative pronoun 'those' and present tense 'are' whilst pointing to the text intimate a level of certainty. Amy is not asking a question, but stating what she believes to be fact and therefore her co-participant is led to believe that this utterance clearly reflects her interpretation of the current situation. Finally, Amy's comment, although a specific reference to something she can see on the page that is being read, is *not* particularly relevant to the words that the adult is reading. Amy focuses in on an aspect of the image that has not been foregrounded by either the read-aloud

performance or the adult-participant at any point during the discourse; it is not relevant to the prominent TW(s) (see 5.1.1 below) that participants have been expected to construct for *Stick Man* (2008, see Appendix C for full reference), based on the written and visual information contained in the text, at this point in the discourse. It is clear, looking at Figure 5.2, that Amy has mis-identified something in the illustrations of the picturebook, mistaking an image of a bulrush for a 'little sausage'. Amy's speech in this instance, therefore, highlights a dissimilarity between TW (adult) and TW (child).

In the videos I collected, children's discourse provided evidence of independent thinking in the ways shown above. From brief confusion like Eva across lines 110 – 122 in Extract 5.0 (Appendix F), to complete misinterpretation like Amy across lines 89 – 100 in Extract 4.0 (Appendix F), my data showed that whilst parents and children are involved in a shared reading practice, they ultimately experience the discourse differently and construct completely separate TWs for the discourse. However, once storytime begins and the PerfW is generated, the shared communicative aim of the discourse – to read, enjoy, and understand a picturebook together – frames all of the interaction that takes place. The shared text and shared purpose of the discourse thus influences how individual TWs are constructed in order to achieve a successful storytime.

5.1.1 An interactive reading practice: text-world assimilation and negotiation

In TWT terms, I argue that the overriding aim of storytime discourse sees both the adult and child participants engaged in the practice of constructing a prominent TW(s) for the printed discourse being shared. The term 'prominence' is used here in reference to the key purpose of the practice which involves participants negotiating a similar experience around a shared text. Essentially, once the storytime schema has been triggered in the discourse situation, all focus shifts towards a single picturebook and both the adult and child participants become engaged in the process of decoding the words and pictures contained within this text. A 'prominent TW' is thus best defined as the mental representation a participant constructs based on the linguistic and visual information provided by a picturebook at any given moment (for a similar idea see Emmott's (1997) concept of 'priming'). In Figure 5.0 the prominent TWs of the adult and child are represented by the TW (adult) and TW (child) constructs, respectively. During storytime, the concept of a prominent TW takes on greater significance due to the fact that the practice itself is centred around the presentation and comprehension of this world by co-present readers; all interaction that takes place works towards the construction of, or is a

result of attempts to construct, a prominent TW(s) that represents the contents of a single text and results in an overall similar experience of that text by participants.

In Eva and Daniel's *Paddington* storytime video (see Extract 5.0, Appendix F), the shared discourse is the story *Paddington at the Carnival* (Bond and Alley, 2014) (referred to as *Paddington* throughout this thesis). The story *Paddington* (2014) follows the key TW-enactor Paddington Bear and his friend Mr Gruber as they complete the 'Busy Bee Adventure trail' at a carnival in London. The Busy Bee adventure trail entails Paddington Bear searching for and completing a list of as many things as possible that begin with the letter B. This trail is the main event around which the whole of the written discourse is focused (also see analysis of *Paddington* in Section 6.3). In Eva and Daniel's storytime video, I observed that the majority of the discourse – both read-aloud and additional – centres around the Busy Bee adventure trail and a shared experience of this key event. Once participants have settled into the read-aloud context and the PerfW has been generated, this text is conceptually foregrounded for both participants involved in the practice (see Section 4.3.3); from this point onwards Eva and Daniel's discourse becomes primarily focused on making sense of the words and images in *Paddington* and constructing a prominent TW(s) that represents the ontological realm in which Paddington Bear exists.

The shared communicative aim of storytime presupposes a similar experience of the written discourse being shared by all participants involved in the practice. It is therefore expected that read-aloud participants will construct similar prominent TWs for the shared text. However, this does not mean that storytime participants work together to construct a 'joint text-world'; this would be ontologically impossible (see discussion in Section 5.1). Nor does it mean that storytime participants will construct the exact same prominent TW(s) for the shared text individually; participants' varied knowledge, experience and abilities are one indicator that an identical experience is not possible. Nevertheless, in order for storytime to be successful, the TWs of the two participants must match up to some degree and I argue that throughout storytime, participants work together to carefully negotiate a shared experience of the text.

Although it is impossible for participants to negotiate a shared TW, I suggest that the process of negotiation we do see happening during storytime is the careful assimilation of participant's individual distinct ontological constructs. In Figure 5.0 the negotiated nature of the distinct TWs is represented by the 'negotiation' arrow placed between TW (adult) and TW (child) to the right of the diagram. The negotiation arrow(s) is connected directly to the PerfW, foregrounding a direct link between this level of the discourse and the processes of

assimilation taking place during storytime (see Section 5.2 for further discussion). As Figure 5.0 represents, although separate, participants' varied conceptual processing runs simultaneously and as such they often inform one another. I argue that one of the key ways in which participants assimilate their experiences is through the 'additional talk' that takes place throughout the practice. In Extract 5.0 (see lines 110 – 122, Appendix F) and Extract 4.0 (see lines 89 – 100, Appendix F) (see Section 5.1), for example, when a child foregrounds a TW mismatch, adult and child are then able to discuss why their TWs are different and then re-assimilate.

The topic of storytime talk is not new, and many scholars have focused on the dialogic nature of these practices. Cochran-Smith, for example, notes that 'the dialogic pattern of storyreading *emphasizes the fact* that storyreading events were *social and interactional*' (1984: 145, *my emphasis*). In Chapter 4, I argued that storytime is made up of two main types of spoken discourse that take place simultaneously (see Section 4.2 and Section 4.1.2):

1) The read-aloud performance of the written text

2) Additional talk and discussion between both participants about (1) or any other topic

Essentially, not only is the text itself presented as a spoken performance (1), but participants regularly communicate with one another as they usually would in the DW (2). I propose therefore that read-aloud discourse associated with storytime practices is made up of two types of talk, which I refer to throughout the current work as (1) read-aloud talk or read-aloud performance, and (2) additional talk.

Other researchers have also drawn attention to the interactive and negotiated nature of storytime practices. In particular, scholars have focused on the structure and content of 'extra-textual' talk that takes place during storytime and explored the ways in which this talk can be used by adults to improve the literacy and/or literary outcomes of the practice (see review in Section 2.2.1 and discussion in Section 4.1.2). Many of these studies focus predominantly on the talk that participants engage in around the text with very little focus on either the text being shared or the read-aloud performance of that text (see Cochran-Smith, 1984 for an exception). However, the naturalistic study presented throughout this thesis focuses on the significance of *all* talk whilst exploring its relationship to the written discourse. In particular, I argue that it is the specific shifting relationship between (1) the read-aloud performance and (2) additional talk that is significant, as opposed to one or other of the categories.

5.1.2 A social-solitary reading practice: storytime talk and spoken comprehension

Storytime is a predominantly spoken discourse and in many ways it is an example of what Peplow et al. (2016) define as social reading. Peplow et al. (2016) apply the term social reading to face-to-face reading group discussions and argue that:

> Through their utterances, participants collaborate in the creation of a (spoken) text, and as they do so the relevant context for the discourse is also jointly negotiated, for instance as contributors add to or shift the current conversational topic (Werth 1999: 85). Each participant in the interaction forms text-worlds as they follow and contribute to the conversation.

(Peplow et al, 2016: 37)

I maintain that during storytime, the face-to-face read-aloud context means that participants engage in similar negotiations of meaning. Peplow et al. recognise that participants in face-to-face reading groups engage in different types of talk, shifting between 'literary talk and non-literary topics' (2016: 21 - 14) and as such the TWs participants construct may depict either 'a literary text (as in a discussion of the text itself) or any other possible topic (the other matters are discussed)' (2016: 37). Similar interactional shifting takes place during pre-school read-aloud practices between the two core categories of talk: (1) read-aloud talk and (2) additional talk. In the *Paddington* transcript (see Extract 5.0, Appendix F), for example, participants begin by settling into the storytime context (see lines 1-15, Extract 5.0, Appendix F; also see discussion across Sections 4.1 – 4.1.3 in Chapter Four). Once the book has been opened and Eva (child) has chosen which story to read (line 10), the adult (Daniel) adopts their read-aloud narrator enactor-role (AN) and the read-aloud activity begins. Lines 16 - 39 are dedicated to the adult's read-aloud performance of the text; however, lines 40 - 44 see Eva and Daniel participating in face-to-face communication with one another, before Daniel once again focuses on his read-aloud performance across lines 45 - 48. This pattern is repeated throughout the activity with a number of lengthy episodes of the adult's read-aloud performance (see lines 64 - 79, 83 – 93, 129 - 142, 156 - 165, 179 - 216 in Extract 5.0, Appendix F) separated by face-to-face communication, or additional talk, between the adult and child. As in a reading group situation, then, I propose that the speaker and topic of storytime discourse can shift at any time.

In Extract 5.0, across lines 110 – 122 (Appendix F), for example, once Eva asks about what the TW-enactor Paddington is doing, the talk does not remain strictly literary. Whilst the discussion across lines 110 – 122 (see Extract 5.0, Appendix F) is triggered initially by the child's perceptual confusion surrounding a mutually perceivable image in the book *Paddington*, the content of the talk itself relates to the general activity of fishing. Daniel's

explanation across lines 116 – 120 (see Extract 5.0, Appendix F) includes no mention of any TW enactors, entities, or events. In fact, once Daniel begins to explain what it is like to fish, his gaze moves away from the text and towards Eva in the DW, who he addresses directly with the second-person pronoun 'you'. Daniel also engages Eva physically in the DW, enacting the process of catching and reeling in a fish by trapping her finger. Daniel does not point to or reference the image or the text during his explanation, but instead momentarily draws attention away from the literary text and towards a real-world explanation of fishing in the DW.

However, there is one key difference between reading group discourse and storytime discourse: participants engaged in reading group discourse have already read and interpreted a text and come together to discuss that text retrospectively; whereas, participants engaged in storytime practices, although often having shared the picturebook being read aloud numerous times before, are involved in the online discursive processing of a text with a co-participant(s), *whilst* that text is being read. The discussion in Extract 5.0, about fishing (see lines 110 – 122, Appendix F), for example, takes place in the middle of the reading practice. Eva's turn in line 111 interrupts and pauses the adult's read-aloud narration. However, following the talk about fishing, Daniel immediately adopts his adult-narrator role again (line 123, Extract 5.0 Appendix F) and completes the turn that Eva originally interrupted in line 110. In my storytime video data, I found that episodes of additional talk can take place at any point during the reading practice and once complete, the adult continues their read-aloud performance until participants come to the end of the book. During storytime, then, the read-aloud performance of the text is regularly fragmented by talk that is not included in the written discourse being shared. However, this talk is intricately intertwined with participants' *ongoing* conceptual experience of the text being read (also see discussion of conceptual toggling in Section 5.2).

Peplow et al. (2016) also note that 'in reading group discussion, rather than being the instrument through which TWs are created, the literary text is instead referenced and reconstituted by the interaction. *Sometimes* the original literary text exists physically as an autonomous object in the discourse-world […]' (2016: 37, *my emphasis*). However, during storytime, the text is consistently foregrounded as both an autonomous and key heteronomous object; it remains alongside the adult and the child in the PerfW throughout the practice. In the storytime practices I captured, all participants remained focused on the text that they were sharing throughout the interaction, with only very minimal disruption. Moreover, when additional talk was triggered, it was often linked to, or relied on some aspect of the text in the

DW. The fishing interaction present in Extract 5.0 (see lines 110 – 122, Appendix F) arises because of something Eva has noticed in the pictures of the text. What is more, whilst Daniel's initial explanation across lines 116 - 120 does not include a reference to the text, once he completes his interrupted turn in line 123 and turns the page, he immediately points to the image and says 'look' to Eva (see line 124 Extract 5.0, Appendix F); the image that Daniel points to is shown in Figure 5.3:

[Image removed due to copyright reasons]
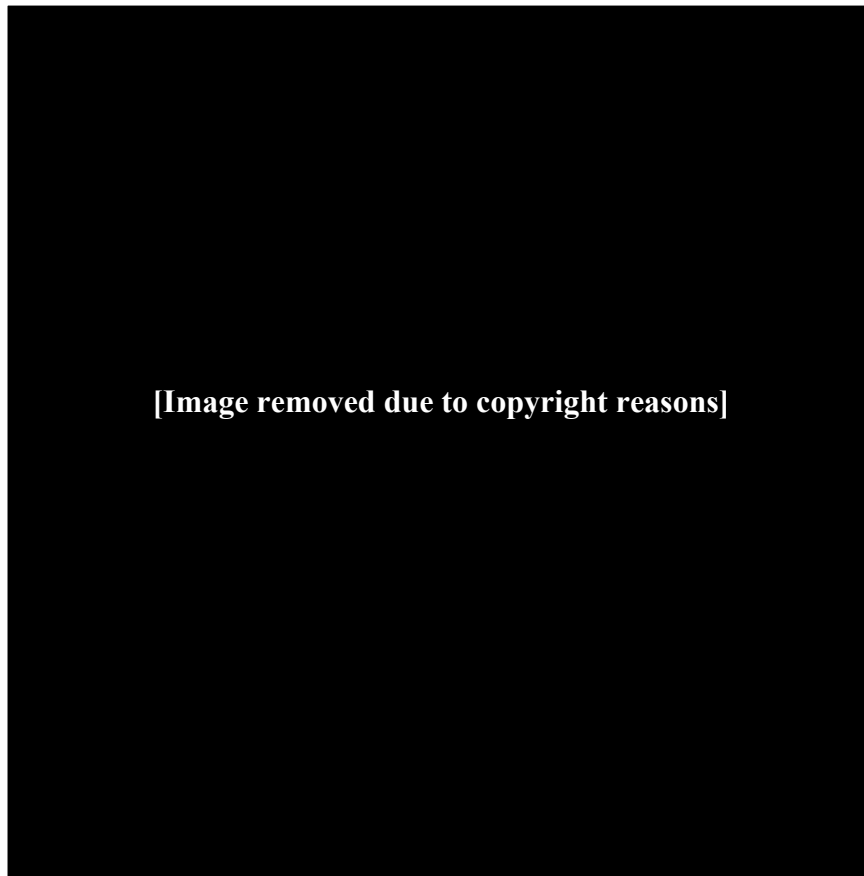
Figure 5.3 *Paddington is fishing*

This image complements the explanation Daniel provided across lines 116 -120 (see Section 5.1). Daniel directs Eva's attention towards this image with the imperative 'look' and thus provides a visual reference to his own talk, which in turn aids Eva's understanding of a TW event. This type of phrase is prevalent in the videos I collected, alongside 'look at this', 'look here' and 'can you see', which participants use to guide their DW partner to some visual aspect of the book's autonomy.

The text, then, remains a key source through which talk and thus TWs are created during storytime (also see discussion of storytime modes in Section 5.1.3). As such, I argue that storytime practices, although inherently 'social', simultaneously replicate solitary

reading practices (also see discussion of focused and non-focused interactions in Cochran-Smith, 1984: 157 - 169). According to Peplow et al.:

> In solitary reading, then, the written literary text is the substance of the discourse; it is the language which cues text-worlds in the readers' minds. The written literary text is both an autonomous object which forms the focus of the reader's attention and a heteronomous object brought to life by their acts of reading and text-world creations.
>
> (2016: 37)

The written text is still the substance of the discourse during storytime, but the way in which participants come to comprehend and construct TWs for this text is through social, collaborative performance and negotiation. I propose that Peplow et al's (2016) concept of shifting between literary and non-literary talk maps on to the concept of shifting between read-aloud talk and additional talk presented in this thesis; throughout storytime the read-aloud performance of the text (literary), which is linked directly to the construction of a prominent TW for the shared picturebook, is regularly fragmented by episodes of additional talk (non-literary), through which participants negotiate a shared experience and assimilate their TWs. These shifts are represented throughout the current work by the changing enactor-roles attributed to participants in my transcripts at different points during the activity. I argue that a shift in role ultimately reflects a shift in purpose during communication and is thus linked to the type of spoken discourse being produced (also see discussion of reader-roles in Section 4.2 and Section 4.3.1):

1) Read-aloud talk, associated roles: adult-narrator (AN), adult-character (AC)

2) Additional talk, associated roles: adult-participant (AP), child-participant (CP)

Whilst read-aloud talk provides a spoken version of the written discourse, additional talk aids the comprehension of that written discourse and its spoken performance.

As a social reading practice that mimics solitary reading, then, I argue that during storytime usually silent conceptual processes that we associate with reading a written fictional discourse, like text comprehension, become spoken (see discussion of interactive comprehension in Section 5.2). For example, I propose that across the interaction about 'little sausages' captured in lines 89 – 100 in Extract 4.0 (Appendix F) participants are engaged in what I will refer to as 'joint world-repair' (see Gavins, 2007: 141 – 142). During joint world-repair, the adult encourages the child to re-conceptualise an aspect of the discourse that they have either struggled to comprehend, interpreted in an unusual way, or in a way that does not match the adult's interpretation of the text. The adult in Extract 4.0 provides information in

her additional talk (AP) that the child is able to increment into their own prominent TW for the fictional discourse that is being read, thus hoping to redirect the child's understanding of the text in an attempt to assimilate their interpretation of *Stick Man* (2008) and re-align text-world (adult) and text-world (child) (see lines 93 – 95, Extract 4.0). World-repair in a face-to-face context is not unusual. Gavins notes that during world-repair in face-to-face communication 'hearers will often question their co-participant once an error is realised, seeking further information or clarification in order to repair the relevant mental representation' (2007: 142); this is what Eva can be observed as doing when she asks her father 'what is he doing' in line 111 of Extract 5.0. However, the face-to-face discussion of world-repair, associated with an individual's conceptualisation of the written discourse being read, is what makes storytime practices unique. Parent and child discuss a conceptual process that would usually be carried out silently and independently.

Peplow et al. argue that the concept of reading as a social and interactive act creates problems for cognitive-stylistic approaches, which developed from first-person introspection and predominantly focused on modelling the mental processes of individuals (2016: 32 - 33). I propose that the PerfW accounts for the social aspects of reading during storytime by providing a conceptual level in the discourse where participants can negotiate the meaning of their own TWs with a co-participant at the time of reading. The PerfW acts as a mediation space in the discourse that is able to account for the complex TW construction processes that take place during storytime.

5.1.3 A multimodal reading practice: semiotic modes and conceptual mediation

The shared and interactive nature of storytime practices means that there are a number of modes available to participants to communicate with, and from which they are able to construct meaning during TW assimilation, of which additional talk is only one. I propose, therefore, that storytime is a predominantly multimodal reading practice in terms of both text *and* context (also see Jackson 2013).

The very definition of multimodality centres on the notion of there being a multitude of semiotic modes within a given context (see Gibbons, 2012: 8; also see for definitions Jewitt, 2009: 1; Kress and van Leeuwen, 2001: 20). Whilst this is true of the majority of communicative contexts human beings find themselves in, I argue that during storytime a number of additional modes that are not normally associated with the activity of reading become relevant. Essentially, during storytime, participants must deal with the cognitive

aspects of both making sense of a written discourse *and* interacting socially with a co-participant.

The exact definition of the term 'mode' is understood differently across the three central approaches to multimodality: the social semiotic, discourse analysis, and interaction analysis (see Gibbons, 2012: 9 for a review). However, in this thesis, I adopt a definition of 'mode' that follows Gibbons' (2012) work on experimental literature and her cognitive-narratological approach. Gibbons aligns her understanding of the term 'mode' with Forceville's (2006, 2009) and Page's (2009) classification (2012: 10). Forceville's modal categories include: pictoral signs; written signs; spoken signs; gestures; sounds; music; smells; tastes; touch (2006: 383; 2009: 23). Page's classification is even broader, she states:

> […] a mode is understood here as a system of choices used to communicate meaning. What might count as a mode is an open-ended set, ranging across a number of systems including but not limited to language, image, colour, typography, music, voice quality, dress, gesture, spatial resources, perfume, and cuisine […] Given the fluid nature of modes, central questions are how, why, and to what extent some modes become privileged in certain contexts.
>
> (2009: 6)

Forceville and Page recognise that the classification of a mode is 'open-ended' and that these open-ended definitions are themselves fluid; modes are essentially context-specific. During storytime, the key communicative aim of the discourse is to comprehend a shared written discourse. As such, I argue that everything that surrounds the production and reception of that shared written discourse can be categorised as a 'mode', if its semiotic value aids a participant's understanding of the text being shared. In my data, I found that read-aloud discourses rely on a semiotic understanding that minimally combines text, image, and talk. However, the shared nature of the practice means that anything can become a mode during storytime at any point throughout the practice.

From the very beginning, storytime participants are involved in a discourse situation that requires them to make sense of a minimum of two different modes: words and pictures. Picturebooks are a multimodal literary genre in themselves. The relationship between words and pictures in these texts has been the focus of much scholarly research (see Nikolajeva and Scott, 2000, 2006; Lewis, 2001; Agosto, 1999; Sipe, 1998; Nodelman, 1988; also see Section 2.3.2 for a review of work in this area), the majority of which has focused on how these two core sign systems interact. In particular, researchers have emphasised the diversity in how text and image work together in picturebooks and attempted to produce frameworks,

taxonomies, and definitive labels in order to make sense of these image-text relationships. However, regardless of the diversity in image-text configurations that exist in picturebooks, many researchers agree that readers must engage in the 'dual processing of visual and textual information' (Martinez and Harmon, 2012: 337). This approach to the picturebook defines the text as a story told by two sign systems, which require a reader to 'find routes through the text that connect words and images' (Lewis, 2001: 32). Sipe notes that the different processing demands of reading the written and reading the visual makes the meanings in word-picture relationships inexhaustible providing readers with an opportunity to 'engage in an unending process of meaning making' (Sipe, 1998: 107; also see review in Section 2.3.2). The variation in how text and image interact in picturebooks therefore encourages a multitude of interpretations. During storytime practices, then, participants must work together to combine text and image in order to find their own 'route through the text' (see Lewis, 2001: 32). Thus, in many ways, the stylistic make-up of picturebooks themselves encourages a discursive and interactive interpretative context. This process of engaging in one of a number of potential routes through a text complicates TW assimilation, foregrounding the significance of storytime talk and TW negotiation.

However, as discussed in Section 4.3.3, as a mutually perceivable object in the PerfW, where it shares space and time with the adult and the child, the text controls the gaze of both participants and centres and guides the spoken discourse that does takes place during the practice. The foregrounding of the text's autonomy during storytime also means that the picturebook becomes a tactile feature of the discourse that each participant interacts with physically whilst reading. Physical movements like turning the page, pointing to images, and even touching images are part of the experience of reading these texts; these physical aspects of storytime are a form of comprehension aid available to both adult and child readers (also see discussion of text autonomy in Section 4.3.3 and materiality in Section 6.2). Gibbons contends that when reading multimodal fiction:

> word and image act in synchronicity, engaged in the production of a shared
> textual meaning. Their narrative congruence is thus perceived as contributing to a
> joint event. Consequently, multimodal novels may create *more intense narrative*
> *experiences.*
>
> (2012: 41, *my emphasis*)

Although Gibbons' work refers specifically to a more complex genre of fictional writing for adult readers, I propose that the effect of reading word and image during pre-school reading practices also contributes to a more intense reading experience. Co-present participants are

involved in the comprehension of a written discourse that is made up of co-occurring modalities. Storytime participants are thus actively involved in deciphering each mode, combining them, and discussing the different modes both individually and in combination; the multimodal characteristics of the text therefore engage readers in a number of active conceptual and physical processes simultaneously. Thus, I argue that the key multimodal characteristics of picturebooks, words and images, create a level of experiential intensity by consistently engaging participants both with the text, and one another. For the child, I argue that this intensity is linked to their developing cognitive skillset with regards to reading (see Section 5.1). The picturebook, alongside all other interaction with a literate adult, acts to focus and maintain the child's attention during the practice which in turn works to activate the goal state of the reading activity; this activation of the goal state is critical for goal maintenance in pre-schoolers (Marcovitch et al., 2007: 562). Storytime ultimately engages children verbally, visually, and physically. I propose that the multisensory nature of the practice means that the child is more likely to remain engrossed in the reading activity until its end; as a result of this sustained engagement, both their executive function and their knowledge surrounding how to read is enhanced. As a result of this intensity, I argue that the practice is more 'fun' for the child and that TW assimilation is more likely to succeed.

Gibbons' work (2012) on the experiential intensity of multimodal texts focuses specifically on solitary adult readers reading texts that intentionally exhibit ontological instability for specific narrative effect. As such, Gibbons' work assumes the construction of the ontologically distinct TW and explores multimodality as a product of that TW. Whilst I will go on to argue that the multimodal features of picturebooks involve storytime participants in interesting and complex ontological relationships with TWs (see Chapter 6), I propose that the key role of multimodality during storytime is not for specific narrative effect. Rather, in the pre-school read-aloud context, TWs are the product of the multimodal elements of the discourse; thus, multimodality plays a significant role in the *construction* of TWs (also see Jackson, 2013: 45 - 47). Ultimately, in order to make sense of the different modes contained within the text, participants rely on both the read-aloud performance by the adult, and all other additional interactions that take place with their co-participant and the picturebook.

Given the role of spoken discourse in these early reading practices, then, a number of additional DW modes, which are not usually associated with the comprehension of written communication, remain pertinent in the read-aloud context (see Gavins, 2007: 26; see also description of the storytime DW in Section 4.2). In all of my storytime videos, participants

used their bodies and voices purposefully during communication and I identified a number of key comprehension aids employed throughout each activity:

- Gesture

- Physical movement

- Facial expressions

- Gaze

- Voice manipulation, laughter, other vocal signals like gasping

All of these different comprehension aids hold semiotic potential in the discourse situation and become a form of storytime mode that aids participants' TW assimilation, and contributes to their individual experiences.

Essentially, I argue that in order to construct and assimilate TWs for the written discourse being shared, participants are required first to conceptually combine the key storytime modes: text, image, and talk (performance and additional). The conceptual processing of these key elements also includes all of their embedded comprehension aids such as gesture and voice quality, which present as core storytime modes at different points throughout the practice. It is out of this semiotic combination that TWs are constructed. I propose, therefore, that the PerfW, as an in-between conceptual space, is where this multimodal TW construction is carried out. Thus, the PerfW is not only a middle ground where participants adopt enactor-roles and enact the storytime activity, it is a conceptual combination space, where participants make sense of the different elements of the discourse being produced, combine them, discuss them, and filter them through into their own experiences.

The conceptual mediation offered by the PerfW is complex in that it requires constant conceptual toggling by participants between different levels of the discourse, namely the two ontologically distinct domains: the DW and the TW (see Section 5.2; also see discussion of toggling talk in Section 6.1). Moreover, participants must balance the constant shifting between the two key types of storytime talk in the PerfW: performance and additional talk. However, these two features of the discourse are closely intertwined and form the focus of the next section.

5.2 Interactive comprehension: additional talk and conceptual toggling

During the initial stages of my video data analysis, I was able to separate out instances of read-aloud talk and additional talk based purely on whether or not an utterance reflected the written content of the picturebook being shared; I owned a copy of each text being read in my

storytime videos and was therefore able to determine with ease when the talk produced during storytime was the written discourse being read aloud and when it was not. Once the talk had been split into the two main categories: (1) read-aloud talk or read-aloud performance, and (2) additional talk, I was able to explore each in greater detail. I found that each category could be defined by a number of features in addition to simply whether or not the talk matched the written discourse being shared.

Read-aloud talk, usually produced by the adult, is marked immediately by the performative nature of the utterances. Adults manipulate their voice in a number of ways which includes changes in intonation, accent, volume, and speed. Whilst these changes in voice are also present during the production of some additional talk, they were often more extreme and more prolonged during read-aloud narration. What is more, I found that patterns in voice manipulation are closely tied to the read-aloud enactor-roles that the participants adopted throughout the practice: adult-narrator (AN) and adult-character (AC). Adult-narrator talk usually begins with a slight increase in volume and decrease in speed; this talk then maintains a steady rhythm and parents focus on features such as clear enunciation. The way in which this AN-talk was produced was also influenced by the style of the text being read. For example, when adults read a text that had a rhyming narrative, they usually foregrounded the rhythm through their speech, placing emphasis on the syllables that carry the main rhythm and rhyme.

However, the most extreme voice manipulation I observed across my dataset were adult-character (AC) performances. When reading *Paddington* (see Extract 5.0, Appendix F), for example, Daniel not only maintains a very clear and coherent narrator-voice, but he also produces the speech of six other TW-enactors:

AC1: Mr Gruber

AC2: Paddington Bear

AC3: a lady

AC4: a man

AC5: the judge

AC6: the boy

For each of these enactors, Daniel performs individual AC-specific accents which he maintains throughout the practice and performs each time a specific TW-enactor speaks; the production of strong character-voices was common in the storytime videos I collected (also see discussion of read-aloud performance in Section 6.2.1). Across the *Paddington* transcript, the persistent voice manipulations Daniel produces for each character in the text are

represented by a relevant ((AC1V)) – ((AC6V)) label. These labels foreground the notion that a strong voice manipulation has been produced in order to represent a specific character and that the same manipulation is being maintained during the performance of this character throughout the reading practice. What is more, during the production of a read-aloud performance, adults also engaged in a number of physical and behavioural practices specific to this these read-aloud roles, such as:

- Pointing to the words as they were being read
- Pointing to images as they were referenced in the written discourse
- Holding the text so both participants could view it
- Maintaining their gaze on the text

All utterances produced under the read-aloud talk category were TW-specific and referred to, or included the live performance of, a place, person(s), and time that was distinct from the participants' real-world. As soon as these read-aloud performances began in the PerfW, children became quiet and sat and listened. Children rarely looked up at adults, even when they were engaged in the highest level of voice manipulation and performance, they instead stay focused on the text as the adult performs the content. I propose that in these instances, where a silent listener focuses on a TW-performance, they are involved in the ongoing construction of a prominent TW for the written discourse, up until this performance is paused. The PerfW, at this point in the interaction, acts like a conceptual stage where participants simply combine image and spoken discourse. Pre-school children cannot read the text that is being shared in order to know for certain that the talk the adult is producing is the read-aloud narration but it was clear that they understood when the adult was engaged in read-aloud talk and when they were not. I suggest that children are picking up on specific comprehension aids embedded within the vocal manipulations that the adult employs as they perform the written discourse. The child knows what the adult sounds like on a day-to-day basis and is therefore well-equipped to identify when their parent is speaking differently.

In comparison, utterances that belong to the additional talk category – and AP and CP transcribed reader-roles in the PerfW – more closely represented participant's every day DW interactions. The face-to-face relationship that participants maintain throughout the practice means that they are able to communicate with one another as they normally would in the DW at any point during the read-aloud practice. This means that participants regularly make reference to what van der Bom (2016: 96) calls the 'here-and-now' level of interaction. In my data, participants regularly address one another in the present tense, by name or with first-person and second-person references, make definite references to shared perceptual items,

and regularly turn to look at one another. Moreover, aspects of voice manipulation associated with the read-aloud performance are much less extreme.

Read-aloud talk and additional talk, then, are marked by certain features associated with the production and structure of utterances, which enable participants to recognise switching between the two discourse-types. However, unlike the read-aloud talk which was relatively predictable, the identification and tagging of additional talk produced during storytime was more complex. Additional talk does not always stem directly from a trigger in the text being read. Instead, participants can choose to break away from the read-aloud narrative of the fictional text at any moment. I identified two key ways in which additional talk was triggered during the storytime practices I captured. In the first instance, I define speech that 'triggers' additional talk as the first utterance of non read-aloud talk by any participant in the discourse situation that immediately follows a turn that involves the read-aloud narrator reading the written narrative lines as they appear in the text (for example see Daniel's question 'can you think of anything' in line 40 of Extract 5.0, Appendix F). In the second instance, I argue that additional talk is triggered by any utterance that interrupts the read-aloud narrator as they read the written narrative lines as they appear in the text (for example see Eva's question 'what's a canal' in line 144 of Extract 5.0, Appendix F). In my data, I found that both the adult *and* child participants regularly trigger additional talk, as shown in the above quoted lines 40 and 144 from Extract 5.0, respectively. What is more, the talk can take place at any point during the read-aloud practice and is unpredictable. However, whilst there is no definitive pattern that determines *when* participants will engage in additional talk, there are observable patterns in *how* the talk is employed by participants once it is initiated. Thus, once additional talk has been triggered in the discourse situation, it usually follows a much more predictable pattern that can be aligned with the main aims of the discourse and the assimilation of text-world (adult) and text-world (child).

Across my dataset, I found that instances of additional talk can be subcategorised based on factors such as who triggered the talk, what the talk is about, the structure of the talk, and what the talk achieves (also see Jackson, 2019). I identified three key subcategories of additional talk in my storytime videos: 'additional commentary', which involves instances where participants provide extra detail about what has happened in the fictional discourse or commentary about their own observation or experience (see Extract 5.0, Appendix F, lines: 176 – 177); 'extended discussion', which refers to instances where the talk becomes prolonged and the topic discussed evolves gradually as participants build a mutual understanding about something in the fictional discourse, or some other relevant topic (see

Extract 5.0, Appendix F, lines: 144 - 152); and 'question and answer', which refers to instances where one participant asks a question about some aspect of the text, or some other relevant topic, which requires an immediate answer from their storytime partner (see Extract 5.0, Appendix F, lines: 80 - 81).

In addition to identifying key subcategories of the talk, I also observed that a large majority of the additional talk that took place included a direct, or indirect image reference. These visual references were present across my storytime data, they occurred in every video, usually more than once. I found that images regularly facilitated additional talk and usually, whenever additional talk was triggered, images were either the cause or were used as part of the explanation. In some instances, additional commentary included turns such as 'ooh look', where the participants didn't provide extra detail through speech, but referred their co-participant to an image in the text (for example see line 104 in Extract 5.0, Appendix F). The ease of reference and the regularity with which participants refer to pictures during storytime is related to their role in the discourse as a material object. Within the conceptual space of the PerfW, the adult, child, and text exist together. As such, they share time and space and the text as a shared object remains referential throughout storytime. The child is unable to access the words in the picturebook, but pictures are accessible to both participants throughout the practice and as such, it follows that they become the first point of reference when negotiating comprehension during storytime. Additional talk and direct image reference are closely intertwined (also see discussion of pictures across Sections 6.3 – 6.3.2).

The boundaries between these subcategories of talk are not definitive and, often, one episode of a specific subcategory can merge into another, depending upon the topic and the participants who are involved in the interaction. Nevertheless, all of these different subcategories of talk are essentially different communicative methods through which participants engage in TW negotiation in the PerfW; each subcategory above involves the provision of additional information about the fictional discourse, or some other relevant topic. For this reason, I refer to all instances of additional talk as triggering 'interactive comprehension', where participants engage in discursive behaviour in order to comprehend some aspect of the fictional discourse at hand. However, these instances of interactive comprehension are not always triggered by the text being shared. I propose instead that interactive comprehension is a consequence of the specific context of pre-school reading practices and the need for two participants with varying cognitive and reading abilities to negotiate a shared experience. Essentially, I argue that storytime is a reading practice that is made up of larger episodes of interactive comprehension, where participants engage in

discursive behaviours in order to assimilate their individual TWs and come to a shared and coherent understanding of the written discourse.

What is key about additional talk is that it happens simultaneously with the fictional discourse as it is being processed and interpreted by participants in the DW. Although it is in many ways separate from the fictional narrative, additional talk is nevertheless occurring simultaneously with that narrative and is undeniably intertwined with the picturebook discourse that is being read aloud. Moreover, participants shift seamlessly between the two throughout storytime. However, the production of additional talk and read-aloud talk are associated with different modes, comprehension aids, enactor-roles and purpose in the discourse situation. Conceptually, therefore, I propose that when participants switch between read-aloud talk and episodes of interactive comprehension, they toggle across different levels of the discourse in order to process the talk.

The concept of conceptual toggling during storytime involves some movement between ontological levels that is not accounted for by TWT. Canning characterises TWT as a 'top-down processing model that operates unidirectionally so that discourse-world knowledge is imported into the text-world, rather than text-world contributing to discourse-world understanding' (2017: 174). However, I argue that a backwards and forwards movement between these levels, with one impacting on the other, is one of key features of how storytime discourse operates. A number of scholars have argued for similar 'upward influence from text-world to the discourse-world level' (see Lahey 2016). Canning argues that TWs can be incremented back in the DW and thus function 'bi-directionally' (2017). Canning goes on to note that Stockwell (2009: 95) alludes to a level of circularity between DW and TW when he talks of a 'feedback loop' in the production of empathy during reading. Lahey (2019) also draws on the notion of a feedback loop in her work on world-building and argues that 'knowledge is not only applied in world-building, but accrued through it' (2019: 54). Lahey's 'cognitive feedback loop' model thus draws attention to the 'cyclical' relationship between DW and TW during text comprehension and she argues that it is better able to account for the learning that occurs whenever reader's engage in fictional reading (2019: 59). The terminology used by these scholars: upward influence, bi-directional, and feedback loop all refer to interpretative activity by experiencing adult readers. More specifically, these scholars assume the construction of the ontologically distinct TW by adults and then explore the influence of this TW on DW knowledge; the 'upwards influence', then, is ultimately the product of TW interaction. Whilst I agree that TWT must account for bi-directional processing, I argue that pre-school children do not so easily immediately construct an

ontologically distinct TW because of their developmental cognitive capabilities. Instead, the conceptual toggling that takes places between the DW and TW during storytime practices is *not* the product of constructing a TW that influences the reader's DW knowledge, but happens in order to aid the multimodal construction of a TW in the first place and thus their comprehension of the text being read. The word 'toggle', therefore, better represents the gradual and repetitive conceptual movement needed in order for participants to check-in with one another and the text, and assimilate their experiences.

The conceptual toggling I am proposing takes place during storytime involves participants switching between their individual conceptual processing of the read-aloud talk to more interactive face-to-face communication with their co-participant. This conceptual movement involves two key toggles that are represented in Figure 5.4 by the two-way arrows that sit between the DW and the PerfW (Toggle 1), and, the PerfW and the TW (Toggle 2).
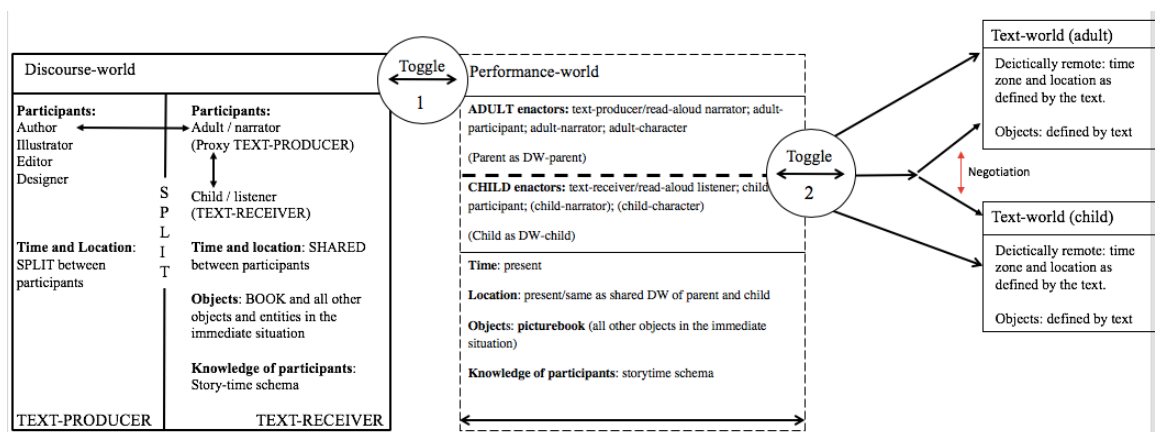
Figure 5.4 *Storytime conceptual toggling*

I propose that when an episode of interactive comprehension is triggered by either the adult (AP) or the child (CP), following the adult's read-aloud performance (AN, AC), the purpose of the discourse shifts slightly. This shift is linked to the different types of talk and their associated enactor-roles that make up storytime discourse (see Section 5.1.2, and Section 6.1 for a more detailed discussion of toggling talk and re-orientation during storytime). I argue that, as the discourse switches between read-aloud talk and additional talk, participants become involved in conceptual toggling across the different levels of the discourse. The two-way arrow at the bottom of the PerfW in Figure 5.4 also helps account for this complexity. It represents a conceptual cline, ranging from DW on the far left to TW on the far right. This feature of the PerfW aids the examination of storytime discourse by

allowing the different enactor-roles and types of talk associated with read-aloud practices to be plotted at different points between the DW and TW; thus accounting for key conceptual and experiential shifts that take place during the discourse (for a detailed discussion of this conceptual cline see Section 6.1). When an episode of interactive comprehension is triggered, for example, it creates a jump for both participants away from the conceptual activity of processing the read-aloud talk and constructing a prominent TW for the fictional discourse being read, and towards engaging with a co-participant and the book as on object in the DW. Essentially, all additional talk creates some cognitive movement away from any silent conceptual processing of the discourse and back towards the DW, regardless of how closely linked this talk is to the text being read. However, unlike the bi-directional processing (Canning, 2017) and the feedback loops (Lahey, 2019, Stockwell, 2009) proposed by previous scholars, storytime participants are not involved in the simple circular cognitive movement between a TW and DW; interactive comprehension does not return participants to the DW completely.

Instead, in the first instance, participants toggle the TW and the PerfW (Toggle 2) as a topic for discussion is highlighted; participants then employ a second conceptual toggle with the DW (Toggle 1) during communication with one another as they engage in joint comprehension (see Figure 5.4). I propose that Toggle 2 results in conceptual movement away from the world of the text and towards the PerfW, where parent and child discuss an aspect of the picturebook discourse jointly, or partake in any number of engagement activities (see discussion in Section 5.3), effectively assimilating their experiences. During these episodes of additional talk participants construct a number of TWs in order to conceptualise one another's speech. It is important to remember that whilst both participants remain focused on the text being read aloud and work towards combining information contained in the written (spoken) and visual modes of the picturebook, the prominent TW(s) for the picturebook is only one of many TWs constructed during storytime; participants construct TWs for *all discourse* that takes place during storytime, and all of these TWs feed into and play a key role in each participant's overall experience of the discourse.

During these episodes of interactive comprehension, then, the purpose of the PerfW shifts from a silent conceptual stage to an interactive conceptual mediation space, or comprehension space (see Section 5.1.3). Once the episodes of additional talk are completed, participants conceptually toggle back towards the world of the text and their prominent TW (Toggle 2), and take with them any information that they have deemed relevant during the negotiation at the PerfW level of the discourse. In many ways, the knowledge that is accrued

during the backwards toggle(s) is immediately repurposed into the conceptual comprehension process (see Lahey, 2019 for discussion of knowledge accrual during reading). This process is represented in Figure 5.0 by the two-way arrows that surround and include the negotiation arrow to the right of the PerfW in the diagram (also see Figure 5.4). Participants effectively increment key points from these episodes of interactive comprehension into their conceptual processing of the text, employing the PerfW-to-TW toggle (Toggle 2) in order 'return' to their prominent TW(s) with more knowledge. In this way, the PerfW acts like a conceptual filter and incrementation space.

The dotted outline of the PerfW (see Figure 5.0) represents the 'semipermeable membrane' of the construct (see McHale 1987: 34 - 36). The notion of a semipermeable membrane adopted in this thesis is most closely aligned with McHale's (1987) work on postmodern fiction. McHale draws attention to the flexible boundaries between narrative worlds and/or levels (also see Gibbons, 2012: 50) and posits that 'fiction's epidermis, it appears, is not impermeable but a semipermeable membrane' (1987: 34). Gibbons, who also draws on McHale's work, argues that McHale's application of the metaphor of semipermeability can be 'applied to literary experience by signifying the possibilities for transgressions between and across narrative worlds' (2012: 50). In her work on experimental fiction, Gibbons applies the notion to the division between a reader's DW and the fictional TW in her analysis of texts that appear to 'traverse the discourse-world divide' (2012: 51). It is this concept of a membrane that holds the potential for possible transgressions with surrounding constructs, or worlds, that I employ here (also see discussion of the PerfW as a blended space in Section 6.1). The semipermeable membrane of the PerfW is thus indicative of the blurred boundaries of this conceptual level and facilitates the movement and accessibility of the PerfW with the surrounding DW and TW. Alongside the two-way arrows that connect the three levels of the discourse, this dotted outline of the PerfW accounts for the overlapping relationship between the DW, PerfW, and TWs throughout early reading practices. Ultimately, the interactional pattern: read-aloud → additional talk → read-aloud → additional talk → read-aloud and so on, was common across my dataset and I propose that conceptual toggling across different levels of the discourse is the norm during these practices. Storytime discourse relies on this backwards and forwards movement between the different conceptual levels of the discourse in order to negotiate and assimilate their experiences, which means that the underlying ontological nature of the discourse is complex (see Chapter 6).

As the differing roles and separated conceptual processing in the PerfW suggest, the process of TW assimilation differs considerably for both the adult and child. I argue, therefore, that the adult's and the child's role during interactive comprehension, including the talk they produce and their experience of the different toggles across the discourse, vary. In the sections that follow I explore patterns in adult-talk and child-talk in turn.

5.2.1 Adult-talk: guided interactions, conceptual foregrounding, and text-world layering
The adult holds a privileged position in the discourse situation as the participant who has the more advanced reading abilities, cognitive capabilities, and experiential/knowledge stores. In TWT terms, I argue that the adult in the DW possesses 'privileged access' to both the PerfW and the TW(s). The notion of conceptual access presented here is representative of the adult's more mature overview of both the DW, including their co-participant and the storytime schema (see discussion of the storytime schema in Sections 4.1 - 4.1.3), and of the text that is being read. The term 'privileged' in this instance, then, refers to the adult's access to and understanding of their child co-participant, and the adult's ability to read independently, enabling them to conceptualise, comprehend and construct a TW for the picturebook text being read before the child. This feeds into their conception of the PerfW and informs their talk and behaviour at this level of the discourse.

The adult's reading and cognitive capabilities means that they are able to easily read and construct a TW for the text that they are reading aloud, just as they would for any other written discourse. I argue, therefore, that in order to present the content of the picturebook text to the child, the adult first constructs a TW for that picturebook. The adult, as text-producer in the PerfW, then performs the literary discourse to the pre-school child based on their own interpretation of the text. The adult thus constructs a TW for the picturebook and then toggles up a level (Toggle 2) away from TW (adult) and towards the PerfW as they present what is ultimately their version of the picturebook to their child. In TWT terms, then, I argue that the adult's read-aloud performance and the episodes of interactive comprehension that take place during storytime are more accurately viewed as a way in which the adult attempts to bring the child's TW of the read-aloud picturebook discourse as close as they can to their own TW of the read-aloud picturebook discourse. The adult is essentially a guide during storytime and their privileged position in the discourse means that they are free to adapt their presentation of the picturebook text at any point during the practice.

The adult's ability to manipulate the discourse and the presentation of the text in this way is linked to their potential 'authorial control' in the discourse. As the privileged proxy text-producer, the adult is able to make decisions about what text-specific and context-specific information to provide, foreground, ignore, and so on. The videos I collected showed that adults often edited texts during their read-aloud performance by missing out and/or adding in words; furthermore, adults regularly re-instantiate schema headers and foreground schematic knowledge during the read-aloud (see, for example, the discussion of 'readiness interactions' in Section 4.1.1). The additional talk the adult produces, and the way in which the narrative lines are produced by the read-aloud narrator, in turn, impact the way in which the child comprehends them. The different character voices that Daniel voluntarily maintains throughout the *Paddington* transcript (see Extract 5.0, Appendix F; also see discussion in Section 5.2), for example, are not only entertaining and thus engaging for the child, but provide an audible mode in the PerfW that enables Eva to keep track of different characters she can see in the story.

What is more, adults are able to use their privileged position in the discourse to adapt their reading style in a way that specifically targets the child that they are reading to. The existing DW relationship that read-aloud participants share means that the adult possesses a detailed awareness of their child's knowledge and experiences. Throughout storytime, adults draw on these knowledge stores (Toggle 1) and amend their storytime performance accordingly. Mjor (2010) suggests that 'parents, when guiding their children in meaning-making processes, seem to be concerned about presenting the text as relevant to the child, about relating it to his or her own life experiences' (179). Meanwhile, Adrian et al. (2005) recognise that in the storybook context, adults' discourse focuses especially on what children have not yet mastered (684). As Mjor (2010: 183) goes on to argue, sometimes there is a lack of balance between a text and the child's ability to play the role of the implied reader and in such instances, the adult is faced with a meaning-making challenge: adults must first interpret the text themselves then they analyse how the child will be able to find it meaningful.

However, this is not to say that the adult controls the interaction. Instead, I argue that the adult, as the participant with the higher cognitive capability and experiential knowledge, maintains a 'scaffolding' role in the discourse. This scaffolding role involves the adult controlling *only those elements* of the task that are initially beyond the learner's capacity (Wood et al., 1976: 90; see also Henderson et al., 2002; Pentimonti and Justice, 2010; Vygotsky, 1978; Yelland and Masters, 2006). The theoretical background for the term can be linked to the work of Vygotsky (1978) and his concept of the 'zone of proximal

development' (ZPD) (see Sections 2.2.1 and 2.5.1). Ultimately, Vygotsky believed that guided interactions with a more skilled peer could facilitate a higher level of thinking within the ZPD. More specifically, these guided interactions can be seen to aid a child's learning and encourage them to internalise their thinking and strategy surrounding the scaffolding activity (Yelland and Masters, 2006: 363–364).

The adult, then – as the scaffolding participant – has a more specific purpose during storytime and I argue that their spoken discourse is therefore much more structured than the child. In the videos I collected, I observed adults employing their additional talk in order to guide and engage the child through two specific communicative patterns:

- Question and answer
- AN + AP adjacency pairs

Both of these key interactive patterns are explored in some detail below.

Adults regularly triggered additional talk in the form 'question and answer' in order to guide the child's attention during the discourse (also see discussion of subcategories of talk in Section 5.2). Examples from *Paddington* are listed below (see Extract 5.0, Appendix F for full context of utterance):

(1) AP: can you think of anything? (line 40)
(2) AP: what's that? *(=points to image)* (line 61)
(3) AP: =uh oh, what's that? *(=points to image)* (line 80)
(4) AP: you know what bait is? (line 95)
(5) AP: °do you remember sparklers at erm° *(=turns towards and addresses child)* (line 217)
(6) AP: °what do you think it is? ° *(=turns towards and addresses child)* (line 228)

Extract 5.1 *Adult-talk: question and answer*

Across examples (1) – (6) in Extract 5.1, the adult directs a question to his co-participant. In four cases, the adult addresses the child with the second-person pronoun 'you' (see examples (1), (4), (5), and (6) in Extract 5.1) and in the other two examples the adult asks the child to identify a mutually perceivable 'that' which he is pointing to (see examples (2) and (3) in Extract 5.1). The recipient of the question is therefore undeniable in each case and the child is required to respond. I propose that in such instances, the adult's talk encourages a conceptual toggle across the discourse, drawing participants' attention towards their co-participant in the DW and the specific contents of the face-to-face interaction that follows (also see Section 5.2). In the questions listed in Extract 5.1, for example: question (1) encourages Eva to engage with a key TW event: the Busy Bee Adventure trail (see summary of *Paddington*

(2014) in Section 5.1.1); (2) and (3) draw the child's attention to an image in the text and engages them in a relevant labelling activity; (4) focuses on the child's knowledge of a word just mentioned in the text; (5) draws on the child's relevant memories and experiences; and (6) encourages the child to make a prediction about some aspect of the story *Paddington* (2014). I propose that each time the adult engages the child in this way, they conceptually foreground an aspect of the discourse for the child. As examples (1) to (6) represent, this conceptual foregrounding can range from an image in the picturebook being shared (2) to the child's own knowledge (4). Whilst questions (1) – (6) are all related in some way to the discourse being read-aloud, they can be differentiated based on whether they require the child to engage more with the text (1, 2, 3, 6) or with their DW knowledge (4, 5). Nevertheless, the effects of the conceptual foregrounding remain the same. Essentially, once the adult asks the question, drawing attention to the here-and-now level of the interaction and presenting a topic for discussion, participants are involved in the process of creating TWs to make sense of *this* episode of interactive comprehension. The level of focus that accompanies the conceptual activity of processing and responding to a question means that participants are far more likely to increment details from this discussion into their prominent TW (child).

In question (1), (4), (5), and (6), for example, the adult asks the child specifically to engage with their own mental faculties: can you *think;* you *know*; do you *remember*. In each of these cases, the adult's question directs the child to engage with the DW toggle and situate their own thoughts, knowledge and experiences alongside their ongoing experience of the text. This is a process that mature adult readers usually carry out silently and independently. However, during storytime, the adult provides an apprenticeship in this conceptual activity by guiding the child to engage in specific comprehensive methods through questions and actions. Thus, I propose that the child is encouraged to not only increment key information from the episode of interactive comprehension into TW (child), but to increment the way in which they got there, effectively internalising the comprehensive strategy that the adult encouraged into their storytime schema and reading repertoire. The adult provides similar scaffolding surrounding images throughout storytime practices.

In examples (2) and (3) when Daniel asks 'what's that?' he also points to the image at the same time. The significance of pictures in the discourse situation was clear across my data and they were employed as a key mode for making meaning by all participants throughout storytime (see discussion of additional talk and pictures in Section 5.2; also see the discussion of pictures across Sections 6.3 – 6.3.2). Lewis (2001: 36) recognises that 'a picture-book's story emerges out of the mutual interanimation of words and pictures', and I

agree; however, I argue that being able to make sense of these two modes at once is a learned skill. During storytime, the image provides key world-building and function-advancing information, but it is not always referred to directly in the narrative lines of the text or therefore in the read-aloud talk (see Chapter 6, Section 6.3.1 for a more detailed discussion of the relationship between pictures and world-building, and Section 6.3.2 for a discussion of the relationship between pictures and actions). Instead, it is often the episodes of interactive comprehension that surround images that participants use, not only to control the interpretation of this shared stable aspect of the discourse, but to highlight its relevance in relation to the written word. In my data, parents regularly pointed to pictures as they were reading, or would pause their read-aloud narration in order to spend time exploring the images with their child. I argue that in doing so, the adult enacts the process of making sense of these multi-modal texts and draws the child's attention towards the need to combine word and image in the discourse situation. Furthermore, I suggest that through repeated practices like this, the child gradually learns to link up what they hear with what they can see, employing direct perception in the construction of their TWs during storytime. Internalising this reading strategy is a significant step in learning to comprehend these discourses independently.

The second key interactive pattern under investigation here is the 'AN+AP adjacency pairs' produced by adults during storytime. These AN + AP adjacency pairs usually took the form of read-aloud narration + additional commentary (see Section 5.2). Whilst these instances of talk do not necessarily require a response from the child, they still work to foreground certain aspects of the discourse and thus guide the child's experience. In line 104 of the *Paddington* transcript, for example (see Extract 5.0, Appendix F) the adult produces the utterance 'ooh look' in between two instances of read-aloud narration. This additional talk does not require a response from the child, but it does work to foreground the image of the TW-enactor 'a boy' who is mentioned in the preceding line of read-aloud narration (see lines 102 – 103 in Extract 5.0). In doing so, this utterance specifically guides the child's attention towards what the adult considers to be the key aspect of the text at this point in the discourse. Moreover, the adult's talk in this instance draws the child towards a picture in the book and thus once again scaffolds the combination of word and image. The adult's additional commentary, then, aids ongoing TW assimilation by directing the child to aspects of the text that the adult themselves finds significant.

Alongside guiding the child's attention, this AN+AP scaffolding discourse pattern effectively provides additional information for incrementation about the content and events in

the book being read, whilst it is being read. A number of further examples (1 - 6) from my storytime video dataset are presented below in Extract 5.2:

Example 1 *Adult-talk: exaggerated response*

1   AN: toads tracksuit is ↓<too big> ((frowns)), those jeans <u>are</u> <u>tigh</u>t on <u>pig</u> ((concerned face))
2   AP: =((laughs)) he can't do the button up can he?

Example 2 *Adult-talk: new character*

1   AN: ((ACV)) let me introduce myself
2   AP: =((whispers)) it's the elephant (PT>)

Example 3 *Adult-talk: event foregrounded*

1   AN: 11pm high security wing, mouseways prison. And so we leave our wayward friend. At
2   last he sees the error of his ways and is <tru:ly sorry>
3   AP: =oh dear, has he been put in prison

Example 4 *Adult-talk: world-switch*

1   AN: so one Saturday morning Alfie and Mum went to a big shop in the high street
2   AP: they went to a ↑sho:e shop (0.4) (PT>)

Example 5 *Adult-talk: story summary*

1   AN: […] and he told it to his granny, who told it to a plaice, who told it to a star fish, who
2   told it to a seal, who told it to a lobster, who told it to an ↑eel
3   AP: Crikey, they're all telling the story, aren't they? (PT>)

Example 6 *Adult-talk: character-specific*

1   AN: one day Alfie came home from nursery school with a ↑card in an envelope. His best
2   friend Bernard had given it to him
3   AP: =Mmm Annie Rose is thinking 'what's going on here?'

Extract 5.2 *Adult-talk: AN + AP adjacency pairs*

In the examples above, the adult's AP role provides additional commentary on the AN-utterance immediately before it. However, each example provides evidence of a different purpose associated with the talk: in Example 1, the adult provides an exaggerated response to the discourse that reinforces the meaning of the AN line that precedes it; in Examples 2 – 4, and Example 6, the adult achieves a similar result, but this time provides clarity to the narrative with an additional explanation related to either a character, event, or world-switch

that was mentioned or took place in the read-aloud narrative; and in Example 5, the adult provides a succinct summary that foregrounds a key underlying theme in the story being shared, *Tiddler* (Donaldson and Scheffler, 2007; see Appendix C for full reference). In each case, I argue that the adult can be seen verbalising their own response to the discourse as they are reading the text and in doing so they often provide additional TW-specific explanations and information that is not available in the picturebook alone (also see Section 6.3.1 and 6.3.2). However, within the multimodal storytime context, I propose that even the adult's additional talk and verbalised responses display a level of performance.

In Example 1 and Example 2 (Extract 5.2), the adult employs laughter and whispering, respectively, as comprehension aids to foreground both humour and a surprise reveal in the picturebook, respectively. Whilst these examples display obvious verbal performances, I found that adults manipulated their voice in a more subtle manner – adapting intonation, volume and so on – throughout the storytime activity. In the space of the PerfW, I argue that these verbal comprehension aids act as semiotic modes that convey mood and influence the child's experience (also see analysis in Jackson, 2019). I propose therefore that the adult's verbalised responses provide some indication of not just *where* the child's attention should be focused, but *how* the child should interpret the discourse.

Question and answer talk, and AN + AP adjacency pairs triggered by the adult thus consistently focus attention towards, reinforce, or explain some key event, item, enactor, feeling, or other aspect of the text in order to solidify understanding and engage the child in the discourse situation. The adult adapts these communicative strategies throughout the practice to suit their child and is able to use them to identify and fill gaps in understanding during the reading practice. In the *Paddington* storytime video (see lines: 93 -101 in Extract 5.0, Appendix F), for example, Daniel breaks away from his read-aloud narration in line 95 in order to ask Eva 'you know what bait is?' (also listed as Example (4), Extract 5.1). Daniel asks this question immediately after the word 'bait' is mentioned in his read-aloud talk and is thus consequently foregrounded as a key item in the TW. There is no reason for Daniel to pause his read-aloud narration and ask Eva this question except for his own intimation that Eva might not understand the reference to 'bait' in the written discourse. Eva responds with 'no' (line 96) and Daniel is then able to provide an immediate explanation for her: 'it's what you put on the end of your fishing rod to catch a fish. bait. Yeah' (line 97). Across lines 93 - 101 then, Daniel employs his knowledge of his child in order to highlight a potential gap in her comprehensive abilities. Daniel's question causes both participants to toggle away from their TWs and towards the conceptual mediation space of the PerfW, where they discuss the

definition of the word bait. The explanation that Daniel provides in the PerfW can then be incremented into Eva's experience of the discourse, filling a comprehension gap.

I propose that each time the adult provides foregrounding discourse, a verbalised response, or engages the child in question and answer talk that creates some conceptual movement towards the PerfW, the child is engaged in a process of building a set of TWs for this face-to-face scaffolding discourse. This process takes places repetitively throughout storytime and as participants shift from read-aloud talk to additional talk, it creates a level of text-world layering, where a number of different TWs are processed at the same time. I propose therefore that the adult influences the child's incrementation process during storytime by providing not only a read-aloud performance of the text in their AN enactor-role, which the child processes for the prominent TW, but then a number of other additional TW options for the child to conceptualise. These scaffolding TWs emerge from the adult's guiding discourse and share many similarities with Gavins' (2007) modal-worlds and world-switches. A scaffolding TW, for example, is often triggered by a direct 'you' address from the adult to child (and vice-versa), which clearly denotes some reorientation in the discourse away from an ontologically distinct realm – like the fictional-world of Paddington Bear – to the real-world. Phrases such as 'you think' (see line 153 in Extract 5.0, Appendix F), or 'I think' (see line 155 in Extract 5.0, Appendix F), and 'you know' (see line 95 in Extract 5.0, Appendix F) trigger epistemic scaffolding modal-worlds, where participants must consider the inner workings of either their own mind, or their co-participant's. The adult's scaffolding discourse thus provides a number of conceptual options for the child, who is then able to choose where to increment information from into their own TW (child).

The adult thus presents a scaffolding discourse throughout storytime that focuses on guiding:

- reading rules and the storytime schema
- the child's attention throughout the practice
- the child's engagement with and understanding of the specific picturebook being shared
- comprehension strategies and other learning, such as labelling and vocabulary (also see discussion in Section 5.3).

Overall, parents make decisions about what modes to employ and supply the child with, whilst guiding their attention and thus the process of semiotic combination that takes place in the PerfW. I propose that the adult engages the child verbally in processes of incrementation

and comprehension that the independent adult reader would usually carry out silently. In many ways, adults employ their talk in a manner that ultimately demonstrates how to read a text, thus providing an apprenticeship in reading and guiding the child's conceptual experience in order to achieve TW assimilation. However, whilst the adult adopts this 'scaffolding' position in the discourse, it does not mean that communication is one-sided, or that the child is not comprehending aspects of the discourse independently (see discussion in Section 5.1); in all of my storytime data, children were shown to interact with the text and adult in a number of ways.

5.2.2 Child-talk: seeking clarification and perceptual processing

Children are active participants in storytime practices. Across my dataset I found that children, like adults, regularly triggered episodes of interactive comprehension and engaged with both their co-participant and the text being read. The child's wilful engagement with their co-participant emphasises their expectation in the discourse situation to interact with an adult during the practice (see Sections 4.1 - 4.1.3). What is more, when children produced talk, even as an interruption, they were never ignored by the adult in the discourse situation (for examples, see lines: 48 - 51, 110 - 122, 143 - 152 in Extract 5.0, Appendix F). Instead, children were encouraged to join in with the discourse and their participation was always welcomed by the adult; the patterns of question and answer discourse in the adult's additional talk is evidence of this (see Section 5.2.1). However, the child does not possess the same privileged access as the adult in the discourse situation and therefore the talk that they produce differs from the adult's in a number of ways.

Unlike the adult who is able to construct a TW(s) immediately and independently for the written discourse, the child relies on interaction with a read-aloud narrator in the PerfW in order to construct fully-formed TW(s) for the picturebook. The child uses their co-participant's performance and other additional knowledge and information when building TWs for the shared text. Whereas the adult constructs TW(adult) and then performs and discusses it, the child must first experience the performance and discussion in order to complete TW (child). I propose therefore that TW (child) is 'under construction' throughout storytime. The child, then, toggles the different levels of the discourse, not to guide their co-participant, but in order to come to a coherent understanding of the text being read and thus 'complete' TW (child). As the participant who is being guided in the discourse situation, then, the child's talk does not have a specific scaffolding purpose, like the adult, and is therefore far less structured than adult talk during these practices. Instead, I argue that the

child's additional talk is more closely linked to their immediate response as a reader to a text as it is being read. Across my storytime data, I found that children usually produced additional talk, triggering interactive comprehension, for two key reasons:

(1)   when they were seeking clarification about something in the discourse situation (for examples, see lines 111, 144 in Extract 5.0, Appendix F)

(2)   when they were making an observation, or verbalising some aspect of their own experience (for examples, see lines 49, 172, 176 in Extract 5.0, Appendix F)

Children's storytime discourse, then, reflects their natural reactions to the text and context: they regularly ask questions about something they do not understand and/or foreground something that they have *just* noticed. Moreover, whilst the child does not have access to the words in the picturebook, they do have access to the adult and the images in the text. The child's talk is therefore linked to these two accessible DW modes throughout.

I argue that throughout storytime, the child is engaged in the process of matching their interpretation of the images in the discourse to the adult's live performance of the text. The child expects to do this: in all of my storytime videos, the child falls silent and listens to the adult, all the time with their gaze on the text. The child-participant in the PerfW, then, conceptually combines the adult's spoken discourse with the text they are looking at as they experience them. Guided by the adult (see Section 5.2.1), the child employs Toggle 2 and constructs their own TW (child) through the semiotic combination of these verbal, physical and perceptual aspects of the discourse (see discussion of conceptual toggling in Section 5.2). It is this conceptual construct (TW child) that they orient away from again in order to seek clarification.

The face-to-face relationship that is maintained between the text-producer and text-receiver in the PerfW means that the pre-school child is able to interrupt, ask questions, or talk to their read-aloud narrator *at any point* during the discourse. Children engage adults in this manner throughout the practice. For the most part, the additional talk that children produce during storytime remains 'on topic' and is related in some way to either the text being shared, or some aspect of the adult's read-aloud performance. Moreover, the majority of the child's additional talk was linked to them making sense of the discourse and directly seeking clarification from their co-participant. The child's talk thus provided evidence of their implicit awareness of the adult in the discourse situation as the more knowledgeable partner and as a source of incrementation.

In my data, for example, there was a pattern of children interrupting and triggering interactive comprehension in order to ask WH/DO questions. I define WH/DO questions here simply as a who, what, when, where, do question by one participant to another. In the *Paddington* storytime video, for example, Eva interrupts her father to ask 'what is he doing?' in line 111 and 'what's a canal?' in line 144 (see Extract 5.0, Appendix F). These questions directly address and engage the adult in the DW (Toggle 1) and provide evidence of the child seeking additional information about some aspect of the written discourse from the adult. In both of the instances highlighted above, the child ignores turn-taking rules in the discourse situation and interrupts the adult. My storytime videos provided evidence that children regularly interrupted adult-narrators (AN) during read-aloud practices and were rarely warned, punished, or corrected for this behaviour. Instead, I propose that children are encouraged to, and therefore actively expect to, interrupt during storytime when the need arises. In line 111 and 144 in Extract 5.0, for example, the child interrupts with a question and the adult immediately pauses their talk in order to listen and respond to the child's interruption. The nature and frequency of these interruptions across my dataset indicate that the child assumes that the adult will know and therefore be able to provide the answer to any query, regardless of how TW-specific the question might be. In Extract 5.0 (Appendix F), for instance, Eva's interruption in line 144 shows the child asking for the definition/explanation of a word (canal) that she does not recognise, thus highlighting a gap in her own knowledge. However, Eva's interruption in line 111 shows the child asking a specific question about what a TW-enactor ('he') is doing in the prominent TW of the picturebook. The child assumes that the adult will know the answer to both questions and be able to clarify what is essentially DW-knowledge and TW-knowledge. I propose that when the child asks their co-participant a question, the discourse functions in much the same way as it does when the adult engages the child in question and answer discourse (see Section 5.2.1): the questions conceptually foreground a topic for all participants in the discourse situation.

The child also regularly verbalises their own responses to the discourse throughout the practice (for examples, see lines 49, 172, 176 in Extract 5.0, Appendix F); these responses, like the child's questions, are usually interruptions. The child's neglect of turn-taking rules in the discourse reflects the immediacy of their response and I propose that these episodes of additional talk once again foreground certain aspects of the discourse and provide clues for the adult as to where the child's attention is focused and how they are interpreting the discourse at that point in the practice. In Extract 5.3 below, taken from William (child) and Rosie's (adult) *Monster Zoo* storytime video, the child is responding to something that they

can see in the images of the text being read aloud, specifically a monster that has escaped from his enclosure (for full transcript see Extract 6.0, Appendix F; also see Chapter 6 for a more detailed discussion of the *Monster Zoo* (2013) storytime video); the double-page spread the child is referring to is also presented below in Figure 5.5.

35	AN:	the naughty creatures stole my hat, my broom became their cricket bat, and when I
36		went to clean the floor, < they kicked, and flicked> (PT>) and smashed the door. they
37		scrambled [high
38	**CP:**	**[THAT ONE'S ESCAPED!** *(=points to image)*
39	AP:	oh no, oh dear
40	AN:	they scrambled high, rolled on the ground, they <u>how</u>led and <u>yow</u>led and raced around

Extract 5.3 *Child-talk: verbalised response*

[Image removed due to copyright reasons]

Figure 5.5 *Child-talk: that one's escaped*

The child's tendency to engage with perceptual features of the discourse was common across my storytime data.

Researchers have argued for the child's preference and ability surrounding perceptual processing over conceptual processing (see Section 2.5.3) and this was evident in my data: children regularly reference images, point to pictures, and their gaze remains fixed on the pages of the picturebook throughout the adult's read-aloud performance (also see Chapter 6). Children even regularly directed the adult to images in the text with the directive 'look'; later

on in Rosie and William's *Monster Zoo* video, for example, William does just that in his turn beginning 'look, that dino' across lines 83 – 84 (see Extract 6.0, Appendix F). What is more, their questions and other verbalised responses were usually focused on some visual aspect of the discourse. I propose that children exemplified an expectation to see what they hear throughout storytime. For example, children regularly ask questions about something that has just been mentioned in the read-aloud performance, especially when it is not represented in the images. This is the case in both Example 1 and Example 2 in Extract 5.4 below, where neither the doctor nor the driver referenced in the AN utterances is pictured in the text (see further analysis of this concept in Section 6.3.2):

Example 1:

1	AN:	one morning mum took Alfie across the street to Mrs McNally's house to be looked
2		after by Mrs MacNally while she and Annie Rose went to see the doctor. Mrs MacNally
3		was a [v-
4	CP:	[who's the doctor?
5	AP:	well we don't see the doctor in this picture do we? […]

Example 2:

1	AN:	at las:t a big shiny car with white ribbons tied on the front drew up. out got lynn with
2		her dad. she looked quite different [from usual
3	CP:	[who drived?
4	AP:	Who was dr-who drove? I don't know. Sometimes there's someone called a chauffeur
5		who's the person who drives the car but they usually stay outside the church

Extract 5.4: *Child-talk: when text and image don't match*

Pictures are key a mode for making meaning for children in the PerfW, since they are the only aspect of the text that they have access to immediately (also see Chapter 6). It therefore makes sense that pictures underpin much of the child's discourse during storytime.

The regularity with which children interrupt, ask questions, and verbalise their own response to the discourse is evidence that this communicative pattern is an expected part of the practice. Furthermore, I argue that the child comes to associate these patterns of talk with the practice by copying the adult (see Section 5.2.1). The child is shown through participation that storytime is an interactive practice, where participants do not just sit and listen, but talk to one another and engage with the text being read, specifically the images.

Using the text as a type of common ground, then, participants introduce topics and foreground aspects of the discourse for discussion with their co-participant just as they would

in any other face-to-face interaction. However, the nature of the production, reception, and conceptual processing of this discourse varies for the adult and the pre-school child based on their reading and cognitive capabilities. The scaffolding TWs that the adult triggers through their additional talk are instrumental in how the child's TW (child) is conceptualised (see Section 5.2.1). As the adult provides conceptual foregrounding and TW layering, the child updates, amends, and completes aspects of their TW (child). However, the child is instrumental in influencing the scaffolding TWs that the adult provides in the first place. The child's talk provides clues for the adult about the pre-schooler's levels of comprehension and enables parents to make decisions about how to scaffold and what to scaffold in their own talk.

TW negotiation and assimilation is therefore a complex discursive process where participants draw on a number of DW modes to either scaffold or make sense of the written discourse at hand. Participants thus constantly toggle the conceptualisation of the written discourse – and their own individual ontologically distinct TW constructs – with interactive discussions about aspects of that conceptualisation with a co-participant(s). Whilst this process of conceptual toggling remains the same for all participants, the cause and effect is related directly to each participant's role and ability in the discourse situation; the experiential outcome of the toggling that takes place during storytime is thus different for both adults and children. Furthermore, I argue that often during storytime, it is the process of negotiation and assimilation in the PerfW itself, rather than the construction of a TW for the picturebook specifically, that takes precedence during early reading practices.

5.3. Reading as engagement: the performance-world and learning to read

Throughout storytime practices, there is an undercurrent of teaching and learning (see discussion in Sections 2.1.1, 2.1.2, and 2.2; also see discussion of storytime schema across Sections 4.1 - 4.1.3). Young children are in the process of learning how to read and what it means to read. What is more, the child's developing cognitive capabilities means that they are easily distracted and find it hard to focus on a task for long periods of time (see Section 2.5.1). As a result, I argue that reading during the early years is often just as much about a surface-level engagement with a text and with the reading context than it is about the high-level fictional immersion that we associate with adult readers. In such instances TW assimilation, and the adult's scaffolding discourse, can merely involve checking that the child is engaged in the practice and that their attention is directed towards the correct part of the book.

Across my dataset, I observed adults triggering a number of what I will term 'engagement activities' throughout storytime practices. These activities were triggered through the adult's additional talk and usually involved them asking children to count items, label colours, and answer other questions about the text and/or image. Extract 5.5, from one of Amy (child) and Denise's (adult) storytime videos, is an example of an episode of prolonged additional talk, or interactive comprehension (see Section 5.2), in which a number of these engagement activities take place; the key utterances by the adult (AP) that engage the child in a specific activity are highlighted in bold.

1	AC:	[…]would you like to put your blanket down here with the coats
2	AN:	asked Bernard's mum. but Alfie didn't want *(=shaking her head)* to put his blanket
3		down, he still held on to it very tightly
4	**AP:**	**<u>Wow</u>, this looks fun, what can you see in this picture? (.) what are the children**
5		**doing, do you know?**
6	CP:	° no°
7	AP:	think they're building a den?
8	CP:	° yeah°
9	AP:	yeah
10	CP:	And someone's building a-<u>M</u>ummy *(=leans forward and points to image)* what is
11		that?
12	AP:	that looks like a steering wheel to me (0.3) looks like he's made a car out of a
13		cardboard box, hasn't he?
14	CP:	°yes°
15	**AP:**	**yeah. and look can you see the table with all the food and drinks ready?**
16	CP:	° yes°
17	AP:	and some ↑balloons. lovely balloons aren't they?
18	CP:	pink *(=point to image)*
19	**AP:**	**yeah pink, what other colours can you see?**
20	CP:	*(=leans forwards towards page and points to image)* orange=
21	AP:	MmHmm
22	CP:	=orange *(=points to image)*
23	AP:	MmHmm
24	CP:	yellow, green, blue, ↑blue *(=points to image with each colour)=*
25	AP:	Mmm
26	CP:	=↑pink *(=points to image)*
27	**AP:**	**↑yeah. very nice which one would you choose if you were taking one home?**
28	CP:	° pink°
29	AP:	pink one *(=nods)*
30	AN:	=Bernard was […]

Extract 5.5*: Storytime engagement activities: labelling images and colours*

Denise triggers interactive comprehension with her additional talk in line 4. In this utterance she verbalises her own positive response to a picturebook image: '*Wow*, this *looks* fun' (*my emphasis*) and asks Amy what she can see in the picture. This initial AP utterance (line 4-5) creates some conceptual movement in the discourse for both participants away from their individual processing of the text being read and towards the here-and-now of the DW. The communication that follows across lines 6 – 29 is thus more representative of a DW interaction between the adult and child than it is of an interaction between a reader and a fictional-world (also see Section 6.1). Moreover, I argue that the adult's question about the images in the book draws attention to the text as an object in the DW (also see Section 6.2). Whilst these activities continue to engage the child with the text physically, they can also be seen as specific teaching exercises - around colour, numeracy, and so on. In line 19 of Extract 5.5, for example, Denise creates an opportunity to test Amy's colour knowledge by asking her to list what colours she can see in the picturebook illustration. This pattern of communication was common in my data and is a direct reflection of the literacy and learning culture associated with reading at home (see Section 2.1.2). Essentially, storytime is a time for learning about *all things*, not just about the story in the text being read. Nevertheless, regardless of the type of engagement activity that takes place in the PerfW, it always centres around the text being shared. In Extract 5.5, for example, the discussion about colours – and all other challenges to label, identify, and describe posed to the child by the adult – stems from an image in the text being read. Although these engagement activities do not necessarily aid the child's, or adult's, comprehension of the prominent TW of the picturebook being shared, they do feed into each participant's overall experience of the storytime activity.

The adult regularly preserves, reinforces, accretes, and tunes the storytime schema during the storytime practices (see Sections 4.1 - 4.1.3). In each of these instances, the adult purposefully draws attention to the immediate physical context and DW knowledge about reading. Like other engagement activities, this schema reinforcing discourse creates a shift in focus towards the DW and foregrounds conceptual interaction at the PerfW level of the discourse. Whilst this schema-based talk is not necessarily focused on the text being read, these interactions are commonplace during storytime. This discourse about reading ultimately helps build the storytime schema for the child and thus teach them about reading, which is an integral part of early reading practices. Thus, again, this seemingly DW-based interaction feeds directly into a participant's lasting impression and experience of the practice. Therefore, I propose that as the discourse continues to shift between silent read-aloud comprehension and episodes of interactive comprehension, TW (adult) and TW (child) (see

Figure 5.0) are best viewed as each participant's individual mental work and understanding of their shared talk and experience with a co-participant at that point in the discourse, as opposed to solely representing their version of the prominent TW of the picturebook being read.

Storytime, then, is essentially a process of interactive TW assimilation which takes place in the PerfW. The aim is always some kind of shared experience around the text being read. However, the precise nature of this shared practice, and whether it remains more focused on either the prominent TW(s) of the picturebook and the fictional-world this written discourse represents, or on face-to-face interaction in the DW throughout, is varied and subject to change at any point during the discourse. As such, I argue that the PerfW and the conceptual space it offers is conceptually foregrounded during storytime and the interaction that takes place here is often the most significant aspect of the practice. The PerfW, then, is able to account for all of the interactive activity that takes place during storytime that is *not* 'reading' but that is nevertheless an essential part of the practice.

5.4 Review

Chapter 5 has focused predominantly on patterns in storytime talk and examined the role of PerfW in the analysis of storytime comprehension. In Section 5.1 using evidence from my storytime video data, I argued that the although storytime is a practice that involves two readers reading the same text at the same time, their TW(s) remain completely independent. Storytime participants, then, do not work together to construct a joint TW for the picturebook discourse being shared; this would be ontologically impossible. Instead, as I went on to argue in Section 5.1.1, the adult and child work together to assimilate their prominent TWs for the shared written discourse through regular face-to-face negotiation, which I later defined as 'interactive comprehension' (see Section 5.2). These negotiations are made up of regular discursive shifting between two main types of storytime talk: read-aloud talk and additional talk. Whilst these categories of talk can be differentiated from one another based, not only on their specific role and purpose in the discourse situation, but on features of their production and structure (discussed in detail in Section 5.2), they are nevertheless closely intertwined. In Section 5.1.2, I argued that whilst read-aloud talk provides a spoken version of the written discourse, the additional talk *aids* the comprehension of that written discourse and its spoken performance. Essentially, I propose that during storytime usually silent conceptual processes that we associate with reading fictional discourse become spoken. Moreover, the multimodal nature of storytime practices means that participants are faced with a number of different

modes – in terms of both text *and* context – that they must make sense of in order to fully comprehend the fictional discourse being shared (see Section 5.1.3). Participants are thus engaged in a practice that requires them to conceptually combine aspects of text, image, and talk during the construction of TW(s) for a fictional text. In Section 5.1.3, I argued that the PerfW, which sits between the DW and any TWs constructed by participants, acts as a conceptual mediation space that is able to account for this often complex process of semiotic combination during storytime comprehension.

Across Sections 5.2 – 5.2.2, I went on examine in greater detail how interactive comprehension operates during storytime with a specific focus on the role of additional talk. In Section 5.2, I extended my discussion of discursive shifting in order to show how participants effectively toggle the different levels of the discourse as they engage in numerous episodes of spoken comprehension. I went on to argue that during this backwards and forwards movement between the DW, PerfW, and TW(s), the PerfW acts like conceptual filter and incrementation space. Ultimately, as participants engage in additional talk and the semiotic combination of key storytime modes at the PerfW level of the discourse, they draw on their surrounding DW and TW(s) and make decisions about what information to increment into their experience and TW construct(s). However, this process is different for both the adult and child during storytime and, in Sections 5.2.1 and 5.2.2, I examined each of their roles in turn. Section 5.2.1 focused on adult-talk and drew attention to the adult's scaffolding role in the discourse, whilst Section 5.2.2 focused on child-talk and the pre-schooler's experience as a young pre-literate reader. Across these sections, I showed how the prevalent patterns in the spoken discourse of both of the participants during storytime led to conceptual foregrounding and TW layering which ultimately aided TW assimilation.

I have argued throughout Chapter 5 that the PerfW plays a pivotal role in accounting for how joint comprehension and scaffolded discourse operates during storytime. In the final section of this chapter, I went on to argue that the pedagogic nature of read-aloud practices means that the PerfW, as an interactive mediation space, often takes precedence in the discourse situation. I showed how participants regularly take part in other engagement activities around the text that ultimately foreground face-to-face interaction and encourage some form of learning that is not necessarily linked to the fictional-world of the text being shared. Nevertheless, these activities are part and parcel of storytime and filter into each participant's experience of the discourse. Storytime, then, is an inherently social reading practice, but one that I argue mimics solitary reading carried out by independent readers. In this way, I argue that these early read-aloud activities provide young children with an

apprenticeship in how reading works (also see Section 6.5). However, at the same time, storytime is a scaffolded literacy event where opportunities for learning beyond reading are rife and thus regularly intertwined with the comprehension of a fictional-world. The PerfW is key to understanding how these two core aspects of the practice blend together.

Overall, in Chapter 5 I have focused predominantly on additional talk and how participants work together to negotiate a shared experience. I have drawn attention to patterns of conceptual toggling that take place across the discourse and suggested that the underlying ontological nature of the discourse must therefore be complex (see Section 5.2). In Chapter 6, I explore the topic of ontology in greater detail and focus more closely on the child's experience of fiction during these interactive practices. Once again, I extend my explication of the PerfW and examine its role in exploring the pre-schooler's experience of ontologically distinct worlds.

Chapter Six: Storytime Ontology

6.0 Preview

In this final chapter, I draw together and extend key concepts from Chapters 4 and 5 and shift my attention towards the pre-schooler's experience of fiction. I focus specifically on how storytime participants negotiate and engage with the ontologically distinct realms presented in picturebooks together. I continue to apply and further explicate my augmented my Text World Theory (TWT) framework to storytime discourse.

I begin in Section 6.1 by extending my discussion on storytime talk and conceptual toggling, first introduced in Chapter 5. Most notably, I introduce an ontological continuum in the performance-world (PerfW) and discuss its role in analysing storytime discourse. In this section, the PerfW is presented as a blended space and the ontological complexity of storytime practices is foregrounded. Across Sections 6.2 – 6.2.1, I explore the concept of materiality in greater depth and a live performance of a multimodal text. In Section 6.2, I focus in detail on how participants experience the material and physical aspects of picturebooks whilst comprehending what is essentially a fictional discourse. Section 6.2.1 then explores the adult's read-aloud performance in some detail; comparisons are drawn between read-aloud talk during storytime and other staged, or live, fictional performances for adults. In both Section 6.2 and 6.2.1, I argue that text and performance, respectively, rely on or encourage some level of ontological instability in the discourse situation. Section 6.3 then examines the role of direct perception during TW construction and focuses on the role of pictures as a material pivot that grants the child access to TWs. I go on to explore how participants engage in world-building, world-switching (Section 6.3.1), and the negotiation of actions and events (Section 6.3.2) through a combination of talk and pictures. Throughout the analyses presented in these sections, the concept of ontology, reduced conceptual processing, and the pre-schooler's control and interaction with a fictional realm are considered in detail. In the first half of this chapter (Sections 6.1 – 6.3.2), then, text, performance, and pictures are all shown to trigger some form of ontological blurring during storytime. The discussion in Section 6.4 draws on this concept of ontological instability during read-aloud practices and explores how participants themselves engage in forms of ontological play through their additional talk during storytime. I argue that it is through actively playing with the boundary between reality and fantasy that adults teach children how to engage with fiction; the PerfW as a scaffolding conceptual level is shown to accommodate readers who are in the process of learning about ontological distinctions. Finally, in Section 6.5 I bring together key points

from across the chapter and present arguments about what children come to learn about reading and fiction during storytime. The child's tendency to learn through mimicry is foregrounded in this final section and the concept of storytime as a reading apprenticeship is emphasised.

The prototypical case study introduced and analysed in this chapter is William (child) and Rosie's (adult) *Monster Zoo* storytime video (for full transcript see Extract 6.0, Appendix F).

6.1 Toggling talk and the ontological continuum

In Chapter 5, I argued that during storytime, the construction of an ontologically distinct TW for a written discourse relies on the face-to-face interaction, or interactive comprehension, with a co-participant and thus, a constant conceptual toggling across the different levels of the discourse. The joint literary comprehension that participants are involved in during read-aloud practices requires them to re-conceptualise their communicative, receptive, and therefore conceptual behaviours throughout the reading activity. As a result of this reconceptualisation, I have argued that participants repetitively toggle between prominent TWs that make up a fictional story-world, and a real-world interaction with a co-participant in the DW. I also argued in Chapter 5 that the introduction of the PerfW into the TWT framework accommodates the analysis of this intricate ontological toggling by providing a conceptual mediation space, where participants are able to access DW features when needed and discuss and/or clarify aspects of their story-world (TWs) construct whilst they are in the process of constructing it.

Gibbons (2012: 35) notes that TWT is built on a 'complex equilibrium between actuality and imagination' (2012: 35); in essence the DW is reality and the TW is imagination. As a framework that is founded on strict ontological distinction between worlds, it actively explores the conceptual movement between reality and fiction. Drawing on Gibbons' explication of the TWT framework, I have proposed that the PerfW is generated directly in-between reality (DW) and imagination (TW) (see Chapters 4 and 5).

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┌──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
┊ Performance-world                                                      ┊
┊  ┌──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐     ┊
┊  │ ADULT enactors: text-producer/read-aloud narrator; adult-     │     ┊
┊  │ participant; adult-narrator; adult-character                  │     ┊
┊  │                                                               │     ┊
┊  │ (Parent as DW-parent)                                         │     ┊
┊  ╪═══════════════════════════════════════════════════════════════╪     ┊
┊  │ CHILD enactors: text-receiver/read-aloud listener; child-     │     ┊
┊  │ participant; (child-narrator); (child-character)              │     ┊
┊  │                                                               │     ┊
┊  │ (Child as DW-child)                                           │     ┊
┊  ├──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┤     ┊
┊  │ Time: present                                                 │     ┊
┊  │ Location: present/same as shared DW of parent and child       │     ┊
┊  │ Objects: picturebook (all other objects in the immediate      │     ┊
┊  │ situation)                                                    │     ┊
┊  │ Knowledge of participants: storytime schema                   │     ┊
┊  └──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘     ┊
┊              ◄─────── Ontological continuum ───────►                    ┊
└──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

Figure 6.0 The performance-world: an in-between conceptual space

As Figure 6.0 represents, the PerfW effectively constitutes an 'in-between' level of conceptualisation that accommodates features of the discourse that affect the conceptual progression from the DW (reality) to the TW (imagination).

The PerfW itself is generated when DW utterances depict a situation that is distinct from the DW, but that is not a complete ontologically distinct TW construct (see Section 5.1). The PerfW, then, is neither DW nor TW, but is a conceptual space that exists between these two levels (see Figure 6.0). Throughout storytime, participants are involved in a discourse situation that requires them to process both a read-aloud performance of a picturebook text, and any additional talk surrounding the text and performance. Therefore, rather than representing a fully new conceptual level, the PerfW can instead be seen as a kind of conceptual scaffold which enables the unique ontological progression from the DW to the TW during storytime. In many ways, the PerfW is *both* reality and imagination and, as such, I argue that the ontology of the PerfW itself is complex.

As pointed out in Chapter 5, the semipermeable membrane of the PerfW accounts for the blurred boundaries that exists between this construct and the surrounding DW and TW(s). The overlapping nature of the three levels of storytime discourse is represented further by the

two-way arrows that sit between the DW and the PerfW, and the PerfW and the TW in Figure 6.0, depicting the conceptual toggle that takes place between them (see Section 5.2). I use the term 'toggle' to define a continuous cognitive movement between the different ontological levels of the discourse which is indicative of the close links between the PerfW and *both* the realms of reality and imagination. Whilst some manner of conceptual movement between the DW and TW is essential for all participants engaged in discourse, I argue that the toggling that takes place during storytime gains greater significance given the nature of the practice, and the pre-literate participants that are involved. I further argue that the ontological status of the PerfW itself is subject to the specific utterances being produced at different times throughout the discourse. I propose, therefore, that the PerfW retains features of both the DW and the TW and, at any point during storytime, the discourse can be described as being 'more or less' oriented towards the DW or TW.

As we have seen in the discussion thus far, like the TW, the PerfW is generated through DW interactions; however, the location, time and objects of this conceptual level remain the same as the DW. The two-way arrow at the bottom of the PerfW in Figure 6.0 accounts for this complexity. I would now like to argue that this two-way arrow represents an 'ontological continuum' that is key to understanding storytime practices. This continuum acts like a conceptual cline ranging from DW on the far left to TW on the far right. I propose that this feature of the PerfW can be used to plot the different spoken discourse – and other physical activities – that take place during the read-aloud practice. In the first instance, I argue that the two mains types of talk that make up storytime discourse, read-aloud performance and additional talk, can be plotted at each end of the ontological continuum. Furthermore, the main enactor-roles associated with the key types of storytime talk (see Table 4.1, Section 4.3.1) can also be plotted at different points:
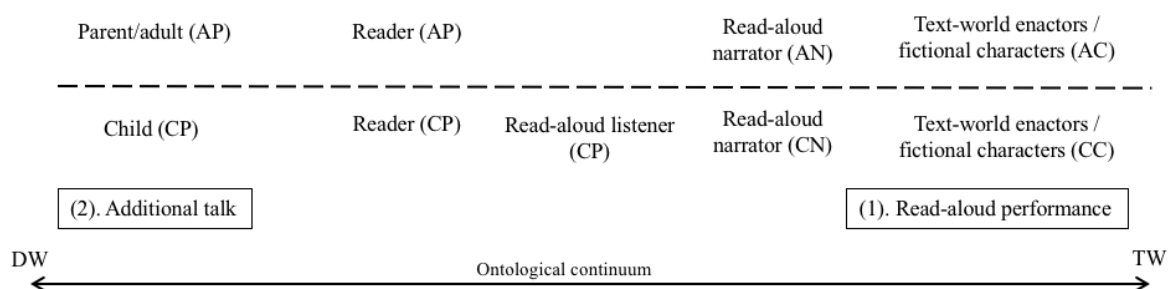
Figure 6.1 *The ontological continuum: storytime talk and enactor-roles*

In Chapter 5, key differences between the content, structure, and production of these discourse types were emphasised and I argued that, as participants switch between these types of talk, they employ a conceptual toggle across different levels of the discourse in order to comprehend what is being said (see Section 5.2). The ontological continuum in Figure 6.1 provides an extended account of this phenomenon. As Figure 6.1 shows, the adult's read-aloud performance is most closely associated with conceptual activity involving the TW of the written text, with all other additional talk being more closely associated with the DW in which both the adult and child are situated. These categorisations are based on key features of the discourse and whether the production and reception of talk is more likely to require a DW-toggle or a TW-toggle. Additional talk and the episodes of interactive comprehension they trigger strongly mimic DW communication and yet they are conceptually still a part of the storytime practice; they take place at the PerfW level of the discourse, but at the DW end of the ontological continuum. At the other end of this spectrum, the read-aloud performance is a direct representation of the written discourse as it is presented in the text. Read-aloud talk ultimately includes all spoken discourse used to convey the content of the written discourse - and the story-world presented within it - for comprehension and TW construction. These types of utterance also take place at the PerfW level of the discourse, but at the TW end of the ontological continuum. The two main categories of storytime talk, then, are represented in Figure 6.1 as the two different extremes of the continuum.

However, as Figure 6.1 suggests, utterances produced during storytime are rarely strictly *just* type (1): TW or type (2): DW. For example, both the PerfW enactor-roles 'parent/adult' and 'reader', which are transcribed across my dataset under the AP transcription convention (see Appendix E), are linked to discourse type (2) additional talk. Nevertheless, in Figure 6.1, the parent/adult role is situated one step closer toward the DW than the reader-role. The ontological continuum, as its name suggests, represents a gradual cline of orientation from DW to TW, which helps delineate the experiential nature of the discourse for participants at any given time, specifically following some discursive switch and any consequential conceptual toggling. I propose that talk produced during storytime can be analysed and plotted along the continuum based on whether or not it exemplifies features that render the utterance(s) experientially 'more DW' or 'more TW'. I argue that during storytime, *all discourse* produced throughout the practice exists at some point along this cline between DW and TW.

As an example, in Figure 6.2, a number of turns from Amy and Denise's *Stick Man* storytime video (analysed in Chapter 4) have been plotted along the cline (for full transcript see Extract 4.0, Appendix F):

Parent/adult (AP)	Reader (AP)	Reader (CP)	Reader (AP)	Read-aloud narrator (AN)	Text-world enactors / fictional characters (AC)
(a) funny name, isn't it? do you want to put it down while we're reading (line 16)	(b) can you see them? where are the three children? (line 34)	(c) ERM MUMMY […] member the cat's scared of father christmas' (line 46 +49)	(d) he's a long way from home, isn't he? little sausage dog going to a walk here (line 62)	(e) stick man lives in the family tree with his stick lady love and the thr-stick children three (line 32-33)	(d) i'm not a twig why can't they see, i'm stick man, i'm stick man, i'm stick man, that's me (line 89-90)

DW ⟵ [(2). Additional talk] —— Ontological continuum —— [(1). Read-aloud performance] ⟶ TW

Figure 6.2 The ontological continuum and storytime utterances

Examples (a) – (d) range from talk that is 'more DW' oriented on the left through to talk that is 'more TW' oriented on the right. Utterance (a) is produced by the adult in their parent/adult role. In this instance the adult (Denise) addresses the child in the DW directly using the second person pronoun 'you' and the 'it' she refers to is a toy snake that is mutually perceivable to both participants in the DW. What is more, with the exception of the adult's attempt to trigger and reinforce the storytime schema (see Sections 4.1 - 4.1.3), the discourse is not specific to the prominent TW(s) of the text being read (see Section 5.1.1). Thus, I propose that this utterance most closely mimics a normal DW interaction between Amy and Denise. In utterance (b), Denise once again addresses Amy with second-person 'you'. However, in this instance Denise triggers an engagement activity around the picturebook and turns the read-aloud practice into a game by asking Amy to identify the TW enactors 'the three children' in *Stick Man* (2008) (see Section 5.3). Thus, although this talk mimics DW interaction to some extent, the content and purpose of this talk is more closely related to the content of the picturebook and the story-world depicted there, than the talk in (a); I argue that example (b) is produced under the adult's 'reader' role in the PerfW. Essentially, this utterance focuses on enactors who exist in an ontologically distinct realm. In comparison, utterance (d) is also produced under the adult's 'reader' role in the discourse; however, it sits closer to the TW along the ontological continuum in Figure 6.2. Like turn (b), this utterance is produced by the adult and immediately follows the adult's read-aloud performance of the written narrative in *Stick Man*. However, in this instance, the adult does not address the child directly, or ask her co-participant a direct question. Instead, Denise simply produces a short

commentary on what she has just read, foregrounding certain aspects of the prominent TW at this point in the discourse (see Section 5.2.1). As turns (b) and (d) in Figure 6.2 exemplify, then, it is possible for talk produced by the same enactor-role to sit at different points along the continuum. Moreover, as the analysis here shows, it is possible for utterances belonging to the 'additional talk' category to be identified as more TW, than more DW at times. The same is true of (1) read-aloud performance utterances; whilst the adult's read-aloud performance is a live presentation of the content of the picturebook and thus the story-world of the text, the shared and interactive nature of the practice means that certain comprehension aids associated with the DW often take precedence in the discourse situation making it feel experientially 'more DW' (also see Section 6.2.1).

Storytime participants construct TWs for *all* discourse that take place; however, throughout the practice they focus on negotiating a fictional story-world for the picturebook being read aloud. Thus, I propose that, as with most reading practices, the ontologically distinct realm of the fictional discourse being read aloud is a key focus during the activity. Essentially, throughout storytime, the different roles that participants adopt and the talk they produce as a result can be categorised as being either more closely matched to their DW selves and the comprehension of face-to-face communication (talk), or more closely matched to the read-aloud talk/performance and the comprehension of an ontologically distinct story-world (text). The ontological cline thus ultimately represents the level of DW influence embedded throughout storytime communication and the comprehension of a fictional domain. As Figures 6.1 and 6.2 illustrate, storytime roles and talk can be plotted along a linear continuum which represents the level of DW influence presented in specific utterances; certain vocal and physical comprehension aids, for example, remain relevant for *all* talk. The PerfW thus provides an immediate insight into the role the DW plays throughout storytime communication, providing a better explication of how participants process relevant conceptual toggling between reality and imagination (also see Section 5.2); the interaction relies on the differing levels of purposeful DW influence from start to finish.

However, participants constantly and fluently switch between these roles and discourse-types during storytime. Turn (b) in Figure 6.2, for example, which sits towards the DW end of the continuum, immediately follows the adult's read-aloud performance of the lines (e) 'stick man lives in the family tree with his stick lady love and the thr-stick children three', which sits towards the TW end of the continuum in Figure 6.2; this utterance is an exact replica of the third-person written discourse in the picturebook *Stick Man* (2008) with no DW-specific references. Jumps in the discourse like that from (e) to (b) above are a

common feature of how participants communicate during storytime. Moreover, the jump from (e) to (b) along the continuum is evidence of how the adult engages the child with the content of the picturebook – and in turn a fictional world – by producing talk that more closely replicates DW interaction.

The progression from DW to TW is not a gradual one-way process. Instead, I propose that storytime comprehension often includes a combination of discursive switches that vary in terms of the ontological reorientation they require from participants; both adult and child are regularly required to reorient from one extreme of the continuum to other, as well as at different points in-between. The nature of this conceptual movement is unpredictable and means that participants intricately toggle reality and imagination as they communicate throughout the practice. Furthermore, storytime participants appear to do so with ease. I argue that the PerfW represents, to some degree, the boundary between the DW (reality) and TW (fiction) during storytime and thus provides a specific insight into how participants experience the relationship between these two realms. I propose, therefore, that the PerfW provides a type of blended conceptual space.

The concept of blending employed here comes from Conceptual Integration Theory (CIT) and is most commonly associated with the examination of metaphor (Fauconnier and Turner, 2002). CIT essentially accounts for the way in which mental spaces, also referred to as 'input spaces', merge together to create new meanings. In TWT, Gavins draws on CIT in her exploration of metaphor and argues that the notion of metaphorical blending leads to the creation of a 'blended world' (Gavins, 2007: 149). Gavins goes on to note that 'blended worlds occur in discourse as the result of the conceptual merger of two otherwise independent text-worlds' (2007: 149). Gibbons applies Gavins' notion of a blended world in her work on immersive theatre. However, Gibbons argues that the blended worlds created by immersive theatre audience members are complex mental representations that project relationships between *the DW* and the TW during the dramatic experience (2016: 74), and not TW and TW as first proposed by Gavins (2007); these blended worlds are vital in creating the metaleptic illusion that underpins the immersive theatre experience. Ultimately, Gibbons draws on the concept of a blended world to account for an experiential transgression between fiction and reality. However, Gibbons notes that it is not the DW itself that is used during the conceptual integration and construction of a blended world, but a re-presentation world that re-represents the DW as a TW (2016: 75), much like the PerfW (Sections 4.3 – 4.3.3 and Section 5.1).

The PerfW, then, like Gibbons' blended worlds, represents a conceptual blend, or merger, of a participant's conceptualisation of the real-world (DW) (input 1) and of fiction (TW) (input 2). However, the PerfW does not represent a new conceptual structure generated by a specific metaleptic address or other fictional device. Instead, the blended space of the PerfW exists to aid comprehension and TW construction; the ontological continuum can therefore be defined more precisely as representing the experiential nature of this blend, which can switch during comprehension and is often determined by the type of talk participants are engaged in and how they conceptually orient themselves in response. It is important to note that the ongoing ontological reconceptualisation carried out during storytime does not interfere with a participant's understanding of what is or is not real and is instead purely experiential. As Figure 6.0 shows, the DW and the TW remain distinct constructs. However, I argue that the continual toggling and conceptual merging between a participant's real-world and the story-world that storytime requires results in an experiential softening of the boundary between reality and fiction to the point that it becomes blurred. I propose that the blurred boundary between fiction and reality plays an integral part in how storytime discourse operates and I explore how throughout this chapter.

Whilst the topic of ontological blurring and the ontological continuum appears to be a somewhat complex feature to attribute to early reading practices that involve pre-literate readers, it actually directly facilitates conceptual processing by a participant who is in the 'process of actively constructing' the boundary between reality and fantasy (Sharon and Wooolley, 2004: 308). Dilalla and Watson's study of interruptions in child's play found that young children's differentiation between fantasy and reality could be explained though a developmental sequence that involves the gradual construction of a boundary between the two realms (1988: 287) (also see review in Section 2.5.4). The PerfW represents this 'gradual construction' of a boundary between the ontologically distinct domains of reality and fiction by providing an in-between space that can be employed to scaffold the child's progression from one realm to another. Moreover, Dilalla and Watson's developmental sequence suggests that young children begin at stage one with no boundary at all. At this stage, fantasy and reality are treated as one real-world and all events are viewed as occurring on one plane in a temporal sequence; the child is often unaware of crossing the boundary between the two realms. The child then goes on to develop a fuzzy boundary which becomes more rigid until the child develops an integrated boundary between the two domains whereby fantasy is seen as a subset of the greater world of reality (1988: 287; see review in Section 2.5.4). The PerfW accommodates the conceptual activity of a participant who often struggles to recognise when

they have crossed the boundary between the two realms of reality and fiction by providing a blended conceptual space that accounts for instance where the DW and TW merge together.

6.2 Picturebooks: sharing multimodal texts

Picturebooks are a multimodal discourse in that they require participants to make sense of *at least* two different modes: words and pictures (also see Section 5.1.3). In Chapter Five, I introduced picturebooks as a mutually perceivable object that controls the gaze of both participants and centres and guides the spoken discourse that takes place during storytime (see Section 5.3.1). I also discussed the physicality of these multimodal texts and argued that actions such as turning the page, pointing to and touching images are a form of comprehension aid available to storytime participants, which directly affects their reading experience. In this chapter, I extend my discussion of picturebooks by focussing on the topic of materiality and ontology, and explore how the specific multimodal features of these texts are linked to participants' engagement with a story-world.

Across my storytime videos, the role of the text as a material object and its impact on the discourse situation is immediately obvious. In William (child) and Rosie's (adult) *Monster Zoo* video, for example (see Figure 6.3), Rosie holds the shared text *Do Not Enter The Monster Zoo* (Sparkes and Ogilvie, 2013; see Appendix C for full reference) (henceforth *Monster Zoo*) wide open, revealing the whole double-page spread at all times. The book is held close to the faces of both participants and it is immediately foregrounded as a dominant and usually large physical object and visual space within the discourse situation; it is the backdrop to everything else that takes place (also see discussion of picturebook as script in Section 6.2.1).

[Image removed for participant confidentiality]

Figure 6.3 *Picturebooks as material objects*

Nikolajeva (2008: 57) notes that 'materiality is one of the most self-evident features of any picturebook' and she refers to this material form as an 'inherent element' (2008: 59). Do Rozario also argues that:

> Picturebooks offer an extraordinary opportunity to explore the boundaries
> between and possibilities of books as material objects. Indeed the genre is
> *designated in part by its physicality*. Authors and illustrators make full use of the
> page spreads, covers, and dust jackets to narrate, and often employ a variety of
> dimensional print effects included pop-ups, embossing, and inserts. The genre of
> the picturebook relies on a synergy of text, visuals, and texture.

(Do Rozario, 2012: 151, *my emphasis*)

Both Nikolajeva and Do Rozario foreground materiality as a seemingly obvious and unavoidable generic trait of picturebooks and yet, as Do Rozario notes (2012: 152), 'much is made of textual and visual play in picturebooks, but the material nature of the book is often passed over'. Researchers working on multimodality and fiction, and those working in picturebook studies, tend to focus on identifying and analysing specific semiotic modes used *within* a book – such as words and pictures – at the expense of accounting for the role of the book itself as an object in the discourse situation (see Sections 2.3 – 2.3.3). What is more, where researchers have taken into account the material form of the book, they display a

tendency to focus on the contents of the text, ignoring the context of reading, and exploring multimodality for specific narrative effect (see for example: Sipe and Pantaleo, 2008). In TWT terms, I propose that previous research has jumped from DW to TW, assuming a seamless progression from one to the other following the unproblematic combination of semiotic modes contained with a text.

However, the picturebook has long been considered a form of 'quasi-literary artefact' (Lewis, 2001: 1) by scholars who recognise the historical, social, technological, and cultural influences behind the production and reception of these texts. Picturebooks are, in many ways, more than just a text. According to Bader:

> A picture book is text, illustrations, total design; an item of manufacture and a commercial product; a social, cultural, historical document; and, *foremost, an experience for a child*. As an art form it hinges on the interdependence of pictures and words, on the simultaneous display of two facing pages, and on the drama of the turning of the page. On its own terms its possibilities are limitless.

> (Bader, 1976: 1, *my emphasis*)

The picturebook, then, is best viewed as an experience and one that has historically relied on the material nature of the object itself. What is more, since Bader's work in 1976, the rise of a digital reading era, has meant that 'the apparatus of the book itself is radically more visible to children of a very young age who are at home with contrasting formats' (Mackey, 2008: 103). For contemporary readers such as the participants engaged in my study, the nature of the book as an object is amplified with the role of materiality taking on even greater significance in storytime practices than ever. Further, I propose that the materiality of picturebooks is emphasised further because of the shared reading context.
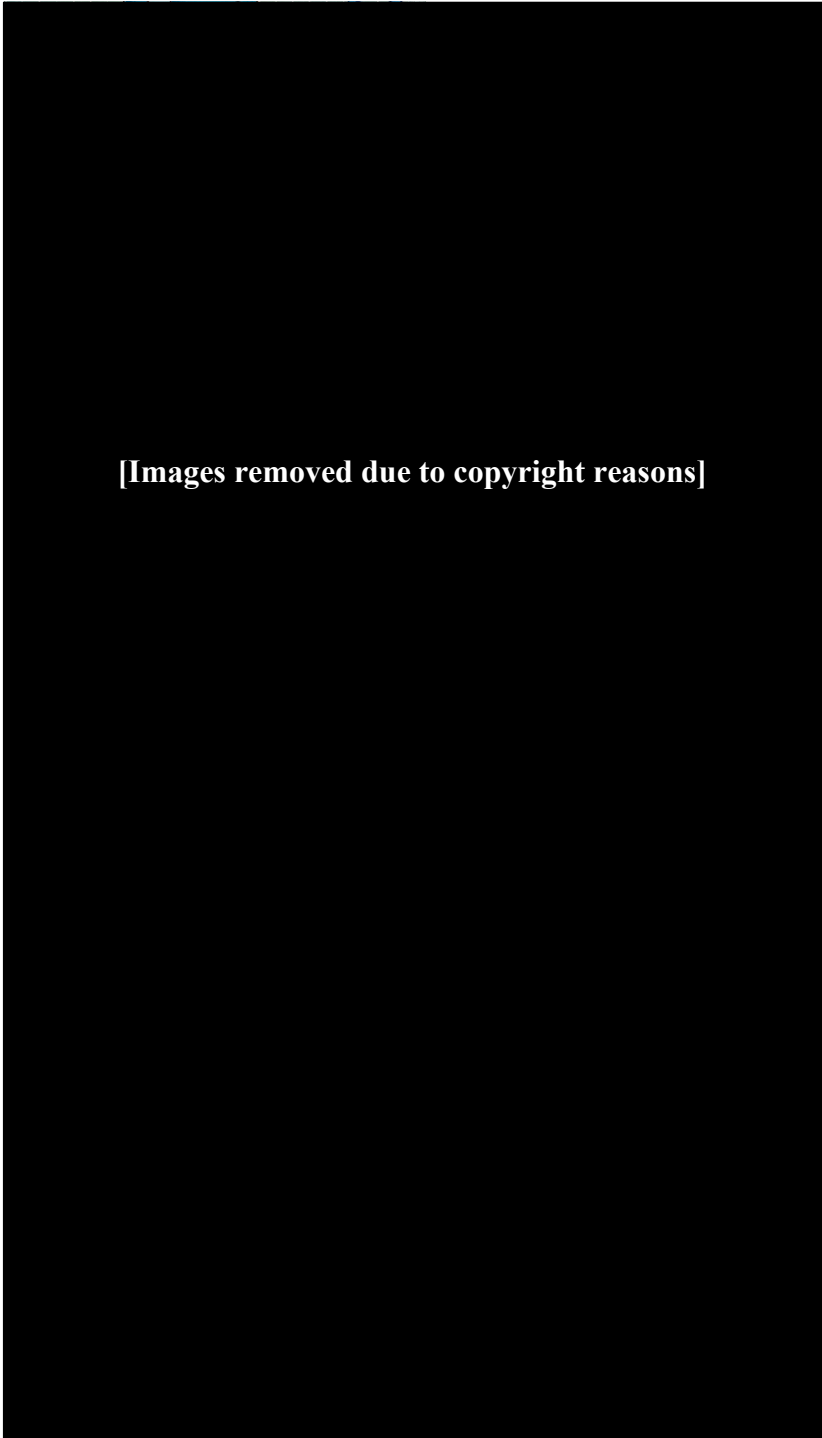
In all of my storytime videos, the text-as-object regularly triggered the storytime schema, guiding participants into certain roles and to adopt certain behaviours (see Section 4.1.1). In Chapter 4, I have argued that the picturebook's autonomy is accounted for in the PerfW, where the text exists as the third significant component during storytime activities, alongside the adult and child read-aloud enactors; I have also discussed the cross-world significance of the picturebook from DW to PerfW and emphasised the concept of the text-as-object (see Section 4.3.3). The nature of the PerfW as an in-between conceptual space accounts for the role of materiality in multimodal texts during storytime, where participants are engaged with the book (DW), and yet not always for some narrative effect (TW). The PerfW thus addresses a gap in previous multimodal and picturebook research that assumes a jump from DW to TW, focusing purely on conceptual processing and ignoring the other

physical modes. The PerfW provides a conceptual space where participants' meaningful interactions with the book as an object – which are integral during storytime practices – can be analysed properly. What is more, the PerfW presents an analytical space where interactions with a book are separated from the TWs that participants go on to construct for it. Its blended nature also represents the simultaneity with which participants experience the physical during the conceptual processing of spoken and written discourse.

Throughout Rosie and William's *Monster Zoo* read-aloud practice, for example, both participants remain, more or less, in the same position shown in Figure 6.3. However, as Rosie reads aloud to William, a number of material attributes associated with multimodal texts for children are foregrounded, for example:

- The size of the book
- Page-turners and page-breaks
- The use of the page - size, rotation, interactive features like flaps, layout
- Pictures: frame, colour, line etc.
- Typography

Monster Zoo (2013) displays all of these key elements. It is a story about a young boy who wins a prize to run a zoo for the day. When the boy arrives at the zoo, he discovers that it is full of monsters. The adult zoo-keeper leaves the boy in charge for the day, whilst he takes a holiday. The boy spends the day trying to tame the naughty monsters in the zoo and does such a good job that the monsters and the zoo-keeper want him to return the next day. Like most picturebooks, in *Monster Zoo* the pages are large and are not numbered; however, instead of specific pages, scholars refer to openings, or double spreads (Nikolajeva 2008: 60) and employ the terms verso and recto to refer to the left-hand spread, and right-hand spread, respectively. *Monster Zoo* is made up of two title pages and 29 story pages, which contain the main text and images that tell the story. It has a rhyming narrative and a maximum of 41 words per page and a minimum of just four; the story is 537 words in total. The images throughout the story are bold, bright, and colourful, fill each spread and extend to the ends of the pages; no frame restricts them. The images possess a cartoon-like visual presence and when looking closely a reader can notice pencil lines which make them look hand drawn. Moreover, word and image have an enhancing or complementary relationship, whereby words and pictures support one another by providing additional information that the other lacks (see Nikolajeva and Scott, 2000, 2006). However, there is no consistent pattern to the text-image layout as Figure 6.4 shows:

[Images removed due to copyright reasons]

Figure 6.4 *Do Not Enter the Monster Zoo (2013): example pages*

The text appears in different spaces on most spreads (on both verso and recto) after each page-turn. The typography is also inconsistent; it is often presented in different sizes, and styles/font and in bold. It is often not in a straight line, but placed at angles across the page, formed into shapes, or placed around images. Nikolajeva (2008: 59) notes that 'peritexts such as cover, endpapers, title page, and double spread layout can contribute to the overall

meaning of the narrative as can the size and format of the book, and other purely external qualities'. This is true of *Monster Zoo*. The front and back covers display the same bright images contained within the text and the inside covers are decorated with monster foot/pawprints (see Figure 6.4). The title pages and the publishing page also include images that are relevant to the narrative and present playful pictures such as two small monsters knocking nails into a wall (the page) in order to hang the title of the texts and the authors names. The typography also carries the same visual effects as inside the text.

Picturebooks, then, as a multimodal discourse, are complex. There are a number of external material features and internal compositional aspects that readers must take into account when reading or viewing these texts. However, William does not appear constantly distracted by these features and instead, I argue that they blend into his read-aloud experience unproblematically. Nevertheless, the simultaneity with which storytime participants experience materiality, in the forms listed above, whilst conceptualising a fictional domain, draw attention to the text as an object and thus to the DW.

The sheer size of the picturebook itself, for example, is always relevant. The pages of preschool texts are often much larger than those we associate with traditional novels; the majority of the page is taken up by images and the text on the page is printed in an oversized typeface (see Figure 6.4). The large pages control the gaze of the participants, who regularly point to and touch the pages and all the elements contained within them; both Rosie and William point to the pages throughout the read aloud practice (see '*(=points at image)'* transcription throughout Extract 6.0, Appendix F; also see overview of transcription conventions in Appendix E). Picturebooks thus tend to engage participants mentally and physically, generating gesture and movement from either themselves or a co-participant in the DW. The use of the page and page-turning in picturebooks also encourages significant physical action.

Sipe and Brightman observe that when adults read a novel 'we do not pay much attention to turning the pages. In fact, turning from one page to another contrives nothing to our experience' (2009: 73). However, this is not the case when reading a picturebook. Gressnich notes that 'unlike in novels, the composition of text and pictures on the pages of a picturebook is by no means arbitrary, but highly meaningful' (2012: 167). Picturebook composition is based on the careful break down of text and image into a series of facing pages during which page-breaks are carefully considered by authors, illustrators, editors and designers (Sipe and Brightman, 2009: 68). In this context, page turns, or page breaks, have a complex semiotic significance (Sipe and Brightman, 2009: 73), which Gressnich argues is

'part of the dramaturgy of the book and contribute[s] to the rhythm and pace of reading (2012: 167). The way in which the page is used in picturebooks, then, has a specific influence over both how participants engage with the book as an object and how the text is read aloud (see Section 6.2.1).

Across lines 69 to 71 in the *Monster Zoo* transcript (see Extract 6.0, Appendix F), the adult reads aloud the following page:

[Image removed due to copyright reasons]
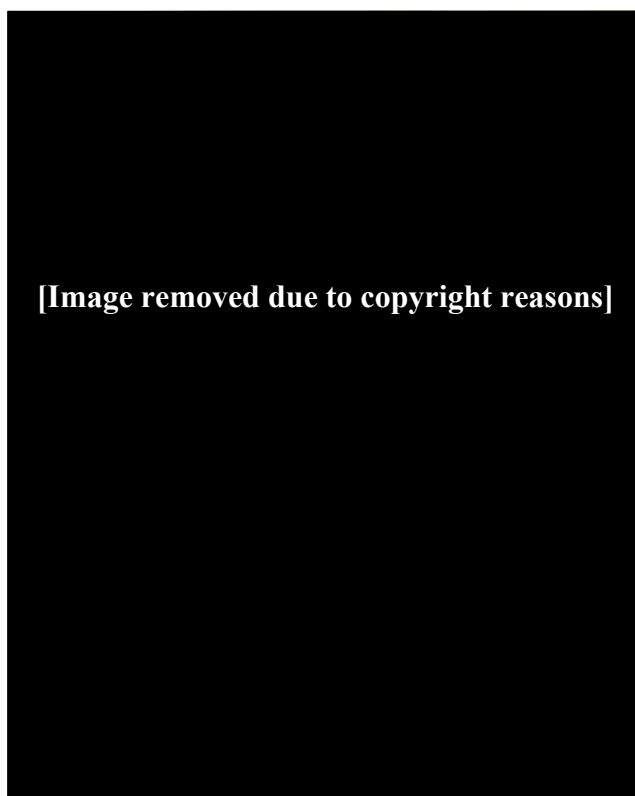
Figure 6.5 *Recto 12 from* Monster Zoo: *ellipsis PT*

The page ends with an ellipsis (triple-dot glyph) which acts as a 'pageturner' (PTs). Nikolajeva and Scott define a pageturner in picturebooks as a 'detail, verbal or visual, that encourages the viewer to turn the page and find out what happens next' (2006: 152). Gressnich identifies split sentences as a common PT in picturebooks for young children (2012: 168). Gressnich goes on to define split sentences as a 'verbal PT' where 'picturebook artists extend sentences over more than one spread, so that a reader has to go overleaf to finish reading the sentence' (2012: 170). As Rosie reads the line 'And, Squirgal, that gurgle…' she slows down her speech and elongates her pronunciation. In addition, Rosie drops her gaze to look at William and whilst William does not see this change in his mother's positioning, Rosie's mouth is consequently closer to William's ear and it is thus likely that

William experiences an increase in volume. Gressnich notes that PTs tend to 'evoke an interactive and conversational reading in that they invite the child to participate actively in the process'(2012: 180). I propose that by dropping her gaze and slowing down her speech, Rosie uses the PT to create a level of suspense for what will come next in the book and to encourage William to join in. William recognises this interactional feature of the practices and he joins in and completes the syntactic turn in line 73.

Furthermore, following the verbal 'gurgle…' PT, Rosie is forced to rotate the whole text from horizontal to vertical in order to accommodate the sudden switch in picturebook production to vertical image; both the page and reading context are shown in Figure 6.6

[Images removed due to copyright reasons]

Figure 6.6 *Text rotation*

The double-page spread shown in Figure 6.6 is the only spread in *Monster Zoo* to present an image vertically; it is one of only three images in the book that takes up both the verso and recto for a singular image. The spread is thus visually overwhelming and carries narrative impact: at this point in the story the young boy zookeeper is standing up to the Squirgal, a monster that he (the fictional narrator) was warned about at the beginning of the story. As Figure 6.6 shows, the Squirgal is large and the boy must stand on a number of other monsters that have been introduced in the pages preceding this one in order to tower over him.

The use of page and composition and the impact of these multimodal features in the example discussed above is two-fold. First, the way in which the PT is represented has

considerable influence on the adult's performance at this point in the discourse (also see Section 6.2.1). Second, the composition of the image engages participants with the book as a material object during fictional comprehension. In both instances, the page is employed in a specific manner in order to achieve some form of narrative effect; however, these effects are realised through semiotic modes – namely, verbal performance and physical movement – that draw attention to the DW and the materiality of the book.

I propose, then, that the multimodal make-up of picturebooks engages participants physically in the DW throughout the practice, regularly encouraging them to orient towards the DW end of the continuum in the PerfW. Furthermore, I argue that this is the case regardless of the fantastical nature of the story contained within the pages of these texts. *Monster Zoo*, for example, tells the story of a young boy who is asked to run a zoo full of monsters all day. The zoo is full of make-believe creatures with ridiculous names and the young boy is left to look after them by himself. Whilst the principle of minimal departure (Ryan, 1991) might encourage readers to adopt their Zoo schema in order to process the fictional discourse, I propose that readers of *Monster Zoo* would perceive the world presented in the text as far away from their actual world. Nevertheless, the material form of this fictional discourse means that its ontologically distinct content is grounded in a level of real-world interaction. Gibbons' (2012: 114) cognitive-poetic approach to multimodality also draws attention to how 'multimodal texts demand a dynamic reading strategy in which the reader must "toggle" between the mediating textual surface and cognitive worlds'. In order to account for the accentuated materiality of multimodal novels, Gibbons argues that the textual surface of the book is contained in a separate TW to the prominent TW and any other TWs readers construct. Gibbons (2012: 122-123) goes on to argue that dual arrows connecting these conceptual constructs show that readers are required to 'take account of each text-world level, a process which calls them to alternate cognitive awareness between imaginative immersion and a consciousness of the book as a physical entity, ultimately resulting in a mixed reality literary experience'. However, Gibbons focuses on multimodal novels for adults that purposefully engage a single reader with the autonomy of the book in order to achieve a specific experimental narrative effect. Thus, whilst Gibbons' textual surface TW accounts for the role of materiality in a specific literary experience, it does not address the role of materiality as an integral contextual feature in a shared reading practice.

In the PerfW, the participants are able to conceptualise themselves and the text in a space that is one step removed from participants' ontologically distinct text-worlds for the picturebook discourse. However, as the adult reads the written discourse aloud, the

participants engage with the fictional realm it depicts. I propose that during this process the inherent material features of picturebooks, such as page, image, and size continue to draw attention to the DW end of the ontological continuum in the PerfW. However, unlike the processes of participant reconceptualisation discussed in Section 6.1, which are the result of switching between different discourse-types (read-aloud performance and additional talk), the conceptual re-orientation and any consequential toggling influenced by materiality does not necessarily create production and reception changes in the discourse. Instead, the toggle towards the DW, which is linked directly to the text as an object, happens simultaneously whilst the adult performs and child listens; this DW orientation, then, is intertwined with the child's online conceptual understanding of the read-aloud talk and thus the ontologically distinct realm of the picturebook story. During the *Monster Zoo* video, for example, William listens to his mother reading the text aloud, which draws attention to the TW end of the continuum, but is also required to process the PTs and other material elements of the text, which draw attention to the DW end of the continuum. The child processes both aspects of the discourse unproblematically, for the most part, with aspects of materiality failing to influence a strong toggle from TW to DW, and thus failing to create constant distractions. Instead, I propose that the material nature of picturebooks encourages children to blend aspects of the DW and TW together during comprehension, which ultimately softens and blurs the boundary between reality and imagination, drawing attention to both simultaneously during the literary activity.

The link between picturebook materiality and ontological instability has been made previously by scholars who have studied these texts through a postmodern lens (see for example: Sipe and Pantaleo, 2008). The postmodern approach to picturebooks has focused predominantly on texts that exhibit some level of self-referentiality, and scholars have explored the use of metafictive devices within these texts. A number of theorists have aligned the use of materiality by picturebook creators with the concept of metalepsis and the device of 'bleeding'. Nikolajeva defines bleeding as a device that 'suggests that the boundary between the visual world and the viewer's reality is blurred; the viewer is invited to step into the image and become an active part of the story; the book intrudes into the viewer's space' (2008: 64). Gibbons' (2012) cognitive approach to multimodality also draws attention to the complex positioning of readers and the ontological intricacies associated with reading multimodal fiction. Similar to postmodern picturebook theorists, Gibbons draws on the potential of multimodal texts to play with the boundary between the DW and TW making it almost indistinguishable (2012: 81).

The concept of multimodal texts playing with the boundary between reality and fiction, then, is not new. However, I propose that existing work surrounding this topic has explored the idea of ontological instability as a specific technique employed/exploited by picturebook creators for narrative effect. Certain physical and material features of picturebooks that postmodern theorists in particular have drawn attention to are in fact core features of the read-aloud context that have, in many ways, always been there. Thus, I argue that picturebooks, by their very nature, have always instilled some level of ontological play or instability by presenting a fictional world (DW) that is so heavily dependent on materiality (DW). The experience of reading these fictional texts and conceptualising an ontologically distinct realm relies on DW modes that blur the boundary between reality and fiction. This blur created by the simultaneity of conceptual TW construction and DW interaction suits the cognitive capacity of the child, who benefits from scaffolding actions/interactions, and often struggles to construct a conceptual construct immediately.

In the following section, I explore in greater detail how the adult's live performance of these multimodal texts further emphasises, and relies on, ontological instability during storytime.

6.2.1 The read-aloud performance

The adult's read-aloud presentation of a multimodal picturebook is one of the most important aspects of the child's storytime experience. In Section 6.1, I argued that the adult's read-aloud talk sits towards the TW end of the ontological continuum in the PerfW and as such I argue that – alongside pictures (see Section 6.3) – it most closely represents and encourages communication with a fictional world during storytime. I propose the most accurate definition of read-aloud talk is as a live performance of a text by the adult. In this section, I draw on the concept of performance and explore the role of the adult's read-aloud activity on the pre-schooler's relationship with a fictional realm during storytime.

In all of my storytime videos, the adult's role as performer once they had adopted their adult-narrator role in the PerfW was clear. All of the adults, albeit with varied levels of commitment, adopted a number of different performative strategies as they read loud, which are summarised below:

- Vocal performance: adults manipulated their normal voice in order to narrate; to present different character-voices; to show mood or emotion.

- Physical performance: adults regularly acted out parts of the written discourse as they were reading it aloud; they employed gesture throughout the activity; and often used facial expressions during their performance.

I found that all the parents in my video data appeared actively aware of making the decision to perform. Furthermore, during my ethnographic research, the topic of storytime voices was common. The majority of parents claimed that they consciously attempted to do character voices whilst they were reading. This topic also often lead to a discussion of who performs 'better voices', with parents being quick to compliment or criticise their own, or a partner's or friend's, acting ability. In the follow-up interviews I conducted, I asked the parents involved in my study about their performance and I received the following answers:

Matthew: 'it makes the story more interesting. They [the children] probably engage with it more. It's more fun isn't it, they're kids, you want them to have fun' 'you just do it naturally, but also you enjoy it more' 'If it's a naff book, you're less inspired, if it's a good one, you get caught up in it and make the most of it'.

Denise: 'I think conveying mood is just part of making the story interesting'

Eleanor: 'I always do the character voices. I do try to. It is something I have always done. I enjoy doing it, I have to, I can't not. I love reading and I love reading to them [the children] and I think that makes it fun for me as well. You have to just make it even more interesting and for them to enjoy it even more'

For parents, then, the concept of performance was linked to enjoyment, for both them and their child, and to making the activity fun and interesting. Denise's comments also draw attention to the role of performance in scaffolding the child's understanding of narratological elements such as mood and emotion (see Section 5.2.1). The adult's role as performer and their acting ability during storytime is therefore a significant feature of their reading style.

Adult reading style (ARS) during storytime activities has received considerable attention (see for example: Dickinson and Smith, 1994; Haden et al., 1996; Heath, 1982; Reese et al., 2003; also see review in Section 2.2.1). However, the majority of research that focuses on ARS is embedded in the field of emergent literacy (see Section 2.1.1). ARS studies, therefore, usually aim to examine reading styles in order to judge which leads to the

best literacy outcomes, often vocabulary development. Nevertheless, diversity amongst ARSs has been emphasised (see Reese et al., 2003) and the exploration of this variation has led to a number of categories being identified, one of which includes a 'performance-oriented style' (Dickinson and Smith, 1994). Reese et al. (2003: 38) provide the following definition of a this style:

> The performance-oriented styles emphasised *dramatic reading*, with *few interruptions* and an *analytic discussion at the end* of the reading that focused on story comprehension, definition of unusual words, and the relation of the book to children's experiences.
>
> <div align="right">(Reese et al., 2003: 38)</div>

Like many studies that aim to categorise ARS, the definition above is defined by the structure of the activity and the level of interaction with a co-participant during the activity (also see Heath, 1982; Dickinson and Keebler, 1989; Martinez and Teale, 1993). Ultimately, the 'performance' aspect of this style is viewed simply as the adult's uninterrupted read-aloud presentation of the written text in a picturebook. The adult's performative *strategies* are, thus, largely overlooked in existing ARS research. Meanwhile, the role of the adult's performance during their read-aloud talk on the child's comprehension, and experience of, a fictional world has been ignored completely.

I argue that the adult's read-aloud presentation of the written discourse in picturebooks has a direct impact on the child's relationship with the ontologically distinct domain depicted in the pages of the text. Once the adult starts to read a text aloud, amending their verbal and physical actions as they do so, it triggers a conceptual movement in the discourse causing participants to orient themselves more towards the TW and away from the DW (see Section 6.1). During the adult's read-aloud talk, the child's focus is on the text and they rely on the adult's presentation of its content in order to comprehend the world(s) contained within its pages. I propose, therefore, that the way in which the child experiences the adult's performance bears some resemblance to a staged production, whereby audience members are engaged with a fictional domain through real-life performance.

Zhang et al. (2016) adopt the view of 'shared reading as a performance' in their exploration of actual adult-child shared reading and its representation on television. They make comparisons between shared reading practices and the concept of performance and argue, as I have done above, that adult-readers are conscious of performing a specific activity (2016: 426). They go on to note:

Just as a performance 'involves self-conscious manipulation of the formal features of the communicative system (physical movement in dance, language and tone in song, and so on), making one at least conscious of its device' (Bauman 1989: 266), so too the adult-readers also manipulate features such as their voice quality and gestures, often with the purpose of stimulating children's curiosity and enhancing their comprehension.

(Zhang et al., 2016: 426)

Zhang et al. thus draw attention to the adult's role as actor during storytime, where verbal and physical manipulation directly impacts audience experience. Moschovaki and Meadows (2015: 156), who focus specifically on affective interaction during classroom read-aloud activities, also recognise the impact of the adult's presentation of the text on the child's experience, referring to the adult-reader as a mediator between the implied reader and the actual one. According to Moschovaki and Meadows (2015: 156):

The reader overrides the text and uses a variety of strategies (voice intonation, gestures, etc.) to make the task of reading interesting and adapt the text to the child's level of understanding (Cochran-Smith 1984). Thereby, text representations have considerable impact on children's cognitive and affective engagement.

(Moschovaki and Meadows, 2015: 156)

Just like actors in a play, then, adults provide a completely self-aware performance of a written discourse during storytime, employing a number of devices to convey meaning and mood. During these real-life, real-time, performances, the picturebook acts like a script (see Parsons, 2004; Zhang et al., 2016).

Parsons (2004: 1) argues that picturebooks operate as scripts and sites for performance by 'forming a visual and spatial backdrop, providing textual narratives, scripting dialogues, and incorporating scores for an interplay of speech, gesture and the production of abstract sounds' (also see discussion in Section 6.2). Zhang et al. (2016: 428) also argue that the picturebook provides content to be read and discussed and can guide the manner in which this is done. However, they go on to note that 'unlike TV, theatre and play scripts […] the picture book does not offer explicit directions for performers to follow, so that its use as a script is negotiated by the participants in the shared reading experience' (2016: 428).

Throughout William and Rosie's *Monster Zoo* video, the book *Monster Zoo* (2013) influences the adult's verbal performance in two key ways: first, through its rhyming and alliterative discourse, and second, through the typography (also see Section 6.2). As soon as

Rosie (adult) begins to read the text aloud, she adopts the rhythm of the written narrative, placing emphasis on certain syllables that foreground the rhyme and distinguish the spoken discourse as a read-aloud performance. A core example of Rosie's read-aloud performance takes place across lines 43 – 53 in the Monster Zoo transcript (see Extract 6.0, Appendix F). Throughout this single AN turn the underlined syllables represent instances where the adult places certain emphasis during production (see Appendix E for full transcription conventions). However, there are a number of other relevant production features present in this turn. The capital letters represent a significant increase in volume, whilst other special characteristics of talk such as '((gruff voice))' (line 48) foreground other vocal manipulations by the adult. I propose that across lines 43 - 53, these particular performance choices by the adult are directly influenced by the typography in *Monster Zoo* (2013). Across lines 44 - 48 in Extract 6.0, Rosie is reading the following double-page spread aloud:

[Image removed due to copyright reasons]

Figure 6.7 *Typography and the read-aloud performance*

The speech that the adult produces with an increase in volume during her read-aloud discourse (see 'ENOUGH OF THAT' (line 45), 'RAWRR' (line 47) and 'RAWWRRED' (line 47) in Extract 6.0) is all represented in a larger font than the rest of the text on the page, with at least one word presented in a bold typeface. The typography thus provides potential visual directions for the adult. What is more, the direct speech of the first-person fictional narrator

"enough of that" is pre-modified with the adverb 'loudly' providing further stage-like instruction for the adult. The text also engages the adult physically and she points to the images on the page at least three times during this AN turn (see lines 50 – 51) (see Section 6.3). Rosie does not pause her read-aloud talk as she gestures towards the text and instead the action of pointing blends straight into her read-aloud performance.

Cruickshank argues that 'the performance event in practice is ambiguous and inaccessible after the fact, and its interpretation individual and in flux at levels of both production and reception' (2014: 456). Although Cruickshank is referring more specifically to staged, or theatrical productions, I argue this concept can be applied to storytime practices. The version of the text that the adult chooses to present to the child at any one time may never be repeated in exactly the same manner and is dependent on the specific context of reading. Moreover, the version of the text presented during storytime is only possible because of the adult and *their* interpretation and presentation of the picturebook content. I propose, therefore, that the adult's read-aloud performance can be considered a direct representation of the fictional domain depicted in a picturebook. The adult's read-aloud talk, then, is both a performance in the DW (reality) and a fictional world prompted by that performance (fiction).

The concept of ontological duplicity is not new to the study of performance. Cruickshank, for example, draws attention to the 'peculiar "doubleness" of performance where objects, words and bodies exist and operate in two places – one real and one imagined – all at once' (2014: 457). Indeed, a number of scholars have linked Conceptual Integration Theory to drama performances and argued for a 'blended space' (see definition of blending in Section 6.1). Fauconnier and Turner (2002: 226), for example, argue that drama performances are a deliberate blend of a living person with an identity. For Parsons (2004), the enacting of a picturebook by an adult, like acting in a play, necessarily entails a similar partial transformation of the adult reader/actor. Although Parsons compares this process of semiotic shifting to that of make-believe in children's role-playing, she nevertheless foregrounds the blended role of the adult. The adult in lines 43 – 53 in Extract 6.0 discussed above (Appendix F) embodies the following roles, which sit at different experiential points along the ontological continuum in the PerfW (also see discussion of enactor-roles in Chapter 4):

- Parent (real)
- Read-aloud narrator (real)
- Actor (real)
- Narrator (fictional/imagined)

- Young Boy (imagined)
- also potential: Monster who RAWWRs (imagined)

The written discourse is a first-person narration by a young boy, who is only ever identified in the images in *Monster Zoo* (see Section 6.3.1). As Rosie reads aloud, adopting the first-person pronouns 'I' and 'me', I would argue that she becomes an actor playing the role of the narrating young boy. Rosie's read-aloud voice in the DW thus provides a voice for a TW enactor in the fictional world triggering conceptual movement towards the TW end of the ontological continuum. Like the picturebook itself (see Section 6.2), the adult's real-world performance, which is presented through modes that draw attention to the DW end of the ontological continuum, simultaneously encourages conceptual focus towards the TW end of the same continuum in the PerfW. In lines 43 – 53 in Extract 6.0, for example, when the adult adopts a loud and gruff vocal manipulation whilst enacting a roar produced by the young boy in the TW, the child does not look up from the pages of the text at all. I suggest that this provides evidence that William's focus is on the text and the fictional world represented by the performance at this point in the discourse, rather than the performance itself, or any other DW interaction. In fact, the next time he speaks in line 54, he produces talk about the image, and thus the TW, of *Monster Zoo* (2013) (see Extract 6.0, Appendix F).

However, within the storytime context, the adult's role as parent and co-participant is never forgotten. Furthermore, the adult as reader/actor/character shares space and time with the child, and the key physical and verbal performative strategies the adult uses engage the child in real-time. Ultimately, actors and audience members occupy the same spaces during storytime performances and as a result 'the ontological architecture of text-world dynamics' is affected (Gibbons 2016: 81).

Cruickshank and Lahey (2010) argue that when faced with reading written play-texts, adults construct two types of text-world: fictional worlds and staged worlds. Essentially, readers of play-texts imagine a fictional existence for the characters and entities presented in a dramatic play-text (fictional world), while recognizing that the genre of text being read prescribes a staged representation (staged world). According to Cruickshank and Lahey (2010) whilst reading these texts, participants toggle between these two world-types as they make sense of the discourse. Similarly, I argue that the child is involved in a process of making sense of two levels of dramatic representation: a DW performance and a fictional world. However, unlike the reader discussed in Cruickshank and Lahey's research, pre-school children during storytime are not reading about and imagining the performance, but are actively experiencing the performance of the written discourse as it happens. Gibbons

also draws attention to Cruickshank and Lahey's failure to account for ways in which audience members experience fictional worlds when they are actualised by performance in the DW (2016: 72). Gibbons goes on to extend the concept of the staged world by applying it to immersive theatre experiences (2016) and notes that:

> The staged world […] in relating to the staged context might be understood to *shift its ontological anchoring* relative to either the reading or the audience experience. When reading a play-text, the staged world is, unavoidably, a text-world. When viewing a performance, it must transfer into a layer of representation in the discourse-world yet distinct from that discourse-world by the very fact of its designed and choreographed nature.

<div align="right">(Gibbons, 2016: 83, my emphasis)</div>

According to Gibbons (2016), during immersive theatre performances, the staged world becomes a frame of representation that is anchored in the DW. Gibbons thus draws attention to the physical nature of live performance, whereby audience members experience the dramatization of the fictional world in the here-and-now of their DW. The same is true during storytime performances where the child experiences the adult's performance first-hand and is required to process a number of DW modes during their experience of the fictional world. Gibbons goes on to note that one of the major challenges that immersive theatre poses for TWT relates to 'the ways in which the apparent actualisation of the immersion metaphor alters projection relations between discourse-world and text-worlds' (2016: 72). Ultimately, Gibbons argues that adult audience members of immersive theatre create 'blended-worlds' in response to these discourse situations that project relationships between the DW and the TW. These blended worlds are independent conceptual structures born out of an individual's experience of a discourse that actively aims to transgress the boundary between reality and fiction (also see Section 6.1).

Essentially, Gibbons' (2016) work on immersive theatre and her extension of Cruickshank and Lahey's (2010) staged world draws attention to the underlying ontological complexity of the experience of live performance, specifically the transgression between DW and TW and the conceptual blend this entails. I propose that during storytime, young children are involved in the similar processing of a live performance that represents a fictional world. Pre-schoolers are thus involved in a discourse situation that requires them to address concepts such as ontological duplicity and conceptual blending. However, unlike the adult readers and audiences members who are the focus of Gibbons (2016) and Cruickshank and Lahey's (2010) work, for pre-school children, the live performance of the text is only one aspect of

the discourse situation. The performance is regularly interrupted by additional talk produced by adults and children alike and these interruptions are not always TW related, but are nevertheless key to storytime comprehension (see Chapter 5). For the pre-school child, then, the live performance they experience during storytime is a necessary component of the practice which aids and scaffolds their experience of a shared written discourse; in many ways, the performance is *not* the key communicative event, but a means to comprehending another. Thus, whilst the staged worlds and blended worlds proposed by previous scholars and discussed above address aspects of a performed written discourse, neither address a context like storytime where both the written discourse being performed and the actualised performance of the written discourse exist simultaneously. During storytime, text and performance exist codependently, both play a key role in the activity, and the comprehension of each is closely intertwined. Moreover, both the staged- and blended worlds discussed above are mature conceptual constructs that I propose young children are not yet capable of creating independently. Nevertheless, I argue that the ontological effects that they address – specifically, the impossible blend of the DW and the TW – are still relevant to storytime, just for different reasons.

The PerfW *is* a blended space, which – like the constructs discussed above – accounts for the conceptual merger of aspects of the DW and the TW (see Section 6.1). During storytime performances I argue that it acts as a conceptual *stage*, as opposed to a staged or blended-world, where the adult adopts a number of enactor-roles and presents a fictional world. The semipermeable membrane of the construct emphasises the potential transgressions between the two key input spaces of the DW and the TW during this performance. Furthermore, the ontological continuum represents the conceptual focus and (re)orientation of participants during the *whole* activity, which regularly switches between these two realms (see Section 6.1); the adult's enactor-roles, for example, sit at different points along the ontological continuum and represent varying degrees of a DW/TW blend throughout the practice. As the adult performs the text in the PerfW, their spoken discourse is filtered through the semipermeable membrane of the PerfW and into the child's TW(s) for that written discourse. I argue that as the performance filters through the conceptual levels of the discourse, it goes from being recognised as an 'act in reality' (DW) to an impersonation of the images and thus as a TW-happening (TW) much like how an adult would process a staged production.

However, adult readers and audience members are able to instantly process a text and/or performance and generate a TW for that discourse independently. In doing so, adults

automatically run certain conceptual blends, such as actor/character, and they process the performance as fundamentally fictional. The adult's experience is usually about complete immersion in the fictional world presented by a written discourse or staged performance. Pre-school children, on the other hand, rely on the adult's performance and other interactions with that parent co-participant in order to construct TWs for a written discourse in the first place. I propose, therefore, that when the adult produces read-aloud talk, effectively performing the picturebook, conceptual processing moves more towards the TW end of the ontological continuum. However, this continuum only ever represents levels of DW influence during storytime comprehension, and not complete fictional immersion as such (see Section 6.1).

It is important to emphasise that the story-world, although ontologically distinct, is also being enacted for the child in real-time and right next to them. Ontological duplicity during storytime thus works to scaffold the child's experience of a fictional discourse by seemingly bringing the TW closer to them and reducing the conceptual processing required by the child. Similar to Gibbons' immersive theatre goers (2016), I propose that the boundary between reality and fiction is softened during storytime as aspects of the DW and the TW seemingly blend together, namely the adult's performance in the DW and the fictional world of the text. However, whereas this blend feeds directly into an existing/ongoing TW experience for adult readers/audiences members and is effectively a product of a specifically immersive fictional experience, during storytime the blend effectively aids the child's comprehension and construction of a TW for a written discourse.

Essentially, I argue that when the adult produces read-aloud talk, they perform a version of the story-world to the child. Moreover, the child is sat right next to them and thus, in many ways, the story-world itself is right next to the child, further helping to blur the boundary between reality and fiction and reducing the distance between them. In Extract 6.0 (Appendix F), for example, when Rosie produces the spoken discourse "enough of that" (line 45) in her actor/character role, a version of the TW enactor of the young boy is sat right next to William shouting. Picturebooks themselves, and more specifically the images they contain, also have an important role to play in this DW/TW blur, as I explore further in the next section.

6.3 Pictures: visual worlds and scaffolding immersion

Werth defined a TW as being 'dependent upon resources of memory and imagination, rather than direct perception (1999: 17). However, as Lewis recognises, a picturebook's story

emerges out of the mutual interanimation of words and pictures (2001: 36); images are 'part and parcel' of the early-reading context (Lehr, 1991: 94). I propose, therefore, that direct perception is a key factor during storytime experiences. In Chapter 5, I discussed the role of images in participants' additional talk, drawing attention to the child's tendency to engage with perceptual features of the discourse and their expectation to *see* what they hear (see Sections 5.2 – 5.2.2). In this section, I extend my exploration of the role of images during storytime, focusing specifically on the link between pictures, performance, and fictional worlds.

All of the adults involved in my study recognised the significance of images during storytime and it was something I discussed with them in the follow-up interviews I conducted:

Matthew: 'pictures are important because the kids are like soaking up the picture and listening and it fires off their imagination; there's more story expanded in the pictures, the words aren't everything'

Sally: 'I think they [the pictures] are vital at this age because it gives them a bit of context and idea. There's a lot that they [the children] don't understand if you're just talking to them about stuff.'

Denise: 'I think they are really important' 'I love pictures that are full of detail because I just think its lovely to sit and spot them, because particularly conscious that she's not reading the letters though she's starting to spot the letters but that's how it starts isn't it that you look for the you look you are starting to read a book so when she sits down with a book on her own she's reading it but she's reading the pictures and she's remembering the story and so I think that I'm conscious that when I read it to her I'm helping her to do that cos I'm giving her the words for the pictures.'

Eleanor: 'I use the pictures a lot, especially with Elijah. And with children's books there's a lot more in the pictures sometimes than there is in words. There's a lot more going on and there's a lot to look at which I think is really interesting.' 'Always add comments just to make sure that they see it and that they understand it'

In particular, parents noted that the pictures present a lot more information, or 'more story', than the words (also see Section 6.3.1) and they also showed awareness of the child's preference for images given their pre-literate status. Pictures take on an additional significance in the storytime context because pre-school children are unable to read the written discourse presented in picturebooks; without images, the child would be unable to engage with the world contained within the text until the adult started reading aloud. What is more, even when the adult begins to read and the child is encouraged to process spoken discourse conceptually, they engage more readily with the perceptual features in discourse. Each time William triggers additional talk in the *Monster Zoo* Video (see Extract 6.0, Appendix F for full transcript), for example, he refers specifically to something he can see on the page, and often points to it and/or directs his mother with the directive 'look':

a) THAT ONE'S ESCAPED *(=points to image)* (line 38)
b) that's that one *(=points to image)* (line 41)
c) THAT-their door looks like them *(=points to image)*(line 54)
d) there's that one *(=points to image) (=adult laughs)* and that one. (Ooh) they're both eating (line 57 – 58)
e) look, that dino-look (PT<) that one's fl-crying *(=moved index finger down face from eye to imitate a tear)* (line 83 -84)

William's gaze also remains fixed on the images throughout the activity. These verbal and behavioural patterns are true of all of the children involved in my dataset and I argue that they all showed a preference for the perceptual over conceptual during storytime (see Section 2.5.3). I propose that a key reason for this is that the perceptual information provided by the images ultimately offers a cognitive 'shortcut' to any potential conceptual processing expected of them.

Pictures, like the adult's live performance, display a level of ontological duplicity (see Section 6.2.1) during storytime in that they exist as a physical object in reality (TW), yet represent a world that is fictional (TW); they draw attention to both ends of the ontological continuum at the same time. Pictures and performance thus go hand in hand during storytime activities. In each of the videos I collected, parents regularly pointed to images as they produced read-aloud discourse, effectively drawing the child's attention to the visual counterpart of their performance (for example see lines 49 – 51 in Extract 6.0, Appendix F). Essentially, the read-aloud narrator directs the child to the images as a way of engaging them

with the specific TW they are presenting through their spoken discourse. The images, in turn, act as a 'pivot' in DW, enabling a shift into the TW (Vygotsky, 1978: 97-100; Gibbons, 2012: 79; Holland et al., 1998: 100).

The term 'pivot' refers to Vygotsky's work in developmental psychology and children's play behaviours (1978). Holland et al. summarise Vygotsky's hypothesis as follows:

> Describing how the children develop the ability to enter into an imagined world, Vygotsky speaks of a 'pivot', a mediating or symbolic device that the child uses not just to organise a particular response but to pivot or shift into the frame of a different world. Toys, even sticks assigned the status of horse, can be the pivots. The tangible symbol may eventually be discarded and the child may be able to enter into the play world without physical props.
>
> (Holland et al., 1998: 50)

Vygotsky draws attention to the child's reliance on material objects during play and links it to their ability during imaginative tasks. I propose that the materiality of picturebooks (see discussion in Section 6.2) is thus a significant factor in how the child engages with and immerses themselves into a fictional world. In reference to literature, Gibbons notes that 'the book as an object is a mediating artefact that evokes, and enables a shift into, its imaginative world' (2012: 79). In the shared reading context, the picturebook first evokes a read-aloud situation, prompting the construction of the PerfW, before it even enables a shift into the imaginative world of the book itself. I propose that it is the images specifically that enable the shift into an imaginative world for the child during the storytime.

The images, as a material, specifically visual artefact act as a pivot by providing an immediate version of a TW(s) contained in the picturebook. Instead of processing linguistic input into a mental representation in order build an ontologically distinct world, pictures provide a version of that ontologically distinct realm from the outset. This multimodal aspect of the text thus creates an instant, seemingly accessible TW for a pre-schooler. The reference to accessibility, here, is defined in terms of reduced conceptual processing; the child is able to see the world of the text without conceptually constructing it first.

In examples a-e above, each time William points to an image whilst verbalising something he has noticed in the text, I argue that he essentially crosses the ontological border of the fiction and touches the aspect of the TW he is referring to, which is accessible to him through a visual mode in the DW. Pictures, thus, create a unique relationship between the pre-schooler and a fictional realm that further disrupts the usually strict ontological border

between the DW and the TW. Specifically, I propose that images have the effect of making an ontologically distinct realm appear closer to the child in two key ways:

- Physically: the world exists as an object in the child's here and now
- Conceptually: pictures reduce the conceptual effort required by the child to construct the world

The PerfW and its blended nature are able to account for instances where engagement with a fictional world during reading is heightened through DW modes. Its placement between DW and the TW thus facilitates the effects of a conceptual 'pivot' and the role of direct perception during TW construction, which involves interacting with DW enactors and objects in order to produce distinct TW constructs. Pictures as a material object not only exist in the here-and-now of the reader which creates a physically closeness, but they effectively *imagine for* the child and therefore fulfil a level of conceptualisation that is usually associated with latter stages of the mental construction. Overall, I propose that the experiential effect of direct perception is the reduction of the mental deictic differentiation between the two ontologies. It is important to note that I am not claiming that the ontologically distinct TW of a literary picturebook *is* closer to and accessible to a child, this would be ontologically impossible. However, I argue that it is made to *feel* closer to the DW of the child which reduces the conceptual effort required by them and ultimately enables and increases the child's engagement with a fictional world.

Picturebooks themselves often rely on this playful disruption of the boundary between reality and fiction. *Paddington at the Carnival* (2014), read by Eva (child) and Daniel (adult), and discussed in Chapter 5, is a strong example of a picturebook that purposely provokes a cross-world interpretative relationship between the two realms (for full transcript see Extract 5.0 in Appendix F) (for a similar concept also see Gibbons, 2012, 2016 notion of 'trans-worlds').

The story *Paddington at the Carnival* (2014) follows the key TW-enactor Paddington Bear and his friend Mr Gruber as they complete the Busy Bee Adventure trail at a carnival in London. The Busy Bee Adventure trail entails Paddington Bear searching for and completing a list of as many things as possible that begin with the letter B. This trail is the main event around which the whole of the written discourse is focused. In Eva (child) and Daniel's (adult) storytime video, I observed that the majority of the discourse – both read-aloud and additional – centres around the Busy Bee adventure trail, and TW assimilation is based on this key event (also see introduction and discussion of the Paddington transcript in Section

5.1.1). Daniel scaffolds Eva's engagement with this aspect of the story by encouraging her to identify objects that begin with B throughout the practice.

Across lines 34 – 40 of Extract 5.0 (Appendix F) Daniel reads the text aloud and introduces the Busy Bee adventure trail. Immediately after the line 'you have to find as many things as possible beginning with the letter b' (line 38) in his adult-narrator role, he shifts his gaze towards Eva and asks 'can you think of anything?' (line 40) Daniel's voice, gaze, and behaviour changes when he addresses Eva in line 40; the use of the second-person pronoun 'you' and his shift in gaze and tone of voice signals to Eva that her father is addressing her directly. I propose that when Daniel adopts his AP enactor-role and asks Eva a question (line 40), he triggers an episode of interactive comprehension that takes precedence in the discourse situation (see Section 5.2): the 'finding the Bs' interaction becomes foregrounded. The adult's question thus creates a shift in the discourse from the conceptual processing of the TW of *Paddington* towards a labelling engagement activity in the PerfW (also see discussion of engagement activities in Section 5.3). At this point in the discourse, then, identifying items that begin with B is the key experiential aspect of the discourse for both participants. Whilst engaging in this aspect of the discourse, both participants generate TWs; however, given the direct address, I argue that these TWs are experientially more DW than they are TW. Nevertheless, this aspect of the discourse is an important part of the comprehension of the text *Paddington* (2014). Thus, following the introduction of the adventure trail, Daniel continues to scaffold Eva's engagement with this aspect of the discourse in two key ways:

1. Foregrounding when items beginning with the letter B appear in the either the written discourse or the images, by placing emphasis on alliterative pronunciation, and pointing to pictures (see for example lines 64-66, 87-89 in Extract 5.0, Appendix F)

2. Employing question and answer 'what's that?' scaffolding discourse (see lines 58 - 63, 79 - 82; also see discussion of adult-talk in Section 5.2.1) that guides Eva's attention to a perceptual mode in the discourse situation and triggers a labelling response from the child.

The question and answer discourse (2), in particular, requires the child to actively label an item in the images of the picturebook that begin with B. When the child answers the adult in the DW, she simultaneously participates in an important part of the narrative identifying an object that can be added to Paddington's list. Ultimately, the Busy Bee Adventure trail and the activity of identifying items that begin with B is an event that is taking place in the

prominent TW of *Paddington.* The activity is being carried out by the TW-enactors Paddington and Mr Gruber in a different spatio-temporal environment to the adult and the child reading the text. However, one of the key ways in which participants engage with this aspect of the fictional discourse is by mimicking TW behaviour in the DW.

The Busy Bee Adventure trail   The Busy Bee Adventure trail

[(2). Additional talk]   [(1). Read-aloud performance]

DW   Ontological continuum   TW
◄───►
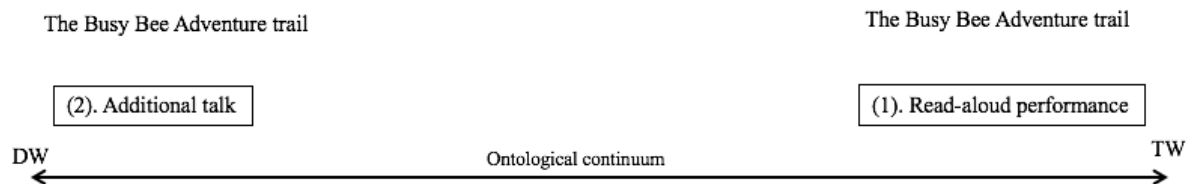
Figure 6.8 *The Busy Bee Adventure trail and the ontological continuum*

As Figure 6.8 represents, discourse at both ends of the ontological continuum in the PerfW becomes focused on completing the busy bee adventure trail. This TW mimicry includes constant switching between enactor-roles and talk-types associated with the TW, where the Busy Bee adventure trail exists and is introduced, and enactor-roles and talk-types associated with the DW, where adult and child participants engage in the Busy Bee Adventure trail. Participants basically engage with the prominent TW of *Paddington* through face-to-face communication that foregrounds a labelling game, which is possible to participate in and engage with in the DW. Aspects of the TW and the DW, then, blend together and the boundary between these two ontologies becomes blurred as DW-participants join in with the TW-activity. I propose that as the adult maintains the child's active engagement in this key aspect of the narrative, as Daniel does throughout *Paddington* (2014), the child becomes absorbed in participating in this part of the story which is scaffolded by the adult.

What is more, whilst the adult initially turns the TW activity into a DW game, I argue that the text itself encourages DW participants to engage with it in this way. For example, throughout *Paddington* (2014) whenever items beginning with B are listed in the written discourse, they appear in the images in the text. Furthermore, each key event that happens in the discourse includes an item beginning with B: for example, feeding the ducks bread; fishing and finding a bicycle (see Extract 5.0, Appendix F). In many ways, the text itself and the story it contains relies on some level of ontological instability. *Paddington* provokes a cross-world relationship between reality and fiction where participants' DW actions map on to the characters and events in the TW. I propose that the majority of picturebooks encourage this blur between DW and TW where the boundary between them becomes indistinguishable;

this is achieved not just through the narrative events like in *Paddington*, but through the presence of storylines that include young protagonists who mirror children in the DW. In *Monster Zoo* for example, there is a young boy in the TW and a young boy in the DW, and I propose that this DW/TW mimicry encourages the child to project into the fictional realm. The adult is then able to draw on this in their performance and their additional talk, thus scaffolding the child's fictional immersion.

Overall , I propose that adults draw on images as a material pivot into an imagined realm throughout storytime and they encourage children to do the same. I argue that throughout storytime discourse, the physical interaction with images (text) in the DW is, to some extent, always represented as a direct interaction with a fictional world (TWs). This cross-world relationship with pictures underpins how adults engage children with, and teach children about, fiction. During storytime, then, the experience of reading a fictional text is not so much about silent and independent TW immersion, owing to the child's literacy and cognitive skills, but a more physical and fun interaction with a co-participant around a visual world. In the following sections, I explore how participants engage with world-building and function-advancing information in picturebooks more closely and further examine how talk about pictures influence how young children engage with ontologically distinct realms.

6.3.1 Who? What? When? Where?: visual deixis and negotiating fictional worlds

Pictures provide a visual world for participants during storytime, and as such they contain the majority of the world-building (WB) information in picturebooks. World-building elements 'specify the temporal and spatial boundaries of a mental representation, as well as any entities present in the world' (Gavins, 2007: 36; Gavins and Lahey, 2016: 4). As adults reading a fictional text, we tend to gradually construct a TW from deictic markers in the *written* discourse and, if world-building elements are missing, the discourse is often considered 'unusual' with the absence of these key elements being attributed to some specific narrative effect. During storytime, however, the temporal and spatial boundaries of the TW, as well as the objects and entities present, are usually found in the pictures. Essentially, during picturebook reading, participants do not have to build a world from scratch, or imagine what places, spaces, objects, and characters look like, because they can already see them.

The first two double-page spreads from *Monster Zoo* are presented in Figure 6.9:

Verso 1   **Recto 1**

Double-page spread (Verso 2, Recto 2)

Figure 6.9 *Visual deixis and world-building in* Monster Zoo

In addition to the temporal, spatial, and referential information provided in the written discourse presented across the pages in Figure 6.9, there is a vast amount of additional world-building detail provided by the images. In particular, the pictures provide details about:

- The appearance of the TW enactors - in particular, what the first person narrating 'I' looks like.

- Deictic locative details about the three core world-switches that take place across the pages, including their appearance and temporality: at home in the morning receiving a note; travelling on a bike during the day; arriving at a zoo in the daylight.

- Information about emotion, presented on the TW enactor's face: the boy is shown smiling.

- Information about personal and social relationships that exist between entities in the TW: the boy is shown in pyjamas with paw prints across them and he is with a crocodile soft toy, which is suggestive of his like for monsters; later, the zookeeper is smiling and waving to the boy as he arrives at the zoo.

The deictic description that is lacking in the text is thus provided in the illustration. The written discourse does not need to describe a world that is already accessible through other perceptual means. It is this feature of picturebooks that allows for some of the most fantastical, imaginative, absurd, and ridiculous fictional worlds and stories to be presented to young children. Pictures enable totally fantastical worlds, which are spatially and temporally distinct from the DW of the readers, to be presented to young children during storytime with very little conceptual effort needed by them.

The visual element of picturebooks, then, is crucial for the way in which deixis operates within these texts. The use of images means that the world-building elements in the written text can remain simple, leaving illustrations and additional talk to fill any gaps and expand on the information presented in the words. World-switches (WS) operate in much the same way during storytime practices. Gavins (2007: 48) notes that world-switches occur whenever the temporal or spatial boundaries of a TW shift. In Figure 6.9, three key world-switches take place and are represented visually: on the first verso, the boy is at home in his pyjamas; on the recto there has been a temporal and locative shift and the boy is dressed and on his bike riding through the woods; finally, across a page turn, there has been another locative shift and the double-page spread introduces the 'strangest zoo' referred to by the boy in the narrative.

In Jackson (2013), I introduced the term 'visual deixis' (21 - 24) to account for the role of perception during world-building, world-switches, and other movement within a TW during picturebook reading. I argue that the requirement for the pre-schooler to conceptualise a new deictic structure from scratch is simplified by the presence of visual world-builders; together, text and image draw the pre-schooler into the location of the story whilst

simplifying the process of projection. In *Monster Zoo*, for example, the first person fictional 'I' narrator, and the origo of the narration, is pictured on the very first page of the text. As the adult reads the first person narration aloud, not only does the adult's live performance of the 'I' bring this TW enactor closer to the child in the DW (see Section 6.2.1), but the child can see a version of the 'I' origo of the story. Live performance and visual deixis, here, reduce the child's need to conceptually project into the origo of the young boy in order to comprehend the story by presenting an accessible version of him in the child's here-and-now.

From the moment children begin to engage with these multimodal texts, they are taught to comprehend images as a direct representation of a fictional realm (see Section 6.3); pictures and interactions with pictures are essentially a form of TW interaction and I would argue that storytime participants rely on images to construct and move around picturebook TWs. Essentially, processes of world-building and world-switching associated with the ontologically distinct realm of the picturebook engage participants in material and physical ways in the DW. Participants are able to point to people, things, and places, and their movement through the fictional realm is mirrored in DW-actions such as page-turning (PT). What is more, participants are actively able to explore new locations visually, as they would in reality. Across lines 4 – 6 in the *Monster Zoo* Transcript, for example, (see Extract 6.0, Appendix F) Rosie and William pause to gaze at the double-page spread (Verso 2, Recto 2 in Figure 6.9) which illustrates the new location 'the strangest zoo' before continuing on with the story.

World-building and world-switching in picturebooks thus rely greatly on the perceptual information contained within the text. The adult's read-aloud performance of the written discourse, therefore, is not focused on providing essential deictic information. However, the ability to see the world and engage with deixis visually allows participants to not only engage with a fictional realm quickly and easily, but to talk about key features of these worlds with ease. My data revealed that the additional talk that takes place during storytime regularly focused on WB and WS elements in the written discourse. I refer to such instances of interactive comprehension as examples of either 'world-building discourse', or 'world-switching discourse'. These labels refer to episodes of additional talk where world-building information and/or a world-switch in the picturebook were discussed in further detail by participants following their initial presentation in the text. I found that adults in particular regularly chose to scaffold world-building, world-switching and world-repair (also see Section 5.1.2) through guided interactions (see Chapter 5).

In Extract 6.1 below from Eleanor and Elijah's *Peace at Last* storytime video, the adult reads the opening lines from the picturebook *Peace at Last* (1980) 'the hour was late' (line 1).

```
1   AN:  .hhh the hour was late (=points to the narrative lines as she reads)
2   AP:  look, the cat's out (=points to image) the ow::ls are flying in the sky (=points to image,
3        starts PT> but drops page) and the moon is ↑bright (=points to image)(PT>)
```

Extract 6.1 *The hour was late*

The written discourse supplies the reader with temporal information only; however, it is accompanied by the following image:

Figure 6.10 *The hour was late*

The pictures provide additional locative and temporal details about what the TW(s) of *Peace at Last* looks like and who and what exists within the space. Across lines 2-3 in Extract 6.1, the adult (Eleanor) draws on this perceptual information in her additional talk in order to build on her read-aloud discourse and guide TW assimilation with Elijah (child) (also see discussion of adult-talk in Section 5.2.1). Eleanor triggers additional talk with the imperative 'look' which, alongside her pointing action, directs Elijah towards the image. Eleanor's

additional talk follows straight on from her read-aloud talk and acts to foreground some of the best examples of 'things we see at night': cats (line 2), owls (line 2), the moon (line 3); Eleanor points to each item in the image as she mentions them. I argue that the adult's additional talk in this instance also triggers a night-time schema in the discourse situation, which simultaneously emphasises the temporal setting of *Peace at Last* (1980) – the one piece of world-building information contained in the very first narrative line. The adult's additional talk, thus, draws on the image in order to expand on the world-building information already supplied by the text.

Moreover, in comparison to the written text and the adult's read-aloud talk, the adult's world-building discourse is present tense and includes an imperative that directs the child's actions in the DW. The adult's commentary thus presents the images – and thus the fictional world – as present and ongoing in the child's here-and-now; the child's real-world and the fictional world of the picturebook are simultaneous. The adult's additional talk, here, blurs the boundary between reality and fiction further by emphasising their co-occurrence and presenting an ontologically distinct realm as accessible.

The stylistic layout of *Peace at Last* also displays a pattern of world-switching page-turns. Each new recto, for example, takes the reader to a new location, which is identified on the previous page, in the last word before the PT:

1	AC:	[…]Oh::::: No::: ((throws head back on sofa))
2	AN:	said mr bear
3	AC:	\<I ca::n't stand thi:s>
4	AN:	so he got up and went to sleep in the living room (PT>) tick-tock went the living
5		room clock[…]

Extract 6.2 *Picturebooks and world-switches*

In Extract 6.2 the adult-narrator verbalises a world-switch (line 4) that has taken place within the fictional discourse, where the TW enactor Mr Bear moves from one location (Baby Bear's room) to another (living room). The adult-narrator reveals the new location just before she turns the page and once she has turned the page, the new location is shown in the images. The movement described in the fictional realm is thus represented visually (pictures) and physically (page-turn) in the DW. The mirroring of DW and TW is foregrounded once more along the ontological continuum in the PerfW, blurring the boundary between fiction and reality and enhances engagement.

The usually silent conceptual processes associated with reading fiction and the comprehension of a fictional world, such as world-building, world-switches, and world-repair are a visual, spoken, and often physical activity during storytime, that relies predominantly on images. Pictures and talk effectively work to extend the written discourse in picturebooks and aid the child's engagement with an ontologically distinct realm. If pictures provide a version of a fictional realm in a reader's reality, then it follows that talk about these images addresses deictic elements in the discourse that are usually associated written language and silent conceptual processing. The TW/DW mimicry and cross-world relationship that participants share with the text, thus enables visual deixis that allows participants to seemingly explore and talk about a fictional realm in their here-and-now. Children are able to interact with the world-boundaries and locative details of a TW through perceptual rather than conceptual means, which simplifies the engagement process; the same is true of the function-advancing elements in fictional discourse.

6.3.2 'What is he doing?': selective illustration and negotiating actions

The role of images as world-builders in picturebooks means that world-building elements in the written discourse are often outweighed by function-advancing elements (also see Jackson, 2013). The adult's read-aloud performance is thus made up of more function-advancing (FA) propositions. In TWT, FA elements are those items that, set against the deictic background constructed by the world-building elements of the text, propel a discourse forward, or move the narrative plot along (Gavins, 2007: 56). The lack of world-building in the written text means that it instead focuses on the material processes – the action – of the story (Gavins, 2007: 56).

However, like the world-building elements in picturebooks, I argue that the function-advancing propositions in the discourse are controlled through the combination of textual and visual modes and regularly become the focus in episodes of interactive comprehension. Picturebooks display a level of 'selective illustration', whereby images complement the key narrative events that are taking place within the story. Like world-building elements in picturebooks, function-advancing propositions are also presented visually; storytime participants are able to see aspects of the actions and events that are referred to in the read-aloud performance. Images thus take on a dual world-building and function-advancing role in the TWs of picturebooks.

In the opening pages of *Monster Zoo* presented in Figure 6.9, for example, the written discourse focuses predominantly on the material and mental processes which have the story's

first-person fictional narrator as their actor, sensor, or experiencer. What is more, the key events or actions foregrounded in the written discourse are simultaneously illustrated. *Verso 1* shows a young boy reading a letter and finding he has won a prize; *Recto 1* shows a boy whizzing through woods, past hills so green, on his bike; and the next double page spread shows his arrival at the strangest zoo he's ever seen. As the adult reads the opening lines, then, detailing the boy's thoughts, feelings, and actions, (see lines 1 – 4, Extract 6.0, Appendix F), participants are able to see physical evidence of them happening in their here-and-now. Visual function-advancing propositions again soften the boundary between reality and fiction by presenting a version of ontologically distinct actions, movements, and events in the child's here-and-now; children can see, touch, and talk about events in the TW with ease. Pictures once again provide access to actions and events in the story reducing the need for the child to imagine them from scratch.

The predominance of function-advancing propositions, and of material intention processes in particular, in read-aloud discourse throws the actor of these processes to the forefront of the discourse. In picturebooks, this actor is usually the 'main' character or protagonist of the story; the main events that are visually represented in picturebooks always surround the main character in the story, with little digression, which keeps the story simple. Furthermore, the main character(s) themselves is usually kept very simple: they are introduced with very little if any description and their names are often better described as 'labels'. In *Monster Zoo*, for example, the reader only knows that the main 'I' enactor is a young child from the images, the written discourse does not reveal the name, gender, or any other information about this enactor. The only other human enactor in this story is a zoo keeper, known simply as 'The Keeper'; simple label-like names mean that different characters in the text are easy to identify when they are mentioned by the read-aloud narrator.

The main character(s) in a picturebook is usually shown on every page of the text and the visual information supplied by the text simplifies the comprehension of a character and their actions further. Key protagonists in the discourse, for instance, are usually represented in a similar way throughout the text; it is rare they changes clothes, or their appearance much at all during the story. The boy in *Monster Zoo*, for example, wears his blue boots throughout the main part of the story. However, he does changes clothes, but this visual shift is significant; the boy is shown changing into a green coat and hat, which the reader has first seen on The Keeper TW enactor. The significance of this is clear: with the coat and the hat on, the boy is now the keeper. Participants see the boy putting the coat over his red t-shirt and beige shorts and there is no space for confusion. I propose that the familiar way in which the

characters are presented through picturebooks enables children to keep track of them during storytime. My dataset revealed that two of the most common questions children interrupted with were 'who?' or 'is that [character's name]?', questions which were often asked just after a specific material intention event or actor had been mentioned. An example is presented below from Amy (child) and Denise's (adult) storytime video:

1	AN:	[…] the church was fu::ll of people. harvey was there already, up at the front. Mum and
2		dad and annie rose s[at right at the back
3	CP:	[is that harvey? *(=points to image)*
4	AN:	no, that's a lady isn't it? harvey, we can't see-OH this is harvey, ↑here he is. I've not
5		noticed him before but he's just there. *(=points to image)*
6	AN:	at las:t a big shiny car with white ribbons tied on the front drew up. out got lynn with
7		her dad. she looked quite different [from usual
8	CP:	[who drived?
9	AP:	Who was dr-who drove? I don't know. Sometimes there's someone called a chauffeur
10		who's the person who drives the car but they usually stay outside the church
11	AN:	she looked quite different from usual, all dressed up in her lo:ng white dress. Alfie
12		thought she was like a ↑princess with a cro:wn of flowers[…]

Extract 6.3 *Tracking TW enactors in picturebooks*

In line 1 of Extract 6.3, the adult-narrator states that the TW enactor 'Harvey' is present, which prompts the child to interrupt. Amy points to an image on the page and asks 'is that Harvey?' (line 3). The child's question shows that she is uncertain who the adult-narrator is referring to and requires some aid. However, the adult-narrator's mention of Harvey in line 1 is the first reference to this character since the PT and I propose that the child in this instance displays an expectation to see what she has just heard (also see Section 5.2.2); Amy hears Harvey's name and needs to know where he is in the image. Amy makes a similar interruption a few lines later in Extract 6.3, after the adult-narrator introduces 'a big shiny car with white ribbons' (also see brief mention of lines 6-10 of Extract 6.3 in Section 5.2.2). The pre- and post- modification surrounding 'car' means that is it a foregrounded entity in read-aloud discourse and it is clearly prominent in the child's experience of the discourse, because she interrupts to ask 'who drived?' (line 8). In this instance, rather than trying to identify a character that has already been mentioned, Amy wants to know about the actor who carried out the driving. Again, I posit that the child's desire to find out this information is linked to her familiarity with a reading practice that usually throws actors of an important material intention process into the forefront of the narrative and its illustrations. In both instances, the child's question triggers an episode of interactive comprehension where participants work

together to assimilate their understanding of the picturebook discourse by linking up the verbal and visual.

The language used by both participants throughout Extract 6.3 is also significant. The participants employ deictic terms such as, the spatial adverbs 'here' and 'there', demonstratives 'this' and 'that', and the adult adopts the third person pronoun 'he' to refer to Harvey in lines 4-5. What is more, the participants also maintain the present tense when talking to one another about the fictional discourse, which contrasts to the past tense of the written text. These features of each participant's spoken discourse tells their co-participant that they are referring to something that is mutually perceivable in the immediate discourse environment and that they should interpret these items and actions as existing and taking place at the same time as the spoken interaction.

Picturebook discourse thus relies on an experiential blend of aspects of the DW and the TW that disrupts the ontological border between the two. Participants' relationships with pictures, in particular, manipulate the boundary between reality and fiction further by making an ontologically distinct realm appear instantly accessible. Young children thus begin their experience of fiction by having the boundary between what is real and not real softened and blurred. In the following section, I assess how this ontological manipulation works to teach children about reading and the experience of fiction.

6.4 Balancing the ontological boundary

The softening of the boundary between fiction and reality is a key feature of storytime practices that underpins how the discourse operates. In the preceding sections (6.2 – 6.3.2), I have shown how text, performance, and pictures rely on this ontological instability in order to engage pre-school children with a fictional realm. However, my data revealed further discursive patterns in how the DW/TW boundary is exploited in the additional talk of storytime participants. I found that adults and children regularly engaged in episodes of interactive comprehension that actively encouraged what I refer to here as 'ontological blurring', where participants were required to merge specific aspects of their DW with aspects of the story-world presented in the text being shared; I argue that this feature of early reading practices is fundamental in teaching children about the process of reading and of reading fiction more specifically.

The storytime videos I collected provide evidence of ontological blurring employed by participants in two key ways:

1. to teach and/or scaffold comprehension (also see Section 5.2.1).

2. to play and/or to entertain.

In the first instance, my dataset revealed a pattern in additional talk being employed in order to connect the TW(s) of the picturebook to the DW of the participants, or vice versa. Parents, for example, regularly triggered additional talk in order to ask children if they 'remember' an entity or event from their real-life. These questions are almost always prompted by the text and the entity or event the child is asked to recall usually mirrors an entity or event that has just been mentioned in the read-aloud performance. An example takes place across lines 214 – 224 in Eva (child) and Daniel's (adult) *Paddington* storytime video (see Extract 5.0, Appendix F for full transcript; also see Section 5.2.1 where Daniel's 'remember' question in line 217 is discussed briefly). The adult's 'remember question' in line 217 about sparklers follows on from read-aloud talk in which participants are told that the TW-enactors have a packet of sparklers. The question 'do you remember sparklers' (line 217) triggers an epistemic scaffolding modal-world in the discourse situation, prompting the child to consider her own past experiences in line with the fictional discourse (also see Section 5.2.1). Participants also regularly drew more direct comparisons between the TW and the DW as shown in examples 1- 4 in Extract 6.4 below (key utterances are highlighted in bold):

Example 1:

1	AN:	[…] busy busy rubbish eaters, al:ways gobbling, they can work all day
2	**AP:**	**do you sometimes see the rubbish trucks come on a Monday, don't we Amy?**
3	CP:	ye[ah
4	AP:	[in the morning […]

Example 2:

165	AN:	meanwhile paddington added binoculars *(=glances at child)* to his list
166	**AP:**	**(nne)-you've got binoculars *(looks at child)***
167	CP:	[mmmm
168	AP:	[haven't you (PT>)
169	CP:	yeah

Example 3:

| 1 | AN: | […] at nine o'clock on <u>W</u>ednesday, tiddler was dawdling= |
| 2 | **AP:** | **=(like) you dylis dawdler ((giggles)) *(=leans in towards child)*** |

Example 4:

1	AN:	[…] Alfie annie rose had a grandma. she drove about here and there in her little red car,
2		and she often came to visit them. Sometimes she brought presents ↑even when it wasn't
3		anyone's bi::rthday.
4	AP:	**that's kind isn't it that's like nanna sending you that dress in the ↑post isn't it, a**
5		**special parcel […]**

Extract 6.4 *Text-to-life talk: comparisons*

In each of these examples, it is the adult who triggers the comparison in their additional talk with the second-person direct address 'you' and/or the preposition 'like'. The nature of the switch between read-aloud talk and additional talk in the examples above thus draws attention from one extreme of the ontological continuum (TW) to the other (DW). The child is, once again, encouraged to orient away from prominent TW processing and reconceptualise their focus towards their DW knowledge and experiences, but only for a moment. During these comparative instances a process of TW layering is triggered (see Section 5.2.1) and the child is prompted to merge the foregrounded real-world comparison (DW) with the entities (example 1 and 2), events (example 1), and enactors (example 2, 3 and 4) in the story-world of the text. The similarities between DW (life) and TW (text) are emphasised during these interactions.

Cochran-Smith identified two similar interaction sequences during her study of storyreading in a nursery-school setting (1984), which she referred to as either life-to-text interactions (1984: 174 - 235) or text-to-life interactions (1984: 236 - 251). Cochran-Smith notes that these interactions are directional, defining life-to-text interactions as operating in an outside-in manner, where storyreaders teach listeners 'how to make sense of text bringing to light the extra-textual information they needed in order to make inner-textual sense' (1984: 173). In contrast, text-to-life interactions operate in an inside-out manner where 'textual references were used to throw light on extra-textual matters' (1984: 173). Cochran-Smith thus recognises a two-way conceptual pathway between reality and fiction during comprehension; however, she provides two distinct definitions and presents them as binary sequences. I propose, instead, that text-to-life and life-to-text interaction sequences are both a form of additional talk that are triggered in similar ways by participants in the PerfW. The PerfW as a blended space already accounts for interaction sequences that merge and compare the DW and TW, and the ontological continuum is able to further account for the inside-out *or* outside-in direction of the interaction by plotting experiential (re)orientation during the discourse. I therefore use the term 'text-to-life' to account for *all* interactional patterns where the relationship between inter-textual and extra-textual matters is foregrounded.

Furthermore, I propose that these text-to-life interactions are just one type of scaffolding TW pattern (see Section 5.2.1) that focuses specifically on teaching children how to use their DW knowledge during the comprehension of fictional texts, which includes drawing on existing experiences and recognising the similarities between the fictional world(s) and the real-world. Cochran-Smith also notes the pedagogic nature of these interactions describing them as 'an initiation process' for literary apprentices in which the usually internalised and automatic reading process of the literate adult reader is transformed into a deliberate, explicit one (1984: 236). In TWT terms, I propose that text-to-life interactions gradually teach young children about the principle of minimal departure (Ryan, 1991), whereby readers 'begin processing a text with the assumption that its textual world has an identity with the actual world unit they are presented with information to the contrary' (Gavins, 2007: 12); adult readers make this assumption automatically, but make this process explicit during storytime by creating crossovers between the TW and the DW in their additional talk.

In the second set of key instances of ontological blurring: to play and/or entertain, I found that the boundary between reality and fiction is regularly manipulated during storytime practices when participants are engaged in play or playful behaviour with the text. An example in William (child) and Rosie's (adult) Monster Zoo video takes place across lines 10 – 25 in Extract 6.0 (Appendix F). The episode of interactive comprehension that takes place here is triggered by a verbalised response by William in line 12 (see lines 10 – 25, Extract 6.0). The child's utterance 'he's a children' is a reference to a TW-enactor in *Monster Zoo* and is directly relevant to the read-aloud talk that has come before it across lines 10 -11. The read-aloud talk specifies that the Squirgal, a fictional monster, likes to eat children. The child's interruption foregrounds this aspect of the discourse 'Squirgal eats children', and the adult draws on this topic in a playful manner.

Across lines 18 and 20 - 21, the adult's spoken discourse creates what I will label here as two key 'hypothetical play-worlds'. These play-worlds are ultimately a type of scaffolding TW triggered in the discourse situation in order to specifically support playful behaviour during the reading activity. In the first of these worlds 'he eats children, yeah, like boys and girls' (line 18, Extract 6.0 Appendix F), the adult repeats the child's observation which is based purely on the content of the text, and then triggers a comparison to the real-world with the preposition 'like'. In many ways, this is another example of text-to-life talk; however, rather than foregrounding real-world events that can be used for comprehension, the talk foregrounds an aspect of the real-world for use in play. The adult's utterance in line 18, for

example, prompts the child in the discourse situation to conceptualise a situation where the fictional Squirgal, who he can see in the images of *Monster Zoo,* eats boys and girls that he knows in his real-world. In play-world one, then, the Squirgal likes to eat *all* boys and girls, both in the participants' *Monster Zoo* TW(s) and known to the participants in their DW. The adult thus purposefully and playfully starts to blend elements of the TW with the DW here. In the second hypothetical play-world, triggered by line 20 - 21 in Extract 6.0 'yeah, you better be careful to not get eaten by the squirgal', the adult's discourse prompts an even more direct blend of the *Monster Zoo* TW and the participants' DWs. Rosie suggests that her co-participant William 'you' must be careful not to get eaten by the fictional Squirgal. In play-world two, then, the Squirgal exists on the same ontological plane as William (you), specifically, and poses a potential threat to him.

Rosie's additional talk around the text is, of course, based on the TW(s) that *she* has built for the picturebook discourse thus far. However, the episode of interactive comprehension that includes the play-worlds discussed above (see lines 10 - 25, Extract 6.0 Appendix F) is triggered by an appropriate response by the child in the discourse situation to the read-aloud talk which specifies that the Squirgal 'gobbles children on the spot' (line 11, Extract 6.0). It is therefore safe for the adult to assume that the different TWs of each participant involved in the read-aloud situation are at this point quite similar; both contain something like 'a monster (Squirgal) that eats children'. It is this assumption that the adult uses as a base when she begins this playful blend of fiction and reality.

My data revealed a pattern of adults triggering text-to-life talk that prompted a more direct blend of the two ontologically distinct realms. Hypothetical play-worlds were essentially aimed at entertaining the child or engaging them in play, which made the overall activity more fun thus foregrounding a 'reading/fiction is fun' literacy lesson. However, adults also trigger a number of other modal-worlds that rely on the playful blurring of the boundary between reality and fiction. My data revealed, for example, that parents regularly ask direct second-person addressee questions, triggering modal-worlds in the discourse, that require the child to place themselves into the TW(s) of the picturebook in order to answer, thus conceptually crossing the ontological boundary:

Example 1:
AC: […] Oh::::: No:::
AN: said Mr Bear
AC: I can't stand ↑this *(=holds hand to head)*

AN: so he went to sleep in the car (PT>) it was cold in the car <u>and</u> uncomfortable, but mr bear was so::: tired that he didn't notice

AP: do you think you could sleep in our car like that? *(=shifts gaze to child)***[…]**

    Example 2

AP: and some ↑balloons. lovely balloons aren't they?
    […]
AP: ↑yeah. very nice which one would you choose if you were taking one home?

Extract 6.5 *Putting the child into the TW*

In example 1 and 2 in Extract 6.5, the child is required to place themselves into the position of a TW-enactor and make a judgement based on what is happening in the TW and not the DW. The ontological blurring displayed in the text-to-life talk here makes explicit the process of projection. On the whole, I argue that this playful merging, blending and crossing of the boundary between reality and fiction is a key feature of early reading practices. However, far from confusing young children, who are in the process of actively constructing a boundary between the realms, the playful manipulation of this boundary teaches them how to control it, and about ontological differentiation.

In Extract 6.0, across lines 10 - 25 discussed above, where the adult triggers a number of play-worlds (see Appendix F), there is essentially a mismatch between TW (adult) and TW (child). Each time Rosie attempts to trigger a play-world by blurring the two ontologically distinct realms, William rejects this scaffolding TW and attempts world-repair with his co-participant. After Rosie's first suggestion that the Squirgal eats *all* children, William states 'i mean the boy' (line 19). William foregrounds his own mental processing with the phrase 'i mean' before specifying the boy with an definite article. The use of 'the' by William in this instance makes clear to Rosie that he is referring to the previously mentioned and mutually perceivable 'boy' in the picturebook, and *not* all children. William continues to differentiate the boy in the text from children known to him in the DW across lines 22 - 23. When Rosie suggests William will have to be careful of the Squirgal, he once again, triggers an epistemic modal-world in the discourse situation with his 'I think' response in which he states that the Squirgal 'he' only likes children in the text 'them', which he also points to. In each case, William re-directs attention back towards the content of the text. Simply, the idea that he himself might get eaten by the Squirgal is not possible to him based on the TW he has constructed where he does not exist on the same ontological plane as the Squirgal. Thus, the TW mismatch between adult and child here is caused, not by William's inability to control

the boundary between the realms, but his reluctance to manipulate the boundary in a playful manner because of how he views the DW and the TW as two distinct constructs.

The deictic distance that William places between himself and the story-world is exemplified in his language throughout the Monster Zoo transcript with his regular use of distal demonstrative (that) (see lines 38, 41, 54, 57, 83, 91) and the spatial adverb (there) (see lines 57, 86, 91). These deictic terms suggest that William comprehends a distance between himself and the TW he is referring to. However, at the same time, William maintains present tense when talking about the TW and regularly points to, or touches, the TW. Essentially, William's talk suggests that fictional worlds are both accessible in his here-and-now and yet distinct from it.

I argue therefore that, although the boundary between fiction and reality is regularly softened and blurred in order to enhance access and engagement with a fictional realm, children nevertheless come to learn that:

- TWs for written fictional discourse are ontologically distinct
- TWs for written discourse can be similar to real-life
- Real-world knowledge can and should be employed during the comprehension of written fictional discourse.
- Reading is fun and enjoyable.
- Placing yourself into the fictional world can aid comprehension and make reading more interesting.

All of these features of teaching during storytime are processes, assumptions, and expectations associated with engaging with fiction that adults employ automatically, and that are made explicit during storytime.

6.5 The pre-school reader: an apprentice

Adults effectively provide an apprenticeship in reading for young children, not only teaching them how to behave with and treat books (see Chapter Four), but how to engage with fiction and ontology. My dataset revealed that children mimic the actions of their adult co-participants and begin to adopt a 'reader-role' in the discourse situation. Children across my storytime videos, for example, would join in with the read-aloud talk at times, and orchestrate the page-turning during the activity. Children also regularly verbalise their responses to a text (also see Section 5.2.2) and make links and observations about the content of a picturebook, often linking up words and images, and exploring place, people, and events through pictures.

Examples of William participating in these behaviours can be observed across the *Monster Zoo* video (see Extract 6.0, Appendix F):

a) he's a children (line 12)
b) that's that one (=*points to image)* (line 41)
c) THAT-their door look likes them! (=*points to image)* (line 54)
d) THAT ONE'S ESCAPED! (=*points to image)*(line 38)
e) there's that one (=*points at image) (=adult laughs)* and that one. (ooh) they're both eating (line 57 - 58)
f) look, that dino-that one, look (PT<) that one's fl-crying (=*moves index finger down face from eye to imitate a tear)* (line 83 - 84)

Across examples a-f William comments on and foregrounds world-building elements (a-c) and/or events and actions taking place in the TW(s) of *Monster Zoo* (d-e); and in the majority of cases, he points to the images at the same time (see b - e). Example c is of particular interest as William draws on a visual game within the text *Monster Zoo* whereby the monsters' own front door resembles their skin. In all of the above examples, William exemplifies his ability to engage with the images in an appropriate manner by noting observations that are relevant to the words being read aloud.

Furthermore, my data revealed that children, too, were capable of employing ontological blurring through text-to-life talk and for a play. I observed evidence of children pointing to images or drawing on read-aloud talk in order to place DW participants into the text and/or making comparisons between their DW and the TW(s). Children also employed their additional talk in order to enact some playful crossing of the ontological border for further entertainment. Elijah (child), for example, 'attacks' the main protagonist in *The Smartest Giant in Town* (2002) (see Appendix C for reference) whilst reading it with his mother by declaring 'I'm going to punch George, punch!' and kicking the page that the TW-enactor George appears on. In all of these instances, the child displays the ability to manipulate the boundary between what is real and not real in ways previously set out for them by their adult co-participant (see Section 6.4).

Finally, my data provided evidence of what I refer to as early fictional immersion in very young children. In Extract 6.6, taken from William and Matthew's Runaway Train storytime video, William (child) interrupts and verbalises an observation 'there's a edge' (line 3):

1	AN:	[…] and duffy drove the little red train into the station at sandy-on-sea and spent a
2		<u>lov</u>ely lazy day on the beach [sss-
3	CP:	[Uh OH::: there's a edge *(=points to image)*
4	AP:	oh yeah (.) uh oh
5	CP:	I think the cows can fall off the edge into the beach
6	AP:	yeah they might do *(=points to image)*
7	CP:	he's near the edge
8	AP:	he is near the edge, isn't he, careful cows *(=points to image)*
9	CP:	no they're in the book I hope they won't […]

Extract 6.6 *Early immersion*

William is referring to the page shown in Figure 6.11, and specifically to the cliffs shown in this picture:

[Image removed due to copyright reasons]

Figure 6.11 *The cows can fall off the edge*

William's interruption is performative with his 'uh-oh' utterance marking his observation in the real-world with worry or concern. In his next utterance in line 5 William triggers an epistemic modal-world with his 'I think' response which extends his initial observation: William is concerned because the cows in the image 'can fall off the edge into the beach'. In

comparison to modal-worlds triggered by children in additional talk discussed previously, this 'I think' response is a direct representation of the child's thought process about the contents of the picturebook, and thus the TW(s) that they have constructed for this discourse. This utterance therefore reflects conceptual thinking that is embedded within the child's fictional comprehension, as opposed to a modal-world that is embedded in the additional talk and interactive comprehension in the PerfW.

In this instance William displays a momentary loss of self-awareness, a feature that has been associated with the sense of immersion in literary reading (see Stockwell, 2019: 18). During my fieldwork, I came to know William well and became familiar with his abilities surrounding the control the reality/fantasy divide. At the playgroup sessions I attended, William taught me three key things:

1. Just because you're dressed as Spiderman, doesn't mean you are Spiderman.
2. You can't cook a plastic cake on a plastic hob because it's supposed to go in the pretend oven.
3. You can't re-use dirty dishes that have been used for imaginary food, because the imaginary food made them dirty.

There are numerous instances like these recorded in my field notes where William appears to abide by strict fantastical rules only to suddenly stop, review, and re-evaluate what would actually be possible. William's grasp on ontological differentiation and his ability to balance the boundary between reality and fictional realms was unpredictable and varied. However, this does not mean that he is completely unable to engage with a fictional world independently and in Extract 6.6 he displays immersive behaviour by reacting to what he predicts might happen in the fictional world without any prompting from his co-participant.

Matthew (adult) agrees with William (line 6) and reinforces the suggestion with his own epistemic modal-world in which 'might' balances William's I think utterance as a possible outcome in the story-world. However, when Matthew says 'careful cows' seemingly addressing these TW entities and speaking across the ontological border, William is quick to deny this playful manipulation of the ontological boundary reminding his father that the cows are 'in the book' (line 9). This utterance by William is a direct response to his co-participant in the real-world and it reorients the discourse away from William's embedded TW response in line 5 and back towards the DW end of the ontological continuum; moreover, it appears to contradict his original observation in line 5 in which he too showed concern for the TW entities. However, William immediately adds 'I hope they won't', this time triggering a boulomaic modal-world through the lexical verb 'hope' that represents his desire for the cows

not to fall. This boulomaic modality creates a modal-world in the child's speech where the cows do not fall, which negates his original 'I think' epistemic modal-world in line 5 and immediately triggers experiential reorientation in the discourse back towards the TW. I argue that the level of re-orientation – and seemingly contradictory, even confused – patterns in William's talk in Extract 6.6 provide an insight into the developmental nature of immersion; as Stockwell acknowledges, 'literary immersion is a schema that must be acquired, refined, and tuned' (2019: 21). William's initial reaction (see lines 3 and 5) is essentially a direct response to the images in the text. Throughout Extract 6.6, even when William rejects his father's boundary crossing, he continues to respond to what he can *see*. I propose that the adult's speech and playful response in Extract 6.6 is in many ways a distraction and the need to switch between responding to the text and responding to a co-participant is what causes the appearance of seemingly contradictory talk by William. The child's immersion in the fictional discourse in this instance is mediated by and relies on the book as an object, and the images as a direct representation of an ontologically distinct realm.

I would argue that William maintains a strict boundary between the two separate ontologies and whilst he is reluctant to playfully manipulate or merge these distinct realms, the modal-worlds that he triggers in his additional talk represent a level of creativity and independent thinking surrounding the TW(s) of the written discourse. For William, then, the cross-world relationship that he shares with images, which makes the story-world appear accessible and reduces conceptual work, enables him to immerse himself in a fictional domain. However, the boundary between reality and fiction which is still under construction for young children is constantly policed and switching between DW and TW continues throughout the practice, and can be unpredictable.

Overall, the softening of the boundary between reality and fiction that underpins these practices, alongside the constant discursive shifting that takes place during storytime, works to teach children about ontological differentiation. The PerfW acts as an in-between space, or cognitive stepping stone, that accommodates a young reader who is learning about ontology and fiction, and often requires some aid from a co-participant; the ontological continuum accounts for the discursive *and* conceptual switching that takes place during these practices, which gradually teaches children about reading literary texts. Children not only mimic an adult's contextual, physical, and linguistic behaviours, but their conceptual activity too, which the adult makes explicit throughout the discourse situation. Ontologically distinct realms are made accessible to the child in their here-and-now through pictures, performance, and additional talk, but at the same time children are taught to conceptualise some deictic

distance between their real-world and the world presented in the text. Fiction, then, is presented to young children as a fun and interactive experience with an ontologically distinct realm that is presented through words and pictures and engages DW actions and knowledge.

6.6 Review

Chapter 6 has focused in detail on a pre-schooler's experience of and interaction with ontologically distinct realms during storytime practices. In Section 6.1, I argued that storytime discourse is ontologically complex and involves constant experiential re-orientation between a participant's DW and the TWs that they have constructed for a written fictional text. I argued that the PerfW, as an in-between conceptual space that scaffolds the progression from DW to TW, is able to account for this aspect of the practice and I went on to explore the ontological status of this conceptual level in some detail. I proposed that the PerfW represents a blended space with simultaneous input from the DW *and* the TW(s) throughout read-aloud activities. Furthermore, I argued that the specific nature of this blend changes throughout storytime discourse based on the exact utterances being produced at any given time during the activity. I introduced an ontological continuum in the PerfW that is able to account for the consequential ongoing reconceptualisation carried out by participants as they engage with one another and with the text being shared.

In the opening section of this chapter I proposed that the fluent switching between discourse that is 'more DW' or 'more TW' that takes place throughout storytime activates a level of conceptual blending during the practice, which leads to the softening of the boundary between reality and fiction. I argued that this softening, or blurring, of the boundary between what is real and what is imagined underpins how storytime discourse operates. In line with this argument, in the sections that followed I showed how text (Section 6.2), performance (Section 6.2.1), pictures (Sections 6.3 – 6.3.2), and additional talk (Section 6.4) instil a sense of ontological instability in the discourse situation by seemingly drawing attention to both DW and TW at the same time.

In Section 6.2, I drew attention to the materiality of picturebook texts and noted that interaction with a fictional world (TW) when reading these multimodal texts is essentially grounded in real-world interaction (DW). The adult's read-aloud performance was the focus in Section 6.2.1 and here I focused on the ontological duplicity of read-aloud talk which essentially represents both a performance in the DW *and* a fictional world prompted by that performance. Ontological duplicity is a feature shared by pictures in the discourse situation and in Section 6.3 I explored their role as a physical pivot in the DW into the story-world

(TWs). I observed that pictures provide a cognitive 'shortcut' to an imaginary realm which reduces the conceptual work needed by the pre-schooler and increases their access and engagement with fiction. I explored this concept further across Sections 6.3.1 and 6.3.2 where I examined the relationship between images and world-building and images and function-advancing propositions, respectively. Together, performance and pictures provide an instant, seemingly accessible story-world that sits right next to the child, thus reducing the mental deictic differentiation between the DW and TW(s). The border between DW and TW is further exploited in the additional talk of storytime participants and in Section 6.4, I discussed how participants encouraged ontological blurring in order to scaffold text-to-life processing and for play and entertainment purposes.

Ultimately, I propose that children are taught how to engage with ontologically distinct realms and about ontological differentiation through the playful 'crossing' of the boundary between fiction and reality. Pictures, performance, and talk all work towards making imaginary worlds easy to access for young children in their here-and-now, whilst teaching them that these worlds are distinct from their own. In the final section of this chapter (Section 6.5) I argued that children gradually learn to mimic and internalise the scaffolded behaviours presented to them by their co-participating adult-reader. I went on to present an analysis of early fictional immersion, which provided insight into a young child's ability to engage with both picturebooks and the fictional worlds they present. Far from confusing the child, then, I argue that the ontological play and instability displayed in all aspects of storytime practices is instrumental in teaching them about written fiction.

Overall, this chapter has provided evidence of how pre-school children, who are actively in the process of constructing the boundary between reality and fantasy, are taught to engage with and gradually control that boundary during their early experiences of fiction.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion

7.0 Thesis summary

In this chapter, I provide a closing discussion of the research developed in this thesis. In the present section, I highlight its key findings and its main contributions to existing fields of study. In Section 7.1, I move on to examine some of the limitations of the thesis and explore potential directions for further work.

In Chapter 1, I presented the three key aims of this research: to rigorously investigate naturally occurring pre-school read-aloud activities; to extend the use and capabilities of Text World Theory (TWT) by applying it to storytime discourse; and to provide insight into pre-schoolers' early experiences of fiction. Chapter 1 went on to define the research context under focus throughout this project and storytime was introduced as one of a child's very earliest interactions with a literary text. I also argued that the ethnographic TWT approach adopted throughout this work is the most effective for providing a fully holistic examination of early reading activities.

Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 provided the theoretical and methodological background to the analyses presented in Chapters 4, 5, and 6. Chapter 2 had two key aims: to introduce the storytime reading context; and to explicate the cognitive approach I adopt in the exploration of these reading practices throughout my work. In line with these aims, my literature review covered three core topics: pre-school reading (Sections 2.1 – 2.3.4), TWT (Sections 2.4 – 2.4.4), and pre-school cognition (Sections 2.5 – 2.5.3). The first half of the chapter summarised existing research surrounding read-aloud practices. I identified a number of key features associated with storytime activities, such as the wider socio-cultural and economic pressures related to early reading (Sections 2.1 - 2.1.2); the innate pedagogic influence of these practices (Sections 2.2 - 2.2.1); and the multimodal picturebook genre associated with young readers (Sections 2.3 - 2.3.3). I argued that existing approaches to pre-school reading fail to provide a combined analysis of context, text, and reader which I propose is essential to understanding early reading experiences. Instead, I advocated a cognitive approach to storytime and the remaining sections in this chapter (2.4 - 2.5.3) were focused on introducing this perspective. Across Sections 2.4 – 2.4.4, I introduced the cognitive-linguistic framework TWT (Gavins, 2007; Werth 1999), arguing for its usefulness in examining storytime discourse. Sections 2.4 and 2.4.1 provided an overview of TWT's key tenets and structure. In Section 2.4.2, I discussed existing work and recent relevant advances in TWT scholarship, before outlining a number of gaps in current text-world research in Section 2.4.3; the

discussion here focussed specifically on the neglect of pre-school readers and reading contexts. I argued that the text-world framework, whilst well suited to the exploration of pre-school reading, would require some augmentation in order to effectively address these practices. The discussion in Section 2.4.4 worked to further address the suitability of TWT for the analysis of read-aloud activities. Furthermore, the discussion in this section situated the approach adopted in this thesis as a response to a wider call amongst academics for a cognitive approach to literature that is specific to young readers. With this in mind, Sections 2.5 - 2.5.4 presented an overview of relevant aspects of pre-school cognition. The discussion of pre-school psychology and the preschool mind (Section 2.5.1), Theory of Mind (Section 2.5.2), conceptual vs. perceptual understanding (Section 2.5.3), and the fantasy-reality distinction (Section 2.5.4) aimed to tailor my TWT approach to pre-school readers. I argued that a number of fundamental cognitive capabilities that we associate with adult readers are still in the process of developing in young children and that this feature of the pre-school reader must also be taken into account.

In Chapter 3 I provided a detailed overview of how I conducted my study. In Section 3.1 I introduced the naturalistic approach to the analysis of reading and went on to discuss how this influenced my methodological design. I argued that the multimodal nature of storytime activities and the pre-schooler's own capabilities meant that the best way in which to explore these practices was to capture them in real time. I presented an argument for ethnography as method in Section 3.2 and outlined my ethnographic perspective and the ethnographic tools I employed in order to conduct my study. I also provided a narrative overview of how I recruited my storytime participants in Section 3.2.1 before introducing these participants (Sections 3.3 - 3.3.5) and the storytime data they supplied (Sections 3.4 - 3.4.1). The data introduced across these sections made up the core focus of the analyses in Chapters 4 - 6. Next, in Section 3.5, I turned my attention to how I handled my storytime data once it had been collected and finally in Section 3.6 I provided more specific details about my analytic approach to this data. Throughout Chapter 3, I focused on my 'bottom up' research design which led to the thematic structure of the three analysis chapters that followed.

Chapters 4, 5, and 6 each possessed a dual aim: they not only presented a rigorous exploration of the pre-school read-aloud activities captured in my video data, but they introduced, tested, and developed an original augmentation to the TWT framework. This key development was introduced at the end of Chapter 4 (Sections 4.3 - 4.3.3) and I employed my

augmented version of the TWT framework throughout the analysis that followed in chapters 5 and 6.

Chapter 4 focused on the read-aloud context and was centrally concerned with the storytime discourse-world (Gavins, 2007: 9 -10; Werth, 1999: 17). In Section 4.1, I drew on the contextual, behavioural, and linguistic similarities I observed across my dataset. In Sections 4.1.1 – 4.1.3, I extended these observations and employed schema theory as tool for examining the developing knowledge in use during early reading practices. I argued that storytime participants bring a 'storytime schema' with them to the discourse situation which influences the way in which they communicate. The analysis of this storytime schema in the early sections of Chapter 4 (4.1 – 4.1.3) foregrounded the interactive nature of read-aloud discourses and placed significant focus on the physicality of early reading and thus the context of reading. My analysis in Section 4.2 showed that the storytime DW presents features more closely associated with face-to-face communication as opposed to written discourse. I argued that spoken discourse takes precedence during storytime and text comprehension ultimately relies on the face-to-face relationship a child shares with a co-present reader. I went on to suggest that these core features of early reading activities complicate the application of TWT to these discourses. I argued that storytime creates an embedded discourse situation whereby participants draw on their schematic knowledge and act in accordance with a conceptual understanding of the read-aloud context. This means that the initial utterances produced in the storytime DW do not prompt the construction of a TW(s), as current TWT scholarship dictates, but instead depict a read-aloud situation and prompt the construction of a new conceptual level: the performance-world (PerfW). In Section 4.3, I provided a preliminary introduction to this core TWT augmentation. I argued that the PerfW sits between the DW and any TWs participants construct like a conceptual scaffold. I proposed that the PerfW captures key complicating features of the storytime DW and, in the final sections of this chapter, I examined its use in exploring the different reader-roles and schematic behaviours adopted by participants (see Section 4.3.1); the concept of co-present readers (see Section 4.3.2); the role of a singular shared multimodal text (see Section 4.3.3); and the heightened role of the DW during text comprehension.

In Chapter 5, I examined patterns in storytime talk and explored how adult-child dyads communicate during read-alouds. I began in Section 5.1 by drawing attention to the conceptual variation displayed amongst storytime participants. I argued that whilst storytime involves more than one participant reading a single text, the process of TW construction itself is not joint. Instead, in Section 5.1.1, I argued that participants construct their own individual

TWs for the written text being shared and then work together to assimilate these conceptual constructs through face-to-face negotiation, a process which I later termed 'interactive comprehension' (see Section 5.2). Chapter 5 went on to explore the nature of these negotiations in detail. Most notably, I identified patterns of discursive shifting in my dataset between two main types of talk: 1) read-aloud talk/performance and 2) other additional talk either about the read-aloud talk/performance or some other topic. In Section 5.1.2, I argued that, whilst the read-aloud performance provides a spoken version of the written discourse, the additional talk *aids* the comprehension of that written discourse and its spoken performance; the two are closely intertwined. Essentially, during storytime negotiations, various usually silent conceptual processes that we associate with reading fictional discourse become spoken. The concept of the performance-world was extended in this chapter as I explored how participants construct text-worlds (TW) for both the picturebook being shared (read-aloud performance) and all other spoken discourse around it (additional talk). In Section 5.1.3, I focused on the multimodal nature of the storytime context, arguing that read-aloud participants are required to conceptually combine aspects of text, image, and talk during the construction of a TW(s) for a fictional text. The PerfW was shown to act as a conceptual mediation space that is able to account for this complex process of semiotic combination. Across Sections 5.2 – 5.2.2, I explored how episodes of interactive comprehension operate during storytime in greater detail with a specific focus on the additional talk that is produced throughout these activities. In Section 5.2, I introduced the notion of conceptual toggling in order to account for the conceptual back and forth between the DW, PerfW and TW(s) that participants carry out as they engage in episodes of spoken comprehension. During such instances, the PerfW acts as a conceptual filter and incrementation space which represents the decision making and semiotic combination carried out by participants. However, I went on to argue that this process of incrementation was different for both the adult and the child during storytime and in Sections 5.2.1 and 5.2.2, I examined each of their roles in turn. Section 5.2.1 focused on adult-talk and drew attention to the adult's scaffolding role in the discourse, whilst Section 5.2.2 focused on child-talk and the pre-schooler's experience as a young pre-literate reader. Throughout Chapter 5, the PerfW was presented as playing a pivotal role in explicating how joint comprehension and scaffolded discourse operates and, in the final section of this chapter (5.3), I highlighted its role in accounting for the underlying pedagogic nature of read-aloud practices. I argued that storytime is a time for learning about *all things* and the PerfW, as an interactive mediation space, often takes precedence in the discourse situation. This means that instances of

interactive learning about an array of topics are embedded within early reading activities, often overshadowing the comprehension of the text itself and yet feeding into the child's overall experience of storytime.

The key focus in Chapter 6 was the pre-schooler's experience of and interaction with fiction and ontologically distinct realms during early read-aloud practices. In Section 6.1 the ontological status of the PerfW itself was defined. I argued that it sits as an in-between conceptual space that scaffolds the progression from DW (reality) to TW (imagination). The blended nature of the PerfW was shown to accommodate the constant experiential re-orientation of storytime participants as they toggle between their DW and the TWs that they have constructed for a written fictional text. I went on to introduce an 'ontological continuum' in the PerfW, which I argued is able to explain this experiential phenomenon; I showed how storytime utterances could be plotted along a cline that delineates the nature of the DW/TW blend present throughout the discourse. The analysis presented in the opening section of this chapter showed that the continual switching between talk that is 'more DW' or 'more TW' activates conceptual blending in the discourse, which in turn leads to the softening of the boundary between reality and fiction. I argued that this softening underpins how storytime discourse operates and I continued to explore its role in early reading comprehension throughout Chapter 6. In the sections that followed, I examined how text (Section 6.2), performance (Section 6.2.1), pictures (Sections 6.3 – 6.3.2), and additional talk (Section 6.4) instil a sense of ontological instability in the discourse situation by seemingly drawing attention to both DW and TW at the same time. Section 6.2 focused on the materiality of picturebooks and showed how interaction with a fictional world (TW) when reading these multimodal texts is ultimately grounded in real-world interaction (DW). Section 6.2.1 focused on the adult's read-aloud talk and drew attention to the ontological duplicity triggered by these utterances, which essentially represent *both* a performance in the DW and a fictional world (TW) prompted by that performance. I continued to focus on the topic of ontological duplicity in Section 6.3, where I attributed this feature to pictures in the storytime discourse situation. In this section, I explored the role of images as a physical pivot in the DW into the story-world (TW). Section 6.3.1 and 6.3.2 explored this concept further and I examined the relationship between images and world-building, and between images and function-advancing propositions, respectively. I argued that pictures provide a cognitive 'shortcut' to an imaginary realm, effectively reducing the conceptual work needed by the pre-schooler and increasing and easing their engagement with fiction. My discussion showed how, together, performance and pictures provide an instant and seemingly accessible story-

world that sits right next to the child thus blurring the boundary between the DW and TW. In Section 6.4, I argued that this boundary is further exploited in the additional talk of storytime participants who regularly encourage such blurring in order to either aid comprehension or for fun. The discussion across Chapter 6 showed how young children are ultimately taught how to engage with ontologically distinct realms and about ontological differentiation through the playful manipulation of the boundary between fiction and reality. I provided further evidence for this argument in Section 6.5, where I claimed that children gradually learn to mimic and internalise the scaffolded behaviours presented to them by their adult co-participants. Finally, I presented an analysis of early fictional immersion which foregrounded the pre-schooler's ability to engage with both picturebooks and the fictional worlds they represent.

The analyses presented across Chapters 4 – 6 provide a rigorous examination of naturally occurring read-aloud activities in the home and the pre-schooler's early experience of fiction. At the same time, the suitability of the TWT framework in the analysis of storytime discourse is exemplified through its application to this previously unexplored context. As a result, the work presented here makes original contributions to both the study of pre-school reading and to the field of cognitive stylistics. In the first instance, it is hoped that the key insights into storytime activities offered here have advanced existing research on reading pedagogy, picturebook studies, and literacy studies. Throughout this project, I have aimed to develop a cognitively-oriented approach to read-aloud practices that encompasses their three main components: text, reader, and context, thus providing a holistic study of storytime. I propose that the results obtained through my naturalistic perspective and bottom-up methodology provide an accurate base for not only understanding early reading habits, but for developing relevant and useful approaches to emergent literacy and reading pedagogy. In the second instance, my work extends the capabilities of the text-world framework, presenting new augmentations to TWT which enable it to address young readers and read-aloud practices. Moreover, the combination of TWT with ethno-methods further contributes to text-world scholarship by developing the concept of the DW and enhancing the framework's approach to context.

7.1 Future research

The practical parameters of the current project mean that it is subject to some limitations. First, the constraints of my study meant that, whilst I was able to recognise similarities across my dataset and comment on these throughout Chapters 4 – 6, the analyses presented here are

not representative of all the data I collected. The length and nature of my ethnographic data collection resulted in a mass of data, from which I identified key topics and selected key extracts for analysis in line with the aims of the current work (see detailed overview of data collection and analytical method in Chapter 3). The sheer amount of storytime data I obtained means that a number of themes, topics, and patterns remain untouched in the current project and thus offer future potential for the further examination of read-aloud activities. Moreover, the video data itself captures the read-aloud practices of a specific community of practice, which means that the generalisability of my claims only extend so far; the findings presented in this work therefore require further testing in order to examine their applicability more widely. It would be valuable, for example, to carry out similar projects with different demographics and/or include additional types of at-home literacy activities, perhaps extending the ethnographic perspective adopted in this thesis in order to observe literacy in the home in greater detail.

The central aims of the analyses presented in this thesis were twofold: I hoped to extend the capabilities of TWT whilst developing a cognitively-oriented approach to early reading activities that was tailored to pre-school readers. Given the scope of this project and the ground it set out to cover, it is hoped that the findings and developments presented here offer a foundation for future testing in a number of areas. In particular, this thesis opens up several potential pathways for research with regards to both Text World Theory (TWT) and the study of (pre-school) reading.

My primary contribution to TWT was the introduction of a new conceptual level to the analytical framework: the 'performance-world' (PerfW) (see Section 4.3). This new conceptual space was shown to be instrumental in the analysis of storytime discourse across Chapters 4 – 6 of the current work; it accounted for features such as co-present readers, scaffolded discourse, and early ontological differentiation. The PerfW is a completely original contribution to TWT and, in order to extend the work presented here, it would interesting to test whether other discourses have a PerfW. Such work would provide opportunities to further examine the usefulness and capabilities of the TWT augmentation presented in this thesis. In particular, I propose that the role of the PerfW in the examination of other instances of spoken interaction would hold some value. The PerfW, as a conceptual mediation space that is able to account for context-specific speaker-roles and talk, may be able to shed light on concepts such as performance, performativity, and identity in other linguistic fields, such as sociolinguistics (see, for example, discussions in Meyerhoff, 2006).

Furthermore, the PerfW was an augmentation made in order to account specifically for young readers who are actively in the process of developing the reading abilities and cognitive capabilities of literate adults. In Section 2.5 – 2.5.3 I provided an overview of pre-school cognition in order to tailor the cognitive approach presented in this project. Whilst this overview foregrounded a number of key relevant features of pre-school cognition it did so in a generalised manner which suited the aims of this project. There is potential therefore to examine specific aspects of developmental cognition, such as Theory of Mind, in even greater detail, providing a close analysis of how these features of cognition develop alongside reading. The constraints of the current work also meant that patterns in my data relating to topics such as reading and empathy remain unexplored and offer potential avenues of future exploration.

The findings of this study with regards to understanding early reading experiences also offer a number of future directions for research. This thesis set out to investigate some of a child's very earliest interactions with literary texts and thus made claims about literacy and the early cognition of reading. A comparative study with a later age group looking to explore which aspects of storytime examined in this work are preserved or dropped as literacy develops would offer an interesting extension of this project. Moreover, the application of my findings and my TWT-approach to reading pedagogy in the classroom-context, for example, could provide additional insights into the experiences and developmental processes of young readers; such research could enhance the potential relationship between TWT and education by exemplifying the framework's utility in understanding beneficial reading behaviours.

Finally, I would argue that there is a need to examine the use of ethno-methods in reader-research and in TWT scholarship, exemplified in this thesis, further. Whilst this project focused predominantly on the video data I collected, the additional fieldnote and interview data I obtained could be analysed in its own right and used in order to provide additional insights into the socio-cultural and economic factors that influence reading contexts. Nevertheless, it is hoped that this project has demonstrated the potential of ethnography as method when it comes to analysing context and functions as a departure point for future research aiming to carry out a naturalistic study of discourse.

This thesis set out to present a cognitively-oriented account of pre-school read aloud practices. I approached the project with three key aims: to investigate how naturally occurring storytime activities between adult-child dyads operate; to extend the use and capabilities of Text World Theory by applying it to read-aloud discourse; and to provide insight into the pre-schooler's early experiences of fiction. I employed ethno-methods to

obtain the most naturalistic data possible and adopted the TWT framework in order to analyse this data in detail. My ethnographic text-world approach produced a unique insight into pre-school reading and pre-school readers from both an experiential and ontological perspective. This thesis stands as an original contribution to the fields of cognitive stylistics, literacy and education research, and picturebook scholarship. It is hoped that the findings and advances presented here, not only inform, but inspire further investigation into the practices and experiences of young readers who possess the key to understanding the cognitive foundations for later reading.

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Appendix A

Participant information sheet

A Study of Story-time between ages 2-4.

You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others /other members if you wish. If anything is not clear or if you would like further information then please contact me (Sarah Jackson, Lead Researcher) – my contact details are below. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

What is the project's purpose?

The project is being run by Sarah Jackson, a postgraduate researcher from the University of Sheffield. I am interested in how pre-school children (between the ages of 2-4) experience stories and story-telling. I am interested in gaining a clear understanding of pre-school children's natural and routine experiences with fiction, play and picture-books. This includes their activities at playgroup and 'story-time' in the home, where both a parent/guardian and child sit down with a story-book and read it together.

What does participation involve?

You will not be expected to do anything except to run and attend your playgroup as you normally would and participate as you normally would. It is natural, everyday story-telling and play-time behaviour which is of interest to me. I will observe and interact with members of the playgroup and afterwards I will make some notes about my time there, focusing specifically on activities related to fiction and story-books. I will participate where and when necessary and members of the playgroup are free to interact / include me at any level they feel comfortable with. I hope to attend the playgroup over a period of months if this is convenient with everyone involved. **No audio or video recordings will be made during the playgroup.**

I will also be looking for volunteers to take part in recording a set of 'story-time' videos in their home. **This is entirely optional** and if you decide to take part in this aspect of the project, you will be provided with all the relevant information.

Do I have to take part?

You do not have to take part in this project. Taking part is entirely voluntary. If you decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep. You will also be asked to sign a consent form before I make any notes/observations; you will be given a copy of the consent form to keep. You may withdraw from the project at any time. There will be no penalty or consequence following your withdrawal and you do not have to give a reason.

What will happen to the results of the research?

Any written notes and observations made during the project will be used for analysis and will be presented in the researcher's thesis, conference papers and publications. Any information collected by the researcher will be anonymised so you will not be able to be identified in any reports or publications that follow the project.

This project has been approved by the University of Sheffield's ethics review procedure.

What if something goes wrong?
If you have a complaint about the research or your treatment please contact Dr Joanna Gavins (University of Sheffield, PhD supervisor for Sarah Jackson). Following this, if you do not think the complaint is handled well, you can contact the University's 'Registrar Secretary'.

If you would like to meet the researcher prior to making a decision about participating in the study or have any further questions then please feel free to use the contact details below. Please use the lead researcher as your first line of enquiry:

Contact information:

Lead researcher	**Supervisor**
Name: Sarah Jackson	Name: Dr Joanna Gavins
Email: sarah.l.jackson@sheffield.ac.uk	Email: J.Gavins@sheffield.ac.uk
Tel: 0754 015 8982	Tel: 0114 222 0214

Address (shared): The School of English, The University of Sheffield, Jessop West, 1 Upper Hanover Street, Sheffield, S3 7RA

Thank you for reading this!

Participant Consent Form

Please INITIAL the boxes and sign at the bottom.

Title of Research Project: A Study of Story-time between ages 2-4.

Name of Researcher: Sarah Jackson

Participant Identification Number for this project: **Please initial box**

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the project information sheet dated **04.06.2015** explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline. The researcher's contact details are given on the information sheet.

3. I give permission for the researcher stated above to collect data about my and my child's participation at our local playgroup. I understand that any observations made by the lead researcher will only be used for illustration and analysis in the researcher's thesis, conference papers and publications.

4. I understand that my name and my child's name (where appropriate) will not be linked with the research materials, and that neither I nor my child will be identified or identifiable in any reports or publications that result from the research.

5. I understand that by agreeing to take part in the research project I am providing consent for both myself and my child.

6. I agree to take part in the above research project.

_____   _____   _____
Name of Participant   Date   Signature
(*or legal representative*)

_____   _____   _____
 Lead Researcher   Date   Signature
To be signed and dated in presence of the participant

Appendix B

Participant information sheet – Video Recordings

A Study of Story-time between ages 2-4.

You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide whether or not to participate, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. If anything is not clear or if you would like further information then please contact me (Sarah Jackson, Lead Researcher) – my contact details are below. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

What is the project's purpose?
The project is being run by Sarah Jackson, a postgraduate researcher from the University of Sheffield. I am interested in how pre-school children (between the ages of 2-4) experience stories and story-telling. Specifically, this project is interested in the natural read-aloud situation involving a child and an adult narrator. I am particularly interested in what happens when children are read stories at home, when a parent/guardian and pre-school child sit with a story-book and read it together as part of their everyday routine (such as a bedtime story). I hope to obtain video recordings of 'story-time' from a number of households.

What will participation involve?
I will ask you to film one or a set of around 4 routine 'story-times' that take place in your home. No researchers will be present and you can use your own video equipment. The videos do not need to be of high quality and can be filmed on a mobile phone camera. If you choose to record more than one video, you do not have to record the videos all at once, you can record the videos over a period of weeks. The number of videos you wish to contribute is optional.

It is important for you to understand that it is your natural story-telling behaviour which is of interest to me, which includes both routine behaviour and acts of spontaneity; there is no wrong or bad example of reading with a young child. I am simply interested in what happens in natural, everyday situations. As far as possible, it is hoped that both adult and child will ignore the video equipment and enjoy their usual 'story-time' in the normal way. You will be in command of the video at all times and will be able to review it before you send it on to me. We will arrange a convenient and secure method of file transfer so that you can forward your video recordings to me.

Following the completion of these videos, you will be asked if you and your child wish to take part in an informal discussion with me (Sarah Jackson) about your participation; only the lead researcher, you and your child will be present. This chat will be audio recorded and will take place in an environment convenient and familiar to yourself and your child. It will provide an opportunity for you to ask any questions about the project and for your video to be discussed. This interview is entirely optional.

Do I have to take part?
You do not have to take part in this project. Taking part is entirely voluntary. If you decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep. You will also be asked to sign a consent form on behalf of yourself and your child and you will be given a copy of this consent form to keep. You

may withdraw from the project at any time. There will be no penalty or consequence following your withdrawal and you do not have to give a reason.

What will happen to the recordings?

The recordings will be used for analysis and will be presented in the researcher's thesis, conference papers and publications. All data will be anonymised so you will not be able to be identified in any reports or publications that follow the project. No other use will be made of the recordings without your written permission and no one outside the project will be allowed access to the original recordings; they will be stored on a secure, password-protected University computer.

This project has been approved by the University of Sheffield's ethics review procedure.

What if something goes wrong?

If you have a complaint about the research or your treatment please contact Dr Joanna Gavins (University of Sheffield PhD supervisor for Sarah Jackson). Following this, if you do not think the complaint is handled well, you can contact the University's 'Registrar Secretary'.

Contact for further information, please use the lead researcher as your first line of enquiry:

Lead researcher	**Supervisor**
Name: Sarah Jackson	Name: Dr Joanna Gavins
Email: sarah.l.jackson@sheffield.ac.uk	Email: J.Gavins@sheffield.ac.uk
Tel: 0754 015 8982	Tel: 0114 222 0214

Address (shared): The School of English, The University of Sheffield, Jessop West, 1 Upper Hanover Street, Sheffield, S3 7RA

Thank you for reading this!

Participant Consent Form – Video Recordings

Please INITIAL the boxes and sign at the bottom.

Title of Research Project: A Study of Story-time between ages 2-4.

Name of Researcher: Sarah Jackson

Participant Identification Number for this project: **Please initial box**

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the project information sheet dated **04.06.15** explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences.
    The researcher's contact details are given on the information sheet.

3. I understand that I can review the video recording(s) I make before forwarding them to the lead researcher. Once I have forwarded the video recording, I give permission for the researcher stated above to have access to it for analysis and I understand that the recorded media will only be used for illustration and analysis in the researcher's thesis, conference papers and publications.

4. I understand that my name and my child's name will not be linked with the video recordings, and that neither I nor my child will be identified or identifiable in any reports or publications that result from the research.

5. I understand that by agreeing to take part in the research project I am providing consent for both myself and my child.

6. I agree to take part in the above research project.

_____   _____   _____
Name of Participant   Date   Signature
(*or legal representative*)

_____   _____   _____
 Lead Researcher   Date   Signature
To be signed and dated in presence of the participant

Appendix C

List of texts featured in my storytime video data:

Note: the specific edition of a text referenced below may not accord exactly with the edition being read in my storytime videos, but the stories listed remain unchanged.

Amery, H. and illustrated by Young, N. (2005). *The Usborne Easter Story.* London: Usborne.

Andreae, G. and illustrated by Parker-Rees, G. (2002). *K is for Kissing a Cool Kangaroo.* London: Orchard Books.

Andreae, G. and illustrated by Dodd, E. (2014). *I Love You Baby.* London: Orchard Books.

Blathwayt, B. (2005). *The Little Red Train Storybook.* London: Random House. (Selected story from collection: *The Runaway Train*)

Bond, M. and illustrated by Alley, R. W. (2014). *Favourite Paddington Stories.* London: HarperCollins Children's Books. (Selected story from collection: *Paddington at the Carnival*)

Bowers, J. (2014). *Little Tree.* London: Big Picture Press.

Carle, E. (1969). *The Very Hungry Caterpillar.* London: Puffin Books.

Child, L. ([2000] 2009). *My Uncle is a Hunkle.* London: Orchard Books.

Cole, B. ([1984] 2003). *The Hairy Book.* London: Red Fox Books.

Dale, P. ([1988] 2013). *Ten In The Bed.* London: Walker Books.

Dodd, L. (2005). *Zachary Quack Minimonster.* London: Puffin books.

Dodd, L. (2010). *Hairy Maclary, Sit.* London: Puffin books.

Donaldson, J. and illustrated by Cobb, R. (2012). *The Paper Dolls.* London: Macmillan Children's Books.

Donaldson, J. and illustrated by Scheffler, A. (2000). *Monkey Puzzle.* London: Macmillan's Children's Books.

Donaldson, J. and illustrated by Scheffler, A. (2001). *Room on the Broom.* London: Macmillan children's books.

Donaldson, J. and illustrated by Scheffler, A. (2002). *The Smartest Giant in Town.* London: Macmillan Children's Books.

Donaldson, J. and illustrated by Scheffler, A. (2007). *Tiddler.* London: Alison Green Books.

Donaldson, J. and illustrated by Scheffler, A. (2008). *Stick Man.* London: Alison Green Books.

Donaldson, J. and illustrated by Sharrat, N. (2006). *Hippo Has A Hat.* London: Macmillan

Children's Books.

Donaldson, J. and illustrated by Sharratt, N. (2008). *One Mole Digging a Hole.* London: Macmillan Children's Books.

Dorling Kindersley Publishing (eds) (1998). *DK Nature Encyclopedia.* London: Dorling Kindersley Publishing.

Edwards, P. D. and illustrated by Davies, B. (2012). *Winston was Worried.* London: Macmillan Children's books.

Fox, M. and illustrated by Oxenbury, H. (2008). *Ten Little Fingers and Ten Little Toes.* London: Walker Books.

Goodhart, P. and illustrated by Sharratt, N. (2003). *You Choose.* London: Random House Children's Publishers.

Hargreaves, R. (1976). *Mr. Noisy.* London: Egmont.

Hill. E. ([1992] 2011). *Spot Goes to a Party.* London: Puffin Books.

Hughes, S. ([1988] 2002). *Alfie: The Big Alfie and Annie Rose Storybook.* London: Red Fox.

Hughers, S. ([1977] 2009). *Dogger.* London: Red Fox Books.

Hughes, S. ([1983] 2009). *Alfie Gives a Hand.* London: Red Fox Books.

Hughes, S. ([1982] 2014). *Alfie: Alfie's Feet.* London: Red Fox.

Inkpen, M. (1997). *Everyone Hide from Wibbly Pig.* London: Hodder Children's Books.

Kennedy, A. V. (2014). *The Farmer's Away! BAA! NEIGH!* London: Walker Books.

Klasson, J. (2011). *I Want My Hat Back.* London: Walker Books Ltd.

Klasson, J. (2012). *This is Not My Hat.* London: Walker Books.

Leeuwen, J. and illustrated by Lobel, A. (1993). *More Tales of Oliver Pig.* London: Random House Children's Books. (Selected stories from collection: *Bedtime*; *All Alone)*

Mayo, M. and illustrated by Ayliffe, A. (2001). *Dig Dig Digging.* London: Orchard Books.

Murphy, J. ([1980] 2011). *Peace at Last.* London: Macmillan Children's books.

Peters, L. W. and illustrated by Williams, S. (2000). *Cold Little Duck Duck Duck.* London: Macmillan Children's Books.

Pienkowski, J. (1983). *Gossip.* London: Gallery Five.

Potter, B. (2018). *Beatrix Potter's beloved Tales.* New York: Racehorse for Young Readers. (Selected story from collection: *The Tale of Tom Kitten*).

Powell, D. and illustrated by Hawksley, G. (1994). *Can't Catch Me.* Somerset: Treehouse children's books.

Prasadam-Halls, S. and illustrated by Rozelaar, A. (2014). *Don't Call Me Sweet.* London: Bloomsbury.

Ripper, G. (2003). *My Best Friend, Bob.* London: Macmillan Children's Books.

Robinson, M. and illustrated by Field, J. (2014). *There's a Lion in my Cornflakes.* London: Bloomsbury.

Sparkes, A. and illustrated by Ogilvie, S. (2013). *Do Not Enter The Monster Zoo.* London: Random House.

Stark, U. and illustrated by Ståhlberg, A. (2013). *King Elk.* IKEA.

Vere, E. (2006). *The Getaway.* London: Puffin Books.

Waddell, M. and illustrated by Dale, P. (1990). *Rosie's Babies.* London: Walker Books.

West, C. (1986). '*"Pardon?" said the Giraffe'.* London: Walker Books.

Appendix D

Participant Consent Form – Interview

Please INITIAL the boxes and sign at the bottom.

Title of Research Project: A Study of Story-time between ages 2-4.

Name of Researcher: Sarah Jackson

Participant Identification Number for this project: **Please initial box**

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the project information sheet dated **04.06.15** explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline. The researcher's contact details are given on the information sheet.

3. I give permission for the researcher stated above to make an audio recording of our informal interview. I understand that the recorded media will only be used for illustration and analysis in the researcher's presentations, lectures and publications.

4. I understand that my name and my child's name will not be linked with the research materials, and that neither I nor my child will be identified or identifiable in any reports or publications that result from the research.

5. I understand that by agreeing to take part in the research project I am providing consent for both myself and my child.

6. I agree to take part in the above research project.

_____   _____   _____
Name of Participant   Date   Signature
(*or legal representative*)

_____   _____   _____
 Lead Researcher   Date   Signature
To be signed and dated in presence of the participant

Appendix E

Transcription conventions:

Key speaker-roles	Label	Description
AP	Adult participant	Talk by the adult
CP	Child participant	Talk by the child
AN	Adult narrator	Talk by the adult that specifically represents the contents of picturebook written discourse
AC AC1, AC2 etc.	Adult character (Numbers accord to the amount of characters being represented)	Talk by the adult that specifically represents the direct speech of a character in the picturebook written discourse

A note about the key speaker-roles:

In all transcripts in this thesis, the adult's role is divided into a minimum of 3 roles: AP, AN, AC. In all of the transcripts in this thesis, only *one* adult is present during the read-aloud activity, all transcribed A-roles (AP, AN, AC) thus pertain to a single adult during each transcribed read-aloud practice (all C-roles represent the speaking role by a child). The speaker-roles are separated out in order to coincide with my analysis which explores, in detail, how the two main types of talk - defined throughout this thesis as 'read-aloud talk' and 'additional talk' - operate during early reading practices. Simply put, AN and AC speaker-roles include talk in the discourse situation that falls under the category 'read-aloud talk' and represents a spoken version of the written discourse. The AP speaker-role accounts for all other utterances by the adult that that do not directly represent the contents of the written discourse and thus fall under the 'additional talk' category.

Speaker-roles used to represent turns in each transcript should not be confused with the detailed analyses of reader-roles and enactor-roles that are presented across Chapter 4, 5, and 6, but instead be seen as a means to aiding the breakdown and explication of the talk.

Transcript feature	Example	Key
[		Simultaneous utterances: when two speakers start talking at the same time
[ ]		Overlap: when speakers' utterances occur simultaneously
=		Latching: no pause between speakers' turns, or an interrupted turn by a single speaker
-		Indicates a cut off either because of an interruption or self-repair
<u>talk</u>		Underlining: shows emphasis
CAPS		Represents a significant increase in volume
hhh		Audible aspirations (the more h's the longer the out-breath)
.hhh		Audible inhalations (gasp) (the more h's the longer the in-breath)
(( ))	((whispers)) ((laughs))	Double parenthesis used for special characteristics of talk, or

	((matching sad facial expression))	linked to talk, and vocalisations that are not easy to spell out
(*talk*)	(*moves to sit down*) (*emotion*)	Single parenthesis and italics used for extra-linguistic information and nonverbal behaviours. May also enclose the transcriber's comments on contextual or other features.
(talk)		Words within a single bracket indicate the transcriber's best guess at an unclear utterance.
(=*action*)	Ok (=*pats sofa*)	When verbal and nonverbal behaviour run simultaneously
(PT>)		Page turn forwards
(PT<)		Page turn backwards
(=PT>) / (=PT<)		Indicates page turn forwards / backwards and talk run simultaneously
((AC1V))	AC1: ((AC1V)) and every	Used at the beginning of an AC utterance to represent the speaker's use of some repeated and ongoing vocal manipulation in order represent a specific character in the written discourse. Number changes according to AC turn.
(.)		Brief pause – less than 0.5 seconds
(0.7)		Timed pause
. . .	He was in the . . .	'. . .' used to indicate Adult-narrator pauses that allow for or invite listener participation
:::		Drawn out sound (the more colons the greater the extent of the stretching.)
xxxx		Inaudible speech
↑		Marked rise in pitch /rising intonation (nb. Placed immediately before)
↓		Lowering of pitch / lowering intonation (nb. Placed immediately before)
><		Talk they encompass was produced noticeably quicker than the surrounding talk
<>		Talk they encompass was produced noticeably slower than the surrounding talk
○ ○		Indicate that the talk they encompass is spoken noticeably quieter than the surrounding talk.
. ,		Commas and full stops are used to aid reading and don't not always indicate a specific feature of the transcript, although most full stops represent a short and natural pause during the reading (note: more substantial/obvious pauses are enclosed (.) or timed (0.2)

?		Question marks represent questions in the discourse.
→		Foregrounds turn(s) as focus of analysis
[…]		Omission in transcript

Transcripts / extracts referenced throughout Chapter 4 – 6. Listed in order of first appearance:

(Also see Appendix E for a full overview of transcription conventions, including transcribed speaker roles.)

Chapter Four:

Extract 4.0 *Amy and Denise's Stick Man Storytime Video*

1	AP:	right have you got stick man? *(=adult enters screen and picks up book)* ((laughter))
2		[you look like you're gonna fall over=
3	CP:	[yep
4	AP:	*(=lifts child so she is sitting up straight)* =i'm going to wear the blanket *(adult picks*
5		*up blanket and wraps it around her shoulders as she sits on the sofa*)
6	CP:	i'm gonna wear the- i need the- i need the snake! *(child climbs off sofa and runs*
7		*across the room, offscreen)*
8	AP:	((laughter))
9	CP:	*(off camera)* that's squiggly
10	AP:	Ok *(adult pats sofa)*
11	CP:	squiggly wiggly *(child re-enters frame)* (0.2) his eyes are called judy and jason
12		*(=adult puts book down and picks child up and sits her on the sofa next to her and*
13		*under the blanket)*
14	AP:	judy and jason?
15	CP:	yeah
16	AP:	funny name, isn't it? do you want to put it down while we're reading *(=adult picks up*
17		*book)*
18	CP:	yeah
19	AP:	shall we put him over there *(=adult pats cushion next to child)*
20	CP:	yeah *(=child places squiggly on a cushion)*
21	AP:	then he can listen too, can't he? maybe he doesn't know about stick man *(=adult*
22		*picks text up so it is in front on her and the child and pulls blanket over her shoulder)*
23	CP:	no *(=child still holding and looking at the snake)*
24	AP:	Ok *(=child turns to look at the book, still holding snake)* stick man. here <u>he</u> is. *(adult*
25		*opens book to title page)* here he is.
26	CP:	here he is
27	AP:	((laughing)) there's the stick lady and thr[e-
28	CP:	[OH closing his eyes and smell the flower
29		*(=child lets go of snake and covers her face with her hands before leaning away from*
30		*the book with her eyes closed)*
31	AP:	yes he is closing his eyes to smell the flower (PT>)
32	AN:	stick man lives in the family ↑tree with his stick lady love and the thr— stick children
33		↑three=
34	AP:	=can you see them? where are the three children? *(child points to page)* there's the
35		mummy and the daddy, yep. and where are the three children? *(child points to page)*
36		one *(child points to page)* two (.) where's the other one?
37	CP:	*(child points to page)* ((whispers)) three

38	AP:	no::: not there, he's upside down in the- in the tree. can you see him?
39	CP:	(*child points to page*) ((whispers)) the[re:::
40	AP:	[((whispers)) that's right, yeah
41	AN:	<u>One</u> day, he wakes early and goes for a jog, stick man, oh stick man, beware of the
42		dog=
43	AP:	=.hh ((whispers)) where's the dog?
44	CP:	((whispers)) there (*child points to page*)
45	AP:	he's running really fast, [isn't he?
46	CP:	[.hhh ERM MUMMY *(=child glances at the adult and then*
47		*begins to turn pages in the book. PT>)*
48	AP:	yeah
49	CP:	erm::: member the cat's scared [of father christmas *(=child stops on a page further*
50		*ahead in the book)*
51	AP:	[oh yes, the cat is scared isn't he, you'll get to that bit
52		in a in a bit *(adult turns back to the page they were reading before interruption. PT<)*
53	CP:	ERM
54	AP:	yeah=
55	AC1:	=((low and gruff voice manipulation)) a <u>stick</u>!
56	AN:	barks the dog
57	AC1:	((low and gruff voice manipulation)) an excellent stick, the right kind of stick for my
58		favourite trick <u>.hhh</u> >i'll fetch it and drop it and fetch it and then, i'll drop it and fetch
59		it and drop it again<
60	AC2:	((high pitched voice manipulation)) i'm not a stick, why can't you see, i'm <u>s</u>tick man,
61		i'm <u>s</u>tick man, i'm <u>s</u>tick man, that's me. I want to go home to the family tree=
62	AP:	=he's a long way from home, isn't he? little sausage dog going for a walk here (PT>)
63	AN:	a notice says <u>dogs</u> must be kept on the lead. at last the game's over and stick man is
64		freed, he sets off for home with a hop and a twirl, <u>s</u>tick man, oh <u>s</u>tick man, beware of
65		the girl
66	AC3:	a stick
67	AN:	cries the girls with a smile on her face
68	AC3:	the ↑right kind of poohstick for winning the ↑race=
69	AP:	=oh look, they're on the bridge aren't they? what are they going to do? drop their
70		sticks over aren't they? (.)
71	AN:	has everyone got one, get ready to throw, it's one two three, into the river they go=
72	AP:	=Wee:::::: splash (PT>)
73	AC2:	i'm not a pooh stick why can't they see, i'm <u>s</u>tick man, i'm <u>s</u>tick man, i'm <u>s</u>tick man,
74		that's me and i'm heading away from the family tree=
75	AP:	=where is he now?
76	CP:	((whispers)) there
77	AP:	yeah=
78	AN:	=stick man is floating, he floats on and on, <u>s</u>tick man, oh <u>s</u>tick man, beware of the…
79	CP:	trick
80	AN:	s::wan
81	CP:	sw[an
82	AP:	[looks, there's his long neck *(=adult points to page)*
83	AC4:	a <u>t</u>wig
84	AC:	says the swan
85	AC4:	<u>this</u> twig is the <u>best</u>, it's the right kind of twig to weave into my ne:st (PT>)
86	CP:	ERM

87	AP:	hm. oh look, the swan's sitting on the eggs now, isn't she? *(=adult points to page)*
88		and look, the eggs are hatching, three little signets
89	AC2:	i'm not a twig *(=adult throws hand up)* why can't they see, i'm s̲tick man, i'm s̲tick
90		man, i'm s̲tick man, that's m[e
91	CP:	[THOSE are little sausages *(=child leans forward and*
92		*points to page)*
93	AP:	they do look like sausages, don't they? they're actually called bulrushes, amy, they're
94		like reeds by the side of a river, can you see they grow as part of the plant *(=adult*
95		*points to image)* but they look a lot like sausages don't they?=
96	AC2:	=↑i lo:::ng to be back in the family tree=
97	AN:	=the nest is deserted and stick man is °free°, he drifts down the river and sails out
98		to…
99	CP:	sea
100	AP:	sea, who's watching him?
101	CP:	sheep
102	AP:	yeah=
103	AC:	=Maa::: (PT>)
104	AP:	you don't usually get sheep by the sea, do you?
105	CP:	°no° *(=child is frowning)*
106	AN:	he tosses and turns till the frolicking foam washes him up on a beach far from home.
107		here comes a dad with a spade in his hand, ↑S̲tick man, oh stick man, beware of the
108		sand
109	CP:	*(child leans forward towards page)* that is a bit frightened of the cr[ab
110	AP:	[yes, that's right
111		she is a bit isn't she. can i just move you along a bit, that's it *(=adult lifts the child*
112		*back a little on the sofa))* and i cannot get my hair so tickled *(=child notices the snake*
113		*next to her)*
114	AN:	[a mast
115	CP:	[those are jason and julia *(=picks up the toy snake)*
116	AP:	jason and julia=
117	AN:	=A̲ MAST yells the dad, an excellent mast, hoor̲ay there's a flag on our castle at last
118		*(=child playing with snake)*=
119	AP:	=let's just pop him over here so he can listen= *(=adult takes snake off child and*
120		*places it on the other side of the sofa next to adult)*
121	CP:	((whispers)) ye[ah *(=child's gaze follows snake)*
122	AP:	[=he's watching *(adult places the snake on the other side of the sofa)*
123		((laughter))
124	CP	((whispers)) he's watching. WHAT about we put him over there *(child pats the*
125		*cushion next to her)*
126	AP:	OK, wee::: *(=swings snake to the other side of the sofa next to the child)*
127	AC2:	i'm not a mast for a silly old flag, [or a sw- *(=child picks up the snake)*
128	CP:	[that's jason and julia
129	AP:	it is isn't it, let's put him down while we're watching then you can look at the pictures
130		can't you *(=adult moves the snake back on to the cushion next to the child)*
131	AC2:	[Or a sword for a knight= *(=child's gaze switches from snake to page)*
132	CP:	[((inaudible))
133	AP:	=where's the sword (.) which one's the sword? (0.4)
134	CP:	*(child searches image)* mmm::: *(child points to page)*
135	AP:	that's right=
136	AC2:	=or a hook for a bag. i'm not a pen=

137	AP:	=what's she drawing ↑here? *(adult points to page)* (0.4) ((whispers)) a fish=
138	AC2:	=i'm not a bow, i'm not a bat, or a boomerang, no, I'M…
139	CP:	↑Stick m[a::n (PT>)
140	AN:	[I'm stick ma::n beware of the snow. here comes a boy in a warm woolly
141		scarf=
142	AC5:	=an arm for my snowman=
143	AN:	=he says with a laugh=
144	AC2:	i'm not an arm, can nobody see, i'm <u>s</u>tick man, i'm <u>s</u>tick man, i'm <u>s</u>tick man, that's
145		<u>Me</u>, will I ever get back to the family tree= ((adult pulls a sad face))
146	AP:	=who's this bird here? *(adult points to page)*
147	CP:	robin
148	AP:	robin, what does he say?
149	CP:	peep peep *(=child bends two fingers to match sound)*
150	AP:	peep peep, peep peep, *(=adult bends two fingers to match sound)* ((laughter)) (PT>)
151	CP:	peep peep
152	AN:	stick man is lonely, stick man is lost ((sad face)), stick man is frozen and covered in
153		frost, stick man is weary, his eyes start to close, he stretches and yawns and lies down
154		for a dose, he can't hear the bells or the sweet singing choir (PT>) or the voice saying
155	AC6:	here's a good stick for the fire.
156	AN:	.hhh ((whispers)) stick man is lying asleep in the crate, can anyone wake him
157	CP:	((whispers)) father chris[tmas *(=child glances at adult)*
158	AN:	((laughter)) [before it's too late=
159	AP:	=do you think so, let's find out (PT>)
160	AN:	.hhh he dreams of his kids and his sic-stick lady love, then suddenly wakes what's
161		that noise up above .<u>hhh</u> it starts as a chuckle, then turns to a shout
162	AC7:	OHH HO HO HO I'M STUCK *(=child turns to face adult)* GET ME OUT
163	CP:	it's °father christmas°
164	AP:	is it=
165	AN:	=a stuck man, a stuck man, now who could that be=
166	AC2:	=[Don't worry=
167	CP:	[((whispers)) father *(=child turns to look at adult)*
168	AN:	=cries stick man
169	CP:	FATHER Christmas *(=adult and child briefly look at one another)*
170	AP:	that's right=
171	AC2:	=I'll soon set you free=
172	AN:	=a scratch and a scrap and a flurry of soot. a wiggle, a jiggle and out pokes a foot, a
173		shove and a nudge, a hop and a jump (PT>) .<u>HHH</u> ↑and santa falls into the room with
174		a thump
175	AC7:	((deep voice manipulation)) <u>OOOH</u> stick man, Oh stick man you excellent friend
176	CP:	THAT.CAT IS FRIGHTENED OF FAT-((laughter)) *(=child points to page)*
177	AP:	he is frightened isn't he?
178	AC7:	((deep voice manipulation)) thanks, thanks a million, thanks without end (PT>)
179	AN:	then stick man helps santa deliver the toys, to fast asleep girls and to fast asleep
180		boys.hh [faste-
181	CP:	[ER:::::M *(=child leans forward and points to page)* that (one's) got a
182		rabbit=
183	AP:	she has yeah
184	CP:	=and the boys got a teddy
185	AP:	that's right=
186	AN:	=faster and faster they fly through the snow, til santa says

187	AC7:	((brief gruff voice manipulation on first word)) <u>only</u> one chimney to go (PT>)
188	AN:	stick lady's lonely the children are sad ((sad facial expression))
189	CP:	Mummy *(child turns the page back one. PT<)*
190	AP:	yeah?
191	CP:	Mummy. is, is the stick man on the sledge *(=child leans forward to look at page)*
192	AP:	he is on the sledge, yes, having a ride isn't he with father christmas= (PT>)
193	AN:	=it won't feel like christmas, without their stick dad. they toss and they turn in the
194		family bed, but what's that clattering sound overhead .hhh someone is tumbling into
195		their house, is it a bird, or a bat, or a mouse, or could it, yes, ↑could it just possibly be
196		(PT>)
197	AC2:	I'M STICK MAN, I'M STICK MAN, I'M STICK MAN THAT'S ME AND I'M
198		STICKING RIGHT HERE IN THE…
199	CP:	those ar[e toadstools there *(=child leans forward towards page)*
200	AN:	[family tree
201	AP:	toadstools, yeah
202	CP:	erm:::: TILL THEY open the tr- erm, the presents
203	AP:	that's right
204	CP:	for-for Father Chris[tmas
205	AP:	[that's right, i wonder what's inside
206	CP:	*(child leans forward to look at page)* i think there are blueberries
207	AP:	they look like blueberries don't they for their breakfast. wow he's home just in time
208		isn't he? lovely (PT> to end)

Chapter Five:

Extract 5.0 *Eva and Daniel's Paddington Storytime Video*

(child is sat on her parent's bed waiting for her dad. Dad sits down and takes the book from the child)

1	AP:	OK (.) *(=flicking through the pages of picturebook)*
2	CP:	=xxxx xxxx *(makes nonsense noises with tongue out with gaze forwards)*
3	AP:	eva
4	CP:	xxxx xxxx *(makes nonsense noises with tongue out, but gaze shifts to picturebook)*
5	AP:	would you like *(=stops flicking though the page and stops on contents page)*
6		paddington in the garden, paddington at the carnival or paddington and the grand
7		tour?*(turns away from text to look directly at the child)*
8	CP:	erm:: *(=lean towards to contents page)* i want=
9	AP:	which one?
10	CP:	=that *(=points to an image on the contexts page)*
11	AP:	paddington at the carnival. Oka:y. let's see if we can find where it starts, this looks
12		like it *(= flicks through the book to the correct page)* I:: remember this one, this is a
13		good one *(=PT> and holds texts up so both participants can see it easily)*
14	AN:	[o-
15	CP:	[°don't remember (it)°
16	AN:	((coughs)) one day, paddington's friend, mr gruber took him on a surprise outing to a
17		part of london known as little venice *(=turns to look at child, who has just wiped her*
18		*nose on her sleeve, near the end of utterance)*

19	AC1:	((voice manipulation: accent and voice quality changed)) it's called little venice
20		because it's by a canal
21	AN:	he explained
22	AC1:	((AC1V)) and every spring they hold a big carnival. boats come from all over the
23		country to take part in the celebration
24	AN:	paddington a::lways en::joys his days out with mr gruber. he waved as one of boats
25		went past *(=child leans forward to look at page and leans on adult's shoulder)* all the
26		people of board waved back (PT>)
27	AC2:	((voice manipulation: accent and voice quality changed)) i've never been on a ride on
28		a canal before *(=child sits up again with gaze still fixed on the text)*
29	AN:	said paddington
30	AC1:	((AC1V)) who knows
31	AN:	said mr gruber mysteriously
32	AC1:	((AC1V)) perhaps you will before the day is out. first of all we must see what else is
33		happening we don't want to miss anything important
34	AN:	he pointed to a board showing all the different events, but there were so many.
35		paddington didn't know which to try first
36	AC1:	((AC1V)) how about the busy bee adventure trail
37	AN:	suggested mr gruber
38	AC1:	((AC1V)) you have to find as many things as possible beginning with the letter b
39		*(=turns to look at child)* (PT>)
40	AP:	can you think of anything?
41	CP:	((gaze remains fixed on the text)) balloon=
42	AP:	mmm
43	CP:	=bubble
44	AP:	wo::k slow down mrs=
45	AN:	=Paddington thought that sounded like a <u>v</u>ery good idea, especially when mr gruber
46		took him-told him the first prize was a <u>free::</u> boat ride for two.
47	AC2:	((AC2V)) bears are good at trails mr gruber
48	AN:	he explained. looking around he could a[lready see
49	CP:	[B for boat! *(=opens hands in performative*
50		*gestures)*
51	AP:	↑that's right=
52	AN:	=he could already see lots of things beginning with b apart from um-
53	CP:	balloons, bubbles
54	AP:	well look, it says
55	AN:	<u>b</u>oard, <u>b</u>oy, <u>b</u>ubbles, <u>b</u>agel, <u>b</u>room, <u>b</u>arbecue, <u>b</u>ananas, ><u>b</u>oats, <u>b</u>alloons, <u>b</u>anjo< <u>b:</u>and
56	AP:	((turns to look at child)) that's a lot, isn't it? (PT>)
57	CP:	°mm-hmm°
58	AN:	after paddington had finished writing them all down he and mr gruber set off along
59		the canal and in no time at all, paddington had added five other items to his list, first
60		there was B for <u>Br::</u>idge and then Bl::ackbird and then <u>B</u>utterup, <u>B</u>lossom, and errr
61	AP:	what's that? *(=points to image)*
62	CP:	butterfly
63	AP:	(yahh-haahaa) (PT>)
64	AN:	Oo, they hadn't gone very far when they saw a lady feeding some ducks, she was
65		wearing a <u>b</u>onnet and a <u>b</u>louse and a <u>b</u>roach and a <u>b</u>racelet. when she saw paddington,
66		she smiled and said
67	AC3:	((voice manipulation: accent and voice quality changed)) would you like some?
68	AC2:	((AC2V)) thank you very much

69	AN:	said paddington. he wrote down bag and bread and then he raised his hat politely and
70		said
71	AC2:	((AC2V)) busy bee adventure trails make you hungry (PT>) this is the sort of day I
72		like mr gruber.
73	AN:	paddington announced as he took a jar of marmalade from his suitcase and began
74		making a sandwich
75	AC1:	((AC1V)) ahem, Hmm-Hmm, mr brown
76	AN:	mr gruber gave a cough
77	AC1:	((AC1V)) i think you're already meant to have the bread-meant to give the bread for
78		the ducks
79	AN:	before paddington had time to reply there was a loud buzzing noise=
80	AP:	=uh oh, what's that? *(=points to image)*
81	CP:	a bee
82	AP:	A-haa
83	AN:	it landed on his marmalade paddington gave the object a good hard stare before
84		adding bee to his list *(=adult quickly glances at child)* (PT>) next they came to a nice
85		man fishing
86	AC1:	((AC1V, whispers)) i think you've struck lucky mr brown
87	AN:	whispered mr gruber. he patiently waited while paddington wrote down box, followed
88		by beret, beard, belt, buckle, boo::ts *(=child nods head in agreement)*, bucket and
89		basket
90	AC4:	((voice manipulation: accent and voice quality changed)) would you like to have a try
91	AN:	asked the man
92	AC4:	((AC4V)) you can use one of my worms if you like
93	AN:	paddington thought that that was a very good idea, but first he wrote down bait=
94		*(=glances at child)*
95	AP:	you know what bait is?
96	CP:	no ((gaze remains fixed on text))
97	AP:	it's what you put on the end of your fishing rod to catch a fish. bait. yeah.
98	CP:	**nods**
99	AP:	mmm (PT>)
100	AC4:	((AC4V)) if you're going in for the busy bee competition
101	AN:	said the man
102	AC4:	((AC4V)) you should watch out, there's a boy following you and I think he's up to no
103		good=
104	AP:	=ooh look *(points to the image)*
105	AN:	paddington was about to say thank you when he felt a tug on the fishing line
106	AC2:	((AC2V)) i think it might be too big for my jar whatever it is
107	AN:	he exclaimed
108	AC2:	((AC2V)) feels like W for ↑whale
109	AC1:	((AC1V)) i'm not sure you'll find any whales in-this far inland Mr Brown
110	AN:	said mr gruber tactfully. all the same to b[e
111	CP:	[what is he doing?
112	AN:	he's fishing *(=points to pictures and looks at child)* ((laughs))
113	CP:	but why is he pulling so hard on his rod?
114	AP:	well, you know what happens=
115	CP:	[°what? °
116	AP:	[=when the fish is big, it takes the bait on the end of the line. give me your finger
117		*(child holds out index finger)* so you hold the line and the fish goes (KNO) ((makes
118		clicking sound)) *(adult enacts fish taking hold of bait by grabbing child's index finger*

119		*with hand)* and it pulls and it can't get away *(=wiggles the child's finger)* and you
120		have to pull the fish in *(=pushes child's finger back towards her)* yeah?
121	CP:	((nods))
122	AP:	that make sense? (0.2) *(looks at child)* ((chuckles))
123	AN:	all the same, to be on the safe side, mr gruber tied some rope around his friend (PT>)
124	AP:	look *(points to the image)*. they all f-oh ohh wha- ((laughs)) it's not a fish, what have
125		they got?
126	CP:	a boat. a bicycle
127	AP:	a bike
128	CP:	hey: *(=adult turns to look at child)* bicycle for B
129	AP:	ooohhh, *(=adult returns gaze to text)* you're ahead of the game
130	AC4:	((AC4V)) strike me pink
131	AN:	said the fisherman
132	AC4:	((AC4V)) it's a bicycle
133	AN:	paddington was most disappointed
134	AC1:	((AC1V)) nevermind
135	AN:	said mr gruber
136	AC1:	((AC1V)) at least it's another word for your list (PT>)
137	AN:	shortly afterwards, they came upon a stretch of water with high banks and trees on
138		either side. paddington decided to have a go at riding a bicycle but he soon discovered
139		why it hadn't been throw-why it had been thrown away
140	AC2:	((AC2V)) I think I'd better hold the other end mr gruber
141	AN:	he gasped pointing at the rope still tied round his waist
142	AC2:	((AC2V)) incase I fall in the canal
143	AN:	mr grub[er
144	CP:	[what's a canal?
145	AP:	it's like erm – where - you know on erm (.) errr rosie and jim
146	CP:	(nods)
147	AP:	and they're on a boat mm they live on a canal, it's like a water way *(=uses hand*
148		*gesture to imitate a pathway)* and you go down a canal on a boat. it's like a road but
149		for boats. that make sense?
150	CP:	like an alley way?
151	AP:	bit like an alley way but with water in it
152	CP:	°oh°
153	AP:	O there's that cheeky boy again, look, what's he upto d'you think?
154	CP:	°I don't know°
155	AP:	mmm, I think he might be trying to get all the words off paddington's list
156	AN:	mr gruber was about to explain that he didn't-that if he did that there would be
157		nothing else for anyone to hold on to when he saw the look on paddington's face
158	AC1:	((AC1V)) is anything the matter, Mr brown
159	AN:	he asked
160	AC2:	((AC2V)) i think we're being followed by a b for bush mr gruber
161	AN:	hissed paddington
162	AC1:	((AC1V)) come back!
163	AN:	shouted mr gruber
164	AC1:	((AC1V)) whoever you are
165	AN:	meanwhile paddington added binoculars *(=glances at child)* to his list
166	AP:	(nne)-you've got binoculars *(looks at child)*
167	CP:	[mmmm
168	AP:	[haven't you (PT>)

169	CP:	yeah
170	AN:	while he was writing a boat went past. one of the passengers had a baby on her lap
171		*(=points to image)* and a bottle and he was wearing a bib
172	CP:	and a ball
173	AP:	↑yea::h, good one
174	AN:	all together with bank and brambles next to mr gruber he had <u>for:::ty one things</u>
175		beginning with B *(=glances at child)* on his list (PT>)
176	CP:	wow
177	AP:	that's pretty lot-that's quite a lot isn't it
178	CP:	°mmhmm°
179	AN:	mr gruber looked at his watch
180	AC1:	((AC1V)) i think it's time we got back mr brown
181	AN:	he said
182	AC1:	((AC1V)) we don't want to be late for the judging
183	AC4:	((AC4V)) good luck
184	AN:	called the fisherman as they went past
185	AC3:	((AC3V)) we shall be cheering you on
186	AN:	said the lady feeding the ducks
187	AC5:	((voice manipulation: accent and voice quality changed)) has anyone collected more
188		than forty bs
189	AN:	called the judge
190	AC2:	((AC2V)) i have
191	AN:	cried Paddington waving his piece of paper excitedly
192	AC2:	((AC2V)) i've got forty one
193	AC6:	((voice manipulation: accent and voice quality changed)) so have i
194	AN:	came a voice from nearby and mr gruber looked over the boy's shoulder
195	AC1:	((AC1V)) this list is exactly the same as young mr brown's
196	AN:	he said sternly
197	AC1:	((AC1V)) you <u>must</u> have been copying it word for word (PT>)
198	AC5:	((AC5V)) oh dear
199	AN:	said the judge
200	AC5:	((AC5V)) we can't have that, i'm afraid i shall have to stop the contest
201	AC2:	((AC2V)) it's alright mr gruber
202	AN:	said paddington
203	AC2:	((AC2V)) we've won. i've thought of another b, it gives me forty two.
204	AC1:	((AC1V)) f::ancy nearly f:orgetting the most im<u>por</u>tant item of all
205	AN:	said mr gruber as they set off on their boat trip
206	AC1:	((AC1V)) what <u>made</u> you <u>think</u> of it?
207	AC2:	((AC2V)) i saw my reflection in the water
208	AN:	explained paddington. mr gruber nodded
209	AC2:	((AC2V)) it's often the hardest thing of all to see things that are right under your nose
210	AN:	he added
211	AC:	it's as if-it-it is if you'v-you're a <u>b</u> for <u>bear</u>
212	AN:	said paddington
213	AC:	bears have very long noses *(=glances at child)* (PT>)
214	AN:	it was dark by the time paddington and mr gruber arrived back and the fireworks had
215		already started. mr gruber brought a packet of sparklers and as they stood on the
216		bridge, paddington joined in with his own display
217	AP:	°do you remember sparklers at erm° *(=turns towards and addresses child)*
218	CP:	((nods))

219	AP:	what do you do with them?
220	CP:	*(waves finger around)* they draw pictures with them
221	AP:	that's right. and look, what does he do, he writes
222	AN:	he waved his sparkler and wrote thank you mr gruber for a lovely day out. in the
223		excitement the only person who noticed was mr gruber but he was-that was all that
224		really mattered (PT>)
225	AC1:	((AC1V)) if you ask me mr brown
226	AN:	said mr gruber as they made their way home
227	AC1:	((AC1V)) the nicest <u>b</u> of all is yet to come
228	AP:	°what do you think it is? ° *(=turns towards and addresses child)*
229	CP:	mmm bear (.) paddington bear
230	AP:	what do you do at the end of the day when you're tired? you go to…
231	CP:	sleep
232	AP:	in your…
233	CP:	bed
234	AP:	ha-haa (.)
235	AC2:	((AC2V)) I think I know what it is
236	AN:	paddington said sleepily
237	AC2:	((yawns)) ((AC2V)) it's <u>b</u> for bed
238	CP:	[((laughs))
239	AP:	[((laughs))
240	CP:	can we do another one?
241	AP:	yeah (0.2) i don't know if we'll read another paddington because they're a bit long
242		aren't they? shall i get another book?
243	CP:	yeah
244	AP:	yeah
245	CP:	i'll get one.
246	AP:	alright then
247	CP:	you stay there
248	AP:	sure

Chapter Six:

Extract 6.0 *William and Rosie's Monster Zoo Storytime Video*

(Mother and Son are sat in a big chair in the child's bedroom. The child is sat on his mother's knee. The child is holding a cuddly toy. Mother is holding the book open in front of them. Child appears to be nodding off to sleep, this is clearly a bedtime story).

1	AN:	one day imagine my surprise (=*drops head closer to child's ear as child fixes gaze on*
2		*text*) to find that i had won a ↑prize. a note came in the post to say, you can run the
3		zoo today. i grabbed my bike so keen to go and peddled quickly down the road. I
4		whizz::ed through woods past hills so green (PT>) to the strangest zoo I'd °ever seen°
5		(0.5) (=*both the adult and child's gaze remains fixed on exploring the page*) (PT>) the
6		keeper beamed and skipped to me, he rubbed his hands so gleefully
7	AC1:	please >clean the cages, feed the beasts<, they get ↓quite cross without their feasts.
8		↓oh dear

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 9    AN:    he said
10    AC1:   i have a hunch, the squirgal hasn't had its lunch. it chews and chumps and chomps a
11           lot, and Gobbles children on the spot=
12    CP:    =he's a children
13    AP:    (do you know other) children (=shifts gaze from page to child and then back again)
14           (0.1) [oh he's a child isn't he? (=points to page and shifts gaze from page to child)
15    CP:         [xx                    yeah
16    AP:    ((whispers)) don't pick your nose xxxx (=moves child's finger away from his nose)
17    CP:    ((whispers)) no. he-he eats childs
18    AP:    he eats children, yeah, like boys and girls (=shifts gaze to child)
19    CP:    (b)-i mean the boy
20    AP:    yeah, you better be careful (0.1) (=gaze remains on child) to not get eaten by the
21           squirgal
22    CP:    Mm, I think he likes them (=points at image in picturebook and adult's gaze returns
23           to page) be-uh-and it-and he might-he forg-in it he forgets to take the tin.
24    AP:    does he?
25    CP:    yeah
26    AP:    shall we see what happens? (=quick glance down at child)
27    CP:    yeah
28    AC1:   So, if you see it do take care. its tummy rumbles, so beware (PT>) ↑I can't no-I
29           cannot stop, I must away. Hoora::y, today's my holida:y.
30    AN:    then off he sprinted with a grin, I turned the key and °tiptoed in° (PT>) my jaw hit the
31           floor, my eyes popped wide, I couldn't beli::eve the mess inside (=brief matching
32           despairing facial expression)
33    AP:     .hhh ((quiet gasp)) (0.3) look at that one (=points to image and child's gaze follows)
34           (he's a /in the) tree (PT>)
35    AN:    the naughty creatures stole my hat, my broom became their cricket bat, and when I
36           went to clean the floor, <they kicked, and flicked> (PT>) and smashed the door. they
37           scrambled [high
38    CP:             [THAT ONE'S ESCAPED! (=points to image)
39    AP:   oh no, oh dear
40    AN:   they scrambled high, rolled on the ground, they howled and yowled and raced around
41    CP:   that's that one (=points to image)
42    AP:   oh yeah (0.1) that one must go schwoo schwoo schwooo (look)
43    AN:   their hooves flung dung, and with their paws, they bent the trees and banged on doors
44           (PT>) Now, I'd been left to run this zoo, but what on earth was i to ↑do? I took my
45           broom, replaced my hat, and loudly said ↓ENOUGH OF THAT. i grabbed the growling
46           grimblegraw when from his huge and hairy jaws there came a mighty frightening
47           RAWWR ((gruff voice)) his head was high, he looked quite proud, until I RAWWRED
48           ((gruff voice)) back twice as loud (=glances down at child as makes rawring noise)
49           (PT>) I tracked the dangling dinglebee, which couldn't hide as well as me. i found the
50           morph (=points to image), split up the quees (=points to image), and caught the humple
51           in the trees (=points to image) (PT>) I jumped up on the purple gurps, I learned to duck
52           their fiery burps, I rode till they could run no more, they slumped back home and shut
53           their door. I fed the [beasts
54    CP:                        [THAT-their door look likes them! (=points to image)
55    AP:   it does doesn't it ((laughter)), it's all bumpy and purple
56    AN:   I fed the beasts, they munched and crunched, I wish that ↑I had time for lunch
57    CP:   there's that one (=points at image) (=adult laughs) and that one. (ooh) they're both
58           eating
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59	AP:	i wonder what they're eating. looks all spikey (PT>)
60	AN:	a <u>fl</u>ying <u>fl</u>omp leapt from a tree, but couldn't jump as fast as me. the furry furbles
61		tickled my nose, I'm glad they have such ticklish toes. <But <u>then</u>, among the squarps->
62		squawks and chirps, and the fiery burps of the purple gurps, I heard a rumbly tummy
63		gurgle (PT>)=
64	AP:	=((gasps))=
65	AN:	then I saw the…(=*drops gaze to child and moves closer to his ear*) (0.1) scary::…
66	CP:	(gurgle)
67	AN:	Squirgal
68	CP:	squirgal
69	AN:	it licked its lips quite hungrily, but I just smiled and said you see squirgals are afraid of
70		<u>Me</u>. served with chips, they're really yum, and <squir::gal (=*drops head towards child*)
71		that gur::gle… (PT>) came from> (=*rotates page from horizontal to vertical to match*
72		*new illustration*)
73	CP:	my:: tum
74	AN:	my tum ((laughs))
75	CP:	no it came from his tum (=*points at image*)
76	AP:	((laughs)) (PT>)
77	AN:	just then the keeper reappeared, he looked more peaceful, calm, and cheered
78	AC1:	they're good as gold
79	AN:	the keeper puzzled. squirgal purred and furbles nuzzled. ↑yes! I said and passed the
80		key, I soon showed them the boss was me. the keeper stared, mouth open wide. I waved
81		goodbye and began to ride. I whizzed past hills and through the wood, I think today
82		was rather good (PT>)
83	CP:	look, that dino-that one, look (PT<) that one's fl-crying (=*moves index finger down face*
84		*from eye to imitate a tear*)
85	AP:	((laughs)) he's so sad to see him go
86	CP:	and there (=*points to image*) and he xxxx xxxx
87	AP:	he's got sad eyes hasn't he? oh that one's crying (=*points to image*) ((laughs)) (look at
88		that one) he's wiping his eye with his tail (0.2) (PT>)
89	CP:	i think he's crying too ((laughs))
90	AP:	(PT<) which one?
91	CP:	that [one there (=*points to image*) ((voice manipulation))
92	AC2:	[oh boo-hoo
93	AP:	they miss him (PT>)
94	CP:	((laughs))
95	AN:	<u>N</u>ext day imagine my surprise to find I'd won ↑another prize. you've won first place,
96		well done to you, oh ple:ase come back and run the zoo
97	AP:	((chuckles))
98	CP:	(he brought a xxxx xxxx he went in his pyja:::mas, with his crocodile) ((high pitched
99		laughing vocals))
100	AP:	((laughs)) (=*moves childs finger from his nose*) aww, right. Time for bed (=*closes*
101		*picturebook and pulls child close for a moment before getting up from the chair*)