

DIALOGIC READING IN THE HOME ENVIRONMENT: A MULTIPLE CASE
STUDY OF SIX FAMILIES

by

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Dedication

This is dedicated to my family and all of my past, current, and future students.

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Abstract

DIALOGIC READING IN THE HOME ENVIRONMENT: A MULTIPLE CASE STUDY OF SIX FAMILIES

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The purpose of this multiple case study was to describe the experiences of six families of varying ethnicities and social classes being taught to use dialogic reading (DR) with their young children at home and to assess students' vocabulary development. Using a Comprehensive Model of Emergent Literacy (Rhode, 2015) and an Ecological Model of Children's Developmental Pathways (Weisner, 2002). Each case was analyzed and the family's experiences contributed to the knowledge of how DR was implemented in the home. The families were taught to use DR using an instructional video and then observed over a six-week time frame. The preschoolers participating in the study were tested using the Expressive Vocabulary Test- 2 (EVT-2) (Williams, 2007) before and after the DR implementation. Data collection included interviews, direct observations, and video taping of dialogic reading in the home, field notes, and the EVT-2 (Williams, 2007). Data analysis consisted of initial and axial coding to form themes and the cases were compared using Stake's (2006) multiple case analysis. This study found the families implemented

DR to various degrees, while using some prompts more than others. The families experienced increased levels of interest, engagement, and bonding during shared readings. While there was little change in expressive vocabulary development, one preschooler's scores increased using DR. Implications of this research include expanding the Comprehensive Emergent Literacy Model to include motivational factors, as well as the need for exploring further development in the use of recall prompts.

Introduction

A child's earliest language experiences occur with their family. The family determines the child's language and how the child will learn language. Verbal interactions, and literacy experiences, vary greatly from family to family (Wasik & Van Horn, 2012). Verbal interactions between families and their young children are an important start to a young child's education (Ninio & Snow, 1996). Verbal interactions, or interactions that include oral language and gestures, often occur when parents read to their young children (Beck & McKeown, 2001). By focusing on ways to put more verbal interactions into shared readings, researchers and educators may find ways to help *all* children come to school with the vocabulary they need to succeed, especially in reading. This chapter will briefly discuss vocabulary development, dialogic reading practices, and how researchers have studied family literacy. The current study, which investigates families' experiences while implementing dialogic reading in the home, will then be outlined.

Background of the Problem

Children with advanced oral language development, as well as other emergent literacy skills, are better equipped to begin formal reading instruction and learn to read and write with more ease than children who do not have emergent literacy skills (Lonigan, 2006). Children come to school with varying home language experiences.

Some students may enter school with no prior knowledge of the alphabetic system and need support at that level. Other children may already know how to read and need instruction on advancing their reading skills (Lonigan, 2006). These students are all at different levels and should receive the support they need to progress in their reading development. Vocabulary is an emergent literacy skill that helps young children learn to read (Lonigan, 2006). Emergent literacy skills are defined as the background information and abilities that children gain from books and from experiences they have before entering elementary school (Clay, 2001; Slavin, 2006).

One way to increase a child's expressive vocabulary is through dialogic reading (Mol, Bus, deJong & Smeets, 2008). Because dialogic reading is one way to build students' emergent literacy skills and because home literacy experiences vary greatly, this study explores different families' experiences while implementing the technique at home. In studying families' different experiences assumptions and deficits can be avoided by using a conceptual framework such as ecocultural theory (Weisner, 2002). An ecocultural theory uses a families routines to determine resources and cultural values. Specifically, this research studies (a) how families across varied racial and socioeconomic backgrounds implement dialogic reading after learning about this type of shared reading and (b) how children's expressive vocabularies may change while using dialogic reading.

Vocabulary Acquisition and Dialogic Reading

Researchers have studied the differences in young children's vocabulary and oral language development. Students from higher socioeconomic backgrounds hear more

words overall (Hart & Risely, 1995, 2002; Lyytinen, Laakso, & Poikkeus, 1998; Nagy, Anderson, & Herman, 1987). These differences are especially significant when considering that oral discourse, or “the extended oral productions, whether monologic or multi-party, centered on a topic, activity or goal” (Ninio & Snow, 1996, p. 323), is crucial to literacy development. Oral discourse in itself, through modeling and practice, is closely related to literacy development (Lawrence & Snow, 2011). This discourse helps to increase a child’s vocabulary skills (Lyytinen et al., 1998). There is a plethora of parenting advice that includes reading and talking with young children as being very important to their literacy development (Lawrence & Snow, 2011)

With such importance being placed on increasing vocabulary at an early age, researchers use interventions in attempt to increase young children’s vocabulary skills (Mol & Bus, 2011). One intervention that has been shown to increase expressive vocabulary using shared reading is dialogic reading. Dialogic reading is a specific type of shared reading that uses questioning techniques to make the child an active participant during shared readings. This and other types of shared reading activities have been shown to increase students’ emergent literacy skills when used by parents and when used by teachers in early childhood education settings (Lonigan & Shanahan, 2010; Sulzby & Teale, 1991; Wasik & Hindman, 2009; Whitehurst et al., 1988). Dialogic reading is especially effective in increasing young children’s expressive vocabulary (Mol et al., 2008; White).

Dialogic reading includes questioning techniques that can be remembered using two acronyms, “PEER” and “CROWD.” The dialogic reading protocol cues the adult

reader to prompt, evaluate, extend, and repeat (PEER) utterances produced by the child (Arnold, Lonigan, Whitehurst, & Epstein, 1994; Whitehurst et al., 1994). This sequence is designed to increase the child's utterances and give them the confidence to expand their thinking. The second set of prompts (CROWD) includes the following types of questions: cloze (child fills in the blank), recall, open ended questions, wh- questions, and distance questions (those that relate back to the child's real life) (Arnold et al., 1994; Whitehurst et al., 1994).

The interactions found in dialogic reading engage the child/children, and the child becomes an active participant in the reading (Mol et al., 2008). The child is asked to use vocabulary found in the text and relate it to themselves. The following is a transcript of a teacher reading the book *Carrot Soup* to a group of children:

Teacher: "It was spring, Rabbit's favorite season. It was time to plant the garden, order carrot seeds, and look forward to enjoying his favorite food, carrot soup."

Rabbit's favorite food is...

Child: Carrot soup.

Teacher: Everybody say it together.

Children: Carrot Soup.

Teacher: Good. What is your favorite food?

Child: Carrot Soup.

Teacher: Lily.

Child: Noodles.

Teacher: Noodles. Why are noodles your favorite food?

Child: Well I just like them.

Teacher: You like them? Ok. Kelsey what's your favorite food?

Child: All the foods in the whole wide world.

Teacher: All the foods in the whole wide world! Oh my goodness. Brianna?

Child: I like 'ghetti and meatballs.

Teacher: Spaghetti and meatballs. Why is that your favorite food?

Child: Because I love it.

Teacher: You love it. Ok, let's see what rabbit is going to do next, with his carrots..." (CONNECT, 2014).

In the text above, there is constant dialogue between the teacher and the children, the children's answers are expanded upon, repeated, and in response the children's utterances are reinforced and extended. These interactions help the children increase the vocabulary they hear (receptive vocabulary) and the vocabulary they use (expressive vocabulary). In a traditional shared reading of a storybook, there is little dialogue between the reader and the listener.

Researchers hypothesize that the effects of storybook reading are greater when children are active, rather than passive, participants in regular shared book reading (Hargrave & Senechal, 2000; McKeown & Beck, 2014; Senechal & Cornell, 1993). Dialogic reading is an effective technique to use with children from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds (Lonigan & Whitehurst, 1998). Many families already incorporate traditional shared reading into their reading at home (Baker & Sher, 2010; Heath, 1983; Li, 2010). However, these shared readings look different in each family

(Heath, 1983). Consequently, it is important to discuss family literacy and how it has been previously studied, especially when discussing the use of dialogic reading with families of different social and ethnic backgrounds.

Family Literacy

When families share literacy activities, they are communicating, bonding, working, learning, and much more. These literacy activities become important aspects of young children's understandings of literacy (Purcell-Gates, 1996; Rodriguez-Brown, 2011). The term "family literacy" was first used in 1983 by Denny Taylor who studied family discourse and showed that family discourses vary greatly from family to family. Heath (1983) further highlighted variation in family communication, especially surrounding literacy practices, through her ethnographic work with families in North Carolina. Family literacy is defined in many ways and includes many components. This study draws from Homer's (2008) description of family literacy: "Family Literacy refers to the literacy practices of parents, children and family members as they go about their daily lives and negotiate relationships within the family" (p. 2.). Therefore, research on family literacy should celebrate the diversity of cultures and reflect values in our society (Homer, 2008; Rodriguez-Brown, 2011).

Deficit perspective. Unfortunately, some family literacy programs label families as failing to meet the literacy standards set forth by white mainstream society. This is what occurs when family literacy is defined narrowly. A narrow definition of family literacy limits literacy activities to those that match school-like literacy activities. In many instances these literacy events are not present in non-mainstream homes; and the

demands of everyday life are seen as getting in the way of families participating in more school-based literacy activities (Auerbach, 1989).

Auerbach (1989) reviewed the literature surrounding family literacy and found five main assumptions that contribute to the deficit perspective in family literacy. The first assumption is that the home environment is literacy impoverished. This means that there are little reading materials available and parents do not know how to model or support their students. The literature (Chall & Snow, 1982; Heath, 1983; Roberts et al., 2005) suggests that this is not the case and there are many literacy practices found in the homes of low-income and minority families. The second assumption is that there is a directionality of literacy interactions and that the parent is in charge of teaching the child literacy skills. This assumption has been disputed by research that suggests children often help to mediate literacy practices in the home (Reese, Thompson, & Goldberg, 2008). The third assumption is that family contexts of successful readers match school-related tasks. This assumption has been disputed by studies (Chall & Snow, 1982) that show many factors contribute to a child's success in reading, not just home literacy practices. This research finding is further supported by Emergent Literacy Theorists (see below).

The fourth assumption centers on school contributions to the acquisition of literacy. This position assumes that the home is the key to school success. This assumption can be disputed with Heath's (1983) ethnographic study (further described in chapter 2). Heath found that even though homes from different communities all included literacy practices, these practices did not necessarily match school-related practices. The last assumption is the social context for family literacy. This assumption places a focus

on parents' inadequacies. Instead of celebrating cultural differences and exploring them, parents are blamed for how they relate with school practices. For example, some schools may require parents to attend after school meetings, but they forget to take into account social supports, such as providing child care (Auerbach, 1989).

Significance of the Problem

While research has demonstrated the benefits of dialogic reading, we know little about families' experiences using this method of storybook reading. There are several studies that involved parents in their research on dialogic reading and involved bringing students to the school setting to read to their children (Brannon & Dauksau, 2012; Lonigan & Whitehurst, 1998). Brannon and Dauksau (2012) taught parents to use dialogic reading, but the parents completed the shared readings in the classroom setting, not at home. By keeping the intervention in the formal school setting, the researchers were able to control for the quality of the interaction, but the technique was never studied as an intervention that could take place in the home, which is a more natural setting for shared book reading. This research also left out other contextual factors, such as what social factors differed in the home environment.

Teaching parents to use this technique at home showed significant effects in increasing expressive vocabulary for young children in a different study by Lonigan and Whitehurst (1998). Their research compared teachers, parents, and the use of both using the technique with low-income children to a control group. They found that parents who frequently used dialogic reading made the most significant gains in expressive vocabulary gains. However, Lonigan and Whitehurst (1998) did not collect any data that

would indicate why some parents' experiences in implementing dialogic reading were different than others. If families' experiences with dialogic reading at home are positive and increase expressive vocabulary scores, then the time and money for teaching parents the technique would be beneficial. However, it is important to find out the experiences of families as they use dialogic reading as a shared reading technique.

Research Aims

The purpose of this multiple case study was to describe the experiences of six families with varying social and ethnic backgrounds being taught to use dialogic reading with their young children at home and to assess students' vocabulary development. It is important to understand the different family's experiences in order to understand how families of varied social classes and cultures implement the technique. Dialogic reading may be a positive fit for some families and not for others. The two sections below discuss the research questions that guide the current study, which address the deficit perspective reflected in the aforementioned literature, and the research methods for the current study.

Research questions. Most studies on the use of dialogic reading have been set in the classroom. The results have shown significant results in increasing expressive vocabulary skills (Mol et al., 2008). It is also important that researchers find out about families' experiences while implementing dialogic reading in the home. Therefore, the literature surrounding expressive vocabulary skills and dialogic reading leads to the following research questions:

- 1) How do families across varied racial and socioeconomic backgrounds implement dialogic reading after learning about this type of shared reading?

2) How do children's expressive vocabularies change throughout the course of this study?

Summary of methods. *Using a multiple case study approach, the experiences of families from different social classes and ethnic backgrounds (Latino, European White, and African-American) were explored. Six cases were chosen in order to be able to see a variety of different families and understand their experiences, but still allow me to go in depth with each case. This study used purposeful sampling to select participants. Families were recruited through community postings and sites. One of the criteria for being chosen was that the families reported that they already read to their children, age's three to five. Other criteria used in selecting the families were their social and ethnic backgrounds. This was used to ensure that a variety of families were represented.*

During an initial interview, families were asked about their current shared reading practices. The children were tested on their expressive vocabulary after this interview using the Expressive Vocabulary Test, Second Edition (EVT-2) (Pearson, 2007). This test allowed me to find out the young child's current level of expressive vocabulary. Families were then instructed how to use dialogic reading at home using Read Together, Talk Together - Family Collection Kit B (Pearson Early Learning, 2003). Afterwards a videotaped observation session occurred. In-home video observations then occurred at two, four, and six weeks after the dialogic reading instruction. Before each observation I had an informal conversation with the family to discuss any changes in literacy practices that occurred in the home. Families were observed for their use of the method and dialogic reading observation protocols and field notes were used. After the final

observation, families were interviewed to find out the families' experiences using dialogic reading. After the interview, the preschoolers were given a post-test of expressive vocabulary using the EVT-2 (Williams, 2007) in order to measure changes in expressive vocabulary.

Conceptual Framework

This research involves working closely with families. The families and I were constructing meaning and exploring families' experiences using dialogic reading. By placing me in the home, the experiences of the family were also changed (Patton, 2002). We were working together to form these experiences. The issues of the cases are both etic, or brought in by me, and emic, issues of the participants (Stake, 1995). The issues that are etic are questions that were constructed before the study began. For example, I wanted to know the experiences families had while implementing dialogic reading. This is an etic issue as I provided the intervention and prescribing, to a certain extent, how families interacted with their children during book readings. The emic issues emerged as I uncovered how participants' experienced the intervention. These experiences were explored using the theoretical lenses described below.

Comprehensive emergent literacy model. One theory of reading development is Comprehensive Emergent Literacy Model (Rohde, 2015). Early Emergent Literacy theorists believe that children's listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills begin at birth. They also emphasize the importance of a literacy rich home environment. Emergent Literacy theorists also believe that reading, writing, speaking, and listening are all interrelated (Clay, 1966). ELT is an overarching theory that includes the importance of

working with families. Rhode (2015) developed the Comprehensive Emergent Literacy Model (CELM) to explain how “EL can be viewed as an interactive process rather than simply a series of individual components” (p. 1). CELM recognizes that each skill within emergent literacy (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) is developmentally complex and its own developmental process (Lonigan, 2001), but each component develops individually and are not strictly related to one another (Rhode, 2015). CELM is comprised of the four considerations that add to the original Emergent Literacy Theory.

The first is that each component of emergent literacy has its own developmental sequence. Second, each component helps to support and develop other components and takes a holistic approach. Third, there is great importance in looking at the child’s family and environment. Last, recommendations should of emergent literacy components should be matched with best teaching practices. Using CELM to understand dialogic reading in the homes of young children with different backgrounds is natural because the home is the first literacy environment (Rhode, 2015). The home environment, however, must be described in more detail than described in CELM in order to place these literacy skills within a context. One way to do that is by using Ecological Theory as described below.

Ecological theory. Specific developmental theories, such as Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) Theory of Ecological Development and Weisner’s Ecocultural understanding of children’s developmental pathways (2002), help explain literacy practices within the home environment. Early research studies were not as interested in the “process-in-context” of a study, but mainly used standardized tests or scores to determine differences in outcome of children in different groups (Bronfenbrenner, 1975). In the 21st century we

have seen a major shift in how child development is studied. Bronfenbrenner (1979) explains that, “Powerful forces affect the child’s behavior and development not directly but through their impact of the immediate settings containing the child, especially his family” (p.15). We study families for a variety of reasons. One reason that we study families is because we believe people are a product of their environment; the family is the main place that early human development takes place (Bronfenbrenner, 1986; Weigel, Martin & Bennett, 2005). Weisner (2002) suggests that one way to study this environment and understand the culture of the environment is by studying every day routines. One way to study these everyday routines is by interviewing the family about the family routine. A family’s time and resources will deem what is meaningful for the family (Weisner, 2002). This study will interview the families in a similar fashion, but will focus primarily on *literacy* routines.

However, as previously discussed, researchers must ensure that a deficit perspective is not used during research. Family literacy has previously used mainstream standards to judge minority families. Judging families on the basis of whether or not they mirror school literacy practices places all of the responsibility on the families, even when they lack the economic resources to do so (Garcia Coll et al., 1996). Wiesner (2002) suggests that looking at activities can be a beneficial way to create units for cultural analysis. The participants in this study will be asked about their literacy practices between observation sessions to gain an understanding of their resoures and time spent on literacy activities. This theory is based on the idea that a child’s engagement is routed in

their routines and activities. These routines and activities can also be found in their literacy habits.

Comprehensive Emergent Literacy Model and Ecological Theory provide a clear framework for this study. Figure 1 shows the relationship of the theories to the current study. A child is affected by their environment (Ecological Development) and should be studied with a lens that takes into account that families routines. This is especially true when studying a child's literacy learning (CELM). The literacy processes of listening, speaking, writing, and reading are all affected by the child's environment, which should be studied with care in order to avoid a deficit perspective..

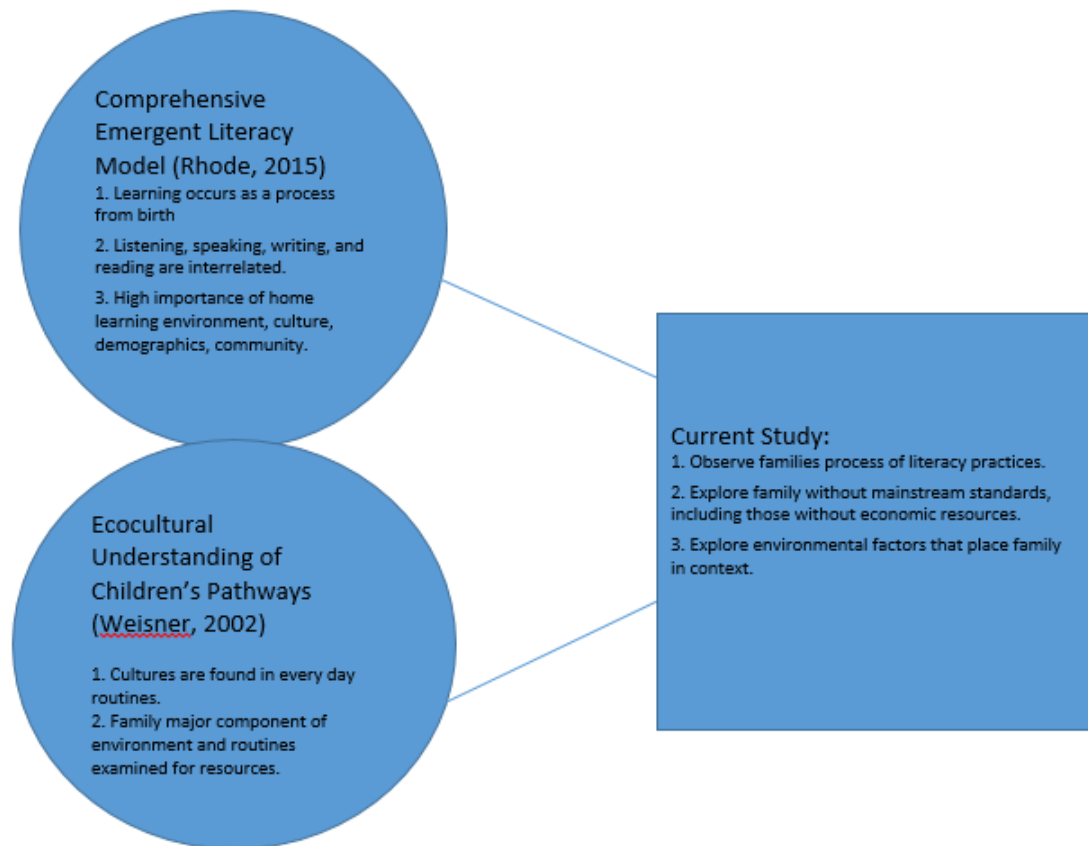


Figure 1: Figure one shows that Comprehensive Emergent Literacy Theory and the Ecocultural understanding of children's pathways all play an important role in the current study. The theories are also not mutually exclusive. The theories overlap by studying the child as a unique subject that has outside forces that help to shape development.

Definition of Terms

The following is list of terms being defined in order to avoid misunderstandings and assumptions. Although many of the terms are common, they also have specific definitions when discussing family literacy.

Emergent literacy skills	the background information and abilities that children gain from books and experiences they have before entering school (Slavin, 2006).
Dialogic reading	a specific type of shared reading that uses questioning techniques to make the child an active participant while being read to.
Expressive vocabulary	knowledge and use of spoken words
Family literacy	“Family Literacy refers to the literacy practices of parents, children and family members as they go about their daily lives and negotiate relationships within the family” (Homer, 2008, p. 2).
Literacy event	any parent/family/child interaction in the home that supports early literacy skills (Rodriguez-Brown, 2011).
Oral language discourse	“the extended oral productions, whether monologic or multi-party, centered on a topic, activity or goal” (Ninio & Snow, 1996, 323)
Oral vocabulary	is when there is understanding of the word when spoken, regardless of whether or not it can be read and understood in print (NICHHD, 2000).
Print vocabulary	Implies that the word can be understood when read. Oral vocabularies develop earlier than print vocabularies (NICHHD, 2000). Shared reading a literacy event that entails one or more persons reading aloud to another person
Vocabulary	refers to word meanings (NICHHD, 2000)

Summary

This chapter explained that children enter elementary school with very different backgrounds and levels of vocabulary skills. Dialogic reading was discussed as one way to increase expressive vocabulary in young children. A large portion of the research on dialogic reading has focused on the school setting and using teachers to implement the technique. This study used multiple cases to study the use of dialogic reading at home after families have been taught to use the technique. The study investigated the families' experiences and the child's expressive vocabulary at the beginning and end of the study. The next chapter will continue the review of the relevant research leading to the design of this study. The literature will discuss expressive vocabulary as an emergent literacy skill, the development of emergent literacy skills within the family setting, dialogic reading as a shared reading experience, and last, teaching families in literacy techniques. The literature reviewed will frame the study within the family setting. Chapter three will describe the methodology of the study in further detail and explain the participants, data collection and process, and data analysis. Chapter four will discuss the results of the study and chapter five will discuss the impacts of this study on further research and practice in the area of dialogic reading and family literacy practices.

Review of the Literature

“There are differences in quantity and quality of language exposure that affect vocabulary development, and these are linked to SES” (Juel, 2006, p. 412). The literature shows, however, that vocabulary acquisition begins early (Biemiller, 2003; Hart & Risely, 1995; Roskos et al., 2008). The current study is interested in how expressive vocabulary can be increased by teaching families to use dialogic reading at home. It is also interested in families’ experiences implementing dialogic reading in their own homes.

The literature review for this study will begin with a review of family literacy studies. Family literacy studies will be reviewed to show the different literacy activities found in the family setting. Many of these activities increase vocabulary skills (Beck & McKeown, 2001; Hart & Risely, 1995; Lonigan & Whitehurst, 1998). The review will then discuss vocabulary acquisition. It is important for us to know how young children acquire new vocabulary and why it is important to for their future literacy success. One common finding of vocabulary research in homes is that it can be increased using storybook reading (Beck & McKeown, 2001; Senechal & Cornell, 1993; Wasik & Hindman, 2014). A specific form of storybook reading is dialogic reading. Research on using dialogic reading and its advancements will be discussed. In order for dialogic reading to be most effective, the methods used to instruct teachers and families are important. The last section of this review describes studies that looked specifically at the effectiveness of teaching teachers and families to use dialogic reading. This chapter will

close with a synthesis of the research reviewed and gaps in the literature will be discussed.

Family Literacy Experiences

Many studies define literacy experiences differently, but for the purpose of this review a literacy event is any family/child interaction in the home that supports early literacy skills (Rodriguez-Brown, 2011). Rodriguez-Brown further explains that:

An explicit statement needs to be made to explain that, in a diverse society, parents might share literacy with their children in different manners, which should be respected and celebrated. These differences could be used as stepping stones to learning different ways to become literate, and would facilitate all children's transition between school and home. (p. 729)

These differences can only be accounted for if we understand what they are first. This study is designed to find out what families' experiences are. It is important to find out what other researchers' have found in regards to literacy experiences of families. This review starts with Heath's (1982) research because it was one of the first studies to look at what literacy activities looked like in different homes. This study was seminal and focused literacy research to look at the practices occurring in the home. The review will then look at family literacy in the 21st century. There is a clear focus during this time period on examining the beliefs of parents and their motivations (Meagher, Arnold, Doctoroff, & Baker, 2008; Reese, Thompson, & Goldberg, 2008; Roberts et al., 2005). Another clear

aspect of studies in the 21st century is the focus on measuring emergent literacy skills in the home (Hart et al., 2009; Weigal, Martin, & Bennett, 2005). These studies will be discussed chronologically in order to see the progression and focus of the previous research.

The beginning of family literacy research. Family literacy began its roots with Heath's (1982) ethnographic study of three different communities that looked at middle class European white families and working class European white families, as well as working class African-American families. Heath frames the study through the Family Literacy Framework and believes each community has its own rules for socially interacting and sharing knowledge. She conducted many hours of interviews and observations in this study. In "Trackton," the African-American community, there are no set bedtime for children, no set routines, and no bedtime stories. Specific literacy activities that were found in Trackton homes included the following: in the presence of human talk and noise from television, stereo, and radio; adults read newspapers, mail, calendars, circulars, school materials, television sets, and Bibles. Parents here believe that children learn by experience and not the explanations that the parents give them. The ways of school are significantly different than home life. For example, the types of questions that teachers typically ask are not present in the homes of "Trackton" children.

This study shows some aspects of Auerbach's (1989) criteria for deficit based practices in family literacy studies. For example, there is an assumption that

emergent literacy skills are built by matching school-based practices. This assumption has been shown to be untrue (Reese, Thompson, & Goldberg, 2008). Children can still obtain important emergent literacy skills from their own family traditions. However, Heath (1982) does acknowledge that there are non-traditional modes of literacy exposure, such as newspapers and bibles.

The European white middle-class community was called “Maintown.” The European white working class European white community was given the name “Roadville.” It was observed that children in both of these homes learned how to talk about books and learned the rules of school. They learned about the rules of schools through dialogue with their parents. The “rules of school” involve the same question and answer response that is often expected in schools. The biggest difference between “Maintown” and “Roadville” families was the way that parents in “Maintown” expounded on content knowledge and brought it to the real world. Parents often gave reasons and explanations for things that were occurring in the real world. For example, if a child saw a yield sign and said, “Look, there is a stop sign” the parent would not only correct them, but also explain why it was different. Another difference in the two was found in the use of manuals. “Roadville” families were not observed using different manuals and other instructional texts to the extent of families from “Maintown” were (Heath, 1982).

The implication for the differences in these findings is that students in “Roadville” and “Tracktown” were then found to be less independent in later years of schooling than those in “Maintown.” There were almost no differences in their emergent

literacy skills. The difference was not noted until they were being asked to reason and extrapolate their own answers. This study gives researchers evidence that there are differences in literacy activities in the homes that may be associated with ethnicity and social class.

Family literacy in the 21st century. Heath's (1982) early research on family literacy practices examined what was occurring in homes, but was limited in looking at the motivations for what families were doing. Research in the 21st century has a clear focus on examining the beliefs of parents and the motivations of both parents and children. Baker and Scher (2002) examined 65 six year olds from different sociocultural backgrounds in order to examine the children's motivation for reading in relation to parental beliefs about home literacy experiences. The children were given the Motivations for Reading Scale and the parents were interviewed about their beliefs and frequency of reading to their children. The results indicated that there was not a relationship between reading motivation and income level, ethnicity, or gender. This is contrary to Heath's (1982) findings. Baker and Scher (2002) used interviews instead of directly observing the families. I also found that a child's motivation was not associated with the frequency in which their parents read to them. The child's motivation was associated with the parent's belief that reading is pleasurable. The research did not examine whether this belief was conveyed through the literacy experiences provided, modeling, or through expressed words.

Heath's (1982) study also exposed the need for more in-depth, longitudinal studies. Roberts, Jurgens, Burchinal, and Graham (2005) used a longitudinal design and

followed children for five years. The theoretical framework for their study is situated in the idea that early emergent literacy skills are important (Teale & Sulzby, 1986) especially for later reading (Storch & Whitehurst, 2002). The study included 72 African-American children from low-income families who were enrolled in childcare. The participants were followed from infancy to kindergarten. The mothers were interviewed and sent questionnaires regarding their reading frequency, children's interests, and their own book reading strategies. Observations were used to code maternal sensitivity, which was defined by warmth, sensitivity, responsiveness, stimulation value, and elaborateness. The children were tested for receptive and expressive language, literacy skills, and vocabulary. The only significant outcome was on maternal sensitivity and the children's receptive vocabulary ($B = 5.24, p < .05$). This was one of the only significant findings and was not highly supported by other outcomes such as receptive language skills and maternal sensitivity. Specific literacy activities measured in the home included book reading, academic and language stimulation, and maternal involvement with the child (Roberts et al., 2005).

The findings of Roberts et al. (2005) study do not corroborate Heath's (1982) findings. Roberts et al. found that low-income African-American mothers frequently read to their children and had a high degree of supportive language activities. Heath found almost no supportive language activities, narrowly conceptualized, and no bedtime stories in low-income African American communities.

Weigal, Martin, and Bennett (2005) conducted a longitudinal study to measure the outcomes of home literacy practices and emergent literacy and language skills. Their

work is framed in Family Literacy Theory which contends that children surrounded with a literacy rich environment gain more emergent literacy skills than children who are not exposed to books and other literacy experiences. The 85 parent participants (mostly white European) and their children, ranging in age from 3 to 5, were recruited through child care centers. The parents were given a questionnaire regarding their personal reading enjoyment, time reading by themselves, read alouds with children, the number of picture books in the home, the number of library visits in a week, reciting rhymes, telling stories, drawing pictures, and playing games (Weigal et al., 2005). The findings suggested that when there is an increase in literacy activities, there is also an increase in print knowledge and other emergent literacy skills. This finding held true on the retesting of children one year later (Weigal et al., 2005)

Weigal et al's (2005) study is especially significant to the current study because while there was an increase in emergent literacy skills, the frequency of parent-child literacy and language activities did not show significant results on the child's expressive vocabulary. They did find, however, that the expressive and receptive vocabularies were positively associated with parental demographic characteristics. One reason for this may be their broad definition of a "language enhancement activity": "shared book readings, making books available for children's use, and engaging in reciting rhymes, telling stories, drawing pictures and playing games with children" (p. 373). This is a relatively broad set of criteria.

The previous studies reviewed have focused on what the literacy practices in the home include. Meagher, Arnold, Doctoroff, and Baker (2008) wanted to find out if the

mother's beliefs are associated with their own and their children's behavior during shared readings. This is an important study because it shifts the focus from what to why. Finding out why parents act in a certain way may provide better understanding of how parents can play a role in their child's reading development. This study used direct observations and mother-reported beliefs. The maternal beliefs were divided into two categories, beliefs about future grade achievement and beliefs about task goals. The observed behaviors were classified into three different categories; the maternal learning-focused behaviors, the mothers' emotional tone, and the child's engagement.

The participants included 50 children around five years of age and their mothers from child development centers. The children were mostly low-income, and were 46% Hispanic, 34% White, 12% African American, and 8% mixed race. Most of the mothers who participated were educated through high school. There were no relationships found between the maternal grade expectations and the behaviors observed. However, it was found that the mothers who believed that reading is for learning asked more questions and provided more information to their children than the mothers who believed reading is for fun. Interestingly, in boys, the mother's belief that reading should be fun was positively related to the child's engagement level. This was not found in girls. The researchers suggest that this may be because boy's engagement levels were lower overall and the mothers were trying to entertain them. This study had many limitations, mostly due to sample size, but also because much of the data could be considered correlational (Meagher et al., 2008).

While Meagher et al. (2008) looked at the mothers' beliefs, Reese, Thompson and Goldberg (2008) used ecocultural theory as a theoretical framework to try and explain if communities define the literacy practices of the home. This theory is based on the assumption that everyday family settings help researchers to understand the culture of each family and that by studying everyday situations researchers can understand the culture of that particular family (Gallimore, Goldenberg & Weisner, 1993). Reese et al.'s (2008) study included 632 Hispanic families from two different regions in the United States. Parents were first surveyed about their practices and then a subset was interviewed. The literacy practices found were divided into the following seven domains: school, household, religion, newspaper, letter, entertainment, and work. There was a wide range of reading activities in the home. Specific literacy skills were not tested for during this study. The study claimed that different communities have different levels of reading frequency and many are bilingual households. Some communities rarely read narrative texts, newspapers, or other reading material. Other sites frequently shared reading experiences. The researchers also suggest that the cultural values varied from site to site just like literacy activities did (Reese et. al., 2008). Home observations were not present in this study; self-reporting was used and carries limitations. Some parents may have claimed more frequent book reading, or on the opposite spectrum, they could have dismissed literacy activities that they did not feel were significant enough to report. While the study has a large sample size, the description of what is occurring in these homes is lacking.

Reese et al. (2008) suggested that the community did not dictate family literacy practices within the community. They explain how some families were aware and intentional concerning literacy activities in the home. Specific literacy skills, such as vocabulary were not tested once again, but through these studies we can begin to see the wide variety of literacy practices present in homes of different cultures and social economic levels. These literacy practices included shared readings, storytelling, writing letters, reading the Bible, writing grocery lists, singing, and reading the newspaper.

When looking at the home literacy environment and its effects on expressive vocabulary, researchers found that the home literacy environment does influence expressive vocabulary in school aged children (Hart et al., 2009). Hart et al. examined 314 twins in their home environment through three annual home visits. The home literacy environment was assessed using mother's self-reports on the Home Literacy Environment (HLE), and expressive vocabulary was tested using the Boston Naming Test (BNT). The heritability of the BNT and the estimates of the shared environment were significant. This means that although genetics may play role in expressive vocabulary scores, the home literacy environment plays a significant role. One limitation of this study, however, is that the BNT is an object naming test and does not capture all facets of expressive vocabulary. Another limitation is that the home literacy environment was not observed. Even the study states that there were home visits, these visits were only designed to give the mothers the HLE and the children the BNT. The researchers were not actually observing the literacy events that occurred in the home.

In Li's (2010) research specific literacy skills were not tested, but low SES white European families were interviewed and observed to see what their general literacy practices in the home were. The children of the white families being studied attended an elementary school designated for refugee children. Although the children were not refugees, they were one of the only remaining white families in the area. The children were read to, parents completed homework with them, read notes from school, and a large amount of reading and writing materials were available in the home. One major finding about this family's literacy practices was that leisure reading was highly valued. Although they did not have a lot of money, if a child asked for a book, they found the money from somewhere. There was also a great deal of modeling of leisure reading in the home.

Studies in the 21st century have moved from Heath's (1982) study concerned with what the literacy practices in homes were, to more recent studies (Li, 2010; Meagher et al., 2008; Reese et al., 2008) that have focused on the motivations for the literacy events found in homes, ranging from communities to parents. These studies tell us that there are not only a variety of literacy practices in different homes, but the quality (based outcomes of emergent literacy skills) of the activities tend to also vary. All aspects of families must be considered when studying families, and this includes the child's motivation (Baker & Scher, 2002). These family literacy events play an important role in the child's reading development (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). These studies do not tell us about parents' experiences when trying to implement new literacy practices in the home. The previous studies only discuss what literacy practices are currently happening, the parents'

motivations, and some of the literacy skills obtained. It is important to know about families' processes and meaning making while implementing dialogic reading.

Vocabulary Acquisition

Vocabulary acquisition occurs naturally through dialogue in the home at various rates (Hart & Risely, 1995; NICHD, 2000) but it is also developed through storybook reading (Beck & McKeown, 2001). This section will review vocabulary studies that use vocabulary interventions with young children and also studies that look at how vocabulary is naturally acquired in the home setting. This is important because this study uses an intervention to attempt to increase vocabulary scores. It is important to know what vocabulary interventions are working in young children.

For the purpose of this review and study, vocabulary refers to word meanings (NICHD, 2000). Vocabulary and language development are key aspects of success in early reading (Biemiller, 2003; Wasik & Iannone-Campbell, 2012). A preschooler's vocabulary is a strong predictor of their later success in reading (Hart & Risely, 2003). The National Reading Panel categorizes vocabulary into two types: oral and print. Oral vocabulary is when there is understanding of the word when spoken, regardless of whether or not it can be read and understood in print. Print vocabulary implies that the word can be understood when read. Oral vocabularies develop earlier than print vocabularies (NICHD, 2000).

Different children's vocabulary development varies by up to 30 million words by the age of three according to Hart and Risely's (1995) study of 42 one to three year-olds over a two-year time period. The longitudinal study recorded hour-long observations each

month of the 42 children and their families. Families' language interactions were coded and analyzed. By collecting data when the children were learning to talk, the researchers were not only able to measure the children's vocabulary, but also the processes by which they obtained language. The study found that the children with a lower SES not only had smaller vocabularies but also were adding words to their repertoires at a slower rate. A follow-up study (Hart & Risely, 2003) showed at age nine, these students' vocabulary scores were consistent with their vocabularies when they were three. It is also notable that 86% to 98% of the words recorded in each child's vocabulary consisted of words in their parent's vocabulary. Parents with a higher education level were exposing their children to more sophisticated vocabulary and language structures. Because by the age of three children already vary greatly in their vocabulary development, it is important to study interventions that may improve the vocabulary of struggling students.

Hart and Risely's (1995) findings are important because the study has been cited in Congressional hearings ("The critical need for evidence-based programs," 2003), the press, and hundreds of scholarly journals. However, in 2009 Dudley-Marling and Lucas make claims that the data interpretation and analysis of the study were not sound. They state that the manner in which the study selected participants was flawed because the criterion for participation in the study was SES. However, the participants did not represent the population. For example, all the families receiving welfare were Black, when in reality only 25% of Americans living below the poverty line are Black (US Census Bureau, 2003). The study also fails to take into consideration linguistic and cultural practices of the families, and does not frame the study in a manner that includes

differences in language or culture. Therefore, the study portrays different ethnicities, particularly black families, as having less meaningful vocabulary interactions (Dudley-Marling & Lucas, 2009).

It is important to uncover these issues since the assumption that there is a lack of vocabulary interactions in many homes is the basis for the current study. However, this study using dialogic reading does not make assumptions based on the same deficit view. The study is important to highlighting the vast vocabulary differences in homes in general.

Some researchers claim that because most children enter school for the first time in Kindergarten, which is where educators should focus vocabulary development (Silverman, 2007). It is true that kindergarten is where many formal schooling experiences begin, but there is no argument among researchers that vocabulary development begins at home well before formal schooling. Because of this understanding, researchers should focus on helping children before they ever enter formal schooling. One way that parents can begin to introduce their children to new words is through the use of storybook reading (Beck & McKeown, 2001). Storybook reading may be a way for families to introduce vocabulary that is not necessarily in their or their children's everyday word utterances. It also provides the opportunity for children to try out newly learned vocabulary. These literacy experiences between parent and child are very important to vocabulary development. Robbins and Ehri (1994) found that the rate of vocabulary acquisition directly impacts a child's literacy potential because recognizing

new words is dependent on building upon the vocabulary already developed. This development carries into children's school experiences.

Some researchers estimate that school children increase their vocabularies by about 2,000 words per year (Nagy & Herman, 1987). It has been hypothesized that much of this growth comes from incidental learning and throughout elementary school the average child will acquire 9,000 root words (Biemiller & Slonin, 2001). This means that new vocabulary words are not from a list of words that the teacher has explicitly taught. The new words come from the language they hear daily and from reading natural text. In Nagy, Herman, and Anderson's (1985) study they used 57 eighth grade students to test whether the words they gained came directly from passages they were given. They used a hierarchical regression analysis to show that the students made statistically reliable gains in word knowledge from context. The researchers believe that the incidental learning from texts contributes to a large portion of children's vocabulary growth in school.

These findings were also supported in a study conducted by Senechal and Cornell (1993). In this study 80 four and five-year-old children were tested on whether they could learn new vocabulary words after being read a story with those vocabulary words one time. The children were pre and post tested on 10 target words that were included in the story before and immediately after the storybook reading. The children were once again post-tested one week after the reading. The four-year-old children were not able to remember as many words as the five year olds. The receptive vocabulary scores also did not change under different learning conditions, such as active participation in the reading. It was concluded that a single reading of the book did not produce any results on a child's

expressive vocabulary. Senechal and Cornell (1993) state that this study is important because it shows that including active participation while reading did not increase the vocabulary of the 10 words. This study was relatively short and based only on the 10 words that were measured. The children may have been able to gain the meaning of the story from the narrative. The testing measures of having three tests within two weeks on the same 10 words may also have decreased the validity of the test.

Expressive vocabulary gains are significant when studying children under three (Fletcher, Cross, Tanney, Schneider, & Finch, 2008). Fletcher et al. (2008) studied 87 children aged 24 months who were enrolled in an early intervention program. All of the children participating had moderate delays in one area of development. Many of the participants were also living in poverty. During the study caregivers were given a copy of *Happy Days*, a picture book, and asked to look (the word read was not used) at the book with their child. The vocabulary interactions were videotaped. The caregivers then filled out the CDI (Mac-Arthur Communicative Development Inventories: Short Form versions). The caregivers then completed this same form when the children were 30 months old. The researchers examined the types of vocabulary interactions they observed to the frequency that the caregivers reported reading to the child. It was found that the “caregivers’ reading techniques have a greater influence over children’s attention during reading” (p.103). They also shared that “only the use of questions by caregivers in the prediction of joint attention during reading showed a relationship with reported frequency of caregiver reading” (p. 104). This finding is significant to the current study because parent and child interaction is the basis for dialogic reading.

In a meta-analysis of effects of vocabulary intervention on young children's word learning (Marulis & Neuman, 2013), it was shown that very few studies of vocabulary interventions involved parents as instructors. The majority of the 67 studies reviewed showed that the instruction was completed by researchers or teachers. Results indicated that there was an effect size of .88, which is on average one standard deviation on vocabulary measures. The interventions ranged from 1 to 270 days, with a median of 47 days. At risk children of middle and upper income levels benefited more than those at risk and from low income levels. The results did not show significant differences in students who were not at risk. The authors claim that because the results between the two previously mentioned groups was so great, vocabulary interventions are not powerful enough to close the gap. This meta-analysis is useful in portraying a picture on the types of studies completed, but conclusions on specific groups and interventions cannot be made.

Incidental learning of vocabulary is another important reason that educators should be helping to teach families effective ways to read with their children. Children who are successful at reading will read more (DeTemple & Snow, 2003). The more the children read, the more incidental vocabulary knowledge that they will gain, and in turn the better readers they will become (Lyytinen, Laakso, & Poikkeus, 1998). It is important that researchers find ways to help increase the vocabularies of all students, but by starting with families early, the gap will be much smaller.

However, it still remains a debate on what types of vocabulary instruction should be given (McKeown & Beck, 2014). McKeown and Beck's study was designed to

compare two vocabulary approaches, repetition (repeated storybook readings) and interactive (based on a cognitive approach working with, thinking about, and responding to words). The study also utilized a control group that served to measure incidental learning that occurred. The participants included 131 kindergarten students from a public school. Half of the participants received free and reduced lunch, 75% of them were European-American and 25% were African-American. The students were pre and post tested using the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT-4). The intervention lasted three days and the same three books were used for each intervention group. The results showed few effects large enough to report meaningful differences. There were almost no differences in the interventions on meaning recognition, listening comprehension, and production. When looking at context integration, the interactive vocabulary instruction had a slight advantage. As compared to other studies, this intervention time was relatively short (3 days). The authors state that this limitation may attribute to the small effect sizes.

The types of verbal interactions continue to be studied in order to explain whether targeting specific words for instruction explains vocabulary skills gained over an academic year. Wasik and Hindman (2014) used three Head Start programs in the northeast to study a training program. In an ExCell training program that addresses “building vocabulary through conversations, advancing vocabulary through shared book reading, enhancing sound awareness, teaching alphabet knowledge, and helping children with emergent writing” (p. 1042) the training session was completed in workshops of 2-3 hours over 1-2 month cycles and included a coach visiting the classroom. Another training, Business-as-usual, included monthly in-service trainings for 2-3 hours and

focused on a variety of topics, including literacy. Teachers could use supervisors as support, but did not have coaches. Measures used to collect data included a teacher background survey, school records depicting child background variables, the PPVT-III, talk during book reading, target vocabulary words (not previously disclosed to teachers), teacher talk (using the target words in contextualized or decontextualized ways), and child talk (when the child used a target word). The results suggested that the ExCell intervention increased the amount of talk surrounding the target words. The importance of this study in regards to children's vocabulary is that "teacher talk and, implicitly, child talk during book reading emerged as an active ingredient in the intervention's effect on children's knowledge of vocabulary" (Wasik & Hindman, 2014, p. 1049).

It is currently unknown how many vocabulary words children learn each year, but it is known that these words do not come from schooling alone (Nagy et al., 1987). This is important to recognize because researchers and educators are looking at ways to increase vocabulary in children. So far we know that vocabulary development in the early years comes through dialogue (Biemiller, 2003; Fletcher et al., 2008; Hart & Risely, 1995) and that one effective means of increasing dialogue is by using storybook reading (Beck & McKeown, 2001; Roskos et al., 2008; Senechal & Cornell, 1993; Wasik & Hindman, 2014). One way to increase dialogue during shared book readings is by using dialogic reading (Whitehurst et al., 1988). The next section will review the development and current studies on dialogic reading.

Dialogic Reading

Dialogic reading reverses the roles of adults and children during shared reading. Dialogic reading is based on the following three principles: encourage the child to participate, provide feedback to the child, and adapt reading style to the child's growing linguistic abilities (Hargrave & Senechal, 2000). The adult uses scaffolding techniques that help children talk and tell about stories they are reading (Lonigan et al., 2013). There are several prompts that can be used with the child. Zevenberger and Whitehurst (2003) developed two acronyms, CROWD and PEER, which describe nine scaffolding techniques. The following are the prompts used in the acronyms: Completion prompts, Recall prompts, Open ended prompts, "Wh" prompts, Distancing prompts, Prompting child to label and talk about what's happening in the story, Evaluating the child's talk, Expanding child's answers, and Repeating child's answers.

There are many studies that have been designed to specifically compare dialogic reading to the traditional shared reading. In traditional shared readings, often called "lap reading" (Lonigan & Whitehurst, 1998) a teacher or parent shares a book with a child by reading directly to them without asking many engaging questions. Typical questions that would be asked in a traditional shared reading ask the child to provide a yes/no answer. Researchers hypothesize that the effects of storybook reading are greater when children are active participants as compared to passive participants during regular shared book reading (Hargrave & Senechal, 2000). The studies that have looked specifically at dialogic reading versus traditional shared reading have had significant results, especially

in the area of expressive vocabulary (Hargrave & Senechal, 2000; Lonigan et al., 2009, 2013; Opel et al., 2009).

One of the earliest studies using dialogic reading as an intervention was Whitehurst and colleagues (1988). The study consisted of 29 children from the ages of 21 months to 35 months; all participants were from middle-class white European families residing in Long Island. The children were divided into two groups and were instructed to audio tape their reading sessions three times a week for a month. Parents in the intervention group participated in two, 30 minute dialogic reading training sessions, one at the beginning and one after two weeks. The children were pre and post tested using the Expressive One Word Picture Vocabulary Test and the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test. The children in the dialogic reading group performed significantly better on expressive measures, but showed almost no difference in receptive vocabulary skills. This was an important study that highlighted that the increase in dialogue between parent and child during book readings increased expressive vocabulary measures. The major limitation of the study is that the participants did not expand beyond middle class homes (Whitehurst et al., 1988).

Realizing this limitation Valdez-Menchaca and Whitehurst (1992) used dialogic reading as an intervention with 20 children from Mexico. The children were all Spanish speakers and came from working class homes. Parents faced barriers reading to their children including the fact that they did not have access to books in the home. The children were pretested on expressive and receptive vocabulary and assigned to either the control or intervention group. The dialogic reading intervention took place with a

graduate student (not parent) for 10-12 minutes a day for a month while at a child care center. The day care center was unable to read to the children due to a lack of books in the center. Once again, students in the dialogic treatment group scored significantly higher in post-tests. The tests used—Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities, Expressive One Word Picture Vocabulary test, and Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Revised—measure expressive and receptive vocabulary (Valdez-Menchaca & Whitehurst, 1992).

In 1994 Arnold, Lonigan, Whitehurst, and Epstein conducted a similar study to Whitehurst et al. (1988), but used video training instead of direct instruction with the intervention group. This study's participants consisted of 64 children and their mothers from middle- and upper-class families. The families reported reading to their children often. After completing the training, the mothers were asked to read with their children using the dialogic reading technique for the next five weeks. After the intervention the children were tested and scored significantly better than the control group on one measure of expressive vocabulary using the Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities. The researchers concluded that this confirmed that video based training was as effective as direct training (Arnold et al., 1994). Later, under the section of parent training, there will be studies that compare the types of training used. This study did, however, show that once again, dialogic reading increased expressive vocabulary scores of middle-class children.

Prior to 1998, dialogic reading interventions had only been tested on middle and upper-class families or non-English speaking populations. Lonigan and Whitehurst

(1998) tested parent *and* teacher involvement using a dialogic reading intervention for preschool children from low-income backgrounds. The participants in this study consisted of 114 three and four-year-old children drawn from four different child care centers in Nashville, Tennessee. The children were 91% African American and their pre-tests showed that they were significantly below grade level in expressive vocabulary skills (measured in Standard English). The four treatment groups consisted of a school reading treatment (with no more than five students to a group) that read for 10 minutes a day, a home reading treatment that encouraged parents to read with their children daily, a school plus home reading treatment, and a no treatment control. Both teachers and parents attended two dialogic reading training sessions. The intervention lasted six weeks. On a post-test of the children using the expressive subscale of the Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities, all of the treatment groups scored higher than the control group. When tested using the One-Word Picture Vocabulary Test, the treatment groups scored higher, except in the schools that showed low levels of compliance. These schools scored significantly less than the control group.

The following year Lonigan, Anthony, Bloomfield, Dyer, and Samwel (1999) studied 95 two to five-year-old children using a dialogic reading intervention verses traditional shared reading using the two interventions and a control group. During the intervention, undergraduate volunteers read to the children in small groups. The children were post-tested after the six-week intervention on oral language, phonological sensitivity, and listening comprehension. Both interventions produced higher effects than the control group. The dialogic reading significantly increased the descriptive use of

language, and the shared reading increased listening comprehension and alliteration detection. This study highlighted the need for further studies comparing traditional shared reading versus dialogic reading.

Hargrave and Senechal (2000) studied 36 three to five-year-old preschool children with poor expressive vocabulary skills. The children participated in a two-day childcare center in Canada. The children represented different socioeconomic status and included parents from varying education level backgrounds. Their experimental design included a dialogic reading group and a traditional shared reading group. The teachers at the reading center were trained in dialogic reading using a one-hour group session as well as a training video. The intervention lasted four weeks and the children were read the same books whether they were in the intervention or traditional reading group. While groups made some gains in vocabulary, the dialogic reading group made significant gains in expressive vocabulary. This study is also significant in that the groups were each made up of eight students. Other studies looking at dialogic reading groups traditionally used no more than five students in the dialogic intervention (Lonigan & Whitehurst, 1998). This study is important because it showed that even though dialogic reading may take much longer (Lonigan et al., 1999), it is feasible with larger groups than previously anticipated. Before it was thought that the extra time it took could instead be used for other explicit teaching areas.

Because dialogic reading had been shown to be effective as an intervention Opel, Aftab, Amear, and Aboud (2009) examined the improvements in expressive vocabulary of preschool children using a four-week dialogic reading intervention program. The

program, however, differed from the original dialogic reading technique. Not all of the traditional dialogic reading prompts (CROWD and PEER) were used. Teachers in the intervention were given a specific set of “wh” questions to use during the reading. In this manner there was not as much flexibility and responsiveness as originally designed by Whitehurst and colleagues (Whitehurst, Arnold, & Lonigan, 1990). Eighty preschoolers were randomly selected from five different schools and given the intervention for four weeks. The researchers found that the mean vocabulary scores of the dialogic reading program children increased from 26% to 54% while the control group stayed level. This study shows that even without much of the other scaffolding techniques, modified dialogic reading was still beneficial in promoting vocabulary skills.

The previous studies on dialogic reading have shown to increase expressive vocabulary scores, but they have not been as effective at increasing other vocabulary measures, such as receptive vocabulary. Researchers began to examine what other emergent literacy skills may benefit from the technique. Lever and Senechal (2011) hypothesized that dialogic reading skills may also increase narrative skills in kindergartners. They theorized that by being able to talk about the story, a students’ story structure and narrative skills may also benefit. Their study used 40 English speaking five and six-year-olds to participate in an eight-week intervention. One group of children participated in a dialogic reading intervention while the other group participated in a phonemic awareness program during the same time. A phonemic awareness intervention was used so that the students in the control would be receiving something completely different than the traditional shared reading that was already occurring in the classroom.

The results produced significant effects on the dialogic reading intervention groups' posttest narrative scores on structure and context measures. The dialogic reading group also had significant gains in expressive vocabulary once again. This study shows that dialogic reading may be beneficial to use in increasing narrative writing, as well as expressive vocabulary.

Lonigan, Purpura, Wilson, Walker, and Clancy-Menchetti (2013) evaluated dialogic reading as well as multiple other interventions designed to promote the development of emergent literacy skills. The study included 365 preschool children from three to five years old. The preschoolers were randomly assigned to either meaning-focused (dialogic reading or shared reading) or code focused (phonological awareness, letter knowledge, or both) intervention groups throughout the year. The findings indicated that impacts of emergent reading skills were observed only in the skill domain of focus during the intervention. For example, there was significant vocabulary skills improvement in the dialogic reading intervention, but not in the phonological awareness intervention group, and vice-versa. This research indicates that dialogic reading should be used as an intervention with students who need to increase their vocabulary skills. It was also found that combinations of interventions did not enhance outcomes across domains.

These studies combined help researchers to understand that children of low income (Lonigan et al., 2009; Lonigan et al., 2013) and middle income (Hargrave & Senechal, 2000; Opel et al., 2009) backgrounds can benefit from dialogic reading interventions in the classroom in order to increase their expressive vocabulary. Dialogic reading has also been shown to be effective in interventions of four weeks to two years

(Mol et al., 2008). Dialogic reading is a practice that has been shown to be effective in increasing expressive vocabulary of children in schools (Mol et al., 2008).

Working with Families

There are not as many studies that have focused on the home practice of dialogic reading, but because vocabulary development starts so young, some researchers theorize that reading success could be improved if there were an increase in positive verbal interactions between family members and their young children (Weigal et al., 2005). Nonetheless, the following two studies do not exclusively look at home interventions. The first study (Brannon & Dauksau, 2012) studied parents in the school setting to read to their own children and the second (Lonigan & Whitehurst, 1998) studied parents as one intervention group out of four.

Brannon and Dauksau (2012) studied 40 young three to five year olds who mostly spoke Spanish as their first language and their parents had an education level of a high school degree or less. During the 10-week intervention, students in the morning class session and their parents participated in dialogic reading exercises. Their parents were given training five times over the 10 weeks. Whereas many intervention studies utilized the CROWD and PEER acronyms, this study utilized a different acronym (CAR-123) designed by the Washington Research Institute in order to help parents simplify the strategies from nine to four. The CAR acronym stands for the following: comment and wait, ask questions and wait, retell and add more, and 123 tell me what you see. The afternoon preschool session participated in the traditional “family time” reading where the parents read a book to their child that they typically would. The dialogic reading

group had 13% more conversation during their shared readings. This finding is important because these conversations have been shown to increase vocabulary development (Lonigan & Whitehurst, 1998).

As previously mentioned, dialogic reading is a shared reading activity that can occur not only in the school setting but also at home. Lonigan and Whitehurst's (1998) study compared dialogic reading interventions led by teachers, parents, and both to a control group. During this study 100 low-income three and four year-olds were randomly assigned to one of the four treatment groups (a control group, a group with parents using the treatment, a group with the teacher using the treatment, a group with both parents and teachers using a teacher) for six weeks. The parents and teachers at the centers where the children attended were all trained using video tapes. All treatment groups showed gains for expressive vocabulary. The treatment groups that involved parents had the largest and longest lasting significant effects. Overall, one of the major contributing factors to success in the intervention depended on frequency of practice. The study was not designed to test this measure intentionally, but reading logs showed that the parents and centers that were most compliant in the procedures made more significant gains.

One of the main concerns in this area appears to be the sustainability of the practice (Lonigan & Whitehurst, 1998), but the at-home practice also produces some of the most significant results. This practice may be especially beneficial to students who lack expressive vocabulary skills.

Fidelity of Dialogic Reading Interventions

It is important to discuss the fidelity of dialogic reading interventions because many studies (Arnold et al., 1994; Lonigan & Whitehurst, 1998) found substantial variability in teacher and family compliance during dialogic reading interventions. Dialogic reading interventions rely on the compliance and use of strategies for the intervention to work. Research studies that use dialogic reading interventions require the person administering the intervention to be trained in the use of dialogic reading techniques. One commonly used method of training in dialogic reading is video based (Mol et al., 2008). Briesch, Chafouleas, Lebel, and Blom-Hoffman (2008) theorized that due to the variance in number and type of strategies that caregivers use while conducting dialogic reading, a video may be an effective training method. They designed a study to determine which dialogic reading strategies caregivers would use during dialogic reading after using a video tape as training.

The video used was Read Together, Talk Together (RTTT; Pearson Early Learning, 2008) and was developed by Whitehurst and colleagues. Many other studies reviewed also used this video as a means of training (Hargrave & Senechal, 2000; Lonigan et al., 2009, 2013). The researchers questioned the feasibility of caregivers using the dialogic reading strategies with their children every day. They found that the “wh” prompts and evaluation prompts were used most frequently while the recall, repeat, and expand strategies were rarely used. Fidelity of treatment is a topic that should be further researched, not only with parents and caregivers but also with teachers.

Two research studies use the RTTT video and other methods to study the effectiveness of dialogic reading training (Blom-Hoffman, O'Neil-Pirozzi, Volpe, Cutting & Bissinger, 2008; Briesch, 2008). The first study examined the effectiveness of the dialogic reading training video and the number and type of dialogic reading strategies used by the caregivers after the training. The study had six dyads from a playgroup of mostly white mothers of mixed educational backgrounds. The single subject multiple baseline design tracked the dyads over 12 weeks. Researchers found that mothers did not naturally use dialogic reading before the training and after the training used “wh” prompts and evaluation prompts the most. Prompts that were considered recall, repeat, and expand were rarely used (Briesch et al., 2008).

This finding was also consistent with a larger study conducted with 18 dyads using a randomized, control group, repeated measures design that trained caregivers using videotape training in community health centers. The caregivers were able to utilize and maintain the use of the instruction over a 12-week time period (Blom-Hoffman et al., 2008). These two studies looked directly at video training and its effectiveness. The next study compared instructional methods.

Huebner and Meltzoff (2005) compared in-person video training, self-video training with a phone follow-up, and self-video training with no phone follow-up with 125 parents and 128 children enrolled in the study. There was a baseline group as well as the intervention groups in order to control for natural parental instruction. The instructional video used in this study was “Hear and Say Reading with Toddlers” (Huebner, 2001), which differed from any of the previous studies reviewed, which all

used RTTT (Pearson Early Learning, 2002). The in-person training was conducted by a community resident trained by the study investigator and was completed at the library in groups of two to six. During this in-person training the same video was used and the session ran from 45 minutes to an hour. The parents were then observed after 4 weeks and 8 weeks. The study found that parents who were mailed the video were comparable in their end dialogic reading usage whether their instruction was followed up with a telephone call or not. Although it may have been expected that they may put off watching the video or forget, this was not the case. Overall, all parents significantly increased their dialogic reading. The parents who had in-person instruction had more significant results, especially those with lower education levels (Huebner & Meltzoff, 2005).

These studies show that dialogic reading training for families can be very effective, even by video. Although Huebner and Meltzoff (2005) suggest that in-person training (with video) may be most effective, Blom-Hoffman et al. (2008) put forth many reasons that video training may be preferred. They suggest advantages include the time it takes to train parents, the lower cost, and the consistency in the intervention delivery. These factors may not seem as important in the current study of six families, but the ultimate goal is for families everywhere to have access to training and in-person training on that scale is not feasible.

The previous studies on dialogic reading showed the efficacy of the training, but did not explore qualitative data. Qualitative data could have provided answers to why some parents were more effective at retaining and using dialogic reading at home or how their shared reading practices developed after using the technique.

Conclusions

Emergent reading is important to later reading success, but the skill levels vary widely among children as early as age three because of the variance in children's oral language development (Hart & Risely, 2003). One way to help close the gap is to scaffold reading experiences for children using dialogic reading techniques. Research has shown that in as little as four weeks, young children's expressive vocabulary skills can significantly improve (Lonigan et al., 1999). Another significant finding is that a teacher can be effective with up to eight children at time (Hargrave & Senechal, 2000). One concern with dialogic reading early on was that it had only been shown effective when working with middle class children. Lonigan and colleagues' (2013) study of low-income students produced significant effects when looking at increasing preschoolers' expressive vocabulary scores.

Although dialogic reading has shown significant effects on vocabulary with teachers and researchers conducting interventions, implementation at home still has not been thoroughly researched. In 1998 Lonigan and Whitehurst compared several types of dialogic reading interventions, including dialogic reading in the home environment, but they did not look at the practice in depth. An in-depth study would have described the families' experiences. A more recent study (Brannon & Dauksau, 2012) looked at the extensive training of caregivers and their use of dialogic reading techniques, but the interventions all took place in a classroom, not the home environment.

Gap in Literature

Dialogic reading has been shown to increase students' emergent literacy skills, especially children's expressive vocabulary skill. When young children take the role of reader, they make improvements in their expressive vocabulary in as little as four weeks (Hargrave & Senechal, 2000). Although there are longer studies (Lonigan et al., 1999) that showed that dialogic reading is a sustainable practice in the classroom, they were unable to report on the long term benefits for students.

There is also a large need for more studies of dialogic reading interventions that could be employed in the home environment. Training techniques (Briesch et al., 2008) have shown to be effective, especially using video training, among teachers and caregivers. If dialogic reading could be effectively implemented in the home environment the vocabulary gap between low SES and more affluent students (Hart & Risely, 2003) may be improved before children enter kindergarten.

The literature has shown that there is large difference in the number of vocabulary words heard by preschoolers from families of varying SES backgrounds (Biemiller & Slonin, 2001; Hart & Risely, 1995; Nagy et al., 1987; Nagy & Herman, 1987; Senechal & Cornell, 1993). Limited early vocabulary development has a significant impact on later reading success (Biemiller, 2003; Ninio & Snow, 1996; Robbins & Ehri, 1994; Wasik & Iaanone-Campbell, 2012). Another aspect that determines a preschooler's reading success is the amount and types of literacy experiences that occur in the home. A large body of research exists on the literacy events that occur in different homes (Heath, 1982; Roberts et al., 2005; Weigal et al., 2005); however, there is very little discussion on the actual

experiences of the parents and parents' perceptions of obstacles they faced during these literacy events.

Although some studies looked at families in a natural setting (Heath, 1982; Weigal et al., 2005), many did not address the multiple forces involved in each family. For example, Weigal et al. (2005) gave parents a questionnaire on their current literacy practices, but they did not ask about any external factors that contributed to these responses. They never asked parents why they read as much as they did to their children or if there were obstacles that they were facing that prevented them from completing literacy events that they would like to do. The researchers also failed to contrast the different families (Bronfenbrenner, 1976). Simply breaking families down by demographic does not actually explain the reasons behind the statistics.

The aforementioned gaps in the literature indicate a need to better understand how dialogic reading might be used as an in-home intervention. These gaps in the literature lead to the need for future research on dialogic reading intervention in the home. The current study will address these gaps by asking the following questions:

- 1) How do families across varied racial and socioeconomic backgrounds implement dialogic reading after learning about this type of shared reading?
- 2) How do children's expressive vocabularies develop throughout the course of this study?

To answer these research questions Chapter 3 will discuss the methods of this research study.

This chapter discussed the studies leading up to teaching families to use dialogic reading at home as a family literacy practices that may increase expressive vocabulary scores. The literature showed that vocabulary acquisition begins at an early age (Hart & Risely, 1995) and is deeply embedded in family literacy practices (Beck & McKeown, 2001). By understanding what family literacy practices families of different ethnic and social backgrounds currently share, we can understand their needs. The literature on dialogic reading shows significant results in increasing the vocabulary scores when used in a classroom setting. However, there is little research on using dialogic reading in the home. The research that is present does not explain the experiences of the families as they implement the technique. The following chapter will explain the methods of the current study and how these methods uncovered the families' experiences while using dialogic reading in the home. The expressive vocabulary scores of the young children were also tested.

Methods of Investigation

In this chapter I will discuss the design of this study, which is a multiple case study. First I will discuss my own epistemology and describe the design of the study. The participants and their selection will then be discussed. Then, I will discuss data collection, which will start with an overview of the procedures and then discuss each part of the study in further detail. The two parts of this study include teaching families to use dialogic reading and collecting data (interviews, observations, and expressive vocabulary testing) to answer the research questions. I will then discuss how the data was analyzed. Lastly, I will discuss the steps that were used to enhance trustworthiness.

The purpose of this multiple case study is to describe the experiences of six families from varied demographic backgrounds in implementing dialogic reading with their child. The families were taught to use dialogic reading with their young children age's three to five at home and the preschooler's vocabulary was assessed by the researcher to measure any development. Knowing how families incorporated dialogic reading into their interactions with their children will help educators in working with families in the future. The methods of investigation described in this chapter were used to explore the following research questions:

- 1) How do families across varied racial and socioeconomic backgrounds implement dialogic reading after learning about this type of shared reading?
- 2) How do children's expressive vocabularies change throughout the course of this study?

Epistemology of the Researcher

Epistemology takes into account the knowledge that the researcher will be gaining, how this knowledge is gained, and lays the foundation for the integrity of the research (Daly, 2007). Daly states that qualitative research holds more integrity if researchers can define what is knowable and clearly lay out in the methods how to gain this knowledge. I believe that knowledge is constructed and, therefore, this research is designed within a constructivist perspective. Constructivism implies that there are multiple realities and these realities are constructed by people and their interactions with others (Patton, 2009). This is to say that the experiences I have and the experiences of the participants are the same in that they were witness to the same events, but how they were perceived may be very different. A person's previous background knowledge and cultural experiences change the perceptions of the same event (Daly, 2007). The participants in this study and their experiences build the meaning to be gained in this research. Their conversations during interviews, observations, and interactions with me helped to construct meaning during the experiences for each family. Participants also had experiences using dialogic reading when the researcher is not there. They were asked to construct meaning out of these experiences and describe them to me. This constructivist approach is not only a framework for how the participants are situated, but also for how I was situated within the study (Creswell, 2007).

Reflexivity

Reflexivity is the influence of my own history, background, and judgements on the research project (Ruby, 1980). I cannot claim neutrality even though I tried to remain

objective. I am a literacy researcher and bring beliefs about how literacy should play a part in the home. I also have children that I believe I should read to and engage in conversations with around text. That being said, I also have influences in my life that limit me from practicing what I believe should be happening in my own home. For example, I believe I should read to my children everyday, but sometimes my schedule limits that. I am also an experienced classroom teacher that has experience asking students a variety of prompts and questions. By being in the family's home, I inevitably influenced the dynamics and meaning of the conversations. For example, the families may have implemented dialogic reading differently when I observed them. They may also ask questions while I am there because they think that is what I want them to do. This is because I am a participant in the research just by being there (Krefting, 1991). It is important not to ignore these experiences, but understand that they do not make my participants' experiences right or wrong.

Design

To answer the research questions this study employs a multiple-case study methodology. A case study is described as "the method of choice when the phenomenon under study is not readily distinguishable from its context" (Yin, 2003, p. 4). I have chosen to use this description of case study because the experiences these families have while implementing dialogic reading in the home cannot be taken out of the context of the family. For example, a teacher would not be able to explain why the families may have only used some of the dialogic reading prompts at home with their young child; only families can describe their own experiences. Someone else may be able to speculate

what is occurring in the home, but they cannot see what is actually happening in the home. They do not have the same experiences as the families. For this reason, the experiences of families with three or four year olds while learning to implement dialogic reading at home is the unit of analysis. Schram (2003) and Stake (1995) define a case study not by the method, but by what is being studied. That is, case study is both the method and what is being studied. Case study designs do not determine what types of data are collected, though. The case defines what is and what is not studied, not how it is studied (Yin, 2003). For the purpose of this study, formal and informal interviews, videotaped observations, field notes, and pretest-posttest data were collected.

Yin (2003) presents three different kinds of case studies, each of which could be on a single case or presented as multiple-case. An exploratory case study “is aimed at defining the questions and hypotheses of a subsequent study or at determining the feasibility of the desired research procedures.” A descriptive case study “presents a complete description of a phenomenon within its context,” and an explanatory case study “presents data bearing on cause-effect relationships- explaining how events happened.” This study is a multiple-case exploratory study because it attempt to answer research questions that have not yet been explored (Yin, 2003). The purpose of the current study is to explore and document families’ experiences while using dialogic reading in the home. Stake (1995) argues that there is a definite distinction between explanation and understanding. These cases are an exploration for understanding, not causation.

Multiple-case design and analysis are needed to explore themes that emerge in multiple contexts (over varying social classes and ethnicities). Each case is presented to

gain understanding of a particular theme in context. While themes that emerge from different cases may appear to be similar, the multiple case analysis serves to highlight not only the common themes, but also the differences in each case (Stake, 2006).

Context and Participants

A multiple-case study of six families that have at least one child in the age range of three to five years old was completed. A complete description of each of the families is presented in the next chapter. Families for this study were defined as any dyad that includes a child and at least one of the following: mother, father, close family member, in-home child care provider, or any person in the child's home that regularly participates in shared reading with the child. I chose six families because it gave me a wide range of families while still remaining small enough to go in depth with each family. This study explores different families' shared reading experiences while using dialogic reading with their preschooler as well as the vocabulary outcomes of each child after participating in dialogic reading throughout the course of the study. These families were recruited by flyer (see Appendix B) in local libraries, preschools, and community message boards. The families were also recruited through colleagues who have ties with working with preschoolers in diverse neighborhoods. These colleagues helped to recruit families of particular social class and ethnicity.

Purposeful sampling was used in order to find a wide range of families willing to participate. The families already participated in self-reported shared reading experiences at home. This requirement helped to ensure that the families had already built in some time to participate in reading with their children at home. Dialogic reading takes longer

than normal shared reading experiences, but families were more likely to complete the study if shared reading was already part of their routine. In order to examine the different experiences of families, families from diverse social and ethnic backgrounds were selected. Three working class families of varying ethnicities were selected (Latino, White European, and African American), as well as three upper class families of varying ethnicities (Latino, White European, and African American). The following demographic groups were chosen based on the makeup of the suburban community in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States in which the study takes place. The following social classes (working class and middle/upper class) have been chosen not only based on the varying classes of the region, but also in order to explore whether or not different classes implement and experience dialogic reading differently. Social class was differentiated by having an in-depth conversation with the families about their types of employment and income. Families with at least one member working in a managerial role or higher and an income of over fifty thousand dollars (closer to one hundred thousand) were considered upper middle class. Families supported by a member of the family working shift work and those with less authority in the workplace.

In a case study of similar size studying families, Lareau (2011) explains that using a fine-grained system in order to categorize each family by class was not needed due to the small sample size. As in this study, the purpose was to look at a small sample of families from varying classes, not to represent all classes. Lareau (2011) describes assigning each family to a class after discussions with each employed adult of the family in which they “would provide extensive information about the work they did, the nature

of the organization that employed them (if there was one), and their place in it” (p. 347). The purpose of this designation recognizes that income is just one measure of class. This method also takes into place authority in the workplace and “credential barriers” (Lareau, 2011).

Procedures

In this section, I first describe the chronological overview of the data collection, as well as give a weekly timeline for the study. Next, I describe the intervention, which is teaching families to use dialogic reading with their child. I then describe each data source in detail and address how collecting interviews, observing, and testing children’s expressive vocabulary address the research questions.

Overview of procedures. During an initial interview, families were asked about their current shared reading practices (see Appendix D). This initial interview provided insights and data on the families’ current literacy practices. This interview also described the family as a whole, including social class and ethnicity. After this initial interview with the families, the children were tested on their expressive vocabulary using the Expressive Vocabulary Test, Second Edition (EVT-2) (Williams, 2007). Reliability and validity information will be discussed below. This test allowed me to find out the young child’s current level of expressive vocabulary.

I then met with the families and they were instructed how to use dialogic reading at home using Read Together, Talk Together - Family Collection Kit B (Pearson Early Learning, 2003), which will be discussed in greater detail below. Learning about dialogic reading (viewing the video and discussing any unanswered questions) took approximately

30 minutes. Afterward, I observed and videotaped the families reading with their child and using the dialogic reading technique. This gave the families a chance to practice the technique while I was still present and ask any questions that needed clarification. After the initial observation, videotaped in-home observations also occurred at the end of weeks 2, 4, and 6 of the study. Families were observed as they used the method and a dialogic reading observation protocols was followed (see Appendix E). However, before each new observation took place the families were asked to describe the previous day and focus specifically on literacy events. This procedure allowed me to ascertain.... In addition, families were asked if the child mentioned any of the content of the book after reading it, perhaps at a later time, or in a different context.

After the observations, at the end of week 6, families were interviewed a second time (see Appendix F). This interview helped me further understand their experiences implementing dialogic reading in their homes. After the final interview, I gave a post-test of the child's expressive vocabulary using the EVT-2 (Williams, 2007) to measure any change. See Table 1 for a timeline of the study.

Table 1. *Timeline*

Introductions (Week One)	Week 1	Week 2 (End of week)	Week 3	Week 4 (End of week)	Week 5	Week 6 (End of week)
Initial family interview (30 to 45 minutes) and	Teach families to use	Informal conversation with family,		Informal conversation with family,		Informal Conversation with family,

pre-test child on expressive vocabulary (10 to 20 minutes)	dialogic reading, Observati on 1 (90 minutes)	Observation 2 (30 minutes)	Observatio n 3 (30 minutes)	Observation 4 (30 minutes) Post-test child on expressive vocabulary (10 to 20 minutes) Final Interview (30 to 45 minutes).
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Teaching families to use dialogic reading. The families were instructed in dialogic reading techniques using Pearson's (2008) RTTT video for families. This video comes from a complete program set that includes book sets, prompt cards, and the videos (for teachers and families). The program was developed to introduce dialogic reading and is designed for children age's two to five. Although the program is available in English and Spanish, only the English version was used in this study. The book sets and note cards for families were not used. The goal of this study was to teach families to use dialogic reading in the natural setting of the home where they were already participating in shared readings.

Teaching families to implement dialogic reading using solely the video has been shown to be an effective means of teaching families to use dialogic reading (Hargrave & Senechal, 2000; Lonigan et al., 2009, 2012). The video was shown to the families after the initial interview and pre-test of expressive vocabulary. After the families watched the video, I observed and videotaped the family member reading to the child and using the

observation protocol, which detailed the use of different dialogic reading techniques. This occurred during the same visit (see Appendix E). I followed up after the first observation in order to answer any questions that the families had concerning dialogic reading techniques. Previous studies have shown that it is beneficial for researchers to follow-up with participants to clarify any questions after teaching them to use dialogic reading techniques (Huebner & Meltzoff, 2005). Huebner and Meltzoff found that one of the most effective methods of teaching families was to show an instructional video in person (although they used a different instructional video).

The current study also included the RTTT video being shown to the participants while I was present. This arrangement ensured that the families watched the video, and I was able to clarify anything that the families did not understand. Blom-Hoffman et al. (2006) did not teach families the technique in-person due to time, cost effectiveness, and the inconsistency of multiple researchers. When implementing dialogic reading in an entire community, like Blom-Hoffman et al., these issues become more relevant, but for the current study, I was concerned with the experiences of the families, not in the actual teaching of the technique, which has already been found to be effective.

Data Sources

Before data collection occurred the participants were asked to review the informed consent forms from the Institutional Review Board. It was important that the participants were aware of how the data were collected, the time involved in the study, how the data are stored, the uses of the data and their reporting, as well as that their participation was voluntary.

Interviews. This is a multiple-case study using focused interviews to collect data that come from the participants' own words. A focused interview is when someone is interviewed for a short period of time. The interview protocol is semi-structured and presented in a conversational way (Yin, 2009). The semi-structured protocol (see Appendix D) allowed for flexibility when questioning. Semi-structured means that the wording of the questions is flexible and there is a mix of structured and unstructured questions (Merriam, 2009). For example, important issues that participants brought up, such as bedtime routines, were discussed further with that participant and the topic was questioned more with subsequent families during interviews.

It is important to use interviews instead of just observing the families so their perceptions are heard. Patton (2002) explains that we cannot observe people's intentions, or even the situations that have brought them to this place in time. Being able to interview families helped me understand why things occur, not just what occurred. Semi-structured interviews took place two times. The first interview occurred before the dialogic reading instructional video was viewed and the second occurred after six weeks of implementing dialogic reading in the home. Two different interview protocols were used each time (see Appendix D and Appendix F).

Informal conversations took place before the week 2, 4, and 6 observations. I asked the family members to walk me through the previous day and describe what their child did that day and to specifically focus on literacy events that occurred. We also discussed any changes in literacy practices since the last session. This method of inquiry

is an effective method of discovering what events the family found to be important (Weisner, 2002).

Interviews and conversations were conducted at a prearranged time in the participants' homes. It was also important to be able to change the interview protocol based on the data analysis of the first interview. This emergent design (Stake, 1995) allowed for flexibility and the ability to further explore issues that were unknown at the time of the first interview. The interviews and the conversations were taped with a digital recorder and transcribed. I also took notes immediately after leaving the interview session. Taping the interviews captured the entire interview and allowed for analysis of the transcripts (Merriam, 2009).

The interview questions for families were designed to understand their perspectives. The families were able to share what they had learned and reflect on their current experiences with reading to the child.

Initial interview. The initial interview protocol (Appendix D) was divided into two different sections. The first section contained the following demographic information in multiple choice forms: age, ethnicity, household income, education level, and ages of children in the home. The families were also asked questions pertaining to the type of work they do and their roles at work. The initial section of the interview helped guide these questions.

The second section of the initial interview protocol was designed to find out more about the families and their reading habits. The interview started by me asking open ended questions. For example, I asked the family member to tell me about the work that

they do. I then asked them to tell me about their children and what they liked to do. The questions then became more focused on their reading habits. An initial prompt, such as, “Tell me about the reading that your family does at home,” was used and the participant were given the chance to share as much as they like. Some participants needed further prompting that included the following questions:

1. How often do you and your child read together?
2. When do you normally read with your child?
3. How long do you read for?
4. How do you choose the books?
5. What types of books do you normally read together?
6. Where do you typically spend time reading?
7. Are there other friends or family that read with your child?
8. Where do you get the books that you read together?

The participants were also asked in the initial interview protocol to discuss how they felt about the child’s reading skills and whether or not they feel the child is prepared for school. These questions helped to cover family’s feelings about the literacy events in their homes.

Final interview. After the dialogic reading instructional video, informal conversations, observations, and implementations (at the end of the six weeks), families were interviewed formally a second time. This interview focused on how the dialogic reading at home went and their feelings about their participation in dialogic reading (see

Appendix E). The participants were asked questions that explored the families' reading experiences before and after learning about dialogic reading.

The purpose of these questions was to discover feelings toward the reading that could not be observed. The families also used this time to reflect on the practice and explain what worked well and what did not, as well as anything that could be done to make the technique easier to implement and maintain in the home. The researcher was seeking to learn more about families' experiences with dialogic reading in their homes.

Observations. While interviewing families was important in understanding their perceptions and experiences, observations also took place. The purpose of using observation was to describe the setting and the events that occurred. This study also used videotaped observations that took place in the field (i.e., participants' homes). Direct observations were used to establish a better understanding of the context of what occurred during the shared readings (Patton, 2002). For example, if the participants made a video of themselves reading to their child without the researcher also observing, the data may not have shown that there was a child in the background asking for snack or other events taking place in the home. It can be argued that this type of overt observation may affect the validity and reliability of the observational data because people act differently when they know they are being observed (Patton, 2002). For the purpose of this research, the observations were important to find out what else was happening in the home. By using an observation protocol (see Appendix E), I was not only focusing on the setting where the shared readings took place, but also on the dialogic reading techniques that were used.

The families were observed using the technique immediately following the viewing of the dialogic reading instructional video. The next three observations took place two, four, and six weeks after this initial observation. This allowed the family to be observed a total of four times. For each observation families were asked to participate in a 20- to 30-minute observation period in their own home at a time that was convenient for them. The families were encouraged to choose a time that they traditionally read to the child, although this often did not occur. I took field notes during the observation and used video-taping during the observation to ensure that the observation protocol on dialogic reading was accurate and all prompts were accounted for. The observation protocol (see Appendix E) was completed based on watching the video tape of the observation. These video tapes also captured data that the observation protocol did not. If the family had questions concerning dialogic reading practices that were covered during the instruction of the technique, I answered those questions after the observation had ended.

Vocabulary pre and post assessments. The children participating in this study, who ranged in age from three to five, were given a pre and a posttest to assess their expressive vocabulary. The researcher administered the test to each student individually. The design, data collection, and analysis of the data generated results that could be graphically represented. The selection of the participants was nonrandom, all participants were assigned to a single treatment, and observations were made after the treatment. The one group design made it possible to measure the dependent variable (expressive vocabulary) from pretest to posttest (Dimitrov, 2010). The pretest was administered during the same visit as the initial interview with the families. The EVT-2 was used

because it is designed to measure expressive vocabulary and assess language acquisition of standard American English. It was originally designed by Kathleen T. Williams and published in 1997, and the second edition was published in 2007. Pearson Publishing recommends this test for the following uses:

- Helps in the detection of language impairments across the age range
- Contributes to assessment of preschool-age children
- Measure word retrieval
- Helps in understanding reading difficulties and assessment of literacy skills
- Monitors growth across time
- Can be used for diverse research purposes
- Aids in measuring language development among nonreaders and people with written-language difficulties
- Evaluates knowledge of standard American English of individuals whose primary language is not English
- Can be used to inform qualitative interpretation using five different methods
- Screens for expressive language problems
- Affords individuals who perform poorly on group tests to demonstrate their ability when tested individually.

The wide range of uses of the instrument contributes to the results of the study.

Although six weeks is not a long period of time between pre-test and post-test measuring,

many dialogic reading studies have found significant results during time ranges of four to six weeks (Hargrave & Senechal, 2000; Opel et al., 2009).

The test is designed for ages two years six months through 90 years and older. The actual test is untimed, but can take anywhere from 10 to 20 minutes depending on the age and vocabulary knowledge of the child. There are 190 items with 8 start points based on age. Another advantage of this test is that it comes in two parallel forms (A and B). I administered the test to the preschooler two times during the study. Form A was administered using paper and pencil scoring after the initial interview with the family. Form B was administered in the same manner after the six weeks of dialogic reading with the family, following the second interview. All scoring was done by hand. The test was scored using normative scores (standard scores, percentiles, normal curve equivalents, and stanines). The scores also gave age equivalents, grade equivalents, and a growth scale value.

The test is designed to examine standard American English and has been norm referenced with a variety of ages/grades. The specific race/ethnicity samples used for norm referencing included African Americans, Hispanics, White, and other. The majority of the sample was White. This information is important to note since the cases in this study will come from a wide variety of ethnicities.

The internal consistency reliability by age for form A: $M = .94$ and form B: $M = .93$. The alternate-form reliability by age was $M = .87$ and the test-retest reliability by age: $M = .95$. These scores show the test to be highly reliable. The validity was also tested for construct and content validity. The EVT-2 showed significant correlation with

the EVT ($r = .81$), CELF-4 (for expressive vocabulary $r = .79$), Grade (kindergarten $r = .76$), and PPVT-4 ($r = .82$) instruments. This was done in order to demonstrate the extent of the observed correlations and the agreement with the pattern of expected valid vocabulary measures.

Summary of Data Collection

Table 2 is a chart that cross-references the data sources and the research questions. The first and second research questions are answered using data collected during the family interviews and the observations of the dialogic reading observation sessions. In order to gain greater understanding about their experiences I needed interview and observation data. By pre and post-testing students on their expressive vocabulary, I was also able to measure any change that occurred in their expressive vocabularies.

Table 2. *Data Sources and Research Questions*

Data Source	RQ1	RQ2
Interviews	X	
Observations	X	
EVT-2 Scores		X

Note. RQ1 = How do families across varied racial and socioeconomic backgrounds implement dialogic reading after learning about this type of shared reading?; RQ2 = How do children's expressive vocabularies develop throughout the course of the study?

Data Analysis

The following paragraphs discuss the data analysis for each case. Each case was analyzed separately and then multiple-case analysis was completed after the intervention and data collection was complete. I will first describe the interview data and then the observation data. Both of these data sources were analyzed using constant comparative analysis (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). I will then discuss the data analysis for the pre and post-tests on expressive vocabulary scores using descriptive statistics. This section will also describe how the theoretical framework guides the analysis of the data. The cross case analysis will then be described.

Interview data. All interviews were transcribed and coded using constant comparative analysis (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). Before coding the transcripts, I emailed them to the participants and the participants were asked to read and confirm that what was written was what they said, and also what they meant. None of the participants made any changes. The reason for this member checking, or respondent validation, is to enhance the credibility of the data (Merriam, 2009).

Corbin and Strauss' (2007) *initial coding* (previously referred to as open coding by Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was used during the first cycle of coding. Corbin and Strauss (1998) describe initial coding taking the pieces apart, looking at them, and analyzing them. Segments of text that were identified as being relevant to the research questions were any portions related to families' experiences (positive or negative). During this initial coding, it became apparent that there were categories emerging. Themes that

emerged at this stage included the following: positive experiences, changes that occurred, and texts used. At this time those categories formed and were coded. This method of analyzing the data was especially significant considering that Comprehensive Emergent Literacy Theory considered all literacy events (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) to be interconnected. It is important that these initial codes included all the facets of literacy from an ELT framework (Tracey & Morrow, 2012).

These initial codes became tentative codes for the second cycle of coding (Saldana, 2009). Each segment of meaningful or relevant text related to the research questions were given a label. Different themes also emerged based on the questions that were being asked. For example, this study was designed to explore the families' experiences with dialogic reading. Themes that were discussed due to the nature of the questioning included experiences learning dialogic reading and perceived changes in the preschooler's vocabulary. It is from these labels that categories emerged.

The second cycle of coding utilized axial coding (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser, 1978; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). *Axial* coding is the grouping of the open codes (Corbin & Strauss, 2007). Axial coding follows initial coding because I was grouping, sorting, and re-labeling initial codes (Saldaña, 2009). Open coding patterns were grouped together during *axial coding*. Categories naturally became integrated because of the similar properties they hold (Glaser, 1965). Some categories were also more narrowly defined during the axial coding. For example, a families experiences was broken down into the following categories: interest in reading and engagement and

bonding; changes that occurred emerged into bedtime routines and the preschooler's vocabulary use.

Stake (1995) claims that the researcher searches for patterns in the data. Initial coding allows the researcher to view *revealed* patterns, not search for them because the data were not deliberately coded into any theme or category. The interview protocol was designed to produce data that answer the first research question; however, there were themes or categories that were not directly related to the research questions. These themes are discussed in addition to the research questions. After these two cycles of coding related to the research questions there were several themes or categories that are written about with each case in the next chapter.

Notes from informal interviews, or conversations, were also included in the analysis. In the next chapter they are presented during the description of each session. The session is described, as well as the conversation that took place before it. Then after all of the sessions are described, a summary of the changes in literacy practices that was discovered from analyzing the conversations is given. This data was analyzed using the themes that emerged from the first two rounds of coding. These families' experiences with dialogic reading were described once all of the data was coded. In this manner each family has a story to tell with their themes.

Observation data. The families were observed a total of four times. Each observation lasted approximately 30 minutes and produced an observation protocol sheet (see Appendix E) and field notes. A video recording of the family reading to the child was also used to ensure proper tallies on the observation protocol sheet. For example, I

may have missed the family member asking a distancing question during the reading. If subsequently identified in viewing the video, it would have then been added to the observation protocol.

However, in addition to the general codes and themes that came out of the data, I also tallied how many times each prompt was used and if there were any prompts that were not used. An outside researcher also tallied each of the prompts using transcripts and the dialogic reading protocols. These data helped to explain the use of dialogic reading during each observation. These data also helped to inform follow-up questions that were asked during the final interview. For example, some families did not use the PEER sequence in some observations, then they were asked what they thought about the technique in the final interview.

Vocabulary data. In this multiple case study, preschoolers were given a pre and posttest using the EVT-2. This allowed examination of changes in the expressive vocabulary of these children. Due to the lack of a control group, there was no way to determine whether the changes were causally related to the treatment or other variables. Internal validity threats include pretesting procedures, statistical regression toward the mean, and history (Dimitrov, 2010).

The purpose of using the pretest-posttest design was to find out where each of the children started in regards to expressive vocabulary and changes in each of their growth score values after participating in the dialogic reading experiences. This was especially important when comparing cases and discussing each case. The whole picture

presented by the case is used to come to an understanding of what factors may have contributed to the score.

The vocabulary data were analyzed to determine any possible amount of change in each child's vocabulary. Inferential analyses were not used because the sample size of six is too small to produce any level of significance. Because the EVT-2 is a norm referenced test, the scores were also compared to students of similar ages and demographics. In the results the percent for the preschooler's age is presented.

The tests were scored by hand. Each score gave normative scores that include age equivalents and grade equivalents (by quarter). The growth scale value was then determined. After both pre and post-test scores were calculated, the amount of change for each of the normative scores was calculated. The growth scale value score was calculated by subtracting the pre-test score from the post-test score. The results are displayed using a table that can visually show the child's standard score, confidence interval, age percentage, and growth score value from pre to post test (see Chapter 4).

Multiple-Case Analysis

The purpose of cross-case study is not only to describe the similarities across the cases, but also to identify how each of the cases is unique. In each case there are findings. When these findings are combined during multiple-case analysis, these findings become assertions (Stake, 2006). The individual cases must be described previous to this analysis because they are set within a context. In this study the individual cases are needed because the context of each family is important and the data cannot be separated from its context without losing meaning. The individual cases present each families' unique

experiences. For example, some families in the study have multiple children. These cases presented different experiences when dialogic reading was used.

The multiple-case analysis is also needed to show experiences and themes that families from different social classes and ethnicities experienced and their explanations for these findings. Often cases have rival explanations (Yin, 2003). Yin explains that rival explanations provide evidence for outcomes that differ. For example, several families stated that after their experiences with dialogic reading, they would not use it at bedtime. If only one case was studied, then the explanation may be that the family member was too tired to complete the longer shared reading. However, by using multiple-case analysis, it was found that rival explanations may exist. Another family does not plan on using it at bedtime because they traditionally read a type of text at bedtime that they find difficult using dialogic reading with. Each case provides their own explanation for their experiences. It is important to look at multiple cases to find similarities and differences.

After each case was analyzed as previously described, a matrix for generating theme-based assertions from case findings was used (Stake, 2006). Figure 2 shows the worksheet that was used for each case. However, for the purpose of this study, Stake's worksheet was modified to include six different cases.

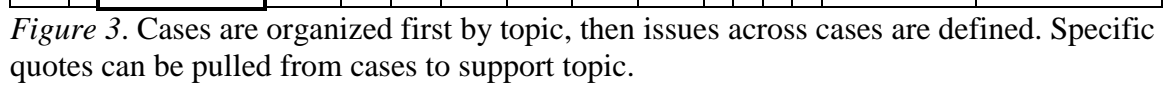
	Themes							
Case A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Finding I								
Finding II								
Finding III								
Finding IV								
Case B								

Finding II								
Finding III								
Case C								
Finding I								
Finding II								
Finding III								
Finding IV								
Finding V								
And so on for the remaining Cases								

Figure 2. Worksheet 5. A Map on which to make Assertions for the Final Report

After the worksheet was completed, the assertions were separated out and described in detail for each of the cases that evidence of the assertion emerged. The process started with the case reports and identified the important themes. The findings were also described as how they are relevant to each theme. The high-importance findings were compared across cases.

The finding of the report is displayed using a worksheet designed by Stake (1995) (see Figure 3). The worksheet serves to organize the main topics of each case and bring the issues out in the context of the cases. It is a tool to organize a summary of the data and compare the cases, without the cases losing their individual context.



The analysis of each case was completed by data collection points and then the multiple case analysis pulled research findings using the worksheets. This analysis was also completed by a second researcher as one step to enhance trustworthiness. Other steps are described in the next section.

Steps to Enhance Trustworthiness

The issue of research quality goes beyond methods. It is an epistemological issue that includes ethics (E. Reybold, personal communication, July 13, 2011). In a case study, the only way a researcher can be seen as trustworthy is if there has been rigor in the design and implementation of the study (Merriam, 2009). Strategies used to enhance trustworthiness in this study include using multiple sources of data, member checking, and transparency in data collection and analysis, which includes my own reflexivity as a reasearcher.

In this study trustworthiness is ensured by using multiple sources of data in order to form conclusions from the data. For example, the families were observed and recorded while using dialogic reading. Adding the recording ensured that nothing was missed in the initial observation (as far as following dialogic reading protocols). By interviewing the families, their perceptions were also added to the collection of data that entails the dialogic reading sessions. The families' words were a third data source.

Member checking occurs when the participant is "requested to examine rough drafts of writing where the actions or words of the actor [participant] are featured, sometimes when first written up but usually when no further data will be collected from

him or her” (Stake, 1995, p. 115). Member checking in this study occurred when the interviews had been transcribed. Participants were asked to ensure that their words were captured accurately and they were asked if they would like to make any changes. The member checking occurred before initial coding because the participants’ words are important and should only be analyzed after they had a chance to ensure the accuracy.

Findings: Case Studies and Multiple Case Analysis

This chapter will discuss each case in detail starting with an introduction to the family and how they were recruited. Each name used is a pseudonym. The cases will be discussed in the order that participation fell during the study. The data collection took place over one year. Some participants overlapped, and there was some time between many of the case studies while other participants were being recruited. There was only one family that started the study but was unable to finish due to scheduling and time constraints; this case was not included.

After describing the family and child, I will discuss information from the initial interview. The demographic information from the initial interview will be discussed in the introduction to the child and family, and a complete background of the families' literacy practices will then be discussed. Next, I will describe the four observation sessions, which include the informal conversation about the families' literacy practices since the last session, the video-taped shared reading observation, and the dialogic reading tally sheet. This format will give a detailed analysis of each one of the four sessions that took place. By separating the sessions, any progression in the use of dialogic reading can be shown. Next, the results of the pre and post EVT-2 tests will be discussed. Although the sample size is small, each child's growth scale value and age percentage will be given. The findings of the final interview will then be presented. Finally, the case will be discussed in regards to the research questions. This format will continue for the next five families.

After each case and its themes have been discussed, the multiple case findings will be discussed based on themes that emerged from across the cases.

George and the Barnum Family

The Barnum family was an upper middle class European white family that lived in the suburbs of a wealthy county on the East Coast. The family was recruited using an online community message board. Ms. Barnum was eager to participate. The subdivision that the family lived in boasted a grand entrance that gave way to a peaceful neighborhood with sidewalks, trees, and well-manicured lawns. Living in the recently built three story craftsman home was Ms. Barnum and her two sons, George, age 3, and his brother Nick, age 6. Ms. Barnum, who was in her mid-thirties, had been divorced for one year and George and Nick's father lived in an apartment a few miles away. The boys normally rotated homes every other week, but due to a work conflict, Mr. Barnum had them every other weekend during the study. As a single mother, Ms. Barnum reported making over \$100,000 a year. Ms. Barnum worked for the federal government doing project management and could not report the specifics of her job due to her security clearance. She was six credits away from a master's degree in education, but was not currently pursuing that degree. She would like to finish her degree, but was not planning on going into the field and did not want to spend the money to finish.

Due to Ms. Barnum's work schedule, she chose for me to come to her home in the evenings around 6:30 p.m. The first meeting occurred on a Sunday evening, and subsequent meetings occurred on Monday evenings. The first evening I went to the home and George and Nick answered the door with excitement. Ms. Barnum came around the

corner and immediately started apologizing for the state of the house. Ms. Barnum led me from the door into the kitchen that opened to the large living area. Play dough was spread out over mats on the kitchen table and on the floor. There were books on the floor of the living room and the boys were playing with transformers on the floor. The dinner dishes sat on the counter and Ms. Barnum apologized once again for the mess and told me she had just picked up the boys from their daycare, where George attended daily and Nick went after school. After signing the consent forms we began the initial interview.

Initial interview. After further discussing Ms. Barnum's demographic information and her family, she was able to describe the boys and their literacy practices in more detail. Nick immediately jumped in to tell me that they liked to play Legos, watch movies, play Minecraft, and play with Power Rangers. Ms. Barnum expanded by adding that George loved play dough and both boys were very physical. As she discussed how physical they were, the boys began to wrestle each other and she encouraged them with, "Go for it. Yeah," in a sarcastic tone. In the winter the family liked to go to indoor playgrounds or somewhere to get their energy out, and in the summer they liked hiking and going to a playground outside.

The family enjoyed reading activities and going to the library. They read every night before bed. Usually she just read two stories to them together, with each of them getting to pick one out, but lately Nick also liked to pick a book to read to the two of them. The entire book reading routine lasted around 30 minutes. Their entire bedtime routine took around an hour. They started at seven with a bath, brushing teeth, pajamas, and then a book. They were usually in bed by eight or eight thirty. The books they chose

were normally fiction picture books and included a lot of Star Wars. Ms. Barnum stated that their Dad had a similar routine when the boys were with him and their grandparents read to them whenever they were around.

Ms. Barnum read to her children because they enjoyed it and mainly because, “it gets them to sit still long enough for them to relax.” She hoped that it would give them a higher vocabulary and an interest in reading. There was a large collection of books in the home that had been given as gifts or bought by Mr. or Ms. Barnum. She finished the statement I would read to my child more if, “I had time. If I had more time and if they showed more of an interest in sitting still and being read to. The only time I can get them to sit still and want to listen to a story is at night when we’re winding down.” After this initial interview, George was tested on the EVT-2, which will be discussed later, while Ms. Barnum watched the instructional video *Read Together, Talk Together* (Pearson Early Learning, 2003) we discussed any questions that she had.

Session 1. The first session took place after the initial interview, instructional video, and EVT-2 test. Ms. Barnum asked George to put down his action figures and come read with her. She asked Nick if he would like to come sit on the couch in the open living room, but Nick continued playing on the floor. The family selected *Don’t Let the Pigeon Stay up Late* by Mo Willems. The title of the book was not read and no questions were asked before the shared reading began. I sat on a couch perpendicular to the couch the Barnum’s were on. George snuggled in with his mother and immediately put his thumb in his mouth. George commented before the reading of the story that he had read another Mo Willem’s book, *Don’t Let the Pigeon Ride the Bus*. Ms. Barnum began

reading and stopped several times to ask “Wh” questions. During one of these “Wh” questions a PEER sequence was used.

Ms. Barnum: Who’s that?

George: A bird.

Ms. Barnum: A bird. I think that’s the pigeon. Is that the pigeon?

George: Uh-huh, the pigeon.

This was the only PEER sequence that occurred during this book reading. The book reading took approximately five minutes and there were five “Wh” questions asked, three Distancing questions, and one PEER sequence used. At the end of the story a Distancing prompt was used relating back to the book. George stated, “If I had a hot dog, I’d be eating hot dogs.”

Session 2. I arrived at the home the following Sunday at 6:30 p.m. When I arrived, the boys were just arriving home from being at their father’s house. They climbed out of the car and Ms. Barnum told them to go into the living room. Before the reading we had an informal conversation about how the reading was going. Ms. Barnum said that they had not completed much reading, except for the normal reading at bedtime. She self-reported that dialogic reading had been going well and that both of the boys were much more engaged in the reading, but bedtime had taken them about 30 minutes longer each night.

For the second reading, the family chose *Home for Bunny* by Margaret Wise Brown. The book reading took approximately four minutes. George sat close to his mother on the same couch as the first reading. Nick did not participate, but did interrupt

several times during the reading to ask Ms. Barnum questions unrelated to the book reading. During the reading one Completion prompt, five “Wh” prompts, two Distancing prompts, and one PEER sequence was used. The PEER sequence consisted of the following conversation about the bird:

Ms. Barnum: What is he sleeping in?

George: An egg.

Ms. Barnum: No, his nest.

George: A nest.

Ms. Barnum: That’s right.

After finishing the text Ms. Barnum asked George if he liked the book and he responded that he did. Ms. Barnum then asked the boys to go get ready for bed. There were no Recall or Open-ended questioning prompts during this shared reading. The book reading was very short and did not provide many opportunities for dialogue. After finishing the book, we scheduled our next session for two weeks from the day at 6:30 p.m.

Session 3. When I arrived for the third session, both boys were finishing dinner. Their plates were on the table, and Nick was in the cupboard looking for a treat to have for dessert. Ms. Barnum said that they had been reading a lot more and Nick was beginning to imitate the questions that she was asking George. Nick would read George a book and then ask him what was happening in the pictures. Ms. Barnum said that George was not as responsive to Nick’s prompts as he was to hers when she was reading.

The family chose *Just Me and My Little Brother* by Mercer Mayor, which took six minutes to read. George immediately pointed to the front cover and said, “Nick.” Ms. Barnum asked if the picture (of a little critter) looked like Nick. George said that it did. After this initial interaction Nick joined George and Ms. Barnum on the couch to read. Nick sat by George so that George was in the middle. However, as soon as they began reading Nick lost interest and went to play with letters that were on the ground. George immediately protested saying that those were his. Ms. Barnum asked Nick to stop. She directed him to go play with the play dough that was on the counter. Nick did as he was asked and that left George and Ms. Barnum on the couch together.

During the reading Ms. Barnum used one Completion prompt, one Recall prompt, one Open-ended prompt, seven “Wh” prompts, five Distancing prompts, and four PEER sequences. During the story Nick interrupted the reading several times. Overall, the book naturally led to many Distancing prompts and Open-ended questions. Because George has an older brother, he was able to see connections to his own family. These connections led to Distancing prompts such as, “We have bunk beds at Daddy’s house.” Nick interjected during that part that he sleeps on the top, but George does not sleep on the bottom, he sleeps on the floor.” Ms. Barnum finished the book by asking Nick if he ever could have imagined that when George was a baby that someday he would be riding bikes with him.

The interactions that occurred during this session occurred because George could relate to the book. Because there was a personal connection, the book also drew Nick into

the shared reading. Nick was not sitting cuddled up on the couch like George, but he was still a participant in the discussions.

Session 4. When I arrived for the fourth session Nick and George were outside riding bikes. When they saw me drive up, they went inside to tell their mother that I was there. The boys left their bikes on the front lawn and went inside. Once inside, I discussed how the dialogic reading was going with Ms. Barnum. She said that they were still doing it, but she found it much easier to do with nonfiction books that the boys chose. They had been reading a lot about animals. She said she found nonfiction easier to use prompts with, but harder because they asked so many more questions and it took so long. She did not feel comfortable just stopping in the middle of the book. The boys just wanted to keep reading.

For the last book both boys and Ms. Barnum sat on the same couch. Nick seemed tired during this session and curled up on the opposite side of his mother. Ms. Barnum began reading *The Kissing Hand* by Audrey Penn without reading the title or introducing the author. During the reading of the book there were zero Completion prompts, zero Recall prompts, one Open-ended prompt, 10 “Wh” prompts, seven Distancing prompts, and one PEER sequence. The PEER prompt went as follows:

Ms. Barnum:	What do you do at bedtime?
George:	I go to sleep.
Ms. Barnum	Go to sleep. Do we get kisses too?
George:	Yes (and kisses his mother).

The book reading continued, but during the reading George snuggled in very close and kissed his mom several times. The book took approximately seven minutes to read. At the end of the book the following exchange occurred:

George: I love mommy.

Ms. Barnum: What honey?

George: I love you.

Ms. Barnum: I love you too.

Ms. Barnum then closed the book and took George on her lap. Both boys were very calm on the couch and did not get up. Ms. Barnum asked Nick to help clean up while I gave George the post EVT-2 test. George quickly moved to the floor and said he was ready to play. After I gave George the test, Ms. Barnum asked the boys to go get ready for bed while she finished talking to me. At this time, I had the follow up interview with Ms. Barnum.

Session summaries. As shown in Table 3, Mrs. Barnum used some prompts more frequently than others. As with most families in the study, “Wh” questions were the most prevalent and throughout the study the frequency increases. The Barnum family also used Distancing prompts to relate the books to George’s life. Completion, Recall, and Open-ended prompts were rarely used throughout the sessions. George and his mother usually had at least one dialogue during the reading that was considered a PEER sequence. In session three they used three PEER sequences. During this session George was highly engaged in the story because he could relate to being the little brother. The connection George found in the book was very important because it allowed for more dialogue.

Table 3. *The Barnum Family's Use of Dialogic Reading Prompts by Session*

Prompt	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Total
Completion	0	1	1	0	2
Recall	0	0	1	0	1
Open-ended	0	0	1	1	2
“Wh”	5	5	7	10	27
Distancing	3	2	5	7	17
PEER	1	1	4	1	7

Note. The dialogic reading prompt were counted using the “Dialogic Reading Observation Form” after the video was transcribed. Prompts that were initiated by the child are not represented in the count.

Changes in literacy activities. Before each session Mrs. Barnum and I discussed the literacy activities that had occurred since the last session. From session one to session two, Mrs. Barnum reported an increase in reading and reading engagement, especially at bedtime. In between session two and session three, Mrs. Barnum reported that Nick, George’s older brother, had begun to imitate the questions that she was asking George. George was not as responsive to his older brother. Between session three and session four, Mrs. Barnum reported that the family had increased the amount of nonfiction texts they were reading. Both George and Nick enjoyed reading nonfiction more when they could discuss the books with their mother. This increased engagement in the books led to longer conversations, and often bedtime became much longer. Overall, the family

reported that the dialogic reading increased the family's engagement with reading. The family reported reading more books, especially non-fiction texts.

EVT-2. George was an enthusiastic participant during the administration of both tests. His scores showed little change over the six weeks. Although there was a positive GSV of two points, the confidence interval shows that his standard scores were both within the same range, meaning that his true score could be anywhere within that range. Overall, George's expressive vocabulary was well above average for his age at the beginning and end of the study.

George was administered the EVT-2 Form A (Williams, 2007) during the first visit before dialogic reading instruction began. At the time George was three years and five months old. George scored a standard score of 117 with a 95% confidence interval of 109 to 124. George was in the 87 percentile for his age. His normal curve equivalent was 74, stanine was 7, and age equivalent was 10 years and 3 months, grade equivalent was 4.5. His growth score value (GSV) was 171. After six weeks of dialogic reading George was given the EVT-2 Form B (Williams, 2007). At this time George was three years and six months old. George scored a standard score of 124 with a 95% confidence interval of 116 to 130. George was in the 95 percentile for his age. His normal curve equivalent was 84, stanine was 8, and age equivalent was 11 years and 5 months, grade equivalent was 5.3. His growth score value was 173. George's GSV changed by +2 points (171 to 173).

Final interview. During the final interview, Ms. Barnum reported that the family really liked dialogic reading. Dialogic reading increased their interest in reading, engagement, and bonding. However, dialogic reading was difficult to learn at first,

prolonged bedtime, and worked better with certain types of texts. The family spent more time reading and discovering books that increased conversation. Ms. Barnum did not notice a change in George's expressive vocabulary. Ms. Barnum also noticed changes in her son, Nick, and his reading behaviors. Each of these themes will be discussed in detail in the multiple case analysis.

Summary of research questions. The following sections look at the findings as a whole to answer the research questions.

Families' implementation of dialogic reading. Ms. Barnum found the dialogic reading instruction difficult to implement in the beginning. This is also shown in her use of dialogic reading prompts (See Table 3). Ms. Barnum frequently used "Wh" prompts, PEER sequences, and Distancing prompts. She rarely used Completion, Recall, or Open-ended prompts. She also found dialogic reading instruction easier to implement with certain texts. For example, she found it hard to use dialogic reading with texts that contained fewer words. Although Ms. Barnum reported initial difficulties, she also reported that George's older brother Nick, also began to imitate the prompts being used.

The family's experience using dialogic reading was very positive. The increased dialogue during reading increased George's interest and engagement during the reading. George increasingly asked to read and spent more time with the texts that they did read. Ms. Barnum also felt that reading was more personable and found it to be a great bonding experience. The family plans on using dialogic reading in the future, but does not see using it at bedtime because the readings took too long.

Changes in child's vocabulary. Ms. Barnum did not notice any notable change in George's vocabulary use. She stated that his vocabulary was expanding each day, and she does not know if she would notice if it was because of dialogic reading. George's EVT-2 scores support Ms. Barnum's observations. George scored above average before the dialogic reading started and although his GSV increased by two points, the confidence intervals did not show any notable change.

Charles and the Mapp Family

The Mapp family was a working class European white family that lived in the suburbs of a wealthy county on the East Coast. The family was recruited using an online community message board. Ms. Mapp was excited about the study and eager to start. The subdivision that the family lived in was well kept with modest homes. Living in the well maintained home were Mr. and Mrs. Mapp, who were in their late 30s, and their two children, Betty, age 2, and her brother Charles, age 4. Mr. Mapp had a high school degree and was currently a car technician at a large automobile dealership. He was in charge of diagnoses and repairs on vehicles. Mrs. Mapp had an associate's degree, but stayed at home to care for their two small children. Their current annual income was just under \$50,000. Mrs. Mapp said that they make it work for now. She mentioned that it just meant some of the kids' activities were more limited than their friends. For example, although many of her friends' children went to preschool a few days a week, they could not afford to do that if she was staying at home.

After contacting the Mapp family in regards to their participation in the study, Mrs. Mapp decided that coming around 10:00 in the morning on Wednesdays would

work best for their schedule. Usually the children had woken up, and they had time to eat breakfast before finding something to do for the day. She mentioned that they often read books throughout the day to fill time, but also read in the evenings when it was bedtime. Their bedtimes ranged anywhere from 7:30pm to 9:30pm so that if Mr. Mapp arrives home late he still got a chance to say goodnight to the kids. She admitted that it didn't always happen though because sometimes she is "just done" and puts them to bed before he gets home. Mrs. Mapp was very relaxed and the children freely ran in and out of the house to the backyard.

The first time I arrived at the house Mrs. Mapp, Charles, and Betty were on the front step planting a flower in a pot. We went inside the home, and Betty went back to the kitchen table to finish eating the breakfast that she had started earlier. There were a couple of books laying on the couch and Charles went to pick them up. Charles was anxious to get started and kept asking his mom if it was time now. Charles was physically average for a four-year-old boy and his blond hair fell just above his eyes. Mrs. Mapp asked him to go play with his Legos while we finished the consent form and began the initial interview.

Initial interview. After discussing the demographic information described above we talked about the family's literacy practices. Mrs. Mapp told me that Charles liked T-ball and playing with Legos and trucks, and Betty was into ponies and princesses, but she also loved Legos. As a family they enjoyed playing outside and riding bikes, going to Charles' baseball games, and camping. The family loved reading together and coloring about what they read. They did not really have a reading schedule, but read when "it

strikes” them. They read all kinds of books, but were really into Dr. Seuss books right now. Often they played games with the rhyming words or made up their own words. Mrs. Mapp was the primary reader in the family, but if Grandma and Grandpa came to visit they also liked to read with the children. The family had not been to the public library yet, but if they saw a book at the grocery store they might buy it. There was not a large amount of books in the home, though, because of the cost.

Mrs. Mapp discussed that Charles did not really have a lot of reading skills, but mentioned he was good at describing the pictures. She said she still felt like he was ready for school, though, because he talked about it, played school, and always wanted to go to the school. Mrs. Mapp said she would read more to her children if she “had a larger devotion to it, to learn books.” She explained that she was often uncomfortable with what she was supposed to be doing besides reading with them. After this initial interview, Charles was tested on the EVT-2, which will be discussed later, while Mrs. Mapp watched the instructional video and we discussed any questions that she had.

Session 1. The first session began immediately after the initial interview, instructional video, and EVT-2 pre-test. Mrs. Mapp chose the book *Corduroy* by Don Freeman because it was a book that they read often. Mrs. Mapp and Charles sat on the large couch, and I placed myself on the couch perpendicular in the room. Betty chose to come sit next to me on the couch. Mrs. Mapp introduced the title of the book, but did not mention the author. Before she began reading she asked several questions about *Corduroy* to Charles. She asked, “Who’s *Corduroy*” and “What happened to this part of

his shirt?” Charles shrugged, but did not verbally respond. She responded to him by saying, “Maybe we will learn about it.”

Mrs. Mapp began reading the story and stopped to ask one “Wh” question. She asked, “Where did he go?” Charles responded that Corduroy was hiding under the bed. When Mrs. Mapp finished reading, she said that she could not remember the prompts and got into the book so she did not stop to ask any questions. We had a brief discussion about the prompts and Mrs. Mapp asked if she could watch the instructional video again. I told her, yes, that would be fine. She said she would feel more comfortable after she had practiced it a few more times. We set the next meeting for two weeks from the day.

Session 2. When I arrived at the Mapp home around 10:00 in the morning, the children were still in their pajamas and playing Legos in the living room. Mrs. Mapp was dressed for the day and said that they had been having a quiet morning at home. She said the reading had been going well and the children were asking to read more and more books at bedtime. Charles was enjoying the more interactive discussions and wanted his father to read to him also, but Mr. Mapp had not been home from work early enough in the last couple of weeks.

For the second reading, Mrs. Mapp chose *There’s a Wocket in My Pocket* by Dr. Seuss. Charles and Mrs. Mapp sat on the same couch as in the first session. Betty continued to play Legos on the floor. Mrs. Mapp started by reading the title to the book, but did not mention the author or ask any questions before beginning the reading. During this reading one Open-ended question, six “Wh” questions, and two PEER sequences were used. During the PEER sequences Charles did not always repeat the answer at the

end of the sequence and Mrs. Mapp would fill in the words for him. For example, the following exchange occurred at the end of the book:

Mrs. Mapp What's he doing to it?

Charles He's doing stuff.

Mrs. Mapp Is he brushing it?

Charles Yeah

Mrs. Mapp Yeah, he's brushing it.

This is still considered a PEER sequence, but the idea behind the sequencing is to increase the utterances that the child uses. Charles was still hearing the new vocabulary, but he was not using it himself. Charles was engaged in the book and took the chance to rest his head on his mother's lap during the reading. Betty was not engaged during the reading and did not pay attention to the book reading. The reading was interrupted by Betty when she told her mother she was not feeling well. Mrs. Mapp responded to Betty that she was sorry, but continued reading without interruption to the flow.

The second session was an improvement over the first session because the use of prompts and questioning greatly increased, but many prompts were still not used. There were zero Completion, Recall, or Distancing prompts. These types of prompts would increase the interaction between Charles, the book, and his mother.

Session 3. The third session took place on week four around 11:00 in the morning. When I entered the home, the children were playing in their rooms. Mrs. Mapp expressed how much the children were looking forward to my visit. She told me that Charles had been telling people that he was part of a reading project. She said that his

part in the study had increased his motivation to read throughout the day. They were spending more time in the evening picking out books that they could talk about. Bedtime reading was changing in that Charles was finding books that he wanted to talk about. Mrs. Mapp said she realized that this was a good thing, but it was making bedtime take much longer than it normally should and she was a little more impatient than when she chose a book and just read him a story. She was enjoying their interactions, but liked it better during the day than in the evening when the children were supposed to be calming down.

Mrs. Mapp called the children into the room to read, and she and Charles sat on the same couch as in previous sessions. Betty curled up next to me on the other couch because she wanted to see me recording Charles. For the third session Mrs. Mapp read *Are You My Mother* by P.D. Eastman. She started by reading the title, but did not mention the author or ask any questions before the reading began. Throughout the reading she used 11 “Wh” prompts and one Distancing prompt. No other prompts or PEER sequences were used during the reading. The “Wh” prompts focused on questions such as, “What is she doing?”

Not present in the count of prompts were the utterances that the child made during the reading. In the previous sessions Charles responded when his mother prompted him, but this book asked questions throughout that provided him opportunities to speak. The book also included many animals as characters in the book, to which Charles would speak the sound the animal makes after Mrs. Mapp read it. The following example illustrates this:

Mrs. Mapp	So the baby bird went on. He came to a cow. (Oh, that's a pretty cow).
Charles	Cows say, "Moo."
Mrs. Mapp	"Are you my mother?" He said to the cow. "How could I be your mother?" said the cow, "I am a cow."
Charles	The cow say, "Moo."

This same type of dialogue occurred during the book when the baby bird questioned the dog, the kitten, and the chicken. So even though the dialogic reading count shows little questioning and prompts, much more dialogue actually occurred. The responses were not extended by Mrs. Mapp. At the end of the session, we scheduled the fourth session, which would include the final reading, an interview, and the post-test of the EVT-2.

Session 4. The fourth session took place at 10:00 on a Wednesday morning. I knocked on the door and Mrs. Mapp showed me into the house. The children were in the backyard playing with a boy around the same age as Charles. Mrs. Mapp said that she often watched a neighbor's child when the father was at work. Our discussion on literacy activities between sessions concentrated on how some of the books they were choosing were easier to use prompts with. Some of the prompts, like Completion, were easier with books that rhymed or they had previously read. Mrs. Mapp stated that it was easier to have longer conversation when they were reading books that Charles picked out himself.

Mrs. Mapp called the children into the house so we could read. Mrs. Mapp had chosen *Good Night Moon* by Margaret Wise Brown. All three children crawled onto the couch and the third child, Danny, exclaimed that he reads this book all the time and it is

his favorite. Mrs. Mapp read the titled of the book, but did not read the author's name. It quickly became obvious that the children knew the book very well. Almost all of the reading followed the format of Mrs. Mapp reading the first line on the page and the children taking turns completing the last portion. The following is a section of the transcript from the reading:

Mrs. Mapp: And there were three little bears sitting on...

Danny: A Chair

Charles: Chairs

Mrs. Mapp: And there were two little kittens, and a pair of...

Charles: in socks.

Mrs. Mapp: Mittens

Charles: Mittens

Mrs. Mapp: And a little toy house, and a young...

Charles: Mouse

Danny: Mousy

The rest of the reading continued in a similar manner. Betty was not as interested in this book and interrupted the reading to ask if she could watch a television show. Mrs. Mapp told her to wait until after they finished reading, but Betty left in the middle of the book. Mrs. Mapp let her go and continued to read.

Overall, Mrs. Mapp used eight Completion prompts and asked three "Wh" questions. There was no PEER sequence used during the reading, and no other prompts were used. It was clear that the family had read the book many times before and enjoy

interacting through taking turns completing the lines of the text. Charles was given the EVT-2 immediately after the last reading and Betty and Danny went to watch a television show.

Session summaries. The Mapp family’s use of dialogic reading prompts showed little use of any reading prompts, as seen in Table 4. After session one, Mrs. Mapp asked if she could watch the instructional video again. She was given the instructional video to watch again. I also told her I would be happy to answer any questions she still had. In subsequent sessions, there was an increase in prompts, but in session two, Charles did not readily respond to prompting. In session three, Charles began to initiate prompts and answer those given to him. In session four, there were still no Recall, Open-ended, Distancing, or PEER sequence prompts, but the book, *Goodnight Moon*, did lead to many Completion prompts. It is also important to note that there was a third child present during the fourth session.

Table 4. *The Mapp Family’s Use of Dialogic Reading Prompts by Session*

Prompt	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Total
Completion	0	0	0	8	8
Recall	0	0	0	0	0

Open-ended	0	1	0	0	1
“Wh”	1	6	11	3	21
Distancing	0	0	1	0	1
PEER	0	2	0	0	2

Note. The dialogic reading prompt were counted using the “Dialogic Reading Observation Form” after the video was transcribed. Prompts that were initiated by the child are not represented in the count.

Changes in literacy activities. The family reported an increase in motivation to read throughout the entire six weeks. Mrs. Mapp reported that Charles’ increase in motivation had also led to him wanting to stay up and read with his father. Before the study this rarely happened because of Mr. Mapp’s work schedule. Between sessions two and three Mrs. Mapp also noticed that Charles was taking more time to choose books that he wanted to talk about. During this time, bedtime was also beginning to stretch out. At the last session Mrs. Mapp reported that reading was going well, but she felt much more confident using prompts with books that were familiar to her. She also noticed that they had better discussions when Charles was able to choose the books.

EVT-2. Charles was an enthusiastic participant during the administration of both tests. His GSV scores showed no change over the six weeks. Charles scores showed that his expressive vocabulary was slightly above average for his age at the time.

Charles was administered the EVT-2 Form A (Williams, 2007) during the first visit before dialogic reading instruction began. At the time Charles was four years and eight months old. Charles scored a standard score of 103 with a 95% confidence interval of 96 to 110. Charles was in the 58 percentile for his age. His normal curve equivalent was 54, stanine was 5, and age equivalent was 8 years and 6 months, grade equivalent was 3.0. His growth score value (GSV) was 164. After six weeks of dialogic reading Charles was given the EVT-2 Form B (Williams, 2007). At this time Charles was four years and nine months old. Charles scored a standard score of 106 with a 95% confidence interval of 99 to 113. Charles was in the 66 percentile for his age. His normal curve equivalent was 58, stanine was 6, and age equivalent was 8 years and 9 months, grade equivalent was 3.1. His growth score value was 164. Charles' GSV did not change (164-164).

Final interview. Mrs. Mapp found the dialogic reading to be a very positive experience. Charles was engaged and interested in books while asking more questions, especially concerning new vocabulary words. The family did not find dialogic reading disruptive to bedtime and they were able to use it with many types of books. Mr. Mapp also began spending more time with the children reading. The family easily incorporated it into their routine and plan on continuing with it in the future.

Summary of research questions. The following sections look at the findings as a whole to answer the research questions.

Families implementation of dialogic reading. Mrs. Mapp reported that dialogic reading was easy to use and was similar to her own reading style before the study.

Throughout the study Mr. Mapp began using dialogic reading when reading with the children. Charles also started to use the prompts when the family read together. Although Mrs. Mapp reported ease with implementing dialogic reading, the analysis on the number of prompts used (see Table 4) shows that she frequently used “Wh” prompts and little else. Mrs. Mapp said that they used the technique with many different types of texts. Depending on the text, the analysis shows that different prompts were used. For example, when the family read a familiar text, more Completion prompts were used.

After implementing dialogic reading Charles had a higher interest in reading and was more engaged in the texts. Mrs. Mapp said, “He was no longer passive” while reading. Mrs. Mapp did not report an increased level of bonding, but did discuss that Mr. Mapp was spending more time reading with the children while using dialogic reading. This was seen during their bedtime routine. The family did not express a longer bedtime as a negative aspect of dialogic reading.

Changes in child’s vocabulary. Mrs. Mapp did not see a noticeable change in Charles’ expressive vocabulary during the study. She did discuss that many of her prompts were focused on teaching new vocabulary words. Her observations support Charles’ test scores. Charles started the study with a slightly above average vocabulary for his age and the scores on his EVT-2 did not change over the six weeks.

Jessica and the Irena Family

The Irena family was a working class Latina family that lived in the suburbs of a wealthy county on the East Coast. The family was recruited using an online community message board. Ms. Irena’s daughter recommended her participation and Ms. Irena was

eager to participate. The subdivision that the family lived in was nestled in a residential neighborhood surrounded by strip malls that hosted large box stores and fast food restaurants. The neighborhood was older than many in the county, but was well maintained. Originally from Puerto Rico, Ms. Irena moved her family to the United States 16 years ago. The family was fluent in Spanish and in English. Ms. Irena lived in a home with her family for 16 years before moving to the townhouse two weeks before the study.

At the time of the study the following family members lived in the home: Ms. Irena, age 54, her 24 year old daughter, Jessenia, and her granddaughter, Jessica, age 5. Ms. Irena had full custody of Jessica since she was born, as her mother, Jessenia, was considered unfit. Ms. Irena cared for Jessica with her husband until the previous year when they divorced. Mr. Irena moved out of state and visited monthly. It was at that time that Jessenia moved back in with her mother. Jessenia was now in her daughter's life, but most day-to-day childrearing was provided by Ms. Irena, not Jessenia. The three had a very positive relationship, but Jessenia chose not to participate, as she was often at work when the family's normal reading activities occur. Jessica's father, who was El Salvadorian and Mexican, had never been present in her life. Jessica also had a step-sister, Julia, whose father cared for her. Julia, age 3, had cerebral palsy and Jessenia did not have custody of her either. Ms. Irena also had a daughter that was married and living on her own and a son whom she was paying for to attend college a few hours away. As a single grandmother with custody of Jessica, Ms. Irena still was able to work full time for the city in the human resources department. She was responsible for administering health

insurance, retirement, life insurance, and long-term disability. Ms. Irena reported making under 50,000 dollars a year. Jessica attended a local child care while Ms. Irena was at work. She held a bachelor's degree in human resources administrations and industrial management.

Ms. Irena and Jessica usually arrived home after work and child care around 6:00 p.m. In order to give them time to settle in and eat dinner, they asked that I arrive around 6:30 on Monday evenings. Each of the six meetings occurred at the same time and day, except the third meeting, which occurred on a Tuesday due to the Monday being a holiday. The first Monday evening that I arrived, I rang the doorbell and Jessenia answered, she stated that her mother had just left to go to the store to buy crayons, but would be back soon. I waited outside until Ms. Irena arrived home. She was very apologetic and let me know that she had forgotten that I was coming. She explained that Jessica was working on a project, but they did not have any crayons.

Ms. Irena welcomed me into the home and led me to the second story, where the living area was. The home was very clean and furnished with a formal dining room table and living room set. There were many boxes in the corner. Ms. Irena said that she still had not had the time to unpack from their move, but she did not plan on unpacking a lot more because they only had a year's lease. She said she was sure they had crayons somewhere, but they were probably in a box in the garage. Jessica was sitting at the table with papers and drawing a picture of herself in pencil. Jessica was large for her age and her long black hair was pulled tight in a ponytail high on her head. She had a huge smile and immediately showed me the picture she was drawing. Ms. Irena asked her to finish,

and gave her the crayons to let her color the picture. While Jessica finished, Ms. Irena and I discussed the details of the study and reviewed the consent. After she signed, I read Jessica the assent script. Jessica was eager to participate and asked if we could start. Ms. Irena asked her to keep coloring while we completed the initial interview.

Initial interview. The beginning of the interview covered the demographic information previously described. Ms. Irena then shared more about Jessica and their reading practices in the home. Jessica was very talkative during the interview and also had a lot to share. When asked what Jessica enjoys doing at home, Jessica was quick to tell me that she enjoyed jumping rope and that she was able to do it. As a family they enjoyed watching football, reading, baking, and anything to do with being in the kitchen. Ms. Irena explained that Jessica made very big messes in the kitchen, but she was impressive in being able to clean up after herself. Jessica then remembered that she also liked painting and bubbles.

When they read, Jessica enjoyed reading in bed, unless of course they were at the library, which was often. Jessica described her reading abilities to me during the interview.

Did you know I pretend I am saying the real words on the book, but I am not saying the real stuff. One time, I already know the book, and I read it all by myself. Right Grandma, you remember? I did but I forgot some of the parts. It was very evident that Jessica enjoyed reading frequently. They normally read in bed and Jessica really enjoyed repeated readings. It was only after Ms. Irena tired of the same story that they switched books. Ms. Irena explained that Jessica enjoyed Barbie books

and animal books. When I asked her what kind of books she had, she explained, “I don’t know, I have too many.” She especially liked books that were interactive. She enjoyed putting actions to the story. Jessica also liked to line up her stuffed animals and read books to them. Ms. Irena explained that she spent time reading to her so Jessica could develop the love of reading. Ms. Irena would like to read more, but said she never has the time. She would like to read more to Jessica if she was not so tired. She felt like reading at bedtime was not really quality reading. She was just reading to her so she could wind down, but it was part of the reading routine.

Session 1. The first session began immediately after the initial interview, instructional video, and EVT-2 pre-test. Ms. Irena chose *We Are in a Book* by Mo Willems. Jessica told her grandmother that she had seen this book before at the library. Before they read, Ms. Irena pointed out the pictures on the cover of the book. She asked Jessica questions about what the elephant on the front of the book looked like and what he was doing. She often followed up her questions by asking why. The following is an exchange that occurred toward the end of the book:

Ms. Irena: What are they doing now?

Jessica: Jumping around.

Ms. Irena: They’re jumping around? Why are they jumping around?

Jessica: Because they saw people reading them.

Ms. Irena: That’s right. Okay.

This exchange shows an example of Ms. Irena prompting Jessica with a “Wh” questions, but then asking her why. This type of exchange allowed for a PEER sequence

to occur. Instead of expanding on Jessica's answer herself, however, she asked Jessica to expand it. She provided her immediate feedback, but she also probed for more information.

Overall, Ms. Irena used three Completion prompts, three Open-ended prompts, 35 "Wh" questions, and three PEER sequences. Throughout these prompts and questions what was happening in the book was a large focus, but there was also a focus on the text features. For example, Ms. Irena asked Jessica what the thought bubbles were for and they discussed what the characters were saying in them. These discussions introduced vocabulary in the text, but also vocabulary they can use when discussing books.

Session 2. When I arrived at the house for the second session, Ms. Irena answered the door and let me in. As I walked up to the second story living area behind Ms. Irena, I could smell food cooking. Jessica was seated at the table eating a bowl of pasta and sauce. Ms. Irena asked her to finish up her dinner so we could read together. We discussed how the reading was going and Ms. Irena apologized and said they had not really had much time to read lately, but they were enjoying the reading when they did. She said that they had been reading the same book each night and Jessica wanted to read it again for the reading.

Jessica brought over *Princess Polly and the Pea* by Laurie Young. The book followed the story of the traditional princess and the pea, but each page had ribbon covers that could be lifted by the reader to show what the princess was sleeping on. Ms. Irena said that Jessica really still likes books that she can interact with in this way. Ms. Irena began by asking Jessica the title of the book. Throughout the session Ms. Irena used two

Completion prompts, three Recall prompts, 14 “Wh” questions, and two PEER sequences. Many of the “Wh” questions included probing for more information and a couple, such as the following example, turned into a PEER sequence.

Ms. Irena: The queen still would not give up. A fourth mattress went on the pile. “This one must work,” she said with a determined smile. The jester wanted to help plucky Polly endure. “My unicycle will do the trick. Keep her awake, I’m sure.” What’s a unicycle, Jessica?”

Jessica: A bicycle.

Ms. Irena: With?

Jessica: One wheel.

Ms. Irena: One wheel! Yes.

The story reading continued in a similar manner, and Jessica was highly engaged throughout the reading. At the end of the story, Jessica asked, “When is the happily ever after?” She said she learned at school (her child care) that it’s a fairy tale if there is a happily ever after. This session showed that even though Ms. Irena reported not reading very much, they had read this book several times throughout the two weeks since the first session. Ms. Irena confirmed this and said she had forgotten about this book. Although no Recall prompts or Distancing prompts were used, this reading was highly interactive.

Session 3. The third session took place two weeks from the second on a Monday evening at 6:30 in the evening. When I arrived at the home Jessica answered the door and told me she was watching a movie downstairs with her mom. Ms. Irena instructed her to go find a book for them to read. Jessica ran back downstairs with her mother. Ms. Irena

said that they had been reading at bedtime, but Jessica had been very tired lately and they had been getting to bed very late so she had chosen short books to make bedtime move quickly.

Jessica brought *If You Give a Pig a Pancake* by Laura Numeroff. Ms. Irena read the title of the book to Jessica and asked her, “If you give Jessica a pancake what will happen.” Jessica shoved her hands to her mouth and smiled. Ms. Irena did not read the author of the book, but talked about the cover of the book with Jessica and asked her questions about what was happening. Ms. Irena used one Completion prompt, three Open-ended prompts, 26 “Wh” questions, one Distancing prompt, and one PEER sequence. Jessica was very engaged in the book and could easily relate to eating pancakes.

Ms. Irena often asked what was occurring on each page. Jessica was very concerned about the syrup and the pig getting sticky. The following shows an example of the dialogue that occurred during this session:

Ms. Irena: I know, she’s laying down on the table and being the plate, so she’ll want to take a bath. Why do you think she’ll want to take a bath?

Jessica: Because her hands are goopy.

Ms. Irena: She’s all sticky, right? She’ll ask you for some bubbles. What’s in here?

Jessica: Water!

Ms. Irena: Water, and what else?

Jessica: A sponge.

At the end of the reading, Ms. Irena and Jessica talked about how the pig would want pancakes again and the book would have to start all over again. Jessica was highly engaged and interacted with and without prompting throughout the reading.

Session 4. The fourth session occurred two weeks after the third, but because Monday was a holiday and the family had plans, we met the next day at 6:30 in the evening. When I arrived at the house, Jessica met me at the door with another girl who appeared to be a year younger. Jessica told me her cousin was playing with her and they were going to get to watch a movie later. Ms. Irena introduced me to the little girl, Evelyn, and said that Jessica's mom had a friend over and Evelyn was her daughter. Ms. Irena said that she often watched Evelyn when her mother and Jessica's mother went out. Evelyn appeared very comfortable in the home.

Ms. Irena reported that their reading activities since the last session had been increasing because they had recently had more time in the evenings with fewer activities. This allowed them to be at home more in the evenings, which is when most of their shared reading occurred. Jessica's mother had also been home more, and she had been reading with Jessica.

Jessica was very anxious to show Evelyn what we were going to do. She mostly wanted to show her how the video camera worked. Jessica picked up a book from the couch and pulled Evelyn over next to her and her grandmother. Ms. Irena started the reading by asking the girls what was happening in the picture. She skipped reading the title or the author and began reading the story. Both Jessica and Evelyn participated

throughout the story. Most of the time Jessica would answer a question and Evelyn would repeat what Jessica said. The following example occurred at the beginning of the reading:

Ms. Irena: Yea. Mrs. Millie, our teacher is really silly. Look at this. Every day she says, good morning children, please hang up your goats. Don't be silly Mrs. Millie, you mean our coats.

Jessica: It's silly. It's silly.

Ms. Irena: What do you think Evelyn? Goats?

Evelyn: Goats.

Jessica: It's coats, Evie.

Ms. Irena: Okay.

The reading continued and Ms. Irena used five Completion prompts, 18 "Wh" questions, and one PEER sequence. During the middle of the reading, Jessica and Evelyn's mother came upstairs to tell Ms. Irena they were going out and would be back later. Neither Jessica nor Evelyn seemed distracted by their exit. The girls remained to participate in the reading. In addition to Ms. Irena's prompts, the girls also initiated two questions of their own. After the reading Evelyn sat at the table to color while Jessica was given the EVT-2 post-test.

Session summaries. Overall, Table 5 shows that Ms. Irena frequently used prompts that varied from session to session. She used "Wh" prompting the most, but many of these prompts led to PEER sequences. In the first session the prompts focused on what was happening in the book and the text features. In session two Jessica was an active participant and also initiated prompts. In session three a variety of prompts were

used. Jessica related well to the book, which discussed eating pancakes and syrup. In session four Jessica read an interactive book that allowed her to play with pieces of cloth on the pages. She remained an active participant throughout the reading.

Table 5. *The Irena Family's Use of Dialogic Reading Prompts by Session*

Prompt	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Total
Completion	2	2	1	5	10
Recall	0	3	0	0	3
Open-ended	3	4	3	0	10
“Wh”	35	14	6	18	63
Distancing	0	0	1	0	1
PEER	3	2	1	1	7

Note. The dialogic reading prompt were counted using the “Dialogic Reading Observation Form” after the video was transcribed. Prompts that were initiated by the child are not represented in the count.

Changes in literacy activities. The families’ literacy activities throughout the study were determined on the activities that the family had scheduled throughout the week. Between sessions one and two Ms. Irena reported that they had not really done much reading. Later, however, when we were reading a book, Ms. Irena mentioned that they had read the book many times in the last week because it was the only book Jessica wanted to read. Ms. Irena had not remembered the reading that they had done. Between sessions two and three Ms. Irena reported that bedtime reading occurred, but many late nights with family activities shortened how long they normally read for because she wanted to get Jessica to bed. Between sessions three and four, Ms. Irena reported that they had not been as busy, and the family has had more reading time, especially at night.

EVT-2. Jessica was an enthusiastic participant during the administration of both tests. Jessica's scores show that her expressive vocabulary was slightly below average (42-47%) for her age. Over the six weeks Jessica's GSV went down two points. However, the confidence interval showed that her standard scores were both within the same range, meaning that her true score could be anywhere within that range.

Jessica was administered the EVT-2 Form A (Williams, 2007) during the first visit before dialogic reading instruction began. At the time Jessica was five years and four months old. Jessica scored a standard score of 99 with a 95% confidence interval of 92 to 106. Jessica was in the 47 percentile for her age. Her normal curve equivalent was 49, stanine was 5, and age equivalent was 5 years and 4 months, grade equivalent was 2.6. Her growth score value (GSV) was 161. After six weeks of dialogic reading, Jessica was given the EVT-2 Form B (Williams, 2007). At this time Jessica was five years and five months old. Jessica scored a standard score of 97 with a 95% confidence interval of 90 to 104. Jessica was in the 42 percentile for her age. Her normal curve equivalent was 46, stanine was 5, and age equivalent was 5 years and 2 months, grade equivalent was 2.2. Her growth score value was 159. Jessica's GSV changed by -2 points (161-159).

Final interview. Ms. Irena focused on Jessica's experiences with dialogic reading during the final interview. She reported increased engagement and interest in books. She easily incorporated the dialogic reading instruction. She enjoyed the bonding experience and ability to use repeated readings. She did not note any change in Jessica's vocabulary, but saw dialogic reading as a tool for enjoying her grandchildren. When Ms. Irena was asked about the overall process she said, "It went well. She got more

enthusiastic about reading. She participates in the process. She to talk more and wanted to read.”

Summary of research questions. The following sections look at the findings as a whole to answer the research questions.

Families implementation of dialogic reading. Ms. Irena found the dialogic reading instruction easy to learn and implement. The family reported that the hardest part was finding the time to read. They often skipped reading at bedtime if it was late. The family’s use of dialogic reading prompts (See Table 5) supports these claims. Ms. Irena used a wide variety of prompts frequently. Overall, all prompts were used, but Recall and Distancing prompts were rarely used. Ms. Irena did not report text selection to be a factor in using dialogic reading, but did learn that repeated readings were encouraged. Jessica, who enjoys reading the same book many times, was happy to have repeated readings.

Jessica was always interested and engaged while reading, but Ms. Irena reported that she became very enthusiastic and her confidence increased while using dialogic reading. Ms. Irena also found dialogic reading to create meaningful bonding experiences. She began using dialogic reading as a way to bond with her grandchildren not living in the home also. The family incorporated dialogic reading at bedtime and did not report any negative aspects of this. However, bedtime reading was skipped many times throughout the study because the family arrived home late due to other commitments.

Changes in child’s vocabulary. Ms. Irena did not notice any change in Jessica’s vocabulary. Ms. Irena reported that introducing new vocabulary words was a focus while using prompts. At the beginning of the study, Jessica scored slightly below average on

the EVT-2. The post test of the EVT-2 showed that her GSV decreased by two points, but the confidence intervals did not show any notable change.

Tatiana and the Pearson Family

The Pearson family was a working class mixed African-American and European white family that lived in the suburbs of a wealthy county on the East Coast. The family was recruited using an online community message board. Mrs. Pearson was willing to participate. The subdivision that the family lived in was on the outskirts of the suburban sprawl and was far from central shopping centers and other amenities. Currently living in the single family home was Mrs. Pearson, age 32; Mr. Pearson, age 33; Tatiana 3; and Zander, 2. The family moved to the area two years ago from the Southwest when Mr. Pearson was transferred during his assignment in the Army. Mr. Pearson recently finished his military assignment and did shift work for a large computer company. Mrs. Pearson stayed at home with their two children, and was expecting a third child in a few months. The family's annual income was under \$50,000 a year. Mr. Pearson had his bachelor's degree in business and Mrs. Pearson had a master's degree in elementary education. She had never taught in the classroom before, but completed her student teaching and worked as a substitute teacher before having children. She was contemplating going back to teaching after the children were older, but was not sure yet.

Mrs. Pearson preferred that I come during the morning. The family usually ate breakfast together and then had a chance to clean up after Mr. Pearson left for work. Most of their mornings were spent around the house or running errands. Mrs. Pearson decided that Wednesday mornings would work well and the next five sessions occurred on

Wednesdays around 9:00 a.m. The first Wednesday that I arrived at the house Zander was peering out the small glass window next to the front door. As I approached the house, he tried to answer the door, but Mrs. Pearson caught him before he could run outside. Mrs. Pearson explained that the children were expecting me, and they were promised that they could play outside after we finished. Tatiana stood at her mother's leg and hid her head. Tatiana was a thin child and was almost a mirror image of her mother. She had tight black curls that framed her dark complexion. Mrs. Pearson explained that Tatiana was not feeling well. We entered the single level home and made ourselves comfortable in the living room. The house was immaculate and there were no children's toys to be seen. When I commented on the décor of the home, Mrs. Pearson laughed and said that she liked to decorate and tried to keep all the children's stuff out of sight. She lifted the large brown ottoman in the living room to expose a host of children's toys. I explained the study to Mrs. Pearson and after receiving her consent to participate, I asked Tatiana for her assent. At this time Tatiana began to feel more comfortable and started to pick up her little brother and wrestle with him to the floor. After a stern look from her mother, Tatiana asked if it was time to get her library bag. Her mother told her that she could go find it while we talked.

Initial interview. As with previous participants, the initial interview asked many demographic questions, which are in the introduction to the family. Mrs. Pearson and I then discussed more about the family's reading practices and what they enjoy doing as a family. Mrs. Pearson described Tatiana as a sweetheart who loved to love on people and cuddle. She also liked to play outside when it is warm, ride her bike, and read stories. She

liked to go anywhere and do just about anything. She was very social. She described Zander as a sweetheart too, but commented that he “is all boy.” She said, “He just runs around and tears up the house.” She explained that his new favorite thing to say was, “I love you,” but he says it to everyone, even strangers. As we continued the interview, Tatiana came back to tell her mother that her head was hurting. I ask Mrs. Pearson if she would like to continue another time, but she assured me that Tatiana was okay and really wanted to use the thermometer again to take her temperature. When asked what the family enjoyed doing together, Mrs. Pearson explained that they did not get a lot of time. Mr. Pearson was going to school and worked a lot. Mostly they just liked to hang around the house and do things with the kids. When they were outside, they enjoyed playing soccer together. They also enjoyed simple things like getting to eat dinner together.

The family’s literacy practices included reading stories together every night for bedtime and going to the library. Mrs. Pearson and Tatiana also practiced reading with small leveled readers; during this time Tatiana liked to pick out the letters that she knew. They read both fiction and nonfiction, and most of the books were about soccer, animals, or princesses. They often received books as gifts and purchased books for the children. The local library was also visited weekly and they usually checked out six to 10 books at a time. Most of their time at the library was spent looking for books, but Tatiana had recently discovered the computers at the library. They also loved playing with the Legos at the library. Tatiana liked playing school and Mrs. Pearson felt that she would be prepared because she loved to learn and listened well. The family spent time reading so that the children could learn. They felt it was important and the children like it. They also

read for fun. Mrs. Pearson would read more to the children if, “It were easier. If I didn’t have Zander jump in on me in the middle of the story, interrupting, and in general just more time. If it was more calm and peaceful time.” Usually Mrs. Pearson read to both children at the same time. It was apparent when talking to the Pearson family that they did a lot of reading throughout the week and enjoyed doing so.

Session 1. The first session began immediately after the initial interview, instructional video, and EVT-2 pre-test. Before beginning the reading, Mrs. Pearson asked Tatiana if she wanted to sit in her lap so it was more comfortable. Tatiana snuggled in between Mrs. Pearson’s legs and round pregnant belly. She began by reading the title of the book, *Snowball Soup*, but did not read the author’s name, Mercer Mayor. Before Ms. Pearson asked many questions but it was Tatiana that initiated the first interaction.

Tatiana: They’re making an angel?

Mrs. Pearson: A snow angel?

Tatiana: Yeah.

Mrs. Pearson: Yeah, you can’t wait to do that, can you? We make snowballs. We throw snowballs. Look, she got him in the face.

Tatiana: In the eye.

Ms. Pearson continued the reading and asked three “Wh” questions, three Distancing prompts, and one PEER sequence (as seen above). While, this does not seem like a lot, much of the interaction was initiated by Tatiana herself. She did not need many prompts in order to discuss the book. They did not have any discussions after the reading of the

book. Tatiana was very engaged in the book, but her little brother, Zander did not interact with the reading. Instead, he played on the floor with a sippy cup.

Session 2. When I arrived for the second session the house was decorated in Christmas lights and Tatiana was staring out the window waiting for my arrival. When Mrs. Pearson let me in, Tatiana handed me a canvas tote bag filled with 10 books. Mrs. Pearson said they were getting ready to take the books back to the library. The library was a couple of miles from their home, and they had been to story time there earlier in the week. Reading activities since the first session were reported as numerous. The children had attended story time, read books from the library, and continued to read at bedtime. Ms. Pearson reported that she had been using many of the dialogic reading prompts, especially at bedtime.

Tatiana pulled out one of the books from the bag. We went into the living room and Tatiana sat on the couch while her little brother curled up in Mrs. Pearson's lap. She began reading *How do Dinosaurs Say Merry Christmas* by Jane Yolen. She started with the title, but did not read the author's name. After the title page, Mrs. Pearson began reading the story, but Tatiana stopped her and pointed to the page before it and said, "No, that one first."

Mrs. Pearson obliged, and read, "To the White family, to team Stimple." Tatiana seemed a little confused, but Mrs. Pearson did not explain the dedication. Instead, she started the story over again. During the reading she asked three "Wh" questions, one Distancing prompt, and used one PEER sequence. The longest dialogue that they had occurred when discussing the many names that Santa Claus or St. Nicholas went by.

After the reading Mrs. Pearson asked Tatiana to put the book back in her bag. She explained that they went to the library at least once a week for something to do. Mrs. Pearson picks some of the books, but Tatiana can get as many as she wants.

Session 3. The third session took place two weeks from the second on a Wednesday morning. Tatiana and Zander were still in their pajamas when I arrived. Mrs. Pearson said the kids were moving slow and she was frustrated because she was watching a neighbor's child soon, and she wanted them to get dressed. She was not expecting the neighbor for an hour, but wanted to have them ready so she did not have so much to do while they played.

Mrs. Pearson reported that their reading activities since the last session had not changed. They went to the library twice in the last two weeks and read while they were there. The family continued to read at bedtime, but much of their bedtime routine was focused on getting the children to sleep. Zander, Tatiana's little brother, was transitioning to a toddler bed, and getting him settled was taking a lot of effort.

Mrs. Pearson had chosen to read *Bedtime at Bessie and Lil's* by Julie Sternberg. It was another book that the family had picked out at the library the week before. Mrs. Pearson read the title of the book, but did not read the author or discuss the book before beginning to read. Mrs. Pearson used seven "Wh" prompts, three Distancing prompts, and three PEER sequences during the reading. The dialogue between the family members focused on expanding phrases that Tatiana answered with and practicing correct grammar. The following is an example of PEER sequence:

Mrs. Pearson: See them tiptoeing?

Tatiana: Yes. That ain't how you tiptoe.

Mrs. Pearson: Huh?

Tatiana: That ain't how you tiptoe?

Mrs. Pearson: That's not how you tiptoe?

Tatiana: No

Mrs. Pearson: How do you tiptoe?

Tatiana: Like this. (Showing her mother).

Mrs. Pearson Oh yeah, good job.

Mrs. Pearson did not directly correct Tatiana by telling her she was wrong, but provided the language she would like her to use. Tatiana did not repeat it correctly, but this allowed Mrs. Pearson to keep the dialogue with Tatiana going. This PEER sequence evaluated what the child was saying and expanded on it by providing the correct usage of language. The entire reading took six minutes. When Mrs. Pearson finished the book they discussed what it would be like when their new baby came.

Session 4. When I arrived at the house Tatiana and Mrs. Pearson answered the door and let me in. The house smelled of paint, and a few of the cabinets were streaked with white paint. Mrs. Pearson explained that she was trying to paint the kitchen cabinet before the baby arrived in a couple of months. She said she enjoyed doing projects around the house, but it was taking much more time since she had to watch the kids. Mrs. Pearson said they had really been enjoying the reading and she felt like they had read a lot more books since starting. She attributed Tatiana's increased interest in books to the fact that she was getting more time at bedtime to stay up with her father. She mentioned

that Zander had a little less interest in reading with them because the books took longer and the interest of a two year old was hard to hold.

For the last session Tatiana had picked out a book about kittens from the library. The book was titled *A Bed for Kitty* by Yasmine Surovec. Before Mrs. Pearson could even finish the title of the book Tatiana shouted out, “Look at all the kitties! They won’t sleep in the bed.” Tatiana was very excited about the kittens in the book. This book reading was only four minutes long, and the only prompts used were six “Wh” questions and one PEER sequence. However, throughout this reading Tatiana spoke 16 different times in comparison to Mrs. Pearson’s 21 times. This showed that Tatiana was an active participant in the reading despite the few prompts used by Mrs. Pearson. She often talked without any prompting. Many times the dialogue consisted of short explanations and Tatiana’s feelings about where the cat was sleeping. Tatiana then hopped off the couch and started looking for another book. Mrs. Pearson explained that we were done for today. Tatiana asked if we could play the game now (the EVT-2 test).

Session summaries. The Pearson family used a variety of prompts throughout their sessions, but did not use any Recall or Completion prompts. Many of the texts that were used were books chosen from the library and were not familiar to Tatiana. Completion prompts are used more frequently when the child has read the book previously, or it contains rhyming phrases. The lack of use of these two prompts did not detract from how interactive Tatiana was during the readings. During the first reading Tatiana initiated many prompts herself and was highly engaged. During the second session Tatiana was less responsive. After finishing the book her mother suggested that

she probably was not very interested in dinosaurs. In the third session there was an increase in prompts and many of the interactions focused on grammar usage. The fourth session included a book about kittens. Although Table 6 suggests that there was a decrease in prompts, Tatiana was highly engaged and initiated prompts 16 times. These prompts were not counted in the table. Kittens was a high interest topic for Tatiana.

Table 6. *The Pearson Family's Use of Dialogic Reading Prompts by Session*

Prompt	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Total
Completion	0	0	0	0	0
Recall	0	0	0	0	0
Open-ended	0	1	1	0	2
“Wh”	3	3	7	6	19
Distancing	3	1	3	0	7
PEER	1	1	3	1	6

Note. The dialogic reading prompt were counted using the “Dialogic Reading Observation Form” after the video was transcribed. Prompts that were initiated by the child are not represented in the count.

Changes in literacy activities. The Pearson family was very interested in using the dialogic reading prompts. Throughout the sessions, Mrs. Pearson reported that their reading increased overall and Tatiana’s engagement with reading increased. From session one to two, they frequently read at bedtime and at the library while using dialogic reading. From session two to three the families reading at bedtime decreased dramatically. This was explained by the bedtime routine being interrupted while

Tatiana's two year-old brother, Zander, was transitioning from a crib to a toddler bed. Mrs. Pearson was frequently distracted and did not have the same amount of time to dedicate to reading. From session three to session four the family reported the reading time increased. One reason for this is that Mr. and Mrs. Pearson both read to Tatiana at bedtime. The Pearsons are all avid readers and enjoy engaging with the text.

EVT-2. Tatiana was an enthusiastic participant during both the pre and post testing. Tatiana's expressive vocabulary was above average for her age (54-79%). Tatiana showed a notable change from pre to post test. Although her GSV changed only by +3 points, her standards scores showed that with the 95% confidence interval she showed improvement. This shows that she had a true measurable difference.

Tatiana was administered the EVT-2 Form A (Williams, 2007) during the first visit before dialogic reading instruction began. At the time Tatiana was three years and eight months old. Tatiana scored a standard score of 103 with a 95% confidence interval of 96 to 110. Tatiana was in the 58 percentile for her age. Her normal curve equivalent was 54, stanine was 5, and age equivalent was 8 years and 6 months, grade equivalent was 8.6. Her growth score value (GSV) was 164. After six weeks of dialogic reading Tatiana was given the EVT-2 Form B (Williams, 2007). At this time Tatiana was three years and nine months old. Tatiana scored a standard score of 112 with a 95% confidence interval of 105 to 119. Tatiana was in the 79 percentile for her age. Her normal curve equivalent was 67, stanine was 7, and age equivalent was 9 years and 6 months, grade equivalent was 3.6. Her growth score value was 167. Tatiana's GSV changed by +3

points (164-167). Her score on the post test could not be explained by error according to the confidence intervals, making her increase in GSV notable.

Final interview. The Pearson family reported that their experience went well. Mrs. Pearson found dialogic reading easy to integrate into the families' routine. Tatiana was more engaged with repeated readings and had started to incorporate vocabulary from readings into her everyday conversations with her mother. Mr. Pearson also began to use dialogic reading without any formal instruction. The family had incorporated dialogic reading into their bedtime routine and planned to use it in the future.

Summary of research questions. The following sections look at the findings as a whole to answer the research questions.

Families implementation of dialogic reading. Mrs. Pearson reported that dialogic reading instruction was easy to implement. She had used these types of prompts while reading with the children before the instruction. She saw the dialogic reading as another tool that she could use. The family's dialogic reading by session (see Table 6) supports Mrs. Pearson's ease of use, but Mrs. Pearson did not use any Completion or Recall prompts. The texts the family used were strategically chosen to either fit Tatiana's interests or to open dialogue around a topic. For example, one week they chose a book about cats because Tatiana loves cats. Another week they chose a book about an animal having to sleep in a new bed because Tatiana's brother, Zander, was moving to a new bed. The family also increased their use of repeated readings after hearing about the benefits during the dialogic reading instruction.

Tatiana had an increased interest in reading new books and the amount of reading that she shared with her mother and father. The shared readings took more time because they were discussing the text. Zander, Tatiana's two year-old brother, easily lost interest in the books that they were reading together because his attention span was shorter. The family did not report an increase in bonding, but did report that Tatiana and her father spent more time reading together than before. The family routinely read at bedtime, and dialogic reading did not disturb Tatiana's routine. The bedtime routine was disrupted over the six weeks by Zander moving into a new bed. Reading was often interrupted to put Zander back to bed.

Changes in child's vocabulary. Mrs. Pearson saw a direct increase in Tatiana's expressive vocabulary over the six weeks. Mrs. Pearson reported that Tatiana used words that they had heard in their shared readings. For example, Tatiana used the word "weird" several times in one day. Mrs. Pearson remembered previously discussing the word in a text they had read that week. The EVT-2 supports Mrs. Pearson's observations. Tatiana's expressive vocabulary started the study slightly above average and ended well above average. Tatiana's GSV increased by three points. Her score on the post test could not be explained by error according to the confidence intervals, making her increase in GSV notable.

Isaac and the Jones Family

The Jones family was an upper middle class African American family that lived in the suburbs of a wealthy county on the East Coast. The family was recruited using an online community message board. Mr. and Mrs. Jones both contacted me about

participating in the study. The subdivision that the family lived in was a new development and was still under construction. The homes were large single family homes and sat on a quarter to half an acre. Their home was a large brick front home that was finished three months prior. Living at the home was Mr. Jones, 41; Mrs. Jones, 38; and Isaac, 4. Isaac took after his father and was very tall for his age. The Jones' annual income was over \$100,000, and they both worked for the federal government at the time of the study. Due to security clearances, neither Mr. nor Mrs. Jones could discuss their current job responsibilities, but both worked in a managerial capacity. Mr. Jones had his bachelor's degree and Mrs. Jones had a master's degree. Because both family members worked during the day, Isaac went to a large child care.

The family's work schedule dictated that we met on Sundays during the research study. I came each Sunday around noon after the family had returned from church. The first Sunday that I arrived there were several cars in the driveway. I made my way to the door as Mr. Jones and his mother were leaving the house. Mrs. Jones explained that her mother in-law had been undergoing cancer treatment, and they had been trying to spend as much time with her as they could. I entered the home and Mrs. Jones asked me to take off my shoes, as was custom in many homes in the area. The entry way was lined with boxes and led to an open kitchen and living room floorplan. The carpeted living room did not have any furniture yet, but they were expecting their new furnishings to arrive in a couple of weeks. We settled ourselves at the kitchen island while Isaac sat in the empty living room playing a game on Mrs. Jones' phone. I explained the process of the study and obtained consent from Mrs. Jones to participate. Mrs. Jones then called Isaac over so

that I could talk to him. When I asked for his assent, he told me that his mom already told him everything and he thought it was okay. Mrs. Jones explained that he was eager to go to a birthday party later in the day for a friend. Mrs. Jones then watched the instructional video while I performed the EVT-2 pre-test with Isaac.

Initial interview. Isaac returned to playing the phone in the living room while Mrs. Pearson shared more about their family with me. The family enjoyed watching movies and television together. This caught Isaac's attention and he said they liked watching "Blackish and Empire." They also liked going to local activities and festivals that came to the area. They had recently attended an event where Thomas the Train came to town. Isaac was also very busy with friends. The neighbors had a four year-old that lived next door and they were often together.

When asked about literacy events they participated in, Mrs. Jones said the first thing that came to mind was practicing phonics and pronunciation. They had several videos that they liked him to watch. She mentioned that he had a short attention span and found that he paid more attention to videos than books. However, he also read at bedtime. Many nights the books were the same ones repeated over and over. He also had a small electronic bear that links to books, and the bear reads to him. They went back and forth between them reading to him and the bear reading to him. His favorite books were a set of Thomas the Train books that also have recordings. Most of the books that Isaac had were gifts from family members.

Mrs. Jones felt that Isaac would be ready for school next year, but lacked some number sense. Isaac said that he already went to school during the day. Mrs. Jones

explained that they call child care school. Mrs. Jones then asked if I had information about the county's registration process for kindergarten. I let her know that I would send her the school's website when I returned home. She shared that they were concerned where Isaac will go when he was out of school and they were not home from work.

They spent time reading to Isaac so that he would be prepared for school; they wanted him to have a good foundation. They did not want him to fall behind. Mrs. Jones said, "It's challenging for me because, like I said, he is my first child and a lot of my friends have older children, I don't have anything to compare him to." Mrs. Jones finished the statement, I would read more to my child if,

I could see a great improvement. Based off of what I'm doing with him, sometimes it's hard to know whether he's grasping the concepts, and that type of thing. I think that if I got confirmation from someone, who observed from the outside what I should and shouldn't do, then I would probably do a little bit more.

After the interview Isaac brought a book over to the kitchen counter that we were sitting at.

Session 1. The first session began immediately after the initial interview, instructional video, and EVT-2 pre-test. The book Isaac brought to his mother to read was *There is a Bird on My Head* by Mo Willems. Before the reading could begin, Isaac went back to the living room to get some plastic action figure. He said that they wanted to read the story too. Isaac sat on a barstool a foot away from his mother's. He was very distracted by the action figures and was not interested in discussing the book with his

mother. The following transcript shows Isaac's attention to the figures, and Mrs.

Pearson's frustration with trying to read the book:

Mrs. Jones: Sit still and let mommy read this to you, okay?

Isaac: Okay, but I'm listening.

Mrs. Jones: You listening?

Isaac: Okay, yes.

Mrs. Jones: Okay. All right, let's finish.

Isaac: Don't move (to his figurine). He's listening.

Mrs. Jones: Okay.

Isaac: (Moving the figurine again). He's just going to stand up and look at it.

Mrs. Jones: Okay, let's finish here. That says, "Ah!" What's going on here? Why did he say, "Ah!"

Isaac: No, I said already. Donatello (the figurine) has to tell you now?

Mrs. Jones: Okay Donatello tell me, what happened?

As the reading continued, Isaac became more engaged in the book, but continued to play with his figurine. At the end of the book, Isaac began to lose focus again. He asked his mom if he could look at something on her phone. She asked him to wait for a moment and tell her what was happening in the picture. He was then able to focus on the book for a few more minutes. The book reading took less than 10 minutes, and Isaac was not very interested in reading. Mrs. Jones used one Recall prompt, four Open-ended

questions, 17 “Wh” questions, and three PEER sequences. Isaac’s level of engagement was low, and he was eager to finish the book.

Session 2. During week two of the study, I arrived at the house around noon on Sunday. Isaac answered the door and told his mom “the reading lady” was here now. Mrs. Jones said that Isaac had been asking when they were going to read again. She said that their reading schedule had been similar to before the reading study. They continue to read books with Isaac at bedtime. Isaac chose a book called *Go, Slow, Thomas* by Rev. W. Audry. Mrs. Jones said they had read each of these books a thousand times, but that it was all Isaac wanted to read. Mrs. Jones expressed concern that she felt as though she was asking too many questions while using the dialogic reading technique. We discussed the use of the prompts again, and I encouraged her to try a few with each reading. We discussed that too many prompts could disrupt the flow of the book and Isaac could lose interest. We sat at the counter on barstools with me on one side of Isaac and his mother on the other side.

Isaac read the title of the book from memorization. The author was not listed on the cover of the book. They did not discuss the book before Mrs. Jones began reading. Most of the dialogue around the book focused on the names of the trains. Mrs. Jones’ focus then became introducing terms that Isaac did not already know. The following is transcript describes Mrs. Jones pointing at a picture of a railroad track and teaching the term to Isaac:

Mrs. Jones: Bunny rabbit. Very good. This is a railroad track.

Isaac: Mm-hmm.

Mrs. Jones: Can you say, "Railroad track?"

Isaac: Railroad-rock track.

Mrs. Jones: Railroad track.

Isaac: Railroad track.

Mrs. Jones: Very good. "Bust my boiler," Thomas peeps. "It isn't easy to go slowly." "Just keep at it, Thomas," says Sir Topham Hatt. "You can do it." Now, what are the trains riding on again? What's that called?

Isaac: may-vel track.

Mrs. Jones: What is that called the ride on?

Isaac: Track.

Mrs. Jones: The railroad track.

Isaac: The railroad track.

Throughout the reading Mrs. Jones used one Recall prompt, one Open-ended question, 10 "Wh" questions, and two PEER sequences. Isaac was engaged throughout the book and enjoyed telling the names of the trains.

Session 3. The third session occurred at two in the afternoon on the fourth week of the study. When I came to the door, Mr. Jones answered and introduced himself again. He said that Isaac had been wanting to read a lot with his mom, but was only interested in the books that he had already read. He enjoyed talking about them. He was hesitant to read any new books with them because he said he does not know the characters in the book.

For the third session Isaac chose *Ride with Thomas* by Rev. W. Audry. He sat next to his mother on a barstool and brought a toy truck with him to the counter. Mrs. Jones read the title of the book, but did not ask any questions before beginning to read. As with previous sessions, it took Isaac a couple of pages to focus on the book. He was much more interested in playing with his toys. During the reading, Mrs. Jones used one Completion prompt, asked five Open-ended questions, 19 “Wh” questions, and used one PEER sequence. Isaac had memorized all of the characters and seemed frustrated that his mom still did not know all of them. The following is an example of his frustration:

Mrs. Jones: Okay. Very good. So who’s supposed to stop at the stopping sign?
 And who is this?

Isaac: I just told you. Thomas.

Mrs. Jones: Oh, Thomas, okay. All right.

Isaac: How many times do I have to tell you that?

Immediately after this dialogue, Isaac got up and walked away from the reading and told his mom he forgot something. He brought back a toy vehicle. When he came back, Mrs. Jones was able to engage him in the reading again. But after a couple of pages, Isaac wanted to tell me about a movie that he was going to see. His mother continued reading, but Isaac was not engaged in the book and wanted to play with his toys.

Session 4. When I arrived at the home for the fourth session, Mrs. Jones answered the door and led me into the open living room and kitchen area. The family had received their new couches and Mrs. Jones said they were relieved to have somewhere to sit and

watch television. We discussed their latest literacy activities, and Mrs. Jones said that Isaac was really excited about the study, but he really will only use the Thomas the Train books they have been reading. She said she was feeling more confident with using the prompts and trying new ones.

For the last session, Isaac chose another Thomas the Train book called *Ten Engine Friends* by Rev. W. Audry. Mrs. Jones asked Isaac if he would like to sit on the couches, but he declined and said he wanted to sit at the counter. Isaac sat between Mrs. Jones and me on the bar stools. Mrs. Jones read the title, but did not discuss the book before beginning to read. During the reading, Mrs. Jones used one Open-ended prompt, seven “Wh” questions, and two PEER sequences. Early in the reading they discussed the railroad track, as they did in session two.

Mrs. Jones: Henry. Henry’s on the railroad track. What is he on right here?

Isaac: Railroad track.

Mrs. Jones: Railroad track. Okay.

Isaac: It’s not. It doesn’t look like one. It looks like a rock track.

Mrs. Jones: Okay. All right. There are rocks under the track. Right? But it’s a railroad track. Can you say that again?

Isaac: Railroad track.

They continued the reading, and Isaac remained engaged throughout the book. Towards the middle of the book, the reading was interrupted because a page was missing from the book. Mrs. Jones responded that they would just go on to the next one. The dialogue during this session continued to focus on the names of the trains. After the reading, I gave

Isaac the second EVT-2 test. He then went upstairs to play while I conducted the final interview.

Session summaries. The Jones family frequently engaged with the text by using “Wh” prompts. As Table 7 shows they rarely used any Completion or Recall prompts and never used Distancing prompts. Three out of the four books they read were very familiar to Isaac and these prompts would have been appropriate. During the first session Isaac was very distracted by the toys. Isaac and his mother also sat at a counter on stools, which may have made it harder for Isaac to focus on the reading. He did not have any interest in the book, and his disengagement showed. During the second session his mother was concerned about too many questions interrupting the flow of the story. She chose to focus on a fewer questions to increase his engagement. The conversations focused on new vocabulary words, such as railroad track. During the third session Isaac did not want to read any new books. Isaac chose a familiar text, but it took him several pages to gain focus, but then it was quickly lost due to his interest in the small toy he brought to the counter. He was irritated by the prompts and did not want to discuss the text. During the fourth session Mrs. Jones said she was much more confident using the prompts and Isaac showed higher engagement in the text. Overall, Isaac showed more focus with fewer prompts.

Table 7. *The Jones Family's Use of Dialogic Reading Prompts by Session*

Prompt	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Total
Completion	0	0	1	0	1
Recall	1	1	0	0	2
Open-ended	4	1	5	1	11
“Wh”	17	10	19	7	53
Distancing	0	0	0	0	0
PEER	3	2	1	2	8

Note. The dialogic reading prompt were counted using the “Dialogic Reading Observation Form” after the video was transcribed. Prompts that were initiated by the child are not represented in the count.

Changes in literacy activities. Isaac’s reading activities were mostly confined to his bedtime routine. During this time, he was either read to, or was left to read with an electronic reading device. From session one to two, Mrs. Jones reports that they did many repeated readings, but he continued to be engaged in the books he had. From session two to three, Mrs. Jones began to ask fewer prompts and let Isaac take the lead. From session three to four, their reading activities remained about the same, as reported by Mrs. Jones. Although Mrs. Jones reported that their literacy activities did not change throughout the six weeks, she did report that she was much more confident in using the prompts with Isaac.

EVT-2. Isaac participated in both the pre and posttest. His scores showed that his expressive vocabulary ranged from 45 to 58 percentile for his age. Isaac’s GSV decreased

by four points, but the confidence interval showed that his standard scores were both within the same range, meaning that his true score could be anywhere within that range.

Isaac was administered the EVT-2 Form A (Williams, 2007) during the first visit before dialogic reading instruction began. At the time, Isaac was four years and five months old. Isaac scored a standard score of 103 with a 95% confidence interval of 96 to 110. Isaac was in the 58 percentile for his age. His normal curve equivalent was 54, stanine was 5, and age equivalent was 8 years and 6 months, grade equivalent was 3.0. His growth score value (GSV) was 164. After six weeks of dialogic reading Isaac was given the EVT-2 Form B (Williams, 2007). At this time Isaac was four years and six months old. Isaac scored a standard score of 98 with a 95% confidence interval of 91 to 105. Isaac was in the 45 percentile for his age. His normal curve equivalent was 47, stanine was 5, and age equivalent was 8 years and 0 months, grade equivalent was 2.5. His growth score value was 160. Isaac' GSV changed -4 points (164-160).

Final interview. The Jones family said that overall the dialogic reading went well. Mrs. Jones reported that in the beginning she struggled with the technique, but Isaac enjoyed it. The family was looking for ways to engage Isaac in literacy without technology. They were also reevaluating what books they had in the home and looking for more advanced topics. Mr. and Mrs. Jones were both present for the final interview.

Summary of research questions. The following sections look at the findings as a whole to answer the research questions.

Families implementation of dialogic reading. Mrs. Jones reported that the dialogic reading instruction was difficult to implement. In the first session, Mrs. Jones

asked 17 “Wh” questions. The dialogic reading instruction given did not specify an amount of questions that should be asked, but Mrs. Jones did notice that the amount of questions she used interrupted the flow of the story. After the first session, we discussed that fewer questions may help with Isaac’s engagement. However, during the next three sessions (as seen in Table 7), Mrs. Jones continued to only use “Wh” questions and a few PEER sequences.

The family did not report any increased interest or engagement from Isaac during the study. The family discussed the need to decrease the amount of electronics used by Isaac. The family spent most of their time together engaging in activities outside the home, like going to museums or parks, and inside the home they enjoy having family dinners and watching television shows. However, they did not discuss dialogic reading as being a bonding experience.

The family incorporated reading into Isaac’s bedtime routine. Before the study Isaac used many electronic devices to read to him as part of his routine. During the study Mr. or Mrs. Pearson read to him also. During this time they reported that they focused on discussing vocabulary words in the text that he may not be familiar with.

Changes in child’s vocabulary. Mrs. Pearson could see growth in Isaac’s expressive vocabulary, especially in the words that he had received direct instruction on during the reading. For example, Isaac did not know the words “coal” or “railroad” track. Isaac started and ended the study with an average expressive vocabulary for his age. During the study his GSV decreased by four points. However, with a 95% confidence interval, the scores show that test score error could have contributed to this difference.

Though the family noticed use of words taught through direct instruction, there was no change in his expressive vocabulary.

Victoria and the Carmen Family

The Carmen family was an upper middle class Latina family that lived in the suburbs of a wealthy county on the East Coast. The family was recruited through a colleague, and Mrs. Carmen was a doctoral student. The subdivision that the family lived in was well established and sat adjacent to major roads and a metro train station making it a prime location. The large single family, wood-sided home sat at the end of a cul-de-sac and boasted a large fenced yard. Living in the home was Mr. and Mrs. Carmen, and their two daughters, Victoria, age 4, and her sister, Mary, age 6. Mrs. Carmen, who was in her late-30s, was originally from Peru and Mr. Carmen, who was 44, was originally from Uruguay. Mr. Carmen had a PhD in electrical engineering and worked for a large government institution specializing in image processing. He mostly conducted his own research concentrating on cancer and cell biology. At this time he was working on creating programs to study images with more quality and more quantity in less time. Mrs. Carmen previously taught kindergarten in a Title I Spanish immersion school. Mrs. Carmen was a PhD student at a major university at the time of the study and was studying education. The family's current income was between \$75,000 and \$100,000.

The family was very busy with work and school, but found time to meet with me on Saturday and Sunday afternoons around 3:00pm. When I first arrived at the home, the glass front door was closed, but the interior door was open so that I could see in. Victoria and her sister reached the door before I could knock. Both girls had long brown hair,

which was neatly held back with headbands and bows. Mrs. Carmen welcomed me into the home and introduced me to the family. Mr. Carmen and their older daughter, Mary, left the room to go to the basement and play. When entering the home we passed the formal living area and entered the main living room. There were several couches and a coffee table with a large doll house placed neatly on top. The kitchen and living areas were well kept and inviting. There were several books waiting on the couch and the room adjacent to the living room was set up as a children's playroom. Many toys were nestled on shelves, as well as puzzles and play food. After explaining the study in depth, I asked Mrs. Carmen and Victoria for consent and assent to participate in the study, and we began the initial interview. Following the interview, I tested Victoria using the EVT-2 (Williams, 2007), while Mrs. Carmen watched the *Read Together, Talk Together* (Pearson Early Learning, 2003) video.

Initial interview. After discussing the demographic information that is described above, Mrs. Carmen told me more about the girls. The girls were both very active and loved to dance and participated in gymnastics. They frequently played together inside and out. They also enjoyed cooking, reading, painting, and drawing. As a family they liked to cook together, travel inside and outside of the country. While traveling and at home, Mrs. Carmen relaxed by reading and Mr. Carmen was very active in the outdoors.

At the time the girls were in a princess phase and most of the books they read were about princesses. They also enjoyed reading books about animals. The family enjoyed reading books in both Spanish and English, but read more in Spanish. The family felt that learning both languages was important and at home they tried to speak Spanish.

When they were outside the home they spoke mostly English. Reading was more natural for them if it was in Spanish. They read frequently and as part of the bedtime routine. During the weekends they read throughout the day as an activity. They read to the girls in their rooms, the living room, and the kitchen. Most of the books in the home came from Mrs. Carmen's library from being a classroom teacher. They also bought books when they were visiting other countries. A large portion of the books in the home were in Spanish.

Mrs. Carmen felt that Victoria would be ready for kindergarten next year. She stated that Victoria was very mature and she thinks her older sister aided in this. For kindergarten, Victoria would attend a Montessori school the following year. They felt the Montessori school was very strong in reading and greatly helped the success of their older daughter. They saw the benefits now that Mary was in first grade. They were expecting similar from Victoria. Victoria recently had a conference for her preschool and the teacher noticed that she was ready to move into forming words and reading simple phonetic words. Mrs. Carmen stated,

Sometimes it's like an act of faith, because you are like speaking here in Spanish when they have to learn English, and you know all the benefits, but even though you know it, as a professional, after fighting, you are like 'Is this really the right thing to do?' And I think it is.

Mrs. Carmen said she would read more to her children, "If I would have more time. It's incredible. When I started thinking about this study I thought, 'Oh my goodness. I'm not reading enough with her.'" She also mentioned that because she was

often in class at night when they were doing their routine, they are reading with her husband and she is not there. She mentioned again that they need more time and that they have the resources.

Session 1. The first session began immediately after the initial interview, instructional video, and EVT-2 pre-test. We moved into the large open living room that had two couches placed around a large rock fireplace. There was a coffee table with a large wooden doll house sitting on it in front of the couches. Unlike many other homes, there was no television that I saw. Mrs. Carmen said the girls sometimes watched movies in the basement. Victoria sat close to her mother with her legs curled under her.

Mrs. Carmen had chosen two books, but let Victoria pick which one she wanted to read. Victoria chose *Hedgie's Surprise* by Jan Brett. Victoria told her mom that she already knew what was happening at the start of the book because they had started reading it earlier. Victoria found the page that they previously read to and asked her mother to start there. I wanted the experience to be as natural as possible for them and told her it was fine to start off from where they were. I do not know if Mrs. Carmen originally read the title of the book, the author, or asked Victoria any questions before they began to read.

Most of the dialogue that occurred during this session consisted of PEER sequences. The family discussed back and forth very naturally. Many of the sequences were focused on vocabulary words that were new to Victoria. For example, Victoria had vocabulary to describe what she saw, but there was often a more accurate word that Mrs.

Carmen would introduce. The following transcript shows an example of this type of dialogue:

Mrs. Carmen: What do you think he's pulling out?

Victoria: A nut.

Mrs. Carmen: What is this?

Victoria: a nut.

Mrs. Carmen: That is called an acorn. Can you say acorn?

Victoria: Acorn!

Mrs. Carmen: Acorn. Hm, said the Tomten, what is this? Off he went to try it...

Mrs. Carmen used five PEER sequences, one Recall, five "Wh" prompts, and four Distancing prompts. Other PEER sequences discussed the difference between a hedgehog and a porcupine and oatmeal and porridge. The "Wh" questions also focused on what items were in the book and who people were in relation to one another. After the reading Victoria asked if I would stay and read her a book. After I read her a book, Mrs. Carmen and I scheduled the next meeting for the following Sunday at the same time.

Session 2. When I arrived for the second session the front door was open and a large glass storm door allowed me to see into the front of the house. Victoria and her sister rounded the corner to open the door for me. They were both dressed in fancy dresses and decorated head bands. Victoria announced that she had gotten to go to a birthday party earlier in the day and at the party they made headbands out of felt. Mrs. Carmen and I discussed their reading practices over the last week. She said that she always reads to the children, but being part of the study had reminded her that she needed

to make time to read with the girls more. She understood how important it was to read to them, but sometimes she just felt like the family did not have time. She then explained that she had classes in the evenings and was gone, but her husband also read to them during this time.

Mrs. Carmen chose the book *Where the Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak. The book was unfamiliar to Victoria. Mrs. Carmen said she found the book in her class library from when she was a teacher. Mrs. Carmen read the title of the book and Victoria asked what wild was. They discussed the front cover of the book, which had a monster or “wild thing” on the front. Victoria said that he looked wild. Then they discussed what animals might be wild or “non-wild.” Mrs. Carmen then explained to Victoria that the book was very important because the author had won a medal for the book. She explained that he not only written the words, but he also drew the pictures. She told Victoria the author’s name.

Throughout the reading, Mrs. Carmen used one Open-ended question, 20 “Wh” questions, four Distancing prompts, and four PEER sequences. Many of the “Wh” questions were about definitions of words such as supper, wild, frightened, and scared. Throughout the book, Victoria asked many questions and showed that her emergent reading skills were advanced. The following transcript shows Victoria’s advanced emergent reading skills:

Mrs. Carmen: You know what this is saying?

Victoria: No.

Mrs. Carmen: What is this sound?

Victoria: Mmm...ax. Max.

Mrs. Carmen: Max. Yeah. That is his boat. You remember the book that we reading the other night. This is a big boat or a small boat?

Victoria: Small boat.

Mrs. Carmen: Small boat. Can you remember the name of the big boat?

Victoria: Ships.

Mrs. Carmen: Ships. Excellent. So he sailed night and day and in and out for weeks and almost over a year to where the wild things are.

In this dialogue Victoria shows that she is able to sound out simple consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) words. Her mother later told me that they had been working on reading small leveled readers. Victoria also showed her ability to make text-to-text connections and transfer vocabulary that she had learned in one book to another. After the reading, Mrs. Carmen and I set up a time to meet for the third session.

Session 3. When I arrived for the third session it was a rainy afternoon and the girls were working on a puzzle with their father in a room adjacent to the living room. They sat at the child sized table working together. Mrs. Carmen answered the door and said she was just getting ready for a dinner party that they were having later in the day with neighbors. Mr. Carmen came in and asked her for the grocery list of items that they still needed. He took Victoria's older sister and left.

Mrs. Carmen said that reading was going well, but they have had a lot of Easter activities so they had not had as much time to focus on the reading. She explained that she was really enjoying the reading, though. Lately, she had been focusing on what

connections the girls were making with the text and other texts, but the study was good because it was helping her focus on vocabulary as well. She thought this was especially important since the girls mostly speak Spanish at home and sometimes they do not know the words in English.

For the third session Mrs. Carmen chose *Rubia and the Three Osos* by Susan Middleton Elya. This book came from Mrs. Carmen's classroom library from when she was teaching. The book was not familiar to Victoria. We seated ourselves on the couch in the living room, and Mrs. Carmen told Victoria she could snuggle in so she could see well. She then asked what she thought the book was going to be about. They discussed the three bears on the cover and the girl going into the house. The following transcript occurred before Mrs. Carmen started reading:

Mrs. Carmen: Could you say Rubia?

Victoria: Rubia.

Mrs. Carmen: Rubia. Do you know what Rubia means?

Victoria: No.

Mrs. Carmen: What color is her hair?

Victoria: Curly.

Mrs. Carmen: It's curly and what color?

Victoria: Yellow.

Mrs. Carmen: Yellow. That's why they call her Rubia. In English it would be blonde. In Spanish it's a rubia. Could you say rubia?

Victoria: Rubia.

Mrs. Carmen: Could you say blonde?

Victoria: Blonde.

Mrs. Carmen: That is the same. Okay. So the book is called “Rubia and the Three Osos.” What is three?

Victoria: Three is tres.

Mrs. Carmen then told Victoria the author and illustrator of the book. Throughout the book there were several Spanish words on each page. Mrs. Carmen used one Open-ended prompt, 20 “Wh” questions, three Distancing prompts, and three PEER sequences. Most of the “Wh” questions focused on the English translation of the Spanish words used in the book. Most were familiar to Victoria. The dialogue provided opportunities to discuss the translation and what both words meant. Immediately after the reading, Mrs. Carmen went back to the kitchen to check on the papusas she was cooking for later that afternoon. While she cooked, we discussed the details of the final session.

Session 4. When I arrived for the fourth session, the family was in the cul-de-sac playing with the next door neighbors. Mr. Carmen was pulling the girls’ scooters back into the yard. I followed the girls into the house, and they showed me the tea party that they had set up earlier in the day at the small table in the living room. Mrs. Carmen and I discussed the family’s literacy practices since I had last seen them. Mrs. Carmen told me that they had been reading quite a bit, and they had gone to the library earlier in the week. She told me that the girls enjoyed the library and it gave them a chance to pick out books that they had not read. The girls also chose books that they recognized from Victoria’s

sister's school. Victoria's interest in reading was increasing every day, and she was continuing to sound out more and more words.

For the fourth session Victoria chose *Bunny Cakes* by Rosemary Wells. The book was based on a popular television show that the girls both enjoy watching. Mrs. Carmen read the title of the book, and after a lengthy conversation about what was happening on the front cover of the book, she read the author. During the reading Mrs. Carmen used one Completion prompt, two Recall prompts, and three Open-ended questions, 11 "Wh" questions, three Distancing prompts, and one PEER sequence. Victoria was very focused on the text and sounded out several words. The following is an example of her reading the words to her mother:

Mrs. Carmen: Ruby sent Max to the store with a list that says...What do you think these words have to say?

Victoria: Worms.

Mrs. Carmen: What?

Victoria: Worms.

Mrs. Carmen: Worms? Why?

Victoria: (Pointing to text) Worms.

Mrs. Carmen: What is that? Yeah, you are making the sounds. You are sounding out. That's good. What is written over here?

Victoria: Eggs.

Victoria was beginning to read. She related well to this book because in the story the character, Max, would really like to add a candy to the grocery list his older sister

made, but he did not know how to write. In the end he drew a picture on the list so the grocer understood what he would like. Victoria remained engaged in the story, but she also focused on finding words that she was able to read herself.

Session summaries. The Carmen family used a wide range of prompts frequently throughout each session, as seen in Table 8. The Completion and Recall prompts were used less frequently than the others. The types of prompts used in each session varied by the book chosen. Most of the books read were not familiar to Victoria. During session one Mrs. Carmen used many PEER sequences, which focused on new vocabulary and using accurate words. During the second session Victoria began to sound out simple words, such as “Max.” During session three Mrs. Carmen read a book that used Spanish and English words. The focus of this session was the English translation of the words. During session four Victoria’s focus was on sounding out more words. During each session Victoria appeared to enjoy the reading and was highly engaged. After every session Victoria asked if I would stay and read her a book also. Mrs. Carmen said that Victoria had enjoyed the one on one attention that she had been receiving during the readings.

Table 8. *The Carmen Family's Use of Dialogic Reading Prompts by Session*

Prompt	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Total
Completion	0	0	0	1	1
Recall	1	0	0	2	3
Open-ended	3	1	1	3	8
“Wh”	15	20	20	11	66
Distancing	4	4	3	3	14
PEER	5	4	3	1	13

Note. The dialogic reading prompt were counted using the “Dialogic Reading Observation Form” after the video was transcribed. Prompts that were initiated by the child are not represented in the count.

Changes in literacy activities. Before the study began, the family reported reading to Victoria, but from session one to session two, Mrs. Carmen reported an increase in their reading from both parents. From session two to session three, the family’s reading decreased because of the many activities around the Easter Holiday. The girls were getting to bed much later. Much of the reading focus was on vocabulary words. From session three to session four, the family’s reading activities increased, and they also took a trip to the library. During the six weeks they saw an increase in reading activities, which they attributed to their increased awareness on how much and what kinds of reading they were doing.

EVT-2. Victoria participated in both the pre and posttest with great eagerness. Overall, Victoria scored above average scoring between the 68 and 84 percentile for her age. Victoria's GSV changed by negative five points, but the confidence intervals showed that her standard scores were both within the same range, meaning that her true score could be anywhere within that range.

Victoria was administered the EVT-2 Form A (Williams, 2007) during the first visit before dialogic reading instruction began. At the time Victoria was four years and seven months old. Victoria scored a standard score of 115 with a 95% confidence interval of 108 to 121. Victoria was in the 84 percentile for her age. Her normal curve equivalent was 71, stanine was 7, and age equivalent was 10 years and 0 months, grade equivalent was 4.3. Her growth score value (GSV) was 170. After six weeks of dialogic reading Victoria was given the EVT-2 Form B (Williams, 2007). At this time Victoria was four years and eight months old. Victoria scored a standard score of 107 with a 95% confidence interval of 100 to 114. Victoria was in the 68 percentile for her age. Her normal curve equivalent was 60, stanine was 6, and age equivalent was 8 years and 11 months, grade equivalent was 3.2. Her growth score value was 165. Victoria's GSV changed by -5 points (170-165).

Final interview. The Carmen Family had a positive experience using dialogic reading during the study. Mrs. Carmen easily incorporated the dialogic reading instruction. The family saw an increase in reading engagement at bedtime, and Victoria continued to develop new vocabulary words. Victoria also began to read simple words during the study. Mrs. Carmen said the family's busy schedule and tiredness sometimes

prevented them from using dialogic reading and discussed changing the practice of reading so much at bedtime to reading earlier in the day.

Summary of research questions. The following sections look at the findings as a whole to answer the research questions.

Families implementation of dialogic reading. Mrs. Carmen found the dialogic reading instruction easy to implement. Mrs. Carmen also shared the instruction with her husband, Mr. Carmen. Both family members used dialogic reading while reading to Victoria. Mrs. Carmen used many of the prompts during the sessions (see Table 8). She used many “Wh” prompts and rarely used Completion or Recall prompts during the sessions. The family selected many bilingual texts in order to discuss vocabulary with Victoria.

Mrs. Carmen reported that Victoria was highly engaged when reading and had always had a high interest level. One change Mrs. Carmen noticed was that when Victoria was reading and it was very late, she was still engaged because they were using dialogic reading, which is highly interactive. The family did not discuss any increase in bonding during the reading, but the family spent a lot of times engaging in activities together.

Mrs. Carmen incorporated dialogic reading at bedtime and Victoria was highly engaged, but Mrs. Carmen reported that she was frequently too tired or too busy in the evenings to spend the time reading that she would have liked. The family was considering changing their shared reading time from bedtime to earlier in the day, when they are not so tired or busy with other activities.

Changes in child's vocabulary. One of the most notable findings for Mrs. Carmen was finding out that Victoria did not actually know the meaning of some common words. She said it was “eye opening” to prompt Victoria a question about a word that she assumed she knew and to find out that she was making false assumptions. Because Victoria was bilingual, she would often know what something was in Spanish, but not in English, and vice versa.

Victoria's EVT-2 found that she started the study with an above average expressive vocabulary for her age. Victoria's GSV decreased by five points, but with a 95 percent confidence interval her scores could have shown no change at all. Overall, there was no notable change in Victoria's expressive vocabulary.

Multiple-Case Analysis

Above, each of the six cases was discussed in detail. Each case description started with an introduction to the family and then discussed each of the following data collection points: initial interview, session one, session two, session three, session four, a summary of the sessions, changes in literacy activities throughout the study, the EVT-2 results, and the final interview. After these data collection points were discussed, a summary of the case was given in regards to the following research questions:

1. How do families across varied racial and socioeconomic backgrounds implement dialogic reading after learning about this type of shared reading?
2. How do children's expressive vocabularies change throughout the course of this study?

The next section of this chapter will discuss the following from each case by themes that emerged from across the multiple cases: dialogic reading instruction, use of dialogic reading during sessions, the selection of texts, interest and engagement during the readings, bonding experiences, bedtime routines, families' perceptions of changes in vocabulary, and EVT-2 results. A discussion of the research questions across the cases will be addressed in chapter five.

Dialogic reading instruction across multiple cases. Each family that participated in the study was given instruction in dialogic reading using the *Read Together, Talk Together* (Pearson Early Learning, 2003) video. Following the instruction the families and researcher discussed the video and any questions were answered. The families then completed a shared reading session using dialogic reading. After the session any further questions regarding dialogic reading were answered. During the course of the study, only one participant asked to view the video again. Mrs. Jones reviewed the video after session one, and we discussed that fewer prompts may keep Isaac engaged longer. The following table shows a summary of the participants' experiences using dialogic reading after instruction.

Table 9. *Families' Experiences Using Dialogic Reading*

Name	Evidence
Barnum	DR was hard at first, but became easier with practice. Soon, George's older brother, Nick, was also using prompts without formal instruction.
Mapp	DR was easy to implement and Mr. Mapp and Charles began using similar prompts without formal instruction.
Irena	DR was easy to implement, but finding the time to read every day was difficult.
Pearson	DR technique was used prior to instruction, but became more focused. Mrs. Pearson now sees it as a tool to use.
Jones	DR was difficult to implement. Mrs. Jones had a difficult time remembering prompts and did not feel confident using them. However, she plans on working on it to use with future children.
Carmen	DR was easy to implement, and Mr. Carmen used without formal instruction.

Note. This is a summary of their dialogic reading (DR) experiences. A full description is described in each case under the results of the final interview.

Table 9 shows that the families' experiences while implementing dialogic reading varied and was not dependent on ethnicity or socioeconomic class. Most the families (Mapp, Irena, Pearson, and Carmen) found dialogic reading easy to implement after the

instruction. Mrs. Pearson also reported that the technique was similar to previous shared reading experiences in their home.

One major finding through the course of the study was the mention of other household members using dialogic reading prompts after having discussions with the family member that had received instruction or by imitating what had been modeled. Both Mr. Mapp and Mr. Carmen began using dialogic reading without any formal instruction. The families talked about the technique with each other and both families reported that the fathers also used the technique. The Barnums and the Mapps also reported that Charles and George's older brother, Nick, began using dialogic reading prompts throughout the study. All families reported that they would continue to use dialogic reading in the future.

Dialogic reading use across multiple cases. While only one family (Jones) reported that they had difficulty using dialogic reading, many families reported that dialogic reading was easy to implement. However, when looking at each family's dialogic reading use by session (see Tables 3 through 8), many used some prompts frequently while never using others. The following table describes the prompts used by each family and the number of times each prompt was used during the four sessions.

Table 10. *Dialogic Reading Prompts Used by Family for All Sessions*

Prompt	Barnum	Mapp	Irena	Pearson	Jones	Carmen	Totals
Completion	2	8	10	0	1	1	22
Recall	1	0	3	0	2	3	9
Open-ended	2	1	10	2	11	8	34
“Wh”	27	21	73	19	53	66	259
Distancing	17	1	1	7	0	14	40
PEER	7	2	7	6	8	13	43

Note. The dialogic reading prompt were counted using the “Dialogic Reading Observation Form” after the video was transcribed. Prompts that were initiated by the child are not represented in the count. All sessions are combined in this count.

Table 10 shows that the least used prompt by all families was Recall. Two families (Mapp and Pearson) never used a Recall prompt during their recorded sessions. The most frequently used prompt by all families was “Wh” questions. All families used the “Wh” prompt for the majority of their prompts. It is important to note that the families were not all reading the same book, so comparing the number of prompts for each session by each family could be misleading. It is also important to note that some families may have used more prompts because the books that they chose were much longer than others. For example, the Pearsons often chose shorter books with less text, whereas the Carmen family often chose longer books with more texts. Naturally, the longer texts provide more opportunities for prompting. However, Table 10 does show that some families used a larger variety of prompts than others. For example, the Pearson

family never used Completion or Recall prompts and the Jones family never used a Distancing prompt.

These findings are especially notable when we look at Table 6. The Pearson family reported previously using a similar technique during shared readings and reported that dialogic reading was easy to implement. However, two of the prompts that are part of the technique were never used during the sessions. Similarly, the Jones family reported having difficulty with implementing dialogic reading, but Table 6 shows that Mrs. Jones used all of the prompts at least once, except for the Distancing prompt.

There are two major findings from looking at each families' dialogic reading use by session. The first is that the families' reported experiences implementing the instruction did not necessarily correlate with their actual use of dialogic reading. The second major finding from this section is that "Wh" prompts were the majority of prompts used by all families in the study, while Recall prompts were the least commonly used type of prompt.

Text selections for multiple cases. For each session families were asked to choose a book to read with their preschooler. This section will discuss the following aspects of texts: the amount of texts in the homes, library usage, how texts for study were chosen, types of text chosen, and repeated readings.

Amount of texts in the home. All six of the families researched already had books in the home. Some families had more books than others as discussed in the initial interview with each family. The Mapp family, who is white European and working class, and the Jones family, who is African American and upper middle class, had the least

amount of books in the home (under 20). The majority of the books in the Mapp house were gifts or were bought at the grocery store. The majority of books in the Jones family were gifts. The Jones family did purchase Isaac many electronic reading devices, such as a bear that reads stories. All of the other families had over 50 books in the home.

Library usage. Many of the families in the study also reported in the initial interview that they were frequent users of the library. Throughout the visits to the home there was evidence or discussion of attending the library from the following families: Barnum, Irena, Pearson, and Irena. Both the Mapp and Jones family reported that they did not use the public library.

How books were chosen. In all of the cases, the books used for the sessions were chosen by the preschooler with the help of the family member. The majority of the books read were chosen based on interest. In the four sessions with the six families (24 total readings), three of the books were chosen for a purpose by a family member. Mrs. Pearson chose one book for a session because it discussed the main character sleeping in its new bed. Tatiana's little brother, Zander, was transitioning to a new bed, and Mrs. Pearson thought the book would introduce the idea to him. The other two books chosen for a purpose were in Victoria's sessions. Mrs. Carmen chose books from her classroom library that were bilingual. Mrs. Carmen wanted to focus on vocabulary words that Victoria might not know in both languages.

Types of books used. All 24 books read in the sessions were narrative fiction. The families were told that they could choose any book. The type or length of the book was not a requirement. The books varied in reading level and topic. Some of the books came

from the home library and some came from the public library. However, all of the families, except the Jones family, discussed reading nonfiction texts at other times. Mrs. Barnum also discussed that she thought some texts were easier to use dialogic reading with than others. For example, she said that she struggled to use dialogic reading with books with less text. She also enjoyed using it with informational texts, but the children always wanted to finish a book and sometimes there was too much information to discuss.

Repeated readings. The dialogic reading instructional video encouraged families to read through books multiple times. Four of the six families (Irena, Jones, Pearson, Carmen) discussed using repeated readings in their final interviews. Ms. Irena discussed that she did not like that Jessica always asked her to read the same book over and over, but now she was rethinking that since she saw how it was beneficial now. Mrs. Carmen also discussed that she now understood that different perspectives could be discussed with each reading. Mrs. Jones said that she was trying to focus on something different with the texts that Isaac liked to read repeatedly, such as different vocabulary words within the text.

Major findings on text selection. The four families that had over 50 books in the home were also the same families that utilized the public library. The books read in each session were chosen by the children based on their own interests. All of the books chosen during the sessions were narrative fiction, even though other books were also present in the homes. Four of the six families began using repeated readings with dialogic reading. The families were more willing to use repeated readings once they knew the benefits.

Interest and engagement for multiple cases. The discussions with families before each session, as well as the final interviews provided evidence that all of the families saw an increase in interest in reading, as well as increased engagement while reading. The only family that did not discuss an increased in interest in reading at the final interview was the Jones family. However, Mrs. Jones did discuss that Isaac had an increased interest in reading in between each of the sessions. Table 11 below provides quotes from each family that give evidence of this self-reported interest and engagement.

Table 11. *Families' Quotes Regarding Interest and Engagement*

Family	Quote
Barnum	<i>"They became more excited about reading, became more excited about reading with me. They would come up with their own tangents and related topics instead of me prompting it. Once they knew that was welcome, we kind of started more conversations just out of their prompting."</i>
Mapp	<i>"They were way more engaged. Rather than just flipping through...I noticed this with my husband especially."</i>
Irena	<i>"She got more enthusiastic about reading. She participates in the process. She got to talk more and wanted to read."</i>
Pearson	<i>"It definitely keeps her more engaged. For sure. Especially with a book that you've already read a few times."</i>
Jones	<i>"He enjoys being read to, so yeah, I think it was very positive."</i>

Carmen	<i>“Even if she’s tired, she’s enjoying reading and she’s enjoying if you’re asking questions”</i>
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Note. This is a summary of their experiences. A full description is described in each case under the results of the final interview.

Table 11 shows evidence that dialogic reading increased self-reported interest and engagement. In addition to being more interested in the reading, several families (Barnum, Mapp, Irena, Pearson, and Carmen) also discussed that the increase in dialogue was attributing to the increased engagement with the text. The preschoolers enjoyed getting to discuss the texts and engage in dialogue with their parents.

Bonding experiences for multiple cases. The increase in dialogue during dialogic reading presented a chance for bonding. The Barnum, Mapp, Irena, and Pearson families all discussed some aspect of increased bonding. For example, Mrs. Barnum said, “I think it has personal effects that was sort of for me so relational, personal.” From the researcher’s perspective this could also be seen in the videos of the sessions. In almost all of the videos (with the exception of the Jones family, who sat at the counter to read), the children started sitting next to their family member on the couch, and they slowly moved closer or to the lap of the reader during the reading.

It also created bonding experiences with family members who did not typically share reading experiences at home. For example, Charles Mapp began to stay up and wait for his father to get home so that they could read together. Mrs. Mapp explained that normally she read to them at bedtime, but since dialogue was encouraged, Charles wanted to spend that time with his father. Mr. Mapp was not the only father who began using dialogic reading. Mr. Pearson and Mr. Carmen also started using dialogic reading

with their preschoolers. Mr. Pearson and Mr. Carmen previously participated in shared readings with their preschoolers.

Ms. Irena, a single grandmother, also discussed her increased bonding experiences with her other grandchildren. After using dialogic reading with Jessica, she also began to use it with her other granddaughter while she was babysitting. She said, “As a grandma, it’s a good tool for me to enjoy my grandchildren when we do the reading.” Ms. Irena saw dialogic reading as not only a tool for learning, but a tool for enjoying her grandchildren.

Bedtime routines for multiple cases. All of the families in the study used shared reading as part of a bedtime routine and tried incorporating dialogic reading into this routine. Each family was unique and dialogic reading presented changes in each of their routines. Mrs. Barnum did not like using dialogic reading at bedtime. She said that she typically read to George in the evening to help calm him down. She said she became impatient when the reading became so long that bedtime was delayed. She said that she planned to use dialogic reading in the future, but not at bedtime. The Mapp family easily incorporated it into their routine, and the only change was Mr. Mapp was now reading with Charles, too. The Irena family was often challenged with incorporating it at bedtime when they arrived home late and skipped reading. Often evening activities prevented them from having the time to read in the evenings. The Pearsons said it went well at bedtime for Tatiana, but their younger son, Zander, did not have the attention span to read with his sister and their routine may involve reading to the two children separately now. The Jones family changed Isaac’s routine from having Isaac use an electronic device to

one of them reading to him. They were still working on decreasing his attraction to electronic devices. The Carmens incorporated dialogic reading into Victoria's bedtime routine and it helped her remain engaged, even when she was tired, but Mrs. Carmen said she was too tired in the evening for the longer shared readings and often she was too busy with schoolwork in the evenings. The family planned on using dialogic reading in the future, but not at bedtime.

For the families in the study, reading would remain a part of the bedtime routine, but for two families, Barnum and Carmen, dialogic reading would not always be incorporated during bedtime. Other families have changed their routines by including other family members (the Mapp family), or reading to multiple children at different times (the Pearson Family).

Families' perceptions of change in expressive vocabulary for multiple cases.

In the final interview, the families were asked if they had noticed any change in their preschooler's expressive vocabulary. For three families (Barnum, Mapp, and Irena), there was no noticeable change in the child's vocabulary. Mrs. Barnum said that because George's vocabulary seemed to grow every day, she did not think she would know if it was from dialogic reading or not. Both the Pearsons and the Jones noticed a change in the child's expressive vocabulary, specifically with words that they had seen in the texts they had read. For example, Tatiana began using the word "weird," which they had discussed the meaning of during a reading. Isaac also began using the words "railroad track" and "coal" while he was playing. The family had directly focused on these words while reading a book about trains.

Five of the six families discussed that while they were using dialogic reading, they specifically focused on teaching new vocabulary words that presented themselves in the text. Discussing the meaning of a word was frequently used as prompt during reading. Mrs. Carmen also said, “I think it was eye opening because, like I said, we assume that they know [the word] but they don’t.” This was especially apparent when Mrs. Carmen was using bilingual books with Victoria.

EVT-2 results for multiple cases. Each preschooler was given the EVT-2 (Williams, 2007) before the first dialogic reading session and after the last dialogic reading session. Each preschooler’s standards score was calculated into a growth score value (GSV) using a confidence interval of 95 percent. Table 12 shows these scores by child. The age percentile has also been added to this table to show where the child started at the beginning of the study.

Table 12. *EVT-2 Results*

Name	Standard Score	95% CI	Age Percentile	GSV
Barnum Pre-test	117	109-124	87	171
Barnum Post-test	124	116-130	95	173
Mapp Pre-test	103	96-110	58	164

Mapp Post-test	106	99-113	66	164
Irena Pre-test	99	92-106	47	161
Irena Post-test	97	90-104	42	159
Pearson Pre-test	103	96-110	58	164
Pearson Post-test	112	105-119	79	167
Jones Pre-test	103	96-110	58	164
Jones Post-test	98	91-105	45	160
Carmen Pre-test	115	108-121	84	170
Carmen Post-test	107	100-114	68	165

Note: The GSV adjusts the standard score based on age of child to the nearest month. Confidence Interval (CI)

George and Tatiana were the only children who increased their GSV over the course of the study. Charles stayed the same, while Jessica, Isaac, and Victoria all had a GSV that decreased. This initial assessment, however, is misleading. When using the confidence interval of 95%, all of the children who had a decreased GSV still had a standard score within the range. For example, Jessica's GSV decreased two points, but her standard scores were still within the 95% confidence interval. This means that under normal testing conditions her score could be anywhere within that range due to error.

Although George's GSV increased by two points, his scores are still within the 95% confidence range. These results show that there was almost no change in any of the preschoolers. Tatiana had the only GSV score that cannot be explained by error using the 95% confidence interval. Tatiana's GSV increased by three points and her standard score on the post-test was outside the initial confidence range.

It is important to note that any of these changes could have occurred due to other factors outside of the study. For example, even though Tatiana's GSV increased, it cannot be concluded that it was because she participated in dialogic reading. There are too many outside factors that were not controlled for. However, Table 12 does provide information regarding a range of percentiles for age of the child. For example, Table 12 shows that George and Victoria's expressive vocabularies were well above average, while Jessica's was slightly below average. This study was not designed to explain these ranges, but does provide a better overall picture of each case.

Conclusion

This chapter described each case in detail by providing an introduction to the family. The following data points for each family were then described: initial interview, session one through four, conversations regarding changes in literacy activities, EVT-2, and the final interview. The research questions were then discussed for each case. Concluding the last case, an analysis of the multiple cases was given by themes that emerged. The analysis was organized by the following themes: dialogic reading instruction, use of dialogic reading by prompt, text selections, interest and engagement, bonding experiences, bedtime routines, families' perceptions of change in expressive

vocabulary, and the results of the EVT-2. The next chapter includes a summary of the current study, a discussion of the findings in regards to previous research, implications, limitations, and future directions for research.

Discussion

The purpose of this multiple case study was to describe the experiences of six families with varying social and ethnic backgrounds being instructed to use dialogic reading with their preschooler at home and to assess the preschoolers' vocabulary development. While many studies on dialogic reading take place in the classroom and have found significant increases as a result of dialogic reading (Mol et al., 2008), there is little research that explores families' experiences while using dialogic reading at home.

This study explored the following research questions:

1. How do families across varied racial and socioeconomic backgrounds implement dialogic reading after learning about this type of shared reading?
2. How do children's expressive vocabularies change throughout the course of this study?

Using a multiple-case study approach, the experiences of families from different social classes (working class and upper middle class) and ethnic backgrounds (Latino, European White, and African-American) were explored. Six cases were chosen in order to be able to see a variety of different families and understand their experiences but still allow me to go in depth with each case. This study used purposeful sampling to select participants. Families were recruited through community postings and sites. One of the criteria for being chosen was that the families reported that they already read to their children, ages three to five.

Families in the study were interviewed initially to find out demographic information and more about their current literacy practices. Following the initial interview, the preschoolers were given the EVT-2 (Pearson, 2007), which tested their expressive vocabulary. The results from the EVT-2 provided a standard score, a percentage for age, and a GSV, which provided a means for comparison on the post EVT-2 test after six weeks of dialogic reading. The family member who traditionally provided shared readings in the home watched *Read Together, Talk Together* (Pearson Early Learning, 2003), which provided instructions on using dialogic reading prompts. The following six prompts were introduced: Completion, Recall, Open-ended, “Wh,” Distancing, and the PEER sequence (Prompt, Expand, Evaluate, and Repeat).

The families were then observed and videotaped using dialogic reading with their preschooler at weeks one, two, four, and six. After each session I transcribed the observation sessions and used an observation protocol that tallied the times each prompt was used. During each of these session the families were also asked about any literacy events or changes in literacy practices that had occurred between sessions. Following the fourth observation session, which occurred at the end of the sixth week, the families were interviewed and asked about their experiences using dialogic reading. The preschoolers were also given the EVT-2 a second time to measure any changes in expressive vocabulary.

In Chapter Four each case included a description of the family, their initial interview, details of each of their four sessions, changes that occurred in their literacy activities, their final interview, and the results of the EVT-2. Then a multiple-case

analysis was completed for the six cases using themes from the single cases. The themes that emerged included the following: families' experiences during the dialogic reading instruction, prompts used during dialogic reading sessions, interest and engagement, bonding, bedtime routines, families' perceptions of changes in expressive vocabulary, and results of the EVT-2. This chapter will discuss the cases as they relate to the findings and the existing literature. Following a discussion of the literature the implications and limitations of the study will be addressed. Future directions will then be discussed as they relate to theory and application, as well as what this means for families, practitioners, researchers, policy makers.

Summary of Findings

While each case was unique and each family had different experiences using dialogic reading, families shared similar experiences. The participants chosen for the study varied in socioeconomic status and ethnicity in order to explore each of their experiences while using dialogic reading. Each case was unique, but the analysis of the cases did not find any notable differences in the families based on their income, ethnicity, or gender. Baker and Scher (2002) previously found the same results in their study of 65 preschool children's motivations for reading in relation to their parental beliefs about home literacy experiences. Previous studies highlight the vast differences in families' reading practices (Heath, 1982) and children's vocabularies (Hart & Risely, 1995) based on their ethnicity and socioeconomic status.

The findings in this study did not find any of these vast differences. The discussion of families below is based on findings from the multiple-cases. These findings

are not findings based on ethnicity or social class. It is also important to note that while the families varied by ethnicity and socioeconomic status, their family structures also varied greatly. For example, Ms. Irena was a single grandmother raising her granddaughter and Mrs. Barnum was a single mother with shared custody of her sons. The diverse family structures provided experiences beyond ethnicity and social class.

Dialogic reading instruction. When the families were asked about their experiences implementing dialogic reading, most of the families (Mapp, Irena, Pearson, and Carmen) found dialogic reading easy to implement. One of the most significant findings in this section is that family members who were not initially instructed to use dialogic reading at the beginning of the study began to use it over the six weeks. Mr. Mapp and Mr. Carmen began using dialogic reading after discussions with their spouses. They did not watch the instructional video, but learned from their spouses' modeling. Mr. and Mrs. Carmen discussed the benefits and enjoyed engaging their daughter in dialogic reading. Mr. Mapp began using dialogic reading when his son, Charles, started asking him to read with him. Charles also started using the prompts when reading. Mrs. Mapp believes that he was modeling her and was using dialogic reading to spend more time with his father. Previous literature (Blom-Hoffman et al., 2008; Huebner & Meltzoff, 2005) found dialogic reading instruction through video to be effective with caregivers, but did not specify if the caregivers were male or female, or if others in the homes began using the technique. Lonigan and Whitehurst (1998) question the sustainability of the practice, but all families in the current study stated that they plan on using it in the future.

Dialogic reading use. The families' actual use of prompts after the dialogic reading instruction varied vastly from their experiences implementing the technique. Variability in compliance of dialogic reading was a concern in previous studies (Arnold et al., 1994; Lonigan & Whitehurst, 1998) and continues in this study. Recall prompts were rarely used by the families, and two families, Mapp and Pearson, never used a Recall prompt during their observed sessions. The most frequently used prompt by all families was "Wh" questions. These two findings are not new (Arnold et al., 1994; Lonigan & Whitehurst, 1998).

These findings are especially significant when we look at Table 6. The Pearson family reported previously using a similar technique during shared readings and reported that dialogic reading was easy to implement. However, two of the prompts that are part of the technique were never used during the sessions. Similarly, the Jones reported having difficulty with implementing dialogic reading, but Table 7 shows that Mrs. Jones used all of the prompts at least once, except for the Distancing prompt. In a previous dialogic reading study (Brannon & Dauksau, 2012), teachers and researchers were trained five times over 10 weeks. This controlled environment that utilized multiple training sessions produced higher fidelity of the technique.

There are two major findings from looking at each families' dialogic reading use by session. The first is that the families' reported experiences implementing the instruction did not necessarily correlate with their actual use of dialogic reading. The families reported that the technique was easy to use, but they did not necessarily use all of the prompts. The second major finding from this section is that "Wh" prompts were

the majority of prompts used by all families in the study, while Recall prompts were the least commonly used type of prompt.

Text selection. Previous studies of the home environment found that resources in the home, such as amount of books available had a significant impact on the families' literacy practices (Heath, 1982; Weigal et al., 2005). All of the families that participated in this study had access to texts in the home. Four of the families had over 50 books in the home and two of the families had fewer than 20. Weigal et al. (2005) found that a print rich environments showed an increase in emergent literacy skills. Hart (2009) also found that environment is a more significant factor than genetics. Compared to previous studies, these numbers show that the families had some level of resources. The families that had a larger selection of books in the home were also the same families that reported using the public library. Economic status did not necessarily dictate the amount of books in the home, as the Jones family had the resources to acquire books for their child but had a lower number of books in the home. Weisner (2002) suggests that a family's time and resources will deem what is important to them. The Jones family placed a high importance on Isaac's learning, but placed their resources on electronic devices that may increase their son's learning.

The texts that were used during the dialogic reading sessions were chosen based on the preschooler's interests. All of the books chosen were narrative fiction, even though other books were also present in the homes. While this is not a finding that has been discussed in the previous family literature, it has been discussed in literature addressing the vast disparity of informational text in schools (Jeong, Gaffney, & Choi, 2010; Yopp

& Yopp, 2006). This may not affect a child's overall expressive vocabulary, but it does affect the type of vocabulary that they are using (Wasik & Hindman, 2014). This will be discussed further in the implications section.

In addition to a difference in the amount and type of texts used, families were shown to increase their use of repeated readings. Senechal (1997) found that dialogic reading where the preschoolers were read a text at least three times were able to increase their expressive vocabularies. It was important that the preschoolers used the same text multiple times. The families in the current study were not required to use repeated readings, but reported that they were more willing to use repeated readings when they understood the benefits. For example, Ms. Irena reported that Jessica frequently wanted to read the same texts over and over, but she was hesitant because it did not interest her personally to read the same text multiple times. However, after being instructed in dialogic reading, she found it beneficial.

The Irenas were not the only family that participated in repeated readings. The Pearson, Jones, and Carmen families also discussed using repeated readings as part of their reading routine after being instructed to use dialogic reading. The use of repeated readings is important because incidental word learning, which is a large portion of a child's vocabulary, is most effective when taught in context (Biemiller & Slonin, 2001). When repeated readings are used the children are familiar with the context. In addition these repeated readings help to build new vocabulary each reading. This is because recognizing new words is dependent on building upon the vocabulary already developed (Robbins & Ehri, 1994). Single book readings do not increase expressive vocabulary

(Senechal & Cornell, 1993). Repeated readings are an important aspect of using dialogic reading to increase expressive vocabulary.

Interest and engagement. The preschoolers' families in this study all self-reported an increase in interest and engagement while reading. Baker and Scher (2002) found that a child's motivation was not associated with the frequency in which their parents read to them, but instead the parent's belief that reading is pleasurable. They also found no relationship between reading motivation and income, ethnicity, or gender. The findings from the current study suggest that the increased interest and engagement came from the opportunities to engage in dialogue with a family member. The preschoolers found enjoyment in using dialogic reading and there was a change in their literacy activities because of it. For example, Charles began staying up later so he could read with his father. Shared readings became more important to him when he could discuss the book with his father, instead of just being read to. Many of the preschoolers, like Charles and George, also took greater care and interest in finding books that interested them. They spent time looking for books that they wanted to have dialogue around. This finding supports previous research by Fletcher et al. (2008) that caregivers reading technique has a large impact on engagement.

This increase in reading interest should serve to increase the preschooler's vocabulary if they continue to read and participate in shared readings. Nagy and Anderson (1984) found that an increase in reading contributes greatly to a child's vocabulary. This finding is because the amount and types of vocabulary found in book reading can differ from those found in oral language. A child who is interested in reading

will be more likely to read in the future, thus serving to increase their expressive vocabulary. There is a potential for the preschoolers to develop a love of reading. The social aspect of reading early in children's lives has potential to not only affect their vocabularies, but many aspects of reading later on. Children who are successful will read more, and thus become better readers (DeTemple & Snow, 2003).

Bonding experiences. Many families participated in this study because they were interested in the technique and the possibility of dialogic reading increasing their preschooler's vocabulary. However, many of the families said that they found dialogic reading to be a positive experience not because of its academic benefits, but because of the personal bonding experiences that it created. Their initial purpose for reading to learn is consistent with Meagher et al.'s (2008) study that showed that mothers whose primary goal was learning asked many more questions, but this did not necessarily lead to engagement.

The mothers in the study that focused on enjoyment were able to increase reading engagement. The difference in the current study and Meacher et al.'s (2008) study is that the families in this study found enjoyment in the questions and prompting. The engagement came from being able to discuss the text. The families were using prompts when they had not necessarily used them before and the experience became more meaningful because of the bonding that took place as a result. This finding builds on the finding that the preschoolers experienced an increase in interest and engagement, which in part came from the increased bonding experiences.

Many of these bonding experiences also came from interactions that were beyond the scope of dialogic reading. Families were not only spending more time together with texts, but they were spending time together picking out different texts. For example, the Barnum family discussed texts that they might like to read together. The Irena family also had experiences beyond dialogic reading between sessions by using the books they discussed as conversation starters throughout the day.

Bedtime routines. Dialogic reading has been shown to take twice as long (Lonigan et al., 1999) as a traditional shared reading. This is a concern when families use dialogic reading at bedtime. The Carmen and Barnum families both reported that they did not like using dialogic reading at bedtime. The families did not feel like they could take the time at bedtime to use dialogic reading. Ms. Barnum's primary focus at bedtime was to calm the children, but the highly interactive dialogic reading made it difficult to do this. She felt that it was difficult to know when to stop the extended dialogue. She said she planned on continuing to use dialogic reading, but not at bedtime.

Similarly, the Carmen family often did not have the time to dedicate to dialogic reading at bedtime, and Mrs. Carmen reported being too busy and too tired to use it at this time. Bedtime reading has been promoted and is commonplace in families (Heath, 1982). While Heath (1982) found that lower class families and African Americans were less likely to read bedtime stories to their children, this study does not support that finding. However, the families that participated in this study had previously reported reading to their children before the study began; that was a requirement of participating in

the study. The majority of the families in this study participated in dialogic reading at bedtime and plan to continue to do so.

Families' perceptions of change in expressive vocabulary. Half of the families that participated in the study did not notice any change in their child's vocabulary. For the families that did notice a change in their child's vocabulary, the change was noticed when words that were purposely introduced during the dialogic reading sessions were used. Wasik and Hindman (2014) found that targeting specific words for instruction increases talk around these words. For example, Tatiana used the word "weird" several times after discussing it during a dialogic reading session. During the study it was found that PEER sequences were often used to build on the child's vocabulary. This is important because just prompting the child with a "Wh" question, which was the most common for families, did not produce conversations around new vocabulary.

The words that were noticeable used after the readings occurred during a PEER sequence where the family member extended the conversation and the child repeated the word. For example, Isaac incorporated "railroad track" into his everyday language after engaging in a PEER sequence with his mother. Senechal and Cornell (1995) found that active participation while reading does not necessarily increase vocabulary, but it may be more beneficial if targeting specific words (Wasik & Hindman, 2014). While dialogic reading does not specifically promote targeted instruction of specific words, five out of the six families mentioned during their final interviews that they intentionally focused on teaching new vocabulary words.

EVT-2 results. The findings did not show any significant growth on the preschooler's expressive vocabulary, except in Tatiana's case. This finding corroborates Senechal and Cornell's (1995) finding that active participation does not necessarily increase vocabulary. The purpose of this study was to explore the families' experiences and explore any changes in the child's vocabulary. While a large body of research shows that dialogic reading is an effective means of increasing expressive vocabulary for preschoolers (Mol et al., 2008), there was no evidence in this small sample to show that. As with previous studies (Arnold et al., 1994; Brannon & Dauksau, 2012; Lonigan & Whitehurst, 1998), there was variability in the fidelity of the dialogic reading treatment. Brannon and Dauksau (2012) also controlled fidelity by family members coming into the schools to read to their children. This could have affected the results of the EVT-2, as well as that six weeks is a short intervention time.

Additions to the literature. Previous studies in family literacy (Heath, 1982; Li, 2010; Meagher et al., 2008; Reese et al., 2008) focused on the early literacy practices in homes and the interactions between families and their communities. These studies told us that there were not only a variety of literacy practices in different homes, but the quality (based outcomes of emergent literacy skills) of the activities tended to vary. Different aspects of literacy practices in the home were considered, including the child's motivation (Baker & Scher, 2002). These studies did not tell us about family's experiences when trying to implement new literacy practices in the home. The current study expands the literature by finding out the experiences of varying families while they

implemented dialogic reading in their homes. The experiences of each case were unique, and comparisons by ethnicity and social class did not find any notable results.

The families all participated in the dialogic reading and showed varying levels of increased interest and engagement with text. This study parallels the findings of Meagher et al. (2008), which found that mothers who believed that reading is for learning used more prompts than those that were mainly focused on engagement. Meagher et al. (2008) also found that mothers of boys tended to focus more on engagement than learning. This finding was not parallel in the current study. For example, the Jones family and their boy focused on teaching new vocabulary words.

The literature in vocabulary development recognizes that it is unknown how many vocabulary words a child learns each year and that many of these words do not come from direct instruction (Nagy et al., 1987). Previous research in vocabulary development found that dialogue increases vocabulary learning (Biemiller, 2003; Fletcher et al., 2008; Hart & Risely, 1995) and that one effective means of increasing dialogue is by using storybook reading (Beck & McKeown, 2001; Roskos et al., 2008; Senechal & Cornell, 1993; Wasik & Hindman, 2014). This study supports those findings. All families in this study found an increase in dialogue when reading together. Both the Pearson family and the Jones family found that their preschooler was able to incorporate new vocabulary from texts that they had previously read either into their everyday conversation or dialogue centered around books with a similar topic. The EVT-2 results only showed a slight increase in expressive vocabulary for one child. This may have been affected by the actual use of dialogic reading prompts by families.

Studies on dialogic reading show that children of low income (Lonigan et al., 2009; Lonigan et al., 2013) and middle income (Hargrave & Senechal, 2000; Opel et al., 2009) backgrounds can benefit from dialogic reading interventions in the classroom in order to increase their expressive vocabulary. This study showed that families were able to implement dialogic reading into their existing shared reading practices. While previous research found that dialogic reading has been an effective intervention of four weeks to two years (Mol et al., 2008), this study found that six weeks may not have been a long enough time for the intervention. One of the main concerns in previous literature was the sustainability of the practice (Lonigan & Whitehurst, 1998). This study suggests that the sustainability of the practice may be affected by the time of day that families use dialogic reading and the effectiveness of the training provided. For example, the Irena family found dialogic reading difficult to implement at bedtime when everyone was tired. Only two of the six families did not plan to use dialogic reading at bedtime, and all of the families said they would continue to use it during the day.

Huebner and Meltzoff (2005) suggested that in-person training (with video) may be most effective. This study employed in-person training with video. The families' implementation of dialogic reading varied, but all families used "Wh" prompts the most and Recall prompts the least. Many families had other members of the household begin to use dialogic reading without formal instruction. This study suggests that the training may need to be modified so that families could review the training video after having an opportunity to use dialogic reading for a couple of weeks. This study also adds qualitative data that helps answer the question of why video training may not be

sufficient. The Jones family reported that the video instruction was easy to understand, but when implementing dialogic reading several questions arose. For example, Mrs. Jones questioned how many prompts she should be trying to use with each book and if her son was disengaged what should she do. The Jones family benefited from reviewing the video and discussing questions in person with me.

Implications and Future Directions

The following section will discuss the theoretical and applied implications of this study and specific implications for families, practitioners, researchers, and policy makers. These implications are important as researchers continue to study families, dialogic reading, and expressive vocabularies of preschoolers.

Theoretical. This study is situated within three theoretical models (CELM and Theory of Ecological Development). The following sections describe how the study is situated within each model and how the results of the study may add to the current model.

Comprehensive emergent literacy model. Comprehensive Emergent Literacy Model (Rhode, 2015) promotes the understanding that speaking, reading, writing, and listening begin at birth as active processes. This theory places emphasis on the literacy environment in the home, since this is where an infant grows and develops. The families in this study all had literacy rich environments, but some (Jones and Mapp) did have fewer books and no utilization of the public library. The literacy environment, however, does not just include the amount of or access to books. The literacy environment also includes the literacy activities that take place in the home. All families in this study previously reported reading to their children.

This study builds upon the Comprehensive Emergent Literacy Model by suggesting that families not only provide the environment for emergent literacy skills to develop within the context of the families' culture and demographics, but also through the priorities of the family. Each family had different goals and different reasons for participating in the study and different purposes for using dialogic reading. Most of the families participated in the study because they had an interest in finding out more about reading techniques that could help their child's literacy skills. However, throughout the study families reported different purposes for completing the reading each week. For example, the Jones family stated that they specifically focused on targeting vocabulary words to increase Isaac's expressive vocabulary. The Mapp family focused on increasing dialogue during readings because they noticed that they saw an increase in engagement with the text. Although the families were participating in very similar activities, the development of skills may be effected by the purpose or intention of each family. Intention is not a current component of the Comprehensive Emergent Literacy Model, but may have implications for emergent literacy skills developed by each child.

Theory of ecological development. Bronfenbrenner (1979) theorizes that the child's family and environment be studied as a process. The families' process is constantly changing. The study did not change the family or the environment, but it did change the process that they used during shared readings. The families previously read to their children, but *how* the families read was modified. Other aspect of the child's development remain the same, but dialogic reading increases the language use within the shared reading context.

This study builds upon the theory of ecological development by understanding not only a family's demographics, culture, and community, but looking at how the family interacts with those aspects in order to achieve their own goals. For example, the Pearson family interacted with their community by visiting the local library. The Jones family also lived within close proximity to the same local library, but they had never visited. Just studying the community that the family is placed in does not give an accurate picture of the ecology of each child's environment. Researchers must also look at how the families interact with the ecological systems in which they are set.

Applied. This study explored how families implemented dialogic reading in their homes and how the preschoolers' vocabularies changed. The findings suggest several implications for dialogic reading instruction, increasing interest, engagement and bonding, and using dialogic reading to target specific vocabulary during shared readings at home.

Dialogic reading instruction. Although video instruction was previously found to be effective (Blom-Hoffman et al., 2008; Huebner & Meltzoff, 2005), the families in the study still primarily used "Wh" questions and prompts. The families in this study would have benefited from more guided practice in order to incorporate more Recall prompts. Extended training at multiple times throughout the study may increase the use of the prompts (Brannon & Dauksau, 2012). However, even the family members who were not formally trained, began using dialogic reading to some degree. This suggests that it may still be beneficial to instruct families through videos, fliers, and workshops. The families

enjoyed using dialogic reading and no families suggested that the practice would not be continued in the home.

The finding that Recall questions were not used may speak to previous research that found that dialogic reading increases narrative skills (Lever & Senechal, 2011). If the preschoolers are not asked to recall what was happening in the story, then their narrative skills may not be affected. In order to increase the preschoolers' narrative skills in storytelling, it is important to use Recall questions during dialogic reading.

Increased interest in reading, engagement, and bonding. The results of this study suggest that using dialogic reading is an effective way to increase a child's interest, engagement, and bonding. The preschoolers enjoyed being able to choose books that they could discuss with their families. They were more interested in reading when they became active participants. This finding may be beneficial to use at home, in the classroom, and with reluctant readers. While previous research (Stanovich, 1986) suggests that student interest in reading can be increased through student choice, being able to have dialogue centered on the text may further increase this interest in reading. Families also reported an increased sense of bonding while using dialogic reading. Using dialogic reading as a form of bonding has not previously been discussed in the literature, but provides an educational based tool that promotes bonding and more personal experiences with young children.

Targeted vocabulary instruction at home. Even though the preschooler's expressive vocabularies did not change according to the EVT-2 test, except in one case, several families saw changes in expressive vocabulary on specifically targeted words.

The families used PEER sequencing to expand on the children's vocabularies. In the Carmen family dialogic reading was used to target vocabulary that was presented in Spanish or English and then help to provide translations to Victoria. In Valdez-Menchaca and Whitehurst (1992) dialogic reading was used with Spanish speaking students and found to be very effective. Their study did not use dual language instruction. The Pearson family also used targeted vocabulary instruction during their dialogic reading sessions and reported noticeable results. Families may find it beneficial to target vocabulary instruction during dialogic reading around certain topics.

Future directions. This study provides implications and future directions for families, practitioners, researchers, and policy makers. Families in this study benefited from the increased bonding, interest, and engagement with the texts. Families are interested in learning new techniques to implement in their homes. Dialogic reading provides not only an opportunity for increasing emergent literacy skills, but also for bonding with children around text.

When families were implementing dialogic reading in the home, they frequently used "Wh" prompts and retell was rarely used. Practitioners in early childhood education should focus on increasing the use of recall prompts with children. Practitioners may also benefit from using dialogic reading to increase their students' interest and engagement in reading, while bonding with students over a text. Dialogue provides insight into how the students are relating to the text and their own experiences.

This study added qualitative findings to the existing body of research on dialogic reading at home. Future research should explore how more guided instruction of dialogic

reading could be implemented in the home setting. Providing guided practices throughout the study may encourage a more diverse use of prompts. Using different prompts may encourage a greater increase in expressive vocabulary scores. The next steps in my research will explore the use of prompts in homes and the use of recall prompts may increase children's expressive vocabulary scores. I am also planning on following up with these families to explore how they may be using dialogic reading in their own homes.

The texts that the families used in this study were also not provided. The family used the resources that were available to them. This provided an authentic implementation of the technique, but it limited the comparisons that could be made among the participants. Some of the texts that were used were much longer than others, thus providing more opportunities to use prompts. The families that used the most prompts were also the families that read the longest texts. Because all of the texts that were used during the sessions were narrative fiction, the use of some prompts may differ also. By providing the same text for each family to read future research could focus on comparisons across texts as well.

Future research on bilingualism should also be considered. The Irena family implemented dialogic reading with fidelity and most of their interactions focused on targeted vocabulary instruction. Use of dialogic reading with bilingual families needs further study.

Finally policy makers should be aware of the implications for families and practitioners. Families in this study were eager to learn a new technique that enhanced

their shared reading experiences. Policy makers should provide the resources for educational opportunities and training for families.

This study explored a variety of families and their implementation of dialogic reading. Although the preschoolers' expressive vocabulary scores did not change significantly, the study found several significant findings that build on the existing literature. This study found that families enjoyed being instructed in a new reading technique to use with their preschoolers and while doing so increased their preschoolers' interest and engagement while reading, and dialogic reading provided a bonding experience. The findings also suggest that families were able to use targeted vocabulary instruction to increase the preschooler's talk around certain topics. While future research in the area is needed, the cases presented show positive experiences for families implementing dialogic reading in the home.

Appendix A

Institutional Review Board Approval



Office of Research Integrity and Assurance

Research Hall, 4400 University Drive, MS 6D5, Fairfax, Virginia 22030
Phone: 703-993-5445; Fax: 703-993-9590

DATE: February 11, 2016

TO: Seth Parsons, PhD
FROM: George Mason University IRB

Project Title: [704358-2] Dialogic Reading in the Home Environment

SUBMISSION TYPE: Continuing Review/Progress Report

ACTION: APPROVED

APPROVAL DATE: February 11, 2016

EXPIRATION DATE: February 10, 2017

REVIEW TYPE: Expedited Review

REVIEW TYPE: Expedited review category #7

Thank you for your submission of Continuing Review/Progress Report materials for this project. The George Mason University IRB has APPROVED your submission. This submission has received Expedited Review based on applicable federal regulations.

Please remember that all research must be conducted as described in the submitted materials.

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the project and insurance of participant understanding followed by a signed consent form. Informed consent must continue throughout the project via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require that each participant receives a copy of the consent document.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by the IRB prior to initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

All UNANTICIPATED PROBLEMS involving risks to subjects or others and SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported promptly to the Office of Research Integrity & Assurance (ORIA). Please use the appropriate reporting forms for this procedure. All FDA and sponsor reporting requirements should also be followed (if applicable).

All NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this project must be reported promptly to the ORIA.

The anniversary date of this study is February 10, 2017. This project requires continuing review by this committee on an annual basis. You may not collect data beyond this date without prior IRB approval. A continuing review form must be completed and submitted to the ORIA at least 30 days prior to the anniversary date or upon completion of this project. Prior to the anniversary date, the ORIA will send you a reminder regarding continuing review procedures.

Appendix B

Recruitment Flier

Reading with Your Preschooler Using Dialogic Reading

Research Study

Be part of a research study that teaches you to use dialogic reading (a questioning technique) with your preschooler.

- *Are you someone who has a 3 or 4 year old you already read at home with?*
- *Are you willing to watch a video to learn new ways you can read with this child?*

If you answered YES to these questions, you may be eligible to participate in a reading study.

- ▶ *The purpose of this study is to find out the experiences of six families (with varied social and cultural backgrounds) while they are learning and using a new learning technique.*

- *Dialogic reading is a technique that uses specific types of questions to interact with the child while reading.*

Families or caregivers (with a legal guardians consent) with a 3 or 4 year old are eligible to participate. Participants will be asked to disclose income and other personal job related questions.

This 6 week study will consist of two interviews, in home teaching of dialogic reading techniques, and 4 in home observations. The child will also be given a 10 minute vocabulary test before and after the study. Total participation time will range from 3 to 5 hours.

Please call Christy Irish at (571) 317-0839 for more information

Appendix C

Consent Form

Dialogic Reading in the Home Environment

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

RESEARCH PROCEDURES

This research is being conducted to describe the experiences of six families (with varied socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds) being taught to use dialogic reading with their young children at home and to assess students' vocabulary growth. If you agree to participate, you will be asked to complete an initial audio recorded interview (30 minutes), watch a training video (30 minutes), be observed and video-taped reading with your child in your home four times (20 minutes each), and complete a follow-up interview (30 Minutes). Your child will be given a pre and post test on their vocabulary (10 minutes). These observations will occur over a six week period.

RISKS

There are no foreseeable risks for you or your child while participating in this research.

BENEFITS

There are no benefits to you or your child as participants other than to further research in the area of early reading.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The data in this study will be confidential. Neither your name nor your child's name will be used in any reporting of the data. The use of a code will be placed on all interviews, observation sheets, video recordings, and vocabulary tests in order to identify participants. An identification key will be kept in a separate file and only the researchers will have access to it. There is one exception to confidentiality. It is our legal responsibility to report situations of suspected child abuse or neglect to appropriate authorities. Although we are not seeking this type of information in this study nor will you be asked questions about these issues, we will disclose them as required under the law if discovered.

PARTICIPATION

Your and your child's participation is voluntary, and you and your child may withdraw from the study at any time and for any reason. If you decide not to participate or if you and your child withdraw from the study, there is no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. There are no costs to you and your child or any other party.

CONTACT

This research is being conducted by Seth Parsons and Christy Irish at George Mason University. Christy may be reached at 571-317-0839 and Seth Parsons may be reached at 703-993-6559 for questions or to report a research-related problem. You may contact the George Mason University Office of Research Integrity & Assurance at 703-993-4121 if you have questions or comments

regarding your rights as a participant in the research.

This research has been reviewed according to George Mason University procedures governing your participation in this research.

CONSENT

I have read this form, all of my questions have been answered by the research staff, and I agree to participate in this study.

Name

Date of Signature

Appendix D

Semi-Structured Initial Interview Guide

1. Highest Level of Education Completed:

- _____ High school diploma
- _____ Some college, no degree
- _____ Associate or technical degree
- _____ Bachelor's degree
- _____ Graduate degree/professional

2. What category best describes your annual household income?

- _____ Less than 24,999
- _____ 25,000 to 49,000
- _____ 50,000 to 99,000
- _____ 100,000 or more

3. Are you currently employed? If so, by whom and what are your job responsibilities?

4. What is your ethnicity?

- _____ Asian or Pacific Islander
- _____ Black/African American
- _____ Hispanic/Latino
- _____ White/European white

5. In which category is your age?

- _____ 18 to 24
- _____ 25 to 34
- _____ 35 to 44
- _____ 45 to 6

Ages of Children currently in house:

6. Tell me about your children and what they like to do.

- a. Ages/Grades
- b. Hobbies

7. What do you like to do as a family when you have time together?
8. When someone says reading activities, what are some things that you think of?
9. Tell me about the reading that your family does at home.

Possible prompts:

- A. How often do you and your child/ren read together?
 - B. When do you normally read with your child/ren?
 - C. How long do you and your children read for?
 - D. How do you choose the books that you read together?
 - E. What types of books do you normally read together?
 - F. Where do you typically spend time reading together?
 - G. Are there other friends or family that read with your child?
 - H. Where do you get the books that you read together?
10. How do you feel about your child's reading skills?
 - a. Do you feel they are prepared for school?
 11. Tell me about any experiences you have with your child relating the reading they do to other activities. For example, do they ever talk about books you read at other times? If so, what prompts them?
 12. What are the reasons that you spend time reading with your child?
 13. How would you finish this statement: I would read more to my child if _____

Appendix E

Dialogic Reading Observation Form

Introducing the Book	
Title of the Book The reader says the title of the book to the children before beginning the read aloud.	<i>Circle Yes or No i to dicat whether this occu</i> YES NO
Author of the Book The reader tells the children who the author of the book is before beginning the read aloud.	<i>Circle Yes or No i to dicat whether this occu</i> YES NO
Asks a Question to Build Children's Interest The reader asks the children at least one question before beginning to read the book to build the children's interest in the story. (Ex: What do you think this book is about?)	<i>Circle Yes or No i to dicat whether this occu</i> YES NO
Make notes about examples of introducing the book you observed:	

Reading the Book	
Make a tally mark in the box <u>each time</u> you observe a CROWD prompt being used.	
Completion- The reader creates an incomplete sentence to prompt the children to come up with the appropriate response (i.e. fill-in-the-blank). (Ex: <i>To open the mailbox Sam will need _____</i>)	
Recall- The reader asks a question designed to help children remember key elements of the story (Ex: <i>Can you remember what happened to Sam and Ellen on the way to the mailbox?</i>)	
Open-Ended- The reader asks a question or makes a statement that requires children to describe part of the story in their own words beyond just a “yes” or “no” response. (Ex: <i>Tell me what you think is happening in this picture.</i>)	
Wh-questions- The reader asks a question about the story that begins with what, where, who, or why. (Ex: <i>What kind of shoes is Sam wearing?</i>)	
Distancing- The reader helps children make connections between events that happen in the story to those that occur in their own lives. (Ex: <i>Sam is big enough to go by herself to get the mail. What do you do all by yourself to help Mom or Dad?</i>)	
Make notes about examples of CROWD prompts you observed:	
Make a tally mark in the box <u>each time</u> you observe the PEER sequence being used.	
PEER Sequence (P rompt- E valuation- E xpansion- R epetition). The reader uses a CROWD prompt, then evaluates and expands on the children’s responses, and then repeats the prompt to provide another opportunity for the children to respond. The PEER sequence should always	
Make notes about the PEER sequences you observed:	

Closing the Book	
<p>Asks a Question to Maintain Children's Interest</p> <p>After finishing the book, the reader asks the children at least one question to maintain their interest in the story. (<i>Ex: Which do you like better, caterpillars or butterflies? Why?</i>)</p>	<p><i>Circle Yes or i No to dicat whether this occurs.</i></p> <p>YES NO</p>
<p>Asks a Distancing Question to Connect to Children's Lives</p> <p>After finishing the book, the reader asks the children at least one question that relates the story to their everyday lives (<i>Ex: How do you feel when you eat too much food at dinner?</i>)</p>	<p><i>Circle Yes or i No to dicat whether this occurs.</i></p> <p>YES NO</p>
<p>Make notes about examples of closing the book you observed:</p>	

Appendix F

Semi-Structured Post Interview Guide

1. How did you feel that using dialogic reading with your child went?
 - A. What are some things that went well?
 - B. What are some things that you don't think went well?
2. How were the reading experiences you had with your child different after the dialogic reading teaching?
3. How did your child respond to using dialogic reading?
4. Did you notice any change in your child while you were using dialogic reading?
 - a. Engagement/Participation?
 - b. Did their vocabulary differ?
5. How do you see your family using dialogic reading in the future?
6. Do you prefer dialogic reading or your traditional reading? Why or why not?
 - a. How were they similar/different?

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Biography

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