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An Analysis of Supportive Strategies in Shared Reading Using an English Story

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The main purposes of this study are to find out the strategies which can be used to support children in a shared reading situation and investigate the ways of adopting them to English teaching with English stories. In order to do this, I designed and observed a shared reading between a child and her mother with an English story. Then the shared reading process was analyzed to identify the strategies offered by the child's mother to support the child's understanding of the English story. The findings of this study are mainly concerned with the interaction between the child and the mother. It also contains the results of the analysis which are related with input analysis, interaction analysis and functional analysis. The major strategies found in this study are similar to that of classroom teacher-student interaction such as translation, affirmation, comprehension check, repetition, specifying, translation request and paying attention. Although the data analysed in this study is derived from a case study and therefore difficult to generalize, these strategies may be able to help English learners feel more comfortable and learn better if applied appropriately.

[English stories/young readers/supportive strategies in reading]

I. INTRODUCTION

Our life is full of stories. Whether they are sad or joyful, we tell them every day. Any form of a message that refers to a certain event could be a story. This means that news, movies, dramas and even a short piece of talk about an incident can be a type of story, if we think of a story in the widest possible sense (Garvie, 1990). In this sense, stories are very familiar to us and our children whether they are our native language or not. In this reason, there were many cases of attempts to use English stories as an English teaching material. Many research results indicate that English stories used for English teaching were successful (Jang, 2008; Jeon, 2004; Kim, 2003; Kim, 2005; Kim, 2008; Park, 2006). Some

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researchers even suggested the integrated elementary English curriculum with English stories (Kim, 2005; Loukia, 2006). Although there are many different factors between learning a foreign language in an EFL context and acquiring a mother language, many researchers tried to make use of the benefits of English stories to teach English. However, frequency of the actual use of English stories is not very high (Im, 2008). According to Im (2008), although English teachers think stories can be a useful English teaching material, they do not use them frequently in their classes due to the following reasons: lack of story books available, lack of time, and difficulty in using them. Hill (2001) also stresses the need for providing enough time for reading and telling stories for children in order to foster communicative language skills.

The main aim of this study is to investigate supportive strategies and their effectiveness. These strategies may help teachers and parents who want to use English stories to teach English to their students or children. The strategies may contribute to helping children to understand the meaning of English stories better and feel more comfortable with reading English stories if they are applied appropriately. Apparently, information on how to teach English with English stories may help and encourage English teachers to use them more often in their classes.

II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

1. Benefits of Stories in English Language Teaching

The influential power of stories on human life seems enormous. Without stories, successful cultural entertainment such as movies, soap operas and plays would not exist. We know that ancient wisdom and experience was inherited across the generations in the form of a variety of types of stories such as myths, legends, epics, and folk tales (Mello, 2001). Stories could give us not only enjoyment but also wisdom and knowledge. For children especially, stories create magical wonder at the world (Stoyle, 2003). Stories can have many benefits for the development of language no matter whether the language is first or second or foreign and regardless of the reader's age.

For first language (L1) acquisition, stories are one of the most popular and interesting tools for children to experience language and life. Children are exposed to their L1 through stories from the moment they are born. They hear their parents telling stories about things around them, daily life, feelings and the stories from TV. For very young children, stories can be presented by their parents or other people around them through storytelling. This means, young children benefit from listening to the stories rather than reading. Storytelling is one of the most common ways of presenting stories to children. Using this interactive

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narrative experience, humans can express their knowledge or thought (Mello, 2001). Mello (2001) says that storytelling is a way of expressing one's individual private experience with culturally negotiated form. It can be also a distinctive way for children to develop an understanding and appreciation for other cultures, and foster a positive viewpoint to people from different countries, races and religions (Stoyle, 2003). This experience of listening to stories read aloud is widely accepted as a way of learning, which provides powerful learning opportunities about literacy, general knowledge and creativity (Dombey, 1996; Wells, 1996). Vygotsky (1978) says that literacy, general knowledge and creativity are directly related to language development. This process can be closely related to the concept of 'ZPD (zone of proximal development)' and 'scaffolding' which Vygotsky coined. The ZPD means the difference between what a child can do without help and what he/she can do with help (Vygotsky, 1978). Scaffolding means teachers' instruction which begins at a level fostering students' success and provides the suitable amount of support to drive students to a higher level of understanding (Huong, 2003). Therefore, the indirect experience which learners can acquire through all forms of reading such as listening to reading aloud, shared reading, and independent reading can be a kind of scaffolding as long as the experience is within the learners' ZPD. Although the above mentioned influences of stories can be successfully achieved in L1 context as they require frequent and abundant reading and listening experience, this principle can be applied to EFL context as well to make an optimal English learning environment. English learners in an EFL context are familiar with the concept of stories. Therefore, they can get similar benefits from reading or listening to English stories read aloud on condition that the concept is within their ZPD.

Listening to English stories read aloud has another advantage in relation to spoken language development. When learners listen to English stories, they will hear unique patterns of spoken language which cannot be seen in written text, such as intonation, stress and pause pattern which play an important role in verbal communication (Wood, 1988). Dombey (1996) also suggests that the child can familiarize her/himself with the meanings and linguistic forms of printed texts which will psycholinguistically assist her/him in later attempts to read. This makes sense of written texts on her own by listening to stories read aloud.

The following table shows possible benefits of English stories. Each benefit will be described further in turn.

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TABLE 1
Possible Benefits of English Stories

1) Resource of authentic English
2) Maintaining learners' interest
3) Supportive features for learners
4) Indirect experience

One of the most important functions of English stories may be their role as a resource of authentic English in an EFL situation. By using English stories, learners in an EFL situation could expand the amount of time for which they are exposed to English. Stories are made of words, sentences and paragraphs, so listening to and reading stories could help learners become familiar with English words and sentences. For very young children aged 1-6, stories can be presented by their parents or other people around them through storytelling similar to L1 context. Ellis and Brewster (1991) said listening to stories can develop learners' listening and concentrating skills. In a foreign language learning situation, English stories might provide a holistic method to language teaching and learning, since they involve children with rich, authentic uses of the foreign language (Cameron, 2001). In other words, they provide abundant vocabulary and plenty of authentic examples of discourse. English stories also show examples of discourse features, which could help learners to learn authentic spoken language and written structures. Ghosn (2002) also said that literature can foster vocabulary development in context and it also provides an excellent medium for a top-down approach to language teaching as it presents natural language (Ghosn, 2002).

Stories can also support English learners to maintain their interest. Interesting stories can make learners have great fun while they are learning, since they are designed for entertainment and often depict an interesting imaginary world created by language. Good stories may motivate learners to read. In an EFL situation, motivating pupils to learn English can be one of the most pressing problems, especially for children, since they do not have many opportunities to use English in real life situations. This lack of motivation may be directly connected to the lack of willingness to learn English. Garvie (1990) and Sweeny (2005) suggest that a good story may be the best method for offering extrinsic motivation, since stories invoke the desire to know what happens in the end. Ghosn (2002) also said that "authentic literature provides a motivating, meaningful context for language learning, since children are drawn to stories" (p. 173). Furthermore, good stories may motivate children to read, since they are designed for entertainment and often depict an interesting imaginary world, created by language. Ellis and Brewster (1991) wrote that storybooks are motivating and entertaining and can increase positive attitudes towards the foreign language (Ellis & Brewster, 1991). Loukia (2006) suggests that stories are expected to motivate the learners and arouse their curiosity about the target language and its culture.

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In addition, just providing listening experience for stories can support learners. Ellis and Brewster (1991) said that children like listening to stories over and over again and this enables language items to be acquired and sustained (Ellis & Brewster, 1991).

Another benefit of English stories is their supportive features for learners such as predictable patterns and illustrations. The typical structure of stories not only provides interesting events and curiosity but also can support learners' learning by providing clues to understand meaning. The predictable pattern of events, language, and pictures, can help children's understanding of difficult words, narratives, discourse and the overall storyline (Cameron, 2001). For example, 'The Enormous Turnip,' (found in many storybooks or anthologies) has a repetitive structure like many other popular English stories (see Linse, 2007 for more examples of repetitive structure of English stories). The lines describing similar action are repeated and become longer in the story as an additional 'tugger' comes to help to pull out the enormous turnip. As learners hear or read these repetitively in a natural expressive style, the expressive communication skills of delivery (enunciation, phrasing, fluency, etc.) can be strengthened and practiced (Joy, 1984). Many stories have similar repetitive structures. Loukia (2006) said that stories are memorable, as the language is repeated, and this encourages students to participate and help to anticipate what is coming next in the story and, at the same time, practices their imagination.

The illustrations of a story book can also support learning. For instance, some children can see what a turnip looks like, and they may be able to guess the meaning of 'enormous' from the picture of enormous turnip. The pictures also can help learners enjoy their learning. Linse (2007) suggests that even children who do not have very good L2 skills like looking at the pictures of a story and listening to the story being read as long as the story is not too long. Loukia (2006) suggests that the strategy of inferring meaning of words from the text is supported by the illustrations and the colors, the simple shapes and figures do not distract learners but rather help them to understand key points of the story.

The familiar concept of stories can also help learning as Sweeny (2005) said all learners are familiar with stories in their mother language and are therefore able to use skills they already acquire to help them fathom and enjoy stories in English.

Similar to the benefits of stories in first language development, stories can contribute to the development of learner's knowledge, intercultural awareness and affective development through indirect experience. Ghosn (2002) suggests literature can function as a change agent since good stories deal with some aspects of the human life and can thus contribute to the emotional development of the child and nurture positive interpersonal and intercultural perspective. In addition, Ellis and Brewster (1991) said that "stories create opportunities for developing continuity in children's learning among others, school subjects across the curriculum and listening to stories develops the child's listening and concentrating skills" (p. 2). Sweeny (2005) also said that we can use stories for obtaining

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and practising many skills and language, both receptive and productive, and a wide range of subjects.

2. Defining Shared Reading and Reading Strategies

As this study uses the term "shared reading', it is necessary to provide the definition for a clearer description. Shared reading may be one of the most effective ways to read a book with children. It can be defined as "an interactive reading experience that occurs when students join in or share the reading of a big book or other enlarged text while guided and supported by a teacher or other experienced reader" (PREL, 2006). Through this process teachers or other experienced readers can teach strategies or skills using direct instruction and the students can practice reading skills (Gentry, 2000). Children can also participate in group problem-solving and discussions about the text. The definition may not be clearly separated with "guided reading", since both can be used as a method to support children to become an independent reader. However, guided reading can be applied to slightly more advanced readers than that of shared reading, as it takes more learner-centered approach than shared reading (Fountas & Pinnel, 1999). The reading context in this study includes very frequent interaction between the child and her mother. In addition, the child heavily depends on her mother and the mother supports the child in many ways. In this respect, the term "shared reading" appears to be more appropriate for this study.

Another important concept in this study is "reading strategy". This can be broadly defined as the intentional, conscious approaches used by readers to enhance text comprehension (Sheorey & Mokhtari, 2001). Paris and Jacobs (1984) point out that there is a significant difference between novice and skilled readers regarding the degree of awareness of the strategies and the application on them. However, the meaning of strategy in this study is somewhat different. It focuses on the supportive aspects of strategies rather than reading strategies. In other words, this study investigates the strategies used by a supporter but by a reader. Investigating these strategies can be very important since teachers can demonstrate what kinds of strategies children can use and how to use them to comprehend the texts (Rha & Lee, 2005). These may be also important in a teaching situation when a teacher or a supporter tries to assist learners' reading especially when the learners' reading ability is not sufficient enough to read independently.

3. Previous Study Analysis

There are many empirical research results, which support the theoretical assertions provided above. The following three empirical research results regarding the use of English stories for English teaching in EFL contexts illustrate practical results and highlight general

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tendencies of research regarding English stories for EFL learners.

Kim (2003) compared two methods of English vocabulary instruction between teaching words using workbooks and teaching words using storybooks. She observed and evaluated a child's language learning after teaching with the two methods for nine weeks. The result indicated that the child learned better through storybooks, and the words and expressions learned in the English stories became her most valuable resource of oral language (2003). This result supports Ghosn's (2002) assertion mentioned above.

Kim (2008) experimented with 34 3rd year elementary school children. The main purpose of her study was to promote an affirmative attitude in English learning and improve reading skills through reading activity program using English fairy tales. She reported that teaching reading with English stories contributed to increasing children's interest and confidence in learning English (Kim, 2008). She also said that the English story reading program was also effective for developing children's reading ability.

Elkiliç and Akça (2008) experimented with 21 4th year private primary school children in order to investigate their motivation for learning English as a foreign language, preferred learning activities, and attitudes towards learning English with storytelling. Their results indicate that both storytelling and grammar were perceived as very enjoyable by a majority of the participants (71.43% and 52.38% respectively), audio and video teaching aids (ie. Illustration) and comprehension check-up questions were useful for the understanding of the stories. They also suggest that the three most popular learning tasks were language games, acting out the stories, and the stories themselves. As this study result suggests, stories can be very useful to increase learners' interest and support their understanding of stories.

All these three previous study results suggest that English stories are effective in improving learners' English reading skills and increasing their interest. Although these are concurrent with the theoretical summary suggested in the previous sections, the results did not provide any information about specific strategies regarding supporting learners in a shared reading session.

4. The Research Questions

This study focuses on the use of the strategies used by the mother in a shared reading. From a Vygotskian perspective, this social interaction between a learner and others around her/him can create opportunities for learning (Vygotsky, 1978). One of the main purposes of this study is to identify the strategies for supporting children in a shared reading situation. The other is to seek the way to adopt those strategies to design digital English stories. In light of the purposes of this study, the following research questions were posed:

1) What strategies can be identified in a shared reading situation?

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2) What are the functions of each strategy?
3) How can we apply those strategies to design digital English stories?

III. METHOD

1. Data Collection Method

In this study, a case study was constructed to find out the strategies of supporting children's reading in a shared reading situation. In this section a detailed description about the experiment will be provided including the subject, the storybook and the procedure.

The child who participated in this study was seven years old at the time of the experiment, and her first language is Korean. She had been in England for seven months. During this time, she was attending a primary school, which was her major English learning opportunity. She had not had any experience studying at private English institute when she was in Korea. Therefore, her English reading proficiency level was not so high but had a lot of English listening experience from her school. She usually talked in Korean at home.

The storybook used in this study was "Elephant Small and the splashy bath" (written by Grindly & Ellis, 1998). The story is written for native speaker toddlers. It has sixteen pages, twenty-nine sentences and 201 words. To choose this story, dozens of storybooks were evaluated according to the subject's level of English and her interest. Like many other primary schools in England, her school gives her homework to read a book. Compare to the books she reads for her homework this book has more words and sentences. However, she showed high interest for this book when she found this book. Further, I needed a little demanding storybook to observe the mother's use of supportive strategies. The English level of this story may be a little difficult for a 7-year-old EFL child. However, the focus of this study is to find out the strategies used by the mother in helping her child's reading. Therefore, this study needs slightly difficult English words to identify those strategies used.

One of the most distinctive features of the storybook is that it has many mimetic and onomatopoeic words as in the following examples:

grumbled, wailed, squealed, whimpered, giggled, splash, splish, splosh, whoooooosh

These words may be unfamiliar to the child, though they may make the story more interesting when her mother mimes the words.

After selecting the story book a shared reading observation was carried out. It was intended to collect data on the social-interaction between the child and her mother while

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they read an English storybook together. The child was tested three times (two days before, right after the reading session and one week after the reading) with test items, which were selected from the "Elephant small and the splash bath".

I asked the child's mother to read the storybook just like they read school storybooks, since the child reads English storybooks for her schoolwork every day with her mother. However, I asked the mother to give as much support as possible to the child and asked the child to ask questions on whatever she wanted to know about the story. They sat on a sofa and the mother read the storybook, the child listened to the story, then they asked and answered questions. While reading, the mother read the text sentence by sentence and translated the meaning in Korean. This reading lasted approximately twenty minutes. It was recorded with a camcorder for transcribing and to observe their actions. While recording, I tried my best to reduce unnecessary interruption for objective data collection.

From the text of the "Elephant small and the splash bath", 23 test items were selected to compare the differences between before and after the reading. The test items included fifteen one-word items and eight short-sentence items. The items mainly consist of meaning words rather than functional words such as the animal's names, verbs and short talks, which are related to the pictures. This was intended to make the test less demanding to the child since meaning words are obviously easier to remember and may be more interesting when the child listens to them than function words.

TABLE 2
Test Items from "Elephant Small and the Splash Bath"

1) Grubby	2) Run	3) Bath	4) Grumble
5) Elephant	6) Felt	7) Trunk	8) Just right!
9) But, I'm scared of the water.		10) Wailed	11) Fun
12) Hold	13) I'll lower you in.	14) Don't let me fall.	15) Squealed
16) Rose up	17) Tummy	18) I'm all wet.	19) Whimpered
20) I want to get out	21) Perhaps you'd like some bubbles?		22) Tipped
23) Bubbles flew into the air.			

The pre-test includes reading, words meaning, and translation. The test was performed with a separate sheet in a face-to-face interview. During the reading test, I pointed to one of the words with my finger on a piece of paper and asked, "Can you read this word?" The child read the word if she could, and said "No" if she could not. I wrote the result on a different piece of paper and went on to the next test item. After finishing the reading test, I pointed to one of the items again and asked the child "Do you know what 'bath' means?" in Korean for the meaning test in the same order as the reading test. I accepted it as a correct answer if the child explained the word or translated the test item into Korean. Finally, for the translation test I asked the child "What is 'something' in English?" If the

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child said the word correctly, I regarded it as a correct answer. This pre-test was carried out before the shared reading session.

After the reading, a post-test was implemented in the same way as the pre-test. However, this time, a retelling test was added after the translation test. I showed one of the pages of the storybook and asked the child to explain the story. It was difficult to decide how much explanation the child should give for the right answer, so I regarded it as a correct answer if she gave one or two important pieces of information about the story. Therefore, most of the 'wrong' answers were counted when she said, "I don't know."

One week after the shared reading session, a long term post-test was also conducted in exactly the same way as the short-term post-test in order to find out the long-term effects of the strategies.

The talk between the child and the mother was recorded and transcribed. Firstly I transcribed their talk in Korean. After that, I translated it into English, since they used mainly their first language. In the transcription below, the italicized character means that they said it in Korean and I translated it into English. When the mother translated the story into Korean, I used the <T> symbol for mother's translation of the English story. So "Elephant Small was grubby. <T>" means that the mother read "Elephant Small was grubby" first and said the same sentence in Korean. However, when the mother translated the text in not exactly the same meaning, or she added additional information, I transcribed it in the bracket as follows: <I'll hold you and I'll let you down slowly>. I used the '*' symbol for the mother's English error and suggested the correction in parenthesis like this: "Ziggled*(giggled)". The number in first column means their turn number, 'M' in the 'speaker' column means the mother and 'C' means the child.

TABLE 3

Sample Transcription

No	Speaker	Talk
1	M	Elephant Small was grubby. <T> "I'll run you a bath," said Elephant Mum <T> "But I don't want a bath," <T> grumbled Elephant Small. "But I don't want a bath," grumbled Elephant Small. <T> "You need a bath," said Elephant Mum <T> *Choeun*?
2	C	Yes
3	M	*What is the Elephant mum doing*?
4	C	*Now, she said he is too dirty... Mum, Why are the penguin and the duck in the elephant's house?* (Looking at the penguin in the picture)

Italic: Korean, M: mother C: child <T>: Translation

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2. Data Analysis

For the qualitative data analysis I used 'grounded theory' (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). I manually checked and rechecked the transcription and recorded video to find out any similarities which can be coded into same categories. The major three categories that I found were the strategic, interactional and functional category.

1) Strategy Analysis

From the data collected from observation and transcription, the strategies used in the shared reading session were identified. They were compared with the test result as in the following examples in order to evaluate their efficiency. For example, in table 4, turn no. 21 below, the mother uses the 'Affirmation' (marked 'Affirm') strategy to give affirmative feedback. The mother also uses the 'Translation request' (marked 'Trans') strategy for 'bath' and 'Repetition' (marked 'Rep') strategy to give clues for the word 'bath' to the child. The effect of these strategies can be evaluated when we relate it to the test result. The mother's strategies for the word 'bath' seem to be very successful, since the child showed an improvement in reading, meaning and translation in the post-test, which she failed to do in the pre-test. However, the effect came from not only the strategies in this turn but also all the following repeated strategies throughout the conversation.

The symbol 'R' in the 'Effect' column represents the child's progress in the post-reading test, and 'M' and 'T' mean the progress in the post-meaning and post-translation test respectively. Thus, 'R/M/T' means the child's progress in reading, meaning and translation in the post-test.

Various kinds of underlining were used to indicate the relationship between the word, the strategy and the effect. For example, a waved underline under 'grubby' and the same underline under 'Affirm' and 'M' indicates that the 'Affirm' strategy might affect the child's learning of the word 'grubby', and the child improved in the meaning post-test as the result.

TABLE 4
Sample Analysis Result

No	Speaker	Talk	Strategy	Effect	Evidence
21	M	*Yes, We can say it* 'grumby*(grubby)'. *How can we say 'bath' in English? 'bath' is?* ... "I'll run you a bath," said Elephant Mum.	Affirm Trans Rep	M R/M/T	 Test
22	C	Bath			
23	M	But I don't want.. *Yes, right, 'bath' is* bath.	Affirm		

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Strategy; Affirm: Affirmation, Trans: Translation request, Rep: Repetition
Effect; R: the child can read the test item, M: the child can say the meaning, T: the child can translate it into Korean

2) Interaction Analysis

The child and her mother used Korean in most of their talk. Their talk seems to follow the IRF (Initiation, Response, Follow-up (feedback); Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975) pattern. Their talk was analyzed to find out who initiated which topic. To do this, I firstly labeled their utterances to categorize their talk. However, it was difficult to categorize some kinds of talk. Unlike classroom discourse, the child initiated frequently. Whenever the child failed to answer correctly, the mother re-initiated in a slightly different way from the first initiation to make it easier to understand. Thus, I needed to add three kinds of moves to differentiate them such as 'child initiation (marked CI)', 'Re-initiation (marked RI)' and mother's response (marked MR). Child initiation simply means the child's initiation as in below table 5, turn No. 4. 'Re-initiation' means the mother's initiation, which follows right after the first initiation before the child responds to the first initiation in order to make the first initiation more understandable. This also means the initiation, which follows after a simple I-R interchange without a feedback move. 'MR' simply means the mother's response to the child's initiation. For example, in the following transcription the mother initiates in turn No.1 by calling the child's name. After that the child responded, the mother re-initiates without a 'Feedback' move in turn No. 3. The transcript in turn No. 7 shows the mother's re-initiation before the child answers the first initiation. Interestingly, the transcript in turn No. 5 shows the mother's response (marked MR) to the child's initiation.

TABLE 5
The Examples of Interaction Analysis

No	Speaker	Talk	Move	Topic of initiation
1	M	Elephant Small was grubby. <T> "I'll run you a bath," said Elephant Mum <T> "But I don't want a bath," <T> grumbled Elephant Small. "But I don't want a bath," grumbled Elephant Small. <T> "You need a bath," said Elephant Mum <T> *Choeun*?	I	
2	C	Yes	R	
3	M	What is the Elephant mum doing?	RI	Story
4	C	*Now, she said he is too dirty… Mum, Why are the penguin and the duck in the elephant's house?* (Looking at the penguin in the picture)	R CI	picture
5	M	*Maybe, they live together.*	MR	

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6	C	*What happen to his tail*? (Looking Elephant's tail in the picture)	CI	picture
7	M	*It's just because the illustrator drew it like that to make it interesting. By the way, Does the elephant mum have hands? How did the elephant mum find that he is dirty? Did she use her hand?*	MR I RI	GK

Italic: Korean, M: mother C: child <T>: Translation
Move; I: Initiation, CI: Child Initiation, RI: Re-initiation, R: response, MR: mother's response, F: Follow up (Feed back)
Topic of initiation; GK: General knowledge

I also categorized their talk in relation to the topics of their initiation. Their topic of initiation can be categorized into seven groups such as questions about the story, words and pictures. Sometimes, the topic related to the organization of the reading such as "Er, shall we go on to the next page?" Sometimes, the child stated her opinion and practiced English words by herself and the mother asked about general knowledge as in the table 5 above.

3) Functional Analysis

The transcription shows various strategies used such as translation, confirmation and repetition like teacher talk. Stubbs (1983) says 'confirmation' is one of the distinctive features of teacher talk and suggests eight types of teacher talk as follows:

TABLE 6
The Types of Teacher Talk

Attracting or showing attention	Defining
Controlling the amount of speech	Editing
Checking or confirming understanding	Correcting
Summarizing	Specifying topic

In addition, Lynch (1996) suggests the types of interaction modifications and input modifications of teacher talk as follows:

TABLE 7
The Types of Interaction Modifications

Confirmation check	Repetition
Comprehension check	Reformulation
Clarification request	Back tracking

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TABLE 8
The Types of Input Modifications

Vocabulary	Use more common vocabulary, avoidance of idioms, use of nouns rather then pronouns
Grammar	shorter utterances, less regular surface structure, increased use of present tense.
Pronunciation	slower speech, clear articulation, standard form, less vowel-reduction, greater stress, wider pitch range.
Non-verbal	gesture, facial expression, more pause, longer pause

Lightbown and Spada (1993) suggest a syllogism in relation to this interactional modification as follows:

Interactional modification makes input comprehensible
Comprehensible input promotes acquisition.
Therefore
Interactional modification promotes acquisition. (p. 30)

Though the talk between the child and the mother is not identical to teacher talk, it has similar characteristics of interaction and input. Their interaction was analysed based on the types of teacher talk.

TABLE 9
The Examples of Interaction Analysis

No	Speaker	Talk	Strategy
17	M	*Ah, nose! It's dirty he is really dirty. How can we say 'grubby' in English?*	Affirm Trans
18	C	Dirty	
19	M	*In other words… What did I say first?* Elephant Small was grumby*.	Back Rep
20	C	Grumby*	
21	M	*Yes, We can say it* 'grumby*'. *How can we say 'bath' in English? 'bath' is* … "I'll run you a bath," said Elephant Mum.	Affirm Trans Rep

Strategy: Affirm: Affirmation, Trans: Translation request, Rep: Repetition, Back: Backtracking

However, some kinds of utterances are difficult to classify, since their talk has different features from the types of teacher talk. Thus, three more categories were added to classify the mother's strategies. One is translation, which means the mother's help by suggesting the Korean meaning of the English. For example, the following transcription shows this was a very frequent strategy, marked '<T>'.

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TABLE 10
The Examples of Additional Categories

No	Speaker	Talk
1	M	Elephant Small was grubby. <T> "I'll run you a bath," said Elephant Mum <T> "But I don't want a bath," <T> grumbled Elephant Small. "But I don't want a bath," grumbled Elephant Small. <T> "You need a bath," said Elephant Mum <T> *Choeun*?

Another is the translation request, which means the mother's request of translation of words into different language such as translating English words into Korean or Korean words into English as in the above table 9 No. 21, marked 'Trans'.

The third is self-practicing or self-correction, which refers to the mother's practicing difficult English words by herself or correcting herself. Though this strategy is not frequent and might not be important to help their interaction, this can affect the child's language input and be a kind of learning model for the child. An example of this can be found in the following transcription.

89 M *Yes*, "OOOH!" Ziggled*(giggled) emm giggled! Elephant Small.

In sum, I used eleven categories, which are 'Comprehension check', 'Specifying topic', 'Affirmation', 'Translation request', 'Repetition', 'Attention (or Attracting)', 'Backtracking', 'Confirmation check', 'Mimicking', 'Correcting', and 'Self practicing'. The following table 11 will give a short explanation of these strategies and an example, excluding the three strategies already explained above.

TABLE 11
The Example of Strategies

Category	Explanation	Example
Comprehension check	Checking of understanding of the child.	What does the Elephant mum doing?
Specifying topic	Highlighting particular topics in the story.	*By the way, Does the elephant mum have hands?*
Affirmation	Affirming or phrasing of the child's answer.	*Yes, We can say it* 'grumby*(grubby)'
Repetition	Repetition of words or utterances	"But I don't want a bath," *what does it mean?* I don't want a bath
Attention (or Attracting)	Making the child to pay attention to the story or something.	*Listen carefully what I'm saying.*
Backtracking	Reminding the child particular words or events, which was referred before.	*What did I say first?*

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Confirmation check	Asking the child's confirmation	*Now, the elephant mum holding him with her trunk, right?*
Mimicking	Mimicking sounds or actions.	*It's like he is blowing out, "Pooh" (Mimicking blowing water)*
Correcting	Correcting child's error	*Not* bathroom, *but* bath.

IV. RESULTS

1. Findings of the Analysis

1) Findings from Interaction Analysis

Throughout the shared reading session, the mother initiates the conversation 62 times and the child 19 times. Thus, the mother initiates three times more than the child. The main reason for the mother's initiation is to make the child pay attention to the story. The mother asks about the story 26 times using questions such as "What is the Elephant mum doing?" and "What do you think is going on?" Other questions are mostly related to the meaning of words, short sentences and the plot of the story, such as "How can we say 'grubby' in English?" and "How can we say 'bath' in English? 'bath' is …". From time to time, she also asks about the pictures, general knowledge, and the organization of the reading. On the other hand, the child's initiation is mainly concerned with pictures rather than the story and words. The number of times each topic is mentioned in the child's and the mother's initiations are shown in the following table.

TABLE 12
The Number of Times of Each Topic Is Mentioned

Mother's initiation	Child's initiation
Story: 25	Picture: 3
Words (or short sentences): 24 (10)	Story: 2
Picture: 3	Organization: 2
Organization: 3	Words: 2
General Knowledge: 2	Opinion: 1

Most of the talk between the child and her mother follows the IRF pattern. The number of IRF interaction is 51, including the expanded IRF interaction pattern, in contrast to the IR interaction, which was recorded only 7 times. The expanded IRF interchange is a longer version of the IRF pattern, which includes the mother's re-initiation such as, I-R-RI-R-F of I-R-RI-R-RI-R-F. This expanded interaction seems to show the mother's scaffolding technique. Whenever the child failed to answer correctly, the mother changes her question

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to a more understandable one or gives some clues to the child. For example, in the following transcription, the mother asks the meaning of the story in turn no 79. The child fails to tell what happened to the bubbles in No. 80. The mother then helps the child by suggesting looking at the picture.

TABLE 13
Sample Transcription

No	Speaker	*Talk*	Move
79	M	Bubbles flew into the air. Bubbles flew into the air. *What do you think happened?*	I
80	C	*I don't know.*	R
81	M	*What happen to the bubbles? Look at the picture, What happen to the bubbles?*	RI
82	C	*They rose up.*	R
83	M	Ah, rose up? Where to?	F/I

In their talk, expanded IRF pattern was observed 13 times. The most frequent pattern was I-R-RI-R-F, while the longest one had re-initiation 5 times as in "I-R-RI-R-RI-R-RI-R-RI-R-RI-R-F".

Interestingly, the mother's response was always followed by the mother's initiation rather than the child's follow-up move. This mother's initiation seems to turn the child's attention back to the story as in turn No. 55 in the following transcription.

TABLE 14
Sample Transcription

No	Speaker	*Talk*	Move
54	C	*Mum, mum by the way, I have something to tell. Why er~.. what is the puppy doing here? And why is it bringing back this?*	CI
55	M	*Maybe they are helping the bath. Right?* "Don't let me fall!" *What did he say?*	MR I

2) Findings from Functional Analysis

The mother used several strategies to help the child in various ways such as a translation, repetition, and comprehension check. The most frequent strategy used by the mother was 'translation' as shown in the table 15 below, which the mother seemed to depend on to help the child to understand the meaning of the story or English words. The next frequently used strategies are 'comprehension check' and 'affirmation'. The mother frequently asked the child about her understanding of the story using questions such as "What is the mum doing now?" and "What happened to the water?" Whenever the child answered correctly,

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the mother said 'yes' or 'well done' to praise or confirm the child's correct answer. This might make the child feel confident and comfortable to answer questions, since the child responded almost every question (93.02 %) - the mother questioned 86 times and the child answered 80 times. Repetition, specification, attention and translation requests were also comparatively frequent strategies. Repetition strategy was used when the mother thought the child did not understand or when the mother wants to stress the meaning of the sentence or words as in the following transcription. Similarly, specification strategy was used when the mother wants to stress particular words or events in the story.

TABLE 15
Sample Transcription

No	Speaker	*Talk*	Strategy
51	M	Said Elephant Mum. <T > "Hold onto my trunk and I'll lower you in." *What did the Elephant mum say?* "Hold onto my trunk' *Hold with what?*	<T> Com c Rep Spec

Attention strategy functions as a way of directing the child's interest to the reading task. When the child is not paying attention to the story, the mother used this strategy as in the following transcription. The mother tries to make the child pay attention to the story by asking "*Em hmm, then what will happen?*".

TABLE 16
Sample Transcription

No	Speaker	*Talk*	Strategy
74	C	*It is following what the mum doing.* (watching a penguin pouring water into a bucket in the picture)	
75	M	*Em hmm, then what will happen?* .. "Now, splash with your trunk, Elephant Small," said Elephant Mum. SPLASH! He went! What did he say?	Atten Spec

The mother sometimes asked the child to translate easy words into English or Korean when the word is in English. This seems to be used to check the child's understanding of the words and to give clues.

In relation to the first research question, 12 strategies were identified. The mother used such strategies as confirmation check, backtracking, correction and mimicking less than five times each. Interestingly, the mother practiced difficult English words by herself such as 'grubby', 'giggled' and 'scrubbed'. The number of times each strategy was used in the reading is shown in table 17.

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TABLE 17
The Incidence of Each Strategy

	Strategy	Incidence		Strategy	Incidence
1	Translation	40	7	Attention	9
2	Affirmation	32	8	Self-practicing	4
3	Comprehension check	30	9	Confirmation check	4
4	Repetition	22	10	Mimicking	3
5	Specifying	20	11	Backtracking	3
6	Translation request	10	12	Correction	1

Jarvis and Robinson (1997) suggest the functions of teacher talk as follows:

(1) Show acceptance of pupils' utterances (e.g. accept; complete; talk now)

(2) Model language (e.g. rephrase)

(3) Give clues (e.g. clue)

(4) Develop, elaborate, build-up the discourse (e.g. extend/guide; extend/ bridge)

(5) Clarify understanding, task, purposes, principles (e.g. check, set)

(6) Disconfirm, reject, rebuke (e.g. ignore) (pp. 217-218)

The mother's strategies seem to have similar functions as the above list, although functions (2) and (6) are not frequently used. The reason of the infrequent use of model language might result from the mother's lack of English skills to rephrase or provide a model English. In relation to this, Cabrera and Martinez (2001) suggest, "while the modification of teacher input from the linguistic point of view is very important, comprehensible input in foreign language teaching will not be enhanced if it is not accompanied by some form of interactive adjustment." (p. 287). Thus, the mother's interactional modifications seem to have an important role in helping the child to understand the story in various ways, for example, by giving more chances to listen to the English words or sentences, by making the child pay attention to the story and by using their first language and so on.

3) Test Results

Even though the test results were probably influenced by the child's previous experiences, they showed the overall effect of the support of the child's mother. It is regarded as a positive effect of the reading, when the child answers correctly in the post-test, and wrongly in the pre-test. In table 18 below, 'P' refers to pre-test, 'S' refers to short-term post-test and 'L' refers to long term post-test. Successful results are shown as 'S', and 'F' refers to unsuccessful results.

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TABLE 18
Sample Data of the Test Result

No	Test item	Reading			Meaning			Translation		
		P	S	L	P	S	L	P	S	L
1	Grubby	F	F	F	F	S	S	F	F	F
2	Run	F	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
3	Bath	F	S	F	F	S	S	F	S	S

P: pre-test, S: short-term post-test, L: long term post-test, S: success, F: fail

I counted each successful result as one point and deducted one point for each negative result. The total pre-test score was 10, and the post-test score was 29. The post-test score here is the average score of the short-term and long-term score. The total increase of the score was 19 and the average increase score was 1.3 as shown in the table 19 below.

TABLE 19
Test Result of the Reading

Test items	Score		
	Pre	Post	Increase
Bath	0	5	5
I want to get out	1	6	5
Run	2	6	4
Elephant	2	6	4
Trunk	0	4	4
Hold	1	5	4
I'm all wet	2	6	4
But, I'm scared of the water.	1	4	3
Grubby	0	2	2
Don't let me fall	0	2	2
Rose up	0	2	2
Tummy	0	2	2
Perhaps you'd like some bubbles?	0	2	2
Tipped	0	2	2
Bubbles flew into the air	0	2	2
Felt	1	2	1
Grumble	0	0	0
Just right	0	0	0
Wailed	0	0	0
Fun	0	0	0
I'll lower you in	0	0	0
Squealed	0	0	0
Whimpered	0	0	0
Total score	10	58	48

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This result may indicate that the strategy used by the mother successfully helped the child to understand the English words or expressions. The t-test result shows that the difference between pre and post test score is statistically meaningful ($p<.05$).

In the retelling test, the child explained nine pages correctly among the sixteen pages, showing 56% success rate.

4) Findings from Input Analysis

The number of times the test items were spoken was counted from the transcription of the experiment to find out the learning opportunities as in the following table 20.

The most frequently repeated test item was 'Elephant', since the main characters of the story are 'Elephant Small' and 'Elephant mum'. The least frequent word is 'wailed', as this word appeared only one time in the story and the mother did not pay attention to this word to explain it. The mean of the number of times of the test items spoken in the reading session was approximately fourteen.

TABLE 20
The Number of Times Each Test Item Was Spoken in the Reading

Item No	Test item	English	Korean	Sum
1	Grubby	9	2	11
2	Run	7	2	9
3	Bath	28	21	49
4	Grumble	3	2	5
5	Elephant	50	29	79
6	Felt	3	2	5
7	Trunk	13	16	29
8	Just right	6	4	10
9	But, I'm scared of the water.	5	3	8
10	Wailed	1	1	2
11	Fun	3	3	6
12	Hold	3	6	9
13	I'll lower you in	4	3	7
14	Don't let me fall	6	4	10
15	Squealed	7	4	11
16	Rose up	11	5	16
17	Tummy	9	6	15
18	I'm all wet	8	4	12
19	Whimpered	5	3	8
20	I want to get out	4	2	6
21	Perhaps you'd like some bubbles?	2	2	4
22	Tipped	7	3	10
23	Bubbles flew into the air	3	1	4
Total	-	197	128	325

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5) Limitations

As this study is based on a small-scale case study, the results might have many limitations. Thus, it is difficult to make broad generalizations from the results of this study. For example, the results of the test can be different if one uses different English stories, or conducts study with other children or in other situations. Moreover, the method of analysis to identify the efficiency of the strategies used in the above sections might have some inaccurate features. In addition, the transcription, which I tried to make as accurate as possible, might contain inaccurate information due to the difficulty in transcribing and translation.

V. DISCUSSION

In the above sections, I have provided major findings of the strategies the mother used in a shared reading. These display the variety of strategies used to help the child and their effects on English learning from the reading session. These findings suggested above may also help us to design English lesson plans which intended to use English stories. The results may help teachers to decide which strategy they should choose in a particular teaching situation.

The mother's supportive strategies seem to be very dynamic and active. As the interaction and functional analysis results showed above, the support helped the child in various ways. The mother frequently checked the child's understanding and gave appropriate support continuously. The various kinds of strategies that the mother used each have a function in supporting the child's understanding. In addition, the mother made the child feel relaxed in interacting and answering. Their interaction might induce a rapport and this psychological comfort makes the child learn in a more relaxed situation. However, sometimes the mother cannot provide a proper model of English when she came across unfamiliar words. Though it is not very problematic if the child learns it correctly in another learning situation, it may affect the mother reading English storybooks with her child. This difficulty might discourage the mother from reading.

From the analysis result, the efficiency of each test item was calculated as in the following table 21. This was determined by dividing test score with the numbers of input throughout the reading session.

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TABLE 21
The Efficiency of the Reading

No	Test item	Input	Increase	Efficiency(%) (Score/input)
20	I want to get out	6	5	83.3
21	Perhaps you'd like some bubbles?	4	2	50.0
23	Bubbles flew into the air	4	2	50.0
2	Run	9	4	44.4
12	Hold	9	4	44.4
9	But, I'm scared of the water.	8	3	37.5
18	I'm all wet	12	4	33.3
6	Felt	5	1	20.0
14	Don't let me fall	10	2	20.0
22	Tipped	10	2	20.0
1	Grubby	11	2	18.2
7	Trunk	29	4	13.8
17	Tummy	15	2	13.3
16	Rose up	16	2	12.5
3	Bath	49	5	10.2
5	Elephant	79	4	5.1
4	Grumble	5	0	0.0
8	Just right	10	0	0.0
10	Wailed	2	0	0.0
11	Fun	6	0	0.0
13	I'll lower you in	7	0	0.0
15	Squealed	11	0	0.0
19	Whimpered	8	0	0.0
	Total	325	58	14.8

The total efficiency of the reading is 14.8% and the average efficiency is 20%. This efficiency may indicate the degree of influence of the strategies. The total efficiency roughly indicates the degree of success of the strategies used in this reading. The higher number of input means higher frequency of strategy use. If the child achieved a high score with low number of input, we can consider the strategy used for the test item to be successful. Therefore, the total efficiency reflects the degree of influence of the strategies used to teach the test item. The more important point of the efficiency is its individual result rather than the average efficiency. For instance, we can assume that the strategies used to teach "I want to get out" appear to be more effective than those used to teach "just right". However, if we consider learning as a gradual process, this efficiency alone may not be a sufficient value to decide the effect of strategies, since we need to consider the difficulties of English words and previous learning experience.

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In relation to the mother's use of strategy, translation strategy was most frequently used. This may be the most powerful support for the child as this may be the most direct and fastest way to tell the meaning of English words. This can be used in a school situation to connect new English words and learners' concept of the words in their first language. However, if learners can always acquire the meaning of new English words in their mother language, they may not try to learn them by themselves. Therefore, this strategy should be used moderately. It may be better to suggest Korean meaning after suggesting similar English words or rephrasing the words in a school situation. In addition, the meaning should be provided in different levels, such as word level, short phrase level and sentence level. Some learners just want to know the meaning of difficult English words, but some may want to know the meaning of a whole sentence. This diversified level of support may be more appropriate for the varied needs of learners.

The second most frequently used strategy was the affirmation. In a school situation, this strategy can be used in comprehension check tasks. If a learner answers correctly to a comprehension checking task a teacher can show affirmative responses. These can make learners feel pleased and interested in the reading task.

In relation to the comprehension check strategy; the third most frequently used strategy, teachers can apply this by adding a greater number of after reading tasks, which ask learners' comprehension of the meaning of the story. However, this should be designed interestingly. If the task is not interesting, learners may feel they are taking a test. As a result, learners may lose their interest in reading the story. Teachers can also use or even change a part of the story to design the after reading tasks and stimulate children's imagination. However, more research should be done to evaluate the effects of these comprehension check tasks, and investigate their design methods.

The repetition strategy can be also used in a school situation to maximise teaching effect. We can use repetition strategy in comprehension check up tasks by asking the meaning of certain words or sentences. To solve this task, learners need to think about the words or sentences and this may help them to figure out the meaning and reinforce their memory along with their pleasure of reading.

VI. CONCLUSION

In the above, a detailed procedure of data collection, and findings have been presented. In this section, a summary of important aspects of this study will be provided.

Firstly, in the reading session the mother and the child exchanged very frequent meaningful interactions. These interactive exchanges between the mother and the child created a certain type of pattern such as IRF. As suggested above, these interactions can

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have significant benefits. This may provide more chances to think and reflect on the meaning of the story. By providing more chances to think about what they read, the child may have more opportunity to broaden her English by connecting old and new knowledge and make use of the potential support. In addition, these seem to provide appropriate feedback to the child, as well as help the child to pay more attention to the reading task.

Secondly, the mother used several strategies such as translation, affirmation, comprehension check and repetition. These strategies appear to be successful to help the child's understanding of the meaning of the story and new English words. Though more research results on the use of the strategies are required, these can be a useful tool to support learners when they study with English stories, including school situations. For instance, repetition strategy can be a useful tool to increase the effectiveness of learning. As suggested above, the mother used this strategy very frequently. Many researchers stress the importance of repetition and recycle in the language teaching and learning process (Lynch & Maclean, 2000; Brown, 2000). Often, a storybook has a recursive structure. This may help learners to focus and better remember the words that repetitively appear. In addition to the natural structure of a story, a teacher can add more opportunities to read, write, speak or listen to the words by providing additional tasks.

The study suggested several useful strategies which can be used in a shared reading session to support learners. However, these suggestions might need further research to be generalized, due to the limitations of this study.

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Examples in: English
Applicable Languages: English
Applicable Levels: Elementary

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