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学位論文題目: Involvement of adults during picture book reading in childhood

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Picture book reading is a common activity during childhood. This article examined *the reality* of mother-child interactions and *the process* of children's learning during picture book reading through observational and experimental studies to understand the involvement of adults that may lead to children's learning.

First, a lateral observational study was conducted with 29 mother-child pairs where the children were in their late childhood. In this study, to indicate the involvement of the parent in the child's learning process, we divided the mother-child pairs into two groups based on their parenting styles, which had been demonstrated in earlier research to be correlated with children's vocabulary levels. Results found that *sharing type* mothers' response to children's surprise or questions regarding the picture book's content was to give *empathic responses that allow children to think by themselves*. On the other hand, *authoritarian type* mothers tended to give *instructional and explicit-answer responses*.

The following study was a longitudinal observational study conducted with 12 mother-child pairs. The children were between early and late childhood because previous studies had illustrated that the quality of mother-child interaction is different between these periods. This study also compared *sharing type* mothers with *authoritarian type* mothers and found that the differences due to parenting style became marked in late childhood. That is, the initiative within the mother-child interactions varied according to the child's age, rather than reflecting the parenting style. With younger children, the mothers tended to use more labeling and questioning to extend conversations about the pictures and stories. As the language skills of the children increased, the mothers became more engaged in reading the text. However, by late childhood, when the children were reading, *sharing type* mothers showed more empathetic responses to their children's behavior, while *authoritarian type* mothers showed less empathetic responses.

Next, an observational study was conducted in a setting where the same picture-book was read repeatedly to verify the possibility of the causal relationship wherein *empathic responses that allow children to think by themselves* promote children's spontaneous participation, which is important for children's learning. Results found that when an *empathic response that allowed children to think by themselves*, was provided, children responded more autonomously in the same section during the next reading than when an *instructional and explicit-answer response* or *no response* was provided. This indicated the possibility that *empathic responses* promote children's initiatives and contribute to learning. In the actual mother-child interactions, a child found the answer to her own question in the first reading session, and in the next session, she talked about it triumphantly to her mother.

Study 1 to study 3 focused on the exchanges in a reading aloud segment. However, in late childhood, the exchanges in reading aloud decrease and reading aloud became the main activity during picture book reading. Therefore, Study 4 experimentally examined whether the quality of reading aloud promotes story comprehension in a group of 54 five-and-a-half year old children. This study especially focused on the emotional quality. That is, the *affective reading*, which included emotion and inflection to match the contents of the story, and *non-affective reading*, which included reading in a flat tone regardless of content, were compared with each other. Results found that a five-and-a-half-year-old child can understand the events in a story regardless of the type of reading. On the other hand, compared with *non-affective reading*, *affective reading* promoted story comprehension, particularly the understanding of the characters' sentiments that were unambiguously represented in the story. It suggests that the rich prosodic information of affective reading heightens children's sensitivity to words and is the key to deeper understanding of the story.

As discussed above, *the reality* of the mother-child interaction and *the process* of children's learning during picture book reading were verified, and two aspects of adult-child relationships related to learning were indicated. The first aspect is that *empathetic responses that allow children to think by themselves* support children's interests and assists children's learning and autonomic involvement in activities. The other aspect is that vocalization rich in prosody heightens children's verbal sensitivity and gives them a key to learning.