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**IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF PRIMARY ESL TEACHERS'
SHARED READING PRACTICE: A COLLABORATIVE
ACTION RESEARCH**



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Universiti Utara Malaysia

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA
2017**



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Abstrak

Bacaan bersama merupakan strategi yang efektif bagi meningkatkan literasi membaca dalam konteks pembelajaran bahasa pertama dan kedua (ESL). Namun, ia masih tidak digunakan secara efektif oleh guru-guru Bahasa Inggeris dalam bilik darjah sekolah rendah di Malaysia. Penyelidikan tindakan secara kolaboratif telah dijalankan untuk membantu dua orang guru Bahasa Inggeria melaksanakan bacaan bersama dalam empat kitaran yang berterusan dan rekursif. "Systematic Assessment of Book Reading" (SABR) oleh Zucker et.al (2010) telah digunakan untuk mengenal pasti amalan bacaan bersama guru dalam kitaran pertama. Versi terubah suai SABR yang dikenali sebagai Systematic Assessment of Second Language Book Reading (SABRL2) pula telah digunakan untuk membimbing guru-guru melaksanakan bacaan bersama dalam tiga kitaran seterusnya. Alat ini mengandungi 7 konstruk iaitu: 1) pemilihan bahan bacaan, 2) susun atur fizikal bilik darjah, 3) perkembangan bahasa, 4) pemikiran abstrak, 5) elaborasi, 6) penggunaan bahasa pertama secara selektif, dan 7) iklim sesi. Data telah dikumpul melalui temubual, refleksi kumpulan, pemerhatian dalam bilik darjah, dan jurnal reflektif. Pola telah dikenalpasti melalui proses penyesuaian data, pengkodan data, dan pembentukan tema berbantuan perisian penganalisisan data kualitatif Atlas.ti. Dapatan dalam kitaran pertama menunjukkan guru-guru mempunyai kefahaman yang kurang tepat tentang prinsip-prinsip bacaan bersama dan tingkah laku pengajaran mereka tidak menggalakkan kemahiran membaca aras tinggi dalam kalangan murid. Guru-guru juga jarang membina persekitaran yang mesra dan menyokong bagi bacaan bersama dan cenderung untuk mendominasi perbincangan semasa perbualan berkaitan teks. Bahasa pertama (Bahasa Melayu) turut digunakan secara berlebihan sepanjang sesi bacaan bersama.

Walau bagaimanapun, pemahaman dan kebiasaan tingkah laku pengajaran guru telah berkembang secara signifikan kesan daripada bimbingan yang diterima menggunakan SABRL2. Kajian ini menunjukkan SABRL2 boleh digunakan bagi membantu guru-guru meningkatkan kualiti pengajaran literasi bacaan dalam bilik darjah ESL. Penyelidikan tindakan secara kolaboratif dapat membawa perubahan dalam bilik darjah dengan memberikan guru kefahaman yang mendalam dan meluas terhadap amalan pedagogi mereka sendiri.

Kata kunci: Literasi bacaan, Bacaan bersama, Penyelidikan tindakan Kolaboratif, Pengajaran Bahasa Inggeris sebagai bahasa kedua.

Abstract

Shared reading is an excellent strategy to enhance reading literacy in both first and second language learning context but has not been effectively utilised by teachers in Malaysian primary ESL classrooms. This collaborative action research aimed to support two English teachers' implementation of shared reading through four continuous and recursive spirals. A Systematic Assessment of Book Reading (SABR) by Zucker et.al (2010) was used to examine teachers' existing shared reading practice during the first cycle. The modified version of SABR called the Systematic Assessment of Second Language Book Reading (SABRL2) was used to guide teachers to conduct second language shared reading during the three subsequent cycles. The tool consists of seven constructs which are: 1) materials selection, 2) classroom physical arrangement, 3) language development, 4) abstract thinking, 5) elaboration, 6) selective use of the first language, and 7) session climate. Data were collected through interviews, team reflections, classroom observations, and reflective journal.

Patterns were identified through a process of data familiarisation, data coding, and theme development using the computer-aided qualitative data analysis software Atlas.ti. Findings for the first cycle showed that the teachers have an inaccurate understanding of the principles of shared reading and their instructional behaviour did not promote higher order reading skills among pupils. The teachers also rarely created a warm and supportive setting for shared reading and tended to dominate the discussion during text related conversation. The first language (Malay Language) was also used excessively throughout the shared reading sessions. However, the teachers' understanding and nature of instructional behaviour developed significantly due to guidance received using the SABRL2. This study suggests that SABRL2 can be used to help teachers increase the quality of reading literacy lessons in the ESL classroom and a collaborative action research can bring about changes in the classroom by giving teachers greater breadth and depth in understanding their own pedagogical practice.

Keywords: Reading Literacy, Shared reading, Collaborative action research, ESL

Acknowledgement

Alhamdulillah, praise be to Allah s.w.t for giving me the courage and strength to pursue my doctoral study and to complete this dissertation. The whole process is certainly not easy for me.

I am truly indebted to the Scholarship Division, Ministry of Education for awarding me with the scholarship to pursue my studies at a doctoral level. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to my supervisors Associate Professor Dr. Aizan Yaacob and Associate Professor Dr. Azlina Murad Sani. I am grateful to each for their advice and support throughout this study. I particularly want to thank Dr. Amirul Shah bin Md Shahbudin from USM and Professor Dr. Supyan Hussin from UKM for their frank and honest words of wisdom throughout this process.

Special thanks also go to Ms. Ani and Ms. Fida from SK Ayer Hitam who became my partners in this journey and openly braved the many challenges we encountered along the way. Without their willingness to collaborate with me, this study will not be a reality. I am also so grateful to my critical friends, Farah and Michael, and pupils of 5K and 5S classes who played significant roles in this study.

Worthy of mention too are my family members; my late “mak” for instilling the value of hardship in my life, and my husband, for his support, encouragement and understanding. Last, but not least, my children for accepting and understanding mama’s hours of devoting to researching, writing, rewriting, and correcting. Your love and support made this journey possible.

Thank you to Professor Saidfudin Mas’udi, Dr. Othman Talib, and all my DSG friends whose help and support were instrumental to the completion of this challenging process. My friends, Dr. Azizah Sarkowi for the criticism, and Dr. Nadiyah Elias for the emotional and moral support, thank you.

The generosity of so many will never be forgotten....

Table of Contents

Permission to Use.....	ii
Abstrak	iii
Abstract	iv
Acknowledgement.....	v
List of Tables.....	xii
List of Figures	xiii
List of Appendices	xiv
List of Abbreviations.....	xv
CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the Study.....	1
1.2 Research Context and Rationale for the Study	5
1.2.1 Issues with Malaysian Students' Reading Literacy	6
1.2.2 Issues in Shared Reading Research.....	8
1.2.3 Shared Reading in Malaysian ESL Context.....	11
1.2.4 Teacher support in Malaysian ESL context	13
1.2.5 Personal Reflections.....	18
1.3 Problem Statement	21
1.4 Aims and Scope of the Study	23
1.5 Objectives of the Study	24
1.6 Research Questions	25
1.7 Significance of the Study	25
1.8 Conceptual Framework	28
1.9 Definition of Terms.....	30
1.10 Structure of the Thesis	31
CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW	1

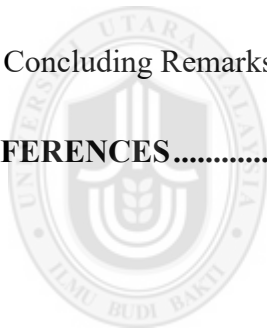
2.1 Introduction	33
2.2 Reading Literacy	34
2.3 Theories of L1 and L2 Reading and How They Affect the Teaching of Reading	35
2.3.1 Process Models	36
2.3.2 Componential Models	39
2.3.3 Teachers' Approach in Teaching Reading	40
2.4 Vygotsky's Social Constructivism	42
2.5 Shared Reading: Its Contribution to the Development of Reading Literacy	46
2.5.1 Criteria for Examining the Quality of Classroom Shared Reading Practices	47
2.5.1.1 Physical Arrangement	47
2.5.1.2 Reading Materials	48
2.5.1.3 Teachers' Instructional Behaviour	48
2.6 Shared Reading Interventions	55
2.6.1 The Systematic Assessment of Book Reading (SABR)	58
2.7 Researcher – Teacher Collaboration as A Way of Supporting Teachers	62
2.7.1 Action Research As A framework for Researcher-Teacher Collaboration	66
2.8 Summary of the Chapter	67
CHAPTER THREE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	69
3.1 Introduction	69
3.2 Research Paradigm and Research Approach	70
3.2.1 What is Action Research	75
3.2.2 The Action Research Process	78
3.2.3 The Design of this Study	81
3.2.3.1 Setting the Stage	82
3.2.3.2 Conducting the action research	88

3.3 The Interventions	92
3.3.1 Systematic Assessment of Book Reading: SABR Manual	93
3.3.2 The Systematic Assessment of Book Reading for Second Language (SABRL2).....	98
3.4 Data Gathering Techniques.....	100
3.4.1 Literature Review: Evidences from Research Studies.....	102
3.4.2 Classroom Observations	102
3.4.3 Interviews.....	104
3.4.3.1 Teachers' Interview	105
3.4.3.2 Pupils' Focus Group Interview.....	106
3.4.4 Guided Reflections.....	107
3.4.5 Self-Reflective Journals	111
3.5 Data Analysis	111
3.5.1 Cycle 1: Research Question 1	112
3.5.2 Cycle 1: Research Question 2	112
3.5.3 Cycles 2, 3 and 4: Research Questions 1 and 2	113
3.5.4 ATLAS.ti version 7.5.....	114
3.6 Research Setting.....	116
3.6.1 The Pupils	118
3.7 Research Team	118
3.7.1 The Principle Researcher: Personal and Professional Contexts	120
3.7.1.1 My Position in This Study.....	121
3.7.2 The Participating Teachers	124
3.7.3 The Critical Friends	127
3.8 Ensuring Quality for Action Research.....	130

3.8.1 Process Validity	130
3.8.2 Outcome Validity	133
3.8.3 Catalytic Validity	134
3.8.4 Democratic Validity	135
3.9 Summary of the Chapter	135
CHAPTER FOUR THE FIRST CYCLE: PILOT STUDY	136
4.1 Introduction	136
4.2 Think - Interpreting and Analysing.....	136
4.2.1 Teachers' Understanding of Shared Reading.....	137
4.2.1.1 Definition and Purpose(s) of Shared Reading	138
4.2.1.2 Reading Materials.....	144
4.2.1.3 Physical arrangement.....	148
4.2.2 Nature of Teachers' Instructional Behaviors	150
4.2.2.1 Literal Focus on the Text.....	152
4.2.2.2 Limited Encouragement of Higher Order Reading Skills	161
4.2.2.3 Lack of Emotion, Enjoyment and Attention.....	163
4.2.2.4 Excessive Use of the First Language.....	166
4.2.2.5 Teacher Centred/ Limited Amount of Talk to Engage Pupils in Conversation.....	170
4.2.3 Conclusion	174
4.3 Think - Interpreting and Analysing: Teachers' perspectives	174
4.4 Conflict: researcher vs teachers' perspectives	176
4.5 Act – Resolving the Conflicts	178
4.5.1 Guided Reflections.....	179
4.5.2 Modelling.....	183

4.6 Lesson Learnt from Cycle 1	190
4.6.1 Setting Direction	192
4.6.2 Refining Research Instruments for Cycles 2, 3 and 4.....	193
4.7 Summary of the chapter	198
CHAPTER FIVE THE TRANSFORMATIVE JOURNEY	199
5.1 Introduction	199
5.2 Understanding of Shared Reading	201
5.2.1 Definition and Purpose(s) of Shared Reading.....	201
5.2.2 Material Selection	203
5.2.3 Seating Arrangement	213
5.3 Nature of Instructional Behaviors during Shared Reading	215
5.3.1 Encouragement of Higher Order Reading Skills	216
5.3.1.1 Ms Ani	218
5.3.1.2 Ms Fida	223
5.3.2 High Enthusiam in Teaching	228
5.3.3 Selective and Appropriate Use of L1	233
5.4 Conclusion	236
5.5 The Testing of Rival Explanation	236
CHAPTER SIX DISCUSSION, IMPLICATION AND FUTURE DIRECTION	239
6.1 Introduction	239
6.2 Overview of the Major Findings	240
6.2.1 More Quality Reading Lesson through Quality Shared Reading Practice	243
6.2.1.1 The Importance of Clear Understanding of the Principles of Shared Reading.....	245

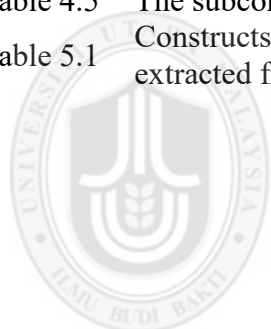
6.2.1.2 The Encouragement of Higher Order Reading Skills.....	247
6.2.1.3 The Importance of Teachers' Enthusiasm in Sharing the Text ...	247
6.2.1.4 The Importance of Teachers' Selective and Appropriate Use of L1248	
6.2.2 The Importance of Reflective and Collaborative Model for Teachers' Voluntary Change	249
6.3 Contributions and Implications of the Study	251
6.3.1 The contribution of Collaborative Action Research as an Intervention ..	251
6.3.2 The Contribution of the Systematic Assessment of Second Language Book Reading (SABRL2).....	254
6.4 Limitations of the Study.....	255
6.5 Recommendations For Future Research	256
6.6 Concluding Remarks.....	258
REFERENCES.....	259



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List of Tables

Table 3.1	Summary of Systematic Assessment of Book Reading (SABR) Adapted from Zucker, Justice, Piasta, and Kaderavek (2010)	96
Table 3.2	The systematic assessment of second language book reading	98
Table 3.3	Data gathering techniques used in the study	101
Table 3.4	Interview s.schedule	105
Table 3.5	Profile of pupils' focused group interviews	107
Table 3.6	The guided reflection schedule	110
Table 3.7	Pupils' profile	118
Table 3.8	The research team	119
Table 3.9	Herr and Anderson's goals of action research and validity criteria.....	130
Table 4.1	Comparison between teachers' understanding of shared reading and principles of shared reading	137
Table 4.2	Comparison among all the five constructs in SABR	151
Table 4.3	Table on comparison between teachers' shared reading and the teacher's in the video to be filled up by teachers	181
Table 4.4	Selective use of pupils' first language	195
Table 4.5	The subconstructs under session climate	195
Table 5.1	Constructs and subconstructs for higher order reading skills extracted from SABRL2	217



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List of Figures

Figure 1.1:	The conceptual framework of the study.....	28
Figure 2.1:	Conceptual model of scaffolding by van de Pol et al. (2010)	44
Figure 3.1:	Stringer's action research interacting spiral	80
Figure 3.2:	The design of the study	81
Figure 3.3:	Action research cycles, adapted from Stringer's (2004, 2007, 2008) action research of interacting spiral/ helix	88
Figure 3.4:	A summary of action research plans and cycles	91
Figure 3.5:	Guided reflection processes	93
Figure 3.6:	The flow of the observations process	103
Figure 3.7:	The Interface of ATLAS.ti version 7.5	114
Figure 3.8:	Process in thematic analysis of data	115
Figure 3.9:	The code list for research question 2 based on the Systematic Assessment of Book Reading (SABR)	116
Figure 3.10:	Continuum and implications of positionality, adapted from Herr and Anderson (2005)	121
Figure 3.11:	Mode of participation throughout the 4 cycles	124
Figure 4.1:	Reading material for Ms Ani's baseline shared reading 1	145
Figure 4.2:	Reading material's for Ms Ani's baseline 2	146
Figure 4.3:	Reading material for Ms. Ani's baseline 2	146
Figure 4.4:	Reading material for Ms Fida's baseline 1	147
Figure 4.5:	Seating arrangement of pupils during Ms Ani's and Ms Fida's baseline shared reading	149
Figure 4.6:	Guided reflection processes	180
Figure 4.7:	Examples of powerpoint slides for the story Ma Liang	185
Figure 4.8:	Classroom layout	186
Figure 5.1:	Sample Power point slides for country mouse and city mouse ...	206
Figure 5.2:	Sample page of the story on power point slides	207
Figure 5.3:	Animated song downloaded from Youtube	210
Figure 5.4:	Classroom layout	213

List of Appendices

Appendix 1	Systematic Assessment of Second Language Book Reading ..	283
Appendix 2	The Systematic Assessment of Book Reading (SABR) tool by Zucker, Justice, Piasta, & Kaderavek (2007, 2010)	284
Appendix 3	Teachers' Interview Protocol	291
Appendix 4	Students' Interview Protocol	292
Appendix 5	Teachers: Questions for Reflection and Self-Assessment	293
Appendix 6	Sample Teacher's Interview Transcription	294
Appendix 7	Sample Observation Transcription: Transcription Ms Ani Cycle 2 – The Lion King	298
Appendix 8	Teacher's Consent Letter	300
Appendix 9	Pupil's Consent Letter	301
Appendix 10	Appointment letter: SK Air Hitam as Teaching School	302
Appendix 11	Letter: Teaching School implementation in Teacher Training Institute	303
Appendix 12	Proposal: Teaching School implementation in Teacher Training Institute	304




 Universiti Utara Malaysia

List of Abbreviations

BM	Bahasa Malaysia – Malay Language
CAR	Collaborative Action Research
DTP	District Transformation Program
ELT	English language teaching
ESL	English as a second language
ICT	Information Communication Technology
KBSR	Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Rendah – Integrated Kurikulum for Primary School
KSSR	Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Rendah – Primary School Standard Curriculum
L1	First language
L2	Second language
LCD	Liquid Crystal Display
MBMMBI	Empowering Bahasa Melayu and Strengthening English
MOE	Ministry of Education
PPT	Power point presentation
SABR	Systematic Assessment of Book Reading Tool
SABRL2	Systematic Assessment of Book Reading Tool for Second Language
SISC+)	School Improvement Specialist Coach
UPSR	Ujian Penilaian Sekolah Rendah – Assessment for Primary Education
PISA	Program for International Student Assessment
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation & Development

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Bismillahirrahmanirrahim

*'Read! In the name of your Lord Who has created,
He has created man from a clot,
Read! and your Lord is Most Generous,
Who has taught by the pen,
He has taught man which he knew not.*

(Quran 96:1-5)

The first blessed verses (ayat) revealed to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in the Qur'an (Qur'an 96: 1-5) began with 'IQRA' or read. This indicates that the first duty in Islam is to 'Read', thus to acquire an understanding of the written text to acquire knowledge. Reading provides us with access to information, and in today's world, information is power. Thus, reading promotes the development of "meaning making" and information processing abilities that are valued in the current technological and information age. Therefore, it is important to promote reading literacy as early in life as possible to produce a knowledgeable and informative society. Research findings in applied linguistics and reading have consistently show a strong relationship between reading proficiency and greater general knowledge at all ages, from the primary school right through to university level (Pretorious, 2000; Heath, 1983; Elley, 1991).

One of the the most researched approaches to promote reading literacy among children is shared reading. The approach, which was also referred to as interactive

read aloud (Wiseman, 2011; Lennox, 2013), repeated interactive read aloud (McGee & Schickedanz, 2007) or dialogic reading (Zevenbergen & Whitehurst, 2003) requires adults to read aloud to children in an interactive and supportive manner with the aim to encourage children to get involve with the meaning making of the text (Justice & Pence, 2005; Hudson & Test, 2011). In the classroom context, Fountas and Pinnell (1996) asserted that this approach occurs when students join in or share the reading of a big book or other enlarged texts (large enough for all the students to see clearly), while being guided and supported by a teacher or other experienced readers. Similarly, Pentimonti et al. (2012) defined shared reading as an interaction and discussion that takes place while a teacher is sharing a book with a small or big group of children. It is through the interaction and discussion that the reading process, reading strategies and comprehension strategies are demonstrated. For example, it gives the opportunity for teachers to model and support pupils using skills such as predicting and elaborating. These experiences eventually provide a scaffold for further independent reading.

Shared reading is an excellent vehicle to enhance reading literacy in both L1 and L2 contexts (Holdaway, 1979; Evans, Lomax, & Morgan, 2000; Zevenbergen & Whitehurst, 2003; McGee & Schickedanz, 2007; Justice & Pence, 2005; Hudson & Test, 2011; Pentimonti et al., 2012). The founder of shared reading, Holdaway (1979) asserted that children benefit the most when their early literacy experience begins with exposure to storybooks, which is mediated by an adult who interacts with the child in a problem-solving situation. According to her, shared reading connects students through shared feelings and shared experiences, thus making it function more than just a lesson but rather a shared event. This strategy produces engaged

young children, middle graders, and high school learners who will become better readers through read-aloud experiences (Allen, 2000).

The quality of shared reading is heavily influenced by the teachers' instructional behaviour (Pentimonti & Justice, 2010) or reading style (Resse, Cox, Harte, & McAnally, 2003) or decontextualized language (McKeown, & Beck, 2003). Appropriate instructional behaviour will invite interaction and collaboration - a context in which pupils would be expected to be actively engaged in the meaning making process of the text being read (Dickinson, McCabe, & Anastasopoulos, 2003; Wasik, Bond, & Hindman, 2006; Zucker, Justice, & Piasta, 2009; Zucker, Justice, Piasta, & Kaderavek, 2010). Justice and Pence (2005) expanded this idea, explaining that in shared reading, the teachers are supposed to encourage and support pupils' engagement and participation in order to ensure that they gather meaning and construct knowledge.

Despite the various benefits suggested by literature, previous researches have indicated that teachers continue to have problems when conducting shared reading. Their implementation was often "not of sufficient quality to fully engage students and maximize literacy growth" (Morrow & Brittain, 2003, p. 144). In addition, McKeon and Beck (2003) also concluded that shared book experience is not effectively utilized to enhance pupils' reading literacy. They have identified that teachers rarely prompt pupils to think, relate, and express their understanding of the stories that were read to them. Teachers were unaware that a shared reading experience is more effective if it is accompanied by questions, prompts, and

discussions that contribute to both children's language and cognitive development (Dickinson et al., 2003).

This is contradicting to the idea that the main ingredient in the recipe for children's reading success is a teacher with the expertise to support basic reading skills, who can provide rich, meaningful, and engaging reading experiences to the children (Braunger & Lewis, 2006; National Education Association [NEA], 2000; Snow, Griffin, & Burns, 2005; Strickland, Snow, Griffin, Burns, & McNamara, 2002). The quality of teachers is the most significant school-based determinant of students' outcomes (Ministry of Education Malaysia, [MOE] 2013). Good and effective teachers are more important than particular curriculum materials, pedagogical approaches, or "proven programs" (Duffy, 1997; Sanders, 1998; Darling-Hammond, 1999; Taylor, Pearson, Clark, & Walpole, 2000; Allington & Johnston, 2001; Pressley, Allington, Wharton-MacDonald, Collins-Block, & Morrow, 2001). Teachers should teach students how to understand and utilize reading strategies in order to improve comprehension (Yigiter, Saricoban, & Gurses, 2005).

Researches have indicated the need for supporting teachers especially by teacher educators in order to improve their practice (Raymond & Leinenbach, 2000; Abdul Rahim, 2007; and Sutherland, 2006). Teachers gain benefits from the support provided by teacher educators as they are able to analyse and improve their own understanding and problems of their teaching practices. A growing body of research suggested that one of the ways to support teachers to strengthen their teaching practice, is through researcher-teacher collaboration (Christianakis, 2010; Abdul Rahim, 2007). Teachers need to feel that they are involved in doing research in their

own classrooms (Ogberg & McCutcheon, 1987; Casanova, 1989; Herndon, 1994; Lieberman, 1995; Darling-Hammond, 1996).

To address the issues discussed so far, this research examined how two teachers for primary level of English as Second Language (ESL) were able to enhance their teaching of reading literacy when supported by a teacher educator. A collaborative action research consisting of four cycles of Stringer's (2004, 2007) action research spiral acted as an intervention (Coghlan & Brannick, 2005) to solve the teachers' problem when teaching reading through shared reading. Specifically this study focused on improving teachers' understanding of shared reading in terms of the definition of shared reading itself, selection of reading materials, physical arrangement of the classroom and teachers' instructional behaviour to support reading literacy development. A Systematic Assessment of Book Reading (SABR) by Zucker et al. (2010) was used as a guide to examine teachers' existing shared reading practice during the first cycle. Later, the tool was modified based on the agreement between the researcher and the teachers and used to evaluate teachers' changes throughout the second until the fourth cycle. The tool which is called "A Systematic Assessment of Second Language Book Reading (SABRL2) will be explained in detail in Chapter 3, Section 3.2.4 under the subheading "The Intervention".

1.2 Research Context and Rationale for the Study

The effort to conduct this study was inspired by three main reasons. The first reason was the issues confronting Malaysian students' reading literacy as portrayed through current reports and research findings (Noor, 2006; Organisation for Economic Co-

operation and Development [OECD], 2009, 2014; Che Musa, Khoo, & Azman, 2012). The second reason was based on the issues related to shared reading practice and shared reading research both globally and glocally. Shared reading research which was largely conducted using naturalistic and experimental approach has indicated that teachers continue to have problems when conducting shared reading. The final reason was related to the scenario pertaining to teacher support in Malaysian ESL context in ensuring better pedagogical classroom practice. Teacher support in Malaysia is still largely based on the cascade-training model which is often criticized for its ineffectiveness, because the messages are often distorted through long-distanced one-way process, and they hardly make any changes in the classrooms (Abdul Rahim, 2007; A. Rahman, 2015).

1.2.1 Issues with Malaysian Students' Reading Literacy

Malaysian students' reading literacy is at a worrisome stage. The most alarming one is the result obtained in the worldwide program for International Student Assessment (PISA) organized by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) which evaluates the level of literacy amongst 15-year olds in Mathematics, Sciences and Reading skills. In 2009, Malaysia ranked 55th place in Reading with the score of 414. Similarly, in the PISA 2012 results, the mean score for Reading of 398 dropped below the OECD's average score of 496. Even though some of the Malaysian schools performed higher than the OECD average, the overall ranking was still lower than OECD's average. Thus, Malaysia's overall ranking was 52nd place out of 65 participating countries (OECD, 2009, 2014). In terms of English reading literacy, Malaysian students (even at the tertiary level) were identified as being unprepared for the reading demands imposed on them as they have low levels of

English proficiency, poor knowledge of reading strategy, and low interest in reading (Noor, 2006; Che Musa et al., 2012).

Ironically, the results seemed to contradict to the country's vision and inspiration to produce citizens who are knowledgeable, skilful, critical, creative, innovative, and competitive (The National Education Philosophy, The Malaysia Education Blueprint).

One of the reasons associated with this issue is the teaching and learning of reading in Malaysian ESL classrooms. Despite the various educational reforms and the introduction of various reading programmes, such as the World Bank Reading Project and the class reader programme (Raj & Hunt, 1990), the NILAM Programme, the Children's Contemporary Literature Programme and the Extensive Reading Programme, previous literatures from the 1990s to 2004 do not show any development in terms of the teaching and learning of reading in Malaysian ESL classrooms (see for example, Ponniah, 1993; Kaur, 1996; Ramaiah, 1997; Yaacob, 2006; Nambiar, 2007; Kadir, Subki, Ahmad Jamal, & Ismail, 2014). These studies suggested that the teaching of reading in Malaysian ESL classrooms is still dominated by the bottom-up approach where the focus is more on decoding rather than meaning making of text.

Furthermore, effective reading strategies that focuses on broadening cognitive strategies and skills by increasing engagement, motivation, and providing opportunities to construct new knowledge, as well as to help students become self-efficacious, have been neglected. Reading lessons have always been associated with

the learners being asked to read a text and answer literal comprehension questions without being exposed to sufficient strategies to develop reading comprehension that can handle the demands of academic literacy (Ponniah, 1993; Kaur, 1996; Ramaiah, 1997). Reading practices in primary school were only confined to choral reading with drilling and repetition as the main focus towards developing language skills and reading accuracy (Yaacob, 2006). Learners' reliance on the dictionary without making the efforts to guess the meaning of the text through contextual clues, and the tendency to use surface level processing of text (Nambiar, 2007) indicate that teachers have not really prepared them to be critical readers (Kadir et al., 2014). The focus of teaching has always been on building vocabulary and grammar (Sardareh, Mohd Saad, Othman, & Che Me, 2014). Reading strategies to develop reading competencies were rarely taught to primary school pupils although some were aware of the use of such strategies (AD-Heisat, Syakirah Mohammed, Sharmella Krishnasamy, & Issa, 2009). As such, there is a need to develop a tool that will serve as a guideline for teachers to teach reading literacy in a proper way.

1.2.2 Issues in Shared Reading Research

Shared reading is an excellent interactive approach to enhance reading literacy in both L1 and L2 contexts that occurs when students join in or share the reading of a big book or other enlarged text (large enough for all the students to see clearly) while guided and supported by a teacher or other experienced reader (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996). It is a strategy that produces engaged learners and better readers through read-aloud experiences (Allen, 2000). While it originates with young children, shared reading has the same potential for middle grades and high school (Allen, 2000).

Shared reading has garnered an extensive amount of attention because previous researches have shown that shared-reading with young children may affect their reading and comprehension skills through the development of their print-related and phonological awareness (Justice, Kaderavek, Fan, Sofka, & Hunt, 2009), vocabulary and language skills (Valdez-Menchaca & Whitehurst, 1992; Whitehurst et al., 1994; Hargrave & Sénéchal, 2000; Zevenbergen & Whitehurst, 2003), abstract thinking skills (McKeown & Beck, 2003; Oueni, Bahous, & Nabhani, 2008), and elaborative responses to text (Justice & Ezell, 2002; Zucker et al., 2009).

Numerous studies have been conducted on how teachers improve pupils' literacy through shared reading. The main focus of the studies were on how teachers encourage and support student's engagement and participation in the process of constructing the meaning of the text through their instructional behaviour. Nevertheless, a review of the literature shows that most studies were mostly conducted naturalistically with respect to how teachers and pupils participate (Morrow & Brittain, 2003; McBee, 2004; Yaacob, 2006, 2011; Yaacob & Pinter, 2008; Omar et al., 2013). Some were conducted experimentally to evaluate the effectiveness of shared reading intervention on pupils' learning (Hargrave & Sénéchal, 2000; Beck & McKeown, 2001; Wasik & Bond, 2001; Justice & Ezell, 2002; Zevenbergen & Whitehurst, 2003; Furlong & Salisbury, 2005; Wasik et al., 2006). In both types of studies, the intention was more on exploring teachers' existing instructional or testing the effectiveness of any new intervention introduced by researchers. Furthermore, studies that used experimental designs did not represent real classroom situations, and are also not replicable in a natural classroom setting (Mol, Bus, & de Jong, 2009).

In addition, both types of studies were conducted on the teachers rather than with the teachers to support them. Most of the time, the researchers played the role of a “detached observer” (Coghlan & Brannick, 2005, p. 7) who was somewhat removed from the setting and the subjects they were studying (Mertler, 2009). The main aim of the studies were more on evaluating rather than supporting teachers to enhance their teaching of reading literacy using any research based approach like shared reading.

More research should be conducted to investigate the involvement of researchers cum teacher educators in introducing interventions to real classrooms to enhance the quality of shared reading (Pentimonti et al., 2012). Ironically, there are currently a small number of collaborations between teacher educators cum researchers and teachers to introduce interventions in the context of a real classroom in order to improve the quality of shared reading (John, 2009; Smith, Hardman, Wall, & Mroz, 2004). The lack of research in this field has led to the failure to bridge the gap between reading theories and practicing the theories, hence causing such problems and interventions to remain in isolation and become the subject of discussion only among researchers.

Furthermore, research that examines shared reading behaviours that occur in L2 context is also lacking. This situation is especially true in the L2 context, where most teachers are non-native English speakers, while most students have low levels of English Language Proficiency (ELP). Hence, there is a need for an alternative research on shared reading and the factors that contribute to its successful implementation in the classroom context. It is important that researchers move

beyond the problem identification stage and start designing the intervention that can bring about social changes in the actual context (the problem solving stage) (McNiff, Lomax, & Whitehead, 2003; McNiff & Whitehead, 2009; Stringer, 2004, 2007).

1.2.3 Shared Reading in Malaysian ESL Context

Shared reading was introduced to Malaysian primary schools through the Early Structured Reading Programme in 2002 in an attempt to inculcate the love of reading among young children, and to ensure high quality student-teacher interaction in primary ESL classrooms. The programme, which was based on the United Kingdom's Literacy Hour, was also known as the English Hour. Shared reading was also encouraged in the Contemporary Children Literature (CCL) programme introduced in 2004 to upper primary students. The aim of the CCL programme was to help students improve their English by reading simple fiction (Kurikulum Semakan Tahun 5, 2003, p. 33).

Shared reading remains relevant with the 2010 KSSR (Malaysian Standard Curriculum for Primary Schools) modular approach because its principles are still in line with the underlying pedagogical principles, educational emphases, and content standard of the current KSSR. This approach focuses on the following objectives: i) students being able to read and comprehend a wide range of English texts for information and enjoyment; ii) teachers assisting pupils to acquire new knowledge and solve problems through pupil-centred active learning (constructivism), and iii) the incorporation of critical and creative thinking skills to enable pupils to solve simple problems, make decisions, and express themselves creatively. Furthermore, KSSR stresses on pupils' achievement in demonstrating understanding of a variety of

linear and non-linear texts in the form of print and non-print materials using a range of strategies to construct meaning. The ultimate goal in teaching reading is for pupils to read independently to obtain information, and to enjoy the language. Higher order thinking skills (HOTS) are also emphasized. Pupils are expected to be given more room for making decision, reasoning, connecting, and giving opinions. Teachers are expected to practice contextual learning - an approach to learning, which connects the contents being learnt to the pupils' daily lives, the community around them, and the working world. Learning takes place when a pupil is able to relate the acquired knowledge to their own lives (Bahagian Pembangunan Kurikulum, 2010).

Before shared reading was introduced, many teachers have been practicing reading aloud or oral reading in their classrooms as a strategy to introduce pupils to print, to read fluently with correct pronunciation, and to improve their reading comprehension skills (Awang, 2003; Omar & Mohd. Ariff Albakri, 2013). Reading aloud was usually conducted in the form of round robin reading where teachers call on students to read orally, one after the other. Unfortunately, Round Robin is completely different from the Shared Reading approach. The former only requires pupils to read orally for a teacher who, rather than coach the student on his or her oral reading performance, checked for errors that were made during the reading. Meanwhile, the latter relies heavily on teacher-supported oral reading as a major instructional vehicle to improve students' overall growth in reading (Rasinski & Hoffman, 2003). Round robin reading, as summarized by Rasinski and Hoffman (2003), is merely an approach used for checking students' word recognition after a period of silent reading. The approach has never been widely advocated or endorsed by scholars of reading. Unlike shared reading that stresses the importance of student-teacher

interaction, round robin reading only requires the pupils to read orally for a teacher who, rather than coach the student on his or her oral reading performance, checked for errors that were made during the reading. Due to its turn taking nature, this approach allows teachers to easily control the group, as the pupils have to read along silently while a classmate reads orally so that they could pick up the reading if called on by the teacher. The teacher would choose a passage and a reader (pupil), guide the pupil in decoding the word or more commonly, would simply give the reader the correct pronunciation for the word and move on. In addition to making life easier for the teacher, round robin reading makes students' level of proficiency in reading a public matter. Meaning making of text is never a concern during this activity.

The same practice was continued even when shared reading was introduced. Teachers continue to conduct round robin reading thinking that it is actually shared reading (Awang, 2003). As such, there is a need to develop a tool that will serve as a guideline for teachers to conduct shared reading in a manner suggested by the literature (see for example Zevenbergen & Whitehurst, 2003; McGee & Schickedanz, 2007; Wiseman, 2011; Pentimonti et al., 2012; Lennox, 2013).

1.2.4 Teacher support in Malaysian ESL context

Malaysian teachers are exposed to limited numbers of professional development mechanisms. Overall, the teacher support network in Malaysia is still based on the cascade-training model - a mechanism of delivering training messages from trainers at the central level to trainees at the local level through several layers. This model is often criticized for its ineffectiveness, because the messages are often distorted

through long-distanced one-way process, and they hardly make any changes in the classrooms.

A. Rahman (2015), in her evaluation of the English primary curriculum in Malaysia, has pointed out that one of the challenges that teachers faced in the implementation of the KSSR is the dissemination model being used. The cascade-training model is not an effective tool because the messages often become distorted because they were being passed down through different levels of trainers. The intended messages often became diluted through miscommunications and different interpretations. Furthermore, the training focused more on theories rather than on practice. There was no teacher participation during the preparation of the training materials.

However, the Ministry of Education (MOE) does provide supports to teachers in the form of coaching and mentoring. For example, the government introduced the Teaching English Language and Literacy programme (TELL) in 2011, whereby experienced native English language teachers from several English speaking countries, such the United States, England, Australia, and New Zealand, were brought over to mentor Malaysian teachers. 6,500 English teachers from 1,800 schools in the country were receiving guidance from 360 native speakers under this programme. The Native Speaker Programme was based on the Empowering Bahasa Melayu and Strengthening English (MBMMBI) policy, in the effort to raise the level of English proficiency among Year One to Year Three English teachers (Ministry of Education, [MOE] 2012). This programme invited criticisms and worries among Malaysian ESL educators and teacher educators (MELTA, 2010). Among others,

there were concerns over the socio-cultural differences that may challenge this cross-race mentoring, and hinder the ability of the two parties to work together. The dependence on foreign English language teachers and the ministry's inability to recognize local Malaysian expertise may result in negative reactions at embracing the Native Speaker programme. Another weakness seen in this programme was that the foreign mentors were not bilingual. They may not be able to relate with the students in rural areas who usually speak their mother tongue; and to empathize with the uphill tasks that the ESL teachers face.

These worries were supported by Ong and Lin (2015), who conducted a phenomenological study on the reactions of the mentors and mentees in the Native Speaker Programme of Rural Primary School in Malaysia. They identified that one of the major problems faced by this programme was the lack of mutual understanding between the mentors and the mentees, which led to fragile relationships. Cooperation was also lacking between some of the mentors and mentees. For example, critical remarks were exchanged at some point between both parties due to disagreements and unwillingness to listen and to accept opinions. Another example would be the mentor's insistence to get things done without considering the workload that the mentees had to shoulder, bore negative consequences to the relationship. The objectives of the collaboration were only partially achieved because extrinsic motivations were lacking, such as words of encouragements, and the ability to display understanding towards each other's duties.

Apart from the Native Speaker programme, the mentoring approach was also

initiated by the British Council under The English Language Teacher Development Project (ELTDP). This project involved approximately 2,000 teachers from 600 schools in East Malaysia – the Malaysian part of Borneo. It was part of the Malaysian government's efforts to upskill primary English teachers, particularly in the context of the new English curriculum, which stresses communicative approaches and making learning fun. One hundred and twenty British Council mentors live and work in locations across the Malaysian states of Sarawak, Sabah, and Labuan (<https://www.britishcouncil.my/programmes/education/teachers/eltdp>).

The British Council has also been working in partnership with Pintar Foundation and UEM Sdn. Bhd. (a private company in Malaysia) to deliver the 'Teacher of English Development Project' (TEDP). This programme aimed to train and mentor 100 primary school teachers from 50 schools, in largely rural areas in Peninsular Malaysia. TEDP began in April 2012 and provided training on incorporating effective teaching techniques within the primary classroom as well as integrating language skills. The programme is designed to support primary school teachers, who teach Standard 1-3 pupils, in their understanding and implementation of the KSSR (Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Rendah). The British Council trainers would regularly visit their trainees' schools to mentor and support the teachers in their own contexts, as well as conduct group teacher training sessions on effective techniques. Through this project, teachers were guided to adapt and implement meaningful communicative teaching techniques in their classrooms. The legacy of the project will be to provide schools with teachers trained in reflective practice, ready to pass on their knowledge to other teachers in their schools

(<https://www.britishcouncil.my/programmes/education/teachers/englishdevelopment>)

In addition to the programmes offered by the British Council, the School Improvement Specialist Coach (SISC+) was established in 2013 through the District Transformation Program (DTP). The SISC+ was meant to support teachers in low performing schools to translate written curriculum into classroom teaching. SISC+'s role encompasses taking new curricula and assessments to the classroom, coaching teachers on pedagogical skills, and monitoring the effectiveness of the implementation (MOE, 2012). DTP was piloted in Kedah and Sabah due to the significant challenges faced by the two states in reducing the performance gap and improving school quality. The pilot showed that DTP has had a positive impact on the academic performance of students in Kedah and Sabah. Furthermore, the two states not only showed improvements in the 2013 UPSR, PMR, and SPM exams, but also showed the largest improvement in the 2013 UPSR results compared to other states (MOE, 2013).

The move by the Ministry of Education to support teachers through mentoring and coaching was certainly a positive effort towards educational reform in Malaysia. Unfortunately, these projects had only involved a small group of teachers. The British Council projects, for instance, had only involved a limited number of teachers in the East and Peninsular Malaysia. Meanwhile, the SISC+ had only targeted teachers in low-performing schools. The fact is English teachers all over Malaysia should be given opportunities to learn from this type of collaboration in order to improve their teaching practice. Furthermore, these collaboration projects did not involve local teacher educators. Local teacher educators are one of the main

stakeholders in teacher education because they are responsible for training both the pre-service and in-service teachers. The collaboration between teacher educators and teachers may have a big impact on the nation's teacher preparation programme, as the knowledge gained during the collaboration will be imparted to the pre- and in-service teachers.

Moreover, the SISC+ was still at an infancy stage and to this date, little research was done on the collaboration that took place. As a result, little is known on the extent of support received by the teachers. Furthermore, teachers who were/are involved in the programme were from non-performing schools (as categorized by the District Education Department [PPD]). Therefore, their participations in the collaboration were not based on a voluntary basis. Effective collaboration should be based on trust and willingness to participate by both parties (Stringer, 2004).

1.2.5 Personal Reflections

As the principle researcher who was once a second language learner in a Malaysian school, who then became an ESL teacher, and now a teacher educator, I have two strong reasons for initiating this research.

First, through my observations, reading aloud was a very common practice in ESL classrooms since the 70s and 80s, when I was in primary and secondary schools. Reading aloud was usually followed by a comprehension task (usually 5-10 comprehension questions). When I became a teacher in the 1990s, I witnessed many teachers who practiced the same methodology. When my eldest turned 9 years old, I learned that his teacher did the same during his English lesson. Now that I am a

teacher educator whose job, among others, is to supervise trainee teachers during their practicum and conduct educational researches, I still observe exactly the same phenomenon.

This procedure would involve something like this: one of the pupils in the class will read from the textbook, but usually only the first sentence of the text. Then, a different pupil would read the next sentence. This cycle will continue around the classroom. Most pupils know when their turn would come since some teachers work methodically around the classroom. For some, it was an opportunity to ‘turn off’ from the class, and they will only snap back to attention when the pupil seated next to them started to read aloud. Some teachers are smarter and choose pupils at random. Most pupils, especially the ones with low levels of proficiency, would struggle through the sentence, while the teacher corrects them. At the end of the sentence, they would heave a mental sigh of relief as the teacher’s attention moves to the next pupil. By the end of this activity, a lot of corrections would have taken place, but not the understanding of the text read. Ironically, pupils are expected to work through the comprehension task.

Based on this observation, I concluded that reading aloud in the form of round robin reading is one of the most preferred techniques by teachers, even in this 21st century. The question is; what are the principles behind this activity? Why ask pupils to read aloud? Pedagogically, what are the outcomes for the learners? One possible objective as given by teachers in previous studies (e.g., Ahmad, 2006; Yaacob, 2006), was to improve pronunciation. A similar reason was given by the two teachers in this study – (refer to the analysis in Chapter 4). Nevertheless, will this work if the

text is 20 sentences long, and 20 pupils read a sentence each while the teacher corrects every pupil's wrong pronunciation of words? To teach pronunciation effectively, a teacher has to restrict the quantity of the words to be studied, and have focused sounds. Reading aloud in this manner, despite remaining a methodologically mainstay for many teachers, obviously does not have a sound pedagogical explanation behind it.

My second reason for initiating this study was due to my experience going through a “lonely” journey as a novice teacher. I started my teaching career as a secondary school teacher in 1994. Back then, I was a fresh graduate who did not know how to bridge the theories I learned in universities and the real practises. I ended up teaching based on my belief, my observations on how senior teachers run their classrooms, and how my former teachers taught me. Teaching and learning, as defined during those days, involved completing exercises in textbooks or workbooks. Teaching reading in particular was associated with guiding students to read texts and answering comprehension questions. Most of the time, the explanations came from me as the knowledge provider, while my students passively listened. I have always provided as much background knowledge as possible to my students so that they will be able to understand the text they were reading. I would also rarely challenge my students with questions that required them to think beyond the text.

It was only in 2001, when I had the chance to attend a course on the teaching of literature components for Form 2 and Form 3 students, I realised that teaching reading is beyond my usual practices. My awareness expanded after I was chosen as one of the trainers for the teaching of literature component. As a trainer, I had to

equip myself with the latest technique in teaching literature through reading and discussion with other trainers. I underwent the unlearning and relearning process, and imposed it to the teachers whom I trained. Gradually, I discarded my own belief system on the teaching of reading through reading books and attending courses. What was lacking throughout this process was support. I believe I could have learned faster if I had received support from anyone more knowledgeable than I was.

These two issues have helped me conclude that teachers need to be supported. Teachers should not be left alone experimenting teachings based on their own assumptions, and other pedagogical beliefs that they inherited from previous generations.

1.3 Problem Statement

As highlighted in the background and context of the study, despite being empirically acknowledged as an effective reading approach (Holdaway, 1979; Evans, Lomax, & Morgan, 2000; Zevenbergen & Whitehurst, 2003; McGee & Schickedanz, 2007; Justice & Pence, 2005; Hudson & Test, 2011; Pentimonti et al., 2012), shared reading implementation in both L1 and L2 classrooms is still confronted by teachers' lack of ability to promote pupils' teacher interaction that eventually lead to active construction of the text read (Morrow & Brittain, 2003; Dickinson et al., 2003; John (2009). The situation is obvious in Malaysia where teachers' instructional behaviour was found to be tied to their traditional preference of teaching reading using the bottom up approach and conducting the round robin reading during reading aloud (Awang, 2003; Yaacob, 2006 Nambiar, 2007; Kadir, Subki, Ahmad Jamal, & Ismail, 2014). The focus is more on decoding rather than meaning making of text. This type

of practice is seen as a probable contributonal factor to the low level of reading literacy among Malaysian students. The main possible reason attributed to teachers' misconception on the teaching of reading and their implementation of shared reading in particularly is the nature of teacher support which is still largely based on the cascade-training model. The model is often criticized for its ineffectiveness, because the messages are often distorted through long-distanced one-way process, and they hardly make any changes in the classrooms (Abdul Rahim, 2007; Abdul Rahman, 2015).

On top of that, a review of the literature shows that shared reading research has seldom been brought to the real classroom context as the studies were mostly conducted naturalistically to investigate teacher and pupils' interaction pattern (Morrow & Brittain, 2003; McBee, 2004; Yaacob, 2006, 2011; Yaacob & Pinter, 2008; Omar et al., 2013) or experimentally to test the effectiveness of any new intervention introduced by researchers (Hargrave & Sénéchal, 2000; Beck & McKeown, 2001; Wasik & Bond, 2001; Justice & Ezell, 2002; Zevenbergen & Whitehurst, 2003; Furlong & Salisbury, 2005; Wasik et al., 2006). The first type of research does not offer any solution to the problems identified while the later does not represent real classroom situations, and are also not replicable in a natural classroom setting (Mol, Bus, & de Jong, 2009).

Consequently, my research was driven by an interest to close the gap in the literature by bringing in the real intervention to real classroom context through an effort to support 2 primary ESL teachers to conduct shared reading in a very informed manner based on suggestions from the review of literature. This type of research is

particularly important in Malaysia where the researcher–teacher collaboration is still at its infancy (Abdul Rahim, 2007). This collaboration will help to enhance teachers’ pedagogical knowledge on the teaching of reading, thus will improve students’ reading literacy. A collaborative action research can combine the more experienced practitioners with the strictly academic researchers. Without such collaborations, academic researchers may have the tendency to conclude their findings based solely on their own perspectives. Meanwhile, teachers who are conducting individual action researches may run the risk of developing ideas only through their experience of interacting with students (Christianakis, 2010). Through this dualistic approach, both teachers and researchers can collaboratively analyse the data and discuss the findings. Subsequently, the findings would be closer to the context as they are the result of a joint-effort between these two parties.

In order for both researcher and teachers to examine the shared reading practice, a tool is needed. To date, there is no specific tool to guide L2 shared reading in primary ESL context. As such, there is a need to develop a tool that will serve as a guideline for teachers to teach reading literacy in a proper way.

1.4 Aims and Scope of the Study

This study was conducted to explore teachers’ understanding of how the teaching of reading should be handled in primary ESL classroom. Specifically it aims to explore teachers’ understanding of shared reading and their instructional behaviour when conducting the activity using the Systematic Assessment of Book Reading (SABR) - a research-based tool developed by Zucker, Justice, Piasta, and Kaderavek (2010). This tool was used as a guide to examine the primary ESL teachers’ shared reading

practice because it contains several important constructs for the development of reading skills, such as language development skill, abstract thinking skill, and elaboration skill. It can also capture teachers' abilities to create a warm and supportive shared reading climate. Following this, the study also aimed to explore teachers' transformative change as they embark in a collaborative action research with a teacher educator. Specifically, this study hoped to enhance teachers' teaching of reading literacy through a research-based activity called shared readingimprove teachers' instructional behaviour using the tool modified from the SABR as a result of the collaboration. . Shared reading is an activity that allows teachers to fully support their pupils in the meaning making process of a text. It has been widely researched, and has been proven to be beneficial to students' language and literacy development.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

This study was carried out with four main objectives which are:

- RO1: To examine teachers' existing understanding of shared reading in terms of the definition, the material selection and the physical arrangement of the classroom during the activity.
- RO2: To examine teachers instructional behaviour when conducting shared reading.
- RO3: To examine the changes in teachers' understanding of shared reading undergone during the collaborative action research.
- RO4: To examine the improvement in teachers' instructional behavior during shared reading as a result of the joint-effort intervention during collaborative action research.

It is anticipated that the process undergone by teachers while designing the intervention together with the researcher will enhance their understanding of shared reading and to improve their instructional behaviour when conducting the activity. As a result, their teaching of reading literacy will also improve.

1.6 Research Questions

The research questions that guided this study included:

- RQ1: What is the teachers' existing understanding of shared reading?
- RQ2: What is the nature of teachers' instructional behaviour when conducting shared reading?
- RQ3: How does the collaborative action research help to improve the participating primary ESL teachers' understanding of shared reading?
- RQ4: How does the intervention designed in a collaborative action research help to improve the participating primary ESL teachers' instructional behaviour when conducting shared reading?

1.7 Significance of the Study

This study has great significance in terms of 1) contribution to the field 2) addressing a gap in literature and 3) implications for teaching.

Firstly, studies on classroom shared reading were mostly conducted either naturalistically with respect to how teachers and pupils participate (Morrow & Brittain, 2003; McBee, 2004; Yaacob, 2006, 2011; Yaacob & Pinter, 2008; Omar et al., 2013) or experimentally to evaluate the effectiveness of shared reading

intervention on pupils' learning (Hargrave & Sénéchal, 2000; Beck & McKeown, 2001; Wasik & Bond, 2001; Justice & Ezell, 2002; Zevenbergen & Whitehurst, 2003; Furlong & Salisbury, 2005; Wasik et al., 2006). Both types of studies were conducted on the teachers rather than with the teachers to support them. On top of that, most studies were conducted in L1 context. This study therefore, moves beyond the problem identification and experimental stage by bringing in intervention to the actual classroom context with the aim to support teachers to improve their shared reading practice (McNiff, Lomax, & Whitehead, 2003; McNiff & Whitehead, 2009; Stringer, 2004, 2007). This study also contributes to the field of L2 reading as it is conducted in an English as a Second Language context.

Secondly, previous research suggested have indicated that teachers continue to have problems when conducting shared reading as their instructional behaviour was not able to invite active participation among students and enhance their literacy growth (Morrow & Brittain, 2003; McKeon and Beck, 2003). In Malaysia, the teaching of reading is still dominated by the bottom-up approach where the focus is more on decoding rather than meaning making of text this study. Effective reading strategies that focuses on broadening cognitive strategies and skills by increasing engagement, motivation, and providing opportunities to construct new knowledge, as well as to help students become self-efficacious, have been neglected. This study addresses the gap in literature by providing teachers with support to enhance their teaching of reading literacy. Specifically, this study focuses on teachers' instructional behaviour during shared reading being one of the most problematic area discussed in the literature so far.

In terms of practical implications, this study provided a tool to assess the quality of second language shared reading practice. The Systematic Assessment of Second Language Book Reading (SABRL2) as an extension of The Systematic Assessment of Book Reading (SABR) by Zucker et.al., (2010) offers great potential benefits for second language researchers and teachers as it measures teachers' specific behaviour within second language shared reading context. Furthermore, this study is relevant to the current primary ESL context in Malaysia as the findings can help teachers to implement shared reading effectively. The developmental process of self discovery undergone by the teachers as well the researcher could be further adopted to the current teacher training modules/practices that should put greater emphasis on the Collaborative Action Research model of exploring teachers' classroom practices.



1.8 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study was built based on two main theories which are Vygotsky's Social Constructivism Theory and the balanced-reading approach or Integrative model (Rumelhart, 1977; Eskey, 1986; Stanovich, 1986; Grabe, 1991). These two theories acted as a navigation point for this research and a means of making sense of the data that emerged (Burns, 1999). Both theories compliment each other in explaining the role of dialogic interaction between a teacher and pupils during the meaning making process of text. The conceptual framework is represented by figure 1.1 below.

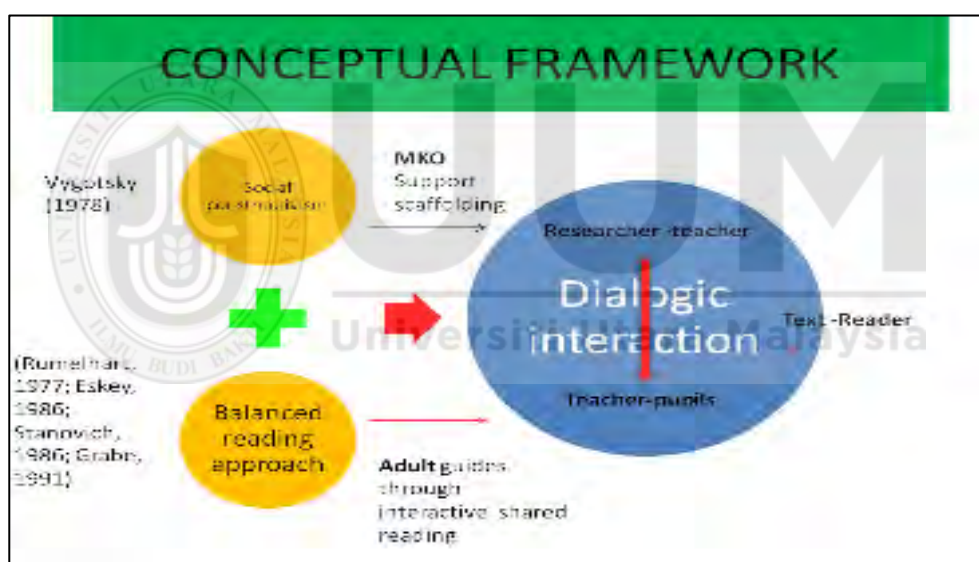


Figure 1.1. The conceptual framework of the study

Shared reading, according to Reese, Cox, Harte, and McAnally (2003), is aligned with the apprenticeship model of cognitive development by Vygotsky (1978). This model placed a great emphasis on the role of social interaction in children's literacy and language development. Children's learning is highly dependent on interaction

and collaboration with adults, and peers that are more capable. The opportunity for active interaction and collaboration is available during shared reading when pupils and teachers are actively engaged in the meaning making process of text. Similarly, the interactive reading theory posited that shared reading focuses on building up students' independence in the meaning and structure sources of information. Reading of any kind of text should not be limited to decoding skills; rather it must be treated as really reading, that is, reading for meaning.

Vygotsky's theory and the concept of scaffolding best explained the concept of support in this study. Within the context of shared reading, pupils will benefit from the teachers' instructional behaviours, which are aimed at allowing pupils the chance to interpret text in a non-threatening situation by relating to their own experiences. Pupils learn more through social interactions with a skilful teacher who models the behaviours and/or provides verbal instructions for the child. Vygotsky refers to this concept as a cooperative or collaborative dialogue. The pupil seeks to understand the actions or instructions provided by the teacher. Then, he will internalise the information, and use it to guide or regulate his own performance.

Vygotsky's theory also explained the concept of support and collaboration between a teacher educator and teachers in this study. Vygotsky's ideas of shifting from other to self-regulation describes the role of a teacher educator as a facilitator in guiding teachers' to improve their shared reading practice.

1.9 Definition of Terms

Reading literacy - the process of meaning making of text by combining textual information with the information that the reader brings to a text based on his or her background knowledge.

Shared reading - an approach that requires adults to read aloud to children in an interactive and supportive manner with the aim to encourage children to get involve with the meaning making of the text. The approach is also referred to as interactive read aloud, repeated interactive read aloud or dialogic reading.

Higher order reading skills- the ability to use higher order thinking skills in the meaning making process of text. The skills among others are previewing, activating prior knowledge, predicting, making connections, monitoring, organizing, summarizing and questioning.

Teaching approach – a method used to deliver information in the classroom. The term is use interchangeably with the term strategy and method in this study.

Collaborative Action Research– a methodological approach that brings both practitioners' (insiders) and researchers' (outsiders) perspectives into a research that investigate practioners' practice.

Primary school teachers – teachers teaching in primary or elementary schools in Malaysia

Guided reflection— a process that takes place when a teacher is assisted by a mentor or a facilitator in a process of self-enquiry, development, and learning through reflection in order to effectively realise one's vision of practice and self as a lived reality.

Instructional behaviour- the nature of the book reading event or discussions that surround book reading conversations. Also referred to as reading style or non-immediate talk or extratextual talk.

1.10 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis was organised into six chapters and presented as follows:

This current chapter provides the research context, the conceptual framework and the purpose of the study.

Chapter 2 presents the literature review that focused on issues pertaining to the three main areas dealt with in this study. The first area was reading literacy, the second area was shared reading, and the third one was teacher's support. This review provided the basis for analysis and discussion of the study.

Chapter 3 outlines and discusses the research method used in this research. The first section of the chapter discusses the arguments on research methodology. The second section presents how the research was designed. This includes the action research model and procedures, the data collection methods, and the process of data analysis. The third section introduces the action research setting and team. It introduces the two research participants and researcher /facilitator in detail. Ethical considerations are also explained.

Chapter 4 briefly presents the findings from the problem identification stage (“look and think”) and describes the process that the researcher and participants went through when planning the solution (“act”). The challenges and framework for managing the teachers’ change are also described.

Chapter 5 details the transformative journey undergone by the two participating teachers in this study. This chapter explores the changes they went through as a result of this collaboration.

Chapter 6 offers concluding reflections, which includes the discussion, implications, and limitations of the study as well as future research directions.



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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Previous literatures on teaching ESL reading have indicated that reading was usually regarded as a language-based, bottom-up process, with comprehension resulting from successfully decoding the letters, words, and sentences (Ponniah, 1993; Kaur, 1996; Ramaiah, 1997; Nuttall, 2005; Yaacob, 2006; Nambiar, 2007; Kadir et al., 2014). This understanding among ESL teachers is usually translated into their practice since they are reluctant to let go of their belief despite contradictory research evidence. Unless teachers are supported to realise this misunderstanding, reading instruction based on empirical researches will never be brought to classrooms.

This literature review will provide the definition of reading literacy because it is the most important element in ensuring the proper way of teaching reading (Goodman, 1992; Nuttall, 2005). Next, it will discuss the evolution of the theories of reading because by understanding the shift in reading theories, we can understand what goes on in reading classrooms. Later on, it will delve into the theories that underpin the concept of support in this study. Then, it will discuss shared reading as an intervention to enhance the teaching of reading. Focus will be given to teachers' instructional behaviours while conducting the activity.

2.2 Reading Literacy

The definition of reading literacy has evolved with the development of reading research itself. Proponents of bottom-up approach, such as Gough (1972), and LaBerge and Samuels (1974) defined reading as a sequential or serial mental process. They pointed out that the reading process begins when readers translate the written language (letters) into speech sounds, then piece the sounds together to form individual words, then piece the words together to arrive at an understanding of the author's written message. On the contrary, supporters of top-down approach, such as Goodman (1967) stressed that reading is to gain meaning from text by utilizing the graphophonic, syntax, and also semantic knowledge. Throughout the process, the reader will interpret and reflect on the content and form, in relation to the reader's own knowledge of the world, and arguing his point of view in relation to what has been read (Nuttall, 2005). Meanwhile, advocates of the interactive reading approach, such as Rumelhart (1977), Wallace (1986), Bielby (1994), and Birch (2002) proposed that reading involves the reader, the text, and the interaction between the reader and the text. The process of reading requires the combination of lower order skills which are ability to decode or recognize words and higher order skills which is making sense of the written messages.

This study employed the definition proposed by the interactive school of theorists. Reading literacy is not only knowing how to decode, decipher, articulate, and pronounce written words but also interacting actively with the text to make meaning out of it (Pang, Muaka, Bernhardt, & Kamil, 2003; Nuttall, 2005). It is a constructive

process where the reader constructs both the text and its meaning. The process requires them to draw on both lower level and higher level skills.

Hence, it is argued that a person who possesses reading literacy is a fluent and skilled reader who has higher order reading skills (Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DCELLS) (Wales), corp creator., 2010) which allow him or her to undergo both the efficient lower-level word recognition processes and the higher-level syntactic and semantic processes when interpreting texts. He or she is someone who is able to manipulate the language to derive meanings from the text, read based on his/her background knowledge and to argue a point of view in relation to what was read (OECD, 2009, p.14). In other words, he or she is a good reader who is able to use cognitive strategies, such as previewing, activating prior knowledge, predicting, making connections, monitoring, organizing, summarizing, questioning, and visualizing in order to make sense of the text. On the contrary, poor readers are those who do not have adequate ability to implement higher order thinking skills so they can analyze, synthesize, and evaluate new knowledge (Hogan, Bridges, Justice, & Cain, 2011).

2.3 Theories of L1 and L2 Reading and How They Affect the Teaching of Reading

Understanding the shift in reading theories is important in order to understand what goes on in reading classrooms (Singer, 1985; Beck & McKeown, 1986). This section will begin with an outline of the evolution of thinking about reading, and then focuses on how closely teachers' beliefs and practices match these theories.

The development in L2 reading depends both on L1 and L2 reading theories. The theories as discussed by Urquhart and Weir (1998) are divided into two: process models and componential models.

2.3.1 Process Models

Process models explain the reading process as sequential or a series of stages, which include the bottom-up model (Gough, 1972; LaBarge & Samuels, 1974), the top-down approach or whole language (Goodman, 1967), Schemata theory (Rumelhart, 1980), and the interactive model (Stanovich, 1980). The componential model, on the other hand, elaborates on the components involved in the reading process.

According to Urquhart and Weir (1998), the bottom-up model proposed that readers approach text by first decoding the smallest sound units, and then proceed to letter blends, words, phrases, and sentences. Meaning takes place after the accurate decoding of the prints, which is strictly based on what is written in the text. Readers' role is very passive since their main task is to only reproduce the text's writer's intended meaning. Hence, teachers who are influenced by this theory may teach reading through a linear process by first exposing their pupils to the alphabetic principle (grapho-phonics – the rules of sound and symbol relationships). They will then teach the pupils to decode a text word by word, and finally linking the words into phrases and sentences. The method usually employed by these teachers is known as phonics, which requires the learner to match letters with sounds in a defined sequence. Emphasis is usually given to repetition and on drills using the sounds that make up the words. Anderson (2008) pointed out that this approach should be

employed with beginners to provide them with a strong foundation towards becoming proficient readers faster.

On the other hand, the process undergone by readers who employ the top-down model or whole language approach is totally the opposite as they approach the text from the whole to the parts. Concerning reading as a “psycholinguistic guessing-game” (Goodman, 1967), whole-language theorists emphasize top-down reading strategies, such as problem-solving and prediction, and hold firm that students learn best by working to understand the meaning of whole texts. The top-down processing enhance the role of background knowledge in addition to what appeared on the printed page.

Teachers who follow this reading model will teach students to read by introducing them to literature as a whole. Learning to read is accomplished naturally and holistically through immersion in print-rich and language-rich environments. Repetition in reading is focused on practicing phrases, sentences, or stories repeatedly until the text elements are internalized. Repeated readings of authentic books of interest, with help or independently, are assumed to lead to the ability to read fluently with comprehension. Instead of teaching students to read by sounding out each word in a sentence, teachers read whole passages of a text. Students will use context clues to decipher unfamiliar words.

Closely related to this model is Rumelhart’s (1980) Schema Theory. This theory also has a major impact on reading instruction. It explained the role of background

knowledge in helping readers to make meaning of text. In order to teach reading effectively, the teacher's role of activating and building schemata is paramount.

However, scholars, such as Eskey (1993), Nunes (1999), Birch (2002), viewed the top-down model as "incomplete" in that it de-emphasizes the bottom-up aspect of reading. The de-emphasis on bottom-up processing will not promote accuracy. Alternatively, a strong emphasis should be placed on a balanced-reading approach or Integrative model (Rumelhart, 1977; Eskey, 1986; Stanovich, 1986; Grabe, 1991). This model combines the contrasting views of bottom-up and top-down for a more comprehensive understanding of the text. It recognizes the importance of both the text and the reader in the process of identification and interpretation. This model perceives reading as an active, interactive process. The interactive theory echoes the importance of background knowledge described in the schemata theory by Rumelhart (1980).

Eskey and Grabe (2000) suggested that teachers who employ the integrative model to teach the reading of a second language should spend time developing strong bottom-up foundation of basic identification skills. They should also develop the willingness to develop appropriate schemata for the proper interpretation of texts. Reading of any kind of text should not be limited to decoding skills; rather it must be treated as really reading, that is, reading for meaning. Top-down and bottom-up skills and strategies must be developed conjointly since both contribute directly to the successful comprehension of text.

2.3.2 Componential Models

Unlike the process models, which are focused on the process of reading, componential models focused on the different components involved while reading. There are two types of componential models, which are the two-component model, and the three-component model. The two-component model is known as “The Simple View of Reading”, which was proposed by Gough and Tunmer (1986). This model was later supported by Hoover and Gough (1990). This model suggests that decoding or word recognition, and linguistic comprehension are equally crucial in determining reading comprehension (Hoover & Gough, 1990).

A more comprehensive model that can explain L2 reading is the three-component model proposed by Coady (1979), and Bernhart (1991). According to Coady, the three variables that influence L2 reading are conceptual abilities, process strategies, and background knowledge. Bernhart had also come up with three variables, namely Language, Literacy, and World Knowledge. Bernhardt (1991, 2000, 2005) proposed that these variables are interdependent on each other in L2 reading.

The process models and componential models have their own strengths and weaknesses, as debated by researchers. Nevertheless, the interactive model and the two componential models are seen as practical models for both L1 and L2 reading. Hence, these models should be translated into the teaching of reading. This is because both models emphasize on all aspects of reading, which include the orthographic, semantic, syntactic, and lexical knowledge.

2.3.3 Teachers' Approach in Teaching Reading

Nuttall (2005) claimed that teachers (regardless of the students' level) are continually comfortable with the bottom-up approach, and often stress on pronunciation, expressive speaking, fluency, vocabulary, and structure (surface structure) when dealing with texts. The higher level of comprehension skill is largely taken for granted as pupils have learnt how to decode (Petorius, 2000). Dickinson, Golinkoff, & Hirsh-Pashek, (2010) was very skeptical that this type of teachers may produce good decoders who cannot make sense of the text.

In Indonesia, Sunggingwati and Nguyen (2013), in their investigation on the practice of teacher questioning and teaching reading in secondary schools found that teachers' questions were mostly targeted at determining comprehensions. Very few questions were asked that encourage students' understanding and thinking. Display or recall questions were dominant when working on the exercises in while- and post-reading phases. Most of the time, the questions were used to keep students' attention focused on the passage, and as part of class management.

Similar scenario was identified in Malaysian ESL classrooms since the focus during reading was mainly on literal comprehension skills, such as word or sentence recognition. Consequently, learners were not equipped with the reading skills and strategies to handle the demands of academic literacy (Nambiar, 2007). AD-Heisat et al. (2009) concluded that the teaching of ESL reading in Malaysia still relies heavily on building vocabulary and grammar, and not on developing reading comprehension that revolves around cognitive strategies and skills. Reading strategies to develop

reading competencies were rarely taught to primary school pupils although some were aware of the use of those strategies.

Studies by Hashimah Hashim (2000a, 2000b, 2001) on the teaching of reading in Bahasa Melayu (L1) have demonstrated that the skill to decode was stressed, but the comprehension skill was given less attention at the primary school level. If pupils were able to successfully decode a text, they were assumed to be able to use their reading skill, and the knowledge of the language to read and comprehend texts. As a result, they were able to read fluently but could not comprehend what was being read.

Similarly, a study by Yaacob (2006) on literacy practices in Malaysia has indicated that the traditional or transmission model of teaching was still a common practice in primary schools in Malaysia, despite the changes in the curriculum and approaches in teaching that encouraged more interactions and active engagements. Teachers' reading practices were only confined to choral reading with drilling and repetition as the main focus, towards developing language skills and reading accuracy. It was found to be the preferred technique to teach pronunciation, and to help pupils to speak. Apart from that, the study also found that classroom interaction was very much teacher-centred and teacher-controlled with students having limited chances to participate. Additionally, teachers' questions were only confined to the recalling type of questions, which did not demand active participations or critical thinking among students.

Similar result was obtained by Sidhu, Chan, & Kaur (2010), while observing instructional practices in literature teaching among Malaysian ESL teachers. They

discovered that reading sessions were dominated by activities, such as reading aloud, reading aloud questions or dialogues in role-play activities, and completing worksheets on individual basis. Like the teachers in Yaacob's study, the teachers in this study were of the opinion that reading aloud would help improve their students' comprehension and pronunciation abilities. This is also supported by Sardareh et al. (2014) who identified that the traditional concept of questioning was still maintained in ESL classrooms in Selangor, Malaysia, The study also further discovered that classroom questioning did not seem to fulfil the promise of enhancing learner's autonomy. The students were not encouraged to ask questions and engage in self-reflection. Many of them were silent often times during classroom questioning, and questions were usually answered by a specific group of students or by the teachers themselves.

The same understanding of teaching reading was demonstrated when conducting shared reading. Many teachers have been practicing reading aloud or oral reading in their classrooms as a strategy to introduce pupils to print, to read fluently with correct pronunciation, and to improve their reading comprehension skills (Awang, 2003; Omar & Mohd. Ariff Albakri, 2013). Reading aloud was usually conducted in the form of round robin reading where teachers call on students to read orally, one after the other. Teachers continue to conduct round robin reading with the impression that it is actually shared reading (Awang, 2003).

2.4 Vygotsky's Social Constructivism

Vygotsky, one of the earliest and most famous theorists in Social Constructivism, developed a theory that learning is a social process (Vygotsky, 1978). One important

concept underlying Vygotsky's Social Constructivism is the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978). The zone of proximal development (ZPD) maintains that the child follows the adult's example and gradually develops the ability to do certain tasks without help or assistance. The premise of this idea is the level at which a child can be successful with appropriate support. Vygotsky defined the ZPD as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development level as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p.86).

Two main principles of Vygotsky's theory are integrally related. The first principle, the More Knowledgeable Other (MKO) refers to someone who has a better understanding or a higher ability level than the learner, with respect to a particular task, process, or concept. MKO could be a teacher or an older adult, peers or any individual with more knowledge or experience. The second principle, the ZPD is a concept that relates to the difference between what a learner can achieve independently, and what he or she can achieve with guidance and encouragement from a skilled helper.

ZPD is always associated with the term 'scaffolding', which originated in the work of Wood, Bruner, and Ross (1976), as explained by Arya, Christ, and Chiu (2013). Scaffolding refers to an interactive process in which a more knowledgeable person supports a less knowledgeable person in order to increase his or her competence or performance. In the process of scaffolding, the teacher or mentor helps the mentee master a task or concept that they are initially unable to grasp independently. The

mentor will only offer assistance with skills that are beyond the mentee's capability. Both the mentor and the mentee must participate actively in the process.

Van de Pol, Volman, and Beishuizen (2010) listed three common characteristics of scaffolding – contingency, fading, and transfer of responsibility (see Figure 2.1). The first characteristic, contingency, implies that a teacher's support must be adapted to the current level of the pupils' performance, and should either be at the same or slightly higher level. To provide contingent support, a teacher must identify the learner's current level of competence through diagnostic strategies. The second characteristic is fading or the gradual withdrawal of the scaffolding. The rate of fading depends on the child's level of development and competence. A teacher fades when the level and or the amount of support is decreased over time. This characteristic is strongly related to the third one - the transfer of responsibility, which takes place when a student takes increasing learner's control.

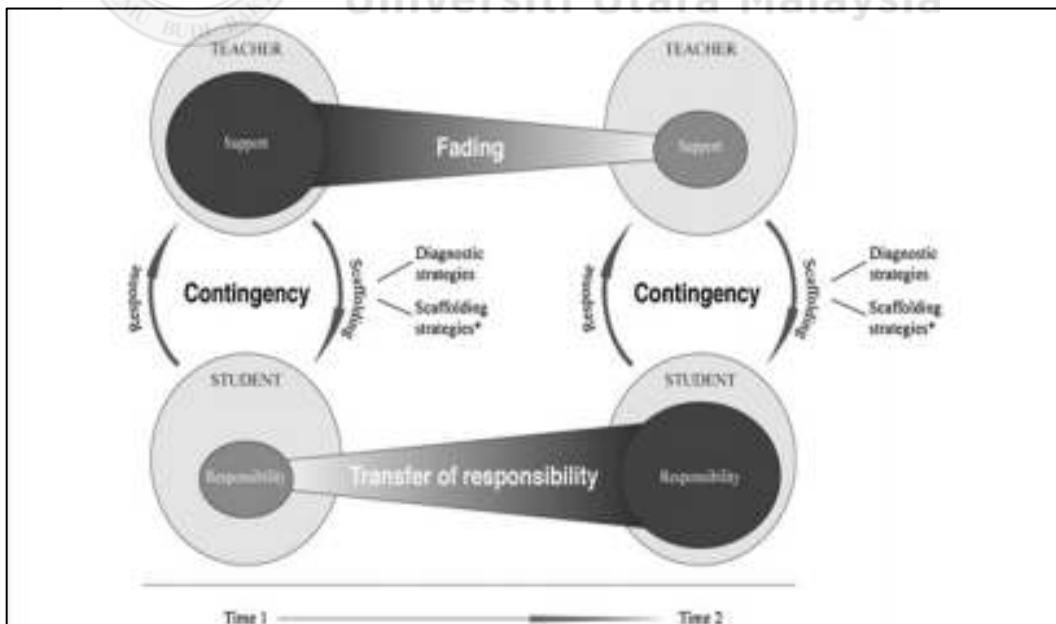


Figure 2.1. Conceptual model of scaffolding by van de Pol et al. (2010)

Vygotsky's theory and the concept of scaffolding best explained the concept of support in this study. Within the context of shared reading (refer Section 2.5), pupils will benefit from the teachers' instructional behaviours, which are aimed at allowing pupils the chance to interpret text in a non-threatening situation by relating to their own experiences. The child learns more through social interactions with a skilful adult who models the behaviours and or provides verbal instructions for the child. Vygotsky refers to this concept as a cooperative or collaborative dialogue. The pupil seeks to understand the actions or instructions provided by the teacher. Then, he will internalise the information, and use it to guide or regulate his own performance.

This observation is supported by Purdy (2008), who investigated Canada's English language learners' participations in discussions about the texts during teacher-designed reading comprehension activities. In this study, it was found that the teacher played a pivotal role in the students' construction of meaning with texts, even when the teacher did not participate in the event. The teacher shaped routines for turn-taking, text selection, engagement with others, and access to new information. A teacher's role during interactions may shift from a director to a collaborator as the event moves from a whole-group to smaller groups, and to one-on-one events. In smaller groupings, the teacher may increase waiting time, and elaborate on ELL students' utterances more than in large group events. Correspondingly, ELL student participations, high-level of talk about texts, and students' control of text selection increased as the event size got smaller. This in turn, will increase ELL students' opportunities to engage in the construction of meaning.

Similarly, Vygotsky's theory also explained the process of mediation during the researcher's effort to support the two participating teachers throughout this collaborative action research. Within this researcher-teacher partnership, these teachers received constructive guidance and scaffolding from the teacher educator cum researcher, which helped enhance their teaching of reading through shared reading - a research-based activity that has promising roles in shaping the pupils to become efficient readers (Yuan & Lee, 2014). Similar to Abdul Rahim (2007), Vygotsky's ideas served as a framework for this study by highlighting the role of bettering others to develop one's ability to construct knowledge, and bring meaning to the development and understanding of his or her own task.

2.5 Shared Reading: Its Contribution to the Development of Reading Literacy

Previous researches have indicated that shared reading is one of the most effective approaches to promote reading literacy among children both in L1 and L2 contexts (Zevenbergen & Whitehurst, 2003; McGee & Schickedanz, 2007; Wiseman, 2011; Pentimonti et al., 2012; Lennox, 2013). The approach offers opportunities for teachers to support pupils' reading literacy through interactive and supportive read aloud with the aim to encourage children to get involve with the meaning making of the text (Justice & Pence, 2005; Hudson & Test, 2011). Specifically, shared reading function as a strategy for teachers to support pupils in developing their reading comprehension skills which include their vocabulary and language skill (Hargrave & Senechel, 2000; Zevenbergen & Whitehurst, 2003; Beck & McKeown, 2007), print related and phonological awareness skill (Justice & Ezell, 2002; Justice et al., 2009), abstract thinking skills (Wasik & Bond, 2001; McKeown & Beck, 2003, 2007; Dickinson & Porche, 2011) and elaborative responses to text (Wasik & Bond, 2001;

Wasik et al., 2006). To conclude, teachers who are able to support these skills while conducting shared reading can be claimed as successful in developing reading literacy among their pupils.

2.5.1 Criteria for Examining the Quality of Classroom Shared Reading Practices

In order to ensure the quality of shared reading, researchers have outlined three main criteria for examining classroom shared reading which are the physical arrangement, the reading materials and the teachers' instructional behaviour (Dickinson & Tabors, 2001; Teale, 2003; Ezell & Justice, 2005). These three criteria are interdependent on each other in ensuring the successful implementation of a shared reading session which eventually lead to a successful reading literacy lesson.

2.5.1.1 Physical Arrangement

Ray Reutzel and Clark (2011) explained that the physical arrangement and organization of a classroom can be powerful and supportive for effective literacy instruction. Ezell and Justice (2005) mentioned that the physical arrangement of the classroom is imperative to support the interactive nature of shared book reading. To ensure that everyone has sufficient access to the reading materials, teachers and pupils must be seated in such a way that both can view the book. Pupils should be seated close to the teacher in an organized way (e.g., on a carpet or rug) to allow for optimal engagement. Furthermore, ensuring that all pupils can see and actively participate deters disengagement and inattention; therefore avoiding behavioural problems.

2.5.1.2 Reading Materials

One of the important criteria for a successful shared reading event is careful consideration of the chosen materials (Teale, 2003). It was suggested that the “food approach” should be used – providing children with the balanced diet of different text types, such as stories, informational books, and word play books (poetry) that are able to provoke complex conversations among children. Al Otaiba (2004) further added that texts selected for shared reading should be engaging, humorous, and have good illustrations. Books appropriate for children are full of exciting, adventurous storylines that maintain children’s attention and curiosity. The text should also be suitable for the individual child’s background knowledge and vocabulary. In other words, it should consist of more words that pupils are more familiar with. When selecting books for children, it is advisable to consider books that are appealing and interesting (with colourful and appealing illustrations) as well as those that contain age-appropriate text (Ezell & Justice, 2005).

The text selected for shared reading should be in the form of a big book or other enlarged text that is clear enough for all pupils in the group to see (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996). The purpose of having this enlarged text is for pupils to be able to share the text while reading together with the teacher.

2.5.1.3 Teachers’ Instructional Behaviour

Teachers’ instructional behaviour (Pentimonti et al., 2012) is the most researched dimension when measuring the quality of classroom shared reading. The term refers to the nature of the book reading event (Dickinson et al., 2003), reading style (Reese

et al., 2003), book reading conversations (Temple& Snow, 2003), non-immediate talk (Temple& Snow, 2003) extratextual talk (Kadavarek, Pentimonti,& Justice, 2014) and discussions that surround book reading (McKeown& Beck, 2003). Regardless of the terms used, these researchers agreed that without proper ways of reading to children, shared reading may not be as beneficial as it is claimed to be. Teachers' styles of reading to children are the main determiner to ensure the success of shared reading (Whitehurst et al., 1988; Arnold, Lonigan, Whitehurst, & Epstein, 1994; Dickinson & Smith, 1994; Haden, Reese,& Fivush, 1996; Reese & Cox, 1999; Dickinson et al., 2003; Reese et al., 2003; Zevenbergen & Whitehurst, 2003). It is only when shared reading is accompanied with "explicit attention to the development of reading skills and strategies that it becomes effective vehicles in promoting literacy among children" (Philips, Norris, & Anderson, 2008, p.82). High quality book reading is demonstrated when an adult interacts with the child to promote optimal child language and literacy skills (Kadavarek et al., 2014).

Teachers' instructional behaviours that have been proven beneficial in promoting children's literacy growth include, defining novel words in text, labelling and describing objects, recasting children's utterances, encouraging children to make text-to-life connections or encouraging children to dramatize portions of the text, and focusing on letters, print concepts, and phonological units (Justice et al., 2009; Pentimonti et al., 2010; Kadavarek et al., 2014).

In addition, according to Ezell and Justice (2005), teachers who are able to read books with reading expressions can draw excitement and curiosity to the reading session. Reading expression includes varying one's pitch and vocal inflection to

draw attention to the characters in the book. Another technique - altering and varying one's volume of speech to signify emotion, expression or a character's personality - creates curiosity for the shared-reading experience. Changing the pace of the reading is the third technique to create suspense, urgency, and excitement, as well. Teachers' display of mutual regard and emotion builds lasting teacher-child relationships. This may occur by laughing with the child or the group of children when something silly occurs in the story or by showing expressions of disappointment, sadness, or being afraid when something disappointing occurs.

Naturalistic studies on shared reading has categorized teachers' instructional behaviour according to the patterns of reading books (Dickinson and Smith, 1994; Brabham and Lynch-Brown, 2002; Morrow and Brittain, 2003; Manesi, 2015), teachers' management style (Dickinson et al., 2003), student-teacher interaction pattern (John, 2009) and teachers' questioning pattern (Zucker et al., (2014).

Dickinson and Smith (1994) identified three distinct patterns of reading books during their investigation in 25 classrooms that served 4-year-old low-income children: (1) co-constructive, in which teachers and children are involved in an analytical discussion of the text they have read; (2) didactic-interactional, in which children answer questions about factual details, and read the text with the teacher chorally; and (3) performance-oriented, in which the text is read with selective, limited discussion, and the reading is followed by extended discussion. They concluded that children who are read to using the performance-oriented style showed greater gains on measures of vocabulary and story understanding. On the other hand, those whose teacher utilised the didactic-interactional style performed significantly less than their

counterparts who experienced being read to using the other two approaches. On the contrary, Brabham and Lynch-Brown's (2002) examination on the effects of these three reading styles with a larger group of students indicated that the participants' vocabulary acquisition was facilitated more by interactional reading than by performance reading. Morrow and Brittain (2003), who observed three teachers conducting shared reading in first grade, second grade, and fifth grade classrooms, however, discovered that teachers do not have to restrict themselves to any one style of interaction to enhance pupils' ability to use reading strategies. Instead, they could vary their reading styles according to the objectives of their shared reading session.

Apart from these patterns, teachers' reading styles have also been categorized according to their management style. While examining teachers' book reading event in the Home-School Study of Language and Literacy Development's (HSLLD) longitudinal project, Dickinson et al. (2003) discovered that some teachers have adopted an "explicit management style" whereby these teachers would directly call for students' attention, ask the children to raise their hands to participate, and set certain rules for participation. On the contrary, other teachers have employed a more "implicit management style" in which their focus is more on the story being read, which eventually lead to students' engagement in book reading.

In addition, researchers such as John (2009) has divided teachers' instructional behaviour based on student-teacher interaction pattern. The interaction styles are categorized as teacher-framed talk, pupil-framed talk, and collaborative talk. The teacher-framed talk is teacher centred in nature and does not invite students' participation in the meaning making of the text, and fails to engage students in the

reading process. In contrast, the pupil-framed talk and the collaborative talk are more student-centred. The only difference between the two is that while pupil-framed talk only encourages pupils to contribute their own ideas through the teacher's questions, the collaborative talk "highlights their status as joint meaning-makers with their teacher" (p.131), as well as the teacher's role in scaffolding their knowledge to facilitate them in the process

Finally, teachers' instructional behaviour is also analysed based on their questioning pattern (Zucker et al., (2014). In their analysis of 25 preschool teachers' extratextual text during shared reading, they discovered that teachers posed slightly more inferential questions than literal questions when reading informational narrative texts. Teachers who asked inferential questions were able to elicit inferential response from the children. Results suggested that preschool teachers can use inferential questioning to encourage children to participate in the conversation at complex, inferential levels; informational texts appeared to provide a successful context for this inferential discourse.

From the literature, it is clear that the instructional behaviour adopted by teachers are categorized based on the interaction strategy they utilized. Interactions that take place during a discussion about a book being read aloud is vital because it is the conversation between the teacher and students before, during, and after reading that can have a significant impact on students' gain in all aspects of language. The effectiveness of reading aloud as an instructional activity can be maximized by scaffolding the book, encouraging the use of background knowledge in meaningful ways, asking questions and inviting responses from students, reading in a lively and engaging manner, encouraging students to make predictions during the reading,

focusing on important text ideas, and talking about a few of the words or phrase to build children's vocabulary (Teale, 2003; Temple and Snow, 2003). Shared reading should be "thought-provoking and enjoyable" because "it is the bringing together of the cognitive and the affective that fully involves students, and leads to the greatest learning and most positive disposition to literacy, and to significantly enhance reading achievement" (Temple and Snow, 2003, p.132).

This observation is supported by McKeown and Beck (2003) who posited that interactions that occur when a story is read, which involves children and students, and are analytic in nature can have positive effects on students' vocabulary and story comprehension. In addition, Dickinson et al. (2003) highlighted that teachers should provide opportunities for active discussions that relate the story being read with students' experience, and focus on the meaning of words, the story line as well as the characters in the story. They further added that teachers should also engage pupils using an effective, animated, and lively reading style that reveals their own enjoyment and enthusiasm towards the text. Similarly, based on a study in a Grade Three classroom, in an urban centre with a high ELL population in Canada, Purdy (2008) suggested teachers to structure meaningful conversations during reading aloud by questioning, teaching vocabulary, engaging in collaborative talk, and recognising that the culture and identity of the child are important to literacy learning. Thelning, Phillips, Lyon, and McDonald (2010) argued that teachers' mediation of text through discussion and high level questioning that challenges the students' thinking, has the potential of producing engaged readers.

In the L2 context, Chakravarthy (2001) proposed that teachers adapt two techniques that were identified while monitoring a mother (whose L1 is Tamil) reading an

English (L2) storybook to her son. The two techniques employed were asking questions and negotiating translations. The use of questions that are similar to Temple and Show (2003) non-immediate talk serves a number of purpose, namely to elicit straightforward meaning of words and phrase, and to predict story content and specific events. The second technique - tolerance of translation is applicable in classrooms because children are able to demonstrate their understanding of the story being read to them. At the same time, teachers will use synonyms when attempting to explain the terms using English. Negotiating the use of L1 helps to foster children's joint meaning making during story discussions. Although the overall goal of shared reading in L2 classrooms is to promote the acquisition of English, employing the children's L1 is necessary for mediating instruction to ensure that comprehension does takes place. Code switching should be seen as a natural aspect of shared reading interactions rather than as a problem (Barrera & Bauer, 2003).

In my previous qualitative study on two Malaysian primary ESL teachers' shared reading style, I discovered one important emerging issue, i.e., the power of students-teacher closeness (Ahmad, 2009). I observed that the teacher who portrayed a very loving character during shared reading was able to create a very secure classroom environment that helped children to immerse into the text being read to them. The same quality was also highlighted earlier by Bus (2003) in a parent-child book reading. The author stressed that a parent's love and supportive presence may greatly influence a child's response towards the activity. In other words, the emotional qualities determine whether children will like the shared reading activity or find it unpleasant.

2.6 Shared Reading Interventions

Based on this diversified instructional behaviour among teachers, researchers have proposed various interventions that were able to promote language and literacy among children through experimental studies.

Zevenbergen and Whitehurst (2003, p.178) proposed a method of conducting shared reading called the dialogic reading technique (DR) - a shared reading technique based on the principle of “practice in using language, feedback regarding language, and appropriately scaffolded adult-child interactions in the context of picture book reading can facilitate young children’s language development”. Doyle and Bramwell (2006) further described DR as a strategy that requires strategic questioning and responding to children while conducting shared reading, applying repeated readings of the same book within a small group, and have the children become the storytellers. DR, as summarized from Morgan and Meier (2008, p.13), involves a prescribed set of procedure known by the acronyms PEER and CROWD. PEER, which stands for prompt, evaluate, expand and repeat, is a sequence that should be followed by adults as they interact with children during shared reading. CROWD is the acronym used to illustrate the types of prompts that adults should use while conducting shared reading. These types of prompts include completion questions, recall questions, open-ended questions, wh- questions, and distancing. The use of both PEER and CROWD ensures high quality interactions between adult and children during shared reading. In the classroom context, Gormley and Ruhl (2005, pp.310-311) suggested 8 teacher behaviours that should be incorporated when using DR, which are: a) questioning and prompting; b) modelling; c) praise/evaluative comments; d)

defining; e) follow-up activities; f) labelling; and g) summarizing. The procedures in DR have always been associated with the success in children's language development. It also serves as a very effective strategy for teaching reading skills. Through DR, students will be exposed to various reading skills, such as word learning strategies, meaningful vocabulary use, linking new information with prior experience, and summarizing (Gormley & Ruhl, 2005).

A few studies have adapted the dialogic reading technique in the classroom context. For example, Valdez-Menchaca and Whitehurst (1992) studied it in a day-care setting for 2-year-old Mexicans from low-income backgrounds. In their study, the day-care teachers employed the dialogic reading techniques while reading books to the children at the centre. Their techniques showed positive results on standardized tests and observational measures. Similarly, Hargrave and Senechal (2000) compared the use of the dialogic reading technique and regular reading in the pre-school context. They found that children who were read to using the dialogic reading technique made significantly better gains in language development.

Apart from Dialogic Reading, another well known intervention is Beck and McKeown's (2001, 2003) Text Talk (TTF). The goal of this intervention is to enhance children's language and comprehension abilities through in-depth and extensive experience of listening to and talking about stories read to them. The key to this is not merely listening passively to the text being read but involving in the discussion relating to the ideas in the text. TTF was developed based on 'Questioning the Author' – an approach that allows students to read text from a reviser's perspective (McKeown, Beck, & Worthy, 1993). The steps involved in the 'Text Talk' include an introduction to the story, interspersed open questions, follow-up

questions, a story wrap-up, and vocabulary activities. Text Talk's format highlights the importance of 'interspersed open questions in which open-ended questions are interspersed with story reading to encourage students to express and connect story ideas'.

TTF was implemented in two kindergartens and two first-grade classrooms in an urban elementary school, consisting of African American children. The findings of this project indicated that teachers' reading style changed after they were introduced to this format. There were evidence of interspersed open questions and follow-up scaffolding throughout the observation. The project had also proven that active student-teacher interaction leads to improvement in students' comprehension skills.

Another intervention is the print referencing style (Ezell & Justice, 2000; Justice & Ezell, 2002, 2004). The print referencing technique is based on the premise that if children show greater attention to, and interest in, print within storybook reading interactions, they will learn about print more quickly (Justice & Ezell, 2004). When reading with a print referencing style, teachers use verbal and nonverbal techniques to heighten children's attention to, and interest in, the print within the storybook. The study indicated that teachers who used the print referencing style were successful in increasing young children's attention and interest in developing knowledge about print. Zucker et al. (2009) proved the effectiveness of this intervention when reading storybooks as a possible technique for accelerating the development of print knowledge for children who are experiencing socioeconomic disadvantages.

2.6.1 The Systematic Assessment of Book Reading (SABR)

The latest invention to measure the quality of a teacher's instructional behaviour during shared reading was proposed by Zucker et al. (2010). They came up with a reliable and valid tool called The Systematic Assessment of Book Reading (SABR) to systematically measure teachers' instructional behaviours within the shared reading context to support students' language development, abstract thinking, elaborative responses to the text print and phonological awareness skills. Additionally the tool also captures teachers' ability to create a warm and supportive shared reading climate. The subconstructs in SABR measure teachers' ability to conduct shared reading in a very dialogic manner as suggested by Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivism and the balanced-reading approach or Integrative model (Rumelhart, 1977; Eskey, 1986; Stanovich, 1986; Grabe, 1991; Eskey and Grabe, 2000). Not only that, the subconstructs also serve as a guide for teachers in the interactive process of scaffolding the pupils to make meaning of the text (Arya, Christ, and Chiu, 2013).

Findings from a study by Pentimonti et al. (2012), when studying the quality of teachers' shared reading practice using SABR, provided the initial validation and preliminary evidence that SABR is a reliable and valid tool to be used for examining the quality of shared reading.

So far, SABR has been utilized in two studies. The first one was by Kadavarek et al. (2014). In their study, SABR was used as a tool to examine the quality of adult shared book-reading behaviours for teachers and caregivers of children with

communication impairments (CI). It was also used to compare the level of a child's literacy engagement during teacher-led (group) and caregiver-led (one-on-one) shared book-reading sessions. Results indicated that teachers' shared book-reading quality was significantly higher than the caregivers'. Children's level of engagement was high across both adult-led contexts.

The second study that utilized SABR is that of Zucker, Cabell, Justice, Pentimonti, and Kaderavek (2013). In the study, they had examined the longitudinal relations between frequency (number of shared reading sessions), and features of reading experiences (teachers' extratextual talk about literal, inferential, print, or phonological topics) within a preschool classroom with children's language and literacy outcomes in kindergarten and 1st grade. Participants were 28 preschool teachers and 178 children. The children were largely at risk and were randomly selected from among those in each classroom to complete the longitudinal assessments. In the case of preschool children, results showed that the frequency of classroom-shared reading was positively and significantly related to children's receptive vocabulary growth, as was the inclusion of extratextual conversations around the text; only extratextual conversations were related to children's preschool literacy growth.

Despite the interventions, guidelines, and tools suggested by literature, previous researches have indicated that teachers continuously have problems when conducting shared reading. Their implementation was often "not of sufficient quality to fully engage students and maximize literacy growth" (Morrow & Brittain, 2003, p.144). In addition, McKeon and Beck (2003) also concluded that shared book experience is

not effectively utilized to enhance students' reading literacy. They have identified that teachers rarely prompt students to think, relate, and express their understanding of the stories that were read to them. Teachers were unaware that a shared reading experience is more effective if it is accompanied by questions, prompts, and discussions that contribute to both children's language and cognitive development (Dickinson et al., 2003). Manesi (2015) who explored preschool and kindergarten teachers' beliefs and practices concerning the role of shared book reading in promoting pre-schoolers' emergent literacy skills revealed that teachers were still comfortable with the performance-oriented, high-demand and non-interrupting readers. Participants in this study have expressed a positive stance towards language development skills, with a rather sceptical attitude towards discussion about book conventions and print conventions as well as their emphasis on inferential/decontextualised language.

In Malaysia, Yaacob's (2006) study indicated that despite the introduction of shared reading during English Hour, meaningful discussion and interaction seldom took place. Although the interaction pattern was improved when teachers used big books during shared reading, big books were still rarely used. Similarly, in Singapore, Curdt-Christiansen and Silver (2013) found a lacking of interactional opportunities for Primary One and Two pupils during reading lessons in the STELLAR program (The Strategies for English Language Learning and Reading) into which the shared reading instruction was incorporated. This was despite one of the STELLAR program's goals being to promote meaningful classroom interactions.

In the following year, Ong (2014) examined whether Singaporean teachers' perceptions of the importance of phonological awareness, word decoding, and text comprehension in helping young learners develop their reading abilities, were indeed emphasized during instructions in the country's shared reading program. It was concluded that there was a tension between theory and practice since the results showed that although the teachers placed high importance on phonological awareness, word decoding, and text comprehension, their instruction of shared reading did not place an equivalent emphasis on the three aforementioned variables.

The non-interactive pattern of conducting shared reading was also discovered in the U.K. literacy hour (Mroz, Smith, & Hardman, 2000; English, Hargreaves, & Hislam, 2002; Burns & Myhill, 2004; Smith et al., 2004; John, 2009). These studies concluded that most teachers tend to dominate the classroom talk and pupils were denied the opportunity to play an active role in their own learning. English et al. (2002), for instance, found that in 80 per cent of the pupils in Key Stage 1 lessons responded to the teacher's questioning in fewer than three words. Burns and Myhill (2004) while also investigating interactive whole class teaching, observed few opportunities for pupil initiation or extended response. Similar findings were discovered by Mroz et al. (2000) who investigated the discourse of 10 primary teachers. They found that 82% of all exchanges in all ten lessons were teacher presentation or teacher-directed question and answer. Only 4% of the exchanges were pupil initiated. The remaining 14% were chiefly concerned with managerial matters.

To conclude, the literature on teachers' instructional behaviour indicated that most studies were mostly conducted naturalistically (Morrow & Brittain, 2003; McBee, 2004; Yaacob, 2006, 2011; Yaacob & Pinter, 2008; Omar et al., 2013) and experimentally to evaluate the effectiveness of shared reading intervention on pupils' learning (Hargrave & Sénéchal, 2000; Beck & McKeown, 2001; Wasik & Bond, 2001; Justice & Ezell, 2002; Zevenbergen & Whitehurst, 2003; Furlong & Salisbury, 2005; Wasik et al., 2006) in L1 context. The purpose of these studies was more on exploring teachers' existing instructional behaviour or testing the effectiveness of any new intervention suggested by researchers. In addition, both types of studies were conducted on the teachers rather than with the teachers to support them. The main aim of the studies were more on evaluating rather than supporting teachers to enhance their teaching of reading literacy using any research based approach like shared reading.

The review of literature shows the need to have more research that brings the intervention to real classroom to support teachers to have more interactive shared reading (Pentimonti et al., 2012). This is especially vital in L2 context where most teachers are non-native English speakers and most students have low levels of English Language Proficiency (ELP).

The next section reviews literature on the importance of researcher – teacher collaboration as a way of supporting teachers to improve their practice.

2.7 Researcher – Teacher Collaboration as A Way of Supporting Teachers

The findings that indicated teachers' insufficient ability to fully engage pupils and

maximize their literacy growth through shared reading showed that teachers must be supported in terms of knowledge, technical skills, and techniques in implementing the approach. Teachers should be given the opportunities to improve their teaching practice and stay in touch with the latest research-based pedagogy. Attempts to support teachers in the form of a systematic research is vital to ensure that teachers are able to carry out any new approach successfully (Smith et al., 2004).

A growing body of research suggested that one of the ways to support teachers, to strengthen their teaching practice, is through researcher-teacher collaboration (Christianakis, 2010; Abdul Rahim, 2007). Teachers need to feel that they are involved in doing research in their own classrooms (Ogberg & McCutcheon, 1987; Casanova, 1989; Herndon, 1994; Lieberman, 1995; Darling-Hammond, 1996). Christianakis (2010) explored how teacher-researcher collaboration can reposition teachers to be powerful stakeholders and policymakers rather than skilled technicians and implementers. It was posited that collaborative teacher-researcher, especially in the form of action research, allows teachers to participate in investigating their own practice in order to shape policies, as well as bridge the gap between teachers, academics, and policy makers. Such collaborations have made educational research more accessible to teachers, and thus, have helped redress some of the unequal power dynamics subjugating teachers in educational research. Collaborative research efforts in teacher education have also helped candidates navigate the complexity of practice and theory.

The benefits of researcher-teacher collaboration can be clearly seen from numerous research collaborations between teachers, students, administrators, and university

professors (e.g., Hawkins & Leglar, 2004; Morton, 2005; Abdul Rahim, 2007; Michelle & Diane, 2010).

Hawkins and Leglar (2004), who collaborated in a study on English Language in a kindergarten classroom, claimed that their collaboration has changed their thinking and perspectives, understandings and articulations of language, and literacy learning in kindergarten and of classroom instructional design. Hawkins, as a University professor, has admitted that she could have not grounded her work in current second language acquisition and literacy theories, and in the principles of childhood development without her partner, who was the class teacher. Both Hawkins and Leglar further emphasized that if teachers and academics can begin to see themselves as collaborators engaged in educational research, the scholarship produced on teaching and learning can reflect a wider array of voices, ideas, and perspectives.

Similarly, Morton (2005) proved that her collaboration with two third-grade teachers in a lower socioeconomic school has benefited the teachers. One of them has gradually transformed the classroom pedagogy, which resulted in a differentiated instruction to meet students' needs, made stronger connections to the students and their families, and displayed a greater enjoyment of teaching.

Abdul Rahim (2007) further convinced that the inclusion of collaboration, interaction, and dialogic discussion has the potential to promote teachers' professional development in Malaysia through her collaboration with two teachers. Among others, the collaboration has allowed her to mediate the two teachers'

understanding of the need to provide challenging tasks, to group pupils, to provide opportunities for pupils to interact, collaborate and use English, and to facilitate the pupils' discovery of solutions by stopping teachers from providing answers to their own questions.

In order to better understand literacy coaches' impact on teachers, Michelle and Diane (2010) analysed interviews with 35 teachers who participated in a state-wide professional development effort, the South Carolina Reading Initiative. For 3 years, literacy coaches facilitated bimonthly study groups for teachers and spent 4 days a week in teachers' classrooms, helping them implement practices learned in study groups. Patterns in the data suggested that the teachers valued how the coaches created a space for collaboration, provided ongoing support, and taught them research-based instructional strategies. Teachers credited their coaches with helping them try new teaching practices, incorporate more authentic assessments, ground their decisions in professional literature, and create curriculum that was more student-centred.

Similar result was obtained by Hayes' (2010) who examined the coaching interactions of two literacy coaches and four classroom teachers. The analysis showed that these coaches supported the reflection-on-action through their post conferences with the participating teachers. The type of support varies with the expertise of the literacy coach. Analysis of the data revealed that these teachers believed that literacy coaches have supported them in the following ways: (a) by giving them feedback; (b) giving them confidence; (c) making connections to learning theory; (d) praising their teaching; (e) helping foster teacher's reflection; (f)

identifying professional texts; (g) providing language to use while teaching reading and writing; and (h) identifying observable evidence of how the teachers supported student's learning.

2.7.1 Action Research As A framework for Researcher-Teacher Collaboration

Action research is the best framework for researcher-teacher collaboration. It requires all participants to come together to learn how to collaborate in a dialectical and dialogical process with a great deal of give and take (Pine, 2008). Its collaborative nature allows for building trust and relationships overtime to ensure that the collaborative process is maximized. The coaching process that takes place during this collaboration may help improve a teacher's problem-solving skills, increase the quality of their reflections, and raise the levels of their work satisfaction (Allan, 2007). It can also develop their professional skills (Teemant et al., 2011), increase their understanding of action research as a methodology, and improved their confidence (Norasmah & Chia, 2016).

Educational researchers have found action research to be an effective professional development tool that promotes inquiry, reflection, and problem solving that results in action or change (Ogberg & McCutcheon, 1987; Casanova, 1989; Herndon, 1994; Rosaen & Schram, 1997). Educational researchers claim that teachers who conducted action researches are better informed about their field of work (Bennett, 1993). They also began to understand themselves better as teachers. They were also making better decisions and choices of behaviours because of their engagements in action research (Ogberg & McCutcheon, 1987). Other studies have indicated that action research may also promote continuous learning (Boyer, 1990; Shalaway,

1990; Rock, 1997), revitalizes teachers' practice, and motivates teachers by improving their self-confidence as professionals (Reading/Learning in Secondary Schools Subcommittee of the International Reading Association, 1989; Lomax, 1995; Rock, 1997).

Collaborative action research is divided into three types; client initiation, researcher initiation, and collaborative initiation. Client initiation represents the classic genesis of AR, in which a host organisation, with a serious immediate problem, seeks help from a knowledgeable researcher. Researcher initiation represents an alternative approach for AR, in which the researcher begins by searching for a host organisation as a site for an AR project. This form of AR initiation often leads to a project bearing some similarity to a field experiment. Meanwhile, a collaborative initiation represents a setting in which the AR evolved from the interaction between researchers and client (Avison, Baskerville & Myers, 2001).

2.8 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter has discussed the theories of reading in both L1 and L2, as well as the teachers' role in teaching reading. The review of literature illustrated that understanding the theoretical backgrounds of teaching shared reading and reading practices entails quality reading pedagogical practices. Next, it has also elaborated on how shared reading can promote reading comprehension through proper classroom physical arrangement, text selection, and teachers' instructional behaviour. Finally, it discussed the importance of researcher-teacher collaboration as a tool to support teachers to improve their teaching practice, and stay in touch with the latest research-based pedagogy. This support system allows teachers to participate in investigating

their own practice in order to shape policies, as well as bridge the gap between teachers, academics, and policy makers. Such collaborations have made educational research more accessible to teachers, and thus, have helped them to have voices regarding their own practices.



CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The goal of this study was to explore teachers' understanding of how the teaching of reading should be handled in primary ESL classroom. It aims to explore teachers' existing understanding of a method to teach reading which was called 'shared reading' and later support to enhance their teaching of ESL reading. Shared reading, which was discussed thoroughly in Chapter 2, is a research-based activity that has been proven to be beneficial in improving children's language and literacy development skills (Valdez-Menchaca & Whitehurst, 1992; Whitehurst & Epstein, 1994; Hargrave & Sénéchal, 2000; Justice & Ezell, 2002; Zevenbergen & Whitehurst, 2003; McKeown & Beck, 2003; Oueni, Bahous & Nabhani, 2008; Justice et al., 2009; Zucker et al., 2009). This study is an action research project, which emphasized on the collaboration or partnership between an outsider and insiders in a natural setting. It aims to bring about changes in people's practice, their understanding of practices, and the condition in which they practice (Burns, 1999; Herr & Anderson, 2005; Stringer, 2007).

To reiterate the objectives of this study were:

- RO1: To examine teachers' existing understanding of shared reading in terms of the definition, the material selection and the physical arrangement of the classroom during the activity.
- RO2: To examine teachers instructional behaviour when conducting shared reading.

- RO3: To examine the changes in teachers' understanding of shared reading undergone during the collaborative action research.
- RO4: To examine the improvement in teachers' instructional behavior during shared reading as a result of the joint-effort intervention during collaborative action research.

This chapter explains the philosophical assumptions behind the methodological choice of this study. Apart from that, it describes the research method, which includes the design of the study, data gathering, and analysis techniques. In addition, it also presents the research context, which includes the research setting, and the research team. Finally, this chapter also provides readers with justifications that the research has been carried out rigorously, and reports on the set of issues that have established the study's trustworthiness.

3.2 Research Paradigm and Research Approach

This study is a researcher-initiated collaborative action research (see Section 2.6.1 for the types of collaborative action research), which is almost similar to the self-initiated Participatory Action Research (PAR) conducted by McIntyre (1995). I, as an outsider, has invited the teachers (insiders) to join this project. However, unlike McIntyre, I chose not to use the term Participatory Action Research (PAR) due to some historical factors associated with it (refer Herr & Anderson, 2005, pp.15-16). PAR, which was synonym to the Pedagogy of the Oppressed in English in 1970, stressed on the importance of understanding social process and structures within the historical context. My study on the other hand, was simply a collaborative action research (CAR) between me, as a teacher educator cum researcher, and two primary

ESL teachers. We wanted to emphasize on issues of efficiency and the improvement of practice rather than on equity, self-reliance, and oppression problems. CAR acted as an intervention (Coghlan & Brannick, 2005) to solve teachers' problems in the teaching of reading literacy.

The choice of this paradigm was due to several factors.

In the introduction chapter, I have described my interest in how ESL reading is being taught at primary school level, and my concerns regarding the way(s) teachers read to pupils during shared reading activity ever since it was introduced in Malaysian ESL primary classrooms in 2002. I have identified that there are still room for improvement in this area. Nevertheless, through my involvement in conventional research (Ahmad, 2009), I can only suggest a few ways to enhance the teachers' shared reading skills. However, I was unable to ensure that my suggestions reach the teachers. This is because my position as a "detached observer" (Coghlan & Brannick, 2005, p.7) in positivist science is somewhat removed from the setting and the subjects I am studying (Mertler, 2009).

Moreover, there may be elements of biasness in my suggestions as they were made from my point of view as a complete outsider. I have only stood outside a research field and observed, described, and explained teachers' problems (McNiff & Whitehead, 2009) without really understanding the actual classroom context (Gay & Airasian, 2003). My role as "the researcher" or "the expert" led me to disregard the complexities faced by each individual teacher as well as the pupils in the classroom

(Stringer, 2007). As a result, I ended up making the conclusion that my suggestion worked for all teachers regardless of any individual setting.

Hoping to find alternatives to researching shared reading, I started reviewing the literatures on this issue. Nevertheless, my review of literature (see Chapter 2) had also indicated that most previous researches on shared reading were conducted from an outsider's point of view, using either the positivist or the hermeneutic approach. They were conducted either experimentally, to introduce intervention and to investigate the effectiveness of the intervention on children's learning (Hargrave & Sénéchal, 2000; Beck & McKeown, 2001; Wasik & Bond, 2001; Justice & Ezell, 2002; Furlong & Salisbury, 2005; Wasik et al., 2006; Zevenbergen & Whitehurst, 2003) or naturalistically (Morrow & Brittain, 2003; McBee, 2004; Yaacob, 2006; Yaacob & Pinter, 2008) to investigate the nature of student-teacher interactions.

Undoubtedly, these two designs have contributed to the knowledge on shared reading practices. Experimental studies have provided a large array of information on the effectiveness of the planned intervention, and have promised improvements in terms of student-teacher interaction during shared reading. Nevertheless, they were unable to explore the meaning of the intervention to both the teachers and the students because they were conducted in a very controlled condition. In an experimental research, the researcher has control over one or more of the variables included in the study that may somehow influence the participants' behaviour. Thus, experimental design may not represent the real classroom situation. Stringer (2004) asserted that:

Although experimentation still assists us to understand certain features of the human social and cultural life, ultimately, positivistic explanations fail to encompass some of the fundamental features of human life – the creative construction of meaning that is at the centre of every social activity.

(Stringer, 2004, p.21)

Experimental design, which is one of the designs in a positivist research, has always been criticized for objectifying the participants, and for being too inflexible, closed, specialized, and of little practical relevance to the real life context (Ellstrom, 2007, p.1). Since it is directly modelled on the physical science, which studies nature in order to control it, and predicts what would happen and control the future, a positivist research may not work well when humans become the objects of enquiry and are treated exactly like nature. Unlike nature, humans have minds of their own and their actions are unpredictable (Whitehead & McNiff, 2006). Furthermore, its main concern is to test hypothesis, and to generalize findings so that they become knowledge and theories about an existing situation that can be applied and replicated in other similar situations (Creswell, 2007). In other words, this type of research ignores the fact that these theories are formed by the theorists' practices through their readings and research, and hence do not offer practitioners the opportunities to theorize their own practices (Kemmis, 2009).

Naturalistic studies have also successfully described, understood, and explained the nature of student-teacher interactions during shared reading in its natural setting, without any manipulated variables (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). However, it does not differ much from the positivist research as it still takes human behaviour as an object to be studied from a spectator's perspective, regardless of whether he is an outsider or insider researcher. This is because the researcher is fully in charge of the research

process and theory; hence, the different status in relationship remains (Whitehead & McNiff, 2006; Stringer, 2008).

The flaw in these types of research is that practitioners often find that the theory formulated by researchers has limited relevance to their everyday practice. Researchers are considered as outsiders who entered the practitioners' professional life with little understanding that their life is personal, contextual, subjective, temporal, historical, and relational among people (Herr & Anderson, 2005). In the educational setting, some schoolteachers shun away from researchers, and are very reluctant to accept changes suggested by them. These teachers view the researchers as outsiders who play the role of fault finders. As a result, educational theory would be rejected and research findings are often seen as intrusive and irrelevant elements, imposed to interfere with teaching, and increase teacher-workload (Chakravarthy, 1999, 2001). There is a great distance between research by academicians and those directly involved in language teaching (Block, 2000).

Due to the above justifications, this study has applied the collaborative action research (henceforth, CAR) as the methodological approach since it brings both practitioners' (insiders) and researchers' (outsiders) perspectives into the research. It is through CAR that I was able to work with experienced practitioners - during their everyday life as primary ESL teachers. The following sections will further elaborate on the definition of action research and its ontological, epistemological, and methodological assumptions. It will then be followed by the explanation on the types and model of action research utilized in this study.

3.2.1 What is Action Research

Although there are various definitions of action research in the literature, the ones that were chosen for this study were those that best reflect the epistemological and ethical decisions I made throughout this study. This study is a collaborative investigation of problems within a contextualized, small-scale, and localized situation in an evaluative and reflective manner, to bring about change and improvement in practice (Burns, 1999). Herr and Anderson (2005) defined AR as “an inquiry that is done *by* or *with* insiders to an organization or community, but never *to* or *on* them” (p.3). According to Stringer (2007), AR is a collaborative investigation approach that enables people to find effective solutions to problems they confront in their everyday lives. Coghlan and Brannick (2005) characterized AR as a collaborative democratic partnership research. Action approach comprises of iterative cycles of data gathering and analysing, action planning and evaluating. Somekh (2006) also defined action research as a collaborative partnership either among insiders or between insiders and outsiders.

Heron (1996) specifically emphasized AR as a practice of co-operative inquiry that stresses on a way of working with other people who have similar concerns and interests to yourself, in order to understand your world, and make sense of your life. It is also a way to develop new and creative ways of looking at things, and to learn how to act to change things you may want to change for the better. In a co-operative inquiry, all those involved in the research endeavour are co-researchers, whose thinking and decision-making contributes to generating ideas, designing and managing the project, and drawing conclusions from the experience. They may also

act as co-subjects, participating in the activity that is being researched (Heron & Reason, 2001; Reason, 2002). Co-operative inquiry is almost similar to Freire's (1970) participatory research. The term participatory action research (PAR), which has been used interchangeably with the collaborative action research by Herr and Anderson (2005), "envisages a collaborative approach to investigation that seeks to engage "subjects" as equal, and full participations in the research process" (Stringer, 2007, p.10).

All these definitions lead to similar conceptualization; it is a systematic inquiry that is conducted collaboratively *among* insiders or *with* outsiders in a natural setting. Its aim is to bring about social changes in people's pattern of practices, understandings of practices, and the condition in which they practiced. It involves repeated cycles of planning, taking action, observing, evaluating, and reflecting.

Nevertheless, not all theorists of action research place this emphasis on collaboration. McNiff and Whitehead (2002) and Whitehead and McNiff (2006) for instance, argued that action research is often a solitary process of systematic self-reflection. In the second language literature, such as those by Nunan (1989, 1992), and Freeman and Richards (1992), action research is commonly viewed as a research conducted by teachers to investigate their own teaching and learning (Burns, 1999). This type of action research, which focuses on the improvement of the insider researcher's own learning is referred to as *self-study* by Bullough and Pinnegar (2001) or *autoethnography* by Bochner and Ellis as cited by Herr & Anderson (2005). One of the challenges faced by this self-study is the lack of research support and professional isolation (Wallace, 1998).

Without trying to deny the relevance and necessity of individual classroom research in certain contexts, I chose the definitions that portray the collaborative perspective of action research because this conceptualization mirrors my effort to collaborate with two primary ESL teachers in improving their classroom shared reading practice. Regardless of the interchangeable names given to this type of research (Herr & Anderson, 2005), I chose to retain the term “action research” throughout this study because action research itself is collaborative in nature (Burns, 1999; Herr & Anderson, 2005).

In other words, this paradigm of action research directly involves the participants by looking at the problems being investigated together. Hence, overcoming the limitations of the traditional research that acknowledges the researcher as the only “expert” to diagnose a problem (Stringer, 2007). AR is participative since it brings the insiders together in a dialogic, democratic, and productive relationship. It creates a sense of community through the sharing of perspectives, the negotiation of meaning, and the development of collaboratively produced activities, programmes and projects (Coghlan & Brannick, 2005; Stringer, 2007).

Additionally, AR goes beyond naturalistic studies as it uses a scientific approach to investigate the issues as well as deciding on the solutions to the issues together with those directly involved (Coghlan & Brannick, 2005). In an educational context, it is a form of research that provides the opportunity to improve teaching and learning, and to develop the knowledge and skills of those who are participating in the process.

To conclude, the use of AR in this study was a necessary step, given my ultimate goal to enhance teachers' teaching of reading through shared reading. AR provides a valuable framework since it is problem-focused, context specific, and future oriented. It puts into operation a cyclical process of 'look', 'act', and 'think' in order to describe, interpret, and explain the participants' existing shared reading patterns, while executing a change intervention aimed at improvement and involvement (Stringer, 2007).

3.2.2 The Action Research Process

The action research process, which is termed as the research design in a traditional research, includes the details of the investigation that the action researchers are engaged in (Stringer, 2008). Generally, AR process begins with a central problem or topic. It involves documenting observations or monitoring of the current practice, followed by the collection and synthesis of information and data. Finally, some sort of action is taken, which then serves as the basis for the next stage of action research (Mills, 2007). This process is cyclical in nature, so that "solutions are enacted, observed, analysed, and reformulated until a successful outcome is achieved" (Stringer, 2008, p.4).

There are different AR models with somewhat similar elements in the literature, as proposed by numerous authors and researchers. Some of the well known models, which have been summarized by Mertler (2009) include Lewin's (1947) action research spiral, Calhoun's (1994) action research cycle, Bachman's (2001) action research spiral, Riel's (2010-2016) progressive problem solving through action research model, as well as Piggot-Irvine's (2006) and Hendricks's (2009) action

research models. Mertler (2009) also came up with an action research model composing of a four-stage procedure; planning, acting, developing, and reflecting. Another model is Kemmis and McTaggart's spiral AR model (Stringer, 2007). It contains cycles of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting, which allow for the understanding of a particular issue and making informed decisions. Burns (1999) offered a model that consisted of a series of interrelated experiences involving 11 phases, which are exploring, identifying, planning, collecting data, analysing/reflecting, hypothesizing/speculating, intervening, observing, reporting, writing, and presenting.

Stringer's (2007) action research interacting spiral, as shown in Figure 3.1 is "the simplest yet powerful AR model" (p.8). It consists of three fundamental steps of a basic action research routine. The 'look', 'think', and 'act' model guides researchers to conduct the investigation in a very systematic manner. Generally, the main purpose for the "look" stage is to obtain information about participants' experiences, and to interpret the issue based on their own perspectives. Meanwhile, the "think" stage is where data obtained in the "look" stage is interpreted and analysed systematically to understand the nature of the problematic experiences affecting the participants' lives. Finally, the "act" stage involves the planning of action to solve the problems as identified and analysed during the two earlier stages. The "Look-Think-Act" cycle is enacted repeatedly to ensure that solutions are enacted, observed, analysed, and reformulated until a successful outcome is achieved (Stringer, 2008).

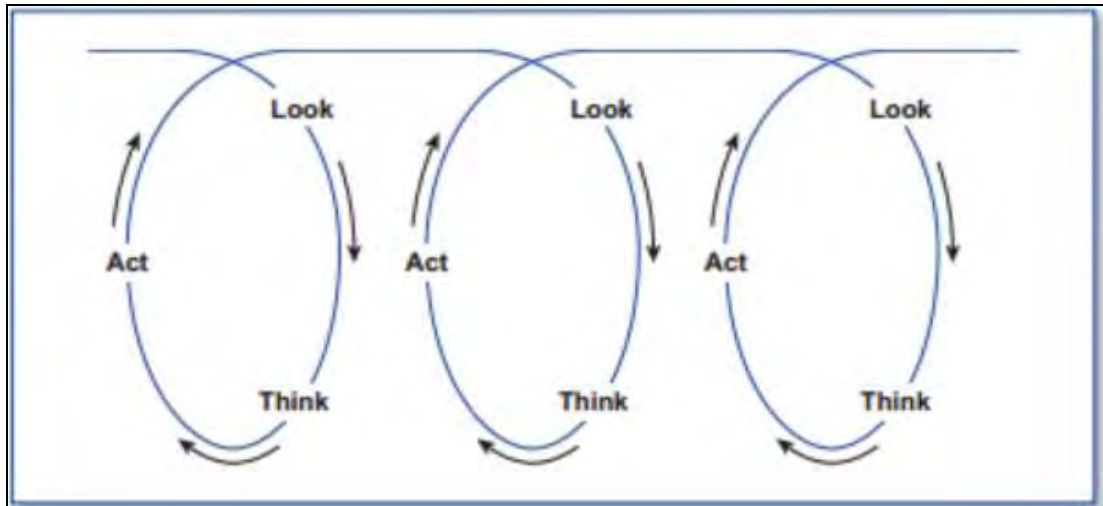


Figure 3.1. Stringer's action research interacting spiral

All the previously discussed models serve as a guide to action researchers when conducting their studies in a systematic way. Although in reality, the process may not be as neat as how it is presented in the models. Within Mertler's (2012) framework, for example, the action research is a recursive, cyclical process that typically does not proceed in a linear fashion. Meanwhile Kemmis and McTaggart's (1988) spiral AR model contains cycles of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. This cycle allows for the understanding of a particular issue and making informed decisions with the knowledge at hand. This model, however, was criticized as being too systematic and too prescriptive (Burns, 1999).

Nevertheless, Mertler (2009) posited that it does not really matter which model should be followed by action researchers because these models are simply variations of the same theme. Depending on the nature of a given action research project, there may never be a clear end to the study. Action research basically cycles through the process of identifying a possible problem that needs to be solved, while collecting

and analysing data, and taking action based on the information obtained from the data. It also involves evaluating the actions and drawing conclusions based on the findings (Macintyre, 2000). This process remains to be “continuous, evolving and complex” (Sax & Fisher, 2001, p.72) regardless of the many different models put forward by different scholars.

3.2.3 The Design of this Study

The action research process for this project was divided into two main stages, as suggested by McNiff et al. (2003), and Stringer (2007). The two stages were: (1) setting the stage/planning the research process, and (2) conducting the action research. The stages are depicted in Figure 3.2 below.

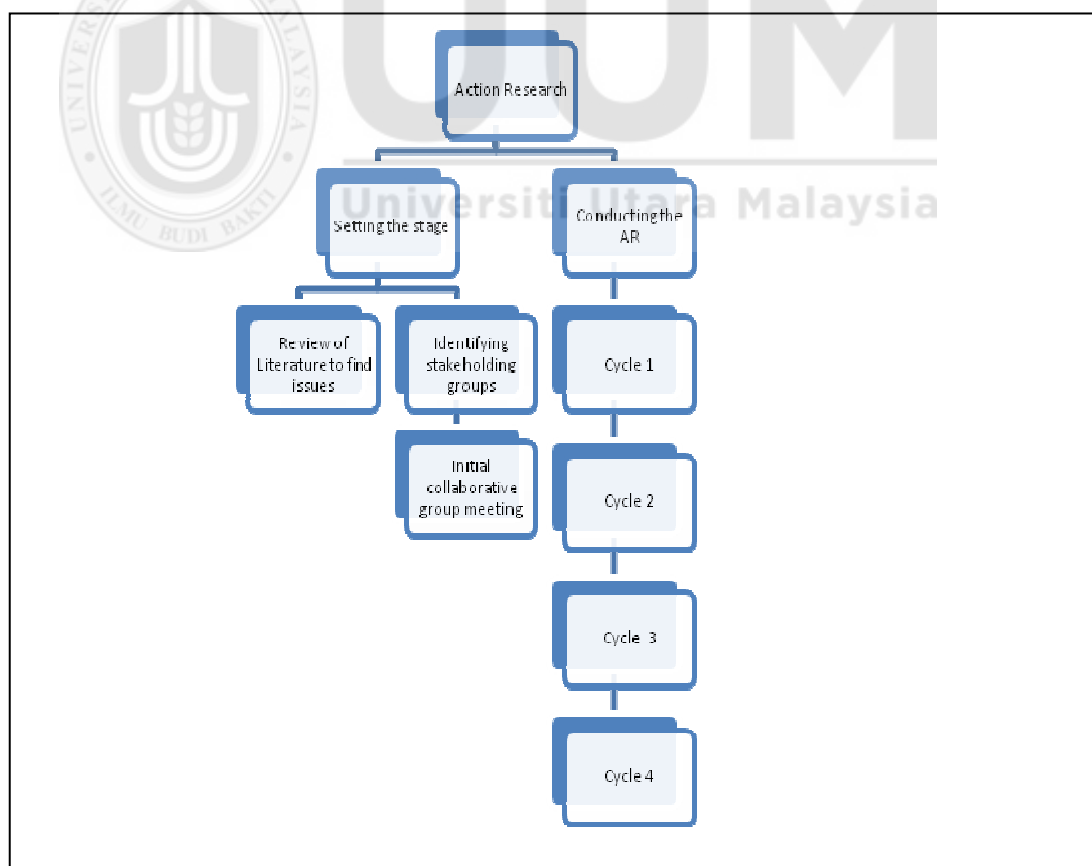


Figure 3.2. The design of the study

3.2.3.1 Setting the Stage

Planning and designing an effective research is crucial in action research, to ensure the smooth running of the whole process. It is also important to capture the interest and commitment among the stakeholders.

As the principal investigator, who was tied to the predetermined requirements of a doctoral thesis, I began my study with the review of literature (Chapter 2). This review has shown that effective reading strategies - that are used to focus on broadening the cognitive strategies and skills by increasing engagement, motivation, and providing opportunities to construct new knowledge, as well as to help students become self-efficacious - were being neglected in most ESL classrooms across Malaysia. On the other hand, reading lesson has always been associated with the bottom up approach where learners were usually asked to read a text and answer literal comprehension questions. They were not exposed to sufficient strategies to develop reading comprehension in order to handle the demands of academic literacy (Ponniah, 1993; Kaur, 1996, Ramaiah, 1997; Norhashimah Hashim, 2000a; 2000b; 2001). My experiences as a teacher educator/supervisor have shown my trainees encountering the same problem during their teaching practice (see my reflection in Chapter 1).

The next step was identifying stakeholding groups or deciding which people to be included in my project and establishing contact with them. Determining who will collaborate with me is of the utmost important to ensure the smooth running of the study because the success of this study also depends on their commitment as my

research partners. Unlike the quantitative studies that commonly use random sampling when selecting respondents, action research uses purposive sampling, a process that consciously select people on the basis of a particular set of attributes. In action research, that major attribute is the extent to which a group or individual is affected by or has an effect on the problem or issue of interest (Stringer, 2007). In the case of my study, I decided that the people who were affected by my concern of the implementation of shared reading in primary ESL classroom are the teachers, the school administrators, the English Language officers, and the students.

For this purpose, I attended a literacy seminar organized by a local university in May, 2010. I approached a few teachers who were participating and introduced the issue of my concern to them. Having made them understood the issue; I then told them my decision to engage with them in a collaborative approach to solve the problems. There, I came across Ms Ani whose enthusiasm in literature and shared reading practice (shown during the seminar) really amazed me. I expressed my interest in getting her involved in my study, and explained my plan to conduct an action research on teachers' shared reading practices. She agreed to participate based on the reason that she had long wanted somebody to examine her teaching practice, and give comments and suggestions for her to improve.

Because I told her I need three teachers for this project, she suggested two other teachers who she thought might be interested in joining us. However, only one teacher (Ms Fida) had confirmed to participate in this project through a phone call I made after my meeting with Ms Ani. For the purpose of this study, Ms Ani promised to use her capacity as the head of the English panel to make arrangements. She and

the other English teacher who would be involved in my project, would be teaching Year 4 and 5 classes beginning January 2011.

In September 2010, I went to see Ms Ani at her school - Sekolah Kebangsaan Air Hitam (SKAH) where I obtained permission as well as full encouragement to conduct an action research from her headmistress. Coincidentally, the school was affiliated with a teacher-training institute as an adopted school or better known as 'teaching school' since 2007 (refer appendix 18, 19 and 20 for the 'teaching school' formal documentation). Therefore, the headmistress decided that she did not have to come up with a formal permission letter to allow me to conduct research in her school. The headmistress, however, was not ready to become fully involved in my project because she was very busy with the administration aspect.

Following my meeting with Ms Ani and the headmistress, I went to the Kedah State Education Department. I negotiated access with the English Language Officer who gave me full support after listening to my explanation on the project. The English Language Officer, despite admitting to not being able to commit to my project, suggested three people whom she thought were relevant to the field. They were Ms Ann, the Kubang Pasu District English Language officer, and Ms Farah and Mr. Michael, who were the district language mentors for The Native Speaker Programme - a three-year country-wide programme (2011-2013) run by the Ministry of Education via the 'Upholding the Malay Language and Strengthening the Command of English' (MBMMBI) policy. This programme was designed to bring Malaysian English teachers together with native English speakers from around the world to trade teaching ideas and methodologies in a drive to strengthen the use of English in

the country. The MBMMBI Policy was developed by the Ministry of Education Malaysia to ensure the usage of the Malay Language as a medium of communication in all national schools and secondary schools, and to ensure that each child can master both Malay and English languages well and fluently (Ministry of Education Policies, n.d.).

Nevertheless, Ms Ann was not able to put her full commitment to this project due to her tight schedule. As a result, the action research team comprises of only myself, the two English teachers, and the two language mentors. The two English teachers played the dual role of participants as well as critical friends, while the language mentors played the role of critical friends.

To make sure that the members of this research team can participate in defining and exploring the issue under investigation, without having the feeling that I was a total stranger trying to pry into their affairs, I attempted to gather them all in an initial collaborative group meeting with the purpose of discussing three important elements in the development of my role in the project: agenda, stance, and position (Stringer, 2007, pp.44-50). The meeting was held in January 2011 at a mutually agreed location, that being the self access learning centre (SAL) of SKAH.

The purpose of this meeting was to:

- (i) Provide specific details of the research project;
- (ii) Identify the expectations for this research project, both for myself and the research participants;
- (iii) Discuss action research as a tool for professional development;
- (iv) Begin the formation of a collaborative group;

- (v) Set dates, location, and times for individual and group meetings;
- (vi) Set a date with each participant for an individual interview.

During the meeting, I informed the two teachers that my agenda was to assist them rather than to prescribe their actions. I told them that I was not an expert but rather a skilful, supportive, resourceful, and approachable friend who has come to support them. We were going to identify the problems, and take action together. As clear as possible, I informed them that my role was not to tell them what to do, but that I wanted to collaborate with them on how to go about identifying and solving their problems. As a result, they should not feel threatened by my presence, as shown by teachers involved in conventional researches who perceived research findings as “intrusive and irrelevant, imposed to interfere with teaching, increase teacher-workload, and insensitive to the real tensions surrounding education in schools” (Chakravarthy, 1999, p.79).

In addition, I had also made it very clear that I was not making judgements about them. I was only inviting them to make judgements about themselves. I was not trying to change them. Instead, I was helping them “make the right choices about how they will recreate themselves”. I had also emphasized that as research participants, their role was to work together with me to document their own practice, so that they could evaluate their own work. In the mean time, I could use the documentation to explain, interpret, and evaluate my interactions with them throughout the collaborative process (McNiff et al., 2003). I had also explained to them that as research participants, they would also functioned as critical friends to me as I was to them.

As for the two mentors, I told them that they were needed as critical friends who were able to give objective analysis to the issue, and to collaboratively make meaning with me and the two teachers based on the data collected. They were also needed to give opinions on the overall framework of retraining the teachers, which was formed as a result of my discussion with the two teachers. In conclusion, they should act as “a trusted person who asks provocative questions, provides data to be examined through another lens, and offers critique of a person’s work as a friend” (Costa & Kallick, 1993).

Apart from establishing contact with the action research team, I had also established a comfortable relationship with the students by entering their class and teaching them. This was to make sure that my presence was not seen as a threat to them. I told them that I was in their classroom as their teacher. I was there to learn to make their English lesson more interesting, and the two mentors were there to help me and their teachers improve our teaching. This process took place throughout January and February 2011.

In conclusion, the process I went through during “setting the stage” phase has helped me to furnish a context that would stimulate the interest of those involved in this project. By carefully establishing context with the stakeholding groups and the key people, as well as establishing the role of each group member including myself, I managed to establish “authentic relationships” (Herr & Anderson, 2005), which was important for the validity of this study.

3.2.3.2 Conducting the action research

In this collaborative action research, I adapted Stringer's (2004, 2007, 2008) action research of interacting spiral/helix, while bearing in mind McNiff and Whitehead's (2002) advice to take models suggested by scholars only as guidelines for what I hope to achieve throughout this project. Similar to Abdullah (2005), I was aware that in reality, action research process may not be as neat as how it is presented in the models.

The action research process consisted of four recursive cycles of Stringer's (2007) "look, think, and act" framework. The "look" stage was the stage where data on teachers' existing shared reading practice was collected. Meanwhile, the "think" stage was the stage where the data were analysed to identify the problems, and the "act" stage was the phase where action was taken to solve them. My decision to stop at the fourth cycle was made due to my judgement that my project has yielded sufficient learning to my participating teachers (Coghlan & Brannick, 2005). The summary of this action research process is illustrated in the following Figure 3.1.

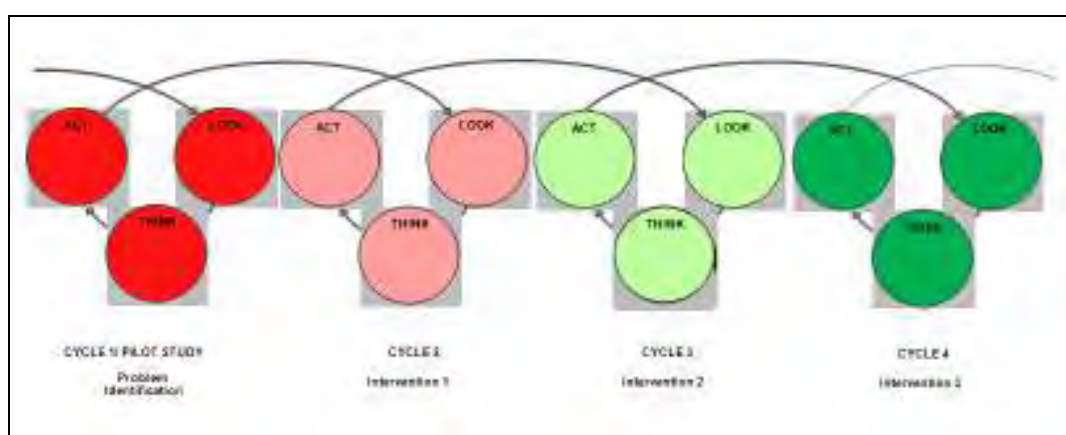


Figure 3.3. Action research cycles, adapted from Stringer's (2004, 2007, 2008) action research of interacting spiral/ helix

Cycle 1 was the initial stage of the whole action research process, which took place from mid January to end of March 2011, prior to my proposal presentation in June 2011. The objectives of this cycle were; 1) to provide well well-grounded understanding of the experience and perspective of the participants regarding their shared reading practice; and 2) to try out the research questions and methodologies. As suggested by Herr and Anderson (2005, p.71), the first cycle also functioned as a 'pilot study' where I started building the structures needed for my study, with the help of my review of literature (see Chapter 2). This cycle was very crucial as it sets the stage for my overall action research project.

To answer the research questions, both teachers were first interviewed. Then, their shared reading sessions (referred to as baseline shared reading throughout this study) were observed, videotaped, and later transcribed verbatim. The observations were then followed by another interview (also videotaped and transcribed), to seek clarification for information obtained during classroom observations. I also took field notes and kept detailed personal journal to record my description of the setting, actions and conversations; and also my reflection - my own thoughts, ideas, questions and concerns based on the observations (Gay & Airasian, 2003). All these data collection methods will be explained in detail in Section 3.3.

The data obtained through the interviews, observations, personal were analysed during the "think" stage of cycle 1, using a combination of pre-set categories and emerging categories (Creswell, 2007). Later, the participating teachers were given the opportunities to analyse their own shared reading practice through guided reflections. The end result for the "think" stage was a set of agreed concepts or ideas

or a shared vision that enabled me and the teachers to understand more clearly the issues confronting their shared reading practice. It served as a platform for us to move on to the “act” stage as well to other cycles.

The final stage for the first cycle was the “act” stage where we brainstormed possible actions that led to a resolution of the issues identified during the “look” and “think” stages. As suggested by Stringer (2007, p.127), we first identified the priorities for our action by identifying the major issue(s) in teachers’ shared reading practice. We had also reviewed other concerns and issues that had emerged from our analysis, and we organized the issue in the order of importance. Finally, we planned a series of steps that enabled us to achieve a resolution to the issues being investigated.

The continuous, recursive "Look, Think, Act" process was repeated in Cycles 2, 3, and 4 to ensure sufficient improvements in teachers’ shared reading practice. At the completion of each cycle, we reviewed (looked again), reflected (re-analysed), and re-acted (modified our actions) in order to ensure that learning process took place and that the teachers’ understanding of the issues being investigated has improved (Stringer, 2007, pp.8-9). The whole process provided a means for us to handle the situations and formulate effective solutions to improve teachers’ shared reading practice.

Figure 3.4 provides an overview of the action research process from the first cycle to the second cycle. I left out the third and fourth cycles as they followed similar process during cycle 2.

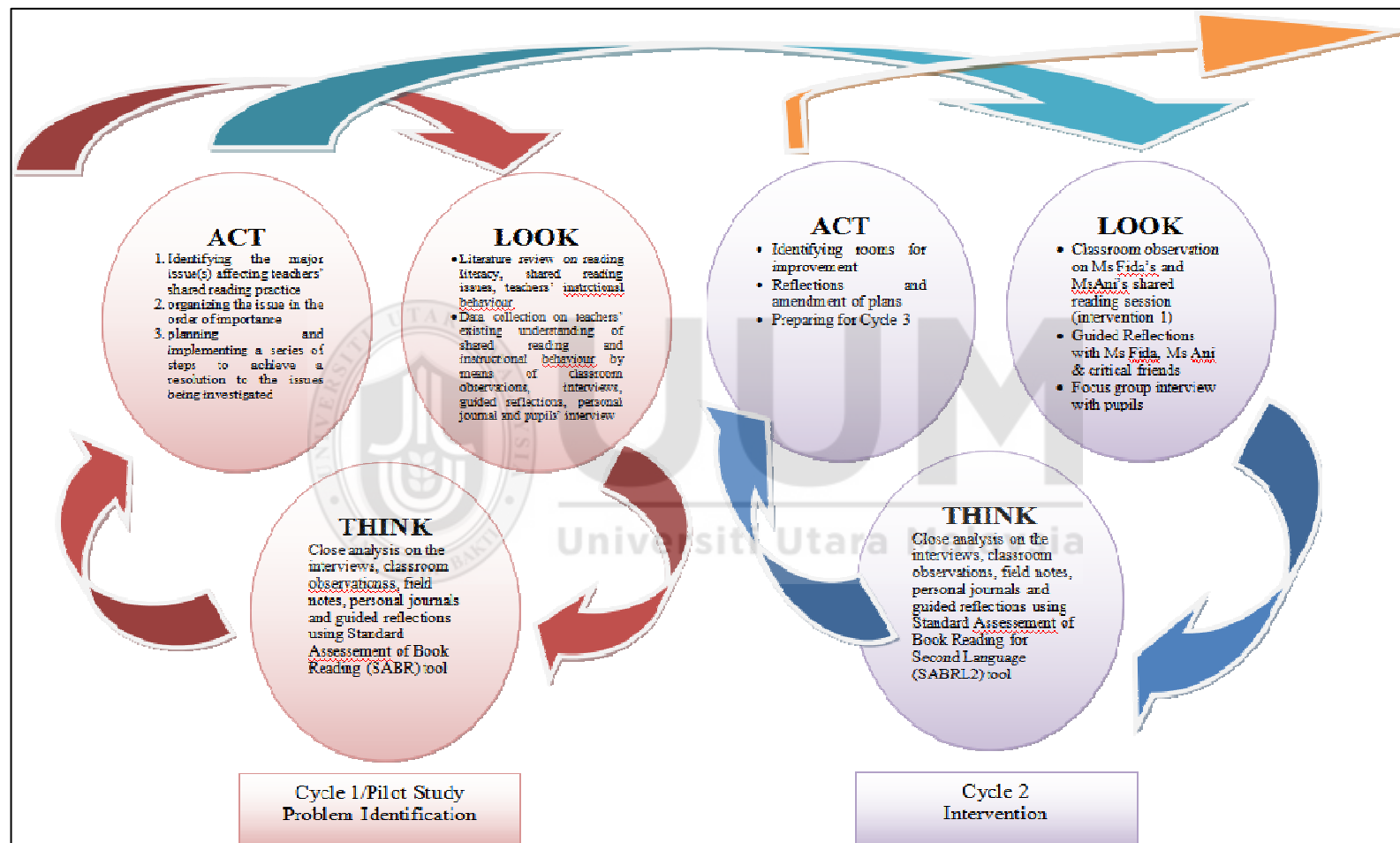


Figure 3.4. A summary of action research plans and cycles

3.3 The Interventions

As indicated earlier in the introduction and purpose of the study (refer Chapter 1), the whole collaboration project was an intervention to solve the issues faced by teachers in their teaching of reading, and in particular their shared reading practice (Coghlan & Branick, 2005). The continuous, recursive “look, think, and act” processes in Stringer’s (2007) action research interacting spiral were themselves interventions. The act of collecting data on the physical arrangement, the reading materials/ texts and the teachers’ instructional behaviour as well as the reflections made on the three areas were interventions made to improve teachers’ shared reading practice. Additionally, opportunities for reflection during each action research cycle have offered many possibilities for improving the participating teachers’ reflective skills. Guidance by the principle researcher and the critical friends on how to reflect effectively, and how to integrate reflection into everyday work efficiently, has helped the teachers see the value of reflection for their daily work in the classroom. They were also able to develop and to communicate the rationale underpinning their teaching practices (McNiff & Whitehead, 2000). Going through a personalised and contextual action research, and enquiry process had given these teachers the opportunity to work on, reflect, and transform their personal theories, assumptions and expectations, develop their reflective processes, and develop a stance of inquiry, which in the end, resulted in a transformative learning. The whole guided reflection processes had involved 5 important steps, as shown in Figure 3.5.

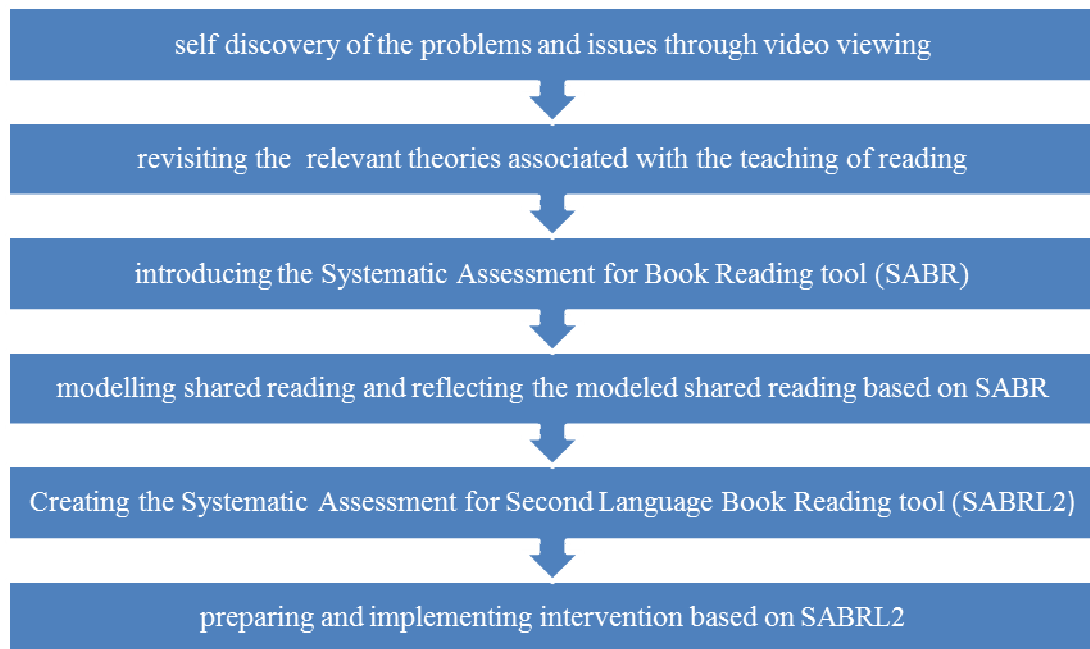


Figure 3.5. Guided reflection processes

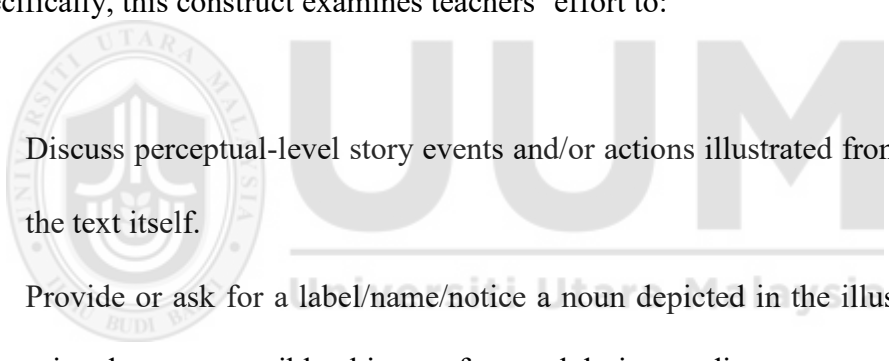
3.3.1 Systematic Assessment of Book Reading: SABR Manual

In this study, the Systematic Assessment of Book Reading (SABR) by Zucker et al. (2010) was initially used as a tool for me to analyse the teachers' existing shared reading practice. It was also utilized as a point of reference for the guided reflection sessions that took place during Cycle 1. The choice of this tool was based on the fact that the teachers' instructional behaviours in supporting the five areas, as described in SABR, were extremely important to produce engaged learners and better readers through shared reading experiences.

As introduced earlier in the review of literature (Chapter 2), the Systematic Assessment of Book Reading: SABR is a systematic observational tool with adequate reliability and validity. It was developed to examine teachers' quantity and quality of conversation during shared reading, particularly in early childhood

classrooms. Specifically, this tool can systematically measure teachers' instructional behaviours within the shared reading context to support pupils' vocabulary and oral language skills (language development), abstract thinking skills, print-related and phonological awareness skills, and elaborative responses to the text. Additionally, it also captures teachers' ability to create a warm and supportive shared reading climate (Pentimonti et al., 2012).

The language development construct measures the extent to which the teacher highlights words during reading and discusses word meanings. This construct includes teachers' effort to develop pupils' vocabulary and oral language. Specifically, this construct examines teachers' effort to:

- 
- (i) Discuss perceptual-level story events and/or actions illustrated from pictures or the text itself.
 - (ii) Provide or ask for a label/name/notice a noun depicted in the illustrations, the printed text, or tangible objects referenced during reading.
 - (iii) Locate a noun and describe characteristics of a noun
 - (iv) Provide a word definition and;
 - (v) Recast, expand, or extend pupils oral language

The abstract thinking construct identifies teachers' ability to demonstrate the use of higher order thinking skills and open-ended questioning to engage children in higher order reading skills' activity such as predicting, hypothesizing, remembering, reasoning, and inferencing on aspects of the book's content. Among others it examines teachers' effort to model or ask pupils to:

- (i) Compare and contrast aspects of illustrations/story events.
- (ii) Make judgments, evaluations, or inferences about the text, events, characters, or illustrations
- (iii) Predict what will occur next in the text or the outcome of a particular event.
- (iv) Provide argument for their explanation and analysis on actions or events in the story.

The elaboration construct assesses teachers' effort to:

- (i) Clarify and elaborate word meanings and pupils' ideas.
- (ii) Encourage pupils' dramatic expansions of the text.
- (iii) Expand on characters' feeling.
- (iv) Relate the text with pupils background knowledge
- (v) Ask pupils to provide word elaboration through contextualization or dramatization.
- (vi) Model or encourage pupils to connect text content with the personal experiences of teachers or pupils.
- (vii) Motivate pupils to pretend or to represent an action/event/ state/feeling/etc. depicted in the text
- (viii) Respond verbally towards pupils' spontaneous initiation in order to expand on the pupils' topic and provide opportunities to repeat/clarify their spontaneous initiation.
- (ix) Utilize feeling words to discuss characters' feelings, to highlight emotion words in the text, or to model her/their own emotive responses to text.

The print/phonological skills construct examines teachers' attempt to include the discussion on:

- (i) Verbal references (questions, directives, comments) regarding the forms and features of the print or book organization.
- (ii) Explicit references to phonology, or the sounds of language (e.g., rhyme, alliteration), are examined within this construct.
- (iii) How books are manipulated and/or how print is organized.
- (iv) Lettersounds in text.

Finally, the session climate construct examines the extent to which teachers:

- (i) Demonstrate enjoyment of reading and respect towards the children during reading.
- (ii) Invite children to manipulate the book during book reading.
- (iii) Use their voicing and dramatic qualities while reading the text

The summary of SABR was presented in Table 3 below. The complete elaboration of SABR tool can be viewed in appendix 2.

Table 3.1

Summary of Systematic Assessment of Book Reading (SABR) Adapted from Zucker, Justice, Piasta, and Kaderavek (2010)

Construct	Codes	Definition
1. Language Development	1a.Describe Story Actions	Teacher discusses perceptual-level story events and/or actions depicted in illustrations or in the printed text
	1b.Label/Locate/ Notice Noun	Teacher provides or asks for a label/name/ notice a noun depicted in the illustrations, the printed text, or tangible objects referenced during reading. Teacher asks child to locate a noun.

Table 3.1 continued

Construct	Codes	Definition
2. Abstract Thinking	1c. Describe Characteristics of Nouns	Teacher describes characteristics of a noun or requires selective analysis of a noun/noun parts.
	1d Word Definition	Teacher asks for or provides a word definition.
	1e Expands/extends child's utterance	Teacher recasts, expands, or extends child's utterance.
	2a Compare and Contrast	Teacher models or asks children to compare and contrast aspects of illustrations/story events
	2b Judgments, Evaluations, and Inferences [I]	Teacher models or asks children to make judgments, evaluations, or inferences about the text, events, characters, or illustrations.
	2c Prediction	Teacher models or asks children to hypothesize what will occur next in the text or the outcome of a particular event.
3. Elaborations	2d Reasoning, Explanation, or Analysis	Teacher models or asks children for reasoning, explanation, or analysis.
	3a Word Elaboration	Teacher asks for or provides a word elaboration through contextualization or dramatization
	3b Text-Life Connection	Teacher models or encourages children to link text content directly to past, present, or future personal experiences of the teacher or children.
	3c Dramatize/ Pretend/ Imitate	Teacher encourages children to pretend or to represent an action/event/ state/feeling/etc. depicted in the text.
	3d Follows child's lead	Teacher follows the topic of child's spontaneous initiation with a contingent verbal response that continues the child's topic or the teacher gives child an opportunity to repeat/clarify their spontaneous initiation, thus acknowledging the child's contribution by giving the child the "floor" to speak.
	3e Emotion Modeling	Teacher uses feeling words to discuss characters' feelings, to highlight emotion words in the text, or to model her/their own emotive responses to text.
4. Print/phonological skills	4a. Book and Print Conventions	Teacher discusses how books are manipulated and/or how print is organized.
	4b. Letter Sounds	Teacher discusses letter sounds in text.
	4c. Letters or Words	Teacher discusses letters or words in text.
5. Session Climate	5a. Models Respect	Teacher models respectful language or respectfully responds to a student's signal.
	5b Positive Feedback	Teacher offers students positive feedback on their input.

3.3.2 The Systematic Assessment of Book Reading for Second Language (SABRL2)

The specific intervention utilised to support teachers' shared reading practice was the Systematic Assessment of Book Reading for Second Language (SABRL2) adapted from the Systematic Assessment of Book Reading (SABR) tool by Zucker et al. (2010). SABRL2 (Table 3.2) retained all constructs in SABR except for the print related and phonological skills and added three new constructs and one subconstruct. The newly added construct were 1) the physical environment 2) teachers' material selection and 3) the use of pupils' first language. The newly added subconstruct was maintaining inspiration and enthusiasm. The whole process of developing SABRL2 will be outlined in Chapter 4, Section 4.7.2.1.

Table 3.2

The Systematic Assessment of Second Language Book Reading

Construct	Codes	Definition
1. Physical environment	1a Teachers' position Pupils' seating arrangement	
2. Material Selection	2a Teachers' choice of text Display of text	Types of text; Size of text; Source of text; Display of text
3. Language Development	3a. Describe Story Actions	Teacher discusses perceptual-level story events and/or actions depicted in illustrations or in the printed text
	3b. Label/Locate/ Notice Noun	Teacher provides or asks for a label/name/notice a noun depicted in the illustrations, the printed text, or tangible objects referenced during reading.
	3c. Describe Characteristics of Nouns	Teacher asks child to locate a noun.
	3d Word Definition	Teacher describes characteristics of a noun or requires selective analysis of a noun/noun parts.
	3e Expands/extends child's utterance	Teacher asks for or provides a word definition.
4. Abstract thinking	4a Compare and Contrast	Teacher recasts, expands, or extends child's utterance.
	4b Judgments, Evaluations, and Inferences	Teacher models or asks children to compare and contrast aspects of illustrations/story events
		Teacher models or asks children to make judgments, evaluations, or inferences about

Table 3.2 continued

Construct	Codes	Definition
5. Elaborations	4c Prediction	the text, events, characters, or illustrations. Teacher models or asks children to hypothesize what will occur next in the text or the outcome of a particular event.
	4d Reasoning, Explanation, or Analysis	Teacher models or asks children for reasoning, explanation, or analysis.
	5a Word Elaboration	Teacher asks for or provides a wordelaboration through contextualization or dramatization
	5b Text-LifeConnection	Teacher models or encourages children to link text content directly to past, present, or future personal experiences of the teacher or children.
	5c Dramatize/Pretend/Imitate	Teacher encourages children to pretend or to represent an action/event/ state/feeling/etc. depicted in the text.
6.Selective use of first language	5d Follows child's lead	Teacher follows the topic of child's spontaneous initiation with a contingent verbal response that continues the child's topic or the teacher gives child an opportunity to repeat/clarify their spontaneous initiation, thus acknowledging the child's contribution by giving the child the "floor" to speak.
	5e Emotion Modeling	Teacher uses feeling words to discuss characters' feelings, to highlight emotion words in the text, or to model her/their own emotive responses to text.
	6a Appropriate use of first language	Scaffolding pupils using first language without displacing English as the main medium of discussion
7. Session Climate	7a Models Respect	Teacher models respectful language or respectfully responds to a student's signal.
	7b Positive Feedback	Teacher offers students positive feedback on their input. Teacher's ability to: - add feeling and emotion to the text/ to convey the writer's feeling through the use of prosodic features and non verbal language - make use of different voices for different characters -use voice to create the atmosphere or tension as the story progresses. - Use gestures and facial expressions add much to the visualization of the story. -Repeat and exaggerate the story to make it more dramatic.
	7c Maintaining inspiration and enthusiasm	

3.4 Data Gathering Techniques

Data gathering took place throughout the four cycles of this action research project during the “look” phase. Data were gathered from a variety of sources, namely literature review, teachers’ interview, classroom observations, guided reflection, researcher’s reflective journal, and pupils’ focus interview. All interviews, classroom discourse (from the observations) and guided reflections were videotaped and transcribed verbatim. The main aim of gathering information from various sources was to extend understanding and provide diverse perspectives on the issue being investigated. The method of gathering data from various data collection is called triangulation (Denzin, 1970). The decision to use these instruments stemmed from the research question laid out in Chapter 1.

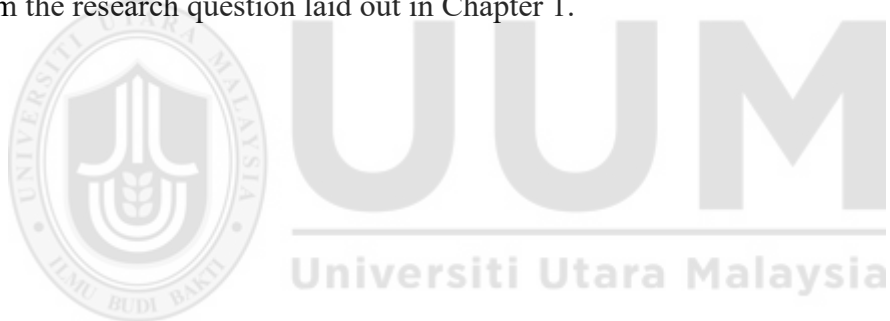


Table 3.3

Data Gathering Techniques Used in the Study

RESEARCH QUESTION	Literature Review	Observation Transcription	Teachers' Interview Transcription	Pupils' Interview Transcription	Reflective Journal	Guided Reflection Transcription
1. What is teachers' existing understanding of shared reading?	X	X	X	X	X	X
2. What is the nature of teachers' instructional behaviour when conducting shared reading?	X	X	X	X	X	X
3. To what extent does the collaborative action research able to improve the participating primary ESL teacher's understanding of shared reading?		X		X	X	X
4. To what extent does the intervention designed in a collaborative action research, able to improve a primary ESL teacher's instructional behaviour when conducting shared reading?		X		X	X	X

3.4.1 Literature Review: Evidences from Research Studies

In an action research, “the literature” is positioned quite differently from that in a traditional research. It serves as a source of information (apart from the perspectives of the stakeholders and observations) that is particularly important, especially at the preliminary stage of the research, to enable the researcher to extend the understanding on the issue being investigated (Stringer, 2008). In this study, the literature provided me with information regarding the different patterns in teachers’ instructional behaviour during shared reading. This knowledge was used as a starting point for my baseline observations during the first cycle.

3.4.2 Classroom Observations

Observation is the process of gathering open-ended, first hand information by observing people and places at a research site. It allows the researcher to record the actual behaviour of the participants in a natural setting (Creswell, 2008) and provides opportunities to gain clearer picture of the research context. It is essential because “it enables researchers to document and reflect systematically upon classroom interactions and events, as they actually occur rather than as we think they occur” (Burns, 1999, p.80). It enabled me to build an understanding of the way they go about conducting shared reading, before and throughout the collaboration. Furthermore, it had also provided me with opportunities to engage in interviews and conversations (during guided reflections) that extend the pool of information about their practice (Stringer, 2007).

In this study, classroom observations took place during the first cycle until the final cycle of this action research. They took place 10 times – 5 for each teacher. Each teacher was observed twice during Cycle 1 and one time for Cycles 2, 3, and 4 respectively. The observations for Cycle 1 were referred to as baseline observations (McKeown & Beck, 2003) where data on teachers' existing shared reading practice were collected. The flow of the observations process for both teachers is depicted in figure 3.6.

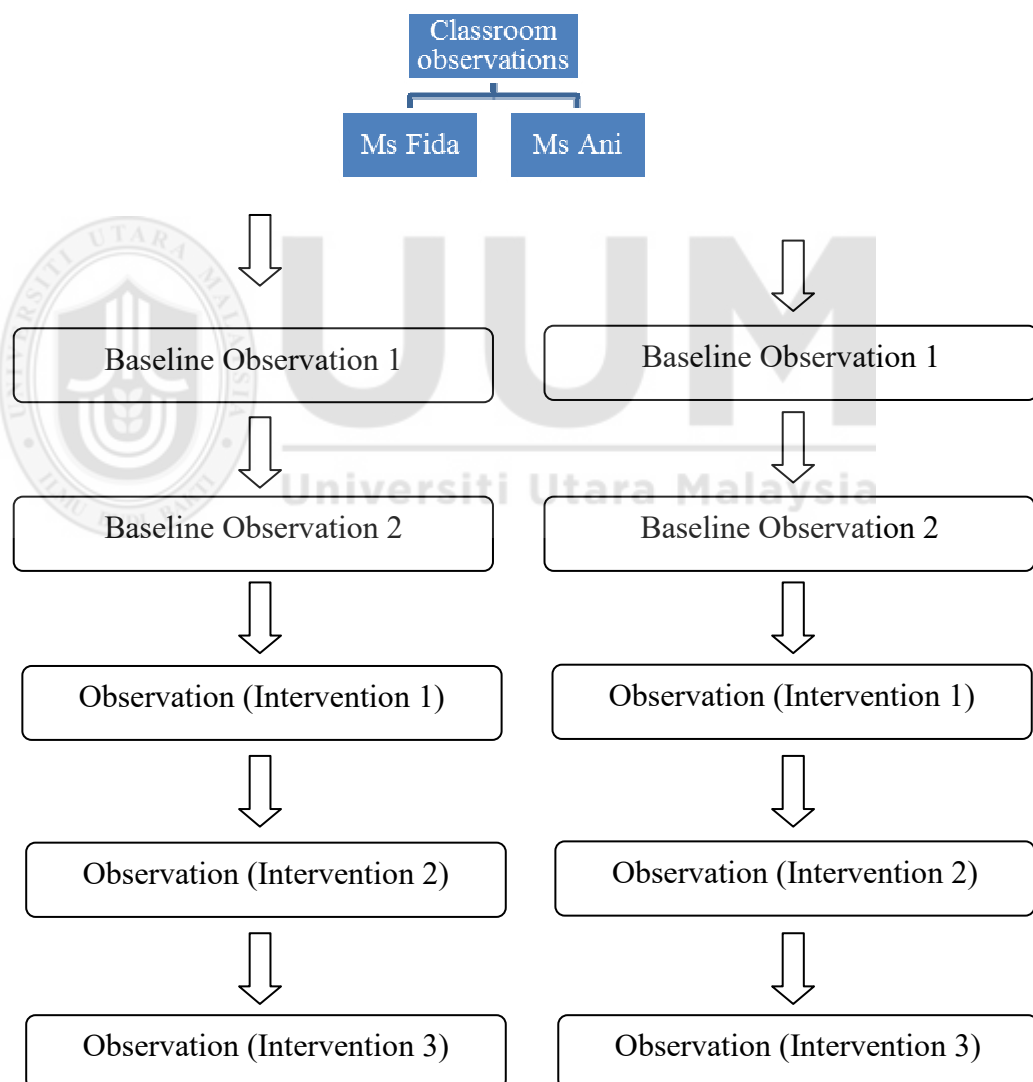


Figure 3.6. The flow of the observations process

The purpose of the multiple observations over time was to obtain the best understanding of the nature of teachers' shared reading practice (Creswell, 2008). The focus was on the teachers' and students' behaviours, from the moment the text became the focus of conversation until the book was no longer discussed or children transitioned to a new activity. The main focus of these observations was the nature of the teachers' shared reading practice, which includes the seating arrangement, the text used for the session, and the instructional behaviour of the teacher.

Teachers and students' discourse during classroom observation was videotaped for analysis. Videotapes provide a powerful record of events and activities that will be used during guided reflection with the teachers. During classroom observations, I noted down my comments on the activities and later transferred to my reflective journal. Questions that I need to clarify with the teachers and ideas about what was observed were also noted down in my journal to assist me in my dialogic reflection with the teachers following the classroom observations (Gay & Airisian, 2003).

3.4.3 Interviews

In a collaborative action research, interviews are characterized as informal conversations that provide the opportunities for the researcher cum the facilitator to explore participants' experience regarding the issue investigated (Stringer, 2007). The informality allows participants to express their real feelings and thoughts.

3.4.3.1 Teachers' Interview

In this study, especially during Cycle 1, teachers were allowed to describe the way(s) they think shared reading should be conducted with their pupils. I listened attentively to their rationale for their physical environment, their choice of text, and their instructional behaviour. I made sure that my questions were nonleading and free from implied judgement or embedded criticism so as to avoid the teachers to be influenced by the way I perceived the whole issue.

The first interview for each teacher was conducted before their first baseline observation. The purpose was to obtain information about the teachers' background, their belief about how children learn and how they should be taught, and their knowledge about shared reading practice. The second interview was also done with the individual teacher right after the first baseline observation. The purpose was to explore the teachers' existing shared reading patterns, and how they affect student-teacher interaction. Each individual session lasted for approximately forty-five minutes to one and a half hours. The final interview session for both teachers took place after their second baseline observations. Altogether, there were six interviews conducted. The interview schedule is presented in table 3.4.

Table 3.4

Interview Schedule

Interview	Time	Purpose
1	Before Ms Fida's baseline observation 1	To obtain information about the teachers' background, their belief about how children learn and how they should be taught, and their knowledge about shared reading practice.
2	Before Ms Ani's baseline observation 1	
3	After Ms Fida's	

Table 3.4 continued

Interview	Time	Purpose
3	baseline observation 1	understanding of shared reading practice and their existing shared
4	After Ms Ani's baseline observation 1	reading patterns/ instructional behaviour, and how they affect student-teacher interaction.
5	After Ms Fida's baseline observation 2	to further explore the teachers' understanding of shared reading practice and their existing shared
6	After Ms Ani's baseline observation 2	reading patterns/ instructional behaviour, and how they affect student-teacher interaction.

Although a list of questions and topics of discussion were prepared in advance, the interviews were somewhat free-flowing, which allowed for an open and honest conversation to unfold. I asked the teachers to clarify and justify their actions during their shared reading sessions, to check the veracity of my own observations (Stringer, 2007, p.77). This was to make sure that the process of analysing and reflecting become “conflated” (Burns, 1999, p.38). Information was gained directly from the participants and not tainted by my own perspectives, biases, or experiences as a teacher educator cum researcher. It was very important for me to make sure that the problems identified were genuinely by the teachers’ as interpreted by them.

3.4.3.2 Pupils’ Focus Group Interview

Focus group interviews were used to collect shared understanding from several individuals as well as to get views from specific people (Creswell, 2005). Focus group interviews were conducted with a few selected students after each observation. The purpose of these interviews was to gain insights on the teachers’ shared reading practice particularly with regards to the text used, the seating arrangement and the

teachers' instructional behaviour from the students' points of view. This included the opportunities for them to have active interactions during shared reading, and their understanding of the texts being read to them. Students were also asked on their enjoyment level, prior and after the intervention.

Out of 84 pupils who participated in this study, 10 pupils were chosen for focus group interview. 5 pupils were from class 5K and another five from 5S. These pupils were chosen based on the recommendation made by their teachers. According to the teachers, these pupils were able to give their opinion as they were quite extrovert and not shy. Based on my observation, they were also the one who always participated in class.

Table 3.5

Profile of Pupils' Focused Group Interviews

Pupil	Class	Gender
A	5K	Girl
B	5K	Girl
C	5K	Girl
D	5K	Boy
E	5K	Boy
F	5S	Boy
G	5S	Boy
H	5S	Girl
I	5S	Girl
J	5S	Boy

3.4.4 Guided Reflections

Guided reflections functioned as a way of looking back at the participating teachers' experiences in conducting shared reading. They aimed to help the teachers in the process of self-examining and evaluating their own teaching by collecting data or evidence related to their work, and then, reflect on this evidence to make informed

decisions about their practice (Farrell, 2012), based on the work of Dewey (1933), and Schon (1983). Guided reflection takes place when the teacher is assisted by a mentor or in a process of self-enquiry, development, and learning through reflection in order to effectively realise one's vision of practice and self as a lived reality. Guided reflections allow researchers to understand the natural world of the participants, as they are able to describe the issue being investigated from their own perspective. They also allow participants to revisit and reflect events in their lives, and as a result, extend their understanding of their own experience (Stringer, 2007). Guided reflections also solve the problem of the participating teachers who complained about not having enough time to reflect, and her lack of knowledge on how to reflect.

A total of nine guided reflections were conducted in this study. The first and second guided reflections were undertaken with each teacher during Cycle 1 following their second baseline observations and interview sessions. The purpose of this guided reflection was to reflect on teacher's shared reading personally without the interference of another participant. Through this session, I was able to highlight certain issues in individual teacher's shared reading practice without being influenced by her colleague. The third guided reflection was held in groups after we had viewed the video of the first and the second baseline lessons of each teacher. The purpose of this reflection was to allow the two teachers to reflect on their colleague's shared reading practice. It had also provided the opportunities for clarification of certain problems arisen from the classroom observations. The fourth guided reflection was conducted together with the language mentors (as critical friends) after viewing all of the baseline observation videos. The purpose of including the critical

friends at this stage was to obtain more perspectives on teachers shared reading practice.

The fifth guided reflection took place following my modelling of sharing shared reading in 5S classroom (see section 4.5.1). It was conducted in a team consisting of myself, the participating teachers, and the critical friends with the aim to examine and evaluate my shared reading session using the SABR tool. The strengths and weaknesses of the session were discussed thoroughly. The sixth session was held before we move to Cycle 2 in order to discuss the possible intervention. The remaining three guided reflections were conducted immediately after the classroom observations during Cycles 2, 3, and 4. They were conducted to allow for dialogic discussions to take place among the team members. The focus of the dialogic discussions was to further identify any problems in teachers' shared reading pattern that hinder active student-teacher interaction and to find solutions for them. To help us remain focused, the guided reflections were based on the Systematic Assessment of Book Reading: SABR tool by Justice et al. (2010).

During each of the group sessions, I acted as a facilitator and participant rather than an expert. Conversations, although guided, were allowed to meander along the teachers' interest to ensure that each individual felt like a part of the research process and that their input was valued. This technique allowed each participant to focus on aspects of the research that were of interest to them.

A summary of the whole guided reflection schedule is illustrated in table 3.6.

Table 3.6

The Guided Reflection Schedule

Guided Reflection	Time	People Involved	Purpose
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After Ms Fida's Baseline observation 1 	Researcher Ms Fida	to provide well-grounded understanding of the experience and perspective of participants regarding their nature of shared reading practice.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After Ms Ani's Baseline observation 1 	Researcher Ms Ani	
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After Ms Fida and Ms Ani's Baseline observation 2 	Researcher Ms Fida Ms Ani	To create awareness among the teachers on the interactive shared reading practice
4	After viewing Ms Fida's video tape of baseline 1 and 2	Researcher Ms Fida Ms Ani 2 critical friends	To create awareness among the teachers on the interactive shared reading practice
5	After modelled shared reading session by the researcher	Researcher Ms Fida Ms Ani 2 critical friends	To create awareness among the teachers on the interactive shared reading practice
6	Before Cycle 2 (After viewing video of exemplary shared reading session from youtube)	Researcher Ms Fida Ms Ani 2 critical friends	To prepare and implement intervention based on knowledge gained from video of exemplary teacher from youtube and earlier reflections.
7	After intervention 1 (Cycle 2)	Researcher Ms Fida Ms Ani 2 critical friends	To reflect on teachers' learning after the first intervention To discuss improvement for intervention 2
8	After intervention 2 (Cycle 3)	Researcher Ms Fida Ms Ani	To reflect on teachers' learning after the second intervention To discuss improvement for intervention 3
9	After intervention 3 (Cycle 4)	Researcher Ms Fida Ms Ani 2 critical friends	To reflect on teachers' learning after the third intervention To discuss future direction

3.4.5 Self-Reflective Journals

Keeping self-reflective journals is a strategy that can help a researcher to systematically and critically reflect on his or her observations on the area being researched, and on the research processes and practices (Gay & Airasian, 2003). As the initiator of this collaborative action research project, I kept two types of personal journal. One was a reflective journal that I had kept a year before the beginning of my doctoral study, which I referred to as my “pre-research” journal. The other was a research journal that I began keeping at the beginning of my doctoral study, in which I documented the research processes and my practices as a researcher, and reflected critically on those processes and practices. I kept detailed personal journal to record my description of the setting, actions and conversations; and also my reflection -my own thoughts, ideas, questions and concerns based on the observations (Gay & Airasian, 2003). Both documents helped me in the process of remembering events and experiences, describing and interpreting situations, developing ideas, questions and goals, and reminding me of my position within the research. They were also meant to clarify and supplement the digital recordings of the classroom observations.

3.5 Data Analysis

In order to answer the research questions in all the four cycles in this Collaborative Action Research, the data obtained via literature review, transcribed classroom discourse from the shared reading observations, transcribed teachers and pupils' interviews, video and audi-taped guided reflection and self reflective journal, was analyzed using thematic analysis. The purpose of thematic analysis is to identify patterns of meaning across a dataset that provide an answer to the research question

being addressed. Patterns are identified through a rigorous process of data familiarisation, data coding, and theme development and revision.(Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Braun & Clarke, 2006). The codes and themes generation was done using two main approaches: a priori and grounded. The priori codes were generated from Zucker et al. (2010) Systematic Assessment of Book Reading: SARR Manual (see explanation in section 3.3). In contrast, grounded codes or additional themes were generated from the data themselves. The analysis was done using the computer-aided qualitative data analysis software or commonly known as CAQDAs, which is ATLAS.ti version 7.5.

3.5.1 Cycle 1: Research Question 1

In answering research question 1, that is “What is teachers’ existing understanding of shared reading”, my coding process was based on the definition and purpose(s) of conducting shared reading, reading materials and the physical environment (seating arrangement). This is due to the reason that teachers’ understanding of shared reading is reflected by their ability to understand the nature of the activity and the criteria for examining the quality of shared reading. To avoid viewing events through my own perspectives, I applied the “verbatim principle” in which I used the term and concepts drawn from the words of the participant themselves (Stringer, 2007).

3.5.2 Cycle 1: Research Question 2

The priori codes generated from Zucker et al.’s (2010) Systematic Assessment of Book Reading (SABR) was used in answering research question 2, that is “What is the nature of teachers’ instructional behaviour when conducting shared reading?”

SABR is a systematic observational tool with adequate reliability and validity. It was developed to examine teachers' quantity and quality of conversation during shared reading, particularly in early childhood classrooms. Teachers' instructional behaviours were coded based on five constructs specified in this tool which are teachers' instructional behaviours to support pupils' vocabulary and oral language skills (language development), abstract thinking skills, print-related and phonological awareness skills, and elaborative responses to the text. Additionally, it also captures teachers' ability to create a warm and supportive shared reading climate (Pentimonti et al., 2012). The codes were then examined and categorized according to themes to signify broader patterns of meaning (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Clarke & Braun, 2013).

3.5.3 Cycles 2, 3 and 4: Research Questions 1 and 2

The codes and themes generation for cycle 2 until cycle 4 was done using Systematic Assessment of Book Reading for Second Language (SABRL2) adapted from SABR. The SABRL2 was based on the results obtained for Cycle 1 and the dialogic discussion among the research team that took place during guided reflections. SABRL2 retained the four main constructs in SABR which are the language development, abstract thinking skills, elaboration and session climate. One construct – the print phonological skills was dropped and three new constructs and one subconstruct were added. The three new constructs were 1) teachers' materials selection 2) seating arrangement and 3) the use of pupils' first language to the construct "session climate" i.e. maintaining inspiration and enthusiasm. The details and reasons for this modification are discussed in sections 4.7.1, 4.7.2 and 4.7.3.

3.5.4 ATLAS.ti version 7.5

Atlas.ti software was used as an aid in developing the codes and categories, linking overall themes and events, and analysing the research memos. Atlas.ti belongs to the genre of CAQDAS (computer-aided qualitative data analysis software). The software was used legally as I obtained the licence for my personal analysis of data. Furthermore, it was adequate for the purpose of the research, as it came with speedier learning curve compared to the other softwares within the same category of CAQDAs. On top of that, it made the process of analysing qualitative data more efficient and systematic and consequently increased the validity of research results (Friese, 2014). The analysis was made more organized through the features offered namely codes, quotes memos and outputs. Figure 3.6 shows the screenshot for the interface of ATLAS.ti version 7.5.



Figure 3.7. The interface of ATLAS.ti version 7.5

The diagram below (figure 3.8) shows the process I went through in conducting my thematic analysis of data using ATLAS.ti.

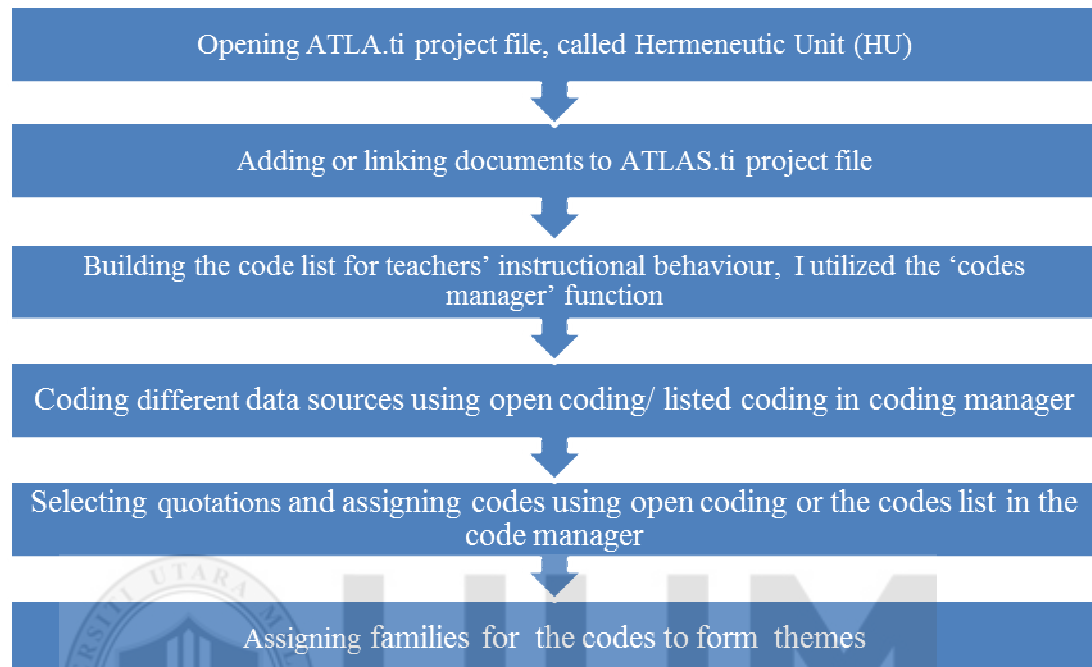


Figure 3.8. Process in thematic analysis of data

In building the code list for teachers' instructional behaviour, I utilized the 'codes manager' function in ATLAS.ti. (Figure 3.9).

The screenshot shows a software window titled "Code Manager [HU: cycle 1]". It has a menu bar with "Codes", "Edit", "Miscellaneous", "Output", and "View". Below the menu is a toolbar with various icons. On the left, there is a "Families" pane with a tree view showing categories like "Abstract Thinking (4)", "Appropriateness (2)", "Elaborations (5)", "Language development (5)", "Level of abstraction for pupil utterance", "Pupil's language production (3)", and "Session climate (2)". The main area is a table with columns: "Name", "Gro...", "De...", "Author", "Created", "Modified", and "Families". The table lists various codes such as "1a.Describe Story", "1b.Label/Locate...", "1c.Describe", "1d.Word definiti...", "1e.Expands/este...", "2a.compare and...", "2b.judgement...", "2c.predictions", "2d.Reascribing explanations / analysis per...", "3a.Word elabor...", "3b.text-life con...", "3c.dramatize/pr...", "3d.follows child...", "3e.emotion mo...", and "4a.models respo...". Each code has associated numerical values and is assigned to one or more families.

Name	Gro...	De...	Author	Created	Modified	Families
1a.Describe Story	43	0	Super	31/05/20...	14/06/20...	Language development
1b.Label/Locate/	14	0	Super	31/05/20...	14/06/20...	Language development
1c.Describe	11	0	Super	31/05/20...	14/06/20...	Language development
1d.Word definiti...	26	0	Super	31/05/20...	14/06/20...	Language development
1e.Expands/este...	18	0	Super	31/05/20...	14/06/20...	Language development
2a.compare and...	7	0	Super	31/05/20...	14/06/20...	Abstract Thinking
2b.judgement...	4	0	Super	31/05/20...	14/06/20...	Abstract Thinking
2c.predictions	8	0	Super	31/05/20...	14/06/20...	Abstract Thinking
2d.Reascribing explanations / analysis per...				31/05/20...	14/06/20...	Abstract Thinking
3a.Word elabor...	0	0	Super	05/06/20...	14/06/20...	Elaborations
3b.text-life con...	12	0	Super	05/06/20...	14/06/20...	Elaborations
3c.dramatize/pr...	16	0	Super	05/06/20...	14/06/20...	Elaborations
3d.follows child...	0	0	Super	05/06/20...	14/06/20...	Elaborations
3e.emotion mo...	0	0	Super	05/06/20...	14/06/20...	Elaborations
4a.models respo...	0	0	Super	05/06/20...	14/06/20...	Session climate

Figure 3.9. The code list for research question 2 based on the Systematic Assessment of Book Reading (SABR)

Once added as codes to the project, I then approached the data deductively and linked the important segments in the data to specific codes which are relevant to them. As the data was coded deductively, I also came across new themes and ideas, hence I also started to code inductively (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2008). Later, in order to form themes from the codes, I assigned families for each code using the family manager.

3.6 Research Setting

This research was carried out in Sekolah Kebangsaan Ayer Hitam (SKAH) - the primary school where the participating teachers were teaching when this study was conducted. SKAH was a public national school located in a small town in the Kota Setar District. It is a one-session daily school. The school was categorized as a type A school with pupil enrolment of around 1,000. The ethnic makeup of the student

population during the 2011 school year was 100% Malay. The average number of students per class is 40. The school is fully equipped proper classrooms and Self Access Learning Centre (SAC). 5% of the teachers have a Master's degree, 25% own a Bachelor's degree, 56% have a Diploma, and 14% have Certificates. Most teachers were used to having visitors to the school due to the status of the teaching school. In fact, at the time when this study was conducted, there was another project going on involving the teachers and lecturers of the teacher-training institute. This research specifically involved two teachers and their students in 5S and 5K classes, which consisted of 42 Malay pupils respectively. Both classes were chosen because the participants of this study were teaching English Language subject to the pupils.

Coincidentally, the school was affiliated with a teacher-training institute as an adopted school or better known as 'teaching school' since 2004. The selection of this school was in line with the aims of the 'teaching school' programme proposed by the Malaysian Teacher's Training Institute (IPGM). The programme is the Malaysia's showcase for its educational excellence in the area of school and classroom management. The aim of this programme was to encourage direct collaboration between teacher's training institutes and the selected schools in order to solve issues regarding teaching and learning problems. In addition it also encouraged team teaching among teachers, trainee teachers and teacher educators (refer Appendix 13 for Kertas Cadangan Pelaksanaan 'Teaching School' di Maktab Perguruan Malaysia). The roles of teacher educators from the teacher's training institutes in this programme were among others:

- (i) To improve teachers' pedagogical skills

- (ii) To guide teachers in research and teaching and learning innovation
- (iii) To carry out the teaching and learning process together with the teachers
- (iv) To guide teachers in their professional teaching development

The research setting was selected based on convenience sampling which is based on the sample are the easiest to access (Gay & Airasian, 2003). In addition, the researcher did not consider selecting the school to represent the entire population of the primary schools in Malaysia as the main aim of this study is to explore and support teachers' shared reading practice through collaborative action research.

3.6.1 The Pupils

The pupils were 11 years old when this study was carried out. Their first language was Bahasa Melayu. Overall, the students in both classes were passive, reluctant to speak, and have low self esteem and confidence in English class. Table 3.7 indicates the pupils' profile.

Table 3.7

<i>Pupils' Profile</i>		
<i>Class</i>	<i>Number of pupils</i>	<i>English Teacher</i>
5K	42 (20 girls ,12 boys)	Ms Ani
5S	42 (18 girls, 24 boys)	Ms Fida

3.7 Research Team

The research team comprises of me as the principal researcher, two primary ESL teachers, and two critical friends or validation group.

Table 3.8

The Research Team

Team Member	Gender	Age	Affiliation	Qualification	Number of teaching Experience
The principle research	Female	41	Teacher Educator	B.Ed TESL M.A Linguistics and English Language Studies Diploma in TESL	17 years
Teacher 1 – Ms Ani	Female	45	English Teacher/ Head of English Panel	Bachelor's degree in English Literature and Language Studies Diploma in Business Studies	21 years
Teacher 2 – Ms Fida	Female	34	English Teacher	Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration Diploma in Education (English Language Studies) Master's degree in Educational Psychology Bachelor's Degree in Mathematics	8 years
Critical Friend 1	Female		Language Mentor in Native Speaker Programme	Master's degree in Curriculum and Design with a concentration on Second Language Acquisition	6 years
Critical Friend 2	Male		Language Mentor in Native Speaker Programme	Bachelor Degree in English	20 years

3.7.1 The Principle Researcher: Personal and Professional Contexts

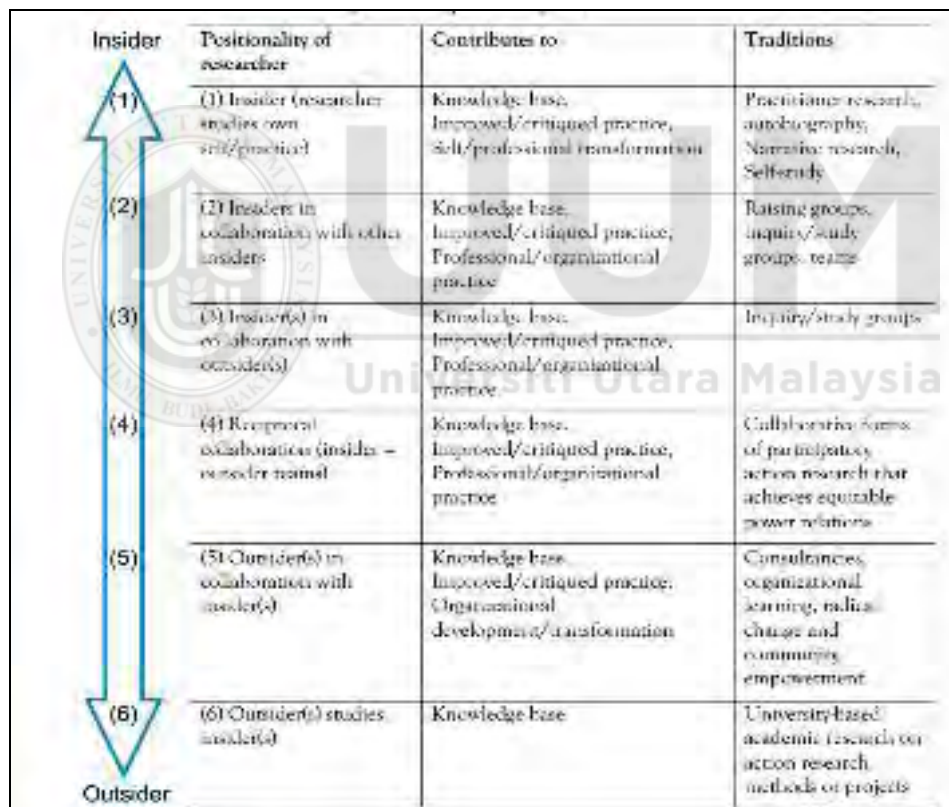
I started my career as a secondary school teacher back in 1994 after obtaining my Bachelor's Degree in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL). Apart from teaching English to Form 1 to Form 5 students, I was also involved in training other teachers in areas, such as the teaching of literature, as well as English for Science and Technology. I have also conducted workshops for teachers to facilitate their professional growth in the teaching of English.

After eight years in school, in 2002, I started my career as a teacher educator in a teacher-training institute. I was responsible to train both primary ESL pre-service and in-service teachers. Basically, my job was to teach them the methodology for teaching ESL to young learners. This included the teaching of all skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. I was also responsible to supervise my student teachers' teaching practice.

My core business also included conducting professional development courses to in-service teachers. My experience in supporting teachers began in 2003 when the Malaysian educational system started implementing a policy that made English as the medium of instruction for Mathematics and Sciences in primary and secondary schools. I have been facilitating teachers through courses like the Language Immersion Programme, Conversion Programme, and Buddy Support Programme to support the government's policy. I was also involved in the preparation of action research module at my college. My vast experience in supporting pre-service and in-service teachers justified my capability to become a facilitator in this study.

3.7.1.1 My Position in This Study

An underlying and influencing factor on action research is the issue of positionality, i.e., the position a researcher takes to the setting under study. Positionality is in fact a continuum, ranging from being an insider to being an outsider (Figure 3.10), and deserves special attention in my study because the degree to which I position myself as an insider or outsider, to the setting under study will determine how I frame the epistemological, methodological, and ethical issues in my dissertation (Herr & Anderson, 2005).



	Positionality of researcher	Contributes to	Traditions
(1)	(1) Insider (researcher studies own self/practice)	Knowledge base, Improved/critiqued practice, Self/professional transformation	Practitioner research, autobiography, Narrative research, Self-study
(2)	(2) Insider in collaboration with other insiders	Knowledge base, Improved/critiqued practice, Professional/organizational practice	Raising groups, inquiry/study groups, teams
(3)	(3) Insider(s) in collaboration with outsider(s)	Knowledge base, Improved/critiqued practice, Professional/organizational practice	Inquiry/study groups
(4)	(4) Reciprocal collaboration (insider – outsider named)	Knowledge base, Improved/critiqued practice, Professional/organizational practice	Collaborative forms of participatory action research that achieves equitable power relations
(5)	(5) Outsider(s) in collaboration with insider(s)	Knowledge base, Improved/critiqued practice, Organizational development/transformation	Consultancies, organizational learning, radical change and community empowerment
(6)	(6) Outsider(s) studies insider(s)	Knowledge base	University-based academic research on action research methods or projects

Figure 3.10. Continuum and implications of positionality, adapted from Herr and Anderson (2005)

On the continuum of positionality, as illustrated by Herr and Anderson (2005, p.31), I positioned myself close to level 5 - outsider(s) in collaboration with insider(s). I

mentioned close because there was ambiguity in my position. I was an outsider, yet not a complete outsider to this setting. The fact that we were working under the same Ministry of Education, and that I was also an ESL teacher for 8 years in 3 secondary schools in Malaysia, gave me the same “insider” status. School building, crowded classrooms, teacher’s routine and students who were reluctant to participate were not something strange to me. The situations faced by the teachers were close to those I had personally experienced. The informal conversations I had with the teachers revealed some similarities between us. The system we worked in was the same – an exam oriented system. In addition, the heavy workload was similar. I was saddled with clerical chores, so did the teachers. We also shared similar problems in terms of integrating theory and practice. We attended courses and always ended up not knowing how to implement what we learned during the course in our own classroom because there was nobody to support us. Most of the time, like me, the teachers were sceptical with whatever introduced by the Ministry of Education.

However, as a teacher educator cum a researcher who initiated the collaboration, I was an outsider to the teachers and the school administration. As someone who has never had an experience teaching primary school in particular, I was an outsider to the setting. I was also totally new to the students as they were to me.

This complexity of positionality was an advantage to me. My “insider” status, to a certain extent, turned me into a welcoming outsider. The similarities that I shared with the teachers made them feel that I was part of them. I was not an outsider to be afraid of. I was there in their territory to support and facilitate them, not to burden them with more work or to threaten them. My plan was to act as a catalyst to the

teachers who were unlikely to have the time or energy to devote to an inquiry due to their tight schedule.

Although I was the initiator to this project, as an outsider, I did not enter this collaboration with an expert mindset. I was an active participant who brought along my own philosophy, experience and understanding to the research. At the same time, I also acknowledged the participating teachers' existing knowledge and values. My aim was to establish a working relationship that combined both my expertise and the teachers' experience as primary ESL teachers. My role was more of a critical friend who supported the teachers. There was no issue of power and authority in this relationship, which impedes the development of the teacher-researchers' reflective and learning capacity (Kember et al., 1997).

Following Cornwall's (1996) continuum of purposes in the Participatory Action Research, as presented by Herr and Anderson (2005, p.40), my mode of participation throughout the 4 cycles (Figure 3.11) moved from cooperation (local people work with outsiders to determine priorities; responsibility remains with outsiders for directing the process) to co-learning (local people and outsiders share their knowledge to create new understanding and work together to form action plans, with outsider facilitation).

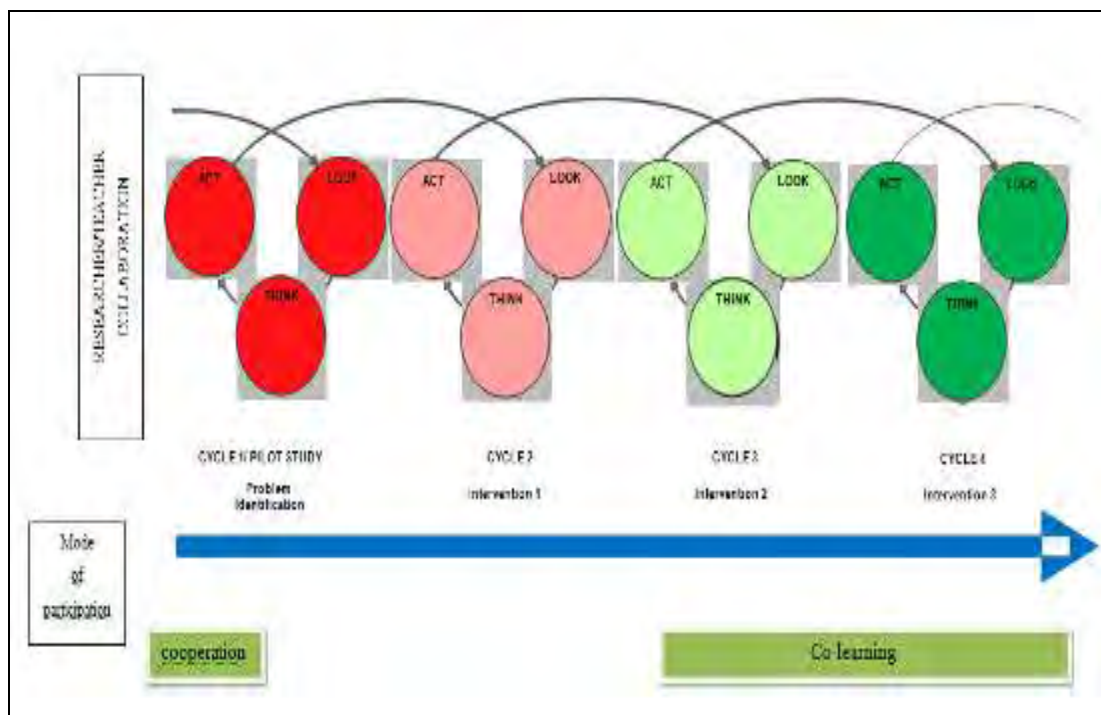


Figure 3.11. Mode of participation throughout the 4 Cycles

3.7.2 The Participating Teachers

The two teachers who volunteered to join this project were Ms Ani and Ms Fida (pseudonyms, as are all names in this study). Both were experienced teachers. Both teachers have expressed their willingness to examine their shared reading practice by participating in my action research project. They were very keen to examine and enhance their shared reading skills. This type of sampling, where the researcher selects participants on a voluntary basis, is called “convenience sampling” (Creswell, 2005, p.149) or “self-selection” (Burns, 1999, p.217).

Ms Ani was a Chinese Muslim woman, married, in her mid-40s, with four children. She was in her 21st year of teaching. She was the head of the school’s English Language panel. She has been teaching in that school for 6 years. She started teaching after obtaining her Diploma in TESL from Universiti Malaya (UM) in 1995. She also

possessed a Bachelor's degree in English Literature and Language Studies, awarded by University Sains Malaysia (USM) in 2003.

Ms Ani considered herself a very hard working teacher and took her career seriously. She was willing to participate in this action research project because she had always wanted someone to observe her teaching, point out her mistakes, and help her to improve her practice. She was very disappointed with the inspectorate who observed her but ended up not discussing her strengths and weaknesses. Her frustration with the type of observation and her willingness to join this project is evident in the following excerpt:

The inspectorate, when they came, they will observe you, they were very serious. They praised you after you teach in general but I don't know what is my strength, or my weaknesses. It made me think that I'm already good but surprisingly, during the staff meeting, the Headmistress mentioned that the inspectorate said there were a few weaknesses in my teaching. I'm looking forward to this kind of activity where you come and observe me, and discuss my strength and weaknesses with me. I really need someone to reflect with me.

(Ms Ani, Interview 1, January, 2011)

In addition to being hard working, she also considered herself to be a very strict and serious teacher during her teaching as she believed that English is one of the toughest subject for pupils in rural schools, like the school she was currently attached to. Ms Ani indicated that if she is not serious, then the pupils will take learning for granted. Her main concern was always her pupils' performance in examination, as suggested below:

I am very strict, and I am very serious too. 'Budak-budak ni kalau kita tak serius mereka akan main-main' (These kids will goof around if we are not serious). They will not pay attention in class. I am preparing them for their exams, especially their UPSR next year.

(Ms. Ani, Interview 2, January 2011)

As the head of the school's English Language panel, her pupils' achievement in any English competitions they entered at any level was the utmost importance to her, as suggested by the following:

For me, my pupils must excel in every field. I must make sure they obtain grade A or pass their English, especially in UPSR examination. They must also try their best in any competition organized at the State Education Department (JPN) or District Education Department (PPD) level, such as action song, story telling and poetry recitation. Therefore, I am always serious with my pupils.

(Ms Ani, Guided reflection 1, January 2011)

Ms Ani has attended CLiPs, a series of workshop organized by the English Language Teaching Centre, Ministry of Education (ELTC) where she was introduced to the language art activities for Contemporary Children Literature (CCL). One of the activities she participated in was shared reading. She admitted that learning was more fun during CCL because she was able to practice the language arts with her pupils. She admitted that CCL was less stressful than the normal English lessons.

Meanwhile, Ms Fida, a motherly Malay woman, married, in her middle 30s, was in her eighth year of teaching. She received her diploma in Business Studies in 1999, and a degree in Business Administration in 2000 from Mara University of

Technology (UiTM,Arau, Perlis). She obtained her Diploma in Education, majoring in English Studies from the Ipoh Teacher Training Institute in 2004. She also possessed a Master's degree in Educational Psychology. She attended her postgraduate course before joining her current school.

Unlike Ms Ani, Ms Fida was rather motherly and jovial. She preferred to treat her pupils like her very own children.

Budak-budak ni tak boleh serius sangat, nanti depa tak mau belajaq.
Kena pujuk-pujuk sikit... *<We cannot be too serious with these kids or else they would not want to learn. We have to coax them...>*

(Ms Fida, Guided reflection 1, January 2011)

As part of the research team, these two teachers played dual role. At the beginning of the study, they were merely research participants. However, as the research developed, they gradually became critical friends and part of the validation team. The two teachers met the criteria of critical friends because they understood the context of this work, which directly involved them.

3.7.3 The Critical Friends

Because action researchers are so involved in the research process at multiple levels, and in multiple roles, it is common for them to utilize critical friends (Anderson, Herr,& Nihlen, 1994), or a validation team. They are usually peers or colleagues who are willing to debrief with the researcher, collaboratively make meaning as well as pose questions regarding how is it that a researcher knows what he/she knows. Critical friends often push researchers to another level of understanding because they

ask researchers to make explicit what they may understand on a more tacit level. Action researchers, because of the intensity and longevity of the research process, can use critical friends as vital sounding boards that help them step back or out of the research enough to thoroughly understand what it is they are seeing and doing (Herr & Anderson, 2005).

The critical friends in this research were two language mentors, Farah and Michael. Both of them were native speakers who were also teacher trainers for primary school teachers in Kubang Pasu District. Their role was basically to help English teachers improve their teaching techniques and classroom management.

Farah was from the United States. She has been a teacher there for six years. She obtained her Bachelor's in Mathematics and taught high school Math for a while before changing to English. After getting her English teaching certificate, she taught adult English at a private institute. She also has a Master's degree in Curriculum and Design with a concentration on Second Language Acquisition. She was exposed to ESL/EFL theories and principles during her Master's studies. She was well versed with the principles behind shared reading but did not use the technique in her classroom because she was only teaching adults before coming to Malaysia. However, she believed that interesting classroom and atmosphere, students' motivation, teacher's understanding of students' personalities, strengths and weaknesses, and flexible teachers can lead to better student-teacher interaction during ESL lessons.

Michael was from Australia. He had worked in various positions and fields in Australia. He offered guitar lessons for many years, which inspired him to become an English teacher. His desire to travel led him to the world of TESL/TEFL. He had been working in the field of TEFL for approximately 20 years in Australia and other countries. In Australia, he taught international students, refugees, newly arrived immigrants, and at an international primary school. While living outside of Australia, he had taught English in universities, high schools and primary schools, banks, hospitals, language schools, and a refugee camp. The students have been of all ages, from primary school age to mature, aged adults. Michael believed that shared reading is a valuable activity to help promote communication and understanding. His understanding of the principles of shared reading convinced me that he was the right choice as a critical friend for this research team. This is evident through his explanation in one of my informal conversations with him:

Shared reading can also help create bonds within the class to further help the relationships between students, and between the teacher and the students, and have a beneficial effect on class dynamics. Choosing appropriate materials and enhancing the environment around the class will help maximise the potential for learning. If the teacher can lay a foundation that will arouse the interest of the students, then shared reading will not just be just another lesson but a shared experience, one that will lead to improved ability in English, and also a personal development in the students themselves.

(Informal conversation with critical friends)

Overall, both Farah and Michael met the criteria of critical friends for this project as they possessed vast experience in dealing with the teaching of English at all levels, especially primary schools. Furthermore, their understanding of how student-teacher interaction should take place in an ESL lesson gave me confidence that they would

be able to help me critically observe the teachers' shared reading practice, and contribute their ideas in improving the existing practice. In addition, they were able to provide an outsider's view as they come from outside the context.

3.8 Ensuring Quality for Action Research

One of the key issues in any research is the quality. To ensure that this action research, alongside positivistic and naturalistic research, is a legitimate form of research for a dissertation, five validity criteria for good action research, as suggested by Herr and Anderson (2005), were used as a guideline. These validity criteria were used as they are closely linked to the goals of action research, as shown in Table 3.9 below.

Table 3.9

Herr and Anderson's Goals of Action Research and Validity Criteria

Goals of Action Research	Quality/Validity Criteria
1. The generation of new knowledge	Dialogic and process validity
2. The achievement of action-oriented outcomes	Outcome validity
3. The education of both researcher and participants	Catalytic Validity
4. Results that are relevant to the local setting	Democratic Validity
5. A sound and appropriate research methodology	Process Validity

3.8.1 Process Validity

Process validity focuses on the accuracy of facts and findings; correct interpretations made and correct conclusion reached as a result of a series of; 1) reflective cycles

that include the ongoing problematization of the practices under study; 2) triangulation of a variety of data sources to collect evidences; 3) quality of the relationships that are developed with participants; and 4) an empirical narrative achieved through narrative enquiry (Herr & Anderson, 2005).

The present study has employed Stringer's (2004, 2007, 2008) action research of interacting spiral/helix, which consisted of four recursive cycles of "look, think, and act" framework. The "look" stage was the stage where data on teachers' existing shared reading practice was collected via continuous review of literature pertaining teachers' shared reading practices, series of persistent and prolonged observations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), interviews, and guided reflections. The "think" stage was the stage where the data were analysed to identify the problems, and the "act" stage was the stage where action was taken to solve them. The whole process took about almost two years (from January 2010 until October 2011), which was in line with the suggestion on the ideal time to observe teachers' development made by Fullan (2002). Throughout this period, I was able to collect data on teachers' problems, modelled one shared reading session, observed the teachers conducting shared reading, and sat together with them and with my critical friends for guided reflections. Guided reflection sessions, which took place five times (each session took about two hours) throughout the four cycles, were relatively prolonged for the teachers to learn from the intervention process (Robson, 2002). This repetition of the series of reflective cycles allowed for greater credibility of the findings (Mertler, 2009).

The process validity of this whole project was also supported by the triangulation of a variety of data sources (Merriam, 2009), namely my journal entries, the video recorded observations, my observation field notes, notes of informal conversations with Ms Ani and Ms Fida, and videotapes of the reflective sessions with the teachers. In other words, I did not limit myself to only one kind of data source to better ensure the accuracy of my interpretations of data.

The quality of the relationships that were developed with the participants from the beginning of this research has also ensured the validity of this study. I have gradually moved from an outsider to an insider throughout the collaboration (see my continuum of positionality in Section 3.6.1). I received full cooperation from the teachers who I regarded as my co-researcher and critical friends. They were involved in member checking process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) or participant verification to improve the accuracy, credibility and validity of the interview, team reflection, and classroom observation transcriptions. Member checking allows the participants to either agree or disagree that the transcriptions reflect their views, feelings, and experiences, and if accuracy and completeness are affirmed, then the study is said to have credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Creswell 2007). Another kind of member checking occurred near the end of the research project when they reviewed the analysed data and report for authenticity of the work. They were also allowed to critically analyse the findings and comment on them (Creswell, 2007). The purpose of doing these was to decrease the incidence of incorrect data and the incorrect interpretation of data, with the overall goal of providing findings that are authentic and original (Creswell, 2007).

In addition to methodology, the process validity was also ensured through an empirical narrative achieved through narrative enquiry – a recursive way of understanding and inquiring into the experience through “collaboration between researcher and participants, over time in a place or series of places, and in social interaction with milieus” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p.20, 2004). Unlike ordinary fiction, my empirical narrative was based on stories gained from my participants’ responses during series of interviews, guided reflections, and dialogic discussions from classroom observations of their shared reading practice. From these stories, I was able to compose field texts or data in the form of transcripts of conversations, classroom discourses and field notes. Interpretation of data were made together with my participating teachers as well as critical friends using the Systematic Assessment of Book Reading (SABR) - a systematic observational tool with adequate reliability and validity that was developed to examine teachers’ quantity and quality of conversation during shared reading, particularly in early childhood classrooms.

3.8.2 Outcome Validity

The outcome validity, according to Herr and Anderson (2005), is the extent to which actions occur, which leads to a resolution of the problem that led to the study. To achieve the outcome validity, this study began with the exhaustive diagnosis of the participating teachers’ understanding of shared reading and their instructional behaviour during the problem identification stage in Cycle 1. In order to demonstrate the integrity of the collected data, I had carefully examined the teachers’ instructional behaviour using the Systematic Assessment of Book Reading (SABR), and coded them accordingly. The coding process was systematically done using Atlas.ti – a computer-aided qualitative data analysis software (Frieze, 2012). The process of

problem identification was conducted with the assistance of two critical friends who were willing to go through the data with me, repeatedly (see Section 4.3.3 for explanation on critical friends). This was then followed by careful planning for the solution strategy during the problem solving stage during Cycles 2, 3 and 4.

3.8.3 Catalytic Validity

Catalytic validity (Reason & Rowan, 1981, p.240) refers to the degree to which the research process re-orientates, focusses, and energizes the participants. It refers to how much the participants gain self-understanding, and ideally, self-determination through research participation. In this research, the betterment of the participating teachers was clearly observed as they improved their shared reading practice. Similarly, as the initiator of this study, I had also undergone a transformative journey throughout.

The learning outcomes for the teachers in this study included improved understanding of shared reading and its implementation in their own classroom context. At the end of this study, both teachers' awareness on the theoretical explanation behind the teaching of reading increased. This understanding has caused them to undertake change voluntarily. The change was obvious through the development in the ways they support pupils' reading literacy particularly through their instructional behaviour. Overall, the two teachers have benefited from the verbal feedback, discussion and joint reflection that occurred throughout the study.

Chapter 5 reports in more depth on the transformative change undergone by the two teachers.

3.8.4 Democratic Validity

Democratic validity entails the degree of collaboration among all parties directly involved in the problem being investigated (Herr & Anderson, 2005). In this study, I have involved and honoured the perspectives of the two participating teachers and their pupils. Unlike conventional researches, these two teachers were treated as insiders to this research. Although I was responsible for identifying the problems in their shared reading practice through my analysis during cycle 1, beginning from cycle 2 onwards, I managed to involve them in the decision making process. The teachers were the ones who decided to focus on certain problems that they felt require more attention. They were also the ones who decided on the solutions to the problems. The whole process was done collaboratively with me playing multiple roles; as a participant observer, a facilitator, and also a critical friend.

3.9 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter has provided the rationale for employing the collaborative action type of research. It has delineated the methodology of the study by encompassing the setting, participants, instruments used, as well as procedures and methods to analyse the data. Finally, this chapter has also provided readers with justifications that the research has been carried out rigorously, and reported the set of issues that helped establish the study's trustworthiness.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE FIRST CYCLE: PILOT STUDY

4.1 Introduction

The first cycle was the initial stage of the whole action research process and functioned as a pilot study where I started building the structures needed for my study (Herr & Anderson, 2005). The objectives of this cycle were 1) to provide well-grounded understanding of the experience and perspective of participants regarding their shared reading practice and 2) to try out the research questions and methodologies. This chapter reports the findings of the “look, think” and “act” stage of the first cycle obtained from teachers’ and pupils’ group interview, classroom observations, my reflective journal and also guided reflections. In addition, it also discusses the lesson learnt from this cycle and how it set direction for the second, third and fourth cycles.

4.2 Think - Interpreting and Analysing

As a teacher educator cum a researcher who initiated the collaboration, I began my interpretation and analysis as an outsider who brought along my own philosophy, experience and understanding to the research (see Chapter 3, Sections 3.8.1 and 3.8.1.1 for my personal and professional reflection, as well as my position in this study). I was also informed by my review of literature on reading literacy and shared reading practice. The findings were in accordance to the research questions which are:

- RQ1: What is the teachers' existing understanding of shared reading?
- RQ2: What is the nature of teachers' instructional behaviour when
Conducting shared reading?

4.2.1 Teachers' Understanding of Shared Reading

In gauging my participating teachers' existing understanding of shared reading, I was guided by the principles of shared reading as presented in previous literature such as those of Whitehurst et al. (1988), Holdaway (2001), McGee & Schickedanz (2007), and Pentimonti et al. (2012). My analysis of data from the teachers' interviews and classroom observations revealed that both participating teachers had inaccurate understanding of shared reading in terms of its definition, purpose(s) of conducting, reading materials and physical arrangement (setting). This is evident as findings indicated a big gap between their understanding and the actual principles of shared reading. Table 4.1 shows the differences between teachers' existing understanding of shared reading and the principles of shared reading as laid out in the literature.

Table 4.1

Comparison between Teachers' Understanding of Shared Reading and Principles of Shared Reading

	Shared Reading as understood and practiced by teachers	Principles of shared reading
Definition	Students read text in advance (at home) or silently (in class) , followed by teacher reads to the whole class or students reads aloud in chorus or	Interaction and discussion that take place while a teacher reads aloud to or with (sharing a book together with) a small or big group of students.

Table 4.1 continued

	Shared Reading as understood and practiced by teachers	Principles of shared reading
	Teacher reads first and then followed by pupils	Should be: -supportive and enjoyable - Repetitive and interactive - dialogic
	Interaction should not take place during shared reading	
	Shared reading should be accompanied by questions to test students' comprehension of text	
Purpose(s)	to teach pronunciation to test students' comprehension	To encourage children to be involve with the meaning making of the text
Physical Arrangement	- Traditional classroom arrangement - a lot of distraction from the nearby classrooms	teachers and students must: - be seated in such a way that both can view the book - sit close to the teacher in an organized way (e.g., each child seated on a letter of the letter rug) to allow for optimal engagement and avoid behavior problems. the area to be quiet and void of other distractions
Materials	Extracts from textbook Everyone has a copy	An enlarged text (big book)

The following sections will elaborate the differences as shown in the table.

4.2.1.1 Definition and Purpose(s) of Shared Reading

As clearly demonstrated in Table 4.1, the participating teachers' definitions of shared reading seemed to divert from the ones given by scholars. For instance, in contrast to Pentimonti et al. (2012) who defined shared reading as interaction and discussion

that take place while a teacher is sharing a book together with a small or big group of children, Ms Ani believed that SR is an activity whereby students were given a text to be read in advance before the teacher read aloud to them or before they read aloud in class. Shared reading also meant teacher reads aloud followed by students. Through her point of view, the purpose of shared reading was for the teacher to correct students' pronunciation while they read aloud. Her interpretation of shared reading was shown in her initial response when asked about her personal understanding of shared reading:

To me shared reading is... there's a text... the pupils are given time to read the text either in the class or at home..then when they come , the teacher can either read the text by herself and pupils listen or occasionally the pupils will read the text.. the teacher will look through ..aaa.. during that time the teacher will look through the pronunciation or sometimes the teacher can do reading along that means the teacher reads first then followed by the pupils. If the text is quite difficultlah for that particular class. And then after that we will have the asking and answering of questions to make sure that the students understand the text before going on to other activities that involve the text.

Universiti Utara (Ms Ani, Interview 1)

This definition of shared reading is clearly reflected in her introduction during baseline 1 (extract 1) when she was drawing the students' attention to the email by asking them to read the text quietlyfor two minutes (lines 001- 003).

Extract 1

Ms Ani: Baseline 1

001	T	Look at the email on page 9 in your text book. Just to let you have a little while
002		Read the text two minutes. Read quietly through the text. Now, let's look
003		at the email.
004		Here it says, SOFEA RECEIVED THAT EMAIL FROM HER FRIEND
005		CHEE KIAT. So, who sends this email?

She also believed that students should not be allowed to interrupt by asking questions when a text is read to them. This was evident in baseline 1 where she read the text and started asking questions only when she finished reading aloud to her pupils.

Her reason for not allowing interruption when she read to the students was:

My first reason is that I want them to listen to really listen to the text as it is being read the whole thing so that they learn the intonation, the stress and the way it is read ... to say correctly ..may be in a way. Because I'm reading it. And No. 2, when there's no interruption, I consider that they are able to process the text through their mind as they read silently with me. So that is why I usually don't allow them to interrupt when I'm reading the text.

(Ms Ani, Interview 2)

It is when I read and they listen and we shared information from the text towards the end when they are able to discuss with me, when they are able to give ideas that they have understood what they have read through the association of the festival that they are used to which is Hari Raya

(Ms Ani, Reflection 1)

Ms Ani, despite claiming that she has been exposed to the principles of shared reading during series of Contemporary Children Literature (CCL) workshops conducted by the English Language Teaching Centre (ELTC), thought that the definition for shared reading in English lesson is different from the one introduced to her during the workshop.

Shared reading in CCL is reading to children in an enjoyable manner. CCL is different. It is more for children to enjoy the text. I am less stressful during CCL. I read storybooks to them. We have games and so on. The pupils also enjoy themselves

(Ms Ani, Interview 1)

Similar to Ms Ani, Ms Fida also asked her students to read first before she read to her students. The silent reading is also considered as part of shared reading. To her, it is a must for the students to read at least three times silently before she reads to them. This definition is reflected in her instruction to her pupils during baseline 1 where she asked them to read silently three times. Similarly, during my first interview with her she stressed that shared reading includes her act of asking pupils to read silently by themselves. Later, she will read aloud the whole text and finally explain the meaning of the text to them.

..... what I consider as Shared Reading was... from the first step where I asked them to read by themselves continued by I am reading and explaining the whole text for them

(Ms Fida, Interview 2)

Besides, she also added that pointing at the words is a must while students were reading the text as it helped them to stay focus. Her rationale was:

..... I don't want the pupils to lose their attention. Normally when they are not pointing at the words/ sentence they are like dreaming. When I ask them to point at words while I am reading, they know how to pronounce the word and relate to the words itself. For example the word 'some' if they are not pointing at the word, they just using their listening skill, they cannot recognize the word itself - spell the word

(Ms Fida, Interview 2)

Ms Fida also associated shared reading with the act of taking turn reading aloud in chorus and individually. In the second observation, she asked the students to take turn reading according their sitting position.

Extract 2

Ms Fida : Baseline 2

- TOk i am gonna first start read the text,you just listen and point at the word.Understand?ok listen carefully. SYAHIRAH IS A HEALTHY GIRL.SHE LOVES FLAKES FOR BREAKFAST.SHE MIXES IT WITH MILK.SHE DOES IT ALMOST EVERY MORNING.MANY OF THE CHILDREN DO THE SAME THINGS LIKE WHAT SYAHIRAH DOES.....THERE IS MILLION OF PEOPLE ALL OVER THE WORLD TAKE THIS FLAKES EVERYDAY.Ok after i am reading now i like to hear from you.Are you ready? But we start row by row. Ok we start, the first row here will read the first sentence, follow by the second row, all of you have to read the second sentence and the third row will have to read the third sentence. And finally followed by fourth row,you have to read the sentence number four. Ok we try first with the first row. Are you ready class?
- SS Yes.
- T Ok while your friends reading you have point at the words. Ok read the first row. Ok onetwo three.
- SS Syahirah is a healthy girl. She loves flakes for her breakfast.
- (Row 1)
- T Excuse me,you do not understand my instructions. The first row...What happen to you girl?Demam?Tu mata terpejam.What happen to you? Tak sihat ke?
- S Tak.
- T Ok this row..Listen here,you only have to read the first sentence, not the first pharagraph. Normally i ask you to read the whole pharagraph but we this time we only to read the first sentence.
- SS
-

Her justification for conducting her shared reading in such a way was evident in the interview session after the lesson.

Q: Just now, I noticed that you ask them to read row by row, line by line. Why is it so?

A: I found that when I read, some of them lose in their own way, some of them miming and not paying attention so when I asked them to read row by row for one sentence they will get ready to take their turn to read.

Q: Do you ask them read one by one?

A: Sometimes, I will make them read in chorus, sometimes I will point one by one.

(Ms Fida, Interview 2)

Like her colleague, Ms Fida also believed that the purpose of shared reading is to teach pronunciation. This was reflected when she kept correcting her students' pronunciation during the choral reading. The belief was also highlighted clearly during the interview conducted with her in January 2011:

Q: You mention about pronunciation. Do you think SR is used to teach pronunciation?

A: Yes

Q: How do you teach pronunciation through SR?

A: I teach pronunciation through.... While I am reading and pupils are listening while I pronounce those words. SR is the skills of reading that involves pupils and teaching and normally I did in induction part of my lesson. Normally, I will read and pupils listen and then pupils read and I will correct their pronunciation afterward.

(Ms Fida, Interview 2)

To conclude, the two teachers' definition of shared reading directly reflected their definition of reading itself. They obviously belong to the first and second categories of teachers mentioned by Nuttall (2005) who associated reading with decoding, deciphering, identifying, articulating, speaking and pronouncing words. Reading aloud in the form of teacher reads, pupils repeat or round robin (pupils take turn reading aloud individually or in group) and the accurate pronunciation of words

featured in the text seemed to be the two teachers' main focus during their shared reading practice. Their practice is in line with language educators who argue that reading aloud is beneficial, both in early stages of reading development, aiming to improve reading fluency, accuracy and pronunciation. Nevertheless, reading aloud alone is not sufficient for the meaning making of text. Interactive reading aloud (Wiseman, 2011) or shared reading (Holdaway, 1979) should take place in order to make sure all pupils are actively engaged in the meaning making of the text (Dickinson et al., 2003, 2012; Wasik et al., 2006; Zucker et al., 2009; Zucker et al., 2010).

4.2.1.2 Reading Materials

The texts used for all sessions were extracts taken from Integrated Curriculum for Primary School English Year 5 textbook which consisted of 12 units with each unit focusing on themes related to the students' daily life and interest (Said, Maulud, Khalid, & Zakariah, 2007). The size of the text was 210 x 297 mm - an ordinary size of a typical textbook. Each student had a copy of the textbook during all baseline shared reading sessions.

The text used by Ms Ani for her first baseline shared reading was taken from unit 1- Family First. It was an extract of an email found on page 9 of the textbook. The email which was sent to Sofea by Chee Kiat contained descriptions about what the writer did during his Chinese New Year celebration. The text also came with one exercise where students had to come up with the similarities and differences between Chinese New Year and their own celebration.

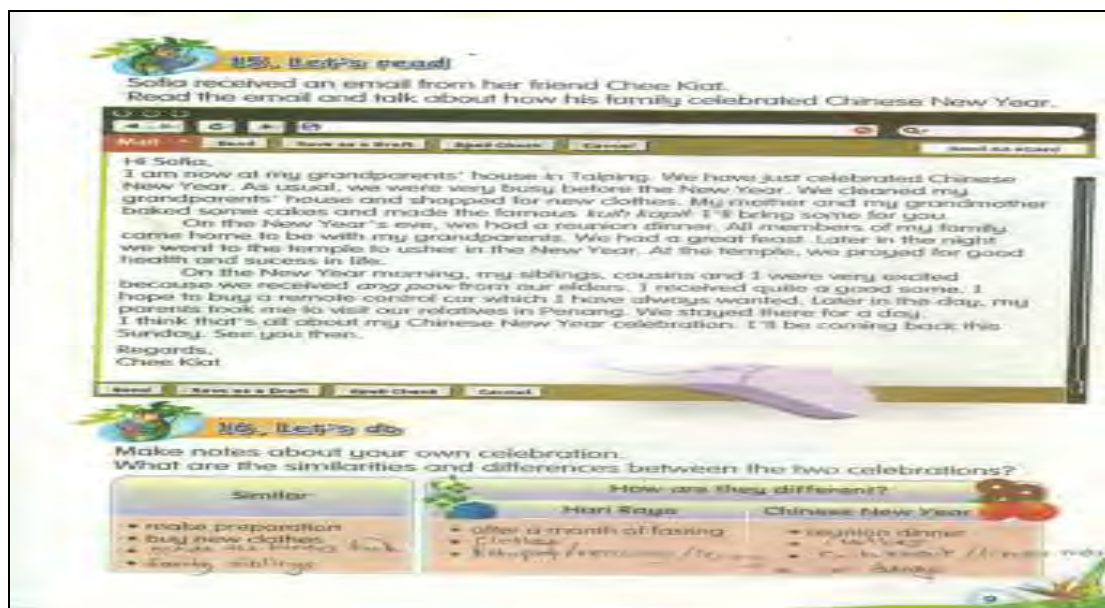


Figure 4.1. Reading material for Ms Ani's baseline shared reading 1

The reading material for Ms Anis's baseline 2 was taken from Unit 2 – Travel and Adventure on page 13 – 15 of the same textbook. Page 13 (Figure 4.2) consisted of pictures of the front page of travel brochures and task about the pictures (wh-questions pertaining to the brochures) while page 14-15 (Figure 4.3) contained the reading text taken from the brochure of Sabah.



Figure 4.2. Reading material's for Ms Ani's baseline 2



Figure 4.3. Reading material for Ms. Ani's baseline 2

Similar to her colleague, Ms Fida also used materials from the textbook for both baseline shared reading sessions. For the first baseline shared reading session, she also used the text from Unit 1. However the text taken was from page 5. It was a story in children's section in newspaper. The story was about 'I' who lived with her family in a small village. 'I' have a lovely cat named Princess. Everybody in the family adored Princess so much. Unfortunately, the cat died due to sickness.



Figure 4.4. Reading material for Ms Fida's baseline 1

During baseline shared reading 2, Ms Fida once again resorted to the textbook. This time she used the material found in Unit 7- People (Figure 4.4). The text on page 87 was about Syahirah who loved flakes for her breakfast. One day her mother told her

about Will Keith Kellog, the person who first created flakes. The second paragraph of the text talked about how Will Keith Kellog discovered wheat flakes and developed his business successfully until he became the richest men in the food business.

Overall, my observation revealed that the two teachers' reliance on textbooks without considering the suitability of the text for shared reading purposes was obvious. This contradicts to the criteria of text selection discussed in Chapter 2 which among others stressed on the use of real big books or enlarged texts that are appealing and interesting for children. The text should allow teachers to capitalize on the interactive nature by providing opportunities for children to actively contribute during the reading.

To conclude, text selection was not given due attention by teachers. The complete reliance on textbook for all reading texts has denied pupils' right to be exposed to books that are appealing and interesting for their age. Furthermore, it also hindered teachers from capitalizing on shared-reading as an opportunity to extend children's interests in reading real books (Ezell & Justice, 2005).

4.2.1.3 Physical arrangement

All baseline shared reading sessions took place in classrooms. Ms Ani's baseline observation 1 and 2 took place in 5S classroom while Ms Fida's baseline 1 and 2 were here held in 5K. Both classrooms were located on the top floor of Block D. There were a few more classrooms on the same level, all occupied by the standard 5

students. As the classrooms were very close to each other, it was quite noisy. A traditional classroom seating arrangement, a typical scenario in Malaysian Primary classrooms where pupils were seated in a few rows were observed (see Figure 4.5). Both Ms Ani and Ms Fida stood in front of the classroom most of the time. Sometimes they would move to the back to check on a few students.

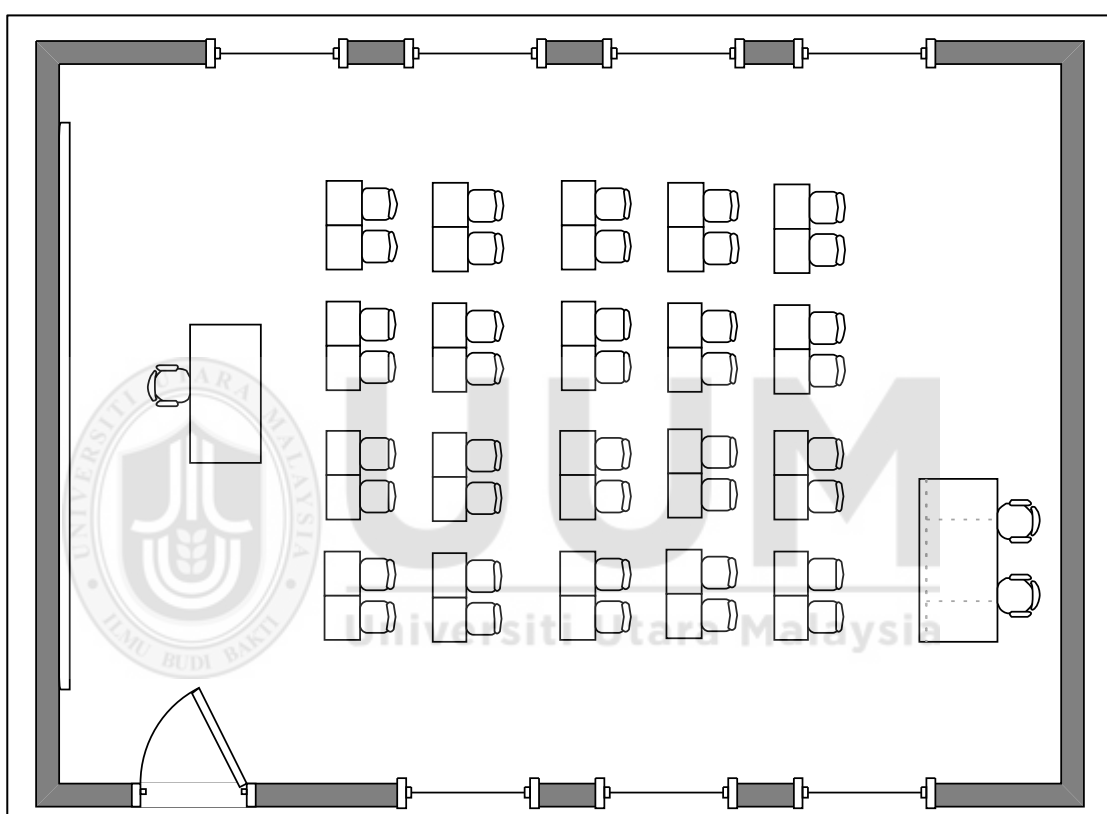


Figure 4.5. Seating arrangement of pupils during Ms Ani's and Ms Fida's baseline shared reading

The seating arrangement was observed to have hindered all pupils to have sufficient access to the teachers and their peers. Hence, optimal engagement between teacher and pupils, and pupils and pupils was not encouraged. It was observed that the set-up of the reading opportunity did not support the interactive nature of shared book

reading. The seating arrangement did not allow for everyone to have sufficient access to the reading material, the teachers and their peers. For classroom shared reading, sitting close to the teacher in an organized way allows for optimal engagement. Ensuring that all children can see and actively participate deters disengagement and inattention; therefore avoiding behavior problems. Attention and forethought should be made by the teacher when choosing a location for shared book-reading experiences, as it is also important for the area to be quiet and void of other distractions (Ezell & Justice, 2005).

To conclude, there was a misconception in teachers' understanding of shared reading in terms of the way they defined it, the reading material and the physical arrangement. I shall now present the analysis for research questions 2 and 3 and later make connections between teachers' understanding of the activity and nature of the book reading event.

4.2.2 Nature of Teachers' Instructional Behaviors

This section discussed a few important characteristics of teachers' instructional behaviour or reading style during all four baseline shared reading sessions in this study. The characteristics were deduced from the themes that emerged from the analysis of the classroom observations, the guided reflections, the researcher's reflective journal, the teachers' interviews and the pupils' focus interviews.

There were three main themes that emerged from my analysis of teachers' baseline shared reading sessions using the SABR tool. The first theme was teachers' literal focus on the text. The second theme was limited encouragement of

higher order reading skills. Finally the third theme was teachers' lack of emotion, enjoyment and attention. Teachers were found to be more prone to support pupils' language development skills compared to the abstract thinking skills and elaboration skills (see Table 4.2). Teachers' extratextual talk during shared reading was restricted to highlighting words during reading and discussing word meanings. Furthermore, teachers' conversation did not demonstrate the use of open ended question to engage children in predicting, hypothesizing, remembering, reasoning, summarizing, and inferencing about aspects of the book's content. Their attempt to elaborate on word meanings, expand on children's own topics and relate with their real life were limitedly observed. Analysis also indicated that teachers' behavior that creates a warm and supportive setting for shared reading was infrequently observed.

Table 4.2

Comparison among All the Five Constructs in SABR

	Ms Ani Baseline 1	– Ms Ani Baseline 2	Ms Fida Baseline 1	Ms Fida Baseline 2	TOTALS
Language Development	26	16	30	40	112
Abstract Thinking	7	0	1	1	9
Elaborations	1	4	0	9	14
Print Phonological Skills	0	0	0	0	0
Session Climate	7	0	16	13	36
TOTALS	41	20	47	63	

Two additional themes emerged from the data themselves. The first one was teachers' monopolization of talk which leads to limited chance to engage students' in conversation while the second one was teachers' excessive use of the first

language. Due to the nature of teachers' reading style, students had little opportunity to play an active role. Their responses during the interaction mostly consisted of low length of utterances – one or two morphemes and mostly expressed in their first language which is Bahasa Melayu.

The following sections will elaborate the findings of Cycle 1 based on the above mentioned themes.

4.2.2.1 Literal Focus on the Text

In terms of teachers' instructional behavior, a literal focus on the story and illustration dominated the baseline shared reading sessions compared to inferential. Close examination on teachers' shared reading sessions showed that teachers' attempt to develop students language seemed to dominate the discourse. Altogether, there were 35 quotations for the sub construct "describe", 14 quotations for "label/locate", 14 quotations for "describe", 27 quotations for "word definition" and 15 quotations for the code "expands/extends". Teachers' talk was limited to labeling and describing perceptually available information. Comprehension only involved surface meanings, asking pupils to find information and ideas explicitly stated in the text. Furthermore, teachers were noticed not encouraging children's dramatic expansions of the text and not elaborating on the characters' emotions and link the text to children's lives. This pattern may make it harder for children to engage imaginatively with texts and also tougher to relate new knowledge to knowledge they already possess. It certainly reduces the opportunity for collaborative experience of interrogating the texts under study. As a result students' utterances were limited to

level 1 utterance that only consists of short answers which normally directly lifted from the text.

Ms Ani, for instance was observed describing the story action throughout her first shared reading session. Her question/request and comment were mainly about events and actions related to the story plot. The comprehension questions asked were the ones with obvious answer from the text and did not require students to think to get the answer. Frequency count using Atlas ti software indicated that she performed similar action 20 times when reading the email taken from the textbook. This literal focus on the story resulted in students producing low length of utterances when giving feedback to her as illustrated in the extracts below.

In extract 3, line 001, Ms Ani started reading aloud to her students after she drew their attention to the text and gave them two minutes to read quietly on their own. As she read the first line, she started asking questions regarding the sentence she read. Similar question pattern was noticed in lines 003 and 005 where she asked about “Who received the email?” and “Who celebrated the Chinese New Year?” The students did not face any difficulties responding to the questions as the answers could were easily be found from the sentence she read.

Extract 3

Ms Ani: Baseline 1

001	T	Look at the email on page 9 in your text book. Just to let you have a little while read the text two minutes. Read quietly through the text. Now, let's look at the email. Here it says, Sofea received that email from her friend Chee Kiat. So, who sends this email?
002	Ss	Chee Kiat.

Extract 3 continued

003	T	Who received the email?
004	Ss	Sofea
005	T	Read the email and talk about how his family celebrated Chinese New Year. So, who celebrated Chinese New Year?
006		Chee Kiat

In extract 4, instead of continuing reading aloud to her students, Ms Ani gave them more time to find out things that Chee Kiat did before Chinese New Year (lines 027, 028 and 029). She repeated the questions seven times using the phrase “What else”. The students did not have much problem answering the question as the questions only required them to retrieve the text content (lines 031, 035, 038, 040 and 045).

Extract 4

Ms Ani: Baseline 1

024	T	Very good. So his all family went back to Taiping. Now, I want to
025		know from you, what did they do throughout the whole celebration
026		before Chinese New Year and during Chinese New Year. I give you
027		few minutes, read again the email and jot down notes and discuss
028		with your friend. What did Chee Kiat and his family do before and
029		during Chinese New Year. Two minutes. Very good. Ok. Are you
030		ready? We do the first part together. Now, before Chinese New Year,
		what did Chee Kiat do? Anybody? Hands up. Who like to try? Yes.
031	Ss	They cleaned their grandparent's house.
032	T	So the first thing they did before Chinese New Year. Cleaned the
033		house. What else did they do before Chinese New Year? Any else?
034		Read the text. It's all in the text. Look at paragraph 1. They cleaned
		their grandparent's house. Yes.
035	Ss	Shops for new clothes
036	T	Clothes. Good. Went shopping. Anybody else? What else did they
037		do? Cleaned the house, went shopping. Yes.
038	Ss	Baked cakes
039	T	So they baked. Baked cakes. What else? Ok.
040	Ss	Baked some cakes and made the famous “ <i>kuih kapit</i> ”
041	T	So they baked cakes and they made “ <i>kuih kapit</i> ”. What else did they
042		do before Chinese New Year day? Paragraph number 2. Come.
043		Anybody else. Look at paragraph number 2. What else did they do
044		before Chinese New Year day? Yes. Anybody? Anybody else. Ok.
045	Ss	Reunion

Similar to Ms Ani's class, most of the time, Ms fida's questions in both baselines 1 and 2 focused on the closed questions such as 'what' and 'who', which required minimal responses from the students. The teacher neither used open-ended questions nor prompted the students with challenging questions. Often students were only required to lift answers from the text. In extract 5, the only prompt that seemed to dominate the discussion was recall prompt (Zevenbergen & Whitehurst, 2003) where the answers were obvious that 'we' in the story have a cat and the cat's name is Princess (lines 99 and 105). This type of interaction allowed the students to answer using one or two utterances as they would not be able to provide longer responses.

Extract 5

Ms Fida: Baseline 1

-
- | | | |
|-----|----|---|
| 099 | T | Yes. So dia ada taman yang cantik < he has a beautiful garden>. Ok. We use to have a lovely cat called princess. Dia ada apa? <what does he have?> |
| 100 | Ss | Kucing <cat>. |
| 101 | T | The cat's name? |
| 102 | Ss | Princess. |
| 103 | T | The cat name's princess. |
| 104 | Ss | Princess. |
| 105 | T | Ok. Princess. Good. Ok, next one. Everyone doted on her. Any difficult word there? So far. Kalau sambil-sambil teacher baca ni, ada perkataan yang awak tak faham <while I read if there are words that you don't understand> please put up your hand ok. Yes. |
-

Similar example was also identified in Ms Fida's baseline 2 (Extract 6, lines 076, 080) where she asked pupils "Who make the cornflakes" two times.

Extract 6

Ms Fida's baseline 2

-
- | | | |
|-----|---|--|
| 074 | T | What do you understand from the text?, Arif? It is about what? |
| 075 | S | <i>Tentang cornflakes</i> <About Cornflakes> |
| 076 | T | Ok about cornflakes. <i>Sapa yang buat</i> < Who make> cornflakes? |
-

Extract 6 continued

077	S	
078	T	OK Very good. Ok Arif from what he read, he said that he knows that
079		Will Keith Kellog create the cornflakes. <i>Dia dapat tahu orang yang</i>
080		<i>pertama mereka cornflakes. Bagitau siapa nama dia?</i> < He knows about
081		the first person who makes cornflakes. <Who is he>? Syahirah! <i>Berdiri</i>
		<Stand up> Syahirah, who makes a cornflakes? What the answer is that?
082	SS	Will Keith Kellog
083	T	Will Keith Kellog (<i>Teacher writes the name "Will Keith Kellog" and</i>
084		<i>pronounces it together with the students</i>).

The reason for eliciting factual text information was attributed to the pupils' language ability. Ms Fida, for instance, explained that her students were very weak and cannot communicate in English. This was expressed during our first guided reflection after her baseline 1.

I have to ask them this type of question to check their understanding. They can refer to text to find the answer. If the answer is not in the text they cannot answer.

(Ms Fida, Guided reflection 1)

Both teachers also blamed the inappropriateness of the textbooks. During guided reflection 2, Ms Ani stated that the nature of most texts in the textbook was not suitable for asking pupils inferential questions. However, it is worth remembering at this point that it was the teachers themselves who chose to use texts from the textbook for their shared reading.

Besides describing the event in the story, both teachers' also had the tendency to ask questions that requested students to label objects in illustrations. This was observed during Ms Ani's baseline 2 where she asked pupils to tell her what they can see in the picture provided in the text. She dragged her pupils to name the objects until she

had limited time to actually discuss other parts of the text. Similarly, Ms Fida was observed focussing too much on the word “cornflakes” and the pictures in the text until the other important parts of the text were eventually ignored.

The two teachers’ shared reading sessions were also dominated by teacher asking for or providing word definition. In extract 7 below, Ms Ani asked her students the meaning of the words “feast” (line 097), “usher in” (line 100), “eldest” (line 106), “a good sum” (line 109) and “difference” (line 112). Ironically, it was observed that most of her pupils were able to give a direct translation of all the words.

Extract 7

Ms Ani’s baseline 1

092	T	Open house. Very good. So we have open house during celebrations.
093		So is the same for Hari Raya. So that is the very unique practice that
094		we do in Malaysia. In other countries we don’t do that. They only
095		celebrate with their relatives. They don’t go to their friend’s house.
096		No. Now, if you look at the text, the email, you will see that there are
097		some words. What is the meaning all of all these words? Feast.
		Who can remember? I said a feast like a reunion dinner. What is a
		feast?
098	S25	Jamuan makan. <Feast>
099	T	Jamuan makan. A feast is a “ jamuan ” Where we sit there are a lot of
100		food and we eat. Usher in? Can anybody tell me, what is the meaning
		of usher in? In maksudnya?
101	Ss	Dalam. <In>
102	T	Dalam. Masuk. Usher means we welcome... we welcome. We
103		welcome in. Here is not “menjemput” but is “merai”. Tomorrow is
104		Chinese New Year. They go to the temple. They pray so that the new
105		year will be a better year. So they usher in the new year. Eldest. Who
		can remember this? I told this during the first week.
106	S26	Orang yang lebih tua. <The elderly>
107	T	Yes. Eldest mean those who are older than us. Our parents, our
108		grandparents, our aunt, our uncles, our great grandparents. Our
109		eldest. The older people in our family. A good sum. A good sum
110		means... For example Chee Kiat, he got a lot of ang pow. A lot of
111		money. A good sum means a lot of money. Just now we already
112		talked about what is the same between Chinese New Year and Hari
113		Raya. Now I want you to look at the mind map in front and tell me
		what is the differences.. What is the meaning of differences?
		Similarities mean the same. Differences?

Extract 7 continued

114	S27	Perbezaan <Difference>
115	T	Yes. Things that are different. Perbezaan . What is different between
116		Chinese New Year and Hari Raya? Look at before. Before Chinese New Year and before Hari Raya.

To me, this indicated that they knew the meaning of the words and it was not necessary for the teachers to ask them. In my journal I expressed my doubt about the need to ask for the meaning of words:

I do not understand why the Ms Ani should keep asking her pupils to define the words. I believe they know the meaning of the words. If they can give the translation of the words, that shows they understand.

(Reflective Journal, January 2011)

Ms Fida was also observed excessively asking and clarifying meanings of words which she taught that her students were not familiar with. In Extract 10, the teacher asked the question concerning meaning of words 5 times (lines 06,08,12,14 and 15). In lines 06-09, she asked the meaning of the word 'read' or 'baca'<read> twice and confirmed the students' answer in line 10. She also asked the meaning of the words "children" (line 12), "section" (line 15), and "newspaper" (line 16). Her main aim was to ensure that pupils understand the phrase "the story in the children's section in the newspaper" (line 21).

Extract 8

Ms Fida's Baseline 1

06	T Open your text book. Look at page 5 here. Let's read 6. You have a story here. Look at the instruction first. Aiman and Sofea read the story in the children's section in newspaper. Maksudnya Aiman dengan Sofea < it means Aiman and Sofea> read. What is
----	---	--

		the meaning by read?
07	Ss	Baca. <read>
08	T	Read tu apa? <what is read>
09	Ss	Baca. <read>
10	T	Yes, baca <read>. A story?
11	Ss	Cerita. <a story>
12	T	Very good. Cerita <story>. In the children's section. What is the meaning by children?
13	Ss	Budak-budak...kanak-kanak. <kids...children>
14	T	Budak-budak or kanak-kanak ? <kids or children?> Yes, kanak-kanak <children>. What is the meaning by section? Ruangan.
15		Ruangan kanak-kanak <section children's section>. In the newspaper. What is newspaper?
16		
17	Ss	Surat khabar. <newspaper>
18	T	Newspaper?
19	Ss	Surat khabar. <newspaper>
20	T	Yes, very good surat khabar <newspaper>. So instruction, Aiman
21		dengan <and> Sofea read the story in the children's section in the newspaper. Maksudnya <it means>, meaning to say that this text that Aiman dengan <and> Sofea baca <read>. From where?

Ironically, I believe that it was not that crucial for pupils to understand that phrase in order to understand the plot of the simple story. Nevertheless, to Ms Fida, vocabulary knowledge seemed to be crucial for her pupils' understanding of individual texts. Such belief was prevalent in her statement during the interview;

They (the pupils) need to understand the meaning of all words in order to understand the text. If they don't understand the words, how can they understand the text?

(Ms Fida, Guided Reflection 2)

It occurred to me that she was underestimating her students' ability by asking them the meaning of words that I believe they have already known. In order to further confirm my claim, I interviewed a few pupils right after Ms Fida's baseline shared

reading 1. I wanted to know whether the words in the text are difficult to them but surprisingly they told me that they understand most of the words in the text (Pupils' focus interview 1).

In comparison to describing story actions, labeling or locating nouns, describing characteristics of nouns and defining words teacher's attempt to recast, expand, or extend child's utterance was minimally found during the baseline observations. Ms Ani for example was only observed trying to elaborate her students' answer once during baseline observation 2. In one of the episodes, she tried to expand the word "tourist" by giving examples as illustrated below in extracts 9 (lines 038, 039, 040, 041 and 042).

Extract 9

Ms Ani's baseline 2

035	T	Cousins.. now you are going to family relationship. So many people
036		go there right, people who are not family, from other countries, what
037		do we call them? People from America? People from Japan coming to
		Malaysia. What do we call them?
038	Ss	Visitors
039	T	Visitors. Ok. There one word, starts with T.. tourist.. so all these
040		places are places where tourists go. Even us in Malaysia from Kedah
041		we go to Malacca. We go to interesting places in Malacca. So we are
042		also tourists.. we have local and foreign tourists.....

Teacher's attempt to ask for or provides a word elaboration through contextualization was also found in Ms Ani's baseline 1 when she was discussing the concept of "open house" by relating it with celebrations like Hari Raya.

Overall, teachers' behaviours within their baseline shared reading context were still limited to describing story actions, describing nouns and their characteristics, labeling nouns and asking and clarifying word meanings. Within these behaviours, teachers were found dominating the talk and seldom elicited conversation from their pupils. Teachers' ability to elicit conversation from pupils during shared reading is always claimed to be associated with students' gain in children expressive vocabulary (Whitehurst et al., 1994; Hargrave & Sénéchal, 2000). Explanations of word meanings which were mostly done in the Malay Language (especially in Ms Fida's shared reading sessions) were found to be contradicted to the simple practice of embedding contextualized explanations of word meaning in the target language which is generally associated with students' greater vocabulary gains (McKeown & Beck, 2003).

4.2.2.2 Limited Encouragement of Higher Order Reading Skills

Higher order reading skills (Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DCELLS) (Wales), corp creator, 2010) is the term used to explain the skills effective readers have in attaining literacy skills. In the SABR tool, they refer to abstract thinking skills and elaboration skills which include skills of comparing and contrasting, making judgement, evaluation and inferences, predicting, reasoning, explaining, analysing elaborating words and relating with real life situation. Both teachers were found rarely supported their pupils in enhancing their higher order reading skills. Their use of specific behaviour to support children's abstract thinking skills was limited to comparing and contrasting, and also making evaluation and judgement. The absence of these cognitively challenging processes which form the foundation for students' later reading comprehension (Wasik & Bond, 2001; Beck &

McKeown, 2003, 2007; Hindman et al., 2008) has also resulted in students' passive participation in conversations within shared reading context.

From the analysis, I found that there were attempts by Ms Ani to ask pupils to make comparison between Chinese New Year and Hari Raya celebration towards the end of baseline 1 (Extract 10). However, the questions asked were still at literal level 1 (Zucker et al., 2010) close ended question. The "what" and "what else" questions were asked ten times to illicit answers on throughout the discussion. As a result, it was noticed that pupils answers were only limited to single-word or single-clause answers such as "went shopping", "pray" and "receive money".

Extract 10

Ms Ani's Baseline 1

052	T	What else did you do?
053	S1	Baked cakes and kuih raya.
054	T	Baked cakes and cookies...biscuits...cookies. What else? Hands up. Too many. Who would like to volunteer? What else do yo do during Hari Raya? Before.
055	S2	Went shopping.
056	T	Went shopping. This is must. Favourite activity. Went shopping with your parents...with your family...with you sibling. You bought new clothes...where? What else did you do before Hari Raya? Anything else? Nothing off. We leave that first. Let's go to during Hari Raya. On Hari Raya day. What do you do? Hands up. Yes.
057	S3	Pray.
058	T	Yes. So the first day Muslims do Go to mosque and pray. After that, what do you do? After going to the mosque...pray...after your Hari Raya prayer. What do you do?
059	S1	Eat.
	4	
060	T	After you pray you eat. So that what was he done. After we go to the mosque to pray he went home he is hungry, so he...eat...eat food. Anybody else? What do you do during Hari Raya day...on Hari Raya day?
061	S5	Visit relatives.
062	T	Visit relatives...eat again. First eat at home. Then you visit your relatives and you eat again. What else do you do? There's something you have

		already forgotten. With your mother and your father. What do you do?
063	S6	Receive money.
064	T	Receive money. First he eat now he receive money. Ok...receive money. What do they call this? For Chinese they call it ang pow. For the Malays...Muslims... what do you call it?
065	Ss	Duit raya.
066	T	Duit raya. What else do you do?
067	S7	Ask forgiveness from parents.

To conclude, teachers' use of specific behaviour to support children's higher order thinking skills was seldom observed in both teachers' shared reading sessions. Apart from a few examples on comparing and contrasting, and making inference and judgement, teachers attempt to encourage students to evaluate, hypothesize, predict and reason was not present. The absence of these cognitively challenging processes which form the foundation for students' later reading comprehension (Wasik & Bond, 2001; McKeown & Beck, 2003, Beck & McKeown, 2007; Hindman et al., 2008) has also resulted in students' passive participation in conversations within shared reading context.

4.2.2.3 Lack of Emotion, Enjoyment and Attention

Another characteristic that deserves special attention during the problem solving stage was the teachers' lack emotion, enjoyment and attention during shared reading. This was represented through the lack of prosodic features and the absence of supportive presence. Prosodic Features refers to expressive reading –variables of timing, phrasing, emphasis, and intonation that speakers use to help convey aspects of meaning and to make their reading lively. Next, the absence of her supportive presence also required attention. Teachers needed to become more enthusiastic and motherly in order to encourage her pupils to participate throughout the discussion.

Based on her studies on adult-child attachment security during shared reading, Bus (2003) concluded that adult's supportive presence would affect how children would immerse in texts. Attention is certainly crucial to ensure the existence of a motivational atmosphere where students feel being read to is such a pleasant experience and not vice versa.

Close examination between the two teachers indicated that Ms Fida showed more enjoyment of reading compared to Ms Ani. At times she was behaving like a mother rather than a teacher to her pupils. She often changed her stress and prosody when communicating with them. At times she slowed down when speaking to them, making her speech more deliberate and clear, and use a greater range in prosody to emphasize sentence boundaries. She also stressed specific words and exaggerated her speech melody exactly like how a mother talks to her children. Through my observation, I found that she was able to make her pupils involve in the discussion about the text they read through her motherly attitude. I can observe the closeness between her pupils and her which through my interpretation has helped to motivate her pupils to be engaged in the discussion.

To further confirm my interpretation, I asked her to rationalize her action and she explained that she needed to be motherly with them as that is one of the ways to motivate them to learn English.

Dengan budak-budak ni, saya kena treat macam anak anak sendiri. Kalau tak mereka tak minat English.. Kalau serious sangat mereka tak suka.

(Ms Fida, Interview 2)

On top of that, she also did not have much problem giving positive feedback and uttering phrases to indicate respect to the students as shown in the following episodes. Most of the time, she used the phrase “thank you”, “very good” and “good try” to show her appreciation towards her pupils’ answers.

On the contrary, my observation of Ms Ani’s baseline 1 indicated that she did not demonstrate enjoyment of reading at all. She tended to read in a somewhat monotonous voice, increasing the pace occasionally, but not altering the pitch of her voice. Her serious facial expression and her firm instruction caused the class to undergo a complete silence. Nobody dared to talk to each other or interrupt her reading. The students seemed to be insecurely attached to her. This insecure relationship resulted in the students continuously being dependent on her for understanding the text, rather than becoming actively engaged and responsive to the content of the text.

In my interview with her she admitted that she was a serious person. She also explained her reasons for behaving in such a way.

I have to be serious with the students. They are weak. They cannot play the fool. Next year they will sit for their UPSR. If I am not serious they will not learn. I can’t play the fool with the students or else they will not concentrate, the students need to be serious too since English is very important.

(Interview 2, January 2011)

Ms Ani was only observed giving positive feedback only once throughout both baseline shared reading sessions. The use of positive feedback is depicted when her

pupils responded to her question on the connection between interesting places and school holidays. As one her pupils answered “we go for trip”, she praised him by saying “very good”.

From the analysis, it was evident that the differences between Ms Ani and Ms Fida have resulted in different responses from their students. While Ms Fida’s class appeared more cheerful and lack of stress, Ms Ani’s class was rather serious and full of tense. As a result, pupils-teacher interaction was slightly better in Ms Fida’s class. Nevertheless, the issue confronting Ms Fida was her excessive use of the pupils’ first language (Bahasa Malaysia) during the discussion. The next section will elaborate on Ms Fida’s excessive use of the first language (BM).

4.2.2.4 Excessive Use of the First Language

Between the two teachers, Ms Fida, was observed to have used the pupils’ first language (L1) during baseline shared reading 1 and 2. Besides using English, Ms Fida was also found to use the Malay Language (BM) in her extra textual conversation during baseline shared reading 1 and 2. Four patterns of L1 usage were identified:

- (i) Checking their understanding of the text
- (ii) Providing definition of words
- (iii) Explaining the text to pupils
- (iv) Allowing pupils to respond in L1

All the four patterns were observed when she read a story about Shahirah and her family who lost their cat in an accident during Baseline 1. Due to her misunderstanding of the principle of shared reading, she began her shared reading

session by asking her pupils to read silently for three times and she expected them to understand the text before she explained to them. Therefore, as she read the text aloud to them, she kept checking whether her pupils have understood the story based on their three times reading. In extract 11, she asked her pupils about what they have understood from the text using English (lines 041-047). However, it was observed that the questions were repeated and translated to BM.

Extract 11

Ms Fida's Baseline 1

039	T	Angkat tangan yang tak sempat habiskan three times reading.
040		Angkat tangan yang tak sempat. <Those who have not read three
041		times, raised up your hands> Ok. Alhamdulillah. <Thank God>.
042		All of you finish three times reading step. After finish reading, now
043		I would like to ask you what you understand from reading this
044		text? Anyone? Apa yang awak faham. < What is it that you do
045		not understand?> Teacher tak expect awak explain one by one.
046		Words by words. No. From the whole text. What do you
047		understand before I explain to you. I would like to know what you
048		understanding regarding this text. Apa yang awak faham tentang
		petikan ni dulu. < I would like to know what you understanding
		regarding this text.> Ok Fatin. What do you understand?

Her concern about whether pupils understood the story was also frequently expressed in BM through the phrase “**Apa lagi yang awak tak faham?**” < What else do you not understand?>, **Takkan tak faham-faham, tak faham satu pun?** < Still do not understand, not understand at all>”. The longest conversation by the teacher on similar pattern was:

.....Semua kebanyakan daripada awak faham yang atas-atas saja. Yang bawah-bawah tak faham ka? Tak faham langsung yang bawah ni. Yang atas sahaja. Kebanyakan yang share dengan kawan semuanya explain the first paragraph sahaja. Tak ada sapa pon yang share for the second paragraph.

<Most of you do not understand. A family live in a small village. Most of you only understand the first part. Most of you share the first paragraph. Nobody shares the second paragraph.>

(Ms Fida, Baseline Observation 1)

In addition to this, Ms Fida was also identified using BM to check whether her pupils encountered with any difficult words while reading the text. As her pupils suggested the difficult words to her, code switching was used to discuss and elaborate the meaning of the words. Most of the times, the equivalent translation was given. Extract 12 showed how BM was used to discuss the words “doted on” (lines 114-122), and “wait” (lines 128-13). The whole episode was mainly conducted using code switching. The elaboration of pupils’ answer was also done in BM. Ms Fida was found to have the habit of repeating her sentence in BM. The direct effect of this type of interaction was pupils felt very comfortable to respond in BM.

Extract 12

Ms Fida’s Baseline 1

111	T	Ok. Princess. Good. Ok, next one. Everyone doted on her. Any
112		difficult word there? So far. Kalau sambil-sambil teacher baca
113		ni, ada perkataan ayang awak tak faham , please put up your
114		hand ok. Yes. <Please raise up your hand if you do not understand>.
115	S18	Doted on.
116	T	Your friend ask for doted on.
117	S19	Manja <Pampered>
117	T	Yes, Arif. Arif ka yang bagitahu tadi? <Were you the one who told just now>
118	S19	Manja.
119	T	Yes. What is the meaning by doted on?
120	S19	Manja <Pampered>
121	T	Yes. Thank you. Manja. Everyone doted on her maksudnya
122		semua orang manja. Manjakan siapa? <Who is pampered>
123	S20	Kucing. <Cat>
124	T	What is the name of cat?
125	Ss	Princess.

Extract 12 continued

126	T	Yes, thank you. Princess. She would wait for my brother and me to
127		come home from school almost every day. What is the meaning by
128		that? Apa maksud ayat tu? Pricess tu will wait for whom? Wait tu
		apa maksud?
129	S21	Tunggu. <Wait>
130	T	Yes. Tunggu. Tunggu siapa? <Wait. Wait for whom?>
131	S22

In the same shared reading session, Ms Fida was also found to ask questions in English and repeated the questions in Malay as she asked them to make inferences and judgement. The same technique was used during baseline 2 when she asked her students the reason why Shahirah was healthy. Her students were found to be able to respond correctly in the Malay Language during both occasions. Unfortunately, it was not clear to me whether the correct responses were due to teachers' effort to translate all her questions or students' ability to understand her question in English. Hence, I cross checked with a few selected students through an interview session and found that they were actually able to understand her question even without the translation. They also admitted that they were comfortable answering in Malay as the teacher also asked the question in Malay. They also claimed that they would try their best to answer in English if the teacher did not use Malay at all.

Ms Fida's reason for resorting to BM to clarify the meaning of difficult words and to explain the text was to ensure students' understanding of the text in their first language.

I think.. more comfortable for me and for the students to understand. If I use more English in my class, I need to repeat and repeat and at last I have to explain in BM. So I take as simple way just to use and explain to them in BM

(Ms Fida Interview 4)

Asked which part she needed to use BM, she explained:

When I tried to explain some meaning or some sentences that are not able to understand, sometimes the instruction also I have to use BM. Just now when I asked them to underline the words, some of them just aaa..call me and ask me teacher what do we have to do.. yes yes you have to **gariskan oo gariskan....<underline>**.

4.2.2.5 Teacher Centred/ Limited Amount of Talk to Engage Pupils in Conversation

Both teachers in the current study were found dominating the talk and seldom elicit conversation from their student— a shared reading practice which is always claimed to be associated with students' gain in children expressive vocabulary (Whitehurst et al., 1994; Hargrave & Sénéchal, 2000). Teacher's lack of attempt to encourage student's responses to text through elaborations upon textual elements and children's own comment about the text has led to less interactive shared reading. As a result, it was observed that teachers were not able to fully support children's understanding of the text. In general, teachers participated more than the students during the book discussion and most comments were on low cognitive demand. Teacher centred or teacher-framed talk, (John, 2009) when used more exclusively denies pupils the chance to bring their own understandings to reading, and thus for the teachers to build upon and extend their established learning.

For example, although both teachers were observed making several attempts to ask students to relate the text with their real life experience, their instructional behavior still discouraged pupils to join the discussion through longer responses. In baseline 1 Ms Ani asked her students to relate their experience celebrating Hari Raya and find

the similarities and differences with CNY celebration. However, her long conversation (lines 070-082) which merely consists of her instruction on how to write notes on similarities and differences between Chinese New Year and Hari Raya has limited her pupils from contributing to the discussion. In addition, as discussed earlier under the construct “abstract thinking”, her questions through the use of the phrase “what else” (line 083, 086 and 087) did not promote longer responses from the pupils as she merely asked them to state the activities they did during Hari Raya.

Extract 13

Ms Fida's Baseline 1

070	T	That's the main festival that all Muslims celebrate. So all Muslims
071		celebrate Hari Raya. Now, I want you to seek and tell or talk about
072		Hari Raya with your friends. So, here you have an example. This is
073		what Chee Kiat did. Before...during. So, I want you sit and discuss
074		with your friends what you do before Hari Raya and during Hari
075		Raya. Very quickly. Three minutes. Use your note book to
076		“conteng-conteng”. Write down the notes. Hurry up. In English
077		please. What do you do before Hari Raya. So there are some words
078		here where can help you. You already have some words here that
079		can help you. So I am giving you another 30 seconds. You just do
080		notes like this. Short notes what did you do. So don't need to write
081		long sentences. I just want notes. You should be ready. So,
082		remember, Chinese New Year before and during. Now let's look at
		you Hari Raya. You celebrate Hari Raya. Can you tell me some of
		the things that you did before Hari Raya. Yes. First activity of
		course we cleaned our house.
083	Ss	Cleaned our house.
084	T	What else did you do?
085	S11	Baked cakes and kuih raya.
086	T	Baked cakes and cookies...biscuits...cookies. What else? Hands up.
087		Too many. Who would like to volunteer? What else do yo do
		during Hari Raya? Before.
088	S12	Went shopping.

She also tried to ask her students to bring in their experience as she was discussing the illustration accompanying the text “Travel and Adventure” on page 14 of the textbook. However, most of the time, she dominated the talk and only used close

ended questions to elicit information from the students. In the first exchange of Extract 14 (lines 035-038), Ms Ani was observed to talk continuously on the picture and the school trip. Her dialogue consists of 34 words in contrast to her pupils' one word answer. Similar example was also identified in the second exchange (lines 040-043 and line 044).

Extract 14

Ms Ani's baseline 2

035	T	Very good.. Each picture shows interesting places that we go
036		during school holidays. Trip that you can go to. Ok now have
037		you ever seen things like this? (pointing at the pictures) pernah
038		tengok tak? Where? Just now your friend say poster
039	S	TV
040	T	Your friend say television. Advertisement. Advertisement on...
041		television.. Now what are the things called when they are
042		folded.. a lot of information and they are lots of pictures and the
043		paper is folded.. big piece of paper you can fold into a small.
044	Ss	File

Ms Fida was also identified monopolizing the conversation in both baselines. The clearest example was from an episode where she was discussing the creator of cornflakes. Lines 034-039 in Extract 15 indicated that Ms Fida's conversation consists of five sentences as compared to her pupils' response which only consists of one word. In addition, her conversation was mainly on giving instructions and asking pupils to add more information on what they know about the content of the text.

Extract 15

Ms Fida's Baseline 2

034	T	Yes,very good the patience is in the hospital.Ok sekarang kita gabung
035		idea Arif dengan idea syazwani.Just know Arif said the creator of
036		cornflakes is Will Kellog then Syazwani said the cornflakes is the first
047		that given towards the patience in the hospital.Ok anyone want to

Extract 15 continued

038039		add?Ada siapa-siapa lagi nak tambah,apa lagi yang dia faham tentang teks ni yang kawan dia tak beritahu lagi.Najmi?
040	S	Ya
042	T	Yes,ada apa-apa lagi nak tambah selain daripada yang Syazwani dengan Arif dah beritahu tadi?What else?Awak ada faham tapi alaaa
042		kawan tak beritahu pun lagi,ok awak nak cuba beritahu.What is
043		that?Selain daripada cornflakes diberi sebagai breakfast,Will Kellog
044		dah cipta cornflakes.Apa yang kawan awak tak beritahu lagi
045		Najmi?Bahagian mana?Which part?
046	S

Ms Fida was also observed to give irrelevant details to her pupils. Extract 16 illustrated her talk on cornflakes which has nothing to do with the contents of the text. For instance, instead of focusing on the origin of cornflakes, she talked about cornflakes advertisement and cooking programme on television as fasting month was approaching.

Extract 16

Ms Fida's Baseline 2

T	Where the Kellog Cornflakes comes from?of course from here (refer to the white board).Nama orang yang reka dia.Sekarang ni dekat raya-raya ni,dekat puasa ni,keluarla iklan cornflakes banyak-banyak.Yesterday baru teacher ternampak iklan keluar lagi,cerita rancangan masak-masak ditaja oleh Kellog's Cornflakes.Kellog ini ialah brand,nama dia.Yang dia punya produk ialah cornflakes.Ok selain daripada apa yang diberitahu,bila baca-baca dapat tahu nama pencipta dia,so syazwani what else besides the name who creates the cornflakes,what else?
---	---

To sum up, both teacher were still comfortable with their teacher-centredness and their inability to elicit more than one word answer from pupils has resulted in failure to fully support children's understanding of the text.

4.2.3 Conclusion

To summarize, the above sections have discussed five themes that emerged from the principle researcher's analysis based on the review of literature on the criteria for examining the quality of classroom shared reading which include the physical environment, the reading materials and teachers' instructional behaviour. The themes for teachers' instructional behaviour, in particular was derived from the constructs and sub construct in the Systematic Assessment of Book Reading (SABR) by Zucker et al.(2010). Overall, teachers seemed to focus more on the literal aspects of the text and provide limited encouragement of higher order reading skills. It was also discovered that the share reading sessions are more teacher centred as teachers offered limited amount of talk to encourage pupils to involve in text related talk. Findings also indicated that teachers (especially Ms Fida) have used the first language excessively in providing definition of words, asking questions and explaining the text to pupils. Furthermore, teachers' enthusiasm and energy when conducting shared reading was also at a very low level.

4.3 Think - Interpreting and Analysing: Teachers' perspectives

In contrast to my analysis, the two teachers seemed to view their baseline shared reading from a different perspective. Both felt comfortable using texts from the textbook as according to them the texts have been arranged according the topics. The texts have been created or modified to tailor certain language items that need to be covered in the respective topics. In Ms Ani's words:

Using textbook helps me to complete the syllabus. Everything has been arranged accordingly. I save lot of time.

(Ms Ani, Interview 1)

Furthermore, almost all pupils had textbook. Thus, according to them shared reading can be conducted effectively as pupils can view their own copy while they read to their pupils. On top of that, both teachers emphasized that using texts from the textbook was the most practical solution to their hectic schedule. Ms Fida reiterated that:

We are very busy with meetings, preparation of lesson plan, exam questions and other clerical works, you know being a teacher we have to do everything, form A to Z. We don't have time to search for materials. So we use textbook. Everything is there....

(Ms Fida, Interview 1)

Besides, Ms Ani and Ms Fida also did not see the pupils' seating arrangement as a hindrance to the success of their shared reading sessions. Furthermore, they were not willing to go through the hustle bustle of changing the seating position.

I think they, I mean the pupils are more disciplined, more settled like this. Rearranging their positions is not easy. They will make noise and a lot of time wasted.

(Ms Ani, Interview 1)

On top of that, most of the time, they tended to blame their pupils for the lack of student-teacher interaction during the activity. This is evident during our team reflection when Ms Ani told me:

Can't you see? They are very passive. They will not open their mouth. They are not proficient. They will not talk because they are afraid that they will make mistake and their friends will laugh at them. That is why I prefer to give them grammar exercises. At least they can practice. Their UPSR is next year. They need to master grammar.

(Ms Ani, team reflection1)

Her argument was supported by Ms Fida:

True. They are very passive. Tak boleh buat apa-apa dah. They will not talk. But if we give them written work they can do. We must give them a lot of written exercises so that they are prepared for their exam.

(Ms Fida, team reflection 1)

The teachers' argument indicated that they perceived their pupils' passivity and low proficiency as a hindrance to conduct shared reading. On the contrary, I believe that pupils are passive because instruction continues to be so didactic. Excessive amount of teacher talk encourage passivity and does not help in improving pupils' proficiency (John, 2009). As second language learners, pupils need to be given opportunity to use the language.

4.4 Conflict: researcher vs teachers' perspectives

My findings which were in alignment with previous literature (McNiff et al., 2003; Yaacob, 2006) suggested five important characteristics that require close examination if student-teacher interaction during the activity was to be improved both quantitatively and qualitatively. Overall, the baseline study indicated that both my participating teachers did have problems with their instructional behavior during shared reading. The findings indicated that teachers' instructional behavior during shared reading was partly influenced by factors such as teachers' misconception on the definition of shared reading and the purpose of shared reading, the choice of text and appropriate seating arrangement for shared reading.

My findings revealed that teachers' instructional behaviour when conducting shared reading was in line with the literature on the teaching of ESL reading which

indicated that reading was usually regarded solely as a language-based, bottom-up process, with comprehension resulting from successful letter, word, and sentence decoding (Ponniah, 1993; Ramaiah 1997; Nuttall, 2005; Yaacob, 2006; Nambiar, 2007; Kadir et al., 2014). Like Yaacob's (2006) findings, the outcomes of this stage also illustrated that the traditional model of teaching reading is still practiced by teachers despite the changes made in the curriculum. Teacher-centred way of teaching still dominated the reading classes although research has proven that it did not contribute much in helping pupils to collaboratively make meaning of the text while reading it.

Most importantly, the findings supported previous studies that concluded shared book experience is not effectively utilized to enhance students' reading literacy as teachers rarely prompt students to think, relate and express their understanding of the stories read to them. (Dickinson et al., 2003; McKeon & Beck, 2003; Morrow & Brittain, 2003).

Nevertheless, there was a gap between the teachers' perspectives and mine and this has resulted in conflicts. However, conflicts, whether minor or major are common in action research (Stringer, 2007). As an outsider who brought along my own philosophy, experience and understanding to the research, I also had to acknowledge the participating teachers' existing knowledge and values. I had to be aware that there is a very close relationship between teachers' belief and their classroom practice. In this situation my role was to manage the conflict so that Ms Ani and Ms Fida will be able to realize their problems and at the same time to ensure that the positive working relationship is not tarnished. My challenge was to provide

assistance to them without making them feel that I was telling them that things did not appear to be going very well with their existing practice. My task according to Stringer (2006, p.96) was “to assist participants in revealing those taken for granted meanings”. In other words my role was to fill up the gap between what the teachers did not manage to realize on their own with the better practice as suggested in the literature of reading pedagogy.

The next section elaborates on the “act” stage where I as the principle researcher resolved the conflicts by enacting my supportive role through several steps as a means of setting a stage for further discussion on issues related to their shared reading problems.

4.5 Act – Resolving the Conflicts

The “act” stage was the phase where the researcher and participants worked together to formulate actions that lead to the resolutions of the issues (Stringer, 2007). In this study, however, this stage appeared to be the most challenging stage for me as I needed to convince my participating teachers that there were a few things in their shared reading practice that were not quite right through my observation and review of literature before we came to a consensus on how to solve the problems. As an “outsider” (refer my explanation on my positionality in this study in Chapter 3, Section 3.7.1.2) my dilemma was how to present this result to my participating teachers and how to convey to them that their shared reading practice was not in line with the literature. By sharing with them my analysis, I was afraid that Ms Fida and Ms Ani would feel that I was labeling them as inefficient teachers and consequently will withdraw from participating in my project. My dilemma can be clearly observed through my self reflection in my journal entries:

The two teachers were so confident with the ways they conducted shared reading. Telling them that what/how they were doing was not really correct was like throwing a bomb to them. If you have done something in a certain way for many years and you believe that it is the correct way of doing it, it is difficult to break the habit and adopt a new way of doing it. How do I deal with letting go of their existing knowledge, assumptions, and ideas?

(Reflective Journal, July 2011)

In another entry, I asked myself:

What would be the most effective ways by which I can help the two teachers realize that there are problems confronting not only their shared reading practice but also their reading instruction in general?

(Reflective Journal, July 2011)

As I further reviewed the literature on teacher change, I realized change is a complicated process; it is a journey and not a blueprint (Fullan, 1991, 1993). He further added that people can easily accept others' criticism once they are given opportunity to discuss, reflect on, and formulate their own interpretations of their problems. Consequently, as a researcher in this collaboration, I played the role of a "facilitator or consultant who acted as a catalyst to assist stakeholders in defining their problems clearly and to support them as they worked toward effective solutions to the issues that concern them" (Stringer, 2007, p.24). The facilitation took place beginning July 2011 through series of guided reflections and a modelling session. Both were conducted based on the themes that emerged from my analysis during the 'think' stage.

4.5.1 Guided Reflections

The purpose of guided reflections was to assist them in reflecting their own practice so as to allow them to revisit and reflect events in their lives and as a result

extend their understanding of their own shared reading experience (Stringer, 2007). This appeared to be the most crucial process as their ability to identify the key areas of the situations that needed to be dealt with would determine the action that we would take throughout the following cycles of this collaboration. The guided reflections involved five important steps as shown in figure 4.6.

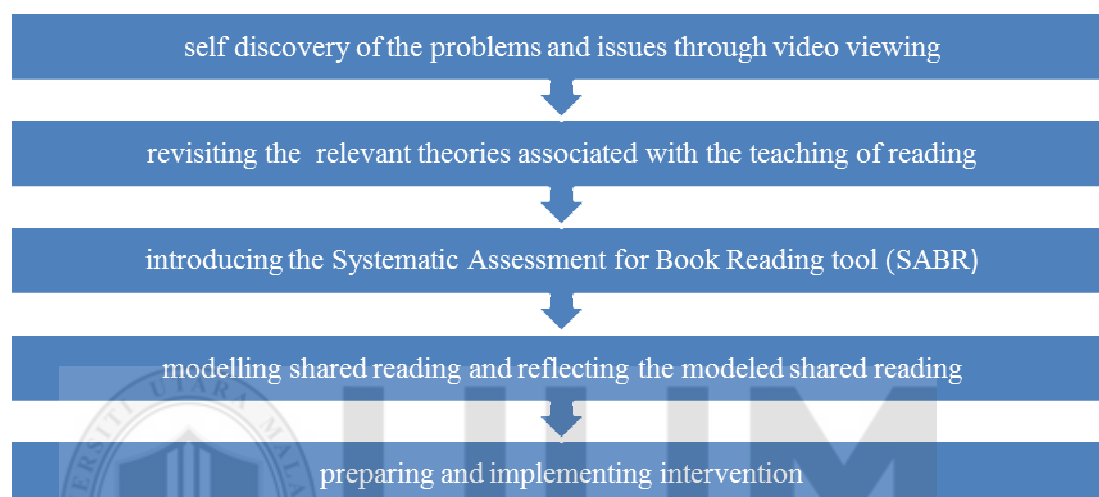


Figure 4.6. Guided reflection processes

Although this is presented as a linear process, in practice the nature of the whole process was much more iterative, dynamic and complex. The processes took place not only during Cycle 1 but also were repeated recursively in the following cycles.

I began the guided reflection with self discovery of the problems and issues through video viewing. The video viewings were divided into three categories. The first category was teachers reflecting on their own video of teaching and the second category was reflecting on their colleague's and the third one is reflecting on video of exemplary teacher from youtube (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jfGjgOc-rJw>) and comparing to their own teaching practice. The video viewings were accompanied by discussion that promotes analysis, brainstorming and problem solving.

Video viewing of teachers' own teaching provides an evidence-based record of their actual way of teaching in classroom watching their own practice allows teachers to analyze their approaches to working with pupils in a much more concrete way than trying to remember what they and their students. Research suggests that these results were most effective when teachers had a chance to watch and discuss video collaboratively with their peers. Recording your own teaching practices and comparing them to a video of an exemplary teacher also “enables you to see the distance between your fledgling efforts and a more sophisticated user’s approach, which is really important. Personal reflection through the use of video allows us to see what really happens in our classrooms—good and bad— and provides a visual path forward for improvement, whether it be in your teaching, your work with a particular student, or your learning environment (Mourlam, 2013).

To assist them in the reflection session, I gave them a table consisting of aspects that they have to pay attention to (see Table 4.3). They had to fill up the the table as they watch the video. The purpose was to make comparison between their existing understanding of shared reading and the principles the identified from the video.

Table 4.3

Table on Comparison between Teachers’ Shared Reading and the Teacher’s in the Video to be Filled up by Teachers

	Shared Reading as understood and practiced by me	Principles of shared reading as demonstrated in the video
Definition		
Purpose(s)		
Physical arrangement		
Materials		
Teachers’ instructional behaviour		

During our discussion, I also drew their attention to the relevant theories of shared reading. I also revisited the relevant theories associated with the teaching of reading and made them aware of the features of interactive shared reading mentioned in the literature (refer literature review). My justification for taking this action was based on the argument that teachers require a solid understanding of the foundational theories that drive teaching, including ideas about how students learn, what they should learn, and how teachers can enable student learning (McNiff et al., 2003) have also emphasized earlier that effective reading teachers are the one who are able to bridge theories to their teaching.

Following the revisiting of theories, I gradually revealed my own analysis of their baseline shared reading sessions. It was not difficult to convince them as at this point the teachers began to make sense of my analysis. They have understood the theories related to the teaching of reading literacy and shared reading. As a result, they were open enough to relearn things as they thought that there were a few misunderstandings in the way they understand shared reading. For example, Ms Ani as she was recalling her baseline shared reading where she read the brochure from the textbook, openly admitted that most of the time she focused on the definitions of words and factual meaning of the text until she ignored the higher order thinking skills that can be developed through her discussion with her pupils. This is evident in her feedback during our guided reflection 2.

How can I overlook this? I can ask my pupils to imagine the place that they would like to visit instead of asking them again and again what brochure is.

(Ms Ani: Guided Reflection 2)

4.5.2 Modelling

The final step taken during Cycle 1 was modelling to the teachers the shared reading session. Although I did not enter this study as an expert, modelling is crucial to enact my supportive role to provide direct cues to the participants regarding their own ways of working (Stringer, 2007, p.137). Modelling is one of the the most powerful means of instituting the social processes that are inherent in collaborative action research. By conducting the shared reading session based on some of the constructs in SABR, I hoped to instill confidence in the teachers that it was not impossible to conduct and enjoyable shared reading while supporting pupils' development in the area that teachers felt less confident with such as abstract thinking skills and elaborative responses to the text. Apart from that, I also ensured that my interaction with pupils was done in English with very selective use of their first language.

My shared reading session was observed by the two participating teachers and the critical friends, Frah and Michael using the SABR tool. Ms Ani and Ms Fida also played the role of a critical friend as they understood the context of their own classroom and pupils. Together the four of them collaboratively made meaning as well as posed questions regarding how I conducted my shared reading. Critical friends often push researchers to another level of understanding because they ask researchers to make explicit what they may understand on a more tacit level (Herr & Anderson, 2005).

The session took place in 5S classroom. I read a story entitled Ma Liang adapted from Wright's (1995) *Storytelling With Children*. The story is about a Chinese girl named Ma Liang who liked to draw. One day, she was given a magic brush by an old man. She began drawing pictures using the magic brush and to her surprise, the picture moved once she finished drawing and became real. She later gave the objects she drew to the poor villagers. The villagers were very thankful to her and loved her so much. Ma Liang became famous and she was later called by the king to his palace. The king wanted her to draw trees full of golden coins. However, Ma Liang refused and was sent to the prison. In the prison she used the magic brush and managed to escape.

I shared with the teachers the reasons why I chose the story. The first reason was because it has the magic elements which capture the imagination of children. Next, it also has repetitive phrases. For instance, every time she gave the objects to the villagers the same dialogue will be repeated and pupils began to remember the phrases such as the below:

This hen is for you!"
"For me?"
"Yes, it's for you. Take it! It's yours!"
"It's mine?"
"Yes, it's yours! It's for you!"

Furthermore the story also gave pupils opportunity to make predictions. Among others they can make predictions on the objects that Ma Liang would draw based the condition presented. For instance, Ma Liang's first few drawings were farm animals. Therefore, pupils were able to predict the animals that she would draw. Similarly, pupils were also able to predict the ending of the story where Ma Liang drew a key to

unlock the prison door in order to escape. Overall, the story was able to provoke complex conversation which naturally shaped the interactive pattern of my shared reading (Teale, 2003).

In line with the principal of shared reading practice which emphasizes on the reading of enlarged text, I prepared the story on power point slides and used LCD projector to project the slides to the pupils. This allowed pupils from all angles to view the text from far. Although the original text was not accompanied with illustrations, I made an effort to put pictures on the slides to make the shared reading session more interesting as I would be able to refer to the pictures in discussing the vocabulary.

Ma Liang is a Chinese girl.
She loves drawing but she is very poor and she
hasn't got a brush.
Ma Liang draws her pictures on the ground.
She draws with a stick.



Figure 4.7. Examples of powerpoint slides for the story Ma Liang

My shared reading session in 5S took place from 9.15 to 10.15 am. It wasn't my first time teaching the class as I already had several interactions with the students prior to this intervention (see section on establishing rapport with my participants in chapter 3). Therefore we did not feel awkward with each other. The pupils were not even aware that I was a researcher who was doing my data collection. To them, I was their teacher who conducted a normal teaching learning session with them. Therefore, their behavior during this session was their normal behavior, the same behavior they would demonstrate during Ms Fida's teaching.

Pupils were seated in a semi circle. Desks were put aside as shown in the figure 4.8.

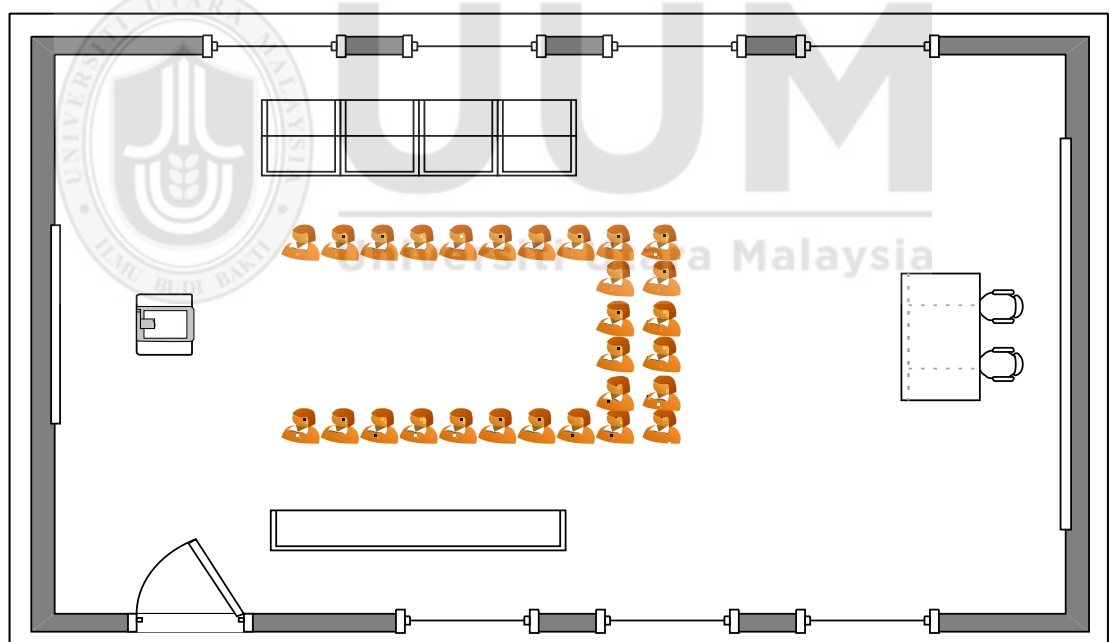


Figure 4.8. Classroom Layout

As a teacher, I stood up and most of the time my position was at the front area of the classroom where all the pupils could see me as I was conducting shared reading with

them. Once in a while, when the need arises, I would move towards a few pupils for better interaction with them.

I started by telling them that I was going to read a story to them. Before reading the story, I encouraged the pupils to predict what was the story all about. I showed to them the pictures of the main character of the story – Ma Liang and asked them who they think the girl in the picture is. One student answered, “It is a girl”. Then I replied, “Yes, it is a girl, but who do you think she is?” Nobody answered my question. I continued prompting them by asking “Do you think he is a Chinese, Indian or Malay? The whole class then shouted “Chinese!” Then I responded “So this is a Chinese girl. Tell me again who do you think this girl is? The whole class answered in chorus “This is a Chinese girl”. I praised them for being so enthusiastic. Then, I began reading “*MA LIANG WAS A CHINESE GIRL. SHE LOVED DRAWING BUT SHE WAS VERY POOR AND SHE DID NOT HAVE A BRUSH. MA LIANG DREW HER PICTURES ON THE GROUND. SHE DREW WITH A STICK*”.

At this point, I paused for a while and asked a few recall questions to check their understanding such as “*Who is Ma Liang*”, “What did she love?” and “What did she draw?” The pupils were able to answer my questions without much hesitation. Then, I asked them “Why do you think Ma Ling draw her pictures on the ground? Upon asking this question, I noticed that some did not understand my question and some understood but hesitated to answer. Hence, I prompted them in the Malay Language (BM) and as a result a few students answered in BM too. Then I asked again in English. As there was no response, I gave the answer and asked the whole class to repeat. I asked them the same questions starting from groups to individuals until I

was satisfied with their answers. Then I continued reading and did the same thing for the remaining parts of the story. I helped them to expand their answer when they gave me incomplete answers. I prompted the students and varied the types of questions I asked. In an episode where Ma Liang found out that there was an old man in front of her, I asked the pupils who they thought that old man was. The open ended questions demanded them to think and relate with their existing knowledge. The open-ended questioning emphasized that meaning existed in the minds of the readers and that the students had important perceptions for interpreting stories.

Apart from that, I also asked the pupils to repeat the dialogue between Ma Liang and the old man. Here pupils practice short but authentic conversation. As I read to them the line “ONE DAY SHE CLOSES HER EYES AND SHE SAYS THREE TIMES, I WANT A BRUSH! I WANT A BRUSH! I WANT A BRUSH!” I asked them to dramatize and imitate the conversation as how it appeared in the text:

“THIS BRUSH IS FOR YOU!”“FOR ME?”
“YES, IT’S FOR YOU. TAKE IT! IT’S YOURS!”
“IT’S MINE?”
“YES, IT’S YOURS! IT’S FOR YOU!”

The whole class said aloud the conversation. At times, I divided them into two groups; one group acted as Ma Liang while the other acted as the old man. Overall, I could witness the enthusiasm in the pupils during this session. As I wrote in my journal,

I could see that the pupils were very excited during the whole session although they were quite passive in the beginning. Gradually, they started to join in the conversation about the story. They were so

engrossed in the session until I could see that they were reluctant to go for their break when the bell rang at 10.15am.

(Reflective Journal, July 2011)

This was admitted by all four critical friends who could feel the pupils' excitement as they participated in reading and discussing the story. Ms Fida related this with my own enthusiasm as I read the story. She admitted that pupils would follow the teachers' mood during teaching and learning. She also added that this factor has contributed to a student centred classroom. According to Frah I have tried to provide a word elaboration through contextualization and dramatization when I asked the pupils to imagine that they were Ma Liang and dramatize her feeling as she received the magic brush from the old man. Ms Ani, could see that I was trying to relate the story with the pupils' own experience as I asked them to predict the object they would draw if they were Ma Liang.

Micheal on the other hand focused on the seating arrangement and suggested that pupils be seated on the floor and gathered around me. He felt that my position was quite far from the pupils thus defeated the purpose of having intimate reading that resembles shared book reading in the home context.

Overall all four critical friends and I believed that the shared reading session was exciting and interactive. The session proved that pupils can be taught reading skills in an enjoyable manner and that their lack of participation in classroom could be attributed to teachers' instructional behavior rather than their passivity as claimed by

the teachers earlier. My shared reading session also indicated that teachers were able to provide pupils with support beyond language development .

4.6 Lesson Learnt from Cycle 1

The first cycle was the beginning stage of the whole action research process and functioned as a pilot study where I started building the structures needed for my study. Overall, the cycle was able to provide a well-grounded understanding of the experience and perspective of participants regarding their shared reading practice. Hence, it helped me in setting the direction and refining my research instrument for Cycles 1, 2 and 3.

As mentioned earlier, there was a contradiction between the teachers' perspective on their shared reading practice and the interpretation I made based on my review of literature and Zucker et.al.'s Systematic Assessment of Book Reading (SABR). However, the process undergone during Cycle 1 was able to close the gap between the teachers' perspectives and mine and as a result resolved the conflicts between us. The dialogic discussion that took place during guided reflections has helped my participating teachers to see things from the same perspective as mine. Similarly, as the initiator of this research, my position has gradually moved from a complete outsider who was analysing the teachers' shared reading practice based on the review of literature to an insider who began to understand the way the teachers see things. Similarly, the two teachers began to feel like co- researchers rather than participants of the research. We had already developed a congenial relationship; we were able to talk about our frustrations and joys and began to see ourselves as one and treated the problems as ours. That has made it easier for the teachers to accept my ideas as I was

no longer perceived as someone who was correcting their behaviour but rather as an insider who was solving the problem together with them.

The two teachers really appreciated the guided reflection and modelling sessions. As posited by Stringer (2007), the guided reflection has enabled them to realise that their shared reading practice needs improvement in the areas I have highlighted earlier. They began to realise that a good shared reading session requires a teacher to select interesting text and their over reliance on the structured and simplified reading materials from textbook has hindered them from carrying out an interesting shared reading sessions. Not only that, their awareness increased as they began to understand the need to use enlarged text during the activity. They also began to see the importance of having suitable seating arrangement, an arrangement that invites the sense of closeness and intimacy between pupils and teachers similar to that of between parents and children during bedtime stories. Finally, they began to realize that appropriate instructional behaviour is crucial in determining the success of their shared reading session. Similarly, they felt that my modeling has provided them with direct cues (Stringer, 2007) regarding their current shared reading practice. My way of providing assistance and support to them has develop their confidence to try different methods and stimulate greater engagement of their students. They began to admit that their pupils' passivity was not due to their nature but instead had connection with the way they discussed the text with them.

All in all, the two teachers felt supported and were not reluctant to further investigate their practice. The guided reflection and modelling have helped me to resolve the conflict between my perspectives and the teachers'. Guided reflections were

extremely valuable in the learning and relearning process. We were able to reflect on their existing shared reading practice and discussed what we needed to implement or change as we watched the videos of their shared reading sessions and made comparison with the literature.

4.6.1 Setting Direction

From our work that first three months together (January – March 2011), we have come to a consensus of the areas that requires attention from the teachers. Our focus was more on the meaning making of the text which is in line with the definition of reading I have been using from the very beginning of this project - reading literacy is not only knowing how to decode, decipher, articulate and pronounce written words but also interacting actively with the text to make meaning out of it (Pang et al., 2003; Nuttall, 2005; Dickinson et al., 2010).

First of all we decided to maintain the focus on teachers' ability to select appropriate reading materials and seating arrangement. Next, we agreed to focus on teachers' instructional behaviour in making shared reading more interactive, lively and engaging, promoting higher order thinking skills and negotiating translation and avoiding the excessive use of first language. These three areas are reciprocal to each other to ensure high quality shared reading. Our aim was to make improvement in terms of teachers ability to provide opportunities for active discussion that relate the story read with students' experience, and focus on meaning of words, the story line as well as the character in the story. In particular, Ms Fida and Ms Ani wanted me and the two critical friends to help them in asking questions and inviting responses from pupils. They also wanted to focus on examining their ability to promote higher

order thinking skills in their pupils as they feel that was the area that they were not good at. They wanted me to help them on how to encourage the use of background knowledge in meaningful ways while reading text with pupils.

4.6.2 Refining Research Instruments for Cycles 2, 3 and 4

Cycle 1 has helped to improve the instruments used for Cycles 2,3 and 4. Based on our analysis during this cycle, we decided to make some modifications in the tool by adding three new constructs and one subconstruct, and dropping one construct in order to suit our present context. The new constructs that we added were the physical environment, the teachers' material selection and the use of pupils' first language. The new subconstruct which was placed under the construct "session climate" was "maintaining maintaining inspiration and enthusiasm. The construct that was dropped was the print/ phonological skills construct. We named the revised SABR tool as Standard Assessment for L2 Book Reading (SABRL2). The complete SABRL2 tool can be viewed in appendix 3.

SABRL2 was used also used as an instrument for the data analysis in Cycles 2, 3 and 4. In other words the coding of teachers' instructional behaviour during shared reading was based on the elements in SABRL2.

The next section provides the rationales for the modification made.

We decided to include the first two constructs because they are very important in determining the quality of teachers' shared reading session. The appropriate seating arrangement and the correct choice of materials are important contributors to

teachers' instructional behaviour during shared reading. In other words, both have reciprocal relationship in ensuring the success of shared reading.

We also agreed to add another construct which is the use of pupils' L1 during shared reading (Table 4.4). Judging from our observation and based on researchers' suggestions such as that of Atkinson (1987), Cook (2001), Paramavisam (2009), Butzkamm (2011), and Halasa and Al-Manaseer (2012), we concluded that L1 should be used to a certain extent to aid the meaning making of text during shared reading. Cook (2001) believes that L1 can be used positively to check the meanings of words and explain grammar, organize tasks and give directions. The learners' first language not only functions as a strategy for communication but also enhances second language learning by helping learners expand their second language repertoire and increase their automatization of second language items (Paramavisam, 2009). If used appropriately, L1 may not only improve or facilitate the teaching process but also bring innovations in the existing teaching methods, and may form a wider teaching approach to language teaching (Halasa & Al-Manaseer, 2012). Nevertheless, we were also aware that excessive use of pupils' mother tongue were found to be contradicted to the simple practice of embedding contextualized explanations of word meaning in the target language which is generally associated with students' greater vocabulary gains (McKeown & Beck, 2003).

Our consensus was also influenced by Alvarez (2014) who posited that the problem stems not from the use of L1 but from the way in which it is used in the classroom. We decided to focus on how teachers use L1 selectively in scaffolding pupils without displacing English as the main medium of discussion (Butzkamm, 2003, 2011).

Table 4.4

Selective Use of Pupils' First Language

Codes	Definition
4a Selective use of pupils' first language (L1)	Scaffolding pupils using L1 without displacing English as the main medium of discussion

The subconstruct that we decided to add was under the construct "session climate". Although it was clearly stated in SABR that this construct examines the extent to which the teacher demonstrates enjoyment of reading and respect towards the children during reading, the former was not spelt out in the codes. Instead, it only focuses on the way(s) teachers model respect and give feedback to the pupils. Hence, we decided to add the subconstructs 4c – maintaining inspiration and enthusiasm (Table 4.5).

Table 4.5

The Subconstructs under Session Climate

Codes	Definition	Specific coding notes & examples
4a Models Respect	Teacher models respectful language or respectfully responds to a student's signal.	4a(1) Questions/Requests/Comments that include/model respectful or polite language (i.e., these key words). 4a(2) Teacher demonstrates respectful behavior to students when they signal (verbally or nonverbally) that they want/need the teacher's attention. Respectful responses are warm/sensitive and prompt, meaning the teacher does not allow the situation to escalate before responding and/or does not ignore the child's signal. 4a(3) Teacher responds respectfully when a child points out a teacher mistake/error/omission. Examples:

Table 4.5 continued

Codes	Definition	Specific coding notes & examples
4b Positive Feedback	Teacher offers students positive feedback on their input.	Teacher comments indicate positive feedback/praise for student(s) verbal or nonverbal behaviors.
4c Maintaining inspiration and enthusiasm	Teacher's ability to add feeling and emotion to the text/ to convey the writer's feeling through the use of prosodic features and non verbal language	Prosodic features - Use of emotional voices/ different voices, variations in pitch, loudness, tempo, and rhythm, intonation, stress, and rhythm. Non verbal language – use of facial expression Gesture Body language

Teachers' enthusiasm plays a vital role in attracting pupils' attention and generating their interest towards learning (Jerelyn, 2007; Jeremy, 2009). Highly enthusiastic teachers possess features of expressive reading called prosodic features. These features comprise all of the variables of timing, phrasing, emphasis, and intonation that teachers use to help convey aspects of meaning and to make their shared reading lively. Prosody can also reflect linguistic features, such as sentence structure, as well as text features, such as punctuation. Previous research have indicated that children enjoyed the shared reading sessions and comprehended text better when adults read with expression to them. Ezell & Justice (2005) posited that teachers who are able to read books with reading expressions draw excitement and curiosity to the reading session. Miller and Schwanenflugel (2008), after comparing students' reading prosody in first and second grades with their reading comprehension at the end of third grade, concluded that early acquisition of an adult-like intonation contour predicted better comprehension.

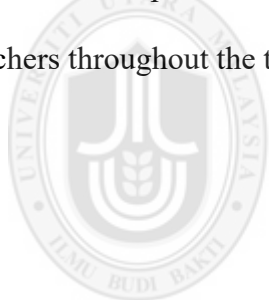
In addition, enthusiastic teachers also possess highly expressive non verbal language. Earlier research has indicated that non verbal language such as teachers' facial expression, gestures, body movement and overall energy level results in increased cognitive and affective learning (Zeki, 2009). After examining students' perception on teachers' non verbal communication in two classroom management groups, Zeki (2009) concluded that non-verbal communication can be an important source of motivation and concentration for students' learning as well as a tool for taking and maintaining attention.

The construct that we planned to take out was the print/ phonological skills construct. The construct examines the extent to which the teacher includes verbal references (questions, directives, comments) regarding the forms and features of print or book organization. Additionally, explicit references to phonology, or the sounds of language (e.g., rhyme, alliteration), are examined within this construct. This construct was dropped since the focus was more on teachers' instructional behaviour in helping pupils to make meaning of the text rather than on the decoding skills. Although decoding skills are equally important in reading, the analysis from Cycle 1 indicated that the teachers needed more help in developing their extra textual talk to help pupils understand texts. Furthermore, similar to other teachers in previous studies, (see for example, Ponniah, 1993; Kaur 1996, Ramaiah 1997; Yaacob, 2006; Nambiar, 2007 Kadir et al., 2014) these two teachers admitted that their focus all these while was more on decoding rather than meaning making of text.

4.7 Summary of the chapter

This chapter has elaborated on the result of the “look, think” and “act” stage of the first cycle. The two participating teachers’ existing understanding of shared reading and their nature of instructional behaviours from their own perspectives as well as those of the principal researcher’s were discussed in detail. The process of solving the identified problems was also described. In addition, the new instrument (SABRL2) for analysing and guiding teachers’ shared reading practice was also presented. Overall, this chapter discussed the lesson learnt from this cycle and how it set direction for the following cycles.

In the next chapter, I shall discuss the transformative journey undergone by the two teachers throughout the three remaining cycles as a result of this collaboration.



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CHAPTER FIVE

THE TRANSFORMATIVE JOURNEY

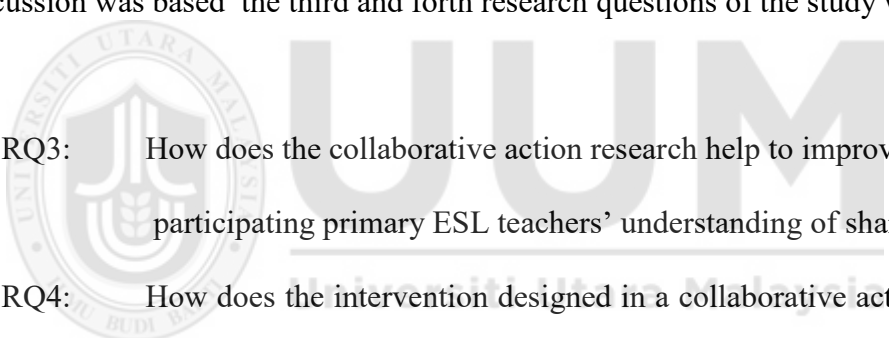
5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to describe my effort as a teacher educator to collaborate with two teachers in a four cycle action research project to improve their shared reading practice. The three areas focused in this study are the physical arrangement, the materials selection and the teachers' instructional behaviour (Dickinson & Tabors, 2001; Teale, 2003; Ezell & Justice, 2005). The three areas have been outlined as three main criteria for examining classroom shared reading (Dickinson & Tabors, 2001; Teale, 2003; Ezell & Justice, 2005). Teachers' instructional behaviour, in particular, is the main determiner to ensure the success of shared reading (Whitehurst, 1988; Arnold et al., 1994; Dickinson & Smith, 1994; Haden et al., 1996; Reese & Cox, 1999; Reese et al., 2003; Zevenbergen & Whitehurst, 2003). High quality book-reading is demonstrated through teacher's extratextual talk when interacting with the child to promote optimal child language and literacy skills (Kadavarek et al., 2014).

A Systematic Assessment of Book Reading (SABR) by Zucker et al. (2010) was used as a guide to examine teachers' existing shared reading practice during the first cycle. Later, in response to the result obtained during the first cycle, the tool was modified based on the agreement between the researcher and the teachers and used to evaluate teachers' changes throughout the second until the fourth cycle. The modified tool was named Systematic Assessment of Second Language Book Reading (SABRL2). Besides retaining the constructs readily available in SABR such as

language development, abstract thinking skill, elaboration skills and session climate, SABRL2 also focused on 1) teachers' selection of materials, 2) physical arrangement 3) the extent to which pupils' first language (L1) should be used during shared reading and 4) teachers' effort to maintain inspiration and enthusiasm throughout the shared reading sessions.

This chapter discusses the journey of the two participating teachers throughout this collaboration. Basically, the discussion focused on teachers' understanding of shared reading and how this understanding was interpreted in their instructional behaviour as a result of the intervention received during this collaborative action research. The discussion was based the third and forth research questions of the study which are:

- 
- RQ3: How does the collaborative action research help to improve the participating primary ESL teachers' understanding of shared reading?
- RQ4: How does the intervention designed in a collaborative action research help to improve the participating primary ESL teachers' instructional behaviour when conducting shared reading?

My analysis was based on teachers' transcribed shared reading sessions during Cycles 2,3 and 4, the guided reflections held after each observation, my own reflective journal and pupils' focus interviews. The analysis focused on how each teacher's shared reading practice during these three cycles was different from their practice during Cycle 1. Specifically, through this analysis, I would like to show the extent to which the teachers have changed their perspectives and practice of shared reading as a result of the intervention planned for these three cycles.

5.2 Understanding of Shared Reading

My analysis of data from teachers' and pupils' interviews, as well as classroom observations during the baseline study (Cycle 1) revealed Ms Ani and Ms Fida had inaccurate understanding of shared reading in terms of its definition, purpose(s) of conducting, reading materials and physical arrangement (setting). However, throughout the ten months collaboration, it was apparent that Ms Ani and Ms Fida's understanding of shared reading developed significantly.

5.2.1 Definition and Purpose(s) of Shared Reading

First of all, the two participating teachers' definition of shared reading gradually changed throughout the collaboration. This was demonstrated through their reaction during cycle 1 when I invited them to view one shared reading video I downloaded from the youtube in attempt to provide an opportunity for them to make comparison with their own practices. Although they sounded somewhat skeptical with what they viewed, they agreed that shared reading was supposed to be conducted in an enjoyable and friendly manner. In fact both began to see the similarities between the shared reading in an ordinary English classroom and the Contemporary Literature. Ms Ani, in particular realized that pupils should be asked to sit around the teacher in order to allow for more interaction to take place. However, she was still not convinced on whether pupils can be allowed to ask questions when the teacher is conducting shared reading for she afraid that it will cause the session to be very noisy. Her confusion can be seen from her remarks during guided reflection 2.

Oh my God! It was very enjoyable. Yet, look at me. I was so serious. So garang... Must we make them sit on the floor? Yeah .. they should sit around us, like what was suggested during the course I attended, I mean the contemporary Literature course.. Oo.. I don't know that students can interrupt the teacher. Can they interrupt? Bisinglah nanti...

(Ms Ani, Team reflection 2)

Similarly, Ms Fida, despite agreeing to the idea that shared reading should be more intimate, was still skeptical as to whether pupils should be allowed to interrupt when the teacher is reading to them. She was not clear on how the interruption should take place.

However, after undergoing a few guided reflections, both teachers was clearer and more certain that shared reading should be interactive. Ms Fida's improved understanding of shared reading was demonstrated as early as in Cycle 2 when she conducted a very interactive shared reading on the story "Ma Liang" with her 5S pupils. Unlike her baseline shared reading where she asked the students to read aloud row by row the reading text from Year 5 textbook, in Cycle 2 she started involving her pupils in her reading. Her justification clearly explained her improved understanding:

To me, in conducting shared reading, there should be a dialogue between the teacher and pupils. As I read, I should ask them questions. Then, I should allow them to answer my questions. Of course, I cannot be too serious.

(Ms Fida, Guided reflection 4)

As for Ms Ani, her definition of shared reading during Cycle 3 totally contradicted to her earlier understanding where she taught that shared reading is only a technique whereby teacher reads aloud and pupils follow the teacher. At this stage, she believed that there should be pupils teacher interaction during shared reading which will eventually lead to the meaning making of the text.

Shared reading as I understood from our discussion so far is it should be interactive, it is not teacher reads aloud pupils follow all the time, but it is.....teacher reads, teacher ask questions, pupils responds to the question. Sometimes pupils read aloud too.

(Ms Ani, Guided reflection 5)

5.2.2 Material Selection

In terms of text selection, MsAni realized that she should use enlarged text instead of materials from the textbook. However, at this point the only reading materials that came to her mind was big book and she personally thought that the big books available in the school library were not suitable for shared reading due to the small font size.

I shouldn't have used textbook. But we don't have big book. We do have in our library... but only the book is big... the writing is still small, how to read to the students? Still they can't see...

(Ms Ani, Guided reflection 3)

Ms Ani's attempt to avoid using materials from the textbook and the big book from the library was obvious as she conducted her shared reading using a story entitled "The Lion King" during Cycle 2. She had made an attempt to write down the story

on a mahjong paper. It was quite large for her pupils to view the text from as far as approximately 4 metres. Although not attractive enough, it was able to capture her pupils' attention. It was something different from her routines of using textbook. This is evident from my description in my reflective journal.

The kids were very happy. They were very eager to read the story. The class was very noisy as some were trying to read the story while Ms Ani was sticking the mahjong paper on the white board. There was sense of eagerness to read. I could not imagine how the kids would react if their teacher used more colourful and larger materials than this.

(Reflective Journal, July 2011)

“Lion King” was a story about a lion and an ant who competed to be the king of the jungle. The lion was finally defeated by the smaller but smarter ant in a race and died. The ant then became the king of the jungle. The decision to use the story was made during guided reflection 2 held prior to the second cycle. Her justification for choosing the story demonstrated her understanding of text selection for shared reading. “Lion King” was an interesting children story with a lot of interactive dialogue and opportunities for prediction. It also contained a words and phrases that are challenging for the pupils.

Ms Frah, the critici friend also admitted that the choice of the story was suitable for the pupils as animal stories are always appealing to children. However, she raised the issue of using more colourful and enlarged materials. To her, presenting the story on the mahjong paper was not attractive enough as it was not accompanied with colourful pictures. The writing also was not large enough for pupils who sat quite far from the board where the mahjong paper was pasted. This was agreed by another

critical friend who added that writing a story on mahjong paper would be more time consuming to teachers.

Based on the comments given by the two critical friends, in Cycle 3, she chose the story “Country Mouse and City Mouse” The story was about two cousins; a country mouse and a city mouse. The country mouse lived in a simple house and eat simple food. By comparison, the city mouse lived in a beautiful and large house in the town and had a lot of delicious food everyday. One day the country mouse received a letter from his cousin saying that he wanted to visit him. As he stayed there, he told the country mouse that life was better in the city. So, the country mouse wanted to follow him to the city. However, after he went to the city, he was shocked to experience the the life in the large and beautiful house in the city was full of danger. The country mouse preferred to be poor and happy rather than be rich and afraid.

Her argument for utilizing this story has indicated her changed perspective in material selection for shared reading session. In Ms Ani’s opinion, the story was very interesting and inspiring in general because it contained a life lesson. She further added that the story offered opportunity for extending conversation with her pupils. To her the ending seemed the most interesting part of the story. This was because in the end the country mouse suddenly realized that he did not want a rich and dangerous life, but a simple and happy one. She went on to state that this kind of ending is important to allow pupils the opportunity to relate the story with their own lives as suggested below:

I like this part because it also inspires us/leads us to think deeply about our own lives. We might think that a good life means a rich life. However, according to the story, a good life should be simple and happy. It gives us a different idea about life, which I also agree with itthis. Therefore, I think this story is interesting and inspiring.

(Ms Ani, Guided Reflection 5)

She presented the story using Microsoft Power point slides. The power point slides contain enlarged sentences and colourful pictures taken from the internet. What she did was merely choosing the pictures from the internet and later copying and pasting them on the power point presentation slides. The slides (refer figure 5.1 and 5.2) were attractive and large enough for everyone to view.

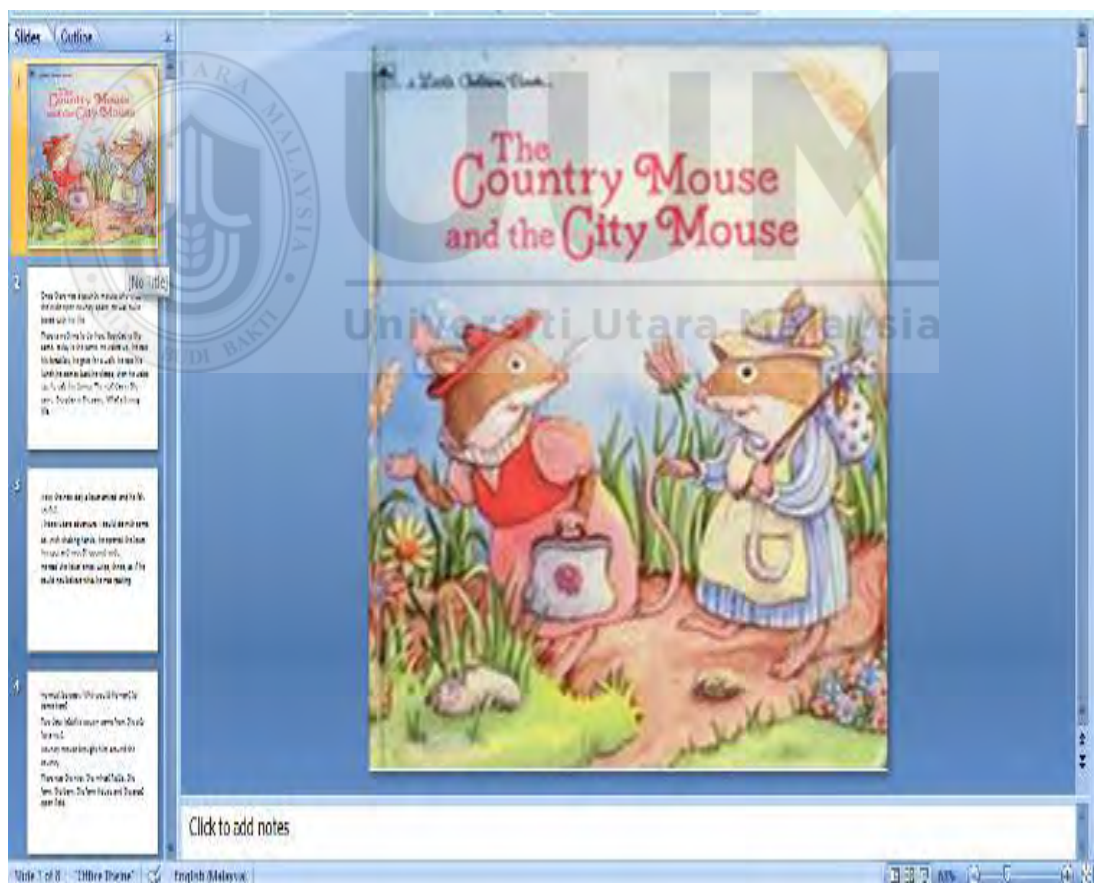


Figure 5.1. Sample power point slides for country mouse and city mouse

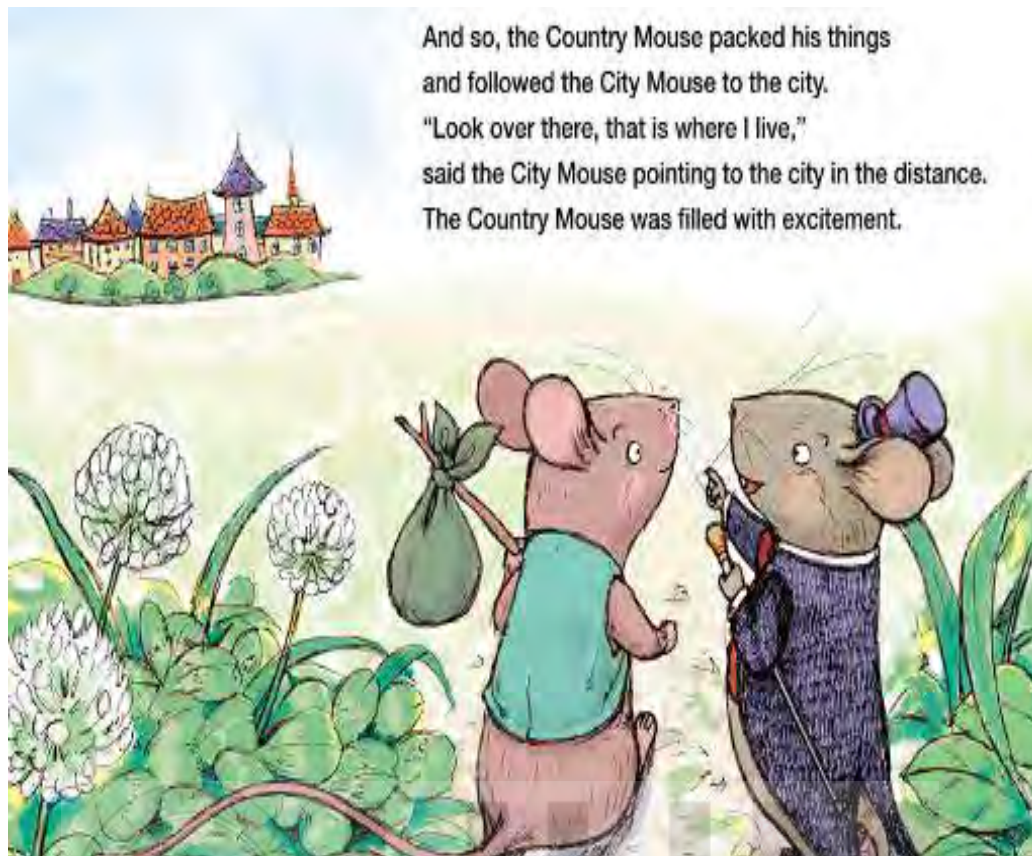


Figure 5.2. Sample page of the story on power point slides

Her effort to prepare the slides was due to her awareness that her mahjong paper was not colourful and big enough for pupils to see. Evidence from our conversation during guided reflection indicated that she felt very satisfied with the rapport she received from her pupils due to the use of power point slides.

When I used the slides, suddenly I felt it was easier to teach. Suddenly everyone seemed to participate. Suddenly, the class seemed to be so interactive, my pupils seemed to be asking questions and I did not feel the tense of teaching, asking questions and waiting for answers from them. Everything happened automatically, I mean I ask questions, they answered.... The colourful slides really made an impact on my pupils. All eyes were on me. Compared to using textbook, my pupils pay more attention when I used power point slides.

(Ms Ani, Guided Reflection 6)

Similarly, her pupils responded positively when asked about their feeling with regards to the use of power point slides by their teacher.

Rasa seronok sebab besar. Cikgu baca dan kami ikut. Ada gambar. Cantik dan menarik. < *It is interesting because the slides is large. We follow the teacher as she reads. There's beautiful and interesting pictures.* >

(Pupil 1, Pupils' focus interview 4)

Gambar clear, kami seronok. Cikgu pun nampak seronok < *We are happy because the pictures are clear* >

(Pupil 2, Pupils' focus interview 4)

Like Ms Ani, Ms Fida has also shown her understanding of text selection by choosing stories for all her shared readings during Cycle 2, 3 and 4. She related the choice of text with the opportunity to ask questions and to invite more discussion from pupils.

The text is important. I have to choose texts that allows me to ask question. I think story is good. I prefer stories with dialogue. Easy for me to discuss and make my pupils talk.

(Ms Fida, Guided reflection 5)

For her Cycle 2, she had expressed her interest to use the same story I used during my modelling session in her class. To reiterate, the story was entitled Ma Liang. The story is about a Chinese girl named Ma Liang who liked to draw. One day, she was given a magic brush by an old man. She began drawing pictures using the magic brush and to her surprise, the picture moved once she finished drawing and became

real. She later gave the objects she drew to the poor villagers. The villagers were very thankful to her and loved her so much. Ma Liang became famous and she was later called by the king to his palace. The king wanted her to draw trees full of golden coins. However, Ma Liang refused and was sent to the prison. In the prison she used the magic brush and managed to escape.

During her reading session, she continued my reading from the part where a group of soldiers were searching for Ma Liang under the king's order. Ma Liang refused to follow and finally she was caught by the soldiers. The whole episodes was basically on Ma Liang's conversation with the soldiers and the king. The conversation contained repetitive phrase which make it easy for pupils to gauge the language and the meaning of the text. Her awareness and insights into this matter was demonstrated during one of the guided reflection sessions when she was justifying her choice of "Ma Liang".

I chose the story "Ma Liang" due to its repetitive dialogue and simple language used. It makes it easy for me to interact with my pupils as they are familiar with the language used in this story. Furthermore, I did not have problems searching for additional materials about the story as I could find them on the internet. It was not difficult for me to copy and paste the materials to my power point slides.

(Ms Fida, Guided Reflection 3)

During Cycle 3, she utilized another story entitled Amir Catches a Thief. It was a simple story on a boy who managed to catch a cat who entered the kitchen in the middle of the night. Her decision to use this story was due to her opinion that it was dialogic in nature. Al Otaiba (2004), she further added that the texts she used were also engaging, humorous, exciting, and contain adventurous storylines that maintain

children's attention and curiosity. For example, she emphasized that "Amir Catches a Thief" has the element of suspense and adventure to children in addition to containing engaging problems that require pupils to solve. She further argued that the text naturally invited participation among her pupils. This was evidence as most of her pupils were imagining that the thief was a dangerous man. Their wild imagination motivated them to listen attentively and eagerly responded to her questions.

Finally for Cycle 4, both teachers decided to use the same text which they downloaded from the youtube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sCaYt1KxZiY>). They amazed the pupils by using an animated song entitled "There Was An Old Lady Who Swallowed A Fly" (figure 5.3).



Figure 5.3. Animated song downloaded from Youtube

The lyrics of the song were written by Alan Mills a Canadian folksinger, writer, and actor who was best known for popularizing Canadian folk music. The song tells a tale of a woman that swallows a series of animals starting from the smallest, leading to the biggest which is a horse. (<http://bussongs.com/songs/there-was-an-old-lady-who-swallowed-a-fly.php>).

The rationale given for choosing this text has demonstrated the teachers' understanding of text selection. Both claimed that the text has elements of fun. The story seemed absurd because it was illogical for an old woman to swallow animals of ridiculous sizes without dying. However, children loved this absurdity and kept predicting the animal which the old woman was going to swallow next. Their critical thinking was tested as they had to imagine what would happen to the old woman as she swallowed the animals.

Ms Ani has creatively used this song as her shared reading text. She displayed the youtube video without the song and the music. What appeared on the screen were just the video and the lyrics of the song. She read the lyrics as if she was reading a story to them.

Her pupils' response was superb. As noted in my journal entry dated 26 July 2011:

It was a lively classroom. I could see the pupils' cheerful faces. Everybody was so eager to read the story with their teacher. Everybody wanted to sit in front of the screen. I believe the positive response was a contribution from the use of the animated story from the youtube and the teacher's ways of reading.

(Reflective Journal, 26 July 2011)

The pupils, when interviewed right after the shared reading session has expressed their excitement:

Seronok sangat. Senang faham cerita tu. Menarik. <Very interesting. It is easy to understand the story>

(Pupil 3, pupils' focused interview)

Lain dari hari lain. Teacher selalu guna buku teks. < Different from other days where teacher only used textbook>

(Pupil 3, pupils' focused interview)

Ms Fida has also successfully utilized the song as her shared reading text. She admitted that the text has naturally helped her in interacting with her pupils. During guided reflection 5, she expressed her satisfaction for selecting the text because it has helped to ensure the flow of her shared reading session. The flow was attributed to the repeated phrases such as "There was an old lady who swallowed" in lines 001,004, 009 in different stanzas (see extract 17) which has provided her pupils with the language to use when she asked them to predict the event that will happen next. The repeated vocabulary has also made her pupils' ignored the difficult words and focused on the overall meaning of the text.

Extract 17

Examples of stanza from "There was an old lady who swallowed a fly"

001	There was an old lady who swallowed a fly
002	I don't know why she swallowed the fly,
003	I guess she'll die
004	There was an old lady who swallowed a spider,
005	that wiggled and wiggled and tickled inside her.
006	She swallowed the spider to catch the fly.
007	I don't know why she swallowed the fly.
008	I guess she'll die.

009	There was an old lady who swallowed a bird
010	How absurd to swallow a bird.
011	She swallowed the bird to catch the spider,
012	that wiggled and wiggled and tickled inside her.
013	She swallowed the spider to catch the fly.
014	I don't know why she swallowed the fly.
015	I guess she'll die.

5.2.3 Seating Arrangement

Apart from making efforts to present suitable materials for their shared reading sessions, both teachers have also has made adjustment to their pupils' seating arrangement throughout the three cycles. During Cycle 2, both teachers asked their pupils to sit in a semi circle. Desks were put aside as shown in the illustration below.

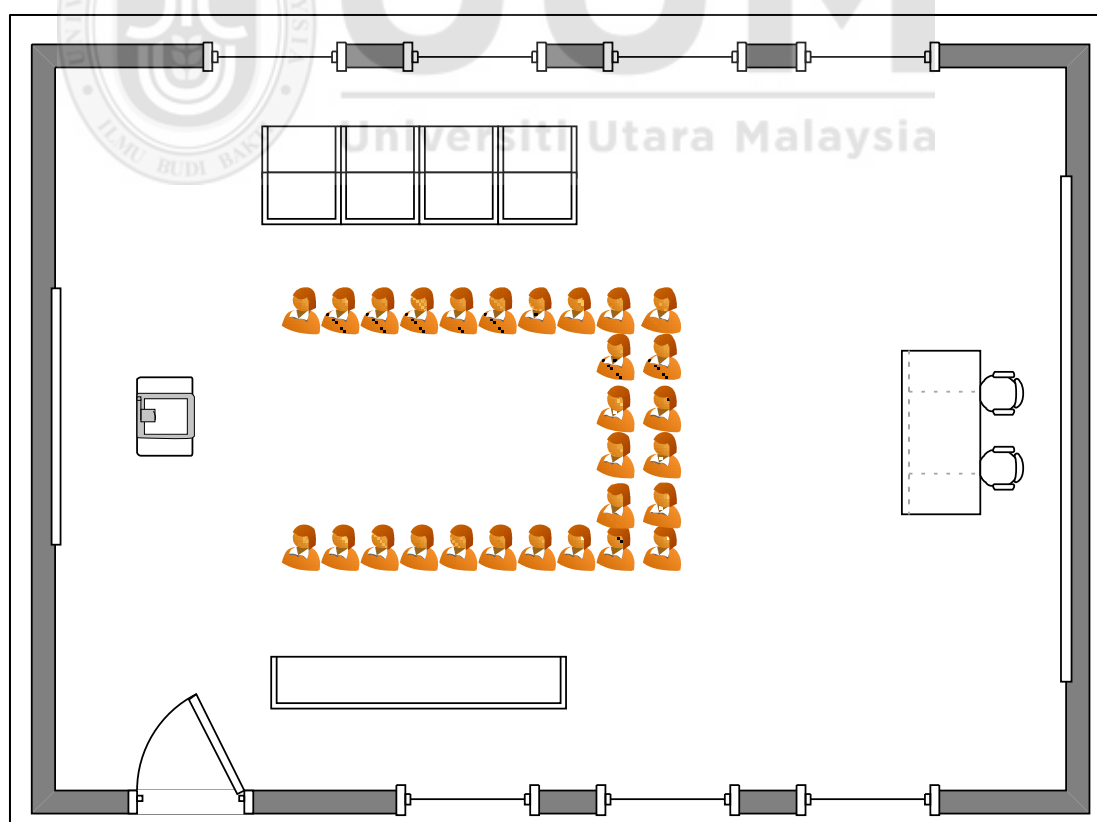


Figure 5.4. Classroom layout

Ms Ani was observed standing up and most of the time her position was the front area of the classroom where all the pupils could see her as she was conducting shared reading with them. Once in a while, when the need arised, she would move towards a few pupils for better interaction with them. The interaction pattern was slightly better than her baseline shared readings. In fact after our third reflection, she decided to bring her pupils to the self access room (SAC) during Cycle 3. In SAC, there were no chairs but only a few Japanese tables and the students were seated on the floor around the Japanese tables. It was rather crowded as there were only six Japanese tables and seven students had to share one table. Hence in Cycle 4, she put aside the Japanese tables and asked her pupils to sit close to her in a semi circle. As a result, she managed to invite maximum concentration and active participation from her pupils during her shared reading session.

The same steps were also taken by Ms Fida. Learning from the suggestions made by the critical friends and the argument put forward by Ms Ani regarding the seating arrangement of the pupils, she also brought her pupils to the SAC. Apart from that, she also brought a mat and asked her pupils to sit on the mat surrounding her. During the guided refletion, she admitted that the seating position has made her feel closer to her pupils, thus has helped her in interacting with them.

It was evident that both teachers' understanding of shared reading has improved throughout this study. Their ability to decide on the most appropriate materials and physical arrangement indicated that they have understood the principles of shared reading. This understanding has directly influenced their nature of instuctional behaviour during shared reading which will be discussed in the next section.

5.3 Nature of Instructional Behaviors during Shared Reading

Teachers' instructional behaviour or the nature of the book reading is very crucial in enhancing pupils' reading literacy. Based on my analysis of the first cycle using the SABR tool, teachers were found to be more prone to support pupils' language development skills compared to the abstract thinking skills and elaboration skills. Hence, it can be concluded that a literal focus on the story and illustration dominated the shared reading sessions. Teachers' extratextual talk during shared reading was restricted to highlighting words during reading and discussing word meanings. Teachers' conversation did not demonstrate the use of open ended question to engage children in predicting, hypothesizing, remembering, reasoning, summarizing, and inferencing about aspects of the book's content. Their attempt to elaborate on word meanings, expand on children's own topics and relate with their real life were limitedly observed. Analysis also indicated that teachers' behavior that creates a warm and supportive setting for shared reading was infrequently observed. Teachers were also identified using the first language (Bahasa Malaysia) excessively through translation. They were also found to dominate the discussion during shared reading and provide limited chance for pupils' to engage in the discussion about the text read.

However, both teachers were observed to have undergone a transformative change throughout their involvement in this collaboration. It was apparent that their nature of instructional behaviours develops significantly throughout the ten months as demonstrated through their shared reading sessions in Cycles 2, 3 and 4. The dialogic discussion between the principle researcher and the two teachers that took place during the guided reflections has helped them to make significant changes in

their beliefs and understanding of the way they conduct shared reading session. The utilization of the SABRL2 tool in particular has successfully guided the teachers to conduct their shared reading session that is aligned with the principle of reading literacy. Both teachers were found to have tried their best to balance their support for pupils' lower and higher order reading skills. Besides maintaining their support for pupils' language development, they have tried their level best to make their shared reading sessions more interactive, lively and engaging through more inferential talk, promoting higher order thinking skills and avoiding the excessive use of first language. They have also demonstrated vast improvement in terms of their effort to create a warm, supportive setting for shared reading. Both teachers were able to incorporate a variety of literacy enhancing techniques described in SABRL2 to increase the quality of student-teacher interaction. These behavioural changes in the teachers' extra-textual talk following the use of SABRL2 resulted in increased child participation during book-related conversations.

The following sections further elaborate the development in their pattern of instructional behaviour during shared reading throughout their participation in this collaborative action research.

5.3.1 Encouragement of Higher Order Reading Skills

Higher order reading skills refers to the ability to use higher order thinking skills in the meaning making process of text. The skills among others are previewing, activating prior knowledge, predicting, making connections, monitoring, organizing, summarizing and questioning. As teachers utilized all these skills in their shared reading, their extra textual text will not only be restricted to the literal meaning but

also on the inferential meaning of the text. In SABRL2 the higher order reading skills were represented by the abstract thinking skills and also elaboration skills. The analysis was based on the sub constructs underlying these two constructs which are shown in Table 5.1 below:

Table 5.1

Constructs and Subconstructs for Higher Order Reading Skills extracted from SABRL2

2.Abstract Thinking	2a	Teacher models or asks children to compare and contrast aspects of illustrations/story events
	Compare and Contrast	
	2b	Teacher models or asks children to make judgments, evaluations, or inferences about the text, events, characters, or illustrations.
	Judgments, Evaluations, and Inferences [I]	
	2c	Teacher models or asks children to hypothesize what will occur next in the text or the outcome of a particular event.
	Prediction	
	2d	Teacher models or asks children for reasoning, explanation, or analysis.
	Reasoning, Explanation, or Analysis	
3.Elaborations	3a	Teacher asks for or provides a word elaboration through contextualization or dramatization
	Word Elaboration	
	3b	Teacher models or encourages children to link text content directly to past, present, or future personal experiences of the teacher or children.
	Text-Life Connection	
	3c	Teacher encourages children to pretend or to represent an action/event/ state/feeling/etc. depicted in the text.
	Dramatize/ Pretend/Imitate	
	3d	Teacher follows the topic of child's spontaneous initiation with a contingent verbal response that continues the child's topic or the teacher gives child an opportunity to repeat/clarify their spontaneous initiation, thus acknowledging the child's contribution by giving the child the "floor" to speak.
	Follows child's lead	
	3e	Teacher uses feeling words to discuss characters' feelings, to highlight emotion
	Emotion	

Table 5.1 continued

Modeling	words in the text, or to model her/their own emotive responses to text.
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Both teachers were observed trying their best to promote higher order reading skills among their pupils by asking pupils to make predictions, decisions, judgement and evaluation about certain episodes in the texts they read in Cycles 2, 3 and 4.

5.3.1.1 Ms Ani

Ms Ani's attempt to promote higher order reading skills is characterized by her constant attempt to ask her pupils to make prediction, provide reasons, judgement and evaluation as she read the texts to them. At the same time, she also elaborated their answers by prompting them to relate with their background knowledge. At the beginning of her reading of the story "The Lion King" (extract 18), she asked her pupils to predict who the king of the jungle was (line 010) before she actually read the story to them. Here, her pupils were expected to give the answer by relating with their own background knowledge as well as drawing from the title of the story itself. As her pupils answered in chorus "LION", she asked them to rationalize their answer using the "why" question (line 012). A few pupils answered "because his roar can be heard in the jungle". She then elaborated the pupils answer by probing them to provide more justifications as to why they feel that the lion was the most capable animal to be the king in the jungle. She tried to make her pupils associate their answer with the lion's strengths, physical attributes and movement (lines 114, 116, 118) through questions such as "What about the look of the lion, what does the lion look like, what make it so special and how does the lion walk" (lines 015-028). On

top of that, she also elaborated her pupils' answer about the lion's hair by providing the appropriate term for it which was "mane"(lines 022-025). The quality interaction pattern was also observed as she asked them to relate their knowledge on the lion's physical experience with their real life experience encountering with the features of a lion on television documentary (lines 024 & 025). These efforts have led the pupils to come up with more reasons to support their answer earlier. The pupils felt that they obtained a lot of knowledge as their teacher read the story to them.

Extract 18

Ms Ani's Cycle 2

009	TEhmmm. it's also about animals, Yea? But this time it's about
010		jungle animals. Ok, now in a jungle, which animal is the king?
011		Lion!!
012	T	Why does everyone say the lion is the king?
013	Ss	because his roar can be hear in one jungle.
014	T:	Ok, so the roar of the lion of the giant, the the lion can be heard in
015		the whole jungle. Ok, why else do we say the lion is the king of the
016		jungle? What about the looks of the lion? What does a lion look
		like?
017	Ss	It looks like a cat.
018	T	It looks like a cat, yes. But what makes it so special?
019	S	His hair!
020	T	His hair where?
021	Ss	At his face.
022	T:	Yes! Around his face! That is called the mane. M.A.N.E, the mane.
023		Ahhh, so the lion has this big mane hah. A lots of long hair around
024		his face, around the neck. Yea? So it looks like a king, yea? Have
025		you ever seen a lion in.. on the television?
026	Ss	Yes!!
027	T	Yes!! How does the lion walk? How does the lion walk? Does he walk
028		with the head down, like that?
029	Ss:	no!!!
027	T:	How does the lion walk? Hahh, walks with the head up, isn't it? And
028		the lion looks around, right? Ok, I want to ask you one question. Does a
029		lion live in the jungle?
030	Ss:	Yes!!

In another episode (Extract 19) where the lion was busy bragging to people how strong and fast he was (lines 175 and 176), Ms Ani asked her pupils to guess which

animal suddenly came into the picture (line 177 & 178). When they answered “ant”, she further asked her pupils to describe what the ant did (line 180) Later, when the giraffe who happened to be the lion’s good friend appeared, she also asked them to predict what the giraffe would do in relation to the story heard (line 187). Overall, she was trying her best not to read in advance the possible things that the animal would do, instead she activated her pupils thinking skills by asking them to make prediction. This process was observed to make pupils more engaged with their reading.

Extract 19

Ms Ani’s Cycle 2

175	Teacher:	HE GOES AROUND TELLING ALL THE ANIMALS. ‘I AM
176		THE STRONGEST, THE FASTEST, AND THE SMARTEST!’
177		HE ROAR. Ok? One day, what happened? Ok, soo comes into the
178		picture another animal. Which animal?
179	Students:	The ant..
180	Teacher:	The ant. Hah.. What did the ant do?
181	Student:	It was telling everyone that he was going to be king soon.
181	Teacher:	RIGHT.. SO THE ANT WAS TELLING EVERYONE THAT HE
182		WAS GOING TO BE KING SOON! SO THE ANT TOLD THE
183		FROG, ”WAIT, I AM GOING TO BE THE KING”. THE ANT
184		TOLD THE HYENA, “I AM GOING TO BE KING!” THE ANT
185		TOLD THE ANTELOPES, “ I AM GOING TO BE KING!” SO
186		THE GIRAFFE HEARD FROM ALL THESE ANIMALS.
187		“Uuishhh, you know, the ant is telling everybody he wants to be king! Ahhhh... and the giraffe is a good friend of the lion. So, what did the giraffe do?
188	Student:	The giraffe told the lion.
188	Teacher:	Ok..so he reported to the lion. “Hey lion, you know what
189		happened? The ant is telling everybody he wants to be king”
190		“Hah?” and what did the lion do? He went to see the ant. So the
191		lion said, “hello ant, hello hello..ahh, I heard you said you will be king soon!” ? Was the ant frightened
192	Student:	No.
193	Teacher:	No. What did the ant say?
	Student:	“Oh yes. it is me who is the fastest and the smartest. So, I should be king.”

More evidences of prediction were observed during Cycle 3 when she was reading the story “The Country Mouse and the City Mouse”. In the event where she was reading about the country mouse receiving a letter from the city mouse (extract 20), she asked her pupils to guess the content of the city mouse’s letter and the country mouse’s reaction upon receiving the letter. The answer for this question could not be directly lifted from the text. In order to answer this question pupils need to make inference from the country mouse’s reaction and relate the statement with their own life experience. So she drew her pupils’ attention by stressing lines 044 and 145 in extract 20 “SO, WITH SHAKING HANDS, HE OPENED THE LETTER. HIS EYES AND MOUTH OPEN WIDE”. She emphasized on how shock was the country mouse upon reading the content of the letter by adding the dialogue “Huh? Ok. He read the letter once, twice, thrice, as if he could not believe what he was reading.” This instructional behaviour was one way to support pupils to predict the possible content of the letter.

Extract 20

Ms Ani’s Cycle 3

041	T	A LETTER. SO A LETTER ARRIVED AND HE FELT EXCITED. Of
042		course he is excited. What can this letter be about? I HOPE IT SAYS
043		ADVENTURE. I COULD DO WITH SOME. Ok. So, he hopes that he
044		will have something new to do.Ok, an adventure. SO, WITH
045		SHAKING HANDS, HE OPENED THE LETTER. HIS EYES AND
045		MOUTH OPEN WIDE. Huh? Ok. He read the letter once, twice, thrice.
		As if he could not believe what he was reading. And what did he say?
		What was his reaction?

Further, she also asked them to predict the country mouse’s feeling as he received the invitation from the cousin to go to his house in the city. A few pupils answered in chorus “Country mouse felt excitement”. Although the answer given by her pupils

was grammatically wrong, it showed that they understood the story and was able to make prediction.

Ms Ani's effort to encourage pupils to exercise their higher order reading skills was also clearly observed towards the end of her shared reading session when she asked her pupils to think of what would happen when the country mouse met his cousin's housemate. The pupils were encouraged to think critically whether to end the story with a good ending or vice versa. The pupils came up with various endings that reflected their deep understanding of the plot and characters of the story. Among others, the endings suggested by pupils were:

- (i) ...he has been eaten by the fierce and black cat
- (ii) The country mouse run from the cat but unsuccessfully because he is reallyshocken.
- (iii) Shocked. He has been eaten by the hungry, fierce and black cat.
- (iv) He run as fast as he could. He said help me, help me.
- (v) That is a cat. Dear my cousin, help me. His cousin hear he shouted. Stop, don't chase my cousin, said the city mouse. The country mouse is escaped from the cat. The country mouse feel so scared and regret and went back to his country.

The pupils' answers indicated that they understood the text and were able to make connection with other events and characters in the text. This contradicted to her statement during Cycle 1 that her pupils were weak and passive during shared reading.

Apart from prediction, she also asked her pupils to decide and justify on which mouse has a more relaxed life in the story “The City Mouse and The Country Mouse”. The question, to me was quite tough, but through the process of scaffolding, her pupils were able to decide that the country mouse had a better life due to the fact the his life was more peaceful without a cat as a housemate.

5.3.1.2 Ms Fida

Ms Fida’s s effort to promote higer order reading skills was detected as early as Cycle 2 as she read the continuation of the story “Ma Liang” which I read during my modelling session (refer Chapter 4, Section 4.5.2). Unlike her reading sessions in Cycle 1, the discussion focused more on the characters and the events in the story rather than on the meaning of difficult words. She used prompts, expanded students’ responses and repeated the prompts to ensure students’ understanding of the main ideas in the text. In extract 21, 22 and 23, there were evidences of her effort to train pupils to make connection with their real experience, make justification, dramatize action and predict possible event or action in the text. Furthermore, she has also demonstrated improvement in the ways she expanded her pupils’ answers

She began reading by asking them to recall the main character of the story which was Ma Liang. Her effort to make use of the pupils’ background knowledge on the story obtained from my modelling session was successful as pupils responded actively to her questions (lines 005- 021). As she asked them “what is so special about Ma Liang”, everybody was observed so eager to contribute the answers. Similar response was observed as she further prompted on the function of the magic brush (line 009).

Then, in lines 011 and 014 she prompted her pupils on the objects that Ma Liang can draw. A student answered that Ma Liang can draw anything (line 012) while another two students answered “She can draw an axe” and “key” respectively.

In the same episode too, Ms Fida has demonstrated her ability to support pupils to link the text content directly to their future personal experience by asking them to suggest the possible object that they might draw if they were Ma Liang (line 022) Not only that, they were also asked to justify their suggested object. (lines 024 & 026). She was also observed expanding her pupils on word answer (lines 027 & 029) using complete sentences (lines 028 & 030).

Extract 21

Ms Fida's Cycle 2

001	T	Are you familiar with Ma Liang? Who is Ma Liang? OK Shazana
002	S	Chinese girl
003	T	That's very good. Ma Liang is a Chinese girl
004	Ss	Ma Liang is a Chinese girl
005	T	What is special about Ma Liang? Anyone, put up your hand. Amirul
006	Ss	She has a magic brush.
007	T	Everyone... she has a magic brush
008	Ss	She has a magic brush
009	T	What can she do with her magic brush? Anyone?
010	S	She can draw,
011	T	Ok she can draw what?
012	S	She can draw anything
013	S	She can draw an axe
014	T	Beside that what else she can draw? She can draw an axe, a cow, a
015		cock, what else?
016	S	Key
017	T	Yes, what is so special about the things she draws?
018	S	move
019	T	Yes, the picture can move
020	S	The picture can move
021	SS	The picture can move
022	T	If you were Ma Liang what would you draw?

Extract 21 continued

023	Ss	A cow
024	T	Why? Why would you like to draw a cow? Why
025	Ss	No response
026	T	Why?
027	S	Can eat
028	T	Yes, you can eat the cow,
029	S	Money
030	T	Yes, you can sell the cow and get money

Ms Fida was observed cleverly using “dramatization” as a way of inviting participation among students throughout the story. Analysis indicated that she uses this technic several times. She has proven to herself that with weak students shared reading can still be made interactive and lively by asking students to repeat the dialogue in the story and dramatize the event (extract 22, lines 036-056). Lines 040, 042, 044, 046, 048, 050, 051, 052, & 054 indicated her pupils’ engagement with the text while reading aloud their dialogue. Here, the reading aloud was done purposely in comparison to in Cycle 1.

Extract 22

Ms Fida’s Cycle 2

031	T	Ok now lets continue the story.. ONE DAY TWO SOLDIERS
032		CAME TO THE VILLAGE. What do you think the soldier will ask?
033	S	Where is Ma Liang?
034	T	Yes, WHERE IS MA LIANG. What do the villagers say?
035	S	She is there (<i>reading from the text on the screen</i>)
036	T	Yes... she is there. Now I will be the soldiers and you will be
037		the villagers. WHERE IS MA LIANG
038	Ss	SHE IS THERE
039	T	Very good. WHERE IS MA LIANG?
040	Ss	SHE IS THERE
041	T	Ok start from the beginning WHERE IS MA LIANG?
042	Ss	SHE IS THERE. SHE IS A OUR WONDERFUL GIRL.
043	T	Arif, Where is Ma Liang?
044	S	She’s there. That’s Ma Liang. She’s our wonderful girl

Extract 22 continued

045	T	Ok, lets continue. ARE YOU MA LIANG?
046	S	YES. THE KING WANTS YOU. COME WITH US
047	T	ARE YOU MA LIANG?
048	S	YES. THE KING WANTS YOU. COME WITH US.
049	T	Now who wants to be an angry soldier? Aiman, Fatin you become Ma Liang
050	S(Aiman)	Are you Ma Liang?
051	S(Fatin)	Yes
053	S (Aiman)	The king wants you. (2 pairs of students role played successfully)
054	T	Why do you think Ma Liang refuse to follow the soldier?
055	Ss	Because...
056	S	Greedy king

Her pupils' active participation through her effort to encourage them to pretend or to represent an action or event depicted in the text contradicted to her earlier statement during baseline observation where she said:

It is very difficult to make my shared reading session interactive as my students are very passive. They will just keep quite, difficult to talk, don't want to talk.

(Ms Fida, interview 2)

Her shared reading session during Cycle 2 also offered many opportunities for prediction. Since the nature of the story was about Ma Liang who had the magical ability to draw something that would eventually become real, Ms Fida would stop at certain episodes and ask the pupils to predict the object that Ma Liang would draw. For example in the event where she managed to escape from the king's soldier, Ms Fida asked her pupils to predict the item that Ma Liang would draw. In order to answer, pupils have to use logic by making connection with another event in the story to give the answer. Their failure to do so will lead to failure to suggest

appropriate object to draw. The pupils have shown their understanding of text by giving answers such as “door” and “hole” which were acceptable objects to save Ma Liang from the soldiers and the King.

Another attempt by Ms Fida to ask pupils to make prediction was identified during Cycle 3 when she read the story “Amir Catches a Thief”. The pupils were asked to guess what might be the creature that Amir saw. The question managed to invite active participation among her pupils as almost everyone wanted to suggest their answer as indicated in Extract 23. All answers given suggested that pupils understood that the creature was dangerous.

Extract 23

Ms Fida's Cycle 3

020	T	...SUDDENLY, AMIR SEES A BIG, YOU ALL SAID JUST NOW
021		YOU SAID A BIG what do you think could it be? maybe a big ghost, a big monster, a big cat,
022	Ss	A big tiger!
023	T	...a big tiger...
024	Ss	Snake!
025	T	...a big snake, a big mouse,
026	Ss	Monkey!
027	T	...a big monkey, what else?
028	Ss	A big, big bat! Cat!
029	T	...a big bat...
030	Ss	Bird bird
031	T	...a big bird, what else?
032	S	People! A big people!
033	T	A big people okay a big people, a big thief
034	Ss	...elephant...
035	T	A big elephant in the kitchen! What else?
036	Ss	...people...bat...cat...house...a big rat..
037	T	A big house?
038	S	A big rat!

5.3.2 High Enthusiam in Teaching

Teachers' enthusiasm is essential in promoting students' engagement during teaching. In shared reading context, teachers' enthusiasm when reading and discussing the text invites excitement, enjoyment and active participation from pupils. Based on the analysis in Cycle 1, Ms Fida did not have much problem with her energy and enthusiam when conducting shared reading. On the contrary, Ms Ani's baseline 1 indicated that she did not demonstrate enjoyment of reading at all. She tended to read in a somewhat monotone voice, increasing the pace occasionally, but not altering the pitch of her voice. Her serious facial expression and her firm instruction caused the class to undergo a complete silence.

However, Ms Ani was observed to have exhibited her high enthusiasm during shared reading throughout the three cycles. The dialogic discussion held during guided reflections was able to help her view the importance of making different voices for different characters, using their voice to create the atmosphere or tension as the story progresses, and using gestures and facial expressions in order to support pupils in the meaning making of the text. Furthermore, she also began to realize that repetition and exaggeration also contributed to pupils' understanding of text. Ms Ani has undergone a complete change from a very serious teacher to someone who was very enthusiastic. This was shown as early as in Cycle 2 when she read a story entitled "The Lion King". The story was about a lion and an ant who competed to be the king of the jungle. The lion was finally defeated by the smaller but smarter ant in a race and died. The ant then became the king of the jungle. She began the session by introducing the story casually and enthusiastically to her pupils. Her interest in the

story that she was going to read was reflected in her facial expression and her intonation. As she asked her pupils about who the king of the jungle was, the pupils excitedly responded in chorus, “Lion!”. Suddenly the climate seemed to be very friendly, warm and supportive. The pupils seemed to have forgotten that in front of them was the serious Ms Ani who they were afraid of all these while. This change in climate was vividly recorded in my journal entry in which I wrote:

It was rather shocking for me to see Ms Ani’s complete difference in character as she read “The Lion King” to the students. Her seriousness was gone. In fact, she was becoming like Ms Fida who seemed to be close to her pupils. This is a miracle. I believe the choice of text has helped her a lot. And, obviously, she is a fast learner who responded to my analysis of her baseline in a very positive manner.

(Journal entry, 30 March 2011)

Ms Frah, the critical friend also admitted that Ms Ani was very enthusiastic in her teaching.

I am very overwhelmed with her energy today. She is superb! She was not that serious after all, right?

(Ms Frah, Guided reflection 5)

To avoid biasness to what I felt, right after the lesson, I interviewed a few pupils who I noticed were very active during the lesson. Their responses were similar to my interpretation.

Teacher **tak garang langsung hari ni. Saya rasa seronok dan berani jawab.** <Teacher is very friendly today. I feel excited and not afraid to answer>.

(Pupil 1 interview, 30 March, 2011)

Rasa relax sikit sebab teacher tak garang sangat, macam mak saya.
<I feel a little bit relax as the teacher is not fierce, like my mother>.

(Pupil 2 interview, 30 March, 2011)

While reading she also interacted with her pupils by telling them that the two main characters in the story were good friends (extract 24, line 071-072). Whenever necessary her intonation changed according to the need of the story. For instance, in lines 073 – 076, she imitated the lion's voice as she read on the part where the lion was introducing himself and roaring loudly. Consequently, I noticed how excited and engaged her pupils were as they followed the story.

Extract 24

Ms Ani's Cycle 2

071	T:	Ok...the giraffe and the lion were good friends.ok? so, in this story,
072		the lion has a good friend, the giraffe. "I AM YOUR KING", the lion
073		always told the animals. As usual you know, the king! "I AM YOUR
074		KING! I AM YOUR KING! ". HE GOES AROUND TELLING ALL
075		THE ANIMALS. 'I AM THE STRONGEST, THE FASTEST, AND
076		THE SMARTEST!" HE ROARED.

Later, she also pretended to be an ant when she was reading the part where the ant was telling the animals in the jungle that he was going to be the king (extract 25, lines 086-089). Her attempt to dramatize the story she read has resulted in her pupils also acting the same way when they responded to her (lines 102-103). Their understanding of the story was demonstrated through their movements and facial expressions as they responded to their teachers' question. Extract 28 indicated that

there was a quality interaction between the teacher and her pupils as she was reading and interacting with the pupils at the same time. As a result, her pupils were not reluctant to participate at all. Ms Ani's dramatization has inspired purposeful conversation to take place and raises the pupils' enthusiasm to discuss the text further.

Extract 25

Ms Ani's Cycle 2

081	T:	The ant. Hah..What did the ant do?
082	S:	It was telling everyone that he was going to be
083		king soon.
084	T:	Right.. SO THE ANT WAS TELLING
085		EVERYONE THAT HE WAS GOING TO BE
086		KING SOON! SO THE ANT TOLD THE FROG,
087		"WAIT, I AM GOING TO BE THE KING". THE
088		ANT TOLD THE HYENA, "I AM GOING TO
089		BE KING!" THE ANT TOLD THE
090		ANTELOPES, " I AM GOING TO BE KING!"
091		SO THE GIRAFFE HEARD FROM ALL
092		THESE ANIMALS. "Uuishhh, YOU KNOW,
		THE ANT IS TELLING EVERYBODY HE
		WANTS TO BE KING! Ahhhhh... AND THE
		GIRAFFE IS A GOOD FRIEND OF THE LION.
		So, what did the giraffe do?
093	S:	The giraffe told the lion.
094	T:	Okay..so he reported to the lion. "Hey lion, you
095		know what happened? The ant is telling
096		everybody he wants to be king" "Hah?" and what
097		did the lion do? HE WENT TO SEE THE ANT.
098		So the lion said, "hello ant, hello hello..ahh, I
099		heard you said you will be king soon!" Was the
		ant frightened?
100	S:	No.
101	T:	No. What did the ant say?
102	S:	"OH YES. IT IS ME WHO IS THE FASTEST
103		AND THE SMARTEST. SO, I SHOULD BE
		KING."

104	T:	Hah,okay. NOW THE LION TOLD
105		EVERYBODY, "I AM THE STRONGEST,
		FASTEST AND THE ...
106	S:	SMARTEST.

Her enthusiasm was also observed during Cycle 3 where she read the story entitled "Country Mouse and City Mouse". Positively affected by her success during Cycle 2, she began the session with full of enthusiasm. As the following discussion unfolded, I could feel the attention and excitement of the students as they participated in the shared reading session. The surrounding was not threatening unlike her two baseline shared reading sessions during Cycle 1. To encourage the pupils to recall important details on the story plot and the characters involved in the story, Ms Ani still retained recall questions such as asking her pupils who the characters in the story are, how many of them and what happened at the beginning of the story. The pupils answered her questions very fast indicating that they understood the story. I believed their understanding was supported by the teacher's effort to dramatize the story as she was reading it. For example, in the occasion where city mouse was trying to tell the cousin that the house he was staying was not that safe, she stressed the dialogue "YES BUT". There's the but. "BUT I SHARE IT WITH MANY OTHERS". In addition to that, she also asked her pupils to read aloud together the city mouse's dialogue warning her cousin not to go out without him "DEAR COUSIN, PLEASE DON'T GO OUT ON YOUR OWN. I WILL SHOW YOU AROUND TOMORROW SAID CITY MOUSE SERIOUSLY". In another episode, she pretended that she was the country mouse and laughed excitedly as she read the line "He saw a very very big dining table". On top of that, she also

added her own dialogue to indicate how excited the country mouse was due to the 'grand' lunch, yet how nervous the city mouse was if the 'housemate' was to find out about them. In both examples, the co-construction of the text was done in an enjoyable manner both by the teacher and her pupils.

Ms Ani retained the same energy and enthusiasm as she read "An old woman who swallowed the fly". She began her shared reading session enthusiastically by scaffolding her pupils on the word 'swallow' in the title of the song. She has demonstrated to her pupils how she made connection between the title of the song and her own life experience by telling them the incident where she accidentally swallowed a mosquito. Her pupils' responses were alarming especially when she asked them the effects of swallowing insects. Everybody was eager to participate as the discussion regarding the issue was done in an informal and non-threatening environment. Her action further indicated her understanding of the importance of conducting shared reading in a very enthusiastic and friendly manner.

5.3.3 Selective and Appropriate Use of L1

Pupils' first language (L1) should be used to a certain extent to aid the meaning making of text during shared reading. It can be used positively to check the meanings of words and explain grammar, organize tasks and give directions. The learners' first language not only functions as a strategy for communication but also enhances second language learning by helping learners expand their second language repertoire and increase their automatization of second language items. However, studies have shown that the problem stems not from the use of L1 but from the way in which it is used in the classroom (Butzkamm, 2003, 2011).

Throughout Cycle 1, the problem of excessive use the first language (BM) was only observed in Ms Fida. Code switching was used frequently during the discussion of text, with sometimes BM became more dominant than English. On the other hand, the problem was reduced throughout Cycles 2, 3 and 4. Code switching was no longer used to check pupils' comprehension of text or to define the difficult words.

Code switching was detected only once during Cycle 2. In Extract 26, line 080, BM was used not to give equivalent translation to a certain word but to answer the prediction question posted by Ms Fida. She accepted her pupils' answer in BM but did not further elaborate it using BM. Instead, she quickly moved to the question "Where" in which pupils answered in English.

Extract 26

Ms Fida's Cycle 2

076	T	Thats why Ma Liang won't draw a picture for the king because the
077		king got everything.
078	Ss	Yes
079	T	What would happen to Ma Liang next?
080	Ss	<i>Kena kurung</i>
081	T	Some say <i>kena kurung</i> . Where?
082	Ss	Prison

In Cycle 3, code switching was also minimally used. Unlike her shared reading sessions in Baseline 1 and 2, Ms Fida only used BM once in Extract 27 in response to one of the pupils who answered "**Amir tidur**" <Amir sleeps>. She only repeated the word "**tidur**" <sleep> without further elaborating the word in BM unlike what she did in Cycle 1.

Extract 27

Ms Fida: Cycle 3

S5	Catches
T	catches..a thief! same as the title. So the story maybe on how amir catches a thief. Ok look at the slide now. It's late at night. How amir feels?amir? Look a the slide. Amir?
Ss	Amir..feels..
T	Amir..feels..
Ss	Amir feels sleepy
T	Ok so what are you gonna do?
S6	Amir tidur..
T	Yes..tidur.. so? where's he go?
S7	Amir..sleep
S5	Catches
T	catches..a thief! same as the title. So the story maybe on how amir catches a thief. Ok look at the slide now. It's late at night. How amir feels?amir? Look a the slide. Amir?
Ss	Amir..feels..
T	Amir..feels..
Ss	Amir feels sleepy
T	Ok so what are you gonna do?
S6	Amir tidur..
T	Yes..tidur.. so? where's he go?
S7	Amir..sleep
T	yes, amir feels sleepy. Amir is going to bed. Ok before going to bed, what did amir said to his parents?

Similarly, in extract 28, instead of simply accepting pupils' BM translation to the word "tiptoed", she resorted to asking her pupils to demonstrate the act of tiptoeing. She still managed to make her pupils understand the word without having to use their L1.

Extract 28

Ms Fida's Cycle 3

T	ok. What's the meaning of tiptoes? Can anyone show me? How to tiptoes? Macam mana tiptoes tu? Anyone can show to me?
S11	Bukak lampu?
T	No
S12	Terkejut?
T	How to tiptoes?

S13	menginjat
T	ok. Please show to me. Who said ginjat just now? Ok please. In front and show. How to ginjat. I don't know what is to ginjat. Show to your friends. How tiptoes. How to act a tiptoes. Never mind. Ok. Nak tiptoes over there pun it's ok. Just tiptoes at your place. Ok how to tiptoes? Make a step.ok. Nampak tak? Did you see that?

5.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, both teachers have demonstrated change in their understanding of shared reading and also their instructional behaviour. After undergoing a series of guided reflections they gradually understood the principles behind shared reading. Both teachers have also demonstrated changes in their instructional behaviour in most of the areas outlined in the SABRL2. Their shared reading sessions were more interactive, lively and engaging compared to their baselines in Cycle 1. They were able to converse with their pupils in English using more inferential talk that invite spontaneous response from them. The results indicated that both teachers have benefited from the dialogic discussion held during guided reflections. The changes undergone by the two teachers indicated that when teachers are systematically supported to reflect their own practice, reading instruction based on empirical researches will successfully be brought to classrooms.

5.5 The Testing of Rival Explanation

Examination of rival explanations is an attempt to look for other ways to organize data and thinking about other possible ways of seeing the data in order to provide one critical check and balance that increases the credibility of the research findings (Patton, 2001; Mills, Durepos, & Wiebe, 2010; Munn-Giddings, & Winter, 2013).

As indicated before, shared reading research were mostly conducted using the conventional method using experimental or naturalistic design. With this proliferation of paradigms, there is a possibility of different interpretation and divergent patterns emerged from the data (Patton, 2001, p.553). Opponent of experimental design for instance, might question my credibility as the principle researcher of this study due to my lack of control over the results. In section 4.4, although I made a conclusion that my findings for Cycle 1 supported previous studies that concluded shared book experience is not effectively utilized to enhance students' reading literacy (Dickinson et al., 2003; McKeon & Beck, 2003; Morrow & Brittain, 2003), I still took into consideration my participating teachers' views and belief. On the contrary, experimental researchers who have made certain hypothesis earlier, might skew the data to fit their need to come up with a clear cut conclusion on teachers' shared reading practice. Nevertheless, as my aim was not to prove any hypothesis, I dealt with the conflict as suggested by Stringer (2004) by acknowledging the teachers' justification of their instructional behaviour. My aim was rather to understand how the teachers see things and to help them realize the mismatch between their existing beliefs and the theories that were supposed to navigate their practise. My task according to Stringer (2006, p.96) was "to assist participants in revealing those taken for granted meanings". In other words my role was to fill up the gap between what the teachers did not manage to realize on their own with the better practice as suggested in the literature of reading pedagogy.

In addition, the findings of this research might also be argued by opponents of action research who felt that it might be shaped by my predispositions or biases due to my position as a "welcoming outsider" and also a critical friend to the participating

teachers (see explanation on my positionality in section 3.7.1.1). The transformative change might appear impossible to any “detached observers” (Coghlan & Brannick, 2005, p.7) in positivist science who is somewhat removed from the setting and the subjects they are studying (Mertler, 2009). However, it is worth noted that the changes undergone by the teachers in this study were due the systematic joint enterprise undertaken by all of us the research team in order to to give a voice to differing perspectives (Munn-Giddings & Winter, 2013). Together with the research participants, I engaged in a systematic search that encouraged the teachers to present the details of their experience and their conceptions of desirable changes in practice, so that their ideas and perceptions become available for comparison and exploration. The findings was the result of negotiation between us as the inquiry progressed.



CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATION AND FUTURE DIRECTION

6.1 Introduction

This study was conducted to explore the implementation of shared reading by primary ESL teachers to enhance their pupils' reading literacy while participating in a collaborative action research project. In this study, two teachers were directly involved in four continuous, recursive "look, think, and act" action research interacting spirals that utilized the Systematic Assessment of Second Language Book Reading (SABRL2) as an intervention to guide teachers to conduct shared reading in a manner suggested by the literature (see for example Zevenbergen & Whitehurst, 2003; McGee & Schickedanz, 2007; Wiseman, 2011; Pentimonti et al., 2012; Lennox, 2013). The tool was developed together with the teachers based on the Systematic Assessment of Book Reading (SABR) by Zucker et al., (2010) through series of guided reflections on teachers' shared reading practice. It consists of seven important constructs that are crucial in examining the quality of second language classroom shared reading. The seven constructs are: 1) materials selection, 2) physical arrangement of the classroom, 3) language development skills, 4) abstract thinking skill, 5) elaboration skills, 6) selective use of the first language, and 7) session climate.

This chapter brings together findings from the data analysis in Chapter 4 and 5 to answer the four research questions set forth in Chapter 1 which are:

- RQ1: What is the teachers' existing understanding of shared reading?
- RQ2: What is the nature of teachers' instructional behaviour when
Conducting shared reading?
- RQ3: How does the collaborative action research help to improve the
participating primary ESL teachers' understanding of shared reading?
- RQ4: How does the intervention designed in a collaborative action research
help to improve the participating primary ESL teachers' instructional
behaviour when conducting shared reading?

The whole chapter is organized into four sections: 6.2 provides an overview of the major findings; 6.3 discusses the contributions of study in the field and implications of the research for teachers, pupils and researchers; 6.4 includes some limitations of the study and 6.5 provides recommendations for future research; and finally 6.6 offers some concluding remarks.

6.2 Overview of the Major Findings

The outcomes of this study illustrated that at the beginning of this study, the two participating teachers had an inaccurate understanding of the principles underlying shared reading. The two teachers have demonstrated heavy reliance on textbooks in choosing texts for shared reading. They were also tied to the traditional seating arrangement which requires pupils to sit in rows facing the front of the classroom where teachers usually stands or sits. In addition, teachers' instructional behaviour as they conduct shared reading emphasized on the literal focus of the text and gave little attention to the process of encouraging higher order reading skills among their pupils. On top of that, they also practiced a teacher centred teaching that denied

pupils' opportunity to interact and make meaning of the text with the teachers. There were also lack of enjoyment and enthusiasm on the part of the teacher as they conduct the activity. One of them was also found to have excessively used the pupils' first language to convey the meaning to the pupils.

Nevertheless, after going through four continuous and recursive cycles of action research study, the two teachers have undergone a transition that resulted in the change in their understanding and also practice. Both teachers gradually understood that shared reading is an interactive process that takes place to understand text. Therefore, pupils should be allowed to interrupt as teachers read to them. In order for such interaction pattern to take place, the selection of text and the pupils' seating arrangement is important. This understanding was shown by the two teachers in Cycle 2, 3 and 4.

Both teachers have also demonstrated changes in their instructional behaviour in most of the areas outlined in the SABRL2. The shared reading sessions conducted by the two teachers during Cycle 2, 3 and 4 were more interactive, lively and engaging compared to their baselines in Cycle 1 due to teachers' effort to create a warmer and more supportive setting for shared reading. The extra textual conversation contained more inferential talk due to higher order thinking questions posed by the teachers. Moreover, the use of L1 was also minimized. Both teachers were able to incorporate a variety of literacy enhancing techniques described in SABRL2 to increase the quality of student-teacher interaction. The behavioural changes in the teachers' extra-textual talk following the use of SABRL2 resulted in increased child participation during book-related conversations.

The transformative journey undergone by the two teachers proved that when teachers are systematically supported to reflect their own practice, reading instruction based on empirical researches will successfully be brought to classrooms. In this study both teachers have benefited from the Systematic Assessment of Second Language Book Reading (SABRL2) developed as a result of guided reflection by a teacher educator and two critical friends. More quality reading lesson was displayed through quality shared reading which rooted from clear understanding of the strategy, high enthusiasm in teaching, appropriate knowledge on how to encourage higher order reading skills and selective use of pupils' first language.

This study has resulted in two major positive outcomes which concur with the results of many other studies. The first one is the importance of a more quality reading lesson in order to ensure the improvement of reading literacy which can be achieved through quality shared reading. The second one is the significance of reflective and collaborative model of research for teachers' voluntary change. These two outcomes are in agreement with the theoretical foundation of this study. Both Vygotsky's socialcultural theory and the interactive reading theory emphasized on the the role of dialogic interaction and constructivism during the meaning making process. The opportunity for active interaction and collaboration is available during shared reading when pupils and teachers are actively engaged in the meaning making process of text. Similarly, the constructive dialogue during the researcher-teacher collaboration also lead to teachers' realisation of their own practice which later results in voluntary change.

6.2.1 More Quality Reading Lesson through Quality Shared Reading Practice

A quality reading lesson is associated with the ability of the teacher to assist pupils in the meaning making of the text read. It is certainly beyond the ability to decode and pronounce the words as understood by many teachers. Many primary ESL teachers felt successful when they were able to teach their pupils to decode the letters, words and sentences (Nuttal, 2005; Ponniah, 1993; Kaur, 1996; Ramaiah, 1997; Yaacob, 2006; Nambiar, 2007; Kadir et al., 2014). This fallacy about teaching reading has led to the production of pupils who were unprepared for the reading demands imposed on them as they have low levels of English proficiency, poor knowledge of reading strategy, and low interest in reading (Noor, 2006; Che Musa et al., 2012).

Shared reading is one of the many reading instructions based on empirical researches which is effective to enhance reading literacy in both L1 and L2 contexts (Holdaway, 1979; Evans et al., 2000; Zevenbergen & Whitehurst, 2003; Justice & Pence, 2005; McGee & Schickedanz, 2007; Hudson & Test, 2011; Pentimonti et al., 2012). The approach which encouraged on the meaning making of text through active interaction between teacher and pupils was introduced in Malaysia in 2002 to produce better readers. Unfortunately, teachers were observed continue to put high emphasis on decoding and pronouncing the words.

Similarly, at the beginning of this study, the two participating teachers also emphasized on the literal focus of the text and gave little attention to the process of encouraging higher order reading skills among their pupils. On top of that, they also initially practiced a very teacher centred teaching that denied pupils' opportunity to

interact and make meaning of the text with the teachers. There were also lack of enjoyment and enthusiasm on the part of the teacher as they conduct the activity. One of them was also found to have excessively used the pupils' first language to convey the meaning to the pupils despite teaching ESL reading. Nevertheless, after going through four cycles of action research study, the two teachers have undergone a transition that resulted in the change in their understanding and also practice.

The transformative journey undergone by the two teachers proved that when teachers are systematically supported to reflect their own practice, reading instruction based on empirical researches will successfully be brought to classrooms. In this study both teachers have benefited from the Systematic Assessment of Second Language Book Reading (SABRL2) developed as a result of a series of systematic guided reflections by a teacher educator and two critical friends.

Teachers should be equipped with a specific tool to guide them to maximize the benefit of shared reading in improving reading literacy among pupils despite their claim that their pupils are passive and incapable of responding to teachers in English due to their low proficiency level. The two teachers in this study have proven that active discussion of text can take place when teachers are guided using the SABRL2 tool. SABRL2 allows for teachers' self examination of specific criteria such as materials selection, physical setting of the classroom, language development, abstract thinking skills, elaboration skills, usage of L1 and enjoyment during reading. The combination of all these elements leads to pupils' high engagement in reading as they articulate their responses, and these help the teacher to assess whether they have understood the passage. More quality reading lesson was displayed

through quality shared reading which rooted from clear understanding of the strategy, high enthusiasm in teaching, appropriate knowledge on how to encourage higher order reading skills and selective use of pupils' first language.

6.2.1.1 The Importance of Clear Understanding of the Principles of Shared Reading

Teachers have always been introduced to new ideas about learning and teaching and are regularly bombarded with suggestions for reform. They are asked to use new curricula, new teaching strategies, and new assessments based on research (Wilson & Peterson, 2006). Similar phenomenon was observed in Malaysian where teachers are always expected to follow the prescription and description outline in the curriculum specification without given proper exposure on the principle behind what they have to do. Some followed with understanding whilst some not. The usual cascade-training model was found not effective to expose teachers to the latest change in the curriculum because message became distorted as they were passed down through different levels of trainers. The intended messages often became diluted through miscommunications and different interpretations (Abdul Rahim, 2007; A. Rahman, 2014). Due to time and workload factor teachers barely have time to read the theories underlying any new approach introduced to them. It is very rare to find teachers who are consistently keeping up with the reading of academic material (Block, 2000). Hence, most of the time many tend to implement any new strategy proposed to them without full understanding of the principles behind it. The lack of knowledge on the theories or principles underlying certain strategy has

created classroom conflicts which eventually lead to the failure to achieve the set up objectives.

Shared reading for instance have been acknowledged as a strategy that is based on empirical researches which is effective to enhance reading literacy in both L1 and L2 contexts (Holdaway, 1979; Evans et al., 2000; Zevenbergen & Whitehurst, 2003; Justice & Pence, 2005; McGee & Schickedanz, 2007; Hudson & Test, 2011; Pentimonti et al., 2012). Therefore, teachers should be exposed to the theories and explanation behind it in order to ensure its proper implementation in classrooms. Teachers should be explained on the choice of text, the physical environment and also the instructional behaviour they should possess in order to support pupils' reading literacy. It is only when teachers know all these that they will be able to understand what goes wrong in their teaching if pupils' reading literacy is still at lower level.

Through this study, teachers gained understanding of the three aspects of shared reading via the guided reflections and also the SABR tool. The evidence of this understanding was the change in teachers' shared reading practice in terms of materials selection, seating arrangement and also their instructional behaviour. Consequently, the improvement in pupils' reading literacy was also observed. The focus given on these three aspects has led to a more quality pupils - teacher interaction during shared reading. Quality pupils- teacher interaction finally led to joint meaning making of text by both the teacher and the pupils.

6.2.1.2 The Encouragement of Higher Order Reading Skills

Higher order reading skills is the term used to explain the skills effective readers have in attaining literacy skills. They refer to abstract thinking skills and elaboration skills which include skills of comparing and contrasting, making judgement, evaluation and inferences, predicting, reasoning, explaining, analysing elaborating words and relating with real life situation. Teachers plays vital role in equipping pupils with all the skills during shared reading. The way teacher ask questions matters. When teachers ask open-ended and inferential questions, the discourse tends to become more spontaneous. Unlike literal questions which assess pupils' ability to recall information explicitly presented in a text, inferential questions demand them to integrate pieces of information and relate them to each other or to their previous knowledge. This provides a two-way benefit for the pupils: they engage in higher-level thinking as they articulate their responses, and the teacher is able to assess whether they have understood the passage. The cognitively challenging processes forms the foundation for pupils' higher order reading (Wasik & Bond, 2001; Beck & McKeown, 2003; McKeown & Beck, 2007; Hindman et al., 2008) which will prepare them for the reading demands that they will face inside or outside the academic world.

6.2.1.3 The Importance of Teachers' Enthusiasm in Sharing the Text

Teachers' enthusiasm is essential in promoting students' engagement during teaching. In shared reading context, teachers' enthusiasm and supportive presence when reading and discussing the text invites excitement, enjoyment and active participation from pupils (Bus, 2003; Ezell and Justice, 2005). This enthusiasm is

manifested through teachers' ability to read with reading expressions to create feeling in accordance with the plot of the text. Besides, teachers' use of non verbal language like gestures and facial expression also contributes to teachers' enthusiasm. Highly enthusiastic teachers possesses features of expressive reading called prosodic features. These features comprise all of the variables of timing, phrasing, emphasis, and intonation that teachers use to help convey aspects of meaning and to make their shared reading lively. Prosody can also reflect linguistic features, such as sentence structure, as well as text features, such as punctuation. Teachers with these qualities are able draw excitement and curiosity to the reading session. This study is in alignment with previous literature which indicated that children enjoyed the shared reading sessions and comprehended text better when adults read with expression to them. (Ezell & Justice, 2005; Miller and Schwanenflugel, 2008).

6.2.1.4 The Importance of Teachers' Selective and Appropriate Use of L1

The use of L1 in L2 classrooms or code switching has always been a debatable issue among scholars. Researchers such as Miles, 2004 advocated that the use of L1 can be detrimental and interfering, and consequently diminished the L2 learning development and restricted students to use L2 in the classroom. On the contrary, their opponents believed that L1 functions as a valuable tool in L2 classroom (Macaro, 2001; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2003; De la Campa & Nassaji, 2009; Lin, 2013). In Malaysia, the use of L1 is typical in most ESL classrooms to facilitate understanding and to encourage participation among pupils (Yaacob, 2006)

Findings from this study resonate with those who believed that the use of L1 should be encouraged to make the process of meaning making of text faster and easier for

pupils. Nevertheless, it should not be used excessively to the extent it overshadows pupils' exposure to English. Code switching is permissible as a comprehension check only after the teacher has made attempt to use various other strategies such as visual prompts, miming, eliciting, paraphrasing, defining, and providing multiple examples. Excessive direct translation may lead to several consequences such as pupils becoming lazy and too dependent on teachers. As a result, the joint construction of meaning will not take place. In addition, word per word translation defeat the purpose of teaching the reading strategies in which meaning of text should be understood from the context. Pupils should be trained to use contextual clues in order to guess the meaning of certain words in the text.

6.2.2 The Importance of Reflective and Collaborative Model for Teachers' Voluntary Change

In this study, the two participating teachers made significant changes in their understanding and way they conduct shared reading. This study supports the literature which indicates that teachers' voluntary change can be initiated through collaborative action research. This type of research involved the teachers from identifying their own problem in certain expects of their teaching until solving it. The guidance they received as they reflect their own teaching has enabled them to see things from different perspectives. Throughout this collaboration, I noticed that both teachers undertook change voluntarily, following their sense of what their students need and what is working without denying the principles behind the activity conducted.

The change took place as result of deep understanding of the theoretical explanation underlying shared reading practice obtained via SABRL2. As they became more engaged and experienced with the SABRL2, they also became more critical in their discussion. The teachers had become confident in their decision-making abilities and took responsibility for what was happening in their classrooms. Thus they had developed a strong sense of individual autonomy and felt empowered to make deliberate and thoughtful changes in their classrooms.

The result of this study is in line with the research that suggested reseasearch-teacher collaboration as a way to to strengthen teachers' teaching practice (Hawkins & Leglar, 2004; Morton, 2005; Abdul Rahim, 2007; Michelle & Diane, 2010; Christianakis, 2010). These studies indicated that the collaboration has changed teachers thinking and perspectives and has gradually transformed their classroom pedagogy to the one that meets students' needs and increases their own enjoyment of teaching. This partnership has also made teachers feel that they are involved in doing research in their own classrooms (Ogberg & McCutcheon, 1987; Casanova, 1989; Herndon, 1994; Lieberman, 1995; Darling-Hammond, 1996) and as a result can reposition teachers to be powerful stakeholders and policymakers rather than skilled technicians and implementers (Christianakis, 2010). Similar to Hayes' (2010) this study concluded that collaboration create opportunities for researcher to give feedback and confidence, as well as help teachers to make connections to learning through continuous reflection. In Malaysian context, this study resonates with Abdul Rahim's (2007) who stressed that the inclusion of collaboration, interaction, and dialogic discussion has the potential to promote teacher change in Malaysia in terms

of providing challenging tasks and creating opportunities for pupils to interact, collaborate and use English through a more teacher centred classroom.

This study also proposed that action research is the best framework for researcher-teacher collaboration as it provide opportunities for all participants to come together to learn how to collaborate in a dialectical and dialogical process with a great deal of give and take (Pine, 2008). The facilitation process that takes place during this collaboration certainly helps improve a teacher's problem-solving skills, increase the quality of their reflections, and raise the levels of their work satisfaction.

6.3 Contributions and Implications of the Study

The contribution of this study is the intervention itself. As stated in Chapter 3, Section 3.3, the whole collaboration project which comprises the continuous, recursive “look, think, and act” processes was an intervention to solve the issues faced by teachers in their teaching of reading, and in particular their shared reading practice. Embedded in this big intervention was another intervention that is the SABR and SABRL2 tool. Both tools were used to guide teachers to implement shared reading.

6.3.1 The contribution of Collaborative Action Research as an Intervention

Methodologically, this study has diverted from the common pattern of shared reading research design which are experimental and naturalistic. As discussed in the research methodology chapter, these two types of study have their own drawbacks. Experimental studies, for example, involve controlling irrelevant variables on certain

occasions. As such, it does not represent the actual classroom context (Mol et al., 2009). Meanwhile, naturalistic studies only allows for the exploration of teachers' existing practice without having any intention to find solution to any issues identified. Both types of studies were conducted by researchers who usually were the outsiders who intend to investigate the insiders' practice. Researchers usually work in isolation rather than with the teachers (Coghlan & Brannick, 2005; Mertler, 2009). The main aim of the studies were more on evaluating rather than supporting teachers to enhance their teaching of reading literacy using any research based approach like shared reading.

This study has employed the collaborative action research to overcome the limitation of the two types of research (Pentimonti et al., 2012). Hence, it offered a significant contribution to the knowledge of collaborative action research (CAR) process. This process may be replicated either to further examine the shared reading practice or to investigate other teaching and learning areas. The opportunities for reflection during each action research cycle have offered many possibilities for improving the participating teachers' reflective skills. Guidance by the principle researcher and the critical friends on how to reflect effectively, and how to integrate reflection into everyday work efficiently, has helped the teachers see the value of reflection for their daily work in the classroom. They were also able to develop and to communicate the rationale underpinning their teaching practices (McNiff & Whitehead, 2000). Going through a personalised and contextual action research, and enquiry process have given these teachers the opportunity to work on, reflect, and transform their personal theories, assumptions and expectations, develop their reflective processes, and develop a stance of inquiry, which in the end, resulted in a transformative learning.

Previous researches have indicated that teachers become more reflective, critical, and analytical about their teaching behaviours in the classroom after engaging in the action research process (McNiff, 1988; Madzniyah, 2006; Noraini, 2010). Similarly, this current collaboration was able to increase the understanding of the two participating teachers regarding themselves as teachers, improved their shared reading practice, as well as their teaching of reading. This collaboration has also provided opportunities for them to realize that the ability to successfully conduct shared reading does not come naturally to every teacher (Justice et al., 2010). It is a skill that needs to be learned, practiced, reflected, and relearned. Raymond and Leinenbach (2000), Abdul Rahim (2007), and Sutherland (2006) have indicated that teachers often benefit from the support provided by teacher educators because they are able to analyse their own understanding and problems related to the activity. Consequently, they would be able to improve their shared reading practice through the interventions introduced to them. Being aware of their reading and discussion styles has helped the teachers to periodically improve themselves, and to effectively exploit shared reading to enhance students' literacy development. The process of change that the participating teachers underwent due to their involvement in CAR is also something valuable to be shared with other practitioners. By utilising the collaborative action element, this study became more meaningful to the participating teachers because it effectively supported their professional developments. In turn, they were able to promote more interactive classroom practices compared to other experimental studies.

This study showed that CAR offers new training approaches and/or contribute to teachers' professional development in Malaysia. It can also help to establish the groundwork for productive pedagogical partnerships in these settings because of the opportunity to engage in shared dialogue and critical inquiry. Similar benefits will be obtained by other teachers who embark in this type of collaboration in the future.

Similarly, this collaborative action project has also benefited me as a teacher educator. It has greatly affected my own instructions, feedbacks, and motivational strategies, as well as reinforced my belief in the importance of teacher facilitation in the teaching process.

6.3.2 The Contribution of the Systematic Assessment of Second Language Book Reading (SABRL2)

The Systematic Assessment of Second Language Book Reading (SABRL2) is an extension of The Systematic Assessment of Book Reading (SABR) by Zucker et.al., (2010). While SABR is used to examine teachers' instructional behaviour during L1 shared reading, SABRL2 functions as a systematic tool to assess the quality of second language shared reading practice. The tool offers great potential benefits for second language researchers and teachers as it measures teachers' specific behaviour within second language shared reading context.

The SABRL2 offers significant benefits for second language reading researchers. Instead of depending on the tool invented for first language reading, they can utilize this tool to evaluate teachers' shared reading practice in ESL classrooms. The inclusion of the construct on the use of L1 has made this tool appropriate for

bilingual shared reading which does not only apply in Malaysia but also in other countries where English is taught as a second language. The tool can be used both quantitatively and qualitatively.

SABRL2 is also very significant to the teaching of second language literacy reading as it guides primary ESL teachers to conduct a quality shared reading in primary ESL context. It serves as a guideline for teachers to work together to evaluate and critique their own shared reading practice. SABRL2 provides an important step in working toward the goal of equipping pupils with the higher order reading skills that is associated with improved reading literacy teaching and learning. The SABRL2 can also be used by literacy coaches such as the SISC officers or the head of English Language Panel to assess teachers' shared reading practice for professional development.

6.4 Limitations of the Study

The purpose of this research was not to validate or refute a theory, but rather to unearth the process of change undergone by the participants throughout this collaboration. Therefore, several limitations warrant mention when reflecting on the outcomes of this study and in planning for future researches.

The first limitation is the constrained sample with regards to participants and materials. The current CAR team only comprised of a teacher educator and two primary ESL teachers and who were teaching in the same school, in the northern state of Malaysia. The team was also helped by two critical friends who were serving as mentors for the native speaker programme at the Kubang Pasu district at the

time of this study. The team could be extended to a few other English teachers and English officers who can act as critical friends. Stringer (2007) pointed out that larger team might lead to more constructive discussion on the issue as opinion comes from people with different experiences and background.

In addition, the shared reading was also limited to six sessions for each teacher due to the time limitation. Therefore, this study had focused only on the process of change within the specific shared reading context involving these teachers. More reading sessions should be examined to examine teachers' improvement in all the aspects outlined in SABRL2. Nevertheless, the context and richness of the in-depth case that was analysed in this thesis has provided an invaluable research avenue towards discovering the change process we went through.

Another limitation is that the present study only addresses teachers' instructional behaviour using SABRL2 tool. Pupils' response was not captured in detail to reflect the effectiveness of teachers' change in instructional behaviour on them.

I shall now propose recommendations for future studies in relation to the limitations discussed.

6.5 Recommendations For Future Research

Future research should involve more people in the action research team. The team can consist of other teachers, teacher educators or officers from the district or state education department who can act as critical friends. More critical friends will allow for more dialogic discussion to take place. Using their experiences and knowledge,

these critical friends can collaboratively make meaning as well as pose questions regarding any issues arising throughout the four cycles. Critical friends often push researchers and participants to another level of understanding because they ask researchers to make explicit what they may understand on a more tacit level (Herr & Anderson, 2005).

Future studies should also relook into the amount of shared reading sessions observed during the problem solving cycles. More sessions mean more opportunities for guided reflections to take place. As a result, more issues can be thrashed out from the discussion and this could lead to more specific insights, such as teachers become more aware that their shared reading sessions include relatively few comments encouraging certain aspects in SABRL2. They can then practice incorporating the aspects in the following shared reading sessions. In addition, more shared reading sessions also indicate that teachers can use different text type during shared reading. Different feature of text yields different instructional behaviour that will open for more discussion and insights among the team members. Among others, teachers can be encouraged to use informational text besides fiction. The use of digital books can also be explored as an alternative to ordinary books.

Apart from this, future studies can also focus on capturing pupils' behaviour during shared reading in order to gauge their comprehension performance throughout the intervention. Individual pupils' oral responses can be examined to see the reciprocal relationship between teachers' instructional behaviour and pupils' performance.

Finally, those interested in pursuing this study could also focus on the discourse between teachers, researchers and critical friends during guided reflection. Analysing

the discourse in detail would entail more understanding on how guided reflection benefit teachers in this type of collaboration.

6.6 Concluding Remarks

This study investigated teachers' ability to change the way they conduct shared reading following a collaborative action research project. It also examined the effects of these changes in student-teacher interaction pattern and engagement in teachers' shared reading practice. The current study indicates that this collaboration shows some promising results for enhancing teachers' ability to engage pupils through a more quality inter textual talk. Overall, these improvements in teachers' ability to engage children in higher order reading may result in a significant change in the teaching of reading literacy within Malaysian primary ESL context. Apart from that this study also showed that CAR offers new training approaches for teachers' professional development in Malaysia. It also establishes the basis for productive pedagogical partnership between teacher educators and teachers which provides opportunities to engage in shared dialogue and critical inquiry.

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Appendix 1

Systematic Assessment of Second Language Book Reading

Construct	Codes	Definition
1. Language Development	1a. Describe Story Actions	Teacher discusses perceptual-level story events and/or actions depicted in illustrations or in the printed text
	1b. Label/Locate/ Notice Noun	Teacher provides or asks for a label/name/ notice a noun depicted in the illustrations, the printed text, or tangible objects referenced during reading. Teacher asks child to locate a noun.
	1c. Describe Characteristics of Nouns	Teacher describes characteristics of a noun or requires selective analysis of a noun/noun parts.
	1d Word Definition	Teacher asks for or provides a word definition.
	1e Expands/extends child's utterance	Teacher recasts, expands, or extends child's utterance.
2. Abstract Thinking	2a Compare and Contrast	Teacher models or asks children to compare and contrast aspects of illustrations/story events
	2b Judgments, Evaluations, and Inferences [I]	Teacher models or asks children to make judgments, evaluations, or inferences about the text, events, characters, or illustrations.
	2c Prediction	Teacher models or asks children to hypothesize what will occur next in the text or the outcome of a particular event.
	2d Reasoning, Explanation, or Analysis	Teacher models or asks children for reasoning, explanation, or analysis.
3. Elaborations	3a Word Elaboration	Teacher asks for or provides a word elaboration through contextualization or dramatization
	3b Text-Life Connection	Teacher models or encourages children to link text content directly to past, present, or future personal experiences of the teacher or children.
	3c Dramatize/ Pretend/ Imitate	Teacher encourages children to pretend or to represent an action/event/ state/feeling/etc. depicted in the text.
	3d Follows child's lead	Teacher follows the topic of child's spontaneous initiation with a contingent verbal response that continues the child's topic or the teacher gives child an opportunity to repeat/clarify their spontaneous initiation, thus acknowledging the child's contribution by giving the child the "floor" to speak.
	3e Emotion Modeling	Teacher uses feeling words to discuss characters' feelings, to highlight emotion words in the text, or to model her/their own emotive responses to text.
4. Selective use of mother tongue	Scaffolding pupils without displacing English as the main medium of discussion	
5. Session Climate	4a Models Respect	Teacher models respectful language or respectfully responds to a student's signal.
	4b Positive Feedback	Teacher offers students positive feedback on their input.
	Maintaining inspiration and enthusiasm	Teacher's ability to add feeling and emotion to the text/ to convey the writer's feeling through the use of prosodic features and non verbal language

Appendix 2

The Systematic Assessment of Book Reading (SABR) tool by

Zucker, Justice, Piasta, & Kaderavek (2007, 2010)

1. Language Development

The Language Development construct examines the extent to which the teacher highlights words during reading and discusses word meanings.

This construct includes instances of expanding on a child's verbal contribution.

Codes	Definition	Specific coding notes & examples
1a.Describe Story Actions	Teacher discusses perceptual-level story events and/or actions depicted in illustrations or in the printed text	Question/Request/Comment about events and actions related to the initiating events, problems, solutions, and/or goals of story plot. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T: What are they doing? • T: What's happening in this picture? • T: It is raining.
1b.Label/Locate/ Notice Noun	Teacher provides or asks for a label/name/notice a noun depicted in the illustrations, the printed text, or tangible objects referenced during reading. Teacher asks child to locate a noun.	1b (1)Question/comment/requests that provide a label for an object or character in illustration or encourage children to notice an object/character. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T: What is this?/What are these? • T: Who's that on the stairs? (Note: noun label request + prepositional phrase) • T: That's a watch. • T: See the giraffe? • T: That's not a giraffe 1b(2)Request for child to locate a simple noun in illustration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T: Find the... • T: Find the...+ prepositional phrase(s) • T: Where is...? • T: They are in the + prepositional phrase(s)
1c Describe Characteristics of Nouns	Teacher describes characteristics of a noun or requires selective analysis of a noun/noun parts.	1c(1)Questions/requests that require children to locate a modified noun in an illustration. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T: Show me the biggest tomato. • T: Where is the white flower? • T: Is that the fast one? (Note: "one" functions as pronoun here) • T: Show me one word on this page. (Note: "one" functions in the numerical sense here) 1c(2)Questions/requests that require children to locate an object defined by its function or characteristics. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T: Find the one that is... (Note: this determiner requires selective analysis) • T: Find the one that is... and is ... • T: Do you see one that...? • T: See the outside edge?(in this case, "outside" is an adjective modifying edge) 1c(3)Questions/requests/comments that describe attributes of object, including colors, shape, quantity, properties, or possession. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T: Does the cheetah have spots?

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T: That one is soft. • T: Tell me its shape/size/color/quantity/possession/etc. • T: See the red one
1d Word Definition	Teacher asks for or provides a word definition.	<p>1d (1) Definition requests/comments occur when a teacher asks for or provides a word's meaning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T: What is a...? • T: What kind...is this? • T: It is a ...+ category/essential qualities • T: What does... mean? • T: Do you know what "furious" means? • T: That means.... • T: This is like.... • T: This refers to.... • T: This stands for.... • T: This is a kind of + category <p>1d(2) Requests/comments that establish a category include a superordinate category or explain this is one group/type/kind.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T: Cheetahs and tigers are both members of the cat family. • T: The occupied sign is a kind of signal to tell others.... <p>1d(3) Requests/comments with examples/non-examples include a demarcation of the word's meaning for vocabulary development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T: Some other enormous things are elephants, skyscrapers, eighteen-wheel trucks, and whales. But, a needle and your pinky finger are not enormous. • T: Find the ones that are not vegetables. • T: Name something that is a vegetable and not a fruit.... (Note: Also code 2a) • T: Name something that can...but is not a....(Note: Also code 2a) • T: Angry is more than mad. (this demarcates how these words relate on a continuum) <p>1d(4) Requests/comments about purpose of a word include the function/purpose of an object.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T: Tell me its purpose.... • T: What is it used for? • T: A bulldozer helps you to tear down and move things. • T: A scale is used to figure out how heavy something is or how much it weighs.
1e Expands/extends child's utterance	Teacher recasts, expands, or extends child's utterance.	<p>1e (1) Teacher expands or recasts child's utterance with correct grammar or a longer form.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C: Chair broke. - T: The chair is broken. • C: Mean lion. - T: Lions are mean. • C: Her's happy. - T: She's happy. <p>1e(2) Teacher extends child's utterance by adding/clarifying an idea.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C: Chocolate cookies. - T: You made chocolate cookies. (added idea that child made the cookies) • C: He's hurt. - T: He might be hurt and that could be why he's using a wheelchair. (added idea/possible explanation) • C: Dog. - T: That is a brown dog. (added color) • C: Why? - T: Well, why do you think he is confused? (clarified idea by stating

	character is confused)
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2. Abstract Thinking

The Abstract Thinking construct examines the teacher's use of modeling and open-ended questioning to engage children in predicting, hypothesizing, remembering, reasoning, summarizing, and inferencing about aspects of the book's content. All of these codes include an inferential level of demand.

Codes	Definition	Specific coding notes & examples
2a Compare and Contrast	Teacher models or asks children to compare and contrast aspects of illustrations/story events	Questions/Requests/Comments that require children to consider similarities and/or differences between pictures, characters, stories, life events, or functions/purposes of objects. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T: What's different about the tiger and the cheetah? • T: How are these garden tools similar? • T: How are these the same? • T: These frogs are the same color, but they are not the same type. • T: This one is like this one • T: Do you do this with your friends too? (listen for "too" as a comparison/highlight similarity; Also code 3b. Text-Life Connection)
2b Judgments, Evaluations, and Inferences [I]	Teacher models or asks children to make judgments, evaluations, or inferences about the text, events, characters, or illustrations.	2b(1) Questions/Requests/Comments that include judgments or evaluations about story ideas, non-perceptual qualities, events, illustrations, or the text as a whole. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T: Do you think he's cool? • T: Do you think he's embarrassed now? • T: Is he really hungry? • T: Find the scary part. • T: What a beautiful landscape. • T: He shouldn't be afraid. • T: I like this book. • T: He'd better... + judgment/evaluation • T: You ought to... + judgment • T: Even the words on this page look sad. • T: That was the best soup they'd ever had. • T: He is old/young. • T: Ew! (as in "that's gross"); (Note: Do not code "Uh oh" as evaluation as this is too vague.) 2b(2) Questions/Requests/Comments that model or request inferences about a characters' role/feelings, events, or things not perceptually present in text. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T: What could he say? • T: Do you think that was a good idea? • T: He's eating, but he's not really hungry. • T: I think the author wants to show us.... • T: I think... + judgment/evaluation/inference • T: I bet... + judgment/evaluation/inference • T: What did you think the title of the book was?
2c Prediction	Teacher models or asks children to hypothesize what will occur next in the text or the outcome of a particular event.	Questions/Requests/Comments/Complete-the-Sentence about events subsequent to a scene or predict the outcome of an event/entire text. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T: What will happen if it gets wet? • T: Do you think it could be noisy on the plane? • T: What's the next noise going to be? • T: What's going to make a noise on this page? • T: What will happen next? • T: Do you think that will work? • T: Was Jill's prediction correct? • T: Show me what you think will happen if.... • T: I think his mom will find out.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T: I wonder what will happen.... • T: Let's see if... will.... • T: I think he will do this again. • T: That will become a butterfly. • T: What do you think they're going to find? • T: If he can be very careful it might.... • T: Then what will happen...? • T: Then, the seeds become ____. • T: Do you think this book is going to be about a duck or a bear? (Although a closed question, this is a prediction) • T: Is he going to eat the trash? (Although a closed question, this is a prediction) <p>Let's see + what animal is on the next page.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T: Let's see + where he will sit. • T: Let's see + who Arthur will meet. • T: Okay, let's see + what it says about the lion (in this example, note the teacher's explicit statement of what they will be looking for when reading). • T: Let's read about + why she's frustrated (in this example, note the teacher's explicit statement of what they will be looking for when reading).
2d Reasoning, Explanation, or Analysis	Teacher models or asks children for reasoning, explanation, or analysis.	<p>Questions/Requests/Comments that model or request explanations of story events, concepts, or explain an inference drawn or a judgment made.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T: Why is everything missing? • T: What else could he do? • T: Why can't they...? • T: How can you tell...? • T: Why wouldn't he...? • T: Why will...?39 • T: Why do you think that happened? • T: When the engines turn they make a loud sound and it scared the boy. • T: What happens when...? • T: The water is coming out of the top of the whale because that is his blowhole. • T: This happened because/since/so... • T: When this happens..., but when.... • T: This must be a make-believe story because.... • T: They could do...to solve their problem. • T: This is shown in the picture because.... • T: If this happens...then this happens... • T: Gerard found he couldn't dance like the others, but he could dance in his own way. • T: Why do you think the little brother took all their things? • T: So, thrusters have something to do with speeding up the plane. • T: When the gardener pulls the weeds her plants can get more light and grow better. • T: When you put together letters they can make a word. • T: We need to look up that word in the dictionary. (explains solution to unknown definition) • T: The author's job is to write the words of the story. (explains author's role) <p>4. These formulations often indicate explanation or analysis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because... • .../so that... • Since... • If... <p>Answers to "why" questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explanation of "why it would/wouldn't" – essential/nonessential elements

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ...have to... or ...got to have... – Explain necessary conditions • Explanation of “what made/makes it happen” – causes of events/feelings • Explanation of “what you/they could do” – another’s perspective • Explanation of “how we can tell” – explain inference from observation
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3. Elaborations

The Elaborations construct examines the extent to which the teacher elaborates on word meanings, expands on children’s own topics, or encourages children’s dramatic expansions of the text. This construct also assesses the extent to which the teacher elaborates on characters’ emotions and ways the text link to children’s own lives.

Codes	Definition	Specific coding notes & examples
3a Word Elaboration	Teacher asks for or provides a word elaboration through contextualization or dramatization	<p>3a(1)Contextualization provides accurate, contextual information about a word or phrase, including, (a) the time, place, or circumstances in which something occurs or develops, or (b) utterances that sheds light on the word’s meaning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T: Doctors use this word. • T: You can find these (trowels) at the hardware store. • T: Maybe he’s jealous because he didn’t get a toy he wanted. • T: Like we took a boat through the marsh and we saw lots of birds and alligators. • T: You might have felt jealous before when a brother or sister got something for Christmas that you wanted. • T: You can get this vegetable in the winter. • T: Brian was excited when he went to Chuck E Cheese’s. (Uses text-life connection to contextualize a word) <p>3a(2)Dramatization provides the meaning of a word through a teacher’s gestures and imitation, or a request for the children to act out a word’s meaning. The dramatization must be linked to a particular, focal word in the text or a teacher utterance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T: Show me how you look if you feel drowsy. • T: Show me an angry and furious face. • T: Tremble like you’re afraid.
3b Text-Life Connection	Teacher models or encourages children to link text content directly to past, present, or future personal experiences of the teacher or children.	<p>Text-to-Life relates teacher or student(s)’ previous/current/future episodes, possessions, or preferences to story concepts, including inter-textual connections to other books or cultural products.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T: It says Violet’s (character) favorite color is purple and Madison’s (student) favorite is purple too. • T: That’s like what happened at our classroom science center. • T: Your name starts with A too, Amy. • T: We have an alphabet strip in our classroom too. • T: You did some planting yesterday. • T: We’ll see pumpkins when we go to the farm on our field trip. (Note it would not be a text-life connection if T referred to a hypothetical future event like this - T: We would see pumpkins if we went to the farm on a as this phrasing is hypothetical.)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T: Who's seen a dandelion before? • T: Does anyone have a bike like this? • T: Who likes soup? (Note: links to personal preferences) • T: Who has brown eyes like this character? (Note: links to personal characteristics) • (C: I have a backpack.) In response to C's utterance, T: You do have a backpack like this character, but your backpack is a Sponge Bob backpack. • T: This reminds me of The Snowy Day because it is winter in this book too. • T: This reminds me of the other book we read about penguins. • T: I have seen a boa constrictor like this on Animal Planet.
3c Dramatize/ Pretend/Imitate	Teacher encourages children to pretend or to represent an action/event/state/feeling/etc. depicted in the text.	<p>3c (1)Dramatize occurs when the teacher's comments or requests encourage children to represent emotions/actions of animals, characters, or events in text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T: Show me a ferocious and scary face. (also code 2b judges scary and 3e emotion) • T: Make the chimpanzee's sound. (also code 1c describe noun – possessive) • T: Can you act out what happened in the beginning of the story? • T: You can really open your jaws as wide as the lion. • T: He's so angry he just wants to do like this (teacher stomps on floor). <p>3c(2)Pretend Talk occurs when children are encouraged to pretend to talk or interact with characters in text or when teacher pretends to be a character in the text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T: Say hello to Mr. Hippo. <p>T: Get quiet so the crocodile doesn't come and chomp our heads off.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T speaks in 1st person as if she is the dump truck character in I Stink! T: No, I have plenty of gas. <p>3c(3)Imitate occurs when children are encouraged to imitate/repeat actions in text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher imitates shivering. T: Let's shiver like the boy in the snow. • T: Turn your neck like the giraffe is turning his neck. • T: Put your arms up like a letter Y
3d Follows child's lead	Teacher follows the topic of child's spontaneous initiation with a contingent verbal response that continues the child's topic or the teacher gives child an opportunity to repeat/clarify their spontaneous initiation, thus acknowledging the child's contribution by giving the child the "floor" to speak.	<p>Teacher uses comments/questions that focus on or continue a child's topic of spontaneous initiation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher responds verbally with recast, expansion, extension, or asks for more information about the child's initiation. • Teacher respectfully responds to child's topical lead, by explaining that they can talk about this at a later time.
3e Emotion Modeling	Teacher uses feeling words to discuss characters' feelings, to highlight emotion words in the text, or to model her/their own emotive responses to text.	<p>3e(1)Teacher uses comments/questions that include feeling words related to or contained in the text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T: Why do you think Henry is sad? • T: How does Mudge feel? • T: Look at that word "excited." (highlighting a printed emotion word is appropriate for this code)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T: It looks like he's embarrassed and that's why he put the bag over his head. <p>(3e(2)Teacher uses comments/questions that include her/his own emotive responses to text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does anyone else feel sad when we get to this page? • T: That lion is scary! • T: I feel anxious for Arthur because he might not make the bus.
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4.Session Climate

The Session Climate construct examines the extent to which the teacher demonstrates enjoyment of reading and respect towards the children during reading. This construct also examines the extent to which the teacher invites children to manipulate the book during book reading and teacher's reading delivery and behavior management approaches.

Codes	Definition	Specific coding notes & examples
4a Models Respect	Teacher models respectful language or respectfully responds to a student's signal.	<p>4a(1)Questions/Requests/Comments that include/model respectful or polite language (i.e., these key words).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Words: Please...; Thank you; You're welcome. <p>4a(2)Teacher demonstrates respectful behavior to students when they signal (verbally or nonverbally) that they want/need the teacher's attention. Respectful responses are warm/sensitive and prompt, meaning the teacher does not allow the situation to escalate before responding and/or does not ignore the child's signal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher responds warmly and promptly when a student calls the teacher's name. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o C: Ms. DiBella! Ms. DiBella! T: Yes, Mark. What do you want to tell us? o C: Teacher, look! T: What do you see? • Teacher responds warmly and promptly to a student who is upset/tired/hungry/crying/demonstrating physical need/etc. <p>4a(3)Teacher responds respectfully when a child points out a teacher mistake/error/omission. Examples:</p> <p>T: I was wrong. You (the child) are right. C: That's not a girl, it's a boy. T: I'm sorry. It is a boy. C: Ms. Smith, you forgot to tell the title! T: You're right. The title is xxx. C: That's an apple, not a tomato. T: I see why you'd think that, but I can tell it is a tomato because it is growing on a vine. (Note: The code is marked even though the teacher did not actually make a mistake because she responded respectfully) C: No. It says "tadpoles wriggle." T: Oh. "Wriggle." Thank you.</p>
4b Positive Feedback	Teacher offers students positive feedback on their input.	<p>Teacher comments indicate positive feedback/praise for student(s) verbal or nonverbal behaviors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T: I like how you are looking at the details • T: I can tell you are doing some good thinking. • T: Good job reading with me. • T: That was a smart way to solve the problem. • T: Your prediction was correct. • T: I love how you are paying attention while I read. • T: That's right. • T: You're absolutely right! • T: Fantastic!

Appendix 3

Teachers' Interview Protocol

I appreciate your letting me observe your class. I have some questions I'd like to ask you related to this lesson. Would you mind if I taped the interview? It will help me stay focused on our conversation and it will ensure I have an accurate record of what we discussed.

1. Describe your typical book reading session.
2. Can you define shared reading?
3. Can you describe the seating position?
4. What kind of text do you read to your pupils?
5. Do you allow them to ask question when you are reading?
6. Do you ask question as you read?



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Appendix 4

Students' Interview Protocol

1. Do you understand the text read by your teacher?
2. Did you ask questions?
3. Did your teacher ask questions?
4. Did you respond to her question?
5. Did you answer in English? Why? Why not?
6. Did you enjoy the session?
7. Do you like the text? Why? Why not?



Appendix 5

Teachers: Questions for Reflection and Self-Assessment

1. How did the activity go? Did it work with your student(s)?
2. How do you think it helped to improve your student's English: in recognition, production and/or usage?
3. Were there any results that surprised you?
4. What modifications could be made so that it would work better?
5. What do you think are the basic principles involved in this activity?
6. Try to design a new individual activity based on these principles.
7. Is it possible to design an activity for the whole class based on these principles? If so, how would you do it?



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Appendix 6

Sample Teacher's Interview Transcription

Ani 260711(1)

(Interview with regards to baseline1 – 20 January 2011)

Venue : SMK Ayer Itam Staff Room

Q: During your first lesson that I observed you, I noticed that there were many times that you asked students wh questions but the answers were obvious from the text. Why is that so?

A: One is I want to make sure that they have listened to the text when I have read it earlier and that is one way of me checking where those information are in the text because they need to refer to the text right so they need to answer those obvious questions. Another thing is if they are able to answer those questions, I consider that they have understood the text.

Q: I also noticed that you read to students without allowing them to interrupt, without asking them questions. You read and students listen. Why?

A: My first reason is that I want them to listen to really listen to the text as it is being read the whole thing so that the learn the intonation, the stress and the way it is read ... to say correctly .. may be in a way. Because I'm reading it. And No. 2, when there's no interruption, I consider that they are able to process the text through their mind as they read silently with me. So that is why I usually don't allow them to interrupt when I'm reading the text.

Q: Would it make any different if you allow them to interrupt? In terms of their understanding of the text?

A: It may not. But I am worried about is, it may distract their attention from the text. So if I asked them questions while I'm reading the text or I allow them to ask me questions I am just afraid that they will lose their focus and the story line

Q: During this lesson what you did was first you started by asking them to turn to page 49 of the textbook and then you asked them a few wh questions with obvious answer, and then you read to them without allowing them to interrupt and then after that you did not repeat, you started discussing the text until the end. Also at the end you ask them to associate what ever they read about Chinese new year you ask them to relate with Hari Raya and you ask them to draw a diagram on the pre and post

and while Hari Raya. Ok Which part of this lesson is considered as shared reading? Is it the whole part or certain part only that you consider as SR?

A: It is when I read and they listen and we shared information from the text towards the end when they are able to discuss with me, when they are able to give ideas that they have understood what they have read through the association of the festival that they are used to which is Hari Raya

Q: So that means the discussion that takes place after your reading aloud to them is also considered

A: Also considered a little bit there because they have to understand what I have read and they share with me their experience.

Q: And about asking them to relate with Hari Raya, is that also SR?

A: Hmm... I consider that a part of SR where I let them used their experience that they have gone through for their festival and they find the similarities and the differences between CNY and Hari Raya.

Q: How do u relate your lesson, your discussion of text with students' critical thinking?

A: Well, they have to recall what they have done during their festival which is Hari Raya and then they try and associate it with CNY that they have read from the text and they discuss and tell me what is similar what is done by Chee Kiat that they do during Hari Raya, and what are the differences during that festivals.

Q: Do you think that students are able to do this task because of the text they read about Chee Kiat or because they already know?

A: One is of course based on their experience, so they already have that knowledge, they already know and no 2 when I get them to compare so they will have a cleare picture that they are similarities and they are differences. So they will need to think in a way critically to find out what are the differences and what are the similarities. So that was my main concern during that time.

Q: I also notoce that you restate students' answer . Why?

A: That is one way I think I can make sure that all the pupils have heard the answer

Q; Oo.. It was meant for others

A: Yes, I also want to make sure that they know that have given me correct answer.

Q: The part when you said now I want to know more....I give you 2 minutes to read again....discuss with your friend, is this also part of SR?

A: This is what I consider as sharing their reading with a friend because they need to read again and discuss with a friend.. so there's some sharing in a way although both have heard from me, I have already read so at least I can see that by reading againn they will be able to see what they have missed and since I stated specificall before and during the festival so they will pay attention to those partsin the text.

Q: Was everybody able to complete this task, u said give 2 minutes..will they able to complete this task within 2 minutes

A: Some of them were able to do.

Q: How do you gauge whether they are able to do/ not able to do?

A: I spend a little bit of time just walking around watching them, and occasionally I asked them how far have they completed thetask although its only 2 minutes, I consider we already read, discuss a little bit so they are able to zoom in straight away at those specific part and they are able to spend that specific time for that particular part only.

Q: Do you think that this part is done better if done when u are reading aloud to them. U include this while you are reading which one will be better?

A: In a way, if I had done it during reading, some of them may miss out because they may not pay attention, they may miss out this part so when I do it this way I consider that I have already given them sufficient time to listen to text and they focus and they should be able to get the answer.

Q: But what I notice (read memo....

A: For that particular activity I ask them to discuss with the students sitting next to them so that there will be minimum movement otherwise it will take quite sometime

Q: And and that time you expect interaction between student and student and not between you and the student

A: Yes

Q: I also notice that you like to ask question "what else". What do you think is the effect of this question to your student?

A: My rationale is that I want them to think themselves and things that they have already discussed they should have discussed so they could help each other to give me explanation and all that but of course when I do not give them any help whether ppictorial or visually or orally some most of them are not able to give me what I want, only a few.

Q: There was a part where you explain the meaning of the words. Is there any other ways that you could do before explaining the meaning to them to make sure they understand the words.

A: If I could have given them picture because when it comes to CNY of course they know that they have a reunion dinner and they know it's a big affair. I could have shown them the picture and try to get the meaning of the words feast from the picture. Or I could have given them another sentence with that word which they can use to associate or to guess.

Q: What about the sentence itself in the text?

A: The sentence itself aa.. during that time there was one student, she used the word feast wrongly right so that was why I wanted to explain the word and I tried not to give them the obvious answer by asking other pupil to give the meaning..

Q: What I mean is can you use the sentence in the context of the sentence to let them guess the meaning of the word feast

A: If I am not mistaken one of the girls said that it is a reunion dinner and everybody group together to eat there are many people so I supposed that particular student have helped me in a way to help her friends understand the word feast

Q: Have you ever heard of the word "thinking aloud"?

A: Thinking aloud..... aaaa... Not specifically when it is associated with reading.

Q: What do you understand by the word thinking aloud?

A: Thinking aloud I suppose literally it means that we speak as we think which we sometimes do when we are not satisfied with something..

Q: Do you think thinking aloud can be done during SR?

A: I have never tried before and so far if I'm not mistaken I have never heard of that method being used during reading

Appendix 7

Sample Observation Transcription

Transcription Ms Ani Cycle 2 – The Lion King

001	Teacher:	Ahhhh...What are you giving back? What are you giving back?
002	Student:	Book
003	Teacher:	What book?
004	Student:	E1, E2 teacher
005	Teacher:	Hold on first.sit! Lets start with our lesson first.k? There's another table over
006		there. Ok...now, today yea, we are going to look at another story k? And this
007		particular story, well I think is funny. I think is funny. I'll share it with u
008		afterwards and then you can decide whether it's funny or not. Yaaa? Ehmmm.
009		it's also about animals, Yea? But this time it's about jungle animals. Ok, now
010		in a jungle, which animal is the king?
011	Students:	Lion!!
012	Teacher:	Why does everyone say the lion is the king?
013	Students:	because his roar can be hear in one jungle.
014	Teacher:	ok, so the roar of the lion of the giant, the the lion can be heard in the whole
015		jungle. Ok, why else do we say the lion is the king of the jungle? What about the
016		looks of the lion? What does a lion look like?
017		
018	Students:	It looks like a cat.
119	Teacher:	It looks like a cat, yes. But what makes it so special?
120	Student:	His hair!
121	Teacher:	His hair where?
122	Student:	At his face.
123	Teacher:	Yes! Around his face! That is called the mane. M.A.N.E, the mane. Ahhh, so the
126		lion has this big mane hah. A lots of long hair around his face, around the neck.
127		Yea? So it looks like a king, yea? Have you ever seen a lion in.. on the
128		television?
129		Yes!!
130	Teacher:	Yes!! How does the lion walk? How does the lion walk? Does he walk with the
131		head down, like that?
132	Students:	no!!!
133	Teacher:	How does the lion walk? Hahh, walks with the head up, isnt't it? And the lion
134		looks around, right? Ok, I want to ask you one question. Does a lion live in the
135		jungle?
136	Students:	Yes!!
137	Teacher:	Does a lion live in the jungle?
138	Student:	No! No! In the zoo.
139	Teacher:	ok, in the jungle. What about in the wild? Now, try to recall the documentaries,
140		the shows that you have seen about lions. Which animals actually lives in the
141		jungle? The lion or the tiger?
142		
142	Student:	Tiger! Tiger!
143	Teacher:	Tiger yea? Because usually we see documentaries about the tiger, ahhh, they
144		have trees around them. But what about a lion? Where does a lion actually live?
145		
146	Student:.	In the forest
147	Teacher:	In the forest? Forest, then jungle is merely the same. Where does actually..does a
148		lion actually live? In which country? In which country can you find lions? Can
149		you find lions in Malaysia?
150		
151	Student:	Yes!

152	Teacher:	No!
153	Student:	Africa.
154	Teacher:	Africa..Yes! Can you imagine..ahhh. Can you...ahhhhh. In your mind, can you
155		have the picture of Africa? What you see in Africa? You see a lot of jungle?
156	Students:	No!
157	Teacher:	No!!! What do you have in Africa?
158	Student:	Lot of animal and people.
159	Teacher:	yes, a lot of animals and people. But what about the state, the landscape? What
160		about the landscape? Bentuk bumi dia macam mana?
161	Student:	Panas.
162	Teacher:	Panas, and then?
163	Student:	Luas!
164	Teacher:	Luas! Ada pokok tak?
165	Students:	Ada!
166	Teacher:	Ada tapi...
167	Student:	Sikit..banyak...
168	Teacher:	ok, Africa is a very hot place. Very...big fields isn't it? Dry fields hah. But
169		usually we say the lion is the king of the jungle. So whatever it is, today my
170		story is about the lion, ok? Right..let me put up the story for you. Ok..take a few
171		minutes. Look at the story, read it quietly with you friends. Ok...the giraffe and
172		the lion were good friends.ok? so, in this story, the lion has a good friend, the
173		giraffe. "I am your king", the lion always told the animals. As usual you know,
174		the king! "I am your king! I am your king! ". He goes around telling all the
175		animals. 'I am the strongest, the fastest, and the smartest!" He roar. Ok? One
176		day, what happened? Ok, soon comes into the picture another animal. Which
177		animal?
178	Students:	The ant..
179	Teacher:	the ant. Hah..What did the ant do?
180	Student:	it was telling everyone that he was going to be king soon.
181	Teacher:	right.. so the ant was telling everyone that he was going to be king soon! So the
182		ant told the frog, "Wait, I am going to be the king". The ant told the hyena, "I am
183		going to be king!" The ant told the antelopes, " I am going to be king!" So the
184		giraffe heard from all these animals. "Uuishhh, you know, the ant is telling
185		everybody he wants to be king! Ahhhh... and the giraffe is a good friend of the
186		lion. So, what did the giraffe do?
187	Student:	The giraffe told the lion.
188	Teacher:	Ok..so he reported to the lion. "Hey lion, you know what happened? The ant is
189		telling everybody he wants to be king" "Hah?" and what did the lion do? He
190		went to see the ant. So the lion said, "hello ant, hello hello..ahh, I heard you said
191		you will be king soon!" Was the ant frightened?
192	Student:	No.
193	Teacher:	No. What did the ant say?

Appendix 8

Teacher's Consent Letter

SATIRAH BT. HJ. AHMAD
UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA

Purpose of the Project:

I am Satirah Hj. Ahmad, a doctoral candidate in Universiti Utara Malaysia would like to get the cooperation from the teachers to carry out my study entitled, **“IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF PRIMARY ESL TEACHERS’ SHARED READING PRACTICE: A COLLABORATIVE ACTION RESEARCH”**.

The primary focus of the study is to investigate how teachers can be supported to improve their shared reading practice during reading lesson.

Nature of Participation: We will be collaborating in an action research project. Our aim is to explore issues in your shared reading practice. Then together we will brainstorm possible ways to make your shared reading more interactive.

Participation is Voluntary: Your participation is strictly voluntary.

Confidentiality: I'll do everything I can to keep your information and identity confidential. In presentations and publications, we will use pseudonyms instead of using names of real names. All interview tapes will be destroyed after a three year period.

Benefits: This study will help you improve your shared reading practice.

I have read and understand the consent letter and agree to participate in this study

Name

Signature

Phone Number: _____

Appendix 9

Pupils' Consent Letter

SATIRAH BT. HJ. AHMAD
UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA

Purpose of the Project:

I am Satirah Hj. Ahmad, a doctoral candidate in Universiti Utara Malaysia would like to get the cooperation from the pupils to carry out my study entitled, **“IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF PRIMARY ESL TEACHERS’ SHARED READING PRACTICE: A COLLABORATIVE ACTION RESEARCH”**.

The primary focus of the study is to investigate how teachers can be supported to improve their shared reading practice during reading lesson.

Nature of Participation: This is like your ordinary English class with your teacher. The only difference is I will be around to see how your teacher conduct shared reading. The shared reading sessions will be videotaped to see the pattern of interaction between you and your teacher.

Participation is Voluntary. Your participation is strictly voluntary. That means you don't have to do this if you don't want to.

Confidentiality. I'll do everything I can to keep your information and identity confidential. In presentations and publications, we will use pseudonyms instead of using real names. All interview tapes will be destroyed after a three year period.

Benefits. Through this study, you will be have more interesting and fun shared reading sessions with me and your teachers.

I have read and understand the consent letter and agree to participate in this study

Name

Signature

Phone Number: _____

Appendix 10



INSTITUT PERGURUAN DARULAMAN
BANDAR DARULAMAN 06000 DUA
KEDAH DARUL-AMAN

10/11/2022 10:11:50 AM

DENGAN FAX

"KEDAH GEMILANG"

IPDA 01/2/26/22
20 November 2022

Pengarah,
Bahagian Pendidikan Guru,
Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia,
Ara 3-6, Blok E 13,
Kompleks Kerajaan Parcel E,
Pusat Pentadbiran Kerajaan Persekutuan,
62604 PUTRAJAYA,
(Unit KPP Unit Dasar, Perancangan & Pembangunan)

Tuan/Fuam,

Pelaksanaan 'Teaching School' di Institut Perguruan Darulaman

Dengan hormatnya saya merujuk kepada perkara tersebut di atas.

2. Sukacita dimaklumkan bahawa Institut Perguruan Darulaman telah membuat peritinan Sekolah Kebangsaan Ayer Hitam dalam Daerah Kubang Pasu untuk melaksanakan 'Teaching School'.

3. Sehubungan itu, Mesyuarat Perancangan dan Pelaksanaan 'Teaching School' bersama dengan Jabatan Pelajaran Negeri Kedah, Pegawai Pelajaran Daerah Kubang Pasu, Guru Besar Sekolah Kebangsaan Ayer Hitam serta wakil dari jawatan kuasa akan diadakan pada ketetapan berikut.

Tarikh : 27 November 2022 (Selasa)
Masa : 10.30 pagi
Tempat : Bilik Gemilang IPDA

Sekian, terima kasih

'BERKHIDMAT UNTUK NEGARA'
'MENDIDIK DAN MEMIMPIN'

Saya yang menurut perintah,


(HAJI SHAHIDAN B. ABD RAHMAN PPN BCK)
Pegarah,
Institut Perguruan Darulaman,
Ara, Kedah Darul-AMAN
s.k.: Fail Timbul

Appendix 11



BAHAGIAN PENDIDIKAN GURU
KEMENTERIAN PELAJAJAN MALAYSIA
TEACHER EDUCATION DIVISION
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION MALAYSIA
ARAS 2-K BLOK E15, KOMPLEKS KERAJAAN PAKSI, E.
PUSAT PENTADBIRAN KERAJAAN PERSEKUTUAN
62604 PUTRAJAYA



03-88841000
03-88841001, 08888888
PELAJARAN

Ruj. Kami: KP(BPG)/3330/206 Jld 5(42)
Tarikh: 31 October 2007

Semua Pengarah
Institut Pendidikan Guru

Tuan/Puan

Pelaksanaan Teaching School di Institut Pendidikan Guru

Sukacita perkara di atas dirujuk.

2. Satu daripada elemen penting yang perlu ada di IPG ialah "Teaching School". Ini selaras dengan kertas Kabinet Naik Taraf Maktab Perguruan kepada Institut Pendidikan Guru yang telah dikeluarkan pada tahun 2005. Sehubungan itu, Mesyuarat Penyelarasan Teaching School yang telah diadakan di Terengganu pada 24-25 September 2007 telah diputuskan bahawa semua IPG mesti mempunyai Teaching School mulai Januari 2008.

3. Sehubungan itu, Bahagian ini memohon agar semua IPG dapat melaksanakan teaching school masing-masing mulai sesi persekolahan Januari 2007. Perancangan bagi melaksanakan teaching school ini perlu dibuat atas prinsip kolaborasi antara IPG dan pihak jabatan Pelajaran Negeri. Ini melibatkan pemilikan sokongan teaching school dan bentuk penglibatan IPC di sekolah teaching school tersebut.

4. Bagi tujuan penyemakan, semua IPG dipohon mengemukakan nama teaching school dan senarai jawatankuasa teaching school IPG masing-masing sebelum 30 November 2007. Semua maklumat dan pertanyaan boleh dikemukakan kepada Dr Maria Mansur di talian 03-88841061 atau 012-8725006.

5. Kerjasama tuan/puan dalam perkara di atas amat diharapkan dan diidharahi dengan ucapan terima kasih.

"BERKHIDMAT UNTUK NEGARA"
"PRODUKTIF, BERKUALITI DAN EFEKTIF"

Saya yang menurut perintah,

(HAJI MOHD. ADENAN BIN DERAMAN)
b.p. Pengarah
Bahagian Pendidikan Guru



Appendix

12

KERTAS CADANGAN PELAKSANAAN 'TEACHING SCHOOL' DI MAKTAB PERGURUAN MALAYSIA

1.0 TUJUAN

Kertas kerja ini bertujuan untuk memohon pertimbangan dan kelulusan Mesyuarat Majlis Profesional, Pengurusan dan Pentadbiran (mempadatkan cadangan pelaksanaan 'Teaching School' di maktab-maktab perguruan Malaysia).

2.0 LATAR BELAKANG

2.1 Mesyuarat Jawatan Kuasa Perancangan Pendidikan (JPP) Bil. 167, bertarikh 26 September 2002 telah mencadangkan supaya diwujudkan 'Teaching School' di bawah pengurusan setiap maktab perguruan yang boleh dijadikan wadah (showcase) negara untuk kemahiran pendidikan dalam semua aspek pengurusan sekolah dan bilik darjah.

2.2 Hasil kajian literatur menunjukkan bahawa banyak negara telahpun mengamalkan konsep 'Teaching School' ini.

2.2.1 Di negara-negara maju seperti Jerman dan Belgium, seseorang bakal guru perlu mengikuti program pengajian pendidikan untuk mendalami ilmu pedagogi di sekolah yang menjadi cawangan (*affiliated*) universiti.

2.2.2 Di Perancis, semua bakal guru perlu mengikuti program di bawah 'University Institutes for the Preparation of Teachers' yang berkejasama dengan sekolah-sekolah berdekatan.

2.2.3 Myanmar dan Thailand turut melaksanakan konsep 'Teaching School'. Burapha University, Kasetsart University dan Chulalongkorn University di Thailand misalnya, mempunyai pra-sekolah, sekolah rendah dan sekolah tinggi di bawah pengendalian fakulti pendidikan.

Rajabhat Institute Songkhro dan Rajabhat Institute Nakhon Si Thammarat di Selatan Thailand telah mempunyai 'demonstration school' di dalam kampus masing-masing.

2.2.4 Kepertuan kepada satu pendekatan baru untuk melatih guru seperti yang disarankan dalam laporan-laporan seperti The Carnegie Forum on Education and The Economy (1988), The Holmes Group (1988), The National Commission on Teaching & America's Future (1996) National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983) dan Goodlad (1980) telah membawa kepada perwujudan idea 'Teaching School' sebagai satu pendekatan untuk mencapai matlamat tersebut.

2.2.5 Di Amerika Syarikat, banyak program latihan peningkatan taraf pertama telah bergabung dengan sekolah-sekolah di kawasan masing-masing untuk membentuk Professional Development School yang berkonsepkan hospital universiti. Sekolah-sekolah yang bergabung ini akan menyediakan 'state-of-the-art practice' yang boleh membantu melatih baka guru dalam persekitaran sebenar di samping dapat meningkatkan perkembangan profesionalisme guru terlatih.

2.3 Di negara-negara yang telah melaksanakan 'Teaching School', jelas menunjukkan konsep ini boleh memberi pendedahan alam sebenar persekolahan kepada guru pelatih. Tenaga pengajar 'Teaching School' yang terdiri daripada guru sekolah terlatih dan pensyarah maktab boleh menyediakan suasana pengajaran pembelajaran yang kondusif dan berkesan.

- 2.4. Fungsional 'Teaching School' sama seperti hospital yang digunakan oleh universitas yang mempunyai fakulti perubatan untuk melatih bakal doktor perubatan dan ahli farmasi. Menurut Abdal-Haqq (1989) guru-guru yang mengikuti kursus perguruan akan mengikuti program 'residency' di mana-mana sekolah klinikal. Ini menyamai amalan doktor perubatan yang perlu mengikuti pengajaran klinikal di hospital universiti (Sadlak, 1987, Carnegie Corp., 1986).

3.0. ASAS PERTIMBANGAN

- 3.1. Teaching School mewujudkan kolaborasi sistem maktab perguruan dan sekolah secara terus. Nilai kerjasama dan muafakat dapat dijalinan antara pihak sekolah, maktab perguruan dan Jabatan Pendidikan Negeri. Matlamat ini boleh dicapai kerana:

- 3.1.1. Perbincangan mengenai masalah pengajaran dan pembelajaran murid dan penyelesaiannya.
3.1.2. Perkongsian pengajaran di bilik darjah antara guru sekolah, guru pelatih dan pensyarah maktab.
3.1.3. Penyelidikan secara kolaboratif terhadap masalah yang berkaitan amalan pendidikan.

- 3.2. Pelbagai impak yang positif boleh diperolehi menerusi pelaksanaan program ini, antaranya ialah:

- 3.2.1. Guru - Projek Teaching School dapat membantu dalam usaha meningkatkan kompetensi guru menerusi pelbagai aktiviti perkembangan profesionalisme. Pensyarah maktab perguruan yang mempunyai kepakaran dalam pelbagai ilmu pendidikan dapat berkongsi kepakaran dengan guru-guru sekolah, merancang aktiviti perkembangan staf bersama-sama guru dan berbincang secara bersama.

pendekatan terbaik untuk membantu pelaksanaan pengajaran pembelajaran dalam bilik darjah.

3.2.2 Murid – 'Teaching School' turut membawa pelbagai faedah kepada murid terutamanya dari aspek kemajuan akademik dan perkembangan sahsiah murid. Dalam bidang akademik, murid didedahkan kepada satu suasana pembelajaran yang mampu menggalakkan pembelajaran mereka. Kelebihan pembelajaran di 'Teaching School' ialah mereka diajar bukan sahaja oleh guru sekolah, tetapi juga oleh guru pelatih dan pensyarah maktab perguruan. Keahlian tenaga pengajar yang pelbagai ini dapat mendedahkan murid kepada variasi pendekatan pengajaran yang bukan rutin. Di samping itu juga kepakaran pensyarah boleh dipraktikkan dalam proses pengajaran pembelajaran bilik darjah untuk membantu pembelajaran berkesan murid-murid. Satu dimensi input yang turut berjaya menerusi pelaksanaan 'Teaching School' ialah pembentukan sahsiah kepimpinan dalam diri murid. Pembentukan sifat kepimpinan pada murid turut terbentuk menerusi persekitaran yang membina seperti:

- i) penyesuaian terhadap perubahan – murid didedahkan kepada perubahan dalam pendekatan pembelajaran di sekolah yang melibatkan guru pelatih dan pensyarah maktab. Pada peringkat awal lagi, murid didedahkan kepada keadaan dan persekitaran pembelajaran yang baru, yang agak berbeza dengan persekitaran pembelajaran yang konvensional. Ini akan memupuk sahsiah awal murid untuk bersedia dan boleh menyesuaikan diri kepada perubahan. Kemampuan untuk beradaptasi dan menyesuaikan diri dengan perubahan merupakan elemen penting dalam kepimpinan.

ii) Kolaborasi yang terjalin di antara sekolah dan maktab dalam 'Teaching school' dapat memberi contoh yang signifikan kepada murid terutamanya dalam pemupukan nilai-nilai murni. Amalan bekerjasama, bahu-membahu dan 'partnership' yang ditahirkan melalui teaching school memberi contoh terbaik kepada murid untuk menerapkan nilai tersebut dalam penyuburan diri mereka. Kepenbebaran yang menekankan elemen kolaborasi telah dikenapasi penting dalam mamupuk budaya kepimpinan murid.

iii) Keperibegian aktiviti di maktab baik aktiviti kurikulum mahupun aktiviti ko-kurikulum memberi peluang yang luas kepada penglibatan aktif murid dalam aktiviti maktab. Peluang sebegini mampu meningkatkan keupatimpinan minda, emosi dan fizikal murid yang merupakan seel penting untuk melahirkan pemimpin cemerlang.

iv) Penekanan kepada aspek-aspek pembentukan sansish kepimpinan menerusi aktiviti-aktiviti seperti 'Public Speaking', 'Team-building', 'Team-Expectation', 'National Integration' dan 'Peer-pressure' yang berasaskan kurikulum dan ko-kurikulum kebangsaan. Aktiviti-aktiviti ini bukan sahaja menjadi aktiviti dalam bilik darjah tetapi cuba diterapkan dalam diri murid-murid agar menjadi sebahagian daripada budaya dalam 'Teaching School'.



3.2.3 Pensyarah - Teaching school dapat mengukuhkan kemahiran pensyarah terutamanya dalam pengaplikasian teori-teori ilmu pendidikan dalam situasi sebenar bilik darjah. Pendekatan begini bukan sahaja memberi ruang kepada pensyarah untuk mempraktikkan segala pengetahuan dan kemahiran yang selama ini hanya disampaikan dalam kuliah kepada guru pelatih tetapi pada masa yang sama pensyarah dapat membiasakan diri dengan keadaan semasa di bilik darjah, menyedari akan keperluan-keperluan terkini dalam proses pengajaran pembelajaran bilik darjah dan mengevaluasi perubahan-perubahan yang memerlukan penyesuaian dari aspek pedagogi dan psikologi pendidikan. Kesedaran ini akan membantu pensyarah untuk sentiasa memajukan diri agar tetap pengetahuan dan kemahirannya sejajar dengan keperluan semasa di bilik darjah.

3.2.4 Guru Pelatih - Pendekatan baru ini memberi latihan pengajaran yang sebenar kepada bakal-bakal guru. Guru pelatih bukan sahaja dapat menjadikan Teaching School sebagai premis untuk menjalani praktikum tetapi juga dapat mengadakan mikro-teaching dalam suasana pengajaran pembelajaran yang sebenar. Di samping itu juga, guru pelatih dapat membuat pemerhatian dan penyelidikan tentang proses pengajaran-pembelajaran bilik darjah di Teaching School dan cuba mengaitkannya dengan teori-teori yang dipelajari semasa kuliah. Di samping itu juga, guru-guru pelatih dapat mempraktikkan pelbagai amalan pedagogi yang dipelajari semasa kuliah dalam situasi pengajaran-pembelajaran di bilik darjah Teaching School.

3.3 Teaching School mencadangkan satu bentuk hubungan baru antara penyelidikan dan amali dan menjadi *institutional base of authority* kepada profesion perguruan (Abdul-Razq, 1989) dan

menyediakan sokongan institusional untuk keperluan profesional (Levine, 1988).

4.0 CADANGAN

Berikut ialah cadangan pelaksanaan 'Teaching School' di maktab-maktab perguruan Malaysia:

4.1 Ada 2 kaedah bagaimana pelaksanaan 'Teaching School' dapat dilakukan oleh maktab perguruan. Dalam kaedah 1, maktab-maktab perguruan yang mempunyai kawasan akan membina sebuah kompleks sekolah rendah 'Teaching School' dalam kawasan maktab. Manakala bagi maktab-maktab yang tidak mempunyai kawasan, konsep 'Teaching School' masih boleh dijalankan dengan mengambil kaedah 2 iaitu menjadikan sebuah sekolah yang berdekatan dengan maktab sebagai 'Teaching School'.

4.2 Bagi maktab-maktab yang memiliki kaedah 1, iaitu membina kompleks 'Teaching School' dalam kawasan maktab, sebuah kompleks sekolah rendah akan dibangunkan dan diadabir oleh maktab perguruan sepenuhnya. Pelajar sekolah rendah daripada pelbagai latar belakang seperti sekolah harian lain, persekitaran ini akan memberikan peluang kepada aktiviti klinikal yang melibatkan guru-guru pelatih dan maktab perguruan untuk mempelajari keadaan sebenar situasi sesebuah bilik darjah. Kemudahan sidang video atau TV litar tertutup akan diadakan antara bilik kuliah dengan bilik darjah di sekolah bagi membolehkan proses pengajaran dan pembelajaran yang berlaku di bilik darjah dapat diceritakan terus ke bilik kuliah untuk tujuan pengajaran dan pembelajaran.

4.3 Mewujudkan perjawatan guru bawasah yang akan mengajar di 'Teaching School'. Guru tetap akan menjalankan aktiviti pengajaran dan pembelajaran di bilik darjah mengikut jadual waktu yang dirancang. Mereka akan dibantu oleh beberapa orang

pensyarah DG41, DG44 dan DG48 dan pelbagai Jabatan di maktab perguruan. Pembahagian masa antara tugas di maktab dengan sekolah akan ditentukan oleh maktab. Perjawatan guru dan staf sokongan 'Teaching School' adalah di bawah pentadbiran maktab perguruan.

- 4.4 Mewujudkan sub-unit 'Teaching School' di bawah unit Kurikulum di Bahagian Pendidikan Guru bagi menyelaraskan aktiviti 'Teaching School'.
- 4.5 Pelajar pra-sekolah di maktab-maktab perguruan adalah "tepat" kepada pelajar tahun 1 sekolah ini.
- 4.6 "Teaching School" akan ditadbir oleh sebuah unit Teaching School yang akan diubuhkan di Jabatan Ilmu Pendidikan Maktab yang akan diketuai oleh seorang Pensyarah Kanan (DG48).

4.7 Jisual waktu 'Teaching School' sama seperti sekolah-sekolah lain. 'Teaching School' akan menggunakan kurikulum dan kokurikulum kebangsaan yang diguna pakai di sekolah biasa. Namun demikian terdapat nilai tambah pada kurikulum ini yang akan memuatkan unsur-unsur patriotisme dan kepimpinan. Aspek kepimpinan negara bangsa Malaysia menjadi agenda penting dalam sekolah ini bagi membentuk murid ke arah menjadi pemimpin yang dinamik dan berpandangan jauh serta memahami kehendak masyarakat pelbagai kaum dan budaya di Malaysia.

- 4.8 Cuti persekolahan akan diselaraskan dengan cuti maktab, namun jumlah hari persekolahan adalah mengikut ketetapan oleh Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia.

5.0 IMPLIKASI

5.1 Perjawatan

Dari segi perjawatan, penentuan perjawatan guru sekolah rendah (siswazah) perlu diwujudkan di bawah pengurusan maktab-maktab perguruan mulai tahun 2005 hingga 2010.

5.2 Infrestruktur

Sebuah kompleks bangunan sekolah yang lengkap mempunyai 24 buah bilik darjah yang lengkap dengan bilik Guru Besar, tandas, bilik pejabat guru, makmal Sains, makmal Kemahiran Hidup, makmal Komputer, kantin, stor peralatan sukan dan ruang pertunjukan perlu dibina mulai tahun 2005 untuk menampung keperluan murid-murid yang makin bertambah dari setahun ke setahun mulai tahun 2005 sehingga tahun 2010. Anggaran kos untuk 16 buah sekolah yang lengkap adalah RM128 juta (Anggaran RM8 juta bagi sebuah sekolah yang mengandungi 24 buah bilik darjah).

5.3 Kos

Peruntukan kewangan untuk pengurusan sekolah seperti gaji guru dan belanjawan mengurus yang lain perlu diperuntukkan kepada BPG untuk disalurkan kepada maktab perguruan.

5.4 Pentadbiran dan Pengurusan

Skim pinjaman buku teks dan peruntukan AMP (Amalan Makenan dan Pemakanan) yang diperolehi dari JPN perlu disalurkan ke sekolah ini melalui maktab-maktab perguruan.

5.5 SYOR

Majlis dengan segala hormatnya dipohon untuk memberi pertimbangan dan kelulusan (terhadap cadangan pelaksanaan Teaching School di maktab-maktab perguruan Malaysia).

Disediakan oleh:
Unit Dasar, Perancangan dan Pembangunan
Bahagian Pendidikan Guru