

**DIALOGIC ORIENTED
SHARED BOOK READING PRACTICES
FOR IMMIGRANT CHILDREN
IN GERMAN KINDERGARTENS**

Maria Teodora Ping

DISSERTATION.COM



Boca Raton

*Dialogic Oriented Shared Book Reading Practices for Immigrant Children
in German Kindergartens*

Copyright © 2011 Maria Teodora Ping

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without written permission from the publisher.

Dissertation.com
Boca Raton, Florida
USA • 2012

ISBN-10: 1-61233-786-4
ISBN-13: 978-1-61233-786-9

Layout by Briyan B. Hendro K (brianos.daportfolio.com)

Cover photo @Cutcaster.com/Matt Antonino

Dialogic Oriented Shared Book Reading Practices for Immigrant Children in German Kindergartens

An Updated Version of a Doctoral Dissertation

By:

Maria Teodora Ping

Research School "Education and Capabilities"

Faculty of Educational Sciences and Sociology

(Fakultät 12 Erziehungswissenschaft und Soziologie)

Technische Universität Dortmund

Defended Successfully in Dortmund, Germany, in October 2011

Supervised by:

Prof. Dr. Lilian Fried

Prof. Dr. Uta Quasthoff

Reviewed and Examined By:

Prof. Dr. Uwe Uhlendorff

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Deductive Content Analysis Procedures	60
Figure 2. Inductive Content Analysis Procedures	61
Figure 3. Content Analysis Process in the Current Study	63
Figure 4. Crosstabulation of Selected Coded Educators' Strategies	94
Figure 5. The Chi Square Test Result of Coded Educators' Strategies	94
Figure 6. Crosstabulation of Selected Children's Responses	106
Figure 7. The Chi Square Test Results of Selected Children's Responses	106
Figure 8. Crosstabulation of Selected Children's Self- Initiations	108
Figure 9. The Chi Square Test Results of Selected Self- Initiations	108
Figure 10. Correlation Measurement in Case 1	120
Figure 11. Correlation Measurement in Case 2	122
Figure 12. Correlation Measurement in Case 3	123
Figure 13. Correlation Measurement in Case 5	125
Figure 14. The Chi Square Test for Variance for Overall Educators' Cognitive Input and Demand Levels	127
Figure 16. Correlation Measurement between Educator's and Children's Cognitive Levels in Case 1	141
Figure 17. Correlation Measurement between Educator's and Children's Cognitive Levels in Case 2	142
Figure 18. Correlation Measurement between Educator's and Children's Cognitive Levels in Case 3	144
Figure 19. Correlation Measurement between Educator's and Children's Cognitive Levels in Case 4	145
Figure 20. Correlation Measurement between Educator's and Children's Cognitive Levels in Case 5	147

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Demographic Information of the Participating Kindergartens	69
Table 2. Demographic Information of the Participating Educators	70
Table 3. Demographic Information of the Participating Children	71
Table 4. The Cohen Kappa's Measurement for the Intercoder Reliability of Educators' Strategies Categories	77
Table 5. The Cohen Kappa's Measurement for Intercoder Reliability of Children Behaviours Categories	77
Table 6. Frequencies and Percentages of Overall Educator's Strategies in Case 1	96
Table 7. Frequencies and Percentages of Overall Educator's Strategies in Case 2	98
Table 8. Frequencies and Percentages of Overall Educator's Strategies in Case 3	100
Table 9. Frequencies and Percentages of Overall Educator's Strategies in Case 4	101
Table 10. Frequencies and Percentages of Overall Educator's Strategies in Case 5	103
Table 11. Overall Coded Children Behaviours in Case 1	112
Table 12. Overall Coded Behaviours in Case 2	113
Table 13. Overall Coded Children's Behaviours in Case 3	115
Table 14. Overall Coded Children's Behaviours in Case 4	117
Table 15. Overall Coded Children's Behaviours in Case 5	118
Table 16. Educator's cognitive input and demand level in Case 1	128
Table 17. Educator's cognitive input and demand level in Case 2	129
Table 18. Educator's cognitive input and demand level in Case 3	130
Table 19. Educator's cognitive input and demand level in Case 4	131
Table 20. Educator's cognitive input and demand level in Case 5	132
Table 21. Overall Coded Cognitive Level of Children's Responses	133
Figure 15. The Chi Square Test for Overall Coded Cognitive Level of Children's Responses	134
Table 22. Cognitive Levels of Children's Responses in Case 1	136
Table 23. Cognitive Levels of Children's Responses in Case 2	137
Table 24. Cognitive Levels of Children's Responses in Case 3	138
Table 25. Cognitive Levels of Children's Responses in Case 4	139
Table 26. Cognitive Levels of Children's Responses in Case 5	140

LIST OF CHARTS

Chart 1. The Overall Coded Educators' Strategies	95
Chart 2. Overall Educator's Strategies in Case 1	97
Chart 3. Overall Educator's strategies in Case 2	98
Chart 4. Overall Educator's Strategies in Case 3	100
Chart 5. Overall Educator's Strategies in Case 4	102
Chart 6. Overall Educator's Strategies in Case 5	104
Chart 7. Overall Coded Children's Behaviours	105
Chart 8. Overall Coded Children's Responses	107
Chart 9. Overall Coded Children's Self- Initiations	109
Chart 10. Children's Communicating Behaviours	110
Chart 11. Children's behaviours in Case 1	112
Chart 12. Children Behaviours in Case 2	114
Chart 13. Children behaviours in Case 3	116
Chart 14. Children's behaviours in Case 4	117
Chart 15. Children's behaviours in Case 5	119
Chart 16. The correlated educator's strategies and children's responses in Case 1 (Bar chart)	121
Chart 17. The correlated educator's strategies and children's responses in Case 1	121
Chart 18. The correlated educator's strategies and children's responses in Case 2 (Bar chart)	122
Chart 19. The correlated educator's strategies and children's responses in Case 2	123
Chart 20. The correlated educator's strategies and children's responses in Case 3 (Bar chart)	124
Chart 21. The correlated educator's strategies and children's responses in Case 3	124
Chart 22. The correlated educator's strategies and children's responses in Case 5 (Bar chart)	126
Chart 23. The correlated educator's strategies and children's responses in Case 5	126
Chart 24. Overall Educators' Cognitive Input and Demand Levels	128
Chart 25. Educator's cognitive input and demand level in Case 1	129
Chart 26. Educator's cognitive input and demand level in Case 2	130
Chart 28. Educator's cognitive input and demand level in Case 4	132
Chart 29. Educator's cognitive input and demand level in Case 5	133
Chart 30. Overall Coded Cognitive Level of Children's Responses	134
Chart 31. Overall Coded Cognitive Level of Children's Responses	135
Chart 32. Overall Coded Cognitive Level of Children's Responses	135
Chart 33. Cognitive Levels of Children's Responses in Case 1	136
Chart 34. Cognitive Levels of Children's Responses in Case 2	137
Chart 35. Cognitive Levels of Children's Responses in Case 3	138

Chart 36. Cognitive Levels of Children's Responses in Case 4	139
Chart 37. Cognitive Levels of Children's Responses in Case 5	140
Chart 38. Educator's and Children's Cognitive Levels in Case 1	141
Chart 39. Educator's and Children's Cognitive Levels in Case 1	142
Chart 40. Educator's and Children's Cognitive Levels in Case 2	143
Chart 41. Educator's and Children's Cognitive Levels in Case 2	143
Chart 42. Educator's and Children's Cognitive Levels in Case 3	144
Chart 43. Educator's and Children's Cognitive Levels in Case 3	145
Chart 44. Educator's and Children's Cognitive Levels in Case 4	146
Chart 45. Educator's and Children's Cognitive Levels in Case 4	146
Chart 46. Educator's and Children's Cognitive Levels in Case 5	147
Chart 47. Educator's and Children's Cognitive Levels in Case 5	148

LIST OF PICTURES

Picture 1. The Cover of the Picture Book " <i>Der kleine Esel und sein Geschenk für Jaki</i> "	73
Picture 2. The Book Content	73
Picture 3. E-LAN Programme	75
Pictures 4 Children's Communicationg Behaviours	110
Pictures 5 Children's Communicationg Behaviours	110

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dedication Page	14
Preface	15
List of Figure	4
List of Tables	5
List of Charts	6
List of Pictures	7
Chapters:	
Chapter One: Introduction	17
I.1. The Importance of Early Childhood Education and Care	18
I.2. Early Childhood Education and Care in Germany	18
Chapter Two: Literature Review	25
II.1. Language Promotion Programs in Kindergartens	26
II.2. Adult-Child Book Reading Practices	37
II.2.1. Impacts and Benefits of Adult-Child Book Reading Practices	37
II.2.2. The Types of Adult-Child Book Reading Practices	38
II.3. Adult-Child Book Reading Practice Assessment	40
II.3.1. Nature of Book Reading Event	40
II.3.2. Interaction in Book Reading	41
II.3.3. Adult's Strategies	43
II.3.4. Children's Participation	47
II.4. Other Aspects of Adult-Child Book Reading Practices	48
II.5. Gaps from the Existing Studies	49
II.6. Framework of the Current Study	51
Chapter Three: Research Methodology and Procedures	55
III.1. Aims	56
III.2. Research Methodology	56
III.3. Instruments	64
III.4. Research Participants	68
III.4.1. Participating Kindergartens and Educators (<i>ErzieherInnen</i>)	68

III.4.2. Participating Children and Families	70
III.5. Data Collection Procedures	71
III.5.1. General Procedures	71
III.5.2. Picture Book	72
III.5.3. Videotaping Situation and Transcription Process of the Videotaped Data	74
III.6. Coding Development Procedures and Coding System	75
Chapter Four: Findings Presentation	81
IV.1. Overall Profiles of the Observed Shared Book Reading Sessions	82
IV.1.1. Case 1	82
IV.1.2. Case 2	83
IV.1.3. Case 3	83
IV.1.4. Case 4	84
IV.1.5. Case 5	84
IV.2. Interaction Forms Observed during the Book Reading Sessions	84
IV.2.1. One-to One Educator- Child Interaction	84
IV.2.2. Peer Interaction	87
IV.2.3. Group Interaction	89
IV.3. Overall Observed and Coded Educators' Strategies	93
IV.3.1. Case 1	95
IV.3.2. Case 2	97
IV.3.3. Case 3	99
IV.3.4. Case 4	101
IV.3.5. Case 5	102
IV.4. Overall Observed and Coded Children's Behaviours	104
IV.4.1. Case 1	111
IV.4.2. Case 2	113
IV.4.3. Case 3	114
IV.4.4. Case 4	116
IV.4.5. Case 5	118
IV.5. Correlation between Educators' Strategies and Children's Responses	119
IV.5.1. Correlation Measurement in Case 1	120
IV.5.2. Correlation Measurement in Case 2	122
IV.5.3. Correlation Measurement in Case 3	123
IV.5.4. Correlation Measurement in Case 4	125
IV.5.5. Correlation Measurement in Case 5	125

IV.6. Cognitive Levels of Educators' Strategies	127
IV.6.1. Educator's Cognitive Input and Demand Level in Case 1	128
IV.6.2. Educator's Cognitive Input and Demand Level in Case 2	129
IV.6.3. Educator's Cognitive Input and Demand Level in Case 3	130
IV.6.4. Educator's Cognitive Input and Demand Level in Case 4	131
IV.6.5. Educator's Cognitive Input and Demand Level in Case 5	132
IV.7. Cognitive Level of Children's Responses	133
IV.7.1. Cognitive Levels of Children's Responses in Case 1	136
IV.7.2. Cognitive Levels of Children's Responses in Case 2	136
IV.7.3. Cognitive Levels of Children's Responses in Case 3	137
IV.7.4. Cognitive Levels of Children's Responses in Case 4	138
IV.7.5. Cognitive Levels of Children's Responses in Case 5	139
IV.8. Correlation between Educator's and Children's Cognitive Levels	140
IV.8.1. Correlation of Cognitive Levels in Case 1	141
IV.8.2. Correlation of Cognitive Levels in Case 2	142
IV.8.3. Correlation of Cognitive Levels in Case 3	144
IV.8.4. Correlation of Cognitive Levels in Case 4	145
IV.8.5. Correlation of Cognitive Levels in Case 5	147
Chapter Five: Interpretations and Discussions	151
V.1. Overall Profiles of the Videotaped Shared Book Reading Sessions	152
V.2. Educators' Strategies	153
V.2.1. Educator's Strategies in Case 1	155
V.2.1.1. Instructional Strategies	155
V.2.1.2. Personal and Management Strategies	162
V.2.2. Educator's Strategies in Case 2	165
V.2.2.1. Instructional Strategies	165
V.2.2.2. Personal and Management Strategies	172
V.2.3. Educator's Strategies in Case 3	174
V.2.3.1. Instructional Strategies	174
V.2.3.2. Personal and Management Strategies	181
V.2.4. Educator's Strategies in Case 4	185
V.2.4.1. Instructional Strategies	185
V.2.4.2. Personal and Management Strategies	187
V.2.5. Educator's Strategies in Case 5	189
V.2.5.1. Instructional Strategies	189

V.2.5.2. Personal and Management Strategies	195
V.3. Children's Behaviours	199
V.3.1. Children's Behaviours in Case 1	200
V.3.1.1. Children's Responses	201
V.3.1.2. Children's Self- Initiations	204
V.3.2. Children's Behaviours in Case 2	207
V.3.2.1. Children's Responses	207
V.3.2.2. Children's Self- Initiations	211
V.3.3. Children's Behaviours in Case 3	213
V.3.3.1. Children's Responses	213
V.3.3.2. Children's Self- Initiations	217
V.3.4. Children's Behaviours in Case 4	218
V.3.5. Children's Behaviours in Case 5	221
V.3.5.1. Children's Responses	221
V.3.5.2. Children's Self- Initiations	225
V.4. Correlation and Congruence between Strategies and Responses	227
V.4.1. Naming and Labelling	228
V.4.2. Picture Description	233
V.4.3. Text- Reader Connect	236
V.4.4. Text Prediction	240
IV.4.5. General Knowledge	243
Chapter Six: Conclusion	251
VI.1. Conclusions of the Study	252
VI.2. Discussion referring to Previous Studies	256
VI.3. Discussion Referring to Early Childhood Education and Care in Germany	260
VI.4. Limitations of the Study	262
VI.5. Recommendations for Further Studies	263
Appendices	279
Appendix 1 Consent from the Participating Children's Parents	280
Appendix 2 Consent from the Participating Kindergartens and Educators	282
Appendix 3 Demographic Questionnaire for Children and Families	284
Appendix 4 Demographic Questionnaire for Kindergartens and Educators	288
Appendix 5 Coding of Maternal Utterances	294
Appendix 6 Nature of Book Reading Even	295

Appendix 7 Adult- Child Interactive Reading Inventory	296
Appendix 8 Codebook for Educators' Strategies	297
Appendix 9 Codebook for Children's Behaviours	301
Appendix 10 Sample of Coding Educators' Strategies	304
Appendix 11 Sample of Coding Children's Behaviours	305
Appendix 12 Overall Coded Educators' Strategies	306
Appendix 13 Frequencies and Percentages of Strategies Categories in Case 1	307
Appendix 14 Frequencies and Percentages of Instructional Strategies Functions in Case 1	308
Appendix 15 Frequencies and Percentages of Naming and Labelling Strategies in Case 1	309
Appendix 16 Frequencies and Percentages of Confirmation Strategies in Case 1	310
Appendix 17 Frequencies and Percentages of Questioning Strategies in Case 1	311
Appendix 18 Frequencies and Percentages of Correction Strategies in Case 1	312
Appendix 19 Frequencies and Percentages of Personal and Management Strategies in Case 1	313
Appendix 20 Frequencies and Percentages of Management Style Types in Case 1	314
Appendix 21 Frequencies and Percentages of Strategies Categories in Case 2	315
Appendix 22 Frequencies and Percentages of Instructional Strategies Functions in Case 2	316
Appendix 23 Frequencies and Percentages of Naming and Labelling Strategies in Case 2	317
Appendix 24 Frequencies and Percentages of Confirmation Strategies in Case 2	318
Appendix 25 Frequencies and Percentages of Questioning Strategies in Case 2	319
Appendix 26 Frequencies and Percentages of Correction Strategies in Case 2	320
Appendix 27 Frequencies and Percentages of Personal and Management Strategies in Case 2	321
Appendix 28 Frequencies and Percentages of Management Style Types in Case 2	322
Appendix 29 Frequencies and Percentages of Strategies Categories in Case 3	323
Appendix 30 Frequencies and Percentages of Instructional Strategies Functions in Case 3	324
Appendix 31 Frequencies and Percentages of Naming and Labelling Strategies in Case 3	325
Appendix 32 Frequencies and Percentages of Confirmation Strategies in Case 3	326
Appendix 33 Frequencies and Percentages of Questioning Strategies in Case 3	327
Appendix 34 Frequencies and Percentages of Correction Strategies in Case 3	328
Appendix 35 Frequencies and Percentages of Personal and Management Strategies in Case 3	329
Appendix 36 Frequencies and Percentages of Management Style Types in Case 3	330
Appendix 37 Frequencies and Percentages of Strategies Categories in Case 4	331
Appendix 38 Frequencies and Percentages of Instructional Strategies Functions in Case 4	332
Appendix 39 Frequencies and Percentages of Confirmation Strategies in Case 4	333
Appendix 40 Frequencies and Percentages of Questioning Strategies in Case 4	334
Appendix 41 Frequencies and Percentages of Personal and Management Strategies in Case 4	335
Appendix 42 Frequencies and Percentages of Management Style Types in Case 4	336

Appendix 43 Frequencies and Percentages of Strategies Categories in Case 5	337
Appendix 44 Frequencies and Percentages of Instructional Strategies Functions in Case 5	338
Appendix 45 Frequencies and Percentages of Naming and Labelling Strategies in Case 5	339
Appendix 46 Frequencies and Percentages of Confirmation Strategies in Case 5	340
Appendix 47 Frequencies and Percentages of Questioning Strategies in Case 5	341
Appendix 48 Frequencies and Percentages of Correction Strategies in Case 5	342
Appendix 49 Frequencies and Percentages of Personal and Management Strategies in Case 5	343
Appendix 50 Frequencies and Percentages of Management Style Types in Case 5	344
Appendix 51 Overall Coded Children's Behaviours	345
Vita	346

*It's good to have an end to a journey toward; but it is the journey that matters,
in the end- Ernest Hemingway*

For my beloved family in Samarinda

PREFACE

Shared book reading has been a common daily activity in German kindergartens. Unfortunately, it has not been so much of a particular research focus to be explored. So far, one mostly quoted study which discussed shared book reading in the German context is the study conducted by Wieler (1997). While, in the international context, there have been quite a number of notable studies which indicated that book reading influenced the outcome measures in preschool children's language growth, emergent literacy and reading achievement (cf. Bus et al, 1995; Hargrave and Sénéchal, 2000; De Temple & Snow, 2003). Therefore, this case study was conducted to fill this particular research gap.

The findings of this study revealed how practices of dialogic oriented shared book reading might look like in German kindergartens. Furthermore, the findings described the dialogic oriented shared book reading strategies the early childhood educators working in the German kindergartens might have been able to employ. In addition, how they employed the strategies were especially discussed. The findings also showed how children who were still acquiring a second language could participate when given the dialogic or interactive reading situation. Thus, these findings are expected to give theoretical and methodological contributions to the existing studies concerning adult-child shared book reading as well as to practically support the improvement of language promotion programs in Germany. Nevertheless, due to the limitation of the study, some recommendations for further study are also made, especially related to such issues as research design and generalizability of the results.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1. The Importance of Early Childhood Education and Care

Early childhood education and care has been conceived as crucial for children's development as indicated by the results of a number of various studies in the field (McCartney, 1984; Phillips et al, 1987; McCartney & Jordan, 1990; Barnett, 1995). These studies revealed important findings which addressed relevant issues such as quality of care and amount and timing of care (Lazar et al, 1982; McCartney & Jordan, 1990; Schweinhart et al, 1993; Barnett, 1995; Reynolds, 2000; Lamb & Ahnert, 2006; Mashburn & Pianta, 2007; Burger, 2010). Higher quality child care was found to give both short-term and long-term impacts to children's cognitive and social development (cf. Phillips et al, 1987; McCartney & Jordan, 1990; Barnett, 1995; Cleveland et al, 2007). The short-term effects were defined as the ones obtained within a year or two after children exit an early childhood education and care program whereas the long-term effects were the ones obtained in latter stages of education that the children went through, for instance high school (cf. Barnett, 1995). The short-term effect of early childhood education and care on children's cognitive development could take a form of the immediate "boosts" of IQ points. While, the long-term effect would relate to school achievement, grade retention, placement in special education as well as social adjustment (Barnett, 1995).

Furthermore, these short and long-term effects were especially significant for children with disadvantaged background, i.e. from impoverished homes, at-risk or with migration background (cf. Barnett, 1995; Stegelin, 2004; Fried & Voss, 2010). On the other hand, children from highest income families got negative effects. Moreover, children from highly supportive home environments did not seem to profit much. They even had lower cognitive and social development progress when being cared outside their homes compared with children whose home environments were poor. This might indicate that the quality of care in children's early year, instead of merely the income of the parents, would be the key to the difference (Barnett, 1995). In addition to that, "teacher-child interaction" was also considered as one of the indicators of this high quality process in the early childhood education and care practices (cf. Hamre & Pianta, 2001; Sylva et al, 2004; La Paro et al, 2004; Pianta, 2005 and Pianta, 2007).

1.2. Early Childhood Education and Care in Germany

In some countries, such as Germany, children with disadvantaged background such as the ones with migration backgrounds have become an emphasis in the education reform be-

cause their participations and achievements at schools are regarded as lower than their native German speaking peers (Autorengruppe Bildungsberichterstattung, 2010). After the publication of PISA 2000 results that have brought presumed problems of inequality in German education to surface, a reform in the education system was initiated starting from early childhood education level. Laubeová (2006) mentioned that the problem of inequality was obviously not concerning “the quantitative participation at education, but the quality of their promotion”. In other words, the statistical distribution of children or students with migration backgrounds in the German schools might not be the main problem. Furthermore, Bos et al (Bildungsberichterstattung Ruhr, not yet published, 2011) implied that somehow the statistical numbers of immigrant children enrolled in kindergartens could not really indicate whether they were according to the proportions in the population.

Therefore, if the core problem was not the matter of statistical number of participation in the early childhood education and care services, the actual problem would be on the kinds of educational programs that children obtain. For many, it is not a surprising fact that a big number of children or students with migration backgrounds go to the lowest tracks of secondary education, which later on will affect their possibilities of future academic and professional career. This over-representing number has been claimed to be caused by the children’s lack of language mastery, i.e. German. Leubová (2006) argued again that this frequent claim stating that the lack of language mastery was caused by the non-attendance of immigrant children in the early childhood education and care institutions is not fully proven to be true. She further continued by saying that the attendance rate of immigrant children in kindergartens was only slightly lower than the native German speaking children. This implicitly suggested that there could be a problem in the quality of the programs provided in the educational institutions, in this case kindergartens, themselves.

Consequently, one of the implications of the reform in the level of early childhood education in Germany is in forms of a variety of language promotion programs targeting immigrant children, which are offered in institutions such as in kindergartens (Jampert et al, 2007). The language promotion programs to promote language competencies of children are in the first place regarded as important based on the underlying idea that language is “a key competence” for equal opportunity of children’s educational career as well as future life (Jampert et al, 2007). In addition, it is also widely believed that there is a “strong inter-relation between reading and language abilities” (Bowey, 2005, Gasteiger-Klicpera et al., 2009). Language development, including vocabulary and grammatical development have been found to be able to predict later reading achievement of the so-called “normally developing” children (Bowey, 2005).

Furthermore, in a more general and broader sense, language itself is one of the impor-

tant central capabilities marking one's life (Nussbaum, 2003). Accordingly, it is claimed by Vygotsky (1978) as 'a critical bridge between the socio-cultural world and individual mental functioning'. Moreover, the acquisition and development of language is also considered as the most significant milestone in children's cognitive development (Berk & Winsler, 1995). A child language delay is therefore believed to lead to isolation and withdrawal as well as to learning difficulties and poor academic performance. In other words, if children have difficulties related to their language development, most probably they will have difficulties in learning in general. Moreover, in the case of children who have to master more than one language, for instance the immigrant children in Germany, it often happens that they face great difficulties and confusion in developing the mastery of the languages. Sometimes the difficulties and confusion result in a risk of losing the ability in one of the languages they have learned (Wong- Fillmore, 1991). This will certainly have an impact on their future academic and social life unless there is a help from their caregivers, who are parents and educators, since **children acquire language – both first and second language- through interactions** (Birner, 2008).

Children's language acquisition, especially second language acquisition, has been so far an interest of many researchers (McLaughlin, 1984; Levy, 1985). However, there have been as well different points of views with regards to basic underlying hypotheses, such as whether or not there are differences in first and second language acquisition processes or whether the differences related to "substantive changes in human mind" (Sopata, 2010). Moreover, there are also at least two distinctive types of childhood bilingualism commonly recognized, namely "simultaneous" and successive (consecutive) bilingual acquisition (McLaughlin, 1978). Simultaneous bilingual acquisition happens when a child learns two different languages from his or her very early ages, i.e. up to three years old according to McLaughlin (1978). Meanwhile, successive (consecutive) acquisition occurs when a child learns the second language at a later stage in his or her childhood.

In the context of children acquiring German as a second language, the different stances also existed. Thoma & Tracy (2006) noted from their empirical research results that children's second language acquisition could be a similar type to the first language. The results of their study showed that children at the age of three to four who learned German as their second language at the first time might already develop the most important *morphosyntactic properties* (e.g. syntactic construction, subject-verb agreement) within half a year, just like their native German speaking peer. They claimed that the results were in line with the results of some other studies conducted by researchers such as Rothweiler (2006) and Kroffke & Rothweiler (2006, as cited in Thoma & Tracy, 2006).

They further argued that such aspects as the cases and gender paradigms, the articles,

classes of words, prepositions and irregular verbs were important to promote. Moreover, the vocabulary of the children acquiring German as a Second Language, as indicated in their study was still behind the lexical repertoire that the native German speaking children could already actively develop at the same age. Nevertheless, overall Thoma & Tracy (2006) concluded that the children aged three to four acquiring German as a Second Language showed to some extent similar characteristics as their native German speaking counterparts and they could do it relatively quickly and easily given the right support.

On the other hand, Sopata (2010) in her study argued otherwise. She studied the acquisition of verb placement in German as a Second Language of children aged three to four years. Her study results revealed that the children acquired their second language in a different type from the first language acquisition, which was contrary to the results found by Thoma & Tracy (2006) as described above. In addition, the results of her study specifically showed that children's acquisition of second language inflectional morphology differed from the first language acquisition. Concerning the syntax domain, the children's acquisition seemed to be "a variant of second language acquisition" (Sopata, 2010). None of these results seemed to support the results of Thoma & Tracy's (2006) mentioned earlier.

Regardless of these various stances, there are still some other relevant considerations that should be kept in mind concerning bilingual children acquiring a second language, such as those from Hakuta & Diaz (1985) who stated that there would be a possibility that bilingual children develop an early capacity to focus on and analyze the structural properties of language. Furthermore, bilingual experience could also be helpful in developing an early awareness of language (Levy, 1985; Clyne, 1987). Thus, going back to the core matter discussed previously, the initiative of the German government to promote language mastery starting should be considered as a necessary step. Moreover, Gasteiger-Klicpera et al (2009) suggested that language promotion programs should begin as early as possible and be tailored to the needs appropriate to the participating children's initial abilities. They also hinted from one of their empirical study results that children speaking more than one language were found better at applying phonological working memory. In addition to that, Tracy (2008) underlined several common phenomena regarding children's acquisition of German as a Second Language. In her previous study, Tracy (2008) noticed that children got acquainted with problems related to the use of several aspects in sentence production, namely: 1). verbs (e.g. V2, V2 finite, focus particle phrase and irregular verbs); 2). case and genus; 3). articles; 4). prepositions of place, and 5). plural forms. Taking these facts into account, the focus of the language promotion programs in German kindergartens should be given addressing these conditions and needs.

However, another problem has emerged concerning the readiness of the whole com-

ponents of the early childhood education system in Germany itself in dealing with the change. In Germany, the early childhood education and care has had its long tradition of being focusing on social pedagogy which advocates that education and child upbringing are intertwined. In the so-called “Early Childhood Education and Care” (ECEC) system in Germany, the concept of education has been aimed at developing abilities which will enable children to learn, to develop their achievement potential to act, solve problems as well as to form relationships (cf. *Bundesjugendkuratorium et al., 2002* in Leu & Schelle, 2009). Thus, education in an ECEC institution has not been really defined as a school-oriented approach (cf. Leu & Schelle, 2009). The educators serving at these institutions have been therefore regarded not as teachers, just like their counterparts in primary education or secondary education. Moreover, they have been called “educators” (German: *Erzieherin/ Erzieherinnen*) or social pedagogues (German: *Sozialpädagogen/ Sozialpädagoginnen*).

In order to be able to work in a kindergarten in Germany, one must firstly go through a specific vocational training course upon the completion of secondary education. The duration of the training course is two or three years depending on the state in which the training takes place. There is also a possibility of a one-year work placement or internship after the training. After completing this initial qualification, one can be considered as a child carer or social assistant. To be a qualified early childhood educator, another post-secondary training is required. The training lasts for three years. Therefore, it might take up to five years in total for one to be considered a professional “*Erzieher*” or “*Erzieherin*” (Leu & Schelle, 2009). Nevertheless, as already noted out earlier, the profession of an early childhood educator in Germany are unfortunately still incomparable to teachers.

Referring back to the problems and the educational reform mentioned previously, according to a study conducted by Gastegeiger- Klicpera et al. in 2009, there have been a number of developed language promotion programs in almost every state in Germany during the recent years. Thus, it could be assumed that the early childhood educators have been facing more challenges in their everyday tasks in kindergartens. Not only do they have to take care about the children, but also they have to start educating them through some instructional activities, to enhance their literacy competences so that they will be ready for schools. Some other studies concerning early childhood educators and their professional competence aspects, which included interaction, have been also conducted by several other researchers such as Fried (1985, 2009), Honig et al, (2004), Becker- Stoll & Textor (2007), Beller & Preissing (2007), Hemmerling (2007), Teschner (2004), Tietze et al (2005), and Kuger & Kluczniok (2009). The results of these studies showed that the quality of the educator-child interaction processes had a significant impact on children’s development. The study conducted by Fried (1985) pointed out results which specifically addressed the effects of

the interaction with on children's phonetic development gain. While her other recent study in 2009 also indicated that efforts in improving the early childhood educators' professional developments should be done in the first place to enhance their capabilities to support children's language learning. Moreover, there are several aspects such as their knowledge base, skills repertoire, levels of expertise and experiences that have to be taken into consideration as they are important for an effective language learning interventions (Fried, 2009; König & van der Aalsvoort, 2009, Gasteiger- Klicpera et al, 2009).

It has been pointed out earlier that reading ability has been assumed as strongly correlated to language abilities in general. Thus, reading activities have also been encouraged in kindergarten setting as well as home setting. Unfortunately, to date there seems to be a lack of empirical research done concerning this activity, in comparison to the abundant studies with international settings. One of the most notable studies in German context was conducted by Wieler (1997), who researched the practices of shared book reading in home setting. Apart from this study, however, little has been known regarding how the early childhood educators have practiced this activity in kindergartens.

The previous studies in the field have indicated that adult- child book reading activity, including the one conducted in the institutional setting, gives beneficial effects to children's cognitive and language development (Whitehurst, 1992; Bus, van Ijzendoorn and Pellegrini, 1995; Hargrave and Senechal, 2000, and Blewitt et.al, 2009). Moreover, the adult- child interaction which is embedded during the book reading session has also been proved to be potential for learning (Cochran- Smith, 1986; DeBruin- Parecki, 1999). A particular shared book reading type called "Dialogic Book Reading" has gained supports from researchers such as Whitehurst (1992), Zevenbergen & Whitehurst (2003), Cutspec (2006) and Trivette & Dunst (2007). This type of reading has been claimed as one of the most effective activities to facilitate children's language learning, even for younger children and children with specific needs, such as the ones from lower socioeconomic background (cf. Cutspec, 2006).

Furthermore, in the context of Germany, the notion of dialogic book reading as a supportive activity to promote literacy has also come to attention. It has been discussed quite publicly in the online resource such as *Kindergarten Pädagogik Online Handbuch*. An on-going large scale quantitative experimental research has also been conducted by a team of researchers from the Faculty of Psychology of the Justus- Liebig University of Giessen. Even so, there is still rather insufficient information around. Therefore, an empirical study researching how the early childhood educators perform shared book reading activity, particularly dialogic book reading, in the context of German kindergartens which offer language promotion programs to immigrant children would be interesting and of necessity.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review