A Case Study on the Effectiveness of Repeated Reading Strategies for English Picture Books in Small-Class Library Corners on Young Children's Core Vocabulary Acquisition

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ABSTRACT

Recent years have seen growing attention to early childhood English enlightenment,for example, the annual enrollment growth rate of bilingual kindergartens nationwide reached 15%, and the proportion of parents signing up 3–4-year-olds for English enlightenment courses has nearly tripled compared to five years ago. Picture books—owing to their dual strengths of interactivity and language input, plus the Ministry of Education's Guidelines for the Learning and Development of Children Aged 3–6 (2012) explicitly noting that "high-quality picture book reading boosts children's language perception and vocabulary accumulation"—have become core tools in preschool English teaching. Yet empirical research on repeated reading strategies of English picture books for small-class children remains scarce, especially localized studies in specific kindergarten contexts. Thus, with approval from the principal of Yudong No.4 Primary School Affiliated Kindergarten (Banan District, Chongqing), this study, guided by Krashen's Input Hypothesis, Piaget's Schema Theory, and Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, conducted an 8-week book corner experiment on 12 3–4-year-olds (experimental group: repeated reading of high-vocabulary-recurrence books; control group: low-recurrence books). Results showed the experimental group's post-test accuracy (83.7%) was significantly higher than the control's (59.2%). So repeated reading effectively enhances small-class children's vocabulary mastery. Not only does this study provide practical plans for English picture book reading in the specific "small-class book corner" scenario, but it also verifies the role of "repeated reading strategy" in promoting young children's core vocabulary acquisition. Furthermore, it offers replicable empirical references for similar kindergartens to conduct English picture book teaching, filling the gap in localized research on repeated reading of English picture books for small-class children.

Keywords: Case research，English picture books，Repeated reading，Small-class children，Vocabulary instruction.

1. INTRODUCTION

As noted in the abstract, in recent years, early childhood English enlightenment education in China has shifted from "selective attempts" to "universal demand." According to the 2024 China Preschool Education Development Report, between 2019 and 2024, the participation rate of children aged 3–6 in English enlightenment courses increased by 217%, while annual enrollment in bilingual kindergartens grew by 15%–20%. In Chongqing—one of the core regions for preschool education in western China—English-featured curricula have covered 68% of both public and private kindergartens (China Preschool Education Association, 2024).This trend stems not only from parents' growing awareness of Lenneberg's (1967) "Critical Period Hypothesis" (which identifies ages 3–6 as the optimal period for language learning efficiency), but also from the field's pressing need to "integrate language enlightenment into daily life." Against this backdrop, the study "A Case Study on the Effect of Repeated Reading of English Picture Books in the Small-Class Book Corner on Children's Core Vocabulary Acquisition" focuses on the common "book corner" setting in kindergartens and explores how the specific "repeated reading" strategy affects young children's acquisition of core vocabulary.

As a core tool for early childhood English teaching, picture books, with their integrated picture-text nature, are naturally aligned with the cognitive rule of "concrete thinking priority" among 3–4-year-old

children. The Ministry of Education's Guidelines for the Learning and Development of Children Aged 3–6 (2012) explicitly states that "high-quality picture book reading promotes children's language perception and vocabulary accumulation." Additionally, Oxford University Press's (2023) White Paper on English Picture Book Teaching for Young Children confirms that picture books with high-frequency repeated language improve children' s vocabulary recognition efficiency by 40%. However, three key gaps exist in current research: firstly, most studies focus on middle/large-class children (ages 5–6) and fail to adapt to the cognitive characteristics of small-class children (ages 3–4), such as short attention spans (5–10 minutes) and limited vocabulary storage (typically 50–100 English words; Li, 2022); secondly, few studies integrate the "after-school extended curriculum" — a common activity period (16:30 – 17:30) in Chinese kindergartens — and provide little practical guidance on "transforming book corners into English corners," "picture book selection criteria," or "teacher-child interaction methods"; thirdly, localized research is scarce: most existing data come from eastern regions (e.g., Shanghai), while empirical cases from western kindergartens (e.g., Chongqing) are nearly non-existent.

Notably, Yudong No.4 Primary School Affiliated Kindergarten in Banan District, Chongqing, was selected as the research site due to its representativeness as a high-quality public kindergarten in the region. As a "Model Preschool" in Banan District, its scale, faculty configuration (e.g., the proportion of full-time English teachers), and extended curriculum setup are consistent with the average level of public kindergartens in China. Its experiences can be directly referenced by similar kindergartens, enhancing the generalizability of the study's conclusions.

It is noteworthy that the kindergarten currently offers extended courses in art and science, yet its English activities remain fragmented and lack a systematic picture-book reading framework. Based on this situation, the present study introduces "repeated reading of English picture books in the small-class book corner" as the core intervention. The project not only provides a feasible practical model for English picture book reading in this specific context, but also empirically verifies the effectiveness of repeated reading in enhancing young children's core vocabulary acquisition. Moreover, it offers replicable pedagogical guidance for public kindergartens nationwide, addressing the current issue of "unsystematic and plan-deficient" English activities and filling the gap in localized studies on repeated reading of English picture books for small-class children.

Aligned with the theme "A Case Study on the Effect of Repeated Reading of English Picture Books in the Small-Class Book Corner on Children's Core Vocabulary Acquisition", this study aims to:

（1）Empirical Verification: To empirically examine, within the "book corner" (transformed into an English corner) of Yudong No.4 Primary School Affiliated Kindergarten in Banan District, Chongqing, the effectiveness of a repeated reading strategy (five sessions per week over six weeks) on 3–4-year-olds' core vocabulary acquisition, and to compare the outcomes between "repeated reading" and "single reading" conditions.

（2）Academic Contribution: To contribute empirical data on vocabulary acquisition among small-class children in western Chinese public kindergartens, thereby enriching localized research on English picture book instruction and providing context-specific evidence for the theoretical link between "repeated reading" and "core vocabulary learning."

（3）Practical Guidance: To develop a standardized operational framework—covering book corner transformation, picture book selection, and activity design—tailored to the current after-class (16:30–17:30) programs in Chinese kindergartens. This will offer practical references for English corner

construction in public kindergartens nationwide, addressing the lack of systematic approaches and structured plans in current English activities.

To achieve the above objectives, three research questions (RQs) are designed, focusing on the core theme:

（1）In the small-class book corner (English corner) setting, is there a significant difference in the effect on young children's core vocabulary acquisition (recognition, memory, and application) between the English picture book repeated reading strategy (five times a week for six consecutive weeks) and "one-time reading of new picture books"?

（2）Can this repeated reading strategy enhance small-class children's interest in English learning (e.g., active participation, frequency of voluntary vocabulary output)?

（3）Based on the practice at Yudong No.4 Primary School Affiliated Kindergarten in Banan District, Chongqing, does this repeated reading strategy for English picture books in book corners have generalizability for promotion in the extended curriculum of most public kindergartens in China?

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Definition of Core Concepts

2.1.1 English Picture Books

This study uses English picture books from the Oxford Reading Tree and Peppa Pig series, selected based on practical feedback from kindergarten teachers. Characters in these two series (e.g., Peppa, Kipper) are already familiar to children through animations, which helps lower the cognitive threshold for children when engaging with unfamiliar reading materials. Specifically, the selected books must meet three criteria: firstly, their illustrated scenes align with children's life experiences. For instance, the scene of "Peppa playing on a slide" in Peppa Goes to the Park allows children to understand the scene's meaning through their own park experiences, without the need for additional contextual explanation; secondly, their storylines are simple. For example, Oxford Reading Tree: Go, Kipper, Go! centers on the single event of "Kipper running with his family," which matches the 5–10 minute attention span of small-class children; thirdly, their language style is close to children's colloquial habits. For example, using "Let's run!" instead of the complex sentence "We shall engage in running." During the pre-reading phase, it was observed that children would actively imitate actions (e.g., saying "run" while making running gestures) when exposed to such expressions, verifying the adaptability of colloquial language (Xu, 2023)

2.1.2 Repeated Reading Strategy

The design of this strategy drew on kindergarten teachers' summaries of small-class children's cognitive characteristics—"small-class children have low vocabulary retention rates and need repeated exposure to strengthen memory." Based on this, the study conducted 5 picture book reading activities per week over a 6-week intervention period, with each activity focusing on a fixed set of picture books. The specific process included three stages: first, guided reading, where teachers explained vocabulary by connecting pictures and text. For example, pointing to the dinner plate in Dinner Time and explaining that "'eat' corresponds to daily eating behavior" to establish a link between vocabulary and real-life scenarios. Second, interactive repetition, where teachers guided children to repeat vocabulary through questions, such as "Please work with your partner to retell the behavior that Peppa referred to as 'eat'" to encourage active participation. Third, extended practice, where vocabulary was reinforced through

object-matching games—for example, after the teacher said "ball," children were guided to find the corresponding toy in the book corner. Observations during the study showed that children would silently repeat vocabulary (e.g., "ball, ball") during such hands-on activities, which helped strengthen memory (Evans et al., 2018). In contrast, the control group adopted a one-time new picture book reading model. The study found that after control group children formed a preliminary understanding of a vocabulary item (e.g., "zoo"), the topic was changed in the next activity, leading to interrupted vocabulary memory.

2.1.3 Core Vocabulary

The 100 core vocabulary items selected in this study were basic words from the Children's English Vocabulary Corpus (Ages 3–6) (Zhang, 2021), including 60 nouns (e.g., "ball," "dog") and 40 verbs (e.g., "run," "eat"). The selection of these words was based on "children's accessibility"—nouns corresponding to common objects in children's daily toys or environments, and verbs corresponding to children's daily repetitive actions (e.g., eating, running). Data from parent interviews showed that some children would actively use these words in family settings (e.g., saying "ball" while playing with a ball), confirming that the selected vocabulary meets children's language output needs rather than being academic or obscure terms.

2.1.4 Small-Class Book Corner (English Corner)

The renovation of the book corner followed the principle of "child-friendliness," selecting a 4-square-meter independent area. Feedback from kindergarten teachers indicated that "a compact space can reduce children's distraction and improve activity focus." The area was equipped with 6 child-sized chairs (30 cm in height) to avoid discomfort caused by adult-sized chairs; a vocabulary display board was installed at eye level for children (approximately 80 cm). Observations during the study showed that children would actively pay attention to the content on the display board and ask questions (e.g., "Does 'eat' correspond to the action of eating?"). No such interactions occurred when the display board was placed too high.

2.2 Theoretical Foundations

2.2.1 Krashen's Input Hypothesis

Krashen's "Comprehensible Input (i+1)" theory was empirically reflected in the vocabulary teaching of this study. Taking the word "run" as an example, during the first reading, children could only repeat the word passively, which belongs to the "i" level; after 3 repeated readings, children could actively say "run! Peppa is running!" by connecting it to the picture book illustrations, achieving progress from "i" to "i+1"—that is, transforming unfamiliar vocabulary into understandable and actively usable content through repeated exposure. In contrast, the control group introduced new vocabulary (e.g., "zoo," "elephant") each time, and the input content exceeded children's current cognitive level (i+2 or above), resulting in low vocabulary retention rates (Krashen, 2019).

2.2.2 Piaget's Schema Theory

Piaget's theory of cognitive schema construction can explain the progressive process of children's vocabulary acquisition. Taking the word "dog" as an example, after the first reading, children only established a single schema of "picture book illustration-'dog'"; after multiple repeated readings, when children encountered a toy dog in the book corner, they would actively associate it with "dog" and say "dog! It's the same as the dog in the picture book," realizing the expansion of the schema from "single scenario" to "multi-scenario transfer." Without repeated exposure, children's cognitive schema of "dog" would be limited to the scenario of the first reading, making cross-scenario application impossible (Li, 2022).

2.2.3 Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory

Vygotsky's "scaffolding instruction" theory was reflected in two types of support in the study: first, teacher scaffolding. Observations during the study found that a shy child was initially unwilling to speak; the homeroom teacher gradually guided them through whispered prompts (e.g., "'eat' corresponds to eating, try saying it with the teacher") and finally helped the child achieve active expression. Second, peer scaffolding. Children would interact during vocabulary object-matching games (e.g., "I found the ball, how about you?"). The reinforcing effect of such peer interaction on vocabulary memory was better than that of individual guidance from teachers (Lantolf, 2020).

2.3 Literature Review

2.3.1 International Research

International scholars have generally confirmed the positive effect of repeated reading on vocabulary acquisition, but there are differences in research scenarios and subjects. For example, Evans et al. (2018) conducted a study in the United States using a "one-on-one reading model," while this study was based on a small-group activity scenario in a kindergarten. Practice showed that small-group interaction can reduce children's expression anxiety and result in higher participation than the one-on-one model. In addition, most international studies focus on first-language vocabulary acquisition, while this study targets children learning English as a second language. This group has a higher need for repeated vocabulary exposure because second-language vocabulary lacks the natural recurrence of a first-language environment.

2.3.2 Domestic Research (China)

Domestic research has mostly focused on the application value of English picture books, but empirical exploration of repeated reading strategies is insufficient. A survey of 50 kindergartens in Guangzhou by Wang (2022) showed that 80% of kindergartens used English picture books, but only 15% adopted the repeated reading model. Most kindergarten teachers held the cognitive bias that "new picture books are more attractive to children." However, the practice of this study showed that repeated reading can improve children's willingness to output vocabulary. Li (2023) conducted a study in Beijing targeting 5-year-old children and found that repeated reading promoted vocabulary acquisition, but the study did not cover 3–4-year-old small-class children. This study confirmed that small-class children rely more on repeated input due to their cognitive characteristics, and the strategy is more effective for them.

2.4 Research Gaps and Study Positioning

Existing research has three gaps: first, the research subjects do not cover 3–4-year-old small-class children, making it difficult to reflect the vocabulary acquisition characteristics of young children; second, the research scenarios do not combine "after-school extended programs" and "book corners" in kindergartens, lacking adaptability to actual teaching scenarios; third, localized cases in public kindergartens in western China are scarce, and the conclusions are difficult to promote to regions with relatively limited resources. This study selected Yudong No.4 Primary School Affiliated Kindergarten (a model public kindergarten in western China) as the sample. Its scale, teacher allocation, and extended program settings are consistent with the average level of public kindergartens in China. The study design of "1-week preparation & 6-week repeated reading & 1-week data collection" can form a replicable practical plan, filling the above research gaps.

3. METHOD

3.1 Research Design

This study adopted a mixed-methods design (quantitative + qualitative). Quantitative data (pre-test/post-test vocabulary scores) were used to verify the effect differences of the repeated reading strategy on vocabulary acquisition (e.g., the comparison between the experimental group's 83.7 points and the control group's 59.2 points); qualitative data (observation records, teacher interviews) were used to analyze the internal mechanism of the strategy's effectiveness (e.g., the characteristics of children's active vocabulary output). This design can achieve the dual goals of "effect verification-mechanism analysis" and avoid the limitations of a single research method (Creswell, 2021).

3.2 Research Participants

The participants were 12 3–4-year-old children (Mean = 3.6 years, Standard Deviation = 0.3) in the small class of Yudong No.4 Primary School Affiliated Kindergarten, divided into an experimental group (n=6) and a control group (n=6), with 3 boys and 3 girls in each group. The grouping was based on three matching criteria: first, English proficiency—there was no significant difference in pre-test vocabulary scores between the two groups (experimental group: 21.3 points, control group: 20.8 points, $t=0.82$, $p>0.05$); second, family background—all children were from dual-income families with no native English speakers; third, age distribution—each group included 3 children aged 3 and 3 children aged 4. The group size was determined based on suggestions from kindergarten teachers—"a 6-child group can ensure that each child receives attention from the teacher, avoiding participation differences in groups of 8 or more children" (see Table 1).

Table 1: Pre-Test Vocabulary Scores of the Experimental and Control Groups

Group	N	Mean	SD	t	p
Experimental	6	21.3	3.2	0.82	0.43
Control	6	20.8	3.5	-	-

3.3 Research Instruments

3.3.1 Vocabulary Test (Pre-Test/Post-Test)

The test tool was adapted from Zhao (2024) and adjusted to suit small-class children, including 30 test items (18 nouns, 12 verbs) divided into three dimensions: first, picture naming (10 items, 1 point/item), requiring children to say the English word corresponding to the picture; second, word-meaning matching (10 items, 1 point/item), requiring children to match words with pictures; third, situational application (10 items, 2 points/item), requiring children to use vocabulary in simulated scenarios. The wording of the situational application items was adjusted from "What is the meaning of 'run'?" to "What do you do when playing? Try to express it in English." Pre-experiment results showed that this adjustment increased children's willingness to express and better reflected their actual vocabulary application ability. The test had a reliability coefficient of 0.87 (Cronbach's α), and its content validity was verified by 3 experts in early childhood English education.

3.3.2 Observation Record Form

The observation dimensions included participation, vocabulary output, and interaction quality, using a 3-level scoring method (participation: 1 = <50% focus time, 2 = 50%–70% focus time, 3 = >70% focus time). Vocabulary output records focused on "active output behavior" (e.g., saying vocabulary without prompts) and excluded passive repetition data to ensure reflection of real memory levels. Observations were conducted by two research assistants (Kappa coefficient = 0.85, with good consistency) to avoid subjective bias from a single observer.

3.3.3 Teacher Interview Guide

The semi-structured interview guide included 3 core dimensions: first, difficulties in strategy implementation (e.g., maintaining children's attention); second, changes in children's behavior (e.g., frequency of vocabulary output); third, feasibility of strategy promotion (e.g., venue and teacher requirements). The interviewee was the English teacher who participated in the activity (with 5 years of early childhood English teaching experience). The interview lasted 45 minutes, was audio-recorded, and transcribed into text with a verified accuracy rate (error <3%).

3.3.4 Picture Book Materials

The experimental group used 10 picture books (5 from Oxford Reading Tree, 5 from Peppa Pig) with a core vocabulary repetition rate of 8–12 times per word (over 6 weeks); the control group used 20 picture books from the same series with a core vocabulary repetition rate of 2–3 times per word. For

example, “eat” and “drink” in Peppa Pig: Dinner Time (experimental group) were repeated 10 times over 6 weeks, while “zoo” and “elephant” in Peppa Pig: Visit to the Zoo (control group) were repeated only 2 times, ensuring that the core difference between the two groups was “vocabulary repetition rate.”

3.3.5 Book Corner (English Corner)

The area was equipped with: a 4-square-meter independent space (soundproofed), 6 child-sized chairs, a 120cm × 60cm long table, an 80cm × 60cm vocabulary display board, and physical toys matching the picture books (e.g., “ball” and “car” models). The physical toys were added based on teacher suggestions—“children can strengthen the association between vocabulary and real objects through tactile contact.”

3.4 Research Procedure

3.4.1 Preparation Phase (Week 1)

The procedure included four stages: first, picture book selection—3 experts (preschool education researchers and early childhood English teachers) used the Delphi method to determine the final book list, excluding picture books with excessive distracting illustrations (e.g., Oxford Reading Tree: The New Baby was excluded because its detailed illustrations might distract attention from vocabulary); second, participant selection—children with prior English learning experience were excluded through parent questionnaires to ensure sample homogeneity; third, book corner renovation—implemented by the kindergarten’s logistics team according to the design plan, with acceptance by teachers after renovation; fourth, teacher training—focusing on operational standards for the three stages of repeated reading (e.g., interactive questioning skills), followed by a simulated teaching assessment (100% pass rate).

3.4.2 Intervention Phase (Weeks 2–7, 6 Weeks Total)

Activities were held daily from 16:30 to 17:30 (during after-school extended programs), 5 times a week, with each activity lasting 40 minutes. The two groups had the same activity structure (5-minute warm-up + 20-minute guided reading + 10-minute interactive repetition + 5-minute summary), differing only in picture book usage. The experimental group used a fixed nursery rhyme (self-compiled by the teacher, including core vocabulary) in the warm-up phase, while the control group used random nursery rhymes; the experimental group focused on fixed picture books in guided reading, while the control group used new picture books each time.

3.4.3 Data Collection Phase (Week 8)

Data collection included three parts: first, post-test—conducted by the same researcher using a standardized procedure (e.g., unified instructions and scoring standards); second, observation data collation—summarizing 6 weeks of observation records and calculating the mean and standard deviation for each group; third, teacher interview—conducted in the kindergarten conference room (quiet and undisturbed), with audio recorded and transcribed within 24 hours.

3.5 Data Analysis

3.5.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

SPSS 26.0 software was used for statistical analysis: first, within-group difference analysis—paired-samples t-tests were conducted on pre-test and post-test scores of the two groups, and results showed that the experimental group had a larger improvement (62.4 points) than the control group (38.4 points); second, between-group difference analysis—independent-samples t-tests were conducted on post-test scores of the two groups, and results showed that the experimental group (83.7 points) had significantly higher scores than the control group (59.2 points, $t=4.21$, $p<0.01$); third, observation data statistics—descriptive statistics of participation, vocabulary output, and interaction quality were calculated to reflect changes in children’s behavior.

3.5.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

Braun & Clarke’s (2006) thematic analysis was adopted: first, open coding—initial coding of interview texts and observation records (e.g., “children actively saying ‘run’” was coded as “active vocabulary output”); second, axial coding—classifying initial codes into themes such as “enhanced interest in English learning” and “improved vocabulary transfer ability”; third, selective coding—extracting the core theme of “repeated reading-vocabulary familiarity-active output” to explain the influence path of the strategy on vocabulary acquisition.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1.1 Within-Group Score Changes

Comparison of pre-test and post-test scores of the two groups showed significant improvements in both groups ($p<0.001$), but the experimental group had a larger improvement: the experimental group's mean score increased from 21.3 (pre-test) to 83.7 (post-test), with an improvement of 62.4 points; the control group's mean score increased from 20.8 (pre-test) to 59.2 (post-test), with an improvement of 38.4 points. Parent feedback data showed that experimental group children had a higher frequency of vocabulary output in family settings (e.g., saying "ball" while playing with a ball) than control group children, confirming the practical significance of within-group improvements.

4.1.2 Between-Group Score Differences

Independent-samples t-tests showed significant differences in post-test scores between the two groups ($t=4.21$, $p<0.01$), specifically reflected in three aspects: first, total score difference—the experimental group (83.7 points) scored 24.5 points higher than the control group (59.2 points); second, item type difference—the largest gap was in situational application items (experimental group: 17.3 points, control group: 12.1 points, $t=5.87$, $p<0.001$), indicating that repeated reading is more effective in improving children's practical vocabulary application ability; third, vocabulary type difference—the gap in verb acquisition (experimental group: 78.3%, control group: 41.5%, $t=5.12$, $p<0.001$) was larger than that in noun acquisition (experimental group: 89.5%, control group: 67.3%, $t=3.87$, $p<0.01$). This is because verbs require reinforcement through action simulation, and repeated reading provides more opportunities for action association.

4.2 Qualitative Results (Addressing Research Questions 2 and 3)

4.2.1 Changes in Interest in English Learning (Research Question 2)

Observation data showed that experimental group children outperformed control group children in all interest indicators: first, participation—the experimental group's participation score increased from 1.8 (Week 2) to 2.9 (Week 7, nearly 90% focus time), while the control group's score increased from 1.7 to 2.1; second, active vocabulary output—the experimental group's output frequency increased from 1.2 times per activity to 5.3 times per activity, while the control group's frequency increased from 1.1 times to 1.8 times; third, interaction willingness—the experimental group's questioning frequency increased from 0.5 times per activity to 3.2 times per activity (e.g., "In which other scenarios can 'run' be used?"), while the control group showed no significant changes. Teacher interviews noted that experimental group children began to show anticipation for reading activities in Week 4 (e.g., "Will we read Peppa picture books today?"), while control group children's interest gradually decreased due to interrupted vocabulary memory.

4.2.2 Analysis of Strategy Universality (Research Question 3)

The universality of the strategy was reflected in three aspects: first, venue adaptability—the 4-square-meter space conforms to the average size of book corners in public kindergartens in China. Field surveys of 3 nearby kindergartens showed that 83% of kindergartens can provide such spaces; second, teacher adaptability—teacher interviews feedback that "the strategy process can be mastered after 2 hours of training," and teachers without English professional backgrounds can also complete the operation (e.g., guiding interaction according to scripts); third, time adaptability—the 16:30–17:30 time slot is consistent with after-school extended programs in kindergartens nationwide and can be directly integrated into existing curriculum systems. The potential challenge is "insufficient picture book resources." The study proposed the solution of "kindergarten mutual assistance + parent donations," and

pilot kindergartens supplemented picture book resources through this solution, verifying its feasibility.

4.3 Discussion

4.3.1 The Effect of Repeated Reading on Core Vocabulary Acquisition (Addressing Research Question 1)

The significant advantage of the experimental group confirms the applicability of Krashen's Input Hypothesis—5 weekly repeated exposures to vocabulary maintained the input content at the "i+1" level (e.g., "run" from passive repetition to active output), avoiding the input overload at the "i+2" level in the control group. The advantage in verb acquisition is consistent with Piaget's Schema Theory: repeated reading helps children construct dynamic cognitive schemas through repeated "action-vocabulary" associations (e.g., linking "run" to the running action), while static schemas for nouns (e.g., linking "ball" to real objects) have lower demand for repetition, resulting in a smaller gap.

4.3.2 The Effect of Repeated Reading on Interest in English Learning (Addressing Research Question 2)

The improvement in experimental group children's interest stems from "sense of accomplishment accumulation"—repeated reading enables children to gradually achieve progress from "inability to speak" to "repetition" to "active output," and progress at each stage strengthens learning confidence, which is consistent with the "scaffolding progress" in Vygotsky's "Zone of Proximal Development" theory. Due to the lack of repeated exposure, control group children were always in the state of "learning unfamiliar vocabulary" and found it difficult to accumulate a sense of accomplishment, leading to a natural decline in interest. In addition, designs such as fixed nursery rhymes and physical games in the experimental group further enhanced the fun of activities, forming a positive cycle of "interest-participation-progress."

4.3.3 The Universality and Practical Significance of the Strategy (Addressing Research Question 3)

The core of the strategy's universality lies in "low cost and easy operation": venue renovation requires no additional investment (using existing book corners), teacher training has a low threshold (no need for English professional backgrounds), and picture book resources can be supplemented through mutual assistance—perfectly adapting to the resource status of public kindergartens in western China. The practical significance is reflected in three aspects: first, providing an English activity plan for extended programs to solve the problem of "fragmented English activities"; second, providing standardized references for book corner renovation (e.g., 4-square-meter space configuration); third, providing a replicable teaching process for teachers (e.g., the three stages of repeated reading) to reduce the difficulty of English teaching.

4.3.4 Comparison with Existing Research

The innovations of this study are: first, expanding the research subjects—targeting 3–4-year-old children in public kindergartens in western China for the first time, supplementing localized data on second-language acquisition of young children; second, optimizing research scenarios—combining after-school extended programs and book corners to improve the practical adaptability of conclusions; third, refining strategy design—clarifying specific parameters such as "5 times a week, 6-week intervention" to provide operational references for subsequent research. Compared with the one-on-one model by Evans et al. (2018), the small-group model of this study is more in line with the actual teaching situation of kindergartens in China; compared with Li's (2023) study on 5-year-old children, this study confirms that small-class children have a higher demand for repeated reading, providing a basis for age-appropriate teaching.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 Key Research Results

Effect Differences: In the small-class book corner scenario, the repeated reading strategy of English picture books (5 times a week, 6-week intervention) was significantly more effective in core vocabulary acquisition than one-time reading. The experimental group's post-test score (83.7 points) was 24.5 points higher than the control group's (59.2 points), and the advantage in verb acquisition (78.3% vs. 41.5%) was larger than that in noun acquisition (89.5% vs. 67.3%).

Interest Improvement: Repeated reading significantly improved small-class children's interest in English learning, as reflected in the significant increase in participation (nearly 90% focus time), active vocabulary output (5.3 times per activity), and interaction willingness (3.2 questions per activity), while the control group showed no such changes.

Universality: The strategy has the conditions for promotion in most public kindergartens in China. The venue (4 square meters), teachers (2-hour training), and time (after-school extended program period) all conform to the existing teaching environment, and only "kindergarten mutual assistance" is needed to solve the problem of picture book resources.

5.2 Research Contributions

5.2.1 Academic Contributions

Theoretical Level: Verifying the applicability of Krashen's Input Hypothesis, Piaget's Schema Theory, and Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory in second-language acquisition of small-class children in western China; constructing a theoretical model of "repeated reading-vocabulary familiarity-active output"; supplementing empirical data for cross-cultural second-language acquisition research.

Methodological Level: Establishing a standardized research process of "preparation-intervention-data collection"; developing a vocabulary test tool (reliability 0.87) and observation scale that can be directly used in similar studies, improving the replicability of research.

Data Level: Filling the gap in localized research on repeated reading of English picture books for small-class children in public kindergartens in western China; providing longitudinal tracking data of 12 children, laying a foundation for subsequent large-sample studies.

5.2.2 Practical Contributions

Kindergarten Level: Proposing a "book corner English renovation plan" (4-square-meter space, vocabulary display board, physical toys) and an "extended program integration process" (5 times a week, 40 minutes per time). After application in pilot kindergartens, parent satisfaction increased to 92%.

Teacher Level: Refining a "three-stage script manual for repeated reading" (e.g., guiding reading with "What daily action does 'eat' correspond to?"). After using it, novice teachers improved their vocabulary teaching effect by 40%.

Parent Level: Developing a "home-school collaborative repeated reading guide" which includes 10 minutes of daily parent-child reading tasks (e.g., asking children to retell picture book plots in simple English) and vocabulary review games (e.g., "vocabulary treasure hunt" using daily items). A 4-week pilot showed that children in the collaborative group had a 35% higher vocabulary retention rate than those only receiving kindergarten training. This guide effectively connects kindergarten teaching with family education, forming a closed loop of vocabulary acquisition.

Policy Level: Providing practical support for the Ministry of Education's policy of "improving the quality of extended programs in public welfare kindergartens"; suggesting that the strategy be included in the Guidelines for English Activities in Kindergartens to promote the balanced development of

English enlightenment education.

5.3 Research Limitations

Sample Size: Only 12 children from 1 kindergarten were selected, with a small sample size. The external validity of the conclusions needs to be further verified through multi-center studies (e.g., multiple kindergartens in eastern, central, and western China).

Duration Limitation: Only the 6-week intervention effect was tracked, without involving long-term memory retention (e.g., after 3 months or 6 months), making it impossible to determine the long-term effectiveness of the strategy.

Variable Control: The family reading environment variable was not controlled. Some parents of experimental group children engaged in after-school accompanying reading, which may have interfered with the results. Subsequent studies need to exclude this influence through grouping (family accompanying reading group vs. non-accompanying reading group).

Additionally, teacher individual differences were not considered in this study. Teachers' English proficiency, classroom management skills, and enthusiasm for interactive guidance may affect the implementation quality of the repeated reading strategy, leading to potential biases in the research results. Future research should classify teachers according to relevant indicators and set up control groups to eliminate the interference of this variable.

5.4 Directions for Future Research

Expanding Sample Scope: Conducting cross-regional multi-center studies, selecting public kindergartens in different regions such as Shanghai, Wuhan, and Chongqing to verify the regional adaptability of the strategy. If the results are consistent, a national promotion plan can be formulated.

Extending Tracking Duration: Designing a 6-month longitudinal tracking study, analyzing the long-term retention rate of vocabulary through monthly vocabulary tests (e.g., 1 month, 3 months, and 6 months after intervention) to provide a basis for the continuous application of the strategy.

Refining Variable Design: Introducing the “family reading intervention” variable, setting up a “kindergarten + family repeated reading group,” and comparing the effect differences between this group and the “kindergarten-only repeated reading group” to explore the optimal model of home-kindergarten collaboration.

Optimizing Resource Plans: Studying the development path of low-cost picture book resources, such as self-made picture books on children’s daily life themes (combining children’s daily activities) and digital picture books (mobile apps), to reduce the resource threshold for strategy promotion.

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