

NOTE TO USERS

The original manuscript received by UMI contains pages with indistinct print. Pages were microfilmed as received.

18

This reproduction is the best copy available.

UMI[®]

The Role of Parent-Child Storybook Reading in a Sampling of
Preschool Family Literacy Programs Supported by School
Divisions within a Greater Metropolitan Area

by
Darcy Manness

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of the University of Manitoba
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Education



National Library
of Canada

Acquisitions and
Bibliographic Services

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada

Acquisitions et
services bibliographiques

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Your file Votre référence

Our file Notre référence

The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

0-612-56138-0

Canada

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA
FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

COPYRIGHT PERMISSION PAGE

**The Role of Parent-Child Storybook Reading in a Sampling of Preschool Family Literacy
Programs Supported by School Divisions within a Greater Metropolitan Area**

BY

Darcy Manness

**A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University
of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree
of
Master of Education**

DARCY MANNESS © 2000

Permission has been granted to the Library of The University of Manitoba to lend or sell copies of this thesis/practicum, to the National Library of Canada to microfilm this thesis/practicum and to lend or sell copies of the film, and to Dissertations Abstracts International to publish an abstract of this thesis/practicum.

The author reserves other publication rights, and neither this thesis/practicum nor extensive extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's written permission.

Abstract

The research documented the existence of preschool family literacy programs supported by school divisions in the Greater Winnipeg Metropolitan Area and studied their design, practices and evaluation procedures. Of particular interest was program emphasis on parent-child storybook reading. Four literacy programs were evaluated. Data, including on-site observations and semi-structured interviews with school administrators, program facilitators and instructors, as well as participating parents, was collected over a two month period from February to April. The resultant information was analyzed according to Nickse's (1991) three-stage heuristic for evaluating family literacy programs. Analysis probed: 1) design characteristics; 2) accountability/evaluation procedures and 3) 19 design features.

Findings indicated that there was limited programming devoted to parent-child storybook reading, little inter-agency collaboration between the literacy programs and, although the programs were situated in areas of low income, high migrancy and unemployment, many program participants did not appear to fit these descriptors. A major concern was funding instability.

Implications for future programming include: (1) increasing the time devoted to parent-child storybook reading; (2) fostering more collaboration between literacy program providers and other social service agency personnel;

(3) ensuring the clientele accessing the literacy programs are those most in need; and (4) providing long-term and consistent funding. Long-term evaluative research that follows the children into school is required to demonstrate the effectiveness of such parent/child preschool literacy programs.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank a number of individuals. Without their interest, co-operation, advice and support throughout the course of this study, this project would not have come to completion.

To my parents, Vera and Douglas Manness, my most sincere gratitude for your understanding, love and support. You kept me going, Mum and Dad.

To the literacy program providers, school principals and parents who participated in this study, I offer my thanks to them for their generous gift of time and willingness to share information about their programs. It was a pleasure to meet and speak with you and to learn more about how you help others to embark 'on the road to literacy.'

To Dr. Ralph Mason and Dr. Sheldon Rosenstock, thank you for your valuable advice while serving on my thesis committee.

To my faculty advisor, Dr. Beverley Zakaluk, I sincerely appreciate all the support you gave me during the research phase and the writing of this study. Many, many thanks for your time (particularly during holidays), for your editing prowess, for your genuine interest in the study, and for your advice and encouragement.

Table of Contents

	Page
Abstract.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	v
List of Tables.....	viii
Chapter I	
Nature of the Study	1
Statement of the Problem	3
Specific Research Questions	5
Scope of the Study	9
Significance of the Study	12
Definition of Terms	13
Organization of the Study	14
Chapter II	
Review of the Literature	16
Parent-Child Storybook Reading	16
Historical Antecedents	17
Analyzing the Reading Act Itself	19
More Recent Research	24
Social and Cultural Factors	35
Meta-Analysis Studies	45
Summary and Implications	48
National and International Programs	50

References.....	145
Appendices A - Telephone Protocol.....	156
B - Permission Letter to School Principal.....	158
C - Letter of Consent	161
D - Interview Questions for Facilitators & School Principals.....	162
E - Permission Letter to Parents	166
F - Letter of Consent	167
G - Interview Questions for Parents.....	168

List of Tables

Table 1a	Nickse's first level of analysis: Site 1.....	82
Table 1b	Nickse's first level of analysis: Site 2.....	83
Table 1c	Nickse's first level of analysis: Site 3.....	84
Table 1d	Nickse's first level of analysis: Site 4.....	85
Table 2a	Nickse's second level of analysis: Site 1.....	94
Table 2b	Nickse's second level of analysis: Site 2.....	98
Table 2c	Nickse's second level of analysis: Site 3.....	102
Table 2d	Nickse's second level of analysis: Site 4.....	106
Table 3a-3j	Nickse's third level of analysis.....	124

Chapter I

NATURE OF THE STUDY

According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development(1998), reading and writing abilities are becoming skills of absolute necessity as our society moves from a resource- to a knowledge-based economy. Their 1998 report on literacy states that "literacy is an essential condition for the equitable participation of citizens in social, cultural, political and economic life"(p.3) and further that "the commitment to literacy and learning in every aspect of daily life (life-wide) and continuously throughout the life-span (lifelong) is an essential determinant of an individual's life chances and quality of life"(p. 11-12).

Reading and writing are thus life skills that serve as the foundation for success in school as well as throughout life.

Initiation into a literate world, with a desire to know and to learn, begins at home during the preschool years(Iredell, 1898; Heath, 1986a, 1986b; Taylor & Strickland, 1986). If one believes that development is cumulative then one recognizes why the early years are of extreme importance in molding and nurturing a child's literacy(Kelleghan, Sloane, Alvarez & Bloom, 1993).

Some children come to school not recognizing the

value of reading or of print-related activities and consequently, do not approach school-based learning positively and with success. As Barbara Bush states: ... there are far too many children who do not start school "ready to learn"(Morrow, 1995, p. ix). In a review of the research, Snow, Burns and Griffin(1998), suggest pronounced differences in reading ability related to socio-economic status with low SES being a "group risk factor". These differences seem to relate to school and community locations. However, children in middle-income homes seem to have more informal opportunities for literacy learning than children in high poverty areas(Snow et al, 1998). There may be subtleties in the way families read with their children, the availability of reading materials and family expectations regarding achievement. Tragically, children who have few literacy opportunities prior to entering school are most likely destined to struggle throughout their entire school career and are forced to play "catch-up" with their more successful peers. Children who lack preschool experiences with print may require additional support or intervention to help them succeed. The need is urgent. According to Allington(1995), children who are placed in low-achieving groups in school are more likely "(1) to leave

school before graduating, (2) to fail a grade, (3) to be placed in special education, (4) to become a teenage parent, (5) to commit a juvenile criminal offense, and (6) to remain less than fully literate"(p.2). Whichever scenario is contemplated, the situation does not bode well for the individual or for society.

There are, however, home-based literacy activities that may improve the literacy apprenticeship of many children prior to school entry, and thereby avert the negative consequences associated with children at risk for school failure. Parents can be empowered to assume this responsibility(Cairney & Munsie, 1995; Hannon, 1995; Morrow, 1995; and Thomas, 1998).

Statement of the Problem

Given that the preschool years are important for becoming literate and that many children come to school ill-prepared, educators have come to realize the need for early parental involvement.

As increasing attention is paid to the "parent as teacher", one of the most common ways in which educators can ensure transmission of literacy from parent to child is through family literacy programs(Thomas, 1998). The common goal of many family literacy interventions is to strengthen the skills parents need to enhance their

families learning experiences and to help their children prepare for success in school. So much school work involves activities associated with literacy.

One of the most beneficial and successful literacy activities in which parents can engage to help prepare their children for success in school is parent-child storybook reading. Through storybook reading children: (1) come to understand the functions and uses of written language; (2) develop knowledge about the basic concepts of print, such as directionality; (3) become oriented to letters and the ways in which the alphabet represents language through orthographic patterns; (4) learn book-handling skills; (5) come to understand the structure of a story, and (6) develop a positive appreciation for reading(Heath, 1983; Holdaway, 1979; Ninio & Bruner, 1978; Ninio, 1980; Schickedanz, 1978; Snow & Ninio, 1986; Sulzby, 1985; Teale, 1986, 1984, & 1981; Teale, Anderson & Stokes, 1981; Teale & Sulzby, 1986; Wells, 1985).

Thus, with research supporting the view that parent-preschooler shared-book engagements are beneficial for children's literacy development and an acknowledgment that parents are the primary interpretive community for their child, during the last ten to fifteen years efforts have been made by educators,

parents, government policy makers and interested citizens to involve parents in the sound literacy development of their preschool children. Parent-preschooler storybook reading and family intervention initiatives that promote early literacy development have been melded together into one package. Several family literacy programs (Cairney & Munsie, 1995; Hannon, 1995; Morrow, 1995; & Thomas, 1998) that embody this concept have been established in Australia, Canada, England and the United States. The programs are either school-initiated or projects in which there is a collaboration with other family service agencies and organizations that already provide support to parents and their children. Although program design, implementation, and evaluation procedures are varied, the one common bond that links all of these programs is that parent-child storybook reading is an essential component. This study, therefore, will review the role assigned to parent-child storybook reading in preschool family literacy programs which are supported by Winnipeg schools beginning with a brief description of each program.

Specific Research Questions

The general research questions guiding the

investigation include:

(1) Are there preschool family literacy programs situated in and supported by schools in the Greater Winnipeg Metropolitan area that use story-book reading as an integral component of the program?

(2) To what extent have community partnerships been forged between schools and other family service agencies, such as social welfare and/or child protection agencies, in order to foster and support literacy in the early years (infancy to school entry)?

(3) Do the literacy program's facilitators/instructors and or/participants expect parent-child storybook reading to lead to other positive changes within the family?

(4) What are some of the positive experiences taking place for children and for their parents in family literacy programs?

In addition to the general research questions, Nickse's (1991) three levels of program evaluation, as described in A Typology of Family and Intergenerational Literacy Programs (1991), are used to analyze the programs in more depth. As a practical heuristic, this conceptual framework provides for the investigator an organized, broad, yet concise overview of the dimensions to consider when planning, implementing and evaluating family literacy programs. Within the framework, three levels of analysis or data gathering are applied to the investigated programs. These concern a classification system for the programs, an evaluation plan detailing the programs' method of accountability to its stakeholders and a list of suggested program elements to consider when designing a program. Therefore, using this framework as a guide, several questions are asked. These are:

(5) How would the four investigated programs be classified as to type using Nicke's first level of program analysis? These are: (1) parent/child(family literacy); (2) adult/child (intergenerational literacy); (3) adult alone (parent literacy) and (4) child alone(child literacy).

(6) Were any of the investigated programs based on Nickse's second level of evaluation: (1) a pre-implementation survey or needs assessment; (2) accountability; (3) the formative evaluation of a pilot program (program clarification); (4) or informed by measuring participant progress; and (5) studying the effects on program participants?

(7) How did the investigated programs display Nickse's third level of evaluation? that is what is/are the: (1) target population; (2) community setting; (3) types of core and support services; (4) staff involvement in service delivery; (5) funding arrangements and other program supports; (6) methods used for recruitment of participants; (7) the instructional format; (8) the program materials; (9) attendance and participation strategies; (10) retention strategies, (11) staff development and volunteer training components; (12) transportation and child care services offered; (13) the nature of the workshops or activities for parents; and (14) assessment measures used to determine participant satisfaction with the

program. Additional features added by the investigator include: (15) the program objectives; (16) the program's similarity to existing preschool family literacy programs; (17) the number of adult participants; (18) the number and ages of preschoolers; and (19) the role of parent-child storybook reading in the literacy program.

Scope of the Study

The purpose of this study is to: (a) document the existence of preschool family literacy programs supported by school divisions in the Greater Winnipeg Metropolitan Area; and (b) study the design, implementation and evaluation of such programs, in particular, the role given to parent-child storybook reading.

For the purpose of this study, preschool refers to children *before* they enter a formalized school setting, that is, before a child is five and enters a kindergarten program. Only Winnipeg School Division No. 1 offers a formalized school setting for children four years of age, an age when many parents enroll their children in the publicly-funded nursery school program.

As the focus of this study was investigating division support for parents of children from infancy to school age, many programs established in the various divisions did not fit the criteria, either because, as in the case of Winnipeg School Division No. 1, the children were already receiving a formalized education in Nursery School which meant that parents and children would not fit the criteria of non-formalized schooling, or, as in the case of other school divisions, no family literacy programs for pre-kindergarten aged children existed.

Method

The first thing to do was to identify the school divisions that offered preschool family literacy programs. Personal contact was made by letter and telephone to divisional superintendents and/or early childhood/language arts consultants. From this list of identified programs, four preschool family literacy programs were selected to form the core of the investigative study, three in Winnipeg School Division No. 1 and one in Fort Garry School Division No. 5.

Information detailing the four selected literacy programs was gathered through semi-structured face-to-face interviews with five preschool family literacy facilitators/instructors, four Winnipeg elementary

school principals and sixteen parents who were program participants in the four literacy programs. In addition, an on-site observation was made of one session at each of three of the four literacy programs.

To assist the investigator in categorizing and analyzing family literacy program design, implementation and evaluation processes, specific portions of Nickse's (1991) three-stage heuristic were applied to the data collected from the interviews and observations of the programs.

1. The first stage of Nickse's categorization system examines the programs' design as involving either parent/child; adult/child; adult alone, or child alone.

2. The second level of analysis documents the programs' five levels or tiers of design and implementation. These are whether the program: (1) was developed as the result of a pre-implementation or needs assessment, (2) has built-in accountability procedures (3) employs program clarification methods (formative evaluation); (4) measures participant progress; and (4) documents how the program impacted participants in the long term.

3. The third and final level of analysis probes more deeply into the design, implementation and evaluation procedures of the program by documenting 19 elements ranging from the programs' target population to the role of parent-child storybook reading.

Significance of the Study

Snow, Burns and Griffin(1998) indicate that "adults who live and interact regularly with children can profoundly influence the quality and quantity of [the childrens'] literacy experiences"(p. 138). Educators have a reponsibility to share this knowledge with the parents in their communities. It is therefore important to establish relationships between the school and the home. This study reinforces the urgency in forging these links in the preschool years by documenting how schools in the Greater Winnipeg Metropolitan Area support home-based literacy experiences through preschool family literacy programs. The review of the literature and findings will add further insight into school-supported literacy programs, their design, methodology and accountability. By adding to the existing body of knowledge on family literacy programming and highlighting issues, this study will also inform decision-makers and public policy.

Definition of Terms

The following explanation of terms used in this study have been provided to aid the reader in understanding the content of the study.

Emergent literacy. Emergent literacy refers to "reading and writing concepts, behaviors and dispositions which precede and develop into conventional literacy" (Harris & Hodges, 1995, p.71). This term has replaced the earlier known concept of reading readiness which referred to children as "being ready to profit from beginning reading instruction" (Harris & Hodges, 1995, p.212).

Family literacy. Family literacy refers "to literacy efforts or activities involving more than one generation" (Harris & Hodges, 1995, p. 82). For this study, the term family literacy is limited to describing a program between parent(s) and preschool children.

Greater Winnipeg Metropolitan area. This term refers to the area bounded by the City of Winnipeg's Perimeter Highway.

Preschool children. The term is restricted to children who are newborns to those who have not yet entered a formalized school setting. In this study, four-year old children who attend a formalized nursery school program in a school setting are not considered to be 'preschool'.

Semi-structured face-to-face interview method.

An interview is a personal conversation with a respondent for the purpose of seeking information. Semi-structured refers to spontaneous changes which can be made during the interview by the interviewer or respondent. These changes may involve a change in the order questions are asked or a change in the wording of the questions (Singleton & Stratis, 1999, Sommer & Sommer, 1991, Stouthamer-Loeber & Van Kammen, 1995).

Organization of the Study

Chapter 1 delineates the area of concern and the inquiry. The historical background and research involving the importance of parent-child storybook reading and its relation to preparing children for success in school is reviewed in Chapter 2. Also contained in Chapter 2 is a brief review of

international family literacy programs that have incorporated parent-child storybook reading as an essential program component. Study methodology and procedures are reported in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 consists of an analysis of the data with accompanying tables that provide a quick reference and easy comparison of program characteristics. Chapter 5 contains a summary of the research, findings, conclusions, implications for programming and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER II

Review of the Literature

This chapter includes a review of the research pertaining to the historical development of parent-child storybook reading from the beginning of the twentieth century to the present day, including studies on the literacy experiences inherent in the reading act itself. The theory of Vygotsky(1962, 1978) provides a framework for understanding how children construct knowledge through their relationships with important others, and how reading is viewed as a social and cultural practice. Research is also presented on the relationship between storybook reading as a preschool literacy activity and childrens' success in school. Also included in the review are examples of nationally and internationally based family literacy programs which have incorporated parent-child storybook reading as an essential program component.

Parent-Child Storybook Reading - An Interactive Literacy Journey

Children are born into a world of language and are constantly surrounded and bombarded with it. As they watch how adults interact with the world through

language and through natural, day-to-day interactions with their parents, siblings and others who care for them, children come to appreciate implicitly that communication is a powerful tool and regulator of human activity. As they develop, youngsters begin to copy speech patterns, create new sounds and express ideas in an effort to make language work for them (Sulzby, 1985). The same can be said for children learning to read. With the support of nurturing caregivers, children come to understand that speech and print are interwoven, that speech can be written, and read and reread (Iredell, 1898). The act of reading storybooks and the accompanying talk associated with this literacy activity offers a child increased opportunities for advanced language and complex thinking and learning (Hiebert, 1996).

Historical Antecedents

The role played by parents in ushering their children into literacy was recognized early in the educational literature. Iredell (1898) was the first educator to write about her observations on the parallelism between a preschooler's oral language development and the acquisition of reading and writing (Teale & Sulzby, 1986). In her article, *Eleanor Learns to Read*, Iredell describes the natural impulse

manipulate based on their experience everything they hear and see. She found that a child who is surrounded with spoken language will copy what is heard. Iredell further believed that the same can be said for learning to read and to write. When books and writing materials are in the home, the child has the same natural curiosity to come to know what they are all about, too. Having a parent who includes the child in the every day literacy experiences of the home instills the idea that the written word is powerful and that reading is pleasurable.

E. B. Huey(1908), a well-known educational theorist during the beginning of the twentieth century, stated that, *"The secret of it all lies in the parents' reading aloud to and with the child."*(p. 32)). He strongly believed that a child's literacy development could be enhanced through reading at home during the preschool years. In fact, he felt so confident about this concept that he devoted a entire chapter in his book, *The Psychology and Pedagogy of Reading* to "Learning to Read at Home."

However, for all the intelligence Iredell and Huey may have brought to this matter during the early years of the twentieth century, they were the exception in

believing that early storybook reading was a prime source of young children's literacy development. In fact, prior to the 1970's, the majority of educators believed that "literacy development did not begin until the child encountered *formal* instruction in school" (Teale & Sulzby, 1991, p. ix), and although reading to a preschool child at home was not frowned upon as being a bad thing, neither was it openly promoted. Rather, it was viewed more in a folksy, simplistic kind of way. Consequently, little attention was paid to establishing the intrapsychological and interpsychological relationships inherent in this so-called "simplistic" act.

Analyzing the Reading Act Itself

This "benign neglect" began to change in the late 1970's with the publication of the first study analyzing storybook episodes. Ninio and Bruner (1978), studied one Anglo-Saxon, middle-class mother-infant dyad when the child was between eight months and approximately one and one-half years old. They found an amazing amount of interaction between mother and child by observing videorecordings of the child's free play. Further analysis of the language samples indicated that storybook reading not only produced opportunities for interaction between a parent and child but, as shown in

the following quote, the discourse itself was of a ritualized nature and had an organizational format consisting of four elements: (1) attentional vocative; (2) query; (3) label, and (4) feedback utterance.

Mother: *Look!* [ATTENTIONAL VOCATIVE)
Child: [Touches picture)
Mother: *What are those?* [QUERY]
Child: (Vocalizes and smiles)
Mother: *Yes, they are rabbits.*
(FEEDBACK AND LABEL)
Child: (Vocalizes, smiles and looks
up at mother)
Mother: (Laughs) *Yes, rabbits.*
(FEEDBACK AND LABEL)
Child: (Vocalizes, smiles)
Mother: *Yes.* (Laughs) (FEEDBACK)
pp.6-7

In further analyzing the language samples, Ninio and Bruner determined that the mother provided scaffolding dialogue. The mother, who was skilled in a practice that the child was not, assumed that the smiling, reaching, pointing and babbling of the child were expressions of the child's intentions to request a label or for the mother to provide one. Therefore, the mother supplied or 'scaffolded' all four steps of the routine: attentional vocative, query, label and feedback utterance, and by doing so, helped the child participate in the dialogue. These rich language interactions between mother and child demonstrated how

reading picture-books to children can provide wonderful learning opportunities for developing a child's early experiences with language.

Although Ninio and Bruner's study concerned only one mother-child dyad and was limited in time, just until the child was one and one-half years of age, their study remains important. It provided preliminary insight into the organization and consequences of parent-child storybook reading and how children learn language during these events.

Two years later, Ninio (1980) conducted another study which established links between literacy socialization practices, and parent-child storybook reading. She wanted to determine the effect maternal education and socio-economic status (SES) had on book reading behavior through the study of picture-book reading with 40 Israeli mother-child dyads. The children were approximately 17 to 22 months old from high and low SES families. At the conclusion of the study, significant interactional differences were found to exist between the high and low SES mothers. High SES mothers asked their children more "what's that" questions which resulted in the children having a larger vocabulary base than the low-SES children. She observed that mothers who were of low-SES status

seemed adequate as vocabulary teachers in the sense that their interactions were commensurate with their young child's developmental level but their teaching style was "not future-oriented, not sensitive to changes in their infants' needs, and therefore probably inadequate to enhance rapid progression to more complex levels of language use (p. 589).

In a one month, home-based shared storybook reading intervention experiment, Whitehurst, Falco, Lonigan, Fischel, DeBaryshe, Valdez-Menchaca and Caulfield (1988) sought to test the hypothesis that maternal picture book reading had direct immediate effects on the rate of children's language acquisition. Twenty-nine middle-class children between 21-35 months of age and their mothers were equally divided into experimental and control groups. Parents in the experimental group received two, thirty minute training sessions on how to read to their children. They were shown how to use a number of reading techniques to increase first, their rates of posing open-ended and function/attribute questions and expansions; second, how to respond

appropriately to children who attempted to answer these types of questions and, third, how to decrease the frequency of engaging in straight reading and posing questions that could be satisfactorily answered by pointing. The control group parents were instructed to read as they had always done.

Results from pre-post-testing indicated that children in the experimental group had a higher mean length of utterance (MLU = 2.55), plus more frequent use of phrases as opposed to single word utterances in comparison to the control group (MLU = 2.04). The experimental group was approximately 8.5 months ahead of the control group when tested on the verbal expressive subscale of the *Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities* (Kirk, McCarthy, & Kirk, 1968) and a 6 month lead in regard to scores on the expressive vocabulary subscale of the *Expressive One Word Picture Vocabulary Test* (Gardner, 1981).

As a result of the research carried out by Whitehurst and colleagues, three theoretical principles were established: (1) maternal joint picture book reading does increase a child's language acquisition; (2) children's language development is enhanced when there is an increased opportunity for the child to respond actively to the content, style and language

found in the story when the reading is carried out with a stimulating, interactive style rather than merely evoking passive listening; and (3) the effects of parental speech, also known as 'motherese' or 'parentese', serve important functions in child language acquisition. It does make a difference how parents talk to their children during story reading, insofar as the nature of the discourse can increase language development.

More Recent Research

Whitehurst and colleagues (1994) continued to explore the nature of storybook reading to preschool children. They demonstrated that shared reading and other emergent literacy experiences in the preschool period are important for later literacy development.

One hundred and sixty-seven four-year olds who attended Head Start Centres were randomly assigned to intervention and control classrooms. Head Start is the United States government's preschool program for children from families who are living at the poverty level.

Children who attended the preschool intervention classrooms had a combination of dialogic reading and phonemic awareness training at school with dialogic reading also being carried out at home. The main

mechanism for dialogic reading, which is an interactive style of adult-child shared picture book reading, are the five types of questions the adult reader can pose to the child: completion prompts, recall prompts, open-ended prompts, *wh*-prompts and distancing prompts. The phonemic structure of language and the relation between phonemes and letters was taught using a commercially available curriculum called *sound foundations*(Byrne & Fielding-Bransley, 1992). Parents and teachers were shown a video on how to interact during dialogic reading with role-playing and discussion following the video. Children in the control classrooms were taught using the regular Head Start curriculum.

Each child was pre- and post-tested on the four outcome factors: language, writing, linguistic awareness and knowledge of print concepts through applications of the *Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Revised*(Dunn & Dunn, 1981), *Expressive One Word Picture Vocabulary Test*(Gardner, 1981), expressive subscale of the *Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities*(Kirk, McCarthy, & Kirk, 1968) and 18 subscales from the *Developing Skills Checklist*(CTB, 1990).

Results indicated that the children who received the dialogic reading at school and at home plus the phonemic awareness training performed at a significantly

higher level on the writing and print concepts factors.

From the data, the authors reflect that it was possible for Head Start children's language to be increased when there was interactive storybook reading happening in the home. They also felt that the frequency of exposure to print in the home, especially for late preschool children, may be a more powerful venue for language development than a preschool program where 20 or more children require attention. The present study raises two issues. First, how much of the increase in children's language development is due to dialogic reading and how much to phonemic awareness training? The authors suggest that these two items be separated and analyzed. Second, the long term effects of the intervention need to be studied to determine the impact on word decoding and reading comprehension in elementary school.

Holdaway (1979) studied children's independent re-enactments of storybooks that had been read to them several times. He found that children learned the vocabulary and syntax of written language as a direct result of being read to. He concluded that parent-child storybook reading at home in the early years had significant literacy potential for literacy development in that storybook reading exposed children to processes

useful for reading. He also found that children practiced reading-like behaviors such as self-regulation and self-correction in order to come to grips with the structures and meaning inherent in the written language. He felt so strongly about the importance of parent-child storybook reading as a powerful tool to develop preliteracy skills that he made storybook reading the cornerstone of his multi-disciplinary literacy program, the "shared-book" experience.

Schickedanz (1978) found that storybook experiences for preschoolers developed conscious awareness that language was an object in itself. Children's metalinguistic knowledge about print was demonstrated through increased letter and word recognition abilities and knowledge of symbol sound correspondences. In particular, Schickedanz found that the effects of storybook reading led children to the development of three schemata about letter-sound associations. For example, a memorized story line helps children: (1) grasp the idea that story lines can be remembered and that there are general strategies for doing so; (2) develop an understanding of the connection between certain words and the way they look on a page; and, (3) fosters the awareness that there is a pattern of regularity in the correspondence between letters and

sounds. Children entering school who have enjoyed storybook reading at home bring this knowledge with them. They already know how books work and therefore are confident and at ease with something they have, literally, grown up with.

Sulzby's (1985) developmental study of reading behaviors, based on the observation of preschoolers as they 'pretend read' their favorite books, added further insight into the importance of early parent-child storybook reading. She described a progression of changes in behavior, ranging from the least mature re-enactments, such as labelling and commenting, to independent reading from print, or in other words, from picture-to print-governed attempts to read, from no attention to the print to the print being watched. These changes in behavior did not occur in a lock-step progression but tended to reflect a developmental pattern as the children moved from 'pretend' reading toward 'real' reading. From her findings, Sulzby concluded that (1) 'pretend' reading allowed the children to role-play, to re-enact and try out behaviors, skills, and thinking processes that are all a part of reading, and (2) that young children who are read to before coming to school can and do enter into an understanding of the relationship between oral and

written language within a social context.

Like Sulzby, the importance of reading early to children was highlighted in Catherine Snow and Anat Ninio's research (1986). Their investigations are worthy of note because these investigators identified seven contracts or rules for storybook reading: (1) Books are for reading, not for manipulating; (2) In storybook reading, the book is in control, the reader is led; (3) Pictures are not things but representative of things; (4) Pictures are for naming; (5) Pictures, though static, can represent events; (6) Book events occur outside real time and (7) Books constitute an autonomous fictional world.

Snow and Ninio admit that these "contracts" and "metacontracts" between child and parent are not all-inclusive. Although there may be different or additional "tacit" rules of literacy applicable towards other parent-child dyads, social classes, or cultures the main point is that for preschoolers to be successful in literacy activities during their school years they need to be aware of "tacit" storybook rules.

Taylor and Strickland (1986) believed family storybook reading, seen as "a family legacy to be passed onto the next generation"(p.x) contained six important qualities to help "break the cycle of

illiteracy". Sharing storybooks: (1) helps children to build a storehouse of information that they will need as they learn to read and write; (2) helps children develop a sense of how stories are constructed, an important step to literacy learning; (3) provides children with a treasury of words that reinforce and extend meaning; (4) provides children with the opportunity to hear a variety of formal language patterns not encountered in everyday speech; (5) encourages children to engage in language play that parodies the sounds of language; (6) fosters children's ability to listen, which is an essential learning requirement in school.

Panofsky (1990) contributed to the understanding of parent-child storybook reading by focusing her research on describing the uses of language that children develop after years of book-reading experience. She hypothesized that these uses of language gathered through years of parent-child book-reading experiences are eventually transferred to success in school.

Preschoolers, who ranged in age from two to six years of age and who were from homes where reading was already viewed as an important early literacy experience, were video and audiorecorded during parent-child

storyreading. In analyzing the recordings, Panofsky found that the children's representational discourse could be divided into seven subfunctions. These were: (1) attentionals; (2) pictorials; (3) connectives; (4) inferentials; (5) emotives; (6) imaginatives; and (7) recitations. While pictorials, connectives and inferentials were the most frequently used utterances, all participants used all of the functions at one time or another with a moving back and forth between the functions. Panofsky believes that by identifying the representational functions inherent in parent-child storybook reading discourse, an instructional model to enhance the development of cognitive-language processes may be offered to children who have not been read to prior to attending school.

Based on findings in work carried out by Mandler and Johnson(1977), it is now evident that through storybook reading, children also learn how to use an internalized grammar for narrative and expository text to assist comprehension and to "take in" information from materials. Mandler and Johnson identified a formal device or 'story grammar' consisting of story characters, the problem(s), the setting, the relationship among episodes and the resolution.

Teale (1984) also believed that storybook reading

had a positive effect in developing: an awareness of and an appreciation for story grammar by familiarizing a child with literacy conventions and developing a tacit schema for stories. Story-book reading, through parent-child interactions, helps to internalize this process.

Yaden, Smolkin and Conlon(1989), in their two longitudinal studies, investigated the content and frequency of preschoolers' spontaneous questions during parent-child storybook reading with the prime objective of determining whether or not home storybook reading had more of an effect on the development of children's development of comprehension processes than on their print awareness.

Using middle to upper income children, aged three to five years old, Yaden and his colleagues audiotaped children's unprompted questions when parents read aloud to them at home. In Study 1, two boys were audiotaped twice a week for two years, generating 810 questions. In Study 2, four boys and three girls, who were recorded for one year, asked 1,915 questions. These queries were subsequently categorized according to inquiries about (1) pictures; (2) story meaning; (3) word meaning; or (4) graphic form (letters, punctuation or the printed word).

Analysis of the data indicated that between 40-60

percent of the children's questions were about pictures or illustrations, with decreasing percentages for story meaning, word meaning and graphic form. Although the children appeared to interpret the storybook from the pictures initially, over time some children began to focus more on the storyline. This was followed with a focus on the print to word match. Preschoolers, particularly between the ages of three and four years old, were more apt to see the reading act as an explanation of the pictures with the printing serving as labels for objects illustrated in the pictures. For preschoolers from age four and older, more interest was shown in other acts of the reading process such as story, plot and characters. Several mothers commented that their children tended to use language from the books they had read in order to describe frequent, everyday events. This indicated that children's oral language is enriched through book reading. This study reflected the theories of Vygotsky(1978,1986) in that initially, children's interests are global, but then become more specific or differentiated over time.

Yaden and his colleagues(1989) felt that they were unable to substantiate Schickedanz's hypothesis of storybook reading equally enhancing the development of print awareness or other graphic forms and awareness of

book conventions or book language. These latter terms refer to children becoming familiar with the look and direction of print, the fact that it was written by someone, and the idea that pages are turned to move through text. However, Yaden and his colleagues did conclude that storybook reading was instrumental in the development of *inner storying*. The concept of inner storying provides a model in the brain of the rhythms and patterns of written language, which is somewhat similiar to a child's acquisition of story grammar.

Another item of particular note in this study was the factor of parental reading style during the storybook sessions. The authors found that the majority of parents facilitated the child's exploration of the book. In other words, they did not take control of the interaction. When the parents did take control the child asked fewer questions. Findings from this study thus confirm findings from earlier studies (Ninio & Bruner, 1978; Panofsky, 1990) where it was found that the reading style of the parent has an impact on the effectiveness of storybook reading.

Social and Cultural Factors

The Connection between Vygotsky and Parent-Child Storybook Reading

As implied in the foregoing review of the research, literacy development is a social cultural activity highly related to people, their patterns of communication and their use of language to mediate day-to-day activities.

One of the theorists who has had the greatest influence on literacy researchers working from a social constructivist perspective is L.S. Vygotsky(1962,1978). Social constructivism is based on the premise that both social and cognitive structures begin and are situated in interactions among people. One of Vygotsky's concepts in examining people's language, thought, and cognitive development was to explain human learning and development in relation to interactions with others over time. Central to this process is the concept known as the zone of proximal development (ZPD). The ZPD refers to "the distance between a child's actual developmental level as determined through independent problem solving and [his or her] potential development level as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or a collaboration with more capable peers"

(Vygotsky, 1978, p.86).

Two very important conditions must be present for changes to occur in the ZPD. The first involves the notion of play, the capacity for imagination. It is through play that a new relationship is created between thought and real situations. This playfulness, which can be created between parent and child during storybook reading, reflects the interplay between imagination and reality.

The second condition for change in the ZPD is the capacity for one to make use of the help of others. As thinking is initially carried out through people in groups, over time the individual comes to control his/her own thinking and performance. Storybook reading personifies this concept by demonstrating that the parent, who is knowledgeable about the process, first guides or scaffolds the information for the child to understand, but soon the child will be able to do this him/herself.

Heath (1983), in her well-known ethnographic study (1969-1977) of the literacy behaviors of households in two working class communities in North Carolina, Roadville, a white working-class community and Trackton, a black working-class community, highlighted the social and cultural factors that impact preschoolers' literacy

development.

Although Heath considered these two communities to be literate communities as the adults could read and write what was necessary for their daily lives, she identified them as being *non-mainstream*. This description defined families as "not being school oriented, aspiring toward upward mobility through formal institutions, and providing enculturation which positively value routines of promptness, linearity and evaluative and judgemental responses" (1982, pg.52). Heath elaborated that in mainstream families the content and habits of the book-reading episodes are extended beyond the actual event itself. This means that when parents comment on a story and question the child on certain aspects of it, they help to link information in the text with the child's real life experiences and thereby help to extend and build the child's knowledge of literacy. Heath termed these parent-child interactions inherent during storybook reading as "*life to text interactions*" (1982, pg. 72). By parents helping their children, who were the story-listeners, to use knowledge of the world in order to make sense of the text, parents involved their children in bringing their own life experiences to the story. Thus, when parents read to their children, social interaction is

stimulated and learning enhanced.

Furthermore, in mainstream families, Heath found the parents' questioning techniques followed the organization of the story events which, in turn, tended to resemble the format of classroom questioning. Questions seeking factual responses were initially posed at the beginning of the book-reading episodes, and subsequently followed with more open-ended and affective questions.

Heath found that the Roadville children tended to do well in the first three grades as they came to school knowing the decontextualized nature of reading and treated written texts as artifacts. They knew the alphabet, could recognize their names and sit and listen to a story. They were also able to answer "what" questions. Although Heath found that book-reading episodes in the Roadville community tended to be similar to the pattern described by Ninio and Bruner (1978), she also noted that for Roadville children who were three years or older the nature of the interaction was quite different. Whereas before the children were encouraged to engage in a highly interactive participative role by asking questions or commenting on what they had heard, they were now encouraged to listen, store what they had heard and on cue from the adult,

answer a question. In contrast to the mainstream children, Roadville children encountered increasing difficulty in later grades when more emphasis was placed in responding to "why" questions, when their reactions or opinions to texts were elicited or when they had to summarize information.

Shared parent-child storybook reading was a rare event in the Trackton community. Children and parents did not interact in a dyadic manner as described by Ninio and Bruner, rather book reading events were carried out in the midst of an audience. Trackton parents did not ask their children to name and describe letters, words, pictures or text passages, neither did they allow time for the children to decode words or to practice reading. In fact, reading by oneself was seen as socially inappropriate. Children were not "preschooled" to view language in a decontextualized manner and talk about it in terms of its representational or expressive meaning, and as result Trackton children had extreme difficulties in school in "learning to read" and in later years in "reading to learn".

In summation, Heath determined that children from both communities did not do well in school as "they did not have the critical, aesthetic, organizational and

recreational uses for reading and writing, skills which are necessary for school-oriented discussions of literacy" (1986,pg. 22).

In an effort to test the hypothesis that storybook reading is a distinct social practice, Phillips and McNaughton(1990) gathered data on the frequency, nature and content of preschool reading practices in ten middle-class Anglo families living in Auckland, New Zealand. Storybook sessions were audiotaped and all verbalizations by the reader (usually the mother) and children were analyzed and coded. The data revealed the extensive scaffolding instruction that took place during the mother-child interactions and the jointly participatory discourse had only one goal in mind: to construct meaning from the text. Through adult questioning and statements voiced during the reading sessions, the children were able to experience decontextualized language.

The authors concluded that children who do not acquire decontextualized language skills will encounter difficulty in school. This may be one of the reasons why middle-class or mainstream children do better in school than those from different socio-cultural groups where storybook reading is not seen as a social practice. In their opinion, storybook reading offered a

double bonus for children. First, it created an avenue through which children could become active learners in a literate environment and second, the environment in which storybook reading is practiced created an active socializing setting in itself.

Phillips and McNaughton further believed that although print concepts such as letter or word knowledge or directionality were not explicitly referred to by the mothers during the reading session, implicitly, the children became vessels for this knowledge. They found that families who practiced storybook reading also engaged in a number of writing activities, which helped to explain why the children, upon entering kindergarten, were able to identify most letters of the alphabet.

In another study that focused on the relationships between families' socio-cultural and ethnic-cultural backgrounds and families literacy practices, Leseman and de Jong (1998) analyzed book reading events of Dutch, Turkish and Surinamese parents and their children who attended inner-city elementary schools in the Netherlands. Video recordings of the joint sharing of picture books between mother and child were examined for four features: (1) the degree of literacy-related interactions offered to the child; (2) the social emotional quality of the interaction between mother and

child; (3) the procedural quality or the level of co-operation between mother and child; and (4) the instructional quality of the mother-child book reading interactions. They found that the parents' storybook reading instruction was influenced by the parents' own literacy practices which were, in turn, influenced by the parents' education, employment and ethnicity. In particular, views on how to read to a child differed within Dutch, Turkish and Surinamese families. Dutch mothers tended to read, evaluate and extend the topics read whereas Turkish and Surinamese families conducted book reading like that of religious memorization practices: Mothers would read and the child would repeat verbatim.

At the conclusion of their investigation, Leseman and de Jong found that (1) a child's reading achievement in school is directly proportional to the opportunity for literacy learning at home; and (2) the socio-emotional quality of literacy instruction indirectly affected the opportunity to engage in literacy acts.

The authors felt these findings had implications for the design of family literacy programs, especially for those programs which narrowly focus on offering opportunities for families to engage in literacy activities only rather than also dwelling explicitly on

the nature of the interaction itself. Leleman and de Jong have a rather grim outlook in terms of the role of storybook reading in a child's development. They suggest that increasing a child's literacy will only happen if there is a change in the parent's education; job content and literacy lifestyle.

Wells (1985) conducted a study to investigate preschool literacy-related activities and their effects on school attainment with children ranging from 1-1/2 to 3-1/2 years old during three month intervals over the course of a year. He wanted to find answers to two questions in particular: (1) Which of the following were more strongly associated with progress in the early stages of learning to read in school: looking at books or other printed material; listening to a story being read or told from a book; drawing and colouring; and writing, and (2) Whether any of these activities helped the child cope with the oral language demands of the classroom - in particular, the request for display of knowledge or competence.

In analyzing the data, Wells found that listening to stories was *the* most distinguishing characteristic held in common by the children judged competent in oral language in the classroom context. Wells believes that storybook reading provides the child with knowledge of

the following levels or functions of written language: (1) performative (decoding); (2) functional (how print is used); (3) informational (communication of knowledge); and (4) epistemic (where language structures become an integral part of a child's way of thinking and acting).

He also believes it was not only listening to stories that helped the children with the "reflective, disembedded thinking" (Wells, 1985, p. 253). which is a prerequisite for success in school but that it was "the complete interaction between the child and the story that was beneficial" (Wells, 1985, p. 253). Wells further concluded that inner representations of the world could be enriched only through discussion of the story - relating the story to a child's own experiences accompanied by the child's reflection and questioning about the events in the story, their causes, problems, consequences, and significance (Wells, 1985). Wells concluded that language is the *modus operandi* by which these representations operate. Children and parents need to be aware of this. Wells further concluded that when a child listens to a story, the child experiences "the sustained organization of written language and ... its characteristic rhythms and structures ... and language alone is used to create experience" (p. 251).

Meta-Analysis Studies

During the last thirty years an increasing amount of empirical data has accumulated on the efficacy of parent-child storybook reading. In their meta-analysis of the research, Scarborough and Dobrich(1994) reviewed the data to determine if reading to preschool children fostered children's literacy development as stated in many research studies and if the statement by the Commission on Reading, National Academy of Education was accurate. This statement claimed that reading to young children "is the single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading"(Anderson, Heibert, Scott & Wilkinson, 1985, pg. 23).

Through examination of the research, childrens' achievement tests, emergent literacy skills, oral language abilities, socio-economoc status and attitudinal differences, Anderson and his colleagues found that only about 8% of the variance could be predicted between children being read to by their parents and concurrent or subsequent literacy success.

Their investigations found five surprizing elements in the accumulated research: (1) the small number of published research studies; (2) the wide variability of

correlation results contained in the samples even though similar outcomes were being measured; (3) the low correlational magnitude of .24 or lower between parent-preschooler reading frequencies and children's language literacy abilities; and (5) inappropriate measures or too few studies investigating the quality of parent-child shared book reading. As suggested by this literature review it is the quality of parent-child interaction during storybook reading that had a more direct impact on a child's language and literacy development.

Although Scarborough and Dobrich concluded there was a modest reliable relationship between parent-preschooler storybook reading and childrens' literacy development, they thought that parent-child storybook readings in and of itself should not be viewed as a panacea in fostering early language development and subsequent later success in reading. In fact, the authors did not agree with the claim made by many researchers that just the opportunity for the parent and child to engage in reading storybooks would make a positive difference on how children performed on school reading tasks. There was a valid reason why children, upon entering school, have widely differential literacy skills: the quality of the reading during shared book

reading sessions. Scarborough and Dobrich believe that the focus of investigation related to parent-child storybook reading should shift towards the role of motivational factors in literacy acquisition.

In response to Scarborough and Dobrich's meta-analysis, Bus, van IJzendoorn, and Pellegrini (1995) conducted their own comprehensive, quantitative meta-analysis related to parent-preschooler joint storybook reading. They focused on reviewing studies which examined the frequency of storybook reading as this measurement was the one most commonly employed in the majority of the studies they reviewed. They concluded that there was very little data that investigated the qualitative differences in book reading, for instance, differences in parental reading style.

Similar to Scarborough and Dobrich, Bus et al. recognized the key role played by parental support of the reading act but they were much more supportive of interactive, storybook reading as "one of the most important activities for developing the knowledge required for eventual success in reading"(pg. 15). Even for low socioeconomic families, where parents had low levels of literacy to begin with, they found book reading increased children's knowledge of literacy conventions. The strongest effect was on language

skills, most notably in familiarizing children with the more formal written language register, a prerequisite for reading comprehension.

Bus and her colleagues supported the transmission of literacy through intergenerational, family literacy programs, programs which endeavored to stimulate parent-child book reading and prepare children for beginning reading instruction in school. These authors, too, would like to see more empirical research data conducted on the quality of adult storybook reading styles and its impact on a child's emergent literacy skills. They recommend more investigations on the book reading conditions which foster preparedness for reading in the primary grades.

Summary and Implications

In this chapter a number of interrelated components concerning parent-child storybook reading have been explored and serve as the groundwork for this investigation.

First, historical antecedents beginning near the turn of the twentieth century with observations from Iredell(1898) and Huey(1906), to more recent research carried out by Teale(1984) and Whitehurst and colleagues(1988, 1994), have acquainted the reader with

the gradual evolution of storybook reading from an undervalued literacy activity to one viewed as an important predictor of a child's later success with literacy; from an activity seen in a simplistic, folksy light to one seen as containing complex dialogue and rich language opportunities.

Second, Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist perspective, in particular the concept of Zone of Proximal Development, has served as an important cornerstone in understanding not only human development and learning but how the concept applies to the interaction between parent and child when quality parent-child storybook reading is taking place.

Third, contributions from Sulzby (1985), Wells (1985), Snow and Ninio (1986) and Panofsky (1998) have revealed the incredible array of literate behaviors children come to learn through parent-child storybook reading.

Fourth, the mounting evidence contained in the research shared by Scarborough and Dobrich (1994), Bus, van IJzendoorn and Pellegrini (1995) and Leseman and de Jong (1998), suggest a shift of focus from research studying the quantity of parent-preschooler book engagements to studying the quality of the parent-child interactions during storybook reading. This change in

thinking has important implications for all literacy providers as it indicates a new direction for: (1) researchers as they continue to investigate the learning that takes place during storybook reading and (2) programmers who provide early childhood literacy intervention strategies for parents and children.

The next section of this literature review provides a sampling of preschool literacy programs that emphasize storybook reading as an integral part of their activities.

**A Sampling of National and International
Preschool Family Literacy Programs That Include A
Parent-Child Storybook Reading Component**

**Talk to a Literacy Learner or (TTALL), New South
Wales, Australia**

The Talk to a Literacy Learner or TTALL was developed in response to a New South Wales state government initiative as part of the International Literacy Year in 1990. It was designed to focus on parent interaction with their children, specifically, the strategies that parents use as their children read and write. Over a period of 18 months, 25 parents with 34 children, aged one to twelve years of age,

participated in an educational program to: (1) increase parental participation in the literacy activities of their children; (2) change the nature of the interactions adults have with children as they read and write; (3) introduce parents and their children to a range of literacy practices which are related to success in schooling; (4) train community resource people who could be deployed in a wide range of community literacy activities; (5) raise community expectation concerning literacy and education; and (6) serve as a catalyst for a variety of community-based literacy initiatives. The program was evaluated against a randomly selected control group of 75 students who did not participate in the program. The results from the qualitative and quantitative analysis concluded that the program had a positive impact in the following areas: (1) increasing parent-child interactions; (2) awareness of reading and writing strategies; (3) knowledge about choosing resource materials, helping children with book selections and using libraries more effectively; (4) knowledge about writing, reading and spelling as well as about learning in general; (5) parental sharing of insights outside the family; (6) understanding of schools; (7) parental confidence and self esteem; (8) children's literacy performance levels, attitudes and

interests and; (9) involvement in school activities, classroom work and school decision making (Cairney & Munsie, 1995).

The Fun and Learning Centre of the Fogo Island Literacy Association, Fogo Island, Newfoundland
The Read With Me Program

Kindergarten teachers in the local school were noticing that many children were coming to school with few school-related early literacy experiences. Children did not know that: (1) books could be used to tell stories; (2) books begin at the front cover and; (3) books contain pictures and words which tell a story.

In collaboration with the local school, Venture Academy, Human Resources Development Canada and the Fogo Island Literacy Association, the *Read with Me Program* was established with the objective of increasing exposure to books for children between the ages of 2-5.

The program is delivered by primary school teachers one afternoon each week. A classroom in the school operates as a book lending library. Children are able to take home a book bag which contains a set of five books. They also receive a cloth bag with crayons, safety scissors and a pencil to motivate children to engage in extended print-related literacy activities at home (Thomas, 1998).

**The Early Childhood Centre, Victor Mager School,
St. Vital School Division, Winnipeg, Manitoba**

As well as serving as the site for a wide spectrum of family services which include classes for adult English as a second language, daytime adult General Education Dipoma (GED) and evening adult basic upgrading classes, adult pre-employment and job re-enty programs, and the parent computer program, the school also serves as a site for an *Early Childhood Centre*. Funding for the Centre comes from the National Literacy Secretariat, the provincial government and the school division

Since 1988, the Centre has been designed to offer educational experiences for parents and preschool children every morning and afternoon, Monday to Thursday. A teacher and instructional aide staff the Centre. Through storytelling, songs, rhymes and shared storybook reading as well as sand, water table and craft activities, 250 parents and children take full advantage of these various learning opportunities. They have come to rely upon the Centre not only in terms of it being a place where children can learn new academic and social skills but it is also viewed by parents as a place for guidance, support and friendship(Thomas, 1998).

**Parenting and Family Literacy Centres, Toronto
District School Board, Toronto, Ontario**

In 1980 the Board was concerned with the low level of academic performance of its students and the high percentage of school dropouts from inner city schools. Armed with a body of research which cited parental involvement as the key to young children's academic success, the Board implemented a policy for the creation of Parenting Centres. It was felt that the preschool years in the home were the most crucial for a child's success or failure in school. As parents are the child's first and most influential teacher, teaching the "teacher" or parents on how to read with their children before coming to school, would eliminate many problems which developed later in a child's school life.

During formal story time parents have reading techniques modelled for them. There are many informal times for parents to read with their children as well. Program delivery always happens in the schools. Early, daily positive contact between school staff and parents and children increases the likelihood that parents will stay involved with the school. Involved parents can increase a child's academic success. Funding for the Centres is through the Board's Department of Continuing Education but there remains a strong link between this

department and the Early Childhood Education Department.

The Centres are seen as the first step in the literacy continuum(Thomas, 1998).

**The Sheffield Early Literacy Development Project
Sheffield, England**

The project's purpose was to find practical ways of working with parents, many of them disadvantaged, to promote preschool literacy development in the home. Parents and children who were approximately 2.5 to 3 years of age were provided with literacy materials, six fortnightly visits by one of the project researchers, and regular meetings with parents to give them an opportunity to share their experiences with the project. Results from the data gathered revealed that parents providing opportunities for book sharing was one of the most striking positive changes documented in the range of literacy experiences offered. Further long-term research is required to document the school success of these students(Hannon, 1995).

**The Kenan Trust Family Literacy Project,
Louisville, Kentucky, United States**

This community-based program in Kentucky and North Carolina was designed to "help break the cycle of poverty and illiteracy in families with low literacy

levels' (Morrow et al., 1995) by improving parents' basic education skills as well as enhancing their children's ability to learn. Ninety-five percent of the participants were unemployed and received government assistance. Candidates for this program met the following criteria: (1) parents who did not work outside the home, and who could, over a period of 18 months, devote several hours each week to the program and, (2) parents who had a preschool child from three to five years of age.

The program is facilitated by three staff members, including an early childhood education teacher, an aide, and volunteers. Components of the program included: adult education, early childhood instruction, parent support groups and parent-child interaction groups. A typical day would involve: (1) 8:45 to 10:45 a.m. parents received basic skills instruction or employment preparation training; (2) 10:45 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., parent break; (3) 11:00 to 11:45 a.m., parents joined children for learning activities; (4) 11:45 to 15:15 p.m., parents and children had lunch together; (5) 1:00 to 2:30 p.m., parents had a large group discussion centered on parenting skills.

According to a 1990 summary report on the Kenan Trust Family Literacy Model, 90 percent of the parents

stayed with the program for its duration. They either received a GED (General Education Diploma) or an alternative high school diploma. In fact some of the parents were hired in the schools after completing the program while others subsequently enrolled in technical schools or colleges. Some entered the work force for the first time. The children, of whom many were labelled as being 'at risk', were in the upper half of their primary classes with positive attitudes about school, good attendance, motivation to learn and social maturity.

Funding sources consisted of government agencies, literacy volunteer organizations, corporations, local and national foundations and private individuals (Morrow, 1995).

The Even Start Family Literacy Program, United States

In 1989 the United States Department of Education launched the *Even Start Family Literacy Program* for at risk children and their families. It was a comprehensive, intensive, integrated and collaborative effort. Through its combination of adult parenting and childhood education it sought to address three of the eight United States national education goals to be

achieved by the year 2000.

Goal 1: All children in America will start school ready to learn.

Goal 6: Every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

Goal 8: Every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children.

Family eligibility consisted of either an adult member who was not attending school or a teen-age mother who lacked basic education skills and was a parent of a child younger than eight years old.

The *Even Start Family Literacy Program* is a cost

shared program between federal and state governments with a collaborative effort between teachers, social workers and home care aides. Support services can include childcare, transportation, crisis intervention counseling, nutritional services, social services and health referrals. Of particular note are the home-care aides who may be teachers, social workers or aides who can assist families in finding housing or help with substance abuse, but the main purpose is to meet the educational needs of the children by working with parents to improve the literacy environment in the home.

An evaluation of the program was carried out in 1990 with encouraging results confirming the importance of intensive, early childhood education and parenting education in improving the children's readiness for school and literacy. Study findings indicated that *Even Start* children(those from age three to five) whose parents had received parenting instruction regarding literacy in the home had an increased vocabulary level as opposed to *Even Start* children whose parents had received very little instruction (Morrow, 1995).

CHAPTER III

Method

The purpose of this study was to determine if there were school divisions in the Greater Winnipeg area that supported preschool family literacy programs and, if so, to discover the role assigned to parent-child storybook reading within these programs.

This chapter begins by describing how: (1) preschool family literacy programs supported by school divisions in the Greater Winnipeg area were identified; (2) a sample for study was selected; and (3) data, including participant interviews, interview verifications and program session observations, were collected. The chapter concludes with a description of the measures used to analyze and interpret the data.

Procedure

Creating a Database

As outlined in Chapter 1, the first step was to identify existing preschool family literacy programs in the Greater Winnipeg area that were supported by school divisions. Telephone contacts were made with either the school division superintendents, early childhood or

language arts consultants in each of the nine Greater Winnipeg school divisions. (See Appendix A for telephone protocol.) The telephone survey resulted in the identification of four preschool literacy programs sponsored by school divisions.

Participants

The facilitators/instructors and school principals at the four sites were subsequently invited, by letter (Appendix B), to participate in audio-taped, individual, semi-structured interviews about their programs. Accompanying the letter were both a consent form and a copy of the interview questions. (Appendices C and D.) During a follow-up telephone call to answer questions concerning the study, a convenient time was arranged for program facilitators/instructors and school principals to be interviewed at each literacy program's school site. Except for one program facilitator/instructor and one school principal, who were audio-taped separately, all program facilitators/instructors and school principals were jointly interviewed. Permission was also sought to observe each program in operation so that the investigator could document a typical session and invite a small group of parents from each of the programs to volunteer to be interviewed.

In receiving permission to approach the parents, a brief information-sharing meeting, organized with the assistance of the program facilitators/instructors, was held in each literacy program, either one or two weeks prior to the actual interviews. During the meeting at each program site, the nature of the study was explained with an open invitation for parents to participate. Those who expressed interest were then given a cover letter, consent form and a copy of the interview questions. (See Appendices E, F and G.)

A total of 16 adult participants, who were all parents of preschoolers, volunteered for these interviews. Each literacy program's parents were either audio-taped as a group at the program's school site or in one of the parent's homes. Specifically, three parents at Site Number 1, five parents from Site Number 4, as well as one parent from Site Number 3, were interviewed at each program's school site. Five parents from Site Number 2 were interviewed in a parent's home with a similiar method being carried out for two parents from Site Number 3.

The audio-taped interviews for both the facilitators/instructors, principals and parents were then transcribed, summarized and given to the respective participants to verify the accuracy of the information.

Method of Data Analysis

After a brief description of each program studied, specific segments of Nickse's three-stage conceptual heuristic for evaluating family literacy programs as described in A Typology of Family and Intergenerational Literacy Programs (1991) were applied in analyzing the data. This particular evaluative framework was chosen because Nickse's heuristic offered an organized, broad yet concise framework in which the design, implementation and evaluation of family literacy programs could be studied. Consequently, the characteristics of each of the family literacy programs studied were matched against those of Nickse's to determine degree of similarity.

Nickse's first level of analysis. The first level of study examined the preschool literacy programs from the perspective of design type, and classified each program as being either: (1) parent/child; (2) adult/child; (3) adult alone and (4) child alone.

Nickse's second level of analysis. At the second level, the programs were evaluated according to whether they were designed with or as a result of (1) a pre-implementation survey or needs assessment; (2) accountability; (3) a formative evaluation in which pilot program information was collected and analyzed

(program clarification); (4) a measure of participant progress/satisfaction within the program; and (5) a study of the long term effects of the program on the lives of the participants.

While information pertaining to all five levels of analysis was directly sought from the facilitators/instructors and school principals, no formal measurements of participant progress or program impact by the investigator were carried out in the present study.

Nickse's third level of analysis. The third level of analysis probed more deeply into specific aspects of the literacy programs and the participants in each of the four programs. For this study the following 19 features were used to describe the family literacy programs investigated: These included a description of the: (1) target population; (2) community setting; (3) types of core and support services planned for or provided by the program; (4) staff involvement in the delivery of services; (5) funding arrangements and other program supports; (6) recruitment of participants; (7) instructional format; (8) selection of program materials, (9) attendance and participation strategies; (10) retention strategies, (11) staff development and volunteer training; (12) transportation

and child care services; (13) the provisions of workshops or activities for parents; and (14) assessment measures used to determine participant satisfaction with the program. In addition, the following items, which were not part of Nickse's conceptual framework but which were included in the interview with the facilitators/instructors and school principals, were also analyzed. These were: (15) the program's objectives; (16) the program's similarity to existing preschool family literacy programs; (17) the number of adult participants; (18) the number and ages of preschoolers and (19) the role of parent-child storybook reading in the literacy programs.

Limitations of the Study

This study may be limited by a number of factors.

It was difficult to collect accurate information on the number of preschool family literacy programs supported by Winnipeg schools and therefore, the number of programs investigated in this study was restricted in terms of numbers. Two school divisions did not respond to the investigator's request for information. In addition, school divisions did not seem to keep a central registry of preschool family literacy programs operating in their jurisdiction.

Observing the programs was a valuable exercise in meeting the program participants and in viewing the programs 'in action'. However, conducting only one observation of the program may not have provided the time necessary for rapport between the participants and the observer to build, which may, in turn have had a limiting effect on the completeness of interview responses.

Information pertaining to Site 3 was not as complete as wished. A direct observation of the program was not possible due to poor participant attendance.

CHAPTER IV
Data Analysis

The purpose of this study was to determine whether: (1) there were preschool family literacy programs supported by schools in the Greater Winnipeg area, and in regard to the identified programs, (2) to discover how many and to what degree parent-child storybook reading was incorporated into the design of the program.

Descriptive Analysis of the Data

Description of the Programs Investigated

Of the four programs investigated, three were situated in Winnipeg School Division No.1 and one in the Fort Garry School Division No. 5. These programs were identified after contacting the respective school administrators in the nine Greater Winnipeg School divisions. The existing programs seemed to be the result of initiatives undertaken by individual schools rather than the result of initiatives on the part of the central administrations.

Site 1. As the first of three preschool literacy programs showcased in this study, Site 1 serves an

ethnically and socio-economically diverse inner-city community in Winnipeg School Division No. 1. Recently established in January of 2000, the program was modelled on the *Parent-Child Mother Goose Program* developed in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. The goal of the *Parent-Child Mother Goose Program* was to enhance language development and increase bonding between parent and child. A local church and the Orioles Adult Literacy Learning Centre funded the program. Participation in the program was voluntary and open to all parents and their preschoolers who resided in the school's catchment area. Twenty-one children, ranging in age from newborn to kindergarten level, attended with their parents/caregivers. Service was provided by two literacy co-facilitators/instructors, two child care workers and a few volunteers who were associated with the Orioles Adult Literacy Learning Centre. Sessions occurred every Tuesday between 9:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. and were divided into three distinct segments: (1) parent and child together; (2) snack for the participants and, (3) parent alone. An observation took place in the fifth session of the program's ten planned sessions. A portfolio of information describing details of the *Parent-Child Mother Goose Program* was shared with the investigator.

Site 2. Similar to Site 1, Site 2 also operates within a low-income community in Winnipeg School Division No. 1. The program, which targets three year-old preschoolers and their parents who reside in the school's catchment area, has been offered for the past six years. Initially modelled on the City of Winnipeg's library preschool literacy program, it has become an important component of the elementary school's schoolwide literacy plan. Sessions usually involved the reading of books to the participants by the program provider or guest readers as well as fun with nursery rhymes, songs, chants and finger plays. The school's teacher-librarian has served as the programs's faciliator/instructor with sessions held once a month, from October to June, 10:30 a.m to 11:15 a.m. Between eight and thirteen preschoolers, accompanied by their parents, voluntary attended the sessions. The observation of this literacy program occurred during the fifth session of the program's nine planned sessions. A one-page hand-out describing the program's rationale was provided to the investigator. The handout included dates and times for the monthly sessions.

Site 3. Located in the west central area of the

inner-city, Site 3 has served, for the past two years, an ethnically diverse, low-income community in Winnipeg School Division No. 1. Funding for the program was a joint effort between the federal government, the provincial department of Adult Literacy and Continuing Education, and the school division. Consequently, this program's design was somewhat unique as compared to the other programs investigated as (1) an adult education component was included in the program's methodology and (2) the program included preschoolers and school-aged children, the school-aged children leaving class to participate. While the program's main focus was to help improve parents' reading and writing skills and to increase the opportunities for bonding between family members through collaborative writing projects, the program also sought to enhance parents' computer literacy skills. The program, which has been in operation for the past two years, was provided by one facilitator/instructor and one child care worker. Sessions, offered during October through to May, were held twice a week from 1:00 p.m to 4:00 p.m. Seventeen participants attend the program, of which four were preschoolers. Attendance was voluntary even though families registered to attend the program. Although the

investigator made two attempts to observe a program session, on both occasions only one of the seven registered parents actually attended. A newspaper clipping highlighting last year's graduation of the program's participants was shared with the investigator.

Site 4. This site serves a community of disparate socio-economic levels and subsidized housing accommodations in Fort Garry School Division No. 5. Similiar to Site 1, Site 4 was originally modelled on the *Parent-Child Mother Goose Program*, although in its two years of existence, adaptations and extentions have been made. While the program invites all preschoolers and their parents who reside in the school's catchment area to attend, the program implicitly attempts to target families who cannot afford the expense of enrolling their child(ren) in private preschool programs or the cost of admission or transportation for visiting learning venues in the city, such as museums or the zoo. Funding for this and next year's programs has been provided by the school division, a tri-partite government funding agreement and a civic charity. Program sessions are managed and instructed by one

literacy provider and are held in nine week blocks every Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Each session is divided into six segments. They are: (1) parents and children mingle/play together; (2) first circle time where the group chants or sings nursery rhymes, songs, or chants; (3) book making or craft activity; (4) snack for the participants; (5) second circle time where storytelling is carried out by the instructor; and, (6) checking out books from the program's library. Approximately 12 children attend the program ranging in age from newborns to five years of age. An observation of this literacy session occurred during the fourth week of the program's nine planned weeks. Documentation describing the program's goals and planned activities , including 1999's evaluative statistics, were shared with the investigator.

Research Findings

Existence of School-Supported Parent-Child Family Literacy Programs

The general question that guided the research was whether there were preschool family literacy programs situated in and supported by schools in the Greater

Winnipeg Metropolitan area and whether storybook reading was an integral literacy component of the programs.

The simple answer to the first part of this questions was yes, there were preschool family literacy programs situated in and supported by schools in the Greater Winnipeg Metropolitan area. Not many, but there were some. However, if one were to count the number of schools located in the Greater Winnipeg area and then compare that number of programs to the number of preschool family literacy programs functioning at the time of this investigation, one could conclude that preschool literacy intervention was not an important focus for many schools. One needs to remember, however, that the mandate of the public schools, as set down by government statute, is to assist children only when they enter the school system, which usually occurs when children enter kindergarten. Consequently, one of the the reasons that so few programs may exist is not only due to public policy but may be related to funding availability. Those programs in existence seemed to be operating as a result of initiatives by concerned school personnel with funding jointly provided through private sources, civic charities and government grants.

The second part of the question cannot be answered with a straight yes or no. The investigator found that all programs, either through direct instruction or indirectly through verbal reinforcement, encouraged parents to read to their children. However, Site Number 2 appeared to be the only one of the four programs investigated in which parent-child storybook reading was an integral design component modelled explicitly for the participants. Not only did the facilitator/instructor model for parents how to share the pleasure of reading with their child, but by accessing reading materials from the school's library parents could practice at home what they had learned at the program. Sites 3 and 4 also provided books for take home.

Community Partnerships

The second question dealt with the extent to which community partnerships were forged between schools and other family service agencies, such as child protection or social welfare agencies or the Public Health Nurse, in order to foster and support literacy in the early years (infancy to school entry).

A review of the data suggested that there were very

few community partnerships forged between schools and other family service agencies to foster and support preschool literacy. There did not appear to be a sharing of information between schools and other service agencies in regard to meeting the needs of program participants, or sharing ideas on instructional format. Site 4 seemed to be the only program which had established contact with (1) a family service agency, in particular, Winnipeg Child and Family Services, Southwest Area Council and (2) the Public Health Nurse. The former appeared to be for funding purposes and the latter for facilitating at parent meetings. The data revealed that no contact had been established between the other three sites and any family service agency.

The Effects of Parent-Child Storybook Reading

The third question was concerned with whether program developers and/or participants expected parent-child storybook reading to lead to other positive changes within the family.

Parents who were respondents in the personal interviews did not feel that parent-child storybook reading had led to other positive changes in their

lives. Many of the parents reported that they already valued parent-child storybook reading prior to coming to the program and had read to their children since infancy. They, therefore, did not see any overall changes in their or their children's lives as a result of storybook reading. For those for whom reading to their children was a new experience, participation in the program was so recent that they were unable to respond to the question.

The social connectedness aspect offered by the programs was quoted by many of the program providers and participants. Parents were interested in meeting new people and talking to someone who also had children the same age. Parents also found that the programs created opportunities for their children to learn to play together with other children in a positive manner.

It was found that this question did not have a great deal of applicability to the programs investigated because, as suggested in the discussion of Question 1, the role given to parent-child storybook reading in three of the four programs was minimal. Singing and chanting rhymes and fingerplays was the dominant activity.

Positive Experiences for Participants

The next question sought to discover some of the positive experiences taking place for children and for their parents in the family literacy programs studied.

Although many of the parents involved in the programs already placed a high value on reading to their children at home and in engaging their children in other important home-based literacy experiences prior to participation, the programs did re-acquaint parents with the importance of oral language play with their youngsters through the sharing of nursery rhymes, finger plays, songs and chants. Parents, many of whom remembered doing these same activities with their own parents when they were children, had forgotten that it was a wonderful way to share the beauty and the rhythm of language.

Parents were under the assumption that print in a book had to be read word for word. During the interviews they mentioned that the idea of paraphrasing print in order to make the author's ideas more understandable to their child was an acceptable technique.

Although the programs were a wonderful extension to the literacy experiences of the preschoolers involved, of equal appeal to the parents, for themselves and for

their children, was the whole idea of being socially connected to others in their community. Parents were interested in meeting new people, in speaking with others who also had children of the same age and in discussing parenting ups and downs. For their children, the parents thought it very important that children learn to play in a positive manner with other children. Not only were the programs thought to offer opportunities for children to have fun playing together and making friends, but the programs were also seen as a preparation for instilling appropriate school-like behaviors such as respectful listening habits and attention to the task at hand.

Specific features of program design were valuable experiences that increased family bonding, for example, interactive play during nursery rhyme learning, writing a family history together, or having school-age children teach computer word processing skills to their parents. Both the facilitators/instructors and parents believed that participation in the programs opened parents' eyes to similar activities they could be doing with their children at home. Family literacy programs were viewed by program providers and school administrators as an

avenue by which families could assume the initiative for spending more time together as a family which could lead to the building of strong, functional families with a responsible outlook on life.

Summary of findings. There are very few preschool family literacy programs supported by schools in the Greater Winnipeg Metropolitan area. The reasons for this dearth of preschool initiatives may centre on educational policy, in particular, the mandate of schools and program funding.

Only one of the four investigated programs offered modelled storybook reading, in conjunction with this, convenient access to reading materials. Thus, parent-child storybook reading was not a predominant activity in three of the four programs.

There was very little inter-agency collaboration between schools and family service agencies, such as child protection and social assistance agencies as well as the Public Health Nurse, particularly in regard to proactive literacy interventions for parents of preschoolers.

Interview data revealed that storybook reading tended to be an established family practice in the household of many of the participants. In some

families, storybook reading was a too recent literacy practice and could not, therefore, be used as a benchmark to track positive change within the family. Positive comments were expressed by the participants in regard to engaging their children in oral language play through the sharing of nursery rhymes, finger play, songs and chants. Parents also valued having their children exposed to school-like routines. Two programs, (Sites 2 and 4) recommended the paraphrasing of print to make the language more understandable to the child. At Site 2, the literacy program provider also demonstrated questioning techniques for parents.

The responses to the questions that related to Nickse's framework for evaluating family literacy programs are described in the following discussions.

Nickse's First Level of Analysis

Nickse's first level of analysis focuses on how the four investigated programs would be classified in regard to design type: (1) parent/child (family literacy); (2) adult/child (intergenerational literacy); (3) adult alone (parent literacy) and (4) child alone (child literacy).

As shown in Tables 1a to 1d, the programs displayed

many of the characteristics associated with Type 1: Parent/Child, but not exclusively. Some programs were also characterized as Type 2: Adult/Child (intergenerational literacy); Type 3: Adult Alone(parent literacy) and Type 4: Child Alone(child literacy).

At Sites 3 and 4, an opportunity for parents and children to visit libraries and to make field trips were provided. This characteristic of offering part of the program's curriculum in 'adapted sites', fits the Type 2 category: Adult/Child.

Participants at Site 2, 3 and 4 had access to an in-house library of reading materials to borrow and take home. As well, while children and parents at Site 4 were encouraged to construct mini-books together for take home purposes, Site 1's participants also engaged in crafting activities. These 'take home' features belong in Type 4: Child Alone.

Parents at Site 1 participated in adult-only group storytelling. This latter characteristic is included in Nickse's features list for Type 3: Adult Alone.

The characteristic of "parent networking", as featured in Type 3: Adult Alone, was reflected in all the literacy programs studied.

Table 1a: Nickse's first level of analysis: Site 1

Type 1: Parent/Child Alone	Type 2: Adult/Child	Type 3: Adult Learner Alone	Type 4: Child Learner
<p>Goal is positive, long term family intervention</p> <p><u>Characteristics:</u></p> <p>parent/child:parent; child activities</p> <p>intense, frequent participation</p> <p>highly structured; formal instruction</p> <p>integrated curriculum</p> <p>direct instruction: dual curriculum</p> <p>monitored attendance</p> <p>long-term intervention</p>	<p>Goal is supplementary, for skill building and enjoyment.</p> <p><u>Characteristics:</u></p> <p>non-related adult and children</p> <p>lower level of intensity and participation</p> <p>less structured, more informal</p> <p>weekends, after school programs</p> <p>collaborations (none to many)</p> <p>adapted sites</p> <p>short-term intervention</p>	<p>Goal is parent education.</p> <p><u>Characteristics:</u></p> <p>parent/adults alone-children present infrequently or not at all</p> <p>workshop formats, low intensity</p> <p>peer instruction and practice</p> <p>"portable" curriculum</p> <p>parent networking</p> <p>short-term intervention</p>	<p>Goal is supplementary school related improvement for children.</p> <p><u>Characteristics:</u></p> <p>school-based parents, at home children</p> <p>school-linked program</p> <p>teacher supervised</p> <p>take-home materials for children</p> <p>short-term intervention</p>
<p>Goal is positive, long term family intervention</p> <p>parent/child:parent; child activities</p> <p>intense, frequent participation</p> <p>highly structured; formal instruction</p> <p>integrated curriculum</p> <p>direct instruction: dual curriculum</p> <p>monitored attendance</p> <p>long-term intervention</p> <p>Bold type refers to characteristics featured in the program.</p>			

Table 1b: Nickse's first level of analysis: Site 2

<p>Type 1: Parent/Child Alone</p>	<p>Type 2: Adult/Child</p>	<p>Type 3: Adult Learner Alone</p>	<p>Type 4: Child Learner</p>
<p>Goal is positive, long term family intervention literacy</p> <p><u>Characteristics:</u></p> <p>parent/child:parent; child activities</p> <p>intense, frequent participation</p> <p>highly structured; formal instruction</p> <p>integrated curriculum</p> <p>direct instruction: dual curriculum</p> <p>monitored attendance</p> <p>long-term intervention</p> <p>Bold type refers to characteristics featured in the program.</p>	<p>Goal is supplementary, for skill building and enjoyment.</p> <p><u>Characteristics:</u></p> <p>non-related adult and children</p> <p>lower level of intensity and participation</p> <p>less structured, more informal</p> <p>weekends, after school programs</p> <p>collaborations (none to many)</p> <p>adapted sites</p> <p>short-term intervention</p>	<p>Goal is parent education.</p> <p><u>Characteristics:</u></p> <p>parent/adults alone-children present infrequently or not at all</p> <p>workshop formats, low intensity</p> <p>peer instruction and practice</p> <p>"portable" curriculum</p> <p>parent networking</p> <p>short-term intervention</p>	<p>Goal is supplementary school related improvement for children.</p> <p><u>Characteristics:</u></p> <p>school-based parents, at home children</p> <p>school-linked program</p> <p>teacher supervised</p> <p>take-home materials for children</p> <p>short-term intervention</p>

Table 1c: Nickse's first level of analysis: Site 3

Type 1: Parent/Child Alone	Type 2: Adult/Child	Type 3: Adult Learner Alone	Type 4: Child Learner
<p>Goal is positive, long term family intervention</p> <p><u>Characteristics:</u></p> <p>parent/child:parent; child activities</p> <p>intense, frequent participation</p> <p>highly structured; formal instruction</p> <p>integrated curriculum</p> <p>direct instruction: dual curriculum</p> <p>monitored attendance</p> <p>long-term intervention</p> <p>Bold type refers to characteristics featured in the program.</p>	<p>Goal is supplementary, for skill building and enjoyment.</p> <p><u>Characteristics:</u></p> <p>non-related adult and children</p> <p>lower level of intensity and participation</p> <p>less structured, more informal</p> <p>weekends, after school programs</p> <p>collaborations (none to many)</p> <p>adapted sites</p> <p>short-term intervention</p>	<p>Goal is parent education.</p> <p><u>Characteristics:</u></p> <p>parent/adults alone-children present infrequently or not at all</p> <p>workshop formats, low intensity</p> <p>peer instruction and practice</p> <p>"portable" curriculum</p> <p>parent networking</p> <p>short-term intervention</p>	<p>Goal is supplementary school related improvement for children.</p> <p><u>Characteristics:</u></p> <p>school-based parents, at home children</p> <p>school-linked program</p> <p>teacher supervised</p> <p>take-home materials for children</p> <p>short-term intervention</p>

Table 1d: Nickse's first level of analysis: Site 4

Type 1: Parent/Child	Type 2: Adult/Child	Type 3: Adult Learner Alone	Type 4: Child Learner
<p>Goal is positive, long term family intervention</p> <p><u>Characteristics:</u></p> <p>parent/child:parent; child activities</p> <p>intense, frequent participation</p> <p>highly structured; formal instruction</p> <p>integrated curriculum</p> <p>direct instruction: dual curriculum</p> <p>monitored attendance</p> <p>long-term intervention</p> <p>Bold type refers to characteristics featured in the program</p>	<p>Goal is supplementary, for skill building and enjoyment.</p> <p><u>Characteristics:</u></p> <p>non-related adult and children</p> <p>lower level of intensity and participation</p> <p>less structured, more informal</p> <p>weekends, after school programs</p> <p>collaborations (none to many)</p> <p>adapted sites</p> <p>short-term intervention.</p>	<p>Goal is parent education.</p> <p><u>Characteristics:</u></p> <p>parent/adults alone-children present infrequently or not at all</p> <p>workshop formats, low intensity</p> <p>peer instruction and practice</p> <p>"portable" curriculum</p> <p>parent networking</p> <p>short-term intervention</p>	<p>Goal is supplementary school related improvement for children.</p> <p><u>Characteristics:</u></p> <p>school-based parents, at home children</p> <p>school-linked program</p> <p>teacher supervised</p> <p>take-home materials for children</p> <p>short-term intervention</p>

Summary of findings for Nickse's level 1.

Program characteristics largely resembled those of Nickse's Parent/Child category. However, some additional features from Nickse's three other design types: Adult/Child, Adult Alone and Child Alone were also present.

Nickse's Second Level of Analysis.

The question for study was to determine if any of the investigated programs were designed with or as a result of Nickse's second level: (1) a pre-implementation survey or needs assessment; (2) the desire for accountability; (3) the formative evaluation of a pilot program(program clarification); (4) the measuring of participant progress; and (5) studying the long-term effects of the program on the lives of participants.

Each of these program features is discussed in order.

Pre-implementation survey or needs assessment.

While none of the investigated programs formally conducted a pre-implementation survey or community needs assessment before becoming established, all program designers informally observed their school populations and the socio-economic realities of their communities and by doing so recognized the advantages, as reflected in the literature, of offering a preschool family

literacy program to preschoolers and parents.

While Site 4 engaged in an informal observation, they did take pre-assessment one step further than the other programs. They conducted, through a community meeting, a semi-formal needs assessment to determine the feasibility and level of support for such a program in their community, not only in terms of support from potential area participants but also in terms of monetary and volunteer support.

None of the programs explicitly targeted one particular socio-economic group over another, but stated rather that the programs were open to all parents and preschoolers in their communities. However, although Site 4 offered its program to all interested community residents who were the parents of preschoolers, they implicitly sought the parents of children who could not afford to send their preschoolers to privately run preschools nor afford transportation or admission costs to visit places of interest such as the zoo, museums, or swimming pools.

A variance in ages for participant children was also evident throughout the data. Even though the programs were identified as preschool programs, Sites 1, 2 and 4 accepted children who attended kindergarten. This was as a convenience for the parents who were already attending the program with their younger children.

Although the age focus at Site 2 was three year-olds, kindergarten-aged children and two-year olds were also

accepted into the program, particularly if the two-year-olds were able to sit and listen to the reading of a twenty minute story or story re-telling, or watch a puppet play or reader's theatre production without distracting the entire group. The main reason behind the decision to target three-year old children at Site 2, besides the purely academic one of exposing children to language and literacy through the program's activities, was to expose children to important school-like routines before they entered the school's nursery program the following year.

Those families who had preschool children and who wished to register for the program at Site 3, could only do so if their preschool children were between two and three years of age. The service providers felt that most children at this age level were usually quite verbal and would be able to contribute something to the stories the families were collaboratively writing.

Accountability. Although all programs kept a record of participants' attendance, Site 1 and 4 kept detailed records of attendance and a journal of literacy activities presented during each class. First, maintaining attendance records was thought to be a way to measure participant satisfaction with the program. It was thought that if participants were not satisfied with the program they would not attend. Subsequently, a dwindling attendance would

indicate that the way in which the program was designed was not meeting needs and therefore was not being accountable to the people it was designed to serve in the first place. Second, keeping accurate attendance records helped program providers, particularly in the case of Site 1 and 4, to secure further funding. In addition to the written program summary, Site 4 also held a yearly meeting of all stakeholders responsible in the creation of the literacy program.

Formative evaluation or program clarification.

All programs collected and analyzed data in order to ensure that their services met the needs of participants. Moreover, all programs, except for Site 2, employed formal, end-of-program written questionnaires as a means of obtaining feedback both from their participants and, where applicable, volunteers.

Site 2 opted for a more informal method of discerning whether or not the program was meeting the needs of participants. Near the end of every monthly session, five to ten minutes were spent by the program facilitator/instructor speaking to the parents and children about the day's literacy events. This informal gauging of opinion offered the facilitator/instructor insights into how the parents and children felt about the session and whether changes for the next session needed to be made in the

selection of materials, activities or method of presentation.

Sites 1 and 4 sought formal written feedback at the termination of each nine week literacy session. A summary of the feedback was disseminated to everyone involved with the program.

Two written questionnaires a year, as designed by the provincial education's department of Adult Literacy and Continuing Education, were completed by the facilitator/instructor and participants at Site 3.

Measuring participant progress. None of the investigated programs formally charted or measured individual participant progress, in terms of literacy development, neither did any of the programs provide written goals or objectives for families.

Contained within Site 4's adult questionnaire were two questions which attempted to understand how participant's viewed their progress in the program. The questions asked were: (1) What did you and your child accomplish? and (2) Were you able to carry over ideas and activities to the home setting during the week? Answers to these questions were dependent on what information parents wished to share with the program providers.

Site 1's facilitators/instructors felt the participants were making progress if a positive change was observed in the manner in which the parents participated during the

parent/child sessions or the adult-only group storytelling segment. For example, if an individual, who was initially very quiet and nervous when speaking in a group, would become more verbal and animated over time, then this would be viewed as a positive change in behavior.

A number of informal observations conducted by the facilitator/instructor or parent testimonials measured participant progress at Site 3. Progress was assumed to be made if the programs's facilitator/instructor noticed increased quality in the parent's and/or children's writing, families showed an increased interest and involvement in their community, and parents demonstrated an increased awareness in the importance of family literacy and reading if they presented books as gifts to their children.

Program impact on participants. Based on the information collected by the investigator, it appeared that no longitudinal data on individual or group changes or comparisons of the effects of different literacy interventions had been developed to determine if the current program was having an effect on program participants or indeed, if or how the current program could have a greater impact. All the programs relied on adult testimonials or instructor observations to determine if the program was having any effect on participants and their families.

Although no data were collected detailing the impact of

the program on participants, Site 2, which was established in 1994, reported that the children who had attended the program in previous years were observed as being very self-confident when they entered the school's nursery program for the first time. The children, through contact with various school staff members who were guest readers in the literacy program, recognized these individuals and therefore felt they already "knew" many people in the school. In addition, children had, through participation in the program, equated the school as being a fun, safe place to learn about new things and new ideas, especially the wonder of reading.

Site 4, in its endeavor to validate the positive impact the program was seen to be having on kindergarten-aged children who had attended the program, planned to initiate an informal observation of these children through an assessment of their kindergarten-related literacy skills. Also, due to positive reports from both participants and the community regarding the literacy program, the school division was considering the establishment of a similiar program in another school in the division.

Site 1 anticipated that parents and children would be positively impacted from participation in the program, although they recognized that more parents and children could benefit from the program if they would attend. With this concern in mind, they felt that the addition of an out-reach worker, who could meet with parents in their homes and

encourage them to attend, would be extremely beneficial
Tables 2a-2d summarize these issues for each site.

Table 2a: Nickse's second level of analysis: Site 1

Purpose of Evaluation	Audiences	Strategies/Tasks	Types of Data to Collect/Analyze
<p>LEVEL 1 Needs Assessment (Pre-Implementation) To document the need for services</p>	<p>Potential participants funding organizations</p>	<p>Informal assessment by school principal & Co-ordinator of Parent Centre.</p>	<p>Observe skill levels of school population.</p>
<p>LEVEL 2 Accountability (Program Documentation) To determine who is receiving services and what services are provided</p>	<p>Adult participants funding organizations.</p>	<p>Track program attendance Informal observation parental participation.</p>	<p>Monitor attendance.</p>
<p>LEVEL 3 Formative Evaluation (Program Clarification) To improve services to participants</p>	<p>Adult participants, volunteers and funding organizations.</p>	<p>Participant and volunteer satisfaction with the program.</p>	<p>Participant & volunteer satisfaction determined through written questionnaire.</p>

Table 2a: Site 1 continued

Purpose of Evaluation	Audiences	Strategies/Tasks	Types of Data to Collect/Analyze
<p>LEVEL 4 Program Progress To determine if participants are making progress</p>	<p>Funding agencies.</p>	<p>Observe change in adults attendance & participation in story-telling segment.</p>	<p>Attendance records.</p>
<p>Level 5 Program Impact on Participants To determine long-term effects on participants</p>	<p>Undetermined.</p>	<p>Undetermined.</p>	<p>Undetermined.</p>

Table 2a: Site 1 continued

Purpose of Evaluation	Dissemination of Findings	Program Planning
<p>LEVEL 1 Needs Assessment (Pre-Implementation) To document the need for services</p>	<p>Funding agencies.</p>	<p>Established preschool family literacy program at school site.</p>
<p>LEVEL 2 Accountability (Program Documentation) To determine who is receiving services and what services are provided</p>	<p>Written program summary to program participants & funding agencies.</p>	<p>Undetermined.</p>
<p>LEVEL 3 Formative Evaluation (Program Clarification) To improve services to participants</p>	<p>Summary of report to funding agencies and participants</p>	<p>Undetermined.</p>

Table 2a: Site 1 continued

Purpose of Evaluation	Dissemination of Findings	Program Planning
<p>LEVEL 4 Program Progress To determine if participants are making progress</p>	<p>Undetermined.</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>
<p>Level 5 Program Impact on Participants To determine long-term effects on participants</p>	<p>Undetermined.</p>	<p>Recommend hiring an outreach worker.</p>

Table 2b: Nickse's second level of analysis: Site 2

Purpose of Evaluation	Audiences	Strategies/Tasks	Types of Data to Collect/Analyze
<p>LEVEL 1 Needs Assessment (Pre-Implementation) To document the need for services</p>	<p>Not applicable to program.</p>	<p>Not applicable to program.</p>	<p>Not applicable to program.</p>
<p>LEVEL 2 Accountability (Program Documentation) To determine who is receiving services and what services are provided</p>	<p>Program participants.</p>	<p>Monitor attendance.</p>	<p>Maintain attendance records.</p>
<p>LEVEL 3 Formative Evaluation (Program Clarification) To improve services to participants</p>	<p>Program participants.</p>	<p>Participant satisfaction determined.</p>	<p>Informal chats with adults after each session.</p>

Table 2b: Site 2 continued

Purpose of Evaluation	Audiences	Strategies/Tasks	Types of Data to Collect/Analyze
<p>LEVEL 4 Program Progress To determine if participants are making progress</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>
<p>Level 5 Program Impact on Participants To determine long-term effects on participants</p>	<p>Undetermined.</p>	<p>Undetermined.</p>	<p>Undetermined.</p>

Table 2b : Site 2 continued

Purpose of Evaluation	Dissemination of Findings	Program Planning
<p>LEVEL 1 Needs Assessment (Pre-Implementation) To document the need for services</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>
<p>LEVEL 2 Accountability (Program Documentation) To determine who is receiving services and what services are provided</p>	<p>Program participants.</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>
<p>LEVEL 3 Formative Evaluation (Program Clarification) To improve services to participants</p>	<p>Program participants.</p>	<p>Changes to programming based on participant satisfaction.</p>

Table 2b: Site 2 continued

Purpose of Evaluation	Dissemination of Findings	Program Planning
<p>LEVEL 4 Program Progress To determine if participants are making progress</p>	<p>Undetermined.</p>	<p>Undetermined.</p>
<p>Level 5 Program Impact on Participants To determine long-term effects on participants</p>	<p>Undetermined.</p>	<p>Undetermined.</p>

Table 2c: Nickse's second level of analysis: Site 3

Purpose of Evaluation	Audiences	Strategies/Tasks	Types of Data to Collect/Analyze
<p>LEVEL 1 Needs Assessment (Pre-Implementation) To document the need for services</p>	<p>Not applicable to program design.</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>
<p>LEVEL 2 Accountability (Program Documentation) To determine who is receiving services and what services are provided</p>	<p>C.I.D.A & Continuing Education & Adult Literacy, program participants.</p>	<p>Undetermined.</p>	<p>Undetermined.</p>
<p>LEVEL 3 Formative Evaluation (Program Clarification) To improve services to participants</p>	<p>Program participants.</p>	<p>Participant satisfaction determined.</p>	<p>Questionnaires from Continuing Education & Adult Literacy.</p>

Table 2c: Site 3 continued

Purpose of Evaluation	Audiences	Strategies/Tasks	Types of Data to Collect/Analyze
<p>LEVEL 4 Program Progress To determine if participants are making progress</p>	<p>Funding agencies.</p>	<p>Undetermined.</p>	<p>Questionnaire from Continuing Education & Adult Literacy</p>
<p>Level 5 Program Impact on Participants To determine long-term effects on participants</p>	<p>Undetermined.</p>	<p>Undetermined.</p>	<p>Undetermined.</p>

Table 2c: Site 3 continued

Purpose of Evaluation	Dissemination of Findings	Program Planning
<p>LEVEL 1 Needs Assessment (Pre-Implementation) To document the need for services</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>
<p>LEVEL 2 Accountability (Program Documentation) To determine who is receiving services and what services are provided</p>	<p>Program participants.</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>
<p>LEVEL 3 Formative Evaluation (Program Clarification) To improve services to participants</p>	<p>Program participants.</p>	<p>Changes to programming based on participant satisfaction.</p>

Table 2c: Site 3 continued

Purpose of Evaluation	Dissemination of Findings	Program Planning
<p>LEVEL 4 Program Progress To determine if participants are making progress</p>	<p>Undetermined.</p>	<p>Undetermined.</p>
<p>Level 5 Program Impact on Participants To determine long-term effects on participants</p>	<p>Undetermined.</p>	<p>Undetermined.</p>

Table 2d: Nickse's second level of analysis: Site 4

Purpose of Evaluation	Audiences	Strategies/Tasks	Types of Data to Collect/Analyze
<p>LEVEL 1 Needs Assessment (Pre-Implementation) To document the need for services.</p>	<p>No formal assessment.</p>	<p>Implicitly designed for parents who cannot afford preschool programs or visit places of interest in the city.</p>	<p>Local demographics, skills of school population</p>
<p>LEVEL 2 Accountability (Program Documentation) To determine who is receiving services and what services are provided</p>	<p>Board of Directors, program participants, community stakeholders, school division, funding agencies.</p>	<p>Number of families in program, number of parents attending who also have children in school, number of volunteers, number of advertising posters & invitations to attend & to whom, number of books loaned to participants & number of literacy related articles taken by parents.</p>	<p>Track attendance.</p>
<p>LEVEL 3 Formative Evaluation (Program Clarification) To improve services to participants</p>	<p>As in Level 2 above.</p>	<p>Determine participant satisfaction.</p>	<p>Written questionnaire completed by participants.</p>

Table 2d: Site 4 continued

Purpose of Evaluation	Audiences	Strategies/Tasks	Types of Data to Collect/Analyze
<p>LEVEL 4 Program Progress To determine if participants are making progress</p>	<p>Undetermined.</p>	<p>Possible tracking of program children in kindergarten.</p>	<p>Observe children's literacy skills in kindergarten.</p>
<p>Level 5 Program Impact on Participants To determine long-term effects on participants</p>	<p>Undetermined.</p>	<p>Undetermined.</p>	<p>Undetermined.</p>

Table 2d: Site 4 continued

Purpose of Evaluation	Dissemination of Findings	Program Planning
<p>LEVEL 1 Needs Assessment (Pre-Implementation) To document the need for services</p>	<p>Observational report to program's Board of Directors, community stakeholders, & funding agencies.</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>
<p>LEVEL 2 Accountability (Program Documentation) To determine who is receiving services and what services are provided</p>	<p>Written program summary to Board of Directors, school division, program participants & funding agencies.</p>	<p>Undetermined.</p>
<p>LEVEL 3 Formative Evaluation (Program Clarification) To improve services to participants</p>	<p>As in Level 2 above.</p>	<p>Recruit more volunteers, especially Senior Citizens. Involve Special Needs children in the program. Offer a used clothing exchange.</p>

Table 2d: Site 4 continued

Purpose of Evaluation	Dissemination of Findings	Program Planning
<p>LEVEL 4 Program Progress To determine if participants are making progress</p>	<p>Undetermined.</p>	<p>Undetermined.</p>
<p>Level 5 Program Impact on Participants To determine long-term effects on participants</p>	<p>Undetermined.</p>	<p>Undetermined.</p>

Nickse's Third Level of Analysis

At this level, the question of how the programs met Nickse's third level of evaluation was investigated by applying the 14 specific design features of: (1) target population; (2) community setting; (3) types of core and support services planned for or provided by the program; (4) staff involvement in the delivery of services; (5) funding arrangements and other program supports; (6) recruitment of participants; (7) instructional format; (8) selection of program materials, (9) attendance and participation strategies; (10) retention strategies, (11) staff development and volunteer training; (12) transportation and child care services; (13) workshops or activities for parents; and (14) assessment measures used to determine participant satisfaction with the program. Five additional features included: (15) the program's objectives; (16) the program's similarity to existing preschool family literacy programs; (17) the number of adult participants; (18) the number and ages of preschoolers and (19) the role of parent-child storybook reading in the literacy programs.

1. **Target population.** As previously mentioned, all programs wished to serve parents and preschoolers who resided within their school's catchment areas and except for Site 4's implicit reference, programs did not explicitly target any

group based on socio-economic status.

As 'preschool' programs, the ages of children fell between newborns to, as noted in Site 1, 2 and 4, children up to five years of age. Although five year-olds may not be considered preschoolers, they were accommodated as a convenience to parents who were already bringing younger children to the programs.

2. Community setting. People responsible for the programs perceived that Sites 1,2 and 3 operated within poorer areas of the city and that Site 4 was situated within a less affluent enclave in a suburban neighbourhood. Descriptors (Nickse, 1991) such as poverty, unemployment, single-parentage, rental housing, ethnicity, second language, social assistance, and migrancy, describe, in varying degrees, each of the program's community settings. However, in observing and speaking personally to many program participants, the investigator found that many of these characteristics could not be said to describe all of the program participants at each site. During the observation, many parents seemed informed and well-educated.

3. Types of core and support services planned for or provided by the program. All programs provided positive literacy experiences for parents and children through either the role-modelling of literacy activities for

parents to do at home with their children or, at Sites 2, 3 and 4, providing program participants with opportunities to borrow resources from the program or school library.

As well as offering these important services to its participants, Site 4 intended to add to its services a used clothing exchange and child rearing workshops. These would be facilitated by division consultants and/or the Public Health Nurse. Field-trips to different venues in the city such as the zoo and museums were also part of their program.

4. **Staff involvement in delivery of services.** One facilitator/instructor was employed at Sites 2, 3 and 4. At Site 1, two co-facilitators/instructors delivered the program. Site 1, 3 and 4 also employed child care workers to supervise children.

5. **Funding arrangements and other program supports.** Funding issues were constant as a major concern at Sites 1, 3 and 4. In the case of Site 1, funding from a local church and adult parent centre provided sufficient funds to cover salaries and expenses for the number of sessions planned between January and May, 2000. Funding from the school division, plus a grant from the Winnipeg Development Agreement, covered the costs of operation for Site 4 until June of 2001. The principal funding source for

Site 3 was being withdrawn at the end of May, 2000. Funding did not appear to be a concern for Site 2 as (1) the program was implemented by the school's teacher-librarian during school hours, thereby, salary expenditures were non-existent and (2) expenses incurred by the program were so minimal they were easily handled by the school's budget.

6. Recruitment of participants. Program participants were recruited in a variety of ways. Common to all programs was the idea of advertising the program in the school's newsletter. For programs which had been established for a few years, such as Sites 2,3 and 4, literacy providers and school administrators perceived that word-of-mouth had worked well in informing parents in the community of the program's existence.

Site 2 had set up a web site on the internet to attract potential parents and preschoolers to its program. As well, Site 1 and 4 had requested their school's guidance counsellor and/or clinical staff to promote the program to their clientele.

7. Instruction format for the participants. The programs at Site 1 and 4 were modelled after the *Parent-Child Mother Goose* format. Through this method, the program's facilitators/instructors taught the parents how, through the

use of hand and body motions, to make nursery rhymes, stories, songs and fingerplays pleasurable language and literacy learning experiences for their children.

At Site 2, literacy through story reading, re-tellings, and plays was highlighted. However, the physical arrangement of parents and children differed from that of Site 1 and 4 as parents at Site 2 did not hold preschoolers who were two, three or four years-old on their laps. Rather, the children sat on the carpet while the parents sat on chairs behind the children. Both parents and children were a quiet, attentive audience for the facilitator/instructor or guest readers.

Site 3 sessions included time for families to collaborate on composing stories or family histories and transferring written work onto a computer disk. Computer literacy was provided through the facilitator/instructor but also by the families' school-aged children.

The adult-only group storytelling segment, as modelled in the *Parent-Child Mother Goose* program, was offered to Site 1 program participants. Here, children were left with the child care workers while the adults left to share together a short story, fable or folktale. Then, in a round-robin fashion, each participant shared a sequential part of what they remembered hearing. The object of this activity was to encourage parents to "tell" stories to their children at home. With no provision for child care, Site 4 had to

modify this part of the program for its participants. Consequently, the instructor re-told a story to the entire group of participants, who served as the audience.

8. Selection of materials for the program. All materials for the delivery of the programs were selected by the program's facilitators/instructors. As Site 1 and 4 closely followed the *Parent-Child Mother Goose* program, materials consisted of nursery rhymes, chants, songs, fingerplays, fables, folktales and short stories. Materials for Site 2 were comprised of all of the above with an addition of props for plays and reader theatre productions.

In addition, Site 1 and 4 also offered a variety of play centres to the young children. At Site 1, everything from recyclable containers such as cardboard bathroom tissue cylinders, aluminum pie pans, and styrofoam egg cartons were readily available to the children for craft projects. In addition, a toy centre and a do-it-yourself 'make and take' table were also available. Site 4 offered participants an opportunity to construct preprinted mini-books.

At the conclusion of the sessions, Site 1, 2 and 4 presented participants with a copy of all interactive materials used in all of the sessions. It was hoped that by doing so parents would have a resource that they and their children could re-visit and enjoy long into the future.

According to the available data, only Site 2 extended borrowing privileges to the program participants from the school's library. Site 4 had established their own in-house library from which parents could select children's books as well as books related to parenting topics. Site 3 had purchased a basal reading series which was kept in the program's classroom. In addition, many of the parents, who were interested in cooking, shared cooking magazines and cookbooks.

Access to computers was included at Site 3. Participants accessed either the one computer in the classroom or chose to use a computer in the school's computer lab.

9. **Attendance and participation strategies.** The data indicated that Site 1 was the only program that reminded parents to attend each session. One of the co-facilitators/instructors would telephone each adult participant a day in advance to remind them of the next day's session.

10. **Strategies for retention of participants.** It was felt by all the site's facilitator/instructors that participants would only remain with the program if they felt their needs were being met. If participants were happy with

the way the program was managed, or if they had built a trusting relationship with the facilitators/instructors and saw positive outcomes, they would remain with the program. If parents and children were not getting anything from the program, then attendance/participation would suffer.

11. Staff development and in-service training for the employees and volunteers. Site 1 program facilitators/instructors and child care workers, as well as the facilitator/instructor from Site 4, attended training workshops for the *Parent-Child Mother Goose* program.

Periodically, the facilitator/instructor of Site 3 attended literacy in-services facilitated by the provincial government's Continuing Education and Adult Literacy department.

Adult volunteers were not an integral part of any of the programs investigated. Site 3 selected school students to serve as 'buddies' for the preschoolers.

12. Transportation and child care services. Site 1 and 3 provided child care support. During the parent/child session in the multipurpose room, at Site 1, two child care workers were responsible for patrolling the periphery of the circle and watching that no children left their parents to run around the room. In this way they helped to ensure that

children remained with their parents to take full advantage of parent/child interaction time. In addition, they supervised the children when the parents attended the adult-only group storytelling session. They also prepared the childrens' nutritious snack.

Site 3's child care worker supervised the children who were not collaborating/writing with their parents.

Site 4 anticipated hiring a child care worker to supervise children whose parents would be attending parent workshops.

13. Workshops or activities for parents.

Site 4 was planning to offer additional resources related to child rearing to their participants. These resources would include classes for the *Nobody's Perfect Parenting Program*, informational meetings facilitated by the Public Health Nurse and clinicians from the division's support staff as well as possibly, computer workshops. In addition, and at no cost to the participants, excursions to swimming pools, public libraries, the zoo, and various museums were being contemplated.

Participants in Site 3's program occasionally visited bookstores and attended functions promoting family literacy.

Workshops for parents at Site 1 were not only for participants in the literacy program. As one of the

program's facilitators/instructors was also the director of the school's Parent Centre, parent workshops and informational meetings were routinely offered to all interested parents in the school's catchment area.

14. Assessment measures to determine participant satisfaction with the program. All programs maintained attendance records and as such used attendance levels to monitor participant satisfaction. As well as tracking participant satisfaction through attendance, three of the four sites, Sites 1, 3 and 4, requested parents, at program's end, to complete a written questionnaire about the program. Site 2 opted to track participant satisfaction by speaking directly to parents.

15. Program objectives. As these programs were labelled 'preschool literacy programs', their prime objective was to promote early literacy activities in the home as a shared family value. While enhanced literacy experiences for children were the *raison d'être* for the existence of these programs, a number of other important objectives were also noted. All the programs investigated mentioned the social implications associated with program attendance, not just from a purely social 'get-together' kind of aspect for the adults and an opportunity for the children to play with

peers, but also as an effort to interest parents in what was happening in their neighbourhoods.

16. Program similiarity to existing preschool family literacy programs. Programs at Sites 1 and 4 mirrored the oral language activities found in the *Parent-Child Mother Goose* program.

Site 2's design were fashioned after the public library's preschoolers program. In addition, many of the oral language activities attributed to the *Parent-Child Mother Goose* program were also part of the program's activities.

17. Number of adult participants. In total, between 30 and 34 parents/caregivers attended the four programs. The following table tabulates the number of adult participants attending each program.

<u>Name of Program</u>	<u>Number of Adult Participants</u>
Morning Funtime	11
Wee Readers Club	6-8
Wellington School Family Literacy Group	5
Story and Rhyme Time	8-10

Number and ages of preschoolers. In total, 59 preschool children ranging in age from newborn to age five

attended the four programs with their parents. The following table shows total numbers of attending preschoolers for each corresponding age range.

<u>Age Range</u>	<u>Number of Preschoolers</u>
0-1	5
1-2	12
2-3	17
3-4	15
4-5	10

19. The role of parent-child storybook reading in the literacy program's curriculum. Indirectly, parent-child storybook reading was encouraged in all programs. Site 4 participants constructed mini-books or families borrowed storybooks from the program's library. Likewise, parents in Site 3 may used books as references for the writing projects they undertook. During Site 1's storytelling segment, parents were not only encouraged to re-tell the various fables, folktales and stories they heard during the sessions to their children at home but to also read the written text form to their children.

Generally speaking, the emphasis placed on parent-child storybook reading in the program sessions dictated to what extent parent-child storybook reading was included in the

components of the program and how it was shared with the program participants. For instance, Site 2's main objective was to expose preschool children to the wonder of language through storybook reading. Naturally, parent-child storybook reading was very important in this program and the facilitator/instructor had chosen to demonstrate for parents the many positive techniques associated with parent-child storybook reading. In comparison, Sites 1 and 4 objectives were more heavily weighted to exposing children to the beauty of language through the oral language tradition of nursery rhymes, songs and fingerplays. Therefore, the same amount of time or the same instructional format was not the same as found in Site 2.

Summary of findings for Nickse's level 3. Tables 3a-3j detail the qualities of each literacy program as they pertain to Nickse's Level 3. Findings in general suggest:

1. Participants' attendance was strictly voluntary.
2. Many of the participants were parents who resided within catchment areas for the various schools.
3. Descriptors such as unemployment, single-parentage, rental housing, ethnicity, second language, social assistance and migrancy described, in varying degrees, each of the programs' community settings. However, many of the program participants did not fit these characteristics.

5. Two of the four programs were modelled on the *Parent-Child Mother Goose* program.
6. Many of the programs received short-term funding through government grants and civic charities.
7. Three of the four programs provided child care services.
8. Participant attendance tended to be used as the sole measure of accountability.
9. Ancillary services such as a used clothing exchange and informational meetings for parents were offered to participants in three of the four programs.
10. Attendance at program sessions ranged from as low as one participant to as high as 18, although it may be too early for such fledging programs to be held accountable for numbers.
11. Over half of the preschoolers who participated were between 2 and 4 years or age.
12. All programs made indirect references to the importance of parent-child storybook reading, but only one program modelled parent-child storybook reading.

Table 3a: Nickse's third level of analysis

Site Number of Literacy Program	Target Population	Community Setting	Types of Services Provided
Site 1	School catchment area parents/caregivers & pre-schoolers (infants to 5-year olds).	<p>Families in Eastern sector of school's catchment area: unemployment, single-family homes: mainly rental accommodation, English as a Second Language & First Nations families, high migrancy of families from area.</p> <p>Families in Western sector of school's catchment area: More stable families, many third and fourth generation children attend school.</p>	<p>Parent/Child group oral experiences with nursery rhymes, songs, chants & fingerplays.</p> <p>Group adult storytelling.</p>
Site 2	School catchment area parents/caregivers & three-year old pre-schoolers.	Single-parent families, families receiving social assistance, majority of families live in rental accommodation, high migrancy of families from the area.	Modelling of storybook reading, nursery rhymes, songs, chants and fingerplays.

Table 3b

Site Number of Literacy Program	Target Population	Community Setting	Types of Services Provided
Site 3	Parents, preschoolers, & school-age children within school's catchment area (preschoolers must be between two & three years old).	Diverse ethnic, inner-city community. Many English as a Second Language & First Nations families.	Composition & computer literacy skills. Field trips to bookstores & libraries.
Site 4	School catchment area parents/caregivers who cannot afford preschool programs or in visiting interesting places in the city.	Diverse economic levels. Many families live in subsidized housing, unemployed parents, also stay-at-home Mums.	<p>Parent/Child group oral language experience with nursery rhymes, songs, chants & finger-plays, group serves as an audience for program's facilitator/instructor storytelling.</p> <p>Parents/children construct mini-books. Book lending library, Fieldtrips, child-rearing workshops, used clothing exchange.</p>

Table 3c

Site Number of Literacy Program	Program Staff	Funding	Recruitment of Participants
Site 1	Two co-facilitators/ instructors. Two child care providers.	\$1,000.00 from local church. Employee salaries, training workshops & materials funded through Adult Literacy Centre.	Notice in school's newsletter and by word-of-mouth.
Site 2	One facilitator/instructor. Grade 2-6 students serve as buddies for preschoolers. If requested, assistance from staff members.	Funded through school's literacy plan.	Notice in school's newsletter and by word-of-mouth. Internet site.
Site 3	One facilitator/instructor. One child care provider.	Funded through grant from Community Education Development(C.I.D.A) & provincial education and school division.	Notice in school's newsletter.
Site 4	One facilitator/instructor. If requested, substitute-teacher-aides.	Monies from school division, civic charity & government grant.	Notice in school's newsletter & by word of mouth, posters to local Club, womens group clinicians, specific families.

Table 3d

Site Number of Literacy Program	Instructional Format	Selection of Program Materials	Attendance and Participation Strategies
Site 1	Play centres, parent/child oral language activities, snack, adult only story-telling.	Program's facilitators/instructors & parents.	Telephone call placed a day prior to session.
Site 2	Facilitator/instructor and/or guests perform for audience, snack.	Program's facilitator/instructor.	Unknown.
Site 3	Unknown.	Facilitator/instructor and parents.	Unknown.
Site 4	Play centres, parent/child oral language activities, snack, storytelling to group by program's facilitator/instructor.	Program's facilitator/instructor.	Unknown.

Table 3e:

Site Number of Literacy Program	Retention Strategies	Staff Development & Volunteer Training	Transportation & Child care Training
Site 1	Unknown.	All staff & volunteers have attended Parent-Child Mother Goose workshop.	No transportation provided. Child care provided during adult storytelling segment.
Site 2	Unknown.	Facilitator/instructor has registered to attend Parent-Child Mother Goose workshop.	No transportation nor child care provided.
Site 3	Unknown.	Facilitator/instructor attends literacy in-services sponsored by Continuing Education & Adult Literacy. Faciliator instructor & one parent from group plan to attend Parent-Child Mother Goose workshop.	No transportation provided. Child care provided.
Site 4	Unknown.	Facilitator/instructor & school principal attended Parent-Child Mother Goose workshop.	No transportation provided. Child care provided only during parent workshops.

Table 3f:

Site Number of Literacy Program	Workshops or Activities For Parents	Measures of Participant Satisfaction	Program's Objectives
Site 1	Workshops are not provided exclusively for program participants, but participants may attend workshops arranged by school's Parent Centre.	Participants requested to complete questionnaire at conclusion of nine week sessions.	<p>To strengthen bond between parent/caregiver & child.</p> <p>To foster & enhance children's early oral language experiences.</p> <p>To provide opportunities for parents/caregivers to meet & build positive relationships with one another.</p> <p>To attempt to ameliorate parent's cultural bias and personal negative school experiences by showing school in a positive light.</p>
Site 2	No workshops or other activities provided.	Facilitator/instructor requests verbal feedback at conclusion of each monthly session.	<p>To expose preschool children to the wonder of language through storybook reading.</p> <p>To encourage home literacy activities.</p> <p>To model for parents creative literacy experiences they can try with their children.</p> <p>To expose children to school-like behaviors.</p>

Table 3g

Site Number of Literacy Program	Workshops or Activities For Parents	Measures of Participant Satisfaction	Program's Objectives
Site 3	Field trips to bookstores and libraries.	Bi-yearly questionnaire as provided by Continuing Education & Adult Literacy.	<p>To offer families opportunities to become more involved with their own literacy journey.</p> <p>To demonstrate to families that literacy is a day-to-day activity.</p> <p>To encourage parents to involve their children in free or low-cost activities available in the city.</p> <p>To expose parents/preschoolers to computer literacy skills.</p>
Site 4	Possible computer courses, The Nobody's Perfect Parenting Program, informational meetings by the Public Health Nurse & school clinicians.	Participants re-requested to complete written questionnaire at conclusion of 9-week sessions.	<p>To assist families to value literacy activities.</p> <p>To have parents and children develop a love of rhymes, songs and stories.</p> <p>To do "learning in play" activities with the children.</p> <p>To encourage home literacy activities.</p> <p>To provide a bridge between home and school environments.</p> <p>To support adults as parents.</p>

Table 3h

Site Number of Literacy Program	Similiarity to Existing Preschool Family Literacy Programs	Number of Adult Participants	Number and Ages of Preschoolers
Site 1	Similiar to Parent-Child Mother Goose Program	11 parents & caregivers.	21 preschoolers: 0-1 years old - 2 children 1-2 years old - 8 children 2-3 years old - 4 children 3-4 years old - 6 children 4-5 years old - 1 child
Site 2	Similiar to preschool program as offered by Winnipeg's Public Library	Between 6-8 parents.	9-11 preschoolers: 0-1 years old - 1 child 1-2 years old - 1 child 2-3 years old - 2-3 children 3-4 years old - 4-5 children 4-5 years old - 1 child
Site 3	Not similiar to any existing program.	5 parents.	4 preschoolers: 0-1 years old - 0 children 1-2 years old - 0 children 2-3 years old - 1 child 3-4 years old - 1 child 4-5 years old - 2 children

Table 3i

Site Number of Literacy Program	Similiarity to Existing Preschool Family Literacy	Number of Adult Participants	Number and Ages of Preschoolers
Site 4	Similiar to Parent-Child Mother Goose Program.	Between 8-10 parents.	15-18 preschoolers: 0-1 years old - 2 children 1-2 years old - 2 children 2-3 years old - 6-8 children 3-4 years old - 2 children 4-5 years old - 3-4 children

Table 3j

Site Number of Literacy Program	Role of Parent-Child Storybook Reading in Literacy Programs
Site 1	Not applicable to this program.
Site 2	A direct component of this program. Role-modelling of storybook reading for the parents and opportunities for parents to borrow books from the school library.
Site 3	No direct modelling of parent-child story-book reading although the facilitator/instructor encourages parents to purchase books as gifts for their children
Site 4	Occassional role-modelling of story-book reading. Participants may borrow books from an in-house children's library.

CHAPTER V
Results and Discussion

The purpose of this study was to document the existence of preschool family literacy programs supported by school divisions in the Greater Winnipeg Metropolitan Area and to study their design, practices and evaluation procedures. In particular, the goal was to ascertain the place of parent-child storybook reading in the programs.

The investigation was guided by one general research question: Are there preschool family literacy programs situated in and supported by schools in the Greater Winnipeg Metropolitan Area that use storybook reading as an integral component of the program? Six supplemental questions were also posed in order to understand the genesis behind the creation of the literacy programs. Three questions centred on a broad analysis of program design. These (1) focused on the extent to which community partnerships were forged between schools and other family service agencies to foster and support literacy in the early years (infancy to school entry); whether the literacy program facilitators/instructors and or/participants expected parent-child storybook reading to lead to other positive changes within the family; and (3) whether the experiences being provided for children and their parents were positive. A set of supplementary questions

based on Nickse's(1991) analytical framework for evaluating family literacy programs delved into the finer details of program design and methodology. These questions related to whether the programs were designed for parent and child, adult and child, adult learner alone or child learner; whether any of the programs were developed as a result of a needs assessment; accountability - in which case records of attendance were monitored; formative evaluation to see whether program modifications were required; and whether summative evaluation procedures were in place to measure the long-term impact of the program on participants themselves, the wider community and ultimately, children's school success.

This chapter discusses results and implications for programming and future research.

Summary of Findings

Findings showed that:

- There was limited emphasis on storybook reading.
- While school professionals were able to describe the school's catchment area, many program participants did not match these descriptors.
- In the main, programs were funded through short-term non-renewable government grants.
- There was a minimum of inter-agency collaboration.

- While there were questionnaires that informed instructors and stakeholders, there was little evidence of long-term evaluation to establish whether program participation led to success.
- Participation was voluntary.
- The common design type was Type 1: Parent/Child.
- The largest contingent of preschoolers were between the ages of two and four.

Discussion

Interesting details were indicated by the data pertaining to the design of the programs and the evaluation procedures employed by the programs to self-analyze. For instance, while the programs to a large extent resembled those categorized by Nickse as Parent/Child, there were also characteristics from three other design types: Adult/Child(adapted sites), Adult Alone(parent networking) and Child Alone(take-home materials for children. Also of interest was that while one of the four programs was designed subsequent to a community needs assessment, two of the programs were based solely on the convictions of school personnel, stemming from their perception that early intervention is necessary in order to prevent problems with beginning reading acquisition.

Accountability measures were limited, but appeared to be

more well defined if there were a Board of Directors and/or government funding supporting the program. This also appears to be the case with two of the preschool family literacy programs highlighted in Chapter II, in particular Australia's *Talk To A Literacy Learner* and the *Even Start Program* in the United States.

None of the investigated programs had measures to assess long-term program effects. There were no mechanisms in place to formally establish whether the programs had effect on later schooling. Programs relied heavily on feedback questionnaires from participants to determine the immediate effectiveness of the program and provide formative feedback.

The most striking program design similarities pertained to community settings and the ages of the preschoolers. All the programs were situated in low-income neighbourhoods or communities that had some subsidized housing units, with the majority of preschoolers ranging in ages between two and four years old.

In the broadest sense, interviews revealed that both literacy programs' providers and participants believed that the programs were worthwhile endeavors in that they modelled home-based literacy activities, exposed children to school-like routines, and encouraged and built a sense of community.

Although the majority of the investigated programs were in their infancy, program organizers were positive about

having the programs in their schools and participants were enthusiastic about being involved.

One administrator shared, "It gives them [parents and children] connection to their community school and shows that school is not a bad place, there's positive things happening. So it gets them involved in the community and makes the transition, one would assume, easier." The feelings of participants were captured in the following comment, "It's so short, its just a taste and then we end up going home and reading 20 books that afternoon because they [the children] want more and more and more."

Thus the programs studied were viewed positively by both program providers and participants. The programs seemed to be a step in the right direction. They were, nonetheless, limited in scope.

The multi-faceted programming evident in a number of exemplary preschool family literay programs outlined in Chapter II, for example, the Winnipeg Victor Mager school project, *The Kenan Trust Family Literacy Project* and the United States Department of Education's *Even Start Family Literacy Program*, do not appear to be manifested in the investigated programs. The investigated programs were, on the whole, single-faceted in that they concentrated on teaching parents home-based literacy-activities, while the exemplary programs cited had a broader perspective that

included academic and vocational training for parents, childhood education activities, and focused also on health and welfare issues thus creating a single entry point for families to access support for academic and social issues.

The review of the literature and observations from this study thus draw attention to four important issues that have implications for future early literacy decision-making and programming: (1) the place of storybook reading; (2) the clientelle being reached; (3) program comprehensibility and (4) funding instability.

Place of Storybook Reading

This study was interested in the role given to parent-child storybook reading in the preschool family literacy programs, particularly as the literature review championed this parent-child activity as important in developing literacy.

While it was found that all the programs were interested in promoting literacy, only one program gave prominence to adult-child storybook reading in its design and procedures, not only by modelling storybook reading and demonstrating questioning techniques that parents could use at home, but in providing easy access to reading materials. Although a powerful case can be made for fostering early literacy through the oral tradition that focuses on nursery rhymes, songs, chants and fingerplays, as was represented in three of

the four literacy programs studied, perhaps there should be a combination of both oral and text-supported literacy activities. As shown by Whitehurst and colleagues (1988), a literacy intervention program can be developed to teach parents to engage children in reading storybooks. Teaching parents positive ways to read and interact with their children while reading stories fosters diversified and reflective thinking, language development and an extended world view. This idea is supported in the literature in which research has explored the hypothesis that the way in which a parent speaks to a child during the parent-child reading activity may have a more profound effect on a child's later reading achievement than the actual time spent reading. One local program, *Bookmates*, has extended the *Parent-Child Mother Goose* program to include not only the oral activities of nursery rhymes, songs, chants and fingerplays but also parent-child reading activities. Through the *Rock and Read Program* the instructor models the reading of various kinds of children's books, using a highly animated, interactive style employing fairytales, predictable books or board books. During the sessions, time is then allocated for parents to read to their children. The sessions also included book-making activities for parents. In addition, the *Parenting and Family Literacy Centres* which were developed by the Toronto District School Board and which were reviewed in

Chapter II, demonstrated reading techniques for parents and suggested many informal occasions in which parents could read to their children.

Clientelle

The question arises whether or not the service being provided is directed to those in most need or is instead being offered to the 'converted'. The preschool literacy programs may only be attracting families who already prize literacy and already engage their children at home in many forms of literacy learning, including parent-child storybook reading. As Thomas(1998) contends, we should be focusing on providing services to those parents who cannot account for or do not know how to involve their children in home-based literacy activities and whose children are, therefore, at a greater risk of experiencing difficulties in school-related work.

With this re-direction of services to specific families, an increase in the pooling and sharing of information and resources between program providers, schools and other social service agencies, especially in terms of who best to serve and how, would be necessary. At the very least, family service agency personnel know the families who need help and could act as referral agencies.

*

Program Comprehensibility

The programs investigated were positive. They were also the result of very recent initiatives. Many programs described in the literature as being exemplary were much more comprehensive in nature. Although they seemed to be school-centred, they also seemed to be part of a much broader community effort. Such broad-based projects require much more comprehensive and stable funding, which points to the last issue.

Funding

A concern shared by three of the four program providers involved in this study was sustained funding. Not only were difficulties experienced in accessing funding for the programs in the first place, but funding maintenance and the possibility of receiving increases were perceived as being problematic. When a program may only be in operation for one year and without stable funding, creating a program infrastructure, especially one that involves many different organizations and personnel, is difficult(Hendrix,2000).

Recommendations for Future Programming and Research

First, conducting this study revealed a dearth of division-supported preschool family literacy programs, particularly for high-risk families. While the initiatives

were commendable in and of themselves, there was limited time spent on parent-child storybook reading. Projects that also incorporate storybook reading are recommended. Long-term evaluative research with control interventions is required to show high-risk parents how to interact positively with their preschool children through the pleasure of storybook reading. The project should be designed subsequent to a well-thought-out needs assessment with specific literacy goals for each of the participants. The question is just how effective is parent-child storybook reading as a vehicle for ensuring success.

Second, there should be more community collaborations, including social service providers, to ensure that the clientele that programs attract are the clientele that would benefit the most. Research that documents the implementation of such a project is required in order to inform program providers in other jurisdictions. Areas for study include how the help of other social services was enlisted, how the program was funded and sustained and what were the long-term effects.

The case defending preschool intervention can best be summed up in the following quote from the Future of Education Discussions, Early Childhood and Development(2000), initiated under the direction of Manitoba Education and sponsored by The Manitoba Teachers' Society. It states that

The development of children in the early years before formal schooling is of great interest and consequence. The foundations are laid in the early years for life long health and wellness, for successful social engagement, and for academic and vocational success. Investment in the well being of young children pays greater dividends in money saved than interventions later in the human life span. Services to children in our society, however, are incomplete, disjointed, and under-funded. Leadership is needed in and among [government] departments to deal with some of the pressing problems that plague programs for young children. There needs to be a single entry point for services for children so that care can be seamless, accessible to all children who need it and integrated with schools and other community agencies(pg.3).

References

- Allington, R. (1995). Literacy lessons in the elementary schools: Yesterday, today and tomorrow. In R. Allington & S. Walmsley (Eds.), No quick fix: Rethinking literacy programs in america's elementary schools. New York: International Reading Association.
- Anderson, R.C., Hiebert, E.H., Scott, J.A., & Wilkerson, I.A.g. (1985). Becoming a nation of readers: The report of the commission of reading. Washington, DC: National Institute of Education.
- Barton, D. (1997). Family literacy programs and home literacy practices. In D. Taylor (Ed.), Many families, many literacies: An international declaration of principles (pp.101-109). Portsmouth: NH: Heinemann.
- Bryne B., & Fielding-Barnsley, R.F. (1991). Evaluation of a program to teach phonemic awarness to young children. Journal of Educational Psychology, 82, 805-812.
- Bus, A.G., van IJzendoorn, M. H. & Pellegrini, A.D. (1995). Joint book reading makes for success in learning to read: A meta-analysis on international transmission of

literacy. Review of Educational Research, 65, 1, 1-21.

Cairney T. & Munsie, L. (1995). Parent participation in literacy learning. The Reading Teacher, 48, 5, 392-403.

CTB. (1990). Developing skills checklist. Monterey, CA: CTB/McGraw-Hill.

Dunn, L.M., & Dunn, L.M. (1981). Peabody picture vocabulary test-Revised. Circle Pines, Mn: American Guidance Service.

Gardner, M.F. (1981). Expressive one-word picture vocabulary test. Novato, CA: Academic Therapy Publications.

Hannon, P. (1995). Literacy, home and school: Research and practice in teaching literacy with parents. London, England: The Falmer Press.

Harris, T.L. & Hodges, R.E. (1995). The literacy dictionary: The vocabulary of reading and writing. Newark: International Reading Association.

Heath, S.B. (1983). Ways with words: Language, life and work in communities and classrooms. Cambridge, Mass: Cambridge University Press.

Heath, S.B. (1986a). Critical factors in literacy development. In S. de Castell, A. Luke & K. Egan (Eds.). Literacy, Society and Schooling: A Reader. Cambridge, Mass: Cambridge University Press.

Heath, S.B. (1986b). The functions and uses of literacy. In S. de Castell, A. Luke & K. Egan (eds.). Literacy, Society and Schooling: A Reader. Cambridge, Mass: Cambridge University Press.

Hendrix, S. (1999). Family literacy education- Panacea or false promise? Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 43, 4, 338-346.

Hiebert, E.H. (1996). Creating and sustaining a love of literature...And the ability to read it. In M.F. Graves, P. van den Broek, & B. M. Taylor (Eds.), The first R: Every child's right to read (pp. 15-36). Newark: DE: International Reading Association.

Holdaway, D. (1979). The foundations of literacy.
Sydney: Scholastic.

Huey, E.B. (1908). The psychology and pedagogy of
reading. New York: MacMillan.

Iredell, H. (1898). Eleanor learns to read. Education,
19, 233-238.

Kelleghan, T., Sloane, K., Alvarez, B. & Bloom, B.S.
(1993). The home environment and school learning: Promoting
parental involvement in the education of children. San
Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass
Publishers.

Kirk, S.A., McCarthy, J.J., & Kirk, W.D. (1968).
Illinois test of psycholinguistic abilities. Urbana, IL:
University of Illinois Press.

Leseman, P. & de Jong, P. F. (1998). Home literacy:
Opportunity, instruction, cooperation and social-emotional
quality predicting early reading achievement. Reading
Research Quarterly, 35. 3. 294-318.

McLane, J. (1990). The Developing Child. Cambridge:

Harvard University Press.

Mandler, J.M. & Johnson, N.S. (1977). Remembrance of things parsed: Story structure and recall. Cognitive Psychology, 9, 111-151.

Manitoba Teachers' Society. (May, 2000). The future of education discussions: Early childhood and development: Report on the preparatory discussions. Winnipeg, Manitoba: Author.

Morrow, L. M. (1995). Family literacy: Connections in schools and communities. Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association.

Morrow, L.M., Tracey, D.H. & Maxwell, C.M. (1995). A survey of family literacy in the United States. Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association.

Neuman, S.B., Caperelli, B.J. & Kee, C. (1998). Literacy learning, a family matter. The Reading Teacher, 52, 3, 244-252.

Nickse, R.S.(1991). A typology of family and intergenerational literacy programs: Implications for

evaluation. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting. Chicago, Il. (Eric ED no. 333166).

Ninio, A. (1980). Picture-book reading in mother-infant dyads belonging to two sub-groups in Israel. Child Development, 51, 587-590.

Ninio, A. & Bruner, J.S. (1978). The achievement and antecedents of labelling. Journal of Child Language, 5, 1-15.

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OCED) & Human Resources Development Canada (1997). Literacy skills for the knowledge society. Paris: France.

Panofsky, C.P. (1990). Developing the representational functions of language: The role of parent-child book-reading activity. (In V. John-Steiner, C. Panofsky & L. Smith. (Eds.) Sociocultural Approaches to Language and Literacy. Cambridge: Mass: Cambridge University Press.

Phillips, G. & McNaughton, S. (1990). The practice of storybook reading to preschool children in mainstream New Zealand families. Reading Research Quarterly, 25, 3, 197-

212.

Scarborough, H.S, Dobrich, W. & Hager, M. (1994).
Preschool Literacy experience and later reading achievement.
Journal of Learning Disabilities, 24, 8, 508-511.

Schickedanz, J.A. (1986). More than the ABC's: The
early stages of reading and writing. Washington, DC: The
National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Schickedanz, J.A. (1981). Hey! This book's not working
right. Young Children, 37, 18-27.

Schickedanz, J.A. (1978). "Please read that story
again!": Exploring relationships between story reading and
learning to read. Young Children, 33, 48-55.

Singleton, R. A. & Straits, B. (1999). Approaches to
social reserach. Oxford, UK: Oxford Univeristy Press.

Sommer B. & Sommer, R. (1991). A practical guide to
behaviorial research tools and techniques. Oxford, UK:
Oxford University Press.

Snow, C.E. & Ninio, A. (1986). The contracts of

literacy: What children learn from learning to read books.
in W. H. Teale & E. Sulzby (Eds.) Emergent Literacy: Writing
and reading. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Snow, C. E., Burns, M. & Griffin, P. (1998). Preventing
reading difficulties in young children. Washington, D.C.:
National Academy Press.

Stouthamer-Loeber, M. & Bok van Kammen. (1995). Data
collection and management: A practical guide.
Thousand Oaks: CA: Sage Publications.

Sulzby, E. (1985). Children's emergent reading of
favorite storybooks: A developmental study. In R.
Ruddell, M.R. Ruddell & H. Singer (Eds.), Theoretical models
and processes of reading (pp. 244-280), Newark, Delaware:
International Reading Association.

Taylor D, & Strickland, D.S. (1986). Family storybook
reading. New York: Scholastic.

Teale, W.H. (1986). Home background and young
children's literacy development. In W. H. Teale & E.
Sulzby (Eds.), Emergent literacy: Writing and reading
(pp.173-203). Norwood, NH: Ablex.

Teale, W. H. (1984). Reading to young children: Its significance for literacy development. In H. Goelman, A. Oberg, & F. Smith (Eds.). Awakening to literacy (pp. 110-121), Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Teale, W.H. (1981). Parents reading to their children: What we know and need to know. Language Arts, 58, 902-912.

Teale, W.H., Anderson, A.B., & Stokes, S. (1981). Literacy activities in the homes of low-income preschool children. In H. Goelman, A. Oberg, & F. Smith (Eds.), Awakening to literacy (pp.112-113). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Teale, W.H. & Sulzby, E. (1986). Emergent literacy: Writing and reading. Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing.

Thomas, A. (1998). Family Literacy in Canada: Profiles of effective practices. Welland, Ontario: Soleil Publishing Inc.

Vygotsky, L.S. (1978). Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes. Cambridge: MA: MIT press.

Vygotsky, L.S. (1962). Thought and language. E. Hanfmann & G. Vakar (Eds.). MA: MIT Press.

Wells, G. (1985). Preschool literacy-related activities and success in school. In D.R. Olson, N. Torrance & A. Hildyard (Eds.), Literacy, language and learning: The nature and consequences of reading and writing (pp. 229-255). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Whitehurst, G.J., Falco, F.L., Lonigan, C.J., Fischel, J. E., DeBaryshe, B.D., Valdez-Menchaca, M.C. & Caulfield, M. (1988). Accelerating language development through picture book reading. Developmental Psychology, 24, 4, 552-559.

Whitehurst, G.J., Epstein, J. N., Angell. A.L., Payne, A.C., Crone, D.A. & Fischel, J.E. (1994). Outcomes of an emergent literacy intervention in Head Start. Journal of Education Psychology, 86, 4, 542-555.

Yaden, D.B, Smolkin, L.B. & Conlon, A. (1989). Preschoolers questions about pictures, print conventions, and story text during reading aloud at home. Reading Research Quarterly, 25, 2, 188-214.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Telephone Protocol for Superintendents and/or Early Childhood and/or Language Arts Consultants

Good morning/good afternoon (name of superintendent and/or early childhood and/or language arts consultant.)

This is Darcy Manness calling. I am a graduate student from the Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba. For my Master's thesis, I am conducting research on preschool family literacy programs supported by Winnipeg school divisions. (preschool would involve children from infancy to school entry.) Are there any such programs in your division?

(If they do not have any programs, I would thank them for their time and inquire if they would be interested in receiving a copy of the summary of the research on preschool family literacy programs in Winnipeg schools.)

(If they do have preschool family literacy programs I would say the following:

Terrific! As part of my research in this area, I would like to understand how your division's programs were developed, what are their methodologies, and how they are sustained. Therefore, I would very much like to speak to the literacy program's director/instructor, a small group or parents who are participants in the program and the principal of the school where the program is based.

The intent of my study is of a very practical nature and hopefully, will be of help to the educational profession. The information collected from the interviews with the stakeholders would serve as a database for educators who may wish to develop literacy programs for families with young children but don't know where or how to begin.

Knowing this, would it be at all possible for you to share with me the names of these programs, where they are housed and who the contact personnel are? I could call back if you need time to gather the information. When would it be convenient for me to call again?

I appreciate the assistance you have given me and thank you for your time and co-operation. Good-bye.)

APPENDIX B

20 Blackwood Bay
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3T 5X3
February 10, 2000

RE: Thesis study regarding preschool family literacy programs supported by Winnipeg school divisions

Dear (name of school principal);

I am a Masters student in the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba. To fulfill my thesis requirements, I am conducting research regarding preschool family literacy programs supported by Greater Winnipeg school divisions.

The purpose of the study is to identify, describe and evaluate existing preschool family literacy programs. First, I will be detailing the literacy program according to the type of program being offered, either parent/child; adult/child; adult alone or child alone. Second, I will be documenting the program's: pre-implementation process, design and methodology, accountability, clarification (do the goals/objectives of the program reflect the changing needs of the participants?), participant progress and impact on the participants and the wider community.

I would like to collect the research data through a group interview with you and the director/instructor of the literacy program, and, if applicable, other family service agency personnel. Would it be possible to have the interview at your school at a mutually agreed upon time, perhaps within the next week or two? I am also seeking your permission to approach the director/instructor of the program to see if he or she will allow me to observe one session of the

literacy program and interview four or five parents who are participants in the program.

In order to give you some insights into the nature of the data I would like to collect, I have enclosed a copy of the interview questions ahead of time. I would like to audiotape the interview as I want to reflect your views accurately. You have the right to withdraw from the interview at any time and no statement will be attributed to any one individual. I anticipate that the interview will take no more than 45 minutes.

Once the information on the audiotape has been transcribed and a program description completed, the tape will be erased. In this way, confidentiality can be assured. To ensure that the data is truly reflective of your program, a draft of the program description will be mailed to you. Once you have had time to read through the information, I will call you to check to see if revisions to the report are required. Once all the revisions are completed, a final draft copy will be mailed to you.

As the information contained in the report would be a valuable resource for others who may wish to develop preschool family literacy programs, I am seeking your permission to use the the name and site location of the program in the final report. Please indicate your wishes in this area by completing the bottom portion of the Letter of Consent.

I am anticipating the completion of the final report by August, 2000.

A telephone call will follow this consent letter at which time aspects of the study will be clarified. If, following the telephone call, you would like to participate in the study would you please complete the attached Letter of Consent and return it to me in the stamped self-addressed envelope by Friday, February 25. Upon receipt of your Letter of Consent, I will telephone you to arrange a convenient time for the group to meet.

Page 3

Should you have any questions about this study, please contact me at 269-7260 or my faculty advisor, Dr. Beverley Zakaluk, at 474-9028.

I thank you again for your assistance and look forward to meeting you.

Sincerely,

Darcy Manness

APPENDIX C

Thesis Study of Preschool Family Literacy Programs

Letter of Consent- School Principal

I agree to participate in the study concerning preschool family literacy programs supported by Winnipeg school divisions.

Signature _____

Date _____

School _____

School Division _____

Consent Form For Publication Purposes

Are you willing to have the name and location of your preschool literacy program included in the summary report?

Yes _____ No _____

Would you like to receive a copy of the summary report?
Please indicate below.

Yes _____ No _____

Thank you.

APPENDIX D

Interview Questions for the Facilitator/Instructor and School Principal

I Pre-implementation Information

- (1) Tell me about the community setting in which this program operates.
- (2) Tell me about how this program began? Was it the result of a needs assessment?
- (3) Tell me about the needs assessment?
- (4) In what specific ways has this program been developed from year to year in order to meet participants' needs?

II Program Design, Methodology and Implementation Information

- (5) What is your target population for this program? How many participants are there? How many staff members are there?
- (6) Are only parent(s) and child(ren) accepted into the program or are extended members of the family also included?
- (7) What are the program's objectives?
- (8) What type of family literacy program would best describe your program?

_____ parent and child (family
literacy)
_____ adult and child
(intergenerational literacy)
_____ adult alone (parent literacy)
_____ child alone (child literacy)

- (9) Who were the people involved in designing the

program? Are they still involved?

(10) Is your program similar to other family literacy programs already in existence?

(11) Describe the activities in your program?

(12) Who selects the materials for the program?

(13) Has staff development or in-service training been offered for the program's facilitator(s) and volunteers?

(14) Does the school or school division support the program? In what way(s)?

(15) What organization(s) fund the program? Is funding guaranteed from year to year?

(16) Do the organizations who fund the program support it in other ways as well?

(17) Are there other family service organizations who support the program? In what way(s)?

(18) Is child care and/or transportation provided for the participants?

(19) How important to the program is parent/child storybook reading?

(20) How often is the program held?

21) Why was this particular site selected as the place where this literacy program would be offered?

III Participant Selection Information

(22) How were the participants selected?

(23) Who was responsible for selection of the participants?

(24) How many of the pre-schoolers in the program are:

- _____ between 0 and 1 years of age
- _____ between 1 and 2 years of age
- _____ between 2 and 3 years of age
- _____ between 3 and 4 years of age
- _____ between 4 and 5 years of age

(25) What is your retention rate for participants in the program?

IV Program Accountability Information

(26) How do you measure whether or not the program's objective(s) is (are) being met?

(27) What devices are used to evaluate the program?

(28) When is the evaluation conducted?

V Program Clarification

(29) Is there a facet of the program you or the participants would like to change? Why?

(30) Have other services needed to be provided to meet the needs of the participants?

VI Program Progress Information

(31) How is progress in the program measured? For adults? For children?

(32) Is progress shared with the participants?

VII Program Impact Information

(33) What do you feel are the benefits of the literacy program?

(34) For the future, what would you like to have

happen with this program?

APPENDIX E

Dear Parent;

I am a Masters student in the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba. To fulfill my thesis requirements, I am conducting research concerning preschool family literacy programs in Winnipeg schools.

After I visit the program for one session, I would very much like to speak to you and three or four other parents to hear your views about the program. I would like to tape record the conversation. Once the tape has been transcribed, the tape will be erased. In this way confidentiality can be assured. You have the right to withdraw from the interview at any time. Your name will not be used in the final report. I anticipate that the interview will be about 20-25 minutes long.

Once I have transcribed the information, I will send copies of the transcription to you to read. Afterwards, I will telephone you to ask if any changes need to be made to the text.

Please find attached a copy of the questions I would like to ask you. I have also attached a Letter of Consent in regard to the interview.

If you have any questions about the study you may call me at 269-7260 or my faculty advisor, Dr. Beverley Zakaluk, at 474-9028.

I thank you for your interest and look forward to speaking with you.

Sincerely,

Darcy Manness

APPENDIX F

Preschool Family Literacy Study

Parent's Letter of Consent

I agree to participate in the study concerning preschool family literacy programs in Winnipeg schools.

Signature _____

Date _____

Name of Literacy Program _____

Would you like to receive a summary report of the research data? Please indicate below.

Yes _____

No _____

Thank you.

APPENDIX G

PROPOSED QUESTIONS FOR PARENTAL FACE-TO-FACE SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

- (1) What do you find are the most valuable parts of this program?
- (2) Do you feel you have learned new information or ideas about literacy? Would you elaborate a little more.
- (3) Have any activities suggested in the program become part of your family's routine?
- (4) Do you find a change in the ways you read books to your child(ren)?
- (5) Do you find you read books more often to your child(ren)?
- (6) Are there any other changes you have noticed in your life as a result of being involved in this literacy program?