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Korean Mothers' Extratextual Talk and Questioning in Shared Book Reading

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The shared book reading experience is hailed as a cornerstone for children's language development and academic success in their later years. However, relatively little research has been done in Korean preschoolers' English book reading. This study aimed to investigate Korean mothers' communication behaviors and their use of questioning when they share books with their children in home settings. Seventeen mothers and their 4- to 6-year-old (Korean age) children from middle income families participated in the study. They shared one Korean and one English book and audio-recorded their readings, followed by an online questionnaire. Their recordings were transcribed verbatim into the CHILDES program and then analyzed into 13 communication behaviors. A paired samples *t*-test revealed that the Korean mothers used *evaluation* more often when they read the Korean book than they did with the English book, while they used *translation* and *directives* more often in reading the English book. As for questioning, the mothers preferred to use *recall* prompts the most, asking about aspects of the story on average; however, the question types did not make any differences in both language readings. Some pedagogical discussions are addressed for the parents and educators who teach English through book reading.

**[shared book reading/communication behaviors/extratextual talk/questioning/
함께 책 읽기/언어적 행동/텍스트 외 말하기/질문]**

I. INTRODUCTION

For a long time there has been consensus that book reading is a potent predictor of children's growth in vocabulary and language development. In addition, scholars report that the amount of exposure to storybooks is reliably associated with children's oral language development (Sénéchal, LeFevre, Thomas, & Daley, 1998), and academic

success in later years (Heath, 1982; Sénéchal & LeFevre, 2002; van Kleeck, Gillam, Hamilton, & McGrath, 1997). Before becoming literate, preschoolers undergo "literacy events" (Heath, 1982, p. 50), which include reading with parents before going to bed or reading signs or posts with printed letters around them. In this stage, children read books with their teachers, parents, or caregivers and share stories while having discussions or dialogues. This session is called shared book reading (SBR) and a large volume of literature has been carried out with various sub-topics, such as parents' socioeconomic status (Heath, 1982; Ninio, 1980; Sénéchal et al., 1998), age (Wheeler, 1983), race (Anderson-Yockel & Haynes, 1994), vocabulary acquisition (Sénéchal, 1997), and children with specific language impairments (McGinty, Justice, Zucker, Gosse, & Skibbe, 2012; Pellegrini, Brody, & Sigel, 1985; Rabidoux & MacDonald, 2000), to name a few.

Among these specific areas, parental interactions patterns have especially received much attention since this is related to children's vocabulary growth (Ninio, 1980; Sénéchal, 1997) and abstract language development (van Kleeck et al., 1997). During the sharing session, parents produce utterances besides the text of the books. Namely, extratextual talk includes utterances that go beyond the contents of the book; there is huge evidence that extratextual talk is not only related to stories and book reading, concepts of print, children's phonological awareness (Bialystok & Herman, 1999) but also to early language and receptive vocabulary growth (Sénéchal, 1997). Based on the reported effectiveness of extratextual talk, scholars have expanded their interests in whether or not it is viable to teach parents about how to read to their children. Some evidence reported that parents' extratextual talk intervention during SBR was beneficial both for English-monolingual children (Whitehurst et al., 1988) and bilingual children's (Valdez-Menchaca & Whitehurst, 1992) receptive vocabulary (Chow & McBride-Chang, 2003), as well as language production (Valdez-Menchaca & Whitehurst, 1992) and decoding and fluency development (Silinskas et al., 2012). Those intervention studies also included qualitative talk including questions (A. Anderson, J. Anderson, Lynch, Shapiro, & J. E. Kim, 2012; McGinty et al., 2012; S. Y. Kim, 2011; Whitehurst et al., 1988), and reported its effectiveness during SBR.

In Korea, where English is widely taught at all age levels, many previous studies reported Korean children's emergent literacy phenomenon through various channels. Korean mothers read books to their children at home with various interactions (E. G. Han & A. J. Yoo, 2001; H. Kim, 1999; J. S. Kim & H. J. Kim, 2003; T. S. Kim & B. G. Choi, 2001; M. S. Lee & M. S. Kim, 2011) with supportive strategies (K. B. Im, 2010). In addition, the effectiveness of using English picture books in promoting Korean primary students' interest to learn English was also evidenced (Y. S. Jung, 2008; J. S. Kim, 2009). However, despite its importance, studies about Korean children's shared readings using Korean and English books have not been highlighted in English education, as evidenced in

recent meta-analyses (T. Y. Kim & H. J. Lee, 2015; M. H. Seong & E. H. Nam, 2010). In addition, most previous SBR studies only employed Korean books not English books (M. S. Lee & M. S. Kim, 2011). Thus, how Korean children are exposed to English through one of the most popular channels—book reading—before entering school programs should be worth studying. Therefore, the present study aims at exploring parental reading interaction patterns and their use of questions while they read Korean and English books to their children at home.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Shared Book Reading

Shared book reading (SBR) refers to a reading session where parents, adults, or more expert readers read to children before the children are literate (Health, 1982). SBR grounds its theory on Vygotsky's (1978) zone of proximal development (ZPD) in social learning context, since during the process adults and children scaffold each other through language. The scaffolding is crucial for children's cognitive development to have them engage in high-order thinking. When his theory is applied to book reading, children can naturally uncover the meaning of unknown words through the reading interactions with more competent readers. Studies of shared book reading have been explored in many sub-areas, such as socio-economic status (Ninio, 1980; Sénéchal et al, 1998), children's age (Wheeler, 1983), type of text (Anderson et al., 2012; Bus & van IJzendoorn, 1988), and gender (Ninio & Bruner, 1978). For example, Ninio (1980) reported that middle-class white mothers generally read more often and talk more with their children than the lower-class mothers. With respect to children's age, Wheeler (1983) found that the mothers of 3 and 4-year-old children used more challenging questions as the children grew up. In Korea, H. K. Hong (1997) reported that the frequencies of book reading with the children decreased as the children grew up and the girls enjoyed reading more than the boys.

During SBR, parents go beyond the text and produce utterances which is known as extratextual talk. While sharing books, parents produce questions or comments which lead the children to be more engaged in their conversation. Given the importance of parents' talk, attempts have been made to discover its different interactional patterns. Sénéchal and LeFevre (2002) saw two types of home literacy experiences: informal and formal. Informal activities include questions and answers related to the meaning of certain words, focusing on the message of the book. Formal activities include the letters, names, or sounds of certain words, focusing on what is printed in the book. Similarly, with a nationally representative large sample of 700 families from various backgrounds in the USA,

Hindman, Skibbe, and Foster (2014) found that American parents' book-related talk was more about the meaning of the story (words or concepts) rather than the code (text). In addition, for the families who reported that they frequently read at home, the pattern of code-related talk was evident; for the families who reported they spend more time during reading, the pattern of meaning-related talk was apparent.

More specifically, some researchers tried to classify parents' talk into categories. For instance, Rodríguez, Hines, and Montiel (2009) investigated Mexican American mothers' communication behavior during SBR based on Ninio (1980) and Anderson-Yockel and Haynes's (1994) coding system of nine categories, including "*wh-questions, yes/no questions, directives/requests, labeling, descriptions, feedback, attentional vocatives, pauses*, and *others*" (p. 275). Based on their categories, they reported that middle-class Mexican American mothers used more positive feedback and yes/no questions than their lower-class counterparts. Through a meta-analysis that studied the effects of 21 previous SBR studies, Trivette, Dunst, and Gorman (2010) categorized reading interactions into 11 characteristics: "*attention getting, labeling, commenting, imitation, relates to child's experience, correction, positive feedback, open-ended questions, expansions, follow-up with questions*, and *follows child's interests*" (p. 6). The authors concluded that 9 out of these 11 characteristics had at least medium effects on children's oral (expressive) and comprehension (receptive) language development.

However, SBR studies about mothers' extratextual talk in L1 (primary language) and L2 (second language) use have been scarcely studied. In ESL (English as a Second Language), Roberts (2008) reported that reading a storybook in the children's primary language (either Hmong or Spanish) at home was proven to be effective as reading the same book at school. In addition, reading book in a primary language did not compromise the children's English vocabulary learning as she reported that "the possibility of cognate transfer is less-likely in young children" (p. 121). Thus, as seen above, reading storybooks in more than one language can provide benefits for second language vocabulary acquisition. However, in SBR, parent-dyads' book reading whose L1 is something other than English or Spanish has not been largely explored.

In Korea where English is used as a foreign language (EFL), only scant attention has been paid to the relationship between SBR at home and children's English learning. Moreover, to the best of my knowledge, only one study has included both Korean-written and English-written books in their study design. M. S. Lee and M. S. Kim (2011) investigated 201 Korean preschoolers' (aged 3 to 5) emergent literacy skills through Korean and English picture book readings. As a result, they reported that the mother's interaction with the children in L1 (Korean) might have potentially benefited the children's English book comprehension in terms of building background knowledge, thereby supporting L1 ability on L2 and the and the Developmental Interdependence and Threshold Hypothesis

(Cummins, 1979).[1] However, what is interesting, though, is that they did not observe the quality of mother's extratextual talk (e.g., questioning). Thus, there is a high need to see what kind of questions Korean mothers produce when they read the two different kinds of books in home settings.

2. Questioning

Along with above, mothers' questioning should be revisited since high-quality or high-demanding talk includes questions. In addition, there is evidence that questioning is related with children's abstract thinking (van Kleeck et al., 1997) and decontextualized talk (Curenton & Justice, 2004). Some scholars focused on questions and divide them into two categories: high demand and low demand (Blewitt, Rump, Shealy, & Cook, 2009; Pellegrini et al., 1985). High demand questions include inferences or predictions (e.g., "And then what is going to happen?") that are decontextualized prompts from the story, whereas low demand questions include simple labeling or description questions (e.g., "What is its name?"). The level of demand has its significance in its quality which involves more sophisticated and cognitively challenging talk such as open-ended questions or inference.

In this stance, Whitehurst et al. (1988) proposed a special technique called *dialogic reading*, aiming children—usually listeners in shared book reading—to have a teller role. During picture book readings, trained parents used evocative techniques such as "There's Eeyore. What's happening to him?" (p. 553), and gave feedback, including expansions and modeling, rather than a typical reading. According to them, the *dialogic reading* worked for the English-speaking children's language advancement. Zevenbergen, Whitehurst, and Zevenbergen (2003) also evidenced that the *dialogic reading* for native English speakers in the Head Start classroom and home showed a significant effect on children's use of evaluative devices in their narratives. In ESL, the intervention was also reported. Valdez-Menchaca and Whitehurst (1992) confirmed that the *dialogic reading* intervention actually worked for 2-year-old low-income Mexican children whose primary language was Spanish in their spontaneous language improvement in the US.

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[1] Cummins (1979) introduced the Development Interdependence and Threshold Hypothesis in order to explain an interaction between L1 and L2 in bilingual education. He stated that "the 'developmental interdependence' hypothesis proposes that the development of competence in a second language (L2) is partially a function of the type of competence already developed in L1 at the time when intensive exposure to L2 begins. The 'threshold' hypothesis proposes that there may be threshold levels of linguistic competence which a bilingual child must attain both in order to avoid cognitive disadvantages and allow the potentially beneficial aspects of bilingualism to influence his cognitive and academic functioning" (p. 222).

However, the *dialogic reading* intervention study was not limited to both native speakers of English or Spanish. Chow and McBride-Chang (2003) closely observed how Hong Kong Chinese kindergarteners were changed after eight weeks in three intervention conditions: *dialogic reading*, typical reading, and control. As a result, the authors concluded that the *dialogic reading* was efficient for the children's literacy and language skill improvement. Similarly, Fung, Chow, and McBride-Chang (2005) also confirmed that the same experimental condition also worked for the Chinese hard-of-hearing kindergarteners, first, and second grade children in their growth of receptive vocabulary. In EFL, in Korea, S. Y. Kim (2011) also evidenced that Korean fifth grade elementary students acquired more vocabulary through *dialogic reading* than the control group after an 8-week-long intervention.

However, the previously mentioned studies have limitations in that they did not investigate cross-language effects or an EFL learning environment, as in Korea. Chow and McBride-Chang (2003) only tested children's Cantonese growth rather than English literacy development, although they were in a bilingual environment in Hong Kong. Although parental intervention worked for English monolingual, bilingual, and English-speaking learners' language development, more investigation is still warranted to see whether or not home reading in a natural setting without intervention (i.e., *dialogic reading*) has the possibility to aid EFL children's English learning. In addition, if the language used in home is something other than English or Spanish, such as Korean, how the reading affects the children's English is worth investigating.

Therefore, although M. S. Lee and M. S. Kim's (2011) study provides backgrounds for Korean preschoolers' English literacy emergency, they seem insufficient to provide a snapshot about what is going on in home settings when Korean and English printed books are read. In addition, before further exploring mothers' extratextual talk on children's language development, a diagnostic experiment should be preceded in order to see how languages are used in actual book-reading practices. Accordingly, in this study, through natural data earned from home readings, how Korean mothers interact with their children is explored. Two research questions are generated:

1) What kinds of communication behavior differences can be observed between Korean mother-child dyads in Korean-written and English-written book readings?
2) What kind of questions do mothers produce in Korean-written and English-written book sharing?

III. METHOD

1. Participants

A total of 17 middle class mother-child dyads from a city located in Gyeonggi Province, South Korea, participated in this study. The mother-child dyads were included based on the following criteria: (a) children aged four to six (Korean age), (b) both native speakers of the Korean language, (c) maternal report of regularly reading Korean and English books in their homes, (d) maternal report of no learning disabilities in the children. The children included eight boys (47%) and nine girls (53%), aged from 35 to 70 months (M = 49). At the time of the study nine children were attending a daycare center, four were in kindergarten, one was in an English-medium kindergarten,[2] and three were homeschooled. Thirteen (76%) of the mothers held a four-year university degree, two (12%) held a two-year college degree, and two (12%) held a master's degree. Their age ranged from 28 to 44 years (M = 35). The mothers reported that they were middle-income family and they read fourteen Korean books and nine English books almost six times a week on a regular basis.

2. Research Instruments

Two picture books were chosen to measure the extratextual talk of the mothers. The Korean book was *Mr. Gumpy's Outing* (Burningham, 1970, Korean-translated version as *Geompi ajeossiui baennori* by J. R. Lee, 1996), and the English book was *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (Carle, 1983). Both books are narratives and the plot is in accordance with each other. For instance, *Mr. Gumpy's Outing* developed its story by adding one animal (e.g., a rabbit, a cat, a dog, etc.) at a time and the sequence of events was alike in the *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by adding one food (e.g., an apple, two pears, three plums, etc.) at a time from the beginning to the end. The total number of words was 220 in *Mr. Gumpy's Outing* and 227 in *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. Together, these two picture books were chosen for their popularity,[3] comparable plot, items and figures presented, and word counts.

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[2] One child who was attending English-medium kindergarten was included in this study because the aim of the current study was not to see the children's responses but to see the mother's communication behaviors during SBR with their children.

[3] *Mr. Gumpy's Outing* (1970) was also used as a reading material for other shared book reading studies, such as H. Kim (1999) and J. S. Kim & H. J. Kim (2003). *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* was used in J. S. Kim (2009), Y. S. Kim, J. Y. Kang, & B. A. Pan (2011), and Rodríguez et al.'s (2009) studies.

3. Procedure

Participants were recruited through advertisements on an online local community board. The researcher posted advertisements three times inviting mothers who would read books to their children at home. For the mothers who responded to the advertisements, the researcher contacted in person and let them know the procedure of the study one-on-one. The following instructions were given to the mothers: "Please read these books with your child as you typically read to your child. Please don't be concerned about the recording device you use while you read the story. You may read the books in any order as long as you want. In addition, you can use any preferred language, either Korean or English, during the session." Thus, the mothers decided the reading duration and the order according to their own schedule.

The participants used their own books if they had both of them at home; otherwise, the researcher lent the books to the participants. After completing the recording, they sent two recorded files—*Mr. Gumpy's Outing* and *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*—to the researcher via e-mails, text messages, or the website *Dropbox*. Ten short questions were collected via *Surveymonkey.com*, asking about the background of the participant. After completing the recordings and a survey, the participants received a gift card as an expression of gratitude. The average recording duration was 7 minute 20 seconds for *Mr. Gumpy's Outing* and 7 minute 37 seconds for *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*.

4. Transcription and Coding

After receiving all of the voice recordings, the utterances were transcribed and then only the mothers' words were coded for and analyzed into the Child Language Data Exchange System (CHILDES) (MacWhinney, 2000). The frequency was calculated for each sentence unit. The researcher coded 90% of the data and another coder, who holds a Ph.D. in education, coded the remaining 10%. The computed Cohen's Kappa was .70. To illustrate the first research question, 13 communication behavior categories were created based on Trivette et al. (2010) and Whitehurst et al.'s (1988) studies, as shown in Table 1. In addition, in order to examine the second research question—the Korean mothers' use of questioning—five types of prompts were adapted from *Dialogic Reading Prompts* in Whitehurst et al.'s study (1994),[4] as shown in Table 2.

[4] According to Whitehurst et al. (1994), Dialogic Reading Prompts were developed and tested in their study to train adult readers to remember the five types of questions in order to make children take an active role. The five types of questions have the acronym CROWD: *Completion, Recall, Open-ended, Wh-*, and *Distancing* prompts (pp. 547-548).

TABLE 1

Definitions of 13 Communication Behaviors in SBR

No.	Behavior	Definitions
1	Feedback	Giving positive, negative, corrective feedback
2	Follow-up	Following up children's comment/answers with questions or statements including the children's lives
3	Simple Q	Asking simple *wh*-questions and yes/no questions related to the contents of the book
4	Evaluation[5]	Mothers' evaluation of the story/action/character/event in the story (e.g., "Wow! Mr. Gumpy is a good person!", "The caterpillar eats a lot.")
5	Directives	Directions or requests (e.g., "Can you turn the page?", "Tap your hands on the butterfly.")
6	Description	Describing a scene of the story (e.g., "The cocoon is going to sleep after having a lot of food.")
7	Attention	Asking children to pay attention to the book (e.g., "Look!", "Look at this!")
8	Labeling	Labeling the name or action featured in the story (e.g., "This is called a cocoon.")
9	Open-ended Q	Giving pause at the end of the sentence (e.g., "This is because …")
10	Repetition	Repeating the children's comment or the contents of the book
11	Translation	Directly translating words/phrases/sentences of the English book into Korean
12	Begin/End	Utterances noticing the beginning or ending of the book reading
13	Others	Utterances that do not belong to any of the above categories

Based on the 13 communication behavior categories developed, subcategories were then developed and coded separately. The open-ended questions in Table 1 were coded as *completion* prompts in Table 2, and simple questions in Table 1 were coded as *recall* prompts in Table 2. As for the *open-ended* prompts that encourage children to use their own words, there was no equivalent category in Table 1; thus, using the KWAL command in the CHILDES program, specific Korean words encouraging children's response were searched for (e.g., *tell*, *retell, page*, *last page*, *now*, *turn, your turn, own word, your own word, you try, you can try*), but no matching results were yielded. On top of these, *wh*-questions (what, where, why) in the *follow-up* category were coded as *wh*-prompts. Also, questions asking about the child's life outside the book in the *follow-up* category in Table 1 were coded apart and retitled as *distancing* prompts.

[5] In this paper *evaluation* is referred to as "explicit inferences about a character's frame of mind or emotional state ("He decided to jump over the fence." and "He was sad."), quoting the speech of characters, using qualifying or emphasizing comments ("He never listened."), directing questions to the listener, and commenting upon one's own emotional reactions to the story" (Peterson & McCabe, 1983) (as cited in Zevenbergen et al., 2003, p. 3).

TABLE 2

Five Types of Questions (from Whitehurst et al., 1994, pp. 547-548)

No.	Prompts	Definitions
1	Completion prompts	Fill-in-the-blank questions (e.g., "Something went bump, and that made us _____?")
2	Recall prompts	Questions asking aspects of a book (e.g., "Can you remember some things that happened to Lena when she went to school?")
3	Open-ended prompts	Statements that encourages the child to respond his/her own opinion (e.g., "I told about the last page, now it's you turn. You tell me about the page")
4	*Wh*-prompts	What, where, why questions (e.g, "What's this called?")
5	Distancing prompts	Questions that require the child to relate the content of the book to aspect of life outside the book (e.g., "Did you ever play in the snow like Peter did? What did it feel like?")

To answer the two research questions, descriptive statistics will first examine the participants' performance and then a paired *t*-test will display the comparative patterns of behaviors and questions one by one.

IV. RESULTS

The descriptive statistics in Table 3 show how the Korean mothers performed in each book reading in this study. The results indicated that the participants produced more words when reading an English book (M = 260.71, SD = 198.71) and the variance was much greater than in the Korean book reading (M = 247.12, SD = 166.42). However, in contrast, the mothers produced longer sentences when reading the Korean book (M = 4.17, SD = 1.15), but the degree was not greatly different from the English book (M = 3.83, SD = 1.19). The mothers produced more sentences in the English book reading (M = 64.00, SD = 41.18) than in the Korean book reading (M = 54.00, SD = 25.55), and the type/token ratio was similar in each session. In sum, it can be said that the mothers produced more sentences in the English book reading, with more words but in somewhat shorter sentences, with a bit of higher lexical diversity.

Table 4 represents the Korean mothers' reading behavior differences in two sessions. When they read the Korean book, *Mr. Gumpy's Outing*, they used *evaluation* (M = 15.29, SD = 9.20) the most, followed by *feedback* (M = 9.82, SD = 6.22), *follow-up* (M = 9.00, SD = 6.84), and *repetition* (M = 7.35, SD = 6.59). Except these, the mothers did not show greater preference on one specific behavior. On the contrary, when the mothers read English book, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, they showed more variety of behavior patterns. They used *feedback* (M = 10.94, SD = 8.85) more often followed by *evaluation* (M = 9.71,

SD = 7.77), *translation* (*M* = 9.65, *SD* = 10.69), *repetition* (*M* = 8.94, *SD* = 7.08), *follow-up* (*M* = 8.76, *SD* = 8.01), and *simple question* (*M* = 5.41, *SD* = 5.86).

TABLE 3

The General Descriptions of Korean Mothers' Book Reading

	Mr. Gumpy's Outing (Korean Book)				*The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (English Book)			
	Min	Max	*M*	*SD*	Min	Max	*M*	*SD*
Number of words	40	659	247.18	166.42	20	620	260.71	198.71
Mean length of sentences	2.11	5.88	4.17	1.15	2.00	6.52	3.83	1.19
Number of sentences	13	112	54.00	25.55	7	136	64.00	41.18
Type/token ratio	0.20	0.50	0.31	0.09	0.17	0.70	0.33	0.15

TABLE 4

Korean Mothers' Communication Behavior in Korean and English Book Readings

		Mr. Gumpy's Outing (Korean Book)				*The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (English Book)			
		Min	Max	*M*	*SD*	Min	Max	*M*	*SD*
1	Feedback	0	22	9.82	6.22	1	32	10.94	8.85
2	Follow-up	0	22	9.00	6.84	0	24	8.76	8.01
3	Simple Q	0	9	3.53	3.10	0	19	5.41	5.86
4	Evaluation	2	33	15.29	9.20	1	28	9.71	7.77
5	Directives	0	5	1.18	1.38	0	11	2.59	3.14
6	Description	0	10	3.71	3.69	0	8	1.94	2.46
7	Attention	0	1	0.41	0.51	0	3	0.59	1.00
8	Labeling	0	4	1.18	1.13	0	7	1.71	2.11
9	Open-ended Q	0	2	0.47	0.62	0	11	0.88	2.67
10	Repetition	0	24	7.35	6.59	0	26	8.94	7.08
11	Translation	0	0	0.00	0.00	0	31	9.65	10.69
12	Begin/wrap-up	0	3	1.35	1.17	0	3	1.35	1.00
13	Other	0	4	0.76	1.15	0	5	1.24	1.35
	Total	13	112	54.06	25.55	7	136	63.71	41.18

Table 5 represents statistically significant differences in the communication patterns in each book reading. Paired samples of *evaluation* behavior in both session showed the greatest differences (t = -2.65, $p < 0.05$), followed by *directives* (t = 2.37, $p < 0.05$). The statistics results show the most significant outcome for the *translation* (t = 3.72, $p < 0.001$); however, since *translation* was only used in the English book reading session, the value should not be included in the interpretation. Thus, it can be said that the Korean mothers used more *evaluation* when reading the Korean book than they did in the English book. In addition, they used more *directives* in the English book reading than they did in the Korean book reading.

TABLE 5

Paired Samples *t*-Test of Korean Mothers' Behaviors in Two Reading Sessions

		Paired Differences				
		M	*SD*	Std. Error Mean	*t*	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	Feedback (E)-Feedback (K)	1.12	10.02	2.43	0.46	0.65
Pair 2	Follow up (E)-Follow up (K)	-0.24	7.30	1.77	-0.13	0.90
Pair 3	Simple Q (E)-Simple Q (K)	1.88	5.93	1.44	1.31	0.21
Pair 4	Evaluation (E)-Evaluation (K)	-5.59	8.71	2.11	-2.65*	0.02
Pair 5	Directives (E)-Directives (K)	1.41	2.45	0.59	2.37*	0.03
Pair 6	Description (E)-Description (K)	-1.76	4.16	1.01	-1.75	0.10
Pair 7	Attention (E)-Attention (K)	0.18	1.13	0.27	0.64	0.53
Pair 8	Labeling (E)-Labeling (K)	0.53	2.58	0.62	0.85	0.41
Pair 9	Open-ended Q (E)-Open-ended Q (K)	0.41	2.58	0.62	0.66	0.52
Pair 10	Repetition (E)-Repetition (K)	1.59	6.81	1.65	0.96	0.35
Pair 11	Translation (E)-Translation (K)	9.65	10.69	2.59	3.72***	0.00
Pair 12	Begin/Wrap-up (E)-Begin/Wrap-up (K)	0.00	1.17	0.28	0.00	1.00
Pair 13	Other (E)-Other (K)	0.47	1.91	0.46	1.02	0.32

*$p < 0.05$, ***$p < 0.001$

As shown in Table 6, the Korean mothers employed different types of questions during SBR. *Recall* prompts questioning aspects of the book were used the most in both readings ($M = 3.53$, $SD = 3.10$; $M = 5.41$, $SD = 5.86$ for the Korean and English books, respectively). However, the degree was different as the participants used more *recall* prompts in English book reading, which means that they tried to check the children's understanding after reading the English book. The second preferred method was *wh*-prompts in both readings ($M = 2.47$, $SD = 2.92$; $M = 3.24$, $SD = 4.82$ for the Korean and English books, respectively). Both *recall* and *wh*-prompts were used more in the English book reading on average. In addition, the Korean mothers did not use *open-ended* prompts at all, which encourage children to use their own words in both readings.

TABLE 6

Korean Mother's Use of Questioning in Korean and English Book Readings

		Mr. Gumpy's Outing (Korean Book)				*The Very Hungry Caterpillar* (English Book)			
		Min	Max	*M*	*SD*	Min	Max	*M*	*SD*
1	Completion prompts	0	2	0.47	0.62	0	11	0.88	2.67
2	Recall prompts	0	9	3.53	3.10	0	19	5.41	5.86
3	Open-ended prompts	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	*Wh*-prompts	0	9	2.47	2.92	0	18	3.24	4.82
5	Distancing prompts	0	8	2.00	2.60	0	11	1.41	2.83
	Total	0	23	8.47	6.08	0	32	10.94	8.61

TABLE 7

Paired Samples *t*-Test of the Mothers' Questioning in Two Reading Sessions

		Paired Differences			*t*	Sig. (2-tailed)
		M	*SD*	Std. Error Mean		
Pair 1	Completion (E)-Completion (K)	.41	2.58	.62	.66	.52
Pair 2	Recall (E)-Recall (K)	1.88	5.93	1.44	1.31	.21
Pair 3	Open-ended (E)-Open-ended (K)	0	0	0	0	0
Pair 4	*Wh*-prompts (E)-*Wh*-prompts (K)	.76	5.18	1.26	.61	.55
Pair 5	Distancing (E)-Distancing (K)	-.59	3.10	.75	-.78	.45

As shown in Table 6, the Korean mothers employed different types of questions during SBR. *Recall* prompts questioning aspects of the book were used the most in both readings ($M = 3.53$, $SD = 3.10$; $M = 5.41$, $SD = 5.86$ for the Korean and English books, respectively). However, the degree was different as the participants used more *recall* prompts in English book reading, which means that they tried to check the children's understanding after reading the English book. The second preferred method was *wh*-prompts in both readings ($M = 2.47$, $SD = 2.92$; $M = 3.24$, $SD = 4.82$ for the Korean and English books, respectively). Both *recall* and *wh*-prompts were used more in the English book reading on average. In addition, the Korean mothers did not use *open-ended* prompts at all, which encourage children to use their own words in both readings.

However, as shown in Table 7, the paired samples *t*-test of the mothers' questioning did not make any statistical differences in two reading sessions. This means that except open-ended questions which encourage the children to use their own opinion, the mothers' use of questioning were not different both in the Korean and the English book sessions.

V. DISCUSSION

This study aimed to investigate Korean mothers' communication behavior during shared book reading practices. The mothers showed a variety of behavioral patterns in Korean and English book readings. Evident differences were revealed for the first research question. Korean mothers used more *evaluation* followed by *feedback*, *follow-up*, and *repetition* when they read *Mr. Gumpy's Outing*—the Korean book. In contrast, there was considerable diversity in the number of communications, with *feedback* being the most used, followed by *evaluation*, *translation*, *repetition*, and *follow-up* when they read *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*—the English book.

In terms of different behavior, the paired samples *t*-test results indicated that the use of

translation was shown to be the most significant difference in both readings. However, because *translation* was not employed in the Korean book reading (which makes sense), only statistically significant *evaluation* and *directives* were taken into account. The mothers used more *evaluation* in the Korean book reading, while they used more *directives* in the English book reading. This might be due to the language effect which means that "English is not a familiar language to the mothers" (M. S. Lee & M. S. Kim, 2011, p. 22). When they read books in the Korean language, the printed language was not an obstacle in producing intended utterances during interaction; thus, they were able to express their own inferences or thoughts spontaneously whenever they wanted. In addition, the mothers used more *directives* such as "Tap your hands on the butterfly" or "Point to what the piggy wants". This might be due to the limited English vocabulary or limited attention span of the children. Accordingly, in order to get the child's attention onto the book and prevent them from being distracted, the mothers might have used twice the number of *directives* to go ahead in her reading.

Among 13 behaviors, it was revealed that the mothers' preferred pattern seemed quite similar, except *translation* in the English book. For instance, in the Korean book reading, the total number of the most preferred behaviors ranked 1 to 4 (*evaluation*, *feedback*, *follow-up*, and *repetition*) and took up 77% of the total produced sentences, whereas the total number of the most preferred behaviors ranked 1 to 4 (*feedback*, *evaluation*, *repetition*, and *follow-up*) in the English book reading took up 60% of the total produced sentences, leaving 15% for *translation*. This result means that although the mothers read two different books, they all preferred using those top four patterns the most. They loved giving feedback, following up on their child's comments or answers, reflecting their own thoughts, and repeating their child's comments or the content of the book, although the degree to which these were used was different in each reading.

Along with this one interesting result was revealed in the English book reading—the total number of sentences produced. The mothers produced more sentences (M = 63.71, SD = 41.18) when they read the English book, whereas they produced fewer sentences (M = 54.06, SD = 25.55) when they read the Korean book in total. This result is contradictory to M. S. Lee and M. S. Kim's (2011) study, which found the mothers produced only half the number of sentences when they read an English book compared to the Korean one. However, M. S. Lee and M. S. Kim (2011) supposed that the mothers might have just focused on the printed words in the English book with worries about their English. In other words, the mothers might have had "fears" (M. S. Lee & M. S. Kim, 2011, p. 21) that their limited English vocabulary could hamper the children's English book comprehension during SBR. Considering that the mothers hired in the current study regularly read about 14 Korean books and 9 English books to their children, they had already established habitual book reading and knew how to interact with their children when sharing books;

this degree of interaction was greater in English written books.

Apart from the above, one interesting captured phenomenon is that none of the mothers used English in their extratextual talk, although they were allowed to freely use either Korean or English when they wanted. All participant mothers spoke only in the Korean language for their interactions except when they read the printed sentences of the English book. Thirteen mothers (76%) held a four year university degree and two (12%) of them held a master's degree; however, none of them spoke even a simple sentence in English in the collected recordings. According to Kohnert and Bates (2002), a mix-language processing (L1 and L2 switch) did not interfere with the participants' lexical comprehension task in all ages. The young participants aged between five to seven had the least "switch cost" (p. 350), which means that they had the lowest level of inhibition when they switched from L1 to L2, thus allowing them to freely acquire L2 vocabulary more easily than adult learners. A similar finding was reported by Roberts (2008). She reported that when home-reading in L1 (Hmong or Spanish) was combined with school instruction (English), the combination eventually boosted the children's English vocabulary learning. As evidenced by these researchers, L1 and L2 switching during book reading may bring benefits to Korean children as well. Thus, based on above results, it can be assumed that if Korean children are exposed to a shared book reading environment in both languages, Korean and English, and when school instruction can be added, their learning of English vocabulary will also be boosted.

Regarding the second research question, the use of questions, Korean mothers used more questions in the English book reading (M = 10.94, SD = 8.61) than they did in the Korean book reading (M = 8.47, SD = 6.08) on average. As for the kinds of questions, there was no significant difference in the five questioning types. This means that the mothers used each type of question in a similar way in both readings. The mothers' preferred question type was *recall* the most, which asks about aspects of the book (e.g., "Can you remember something that happened to Lena when she went to school?") followed by *wh*-prompts, which ask *what*, *where*, and *wh*y questions about the story (e.g., "What's this called?"). This result coincides with Jiménez, Garcia, and Pearson's (1995) study. They compared English monolingual and Spanish-English bilingual children's reading performance and reported that unknown words were the obstacles in their English reading, whereas an explicit knowledge aided their reading comprehension in English. The result of the current study was in line with theirs because the young Korean participants were not proficient in the English language, neither vocabulary nor explicit knowledge of English. Thus, the mothers might have used more *recall* and *wh*-prompts to identify the children's understanding of simple facts in the English book. In addition, the mothers did the same comprehension checkup in the Korean book reading, although the degree to which they did this was weaker.

However, no use of *open-ended* prompts (e.g., "I told about the last page, now it's you turn. You tell me about the page") was a remarkable result. Moreover, relatively low employment of *completion* (e.g., "Something went bump, and that made us _____?") and *distancing* prompts (e.g., "Did you ever play in the snow like Peter did? What did it feel like?") seemed comparable to the high use of *recall* (e.g., "Can you remember some things that happened to Lena when she went to school?") and *wh*-prompts (e.g, "What's this called?") in both sessions. Given the fact that high demand questions include inferences, explanations, predictions, or relating a story to personal life, the Korean mothers' use of questions still seems far from high demand and closer to low demand questions, such as descriptions or asking object names. Yet, mixing high and low demand questions seems necessary since Blewitt et al. (2009) contended that children receive benefits from both high and low demand questions when they are ready. Thus, starting at low demand, when the children have just started reading, and gradually moving forward to high demand, and mixing both kinds seems necessary.

Based on above, several considerations and pedagogical implications are proposed. First, the mothers' high translation pattern should be reconsidered because translation is not directly related to children's novel word learning. Walsh and Blewitt (2006) found that asking questions not targeting vocabulary had positive effects in learning new words, regardless of question types. Similarly, Blewitt et al. (2009) also suggested that use of word-referent, target word repetition, and a shift from low demand (e.g., simple labeling or description questions) to high demand questions (e.g., inferences, explanations, predictions, etc.), all boosted American preschoolers' deeper understanding of novel words in a book. Thus, instead of letting the children have Korean-translated meanings line by line, employing questions while having extratextual talk during reading seems better for their learning of English vocabulary. Second, concerning no use of *open-ended* prompts and the limited use of *completion* and *distancing* prompts, intentional use of these types of questions or mixing them together is highly recommended. It is because that questioning challenges learners to deal with language at a deeper level than when input alone is given (Swain, 2000). Besides, more practical guides for shared book reading should be disseminated through parent seminars or lifelong education so that both parents and children can make the best use of benefits of extratextual talk.

VI. CONCLUSION

In this study the Korean mothers displayed a higher number of both communication behavior and questioning during SBR. The statistical results showed that mothers used more *evaluation* in the Korean book reading, while they used more *directives* in the

English book reading, excluding *translation*. In addition, in terms of questioning, the mothers employed more *recall* and *wh*-prompts in the English book reading on average. However, no statistical evidence was found in the matched pairs of five types of questions. This means that the Korean mothers used the questions in a similar manner when they shared the Korean-written and the English-written books. Moreover, no use of *open-ended* prompts and low use of *completion* and *distancing* prompts implied that high demand questions are still necessary for a balanced questioning (Blewitt et al., 2009).

This study explored Korean preschoolers' home literacy experiences in natural settings. The current study has limitations with the small number of mother-child dyads from one region. Thus, the results warrant future studies recruiting children with various English backgrounds, family backgrounds (e.g., only child vs. second child), or inviting mothers who have proficient English speaking skills. In addition, a comparison of Korean and English translated version seems viable by adapting the Korean translated version of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* and the English version of *Mr. Gumpy's outing* in the current study design. Use of paper-printed books and e-books (M. S. Lee, 2005) would broaden the limited number of literature in SBR studies in Korea. Despite the limitations, this study is still provocative since the results shed light on the studies of Korean preschool children's English book reading in terms of mothers' reading behavior and questioning practices in a natural setting. Consequently, this study adds to previous limited literature of Korean preschoolers' English learning by presenting unique aspects of parent-child scaffolding during L1 and L2 book readings.

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Examples in: English
Applicable Languages: English
Applicable Levels: Early Childhood & Primary

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