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Entitled

INVESTIGATING PARENTAL ROLES IN DEVELOPING PRESCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN'S EMERGENT LITERACY IN ENGLISH, THEIR SECOND LANGUAGE, THROUGH STORYBOOK READING IN A SAMPLE OF KUWAITI HOMES

by

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Abstract

Using a convergent mixed methods design, this study explored home emergent literacy environments actualized by six mothers of young preschool-aged children living in Kuwait. It investigated the role of these Kuwaiti mothers in developing their bilingual preschool-aged children's print knowledge, oral language, and phonological awareness, as three areas associated with emergent literacy (EL). In particular, the study explored the influence of parental storybook reading on the development of bilingual children's EL skills in English, their second language (L2). Using purposive sampling, this case study obtained statistical quantitative results from parents who responded to a questionnaire about their home literacy experiences and from fourteen bilingual preschool-aged children who undertook a pretest and a posttest. Qualitative data were also obtained from six families' audiotaped home reading sessions and from semi-structured interviews with the six mothers and three classroom teachers. The research questions were carefully curated as to trace the influence of storybook reading on the children's EL development, which was found to be strongest for oral language development. Moreover, while, on average, there were noted instances of stimulating EL development authentically in the families' homes, parallels were generally drawn between the mothers' and the classroom teachers' reading purposes, being strategically motivated by a number of didactic practices. Ultimately, the study concluded with a number of practical and ecological recommendations, amongst which pertain to transitioning from authentic book reading to direct teaching not only strategically but also sequentially and separately. Ecologically, the study recommends increasing social interactions in children's home literacy environments. The study also concluded with research-inspired home book reading recommendations, hoped to guide regional communities seeking to create similar home environments and experiences and to inspire future relevant research to become explanatory in nature.

Keywords: Emergent literacy (EL), home book reading; print knowledge, oral language, phonological awareness, preschoolers, bilingualism, English, second language (L2), Kuwait, mixed methods design.