



Evidence Summary—Technical Annex:

There is strong evidence on the positive impact of interactive reading approaches, such as dialogic reading, as an approach to improve language and communication in the early years. An analysis of three systematic reviews on shared reading interventions shows that the more active the child participation, the greater the gains in language development (Trivette and Dunst, 2007). Multiple individual studies that compare outcomes of children who were randomly selected to receive interactive reading interventions with those who did not (randomised controlled trials) show a positive effect of this type of intervention in a range of countries (Valdez-Menchaca and Whitehurst, 1992; Wasik and Bond, 2001; van Kleeck, Vander Woude and Hammett, 2006; Opel, Ameer and Aboud, 2009). While most evaluative studies find a positive effect, there are occasional studies that find a mixed effect (Institute of Education Sciences, 2007b).

It is difficult to know why the effect of interactive reading can vary because most studies focus on interactive reading as a multicomponent approach. In other words, they study the impact of the approach as a whole rather than testing the specific practices that are used during reading sessions.

This research gap means it is hard to pinpoint exactly which practices are key aspects of interactive reading and which make the most difference. However, successful interactive reading interventions tend to involve prompts that encourage spoken interactions between the reader and child, such as questioning (Institute of Education Sciences, 2007b). Dialogic reading is a form of interactive reading in which the adult structures their input using the PEER and CROWD acronyms (this framework includes completion and questioning amongst other practices) (Whitehurst et al, 1988). A systematic review on dialogic reading shows a positive effect on oral language outcomes (Institute of Education Sciences, 2007a).

Despite the difficulty in pinpointing which practices are most effective, the evidence for interactive reading overall is positive (Lonigan, Shanahan and Cunningham, 2008). In particular, the evidence is very strong around the efficacy of this approach for pupils experiencing poverty and those with less developed oral language (Mautte, 1990; Lonigan et al, 1999; Tsybina and Eriks-Brophy, 2010), however there is no comparison between pupil groups to confirm that this could close an attainment gap.



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