# Operating Classroom Aesthetic Reading Environment to Raise Children's Reading Motivation

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**Abstract** This research aims to explore how preschool educators understand about raising children's reading motivation through operating classroom aesthetic reading environment. With one year qualitative research, sixteen 4-6 years old young were observed and interviewed. The first stage interviews were undergone with environmental guidance. After the physical class reading environment was adjusted into aesthetic perspective, children's reading motivation and attitudes were triggered. The second stage involved themed reading activities, including the child-centered extended reading activities, arranging parent-child and peers shared reading time, designing borrowing books home activities, promoting peers and parent-child shared reading, and classroom hot-popular reading books selection ballot. Data collection methods included observation, interviews, children's relative documents, drawings, and hands-on works. Based on analysis of research data, main results were extracted as below: young children's reading motivation including interest, perceived control, collaboration, involvement, and efficacy were promoted through classroom aesthetic reading environment and parent-child shared reading promotion activities. Finally, according to conclusion of this research, suggestions for relative teaching application and subsequent research were proposed as reference.

**Keywords** Children, Class Reading Environment, Reading Motivation

## 1. Background

Motivating children's reading plays an important role in era of information technology today, since reading is the integral part in process of educating children (Alderman, 2013)[1]. However, for children to read and study effectively, an incentive is required to lure them into such process (Brock et al., 2008)[2]. Therefore, the imperativeness of motivating their reading matters significantly (Blachowicz et al., 2006)[3]. Besides, reading techniques, teaching procedures, curriculum contents and the aesthetic environment are influential, as well as technological factors incorporated into reading due to dynamic technological advancements (Mashburn, et al., 2008)[4]. In regard of the significance of promoting children's reading habit and attitude, preschool educators pay much attention on its relation toward stimulating children's language, social, emotional, and aesthetic development (Becker, McElvany & Kortenbruck, 2010)[5]. While trying to improving children's reading habits, the educator's should take the aesthetic environment and language usage into consideration (Burchinal et al., 2008)[6]. Children are likely to enjoy readings encrypted in a friendly environment and language usage they can easily make association with (Bishop et al., 2010)[7], with the considerate interaction with aesthetic environment, reading process can foster the children's comprehension of their reading materials (Buyse et al., 2009)[8].

On the other side, social and emotional aspects also have an impact on children's reading habits (Di Francesco, 2011)[9]; preschool educators should consider the children's attitudes towards reading for it is a core indicator of children's emotion development (DiLalla & Mullineaux, 2008)[10]. A positive attitude towards reading can enhance children's constructive reading (Edmunds & Bauserman, 2006)[11] and their emotions in the education process determine whether they develop the right attitudes towards reading (Patrick, Ryan, & Kaplan, 2007; Evans, 2006)[12][13]. Consequently, children's exposure to aesthetics serves as a factor that triggers reading motivation (Guddemi & Gesell, 2010)[14]. Due to the critical influence of environment and classroom arrangement on children's reading habits, scholars (Di Francesco, 2011)[9] agree that arrangement of classroom reading environment makes contribution to the elevation of preschool children' reading motivation, such as instance, a reading environment with appropriate reading materials and resources. On the contrary, an environment not orderly and lacking such resources will

produce negative effect on preschool children's reading motivation.

Among various reading motivational factors, the design of learning environment influences children's growth and development significantly (Guthrie et al., 2007)[15], for appropriate and aesthetics reading atmosphere and/or environment awakens children's visual, feeling and imagination (Rushton, & Juola-Rushton, 2008)[16] The reading environment is of utmost importance to the children's learning outcome (Wigfield, 2010; Wigfield et al, 2008)[17][18]. For instance, technology is a dynamic factor that could enhance and draw children's interest in what they study (Christenson, Reschly & Wylie, 2012)[19], while technology incorporated into environmental aesthetics can eliminate monotony (Goodman, 2014)[20], such as use of electronic interactive whiteboards during teaching art to create a clear and visible perspective to the children (Aikens, & Barbarin, 2008; Grabe & Stoller, 2013)[21][22]. In addition, the quiet external environment can enhance their imagination during their direct interaction with Nature. For the less emphasis on the relation between reading habit cultivation and aesthetic environment, and the imperativeness of elevating the children's reading motivation (Hyson, 2008)[23], this research expects to establish a feasible aesthetic environment for elevating children's reading motivation (Hegde & Cassidy, 2009; Howes et al., 2008)[24][25] and to elevate children's language, emotions and reading interests into account will certainly improve their reading motivation (Goodman, 2014; Grabe, & Stoller, 2013; Jones & Brown, 2011)[20][22][26].

### Research Purpose

1. The research aims to realize in what way preschool educators should elevate children's reading motivation through manipulating classroom reading environment.
2. The research aims to realize in what way preschool educators should elevate children's reading motivation through implementing classroom reading activities.

## 2. Related Literature

### Meaning, essence, and importance of Children's Reading

Children's reading generates their comprehension and understanding of what is encrypted in books and what the educators deliver in class (Guardino & Fullerton, 2010; Klauda, 2009; Law, 2011; Logan, Medford & Hughes, 2011)[27][28][29][30], which is critical to achievement of desirable learning outcomes for the preschool children (McMahon, Wernsman & Rose, 2009)[31]. The essence of children's reading is vast; for instance, children read to develop comprehensive learning skills that fuel the reading process (Lapp, 2013; Mol, Bus & de Jong, 2009)[32][33]; educators should put emphasis on initiating multiple reading activities to attract children's individual learning interest

(McWilliam & Casey, 2008)[34]. Such activities have better inducing motivating factors especially for those young children learners (Meece, Anderman & Anderman, 2006)[35].

### Research on Children's Reading Motivation

Research (Jones, & Brown, 2011; Di Francesco, 2011)[26][9] proposed that children's reading is highly related to curiosity, involvement, recognition, funny games, themed activities, parent-child shared reading and play. As we know, reading motivation is dependent on various factors (Mol & Bus, 2011)[33], including parent-child interrelationship, friendship, aesthetic, imagination, and creativity. Curiosity makes children eager to learn and explore more (Morgan & Fuchs, 2007; Mol, Bus & de Jong, 2009)[37][38]. Since reading materials are effective in drawing the children's interests, they are bound to become curious and tend to crave for more reading (McKool, 2007)[39]. It is only through reading that such a form of curiosity can be satisfied, and also fuel their active involvement in class sessions ( Morgan et al., 2008)[37].

In addition to curiosity, reading activities provide every child chances to participate in learning activities (Nystrand, 2006) [40]. Children are motivated to read not because they are recognized for achieving external desired outcomes (Pianta, Hamre & Allen, 2012) [41], but because they are internally motivated to explore, to observe, to learn within reading(Patrick, Ryan & Kaplan, 2007)[12].

Ponitz et al., (2009)[42] proposed that there are several methods as to elevate children's reading motivation; namely, child-centered, adult-scaffolding, free choices and enough time, provision of appropriate reading incentives, design of multiple diverse reading activities, and constructing a warm reading environment. From the Developmentally Appropriately Practice perspective, child-centered learning enables the children to play an active role in learning process and motivates them to take part in reading activities organized by the educators (Pakarinen et al., 2010)[43].

Adult scaffolding is the process that preschool educators develop a model or demonstration of the problem-solving (Rushton & Juola-Rushton, 2008)[16]. Subsequently, they retreat to make children read on their own, but only when assistance is necessary (Rayneri, Gerber & Wiley, 2006)[44]. Providing children free choice right and sufficient reading time is exerted as an incentive for reading (Roe, Smith & Burns, 2011)[45]. When the children are offered a chance to select their reading materials, they will then come to what interests them the most and be motivated to accomplish the reading task, since adequate reading time enables the children to read and study without unnecessary pressure (Schunk & Zimmerman, 2007)[46].

Educators should also provide multiple reading incentives such as providing the necessary reading materials and other resources (Schiefele et al., 2012)[47]. Constructing diverse reading activities and adequate aesthetic reading environment is an integral motivating factor in Preschool children's reading. Combining these above factors can foster

aesthetics education in schools and pioneer development of effective and meaningful reading among children (Urdan & Schoenfelder, 2006)[48].

### Research Related to Reading Motivation and Children

Research (Becker, McElvany, & Kortenbruck, 2010; Howes et al, 2008; Villiger et al., 2012) [5][25][49]9proposed that motivation is critically significant in Preschool children's reading activities. On this aspect, this research includes an explanation of the motivating elements that will elevate reading culture among the children (Wigfield et al., 2010)[17], such as reading resources, incentives, and study activities as leading elements in motivating children's reading dynamics.

### Research on Classroom Reading Environment

Wigfield & Guthrie (2013)[50] stressed on the meaning and importance of classroom reading environment, in which that situation, atmosphere, and environment setting up serves as key factor influencing young children's learning and playing. While environment education exits in aesthetics, warmth and love, it is easy for children to reach and be involved in reading habit. Parent-child or peers sharing picture and story books are also influencing factors as well. Books with pictorial explanations are more appealing to children, more likely to attract them to launch reading. Unconsciously, in addition to classroom activities, reading becomes part of family education and life necessity (Schiefele et al., 2012)[47]. At home, parents should take in charge of offering a place of aesthetic reading experience for children, including arranging bedroom, living, and library in a comfortable, love, and warmth surrounding (Ponitz et al., 2009)[42]. In this sense, reading is not restricted to school environment, but is extended to any small libraries and study rooms in their homes to function as an aesthetic reading environment established by parents for their children (Grabe & Stoller, 2013)[22], or alternatively, the children's bedrooms can be tailored and developed into an environment allowing children to efficiently proceed learning and reading activities.

### Research on How to Design Reading Environment

On basis of the preceding discussions, environment serves as key factor influencing young children's reading, and responsibility of providing an aesthetic and motivating environment for children's reading falls on parents and teachers. The former provides adequate and functional reading environments for children at home, while the latter prepare appropriate surrounding in school (Buyse et al., 2009)[8].

For Preschool children, an efficient and relevant environment serves as an incentive towards comprehensive and meaningful reading (Jones & Brown, 2011)[26]. The research shows various reading environment designs as effective Preschool children' reading place. Such design should support reading and offer various incentives as a motivation to encourage children to read.

### Models of classroom reading environment

In Gambrell's article, he proposed that there are six items that serve as reading incentives to assist classroom reading culture, including teacher design clear reading model, rich reading environment, free choice books, chances to interact with others, familiar with reading information, and appropriate reading incentive (Martin, 2006)[51]. For instance, free choice of books enables children to go for the books that best serve their interests and can motivate children to read. According to Gambrell, educators should give the children enough time to read as much as they can (Klauda, 2009)[28]. In such process, children are able to share what they have read, especially when they are situated in study groups (Logan, Medford & Hughes, 2011)[30]. Sharing what is read reinforces and promotes development of a positive reading culture. Also, children can be encouraged to read in front of the others, since reading for the whole class makes them establish confidence necessary for the developing essential reading and learning skills. Educators should ensure that sufficient books are available to children to choose, and reward those who perform exemplarily in the reading exercises as the incentive to them and other students and encourages them to read more. Aidan Chambers' reading circle theory include adults who can assist children to select books, read, and respond (Jones & Brown, 2011)[36]. Reading process among children should be inclusive of adults in a position to provide an enabling reading environment. They can do this by suggesting book titles that are likely to interest the children, guide them in the reading process and providing a platform on which the children can respond with regard to what they have been reading.

### Research on Aesthetics Education and Reading Environment and Reading Process

From the perspective of aesthetics integrated into early childhood education, the following three elements-- exploration and awareness, expression and creation, response and appreciation should be taken into consideration in the established reading environment (Brock et al., 2008)[2]. Exploration and awareness serves as preschool children's viable basis to select relevant books and subjects. Through exploration, children are able to go through a variety of books and do extensive reading of a wide range of materials. Teachers and parents have to advise children or suggest reading topics likely to interest them. By such way, awareness of the children can be expounded. In addition, reading a variety of materials can also expound on children's awareness of various topics they are interest (Goodman, 2014)[20]. Awareness is only created when children read in pursuit of meaning instead of the protocol. Moreover, for the final stages composed by response and appreciation of the reading process, expression and creation can be part of children's response to the readings. Response reiterates on

whatever is read and appreciation may be informed of rewards, and rewards tend to reinforce a positive reading culture among Preschool children.

From the aesthetic perspective, the following three elements, including exploration and awareness, expression and creation, response and appreciation should be taken into consideration when parents and child share reading activity (Jones & Brown, 2011)[26]. Aesthetics concentrates on development and constitution of a viable and enabling learning environment for children. Parents complement the educator's efforts in promoting children's reading through exploration, awareness, expression, response and rewards. Therefore, children's reading is dependent on such incentives that encourage them to read more and promotes comprehensive and meaningful reading (Logan, Medford & Hughes, 2011)[30].

# 3. Research Design and Implementation

## *Research Methods*

This research adopted qualitative observation and interview method.

### 1. Observation Method

In this research, children are observed by the researchers and the classroom primary instructors. In the initial stage, when planning of class reading environment was proceeded, as a complete observer, the researcher tried to understand how change of environment affects class reading environment in the way that transforms children's reading motivation. With reading activities proceeding, researcher acts as "participant as observer" in reading activities to interact with children, and also as "observer as participant" to scaffold children with creative plays and interactive communications to assist children being involved in reading activities. Under such condition, the researcher transformed the role and attitudes of the observers on basis of children's learning needs, interests, and development. With recording each child's reading behaviors, performance, dialogues with peers during their reading progress.

### 2. Interview Method

#### (1) Interview with the Children

Preschool children are the most direct and true in their behaviors, thinking, and expression. In the most natural situation, random, individual, and group interviews with the children were conducted in accordance with semi-structured interviews adopted by Fulmer, & Frijters, (2009)[52] and Guthrie et al (2007)[15]. From interviewing with young children, researcher collected the information to do further analysis in understanding how children fall in love with reading and how they are satisfied with the classroom aesthetic reading environment arranged by teachers to modify details and thinking of this research. The interviews include the following items, interest, perceived control, collaboration in reading, self-efficacy, and involvement. Young children were interviewed with the following questions relating to the particular books the children read, which might provide more indicators of their specific motivations for reading.

The interview questions adopted by Fulmer, & Frijters, (2009)[52] and Guthrie et al (2007)[15] are presented in Table 1. Each interview started with a few questions to build the warmth relationship with preschool educators, and then the children students were asked the questions about the constructs of interest, perceived control, collaboration, efficacy, and involvement.

**Table 1.**   Interview Questions for Children's Reading

| | |
|---|---|
| Warm-up | 1. Can you give me some words to describe the reading environment in our classroom?<br>2. Where did you get this book?<br>3. What is it about? |
| Interest | 4. Was this book interesting? Tell me more about that.<br>5. What kinds of books are interesting to you? |
| Perceived control | 6. Did you choose this book?<br>7. Why did you pick this one?<br>8. Do you like it more when you pick out a book by yourself? |
| Collaboration | 9. Did you talk to anyone about this book?<br>10. Did you read this book aloud with anyone? |
| Efficacy | 11. Were you good at reading this book? What made you think that?<br>12. Were there any hard parts in this book? What did you do when you came to those parts? |
| Involvement | 13. About how long did it take you to read this book? How many days, and how many minutes each day?<br>14. When do you usually read with your family members?<br>15. Was this book so good you couldn't stop reading it? |
| Environment | 16. How do you feel about the reading environment?<br>Do you like it more? Or what do you think it will become better? |

**(2) Interview with Classroom Co-Teachers**

In order to supplement the researcher' neglect or insufficiency in process of investigation, the interview direction of co-teacher (called Teacher Huang) and class educare giver (called Teacher Chou) was highlighted in respect of inter-verification and understanding of children's performance in reading motivation, condition of personal reading or peer reading, and the viewpoints and suggestions on design of class reading environment planning. Besides, the objectivity of research would be increased by means of consulting others' angle of opinions and suggestions for modification, so that future teaching can refer to be based on those modifications and improvements

**(3) Interview with Parents**

In regard of parents, the researcher conducted flexible and random methods for sharing and interviews in order to understand children's reading motivation, and their reading behaviors and performance at home. Then, the results with observation and interview data about children and teachers were verified to understand children's change and effect in process of this research.

*Research Field and Subject*

1. Research Field

The field of this research is the school where the researcher work, called The Affiliated Kindergarten of Star Elementary School. Through introduction to the kindergarten, class introduction, and children's reading experiences, the field of this research is described.

(1) Class Introduction

The primary field of this research is the researcher' teaching site, Class Rainbow. Due to the student intake, it is a age-mixed class with 16 children--4 kindergarteners, 6 pre-kindergarteners, and 6 preschools; 6 boys and 10 girls. There is only one floor according to the class design, so most of children's activities are proceeded in this space. In addition to teaching activities, the classroom is also where children have lunch and take a rest. In the classroom environment, the floor plane shows that except the teaching area is wooden floor, the other areas are all tiled floor (Fig 1). Besides, limited to design of floor segmentation, the cabinets in each learning area is arranged in the shape of "1", including Block Area, Puzzle Area, and Role Play Area. As for Reading Area, it is arranged at the middle between the children's seats and the teacher's platform with display-based shelves and segmented shelves for children to select the book for reading.
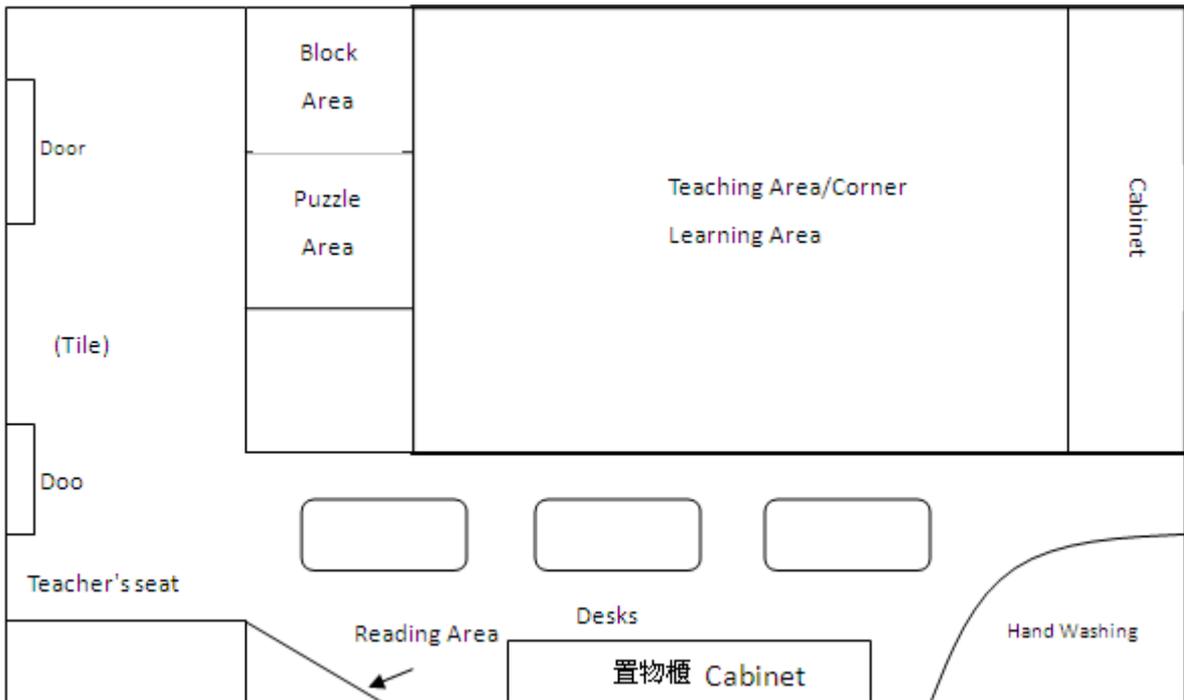


**Figure 1.** Floor Plane of the Original Classroom (Before change)

**(2) The Reading Condition in the Classroom**

Because of family and community environment factors, most children in classroom are lacking cultural stimulation and reading internal motivation; furthermore, their contact with books is passively arranged by classroom teacher's provision of resource. In class, Reading Area is set up for children to read books. However, due to design limit of the shelves, currently, the shelves cannot accommodate longer-shaped books, so that the types of books for children to read are restricted.

*Research Participants*

(1) Research Subject

The research subjects were children in the researcher' class called Rainbow Class (Anonym) with 16 age-mixed children, 6 boys and 10 girls. From children's individual condition, it is found that most children often engage in watching TV at home. In addition, with permission of parents' resource provision, children often operate and play games of 3C products. When they are at school, in spite of teacher's story-telling to attract children to appreciate books, sometimes children take books as a kind of games. Therefore, considering children's language, recognition, aesthetic, and social development, the researchers intended to arrange a series of classroom aesthetic reading environment plans and activities to realize children's reading motivation, and foster their learning and development of reading attitudes.

(2) Researcher

In this research, the researcher plays the role of a researcher, teaching designer, observer, and participant. The researcher has worked for more than 4 years since graduation from Early Childhood Education Department in 2010. During this period, the preschool educators had been serving in two public kindergartens, and are interesting in arranging aesthetic reading atmosphere. In addition, during university stage, the preschool educators started to teach young children reading story books in preschools. During the research period, the school set its own characteristic library for the preschool children, and the researcher served as the volunteer teacher serving in the library, helping organize books as well as reading storybooks and sharing storybooks telling skills for colleagues and parents who are interested in reading.

(3) Research Coordinators

In this research where the researcher operated class reading environment to raise children's reading motivation, two formal early childhood teachers were invited and one preschool educator came to assist the researcher to co-plan and decorate the environment together. By means of observation and interviews, the researcher tried to understand the blind point, merit and demerit of the research, children's individual reading or peer reading, and activity participating condition.

*Research Plan*

The purpose of this research is to understand the influence and effect of operating class reading environment on raising children's reading motivation. Therefore, this section will consult suggestions and enlightenment of relative literature on basis of research motivation and goals as directions for this research. The main points are listed below:

1. Research Schedule

The schedule of the present study lasted 48 weeks, from February, 2014 to January, 2015. The schedule was then further divided into two periods, the first stage interviews were undergone with environmental guidance. After the physical class reading environment was adjusted into aesthetic perspective, children's reading motivation and attitudes were triggered. The second stage involved themed reading activities, including the child-centered extended reading activities, arranging parent-child and peers shared reading time, designing borrowing books home activities, promoting peers and parent-child shared reading, and classroom hot-popular reading books selection ballot. Through observation of children and collection of data like documents, drawings, and works, and the interviews with the children, preschool educators, and parents, the data were analyzed accordingly.

2. Arrangement of Class Reading Environment

The researcher consulted argument on the physical reading environment in class in accordance with Wentzel, Wigfield, Miele (2009)[53] and Corcoran, & Mamalakis (2009)[54] items of the reading environment in three parts, as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2.**   Arranging Dimension of Class Reading Environment

| Arranging Dimension | Content |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Allocation of the Reading Environment | Ample light, bookcases that meet the children's height, open shelves, soft furniture (soft pads and chairs and desks) |
| 2. Book Resources | Diversified books (drawing books, song books, and interactive books), update books periodically, books easy for fetch |
| 3. Diversified Media | Story CD, CD stereo, puppets, paper and pencils, posters, and situational pictures and images |
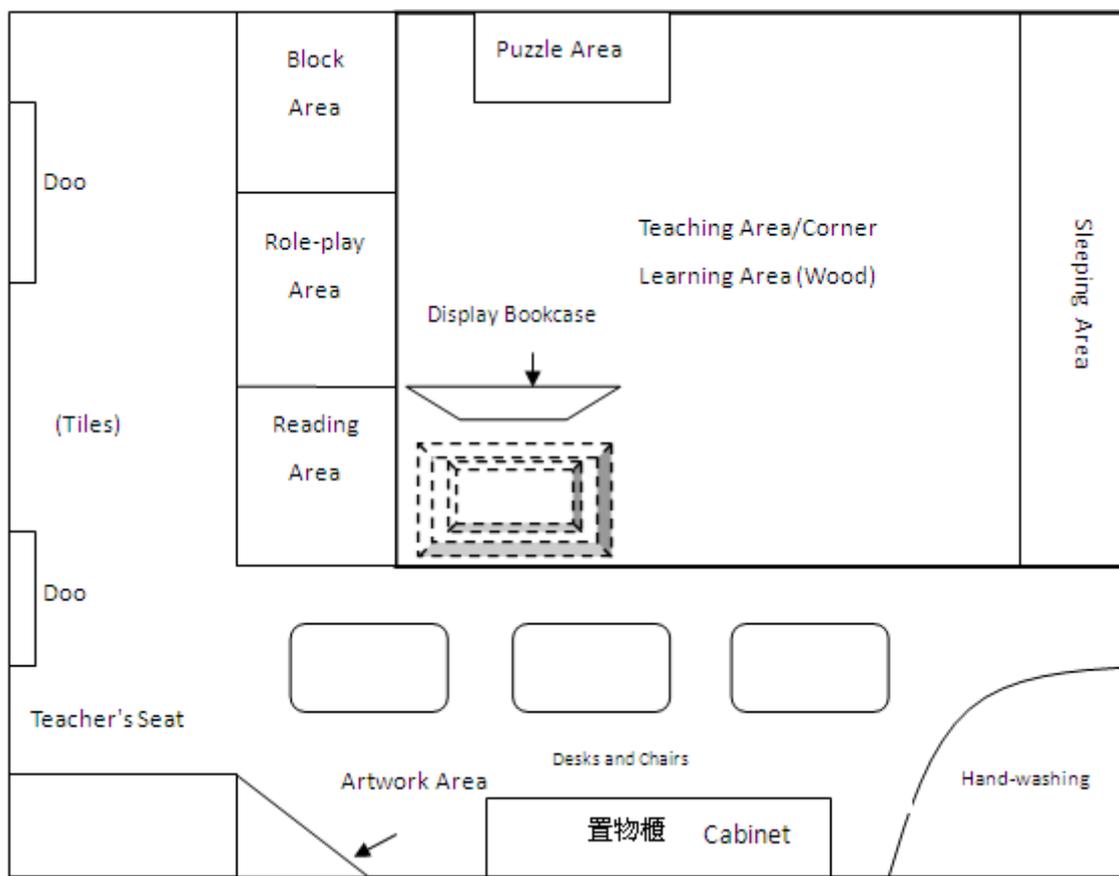
**Figure 2.** Class Environment Floor Plane (After Change)

According to suggestions above, since the researcher considered children's characteristics and habits of activities, and intended to break through the limit of the current environment of class, it is difficult to continue reading in such class environment were proceeded, as shown in Fig. 2:

From the class environment floor plane in Fig. 2, it is learned that children reading books in reading area may interrupt the reading activity enter Wooden Area to interact with the peers when they are invited to play with the peer sometimes, so it is reading environment. Therefore, the researcher moved the reading area to the wooden area, separated the open shelves from other dynamic activities from the semi-independent space of reading area, and made the reading area closer to the range of children's activity. After moving to the new reading area, regarding the book resource, the researcher update the books before and after each topic to provide children with new sense of reading pleasure.

As for some setting and media in the reading area, the researcher arranged soft pads, pillows, chair pads, CD player, story CD media and so on for children to extend pleasure of reading through role play after finishing reading. Artwork tools were also placed in the artwork area for children to exert creativity drawing or creating works to show their feelings or ideas on reading.

3. Arrangement of Class Reading Activities

The researcher planned four normal reading activities and some reading games in the class curriculum as research implementation and teaching, which is described as follows:

(1) To Borrow Books in Class

A. Book Card: The researcher led the children to make their own Book Card. When children intended to read certain book in the reading area, they could insert the Book Card into that book, so that their positive attitudes and habits of reading books were established.

B. Book borrowing: The researcher and the coordinative teachers co-designed the Baby's Book Borrowing Pamphlet for the children to freely borrow a book every Friday to read at home on the weekend. In addition, in the Book Borrowing Pamphlet, children wrote down the borrowed book number and draw the picture from the book they borrowed, so that their sense of achievement and motivation performance regarding reading were enhanced.

C. Incentives: In order to stimulate children's reading motivation and performance, we provided some incentives. For example, if the children could keep Baby's Book Borrowing Pamphlet tidy and clean, and drew how they feel about the book, those performed well could select one book as the reward of reading.

**(2) To Read More for Children**

We arranged 20-25 minutes' storybook reading time every morning for children to read quietly together. Besides, teachers observed and recorded children's preference to books to maintain their reading attitudes, performance, and motivation, so that they could understand children's activeness and concentration toward reading motivation.

**(3) To Share What Children Read**

Children's sharing of reading collaborated with reading at fixed time and book borrowing activities. The method is that in the fixed reading time every day, teacher selected a child randomly or by turn to share on the platform what he or she had just read. With incentives and encouragement, we had children generate more motivation and behavioral performance at fixed reading time.

**(4) "Hot Book"**

The researcher held voting activity of "Hot Book" every Friday by selecting five books that children shared in what they read. In addition to stamping on the book, the child who read this book was invited to share why he or she liked it and what impressed him or her the most.

**(5) The Extended Reading Games**

The researcher integrated demand of program activities with extension and application of the book activities. The methods for extension include, role play, artistic drawing, creating children's songs, book creation, physical games, musical games, and etc. The researcher interwove what interested the children through teaching program. By this way, in addition to raising the interest and use rate of books, reading activities also generated more diversified and abundant feelings and joys, so that we could explore more in respect with children's reading motivation.
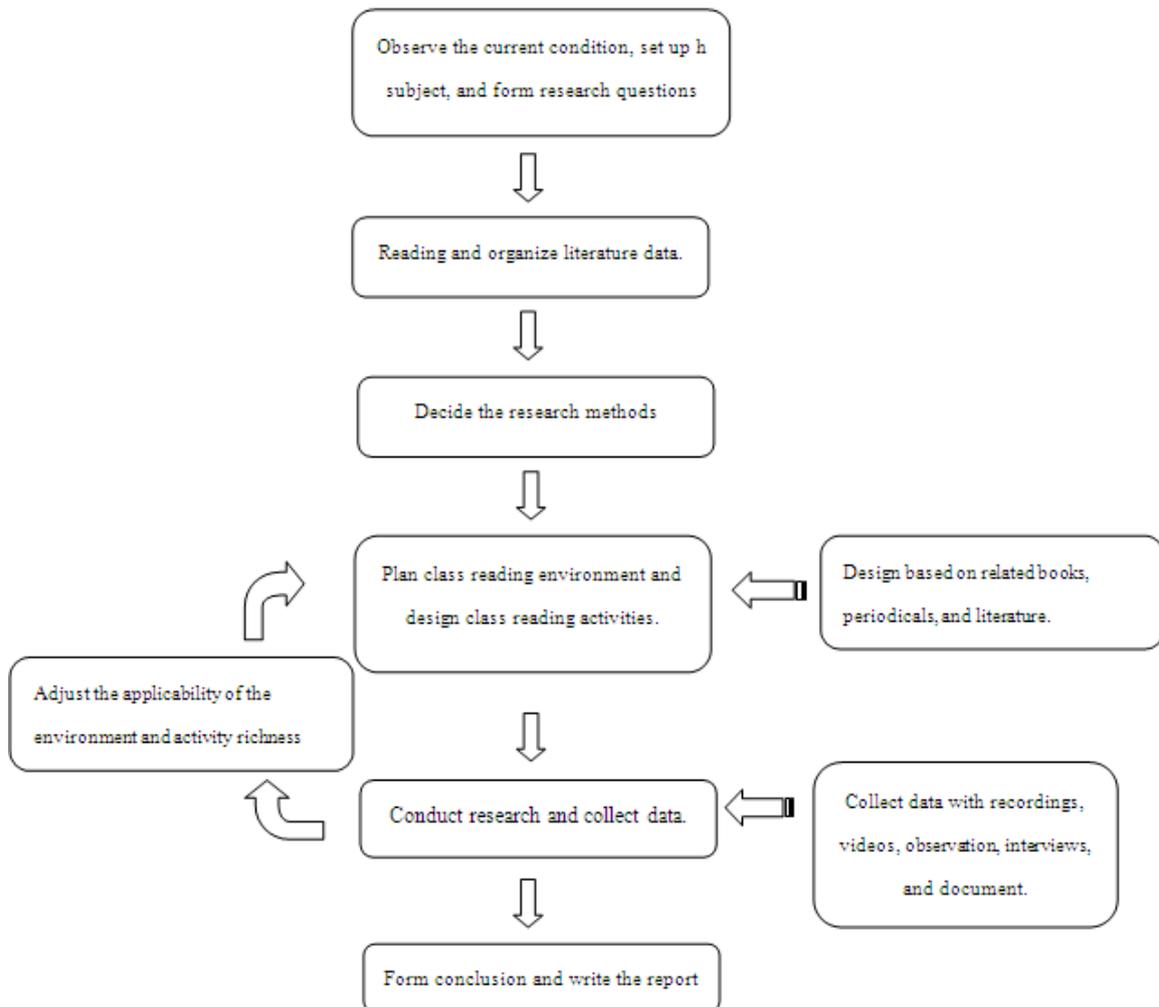


Section 1 Research Process

The following flowchart explains the content and framework of research process (Fig. 3).

**Figure 3**.   Research Flow Chart

*Data Collection and Analysis*

1. Data Collection

Qualitative research emphasizes on employing multiple data to describe the field realistically and record human interaction. This research adopted observation, interviews, and relative files like documents, images, and video files to generalize our main arguments.

(1) Observation Records

With reference to arrangement of classroom (Figure 2), the researcher observed and recorded in the real classroom situation. The observation timing included daily "Corner Exploration Time", "Transfer Time After Meals", and other children's spontaneous reading behaviors and performance, in order to understand the reading condition, children's interaction and conversation during reading. Besides, in "Share What You Read Time", "Class Book Borrowing", and "Hot Books", the researcher observed and recorded children's performance and condition on reading motivation to achieve completeness of the research data.

Additionally, in process of research, we also took pictures, recorded and took video to supplement what was missed or mistaken. At last, the researcher converted the voice files and video files to text files for reference.

(2) Interview Record

The interviews in this research were conducted informally, and proceeded Q&A in the natural situation. Also, in process of interviews, we manually wrote down the content as well as recording it as voice files.. As for the interview subject, there were three sources: children, coordinative teachers, and parents, for whom the researcher proposed questions to serve as reference for research. The following are brief description of interviews.

A. **Children:** In order to understand children's performance and effect on reading motivation in process of implementing the research, the researcher proposed questions for the children intermittently. The primary direction of the questions involved with children's feelings and behaviors after the reading environment was changed. The other direction was regarding children's attitudes and feelings generated from reading to serve as discussion and analysis in this paper.

B. **Coordinative Teachers:** In class, other than the researcher, a teacher and a preschool educator were designated. In the research process, with informal interviews, the researcher proposed questions for the co-teacher and educare giver so as to understand children's reading motivation under arrangement of time and during reading activities. Then, the researcher conducted inter-verification to supplement the researcher's insufficiency in observation and recordings.

C. **Parents:** The research proposed questions for parents based on observation and interviews of the children in order to clarify children's reading attitudes and performance in class. After reviewing each interview records and feedbacks, the research data's proofs and objectivity were enhanced.

(3) Document Files

Through presentation and reflection of the document files, insufficiency in observation and interviews were supplemented, leading to more reliable data. As for the document files collected by the researcher, like pictures, videos, book borrowing record, Baby Book Borrowing Pamphlet, Hot Book, and children's creative work related to books, all fosters our understanding of the process and representation of children's reading motivation, and allows the data and analysis of this research to be used for inter-verification.

2. Data Analysis

(1) Data Organization and Coding

In process of qualitative research, developing coding category is the core of data analysis. It can help data development and extraction, and enable research form a systematic review and explanation. In Table 3. and Table 4, the researcher coded and translated coding and data from the collected data, including observation records, interview records, children's book borrowing record, children's reading related files, and data on video and audio ,images, and so on.

**Table 3..** Data Coding and the definition

| Type | Data Source | Coding Method | Example |
|---|---|---|---|
| Observation | Observation Record | Observation+Year/Month/Date | Observation1030314 |
| | Book sharing observation | Share+ Year/Month/Date | Share1030314 |
| | Teaching observation record | Teach+ Year/Month/Date | Teach1030314 |
| Interview | Interview Record | Interview+Year/Month/Date | Interview1030314 |
| Document Files | Children related files （Works, Drawings, languages…） | Drawing+ Year/Month/Date | Drawing1030314 |
| | Teaching Record | Teach+ Year/Month/Date | Teach1030314 |
| | Pictures | Picture+ Year/Month/Date | Picture1030314 |
| | Video | Video+ Year/Month/Date | Video1030314 |

**Table 4.** Symbols of the translated data

| Code | Definition |
| --- | --- |
| Teacher Huang | Co-teacher |
| Teacher Chou | Educare giver |
| Little+Child's Name | Little Hung, indicating certain child |
| "" | Signify the talk content |
| … | Omit part of the talk content |
| Child's Name+title | Refer to certain child's parents |

(1) Data Analysis

Data analysis steps include "Data Reading", "Data Selection", "Data Presentation", "Data Explanation", and "Completed Data Integration." The researcher timely re-read the collected data according to the suggestions above, and organized, generalized, and classified it to form temporary claims. Then, research data was further reviewed, modified, and tested to establish research system and framework, presenting research implication and results.
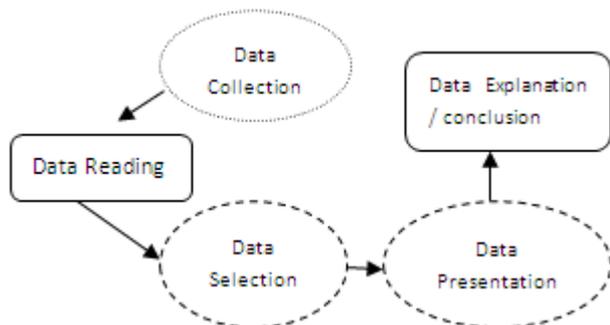


**Figure 4.** Analysis Flow Chart

*Section 1 Research Scrutiny*

Test of scrutiny of this research was done through truth value's validity and dependability of reliability.

1. Test of Truth Value

(1) Long-term participation
(2) Continuous Observation
(3) Researcher's Practical Teaching Experiences
(4) Peer Examination

2. Test of Reliability

Reliability of qualitative research refers to research data's consistency and stability. Reliability of this research was tested by "Triangulation" through multiple channels.

(1) Check of Methods

With collection of data from interviews, observation, and documents, the researcher recorded the situation on site and teaching environment for completeness of research process. In addition, by means of check among each data, reliability and truth value of research data were assured.

(2) Check of Document Data

Through observation record, interview record, teacher's memorandum, teaching pictures, recordings, video files, and other reading related files, the researcher conducted multiple check and comparison to ensure verification and correspondence among each data, and construct researcher's viewpoint and argument in order to strengthen objectivity and reliability of this research.

(3) Check of Personnel

Co-teacher, educare giver, parents, instructive professors, or peers were invited to proceed data check and verification in order to understand validity and reliability among each document file and decrease blind point and prejudice in researcher's thinking. Through mutual analysis and discussion, the research was supported to generalize and establish claims with data.

# 4. Research Results and Discussion

In accordance with collection and analysis of research data, main results are extracted as below:

1. Class reading environment can stimulate children's reading motivation

Re-planning reading space can trigger children's reading explorative behaviors, allow children to help actively, feel curious, and ask for reading actively to show their reading motivation. On the other hand, by means of open shelves and interactive books, the children's reading intention and motivation is raised. As for diversified media like writing, drawing, audio/video devices all enhance children's reading motivation.

2. Class reading activities can enhance performance of children's reading motivation

Four normal activities include: reading in fixed time frame, class's book borrowing activities, teacher-student reading sharing, and vote for the best and popular book. The four activities are inter-dependent, and can have children get contact with books continuously. Besides, by means of sharing and discussing, children can have more time and chances to know different books. As for research results, in addition to raising children's motivation significantly, in extended activities of language, drama, and art creation, it is observed that children are enlightened and make progress in reading habit and attitudes, and   abilities like oral expression, thinking Q&A, and imagination/creation.

Section 1 is Influence of Class Reading Environment on Children's Reading Motivation, and Section 2 is Class Reading Activities on Children's Reading Motivation.

Section 1 Class Reading Environment on Children's Reading Motivation

1. Re-planning Reading Space to Arouse Children's Exploring Behaviors

After changing and arranging the reading area, children

felt curious and interested at the new reading environment. Meanwhile, their active exploration and reading behaviors and motivation were enhanced as well, quite different from their previous interest and activeness in reading. With providing a place for children to contact with books anytime, their love for reading will be fostered. On the other hand, research (Mashburn et al, 2008)55 also held that a comfortable and warm reading environment and atmosphere can strengthen children's reading motivation. Therefore, it is learned from this research that establishment and change of reading environment can rouse children's attention and mobile power for the reading materials, while their reading motivation is enhanced and improved significantly.

## 2. Open Book Resources Raise Children's Reading Intention

From this research, it is also found that the browse frequency of interactive books is very high, and children are interested in books that can be operated manually. They would read to and fro and talk about the story, so the books were often damaged. Consequently, on basis of use rate of books and books' condition. it is understood that, in addition to raise children's intention to take a book for reading, interactive books can trigger their peer discussion and interaction in regard of reading. As a result, it is verified that other than raising the rate of children's book selection, due to sharing with one another, their intention to select a book to read as well as reading motivation are both enhanced.

## 3. Diversified Media Materials Make Children Enjoy in Reading

In respect with the researcher's planning new reading environment, other than changing the location of the reading area and open book resources, she also put some puppets and writing/drawing tools for children to use, making diversified media materials to get extended and applied in reading, and making reading more joyful.

To conclude, in regard of setting up class reading environment, children's psychological traits and abilities as well as the environment's comfort and the shelves' height should be taken into account, so that not only children can contact with books more easily, but also the mental distance between children and books can be shorter. By means of providing media tools in the reading area for children to express or present what they think, it is understood the type of books children like, raise their motivation and interest to explore and enlighten the world of books, and display the creative works made by children after reading a book. By this approach, not only their personal feelings can be expressed, their confidence and sense of achievement can also be enhanced. Therefore, the physical environment within class reading environment can be positive. Just as Pianta, Hamre, & Allen (2012)[41] indicated, to arrange an attractive reading environment and offer rich and diversified books can trigger the reader's inner motivation, develop a positive reading attitude, and establish an easy and free reading atmosphere for children to connect with others' affection, achieving the outcomes and verification of arguments proposed by this research.

## Section 2 Class Reading Activities on Children's Reading Motivation

The researcher formed an interweaving and circulating network for reading in class through four normal reading activities; that is, to read at fixed time, book borrowing in class, share what you read, and hot books. In addition, the activities were extended from what children were interested, like language, drama, artwork, and group games. Meanwhile, by linking different reading time and activities, we fostered peer's and teacher-student book sharing and communication, so that children could have more autonomous performance and stronger motivation involving with reading. On the other hand, in various reading activities, in addition to raising children's reading motivation, their reading habits, attitudes, oral expression, thinking in Q&A, and imaginary creation are also influenced.

### 1. To Borrow Books in Class

Once deciding to implement book borrowing activities in class, the researcher followed the steps to proceed some activities to cultivate children's reading habits and attitudes, and extended those activities to trigger and maintain reading motivation, as described below:

### (1) Book Card

In addition to raising children's reading frequency, their psychological feelings are also slightly improved. Children in fact can feel the reading environment, in spite of the small Book Card, they experience sense of belonging and happy mood, so that activeness and mobile power was shown in their reading behaviors.

### (2) To Borrow a Book

During book borrowing activity, the researcher designed a simple "Baby's Book Borrowing Pamphlet" for the children to record and create works with the book they borrowed at school.

### 1. Baby's Book Borrowing Pamphlet in Class

In process of children's record on reading and drawing, from single picture drawing with a pencil in the beginning, to drawing in detail and full-version creation, we could feel their love and creative ideas involving drawing. Besides, in performance and subtleness of drawing creations, we could tell that they had make a huge progress, which was observed by the researcher in process of activities regarding children's creative ability other than their reading motivation, and such progress was what they learned and harvested from reading.

### 2. Book Borrowing

In this process, in addition to encouraging children to do drawing works by the book they had read, the Baby's Book Borrowing Pamphlet extended the drawing experiences at school. Under inter-influence of such activities, children obtained self-confidence and sense of achievement from

sharing with peers and praise of teachers, and their reading frequency and performance were enhanced as well.

### (3) Incentives

In coordination with the activity of Baby's Book Borrowing Pamphlet, the research and two teachers set up some incentives: anyone who achieves 5 good book borrowing records (the borrowed book is kept well and returned on time), he or she can join the lottery activity in class. As for those who achieve 10 good book borrowing records, in addition to lottery activity, they can select one picture book as the award.

To conclude, regarding process of class book borrowing activity, the researcher consulted suggestions proposed by Roe, Smith, & Burns (2011) [45]and Rayneri, Gerbert, & Wiley (2006) [44]that by having the children took part in multiple reading activities, their mobile power of and interest in borrowing books could be triggered. As a result, to start with using book borrowing sheet and Baby's Book Borrowing Pamphlet in class, children could personally experience and practically operate book reading activity. On the other hand, step by step, they gradually got familiar with method and rules of using the book borrowing sheet and Baby's Book Borrowing Pamphlet. By such way, book borrowing system and reading air in class reading environment was established slowly.

In addition from drawing record of book borrowing sheet and book borrowing pamphlet, children's performance of drawing and ideas were also raised and changed significantly. Moreover, in coordination with incentives and influence of the peers, the children were triggered to read books. As a result, from book borrowing activities in class, it is understood that by providing chances for children to participate in the activities through the process of borrowing books, their reading motivation was enhanced. Also with supportive writing or drawing strategies and incentive system, their reading motivation is obviously stimulated and raised.

### 2. To Read More for Children

The researcher arranged 20-25 minutes after corner exploration as the fixed reading time with expectation to increase time for children to contact books and cultivate their reading habit. The researcher divided data collection and implementation process into three periods for modification and discussion; that is, Exploration Period, Modification Period, and Stability Period.

### (1) Exploration Period

In the fixed reading time, two or three children could co-read a book, and shared or discussed with low voice together. In the meantime, in the fixed reading time, we reminded and guided children, so that they could prepare their psychology and transfer their mood before reading. Moreover, teachers joined in children's reading with encouragement and participation to arouse children's attention and interest in book content.

### (2) Modification Period

After observing the children for several days, it is found that the children liked co-reading with partners, and they could sit at the same place for longer time. In addition, in the fixed reading time, teachers exerted different reading methods that not only improved children's concentration and interest, but also enhance their viewpoints and response by means of repeated reciting by turn, generating more pleasure, self-confidence and sense of achievement in story-telling.

### (3) Stability Period

At first, children were unfamiliar with reading time and unable to concentrate on reading, so they fetch the same book repeatedly. After the researcher modified the reading methods by reminding them in advance and have them co-read with peers, children's interest in reading was raised, and their habits and attitudes were established, which proves what Wigfield et al (2008)[55] signified that sharing reading content with others can be contagious in the way that other children will join in reading together and enhance their sense of achievement and attitudes.

### 3. To Share What You Read

In coordination with daily fixed reading time, teachers selected a child at random or by turn to share what he or she just read on stage. The researcher classified the process of children's sharing what they read into three periods-- Sharing Exploration Period, Sharing Fluency Period, and Sharing Independence Period, which are described as follows.

### (1) Sharing Exploration Period
### (2) Sharing Fluency Period
### (3) Sharing Independence Period

To conclude the process of activity of sharing what you need, in the three sharing activity periods, the researcher observed difference and performance in reading development of children at different age stages. Just as Justice et al (2009) [56]proposed, children at preliminary reading stage browsed the book page by page, guessed what the book was about, and tried to recite or recognize the simple symbols or texts. Besides, Hyson (2008)[23] proposed children's reading development as well—not only from forming story, seeing the images and forming a story, but also to trying to read the text, and able to read independently. Both scholars verified children's development reading ability.

In activity of sharing what you read, the researcher and co-teacher also provided some opportunities and modification methods to make the children develop reading habits and activeness from sharing what they read. As many studies claim, telling stories can help children read; from peers sharing what they read, they imitate and learn reading viewpoints and attitudes, and their reading interest and motivation are raised from different roles, voices, and movements (Guddemi, & Gesell, 2010) [14]. Therefore, from share what you read activity, we saw that sharing what children read on stage stimulated their drive in reading

motivation, and they tended to read books that had been introduced or shared by others as the priority, and raised their reading motivation. In addition, in process of this research, the researcher also found that from storytelling, children's oral expression, imagination and creative thinking ability were raised and made progress, which became their additional gain and growth in this research.

### 4. Hot Book

Hot Book activity allows the children to select a popular book as the hot book by means of reading and sharing picture book. It was proceeded on every Friday in coordination with share what you read activity in daily reading time. By connecting Hot Book and Share What You Read, children not only have more diversified books to read, but also strengthen their reading self-efficacy and interest.

### 5. Extended Reading Activities

Based on subject activity and children's interest, the researcher arranged some activities extended from the drawing books, like role play, art drawings, book creation, group games, and etc. In process of doing those activities, children's performance on reading motivation is influenced directly or indirectly, which are introduced as below.

#### (1) Role Play

From children's performance, extension of drama games not only made reading interesting, but also made children more positive and active. Also, children had different understanding of the roles and content and reading forms. The drama games extended from drawing books indirectly improve children's reading motivation performance and reading pleasure.

#### (2) Art Drawing Creation

Art drawing is indispensable in the teaching activities in kindergarten, so is it in researcher's class. In the research process, the researcher and co-teacher guided the children to conduct group or personal creative extension activities with drawing books, as described below.

##### 1. Group's Big Book Creation

From activities, we saw children's passion and creativity for creation. Although they needed the adults' help and guidance sometimes, they felt sense of achievement and joy with the books they created. Besides, to transform from the reader to the creator, their creative power and thinking in reading was enhanced and extended, making reading full of pleasure and showing their performance of creation.

##### 2. Personal Creation

In teaching activities in kindergarten, children have a lot of opportunities to create art works. By means of drawing, teachers have children to express their personal thought and feelings. In process of research, the researcher and co-teacher also exerted drawing books' content as the media, and had children connect life experiences, teaching programs,

and interpersonal interaction and further express in the personal art works.

In process of research, there were many art creative works designed by teachers or extended from children's interest. However, as a whole, teachers guide children with books, discover their interest from the book's content, and extend drawing works from discussion. When the works are completed, in addition to love for the original book, children seek for related book content or drawings in other works to conduct reading activity. To view from children's reaction and behaviors, those works and extension of book content permit the children's reading motivation to be indirectly or directly influenced, and attract them to make diversified attempts and actions in respect with reading patterns.

#### (3) Group Body Games

For group body games, teacher extended activity design from picture book's content to proceed games. Generally, children positively joined in games and just could not stop playing games. Besides, after game playing, when they read the book for sharing, they would ask the teacher whether teacher would play games based on book content, showing that game activities are very helpful and influential in children's reading motivation.

To conclude, from the four normal activities "To read at fixed time", "Book borrowing activity in class", "share what you read", and "hot book", and irregular reading extension activities "role play", "art creation activity", and "group body games", we can find that in process of reading, in addition to raising reading motivation significantly, children's reading habits, peer interaction, oral expression, drawing creation, creative thinking, and etc grow and perform better significantly. Additionally, although the activities seem independent, they inter-connect and inter-influence one another, and make the reading environment and activities in class proceed with circulating and continuous methods. Children are bathed in reading atmosphere, keeping on reading books ceaselessly.

On the other side, from research, it is observed that during establishing class reading environment, in addition to corresponding measures, teachers play an important role. Teachers have to pay attention to and observe children's reading behaviors and attitudes from time to time in order to adjust reading activities that meet their personal abilities and interest so that reading can be applied well and achieve good effect. Besides, teachers' attitudes and performance will also affect children's viewpoints and behaviors involving reading. Therefore, when teachers practice class reading activities, they have to participate and interact with children in order to get close to their thought and shorten the teacher-child. Teachers can make good use of some methods to attract children to read, like the interesting story-telling, body movement, or expressions, in coordination with oral encouragement and praise to stimulate children's mobile power and performance.

From the above mentioned dynamic and static reading methods, it is observed that reading driving force and

positivity are generated in children's reading performance. As Guddemi, & Gesell (2010)[14] described, dynamic and static balanced reading activities not only induce thinking and feeling expression, but also trigger interest and attract reading, making reading more diversified and rich. From the above-mentioned activities, in addition to design and implementation of reading activities and interaction and communication between teacher and student and peers, reading atmosphere and activity proceeding in class are influenced. Each activity was conducted with form of group, making activities consistent. Meanwhile, by means of form of group, children had the chance to share and communicate with others, created contagious and influential reading atmosphere, and enhanced children's personal reading achievement and motivation. As indicated, in the reading environment, there are multiple chances to interact with others, and understanding of book information, all can raise maintenance and performance of reading's internal motivation.

Therefore, from this section, we can learn that provision of diversified and ceaseless reading activities can generate inducement and stimulation of reading. Besides, with teacher's timely adjusting activities and measures in the process of reading, children's self-confidence and sense of achievement regarding reading activities can be induced and established, so that reading motivation can be raised and maintained effectively.

# 5. Suggestions

### Research Limitation

Adopting qualitative research, class reading environment was established to raise effectiveness of children's reading motivation. In process of implementing this research, the researcher encountered some limitation and difficulties. In this chapter, the researcher will review the insufficiency of this research to provide some suggestions for the studies in the future.

1. Research Subject

The research subject is 16 children in preschool, prekindergarten, and kindergarten. As a result, the results obtained from this research can only reflect the realistic research scenario. In the future, when other researchers apply the conclusion or generalization in this research, they have to take thorough considerations, not to make general deductions.

Research Field

The research field is a public kindergarten with only one class. Since the floor of the classroom is covered by tiles and woods, there is some limitation and insufficiency in object placement, environment arrangement, and activity space. As a result, when subsequent research intends to use the conclusion or generalization in this study, the researchers should inspect from different angles and avoid fast generalization.

3. Research Teaching and Results

The purpose of this research is to raise the reading motivation of children in the researcher's class. The class's physical environment and class reading activities' planning and implementation is based on discussion of related literature and research subject's background, so for teaching and conclusion in this research are presented and recounted according to the real situation. The research results of this research are therefore not always applicable to each teaching situation, and it is suggested review the conclusion of this research carefully, not make extensive deductions.

### Research Suggestions

1. Suggestions for Teaching Practice

(1) To Provide Large and Open Reading Environment

It is learned from this research that open reading space and reading resources can trigger children's interest and willingness of the reading area, so that children can have autonomy in reading, and their self-confidence can be raised. Therefore, it is suggested that children have chances to freely use the reading environment in the classroom in the kindergarten in order to enhance the faith and performance of their reading motivation.

(2) To Arrange diversified and Rich Reading Activities

It is learned from this research that in addition to the environment, reading activities designed by the teachers are influential as well. By means of circulating and continuous reading activities, not only children's familiarity of reading is enhanced, but also children's abilities of language expression, creative thinking, art creation grow. Therefore, it is suggested that teachers design diversified and interesting reading activities in teaching practice to benefit the children's raising reading motivation.

(3) Teacher's Support and Interaction

It is observed that in addition to designing activities that meet the children's abilities, it requires timely adjustment and provision of some strategies in process of implementation to make reading closer to their abilities and interest. Besides, teachers' reading attitudes and participating degree influence children's viewpoint and performance involving reading, so it is suggested that during reading activity, teachers should take part in it and engage themselves in their reading discussion and action, since reading is not just limited to children; it relates to everyone in class.

2. Suggestions for Future Research

(1) Analysis of the Research Subject

The subject in this research is 16 children with different ages in preschool, prekindergarten, and kindergarten. Observation was conduct with the whole class without comparing and analyzing specific object. If the subsequent studies can conduct analysis of difference aiming at children with different ages in preschool, prekindergarten, and

kindergarten, the results will generate more findings and arguments.

(2) To Change the Research Methods

In this research, group teaching is adopted. In the future, it is suggested the subsequent research employ case study by selecting three children with different ages in preschool, prekindergarten, and kindergarten for further analysis and exploration to understand the difference in reading motivation. Besides, quantitative questionnaires can be used to discuss the qualitative and quantitative change in children's reading motivation.

(3) Extension of Research Dimensions

The research field is the classroom primarily. If the research field can be extended to the school or family environments, different research arguments will be generated, so it is suggested that studies in the future can extend and explore on basis of such direction.

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