A Practical Exploration of Teacher Training for Child Reading Education in China: A Case Study of Qinjinmuyu's "Reading Teacher Professional Competence Certification" Program

Mingqian Yuan, Dongmei Xu

Qinjinmuyu Research Institute, Nanjing 210049, Jiangsu, China

Abstract: *Recent decades have witnessed growing attention to child reading education, but research on reading teacher training remains scarce, constituting an impediment to the further advancement of reading instruction. This study seeks to explore the paths to improving reading teachers' professional competence via structured training, using Qinjinmuyu's "Reading Teacher Professional Competence Certification" program as an example. Based on Qinjinmuyu's reading teacher professional competence framework, the program developed a training pattern with the four major procedures: reading training, reading instruction knowledge training, reading instruction practice, and assessment. The program's effects were also examined through questionnaires and interviews. The results reveal that the teachers who successfully completed the training course made significant progress in their knowledge of child literacy, reading curriculum design, and reading instruction techniques.*

About the Authors*: Mingqian Yuan, Qinjinmuyu Research Institute, Nanjing 210049, Jiangsu, China, E-mail: qjmy_ymq@126.com*

Dongmei Xu, Qinjinmuyu Research Institute, Nanjing 210049, Jiangsu, China, E-mail: qjmy.xdm@126.com

Correspondence to*: Dongmei Xu at Qinjinmuyu Research Institute in China.*

Conflict of Interests*: None*

Introduction

READING plays a crucial role in enhancing an individual's comprehension of the world, and it is considered a fundamental skill for everyone. Cognitive neuroscience research reveals a close relationship between a child's reading acquisition and their language proficiency, cognitive, and emotional abilities (Li et al., 2024). Early reading experiences are the bedrock of the child's reading competence development, crucial for their becoming lifelong learners (Zhou, 2005). China has increasingly emphasized the significance of child reading education in the 21st century as its society raises the overall standards of education. "Opinions on Promoting National Reading," released by the Chinese government in October 2020, advocates popularizing pre-primary reading education in line with the cognitive development of preschool children to help nurture their interest in reading and cultivate their reading habits (Zhong, 2020). In March 2023, the Ministry of Education and seven other departments jointly issued "The Action Plan for Promoting Reading in Chinese Adolescents and Children," which laid out systematic actions for advancing reading education among the young population. The action plan elucidates the relationship between the reading behavior of students and education outcomes and poses new requirements for school reading instruction (Ministry of Education of China, 2023).

The enhanced awareness of the value of reading calls for higher standards of child reading education. The Chinese government placed a heavier emphasis on reading education training for Chinese language teachers, as formal schooling is primarily responsible for child reading education in China. The aforementioned action plan particularly stresses the necessity of strengthening reading instruction training in Chinese language teachers and mandates including this training in the "National Teacher Training Program" as well as the regional teacher education and training systems (Ministry of Education of China, 2023). The National Smart Education Platform of China also launched the "Teacher Reading Instruction Competence Development" course. Although moves like these have significantly raised the quality of reading education, current school education in China is still examination-focused (Xu, 2023), which is unfavorable for the development of beneficial reading habits in children. Outside the schools, public cultural institutions, such as libraries, serve as the primary actors in child reading popularization (Tang, 2024), whose services supplement the school-based reading education. Yet, some researchers noted that institutions like the library may render their reading promotion activity entertaining rather than academic in a bid to engage more participants (Feng, 2024). In this context, reading teacher education and their professional development have aroused considerable interest in the Chinese education world. Certain

courses on reading instruction competence enhancement have been created, such as the child reading instruction course offered by the National Library of China. Still, professional reading teacher training in China is in its infancy, and research in this area is scarce. Qinjinmuyu (hereinafter referred to as QJMY, meaning "fostering children's love of reading in Chinese"), a reading research institution founded in 2000, has been dedicated to developing a structured reading teacher training program to contribute to the pool of highly qualified and professional reading teachers. QJMY, in collaboration with South China Normal University's Education Department, launched in 2020 the "Reading Teacher Professional Competence Certification" program, targeting teachers from primary schools, picture book reading centers, and other reading centers. This article is a case study of QJMY's "Reading Teacher Professional Competence Certification" program, with the following research questions:

Q 1: What are the core competencies that qualify a professional reading teacher?

Q 2: What are the basic procedures of a professional reading teacher training program?

Q 3: What are the practical outcomes of QJMY's training program?

Literature Review

The Essential Qualities of a Professional Reading Teacher

Children's reading ability is not innate but is acquired under the direction of adults (Zhou, 2005). The teacher's professional expertise and competencies have a significant impact on the child's reading ability development (Li & Dong, 2004; Taylor et al., 2010; Porter et al., 2024). Hence, it is necessary to identify the basic qualities underlying the professionalism of a reading teacher (Ye, 1998).

Many researchers observed that a qualified reading teacher must have basic knowledge about behavioral, cognitive, and educational science; language and literature knowledge; knowledge about reading evaluation and parental reading involvement; and knowledge about child reading leveling (Strickland et al., 2002; Zhou, 2005). Based on a review of 58 prior studies, Chen (2021) tried to categorize reading instruction-related qualities of a Chinese language teacher in five dimensions: (i) notions of reading education, e.g., the purposes of teaching objective setting and the awareness of fostering the students' reading competence and habits; (ii) reading teaching design, including introduction of teaching materials, teaching methods, multimedia usage, etc; (iii) teaching enactment, e.g., teaching

Table 1. Overarching Standards for the Preparation of Literacy Professionals 2017.	
Standard Title	**Overarching Standard**
1: Foundational Knowledge	Candidates demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical, historical, and evidence-based foundations of literacy and language and the ways in which they interrelate and the role of literacy professionals in schools.
2: Curriculum and Instruction	Candidates use foundational knowledge to critique and implement literacy curricula to meet the needs of all learners and to design, implement, and evaluate evidence-based literacy instruction for all learners.
3: Assessment and Evaluation	Candidates understand, select, and use valid, reliable, fair, and appropriate assessment tools to screen, diagnose, and measure student literacy achievement; inform instruction and evaluate interventions; participate in professional learning experiences; explain assessment results and advocate for appropriate literacy practices to relevant stakeholders.
4: Diversity and Equity	Candidates demonstrate knowledge of research, relevant theories, pedagogies, and essential concepts of diversity and equity; demonstrate and provide opportunities for understanding all forms of diversity as central to students' identities; create classrooms and schools that are inclusive and affirming; advocate for equity at school, district, and community levels.
5: Learners and the Literacy Environment	Candidates meet the developmental needs of all learners and collaborate with school personnel to use a variety of print and digital materials to engage and motivate all learners; integrate digital technologies in appropriate, safe, and effective ways; foster a positive climate that supports a literacy-rich learning environment.
6: Professional Learning and Leadership	Candidates recognize the importance of, participate in, and facilitate ongoing professional learning as part of career-long leadership roles and responsibilities.
7: Practicum/Clinical Experiences (for specialized literacy professionals only)	Candidates apply theory and best practice in multiple supervised practicum/clinical experiences.

environment creation and the use of tactics for posing questions; (iv) professional expertise, including reading competence and knowledge reservoirs; (v) self-development, including updating reading teaching notions and methods, enhancing professional levels, and constantly reflecting on teaching outcomes.

In addition to research efforts in academia, governmental and non-governmental organizations have worked to establish standards for professional reading teachers. *Standards for the Preparation of Literacy Professionals 2017* (**Table 1**), advanced by the International Literacy Association (2018), specify reading teachers' essential expertise and competences in seven dimensions: foundational knowledge; curriculum and instruction; assessment and evaluation; diversity and equity; learners and the literacy environment; professional learning and leadership; and practicum/clinical experiences (for specialized literacy professionals only).

In its *Literacy: Reading-Language Arts Standards*, the U.S. National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) (2012) laid out five core propositions as the foundation of all standards and assessments: (1) Teachers are committed to students and their learning; (2) teachers know the subjects they teach and how to teach these subjects to students; (3) teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning; (4) teachers

think systematically about their practice and learn from their experience; (5) teachers are members of learning communities. According to the standards, an accomplished teacher, in implementing reading instruction, should be able to make well-planned teaching arrangements, imparting to students effective reading skills; to provide students with suitable reading materials in accordance with their reading interests and levels; to improve students' comprehension of reading materials via multiple tactics; to encourage critical evaluation of reading materials in students; and to administer effective diagnosis to student reading comprehension and outcomes.

The Guidelines for Pre-primary, Primary and Secondary Teacher Training Courses (Chinese Language Teaching in Compulsory Education), released by the Ministry of Education of China (2017), provides the objectives and content of reading instruction training for Chinese language teachers, emphasizing that reading training courses should focus on fostering five key competences in the teachers including delivering textbook-based reading instruction; establishing legitimate teaching objectives and selecting pertinent reading materials; devising teaching activities and resources that are consistent with teaching objectives; adjusting teaching to the student's learning circumstances; and directing the whole-book reading of the students.

Existing Training Patterns for Reading Teachers

Researchers and educational organizations have also explored the specific measures for enhancing the language teachers' reading instruction competence. For instance, the American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence (ABCTE) establishes tailored learning plans for reading teacher certificate applicants and delegates professional reading coaches to assist with their mastery of scientific reading instruction skills and strategies regarding teaching plan development, reading instruction execution, and in-class reading activity organization. The applicants must complete all compulsory courses within one year and take exams on reading ability and reading education knowledge, which cover aspects like reading fluency, vocabulary, comprehension of literary and non-fictional texts, differentiated instruction, phonemic awareness, phonetic teaching, and pedagogical theories in the traditional paper-and-pencil form. If the applicant passes both exams, they are granted a reading teacher certificate (Hong, 2010).

In China, the Guidelines for Pre-primary, Primary, and Secondary Teacher Training Courses (Chinese Language Teaching in Compulsory Education) give detailed specifications for reading training courses for Chinese language teachers. First, the Guidelines propose a range of training themes corresponding to the aforementioned five key competences (**Table 2**). Second, the Guidelines recommend 54-hour theoretical courses and 111-hour practical courses for Chinese language teachers at various education

Table 2. Guidelines for Pre-primary, Primary and Secondary Teacher Training Courses (Chinese Language Teaching in Compulsory Education): Reading Instruction Training Themes.	
Key Competences	**Training Themes**
Delivering textbook-based reading instruction	Notions of reading and reading approaches
	Pinpointing highlights of the texts
	Predicting and analyzing difficulties with student reading of the textbook
	Educative roles of the textbook
	Extensive reading surrounding excerpts from classic works
Establishing legitimate teaching objectives and selecting pertinent teaching materials	Perceptions of reading education
	Establishing reading education objectives
	Reading instruction methods
	Reading material selection
	Reorganization of textbook content
Devising teaching activities and resources that are consistent with teaching objectives	Conformity of before-class and after-class reading activities with in-class teaching
	Reading instruction procedures
	Designing teaching activities surrounding the highlights of the textbook
	Developing teaching resources based on the needs of reading instruction
Adjusting teaching to the student's learning circumstances	Static teaching plans and dynamic teaching enactment
Directing whole-book reading of the students	Teaching design and enactment of whole-book reading

levels. The theoretical courses educate the teachers on theoretical knowledge related to reading and reading education; amid the practical courses, they practice reading teaching skills and strategies by means of group lesson preparation, case analysis, experience sharing, and more. It should be noted that the trainee does not have to attend all these courses. Before the onset of the training, the trainee receives a reading instruction competence assessment and chooses the courses that best support their professional development based on the assessment results and the guidelines' recommendations. Third, the guidelines also require the training institutions to adopt the multi-dimensional evaluation method to include qualitative and quantitative assessments, phased and summative evaluation, and self-evaluation and peer mutual evaluation to realize a comprehensive appraisal of the training effects.

On top of these institutional reading teacher training schemes, we also looked into the practices of those popular training programs aimed at preparing highly qualified reading teachers. Researchers summarized 15 crucial components of reading teacher training based on literature reviews and practical studies (Cruickshank & Metcalf, 1990; Hoffman & Pearson, 2000):

- Establishing explicit training objectives and delivering them to the trainees.

- Ensuring that the trainees understand the targeted levels of reading instruction competence.
- Documenting the trainee's pre-training levels of reading instruction competence.
- Providing basic rules at the initial stage of training.
- Adapting the design of the training course to the trainees' existing competencies at the early stage of training.
- Assisting the trainee in developing a fundamental conception of the skills to be learned at the initial stage of training.
- Demonstrating to the trainee how to apply relevant skills at the initial stage of training.
- Giving the trainees the opportunities for discussion and representation.
- Providing intermittent but sufficient opportunities for practicing the skills after the trainee has developed a basic understanding of them.
- Ensuring that the trainee receives feedback following the practice.
- Providing more frequent feedback at the early stage of training.
- Administering intervention on the training's improper performance.
- Giving delayed feedback after the training has completed the initial phase of training.
- Facilitating the transfer of training outcomes by increasing the similarity between the training and actual teaching scenarios and providing a diverse range of practices, as well as adopting delayed feedback, prompting reflections, and giving intermittent assessments.
- Assisting the trainee to reinforce the acquired skills in the actual teaching setting.

QJMY's "Reading Teacher Professional Competence Certification" Program

QJMY's Reading Teacher Professional Competence Framework

Drawing on established standards for reading instruction competence, theories of children's literature and psychology, traditional Chinese reading education practices, and China's education policies and regulations, QJMY developed a reading teacher professional competence framework in the context of Chinese education. This framework lays out the following

requirements for a qualified reading teacher: (1) Emotionally, they shall have positive attitudes towards reading and child reading education. (2) They have a legitimate outlook on child education and views of children's rights and developmental characteristics, which, in turn, impact their practices in reading education. (3) They are proficient readers themselves with excellent reading comprehension and critical thinking. (4) They have professional expertise in children's literature as well as comprehensive knowledge in multiple disciplines, including sciences, social sciences, and humanities. (5) They have multiple reading teaching techniques, including creating engaging reading environments, organizing meaningful readings, planning an effective lesson design, and harnessing educational technology to assist with reading instruction. (6) They have excellent expression skills and are capable of creating an interesting and enjoyable atmosphere to engage their students.

The Program's Training Procedures

Underlying QJMY's "Reading Teacher Professional Competence Certification" program are three principles: (i) The design of training content is based on the said reading teacher professional competence framework; (ii) The effects of the training course are measured by the achievements of the trainee; (iii) The training paths are progressive, assisting the ongoing development of the trainee. The program offers elementary-, intermediate-, and advanced-level certificate courses to accommodate the individually different needs of the applicants (the advanced-level course is in development). Each course consists of four basic procedures, including reading training, reading education knowledge training, reading instruction practice, and assessment.

Reading Training

The teacher's reading behavior has a significant impact on their reading instruction. Teachers who read for more than 30 minutes a day are more capable of using appropriate strategies in reading teaching compared to those without the regular reading habit (Mckool & Gespass, 2009). Also, reading itself is an effective device for improving the reading teacher's professional competence (Li, 2022; Zheng, 2024). Thus, a favorable reading habit and high reading proficiency are the bedrock of the reading teacher's instructional practices. The teacher trainees receive two kinds of reading training from the program.

<u>Specialist Books Reading</u>: To be a qualified reading instructor, the reading teacher needs to develop knowledge in education, child psychology, literature, etc. For elementary-level certificate applicants, the program stipulates compulsory reads such as Reading Handbook, Creating Child

Reading Environments, and Seeds of Happiness. The must-read list for intermediate-level certificate applicants includes but is not limited to Children's Positions, The Teacher's Spiritual Power, Introduction to Children's Literature, and Children, Reading and Discussion. The intermediate-level reading list, compared to the elementary-level one, is of greater theoretical depth and width, spanning knowledge about pedagogy, child education, reading instruction theories, literary theories, etc. The program also encourages the teacher trainees to do more extensive reading to include works of renowned educators, such as Rousseau, Montessori, Sukhomlinski, Dewey, Xingzhi Tao, and Heqin Chen, in their personal reading lists.

    <u>Study of Children's Literature</u>: Successful reading teaching design is contingent on the teacher's in-depth understanding of the reading material, warranting their extensive reading of children's books, especially children's literature. A qualified reading teacher is typically adept at tapping into "topics of greatness" in the work and introduces them to their students in a bid to inspire the latter's contemplation. These "topics of greatness" will strike a chord with the young reader and nurture their emotional and spiritual power (Xu, 2023). Teachers who read children's books extensively have the ability to recommend the appropriate materials to their students in accordance with their preferences and reading levels, reaching effective communication with them via enjoyable reads. The program provides a must-read list of 40 children's books for the elementary-level certificate applicants, including 20 picture books and 20 non-picture books, and a must-read list of 50 children's books for the intermediate-level applicants, including 10 picture books and 40 non-picture books, such as *The Scarecrow, Andersen's Fairy Tales, Grimm's Fairy Tales, Lan and Hui Born in the Year of Rat, Ancient Chinese Mythology, The Thatched Cottage, and Memories in Old Beijing*.

Reading Instruction Knowledge Training

The teachers who equate reading ability to reading instruction competence are likely to impose their own reading experience on their students, compromising their quality of reading instruction (Li, 2011). To increase the teacher's ability to adapt their reading experience to reading instruction practices, the program created online reading instruction knowledge training courses for different levels of applicants. For example, the course for the elementary-level applicants includes the following seven modules: reading education notions and literature literacy, child recitation training, picture-book reading education, whole-book reading education, thematic reading education, in-class reading practices, and specialist lectures (**Table 3**),

Table 3. QJMY's "Reading Teacher Professional Competence Certification": The Reading Instruction Knowledge Training Modules (Elementary-Level).

Modules (for schoolteachers)	Modules (for teachers at non-school reading training institutions)
(1) Reading education notions and literature literacy	(1) Reading education notions and literature literacy
(2) Child recitation training	(2) Child recitation training
(3) Picture-book reading education	(3) Picture-book reading education and children's readings
(4) Whole book reading education	(4) Whole book reading education and children's readings
(5) Thematic reading education (elective)	(5) Thematic reading education and children's readings (elective)
(6) In-class reading practices (elective)	(6) Exemplary cases of reading training institutions (elective)
(7) Specialist lectures	(7) Specialist lectures

Table 4. QJMY's "Reading Teacher Professional Competence Certification": The Reading Instruction Knowledge Training Modules (Intermediate-Level)

Module 1. Reading education notions and literature literacy	(1) Reading education notions
	(2) Literature literacy
Module 2. Appreciation and instruction	(1) Appreciation and instruction of poetry
	(2) Appreciation and instruction of picture books
	(3) Whole-book reading instruction
	(4) Appreciation and instruction of children's stories
	(5) Appreciation and instruction of fairy tales
	(6) Appreciation and instruction of novels
	(7) Appreciation and instruction of myths and folk stories
	(8) Appreciation and instruction of essays
	(9) Appreciation and instruction of non-fictional works
Module 3. Enactment and evaluation	(1) Creation of reading environments
	(2) Organization of in-class readings
	(3) Planning and enactment of reading-related events
	(4) Evaluation of child reading competence

aiming to facilitate the implementation of a child-centered reading education curriculum.

The training course for the intermediate-level applicants is more focused on the teacher's appreciation and instruction of various genres of writing, with three chief modules: reading education notions and literature literacy; appreciation and instruction; and enactment and evaluation (elective) (**Table 4**). Module one is to further improve the teachers' theoretical knowledge of reading education and literature literacy. Module two aims to enhance the teacher's appreciation and instruction of various reading materials. Module three includes training on the construction of positive reading environments, organization of in-class readings, hosting of reading-related events, and evaluation of student reading competence.

Reading Instruction Practice

According to Clark et al. (2013), the teacher's mastery of reading education knowledge does not necessarily mean they can successfully apply it in the actual teaching scenario. Morris (2015) analyzed the reasons for unsuccessful reading instruction and defined practical training as the paramount step in training professional reading teachers. Through targeted and deliberately repeated practical exercises in reading instruction, the teacher can better grasp the essentials of the teaching of varied reading materials. Hence, the program administers practical training to the applicants who have completed the sessions of reading training and reading instruction knowledge training. The practical training takes two forms. One is based on the online and offline thematic workshops, where the trainee conducts simulation classroom instruction under the direction of an experienced mentor, who gives instant feedback, helping the former to continuously modify their teaching behavior. The other is based on the footage of the trainees' in-class reading instruction, which records their classroom implementation processes, interactions with students, and design of questions and is used by the trainers as evidence for their judgment of the trainees' performance.

Assessment

QJMY's training program gives a comprehensive evaluation of the reading education competence of the teacher by combining the formative assessment during the training process and the summative assessment at the end of the training session. The trainee earns credits in completing the preceding three sessions of reading training, reading instruction knowledge training, and reading instruction practice, which ensures a multi-dimensional evaluation of their training outcomes. Specifically, in the reading training session, the trainee takes the reading comprehension test after finishing reading designated books to assess their reading competence. In the reading instruction knowledge training session, the trainee needs to spend prescribed hours watching recorded lectures and subsequently answer questions for each module; the test results are generated automatically on the platform. Furthermore, the trainee is required to submit a teaching design and videos of trial instruction pertaining to the training content as outcomes of the practical training session. Only after reaching the criteria of all three sessions can the trainee sit in the final assessment. In addition, to obtain an intermediate-level certificate, the trainee needs to participate in regular standardized tests, which include objective questions and open-ended questions, aside from submitting teaching designs and videos of classroom instruction. This more careful assessment is to verify that the applicant is

qualified for the higher-rank certificate. The program's assessment system places equal weight on the teacher's mastery of theoretical knowledge of reading education and their ability to transfer the knowledge to practical instruction.

Practical Outcomes of QJMY's "Reading Teacher Professional Competence Certification" Program

To investigate the effects of the training program on the teachers' gains in reading instruction competence and their teaching performance, QJMY conducted a random questionnaire survey of prior trainees, with a total of 600 questionnaires being distributed and 580 (96.7%) of them being retrieved. All retrieved questionnaires were valid. Furthermore, QJMY picked 30 teachers from the respondents to have one-on-one interviews with them. We numbered these interviewed teachers as T1-T30 for the subsequent analysis and discussion.

Changes in the Teachers' Knowledge of Reading Education after Training

The questionnaire contains certain questions aimed at evaluating the change in the teachers' knowledge of reading education. According to the survey results, 88.1% of the respondents reported enhanced understanding of the significance of reading education; 87.59% of them learned more about children's books, especially children's literature; 82.07% said the training aided them in developing more effective reading teaching methods and techniques; 69.14% learned to organize reading-related events of diverse forms. Also, the program had significant impacts on the teachers' perceptions of child reading education. Among them, 90.86% placed a greater value on the reading of children's literature in their students, 80.17% developed the conception of leveled reading, and 79.31% improved their grasp of the essentials of reading instruction after receiving the training.

In the one-on-one interviews, the teachers were asked the question, "What changes does the training program make to your reading instruction?" The following are some examples of their answers:

T7: As the training program recommends, I now ask my students to spend 10 minutes on Everyday Recitation per day and a scheduled session to whole book reading every week. I can use different teaching methods for various reading materials and become more adept at provoking students' interest in reading and engaging them in deep reading.

T9: I used to simply recommend some books for the students' voluntary reading without proposing explicit reading targets. Now, my

students read Everyday Recitation every morning and have one reading lesson in the school library every Wednesday.

T24: The training courses taught me how to pick books for the varied needs of the students and made me more proficient in reading instruction.

T28: With the training program. I learn more specialist theories on reading education and become more professional in reading course design. Also, I can consult QJMY's child reading education paradigm in developing a structured, scientific reading instruction curriculum for my students.

T29: The training program provided me with the opportunity to develop more scientific concepts of child reading education and to systematically study the methods and techniques for reading instruction, including picture-book and whole-book reading teaching as well as the instruction of children's poems and rhymes.

The teachers' statements indicate that the training program had positive impacts on their reading instruction knowledge, making their reading teaching more professional and effective.

Improvements in Reading Education Practices

Upgraded Reading Environments

An ideal reading environment is an important factor in piquing the students' interest in reading and fostering their reading habits. According to Chambers (2007), the selection of books is the starting point of successful reading activity. The student's reading journey begins with ample reserves of books, and more importantly, they are easy to access and are displayed in a way that best provokes the child's love of reading. This questionnaire survey evaluates the teacher trainee's effort to develop a good reading environment by the class's collection of books and the teacher's guidance on the choice of books. As per the survey results, the majority of the teachers set up a bookcase in the classroom after completing the training. More than half (60.35%) of them reported a collection of over 100 books in their classrooms, among whom 33.97% claimed their classes owned more than 300 books each. This suggests that the training program is effective in boosting the teacher's awareness of the value of book resources for reading competence development of the students.

As to the students' reading lists, 71.38% of the teachers surveyed used QJMY's leveled reading list in recommending suitable reading materials to their students, while 19.31% relied on their personal experiences in doing so. Only 3.97% expressed satisfaction with the unified textbook's proposed reading list. These figures show that the majority of these teachers knew how to guide their students in book selection, drawing on their knowledge about books or QJMY's leveled reading list. Only a small

percentage of these teachers lacked this skill. The disparity may be the result of the variation in the reading volume among them, as the teachers who read more extensively know better what books best suit the needs of their students (Mckool & Gespass, 2009).

Bolstered Reading Education Curriculum and Extracurricular Reading Activity

According to the questionnaire survey results, the teachers could develop a better-structured curriculum for their reading instruction after receiving the training, with 81.38% of them including whole-book reading teaching, 66.21% of them picture-book reading instruction, 54.48% of them recitation teaching, and 37.24% of them thematic reading instruction in the reading curriculum. The survey results are supported by the teachers' statements in the interviews, which show that recitation, picture-book reading, and whole-book reading were the primary components of the reading class. The students typically recited in the morning reading session, did picture-book and whole-book reading in the noon reading session, and had one or two scheduled reading classes every week.

T5: My students and I co-read Everyday Recitation in the morning reading session. The students do voluntary reading during a noon break and co-read a picture book in a Wednesday class. We co-read a book every two months.

T29: We concentrate the reading instruction in one session scheduled by the school, focusing on whole-book reading while also paying attention to the teaching of picture books and children's poems. The whole-book reading class consists of the introductory lesson, reading comprehension enhancement lesson, and free exchanges between the students. The students often finish reading one book within a month. They spend the morning reading session and the first two minutes of each Chinese language class on recitation training. In addition, an online reading task completion checking device is deployed to track and record the student's reading behavior. Also, we encourage parent-child co-reading.

The questionnaire also investigates the effect of the training program on the teacher's direction of student extensive reading by posing questions about time allotment to extensive reading and the teacher's efforts to encourage voluntary reading in students. According to the survey results, the program has significantly enhanced the teacher's understanding of the significance of extensive reading. Among the teachers surveyed, 40%, 28%, and 16% of them allowed 16-30, over 30, and 10-15 minutes for student in-class extensive reading every day, respectively. Only 8% did not allot in-class time to student voluntary reading. The overwhelming majority of teachers at off-campus reading centers chose to assign extensive reading

homework to the young readers, who could borrow books from the reading center; only 8% of them had the children do in-class extensive reading. Also, the survey results show the program is effective in motivating the teachers to organize colorful extracurricular reading events to boost extensive reading in the students, with 32% of the surveyed teachers staging 1-2 reading events (e.g., the storytelling competition, recitation performance, book recommendation, etc.) every semester, 28% of them organizing over 2 reading events per week, and 24% of them staging 1-2 reading events every month. Only 4% of them failed to organize any extracurricular reading events for their students. In addition, the increased reading volumes of the students are evidence of the improved reading education competence of the teachers surveyed. 52%, 28%, and 20% of them reported that their students could voluntarily read 6-10, 11-20, and over 20 books every year, respectively. This shows that most students have basically developed the habit of autonomous reading, but their reading volumes are pending further elevation.

Interviews with the 30 teachers find that common devices for instigating extensive reading in the students include creating incentive mechanisms, constructing reading outcome display platforms, encouraging parental involvement, and organizing diverse reading events. The self-reports of T11, T14, and T21 give more details in this regard.

T11: I created a reading performance recording area, dubbed "Bookworms," on the blackboard, where every student has their personal post-it section to showcase the names of the books they have read. The student is rewarded a butterfly-shaped sticker for every 10 books read. The number of the stickers collected is a criterion for the selection of "reading stars" at the end of the academic year.

T14: I believe that student reading competence development is an ongoing process. I often read a story to my students and have them write down their comments; those who do a good job will be praised. Also, the students can read aloud in turns in their study group and exchange ideas on the story. Commenting on the writing they have read is an effective way of instigating their contemplation. Furthermore, I have tried to act as a role model for my students by always having a literary work or a book about educational theories with me, which I can read whenever time is available.

T21: My students have half an hour at noon for voluntary reading. We have two reading festivals surrounding Confucius' birthday on September 28th and the April 23rd World Book Day, during which there are a variety of reading events, such as the Chinese Poem Contest, recitation performance of classic works, the "flea market" selling books, etc. This year, we organized the "Reads Recommendation" in collaboration with the school library, in which the students created recommendation cards and videos for

excellent reads. Reading events like these have successfully stimulated the students' interest in extensive reading.

Conclusion

This study is a practical exploration of teacher training for child reading education in China, using QJMY's "Reading Teacher Professional Competence Certification" program as an example. With its structured training scheme, the program has showcased its effectiveness in enhancing the reading education knowledge, reading curriculum design ability, and reading instruction techniques of Chinese-language teachers. Nevertheless, limitations of the program should also be acknowledged. For instance, it lacks consideration of the differences in the requirements for reading teacher training between various regions and schools. The practical training session of the program should include more analyses of diverse, exemplary teaching cases and more on-site reading instruction training to heighten the teacher trainees' ability to adapt to differential reading education contexts.

We suggest that future developers of the reading teacher certificate course or training program pay more attention to the following issues. First off, more research on tailored reading instruction training courses is warranted to serve the individually different needs of the teacher trainees to enhance training outcomes. Furthermore, it is necessary to introduce global perspectives on and experiences in reading teacher education into the local training program to create more professional training platforms for Chinese reading teachers.

References

Chambers, A. (2007). The reading environment (A Chinese translation by Huizhen Xu & Yirong Cai). Hainan: Nan Hai Publishing Co.

Chen, J. (2021). The factors Influencing the reading instruction competence of secondary Chinese language teachers (master's thesis). Northwest Minzu University. DOI: https://doi.org/10.27408/d.cnki.gxmzc.2021.000012

Clark, S. K., Jones, C. D., Reutzel, D. R., & Andreasen, L. (2013). An examination of the influences of a teacher preparation program on beginning teachers' reading instruction. Literacy Research and Instruction, 52(2), 87-105. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/19388071.2012.754520

Cruickshank, D. R., & Metcalf, K. K. (1990). Training within teacher preparation. In W. R. Houston (Ed.), Handbook for research in teacher education (pp. 469–497). New York: Macmillan.

Feng, L. (2024). Reading promotion services of public libraries: From the perspective of child reading. Library. Available at: http://kns.cnki.net/kcms/detail/43.1031.G

2.20240919.1314.010.html

Hoffman, J., & Pearson, P. D. (2000). Reading teacher education in the next millennium: What your grandmother's teacher didn't know that your granddaughter's teacher should. Reading research quarterly, 35(1), 28-44. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1598/RRQ.35.1.3

Hong, M. (2010). Reform and innovation of teaching qualification certification in the United States: An analysis of ABCTE's roles and its design of teaching certificates. Studies in Foreign Education, 37(8), 18-23. Available at: https://kns.cnki.net/kcms2/article/abstract?v=0-LBHIej7Ql65-UVGdy7DTYnA-_1SHuboKtNCsYV8OaQh-Mj4Qxv8A_xOgGD--hWREXEdW9CC_mdyh3uVF-SqhMeP61lKOlVMgjc94eQbcnBsnHAp_LbTTq1S8-lw1DCwTl5zgnyPIYfuxDHbBOhNkCBUpQk2tgzJ8mBV3OrECDaml34hX0EGQ==&uniplatform=NZKPT&language=CHS

International Literacy Association. (2018). Standards for the preparation of literacy professionals 2017.

Li, G. (2022). How the Teachers Increase their Knowledge on Education (master's thesis). Huazhong Normal University. DOI: https://doi.org/10.27159/d.cnki.ghzsu.2022.001572

Li, J., Zhai, Q., & Niu, X. (2024). A new perspective on child reading education: Insights from cognitive neuroscience. Primary School Chinese, 2024(4), 4-12. Available at: https://kns.cnki.net/kcms2/article/abstract?v=0-LBHIej7Qm20oFKF6gl-_4TBGtVzcphzZBJYVqIXxH2uGflmtLqUdxeDM9vyAu0Kqk92fRkSNg47PvC3hOak3BNuXAltv9Cl9fKK-NhUiXMZNL9a94LVfynIDpFJht3YeRD8E_DdWl6DKZzEXwK6NmDgp1f94-IyPghWn_Mwt-7DTjI1PXgmQ==&uniplatform=NZKPT&language=CHS

Li, R. (2011). The transfer of reading competence to reading instruction in novice teachers. Bulletin of Chinese Language Teaching (D), 2011(6), 23-25. DOI: https://doi.org/10.13525/j.cnki.bclt.2011.06.006

Li, Y. & Dong, Q. (2004). Environmental factors influencing the development of reading and writing abilities in early years. Psychological Science, 2004(3), 531-535.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.16719/j.cnki.1671-6981.2004.03.005

McKool, S. S., & Gespass, S. (2009). Does Johnny's reading teacher love to read? How teachers' personal reading habits affect instructional practices. Literacy research and instruction, 48(3), 264-276. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/19388070802443700

Ministry of Education of China. (2017). The Guidelines for Pre-primary, Primary and Secondary Teacher Training Courses (Chinese Language Teaching in Compulsory Education). Available at: http://www.moe.gov.cn/srcsite/A10/s7034/201712/t20171228_323255.html

Ministry of Education of China. (2023). The Action Plan for Promoting Reading in Chinese Adolescents and Children. Available at: http://www.moe.gov.cn/srcsite/A06/s7053/202303/t20230328_1053070.html

Morris, D. (2015). Preventing early reading failure: An argument. The Reading Teacher, 68(7):502-509. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1002/trtr.1346

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. (2012). Literacy: Reading-Language Arts Standards. Available at: https://www.nbpts.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/EMC-LRLA.pdf

Porter, S. B., Odegard, T. N., Farris, E. A., & Oslund, E. L. (2024). Effects of teacher knowledge of early reading on students' gains in reading foundational skills and comprehension. Reading and Writing, 37(8), 2007-2023. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-023-10448-w

Strickland, D., Snow, C., Griffin, P., Burns, M. S., & Peggy, M. (2002). Preparing Our Teachers: Opportunities for Better Reading Instruction. DOI: https://doi.org/10.17226/10130

Tang, J. (2024). Children's Libraries: Enjoying the beauty of reading. Cultural Industry, 2024(27), 154-156. https://kns.cnki.net/kcms2/article/abstract?v=0-LBHIej7QmTBDo57YAd-Vritpwj9TzFDNXfUv-tRhdHqEc54j7vHP66kvCnpurAKf2IkouCW8N9teAszV1EzKi2z9MaHwF4Sw6T7UXtEzC1ZRPWOqbGhETVJKL4hF-eecqtv3MUWfmIhjOM5ZmKVW3eOUEWX9d5WQFwEgDw8mQyaf2Qq7jrGQ==&uniplatform=NZKPT&language=CHS

Taylor, J., Roehrig, A. D., Hensler, B. S., Connor, C. M., & Schatschneider, C. (2010). Teacher quality moderates the genetic effects on early reading. Science, 328(5977), 512-514. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1186149

Xu, D. (2023). Implementing leveled reading in Chinese and promoting the construction of reading-valued campuses. Hunan Education (B), 2023(5), 28-31. Available at: https://kns.cnki.net/kcms2/article/abstract?v=0-LBHIej7QnQrs_jwuCE6JrWjDcF918XXjoPdYdVwffGj_uJWHDvxJWGbP4o23wzde0ddgKvQq43lxV05TnFbY4aCgqZl0MS-dsn1z5g61KsXFA3AuvLVpYBkqf07k9MelUfwaJSujV4G5GJ9V_Wr0GSCNasON6UB12DREdpmFoePA9f5RbLKA==&uniplatform=NZKPT&language=CHS

Xu, S. (2023). The development of child reading education in China: The current state and prospects. Science-Technology and Publishing, 2023(5), 6-12. DOI: https://doi.org/10.16510/j.cnki.kjycb.20230522.001

Ye, L. (1998). Teacher professsional competence in the new century. Educational Research and Experiment, 1998(1), 41-46+72. Available at: https://kns.cnki.net/kcms2/article/abstract?v=0-LBHIej7Qk7kZ2n1_mQ84D5oSDUUJxumgTk3C-JgYEiHc3lxOllevn4npfHQ9tb81o83DAx_O2dGDj-UEZuZpdJxNZObewEEqWmJvPNo6DTB8oB-ll1leMSop8ibaZeH4utuF5l_r2GTZZWzu

6GbBg5tHT7G_yuFkWouXCmvVgwplqzCtrzAA==&uniplatform=NZKPT&language=CHS

Zheng, L. (2024). How reading advances professional development of the teachers: Using Fengnan District in Tangshan City as an example. Basic Education Forum, 2024(8), 12-14. https://kns.cnki.net/kcms2/article/abstract?v=0-LBHIej7QlKvMHWvxtmEP2uV9n8mM8KJwdJFqNSTueIZ2zPdo7081Tf2udmDo_FmXXDx9_ZktdhX14s3lDfh27M4o50vCOKrh1wm9wtSrMglb6-ylG-YpA3hvxf84ClKx6b92MN4tDfcmy5XDVRP0KwRh4upFyUP_qQD3KtFYRxnQGYXaOBwA==&uniplatform=NZKPT&language=CHS

Zhong, C. (2020). Main ideas of the Opinions on Promoting National Reading. Journal of China Publishing, 2020(22), 3-5. Available at: https://kns.cnki.net/kcms2/article/abstract?v=0-LBHIej7QlmLYDRa3UStJnQAIdcdw8tR56pBP2cyU70wI8dFyW_l3VITHm866-GZG9c-rGCtYYXj-oNLpnqCFihxrGKTAYTPS5LP5QP5JTxxY9vMogGecst9ipZrAU649kQci93sxQiUxzwf928fJQmeQ_zoA4ga1LkleiJbUZGrWKuwzQs0g==&uniplatform=NZKPT&language=CHS

Zhou, J. (2005). Basic theoretical issues of reading education in childhood: With a discussion of the current global trend in child reading education. Studies in Preschool Education, 2005(1), 20-23. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3969/j.issn.1007-8169.2005.01.005