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**Collaborative Support for Reading Development:
Parent Partnership in Practice**

A thesis presented
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Abstract

There is a wealth of existing research which reports on programmes aiming to improve the reading skills of children who are struggling to learn to read. This thesis builds on one specific research area where parents are central to the process of reading remediation and are engaged to promote learning and improve reading skills.

In this research the Participatory Intervention Model was used to guide the development and implementation of a collaborative intervention in support of reading development. The researcher and parents jointly developed reading support strategies which linked child assessment data, existing home literacy practices and research led literacy instruction practices. Parents then implemented these strategies during iterative cycles of support and review.

The findings focus on three aspects of the process. Factors which enhanced and inhibited the effectiveness of collaboration are explored. The particulars of parental enactment of strategies to coach children's reading are revealed. Finally, the impact of parental reading support on the children's reading skills is highlighted.

Finally, the study presents a new way of conceptualising an intervention as a collaborative endeavour. It proposes a new term; home based pedagogy to describe the actions parents and the researcher took in supporting each child.

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Chapter 1 – Thesis Overview

1.1 Welcome

At its most basic level, this thesis investigates what happens when a partnership approach to reading remediation is enacted. Learning to read is arguably the most significant skill attained during schooling. Additionally it is a key predictor of schooling success (Wylie et al., 2004). Reading is considered to be an essential life skill in order to participate and contribute to society (Labov, 2003). Those who leave school unable to read face serious life consequences. For many children the process of learning to read is relatively straightforward. Some children experience difficulty as they learn to read but are eventually successful. However, many children fail to master this essential life skill. In New Zealand, data reveal that adults with poor literacy skills are over-represented in unemployment statistics (Earle, 2010) and in prisons (Department of Corrections, 2009). In the workplace, people with poor literacy skills often receive the lowest wages (Earle, 2010). They are more likely to experience poor health (Ministry of Education, 2001). They have little independent access to print based information and consequently are limited in both participation and access to aspects of an increasingly technologically (text) based society. Labov (2003), argues that illiteracy is the most significant factor in the perpetuation of social inequality. Children from homes where parents have poor literacy skills are more likely to have low literacy skills themselves (Ministry of Education, 2001). Not only are there consequences for the individual, there are also consequences for families, communities and nations as the potential contributions that an individual can make to society are limited.

1.2 Reading

Reading, in its most fundamental sense, can be construed as making meaning from symbols (Fischer, 2003). Symbols can be found in many places and can, with certain skills, be interpreted, for example the weather can be read from the

cloud and wind patterns, an animal tracker can read footprints and droppings, a fortune teller may read a palm (Manguel, 1997). Lyons (2010) and Wolf (2007) assert that reading has been a human endeavour for millennia. Evidence for this view can be found in archaeological finds which suggest that cave art from as early as 15 000 BC was made to be 'read'. During subsequent millennia many early societies made symbolic representations of words (Wolf, 2007) which eventually led to the development of scripts, and innovations in varied writing surfaces including wood, bamboo, shell, wax, papyrus, clay, animal skins, and stone (Manguel, 1997).

Despite the invention of written text in ancient times, until the Middle Ages only a small minority of people could read (Fischer, 2003). These literate individuals learned to read through an apprenticeship. They were often held in high esteem within their society and fulfilled important roles in sharing text with non-literate people (Lyons, 2010).

A number of writers (Cavallo & Chartier, 1999; Fischer, 2003; Lyons, 2010) assert that in Western societies, advances in the technology of texts, including materials (parchment then paper) binding techniques (tablets, scrolls and finally bound pages), reproduction (copying by hand, printing, electronic means) and the development of text conventions (for example, using spaces between words and consistent spelling) resulted in reading material becoming increasingly available and accessible. Additionally, the scope of written material broadened from being the preserve of religious texts, business accounts and legislation to include a proliferation of subjects and text types for many purposes (Lyons, 2010).

Congruent with the proliferation of reading material and readers, reading practices and conceptions of what it means to be a reader have changed significantly (Cavallo & Chartier, 1999). Increased availability and scope of books led to what Lyons (2010) calls the 'democratisation of reading' where, over time, reading has become a widespread practice. Lyons (2010) discusses changes from traditional, intensive reading (where a few volumes, often religious books, were

repeatedly read) to modern, extensive reading practices (where many, largely secular texts of different types are consumed). Historical changes in the practices of reading provide evidence for the view that reading is not an isolated, independent skill but rather is embedded within the social, cultural and technological practices of the people who create text and those who read it.

In 1997, results from the International Adult Literacy Survey showed that 20% of adult New Zealanders had extremely poor literacy skills (Ministry of Education, 1997). This means that readers in this category would “experience considerable difficulties in using many of the printed materials that may be encountered in daily life”(Ministry of Education, 2001, p. 25). By the time the International Adult Literacy Survey was repeated in 2006, 15% of people were in the lowest category (Satherley, Lawes, & Sok, 2008). Whilst this is an improvement, it is apparent that a significant proportion of adults in New Zealand continue to be unable to perform the basic functions of literacy.

There is a large body of research (Anderson, Anderson, Friedrich, & Kim, 2010; Biddulph, 1983; Cadieux & Boudreault, 2005; Cairney & Munsie, 1993; Dolezal-Sams, Nordquist, & Twardosz, 2009; Gozali-Lee, Mueller, & Wilder, 2010; Hindin & Paratore, 2007; McElvany & Artelt, 2009; McNaughton, Glynn, & Robinson, 1981; McNaughton, Jesson, Kolose, & Kercher, 2013; Powell-Smith, Shinn, Stoner, & Good, 2000; Purcell-Gates et al., 2012; Rasinski & Stevenson, 2005; Robinson, 2012; St Clair, Jackson, & Zweiback, 2012; White & Kim, 2008) which reports on programmes aiming to address reading difficulties. These encompass interventions to prevent reading struggles from occurring and those which aim to remediate reading difficulties. One specific area of research aims to involve parents in the process of enhancing their child’s reading skills. Many of the studies listed above claim this is a useful technique which leads to positive results for readers. However, there is also a growing body of literature which is critical of such programmes claiming that they promote only a narrow range of school-based reading skills which may be contrary to parental values, expectations and practices (Compton-Lilly, 2003; Lynch, 2009; Morrow & Young, 1997b; Purcell-Gates, 1996). Promotion of a school based view of reading which

is incongruent with parental views of reading can position parents as inferior, submissive or even deficit. This point is discussed in greater depth in the next chapter.

In contrast to the approaches described above, the current research took a position which prioritised parental beliefs, values and knowledge and situated parents as expert co-constructors, empowering them to make a positive difference to their child's reading.

1.3 Partnership

Partnership can be commonly defined as two parties or individuals agreeing to co-operate or to unite (The New Zealand Oxford Dictionary). The noun form of the word is 'partner'. The word partner is often used in a variety of contexts to describe two individuals who co-operate. It is often used in sports (for example, tennis, rowing, and bowls), card games such as bridge and euchre, and to describe certain domestic relationships. The term partnership can also be applied to small and large groups of people in many contexts, including business, charity, and even international relations (for example, countries which are trading partners). Brett (2002) notes that the word partnership is often used by theorists in health fields to describe various models of caring, for example, a therapist working in partnership with a client to improve physical performance. Brett also claims that the term has become overused and is often viewed as redundant. As an alternative, she offers the term 'alliance' to describe a relationship of negotiated mutual co-operation and reciprocity.

Partnership is often used in educational contexts to describe the relationship between schools and families. This is a complex field where unequal status in relationships can easily permit schools to be positioned as dominant and parents as submissive. This area of tension is further explored in the following chapter.

The benefits of partnership are commonly attributed to the fact that people working together are often able to achieve more than individuals engaged separately in the same task. Additionally, each person may bring differing

expertise and skills to the partnership, which contributes to strengthening the overall output (Idol, Nevin, & Paolucci-Whitcomb, 1994). Despite differing roles or areas of expertise that a party may contribute to partnership, the maintenance of equal status within the pairing is regarded as desirable and even conditional (Robertson, 2009).

In this research, partnership was enacted through a carefully planned series of interactions and a model of coaching. Chapter three details the development and enactment of this strategy.

1.4 Personal Connection to the Research

In addition to my professional interest in the study, I have a personal interest in the topic. I did not start school until I was six years old and initially struggled to read. I suspect I had a good oral vocabulary from living in an extended family situation where I was the only child in the home. I had been told stories, knew nursery rhymes, and had been read to, but I had no print related skills of my own and had not attended any sort of formal pre-school education.

I have vivid memories from my first year of school of desperately trying to make sense of the noises that came from my mouth as I sounded out the letters in the words, but it appeared to me that there was absolutely no relationship between the disconnected sounds of the letters and the complete words that the teacher was able to pronounce. Reading was an embarrassing, pointless struggle and a complete mystery for most of my first year of school. One day when I was waiting for my turn to read to the teacher I decided to look at my book and I discovered that I could read. It was an instant and complete revelation. I can still remember the teacher's astonished face when it was my turn to read and I was able to fluently read page after page of not only my book but almost any book. Although my own struggle to learn to read was relatively short and had an atypical resolution, it furnished in me empathy toward children who were struggling to learn to read.

I trained to be a teacher in the time when a whole language approach was the favoured instructional approach to reading in New Zealand. As a consequence I learned techniques for engaging children in print and promoting a love of literature. I was taught that children learn to read by approximating the behaviours of good readers. This seemed logical as it mirrored my own experience. As a classroom teacher, I found it a relatively straightforward task to continue the development of reading skills of the proficient readers in my classroom but this same task seemed much more complex and less successful with less proficient readers. As was common at the time for beginning teachers, I engaged in a range of professional development activities including completing the Later Advanced Reading In-service Course (LARIC), a New Zealand Ministry of Education initiative. While this gave me some new ways of approaching reading in the classroom, it did not solve my dilemma over what to do for the children in my class who were not proficient readers. I was able to promote some gains in reading but I never transformed a single struggling reader into a proficient one.

Approximately five years after I began classroom teaching, professional private tutoring services emerged in New Zealand. I worked for a company called the Network for Education and Training Strategies known as NETS New Zealand. The NETS approach had been developed by an educational psychologist (D. Pokroy, personal communication, 9 August 2011). It was based on the reading research of Marie Clay combined with specific communication principles. Tutors were taught to respond to the child's emotional connection to reading, build success and provide specific feedback and coaching in response to the child's reading with the aim of increasing the child's metacognitive strategies and ultimately their reading skill. Using this approach in a one to one setting in the child's home, the reading tutors reportedly averaged 12 months reading growth for every six hours of tutoring (G. Jackson, personal communication 5 May 2010). These results are open to scrutiny as they were self-reported by the tutors and did not have any external validation. When I returned to classroom teaching I found the reading strategies I had learned through NETS were some use in a

group setting but they were not as effective when applied individually in a home setting.

The next significant stage in my development as a reading teacher occurred when I was a fifth grade teacher in the USA. As part of the district professional development programme I participated in phonetic training led by Francine Johnston, one of the authors of 'Words Their Way' (Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, & Johnston, 2004). Although this initiative was initially promoted as a spelling programme, when combined with the whole language and NETS techniques in my classroom I noticed a marked improvement in the reading of the struggling students in my classroom. I later learned that this dual enactment focus is the essence of a balanced approach to reading instruction.

When I began my doctoral study, I initially thought I would develop a programme to train parents to do what I was able to do in reading and measure the impact of that programme. However, the more I read, the more I recognised that parents brought a deep understanding of their child and a unique perspective to reading with their child; that of a shared family culture. Instead of imposing my views of reading on the parents I became interested in utilising home culture to support readers, hence the shape of this research.

1.5 Aim of the Study

This research project grew out of a concern for children who experience difficulty learning to read and a desire to contribute to the research knowledge regarding remedial approaches in reading. It was informed by existing research on a variety of topics. The aim of this research was to design, implement and investigate through qualitative methods a collaborative process whereby parents were coached to tutor their children in reading. To enable a broad understanding of this exploratory intervention a range of relevant aspects were examined. This included the coaching sessions with parents, parents' tutoring actions, as well as the children's attitude towards and skill in reading.

1.6 Thesis Overview

I have presented this thesis in six chapters. Following this chapter is a review of the literature in which I discuss a range of literature pertinent to the study. I share the model of reading instruction which informed this study. To provide a rationale for locating this research beyond schools, I explore the ways that parents have been viewed within school contexts and then consider the literature regarding a range of programmes where parents are guided to support their child's reading. Finally, I discuss the implications of existing research for the current study.

I begin chapter three by introducing the research questions which guided this exploratory study. Next, I describe the theory that framed this research and the qualitative research design. I provide the process for the recruitment of participants and discuss specific ethical considerations. In describing the process which was developed for this research, I explain the guiding principles in relation to relevant literature. Data collection methods are integrated within the enactment plan. In the final section of this chapter, I describe the processes for data analysis.

In chapter four, I report on the findings of this research. The four pairs of participants are introduced and I describe their views and home practices concerning literacy. Each research question is responded to by presenting relevant data as a series of vignettes augmented by statistical information where appropriate. In this manner I provide an account of multiple aspects of the process including the interactions between the researcher and the participants, actions taken by the participants in support of reading and changes in reading skill and attitude. The chapter highlights the personalisation of the intervention and its ability to be responsive to a range of contextual factors.

In chapter five you will find a discussion of the findings that emerged from the data. Connections are made between the findings and existing literature. Themes that emerged from the data include: the development of partnership,

the importance of shared goal setting, considerations relating to the co-construction of strategies, the use of support and encouragement, the need for active participation, some issues relating to parental coaching and the implementation of strategies, and the impact of the process on reading. The results of this study indicate that this intervention has the potential to support parents to have an impact on their child's reading skill.

Chapter six concludes the thesis by offering a reflection on the research. I identify both the limitations of this study and the opportunities for further research. I present two new contributions to the research field. One is a conceptual framework which may aid researchers working in partnership with parents. The second contribution to literature is the proposal and discussion of a new term: home based pedagogy. This chapter also discusses implications of the research for various stakeholders: participants, researchers, parents, schools, and reading specialists. In the final statement, I acknowledge that there are complexities and challenges which are likely to occur during the development and enactment of home based pedagogies. However, the potential gains for children as readers and for their parents make engaging in the process beneficial.

Chapter 2 – The Research Literature

2.1 Introduction

This chapter summarises the research literature in relation to the current study. It begins by locating the current study within a range of possible viewpoints on reading. Having established this foundation, the chapter examines a range of research literature relating to various aspects of parents supporting the reading development of their children. The chapter concludes by presenting a rationale for the current study which is informed by the literature presented.

2.2 Reading

The term ‘reading’ is commonly understood to mean the ability to interpret and understand written symbols (The New Zealand Oxford Dictionary, 2005). This view is sometimes described in the research literature as an autonomous view of literacy as it focusses on the discrete skills of reading. However, reading as an autonomous skill can be perceived as problematic because it assumes that reading is a neutral act (Street, 2003). In contrast to this view, some writers position reading as a complex social practice, highly dependent on context (Kendrick, Rogers, Smythe, & Anderson, 2005), a component that contributes to the identity of the reader (Hawkins, 2013) and even as a political act (Freire, 1970). This more complex view of reading is referred to as situated literacy (Hawkins, 2013). Situated literacy includes the functional or skills aspect of reading but, importantly, also recognises that literacy is an applied and encultured skill, a learning process, and that reading necessarily implies the creation and use of text (UNESCO, 2006). Situated literacy encompasses the varied practices surrounding and embedded in literacy, not simply the act of decoding text (Hawkins, 2013; Kendrick et al., 2005). When reading is viewed in this manner, it becomes a socio-cultural construct (Tracey & Morrow, 2006). A situated view of literacy was used to inform this research because this view is

congruent with the theoretical underpinnings of the study, namely socio cultural theory. Additionally, a situated view of literacy is predominant in the current New Zealand educational context including research (Fletcher, Greenwood, & Parkhill, 2010; Fletcher, Grimley, Greenwood, & Parkhill, 2012; Fletcher, Parkhill, Fa'afoi, Taleni, & O'Regan, 2009; McNaughton et al., 2013) and pedagogy (Ministry of Education, 2003, 2006, 2009, 2010a).

Socio-cultural theory prioritises certain types of learning interactions as the learner is seen as an active, central participant in the learning process.

Recognising that the child and his or her experiences are central to the process of reading is congruent with a situated view of reading. In this research, reading was about more than interpreting and understanding written symbols; instead, reading encompassed a wide range of contextual and situational elements such as, reading practices and purposes, relationship with the text, personal opinion, attitude towards reading, and the content and form of the text itself.

Consequently, this research was not reliant on a specific text but sought to use a broad range of reading material which was responsive to each unique reader (Tracey & Morrow, 2006).

2.2.1 Reading Instruction

The teaching of reading is a contestable field. The debate over approaches to reading instruction has engaged academics, parents and educational professionals for over 100 years (Tunmer & Nicholson, 2011). Key methods include the whole language approach (Ministry of Education, 2003, 2006; Smith & Elley, 1994) and a phonics focussed approach popularised by the Simple View of Reading (SVR), proposed by Gough and Tunmer (1986). These foundation models are explored below.

The whole language model takes a holistic view of learning to read based on what competent readers do (Clay, 1985). In this model, reading processes are viewed as being driven by the reader's need to making meaning (Snow & Sweet, 2003). Whole language prioritises learning to read through the act of reading

therefore the teaching of skills occurs within the context of reading (Ministry of Education, 2003, 2006; Smith & Elley, 1994). Instruction of specific skills occurs as particular needs arise for individuals or groups of learners. In this approach, a range of decoding strategies are taught, including responding to syntactic, semantic, visual and graphophonic information (Tracey & Morrow, 2006). Learners are encouraged to actively engage in self-monitoring and self-correction as they read (Ministry of Education, 2003). Emphasis is also placed on the value of comprehension, prior knowledge, individual engagement and the construction of meaning (Ministry of Education, 2003, 2006, 2009, 2010a).

By comparison, the simple view of reading (SVR) positions reading as the product of decoding and comprehension (Gough & Tunmer, 1986). In this approach to reading, the process of reading is driven by phonics, that is, the reader interpreting the symbols of print to make words (Snow & Sweet, 2003). Decoding is “the ability to recognise words presented singly out of context, with the ability to apply phonic rules” (Rose, 2006, p. 77). Comprehension, in this model, is “linguistic comprehension... the process by which, given lexical (i.e., word) information, sentences and discourse are interpreted” (Rose, 2006, p. 77). Owing to the emphasis placed on phonic decoding, proponents of this model stress the need for explicit and systematic teaching of phonemic knowledge for beginning readers above other forms of instruction (Chapman & Tunmer, 2003; Roberts & Scott, 2006; Ryder, Tunmer, & Greaney, 2008; Vellutino, Tunmer, Jaccard, & Chen, 2007).

A recent addition to the reading debate is the balanced approach to literacy instruction described and advocated by a number of researchers including: Bitter, O'Day, Gubbins, and Socias (2009); Donat (2006); Nicholson and Tunmer (2011); Pearson and Raphael (2003); Pressley (2002); Rief and Heimburge (2007); Tunmer and Nicholson (2011) and the New Zealand Ministry of Education (2010a). A balanced approach builds on the identified strengths of both the whole language approach and the phonics approaches.

This means that both explicit, systematic phonemic awareness teaching and a whole language approach may be used. Specific practice is guided by prioritising the needs of the individual learner: “...the most effective approach... depends crucially on the reading related knowledge skills and experiences the child brings to the task” (Tunmer & Nicholson, 2011, p. 405). In the balanced approach to teaching reading, instruction is provided to promote learning in all aspects of reading (Shaw & Hurst, 2012).

The American National Reading Panel identified five key areas of instruction which are beneficial to the development of reading skills: phonological awareness (the ability to aurally differentiate sounds in words), instruction in graphophonemic relationships (phonetics), vocabulary knowledge, fluency and comprehension (Anderson, 2009; National Reading Panel, 2000). Other experts add the use of decoding strategies, developing an understanding of literature (Scarborough, 2001; Tompkins, 2014), automatic word recognition, knowledge of language structures and background knowledge (Scarborough, 2001) to the list. When a balanced view of literacy instruction is enacted, teaching approaches may include: “Specific instruction, guided practice, collaborative learning and independent reading” (Tompkins, 2014). The balanced view of literacy instruction has been reported to lead to good outcomes for students (Braunger & Lewis, 2006; Brown & Fisher, 2006; Taylor, Pearson, Peterson, & Rodrigues, 2003).

The application of reading strategies in this research was guided by a balanced approach to literacy instruction. This approach was chosen as it is congruent with both a socio-cultural approach and situated literacy as it prioritises the learner within their particular environment.

2.2.2 Being a Reader

Just as the term ‘reading’ has varied definitions, the terms ‘good reader’ and ‘poor reader’ can have multiple interpretations (Torgesen, 2004). In different

contexts, a variety of reading skills may be valued. For example, accurate and expressive oral reading may be viewed as a marker of good reading and so might literal comprehension. In contrast, others may regard the use of inferential skills highly, whereas some may value the ability to critique text. Researchers (Cobb, 2012; Deane, 2004; Lyons, 2010) also note that the concept of a ‘good reader’ has changed over time as the demands on literacy are challenged by a changing society, advances in and the increased use of technology .

In this research, consistent with a situated view of reading, a good reader is defined as one who has the ability to decode text effectively and simultaneously use a range of comprehension strategies to understand the material. In other words, a good reader will be able to both extract meaning from text and construct meaning. Extracting meaning refers to translating marks on paper to words and constructing meaning means making sense of those words (Snow & Sweet, 2003).

The process of becoming a competent reader is illustrated by figure 1 (Scarborough, 2001, p. 98).

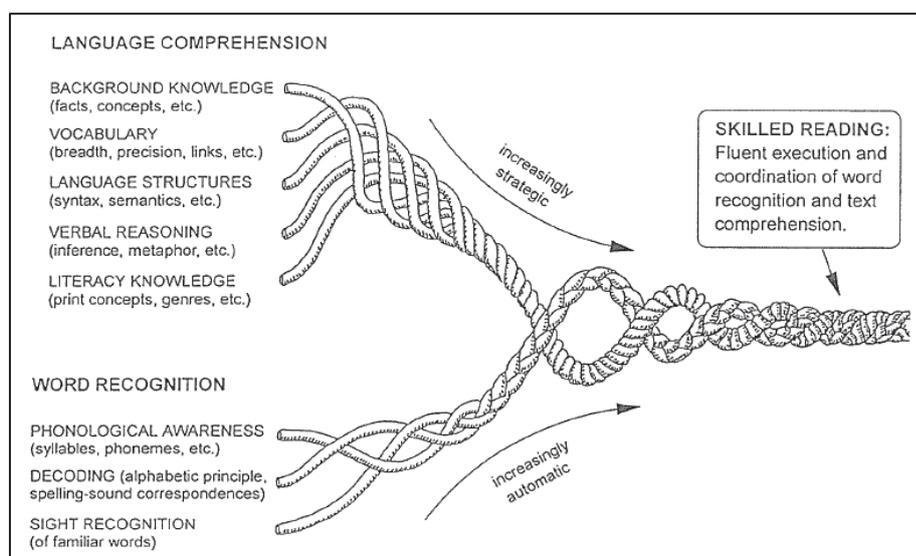


Figure 1: Becoming a Competent Reader

Scarborough depicts reading development as the gradual integration of comprehension and decoding strategies. In this model, congruent with a balanced approach to literacy instruction, word recognition skills are varied and include phonological awareness (awareness that words are made up of smaller sound units which can be manipulated (Morrow & Gambrell, 2011)), decoding and sight recognition. Comprehension strategies are viewed as grounded in the individual and therefore situated. They include background knowledge, vocabulary, language structures, verbal reasoning and literacy knowledge.

Although Scarborough's model appears comprehensive, it does not include several important aspects if reading is to be viewed as situated. The model does not encompass the broader contextual components of situated literacy for example, family literacy practices, exposure to text rich activities, attitude towards reading. If these were added as a background to the 'reading rope' it would present a more complete picture of reading.

As well as being a factor which should be taken into consideration in a situated literacy approach, research has shown that an individual's attitude towards reading is often linked to success (or failure) in reading (Biddulph, 1983; Chapman & Tunmer, 1995; McKenna & Kear, 1990; Ministry of Education, 2003, 2006). In a recent study, Clark and De Zoysa (2011) surveyed 17000 readers aged 8 to 16 years about reading. In the discussion of data, they proposed a cycle of positive influence. Clark and De Zoysa found that a positive attitude to reading contributed to an increase in reading which, in turn, positively impacted reading attainment and further reinforced a positive attitude. A further New Zealand study which acknowledges the importance of a positive reading attitude as a factor influencing reading success is the work of Fletcher and colleagues (Fletcher et al., 2012). This team examined exemplary classroom practice and outlined key strategies for promoting enjoyment of reading in a classroom including: reading aloud, promoting discussion to create a community of readers, supporting access to interesting materials, explicit and engaging teaching, encouragement, and making reading fun. Some of these strategies may be usefully applied in a home setting.

2.2.3 Choosing a Term

There are many terms, often used interchangeably, to refer to people who have not yet become proficient at the skill of reading. Terms used in research literature include illiterate, semi-literate, functionally illiterate, and low progress readers. For the purpose of this study, I will use the term ‘child who is struggling to learn to read.’ This definition was chosen to avoid the negative connotations and deficit positioning of some terminology. It also prioritises the child and recognises that the path to becoming literate can be difficult for some individuals given that there are many obstacles to overcome on the way to becoming a competent and confident reader.

2.2.4 Struggling Readers

The extensive body of research reported on in this section provides a plethora of factors which may contribute to children’s difficulties in learning to read. The possible reasons include (but are not limited to) parent variables, socio economic status, health, school attendance and transience, behaviour issues, quality of teaching, time spent reading, Matthew effects, and child characteristics.

A number of parental factors have been shown to have a significant correlation with reading achievement. Buckingham, Wheldall, and Beaman-Wheldall (2013) cite studies that show a strong link between parental aspirations for children and reading achievement and that there are clear links between parents’ expectations of their children as readers, encouragement to read and reading attainment levels. An Australian study (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2012) which considered factors affecting Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) results found a strong correlation between low student reading scores and low parent education levels, as well as clear links between low scores and children whose parents had low status jobs. Thompson and colleagues (Thompson, Meyers, & Oshima, 2011) found that

children with low reading attainment (measured by the PIRLS survey) were more likely to come from homes with fewer than 25 books. The quality of the relationship between parent and child has an impact on the development of early literacy skills (Bus, 2003). Park (2007) cites a number of American studies which show strong correlation between children raised in single parent homes and low reading achievement. However, Park also points out that this individual factor may not be causal as the impact of single parent families on reading is not mirrored across other countries. A number of other factors may need to be considered, for example the impact of parental bereavement is likely to be a more significant cause of disruption to learning than other factors leading to single parenthood. Similarly, a range of wider family structures and support (or lack of) is likely to be a contributing factor. Park (2008) and Buckingham and colleagues (Buckingham et al., 2013) found that socio economic status also affected children's reading attainment in as much as low socio economic status is likely to lead to the child experiencing a range of circumstances which are not conducive to high literacy attainment. "Children whose home lives are characterised by social disadvantage are less likely to achieve to their genetic potential" (p. 194).

Mol and Bus (2011) found that poor health in children often leads to low rates of school attendance. In turn, this can contribute to lower reading achievement as children have gaps in instruction and fewer opportunities to practice. Furthermore, school mobility (changing schools frequently), especially in the first years of schooling, has been linked to less successful readers (Thompson et al., 2011).

Behavioural issues in children are often linked to poor reading. The direction of the influence appears to be a debated topic. Bennett and colleagues (Bennett, Brown, Boyle, Racine, & Offord, 2003) argue that struggling to learn to read is a causal factor in the development of conduct disorder. In contrast, Pontiz and colleagues (Pontiz, Rimm-Kaufman, Grimm, & Kirby, 2009) assert that maladaptive behaviours can inhibit the effectiveness and uptake of instruction

which in turn can lead to poor reading. Limbrick, Wheldall and Madelaine (2011) adopt a third position; they posit reading and behaviour as a bi-directionally correlated. They argue that poor behaviour in the classroom can lead to poor reading but also that poor reading can lead to poor behaviour.

A number of researchers (Hattie, 2009; Rowe, 2003) identify that the quality of teaching of reading can have an impact on the learner. Of particular importance appears to be the quality of initial reading instruction (Chatterji, 2006; D'Angiulli, Siegel, & Maggi, 2004). Ponitz and colleagues (Ponitz et al., 2009) claim that there are three critical teacher factors which affect reading progress: engagement in thought provoking instruction, warm teacher-student relationships and effective classroom organisation.

There appears to be an association between the time spent reading outside school and reading achievement (Buckingham et al., 2013; McKool, 2007; Mol & Bus, 2011). That is, children who read more are likely to be better readers. Stanovich (1986) labelled this the 'Matthew effect'. He theorised that good readers get better at reading because they read more and those who are struggling to read engage with reading less and therefore slip further behind their peers (Cain & Oakhill, 2011). However, in a longitudinal study of twins and reading processes (Wadsworth, Defries, Olson, & Willcutt, 2007) no evidence to support 'Matthew effects' was found.

A broad range of individual child characteristics can have an impact on a child's ability to learn to read. The term dyslexia is sometimes used to describe these difficulties. However, this is an often overused term. The New Zealand Ministry of Education (2008) defines dyslexia as an unexpected and persistent difficulty in learning to read despite adequate instruction. Klein (2002) points out that if known factors are present which may impact a child's reading acquisition then a child cannot be labelled as dyslexic as the reading difficulty was not unexpected. Strong emergent literacy skills have been shown to be a predictor of reading success (Anderson, Moffatt, McTavish, & Shapiro, 2013; Lubienski & Crane, 2010).

Emergent literacy can be defined as a set of foundation skills, learned from birth (Rhyner, Haebig, & West, 2009) which support early formal literacy instruction and learning (Cabell, Justice, Kaderavek, & Breit-Smith, 2009; Turnbull & Justice, 2012). Cabell and colleagues identify the following skills: phonological awareness (playing with word sounds), print awareness, alphabet knowledge, emergent writing and oral language as being of critical importance to learning to read. Emergent literacy skills are largely developed through spoken language and are often occur alongside nurturing parent-child relationships (Rhyner et al., 2009). Difficulties in auditory processing and speech perception may impair a child's ability to develop emergent literacy skills (Boets et al., 2011) and therefore negatively impact their initial progress in learning to read.

A range of additional factors including visual perception (Klein, 2002), temporal processing (sequencing and connecting information presented over time), neurological functioning (Landi, Frost, Mencl, Sandak, & Pugh, 2013), speed of processing, (Klein, 2002) variances in the spoken language of home (English and other languages) and the spoken and written language of school (Labov, 2003) can be causal factors of reading difficulties. Additionally, the breadth of an individual's vocabulary (the number of words understood) can also impact reading acquisition (Cain, Oakhill, & Bryant, 2000).

It is clear from this survey of literature that there are a vast number and range of factors which may influence a child's ability to learn to read. While it is impossible to go back in time to rectify any previous issues for a child, an understanding of the possible influences which may lead to a child struggling to learn to read can usefully contribute to the particular approaches taken with specific families. Furthermore, a number of the identified contributing factors discussed above supports the view that reading is not an isolated practice but is embedded within social practices.

2.2.5 Reading at School and Parents

It is a commonly held belief in contemporary society that children will learn to read at school. It is also widely agreed by researchers (Auerbach, 2009; Biddulph, Biddulph, & Biddulph, 2003; Cooper, 2009; Education Review Office, 2008a, 2008c; Epstein, 2001; Feiler et al., 2008; Ferrara, 2009; Hill & Tyson, 2009; Ho, 2009; Ji & Koblinsky, 2009; Knopf & Swick, 2008; Lopez & Donovan, 2009; Muscott et al., 2008; Patrikakou, Weissberg, Redding, & Walberg, 2005; Risko & Walker-Dalhouse, 2009; Schechter & Sherri, 2009; Turney & Kao, 2009) that when parents and schools work together it is beneficial for all parties involved, namely, students, parents, schools and teachers. Hartas (2012) argued that parental involvement in learning is useful to boost achievement. Therefore it might follow that when parents are engaged in a school context, supporting their children to learn to read, the learner will benefit. However, this is a simplistic view as further issues need to be considered.

While researchers have identified many positive effects of parent participation, a number of significant barriers to effective home-school collaboration have been identified. Researchers (Ferrara, 2009; Ji & Koblinsky, 2009; Muscott et al., 2008; Risko & Walker-Dalhouse, 2009; Turney & Kao, 2009) report that parents often find schools unwelcoming and disempowering. Some schools are mono-cultural in their approach and do not accept or welcome diversity (Education Review Office, 2008b; Giovacco-Johnson, 2009; Ji & Koblinsky, 2009), even going as far as demonstrating racist attitudes towards parents (Cooper, 2009). Some parents have difficulty accessing schools because of culture and/or language barriers (Bang, 2009; Ji & Koblinsky, 2009; Lopez & Donovan, 2009; Muscott et al., 2008; Risko & Walker-Dalhouse, 2009; Turney & Kao, 2009). In addition, for some parents, going into a school is a stark reminder of their own unpleasant educational endeavours (Bull, Brooking, & Campbell, 2008). Schools are particularly difficult environments for parents who have low literacy skills (Muscott et al., 2008). Moreover, not all schools communicate well with parents (Education Review Office, 2008b). Parents are often impacted by negative teacher attitudes including being viewed by teachers as the source of any

problem (including struggling to learn to read) that a child may be experiencing (Bull et al., 2008; Compton-Lilly, 2003; Ferrara, 2009; Lopez & Donovan, 2009; Muscott et al., 2008; Patrikakou et al., 2005). Some schools are reported to demonstrate little appreciation of parental commitments beyond the school gate (Coco, Goos, & Kostogriz, 2007). Some parents struggle to get to school during opening hours due to time issues (Patrikakou et al., 2005; Turney & Kao, 2009), working hours (Bull et al., 2008; Ji & Koblinsky, 2009; Lopez & Donovan, 2009), transport issues (Lopez & Donovan, 2009) and family constraints (Risko & Walker-Dalhouse, 2009; Turney & Kao, 2009), such as providing care for younger children (Feiler et al., 2008; Lopez & Donovan, 2009). Further sources of conflict between school and parents can be seen from competing agendas and differing values for children (Coco et al., 2007; Cooper, 2009; Muscott et al., 2008).

Despite this, researchers from various fields (Bryan & Henry, 2008; Dotson-Blake, 2010; Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2010) report that many schools do take steps to include and involve parents in schooling. Epstein, Coates, Sanders, and Simon (1997) developed a framework for measuring home/school interactions. In their framework the quality of these interactions is judged against a range of criteria. Unfortunately, much of this framework positions parents in a deficient or submissive position and schools in a superior role. In this manner, traditional models of parent involvement often serve to reinforce the barriers they attempt to remove.

The evidence from research provides an incentive for reconceptualising the way of working with parents to enhance the learning of their children. It also provides a strong rationale for physically locating the present study in a place which is distinct from a school in order to minimise the difficulties which may be experienced by parents when interacting with a school.

2.2.6 Parent Views of Reading

Schools and parents may differ on their views about reading. Reading in school is likely to prioritise the literacy skills needed for school success (Masny, 2005).

The group labelled ‘parents’ is diverse and representative of all groups within society (Fiese, 2013). While diversity is a commonly accepted fact when discussing parents, many schools and traditional researchers do not recognise or value the potentially diverse literacy practices which may stem from a heterogeneous population (Anderson et al., 2010). However, there is an emerging group of researchers who are seeking to identify and understand a broad range of situated literacy practices found in homes which may be supportive of children’s literacy development.

Seminal work investigating the language practices of families was carried out by Heath (1983). Through longitudinal observations of families in three neighbouring but socio-economically different communities, Heath identified specific patterns of language use in each community. She compared and contrasted these family practices to each other and the local school culture and concluded that there are many ways to experience language. However, she also found that the middle class children in her study were advantaged in the school system due to the close match between their family’s language practices and the language practices prevalent in the school. Heath’s work is often used to support the idea that schools should strive to better match family language practices rather than require parents to change their practices to match school expectations. Heath’s research also supports the view that socio-cultural and situational factors are of significance when learning to read.

Identification of non-mainstream literacy practices in homes can be challenging for mainstream researchers because particular home actions may not be recognised as literacy practices by some researchers. Seminal work in the area of identifying a diverse range of home practices as literacy practices was undertaken by Purcell-Gates (1996). In her study, Purcell-Gates conducted in-home observations of ethnically diverse American families of low socio-economic status whose children’s ages were between 4 and 6 years old. She found situated literacy activities with a number of purposes evident in the homes. Most predominant were reading or writing for the purposes of entertainment, support for daily living routines, teaching and learning and school related

activities. Less common activities included engaging in literacy for the purposes of story reading, interpersonal communication, religious practice, participating in information networks, and reading for work. She concluded that the children in the study had many varied literacy experiences and knowledge in relation to literacy. However, these experiences were often different to the literacy practices of school which may lead to disadvantage these children in the school system. She challenged schools to provide literacy experiences which are more closely aligned to home as a foundation for learning to read and write.

Acknowledgement of the discrepancy between mainstream literature based practices (as valued by schools) and some home based literacy practices is also described in Morrow and Young's (1997b) research. The researchers assert that a wide range of literacy practices situated in homes is not recognised as contributing to children's school success in reading and conversely some school based literacy practices have little relevance for particular children. Instead of regarding non-mainstream home literacy practices as a deficit of the families concerned, Morrow and Young re-frame these diverse home literacy practices as strengths to be built upon. They designed and trialled a collaborative family literacy programme which endeavoured to link home and school literacy practices. The results showed positive reading outcomes for students in terms of enjoyment, engagement and skill development.

Compton-Lilley (2003) interviewed the parents of children in her first grade class to find out about their values and behaviours regarding literacy. The school was in a low-socio economic North American community and the families were predominantly African American. Compton-Lilley discovered that the families in her study viewed reading as important in three key ways for survival in a modern world: for future employment opportunities (including further education to get a better job), for travel (driving, reading directions, signs and timetables) and for pleasure. She discovered that the parents in her study facilitated learning to read at home in a number of ways including: ensuring children read at home, listening to children read, supporting decoding strategies (mainly sounding out words) and the use of commercial 'learn to read' materials. The parents in this

study believed that it was the joint responsibility of the teacher and parent to teach the child to read. However, they also acknowledged other significant individuals in supporting the reading development of their children including siblings, extended family members and peers. Compton-Lilley presented these findings as a contrast to the commonly held deficit beliefs about literacy in low socio-economic African-American communities. She also contrasted and compared the results of her interviews with dominant, mainstream discourses about reading. She believed that the parents in her study were positioned by, and positioned themselves, as separate to mainstream discourses which can create barriers to learning. Compton-Lilley believes it is the responsibility of teachers and researchers to embrace locally contextualised discourses as a tool for enhancing learning.

A more recent study which attempted to identify non-mainstream home literacy practices was conducted by Lynch (2009). Lynch interviewed participants from low socio-economic backgrounds about their use of print during the previous 12 months. Results showed a wide range of interactions with print. Reading activities included reading school communication, retail advertising, timetables for bus and TV, menu, newspaper, magazines, housing paperwork, song lyrics, comics and cartoons, calendars, tickets, bills, directions, recipes, shopping and to-do lists, prescriptions, labels on foods and medicines, phone book, messages and notes, fiction books and greeting cards. Writing activities included writing names and addresses, cheques, emails, writing instructions, poetry and reflections, events on calendars, creating shopping and to-do lists, communicating with messages and notes. These findings challenge the oft held belief that parents of low socio economic status do not engage in literacy based activities. Lynch concluded that it may be more useful to use materials for literacy instruction that are congruent with the home experiences rather than materials driven by mainstream values.

Miano (2011) is critical of research which prioritises school based, middle class literacy practices. She outlined an argument whereby she claims that much research views middle class home literacy practices as desirable because they

match school based ideals. She argued that these standards are unfairly applied to parents from other socio economic groups who are subsequently judged deficit or lacking in their literacy efforts. In contrast to this understanding, Miano's research sought to expose and understand the practices of a group of low socio-economic status parents as they participated in and supported their children's learning in literacy. The participants were Mexican-American mothers, many of whom had limited literacy skills with English print materials. Miano discovered that all the mothers in the study played an active role in the literacy development of the children in their family. Some actions taken by the participants, such as support for homework completion, were similar to the desired practices of middle class 'good parents'. Other actions, such as seeking assistance from children to read household bills, did support literacy development but were not the actions of typical middle class families. In this manner, Miano asserts that many actions taken by low socio economic parents in support of their children as learners are invisible to researchers.

Brown, Byrnes, Raban, and Watson (2012) investigated the home literacy practises of a group of Australian parents and their pre-school children. They used a broad definition of literacy which included traditional aspects such as book reading, and non-traditional practices such as reading environmental print and engaging with text through technology. They discovered that most participants engaged recreationally with literacy through each of the modes every day. On interviewing the children of these families, they discovered a positive correlation between the parents' literacy interactions and the children's engagement with literacy.

The international research reviewed in this section is echoed in New Zealand by the findings of Fletcher and colleagues (Fletcher et al., 2010; Fletcher et al., 2009). The researchers initiated discussions with Pasifika families about literacy and found that the families valued a diverse range of skills and attitudes linked to reading including: the development of loving relationships, oral storytelling, recitation, and the sharing of moral, cultural and religious information. In contrast, mainstream literacy practices tend to validate a different set of skills

which prioritised information finding, inference and evaluation. This work is complemented by Dickie (2008) who sought information from Pasifika children aged 11 and 12 regarding literacy activities outside school. Children in this study reported using reading in order to improve gaming performance, to engage with music and fashion, for church and Sunday school activities.

The research studies outlined in this section provide a justification for acknowledging a potentially diverse range of home based literacy practices in the current study. Utilising the existing individual situated literacy practises of a family as a basis for the development of targeted interventions may contribute to children's development in reading.

2.3 Parent Based Reading Support

This section discusses a significant body of international and local research examining parents' roles in the development of their children's reading skills.

Research about parents supporting their children's reading development has been aimed at preventing reading problems from occurring in the future or it can be an attempt to boost lagging skills. The key difference between the two approaches is that preventative programmes generally target children before they start formal learning to read in school whereas remedial programmes are used after children have exhibited some difficulty with initial formal reading instruction (Torgesen, 2004). This section of the literature review focusses on research regarding reading remediation. I have grouped the programmes into three broad categories: efforts to increase the amount of reading done in the home, programmes where parents are given the opportunity to understand school based reading practises, and training programmes where parents carry out the instructions of an expert.

2.3.1 Increasing reading at home

There are a number of programmes reported in the literature which aim to increase the amount of reading carried out at home. These range from simply providing books to children and families to more complex programmes which

aim to explicitly increase certain types of reading behaviours in children and/or parents.

An example of a complex study which aimed to increase reading in the home was conducted by White and Kim (2008). This study was set amidst the research literature which documents the ‘summer slide’ phenomenon where children lose gains in reading made during the school year over the long summer break (McNaughton et al., 2013). All children involved in White and Kim’s study had books sent to their homes during the summer break. Books were matched to the child by reading level and interest. As the children read, they filled in a brief reading log. Prior to the break, some participating children received additional school based instruction in independent reading strategies. During the break, the researchers encouraged and reminded some parents to support their child’s reading at home, whereas other parents did not receive these messages. Comparison of pre and post reading test scores showed that the students who received both explicit in-school instruction and parental encouragement made the most progress in reading during the summer break.

White and Kim’s (2008) study has similar findings to recent New Zealand research carried out by McNaughton and colleagues (McNaughton et al., 2013). McNaughton et al. investigated the results of an intervention designed to prevent summer slide amongst mainly Maori and Pasifika students in low socio-economic schools. They found that students who experienced the least amount of regression in skills were those who had access to texts they were interested in reading over the summer, had received explicit instruction in school prior to the break to develop their personal reading tastes and a discerning attitude towards literature, had parents who actively supported the child’s engagement in reading, and had teachers who canvassed reading activity over the summer at the beginning of the following school year.

One well known initiative in New Zealand is the Duffy Books in Homes project (Duffy Books in Homes) which gifts books to children attending schools in low socio-economic communities. Although aimed at preventing reading failure,

there is some evidence to suggest this programme also has remedial functions. In the most recent evaluation of this programme, Dunn and Croft (2002) found that the programme was highly rated by teachers and principals in terms of providing appropriate books, promoting care and enjoyment of books, and increasing reading at home. These beliefs were congruent with statistically significant positive changes in reading levels amongst the students of participating schools.

It seems logical to believe that having access to books in the home will have a positive impact on reading and, conversely, a lack of access to books in the home will have a negative effect on reading development. However, access to books is only one element of this complex issue. Dolezal-Sams et al. (2009) point out that there is a lack of research into the factors that support and hinder families to engage with text in the home. They hypothesise that a number of influences beyond access to books contribute to print engagement in the home. An assortment of factors is identified in their research including: time constraints, lack of a regular schedule, physical setting, quality of relationship between parent and child, family and household composition, access to community resources, environmental distractions, parent skills, attitudes and inclination. The researchers explored these aspects by conducting observations and interviews in the homes of participants. They found a strong correlation between families that engaged in frequent book reading aloud in the home and those that had a supportive environment.

The studies reviewed in this section appear to point to the conclusion that increasing reading in homes will not be detrimental to a child's developing reading skills. However, they also support the idea that children need more than increased access to print in order to make a significant impact on their reading skills.

2.3.2 *Parents understanding school practices*

The research literature includes a significant amount of material which reports on programmes which aim to increase parental knowledge of school literacy

practises. While specific details may vary, the underlying consistent theme of the programmes is based on the hypothesis that if parents learn about school practices in literacy instruction then they can provide better at-home support in reading to their children. The support is viewed as better because, after training, support will be consistent with school priorities thereby increasing the reading skills needed for school.

In Canada, America and the United Kingdom, programmes known as ‘family literacy’ have been introduced. The key feature described in research of such programmes is that parents attend events at school to learn about school based literacy programmes with the aim of supporting children’s school-based learning at home (Gozali-Lee et al., 2010; Robinson, 2012; St Clair et al., 2012). Auerbach (1989) provides a seminal critique of such programmes, claiming they are based on false assumptions such as poor parents do not have texts in the home; learning should be from parent to child; middle class home practices contribute more to literacy development; school practices are superior to home practices; and some parents hinder learning because they are deficit in relevant skills. Auerbach offers a reshaping of the family literacy approach which is respectful and inclusive of home practices, values and aspirations. This critique has led to the reformulating of some family literacy programmes such as the ones developed by Anderson et al. (2010) and Purcell Gates and colleagues (2012). Anderson et al. (2010) describe a programme in a low socio economic community in Canada where Vietnamese immigrant parents and caregivers had input into the specific topics discussed in sessions, received materials to use at home, had opportunities to talk with other parents, and had their unique home culture recognised across the programme. A programme developed by Purcell-Gates et al. (2012) utilised real life texts such as receipts and coupons (as opposed to school based prescribed reading texts) to develop authentic skills with participants and focussed on two way communication between parent and school. In this manner these researchers attempted to purposefully utilise the affordances of each family’s unique contextualised or situated literacy practices for the further development of children’s learning.

A recent New Zealand initiative in the area of family inclusion in school literacy practices is the Home School Partnership: Literacy (HSPL). This programme was initially designed to involve Pasifika parents more in their child's education, specifically in literacy. HSPL utilised 'lead parents' who were trained to communicate specific messages about literacy to other parents (often in first languages). In carrying out the Ministry of Education's evaluation of the programme, Brooking and Roberts (2007) reported inconclusive results about the effects of the programme on literacy levels of students whose parents participated, due to the difficulty of attributing cause of a positive influence to reading to just this one isolated factor. However, the methodology of the review appears to be limited, given that specific reading information about students' reading skills was not collected before, after or during the intervention. Brooking and Roberts (2007) anticipate long term benefits to literacy learning becoming increasingly visible over time as the impact of greater engagement and positive attitudes are observed.

Despite some benefits, there are also concerns with the programme. Brooking (2007) is critical of the HSPL programme, primarily because it is not collaborative. Information is shared only in one direction, namely, from school to parents. She found that during the programme, schools and teachers tended to prioritise their messages to ensure that parents learned about school procedures and goals but in return did not receive information from parents about home literacy practices, goals or values. This, in effect, perpetuated the inequalities that the programme set out to remove. Brooking compared this process to colonisation and stressed that when schools deny, or at best underestimate, the value of home literacy practises families are discriminated against and deficit views are prioritised.

The research studies reviewed in this section provide a justification for utilising home literacy practices as the basis for an empowering intervention. Although schools may have much to offer regarding literacy learning it appears that children's reading skills do not necessarily improve when parents learn about school based literacy practices.

2.3.3 Parent training programmes

There is a rich and diverse research tradition of inquiry into programmes where parents are trained to provide reading coaching. While the specific methods vary, the approach of training parents to apply particular strategies while listening to their child read is common. This section surveys a range of techniques which have been variously employed in international and New Zealand contexts.

A typical intervention in this field is the work of Cairney and Munsie (1993) who developed a parent training programme in Australia. Cairney and Munsie trained 34 parents during an eight week programme. Parents received training in child development, the acquisition of literacy skills, strategies for helping children learn, and developing self-esteem. A range of pre and post measures were used to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme. Measures included evaluations of children's reading and data from parents regarding strategy use. The researchers found that the programme made a positive impact on children's and parents' skills when compared to a control group.

In a study conducted by McElvany and Ardel (2009) the effectiveness of guided reading was evaluated in home settings in Germany. Guided reading is a technique commonly used in New Zealand schools. It focusses on teaching the skills for decoding and comprehending a given text while children are engaged in reading a text (Ministry of Education, 2003, 2006). In McElvany and Ardel's study, 104 families with 4th grade children were requested to complete up to three reading sessions per week over 14 weeks using books provided by the researchers and following the accompanying teaching notes. Pre and post-test measures were taken and results were compared to a control group of 393 families. The results showed that children in the intervention group made statistically significant gains in vocabulary and reading related metacognitive skills but did not make gains in the speed of decoding, motivation, or comprehension. The researchers concluded that there could be a range of additional factors which impacted these results.

Paired or simultaneous reading aloud is a technique whereby the parent and child initially read aloud together. The child indicates readiness to read alone and does so until an error is made in which case the parent resumes reading aloud. This cycle is repeated for the duration of the reading session. A programme of parent training for simultaneous reading aloud was trialled and evaluated by Cadieux and Boudreault (2005) in Canada. Cadieux and Boudreault selected 54 at risk readers from a single school. The children were randomly assigned to a control or an intervention group. A range of pre-intervention reading assessments was carried out in order to establish a base line of reading skills. Tutors trained the parents to implement the intervention and provided on-going coaching during the intervention. Parents in this study were provided with a series of appropriately levelled books to read with their children. The results showed that the children in the intervention made slight gains in some measures. However, the difference between the control group and the intervention group was not statistically significant. In contrast, research conducted by Howell and Smoot (2008) which is based on Cadieux and Boudreault's (2005) work did show statistically significant results in enhancing reading comprehension amongst the child participants in the study.

Re-reading a text is a strategy commonly used in schools. It is believed to increase both skills and confidence as children repeatedly interact with the same text (Ministry of Education, 2003). Hindin and Paratore (2007) trialled and evaluated the usefulness of this approach in the home settings of eight American children. Parents were requested to listen to their child read the same book supplied by the school at least four times each week. They were given brief instruction about telling the child the word if they made a mistake and requested to audio record each session. This process continued over at least nine weeks. During the intervention, the researchers reported a steady reduction in the number of errors of subsequent readings. When post-intervention test scores were compared with pre-intervention test scores, seven out of the eight children in the study made statistically significant gains in reading performance. The researchers claim that their study appears to support the idea that skills gained

during repeated reading were transferable by the children to other reading situations. Of significance, the children who received the highest levels of support at home during reading made the most progress.

An investigation into the effect of the use of different reading materials for children in a parent training programme was investigated by Powell-Smith and colleagues in America (Powell-Smith et al., 2000). They randomly assigned 29 participants to a literature based group, a basal reader group and a control group. Parents in the intervention groups received comparable training and materials on how to tutor their child in reading and were supplied a range of books. Parents were trained to select a passage of text, to correct a child's error by telling them the word and having the child repeat it and to use praise. During the intervention, the parents received weekly coaching by telephone on using these strategies. The researchers found that children in both active groups made minimally greater gains in reading than the control group but that there was no significant difference between the active groups. The researchers speculate that the small sample, short time frame and differences in follow up reading activity of parents may account for the variance in findings. However, they conclude that the impact of parents on children's reading is overall positive.

Some parent reading training programmes utilise multiple techniques. One example is the American Fast Start programme which combines reading to, repeated reading, simultaneous read aloud and comprehension discussion (Raskinski & Stevenson, 2005). In the programme evaluation conducted by Raskinski and Stevenson, parents were trained to use these techniques then supported to implement them with weekly phone based coaching and packs of books and activities. Pre and post-intervention testing was conducted to compare the active and control groups. The results showed a statistically significant positive impact on the reading skills of children with low skills to begin with but had no impact on children who began the programme with average or above average reading skills. Additionally, parents were surveyed regarding their opinions of the programme. Although all parents regarded the programme

highly, only two thirds of the participants believed it had impacted their child's reading.

Seminal research in the area of parent led reading remediation in New Zealand was carried out by McNaughton (1981) and Biddulph (1983). They both independently created, implemented and evaluated parent training programmes to improve children's reading skills. In their studies, the parents were trained to use a range of strategies to tutor their children in reading. Key content included how to help children when they made an error when reading aloud, how to select books, and how to use praise. Comparisons of pre and post-intervention test results led both researchers to the conclusion that parents can, with support, positively impact the reading of their children. Even though this work is 30 years old, it presents enduring findings which have continued to influence research. In fact, Biddulph's initial research has recently been retitled 'Reading Together' and launched in schools in low socio-economic communities in New Zealand (Bleasdale, 2013). In a Ministry of Education commissioned review, the programme has been found to support gains in reading through parental interactions, promote positive parent and child relationships, and enhance parent and teacher relationships (Tuck, Horgan, Franich, & Wards, 2007).

Research reviewed in this section lends support to the idea that parents can be utilised to support the reading development of their children. However, there are a number of issues that need to be considered.

2.3.4 Critique

Although the programmes reported on above appear to have led to positive outcomes for individuals, there are those who question the underlying assumption that skills based teaching for parents will lead to positive reading outcomes for children. Dolezal-Sams and colleagues (2009) argue that many parent training programmes which are aimed at increasing skills and participation in reading may be inappropriate and ineffective for families with little broader support for reading. Lam and Kwong (2012) identify the field of

parent education as problematic. They state that the goal of parent education is often to impose particular views and practices on parents. In this manner, a narrow range of practices is normalised which often promotes the views of the dominant (school based) culture. Instead of empowering parents, such programmes may have the effect of further marginalising the people they purport to help, promoting a patronising and deficit view of participants and undermining their confidence. In contrast, Lam and Kwong advocate embedding parent education within a more inclusive frame. Thus the goal of parent education programmes is not to have parents conform to one way of behaving but to engender in the parents a sense of agency as a learner on their own terms.

Lam and Kwong trialled the notion of increased parent agency during an action research project which involved parents and parent education professionals. During the project, parent participants generated topics for debate, discussion and reflection. They worked collaboratively to suggest and trial their own solutions. The role of the professional was as group leader who facilitated and supported discussion among the group but did not offer solutions or advice. Feedback from the parent participants showed a lack of satisfaction that the group leader did not take a more assertive teaching role by sharing their professional knowledge. This finding raised a dilemma: while the participants recognised that expert knowledge was not necessarily applicable to their situation, equally they did not like the deliberate withholding of expert knowledge. By not sharing their professional knowledge, the group leaders were just as disempowering for the participants as the programme which marginalised them. Lam and Kwong suggest that a solution to this might be to begin programmes with a process of negotiation between parents and professionals regarding how learning and teaching will occur. However, what they do not consider are the possibilities of a community of practice based on collaborative partnership which values the differing competencies of parents and professionals. Such an approach will be at the forefront of this research.

2.4 Implications

It seems apparent from the literature considered in this chapter, that parents can make a positive difference to the reading development of their children. The current research builds on the positive outcomes achieved for children when parents support reading. However, many of the approaches reported on in this chapter are open to scrutiny for the unintended and potentially disempowering consequences that participants experienced. Although extensive research has been carried out on parents supporting the reading development of their children, no existing research positions parents (their skills, dispositions, values, practices and aspirations regarding reading) as the central figure within an intervention. This gap in the literature provides the rationale for the creation of a new approach to working collaboratively with parents in support of children's reading. This study aimed to ensure that the parent participants and their perspectives were made central during the collaborative process. The methods used to achieve this are explored in the next chapter.

Chapter 3 – Methods

3.1 Introduction

In any research it is important that the research methods are congruent with the research paradigm and the aims of the research (Punch, 2009). This chapter provides a justification for each aspect of the research. The chapter begins with the research questions that shaped the inquiry. It then presents the design of the study. Relevant ethical considerations are discussed in relation to the participants. The chapter then discusses the three guiding principles that shaped the research processes: partnership, recognising and valuing home culture, and utilising a range of reading strategies. The section following reveals how these principles were enacted during the research and discusses the data collection procedures. The final section describes how the data were analysed.

3.2 Research Questions

As this study explored the possibilities of parental reading support which is inclusive of family culture, it was important that the results captured multiple aspects of the research, as this would be more useful in identifying critical factors. Fraser, Richman, Galinsky, and Day (2009) comment that qualitative information from a variety of perspectives provide an important contribution to initial understandings of new programmes. Multifaceted data collection and analysis are also congruent with a socio-cultural approach. In order to understand multiple aspects of the development of collaborative practice with parents and the impact of that community on student's reading skills and attitude, a range of research questions were posed. In any study research questions are of paramount importance as they give the research shape, focus and purpose. They also serve to define the scope of the research (Punch, 2009). Fraenkel and Wallen (2006) assert that research questions must be feasible, clear, significant and ethical. The research questions developed for this study meet these criteria. The research questions are clustered into five groups

pertaining to collaboration, parent actions, reading skills and attitude and the relationship between parent actions and child outcomes.

1. How might a collaborative community of practice develop with parents? The following aspects will be examined to consider their impact on the development of a new community of practice:
 - a. The development of partnership
 - b. The shared development of goals
 - c. The co-construction of coaching strategies
 - d. The use of support and encouragement
 - e. The extent to which participants are active throughout the research
 - f. Commonalities and differences between participants
 - g. Parents' and researcher's reported experience of collaboration

2. How will parents enact reading support strategies when mentoring their child in reading? In particular, the research will focus on the following elements:
 - a. The implementation of coaching strategies
 - b. Parents' reported experience of participation
 - c. Parents' perspective on their child's reading progress during the study

3. What is the impact on children's reading skills when they received parental reading support that was inclusive of family practices? The impact will be measured over time in relation to the following aspects of children's reading:
 - a. strategy use and misuse
 - b. metacognitive awareness
 - c. accuracy of reading
 - d. reading comprehension
 - e. reading level
 - f. fluency and phrasing
 - g. phonological skills

4. What is the impact of parental reading support on children’s attitude towards reading? The impact was evaluated over time in relation to:
 - a. attitude towards academic reading
 - b. attitude towards recreational reading
5. What is the relationship between the actions of the parents who collaborated with the researcher and any changes in reading skills and attitude of children?

3.3 Research Paradigm

The theoretical framework for any research explicitly locates the study within a range of possible viewpoints. It gives the researcher an opportunity to discuss and clarify the set of assumptions which govern the way that “knowledge is studied and interpreted” (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006, p. 2) within the research.

The position that informed this research was an interpretivist stance.

Interpretivist research is guided by the view that reality is subjective (Gray, 2009), viewed as multiple not singular (PlanoClark & Creswell, 2008) and is fluid, not fixed (Walshaw, 2012). Meaning is seen to be constructed by individuals (Gray, 2009) often through the socially mediated tool of language (Myers & Avison, 2002). Therefore, interpretivist research is interested in the social realities of people (Walshaw, 2012) and prioritises understanding the unique experiences of individuals from their perspective (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000). Congruent with an interpretivist stance, this research used inductive approaches to generate theory which emerged from data rather than examining a pre-existing hypothesis (Cohen et al., 2000; Crotty, 1998).

More specifically, in this study, socio cultural theory informed the review of existing research literature, the development and enactment of a collaborative process, data collection and analysis and the discussion of findings. Socio-cultural theory positions human experience as a context bound, socially based phenomenon (Alfred, 2012). Specifically, “the socio cultural lens draws our attention to the ways in which our participants engage in and appropriate

particular practices in order to participate effectively in the community's activities" (Makar & O'Brien, 2013, pp. 112-113). Socio-cultural research is interested in all aspects of the human experience, in particular it allows researchers to focus on a number of social constructions; meaning, practice, community and identity (Wenger, 2009). Accordingly, such research aims to describe, understand and interpret human experience within a socially constructed reality (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006; Walshaw, 2012).

A specific socio-cultural construct which guided this study is was the concept of a community of practice. The term 'community of practice' is found within the field of situated learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Rogoff, 1994, 2003; Wenger, 1998; Wenger, 2009). Situated learning takes the perspective that learning is a social event which occurs within an individual's unique context of experience and participation (Wenger, 2009). Learning is both shaped by and shapes the social context (Wenger, 1998).

A community of practice is defined as a "group of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly" (Wenger, 2006). A community of practice has three hallmarks: a domain, a community, and practice. Domain refers to the content, subject or topic common to the group. Community points to the existence of relationships between individuals which constitute an active membership. Finally, practice means that the members of the community take an active role in a common domain as practitioners (Wenger, 2006). Membership in communities of practice can be both multiple and dynamic. In this research, the parents, the researcher and the children are viewed both as representative members of different individual communities of practice and participants in the creation of a new community of practice.

Although the concept of communities of practice has been widely applied in business settings as a managerial tool it is not exclusively a business tool (Hughes, Jewson, & Unwin, 2007). It can also be viewed as a way to envision learning as socially located and thus broaden the scope of research from the

individual to all engaged in the process (Fuller, 2007). Furthermore, exploring metaphors of learning (Paavola & Hakkarainen, 2005; Sfard, 1998) a community of practice lens enables a view of learning which is less about acquisition and more about participation and knowledge creation. The community of practice stance on learning is congruent with this research. In traditional positivist research, the researcher is positioned as a neutral observer whose role is to report objectively on what was observed (Postholm & Madsen, 2006). However, in this research, partnership between the researcher and participants was central to the process of creating and maintaining new communities of practice, so the researcher as a neutral observer would have been an incongruent stance.

No matter how much you [the researcher] try, you cannot divorce your research and writing from your past experiences, who you are, what you believe, and what you value. Being a clean slate is neither possible nor desirable (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 38).

This research recognised that the role of the researcher was a pivotal factor in the unfolding intervention with each participant. This view is supported by Postholm and Skrovset (2013) who acknowledge that the researcher can have multiple roles with a research project, focussing on both the research processes and on being part of the phenomenon being studied.

As this research occurred within a socio-cultural paradigm, it was important that the research approaches were congruent with this position. The Participatory Intervention Model (PIM) (Nastasi et al., 2000) was chosen because it acknowledges the construction of multiple realities and is supportive of collaboration with participants.

3.4 Research Design

The research design chosen to support this study needed to be congruent with the research paradigm and enable the research questions to be answered. Action research is congruent with the interpretivist paradigm in which this study is located. It is not a positivist approach to research and as such it allows for

individual, multiple and fluid realities (Carr & Kemmis, 1986). Furthermore, action research is congruent with a socio-cultural stance, seeking to understand and embrace the contextual factors surrounding individuals (Chevalier & Buckles, 2013). The exploration of action research methodologies lead to the decision to select a participatory intervention model (PIM) for this research. The section below discusses the evolution of PIM from its origins in action research.

3.4.1 Action Research Models

This research was guided broadly by action research. The term ‘action research’ describes a suite of research approaches which share distinctive common features (Punch, 2009). Action research is a systematic approach to research where iterative cycles of designing, implementing and evaluating are enacted. The aim of action research is to develop contextualised solutions in response to specific circumstances (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). Importantly, through the cyclical or iterative nature of the process, action research recognises that “the learning and the doing inform each other” (Crane & O'Regan, 2010, p. 1). Action research studies are characterised by a high degree of responsiveness because this method does not have a predetermined trajectory (Chevalier & Buckles, 2013). Carr and Kemmis (1986) state that the aim of action research is to, “transform the present to produce a different future.” This approach is depicted in the model below, developed by Crane and O'Regan (2010, p. 7).

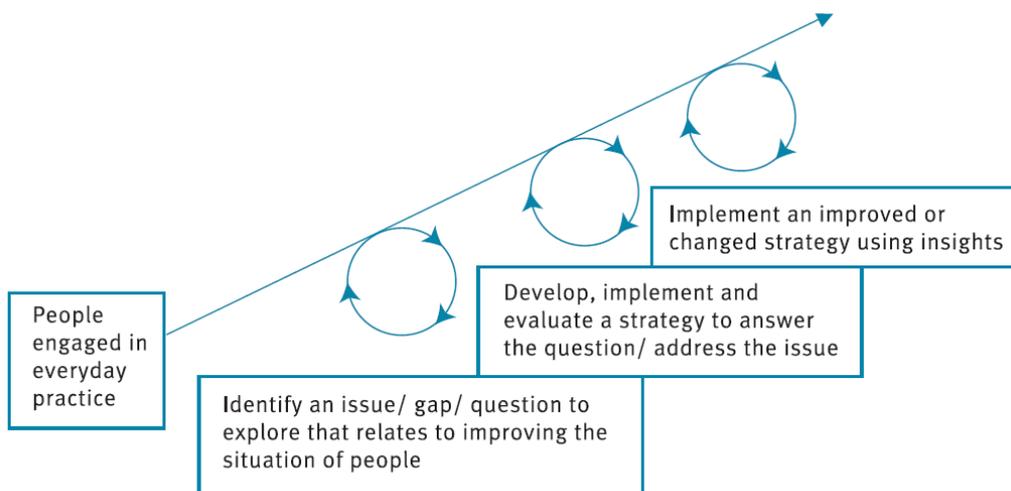


Figure 2: Action Research Cycle.

Action research has spawned many variations. One type of action research of interest to this study is Participatory Action Research (PAR). PAR has been used as a research methodology in numerous fields including, health, psychology, environmental studies and education (Chevalier & Buckles, 2013). Although it can be argued that all action research is, by its nature, participatory (Carr & Kemmis, 1986) the key difference between action research and PAR is that in PAR the participants are positioned as co-researchers (Te Aika & Greenwood, 2009). Buckles and Chevalier (2013) note that this unique perspective allows for strong connections to be made between the academic world of research and the diverse and plural realities of society.

The specific type of participatory action research which shaped this study is the Participatory Intervention Model (PIM). It is worthwhile noting that the Participatory Intervention Model differs significantly from the scientific or empirical model of an intervention study. A scientific or traditional intervention study is characterised by an experimental methodology (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006) which involves the manipulation of variables and hypothesis testing (Suter, 2012). In contrast, the term intervention is used in this research to mean “developing and implementing an action strategy” (Fraser et al., 2009, p. 3). Thus, this research is the study of an intervention, not an intervention study.

The Participatory Intervention Model (PIM) is a form of action research which, “provides a mechanism for integrating theory, research and practice and for promoting the involvement of stakeholders in the intervention efforts.” (Nastasi et al., 2000, p. 207). Like all forms of action research, the model has three distinct phases, designing the intervention, implementing the intervention and evaluating effectiveness (Nastasi et al., 2000). Each of the phases was carried out in a collaborative, iterative manner. A further important element of PIM is the capability of the intervention to be responsive to the multiple aspects of the setting (Nastasi et al., 2000). This enabled the theory and research to be contextualised for the individual needs and understandings of each participant. It also allowed for structured reflection and adaptation to occur in response to the participants. PIM was therefore an appropriate model for this research as it

is congruent with a socio-cultural paradigm, supportive of qualitative methods, links theory and practice and allows for a flexible and responsive approach to integrate new approaches in learning in authentic contexts.

The use of PIM demanded the development of collaborative partnerships between the participants and the researcher in order to enact the research through the creation, evaluation, and reflection of each intervention. This necessitated the researcher taking two roles within the research. One role was to partner the participants in their specific evolving interventions (this aspect is detailed in a section 3.6.1). The other was to lead the research processes as explored further in this chapter.

3.5 Ethics

When conducting research with human participants there are always ethical matters to be considered. I have selected for discussion the key ethical issues in relation to the Massey University Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching and Evaluations Involving Human Participants (Massey University), which relate to this study. Notification of the study was lodged with Massey University Ethics committee. Appendix One contains a copy of the notification.

3.5.1 Recruitment, informed consent and right to withdraw

The participants in this study were recruited through a primary school. The school was situated in a high socio-economic suburb in a large city. I met with the principal to outline the research project and answer any questions. She agreed to support the research. A school contact person was appointed who managed all interactions with the school community to avoid perceptions of coercion from the researcher. Teachers at the school were asked to nominate children from their classrooms who fitted the selection criteria (described below) and pass this information to the school contact person. The contact person then sent each child's family an information sheet, an invitation to participate in the research and a dual consent form to ensure that both parent and child could give informed consent (see appendix 2).

The information sheet communicated clearly the aim of the study and the expected roles and commitments of the parent, child and researcher. It was clearly explained that participation was required from both parent and child for the intervention to be enacted. The information sheet outlined how the data generated during the research would be used and disseminated and assured participants that their participation would be anonymous. Participants were provided with contact details so they could communicate with the researcher about the study to aid in their decision to participate or not. Each family was informed of their right to withdraw at any time during the study. Every parent and child who chose to participate in the study returned a signed consent form.

3.5.2 Research with children

Research projects which include children bring about unique challenges. Punch (2009) asserts that children have differing competencies, power and vulnerability from adults. Consequently, the contribution of children to research needs to be carefully considered and sensitively managed.

In the research community there is debate about whether parents should give consent for children or whether the children themselves should consent to participate in research (Balen et al., 2006). Some researchers (Balen et al., 2006; Coyne, 2010) comment that children have the right to be viewed as having agency in their own lives. Balen and colleagues (Balen et al., 2006) state that obtaining informed consent from children can be problematic. They explain that children may make decisions without full awareness of the implications of consent.

In this study, I chose that parents and children would jointly consent to participate. In this manner specific ethical considerations regarding the children's participation were overseen by their parent(s) and supported by the design of the intervention. However, this potentially created a new range of ethical dilemmas. Coyne (2010) alerts readers to a number of potential issues that conjoint parent-child consent may pose including informed consent, coercion, and unequal power relationships. Balen et al. (2006) asserts that

parents may not be in a position to fully evaluate the requirements of the research when consenting on behalf of their children.

In this research ethical concerns regarding participation were minimised in the following ways. Steps were taken to ensure that consent was fully informed. All potential participants received the information sheet which contained clear information about the study and requested that the parent discuss the project with their child. Contact information for the researcher was made available so that parent and/or child could ask questions of the researcher. In order to participate, both the parent and the child needed to sign a consent form. At the initial meeting with all participants the researcher discussed the study and again invited questions prior to proceeding. At each research session (whether the researcher was collecting data from children, parents or both parties) the specific details of the data gathering were explained and the person was asked to give verbal consent for each process prior to the data gathering. This process is consistent with the protocol suggested by Yee and Andrews (2006) who argue that children should be offered the opportunity to consent, even if their parents consented on their behalf. They also found that children would communicate their desire not to participate in aspects of research even if parental consent had been sought and given.

Coyne believes that in some circumstances parents may (for seemingly good reasons) persuade or coerce a child to participate or continue participating in research. There may also be circumstances where children aim to coerce their parents into participating in research. However, the first situation seems more likely given the potential unequal power relation between child and adults (Balen et al., 2006). In this study, the threat of coercion was actively managed by the researcher who consistently encouraged the parents to use a non-coercive approach with their child. Parents were supported to view and enact reading as an enjoyable joint activity to do alongside their child rather than an activity which required overt control and coercion.

3.5.3 Privacy, anonymity and confidentiality

Data generated in the course of the intervention were kept in a secure locked cabinet in the researchers' office or on a password protected computer. All steps were taken to ensure the data remained confidential to the individual participant, the researcher and the supervisors. In this thesis, no identifying information is revealed about the school that supported this research. Individual participant's anonymity was protected by the removal of personal identifying information and the allocation of pseudonyms. This undertaking was consistent throughout the thesis and will be maintained in any subsequent publications.

3.6 Participants

The research was conducted with four parents. Each parent had one child who also chose to be part of the intervention. This number of participants was selected in response to an invitation to participate. All who accepted the invitation were selected for the research. Both parents in each family could have participated, however they each independently selected one parent to participate which resulted in the participants being three mothers and one father. In keeping with a sociocultural research paradigm and participatory intervention methodology, where understanding the context of each participant is important, the group was appropriately small. Furthermore, a relatively small number of participants allowed for data collection from multiple sources and the development of greater depth of understanding of possible influential factors as is appropriate for an initial intervention. The parents who participated in the study were all fluent speakers of English and able to read. This was necessary to enable their full participation in the intervention and so they could coach their child in reading.

The children whose parents were nominated for the study were aged 8 to 10 at the beginning of the study. All attended the same primary school, but were all in different classrooms. The children were all confident speakers of English, and had not been diagnosed with any specific learning disability. This requirement

sought to limit the number of extraneous variables available for analysis in this initial investigation. At the beginning of the study each child was identified by the school as reading at least one year below their chronological age. Given the age of the children, a difference of one year between reading age and chronological age was significant. The upper age limit of 10 was selected as the likely maximum age of children in a primary school at the beginning of the school year. The children were selected jointly by the school and the researcher.

3.7 Principles of the Research

This section of the methods chapter outlines three key principles that guided the implementation of the intervention. Each of the principles is congruent with the overarching research paradigm of a sociocultural approach as they recognise the broad social structures that this research took place within. The principles of partnership, valuing and supporting home culture and using a range of reading strategies to support readers were developed in response to gaps identified in the literature outlined in the previous chapter.

3.7.1 Partnership

A sociocultural approach to research, “requires a mutual standpoint, researcher to participant, human being to human being” (Eide & Kahn, 2008, p. 199). This is in contrast to a much traditional research which positions the participant as an object to be studied. Consequently, in this research, participants were not objectified but engaged in partnership with the researcher (Makar & O'Brien, 2013; Postholm & Skrovset, 2013). Participants and researcher are partners; both engaged in a new community of practice.

In much qualitative research, the relationship between the researcher and the participants has an impact on the success of the study (Pitts & Miller-Day, 2007). This statement is particularly relevant to the current study as building partnership and a community of practice was central to this research project. Gerson and Horowitz (2002) state: “To enter a world in which one is not naturally a part, a researcher needs to present an identity that permits

relationships to develop.” (p. 212). Accordingly, I strove to develop collaborative and trusting relationships which were respectful of the unique characteristics of each participant and their family. These values draw from the principles espoused by Damico and Armstrong, cited in Duchan (2014) which are described as central to the development of a productive research partnership.

Pitts and Miller-Day (2007) report on the limited research literature which explores how researchers develop the necessary trusting relationships with participants. They interviewed a group of qualitative researchers to discover how they had established and continued to develop productive relationships with participants. They suggest five stages in the development of a partnership based research relationship; gaining entry, recognising mutual benefits, recognition of individuality, interpersonal connection, and finally platonic intimacy or partnership. Their findings also suggest that in the initial stages reducing participant uncertainty was paramount. Additionally, interpersonal skills such as “smiling, nodding, engaging in eye contact” (p. 188) and verbally explaining appeared important. Makar and O’Brien (2013) agree that interpersonal skills are vital to the development of relationships.

In order to facilitate a productive research relationship, trust had to be established as

I was entering into the participants’ homes and lives. One way of establishing trust is to build rapport with the participants. Fraenkel and Wallen (2006) have guidelines for building rapport with participants that I followed. These included being non-judgemental, building trust by being reliable, being transparent in interactions. At all times the participants were treated with respect, as recommended by Bogdan and Biklen (2007).

Partnership is logically not just about the participants but must acknowledge the researcher as the other person in each partnership. This view is congruent with a socio-cultural research frame, where it is important to acknowledge my background as researcher in relation to the research (Cresswell, 2002; Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006).

The vehicle for building partnership was communication. As a researcher, my ability to form mutually beneficial, respectful relationships with the participants through dialogue was essential. Rogoff (1994) writes that communication which acknowledges differing perspectives as valid and legitimate is imperative to the construction of shared understandings. Furthermore, communication in this manner is congruent with a socio-cultural paradigm. To be an effective partner of the participants in the unfolding intervention Postholm and Skrovset (2013) identify four areas of necessary competency: social, communicative, pedagogical and academic. These are highly relevant to this research project. In respect to social skills, I endeavoured to implement a range of effective interpersonal skills. For example, I recognised the need to communicate clearly and to be a receptive listener. I used a range of research and pedagogical skills and knowledge to support the participants in their endeavours.

This research attempted to understand and form bridges between different communities of practice and to create a new community of practice. Rogoff (1994) uses the terms ‘insider’ and ‘outsider’ to explore the dynamics and challenges of such a situation. In this research there were opportunities for both the researcher and the participant to utilise their knowledge, skills and dispositions as insiders in their own communities of practice and bring this to bear upon the creation of a new joint or shared community of practice. It was also likely that both the participants and the researcher took on the role of outsider in relation to each other’s existing community. In this manner, both may have experienced a variety of challenges as they attempted to understand the other’s perspective.

3.7.2 Valuing and supporting home culture

The current research aimed to empower participants by engaging proactively and collaboratively with parents. It built on existing family practices, structures and values to enhance the reading of the children in the family. This is similar to the aim of the Parent Mentoring Initiative described by Gorinski (2005) which endeavoured to establish a productive relationship between the parent and

school so both parties could have an enhanced positive impact on a child's achievement. In this research, this principle was applied to the relationship between the participant and researcher.

Shared, family based, situated literacy practices are recognised to contribute to children's literacy development (McNaughton, 1995; Souto-Manning, 2010). In the home, parents have a unique role to play in the construction of learning (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) as they provide a particular social context for the learning to occur within. This has particular relevance for reading because children's reading does not develop in isolation but through interaction with others (Rhyner et al., 2009; Woolfolk, 1998). One factor which may contribute to the success of programmes where parents and children read together at home is that the parent and child share the same contextually situated practices. Paulo Freire has as his central tenet: that 'reading the word' and 'reading the world' cannot be separated (Freire, 1970). This means that literacy practices cannot be separated from the cultural practices that they are embedded within. Given that parent and child share the same home culture, parents may be well placed to successfully mediate between the child and the text in a reading situation.

To ensure the unique culture of each family unit was valued and understood I met separately with each family. Initial meetings with parents were at a venue and time of their choosing – this was done to minimise stress for parents, make participation easy and to ensure the parents were comfortable and relaxed. I chose to situate this research away from a school setting as many parents find engaging with schools to be a source of stress (Bull et al., 2008; Coco et al., 2007; Education Review Office, 2008c; Feiler et al., 2008; Ji & Koblinsky, 2009; Lopez & Donovan, 2009; Patrikakou et al., 2005; Risko & Walker-Dalhouse, 2009; Turney & Kao, 2009). I also wanted to distance this intervention from the potentially automatic literacy constructs of schools to allow parents to voice and have acknowledged and validated, their individual perspectives on literacy. Parents often hold views which are different to schools regarding literacy, in particular their values, uses for literacy and aspirations in literacy learning for their children

(Fletcher et al., 2010; Fletcher et al., 2009; Lynch, Anderson, Anderson, & Shapiro, 2006; Miano, 2011; Morrow & Young, 1997a).

3.7.3 Accessing Reading Strategies

As well as being responsive to family culture, this intervention was designed to give parents access to a range of research based strategies to further the reading development of their children. Congruent with principles of a balanced view of literacy, assessment of individuals guided the selection of particular learning foci for individuals. The development and implementation of strategies by parents were individually designed with each participant to be congruent with their family practices. Accordingly, I planned for a range of potential needs and strengths based on the recommendations of the National Reading Panel (2000), Anderson (2009), Scarborough (2001) and Tompkins (2014). Specific strategies included, phonics skills, other decoding strategies, comprehension strategies, vocabulary development, knowledge of language structures, automatic word recognition, fluency, the selection of reading material, and increasing enjoyment of reading. Explicit teaching from this range of skills has been shown to improve reading outcomes for those struggling to learn to read (Gerston et al., 2014).

3.8 Data Collection

In this study, data were collected for two purposes; first, to facilitate personalisation of the intervention, second, to enable the intervention to be examined. It was important that ways of gathering data were congruent with the research paradigm and design. Furthermore, the data collected needed to enable the research questions to be answered. Given that this research is guided by a sociocultural paradigm, it followed logically that data collection must be respectful of participants, offer opportunities for co-construction and contribute to answering the research questions. Considering the prominence of collaboration within the research, data collection procedures were also collaborative and embedded in the intervention. The collection of data, as outlined in this chapter, meets these aims.

3.8.1 Unit of analysis

In this research project there were four studies, each comprising one parent and their child who was struggling to learn to read. In a research design where multiple studies exist, such as the current study, the focus is both individual and comparative (Punch, 2009) allowing analysis to focus on both commonalities and differences (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013). Although the studies are likely to be highly individualised through context, insights may be gained which inform possible further research (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). Interestingly, the findings of multiple studies are often viewed as more persuasive (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006).

3.9 The Intervention

In this study, an intervention is defined as “developing and implementing an action strategy” (Fraser et al., 2009, p. 3). This section describes the particulars of the specific intervention that was developed for the purposes of this research.

In the current study, partnership with parents was facilitated through a planned series of interactions. The intervention consisted of the following key phases: engagement, assessment, goal setting, coaching and review cycles, re-assessment and evaluation. At each stage of the research, care was exercised to ensure a partnership was developed between the researcher and the parents. The process is depicted in the diagram on the following page. Each phase of the intervention and the relevant data collection is described in more detail following the diagram.

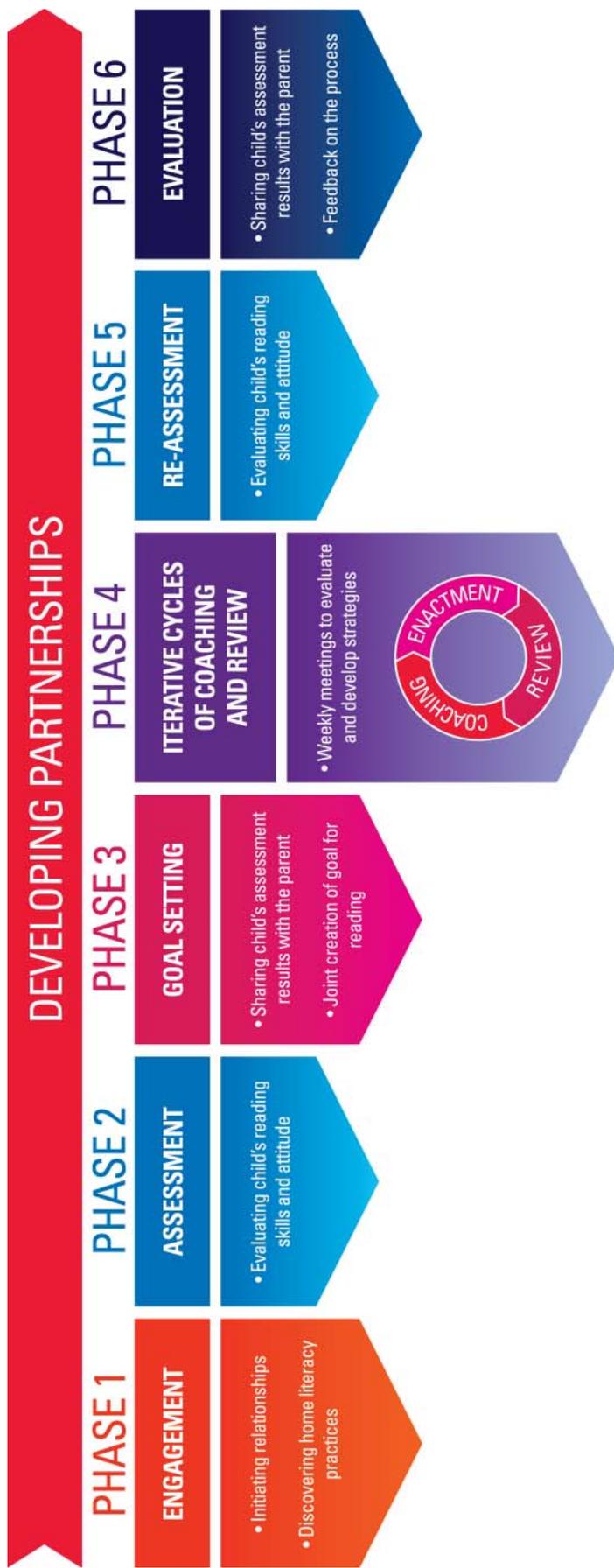


Figure 3: Overview of the Research

3.9.1 Phase One: Engagement

The purpose of the first phase was to promote engagement in the study and to begin to build a relationship between myself and each participant as a foundation for future empowerment and collaboration. Additionally, as the researcher and partner in the relationship with each parent I needed to begin to discover and understand each home environment, in particular the family's literacy practices and beliefs.

Throughout the intervention, data were gathered to build a picture of collaboration between researcher and participant. The dataset enabled the researcher to address research question 1 which enquired into the enactment of partnership. As collaboration occurred during the interactions between researcher and participant, each session was audio recorded (the participant's permission was requested at each meeting). Audio recordings were augmented by researcher notes taken during and after meetings with parents. These methods were chosen as they allowed the researcher to capture rich data and were less obtrusive than video data (Schensul, LeCompte, Nastasi, & Borgatti, 1999).

In order to facilitate the development of productive relationships with each participant I actively engaged in a number of strategies at all meetings with participants. As much as possible, I endeavoured to make the meeting times and locations suit the participants, where possible I fitted in with their schedules. I strove to keep agreements I made with participants, such as being on time, and remembering to follow up on any agreement I made for example, bringing anything I'd previously promised. The act of keeping agreements served to build trust between the participant and myself. I endeavoured to engage in active conversation "being authentically present" (Eide & Kahn, 2008, p. 203). I consciously utilised a range of interpersonal strategies to build a relationship with the participants. These included: positive and encouraging facial expressions and gestures, questioning to clarify my understanding and to elicit further information and encourage conversation while staying on the key topic,

demonstrating understanding and acceptance of the participant's points of view, summarising, checking for agreement, acknowledging success and building self-efficacy.

A further key communication strategy I employed was empathy. Empathy has a commonly understood meaning: to demonstrate understanding of the point of view of another person. A more scholarly definition is provided by Candlin and Roger (2013) who state that empathy has two key components, cognitive and affective. They elaborate to describe the cognitive element of empathy as an intellectual understanding of another's perspective and the affective element as the ability to recognise and respond to the other person's emotional state.

I developed and used a conversation protocol (see appendix 3) to ensure a consistent approach with each family. I began each meeting by thanking the parents for agreeing to participate and going over important aspects of the ethics of the study which had been outlined in the information sheet. Salazar (2012) notes that communication is the cornerstone of effective collaboration; accordingly I endeavoured to establish a conversation between myself as researcher and the participant. I invited parents to ask questions and/or comment at any stage of the meeting so that bi-directional communication occurred. In order to facilitate a partnership where the participant's needs were understood and prioritised I strove to engage in empathetic communication as empathy can be viewed as demonstration of affiliation (Candlin & Roger, 2013). Empathy enabled the participants and the researcher to create shared understandings in relation to the research (Lee & Hudson, 2011).

After introducing myself, I spoke briefly about my background as a teacher, reading tutor, university lecturer and researcher. I did this to provide the parents with a context for the research and to establish a foundation for trust. I wanted to demonstrate Postholm and Skrovset's (2013) four areas of competency: social, communicative, pedagogical and academic so that parents understood that I had credibility in regard to research by establishing a level of professional and experiential knowledge. Having acknowledged my expertise I then

acknowledged the parents as having equal but differing expertise. I acknowledged that the parents were experts in their home and family and their child. This part of the conversation was built around recognition of existing communities of practice (Wenger, 1998). In this manner I endeavoured to build a trusting and collaborative platform for the research which acknowledged the unique contribution of each person's community of practice as being essential in the development of a new community of practice.

Once a basis of relatedness had been established I then moved on to learning about the parent's views, practices and beliefs regarding reading. Each parent engaged in a conversation about their recollections of their child learning to read, their family practices regarding literacy (considered widely), their child's attitude to reading, and any other factors they considered relevant to the development of their child's reading. My role during this time was to reveal as much information as I could about the child, the family and their environment as it related to reading. This data set supported the implementation of the intervention. In order to work within each family's beliefs about literacy it was essential to first identify them. This approach is validated by the international research findings of Lynch and colleagues (2006), Miano (2011), and Morrow and Young (1997a) Purcell-Gates and colleagues (2003; Purcell-Gates, 1996) and in New Zealand by Fletcher and colleagues (Fletcher et al., 2010; 2009), all of whom agree that families are likely to have unique views about literacy. Ultimately, this information would allow strategies to be developed which are based in the learner's everyday practices thus overcoming the potential disconnect between schools and learners as identified by Kumpulainen and Lipponen (2012).

I concluded each family meeting by outlining the assessment procedures I would undertake with their child and reconfirming permission to do so. I negotiated the time and place of the next meeting and outlined a suggested agenda of sharing the results of the assessments.

3.9.2 Phase Two: Assessment

The second phase of the programme was to assess each child's reading skills and attitude. The purpose of this assessment was diagnostic which enabled actions to be personalised for each child in response to their strengths and needs. In the context of assessing young children's early language skills, Anderson et al. (2013) make the point that standardised tests only measure standard English usage. Consequently a range of specific and contextually appropriate but non-standard uses of language may not be accurately assessed. The same could be said of many standardised reading tests; that they do not measure a full range of skills in a multitude of reading situations. Anderson et al. (2013) offer a partial solution to this dilemma by suggesting that observation and parental assessment are valid forms of assessment. Consequently, part of the assessment undertaken with each child was a running record, which is a standardised observation of reading (though in a limited context) and parent views of their child's reading were sought and included. Additional tools used for reading assessments included a reading attitude survey, and a phonological skills assessment. Each assessment task is described and justified below.

I sought each parent's permission to undertake a range of assessment tasks with their child. Each task was outlined with the parent an agreement made regarding the time and location for the assessment. Assent was sought from each child prior to completing each task. The data collected during the assessment phase contributed to the design of each individual intervention. Assessments of each child also contributed to the detailed picture of the impact of the intervention for each family.

3.9.2.1 Reading Skills

Measures of the reading skills of the children were gathered prior to the intervention and immediately following the intervention. This information enabled research question 2.1 to be answered and it provided descriptive information to guide each intervention. Specific data were collected on the children's reading level, comprehension skills, phonological skills and strategy

use. One criticism of research into parent based reading interventions is that the reported results often omit measures of reading achievement and instead rely only on parental opinions to measure success (or lack of) (Ellis, 1996). While parental opinion was highly valued within this study, the collection and analysis of a range of data regarding reading skills contributed to the results of this study.

Reading skills were measured with individual running records (Clay, 1985; Clay, 2000) taken from the PM Benchmark Kit (Nelley & Smith, 2002). Running records are a form of Informal Reading Inventory. They were chosen as they are a comprehensive instrument that allows for measurement, analysis and diagnosis in authentic aspects of reading including appropriate level, word accuracy, errors, self-corrections, fluency, strategy use, miscue analysis and comprehension (Farrall, 2012). The results from this tool can be used to inform the development of specifically tailored reading teaching plans for individuals (Fawson, Ludlow, Reutzel, Sudweeks, & Smith, 2006; Paris, 2002; Provost, Lambert, & Babkie, 2010). The running records were administered by the researcher to increase consistency as this has been an issue reported in literature (Farrall, 2012; Fawson et al., 2006; Nilsson, 2013). They also allowed the researcher to become increasingly aware of the children's behaviour in response to the task. For example, paying heed to the nuances of body language added to a complex picture of an individual's response to reading. Interpretations of behaviour were then used to inform the development of strategies for individuals. Each test was recorded (with the child's permission) so that notes taken during the test and the scoring of the running record could be checked for accuracy. To minimise bias in the scoring of the running records 20% of the recordings (chosen at random) were externally validated by a suitably qualified and experienced person who listened to the recording and checked the scoring.

The PM benchmark kit was chosen for a variety of reasons. The kit is a New Zealand based resource and as such is likely to be culturally appropriate. Although not standardised it has been extensively trialled in New Zealand thereby increasing validity (Ministry of Education, 2010b). Most children in New Zealand are familiar with running records having experienced this type of

assessment as an integral part of their classroom programme. Children's familiarity with the tool should lead to reliable measurements of reading skills as the results will not be distorted by the child experiencing stress over a new assessment method. Finally, running records are frequently used as a measure of reading skills in a variety of research (Commare & Sedlack, 2003; Compton et al., 2010; Elsea, 2001; Guerrero, 2003; Hollingsworth, Sherman, & Zaugra, 2007; Lipsey, 2010).

While the running record provided some information on each individual's phonological skills, it was not a comprehensive measure in this area. In order to provide fuller information, children's phonetic skills were assessed using a spelling inventory from the 'Words Their Way' programme (Bear et al., 2004). This tool was chosen as it provides specific, diagnostic information on an individual's ability to use phonemic information which can be matched to a developmental scale. There are strong links between an individual's ability to manipulate letters to make words and their ability to read (Bear, Invernizzi, Templeton, & Johnston, 2012; Nicholson, 2005). There are varied ways of assessing phonics knowledge, including reading and spelling unknown words and pseudowords (Duff, Silvana, Bailey, & Snowling, 2015). The Words their Way spelling inventory was chosen because it requires participants to spell real words therefore it was likely to be a familiar type of assessment for the children and consequently less threatening. Additionally the format of the inventory allows for the individual words to be said, contextualised in a sentence and then repeated (Bear et al., 2012). When repeated in a sentence the word can be specifically contextualised for the child within their likely scope of experience which enhances the relevance of the test within a socio-cultural research paradigm.

3.9.2.2 Attitude toward reading

Data were gathered regarding each child's attitude toward reading prior to and after the intervention. This dataset informed a response to research question 2.2 which inquired into attitudinal change during the intervention. This data also

contributed to each intervention. Changes in reading attitude during the assessment period represent one aspect of the impact of the intervention.

Reading attitude was measured with a survey instrument called the Garfield Scale (McKenna & Kear, 1990). The Garfield scale was developed to assist teachers to measure children's attitudes to both recreational and academic reading. Although over 25 years old, this tool is still used in current research in a variety of contexts, for example DeNaeghel, VanKeer, Vansteenkiste, and Rosseel (2012); Janiak (2003); McKenna, Conradi, Lawrence, Jang, and Meyer (2012); Ozturk, Hill, and Yates (2015). The Garfield scale was chosen for several reasons. First, one of the stated specific purposes of the tool is to measure attitudinal impact before and after an intervention. Second, the authors of the scale assert that it is appropriate for children aged between 6 and 11. Third, the scale was normed using a large scale trial in the USA and it has been found to be valid and reliable. Fourth, the scale specifically looks at academic or school-based reading and at recreational reading. Given that the reading coaching was designed to take place in a home environment, the instrument allowed the researcher to see if any attitudinal change that occurred in the home was also apparent in the classroom or vice versa. Finally, a pictorial scale is more likely to appeal to struggling readers than a word based scale. For struggling readers, negotiating pictures instead of text should be easier and therefore lead to more accurate results.

Participants completed the inventory by responding to 20 items and choosing one of four images of Garfield which best matched their opinion for each item thus completing a Likert scale. This tool was administered to all children in the study. The scale was administered according to McKenna and Kear's (1990) directions with the small alterations outlined below.

There were two minor problems with the Garfield scale that needed to be overcome. First, the cartoon character which represents stages on the Likert scale is Garfield the cat. This was a popular contemporary cartoon at the time the scale was developed but may not be as familiar to children today. To lessen

the effect of this, the scale was introduced by focussing discussion on Garfield's body language and facial expression with more emphasis than is suggested in the administration instructions for the scale. Second, the word 'vacation' is used in the scale. This Americanism was verbally equated with the word 'holiday' which is in more common usage in New Zealand.

3.9.2.3 Parents' views of child reading

Before and after the intervention, data were gathered from the parents regarding their opinions of their child's reading habits, skills and attitudes. This process enabled the researcher to address research question 3.1 and contributed to the answering of question 2j. Parents' views of their child's reading were ascertained from a questionnaire based on the tool developed by Frank (2001). This specific survey was chosen as there is a strong link between the items for parents and the Garfield scale that children will be using. It allowed for triangulation between these sources of data, thus increasing validity (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006).

3.9.3 Phase Three: Goal Setting

After completing the assessment tasks, I met with each parent to share and demystify the information generated. I aimed to ensure that each parent understood both the assessment task and the results it produced when used with their child. I initiated a conversation about the assessment and asked parents to comment on both the tasks and the results. I also ensured parents had the opportunity to validate or question the results. The focus of the sharing was on what the child could do consistently and what it appeared they could sometimes do. This strengths - based approach serves to avoid positioning the child (and by implication, the family) as deficit (Rodger, O'Keefe, Cook, & Jones, 2012).

Once a shared understanding of the child as a reader was established, the second step of this phase was to develop a shared goal for the child's reading. This approach is congruent with current best practice models as described by

Rodger and colleagues (2012) and Topping (2000). Shared goal setting allowed the parent to set a unique and personalised direction for the research which was informed by current assessment data. It also prioritised the “family’s existing capacities, inherent strengths, practices of living, family care and environmental contexts in order to facilitate change that is relevant and significant to the individual family” (Rodger et al., p. 360). Locke and Latham (2002) found that goal setting contributes towards positive outcomes in four ways: goals direct behaviour, increase efforts in a particular arena, increase persistence and time spent on a task and they lead to action. By developing a shared goal I intended to both increase the likelihood of a positive outcome and be respectful and inclusive of each family and their unique culture. I also aimed to establish a new community of practice founded on taking action towards accomplishing common understandings and goals.

3.9.4 Phase Four: Coaching and Review Cycles

In order to continue to work in partnership with the parents I adopted a coaching model. Coaching is a concept most often aligned with sporting endeavours. Many will be familiar with the role of a sports coach who provides support and guidance to achieve a goal, develop skills or improve performance, and who provides feedback and inspiration to an individual or team. Coaching, as a strategy for enhancing improvement, has been adopted by other fields beyond the sporting arena such as business (Ellinger, 2003; Neenan & Palmer, 2012; Rush, Shelden, & Hanft, 2003), personal development (McGoldrick & Carter, 2001; Neenan & Palmer, 2012) and education (Joyce & Showers, 1982; Joyce & Showers, 1981; Robertson, 2005; Showers, 1985; Showers & Joyce, 1996). In any context, coaching can be defined as an effort to “improve performance within a specific context” (Rush et al., 2003, p. 37) or as an “outcome based, future orientated strategy for facilitating accomplishment” (Wald, 1991, p. 15).

Phase four of the intervention occurred as the parents and I engaged in iterative cycles of coaching. Coaching was guided by the goals established in phase three

and by the reflective feedback provided by the parents as they engaged in reading with their child. My role as a coach was to empower, encourage and guide the parents to work more effectively with their children. I shared ways to develop reading skills which were supported by literature and guided the parents to understand the implications for them and their child and to develop strategies of enactment in ways which were congruent with their family setting. Working in ways that complement family culture is recognised as beneficial (Duchan, 2014). I acknowledged the parents' actions, thinking and their developing skills. The parents' role during coaching sessions was to reflect on progress, co-construct strategies, critique suggestions and subsequently to enact the strategies to support their child to develop as a reader.

One of the problems with a traditional coaching model is the perceived power imbalance between coach and coached. Sabock and Sabock (2011) explain that when the coach is viewed as having superior knowledge or skills, the person being coached may be placed in a submissive role and their skills and knowledge are viewed as inferior or deficit which is unproductive. Ellinger (2003) studied the enactment of coaching strategies within a business environment. She interviewed 12 managers who were recommended as expert coaches of staff to discover the antecedents, procedures and outcomes of specific coaching interventions. The data from interviews were then analysed to find similarities. One significant finding was that coaches viewed their acts of coaching as a tool to achieve improved outcomes. Even when the coaching was provided to address a perceived gap in skills or knowledge, successful coaching did not position the recipient as deficit but rather it sought to enhance existing knowledge and skills and therefore did not promote a deficit view of the person being coached.

Contemporary views of coaching demand the enactment of collaborative relationships where the coach does not use power to exert influence. The word 'collaboration' has a popularly understood meaning; to work together to achieve a common aim (O'Malley, 1991). It is further defined by Idol and colleagues (Idol et al., 1994) as a process whereby people with differing expertise each

contribute to the production of a new solution. In alignment with Rogoff and colleagues' (2001) work on developing communities of practice, this research sought to utilise the contributions of both parents and researcher in developing strategies.

Bryan and Henry (2012) discuss collaboration in the context of school counsellors working with families. They claim that there is little published material that describes how to achieve collaboration. From their survey of literature they develop a seven step plan which prescribes how a professional might initiate, sustain and develop a collaborative relationship. They list the steps as: preparation, assessment, meeting, developing shared goals, taking action, and celebrating success. Unfortunately they do not include a trial and evaluation of the processes they advocate and it does not appear to be reported on elsewhere.

The process of achieving collaboration recommended by Bryan and Henry is similar to that which is advocated in the New Zealand Ministry of Education booklet on Individual Education Plans (Ministry of Education, 2011). The procedures recommended in this document are informed by a review of research literature (Mitchell, Morton, & Hornby, 2010). The review considered 199 documents, including published research, government documents and web based materials. In the chapter on collaboration, Mitchell and colleagues note that achieving collaboration can be problematic due to a number of factors: administrative demands, lack of a clear purpose, logistical barriers, social and cultural barriers, unrealistic or inappropriate goal setting, inadequate consultation and lack of training and communication. Despite problematizing this area, this booklet does not appear to offer evidence of successful collaborative practices.

Robertson's (2005) book on coaching is based on her academic research using coaching as a professional development tool in the context of school leadership. She advocates a partnership model of coaching. A unique aspect of Robertson's

work is that she makes explicit that coaching must be not only supportive and encouraging but it must also include challenge for this is the vehicle by which practice is changed and subsequent improvement occurs. Robertson also discusses some other hallmarks of a coaching relationship which include validation and the understanding of theory to inform practice. She recognises that coaching is a dynamic process which takes time to develop and must be responsive to changing circumstances.

To enable this intervention to be continuously responsive to each of the participants' unique circumstances, I sought feedback at each coaching session regarding the actions that each parent had taken following the previous coaching session. This was so that future approaches could be tailored to meet emerging needs and strengths. Rogoff (2001) argues that a community of practice is not a static entity, rather its members drive a process of evolution in response to change and learning while at the same time maintaining core values. I strove to develop what Lee and Hudson (2011) call a 'side by side' perspective where the process of collaborative coaching was authentic and transparent, not prescribed but naturally unfolding. In this manner a new community of practice was created.

Following each parent/researcher coaching session, it was expected that the parents would carry out the agreed upon strategies to support their child's reading development. In this manner, the parents would tutor their child in reading. Tutoring is defined in a UNESCO publication (Topping, 2000) as a process whereby a non-professional person supports the learning of another in an "interactive, purposeful and systematic way" (Topping, 2000, p. 6). Tutoring is identified in the literature as an effective way of raising achievement (Topping, 2000).

During the research, I planned that parents would be supported to be responsible for both text selection and sourcing. Although I could not find any research literature on parents choosing books for their children, I planned not to provide books as this may have served to invalidate the parents and their text

choices and impose my views about literacy on each family. Having parents take on this role, I believed, enabled text choices to be authentic within that family. Furthermore, I did not recommend that parents purchase books as I did not want to put any financial pressure on parents. I did, however, provide suggestions and assistance in this area when requested.

There was no prescribed time frame for this phase. This was to allow for flexibility in response to the child's particular needs and strengths and the goal which was set. This point is supported by the research of Lee and Hudson (2011) who state that in an empowerment driven intervention, the length of the support process should not be predetermined as the time needed to resolve an issue and develop independent skills will vary between individuals.

As explored in chapter two, utilising parents to tutor their child's reading development has been shown to produce gains in reading for children. It may be additionally advantageous in several ways. First, the parents are likely to have a vested interest in the success of the intervention partly because of the shared goal setting process and partly because parents want their children to be readers. Second, as parents are themselves active participants and co-creators of the home culture, they are likely to be able to mediate between the printed word and their child as reader effectively (Topping, 2000). In Freirean terms, the parent can help the child both 'read the word' and 'read the world' (Freire, 1970). This is useful if, as in this study, reading is construed as a situated, socio-cultural activity.

As parents supported their child's reading development, it was anticipated that they would engage the reader in utilising a range reading strategies as previously discussed. The specific strategies that were likely to be used by each parent were dependent on: family culture, the assessment data, the particular goal, and the feedback provided by the parent. Specific details will be reported in the findings chapter. In the role of reading support person, parents were encouraged to prioritise the child's needs for success. They were expected to optimise learning by adjusting the task to match the learner's capabilities (Rush

et al., 2003; Tracey & Morrow, 2006) and by providing cues and clues to enable the child to read successfully independently (Slavin, 1997; Topping, 2000). They were also be encouraged to use specific praise to encourage appropriate strategy use (Johnston, 2004; Topping, 2000).

3.9.4.1 Parent Implementation

Parents' personalisation and implementation of the ideas and methods presented to them was considered in order to address research questions 1b and 2 which pertained to the co-construction of strategies and the enactment of reading support. Initial data from parents were collected from the questionnaire regarding their current practices when their child read to them. Questions were based on the survey developed by Hannon et al. (2006). The same information was collected for comparison at the end of the intervention.

Towards the end of the intervention, each parent and child pair made a video recording of a reading coaching session. A copy of the recorded session was collected by the researcher. This method was chosen for several reasons: it gave the participants a high level of control over what they chose to share with the researcher, it minimised the impact of an observer during the reading session, and it provided data which can be viewed multiple times (Schensul et al., 1999). Equipment was provided to families if requested.

The recordings contained evidence of parents implementing personalised strategies generated during the programme. This enabled the researcher to see if the methods of presentation to parents were effective in allowing parents to develop their own applications of the material presented. A secondary purpose of the recordings was to look closely at the coaching that individual children received. When compared with the child's reading results it may provide clues to a child's change (or lack of) in reading skill and or attitude.

During the intervention, parents were asked to keep a simple diary outlining briefly the reading coaching they did with their child. The purpose of the diary was to give a measure of treatment integrity. For results to be attributable to

the intervention there needed to be some way of knowing what the parents had undertaken to provide reading coaching for their child and that they personalised the strategies presented. Jacelon and Imperio (2005) assert that diaries can provide a record of processes over time which are pragmatically unobservable. Participant diaries have been found to be reliable (Lewis & Massey, 2004). The diary was offered to parents in various formats (paper, electronic document or video) so they could choose the best option for them. In all cases relevant materials were provided.

3.9.5 Phase Five: Re-assessment

When parents believed that their child had made sufficient progress towards the identified goal, we moved to phase five of the process. This phase repeated the previous assessment tasks. Once again, the processes and the results were shared with the parent and their opinions sought. Depending on the results and the parent's wishes at this point we were able to design new goals and return to phase three or move to the final phase. This data contributed both to the shape of each individual intervention and to the of the intervention.

3.9.6 Phase Six: Evaluation

In the last phase of the process, parents were asked to evaluate the intervention and suggest future changes. They were also asked to evaluate their learning and their child's reading. They were offered the opportunity to comment on the impact of the programme beyond reading (if any). I also initiated a conversation which was focussed on maintaining practices in support of reading in their home. These data were sought for the purpose of evaluating the intervention.

3.9.6.1 Perceptions of the intervention

Hannon and colleagues (2006) note that a shortcoming of many family based literacy initiatives is that they do not evaluate the parents' perceptions of the programme. Given the focus of this intervention on the pivotal role of the parents, data from parents were an important aspect of the study. Hannon

Hannon et al. (2006) suggests several measures of parental perceptions including take-up, participation, drop out, and parental evaluation of the programme offered. This study focused on participation and evaluation as outlined in research questions 1a and 1d. Take up and drop out were not measured, as this is not necessarily a measure of parents' views of the programme being offered and may instead be indicative of prior commitments or unexpected circumstances taking priority. Participation in the programme was monitored via implementation of strategies (see separate section on this). Evaluation data were collected from parents during the research and at the completion of the programme.

The parent interview was based on Hannon et al.'s (2006) protocol. Semi-structured interviews were conducted at a venue and time chosen by the participant. Interviews were recorded and field notes taken at the time. The interview was based around the following questions (personalised as necessary to ensure contribution):

1. What is your opinion of the process we have engaged in?
 - a. What were the best things?
 - b. What (if anything) did you dislike?
 - c. Did you learn useful techniques?
 - d. Were you able to use the techniques when you read with your child?
2. Do you think it has made a difference to your child's reading?
 - a. Did you experience any other benefits? If so what?
 - b. What has changed at home since the programme?
3. Would you recommend this programme to others if it was available?
 - a. Why or why not?

3.10 Data Collection Summary

Data from coaching sessions, interviews, diaries, assessment tools, surveys and recorded observations provided a detailed and multifaceted view of the parents and children as they developed and enacted reading coaching strategies within their unique contexts. Data were also used to shape an individualised approach for each family. A summary table of data collection is provided below.

Research Question (RQ)	Information Collected	Who	How	Phase(s)
How might a collaborative community of practice develop with parents? (RQ 1a-g) How will parents enact reading support strategies? (RQ 2a-c)	Development of a community of practice	Parents and researcher	Audio recordings of each session with parent and researcher	1-6
What is the impact on children's reading skills when they receive parental reading support? (RQ 3a-g)	Reading skills	All children, individually	A Running Record from the PM Benchmark Kit (Nelley & Smith, 2002) was administered to find each child's instructional reading level, word accuracy, errors, self-corrections, fluency, strategy use, miscue analysis and comprehension. A phonological spelling inventory from Words Their Way (Bear et al., 2004) was administered to find each child's phonological skill level.	2 and 5

Research Question (RQ)	Information Collected	Who	How	Phase(s)
What is the impact of parental reading support on children's attitude towards reading? (RQ 4a and b)	Reading attitude	All children in a group	A pictorial Likert scale called the Garfield scale (McKenna & Kear, 1990) was completed by each child.	2 and 5
What is the impact on children's metacognitive reading skills when they receive parental reading support? (RQ 3b)	Metacognitive awareness	Children	Semi-structured interviews were conducted to seek information about each child's knowledge of reading strategies. Each interview was no longer than 10 minutes.	2 and 5
What is the parents' and researcher's reported experience of participation? (RQ1g and 2b)	Perceptions of the intervention	Parents	Interviews were conducted with each parent to seek their opinions of the intervention. Interviews were semi structured and took 15-20 minutes.	6
What is the parents' perspective on their child's reading progress during the study? (RQ 2c)	Opinions of child reading	Parents	A survey based on Frank (2001) was undertaken to ascertain parent's views of their child's reading abilities and attitudes.	1 and 6
How will parents enact reading support strategies when mentoring their child in reading? (RQ 2a)	Parent implementation	Parents	Each parent kept a reading log during the intervention.	4

Research Question (RQ)	Information Collected	Who	How	Phase(s)
How will parents enact reading support strategies when mentoring their child in reading? (RQ 2a)	Reading session	Parent and child	Each parent and child pair recorded 10 – 15 minute video of a reading coaching session. Recording equipment was supplied.	4
What is the relationship between the actions of the parents who collaborated with the researcher and any changes in reading skills and attitude of children? (RQ 5)	Correlation between parent actions and reading outcomes	Parents and children	See all above	After 6

Figure 4: Summary of Data collection

When analysed, the data outlined above enabled the researcher to form conclusions about each aspect of the research questions: How might a collaborative community of practice develop with parents? Can parents be supported to develop and enact effective reading coaching strategies? Did the intervention impact children’s reading skills and / or attitude?

3.11 Data Analysis

3.11.1 Introduction

In line with a socio-cultural research paradigm, multiple facets of the intervention were explored. It was important that the tools and methods employed to analyse data were sympathetic to and congruent with the aims of the programme. Data analysis needed to be accurate, respectful of participants,

offer opportunities for co-construction, and make a contribution to answering the research questions. Furthermore, assessment data gathered in the initial phase of the research were used to select and shape the specific aspects of the intervention so that the intervention matched the individual needs of the participants. The analysis of data, as outlined below, met these aims.

3.11.2 Running Records

Individual analysis of each running record was done in accordance with the standard methods outlined in the New Zealand Ministry of Education guide (2000) and the PM Benchmark Kit (Nelley & Smith, 2002). The error rate, accuracy rate, self-correction ratio and comprehension score will be calculated for each child. Errors and self-corrections were analysed in terms of the meaning, structure and visual clues attended to. From this data an instructional reading level was determined. To minimise bias in the scoring of the running records 50% of the recordings (chosen at random) were externally validated by a suitably qualified and experienced person who listened to the recordings and checked the scoring.

Measures of children's reading level taken before and after the intervention were compared. Changes in the instructional reading level of individuals were compared to expected progress over time measured by the reading levels in the PM benchmark kit (Nelley & Smith, 2002). Although this is not a norm referenced test, it has been extensively trialled in New Zealand to increase validity of results (Ministry of Education, 2010b). In this study, expected progress equated to the duration of the study; that is six months progress in equivalent reading levels to be gained over the six months of the active phase of the study.

The analysis of Running Records allowed the researcher to answer aspects of the research question 2.1 pertaining to reading progress. The researcher was able to evaluate whether or not the children made gains in reading beyond what might be expected. More specifically, any changes in the use of discrete skills were able to be mapped.

3.11.3 Phonological Skills

Individual analysis of each spelling inventory was carried out in accordance with the methods outlined by the original authors (Bear et al., 2004). The feature guide was completed for each child which enabled analysis of skills and determined an instructional level. The number of spelling features used correctly was the child's score and the child's skill stage was calculated.

Change in the phonological skill level of individuals was compared with expected progress over time. In this study, expected progress equated to the duration of the study; i.e., six months progress in equivalent skill stages to be gained over the six months of the active phase of the study.

The analysis of spelling inventories allowed the researcher to answer research question 2.1g. The researcher was able to evaluate whether or not the children made gains in phonological skills compared to what might be expected.

3.11.4 Garfield Scale

Individual children's surveys of reading attitude completed before and after the intervention were compared. Temporal comparison of individual responses gave an indication of change. The developers of the scale, McKenna and Kear (1990), state that a change in score of 5 or more points pre and post is considered significant in each separate category or a change of 7 points overall.

Consequently, the survey items relating to academic reading attitude and recreational reading attitude were compared separately and combined. Data from the Garfield Scale were triangulated with the data from the parent reading attitude surveys to strengthen validity. This information was used to contribute to answering research question 2.2 which sought to find out if any changes in reading attitude occur during the intervention.

3.11.5 Parents' perceptions of children's reading

The surveys of each parent's perceptions of their child's reading taken before and after the intervention were compared. Temporal comparison of individual

responses gave an indication of change. This dataset was triangulated with the data from the child reading attitude surveys and reading assessment tools to strengthen validity. The analysis enabled the researcher to answer aspects of research questions 3 and 4 relating to changes in children's reading skill and attitude towards reading over time.

3.11.6 Evidence of Collaboration

All of the recordings of coaching meetings between researcher and participants were reviewed, coded and analysed. The recordings were reviewed during the research project to enable the researcher to analyse my own interactions with participants in order to ensure that interactions between participant and researcher were authentically collaborative in nature. If the review revealed a lack of collaboration I could immediately adjust my approach to invite more collaboration. Thematic analysis of this data enabled the researcher to determine significant factors in the interactions.

3.11.7 Perceptions of the intervention

The information obtained during the final parent interviews regarding their perceptions of the intervention was analysed. Common themes were identified and material coded accordingly. Thematic analysis of this data enabled the researcher to unpack the experience of each family. Common areas of success and difficulty when enacting coaching were searched for. This process assisted in analysing the effectiveness of the approach (research questions 1 and 2.3) and in informing any future research in this area. Analysis also allowed the researcher to determine if the intervention was successful in supporting parents to enact reading support (research question 1d) and whether or not those actions had impacted the child (research question 2.3).

3.11.8 Parent logs

The parent diaries were analysed for evidence of parental action. The number of recorded reading sessions between each parent and child was calculated. This

was compared to other measures to determine if patterns emerged. The data helped to identify aspects of coaching such as duration, frequency and strategy use that lead to optimal outcomes for children.

Further analysis of the content of the parent comment section of the diary was conducted. Common themes were identified and material coded accordingly. Analysis of this material contributed to the discovery of common areas of success and difficulty when enacting coaching which in turn assisted in analysing the effectiveness of the approach and in shaping any future research in this area. The analysis also provided evidence to answer aspects of research question 1: how might parents be supported to develop and enact a contextualised pedagogy when coaching reading?

3.11.9 Parent child videos

Videos of each parent participant coaching their child in reading were jointly analysed by the parent and the researcher. Shared analysis is a common technique in some research domains, particularly in teacher professional development (Brantlinger, Sherin, & Linsenmeier, 2011; Derry et al., 2010; Ross & Gibson, 2010; van Es, 2010a, 2010b; van Es & Conroy, 2009; van Es & Sherin, 2010) but is less common in research concerning parents and reading development. Processing this data jointly gave the researcher an opportunity to unpack and understand the parents' actions from within their cultural frame (Derry et al., 2010). Shared analysis was also consistent with the overall research design which valued co-construction.

Video analysis was guided by the Adult and Child Interactive Reading Inventory (ACIRI) (DeBruin-Parecki, 1999, 2007). The tool provides a framework for unpacking the reading coaching session. It focuses attention on four specific areas: enhancing attention to text, promoting reading, supporting comprehension and using literacy strategies. The use of this tool by other researchers (Barnyak, 2011; Dixon-Krauss, Januszka, & Chae, 2010) has led to the development of deep understandings of the multiple components of a reading session. By engaging in joint analysis of the video, the researcher was able to

ascertain the adaptations of coaching strategies made by parents when enacting coaching and therefore was able to answer aspects of research questions 1 and 3.

3.11.12 Parent skill survey

Data obtained from the survey of parent skills in reading were reviewed by comparing each participant's responses before and after the intervention. Analysis of the results revealed any new skills that parents had obtained during the intervention. This dataset was used to answer aspects of research questions 1 and 3 which relate to implementation of strategies.

3.12 Chapter Summary

The intervention which formed the basis of this research aimed to build on the successes achieved for children in research projects where parents were utilised in supporting their children to learn to read. It simultaneously sought to redress a key criticism of existing research: that any intervention needs to recognise and build upon the existing and varied beliefs that families may have towards reading. The intervention, methods of data collection and analysis described in this chapter attempted to be respectful and inclusive of family culture at all times and to create a new community of practice where researcher and participant brought their varied skills to work together in the service of learners.

Chapter 4 Findings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter reports on of the findings of the research. As the intervention was concerned with the lived experiences of individuals, there was a need to showcase the voices of participants (and the researcher) in the data (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013). Consequently, the four studies presented in this chapter are written through a series of vignettes as evocative accounts in an attempt to authentically represent the rich data that were collected (Burton, Brundrett, & Jones, 2014). An evocative account offers a broad perspective of interaction and is inclusive of “the messiness of people’s lived experience” (Pappas & Tucker-Raymond, 2011, p. 6.). This approach to reporting data is consistent with the socio-cultural paradigm which shaped this study. Presenting the findings as detailed segments of narrative also provides a rich context from which to explore the unfolding dilemmas, challenges and successes of the participants and researcher.

Within this chapter I have two positions. One is a visible role as a participant in the intervention; a voice within the data. This role is congruent with the key principle of partnership as discussed in the previous chapter where the researcher was viewed as an active participant in the intervention. I am also present in this chapter in the role of the researcher and writer; a voice beyond the data. This, more covert role, is that of a doctoral student and researcher whose job is to sift, sort, select, analyse and present the relevant data into a crafted chapter. This role can be described as the process of finding the findings (Dana & Yendol-Hoppey, 2014).

Four studies are contained in this chapter. To maintain the integrity of each study, each is presented separately within each section. In the first part of this chapter the participants are introduced within the context of their family literacy practices. Initial assessment data are presented. The following sections are structured by the research questions. Each research question is presented and

illustrated by examples from the data which highlight critical aspects of the research. The data in this chapter were compiled from data collected during the intervention in the form of audio recordings of meetings, assessment data, participant diaries, video data and researcher notes made at the time.

4.2 Introduction of the Studies

The data reported in this section were generated during phases one and two of the intervention. In phase one, I aimed to get to know the participants and their individual backgrounds and home literacy practices. Phase two consisted of assessing the children's reading skills and attitude.

4.2.1 Nigel and Kevin

Nigel was the father of two children aged 12 and 10. His youngest child, Kevin (aged 10 years, 0 months) was a participant in the research. Kevin was in year 5 at school. Their household consisted of Nigel, his wife Michelle, and their two children, Shane (aged 12) and Kevin. Nigel was employed in a professional role. He had recently completed a PhD. The family had immigrated to New Zealand from South Africa approximately two years beforehand. Nigel reported that they were well settled in New Zealand and he viewed the family's transition as positive. In particular, Nigel commented that the change of schooling systems had been beneficial. However, he also acknowledged many differences between the two systems of education:

Schooling in New Zealand is quite different... In New Zealand you get left to your own devices a lot more, at home you get set homework, reading this page to that page, do these maths sums. In New Zealand it's pretty much your own pace at home. Back home there was two hours of compulsory homework per night. In NZ homework is a weekly task so it is much more casual, if you don't do it tonight, there's always tomorrow. We had trouble to get boys into a routine to complete homework because it is so relaxed in New Zealand.

In this family, a considerable amount of time beyond school and work was taken up with sport. All three males were active participants in a team sport and Nigel and Shane were also involved in refereeing and other club activities. While Kevin played the same sport, he was less passionate about it than Nigel and Shane.

Nigel reported that Kevin was passionate about animals. He linked this to Kevin's early experiences in their country of origin but said that this interest had been maintained since coming to New Zealand. Kevin had an ambition to work with animals. Nigel labelled Kevin a daydreamer – he reported a lack of planning and organisation in various situations in the home. Nigel's attitude toward this perception was one of humour and bewilderment.

Nigel described that their home “contained a library of books. They (the children) can go there and pick what they want, there is a big range,” which included fiction and non-fiction books at a wide range of reading levels. He also reported that both he and Michelle were keen readers. Nigel reported that he does “lots of different reading” including and beyond reading for work and study. The family took trips to the library regularly and they each chose books.

Nigel reflected that there were no obvious signs that learning to read would be difficult for Kevin. Nigel believed that because Kevin had seen Shane learning to read this would have served as a model and that it would be “a very natural process for Kevin to also read.” However, Nigel also reported that Kevin was “slow to start reading, he wasn't really interested.” When I asked Nigel to speculate about the cause of this, he replied, “I blame TV (laughs). He finds the pictures far more interesting.” This led Nigel to comment: “He's a visual learner, he likes pictures. Even now when he reads he forms little pictures in his head of what is happening on the page.”

As a reader, Nigel reported that Kevin “is happy to read something he likes. He reads real quick but whether he understands everything is a different question. He usually gets the main story line. I quiz him on his reading but sometimes he skips over the detail.” Nigel stated that Kevin particularly enjoyed stories with a lot of humour: “Kevin loves Roald Dahl books and Jeremy Strong. Oh, and he

loves Star Wars.” Nigel believed Kevin was a selective reader, “He would not be interested in reading the newspaper but has recently been enjoying science books.” More recently he had shown an interest in instruction manuals, for example model making, and has made good use of these books at home. Nigel reported that he appeared to enjoy the satisfaction of being able to follow the instructions and make something. He also loved being read to.

4.2.1.1 Kevin’s Initial Assessment Data

At the beginning of this research Kevin had just had his 10th birthday. The assessments were carried out at Kevin’s school in a small meeting room. Only Kevin and I were in the room and we sat at a table together. We were not interrupted during the assessments. During the assessment process Kevin seemed somewhat nervous and smiled rarely. He worked in a slow, methodical manner through the tasks.

4.2.1.1.1 Attitude Survey

The survey showed that Kevin had a positive attitude towards reading at school and at home. However, there were a number of exceptions. Kevin reported disliking: reading a book on a rainy Saturday, reading for fun at home, starting a new book, reading during the holidays and reading out loud in class. When converted to numerical scores, this corresponds to an overall score of 61/80 with an individual score of 27/40 for recreational reading, and 34/40 for reading at school.

4.2.1.1.2 Running Record

I carried out an initial running record with Kevin at level 25, equivalent in reading age to 9-9.5 year old level. He read the text in a very expressive manner, putting appropriate emphasis on words to convey the story well. He responded appropriately to the punctuation. He read this text with 99% accuracy. He made two errors, substituting the words ‘nibble’ for ‘nimble’ and ‘lovely’ for ‘luckily.’ When the errors and text are compared, both have similar letters, sounds and word shape. However, the meanings and word class are significantly different;

even so, Kevin did not attempt to correct his reading. Kevin was able to provide a well sequenced retelling of the story but gave limited detail. He correctly answered three out of five comprehension questions. He was able to answer literal questions but struggled with inferential questions and those which required him to bring his own experiences to the text.

Kevin agreed to read a more difficult text and so I gave him level 27 which corresponded to a reading age of 10-10.5 years. He read this text with 96% accuracy, making ten errors. He did not attempt to correct any of these errors. Two errors were inserted words where the text had no word. The remaining errors were all visually similar to the text but the substituted word did not maintain meaning. Kevin made no attempt to re-read, ask for assistance or correct the errors. Kevin could retell the story well. He correctly answered four out of five comprehension questions but two of these could have had further elaboration to answer fully. He was able to answer the inferential questions related to this text however the story was about a mongoose and snake and as Kevin had a deep interest in the animal world he may have had some prior knowledge which enabled him to make well considered generalisations.

4.2.1.1.3 *Phonetic Assessment*

Kevin completed the spelling test slowly with much deliberation. The assessment showed he had accurate use of single consonants, short vowels, digraphs and blends and long vowel patterns. In the section on other vowel patterns he only got one correct 'ar'. He got 11 correct, and made 13 errors in the section on syllables, word junctures, consonant doubling, prefixes and suffixes. He scored zero in the section which required him to use bases and root words. This result shows that Kevin had very sound phonetic skills in advance of what can be expected of a person his age.

4.2.1.1.4 *My Assessment Conclusions*

Based on the results of the above assessments I determined that Kevin was reading at an age appropriate level. However, he demonstrated a limited range

of strategies for decoding unknown words and he did not monitor or self-correct his reading. He was able to recount what he has read and generally make sense of it. However, he did not always remember details, did not use inference well, and did not always make a personal connection to the text. He had age appropriate phonetic skills. He had a positive attitude towards reading.

Even though the results of this bank of assessments implied that Kevin's reading was at an age appropriate skill level, his reading skills were not supported by a strong foundation of being able to apply a range of reading processes. Without targeted support, continued progress in reading may become difficult for Kevin to maintain in the future as the demands of reading become more challenging.

4.2.2 *Leanne and Adam*

Leanne was the mother of three boys, aged 8, 6 and 4. Adam, the participant in the research was the eldest child in the family. He was in year 4 at school and was 8 years and 9 months old at the beginning of the research. The household also included Leanne's husband, Dan. Leanne was a full time mother who supplemented the family income by caring for pre-school children in her home. Both Dan and Leanne were at the initial meeting but subsequent meetings occurred between just Leanne and me.

This family described themselves as active. The children were involved in a number of organised after-school activities including swimming and softball. Weekends often included family outings to the local beach, going on bush walks, collecting pine cones, and more recently, fishing. The home was situated down a long driveway which served approximately six other homes. There were in excess of 10 children of a similar age in these neighbouring homes. Dan shared that: "all the children are always outside playing together." The parents of the neighbouring houses had developed a system of putting road cones in the driveway to stop traffic so the children could play wide ranging, physically active games on the extensive concrete driveway. Dan added, "They use bikes, skateboards and play cricket." The neighbourhood children attended several different schools in the wider local area. There were no books visible in the

lounge or dining area where the initial meeting was held. Leanne commented: “I don’t see the point of buying a book when you can go to the library.”

Leanne and Dan had been concerned about Adam’s reading progress for some time. Over the last two years, they had his hearing and vision checked and last year had an assessment done by a private educational psychologist. They also experimented with Adam reading with different coloured transparent filters over the text. “At first we thought it made a difference but no. Then we found out he actually needed glasses and that *really* made a difference.” Adam’s hearing is normal. However, he regularly had his ears syringed to remove a build-up of excess wax which negatively impacts his hearing. In 2011 Adam underwent a psychological educational assessment. Leanne and Dan reported that subsequent to the educational psychologist’s report, Adam had weekly physical therapy with an occupational therapist who worked to develop handwriting skills, did exercises to increase Adam’s ability to concentrate and to integrate the use of both sides of his brain. For the past year Adam had also had twice weekly tutoring at a learning centre where he had received additional instruction in reading and maths. Leanne shared, “He’s doing really well [at tutoring] and he loves it because it is bringing up his confidence... His concentration is good there because it is in small groups.” She showed me his latest report from the learning centre which revealed some progress in all areas but particularly good progress in spelling. During this study, Adam did not attend learning centre tuition as Leanne and Dan decided that would be too much additional school based activity for him.

Leanne described herself as “not a reading person. The children have never seen me read a book.” Dan reported that he read the news online but gave a similar response to Leanne: “I’ve never been a book person, I lose track... I want to but then I start reading and I just lose track. I don’t know if I’m lazy or what.” Both Leanne and Dan appeared to be ashamed when making these statements, as if they were confessing to something unforgiveable. I believed that my response to these ‘confessions’ was going to be pivotal to the success of any future relationship. It seemed to me that Leanne and Dan were waiting for me to

reprimand them for their own shortcomings and blame them for Adam's difficulty in learning to read. Instead, I accepted their comments and simply continued the session.

In response to asking about Adam's early reading experiences, Leanne recalled that when Adam was little "we didn't do bedtime stories because the priority was to get all the babies into bed." She shared that Adam attended kindergarten where, "he would listen to a story on the mat but that's all. Reading was not part of his pre-school experience." Dan added that when Adam first went to school he "hated anything to do with reading." The family had established a routine when the children went to bed they were allowed to read to themselves before lights out. Dan commented: "Now that he (Adam) has glasses he's the first one to read."

Dan and Leanne shared that Adam enjoyed being read to but never initiated reading himself. They reported that he sometimes enjoyed reading and had a good attitude toward it. He sometimes borrowed books from the library but Leanne shared that she would like support to choose appropriate books for Adam when she is at the library. Leanne and Dan believed they had a good sense of Adam's reading abilities. They reported that Adam's comprehension skills are variable; he can sometimes summarize what he has read and sometimes discusses his reading. They identified that Adam's key strategy when he met an unknown word is to guess. Leanne reinforced this strategy during reading by directing Adam to guess. However, she sometimes directed him to re-read the sentence which contains the unknown word. Leanne shared that Adam had a good memory and she sometimes uses this to help him learn new words by creating a memory for him by explaining what the words mean and how they are used. Leanne was keen to "use his strong memory to build other strategies," but did not know how to go about this. Leanne discussed that in the past Adam would just get angry while trying to read and that she would get frustrated and reading time together would be awful. "He's the type of kid I just wanted someone else to do the reading with." However, things had improved.

Leanne and Dan discussed some broader concerns they have about Adam at school;

Everything is of concern, not just reading. But he doesn't get the opportunity. No books coming home. Every time I go into school I get side-tracked by something else.... He's the kid who will just come up with a weird noise. It's not because he's being naughty he just gets distracted. Kids in class are shunning him because they don't want him on their table group because he keeps losing them points so Adam is getting isolated.

Leanne was frustrated with the school. "I was nearly going to pull him out last week and send him somewhere else." Following this, we discussed the importance of self-esteem and the need for Adam to experience positive interactions. Leanne and Dan believed it was important that Adam experienced a sense of achievement in other spheres (such as swimming) and have positive social interactions such as those which occur with the neighbourhood children.

Dan described their parenting style as "hands on" meaning that both he and Leanne were actively involved in parenting their children. They had done a positive parenting course. Dan commented: "We acknowledge the kids when they do something well and when things are not great we try to support them. I think we do really well."

4.2.2.1 Adam's Initial Assessment Data

The following assessments were carried out at Adam's school in a small meeting room. Only Adam and I were in the room and we sat at a table together. We were not interrupted during the assessments. At the time of the assessments, Adam was aged 8 years and 9 months. Adam initially arrived without his glasses. Following Leanne's request, I asked him to go back to class to get them. He co-operated and wore them throughout the assessment.

4.2.2.1.1 *Attitude Survey*

The survey showed that Adam had a somewhat positive attitude towards reading at school and at home. However, there were a number of exceptions. Adam reported disliking reading during free time, reading during the holidays, using a dictionary and taking a reading test. When converted to numerical scores, he scored an overall score of 55/80 with an individual score of 28/40 for recreational reading, and 27/40 for reading at school.

4.2.2.1.2 *Running Record*

I administered a running record with Adam at level 22 which corresponded to a reading age of 8 to 8.5 years. This text was slightly below his chronological age. Adam read the text to himself, then out loud to me while I recorded his responses. Adam read aloud with frequent pauses. Throughout most of the text he read 3 to 5 words with fluency then stumbled, resulting in reading which sounded laboured and stilted. He made 11 errors while reading giving an accuracy rate of 94% which indicated this was an instructional reading level. All substitutions which Adam made were visually similar to the original text, for example he read 'hands' for 'handles' and 'drive' for 'dive'. However, none of the substituted words maintained the meaning of the text. Only one error was grammatically correct. Some of the words Adam substituted were not real words in English, for example he read 'naylor' for 'nylon' 'lukey' for 'luckily' and 'laurned' for 'launched'. Despite these words not making sense, Adam self-corrected only one of the errors he made.

Adam was able to re-tell the story with correct sequencing and adequate detail. He answered all of the comprehension questions correctly but could have elaborated further on one answer. Interestingly, although he read the word 'handles' as 'hands' in the text, in one of the answers he correctly described the kite's control mechanism as 'handles' demonstrating understanding of the word and concept in the text.

4.2.2.1.3 *Phonetic Assessment*

Adam completed the spelling test willingly. The assessment showed he had accurate use of single consonants, except 'v'. He could use all short vowels accurately. He was able to correctly use most digraphs and blends except 'mp', 'dr', 'br' and 'ch' when it occurred at the end of a word. He only had one of the long vowel patterns in place 'igh'. In the section on other vowel patterns he did not get any correct. He got two letter patterns correct ('ip and 'ing') and made 22 errors in the section on syllables, word junctures, consonant doubling, prefixes and suffixes. He scored zero in the section which required him to use bases and root words. This result showed that Adam had some gaps in phonetic skills which were likely to impact negatively on his reading.

4.2.2.1.4 *My Assessment Conclusions*

Based on the results of the above assessments I determined that Adam was reading just below an age appropriate level. He attempted to use letters in words to decode unknown words but he did not have sufficient phonological skills to do this effectively. He did not monitor or self-correct his reading even when it did not make sense. Despite this, he was able to make overall sense of what he read and could provide a good recount. He appeared to remember details, use inference well, and was able to make a personal connection to the text. He had a positive attitude towards reading.

The results of this bank of assessments implied that Adam's reading was just below an age appropriate skill level. However, his reading skills were not supported by a strong foundation of phonological or self-monitoring strategies. Without targeted support, progress in reading may become difficult for Adam to maintain in the future as the demands of reading become more challenging.

4.2.3 *Gwen and Naomi*

Gwen was the mother of two children, aged 9 and 6. Naomi, the participant in the research, was the eldest child in the family. She was in year 5 at school and was aged 9 years and 10 months at the beginning of the research. The

household also included Gwen's husband, Don. Gwen worked part time outside the home in an administration role. This job enabled her to be at home with her children before and after school. All meetings occurred in Gwen's home after school.

The family was very busy outside school hours. Naomi was involved in competitive sport at a high level. This required considerable family effort, planning and organisation to meet the priorities of Naomi's training and competition schedule. She also had dance lessons once a week. Naomi's brother, Dominic was involved in extra-curricular activities too; he attended music lessons.

Gwen was a qualified alternative health practitioner who had previously operated her own health practice from home. She incorporated these health principles in her family management. Considerable time after school and at weekends was given to sourcing and preparation of special food to cater for the children's extensive food allergies which Gwen had diagnosed (dairy products, yeast, wheat, potato, eggplant, capsicum, onion, leek, garlic, and tomato) and Naomi's dietary requirements as a high level competitive athlete.

Gwen volunteered that she was a keen reader, particularly of romance novels, "I'm a Mills and Boon freak – always got one on the go." As well as being a consumer of fiction, Gwen saw herself as a writer. She shared that she had written most days since she was a teenager and aspired to be a published author. Gwen said that Don read a lot. "He tends to read non-fiction, he likes biographies and autobiographies." She also shared that both of Naomi's Grandfathers are keen readers and when visiting are "never far from a book." The grandmothers tended to read magazines and not books.

In the initial meeting Gwen shared that Naomi had experienced a disrupted start to school and had "never really caught up." Naomi's pre-school experiences had been at a Montessori kindergarten. It had been Gwen's plan to continue with Montessori education as Naomi moved to primary school because she saw that Naomi had enjoyed Montessori pre-school and it fitted well with Gwen's

personal beliefs. However, the local Montessori school closed due to site issues and a splinter group re-opened on another site. Naomi was enrolled here as one of the remaining 9 school age children. Gwen shared that:

Naomi became very unhappy. We were having major behaviour issues at home. She wouldn't talk about school. When I went to in to school to check there wasn't much happening so I decided to move her. It turns out that the teacher used her to help with the younger kids and didn't teach her anything.

When Naomi was 6 years 6 months old Gwen decided to enrol Naomi in the local primary school mostly because, "She wasn't reading at all. Not even 'The cat sat on the mat.' Nothing!" Gwen reported that the transition to the local school was not easy for Naomi. She was placed in a class with the same age children who already had developed considerable literacy skills. Gwen recalled that Naomi was "emotionally distressed and found it hard to settle in... She was coming home from school saying 'the other kids can read and I can't!' We had counselling to help her get over those issues." Gwen recognised that Naomi's learning had been impacted too. "Because she missed out on year one, she missed a lot of decoding strategies." Despite Naomi's difficulties transitioning to a regular school, Gwen saw the move as positive, "Within two weeks they had her in reading recovery – I was shocked with the speed of action – and pleased." Gwen shared that apart from initial school based support, Naomi had recently ended a year of SPELD tutoring, "I'm not sure how much difference it made and it cost a lot. Naomi loved it though – it was one on one and at the right level for her."

As Gwen completed the reading at home survey she shared more about Naomi's reading beginning with: "She doesn't like reading at all!" However, Gwen revealed that at home Naomi did voluntarily engage in some reading to find information, "She'll read things in the TV guide if she wants to know what's on. She'll try and read the school newsletter sometimes and she can help read the shopping list in the supermarket." She continued: "They love the computer and I

bought them the app ‘Reading Eggs’ and they love that.” Gwen reported that “Naomi tries to read what her friends are reading but the books are too hard so doesn’t really read. She just gets the books from the library and turns the pages.” Gwen shared that “Naomi has a bookcase full of books – there’s always been a lot of reading materials in the house.”

Beyond observing Naomi reading for the specific purposes mentioned above, Gwen stated: “I don’t have a clue about what she can read.” Gwen speculated, “Her reading has improved but she is still behind, still needs extra support. Her attitude has improved but it’s still not wonderful.” Gwen was quite definite and defensive in her own attitude toward reading with her children.

I don’t ask either of my children to do homework or reading or anything EVER. It’s such a battle and I have battled with both of them and I’m just not doing it any more. The relationship between Naomi and I is strained at best and I just don’t want to battle with stuff that I see as being not as important [as our relationship].

I reassured Gwen that this intervention was based on a partnership model where I was not going to demand that Gwen did things that she was not happy about doing.

Gwen shared that reading aloud used to be a bedtime routine. “We used to read to the kids at night but Naomi puts herself to bed now and she doesn’t get read to because it’s later now that she is older. It’s a bit of a shame.” Reading aloud had become a recent family routine for a while, “During the school holidays I read chapter books to the kids at dinner time. Naomi brought home ‘Matilda’ and they both liked that. They did talk about the reading during the story. I’d ask, ‘Do you get what that means?’ because there was some tricky language. The kids were excited to share the story with Dad too when he got home each night.”

Gwen initially responded to the items about what Naomi does when she gets stuck on a word with wry humour: “When my child is stuck... oh there’s no

option except for ‘throw the book across the room!’” She then continued: “She will ask for help by spelling words to me and asking, ‘What’s that word?’ I tell her the word. Unless I think she’ll know it – then I tell her to break it down into chunks – she doesn’t do that by herself. She breaks the letters down but doesn’t chunk the word into syllables.” Gwen added, “I know to associate a word with a known word that’s similar, working with word families. That’s about it.”

Gwen concluded the session by sharing “education is not her place in life. If we had money I’d be pushing her musically. Naomi wants to play the piano but there’s not enough time for everything. She loves dancing but I don’t think she is anything special at that. The [sports] club says she has the ability to compete for New Zealand. She’s developed a sense of confidence from sport and that has helped in her school work. She’s very proud of her sport. We try to give her the best that we can but you can’t do everything.”

4.2.3.1 Naomi’s Initial Assessment data

The following assessments were carried out at Naomi’s school in a small meeting room. Only Naomi and I were in the room and we sat at a table together. We were not interrupted during the assessments.

4.2.3.1.1 Attitude Survey

The survey showed that Naomi had a positive attitude towards reading at school and at home. However, there were two exceptions. She reported disliking completing reading worksheets and reading out loud in class. When converted to numerical scores, this corresponds to an overall score of 67/80 with an individual score of 35/40 for recreational reading, and 32/40 for reading at school.

4.2.3.1.2 Running Record

I gave Naomi a text to read which was at level 23, equivalent to a reading age of 8.5 to 9 years. She read the text to herself then began reading aloud to me. She declined to have her reading recorded despite assurances of the very limited audience who would listen to the recording. Her oral reading was quiet and she

appeared nervous, glancing at me frequently for encouragement or confirmation. Naomi stopped reading half way through the text and said she'd had enough. I requested that she read to the end of the passage but did not insist. She declined.

Naomi read 95 words of the text and made three errors. She asked me to tell her two of the unknown words, 'tuft' and 'pale' and would not make any verbal attempt on the words. The remaining error occurred when she substituted the word 'behind' for 'between.' Because Naomi did not display any independent decoding strategies it was impossible to judge her skills in this area. During the reading, Naomi made three self-corrections. She corrected, 'maked' to 'marked' 'out' to 'on' and 'the' to 'for'. In each of these instances she corrected the word immediately without re-reading the text. Naomi's reading produced an accuracy rate of 97% and a self-correction rate of 1:1. Despite only reading a portion of the text to me, Naomi was able to retell the main events from the story and she was able to answer 4 out of 5 comprehension questions correctly.

Results of this assessment indicate that level 23 is likely to be an independent or recreational reading level for Naomi, this means that she is able to process text of this difficulty without needing additional support. However, the results are also somewhat inconclusive because the test tool recommends that a minimum of 100 words are read to ensure reliability.

4.2.3.1.3 *Phonetic Assessment*

Naomi completed the phonetic assessment slowly and took time to think over her answers. The assessment showed she had accurate use of single consonants, and short vowels. She achieved 11 correct in the section on digraphs and blends and made two errors with 'sh' and 'ch.' In the section on long vowel patterns she got three correct and made two errors with 'oa' and 'ai.' In the section on other vowel patterns she only got two correct 'oi' and 'ow.' She achieved 10 correct, and made 14 errors in the section on syllables, word junctures, consonant doubling, prefixes and suffixes. She scored zero in the section which required her to use bases and root words. This result showed that

Naomi has some gaps in phonetic skills compared to what can be expected of a person her age.

4.2.3.1.4 *My Assessment Conclusions*

Based on the results of the above assessments I determined that Naomi was reading below an age appropriate level. She was not confident when approaching text. She did not demonstrate a range of effective decoding skills with which to attempt unknown words. She did not appear to monitor her reading and self-correct. Despite this, she was able to make overall sense of what she has read and she had a somewhat positive attitude towards reading.

The results of this bank of assessments implied that Naomi's reading was below an age appropriate skill level. Her reading skills were not supported by a strong foundation of phonological or other decoding strategies. Without targeted support, progress in reading may become difficult for Naomi to maintain in the future as the demands of reading become more challenging.

4.2.4 *Eve and Jack*

Eve was a mother of 2 children aged 10 and 2. Her eldest child, Jack was the participant in the research. Jack was in year 6 at school and was aged 10 years and 10 months at the beginning of the research. The household also included Eve's husband Ian. Eve was studying to complete a qualification; Ian was also involved in study towards the completion of an adult apprenticeship. There was evidence of this study in the lounge and dining area. A desk and computer were located in one corner of the room, assorted folders containing study materials, note books and text books were scattered throughout the room. Home appeared busy and Eve said that most of her evenings were spent studying. The completion of the qualifications was seen as an important household goal which would lead to better employment, financial and life opportunities. Eve said she 'gave up' on school at an early age and now regretted that it took her so long to discover the benefits of education. She reported that in her study she had achieved A grades and was keen to continue to post-graduate study.

Eve reported that alongside studying, the household were strong recreational readers and in particular were fans of books by Terry Pratchett, especially the Disc World series. Social conversations occurred frequently about these books with members of the immediate family, extended family, and friends. Eve reported reading to her children regularly. In particular, reading aloud held a special and important place during family camping trips. There was a full bookcase in the lounge with an assortment of recreational books for children and adults.

Jack's school identified him as a possible candidate for inclusion in this research as they reported his reading level to be more than 1 year behind his chronological age. I was told that Jack was known in his school as a child with behavioural difficulties. At the beginning of the study he was involved in several incidents of bullying younger children on the way home from school. The school contact person spoke highly of Eve as a parent, reporting that she was in regular contact with both the classroom teacher and school managers regarding Jack's behaviour and has been supportive of attempts by the school to modify his behaviour.

Jack and Eve both told me that Jack had a strong ambition to join the army when he left school. He had no particular roles in mind and was very interested in all aspects of the army. Like his family, Jack was also a fan of Terry Pratchett books and was very involved in conversations about this imaginary world with his parents and grandmother. Jack accessed the stories by being read to and listening to recorded versions of the books.

Eve reported that she had few specific memories regarding Jack's early education but thought that nothing was unusual as he learned to read. However, Eve shared that she has had some difficulties with parenting Jack. She reported that up to the age of 5, everything was fine but after 5 he became 'difficult.' Eve said that at times he was wilful and disobedient and she found him hard to manage. At the time of the study both Eve and Jack were participating in a joint counselling and parenting programme.

Jack was very interested in my initial home visit and he was an active participant in the session. He spontaneously sat at the dining table with Eve and me. He frequently initiated contributions to the conversation. For example, at one point he said, “Remember, I always talk to Grandma too” in reference to discussing Terry Pratchett books. When Eve wanted to disagree with Jack’s comments she did it with facial gestures aimed at me rather than dispute Jack’s comments verbally. On several occasions Jack directed Eve to select particular responses on the survey form. He presented as confident and articulate, easily joining in an adult conversation and making contributions that developed and enriched the conversation. He sought to be an active participant throughout the meeting and I encouraged this both verbally and with facial expressions. Initially Eve appeared anxious about Jack’s presence at the table but as I offered reassurance that Jack was welcome to participate, she relaxed.

Eve completed the Child Reading at Home Survey with some input from Jack. The survey showed that he always enjoyed being read to, and always guessed at words. Eve reported that she always became frustrated when reading with Jack. He frequently enjoyed getting books as gifts or from the library, understood what he reads, could summarise and re-tell a story, participated in discussions about books, and became frustrated by words he did not know. When he guessed at unknown words, his attempts usually made sense. Eve could usually find appropriate books for Jack to read. Eve reported that Jack sometimes saw reading as enjoyable, sometimes initiated reading, sometimes had a good attitude towards reading and would read to other family members. Eve believed she has a good sense of Jack’s reading abilities. Eve reported that when Jack was stuck on a word, he would most often ask for direct help.

When asked ‘How do you respond when your child gets stuck on a word?’ Eve reported that she most often tells Jack a word, especially if she is busy. Sometimes she will ask him to sound out the word and sometimes she asks Jack to look in the dictionary. Jack contributed: “I hate being told to look in the dictionary. It doesn’t really help me read.” Eve reported that she did not know any other ways in which she might help Jack work out an unknown word.

4.2.4.1 Jack's Initial Assessment data

The following assessments were carried out at Jack's school in a small meeting room. Only Jack and I were in the room and we sat at a table together. We were not interrupted during the assessments.

4.2.4.1.1 Attitude Survey

The survey showed that Jack generally had a positive attitude towards reading at school and at home. There were three exceptions. Jack reported disliking doing a reading test, using a dictionary and reading instead of playing. When converted to numerical scores, this corresponds to an overall score of 56/80 with an individual score of 27/40 for recreational reading, and 29/40 for reading at school.

4.2.4.1.2 Running Record

Given that Jack had just said he disliked doing reading tests I chose to start the running record process on a text which I hoped would result in opportunities for Jack to be successful and that I could provide positive feedback on.

Consequently, I gave him a level 25 text; this corresponds to a 9-9.5 year old reading age. Jack read the text to himself then commented, "This is way too easy." He then read the text aloud to me. Analysis of his reading showed that Jack read the passage with 97.5% accuracy, and a self-correction rate of 1:2. The errors that he made all were syntactically correct and visually similar. Except for omitted words, the meaning of any substituted word was similar to the printed word. He completed an accurate retelling of the story and answered all comprehension questions about the text accurately and with detail augmented by his own knowledge beyond that given in the text.

After praising Jack's efforts and explaining the notes I had taken, he agreed to read a more difficult text. This passage was level 27, which corresponded to a 10-10.5 year old reading level. Jack read this text aloud with 99% accuracy, his self-corrections outnumbered his uncorrected errors. In this text, Jack asked for my help on two occasions; to decode one proper noun and to connect the syllables

(read correctly) of the word 'earthenware'. Once again his substitutions made sense within the context of the story and showed visual similarity. He retold the story with sufficient detail and correct sequencing. He answered all the questions about the story accurately. I provided positive feedback on his performance.

Given the ease that Jack read both the previous texts, he agreed to try another more difficult one. This time I gave him a level 29 text, which corresponds to a reading age of 11-11.5 years. Jack read this text with 96% accuracy. He had a self-correction rate of 1:4 during the reading. At the end of the text Jack initiated a discussion of one error and self-correction. The text used the phrase 'river's brink' and Jack had initially read 'river's bank' before spontaneously self-correcting. He asserted that the text was wrong and his reading 'river's bank' made more sense. Once again his re-telling of the story was detailed and accurate. His responses to the comprehension questions were accurate but could have had further elaboration. Jack had some difficulty with the final comprehension question which asked him to relate the story to his own life. This is not surprising as the story was about American pioneers making a river crossing. After some prompting he was able to supply a reasonable answer.

Jack declined to do a further running record at this time so despite completing three assessments, I could not establish an instructional reading age other than to say it was greater than level 29 or above a reading age over 11-11.5 years.

4.2.4.1.3 *Phonetic Assessment*

Jack chose to do this assessment last because he said he 'hated spelling'. The assessment showed he had accurate use of single consonants and short vowels. He made one error with digraphs and blends (using 'c' instead of 'ch'). He made two errors with long vowel patterns (using 'o' instead of 'oa' in the word float and 'a' instead of 'ai' in the word train). He made two errors with other vowel patterns (not using 'ew' or 'ar' appropriately). He achieved 12 correct responses, and made 11 errors in the section on syllables, word junctures, consonant

doubling, prefixes and suffixes. He scored zero in the section which required him to use bases and root words. This is an age appropriate result.

4.2.4.1.4 *My Assessment Conclusions*

Based on the results of the above assessments I determined that Jack was reading beyond an age appropriate level. He demonstrated a range of strategies for decoding unknown words, he monitored and self-corrected his reading. He was able to discuss what he had read and made sense of it. He had age appropriate phonetic skills. He had a generally positive attitude towards reading.

These results left me wondering why the school had referred him as a participant in this study. The school viewed Jack reading at least one year below his chronological age. However, the assessments I completed showed him reading at least one year above his chronological age.

4.3 Partnership

The first research question was devised to focus inquiry into the ways that a collaborative community of practice developed with parents. This section shares data relating to the principles of partnership which were discussed in the methods chapter and enacted during the intervention. A range of foci are used to examine the initiation and continued development of partnership throughout the intervention.

4.3.1 *The development of partnership*

4.3.1.1 Nigel

All meetings with Nigel were conducted in my office at Massey University. Each meeting lasted approximately 20 minutes. Nigel chose this venue because it was more convenient for him to attend meetings during his work hours rather than schedule a meeting during busy family time in the evenings or weekends. This formal environment set the tone for a professional relationship.

The foundation for Nigel's participation in this study was unique. As well as wanting to support his son's learning, his interest in this research also stemmed from his own experiences of recently completing a PhD. Nigel's doctorate was not in education but he was keen "give something back to the academic community." At the end of our first meeting Nigel asked lots of questions about the nature of my research. These questions came from the perspective of a fellow scholar, not purely the perspective of a participant. Nigel was keen to share his personal story of completing his doctorate. He was very supportive of me as a doctoral candidate and frequently offered encouragement and advice. This shared academic background greatly facilitated partnership between Nigel and me.

Over the course of the intervention the relationship that developed between Nigel and me was based on professional respect and our joint interest in his reading with Kevin. Our conversation was only concerned with Kevin's reading.

4.3.1.2 Leanne

All meetings with Leanne occurred in her home, mostly at 9.30am after she had taken her older children to school. Leanne always made coffee and we talked in a very relaxed and friendly manner which became akin to a personal friendship even though we had little in common beyond the research project. Each meeting lasted approximately 30 minutes.

At the end of the first coaching session I closed the meeting by reinforcing the model of partnership:

I see my job as giving you some tools that you can use to work with Adam but it's not about me coming and saying, 'Right, do all these million things, here's a programme, do this.' but more like building on what you already do. You already do reading with Adam, so, how can we make that reading time more purposeful? You're already playing word games with all of your kids – how can we fine tune that so it gives Adam some extra skills that he needs.

Despite what appeared to be a very relaxed partnership there were two occasions where it was clear that Leanne and I had differing expectations of our roles. Both of these instances occurred after Leanne had experienced some difficulty with implementing a strategy that we had discussed.

During the fourth coaching session Leanne asked to be reminded about the intended length of the intervention. I presented Leanne with some options and she replied, “I’ll just do whatever you say.” I struggled with Leanne’s view of me as the ‘expert’ and stated, “I’m not the boss of this. You are.” Leanne appeared surprised, “Am I?” I clarified, “Well, we are. We are, together.”

At the fifth coaching session, Leanne shared that she had been struggling to apply the phonetic strategy called word sorts that we had discussed. She was frustrated and said: “I don’t think parents should teach their children how to read, cos seriously, I said to my husband, ‘We sent him to a learning centre because I wanted the professionals to teach him the right way.’ I know you’re teaching me the right way, but I don’t know if I’m actually doing him any good.” Although Leanne laughed as she said this, there was a clear message of feeling inadequate and positioning me as the ‘expert’ who knew the ‘right’ way.

Recognising the sub-text of the conversation, I replied, “I don’t think there is any one right way. Kids respond to different things, kids have different needs as they learn to read.” Leanne continued with frustration, “And it’s taken him three goes at finishing his homework for school, yet that’s all he’s got to do and a little bit of this. I’m struggling with him doing that (homework) and that’s why I haven’t pushed him with these (points to word sorts). I’ve done that (points to homework) and then the reading cos it becomes a real fight.” I reminded Leanne that she was in charge of what happens at home, “If word sorts aren’t working for you then dump them.” Leanne was shocked. “But I need to do these to help Adam.” I reminded her: “Stick with what’s working. He’s going to learn this stuff (phonics) in the context of his reading anyway. Don’t panic. If word sorts are a struggle, don’t do it, because this shouldn’t be a struggle...” Leanne responded, “But you’re teaching me the right way and I should do it to help Adam.” I replied: “What happens at home should be in the context of your

relationship, in the context of all the other things that you do as a family, and be a positive, warm, experience for kids and for you. Word sorts have not been a good experience for either of you so stop. Spend the time building Adam's skills in ways that you both enjoy." Leanne finally agreed and we moved on to discuss the week's reading.

At the time I felt challenged by both these discussions. I wanted my relationship with Leanne to be a real partnership and it appeared that on both of these occasions she saw me in the role of a directive expert not an equal partner with expertise which varied from her own. However, I also recognised the beneficial opportunity that the problem gave us to explicitly discuss our roles within the intervention which enabled Leanne and I to negotiate our varied roles within the research to take advantage of our differing spheres of expertise.

4.3.1.3 Gwen

All meetings with Gwen occurred in her home, meetings were approximately 45 minutes long. The children were usually in an adjoining room watching TV but sometimes sat at the table eating their dinner while Gwen and I talked.

Occasionally Gwen's parents were also present in the home and at times Gwen's mother, Noreen would join our discussions. However, in contrast to the ease at which partnership was achieved with Nigel and Leanne, the development of partnership as a community of practice with Gwen was more complex and less successful.

During the intervention it became apparent that taking action to support Naomi's reading was not a priority for Gwen. When reviewing the recorded meetings a number of themes became apparent. Discussion topics prioritised household management, parenting concerns regarding Naomi's behaviour, family history which was unconnected to reading, food and related eating concerns. A selection of these conversations is presented below.

At the first meeting Gwen was keen for me to understand the dynamics and constraints of her household situation and I was keen to show I understood.

“I’ve been unwell so family life has been disrupted. I’m not well enough to do a lot of stuff with the kids and I’m grumpy too so there’s been lots of yelling in the evenings.” I empathised with the demands of a ‘busy’ family, “I understand that certain priorities and routines have to come first. Dinner, bedtimes, lunches, for the next day...” Gwen continued:

There’s not a lot of time between coming home from school and activities then dinner and bed. We eat separately, the kids eat dinner at 4.30 then Naomi eats again after swimming. Evenings disappear quickly; we only have two afternoons a week without activities. My husband gets home later so I do the activities. It takes an hour for Dominic to eat his dinner, he’s not a well boy. I’m laying my problems out on the table so you understand that I’m juggling priorities.

I reminded Gwen that the aim of this programme was to work within the family structure not impose a programme on them. I suggested “five minutes of quality time is better than half an hour of struggle.”

Gwen spent a considerable time during our meetings talking about a number of parenting concerns. The following example from the fourth coaching session illustrates this type of conversation.

I’ve had a lot of trouble this week with her organisation, it’s appalling... I have no idea how to get Naomi to organise herself logically. She can’t logically organise simple routine things... It is very draining to always watch her and ask, ‘Have you washed your hands, have you wiped, have you flushed.’ It’s the same with morning routines and going to bed... she gets three steps away from me and forgets what to do.

I empathised with Gwen’s frustration and tried to steer the conversation back to more positive aspects. “It sounds like the morning routine with the task cards works really well...” Gwen agreed so I carried on: “I wonder if some adaptations of that might work for other routines.” Gwen was not finished explaining things:

I think what adds to the issue is that on sport nights she's tired and we're in a hurry to get her off to bed and she needs to eat lots after training but it takes her at least another half an hour of eating before she is even ready to start the bedtime routines... It's difficult when you're not in control of everything in the household and you have to say, 'Chew Naomi, chew Naomi, eat Naomi,' that's what it's like... It takes Dominic an hour, sometimes two to eat a small side plate of food, sweet fuck all really, so by the time Naomi comes home I'm over making kids eat... I've run out of patience by the time it's Naomi's turn.

As Gwen paused I said, "I'm not surprised you're stressed because on the one hand you must be tempted to let them discover the consequences of not eating for themselves but at the same time you are the responsible grown-up." Gwen confessed:

Well Dominic sometimes gets sent to bed with no dinner and we've put Naomi to bed without pudding too. After training, she'll have steamed pudding and custard then corn chips and hummus then later a burrito with chicken and beetroot. I say, 'Clean your teeth now.' and she says, 'I'm still hungry.' so I say, 'What do you want?' and she says, 'Rice bubbles.' and that's not going to fill her up so then I say, 'How about a banana?' and that is when we get one spoonful every ten minutes because she is no longer really hungry. I get worn out by all of that nagging. I feel like I'm the queen nag.

Gwen continued speaking and her remarks included some very personal concerns about Naomi's lack of responsibility for her own personal hygiene. Gwen was anticipating escalating hygiene issues when Naomi entered puberty. I felt very awkward during this conversation, Naomi and her brother Dominic were in an adjoining part of the house watching TV but they could clearly hear Gwen if they had chosen to listen. I felt embarrassed for Naomi that her mother had shared such personal information with me, a relative stranger. While I acknowledged Gwen's stress, I was keen to conclude this part of the

conversation and re-focus on reading. I wanted to finish the conversation about organisational skills so I offered:

In terms of strategies for routines, it's not my area of expertise, so I don't have guaranteed answers but I do wonder what might happen if, instead of prompting Naomi to do a list of things, you tell Naomi, 'It's time to get ready for bed. What are you going to do first?' It might make a difference.

Gwen considered this, "I just say, 'Do this, do that.' because I've run out of patience. You're right though, getting her to think of it might be a good starting point. I don't know if the same system will work in the evening because she is tired." I suggested and modelled giving praise to Naomi when she does get organised in time, "Find a way to do it that fits with you." Gwen shared:

I can do that if it's a good day but if I'm having a bad day it's just, 'You're ready, thank God for that.' I've started the car and left her upstairs before and then she comes flying down to the car and Dominic is crying, 'Don't leave Naomi!' That's naughty mum. Some mornings are good and some are just appalling. I'm just thankful there were only two children and not five... My mum has offered to take Naomi for six months and straighten her out then give her back. My mum's a bit of a disciplinarian and Naomi is a bit scared of her. They don't like going for the school holidays but she would miss out on a lot here. I'd like to be able to straighten her out myself.

I left the house after this visit feeling overwhelmed and conflicted. I recognised that it may have been beneficial that Gwen had released some of her frustration with me and consequently she might feel less stressed in her subsequent interactions with the children. I wondered if I had done too much of a good job in terms of building a relationship with Gwen to the point that she now saw me as a friend and confidant instead of a reading support person. I felt embarrassed for both children and could empathise with what it must feel like when your mother shared such personal and negative home details with a relative stranger.

I felt impotent in my ability to impact the home situation. I wondered about my motives in the research to find balance between accepting the family as they were and wanting to change things. I spent a lot of the time between this and the next visit running over possible scenarios in my head and planning how I might respond.

In session five, I was prepared for revisiting the previous conversation but Gwen did not mention it. Instead she recounted two long connected stories. The first one was about her Grandfather's death and funeral which occurred about three years ago. The second story described how Naomi broke her leg and they had to go the funeral with Naomi in a wheel chair and plaster cast and all the drama that ensued.

In session six, Gwen introduced a new topic; eating concerns. At the beginning of the session she whispered to me:

She's not eating at the moment, not eating at school. With all the exercise that she does it's a real issue. It is difficult, because of the food allergies, to find food to feed her... She doesn't want to eat anything she used to like.

I asked, "What are her friends eating?" Gwen replied:

Regular food. Packet stuff. I've been horrified at some of her friend's lunches. It's not real food. But Naomi just can't eat that even if I wanted to give it to her to eat... Sorry it's nothing about reading but if she's not well enough to concentrate and read...

I empathised and tried to reinforce the link to reading: "It's all part of the whole situation. Celebrate what you did do – Naomi did some reading last week."

Gwen responded, "Yes and that is massive compared to what she was doing before you came which was nothing." I built on the positive comments: "You've made reading be a positive experience." Gwen brushed aside both the acknowledgement and the focus on reading and shared:

She's on a technology ban at the moment because she's been naughty... There's been a lot of yelling and screaming... She just can't control herself... It's difficult... She just doesn't think about consequences. No amount of punishment makes any difference... I thought she might have read this week because she is not allowed TV or her iPod.

In order to redirect the conversation again, I asked about the week ahead. Before Gwen could reply, Naomi interrupted our conversation with a lunch idea and Gwen became distracted by this. Then Gwen's mother, Noreen joined the conversation and they discussed Naomi's lunch options. For the next 20 minutes, they told me about some of the foods they cook and the recipes they used in place of common products and where to order specific foods online to get the best prices, and recipes that are compatible with specific food allergies.

During session seven there was no discussion about reading at all. Gwen asked me not to record the meeting as she wanted to talk about issues related to puberty. Gwen reported that that they had not done any reading. She was unwilling to commit to a reading plan for the holidays as the children would be staying with her parents. She did agree to support Naomi in packing some books to take with her.

In session eight Gwen was keen to move the conversation away from reading matters. This time another behaviour issue took priority:

We've had an incident this week. Last week Gran gave me \$10 for each of the children to put in their school banking... Naomi banked Dominic's but opened her envelope and spent some of it in the tuck shop... We banked the rest of the money but it occurred to me that they need some money of their own... So we came up with this plan. Doing jobs around the house and doing homework...

I agreed: "Being a family unit means that everyone has to contribute." Gwen continued to discuss how she was considering allocating pocket money: "I want

them to set goals about what they want to spend their money on so they can have experience at planning and a sense of accomplishment and success.”

The examples above show how, in meetings with Gwen, our conversations were dominated by a range of her immediate concerns which excluded reading. Although they demonstrate open communication occurring within our relationship, the partnership in action did not focus on supporting Naomi’s reading development.

4.3.1.4 Eve

All meetings with Eve took place in her home during the late afternoon or early evening. Even though Eve chose this time it was a busy part of the day as she managed after school routines and dinner preparation as well as giving some attention to her boys. The first two meetings lasted approximately 20 minutes each. Other visits to the home took approximately five minutes. Our brief conversations were usually interrupted by the demands of her toddler. Another distinguishing feature of this relationship was that it included Jack as he was an active part of the intervention.

4.3.2 *The shared development of goals*

Consistent with a partnership approach described in the previous chapter, it was important that reading goals for the children were developed jointly between the researcher and the participants. Furthermore, goals needed to be based on current assessment data so that any action taken was likely to be beneficial to the child’s learning. This section describes how shared goals were developed with each participant during phase three of the intervention. In order for parents to understand the results of the assessment data I shared the processes of assessment as well as the results.

4.3.2.1 Nigel

I began sharing the results of Kevin’s assessments with Nigel by discussing the first running record. I explained the process and showed him the annotated

reading sheet. We discussed the errors that Kevin made and Nigel exclaimed over one error, “That’s faulty!” I explained that even though the outcome of Kevin’s reading was incorrect, there were elements of useful reading strategies that were evident such as attending to the visual information in the words. As soon as I began to point out the correct elements, Nigel jumped on the idea and continued in the same manner: “Yes, the beginning and endings are the same!” We explored the elements of the second running record and I shared my concerns about Kevin’s reading processes that the tool had revealed. Nigel commented, “I agree with that assessment. That’s exactly him (laughs).”

Next I shared the reading attitude survey; Nigel commented that he agreed with the responses Kevin had chosen. “He surprises me, that’s where I see him now. If you understand his background, for him to get to here was one heck of a journey. He never wanted to work, play was far more important. Only towards the end of last year he started really coming on.”

I shared the phonetic assessment. Nigel shared that Kevin had participated in a strong phonics based learning programme in school in South Africa and he felt this had contributed to his understanding and application of skills.

In response to the assessment data and Nigel’s input we quickly came to the agreement that the key goal for Kevin’s reading was to be developing a deeper understanding of what he reads.

4.3.2.2 Leanne

The assessment sharing session began with Leanne asking, “Did you have to put a bomb up his bottom to get him to do any work?” Luckily this had not been the case and I was able to report to Leanne that Adam had appeared to be co-operative and focussed during the assessment tasks.

First, I shared the attitude survey. Leanne expressed surprise that Adam’s attitude towards reading in school was better than she anticipated. The next assessment task we discussed was the phonological skills assessment. I shared both the tool and the marking schedule. Our discussion focussed on the

identified gaps in knowledge of the sounds that blends of letters made, in particular ‘br’ and ‘dr’.

Lastly, I shared the running record. We discussed Adam’s correct reading, the single self-correction, and the errors he made, which I described as, “Making near misses on unknown words.” I also shared that Adam took time to think and process the text before attempting unknown words. Leanne responded, “I see that a lot when he’s here. The teachers are just, ‘Come on, wake up.’ But you can see he’s figuring it out and he gets frustrated cos someone’s going, ‘Come on, come on, come on.’” We then moved on to discuss Adam’s correct responses to the comprehension questions and the overall implications. Leanne appeared pleasantly surprised, “That’s not too bad, I would have thought he’d be down at seven [year old material] where he was before we started the Pro-Ed and Kip McGrath stuff.”

Goal setting with Leanne was a very straightforward process. As soon as I asked, “What do you want to achieve with Adam in terms of reading?” she replied, “I just want him to be able to read for his age.

4.3.2.3 Gwen

Following the same format used with other participants, I first shared the reading attitude survey with Gwen. Gwen read through the survey carefully. She confirmed several of Naomi’s answers, such as agreeing that Naomi loves going to bookshops. However, Gwen did not agree with many of Naomi’s responses and concluded, “I don’t know how honest that is really.”

Next I shared the phonetic skills assessment with Gwen. She studied Naomi’s answers, reading from the most difficult words at the bottom of the test to easiest words at the top. Gwen seemed impressed by Naomi’s efforts, “Wow I can read most of those.” I explained that the tool was more interested in diagnosing specific skills related to the sounds letters make in words and not just the ability to be able to spell whole words correctly. Gwen shared that Naomi makes frequent repeated errors in her spelling: “For example, she always writes

'littel' not 'little'." Gwen concluded, "Her spelling is atrocious but I don't know how it should be for her age."

Finally, I shared the running record process and Naomi's response to the task. I talked initially about Naomi's opinion that the reading would be hard and that she had declined to be recorded. Gwen laughed, "That's typical, she's very controlling." I shared Naomi's reading with Gwen as we explored the test. In response to what I believed was Gwen's negative attitude towards Naomi's reading I emphasised the positive aspects. However, Gwen continued to see Naomi's efforts negatively. One example of this is that Gwen commented, "That's typical, misplacing a word with something completely different." I suggested, "Perhaps she was anticipating another word which would make sense if you read the sentence up to the mistake." Towards the end of examining the running record I asked: "Do you think Naomi underestimates her abilities?" Gwen agreed, "When she first went to reading recovery she wouldn't attempt things out loud. She has a fear of getting things wrong... She's very hard on herself." Gwen reflected on this then suggests, "Building confidence would be useful."

The conversation moved seamlessly into goal setting. Gwen shared,

Building her self-esteem is really important because if she believes she can do it, well... Naomi approaches everything with a negative aspect from the beginning. I've always wanted to change that. She can appear confident – like saying she doesn't want to be recorded, but not with learning... I would like her to have extra support in school – reading every day. If I ask her to pick up a book and read with me I get a major problem but I wish there was a way for getting her to read to me, I wish I could do that."

I contributed: "Naomi has a range of reading strategies there in place. I think that building her confidence combined with frequent practise will make a difference." I confirm that Gwen would like this to be our goal. She replied: "I'm a busy person but I could make time while I'm doing the veg for dinner or

while Dominic was still eating dinner because Naomi always finishes first.” Given the difficulties that Gwen had experienced when reading with Naomi, I suggested, “Baby steps are going to be important. If reading is half a page then let’s celebrate that.” Gwen was reluctant to agree. “I know she wants to be reading chapter books because that is what the other girls are reading. She needs to be reading a chapter a night to get into the flow of the story.” I shared that I saw that as a long term goal which could be accomplished by a series of small events. Gwen nodded and we began to plan a starting point.

4.3.2.4 Eve

I approached the meeting to share results with Eve with some trepidation due to the discrepancy between the school’s opinion of Jack’s reading skills and mine. I felt that the opposing results put me in a difficult position as I held a professional and ethical obligation to treat the school respectfully and needed to maintain an on-going positive relationship with the school for the duration of the study. This was potentially at odds with my research obligation to share with Eve that the results from my assessments did not concur with the school’s view of Jack as a reader. I did not want to engage in conflict with the school nor provide Eve with the ammunition to provoke conflict with the school which may be blamed on me. At the same time I wanted to openly share with Eve the information that I had. After discussion about this with my supervisor I determined that an honest yet sensitive approach to this was necessary.

After being welcomed into the home, Eve and I sat at the dining table while Jack was in the adjacent open-plan lounge area watching TV. He acknowledged my presence but did not attempt to join this meeting. I began by discussing with Eve the least contentious results – the reading attitude survey. I shared how the survey was developed and what Jack had done, then shared the results. Eve confirmed the results of the survey saying Jack often chooses reading over other activities at home. Next I unpacked the phonetic assessment and Eve had no questions regarding the tool or the results. She did share that Jack was having

extra one on one help at school with spelling and made a connection between this and the assessment.

I began to unpack the running records by sharing how the assessment was done and what figures could be expected if a child was reading at an instructional level. I also discussed what the term ‘instructional level’ meant. I told Eve about the process I had undergone with Jack and shared each test sequentially. I stressed that these assessments were done in a different environment to the classroom, that my assessments of Jack were conducted in a small room, one to one and that I gave Jack as much choice as possible in the process and provided him with immediate positive feedback. Eve was initially shocked by the results. She reflected on a recent meeting with Jack’s teacher where the teacher had shown her some reading results which differed markedly from the ones I had. Eve stated that the school’s assessment results showed that Jack was reading ‘just below average.’ Eve was unsure how the teacher had arrived at her conclusions about Jack’s reading. She wondered if differences in the test tool and administration may be the cause of the difference. I was relieved to confirm that Eve’s reasoning could be accurate; differences in test tool, administration, and environment could contribute to differences in results. I also talked about other factors that may have influenced Jack’s results such as his physical and/or emotional state on the day of the school assessment compared with the day we did the assessment tasks. I talked about the possible impact of the fact that I had been in Jack’s home and that we had had a pleasant exchange which may have contributed to feelings of trust with me and as a result perhaps he was willing to take more risks. I suggested that perhaps the immediate positive feedback contributed to his self-efficacy in relation to the tasks.

Eve also shared that Jack ‘did well’ last year at school. She said he had, “an amazing teacher, who gave him lots of control, lots of praise and choices.” She pondered, “Perhaps the environment makes a big difference for Jack.” I offered the suggestion that Jack might be sensitive when he perceived he was failing and did not have good strategies for coping with failure. Eve agreed that Jack often responded to a challenge by avoiding the activity or not completing it. She

related this to her own schooling and her current position of being an adult student getting A's compared to a young teenager who gave up trying at school. Eve shared that she wanted Jack to have opportunities that she didn't have in regard to doing well at school and completing education as a teenager, thus avoiding having to face the combined demands of study, work and parenting later in life. She shared that she was worried that Jack's lack of persistence when things became difficult could be a barrier to his achievement in many areas including education.

Following the discussion about the results, I asked Eve what she wanted to accomplish with Jack regarding his reading. Given that there was no apparent lack of skill in Jack's reading, I was prepared to accept that Eve may not want any assistance from me. I explained to Eve that she was in charge of the decision to continue with the research study or not and that any goal that was set should be both worthwhile for Jack and initiated by them, not me. Eve indicated that she wanted to continue as a participant in the research. We then set about developing a goal. The ensuing conversation was punctuated by many false starts and incomplete suggestions as we both tried out ideas and struggled to choose a goal that would be worth pursuing. Jack did not join the conversation or make any contribution. Eve shared that Jack was currently "slogging his way through *The Hobbit*." She revealed that Jack wanted to read it but was daunted by the size of the book, the long stretches of descriptive text with no action and the time and effort required. Eve shared that Jack wanted to read books containing war stories and was also interested in survival tales such as stories by and about Bear Grylls. However, she complained: "I got them out of the library but he won't read them – only picture books." Eve shared that Jack appeared to get overwhelmed by the effort required, "he tells himself they are too hard so doesn't even start the book." Eve attempted to spur his interest by getting some titles from the library as audio books. She thought that if he could access the text this might prompt him to read the book by himself but he was content just to listen. I acknowledged Eve's commitment to her son becoming an enthusiastic reader and the effort she had made to enable this to happen. Even

so, throughout this conversation Eve appeared alternately frustrated and depressed about Jack's lack of reading.

After several minutes of going back and forth, clarifying points from the assessments, and suggesting ideas to further Jack's phonological skills, Eve suddenly said: "I would really, really love to see him finish a chapter book because he has never done that. It doesn't have to be a big book, just something he can say 'I got to the end and I read all of that'." She appeared excited about this and immediately wanted to discuss how we could accomplish this together for Jack. So this became the goal for Jack; to read an entire chapter book.

4.3.3 *The co-construction of coaching strategies*

This section reports on phase four of the intervention. This was the time when parents took action regarding supporting their child learn to read. Actions were supported by regular meetings between the researcher and each participant to review and co-construct reading support strategies. The findings below were constructed based on recorded meetings and the diary of events which parents kept.

4.3.3.1 Nigel

The pattern of interaction illustrated below was typical of the discussions Nigel and I had. During our conversation, I would suggest or label a strategy and Nigel would build on or contextualise the idea so he could apply it in his next reading session with Kevin.

At the first intervention session I discussed the idea of 'targeted talk' to build understanding. I stated that, "in my opinion, it is not your job as a father, to be the inquisitor. Maintaining your relationship with Kevin is important and any discussions that you have about books or reading should occur within the context of your relationship." Nigel agreed so I continued, "Kevin can do facts but he's not so good at building inferential understanding and connecting to the text." In support of this approach I shared Sheena Cameron's (2009) three levels of building connection to text; text to self, text to world, text to text. Nigel

quickly built on this idea, “I should not ask, ‘What happened?’ ‘What did he do?’ and grill him but get him to relate to the story and ask for his opinion and interpretation not just facts.” I agreed, “You want to focus more on inference and deeper thinking. Have conversations that help Kevin make links to the text.”

Nigel often came to our meetings with clear ideas about the reading he wanted to achieve with Kevin in the coming week. When this occurred, I would attempt to shape the implementation of his ideas to ensure that they would be likely to benefit Kevin’s reading progress. I saw my role as being supportive of family culture but also mediating between family culture and research about effective practices in reading. My goal was for Kevin to be able to be successful as a reader and for Nigel to be able to see Kevin as that.

An example of this occurred during session two when we discussed text choice. I recommended that Nigel leave this to Kevin to allow him to build on his own interests but Nigel was keen to read some newspaper articles with Kevin. Reading the newspaper was an important daily ritual for Nigel and he wanted Kevin to share this activity. Nigel was disparaging about Kevin’s current approach to a newspaper. “All he does is cut out the pictures.” Given that Nigel was committed to reading the newspaper with Kevin, I suggested that Nigel built on Kevin’s current interest in astronomy with reading current articles about the Mars Rover landing. I suggested the NZ Herald on-line as a source of searchable news stories. I cautioned Nigel about the reading level of the text which Kevin was likely to find challenging. I suggested a way to overcome this may be for Nigel to pre-read the article and use conversation prior to reading as an opportunity to preview any demanding specific vocabulary or concepts. We also discussed that Nigel could use acknowledgement or praise to promote the continued use of helpful strategies. Nigel confirmed that, when available, Kevin looked at the pictures, used this visual information to predict and then read but he seemed unsure whether this is helpful or not. I connected this to the way in which Nigel probably read the newspaper – I speculated that he probably scanned the pictures and headlines before reading in greater depth.

As well as contributing his own ideas to Kevin's reading Nigel was open to trying other approaches. The following segment from session two showed how I suggested a strategy and Nigel responded. The idea was to promote comprehension while having some fun during reading. I asked Nigel who was asking the questions during reading. He considered the question then slowly replied, "In the first story it was me, in the second story... me. In the hard parts it was about half and half but mostly questions from Kevin that I couldn't answer like, 'How do planets move around?'" I suggested changing the direction of the conversation and questioning so that Nigel would take on the role of 'learner' and Kevin would be the 'expert.' Kevin's role would be to ask questions of Nigel to make sure that Nigel understood the text. They could build on previous strategies such as prediction. Nigel thought that Kevin would relish this opportunity and was enthusiastic to try this approach.

4.3.3.2 Leanne

Leanne and I had a dual focus for Adam's reading. We worked explicitly on boosting his phonetic knowledge and on building a range of skills during reading. Both aspects occurred in response to the assessment data and the shared goal that we had developed. This section reports firstly on the development of explicit phonetic skills then on the situated reading skills.

The first coaching session followed immediately from the meeting where we discussed the assessment results. I decided to suggest a small change to family routines in the hope that early success may lead to confidence to try further strategies. Leanne had previously shared that she drove the boys to and from school and that they played eye spy during the trip. I suggested using the game as a foundation for the children to listen and pay attention to the sounds of "dr" and "br". Leanne was enthusiastic about this and said, "We'll play 'Who can think of something that starts with 'dr' (makes the sound)'." I suggested working with only one sound at a time to avoid confusion. I also suggested building on the game with a sorting activity where Adam was to distinguish the sound of the blend at the beginning of a word. Leanne suggested using the

blend to spell simple words such as drum and I concurred that was likely to be useful for reinforcing the link between the sounds and the letters.

Our second session began with a discussion of the letter sounds game that Leanne had planned to engage Adam in. Leanne shared, “We did ‘d-r’ and he seemed fine so we just thought let’s try him on ‘b-r’ for the next day and then fine again.” Leanne explained that she had engaged Adam and his brothers in this activity by asking them to, “Think of words that start with ‘d-r’ or ‘dr’ (sound). Then they all popped out the words. And then I got him to read these (list of words beginning with ‘dr’ made by Leanne) and asked him does he know what they mean, and then when we played it again he was adding those words into his list of what he remembered starting with “d-r”.

Leanne then raised an interesting point about words that contain ‘dr’ in the middle such as ‘bedroom’. I shared the syllable breakdown which places the letters ‘d’ and ‘r’ in separate syllables forming a compound word made of bed and room. Leanne considered this, “I’d always said ‘bed-droom.’ A friend of mine said the other day – she’s English, very strong English and her kids are born here – and she said it’s gonna be hard to teach her children to sound words out cos she says it differently and it made me think, maybe I say it differently to what he’s hearing at school and Kip McGrath and all that kind of thing. Maybe I’m confusing him... the teachers probably say bed-room, and I say bed-droom.” I offered some reassurance, “What’s important is that he can recognise the sound ‘dr’ and link it to those letters.” I continued, “Given that you’ve established a foundation with these, something you might want to look at in the next week, is to have Adam do some sorting.” Leanne was immediately apologetic, “I forgot about that. Sorry, you said about cutting words out. I forgot about that.” Instead of accepting Leanne’s apology, I acknowledged her for what she had done and we moved on to review the word sort technique.

After Leanne reported Adam could successfully identify and distinguish between the blends ‘br’ and ‘dr’ we moved on to the next aspect of phonetic skills to be developed. At session three I reminded Leanne, “The next thing that showed up

on the phonological skills assessment was that he's not really attending to the difference between short and long vowels." In order to address this learning need I showed Leanne an example of a word sort using long and short a sounds and proposed to, "run through how the book (Words Their Way (Bear et al., 2004)) says you should use this and then you can play, you can use it or not, you can use bits of it – as much or as little as you like, but I thought if I give you the this is how it works, you can adapt that, you can see what fits for you... It is from a classroom programme so it is quite 'teachery'... If you can see this as an opportunity to play, then do that and make it work for you. Or if you think, 'I don't like this, I don't think Adam will like it, don't do it.'"

I modelled with Leanne some basic word sort techniques; identifying the words and pictures, checking for understanding, identifying the different sounds, sorting into sound based groups, alternate grouping, and timed sorts. Leanne had some difficulty with the sound based sort. She was able to identify the words with an 'e' on the end as having a long vowel sound but struggled to put other letter combinations which make the same sound (such as 'ai' and 'ay') in the same group. She asked questions to clarify her own thinking during the process and I reassured her that her level of understanding was completely appropriate. I reinforced the opportunity to use this as play and ask, "Can you see you and Adam playing with that?" Leanne was positive, "Yeah, we'll do it and then he'll want to do it with Daddy when Daddy gets home... He likes anything like this cos this is similar to what Pro-Ed did with him and he likes it cos to him it makes sense. It's different." I reinforced that Leanne is in control, "So have a play with that this week tell me, 'It was rubbish,' or, 'Yes, this is good and we'll keep going for a while.'" I concluded by sharing with Leanne some of the benefits of this approach – no copying, so handwriting issues don't preclude learning, engagement with the sounds in the words as well as the letters, the brain friendly approach of working with patterns and exceptions to patterns. She appeared confident to proceed.

In the third reading session Leanne had previously noticed that Adam struggled with some words where the 'e' on the end changed the vowel sound. She

responded by reviewing the rule, “The vowel says its own name if it’s the “e” at the end.” This worked well, “It was like a light bulb went off! Adam said, ‘I’ve heard that before,’ and then he got to work that out in a couple of words in the story.” I acknowledged Leanne for supporting a breakthrough.

In session four, I asked Leanne how the sound based word sort activity had gone. Leanne said that they had been making up sentences with the words but had no time to do a sort activity. Leanne shared, “The other boys joined in and they were all playing with the words and making sentences. With ‘brain’ they made ‘Dad’s got no brain.’ They all had fun together.” I praised Leanne’s approach to learning as fun, engaging play and gave her a new set of words to sort based on long and short ‘o’ sounds to use when she judged that Adam ready to move on.

Leanne began session five by showing me a word sort that Adam had done. He had grouped the sounds correctly but applied the wrong label to the groups (swapping long and short sounds). Leanne asked, “Well, just to remember – is the short one the one that says its own name?” I corrected her. She replied: “I’m gonna write that down, cos my brain, I just forget! Honestly, Adam will be helping me more than I’m helping him I think. I don’t want to stop his learning cos I’m the one mucking up cos seriously, I am!” I attempted to settle Leanne’s mood, “It’s not easy, and you can see why kids struggle with this long vowel/short vowel business. What’s more important is not so much the label and whether you can actually say this is long or this is short, but whether you can listen and differentiate the sounds.” Leanne shared her frustration: “I couldn’t even, at that stage, see if he was right or not...” Leanne’s frustration with this approach led to a change in tactics.

At the conclusion of session five I confirmed Leanne’s plan for the coming week, to refocus on reading together and drop the word sort activity. Leanne disagreed, “I’ll try and re-approach it. I’ll see how it goes.” I reminded her, “If it becomes a battle, then it’s not worth it, because what will get in the way of learning is the struggle, the battle, the argument, and if that’s what’s happening

then there won't be learning happening, so what's the point?" I shared another idea for working with word sounds, "If you want to approach this from another point of view – rhyming words, playing silly games. Who can think of two words that rhyme with hose?" Leanne shared, "They do those. They come up with really quite, nice rude words at the moment, but at least they're doing it, on the way to school." I built on this, "Those sorts of things are useful, and actually pointing out to him, if you can spell hot, you can also spell pot and ..." "Shot" "And snot! Play with the patterns of the sounds." Leanne summarised, "It's getting him still interested that words are a game and fun. We're so used to this strict learning from Pro-Ed and Kip McGrath and the teacher, that to think of it as fun seems weird."

Leanne did not re-use the word sort technique again. However some further phonological knowledge was discussed such as this example from session six. Leanne had made a note on one of the Parent/Child Reading Log sheets to ask about the word 'stared' and why it wasn't written or pronounced 'starred.' She elaborated, "That's confusing me what we're learning about the 'e' – is it because there's a "d" on it?" I tried to explain, "When you have the letter 'r' after a vowel, they're called 'r' controlled vowels. The "r" makes it have a slightly different sound. So without the 'e' the word is 'star.' If we put an 'e' on the end then the vowel sound become long and it's 'stare.' If you want to use the past tense you have to add an 'e-d' or a 'd' so the word becomes 'stared.' If you want the word 'starred,' to keep the vowel sound of the 'a' short you have to have two 'r'." I was not sure if my explanation made sense to Leanne. She said, "No wonder kids can get confused, it threw me. We were taught to sound out words and that didn't actually help a lot of time." I commented, "To be able to sound out words you have to know those sorts of rules, like what happens when you put an "e" on the end." Leanne shared, "When my seven year old sounds it out, I just go, 'That word's that word just cos it is. Some words are like that, just cos they are.'" I offered Leanne a positive explanation for her coping strategy,

Sometimes when kids are reading, if you stop and try and have them process every word they get stuck on, particularly if there's a lot, they just lose the flow of the story. So, it's perfectly fine to just tell them a word. You have to judge the context, how long ago did they last fix a word? How likely are they to be successful at working this word out? Am I better just to give them a word? But at the same time, you don't want to always do that because then all they learn is, 'If I'm stuck, I look at Mum and she tells me the word.' There's a bit of a balance there. I think tell them sometimes, support them to work it out themselves sometimes. And that support might be about sounding it out, it might be about thinking about what would fit with the story, what would go with the picture.

Leanne and I also focussed on using reading skills in context. In session one, Leanne presented her own question for discussion. She showed me a short novel which she had borrowed from the local library for Adam to read. She wanted to know if I thought the level was suitable. I shared with her some ways that will help her be able to judge the reading level of a book for herself. We discussed checking the size of the print, the ratio of print to pictures, the age of the characters, and skim reading a page to look for tricky words. Leanne opened another book, using the techniques we had just discussed, she quickly surmised that it was likely to be too difficult for Adam because the print was small and there were few illustrations in the text. I agreed with her opinion and demonstrated the technique of skimming for difficult words, "If you skim down here, words like "twinkling", "obviously" and "easy-peasy" could be tricky. "Squiggly", "clenched" – there's some quite hard words in there." Leanne summarised that this book would be too frustrating for Adam as there are too many words he would have trouble with. We also discussed some possible series of books which Adam may enjoy. When I suggested Geronimo Stilton, Leanne shared that Adam has read some Kiwi Bites books and some from the Sparkle series. "He likes chapters cos then he knows he's finished a chapter. He knows

he's up to chapter two. He knows he's up to chapter three. It gives him a little bit of a goal."

Also, at session one, following Leanne's comment about keeping Adam's frustration level manageable, I began a discussion about building Adam's metacognitive processes in reading. "The other thing that I'm thinking is to start having him label some of those (decoding) processes." I continued, "So, if Adam's reading with you and you see him getting to a word and he's getting a bit stuck, give him a prompt so he can work the word out. That could be about sounding out, thinking about what makes sense... drop it in the conversation... say things like, "You're probably wondering what would make sense." So, it's a positive, it's an acknowledgement but at the same time it's a really good clue." Leanne did not respond directly to this suggestion but replied, "Sometimes I just tell him the word." I acknowledged that this was a useful strategy for lowering frustration. I also cautioned that it can lead to dependence, not independence.

On one occasion Leanne brought her ideas to the coaching session to discuss them prior to implementing. In session three, she suggested, "I thought about getting him to read out recipes and things when we're baking." I agreed that this was a good plan and discussed techniques for scaffolding some of the specific vocabulary needed for reading a recipe.

Have a conversation with him before you start about what sort of words he might come across that he might get stuck on, 'There's some words you might find tricky... blend, simmer.' I'd just be like chit chatting about it, 'Do you want to come and help me read this recipe for a cake? There might be some cooking words in here like simmering, kneading or blending.' So drop the words into the conversation before you start reading. It's called scaffolding. The idea is that you give the kid the support before they get to the text, and sometimes he'll get to those words and read them straight through and other times he may still get stuck. That's something you could try and see how that goes.

Leanne connected this to a recent experience, “They were doing some science stuff at school and they went to the library and chose a book and he ended up with a science book about things with levers and things, so he goes, “Oh, yeah, we talked about that.” So, it was of some relevance.” “Great, that’s something that you can build on.” I replied.

Many of the conversations during coaching sessions that Leanne and I had were based on the information she had recorded in the parent diary. For example, in session 4, we discussed that Leanne had written that she had found Adam’s focus on the text to be variable. She shared that during the reading he had frequently ‘day-dreamed’ and discussed aspects of the story. Leanne had responded to this situation by doing nothing, she let Adam speak then he returned to the text when he had finished commenting. Leanne contrasted this with a teacher’s approach which she believed was to quickly re-focus Adam so he completed the reading. I commented, “You’re encouraging him to keep reading. I think you may need to intervene if the comments about the story get really off track, to bring him back, but talking about the story is important... That shows you he’s really thinking about what he’s reading.” Leanne commented that the remaining reading went well. “Adam can’t wait to finish the book!”

Leanne and I frequently discussed how she might go about implementing particular strategies. Through discussion Leanne’s new understandings became anchored to her existing knowledge. For example, in session four, I raised the topic of prediction. I suggested to Leanne,

I don’t want to overload you but you might want to have a think about prediction - maybe you’re doing it already. Asking, ‘What do you think this story’s going to be about?’ (Looking at a book cover) Well, clearly it’s about a robot, but the dog looks a bit scared, maybe something goes wrong with the robot.

Leanne built on the idea of using pictures as support for text.

He got this picture, he's very into pictures. He said, 'Look, the dog's just heard something.' One ear up, one ear closed... I thought how clever of the person to draw all that. And then we read through it and there he was, and he was talking about the dog going for a walk.

Leanne made another connection, "Of course this will also go into normal life, too, wouldn't it? As in real life situations happening, he'll be able to predict what might happen now if I do this." I agreed and brought the conversation back to reading.

Also if you're reading, and you probably do it when you read a magazine or if you read the newspaper, you look at the headline and you're predicting what the article will be about and whether you want to read it... You're making judgements. Prediction is, I think, a really important skill for things like reading newspapers and magazines.

I linked prediction to the scaffolding strategy we had been discussing but Leanne was yet to implement, "That's a great strategy that you're looking at the illustrations and asking what information can I get here? What can I use and connect to the text? And that can be a nice conversation starter for you to drop in some of the vocab. 'You're right, the dog does look scared and I think in this book the dog's called, Rosie.'" I shared some other times when Leanne could use prediction as a tool to discuss the text.

"Think about prediction at the end of a chapter, asking, 'What do you think might happen next?' Or, to start the reading again, 'Remember in the last chapter it finished with the boy deciding to make a robot. I wonder what's going to happen in this chapter?' Just have a conversation around it.

Another example of when my ideas led the conversation occurred in session five. I introduced the idea of broadening Adam's base of decoding strategies: "In the initial assessments I did with Adam and one of the things I noticed in the reading that he did with me was the only strategy that he seemed to use when he got to

a word he was stuck on was he tried to sound out the letters... and whether it made sense or not, was a word or not, he just kept going. What are you noticing now?" Leanne shared: "He's reading it and talking about it while he's reading it... He has a look at the picture and then I'll go, 'Let's go back to the word, let's look at the word,' and then he tries to sound it out and if it's just too hard I break it up for him with my fingers. He's interested in that, whereas before that he was just, 'No, just tell me the word, Mum.'" I reminded Leanne to use praise: "Anytime that you notice him going back to fix a word up or stopping cos it doesn't make sense, acknowledge the pants off him!" Leanne said that she did do this. I reminded Leanne of the strategy of using praise as a prompt.

Any time you are reading with him and you're saying things like, 'Great, you stopped because you noticed that didn't make sense,' – in there is the clue to think about what made sense. 'Oh, good, you stopped because you wanted to check the picture and see if there's some information in there to help you solve that word.' Just feed in those other strategies so he's got a range of things at his fingertips that knows he use to figure out a word.

Leanne asked: "What if it makes sense but it's not the right word?" I shared with Leanne a range of other types of strategies she could prompt Adam with including; grammatical, using word endings, checking the picture for clues, thinking about whether the word is short or long. "Feeding in some of those strategies to him and starting to label them for him will be helpful. You can say things like, 'Oh, great, you noticed it was a short word, let's check the beginning sound, or let's check the end sound.'" Leanne asked: "And when he gets the word right, if it's got 'i-n-g' on the end or 'e-d' do you want me to pick him up on that as well?" I responded, "I think also you want to pick your moments, so it's not every third word that you're stopping and interrupting cos there's a point at which the story gets too broken up." Leanne agreed, "Yeah, it loses that flow... Yeah, sometimes if I see him struggling I'll go back and I'll read from there to that point just to get him up." I acknowledged Leanne: "Reading alternate paragraphs is a good strategy. It keeps the flow of the story going so then when

it's their turn, they've got an understanding of what's gone on, they can start thinking about predicting what will fit with the story and so they've got more to build from when they get stuck."

4.3.3.3 Gwen

On my first visit, Gwen took a lot of time to explain why she could only take small actions regarding Naomi's reading and why reading with Naomi would be problematic. Consequently, I believed that the development of small manageable reading strategies that Gwen could implement successfully was going to be vital to her ongoing support for Naomi. A range of these strategies are outlined below.

At the first session it appeared to me that Gwen was about to talk herself out of reading with Naomi so I redirected the conversation, "We need some fun in the process. Let's not make this hard or painful. Fun, playful, short and painless is the goal." Gwen shared an existing home star chart reward system. She suggested using this system to reinforce reading. "When she gets enough stars, Naomi can buy a song on iTunes to put on her iPod." I built on this idea, "Great, you know what works for your family." Gwen shared, "I've tried different afternoon routines – trampolining then reading. We tried that but it doesn't work in the winter. I have tried to do different things to make reading fun but the fun doesn't last." I agreed, "What is new and unique and novel soon becomes boring and old." I challenged Gwen, "What would two minutes or less of fun reading look like?" Gwen thought then suggested, "The text needs to be humorous. She likes fun, she likes Dr Seuss but I'd rather that she read real words not nonsense words. She does enjoy funny stories. She's not into factual reading." Building on Gwen's comments I proposed, "What if, a couple of times a week Naomi reads a joke. You can make as big or as little fuss about it as you want." Gwen questioned, "Would that be enough?" I responded, "It's a start. It's better than nothing. It's likely to be engaging and there is an inbuilt benefit – Naomi gets to read and enjoy something funny, you both laugh, the job is done. Use that as an opportunity to build confidence. It's low stress for you." I offered

to send Gwen some links to websites with children's jokes and I suggested that she print out some. "You could get a box for the joke of the day. Tell Naomi, 'When you read it is up to you but there is something in here you might like.' I can see that being quite entertaining. There is an opportunity for you (Gwen) to enjoy this too." I suggested that Gwen look for jokes on topics that Naomi might find appealing, such as her sport, or younger brothers. We discussed ideas for creating a box or an envelope and a place to save favourites such as a notebook to glue the jokes in so Naomi can re-read them if she wants to. Gwen seemed enthusiastic, she suggested that she made a joke of the day for Dominic too so that he did not 'steal' Naomi's joke. "It might lighten the mood at dinner too. That's do-able, definitely." I checked, "That's manageable for you?" Gwen replied, "Yes."

On the third session Gwen shared an idea she had to write material for Naomi to read. Gwen stated:

I've been thinking about writing something for Naomi... I thought I could do some counselling with her by having the girl confront some issues in school but excelling in other areas and then at the end the girl could get over all the stuff and be successful. But then I actually got bored of it – writing a diary of each day is OK when there is an exciting holiday but a day-to-day recount of someone's life is dull. So then I came up with this idea of a girl and her best friend or a new friend and the family bought an old abandoned house and the girls go exploring and they find a basement and in there they find treasures that had been stolen and they start figuring out where they came from and returning the items to the owners and there is an adventure in each one.

I responded enthusiastically to Gwen's idea, "I'm interested!" Gwen continued, "Well that's the basic story line." I commented, "It's a great idea! You'll soon work it out whether it is going to work for Naomi or not." Gwen had clearly been thinking about and planning this for some time and she discussed some considerations for the writing.

At session four Gwen discussed some reading she had done with Naomi which started well but then, “Naomi got tired and started making silly mistakes.” I asked, “When you said she started making silly mistakes what do you remember that she did?” Gwen thought then said, “She was guessing at words. Easy words like ‘the’ instead of ‘a’ not tricky words but saying ‘went’ instead of ‘where’ then realising it didn’t make sense. Sometimes she just carried on reading past the mistake.” I commented,

It’s good if she is stopping and noticing. That’s what good readers do when they make an error, they notice it and go back and attempt to fix the word so that is a good strategy. Reading ‘a’ instead of ‘the’ is also something good readers also do – so let them slide.

Gwen saw the sense in this: “As long as the story makes sense I don’t say anything to her.” I reiterated, “What’s important for this week is to keep building on the successes. You seem relaxed about what is happening.”

Also during session four, Gwen speculated about the cause of Naomi’s reading struggles. “I wonder whether Naomi’s poor organisation and the major distractibility stops her from being able to read a piece of text from top to bottom and make good sense of it?” I replied:

That could be a factor. I think there are a couple of possible ways to address this. I think engagement makes a huge difference. Reading stories she enjoys will make a difference because if she is enjoying the text then reading is fun and interesting.

I carried on, “maintaining interest is important. You have already done a good job with getting more of the books Naomi enjoyed.” Gwen contributed, “She wanted to read Geronimo Stilton and I think that could be good for her because there is a lot to look at.” I agreed, “And a nice mix of factual information embedded in the stories.” I then reiterated, “Remember, reading has to work for you and fit in with your life not add more stress to it. If you do have time to talk about the reading have a conversation not a test. Ask, ‘What was your

favourite part?’ or ‘What did you like or not like.’ Keep it easy.” Gwen shared, “I have been giving her feedback about how good she is doing with her reading. But at bedtime I have just been, ‘We’re done, lights out, good night.’ I want to get out of there.”

As Gwen had experienced some success reading with Naomi, I wanted to build on this and suggest some further strategies. I asked, “Did you talk about the story as you were reading together?” Gwen replied, “No, sorry.” I reminded her that she didn’t need to apologise. Gwen then reflected further on the reading, “Naomi tends to get very distracted about the pictures. She says, ‘Look at this!’ and then she gets caught up in the pictures not reading.” I offered some support, “One explanation might be that she is getting tired of reading. Or she is scanning through the pictures to get information.” I likened this to reading a magazine where scanning the pictures can allow you to decide whether you want to read an article or not and can add detail to enrich or inform the reading. I continued, “You need to decide what the signal is telling you.” Gwen thought and replied, “I’m not really sure. She’s very easily distracted with anything. Not just reading, anything at all. She’ll stop mid conversation and switch topic if something catches her eye and I think that is probably more what is going on.”

During session five, I focussed on comprehension strategies. We were discussing Naomi’s favourite book series, Horrid Henry and Gwen shared, “They’ve identified with the characters in those books. If Dominic is being good he says to me, ‘I’m being Perfect Peter and Naomi is being Horrid Henry.’ and I say, ‘Yes and tomorrow you’ll be Horrid Henry and Naomi will be Perfect Peter because there is a bit of both in you.’” I responded, “That’s nice that the reading has entered your everyday conversations. Making connections to the text is something that good readers do. Well done you.” Gwen agreed and continued, “The stories leave you hanging so you have to guess what happens after the end, you have to predict and we’ve been talking about that.” I built on the conversation, “Predicting is an important skill.” I linked that to Gwen’s enjoyment of romance novels and predicting which characters will get into or out of a relationship. “It doesn’t matter if you are wrong but it does add to your engagement with the

book and your enjoyment.” Gwen agreed and connected this to a conversation she had recently had with her husband while they were watching a TV programme.

Sessions six and seven contained no discussion of reading. This was followed by a three week break as the children were with their grandparents for the school holidays then someone was ill. Session eight also contained no discussion of reading.

At session nine, the final coaching session, Gwen wanted to talk about an online reading programme called Raz Kids that the school had enrolled Naomi in. Gwen shared her frustrations with the programme, “Our computer is in the lounge now so if Naomi wants to do Raz Kids then the TV has to be off.” Gwen was working to initiate selective TV watching by the children. “She asks if she can do a Raz Kids story then gets annoyed with answering the questions. I don’t want to give her the answers otherwise we’ll get a false sense of where she’s at. The scores will be just mummy helping and not her real level.” I suggested, “Check if she can go back of to the story to look for the answer. That might help.” I also discussed the need to comprehend the text in different ways, “Some people talk about reading on the lines – the facts in the story, reading between the lines – gathering clues and putting them together and reading beyond the lines – bringing your own ideas to the text.” Gwen linked this to a recent episode, “In one story she got really upset saying, ‘That question wasn’t fair. It wasn’t in the story.’ She was struggling with that.” I added, “Monitoring her frustration is important. If she gets too frustrated then it’s not good.” However, before I could initiate a discussion of how Gwen might use this to support Naomi’s reading, she moved the conversation on to other matters.

4.3.3.4 Eve

Due to the results of the assessment phase and the development of the goal for Jack to complete reading a chapter book, the direction of the intervention which developed with Eve was unique. At the end of the assessment sharing and goal setting meeting Eve had asked if I would supply some books which might

interest Jack as she was currently unable to get to the library (due to work, study and family commitments) and in the past Jack had not liked any books she had chosen for him to read. I agreed to this request even though it had not been my original plan as it seemed unethical to not provide assistance when I had been directly asked to do so.

Prior to returning to visit Eve and Jack I sought help from a children's librarian who suggested several titles. Consequently I took three books to the meeting; Rowan of Rin (Rodda, 1993), ANZACS at War (Low, 2007) and Horrible Histories – the Romans (Deary, 2003). Rowan of Rin is an award winning fantasy novel about a boy aged about 10 years old who undertook a quest to save his town. He succeeded despite facing obstacles. I chose this because of I thought the fantasy element would appeal to Jack, the main character is a boy and I thought the underlying messages of facing and triumphing over adversity might be helpful for Jack given that Eve had identified Jack's difficulties in persisting with tasks. ANZACS at War was a choice which I thought would appeal to Jack's interest in the army and war. It was a collection of simply written personal recounts about soldiers from Australia and New Zealand. I chose the Horrible Histories book because I knew, from my own prior classroom teaching experience, that other boys that I had taught who were not keen readers had enjoyed both the format (short passages illustrated with cartoons) and the gruesome content of this series.

I was apprehensive about how this session would unfold; I arrived at the house hoping Jack would respond well to the books and be enthusiastic about achieving the goal. Furthermore, I was hoping not to cause conflict between Eve and Jack. After greeting Eve and Jack I reminded Jack of our goal developed at my previous visit and I showed him the books. He seemed ambivalent about the first two titles. When I revealed the Horrible Histories book he became animated and enthusiastic. He scanned the front cover and immediately made a connection between the book and his learning at school, "Oh Wow! We've been studying these at school and I know lots about the Romans. I know about the gladiators and the lions and they did such mean things (laughing)." He flicked

through the book – stopping from time to time to review a few of the cartoon illustrations. Neither Eve nor I interrupted his excitement. When he finally paused I said, “You do know a lot about the Romans, I bet you’ll find some more interesting things in here.” Jack nodded eagerly in agreement, he was so keen to get started reading the book that he did not want to talk with Eve and me anymore but headed to an armchair and began reading. Both Eve and I were surprised but very happy about Jack’s response. With little further discussion, Eve and I made a plan that I would return the following week to see how things were going.

On the next visit I was in the house for about five minutes. After greeting Eve and Jack I asked Jack how he was going with the book and he replied, “Can I keep it for another week? I’m not done yet. I read to the end but I want to go back to some parts.” I agreed and we made a plan that I would return the next week with some other books he might be interested in reading. Jack reminded me of the things he liked to read and I suggested he may be interested in another horrible history book. Eve and I had a brief conversation at the door about how things have been going and she reported that Jack had maintained his motivation to read the book and did so independently. He had also shared facts from the book with family members from time to time and they had been interested listeners. However, Eve reported that she had done nothing out of the ordinary in regard to Jack’s reading. She was happily surprised about the outcome and I was too. I had a sense of amazement about the ease at which the goal had been achieved with very little effort on my part or from Eve.

On the next and final visit, as agreed, I returned with another selection of books. Jack chose one and gave back the Horrible History book. He was full of information gleaned from the book and keen to share this with me. He appeared enthusiastic about his next book choice.

4.3.4 The use of support and encouragement

4.3.4.1 Nigel

In my interactions with Nigel I used minimal explicit praise. As he achieved successes in reading with Kevin this became its own reward. The following examples illustrate the positive feedback that Nigel supplied for himself. He consistently reported enjoying working with Kevin and observing Kevin's responses to the material being read.

At the second coaching session, Nigel arrived with three entries in the parent diary which he wrote after reading with Kevin. These notes formed the basis of our discussion. Nigel and Kevin had read a book called 'The Emperor's Underwear' (Anholt, 2002) and followed this with discussion of cause and effect in the story with reference to text and illustrations. Nigel shared, "I asked him why things had happened that weren't spelled out in the text and he was able to think about it and give good answers." Nigel commented, "He impressed me with that book, even though it was pretty basic, he worked out words from the context." Nigel also expressed that this had been an enjoyable time for them both, "Kevin sat on my lap and showed me the pictures as he read."

At session five, Nigel reported that Kevin had been highly engaged in a reading session where they read from a book about robots. Nigel believed that Kevin was motivated to read this book as he was building an "impressive Lego space station which seemed to inspire him on the subject." Nigel reported that Kevin had enjoyed the book and worked well with both the text and the pictures. "Afterwards he built his own robot from all sorts of bits and pieces that he found at home. I was really impressed with that." I commented that in using the book to influence his play Kevin must have really understood the content of the book and got value from the reading

As well as providing his own positive feedback, Nigel also provided reasons to explain why Kevin had met challenges in the reading. At session two we discussed that they had read two sections from 'George and the Big Bang'

(Hawking & Hawking, 2012). Nigel commented, “This book was certainly a level up – far more complicated than the other one.” In the book, the text was written in two ways, there was a narrative about fictional characters engaging in a quest, there were also a number of ‘fact boxes’ which contained scientific explanations of complex phenomena which were linked to the narrative. Nigel identified that reading the narrative was relatively straightforward, “He did pretty well with the story part – I showed him how to try and understand a word better if you read the whole sentence. He did pretty well with that. He could follow the story and almost predict what was going to happen – he was thinking about what he was reading.” However, reading the ‘fact boxes’ was far more difficult for Kevin. Nigel identified that the text contained “Big terms, big words and a topic that he hasn’t had much exposure to – astronomy and how the earth came to be and planets and all.” He continued, “It was very difficult for him – not only the words but also the topic. Where there was a difficult word, reading the whole sentence didn’t help because he didn’t understand the sentence.” I volunteered that Nigel had correctly identified three important difficulties with this text, a complex subject, lack of prior knowledge and difficult, highly specific vocabulary. Despite the difficulties Nigel did not see this as poor reading by Kevin, nor did he blame himself for this but rather saw that the difficulty lay within the text.

Another example of Nigel justifying the reading outcome occurred in session three. Nigel reported that he began the previous week’s reading with two articles from the NZ Herald. Both were chosen by Nigel. One article was about the Mars Rover and the other about London zoo. Nigel reported that Kevin, “found this (the Mars Rover article) quite tough as there were some words he didn’t understand and he lost interest.” However, he also stated that they had later discussed some aspects of the article. Nigel reported that, “Kevin found the article on London Zoo much more interesting.” Nigel speculated that because Kevin had a passion for animals he could relate to the story better and was more willing to “analyse words he didn’t know.” I supported Nigel’s hypothesis, that prior knowledge was likely to affect how a reader processed text.

4.3.4.2 *Leanne*

In contrast to Nigel, Leanne was initially less confident and less sure of herself even when the reading was going well with Adam. She was more likely to seek acknowledgement and was also able to accept acknowledgement. Over time, a pattern of praise occurred; I would acknowledge Leanne for something she had done well and then connect this to a new strategy she might want to implement. The following examples illustrate this pattern.

At session two after Leanne had been reading with Adam she shared what she had done to help him decode an unknown word using phonological knowledge. I acknowledged her efforts and used this as an opportunity to introduce other strategies. “Great. And the benefit of doing that within reading is he can also draw on other clues, like what would make sense? What would fit in the story? What would match with the picture? Is the word short or long?” Leanne shared that Adam got stuck on the word ‘protest’. Leanne reported that she had told him the word then shared, “I told him the meaning of the word, so he thought that was funny, too, because he protests every night pretty much. So, he was, “Oh yeah, I’ve got that. That’s cool.” I acknowledged, “You’ve done a really nice job connecting the meaning to his life not just the dictionary meaning.”

Also in session two Leanne commented, “I’ve heard lots of people going, “Oh, you should know that word.” I hate that saying – you should know that word. Well, if he did, he wouldn’t be stuck on it.” I agreed:

Exactly. That’s so unhelpful and if you give kids messages like ‘you should’ all the time, what they hear is, ‘I should, but I can’t, therefore I must be useless.’ Whereas if you give them messages like, ‘You worked that out because you remembered it,’ or ‘You worked that out because you sounded out the letters in the word,’ or ‘You thought about what would make sense, you fixed that because you knew that a word ending in ‘ing’ would fit better in the sentence,’ or whatever it is. Then the message the kid gets all the time is, ‘I can do this,’ and so from that evidence that you supply they build themselves a picture of themselves as

a reader, which gradually becomes, 'I'm a good reader because I can do all of these different things when I read.'

Over time, Leanne did become more proficient at recognising successes in reading. One example of this occurred during session four. Leanne had noted in the parent diary that Adam was proud of himself for reading the word 'advertisement.' Leanne described what happened, "It took him awhile to work it out, but he just read through the sentence and then he went back. I said: 'Sound out the first few letters.' and he got 'ad-vert' and because the rest of the line had the word "television" in it, he clicked. He's quite proud of himself. It was very hard for him, advertisement." I acknowledged Leanne and asked, "When he did that, did you acknowledge his effort?" She replied, "Yeah, I got him to read the whole word again. I said to him, "It's pronounced ad-vert-is-ment" so he could hear the "mint", cos he's added an "s" in there for some reason."

In session two I used acknowledgement to reinforce that the reading Leanne was doing needed to be congruent with their family priorities. Leanne shared that she was concerned about the duration of the reading sessions she has done with Adam, "He's gone down to 15 minutes, just with the sore throat and stuff." I responded with acknowledgement,

I think that's what's important is that you judge the situation with Adam and think, 'What's going to work today?'... Reading time with you is lovely because it's 1:1 Mummy time, and that's a really nice time for the two of you, but it's also hard work for Adam. He's using a lot of energy and thinking to process that text so it is important that you notice how he's doing and stop when he's had enough.

Sometimes I used acknowledgment for its own sake, not just as an opportunity to introduce a new skill. In session four when we talked about a discussion Leanne and Adam had regarding a book they were reading, I commented: "You're tying the story back to him and his life and making connections, which is

great. That's a really important skill that readers need to know how to do." Further on in the same session Leanne commented that the remaining reading went well, "Adam can't wait to finish the book!" I gave her encouragement, "You've done really well this week. Adam's read jokes and five chapters and he's more motivated to read. It's all going continue reinforcing his skills. That's brilliant. Good for you."

Another aspect of acknowledgement occurred when Leanne used praise to support Adam as a reader. In session four, Leanne shared a spontaneous reading event which had occurred during the week:

I sent him downstairs cos my power had clicked up here and it makes the washing machine stop, and I said to him, 'Oh can you go downstairs for me and push start and if start doesn't work then the machine's all turned off, can you push power and then start?' And he runs back up and he says, 'There's no power button.' I went, 'Okay.' I went downstairs with him and I went, 'Oh, if there's no power button what one would you push, do you think, to make the machine work?' And he looked at it and he went, 'On?' So he worked it out himself.

I praised Leanne, "What a nice piece of contextual reading." She continued, "I said to him, "Thank you for coming up and double checking, because, yes, there wasn't a power button... He likes it that he can read so he can help, the 4 year old can't help so Adam feels proud of himself."

In session six, Leanne related another example of contextual reading. "Adam brought home a tin that he found on the side of the road. I said to him, 'Look at this tin and what on this tin would tell you not to open it?' He pointed out the flame. I said, 'No, something else,' and I pointed and he went, 'Poi ... poison?' I said, 'Mmm-hmm.' Then we talked about how important reading is and why he shouldn't bring home things he finds on the side of the road!"

During session four, Leanne shared that there was a family birthday this previous week so Leanne had fitted reading around preparing for the birthday

celebrations. However, she also related that reading was going well. “It (reading) kind of worked as a threat the other night. I said, ‘If you boys don’t hurry up and get your pyjamas on you will not be reading to me in bed.’ And they were really quick, in their jammies, and off!” She also shared that the boys are valuing reading with her, “Adam got undressed before his brother last night and because it’s his brother’s birthday today he said, ‘You can take my turn, it’s your birthday tomorrow.’ James said, ‘Oh thank you Adam!’ And Adam waited out here. It was quite funny.” This positive attitude towards reading continued. In session five Leanne reported that Adam was continuing to enjoy reading, “Last week I told him: ‘If you don’t do this, we won’t be able to read.’ I made it a reward. I’m seeing a whole new interest in it.”

4.3.4.3 Gwen

It was difficult to provide praise and acknowledgement for Gwen during phase four as she was minimally active with supporting Naomi’s reading (this is explored in the next section of this chapter). However, I did acknowledge her efforts when I could and attempted to use this as a platform on which to build engagement.

In session three, Gwen recounted the weeks’ reading:

The second thing happened spontaneously. Because of the sport competition on Sunday we had to do everything on Saturday to make sure we had everything completely free for Sunday. So I was busy organising food. They have to take food to the sports meet. Naomi can’t take white bread which is what everyone is encouraged to take because it is easy to digest. She can’t do that because of her allergies. They can take pasta but not sweet things like lollies or dried fruit and no protein. So at the last two comps we’ve taken pikelets and banana. So Naomi made them and I made her read the recipe. She asked, ‘How much of this?’ and I told her, ‘Read the recipe.’ So maths came into it too because we made a recipe and a half and had to calculate half a cup of flour plus a half more. Anyway it was good. We made muffins too and Naomi read the recipe.

I commented, “That sounds like a great success.” Gwen agreed, “And because she wasn’t thinking of it as reading it was great.”

During session four, Gwen shared that Naomi did a spelling assessment and reading assessment at school. “The teacher told her that her current reading age was just below her age. That night she asked, ‘Can I go to bed early and read to you so I can show you how much I have improved in my reading?’ She read the first few pages well then got tired and started making silly mistakes so I offered to take over and I read for a while.” I acknowledged Gwen’s strategy, “That was a great idea because you prevented frustration from setting in and the reading becoming a conflict situation for the both of you.” Gwen was pleased to hear that Naomi is now nearly on target for her age. I advised, “Now it is important that you build on this success and keep going.”

As well as acknowledging Gwen’s efforts with supporting Naomi’s reading, I did support her use of praise with Naomi. During session two the recorder stopped working but my notes from the session state that I discussed with Gwen how she might give specific positive feedback to Naomi regarding her reading. I hoped that this would encourage both Gwen and Naomi to keep reading. However, the action was not followed up. In session three I asked Gwen: “Did you have a chance to look at specific praise and starting to work on using feedback strategies with Naomi?” Gwen replied, “No, sorry.” I told Gwen, “Don’t apologise. This is your family and you get to decide what happens. My job is to only offer suggestions.”

4.3.4.4 Eve

During the time I spent with Eve I did not employ any explicit verbal strategies to support or encourage her. Supplying reading material could be viewed as a support strategy in that it enabled Jack to engage in reading and released Eve from the responsibility of finding books for him. Eve reported that she did not encourage or praise Jack for his reading but she reported being responsive when Jack wanted to share aspects of what he had been reading.

4.3.5 The extent to which participants were active throughout the research

4.3.5.1 Nigel and Leanne

Both Nigel and Leanne were very active during phase four of the intervention. Nigel attended six coaching sessions and Leanne attended nine. They both consistently kept parent diaries which noted the reading they had done with their sons. Both engaged their sons in at least three reading sessions per week. They both implemented most of the strategies that we discussed at coaching sessions. They both discovered new opportunities for reading within their family routines. They both reported that reading had become a positive experience. The following examples illustrate this.

At session three, Nigel shared the notes he had written about reading an article in a locally produced free community magazine about electric powered bikes with Kevin. Nigel reported that initially Kevin was not keen to read the article he had chosen and would have preferred instead to read more from the Geronimo Stilton book, “but as he progressed he became more and more interested. It certainly helped that his older brother became interested too and came to listen.” This developed into a three way conversation where Kevin asked increasingly more difficult and abstract questions of Nigel and Shane in an attempt to “catch them out.” Both boys were keen to visit the local retailer who stocked these bikes and see them for themselves and Nigel agreed to take them on the weekend. Nigel was very excited about the upcoming “boy’s trip” and the outcome of the reading session. We speculated about why this had been such a successful reading session and Nigel suggested the high level of interest and debate it had generated, the social environment of contributions from all three participants and the promised trip.

In session three, Leanne began the discussion by reflecting on reading with Adam, “Adam and I are actually both enjoying reading. It’s become something for both of us to look forward to, because reading used to just be, ‘Would you

just hurry up and read,' in my head and now it's not, it's actually become better, more fun for everybody. Instead of thinking, 'We don't have time tonight because I've got three kids,' suddenly it's, 'We do have time, cos this is the time we read.' So it's become slotted in properly."

Leanne noticed the reading that was going on in her household. At session three she described that in one reading session, Adam had been reading a joke book then telling the jokes to his Dad and brothers. "He rattled them off for 20 minutes. I thought, 'That's your reading.'"

Leanne brought to session six Adam's reading material, a book from the Horrid Henry series which she had borrowed from the library. Leanne shared that Adam had taken the book to softball practise. After injuring himself he had to sit and not participate. Adam chose to read the book instead of watching the practise as usual. He also chose to re-start the book with Leanne so she could, "hear the story from the beginning." Leanne recorded that during the reading, Adam read a number of surprising words in the text fluently, including; 'wailing,' 'squealing,' 'shouting,' 'daydreaming,' 'snapped,' 'tension,' and 'cornered.' Leanne commented, "If he really likes them (Horrid Henry books) I can start buying them for him cos he went to the inorganics (large item rubbish collection) the other week and pulled out these huge books. I had a quick look to make sure they're not cutting your head off scenarios, and he's cleared a space in his cupboard for them cos he likes the books." Leanne was surprised by Adam's actions and I was surprised by the change in Leanne from someone who saw buying books as a 'waste of money' at the beginning of the intervention to someone who was now encouraging her son's book ownership.

At the end of session six, I asked Leanne, "How are you feeling about what you're doing in terms of reading with Adam? Are you feeling good about it?" She thoughtfully replied, "They're enjoying it so it's giving us that one on one as well. It's tricky cos it's one on three but we're managing. I've never had reading as a time scheduled in my life – ever – so, of course, I was just bringing that into the kids' world... Now they're bringing reading into my world. Now we make

time for reading and we do that at night... I'll ask them, 'Who wants to do their reading?'" It's still a reward for them at the moment. If they go to bed early they don't get to read and if they go to bed early its cos they've been naughty."

4.3.5.2 Gwen

I met with Gwen nine times for coaching sessions. On three of these visits reading was not discussed. Gwen implemented few of the strategies that we planned and at times appeared to actively block Naomi from reading. At other times Gwen did support Naomi by providing access to books to read and allowing Naomi to engage in reading. However, Gwen never initiated reading with Naomi and only twice listened to her read. During the intervention, she did read aloud to Naomi.

At session two, Gwen recounted the reading efforts of the week which were based on reading emails. She continued, "She's got an email on her iPod now – which turned into an argument because I took the iPod away as a punishment over forgetting her glasses. So now she wants to read the email but she can't until later." While I felt disappointed that Gwen had sabotaged Naomi's reading I also believed that I had to respect the household dynamics.

Gwen opened the discussion in session three by saying, "Well, I haven't made much of an effort although seemingly we have done more this week than last week." I took this as a positive sign and responded by saying, "Well that's good because it shows that whatever you have done must be working within your family structure." Gwen did not accept the acknowledgement easily, "I don't know. It's just been one of those weeks where Naomi has wanted to do stuff."

Gwen brought up the topic of bedtime reading.

Oh Naomi told me she wants to go to bed early so she can read. She asked if I would read to her for 15 minutes then she will read to herself for 15. So that's what we did. I don't know if she read the other book because it is hard... she tries to trick us into believing she has read things when she hasn't.

I attempted to normalise this behaviour, “Lots of kids do that.”

In session five, Gwen shared that, “Naomi has been choosing to read. I haven’t actually asked her to read once. She has just done it herself because she has got a bit of a thing going with the book. It’s pretty amazing!” One of the reading opportunities that Naomi had used was to read to her brother at dinner time. I asked Gwen how that had gone, she replied,

I was getting annoyed because they were supposed to be eating dinner. Dominic has been asking me to read at dinner time. It’s a good distraction for him because he then listens and eats instead of arguing with me. So it is a winning situation, but it annoys me because I can’t get on with other stuff while they eat. So last night I was busy and Naomi was trying to read and eat and I was getting annoyed because she wasn’t really doing either thing well and Dominic was complaining. He says, ‘You read too slow. I want Mummy to read.’ I don’t think that feedback is good for her confidence so I don’t encourage her to read to Dominic.

4.3.5.3 Eve

Throughout the intervention Eve maintained that she did not initiate anything new in her approach or response to Jack regarding reading.

4.4 Parental Coaching

The second research question was designed to enquire into the ways that the parents enacted reading support strategies. In particular the research focussed on the implementation of strategies, parents’ reported experience of the intervention and each parent’s perspective of their child’s reading. This section was informed by data recorded at coaching sessions, video evidence of parents reading with their children, parent diaries and researcher notes.

4.4.1 The implementation of coaching strategies

This section shows how each parent implemented reading strategies with their child.

4.4.1.1 Nigel

Nigel and Kevin read a variety of text types during the intervention. This included a range of fiction and non-fiction genres in hard copy and from online sources. However, Nigel had become more reflective and discerning about the reading he did with Kevin. “At one stage I tried to put too much variety in. Newspaper articles were too dry for him so he wasn’t keen. He liked reading on the iPad a lot – technology and it was different.”

Throughout the reading sessions Nigel promoted Kevin’s engagement with the text through conversation. Initially Nigel would ask recall based questions but learned to ask a broader range of questions which included predictive, inferential and evaluative comments. He also engaged Kevin in the role of questioner which further promoted engagement and comprehension of text.

When Kevin met an unknown word, Nigel most often responded with an instruction to sound out the letters in the word. As Kevin had well developed phonological knowledge this was a useful strategy. Nigel would often repeat the word, modelling correct pronunciation if necessary. He often supplied the meaning of the word and gave an example which used the word in context so Kevin could further develop his understanding.

In the final questionnaire, Nigel reported that he had a new range of ways to help Kevin work out unfamiliar words. This was also evident in the video which Nigel made to show Kevin reading with Nigel’s assistance. As well as the previous strategies, Nigel could now support Kevin to break down the letters and sounds in the word, direct him to look at the rest of the sentence and re-read, ask about what would make sense, give clues to help Kevin read the word and at times tell the word to Kevin. Nigel also knew that he could refer Kevin to a dictionary but he doesn’t use this strategy often because, “They HATE it when I

send them to the dictionary.” Nigel’s responsivity to Kevin in this situation shows a change from Nigel’s initial promotion of this strategy regardless of Kevin’s opinion.

4.4.1.2 Leanne

In discussion, Leanne reflected that she was now more assured when reading with Adam, “It’s given me the confidence to know that what I’m teaching him will work.” She reported that she used a new range of ways to help him work out unfamiliar words. These new strategies were also evident in the video recording of Leanne coaching Adam’s reading. Leanne knew she could support Adam to decode words in several ways including, helping him to look for known syllables in words, breaking down the letters and sounds in the word, directing him to look at the rest of the sentence and re-read, looking at the picture for clues, and at times telling the word to Adam. She did not use the strategy labels to give specific praise to Adam during reading. Identifying a specific strategy by providing a name for it may assist the child to engage metacognitively with strategy choice in future reading.

One of Leanne’s initial concerns was how to find appropriate books for her son to read. This was quickly resolved as Leanne learned a range of strategies to judge the suitability of a book. She became proficient at finding material that would be of interest to Adam and at a fitting reading level. The strategies she employed for checking the reading level were: Checking the blurb on the back of a book, scanning for ‘tricky’ words, using the ‘five finger rule’ with Adam, checking the print to illustration ratio, and checking the size of the print.

When Leanne was focussed on building Adam’s phonological knowledge she initially utilised play and games to engage Adam and his brothers. This appeared to be a low-stress and fun way to promote learning in this area. As the phonological knowledge became more demanding Leanne found that her own knowledge was not sufficient to teach Adam explicitly. After some difficulties (outlined earlier) this topic was put aside.

During the intervention Leanne did establish a family routine for reading time. This went beyond focussing on Adam and included his two younger brothers as well. Leanne shared that reading time became a reward for the boys as they were enjoying it.

Leanne also found opportunities to recognise the importance of reading in context. This was illustrated by the washing machine example, the inorganic collection example and reading a recipe together.

4.4.1.3 Gwen

The strategies implemented by Gwen were minimal. As she had only read minimally with Naomi during the intervention she did not make a video of them reading together. However, she did increase the amount of reading aloud undertaken with the children. She did source some extra books for Naomi to read. On one occasion she supported Naomi to read an email and on another occasion she helped Naomi read a recipe and cook.

4.4.1.4 Eve

Throughout the intervention Eve maintained that she did not support Jack's reading at all. Given that Eve had not engaged in actively coaching Jack's reading, it was not appropriate to seek video evidence of them reading together. However, she had recognised Jack's engagement with books and had been a willing listener when he chose to converse about his reading.

4.4.2 *Parents' reported experience of participation*

At the end of the intervention parents were asked to share their thoughts on the intervention. Data for this section were drawn from recorded conversations and a final evaluative questionnaire.

4.4.2.1 Nigel

Nigel reported that the intervention had a positive impact on himself, on Kevin as a reader and on their relationship as father and son.

Nigel volunteered that he had enjoyed the process of working with Kevin. “Apart from the fact that I know it helped him, it also gave us some time together and he opened up about a lot of other things to me. I think he now sees me as someone who is there to help him, not just a dad who is cross about the room that is not clean and stuff like that. I think it helped in a whole lot of other ways not just reading.” He continued: “On that point we’ve established this relationship of me helping him. At the weekend I made a grid and in one weekend he learned all his times tables. He knows all of them! We just sat there the two of us and he learned all of that no problem because we have this relationship now where he is prepared to work with me.”

As a final question, I asked if Nigel would change anything about the process or the way that we had worked together. He replied, “Nothing, this has been fantastic. I wish there was a similar process for maths. You made a big impact on him. Thanks.”

4.4.2.2 Leanne

Leanne concluded session three by saying, “I’m much less stressed about Adam and his learning now... I didn’t realise how much I was until suddenly I realised I’m not waking up at night now thinking, ‘Oh my God what will happen to Adam!’ Cos you try and help but you think you know what to do but you don’t until you learn the tools. It’s good, and he’s happy doing it.”

Leanne reported that overall the intervention had a positive impact on Adam as a reader and on herself as a parent. The intervention had impacted on family routines, “Reading wasn’t really part of our lifestyle at all but now it’s actually a part of the daily routine. Instead of, ‘Oh, we don’t have time for reading.’ I think, ‘If I can sit down and watch TV, we’ve got time to read.’ It’s making that time and not thinking, no, we don’t have time. Dan gets home, Dan deals to the kids and I go and read with Adam. It made me realise that there is time for play and there’s time for reading as well but there’s no pressure because he didn’t read last night and then the night before he read some of it and then we finished it off in the morning.”

During the final visit, I asked Leanne, “how has this process been for you? Is there anything you would’ve changed about the way that we worked together?” She responded, “No, it’s been good. It’s been very good. It’s kept me relaxed, kept him happy. It’s been like you come over and we have a cup of coffee and we chit-chat but in a purposeful way.” I probed further, “Do you think there’s been enough room for you to do things your way? I didn’t want to come in and say to people, ‘You must do it this way.’” Leanne replied, “Well, my way wasn’t working cos obviously he was struggling with reading. It gave me the tools so it’s nice to know what will work. I know if I’d thought I was struggling, like with the words we were doing, as soon as I said, we didn’t do that anymore so it relaxed it all. That was good. Then I was thinking maybe you needed to put the pressure on me a bit more (laughs). I’m sad this is finished. I’ll miss your visits and our chats.”

4.4.2.3 Gwen

At the final visit with Gwen, when I asked her for feedback on the process, her reply was focussed on everything that was still ‘wrong’ with Naomi’s reading. She appeared disappointed that I had not ‘fixed’ the ‘problem’ and was reluctant to talk about her experience through the intervention. She did not acknowledge any of the barriers to her own active participation. Instead, Gwen commented: “I don’t know how I can help her.”

4.4.2.4 Eve

As Eve reported that she did not do anything different to normal to support Jack’s reading it was not appropriate to complete the ‘post intervention’ surveys which were designed to reveal changes in practice by the parent during the course of the intervention. Eve and I reviewed the process we had engaged in together and came to the conclusion that neither of us could take credit for Jack achieving his goal. Eve believed she had done nothing new, I had no evidence to the contrary and all I had done was provide some additional reading material – however, access to books in the home was not an issue.

4.4.3 Parents' perspective on their child's reading progress during the study

4.4.3.1 Nigel

Nigel shared that he believed Kevin's reading skills had improved during the intervention. Nigel also reported that the reading itself had an impact on Kevin, "In a few of the reading sessions we did some Amazon books and that is the theme at the moment. He is beside himself with knowledge. He knows all about canopies and how things grow on the forest floor and he loves knowing things." Nigel positively compared Kevin's current persona to the child he used to be. Nigel attributed this change in part to the reading intervention. "You would not know the Kevin of last year and the year before. He was a difficult one, he would not open up to anyone. He would definitely not talk to strangers. He would just sit in his room and play with lego and that has changed a lot. He can talk with authority on a lot of subjects at the moment. That has come from reading and his mind has become more inquisitive. If I had to take Kevin back to his South African school now, the teacher would fall off her chair. She would not recognise him."

Nigel also perceived a change in Kevin's attitude towards reading. He identified that Kevin had become keen to read, "He takes out six books a week from the library and he finishes two books on the first day... I've seen him get excited about books and about reading... Initially I thought the routine of going to bed at night with a book was going to be not fun because he loves TV and I thought he would rebel and it was absolutely the opposite."

4.4.3.2 Leanne

Leanne revealed that Adam now enjoyed being read to and frequently initiated reading himself. She reported that Adam always, has a good attitude toward it reading, enjoys being read to and reading to others, understands what he reads, can discuss reading, and makes attempts at words that make sense. Leanne

shared that Adam frequently, enjoys receiving books as gifts, and discusses the book during reading.

Leanne also commented about Adam's changing attitude to reading: "Reading used to be such a pain in the arse because he just was so frustrated with it. He used to get annoyed, 'Stupid book, stupid words' and now he's not mad. To see him frustrated with it was not nice, either. So, now I've seen him happy to read. He even enjoys it. It's been fun."

Leanne frequently commented throughout the intervention about Adam's growing skills. She was proud of his new achievements.

4.4.3.3 Gwen

Gwen appeared disappointed with Naomi's limited progress. She commented: "I think an improvement is always going to be a good thing no matter how much. Moving forward is good. The comprehension is a big concern for me with Naomi. And it's a source of much frustration for her when she reads and I don't think that it helps her want to read." I was surprised by this revelation as Gwen had only mentioned comprehension once before to me but I agreed that the new assessment results point at comprehension being much more of an issue than had previously been apparent. Gwen continued;

She's not capable of reading what she wants to read. She'll say to me that she's read something but I just don't believe her because there is no understanding of what she's read so I'm not sure in that respect if we've made a lot of progress... We go in fits and starts on things. She's now interested in doing Raz Kids on the computer.

I reminded Gwen, "You've had a good run with Naomi reading Horrid Henry books." Gwen replied, "Yes but mostly that has been me reading to them not Naomi reading." Again I was surprised as this was not what Gwen shared with me previously. She carried on: "There has been more of me reading to the kids which is good because at least they are hearing stories and how entertaining they can be."

Gwen commented on the school's view of Naomi's reading;

When I talk to Naomi's teacher she says, 'She can do it, it's just about confidence.' but I don't think so. In some ways she may be being pushed to read things that are a bit beyond her grasp and may be losing interest because she is not understanding.

I kept the conversation going by saying, "That sounds logical." Gwen recalled,

I watched her do a Raz Kids thing yesterday. She only got two questions right out of ten. She was so annoyed with herself ... There were tears and a tantrum and a big show about how bad life is. I can see her frustration and I can see that to be able to read the words and not understand must drive her mad.

I suggested some strategies with Gwen that she could use to support Naomi with Raz Kids such as having Naomi retell the story to Gwen before she answered the questions. We also discussed and shared with Naomi some tips for selecting the correct answer in multi choice questions.

4.4.3.4 Eve

At both the intervention meetings that Eve and I had, she expressed surprise at how easily the goal had been achieved. Eve was (in my opinion) overly grateful for my input. She was tearful as she shared that she could now see a new future for Jack as a reader and as a successful learner.

4.5 Research Questions 3 and 4: Follow-Up Data

Research question three was designed to enquire into the impact on children's reading skills when they received parental reading support that was inclusive of family practices. The impact was measured over time in relation to the children's phonological skills, reading level, decoding strategies and comprehension skills. Research question four was designed to consider the impact of the intervention on the children's reading attitude. The data reported in this section were gained at a post-intervention assessment session with each child.

4.5.1 Kevin

4.5.1.1 Attitude Survey

The survey showed that Kevin's score was lower than the initial survey. Kevin reported disliking, spending free time reading a book, reading for fun at home, starting a new book, reading during the holidays, going to a bookstore, and reading out loud in class. When converted to numerical scores, this corresponds to an overall score of 56/80 with an individual score of 24/40 for recreational reading, and 32/40 for reading at school. Kevin's initial scores were 61/80 overall, 27/40 for recreational reading, and 34/40 for reading at school. According to the test tool information (McKenna & Kear, 1990), these changes are not significant.

4.5.1.2 Running Record

I carried out a running record with Kevin at level 29, equivalent in reading age to 11-11.5 year old level. Once again he read the text with lots of vocal expression, putting appropriate emphasis on words and punctuation to convey the story well. He read this text with 98% accuracy. He made five errors, missing the 'ing' on 'crossing', reading 'anxiety' as 'anxiously', reading 'current's' as 'currently' 'frightened' as 'frightening' and 'agonising' as 'aggressing'. When the text is compared to Kevin's errors all errors are visually similar to text and in all but one instance (agonising) the meaning of the text and attempt are similar. While reading, Kevin spontaneously corrected one error, initially reading 'there' for 'here'.

Kevin was able to provide a well sequenced retelling of the story but gave limited detail. He correctly answered four out of five comprehension questions although one question could have had an additional element because Kevin only listed two of the three possible reasons given in the text. To answer the final question Kevin needed to link his own knowledge to the situation in the story. Kevin's answer was loosely linked to the story and only somewhat plausible.

Given that he had read well, I offered Kevin a more difficult text and he agreed to read a level 30 story which corresponded to a reading age of 11.5-12 years. This is

the most difficult text in the test kit. He read this text with 100% accuracy, making no errors. Kevin could retell the story well. He correctly answered four out of five comprehension questions but two of these could have had further elaboration to answer fully. He was able to answer the inferential questions related to this text. The question which he answered incorrectly had the word climate as a central concept and from his answer it seemed that Kevin did not understand this concept.

It appears that Kevin's reading skills have developed in response to the coaching that Nigel has provided. This running record is 18 months above the prior running record and is well within Kevin's capability to decode and make meaning from the text.

4.5.1.3 Phonetic Assessment

Kevin completed the spelling test thoughtfully. The assessment showed he has accurate use of single consonants, short vowels, digraphs and blends and long vowel patterns. In the section on other vowel patterns where previously he only got one correct, he now had four out of six combinations correct. He got 13 correct, and made 11 errors in the section on syllables, word junctures, consonant doubling, prefixes and suffixes, this represents 2 additional letter combinations used correctly. He scored zero in the section which required him to use bases and root words. This result shows that even though Kevin had very sound phonetic skills in advance of what can be expected of a person his age at the beginning of the study, his skills had continued to improve.

4.5.1.4 Assessment Conclusions

It is clear from the results described above that Kevin did make progress in reading during the intervention. By the end, he was able to adequately process a text that was 1 and half years more difficult than the initial text. In addition his phonetic skills had continued to develop. At the end of the intervention there was no statistically significant change in his attitude toward reading. The table below summarises these results.

Kevin	Prior to parent coaching	Following parent coaching
Reading attitude survey	Total 61/80 Recreational reading 27/40 Reading at school 34/40	Total 56/80 Recreational reading 24/40 Reading at school 32/40
Running Record	Level 27, 10-10.5 years Accuracy 96% Self-corrections 0 Comprehension 4/5	Level 30, 11.5-12 years Accuracy 100% Self-corrections 0 Comprehension 4/5
Words their Way assessment	Single consonants 7/7 Short vowels 5/5 Digraphs 6/6 Blends 7/7 Long vowel patterns 5/5 Other vowel patterns 1/7 Syllables, junctures, consonant doubling, prefixes and suffixes 11/24. Bases and root words 0/5	Single consonants 7/7 Short vowels 5/5 Digraphs 6/6 Blends 7/7 Long vowel patterns 5/5 Other vowel patterns 4/7 Syllables, junctures, consonant doubling, prefixes and suffixes 13/24. Bases and root words 0/5

Figure 5: Summary of Kevin's results

4.5.2 Adam

4.5.2.1 Attitude Survey

The survey showed that Adam had become more negative in his attitude towards reading at school and at home. He now reported disliking reading on a rainy Saturday, reading during free time, starting a new book, reading instead of playing, going to a book store, reading different kinds of books, when a teacher asks questions about reading, reading in school, reading school books, stories in reading classes, reading out loud in class, reading during the holidays, using a dictionary, reading work sheets. When converted to numerical scores, this corresponds to an overall score of 38/80 with an individual score of 19/40 for recreational reading, and 19/40 for reading at school. At the beginning of the study, Adam's overall score was 55/80 with an individual score of 28/40 for recreational reading, and 27/40 for reading at school. According to the test tool information (McKenna & Kear, 1990) these changes represent a significant

change in attitude. Overall Adam was less positive about reading than he was prior to the intervention.

4.5.2.2 Running Record

I began the running record part of the assessment by giving Adam a text at level 23 which corresponded to a reading age of 8.5 to 9 years. This was one level above the previous running record. He read this text fluently and with appropriate expression. He made five uncorrected errors during reading which equated to an accuracy rate of 97.5% which is regarded as easy. The errors all occurred in the first paragraph. Adam substituted and real words which were all visually similar to the words in the text but did not maintain meaning. In subsequent paragraphs, Adam spontaneously self-corrected three errors which gave him a self-correction rate of 1:2.5. His retelling of the story was accurate. He answered all five comprehension questions accurately. In summary, this text was now too easy for Adam so I moved on to another harder text.

The second running record was at level 25 which corresponded to a reading age of 9.5 to 10 years. In this text Adam made 11 errors which is an accuracy rate of 94.5%. Of the 11 errors Adam made, 10 were visually similar to the text the remaining one was an omitted word. None of the errors maintained meaning, and only five were real words in English. He self-corrected three errors giving a self-correction rate of 1:4. He was able to retell the main parts of the story with correct sequencing. He correctly answered four out of 5 comprehension questions. This meant that this text was at an instructional level, that is, suitable for Adam to read with some support.

4.5.2.3 Phonetic Assessment

The phonetic assessment showed that Adam now had accurate use of all single consonants. He continued to use all short vowels accurately. He was able to correctly use all digraphs and blends except 'mp' when it occurred at the end of a word. He still only had one of the long vowel patterns in place 'igh'. In the section on other vowel patterns he did not get any correct. He got two letter

patterns correct ('ip and 'ing') and made 22 errors in the section on syllables, word junctures, consonant doubling, prefixes and suffixes. He scored zero in the section which required him to use bases and root words. This result shows that Adam has made some progress in acquiring phonetic skills but still has some gaps in skills relative to what could be expected for a person of his age.

4.5.2.4 Assessment Conclusions

It is clear from the results described above that Adam made progress in reading during the intervention. By the end of the intervention, he was able to adequately process a text that was one and half years more difficult than the initial assessment. In addition his phonetic skills had improved slightly. However, his attitude toward reading had changed from somewhat positive to somewhat negative. The table below summarises these results.

Adam	Prior to parent coaching	Following parent coaching
Reading attitude survey	Total 55/80 Recreational reading 28/40 Reading at school 27/40	Total 38/80 Recreational reading 19/40 Reading at school 19/40
Running Record	Level 22, 8 to 8.5 years. Accuracy 94% Self-corrections 1: 11 Comprehension 5/5	Level 25, 9.5-10 years. Accuracy 94.5% Self-corrections 1: 4 Comprehension 4/5
Words their Way assessment	Single consonants 6/7 Short vowels 5/5 Digraphs 5/6 Blends 4/7 Long vowel patterns 1/5 Other vowel patterns 0/7 Syllables, junctures, consonant doubling, prefixes and suffixes 2/24 Bases and root words 0/5	Single consonants 7/7 Short vowels 5/5 Digraphs 6/6 Blends 6/7 Long vowel patterns 1/5 Other vowel patterns 0/7 Syllables, junctures, consonant doubling, prefixes and suffixes 2/24 Bases and root words 0/5

Figure 6: Summary of Adam's results

4.5.3 Naomi

4.5.3.1 Attitude Survey

The survey showed that Naomi had a somewhat positive attitude towards reading at school and at home. However, there were a number of exceptions. She reported disliking spending free time reading a book, reading during the holidays, reading instead of playing, responding to the teacher's questions about reading, learning from a book, when it's time for reading at school, reading out loud in class and taking a reading test. When converted to numerical scores, this corresponds to an overall score of 55/80 with an individual score of 30/40 for recreational reading, and 25/40 for reading at school. At the beginning of the research Naomi scored 67/80 overall with an individual score of 35/40 for recreational reading, and 32/40 for reading at school. According to the test tool information (McKenna & Kear, 1990) these changes represent a significant change in attitude. Overall, Naomi was less positive about reading than she was prior to the intervention.

4.5.3.2 Running Record

I gave Naomi a text to read which was at level 24, equivalent to a reading age of 9 to 9.5 years. She read the text to herself then began reading aloud to me. Naomi's oral reading was slow with frequent pauses and limited flow. However, this time Naomi did complete the text.

Naomi read 206 words of the text and made 11 errors. Five of Naomi's errors were visually similar to the printed text and were real words in English. However with one exception the errors did not maintain the meaning of the text. She read 'sized' for 'seized', 'felt' for 'fled', 'torched' for 'touched', 'scrambled' for 'stumbled' and 'demand' for 'demanded'. She asked for help with two words; 'through' and 'strides' and I told her the words. She omitted to read one word, 'roar'.

During the reading, Naomi made five self-corrections. She corrected, 'door' to 'doorway', 'great' to 'giant', 'louse' to 'loose' 'and' to 'the' and 'harst' to 'haste'.

In each of these instances she corrected the word immediately without re-reading more than the self-corrected word. Naomi's reading produced an accuracy rate of 94.7% and a self-correction rate of 1:3. She was able to retell the main events from the story but this could have been based on prior knowledge as the text was a version of the story of Jack and the Beanstalk. Naomi correctly answered only one of the five comprehension questions correctly.

Results of this assessment indicate that level 24 is an instructional level text for Naomi. This means that she would need support to be able to process the text.

4.5.3.3 Phonetic Assessment

Naomi completed the phonetic assessment carefully, she thought about her answers before writing them down. The assessment showed she had accurate use of single consonants, and short vowels. She got all letter patterns correct in the section on digraphs and blends including the two previous errors with 'sh' and 'ch.' In the section on long vowel patterns she got four correct and made one error with 'oa.' In the section on other vowel patterns she only got four correct and made two errors with 'ew' and 'or.' She got 15 correct, and made 9 errors in the section on syllables, word junctures, consonant doubling, prefixes and suffixes. She scored zero in the section which required her to use bases and root words. This result showed that Naomi has filled some gaps in her phonetic knowledge and is now working at a level comparable to what can be expected of a person her age.

4.5.3.4 Assessment Conclusions

It is clear from the results described above that Naomi made some progress in reading during the intervention. A comparison of the reading level results obtained from the running record shows a growth equivalent to six months reading skills. However, this is not a clear indicator of additional growth because the assessments were done five months apart. Her phonetic skills had improved. Her attitude toward reading had become less positive. The table below summarises these results.

Naomi	Prior to parent coaching	Following parent coaching
Reading attitude survey	Total 67/80 Recreational reading 35/40 Reading at school 32/40	Total 55/80 Recreational reading 30/40 Reading at school 25/40
Running Record	Level 23, 8.5 to 9 years Accuracy 97% Self-correction 1:14 Comprehension 4/5	Level 24, 9-9.5 years Accuracy 94.7% Self-correction 1:3 Comprehension 1/5
Words their way assessment	Single consonants 7/7 Short vowels 5/5 Digraphs 5/6 Blends 6/7 Long vowel patterns 3/5 Other vowel patterns 2/7 Syllables, junctures, consonant doubling, prefixes and suffixes 10/24 Bases and root words 0/5	Single consonants 7/7 Short vowels 5/5 Digraphs 6/6 Blends 7/7 Long vowel patterns 4/5 Other vowel patterns 4/7 Syllables, junctures, consonant doubling, prefixes and suffixes 15/24 Bases and root words 0/5

Figure 7: Summary of Naomi's results

4.5.4 Jack

Eve and I discussed whether I would complete any, all or some of the follow up assessments with Jack, given that they are not relevant to the goal which was set or the actions which had been taken. Eve was keen for me to proceed with the assessments so we made a plan to complete them with Jack at school. We also discussed the follow-up parent surveys and determine that these were not relevant as Eve believed she had not changed her approach to Jack's reading at all. We booked a time and date when I would return to share the results with Eve and collect the most recently borrowed book.

4.5.4.1 Attitude Survey

The survey showed that Jack generally had a slightly negative attitude towards reading at school and at home. Jack reported disliking; reading on a rainy Saturday, reading in school during free time, starting a new book, reading different kinds of books, doing reading worksheets, reading school books,

learning from a book, doing a reading test, using a dictionary and reading instead of playing. When converted to numerical scores, this corresponds to an overall score of 46/80 with an individual score of 25/40 for recreational reading, and 21/40 for reading at school. At the beginning of the study, Jack's overall score was 56/80 with an individual score of 27/40 for recreational reading, and 29/40 for reading at school. According to the test tool information (McKenna & Kear, 1990) this is a significant negative change in attitude regarding Jack's attitude to reading at school and his overall attitude toward reading. There is no significance in the change in his score on items related to reading at home.

4.5.4.2 Running Record

I administered a running record at level 30 (reading age 11.5-12 years). Although this was only one level higher than the previous text, it was the most difficult reading passage in the test kit. Jack read this passage with 100% accuracy. His oral reading was fluent, expressive and confident. His retelling of the passage covered main events in the correct sequence. Of the five specific comprehension questions he answered 4 correctly. On the remaining question he provided partial information but he was unable provide a detailed answer to all the aspects of question which was required to achieve a correct response.

4.5.4.3 Phonetic Assessment

The results of the phonetic assessment showed that Jack had maintained the use of all previously correct letter combinations. In addition, he was able to use five new letter combinations correctly; ai, mp, er, tt and le.

4.5.4.4 Assessment Conclusions

The assessment data showed that Jack had improved his phonetic skills. His attitude towards reading had become significantly more negative. The results of the running records are difficult to compare due to being unable to determine Jack's initial instructional level. However, given that his reading was more accurate on a more difficult text it can be implied that his reading skills improved but this is not quantifiable.

Eve and I discussed whether the reading assessment data about Jack that I had collected would be shared with Jack’s school, and if it was to be shared, how this would be done. Eve decided that she wanted to share the information and we discussed how to do this in ways which maintained Eve’s positive relationship with the school. The table below summarises these results.

Jack	Prior to parent coaching	Following parent coaching
Reading attitude survey	Total 56/80 27/40 recreational reading 29/40 reading at school	Total 46/80 25/40 recreational reading 21/40 reading at school
Running Record	Level 29, 11-11.5 years Accuracy 96% Self-correction 1:4 Comprehension 5/5	Level 30, 11.5-12 years Accuracy 100% Self-correction 0 Comprehension 4/5
Words their way assessment	Single consonants 7/7 Short vowels 5/5 Digraphs 5/6 Blends 7/7 Long vowel patterns 3/5 Other vowel patterns 5/7 Syllables, junctures, consonant doubling, prefixes and suffixes 12/24 Bases and root words 0/5	Single consonants 7/7 Short vowels 5/5 Digraphs 6/6 Blends 7/7 Long vowel patterns 4/5 Other vowel patterns 6/7 Syllables, junctures, consonant doubling, prefixes and suffixes 14/24 Bases and root words 0/5

Figure 8: Summary of Jack’s results

4.6 Research Question 5: Action and Change

The final research question was designed to illuminate the relationship (if any) between the actions of the parents and changes in the reading skills and attitude of children. The table following summarises the participation and results of each person in the study.

Participant and goal	Discussions with researcher	Implementation of strategies	Results for child
<p>Nigel and Kevin</p> <p>Developing deeper understanding of texts</p>	<p>6 sessions</p> <p>Building connections to text</p> <p>Discussion strategies for talking about books</p> <p>Using praise</p> <p>Text types</p>	<p>At least 3 reading times per week</p> <p>New reading routine</p> <p>Enjoying reading</p> <p>Discussing text</p> <p>Modelling correct pronunciation</p> <p>Explaining meaning of words</p> <p>Range of decoding strategies</p>	<p><u>Before</u></p> <p>Reading attitude 61/80</p> <p>Instructional reading level 27</p> <p><u>After</u></p> <p>Reading attitude 56/80</p> <p>Instructional reading level 30</p> <p>Increase of 18 months reading skill</p>
<p>Leanne and Adam</p> <p>Read at an age appropriate level</p>	<p>9 sessions</p> <p>Explicit phonetic teaching</p> <p>Assessing the reading level of a book</p> <p>Managing frustration</p> <p>Prediction</p> <p>Scaffolding vocabulary</p> <p>Decoding strategies</p> <p>Praise</p> <p>Contextual reading</p>	<p>At least 3 reading times per week</p> <p>Playing with sounds</p> <p>New family reading routines</p> <p>Enjoying reading</p> <p>Decoding strategies</p> <p>Finding books</p>	<p><u>Before</u></p> <p>Reading attitude 55/80</p> <p>Instructional reading level 22</p> <p><u>After</u></p> <p>Reading attitude 38/80</p> <p>Instructional reading level 25</p> <p>Increase of 18 months reading skill</p>
<p>Gwen and Naomi</p> <p>Building confidence in reading</p>	<p>9 sessions</p> <p>Reasons for not reading</p> <p>Small wins</p> <p>Encouragement</p> <p>Routines</p> <p>Book suggestions</p> <p>Discussing the story</p> <p>Online reading programme</p> <p>Reading recipe</p> <p>praise</p>	<p>2 supported reading times</p> <p>Responding if child choosing to read</p> <p>Reading aloud</p> <p>Sourcing books</p> <p>Read a recipe</p> <p>Read an email</p>	<p><u>Before</u></p> <p>Reading attitude 67/80</p> <p>Instructional reading level 23 independent</p> <p><u>After</u></p> <p>Reading attitude 55/80</p> <p>Instructional reading level 25</p> <p>Increase of approx. 6 months</p>

Participant and goal	Discussions with researcher	Implementation of strategies	Results for child
Eve and Jack Read a chapter book	3 sessions Supplying books	Did nothing	<u>Before</u> Reading attitude 56/80 Reading level greater than 29 <u>After</u> Reading attitude 46/80 Instructional reading level 30 Not possible to comment on increase.

Figure 9: Summary of participation and results

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter presented and analysed the data gathered during the research. Discussion of the findings occurs in the next chapter where themes emerging from the data are made explicit and linked to the literature.

Chapter 5 Discussion

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings presented in the previous chapter. Comparing and contrasting the varied experiences of the participants and the researcher with each participant allows for the development of insights which are grounded in the data. Linking these to literature allows deeper understandings to emerge.

Summary information regarding each pair of participants is provided below.

- Nigel was the father of Kevin. Nigel saw his family as a family of readers with access to many books in the home. Kevin was able to identify favourite books and authors. Kevin read at home and was read to. Prior to the intervention Kevin's instructional reading was at level 27. The goal for Kevin was to develop a deeper understanding of texts. Nigel attended six coaching sessions with me and read at least three times a week with Kevin. At the end of the intervention, Kevin's instructional reading level was 30, an increase of 18 months reading growth.
- Leanne was the mother of Adam. She reported that she did not read, her husband Dan read the news online but little else. There was an existing routine for the children of independent reading at bed time. There were no visible books in the house and the family did not own any books. Prior to the intervention Adam's instructional reading was at level 22. The goal for Adam was to read at an age appropriate level. Leanne attended nine coaching sessions with me and read at least three times a week with Adam. At the end of the intervention, Adam's instructional reading level was level 25, an increase of 18 months reading growth.

- Gwen was the mother of Naomi. She was a keen reader and writer. Other family members including Naomi's father and grandparents were keen readers. However, this keen readership and love of literature was not shared by Naomi. In the home there were frequently a few books on a table but much reading was done electronically. Prior to the intervention Naomi's independent reading was at level 23. The goal for Naomi was to develop a greater confidence as a reader. Gwen attended nine coaching sessions with me and participated with Naomi in two brief occurrences of supported reading. At the end of the intervention, Naomi's instructional reading level was level 25, an increase in reading growth equivalent to approximately six months progress.
- Eve was the mother of Jack. Both Eve and her partner were undertaking adult education. They were also fans of the writings of author, Terry Pratchett. In the home there were many books both on display and accessible. Prior to the intervention, Jack's independent reading was in excess of level 29. The goal for Jack was to read an entire chapter book. Eve attended three coaching sessions with me. At the end of the intervention, Jack's instructional reading level was level 30 and he had read several chapter books.

To maintain consistency, the topics discussed in this chapter follow the research questions and headings used in the previous chapter.

5.2 Partnership

Partnership was a central principle in this research. During the intervention, partnership was enacted within a community of practice as I collaborated with each participant to design specific and unique reading coaching for each child. A community of practice lens enabled the interactions between the participants and myself to be viewed as learning interactions.

5.2.1 The development of partnership

Existing research identifies a range of factors which enable relationships to develop between researchers and participants (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Duchan, 2014; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006; Gerson & Horowitz, 2002; Makar & O'Brien, 2013; Pitts & Miller-Day, 2007). Common to all these studies is recognition of the importance of interpersonal skills. These were particularly evident at the beginning of the intervention as I consciously used a range of strategies to make a personal connection with each participant. However, the development of a partnership requires more than just the enactment of effective interpersonal skills as a partnership is a unique type of relationship. Idol et al. (1994) define a partnership as a relationship where members have equal status (thus reducing the power differential) and may have differing roles or areas of expertise. This is the model that informed the research design. In this research I sought equality between myself and the parents through acknowledging the parents as experts on their home culture and their child while I positioned myself as the expert in reading strategies.

This model of partnership was achieved easily between Nigel and me. In part this could be attributed to the unique antecedents to our partnership as Nigel had recently completed a doctoral qualification. As well as helping his son to become a better reader, Nigel saw his participation in this research as a way to contribute to the academic community. Nigel's secondary agenda contributed to his commitment to being a model participant as he was fully aware of the needs of a researcher doing research. With Nigel, a partnership developed which was based on sharing our varied expertise through conversation.

Evidence of this partnership included: shared goal setting, balanced conversation with both parties contributing, opportunities to disagree, celebrating successes, building reading practice on existing home interests, routines and dynamics.

Examples of potential barriers to collaboration in educational settings have been identified in the research and discussed in chapter two. The design of this

research sought to minimise occurrence of identified barriers. For example, to avoid the barrier of engagement (Bull et al., 2008; Feiler et al., 2008; Patrikakou et al., 2005; Turney & Kao, 2009), participants chose the time and venue of meetings enabling family and work commitments to be met and minimising the need for travel. Furthermore, there was no financial obligation to participate. To avoid barriers which can prevent parents engaging with schools (Bull et al., 2008; Ferrara, 2009; Ji & Koblinsky, 2009; Muscott et al., 2008; Risko & Walker-Dalhouse, 2009; Turney & Kao, 2009), I made clear in written materials and at face to face meetings that I was not a representative of a school. To avoid any preconceptions and negative attitudes that teachers may have towards parents (Bull et al., 2008; Compton-Lilly, 2003; Ferrara, 2009; Lopez & Donovan, 2009; Muscott et al., 2008; Patrikakou et al., 2005) I had no prior perception of the participants. By reducing these barriers, the objective was to enable parents to participate fully in partnership with me.

Despite the attempts made to avoid barriers that had previously been identified in research, some parents did not readily accept a model of equal status partnership. At times, Leanne and I held conflicting ideas about the form of our relationship. Despite initial conversations which laid the groundwork for the acknowledgement of differing expertise within our relationship, there were occasions when Leanne appeared to put greater value upon my expertise than on her own. This point was evident in two conversations that we had where she indicated that she thought her role was to do what the 'expert' (me) directed her to do. However, when these views became apparent they offered an opportunity to explicitly discuss our respective roles within the intervention, to work towards a resolution and consequently to create a stronger partnership. These events are congruent with the findings of Rogoff et al. (2001) who state that collaboration is not a static entity but is evolving and dynamic. It seems that this barrier to partnership was not caused by any particular circumstance which occurred during the intervention but by Leanne's pre-existing beliefs about our roles in the research.

The conflict about partnership that Leanne and I experienced became a positive experience as it was resolved well and led to a more balanced partnership. However, alternate views regarding roles in the research could be problematic if they were not resolved. Perhaps the initial explicit conversation about partnership needed to be cemented with an activity or task which provided an immediate opportunity to enact partnership and then discuss the implications for the future within the context of the research. Another option may be to create a visual aid as a reminder of the principles of partnership and display this during each meeting.

I was able to achieve a relationship with Gwen. While it fitted the definition of partnership offered by Idol et al. (1994) where we both had equal status and differing roles and expertise it was not a partnership which led to action or goal satisfaction. I found myself taking on a range of roles within our relationship. While this did include the role of 'reading expert,' this role was minimised as I was positioned by Gwen, variously, as confidant, confessor, advisor, friend and student. What appeared to be lacking in our partnership was the joining together of our varied expertise. This could indicate that partnership alone was a necessary but not sufficient condition to impact reading. Alternately, Idol et al's definition of partnership as a relationship where members have equal status and differing roles and expertise might need expanding to include the concepts of connected expertise and productive action. This revised perspective is closer to Idol et al's definition of collaboration where people with differing expertise contribute to the production of a new solution.

Partnership with Eve began well but we had limited opportunities to develop our relationship due to the limited number and short duration of our meetings. Furthermore, I often spent as much time conversing with Jack as I did with Eve. Another factor which impacted our partnership was that the shared goal chosen for Jack was achieved without parental coaching.

Pitts and Miller-Day (2007) argue that the quality of the relationship between the researcher and participants can have an impact on the outcomes of an

intervention. The current research supports this view. In this research, a quality relationship was equated with the development of a productive partnership in which interpersonal regard and rapport were matched by successful action taken towards a goal. Such a relationship characterised the participation of both Nigel and Leanne. Although it is impossible to attribute causality from a strong relationship to effective action, the strong relationship did contribute to my understanding of the participants' unique context which in turn impacted the choice of suggested coaching strategies for the parent's to use with their child. In contrast, the lack of partnership with Gwen may have contributed to the limited action that she took to support Naomi's reading and the subsequent lack of change in Naomi's reading.

5.2.2 Shared goal setting

In this research, goal setting was a collaborative act between myself and each parent. Each child's goal was informed by parental learning priorities as recommended by researcher including, Fletcher et al. (2010); Fletcher et al. (2009) and reading assessment data as endorsed by Nicholson and Tunmer (2011). Shared goal setting was planned to ensure that both parents and I had a legitimised voice and were working towards achieving the same outcome which avoided the situation where the researcher and parents had competing agendas (Coco et al., 2007; Cooper, 2009; Muscott et al., 2008).

Defining a shared goal with Nigel was straightforward. He was in agreement with the results of the assessment tasks that I shared with him and rapidly selected a goal which supported his perceptions of Kevin and the assessment data. However, as the intervention progressed a range of more specific, immediate goals or learning opportunities were identified by Nigel as he supported Kevin's reading. Responding to these minor goals meant that the intervention could be flexible and remain useful for both Nigel and Kevin. As Nigel initiated the more specific goals, the evolving intervention provided opportunities for valuing home culture which is recognised as important by a

range of authors (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Freire, 1970; Gorinski, 2005; Woolfolk, 1998).

When Leanne and I negotiated the reading goal for Adam, Leanne appeared to have adopted a school based discourse as her priority, saying “I just want him to be able to read for his age.” In hindsight it would have been illuminating to probe Leanne’s understanding of this concept but I missed the opportunity. Leanne’s view could be another example of her minimising the importance of her own knowledge and understandings in favour of an ‘expert’ view. Perhaps she put more emphasis on the assessment data rather than her own views given that the assessment data came from an ‘expert’ and that it was focussed on certain types of reading behaviours viewed as desirable by schools. This hypothesis is supported by the differing conceptions of partnership which arose between Leanne and me which were discussed in the previous section. Despite Leanne adopting a perspective which minimised her value and placed greater emphasis on my expertise, the shared goal still provided a platform for varied expertise and home literacy practices to be enacted as recommended by a number of researchers (Brown et al., 2012; Compton-Lilly, 2003; Fletcher et al., 2010; Fletcher et al., 2009; Heath, 1983; Lynch, 2009; Miano, 2011; Morrow & Young, 1997b; Purcell-Gates, 1996).

Shared goal setting with Gwen began with an examination of Naomi’s assessment data. Gwen was the only participant who voiced any disagreement with the assessment results, commenting that the initial attitude survey answers did not match her perception of Naomi’s attitude toward reading. The final goal that was chosen, to build Naomi’s confidence as a reader and for Naomi to read frequently was not easy to evaluate. The terms ‘confidence’ and ‘frequently’ are qualitatively difficult to measure and are open to interpretation. This loosely formed goal may have contributed to Gwen’s sense of dissatisfaction with the intervention.

Shared goal setting with Eve was a drawn out process as she attempted to integrate three disparate sources of knowledge; the school’s view of Jack as a

reader (poor skills), her own aspirations for Jack (engaging in reading as a social practice and as access to education) and the current assessment data (good reading skills). After much discussion, Eve settled on a goal which appeared to prioritise her aspirations without negating the other points of view. The process of discussion and negotiation that occurred prior to selecting a single goal showcased the potential of shared goal setting to enable collaboration. Collaboration with parents within a partnership is valued by a number of researchers (Bryan & Henry, 2012; Lee & Hudson, 2011; Ministry of Education, 2011; Mitchell, 2010; Pitts & Miller-Day, 2007; Robertson, 2005; Wenger, 1998; Wenger, 2009).

Overall, shared goal setting was a valuable facet of this intervention. It contributed to the fulfilment of the fundamental intervention principles (partnership, valuing home culture, utilising a range of reading strategies). Partnership occurred with all participants as shared goal setting was a collaborative action. This stance is supported by the work of a number of researchers including: Bryan and Henry (2012); Lee and Hudson (2011); Ministry of Education (2011); Mitchell et al. (2010); Pitts and Miller-Day (2007); Robertson (2005); Wenger (1998); (Wenger, 2009). Shared goal setting illustrates the value placed on home practices within this intervention, a point reinforced by a number of researchers (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Freire, 1970; Gorinski, 2005; Woolfolk, 1998). Shared goal setting provided a launching platform for the enactment of varied expertise and home literacy practices which is recognised in research as important (Brown et al., 2012; Compton-Lilly, 2003; Fletcher et al., 2010; Fletcher et al., 2009; Lynch, 2009; Miano, 2011; Morrow & Young, 1997b; Purcell-Gates, 1996).

5.2.3 The co-construction of coaching strategies

The co-construction of coaching strategies was congruent with all the principles of this intervention: partnership, valuing home culture and utilising a range of reading strategies (as discussed previously). Discussions between myself and each of the participants allowed both parties to learn from each other and utilise

their respective and varied expertise. Following meetings, the parents were able to contextualise reading suggestions and apply them during reading with their child. Building on the ideas of Freire (1970) and Topping (2000), it was anticipated that parents would be able to effectively mediate between the text and their child. The parent diary provided a record of action, successes and issues which could form the basis of future discussions between participants and myself. This iterative approach was a strength of the research as it allowed for immediate concerns to be addressed.

During the intervention, the participants implemented a variety of new strategies when reading with their child. Strategies included: various ways of responding to errors when the child read aloud, choosing appropriate books (based on interest and reading level), scaffolding specific vocabulary prior to reading, reading a variety of genre, understanding the textual demands of particular genre, creating opportunities to read, talking about books, making reading fun, and managing frustration during reading and contextual reading.

It appeared that both Nigel and Leanne were generally able to operationalise the ideas we discussed into actions taken with their children. However, there were some exceptions including Leanne's struggle to apply the phonetic based teaching we had discussed. Both Nigel and Leanne shared successes as well as issues and suggestions for reading time with their child during discussions. Together, through conversation, we labelled, evaluated, linked, built on, reshaped, and considered the application of strategies. These conversations showcased how our varied expertise could be connected for the benefit of the child.

Leanne had difficulties with some of the phonetic strategies I introduced her to. Initial strategies (such as sound differentiation games) were a good match with Leanne's knowledge and existing family practices and therefore easy for her to implement successfully. However, Leanne struggled as we began to explore long and short vowel sounds. This occurred in part because I overestimated her personal phonological knowledge. She did not have sufficient knowledge to

support Adam's learning as the concepts became more subtle, difficult to differentiate aurally and more abstract. Second, some of the activities I suggested to support Adam's learning were classroom based activities which were not easily compatible with Leanne's family practices. The effect of trying to simultaneously implement new knowledge and new practices led to Leanne feeling overwhelmed, frustrated and only partly successful.

Constructing reading strategies with Gwen was a markedly different process to working alongside Nigel and Leanne. Gwen was generally reluctant to commit to any course of action. The actions that Gwen did take were spontaneous unique events initiated by Naomi such as reading emails and a recipe for cooking. I was unable to support Gwen to transfer, develop or replicate any skills used during reading to other reading situations. I did not manage to prompt Gwen to initiate reading where Naomi read to her. The barrier for Gwen to participate in the intervention could have been the same issue that Leanne faced when challenged by the complex phonetic instruction. That is, Gwen had no existing practices which supported her in engaging Naomi in reading and needed to apply new knowledge at the same time as develop new practices. This finding is similar to that of Dolezal-Sams et al. (2009) who found that a broad range of factors variously supported and hindered parent-child reading in the home. Additionally, the apparent lack of a foundation of positive social interactions between Gwen and Naomi may have contributed to Gwen's difficulty in using relational based strategies to support Naomi's reading. This finding is congruent with the research of Rhyner et al. (2009) who state that literacy skills grow within warm, nurturing parent child relationships.

To successfully support a parent to implement co-constructed reading strategies it appears that I needed to either introduce new knowledge and support the parent to use that within existing home practices or, to introduce new practices that provided a new opportunity for the use of the parent's existing knowledge. Introducing new knowledge and new practices simultaneously lead to some participants becoming overwhelmed and ultimately taking no action.

When new strategies were introduced, it was through discussion.

Demonstration or modelling the strategy may have supported deeper understanding which in turn could have led to greater application. However, one of the difficulties with demonstrating strategies is that the parents may have had less opportunity to personalise or co-construct the strategy to fit with their particular context. Alternatively, the participants may have inferred from watching or participating in demonstrations that their role was to simply follow the instructions which would have negated one of the main points of this research; that parental support was personalised by the parent to fit their particular context.

In the instances where the co-construction of strategies occurred, it appeared to be a highly effective vehicle for developing reading support strategies to be used by the parents. However, in this research this process was highly dependent on my skills and the parents' existing practices and knowledge. My interpersonal skills were important in establishing trust and building partnership which allowed for the process of collaboration to occur. Secondly, I needed a good working knowledge of reading strategies that could be recalled rapidly.

The co-construction of reading strategies also appeared to be dependent on the parent's existing knowledge and strategies and their normal interactions with their child. If the parent had some knowledge and/or practices that could be built upon it appeared that they were more likely to be successful. One example of this occurred when Nigel wanted Kevin to read the newspaper. Reading the newspaper was a frequent and familiar task for Nigel and provided a useful context for exploring possible approaches and the skills Kevin required to ensure he would be able to succeed in the task. Nigel then was able to utilise this new knowledge to augment an existing practice and turn this into a beneficial reading coaching session. Similarly, Leanne was able to use her repertoire of familiar positive interactions with Adam to make reading fun for him. In this manner, both Nigel and Leanne exploited the affordances of situated practice to coach their sons. In contrast, Gwen's relationship with Naomi appeared to be characterised by organisation, discipline, stress and discord. When I attempted

to coach Gwen to use a range of positive strategies she was unable to enact either the new way of relating to Naomi or the reading support strategies. It seems that the reading interactions between parent and child were of a similar nature to other interactions in their daily lives.

5.2.4 The use of support and encouragement

In this intervention support and encouragement were used in two ways: the researcher providing support and encouragement to participants and participants providing support and encouragement to their child during reading. Support and encouragement were planned as part of the intervention in order to keep engagement and motivation high. Furthermore support and encouragement provided opportunities for labelling strategies in use which may lead to metacognitive awareness for both parent and child. In turn, this is expected to lead to an increase in the use of a range of a range of reading support strategies by parents and a range of decoding strategies by children. The use of a range of reading strategies is regarded as an important factor in becoming a skilled reader (Anderson, 2009; Clay, 1985; National Reading Panel, 2000; Scarborough, 2001; Tompkins, 2014).

During the intervention, Nigel became adept at generating praise and acknowledgement for himself as he recounted successful reading sessions with Kevin. He appeared to gain enjoyment and satisfaction from successful reading sessions with Kevin. Over time Nigel was able to provide explanations for occurrences of successful reading session such as catering to Kevin's interests and utilising his prior knowledge. On occasion when there were unexpected difficulties with the reading session Nigel explained these as specific to the particular text and never to any deficit in Kevin or himself.

Leanne initially sought acknowledgment or approval from me for actions she had taken during reading with Adam. In a subtle manner, this served to reinforce my position as an 'expert' and diminish her status in the partnership to a more submissive role. Over time, with specific prompting, she became more positively reflective of reading sessions with Adam and was more willing to report on what

went well and accept responsibility for this. As the intervention progressed, Leanne's ability to generate her own praise contributed to the re-balancing of our status within the partnership.

During meetings with Gwen it was difficult to find opportunities to acknowledge her successes when reading with Naomi because she engaged in little actual reading. At those times when acknowledgement was offered it was generally brushed aside by Gwen. Even when Gwen could acknowledge something that had gone well, for example that Naomi had done some reading, she was quick to turn this into a negative statement; "Well I haven't made much of an effort."

Providing support, encouragement and praise to the participants required sensitive use of interpersonal skills. Primarily, feedback needed to be provided empathetically in a discerning manner (responsive to the participant) and with sincerity. Candlin and Roger (2013) define empathy as having two domains, cognitive and affective. Providing appropriate praise to the participants required both these elements.

None of the participants was able to implement the strategy of using specific praise during reading with their children. Specific praise could be defined as the parent providing both acknowledgement and a label when the child used a strategy. For example, saying: "Great, you figured out that word by sounding out the letters." This topic was raised during multiple meetings with both Nigel and Leanne and on several occasions with Gwen. The lack of application could be due to several reasons: the participants did not see the point of the strategy so they did not attempt to use it. The participants may have prioritised other strategies ahead of this. Alternatively, the participants had not gained sufficient knowledge of reading strategies to be able to quickly label the right strategy before the moment had passed. Or, further, explicit praise did not typify interactions in their relationship with their child and felt too foreign to attempt. Specific praise can promote metacognition as children can label the strategies they use and then use labelled strategies consciously to support decoding and

self-monitoring (Clay, 1985). The absence of specific feedback from parents may hinder children's ability to monitor their own use and application of strategies.

5.2.5 *The extent to which participants were active*

Increased reading at home has already been shown in published research to have a beneficial effect on reading skills (McNaughton et al., 2013; White & Kim, 2008). This research aimed to build on this foundation by increasing reading at home and simultaneously improving the impact of time spent reading by enabling the parents to provide targeted support which would boost particular reading skills. Parent actions taken in support of their child's reading was a useful measure that helped to investigate the effectiveness of the approach.

Throughout the intervention, both Nigel and Leanne were consistently active participants. They both engaged with me in the development of a productive partnership. They contributed ideas to discussions. They were both keen to listen to suggestions, try new ideas and were increasingly able to successfully modify suggestions to be responsive to their child during reading sessions. They consistently read with their child at least three times a week and used the strategies we had discussed when reading with their child. They both became better at gauging the appropriate level of a text for their child to read. They both actively sought to use a variety of texts that they believed their child would find enjoyable and engaging. They both became more responsive to the feedback from their child towards particular types of reading. Both Nigel and Leanne adapted and created practices and expectations with regard to reading which were congruent with existing household routines. Interestingly, they both began to spontaneously use the reading techniques with their other children. This may imply that they saw value and success in the reading with their child who was the focus of the intervention.

The participation of Nigel and Leanne was in contrast to Gwen's participation. As discussed above, Gwen and I did not achieve a productive collaborative partnership which was focussed on achieving reading benefits for Naomi. Gwen appeared reluctant to proactively engage Naomi in reading with her and this led

to limited opportunities to implement any strategies we had discussed. Gwen did resurrect a previously used routine of reading aloud at dinner time to both her children. She did borrow some library books for Naomi. She reported on two occurrences of brief spontaneous reading that Naomi did but she never initiated reading with Naomi. At times she prevented Naomi from engaging in reading by removing her electronic devices as a punishment. Dolezal-Sams et al. (2009) found that home reading support alone may not be enough to impact reading in the home. Some families in their study needed additional support in order to be able to utilise help with reading. This may have been the case with Gwen as she frequently appeared to prioritise household matters, health and behaviour management above reading.

It is interesting to note that the parents with whom the strongest partnerships were formed (Nigel and Leanne) were the most active in the intervention. This may imply that partnership is an important factor in the successful implementation of new practices.

5.3 Parental Coaching

The previous section of this chapter focussed on the ways in which the researcher and the parents worked together. This section discusses what the parents did during reading with their children.

5.3.1 The implementation of coaching strategies

Fletcher et al. (2012) found that a range of key actions were pivotal in the classroom to promote engagement in reading: reading aloud, discussion about text, access to interesting material, explicit and engaging teaching, encouragement and fun. In relation to the findings of the current study, it appears that the same elements are important in a home setting too. Leanne and Nigel engaged their children in reading using (at different times) all of the above strategies. In addition, these were individually contextualised for each child within the existing family culture.

Nigel engaged his son in a variety of new reading experiences. He introduced Kevin to a variety of text types. Nigel learned about the varied skills needed to read different genre and successfully supported Kevin through a range of fiction and non-fiction texts. Nigel promoted engagement in reading through conversation; he developed a broad range of questions to ask Kevin and also positioned Kevin in the role of questioner. When Kevin made a reading error, Nigel would variously prompt him to: sound out letters, supply and discuss the meaning of the word and related words. He developed awareness of the process of scaffolding unfamiliar words and concepts prior to reading and was able to utilise Kevin's prior knowledge of a topic to support his reading. Nigel became more responsive to Kevin.

Prior to the intervention, Leanne's only strategy for supporting Adam when he read a word he did not know was to prompt him to guess. During the intervention, Leanne learned how to support Adam to use a range of new decoding strategies including using phonetic knowledge (syllables, letters and sounds), reading on and re-reading, using pictures, and at times telling him the word. Additionally, she knew to encourage cross checking when Adam was unsure of a word. Leanne developed skills in choosing appropriate books for Adam based on both reading level and interest. She developed a more interactive reading routine. Additionally, Leanne was supportive of Adam's new interest in owning books which is a practice linked to good reading (Duffy Books in Homes; Thompson et al., 2011). Leanne began to value reading more as she recognised the value of reading in context. She did attempt to engage Adam in specific phonetic coaching even though this was not entirely successful.

During meetings with Gwen, we discussed a range of strategies and made plans for suggested activities to be carried out. Gwen appeared to be in agreement with particular approaches. However, there was minimal follow through and limited implementation of anything we had discussed. Gwen did source some books of interest and did more reading aloud to Naomi and her brother. Following on from read aloud sessions, Gwen reported that a concept from a book had entered their family conversations. She reported on several occasions

where Naomi had engaged in spontaneous reading but Gwen did not implement any specific reading strategies during these sessions. Throughout the intervention Gwen did not initiate any reading with Naomi.

At the end of the intervention Eve reported that she had done “nothing different” with Jack and was at a loss to explain how the reading goal had been achieved. Eve had previously used the identical strategy that I implemented (providing Jack with reading material which aimed to interest him and inspire him to read) but she found this to be unsuccessful with Jack. There could be a number of explanations for why this strategy worked with me and not with Eve. It could have been a matter of luck and good timing that one of the books I provided Jack with appealed greatly to him. Perhaps this strategy is more likely to be successful when repeated. Perhaps the parenting issues which Eve had shared had impacted their relationship and therefore created a barrier for Jack in accepting help, support or guidance from his mother regarding reading. Another possible explanation is that Eve and Jack’s pre-existing home literacy practices (which were based around being fans of Terry Pratchett’s Disc World series) were significantly different from the school based literacy practices which Jack had experienced. My presence in the both home and school and the conversations I had with Jack and Eve may have served to legitimise both the literacy practices of school and the literacy practices of home. Perhaps this enabled Jack to bridge the previously disparate worlds of home and school more effectively and engage in school based reading in his home.

The findings appear to indicate that the collaborative partnership approach, when implemented well, can lead to enhanced knowledge and use of a variety of individualised reading strategies. This point complements the findings of (Lam & Kwong, 2012) as discussed in the literature review chapter, who report that it is important to engender a sense of agency in parents so that they can take on new ideas and adapt them confidently. In this research, collaborative partnership fostered this sense of agency with participants.

5.3.2 Parents' reported experience of participation

This facet of the research was designed to provide a source of evidence distinct from my own views of the research. Evidence gathered from multiple sources results in a more robust study (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). Furthermore, asking for feedback from participants is congruent with maintaining equal status within a partnership (Idol et al., 1994).

Nigel reported that he found the experience of participating in the research positive. He found benefits for himself and for Kevin as a reader. He also reported that because of reading together his relationship with Kevin had been enhanced.

Leanne volunteered that her confidence grew during the intervention both in regard to her skills in supporting Adam with reading and her skills in general as a parent. She also reported feeling much less stressed and concerned about Adam's future. Leanne commented that she had enjoyed the relaxed nature of the study and felt happy.

Gwen was reluctant to discuss the intervention but did communicate a disappointment that Naomi's reading was not 'fixed.' Gwen's attitude towards Naomi's reading appeared congruent with her overall perceptions and expectations about Naomi and with her ongoing difficulty to identify and acknowledge Naomi's strengths. This finding is congruent with Buckingham and colleagues work (Buckingham et al., 2013) who report that numerous studies have found that parental attitude and expectations are important predictors of reading skill. This finding is also supported by Bus (2003) who found that early literacy development optimally occurred within emotionally warm and supportive parent child relationships.

Despite limited activity during the research, Eve was positive about the intervention. However, we both agreed that it was difficult to attribute any changes in Jack's reading to any specific influence within the intervention.

The findings appear to show that collaborative partnership and purposeful activity lead to a positive experience of the intervention.

5.3.3 Parents' perspective on their child's reading progress during the study

The parent participants in this study aimed to coach their children in reading. Parent perspectives on their own child's reading progress form an important measure of the success of the intervention. A number of researchers (Compton-Lilly, 2003; Fletcher et al., 2010; Fletcher et al., 2009; Lynch, 2009; Morrow & Young, 1997b; Purcell-Gates, 1996) acknowledge that it may be difficult for researchers schooled in traditional literacy to identify non-mainstream practices which contribute to literacy development. As the coaching was embedded in family practices this aspect of the research was designed to give voice to parent priorities and enable them to comment on any change which may not have been visible via the assessment tools.

Nigel believed that Kevin's reading skills improved during the intervention. He also reported that reading together had boosted Kevin's self-confidence and led to an improved attitude to reading and to learning in general. At the end of the intervention, Nigel reported that Kevin was keen to read and was much more engaged in choosing books to read. He routinely read at bedtime instead of engaging in the previous routine of TV watching.

Leanne shared that she had seen a change in attitude in both herself and Adam. At the end of the intervention Leanne believed that Adam viewed reading positively. Leanne was no longer frustrated by Adam's reading. Additionally, she saw reading as fun and enjoyable time together. Overall she was proud, proud of herself and the new skills she had acquired and proud of Adam and improvements in his reading.

Gwen recognised that Naomi had made minimal progress in reading. She also concluded that she was now concerned about Naomi's comprehension.

Perhaps this concern demonstrates that she had developed a deeper understanding of Naomi's reading processes.

Eve reported that she now saw a new future for Jack as a successful learner and a reader. Perhaps, as a result of participating in the intervention she had become less stressed or worried about Jack's reading. This may have resulted in subtle but important changes in her attitude which Jack responded to. Parental attitude toward reading has been found to have an impact on children's reading (Buckingham et al., 2013) Perhaps Eve's changed attitude gave Jack a new freedom to engage in reading and by doing so he discovered reading was a worthwhile use of his time.

Nigel and Leanne's positive view of their sons' reading improvement may have kept them motivated during the intervention.

5.4 Follow-Up Data

One criticism made of some parent based reading programmes is that the impact of the intervention is measured only by parental opinion (Ellis, 1996). While parent views are an important perspective, comparing these with other sources of data in a process of triangulation strengthens the research by increasing the validity of the results (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006).

5.4.1 Attitude Survey

Comparisons of the results of the reading attitude survey taken before and after the intervention were varied. Kevin's results showed no statistically significant change. Adam and Naomi were both statistically significantly more negative towards both academic and recreational reading. Jack's attitude toward reading in school was statistically significantly more negative but there was no significant change in his attitude towards recreational reading. Kevin and Adam's results were contrary to the reported views of their parents who stated that by the end of the intervention their child appeared to be enjoying reading much more and

engaging in spontaneous self-directed reading more. They also reported that reading had become an enjoyable shared experience.

There are several possible explanations for these discrepant results. There could be some issues with the test tool. The test tool may not be a reliable tool for repeated measures over a relatively short time frame. There appears to be no published literature regarding this tool in relation to an optimal repeat schedule. However, one of the stated uses in the literature is for pre and post intervention comparison (McKenna & Kear, 1990) The items in the assessment tool relating to recreational reading do not specifically seek opinions about reading with a parent at home so the results may not be reflective of the children's experiences of reading with their parent. Rather, the results reflect children's attitude to reading as a whole. As this tool contains a four point Likert scale it may not be sufficiently sensitive to accurately measure shifts in attitude over a relatively short time frame. However, the test tool literature does address this point. McKenna and Kear (1990) state that a four point Likert scale is appropriate to use with children as it reduces confusion.

A range of external factors may have also affected both the first and final responses that the children chose. At the time of the initial survey I had no relationship with the children and a limited relationship with their parents. The survey was conducted at school. These factors could have contributed to the children initially choosing more positive responses in order to conform to their anticipated or implied expectations of adults within a school environment. At the time of the final survey I had built a relationship with Jack and Naomi (but not Kevin or Adam) through visits to their homes when they were present. This could have impacted the final scores for Jack and Naomi as they were more comfortable with me. Gwen believed that the initial survey completed by Naomi was highly inaccurate and the final survey more reflective of Naomi's real attitude. This point is supported by her comment when she viewed Naomi's post-intervention data, "This seems more honest."

Alternatively, the survey results might suggest that the children had not enjoyed reading with their parents as much as the parents had enjoyed it. One explanation for this could be that the parents believed that their child would share their own positive attitudes toward the reading sessions they had had with their child. This may have occurred as they reported to me what they thought I wanted to hear in the coaching sessions. Alternatively, it could be that the parents saw their impact as positive because they were invested in the process of coaching their child.

Given that there is a wealth of research literature that comments on the strong correlation between enjoyment of reading and reading skill (Biddulph, 1983; Chapman & Tunmer, 1995; Clark & De Zoysa, 2011; Fletcher et al., 2012; McKenna & Kear, 1990; Ministry of Education, 2003, 2006) the lack of positive change in reading attitude as determined by the survey, is concerning.

5.4.2 *Running Record*

Comparison of the reading assessment results before and after the intervention reveal that all children appeared to be able to cope better with more challenging reading material after the intervention. During the intervention both Kevin and Adam's reading age improved by 18 months and the goals of both were achieved. This is beyond the expected growth over the five months of the intervention. Naomi had made six months growth in reading skills during the intervention. This is unlikely to be significant due to the duration of the intervention. Change in Jack's instructional reading level was not able to be confidently measured due to his initial assessment being inconclusive.

5.4.3 *Phonetic assessment*

Comparison of the phonetic assessment data before and after the intervention provided a measure of growth in a reading related skill area. All children in the study improved their phonetic knowledge during the study. However, this growth is not beyond what might be expected given the duration of the intervention (Bear et al., 2004).

5.5 Action and Change

It is affirming of the intent of this study that the parents who were active participants in the study, namely Nigel and Leanne, were able to engender significant growth in the reading skills of their child. Conversely, the parent who did not actively participate in the intervention, Gwen, did not contribute to any significant change in reading skill in her daughter, Naomi.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the significance of the findings produced by the research. The following chapter will outline the contributions to research that this study makes. It will comment on the strengths and limitations of the study and opportunities for further research in this field.

Chapter 6 - Commentary

6.1 Introduction

This research project grew out of a concern for children who experience difficulty learning to read and a desire to contribute to the research knowledge regarding remedial approaches in reading. I chose to focus my research on working with parents of children who were struggling to learn to read. After reviewing the relevant literature, I designed and implemented an intervention which aimed to create a partnership within which the reading knowledge of the researcher and each family's unique home culture were combined to develop contextually specific reading support strategies for parents to enact when supporting their child's reading. The results of this study suggest that this intervention has the potential to support parents to have a positive impact on their child's reading skill.

This chapter concludes this thesis. It reflects on the study and provides a commentary on the aims of the research. The limitations of the current study are discussed and opportunities for further research are suggested. The contributions to research from this study are identified. Groups of people who may be interested in this research are proposed and the implications for these groups are discussed. A final conclusion is offered.

6.2 Meeting the Aims of the Research

The aim of this research was to design and investigate a collaborative intervention whereby parents are supported to take actions to improve their children's reading. To enable a broad understanding of this intervention a range of aspects was examined. These included the coaching sessions with parents, parents' tutoring actions, the children's reading and finally the relationship between each of these aspects. The research design supported the development and implementation of the intervention, the gathering and analysis of data and the exploration of a range of insights from the data.

6.3 Limitations and Future Directions

The purpose of this section is to identify and discuss the limitations of the current study. The factors which constrained also this study provide new opportunities for further research which are discussed.

6.3.1 Size of the Study

Although a small sample was appropriate for the research and for the scope of a research project for Doctoral study, the next phase of this study could be to work with a larger group of parents to confirm if the positive results can be replicated. Furthermore, working with a larger group of parents, who are more diverse than the parents in this study, may lead to further insights into useful practices, perhaps exploring the specific factors that contribute to promoting engagement and action.

Undertaking this intervention took a considerable time commitment as I met individually with each parent, each week. Although this provided opportunities for the development of partnership and a high level of personalisation, it limited the number of parents who could participate in the intervention. An opportunity to maximise the number of participants in the intervention could occur if the intervention was modified to take place in a group setting. While a group setting may reduce the level of personalisation it might become less important as other potential benefits may emerge for parents. For example, it may be useful for parents to make connections with other parents, to share concerns and successes and learn from each other as reported by Lam and Kwong (2012). In this manner the community of practice would be widened placing less emphasis on the views of the 'expert' group leader and more emphasis on the collective wisdom of the group members.

6.3.2 Replication

A significant implication for the future of this research centres on the design of this study which was heavily reliant on the individual researcher's skills. In this

research project, good interpersonal skills and a broad knowledge of reading strategies were necessary. If this intervention is to have a widespread impact then other parent reading support coaches or facilitators would need to be sought and trained. There would need to be a robust selection process which took into consideration the importance of interpersonal skills in this intervention. Following selection, potential parent reading partners would require further training on how to develop partnerships with parents (possibly including developing cultural awareness depending on the community and the existing competency of the individual), how to undertake reading assessments, and how to lead the co-construction of reading support strategies. This could be an avenue for further research where the focus would be primarily on the learning journey of the parent reading support coaches.

6.3.3 Researcher Skew

Within this research I held two roles, one as a researcher and one as an intervention partner. As a researcher my interests were in the literature which informed the study, the design of the intervention, the methods, the data which was generated and interpreting the data. As the intervention partner, my focus was the face to face interactions with each participant and carrying out the intervention in the manner in which it had been designed. These roles were complementary and lead to strengthening the research through a high level of responsiveness. However, there is also a potential tension between these roles. Being both researcher and intervention partner I had a strong interest in the success of the intervention. I mitigated the potential for skew by using multiple data sources, identifying convergence and divergence, using supervisors as critical friends to comment my interpretation of observations and data. A further way to reduce researcher bias in the future could be through the evaluation of other people while they undertake a similar intervention.

6.3.4 Reading Attitude Survey

This research highlighted some anomalies with the reading attitude survey tool, the Garfield Scale (McKenna & Kear, 1990). The construction of a valid and reliable tool for assessing New Zealand children's attitude to reading in school and at home would be useful for researchers, parents and classroom teachers. The new tool could be designed to be more culturally responsive, in particular to Maori as the indigenous people of New Zealand but also inclusive of New Zealand's diverse population and multiple ways of engaging with literacy in contemporary contexts. One way of achieving this may be to augment the original scale with some open ended questions to further gauge attitude to a broader range of reading practices of the child. Additionally, a newly developed scale could enquire about some alternate ways of reading such as technology based texts. Alternatively the tool could be administered as an interview which may allow for further inclusivity.

The reading attitude survey instructions have some gaps. There is no specified time frame for repeated use, nor are there any clear instructions for administering the survey or for children on how to respond to the items. Clear guidance on the optimum schedule for repeated use would strengthen the reliability of the results when used to gauge change in attitude over time. Rectifying the omission of clear instructions would provide for greater consistency when using the survey.

The development of a robust contemporary tool for gauging New Zealand children's attitude toward reading is another area which could be the source of further research.

6.3.5 Goal Setting

It was a strength of this research that goal setting was predicated on what the parents wanted for their child and informed by current assessment data. However, the goal setting could have been an even stronger feature if, like Jack, the other children were also involved in the goal setting discussion. Contribution

from the child towards goal setting may increase the child's sense of agency, engagement and motivation in the reading coaching and help to establish partnership between parent and child as they work towards a shared goal. There is existing literature which supports the position of children being informed and active participants in their own learning in the classroom as it is found to improve learning outcomes (Allen, 2010; Hattie, 2009; Ministry of Education, 2003, 2006, 2007, 2011). Thus the exploration of tripartite goal setting and the impact on home based learning could be another avenue for research.

6.3.6 Video Data

In this study, video evidence was gathered from some participants at the end of the intervention to provide a view of the parent coaching their child in reading. While this was a useful summative window into the parent's practices, video could have been used throughout the intervention. If the parents made recordings of themselves supporting their child's reading each week, the evidence could be used to guide conversations between the researcher and participant. Video may be a more reliable data source than the parent diaries for information about how coaching is progressing. Thus, using video as evidence to collaboratively shape an individualised intervention could be another field of research.

6.4 Contribution to Knowledge

The literature reviewed in chapter two demonstrated that parents can have a positive impact on helping their children master the skill of reading. However, it also identified that no research exists which positions parents and their skills, dispositions, values, practices and aspirations regarding reading as the central figure within a collaborative intervention to support children's reading. This section of the thesis contributes to the development of an evidence base on situated literacy instruction in reading.

6.4.1 Conceptual Framework

This research was built around the central idea of developing new communities of practice consisting of the researcher and each participant. A community of practice (as defined by Wenger, 2006) is constituted by three dynamic factors: a domain, a community and practice. Furthermore it allows learning to be viewed as a socially situated activity (Fuller, 2007; Wenger, 2009). In this study the domain or field of interest for the researcher and the participants was situated literacy. Community was equated with partnership and practice was understood to mean the actions that the parents and the researcher took in relation to enhancing the reading skills of the children in the study. The relationship can be graphically represented by figure ten on the next page.

In this research, the data from Nigel and Kevin, and Leanne and Adam showed that positive change in reading for the children occurred when all elements of the intervention were enacted. In the diagram this aspect is represented by the central overlapping space. In contrast, when only some elements in the model were present in the intervention (as can be seen in the data from Gwen and Naomi) improvement in the child's reading skills did not occur.

The conceptualisation of research with parents which integrates home culture, partnership and practice is new to the research field. As well as being applied to research which aims to engage parents in reading remediation, this model could be used to guide research in other fields where parents are instrumental in delivering and building the skills of their child. For example, this is a model which may be useful in utilising parents to coach their children to improve maths skills.

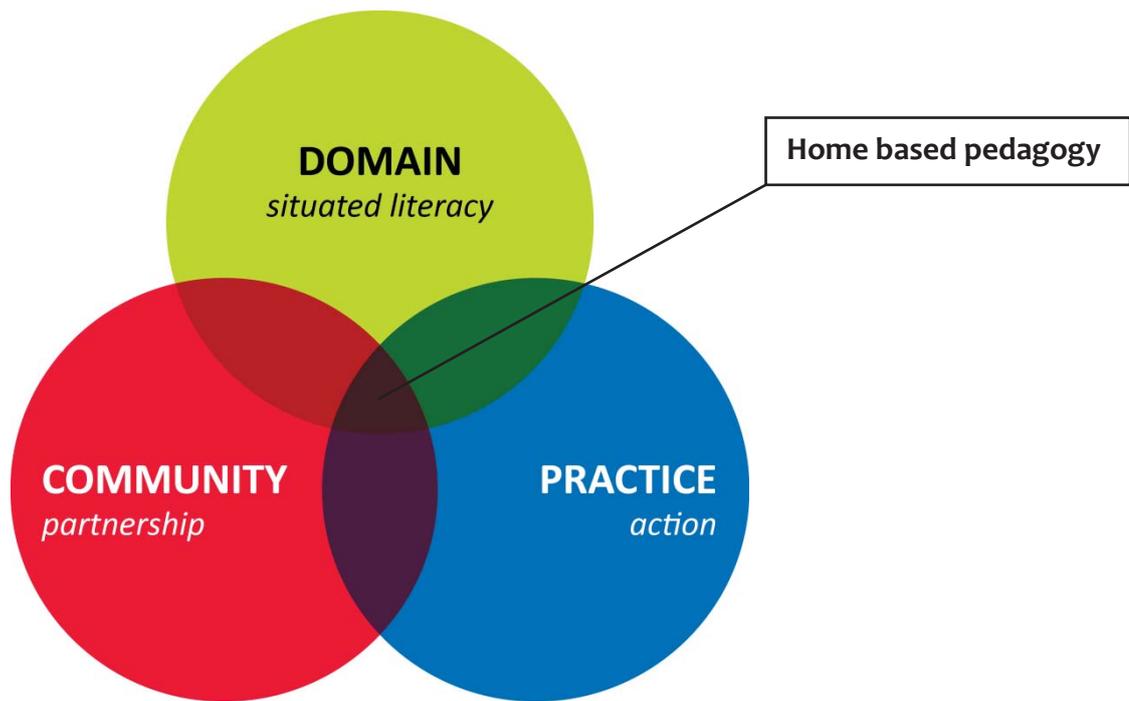


Figure 10: Home based pedagogy

Considering the model above, I propose a new term to describe the successful elements of this intervention: Home based pedagogy. Pedagogy can be defined as the art and science of teaching (Knowles, 1970; Marzano, 2007). In this definition, ‘science’ refers to the researched aspects of teaching and ‘art’ refers to the nuances of the selection and application of appropriate strategies. Pedagogy also points to the interaction between teaching and learning (Blaise, 2006) and to the interactions between people. Pedagogy is usually conceived of as applicable to classroom or formal situations and enacted as teachers and students interact in the context of learning. In contrast, a home based pedagogy would encompass the original definition of pedagogy (the art and science of teaching) but speaks to the need to acknowledge the unique context of a family’s socio-cultural values and practices and the particular parent child relationship. In a home based pedagogy, teaching actions are undertaken by parents and informed by and responsive to both the unique contextual factors of their home and researched practices. In this research, partnership between the researcher and participants facilitated the development and enactment of home based pedagogies. The term ‘home based pedagogy’ is a new contribution to research. It is a previously unused and undefined term.

6.4.2 Considerations for Coaching

A further contribution to new knowledge arose from examining the data relating to the implementation of individual strategies. It appeared that the parents were able to successfully apply only some of the co-constructed coaching techniques. Examining successful and unsuccessful implementation, it is argued that when new knowledge was introduced it was successfully used by parents to augment already existing practices. Alternatively, when new practices were suggested which built on existing knowledge the parents were able to implement these practices. However, when new knowledge was introduced simultaneously with a new practice the strategies were not able to be implemented. When existing practices were combined with existing knowledge, no change to pre-existing routines occurred. This explanation of successful and unsuccessful coaching can be represented in the figure below where knowledge equates with what a person knows and practice is taken to mean what a person does.

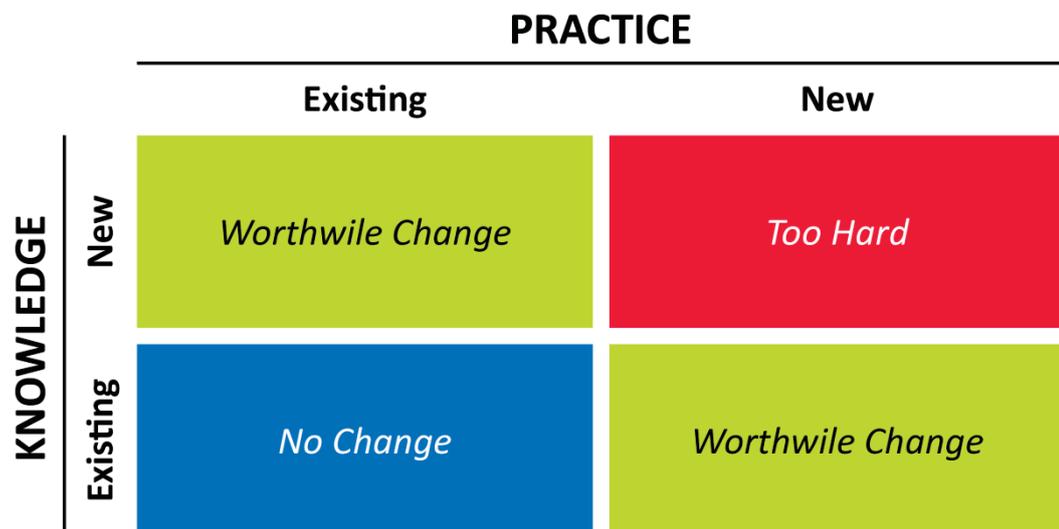


Figure 11: Implementation of strategies

Examples which fit in the red quadrant occurred with Leanne when she attempted to work with Adam to develop complex phonetic skills and with Nigel, Leanne and Gwen with the use of specific praise. Some of Gwen’s experience of

the intervention could be positioned in the blue quadrant, while other aspects could sit within the red quadrant. Both Nigel and Leanne's actions fitted largely in the green quadrants leading to successful implementation of strategies and positive outcomes for their children.

6.5 Implications

This section considers the implications of the findings from this research. A range of stakeholders have been identified and particular interests for each group are discussed.

6.5.1 Participants

For Leanne, Nigel and Eve participating in this research was worthwhile as the reading goals they set for their children were achieved. Additionally, Nigel and Leanne reported being able to use their practices and knowledge to support their other children with reading. Nigel reported that he was also applying some approaches to coaching his children in maths. Nigel also reported that reading with Kevin had positively altered their relationship. Leanne reported sharing reading coaching techniques with her friends so that they could successfully support their own children in reading.

In contrast, this research was a neutral experience for Gwen. Participating in the research was a pleasant experience but it did not disrupt Gwen's initial beliefs that she could not make a difference, that her daughter was not academically inclined, and that reading would not be important or valuable to Naomi. It seems that Gwen's unique circumstances did not position her to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the intervention and simultaneously the intervention failed to impact Gwen's circumstances. Dolezal-Sams et al. (2009) found that a range of support factors beyond the act of reading can have an impact on reading attainment. This appears to be the case for Gwen, perhaps some other type of support such as help with routines and behaviour at home would have been more useful and in time would have enabled Gwen to take

action with reading. Another avenue for future research may be to foster 'readiness' to enable parent support for reading to be enacted.

6.5.2 Researchers

This research was designed inside a collaborative framework where the roles of the researcher and the participants were valued as having equal status. Additionally, the varied expertise of both parties was valued and utilised within the intervention. In this manner, this research contributes to the research knowledge where partnership is central to the research.

The concept of home based pedagogy could be of interest to other researchers who wish to harness the power of home culture to inform learning practices. This could be beneficial in home or school settings or in research which aims to bridge the gap between home and school.

6.5.3 Parents

It is affirming of the intent of this study that the parents who were active participants in the study, namely Nigel and Leanne, were able to engender significant growth in the reading skills of their child. Conversely, the parent who did not actively participate in the intervention, Gwen, stimulated no significant change in reading skill in her daughter, Naomi. Therefore the successes of this intervention may be of interest to parents. Some parents may find it empowering to know that they can improve their child's reading by taking actions which are consistent with their home literacy practices and not prescribed by school priorities.

6.5.4 Schools

The results of the partnership aspects of this study could lead to a re-conceptualisation of school/parent relationships. Working with parents in a true partnership model where both parties' unique skills and expertise are recognised may allow for more productive relationships for both parties. In turn, this could benefit the learning of children. Schools have an opportunity to take lead role in

acknowledging the positive home practices which exist and then using this as a foundation to build parent skills in support of their children's learning.

Shared goal setting was a feature of this study which contributed to the development of purposeful partnerships as well as focussed coaching and learning activities. This approach could be of benefit in a more traditional, school learning environment too. In a school environment it may well serve to build relationships and to focus activity.

These recommendations are aligned with current New Zealand Ministry of Education priorities to support the development of strong relationships between schools and families (Ministry of Education, 2007, 2011, 2013).

6.5.5 Reading specialists

A wide range of people strive to build children's reading skills in various contexts. This group includes reading specialists in school settings, private tutors and tutoring companies. Their practice may be enhanced by partnership with parents and the ability to build contextually appropriate skills for parents to employ when reading with their child.

6.5 Last words

The experience of completing this research and writing this thesis has challenged some of my prior beliefs and reinforced others. However, I am left with a strong conviction that parents *can* make a positive difference to the reading skills of their children. Moreover, as researchers and academics with expert knowledge and access to current research we should not impose our ideals on parents but work alongside them, entering into their worlds to create personalised solutions together. Although there are complexities and challenges which are likely to occur during the development and enactment of home based pedagogies, the potential benefits for children as readers and for their parents make the process worthwhile.

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Appendix 1

Massey University Ethics Notification



MASSEY UNIVERSITY
TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUROA

29 March 2012

Ms Jayne Jackson
School of Education
ALBANY

Dear Jayne

Re: Developing Home-Based Pedagogies

Thank you for your Low Risk Notification which was received on 21 March 2012.

Your project has been recorded on the Low Risk Database which is reported in the Annual Report of the Massey University Human Ethics Committees.

The low risk notification for this project is valid for a maximum of three years.

Please notify me if situations subsequently occur which cause you to reconsider your initial ethical analysis that it is safe to proceed without approval by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees.

Please note that travel undertaken by students must be approved by the supervisor and the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor and be in accordance with the Policy and Procedures for Course-Related Student Travel Overseas. In addition, the supervisor must advise the University's Insurance Officer.

A reminder to include the following statement on all public documents:

"This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named above are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Professor John O'Neill, Director (Research Ethics), telephone 06 350 5249, e-mail humanethics@massey.ac.nz".

Please note that if a sponsoring organisation, funding authority or a journal in which you wish to publish requires evidence of committee approval (with an approval number), you will have to provide a full application to one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. You should also note that such an approval can only be provided prior to the commencement of the research.

Yours sincerely

John G O'Neill (Professor)
Chair, Human Ethics Chairs' Committee and
Director (Research Ethics)

cc Dr Jean Annan
School of Education
Albany

Assoc Prof Helen Southwood, HoS
School of Education
Albany

Dr Sally Clendon
School of Education
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Appendix 2

Family information sheet, invitation to participate in the research, consent form



SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
Private Bag 102 904
North Shore Mail Centre
Auckland 6245
New Zealand
T: 64 9 414 1000
F: 64 9 414 5717
www.massey.ac.nz

Developing Home Based Pedagogies

Project description and Invitation

I am writing to inform you about a research project that I am conducting. The project involves working in partnership with a small group of parents to create personalised approaches to promote the development of reading skills and attitudes in their children. You and your child are invited to participate in this project.

Project Team Introduction

My name is Jayne Jackson and I am a NZ registered teacher and a Lecturer in the Graduate Primary Pre-Service Diploma of Teaching Programme in the School of Education at Massey University. I am doing this study as part of the requirements of a Doctorate in Education.

Why did you get this letter?

Your child has been identified by (name of school contact person) as a possible participant for the study. We are sending letters to the parents of those children to invite you and your child to participate in the research.

Parent Involvement

If you agree to participate in this project you will be asked to:

- **attend** an initial group meeting to outline the study and your role within it.
- **meet** with the researcher for up to 90 minutes once a week during term 3 (July 9 to September 28). The time and place will be negotiated to suit you and the researcher.
- **have** your conversations with the researcher recorded.
- **coach** your child in reading for a minimum of three, 15 minute sessions per week during term 3.
- **complete** a survey (twice) to share your opinions of your child's reading habits, skills and attitudes. This should take no more than 20 minutes each time.
- **participate** in an interview with your child to discuss your opinions of the research project and the impact of the reading coaching you provided.
- **make** a video recording of a reading coaching session (recorders provided).
- **discuss** the video with the researcher.

Child Involvement

If your child agrees to participate in the project they will be asked to:

- **have** their reading skills assessed on three occasions. This process will take no more than 30 minutes each time and will be done at school.
- **complete** a survey about their attitude towards reading on three occasions. This will take no more than 20 minutes each time and will be done at school.
- **participate** in an interview about their reading strategies. This will take no more than 10 minutes on 2 occasions and will be done at school.
- **Complete** a spelling test. This will take no longer than 30 minutes each time and will be done at school.
- **receive** coaching in reading for a minimum of three, 15 minute sessions per week during term 3 (July 9 to September 28).

Data Management

All project data will be stored in a secure location, with no public access and used only for this research and any publications arising from this research. Five years after completion, all data pertaining to this study will be destroyed in a secure manner. All efforts will be taken to maximize confidentiality and anonymity for participants. The school name and names of all participants will be assigned pseudonyms to maintain their anonymity. Near the end of the study a summary will be presented to the school, and following any necessary adjustments, a final summary will be provided to the school and teachers involved.

Your Rights

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate and to permit your child to be part of the research project, you and your child have the right to:

- Decline to answer any particular question;
- Withdraw from the study at any time prior to the commencement of data analysis and have any data pertaining to your child destroyed;
- Ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- Provide information on the understanding that your child's name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;
- Be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.

The supervisors on this project are Dr Jean Annan and Dr Bobbie Hunter of the School of Education, Massey University, Albany. If you have any questions please contact me or either of my supervisors (details below).

Next Step

If you are interested in being part of this project, please complete the attached consent form and return it to your child's teacher.

Ethics Statement

This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named above are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Professor John O'Neill, Director (Research Ethics), phone 06 350 5249, email humanethics@massey.ac.nz.

Thank you for considering this project. This information sheet is for you to keep

Jayne Jackson MEd (hons), B Soc Sci, Grad Dip Teaching (Primary)
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Developing Home Based Pedagogies of Literacy

PARENT CONSENT FORM

This consent form will be held for a period of seven (7) years from
the date of the last publication

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree / do not agree to be ~~video taped~~.
I agree / do not agree to be audio taped.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature		Date:	
Full Name - printed			

Contact Details (insert best contacts only)

Home phone	
Mobile phone	
Work or other phone	
Email	

Developing Home Based Pedagogies of Literacy

CHILD CONSENT FORM

This consent form will be held for a period of seven (7) years from
the date of the last publication

I have read the Information Sheet (or had it read to me) and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree / do not agree to ~~being video taped~~.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet

<input type="checkbox"/>	Signature		Date:	
	Full Name - printed:			

Appendix 3

Session 1 Conversation Protocol

My background

Teacher
Reading tutor
Lecturer and researcher at Massey University
Doctoral student

Ethics

Withdraw at any time
With-hold any piece of information from the study
Confidentiality
Documents and recordings
Name changes
Thesis
Permission to record session today

Partnership model/Coaching

Parent and myself have equal but different expertise, blending these together
Parent as expert in their child
Likes and dislikes
Interests
Engagement
Family
Aspirations
Values
Importance/priorities
Constraints
Me
Experience as a teacher
Experience as a tutor
Reading expertise
Two way conversation

Contribution to the conversation

Duration not fixed

Focus of the study

Background Information

What do you remember about your child learning to read?

Preschool?

Starting school?

Beginning to fall behind?

What sort of reading happens in your house?

By whom?

What is your child's response to reading?

Complete the parent survey

Anything you'd like to share more about?

Anything else you think might be relevant?

Next step

Child assessment

School or home?

Date time preferences/constraints?

Next meeting to share evaluation and plan goals

Time and place

Contact details for JJ

Appendix 4

Reading Attitude Survey

Please circle the picture that describes how you feel when you read a book.

1.	How do you feel when you read a book on a rainy Saturday?				
2.	How do you feel when you read a book in school during free time?				
3.	How do you feel about reading for fun at home?				
4.	How do you feel about getting a book for a present?				

Please circle the picture that describes how you feel when you read a book.

5.	How do you feel about spending free time reading a book?			
				
6.	How do you feel about starting a new book?			
				
7.	How do you feel about reading during summer vacation?			
				
8.	How do you feel about reading instead of playing?			
				

Please circle the picture that describes how you feel when you read a book.

9.	How do you feel about going to a bookstore?    
10.	How do you feel about reading different kinds of books?    
11.	How do you feel when a teacher asks you questions about what you read?    
12.	How do you feel about reading workbook pages and worksheets?    

Please circle the picture that describes how you feel when you read a book.

13. How do you feel about reading in school?



14. How do you feel about reading your school books?



15. How do you feel about learning from a book?



16. How do you feel when it's time for reading in class?



Please circle the picture that describes how you feel when you read a book.

17. How do you feel about stories you read in reading class?



18. How do you feel when you read out loud in class?



19. How do you feel about using a dictionary?



20. How do you feel about taking a reading test?



Appendix 5

Spelling Inventory

Words Their Way Elementary Spelling Inventory Feature Guide

Student's Name _____ Teacher _____ Grade _____ Date _____

Words Spelled Correctly: ____ / 25 Feature Points: ____ / 62 Total: ____ / 87 Spelling Stage: _____

SPELLING STAGES→	EMERGENT		LETTER NAME-ALPHABETIC			WITHIN WORD PATTERN				SYLLABLES AND AFFIXES			DERIVATIONAL RELATIONS			Words Spelled Correctly
	LATE	EARLY	MIDDLE	LATE	EARLY	MIDDLE	LATE	EARLY	MIDDLE	LATE	EARLY	MIDDLE	LATE	EARLY	MIDDLE	
	Consonants Initial	Consonants Final	Short Vowels	Digraphs	Blends	Long Vowels	Other Vowels	Inflected Endings	Syllable Junctures	Unaccented Final Syllables	Harder Suffixes	Bases or Roots	Feature points			
1. bed	b	d	e													
2. ship		p	i	sh												
3. when			e	wh												
4. lump	l		u		mp											
5. float		t			fi	oa										
6. train		n			tr	ai										
7. place					pl	a-e										
8. drive		v			dr	i-e										
9. bright					br	igh i-e										
10. shopping			o	sh				pping								
11. spoil					sp		oi oy									
12. serving							er	ving								
13. chewed				ch			ew oo	ed								
14. carries							ar	ies	rr							
15. marched				ch			ar	ed								
16. shower				sh			ow			er						
17. bottle									tt	le						
18. favor									v	or						
19. ripen									p	en						
20. cellar									ll	ar						
21. pleasure											ure	pleas				
22. fortunate							or				ate	fortun				
23. confident											ent	confid				
24. civilize											ize	civil				
25. opposition											tion	pos				
Totals		/7	/5	/6	/7	/5	/7	/5	/5	/5	/5	/5	/5			