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(IJEPC)**[www.ijepe.com](http://www.ijepe.com)**THE MEDIATING ROLE OF PRESCHOOLERS' READING  
ATTITUDE ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARENT-  
CHILD INTERACTION IN LANGUAGE AND LITERACY  
ACTIVITIES AND ENGLISH PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS  
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**DOI:** 10.35631/IJEPC.954005**Abstract:**

This study examined 374 Malaysian parent-child dyads to explore the mediating role of preschoolers' reading attitude on the relationship between parent-child interaction in language and literacy activities and English phonological awareness. Parents provided demographic information and completed a Parent-Child Interaction in Language and Literacy Activities Questionnaire, while children were administered a Phonological Awareness Test and Elementary Reading Attitude Survey. The data were analysed with descriptive statistics and Structural Equation Modeling revealed significant relationship between parent-child interaction in language and literacy activities and reading attitude. Additionally, reading attitude is the mediator between parent-child interaction in language and literacy activities and English phonological awareness. The findings suggest that strength of relationship between parent-child interaction in language and literacy activities and English phonological awareness can be further enhanced after introducing reading attitude in the relationship.

**Keywords:**

Parent-Child Interactions For Language And Literacy Activities, Reading Attitude, Children's English Phonological Awareness



## Introduction

The relationship between parent-child interaction in language and literacy activities, reading attitude, and English phonological awareness has been a subject of interest and investigation in the field of educational and developmental psychology. Parents' responsibility in developing children's reading habit and interest is closely related to engaging in parent-child interactions while reading (shared reading) (Kamunge, 2018). All parental indicators contribute to significant variance in children's reading outcomes; however, when moving to Grade 1, only parental reading-related ability was observed to continue to affect the reading outcomes (Inoue et al., 2018; Segal & Martin-Chang, 2018). Children tended to possess a more positive attitude toward reading when the parents enjoyed reading and read books to them more often (Baker & Scher, 2002, as cited in Patterson, 2017; Majid, 2018). Reading attitude, reading interest, and reading motivation is proven to be related to each other which have similar nature and contribute to children's development (Wiescholek et al. 2017; Carroll et al. 2019).

According to the International Literacy Association (2020), phonological awareness is a multilayered oral language skill that is often characterized by the phonological structure of uttered words in addition to the meaning carried by each word. Syllabic (words, syllabus) and sub syllabic units are phonological (linguistic) units (onsets and rimes, phonemes). Typically children who can manipulate sound units in primary language are expected to be able to do it in the second language acquisition, if the children can detect second language sounds correctly (Goodrich et al. 2019). Reading attitude and phonological awareness abilities strongly associate with preschool children's reading competencies, while phonological awareness abilities correlate with children's reading attitude toward academics (Wood and Gabas 2017; Buvaneswari and Padakannaya 2017).

International Literacy Association (2020) assured that with a sufficient level of phoneme-level awareness, children could understand how print develops and then implement phonics lessons provided by the teachers. There were subsequently few studies on phonological awareness conducted in Malaysia (Sinnadurai 2018; Alhumsi and Shabdin 2018; Anthony and Said 2019; Sapi'ee and Tan 2020; Winskel 2020) but the studies were not focused on English phonological awareness among preschoolers who enrolled in private preschools in a bigger scale. Hence, to obtain the current English phonological awareness level of young children in Malaysia, the researcher started the research from a state in Malaysia as a general view of the English phonological awareness level of the children after the children had been exposed to basic phonological skills as guided in the NSPC, English language under the communication strand.

## Literature Review

Ng et al. (2020), claimed that parents are aware that to promote their children's reading development on top of the efforts made at school, they need to begin strengthening their children's reading skills at home. Poor parental engagement in literacy activities has been linked to poor or outstanding reading performance in primary school (Hemmerechts et al., 2016). Swain & Cara (2017) claimed that many parents were starting to realize that the

children's reading development opportunities were not limited to the school. Children can learn proper English in school through well-trained teachers; nonetheless, parents can only partially rely on the school to be responsible for their language acquisition. Young children spend much time with their primary caregivers at home, and they tend to feel more secure when they are at home. Children's enthusiasm and motivation in reading-related activities are linked to their emergent literacy skills (Buvaneswari & Padakannaya, 2017). Parent-child interactions were positively correlated with children's attitudes. Children with more positive views towards reading experienced a high frequency of parent-child interaction in their homes (McKenna & Kear, 1990).

Recent research conducted by various experts stated that reading attitude could lead to the acquisition or rejection of positive reading habits where children's reading has a significant indirect effect on their word reading (Wang and Liu 2021). Research has consistently shown that children's attitudes towards reading are closely linked to their reading achievement and motivation (Tisa, et al. 2021). Children's interest and motivation in engaging in literacy-related activities are closely associated with their emergent literacy skills (Buvaneswari and Padakannaya 2017). Positive reading attitudes have been found to contribute to higher reading achievement, as children who enjoy reading are more likely to engage in reading activities, which in turn enhances their reading skills (McGeown et al. 2015). Dewi and Prawita (2019) stated that it is apparent that children wish to become more engrossed in reading activities which will boost their reading interest. Hence, in order to be able to read better, children should have a strong reading interest and motivation. Children who enjoyed reading had higher reading proficiency and were more likely to have positive attitudes towards reading. In addition, parents played an important role in encouraging children to read, with parental involvement positively impacting children's reading habits (Sun et al. 2020).

Understanding the relationship between parents' literacy habits, preschooler's reading attitudes and phonological awareness is crucial for educators and parents who seek to promote reading success in children. By cultivating positive reading attitudes and providing opportunities for phonological awareness development, children are more likely to become confident and proficient readers, laying a foundation for future academic success. However, research often focus in other home literacy dimensions and the interactions between each variables on the impact on children's literacy development. In addition, how the parents' interactions with children in reading activities might influence their reading habits in the context of Malaysian children remains unclear. Therefore, this research aiming to study on the following

1. The level of private preschoolers' English phonological awareness.
2. The influence of private preschoolers' parent-child interaction in language and literacy activities on their English phonological awareness.
3. The mediating effect of private preschoolers' reading attitude on the relationship between parent-child interactions in language and literacy activities and English phonological awareness.

## Method

### *Study Design*

The current study is a quantitative research that uses a survey design with a non-experimental correlational design. The purpose of the study is to examine the relationship between the

parent-child interaction in language and literacy activities and preschoolers' English phonological awareness level, which is mediated by the preschoolers' reading attitude. The study will be conducted in the Johor district and will use a cross-sectional, self-administered questionnaire to gather data from parents and preschoolers.

## ***Instruments***

### ***Demographic Information***

Parental demographic characteristics of the home were assessed by a total of 3 items of basic information, which are: the relationship of the respondent to the child, age of the respondent, and usual language spoken at home. The parents must answer all 3 items to gain basic information about the respondents.

### ***Parent-Child Interaction in Language and Literacy Activities Questionnaire***

The Parent-Child Interaction in Language and Literacy Activities Questionnaire was adapted and modified from Home Literacy Environment Questionnaire developed by Buvanewari and Padakannaya (2017) in the research Development of a Home Literacy Environment Questionnaire for Tamil-speaking Kindergarten Children. Parent-child Interaction in Language and Literacy Activities is the sub-section in the Home Literacy Environment Questionnaire.

This sub-section focuses on the interaction of parents with their children. It includes 20 items related to various activities that parents may engage in with their children, such as, *"I teach nursery rhymes and songs to my child."*

Respondents are required to indicate the frequency with which they have performed these activities with their children. To measure the frequency, a 5-point Likert scale is used, where respondents select a number from 1 to 5, representing "Never" to "Very Often". A higher score in this section indicates that more parent-child interaction occurs in language and literacy activities.

This set of items aims to assess the level of parent-child interaction in language and literacy-related activities at home. Understanding the frequency of such interactions can provide valuable insights into the quality of the home literacy environment and its potential impact on the children's phonological awareness and reading attitudes. The data gathered from this sub-section will contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between parent-child interaction and early literacy development in preschoolers.

### ***Phonological Awareness Test***

The Phonological Awareness Test used in this survey is adapted and adopted from PAT by Robertson and Salter (1997), The Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processes (CTOPP) by Wagner, Torgesen and Rashotte (1999), and the Pre-Literacy Skills Screening (PLSS) by Crumrine and Lonegan (1999). The test consists of 7 parts, with a total number of 50 items. The researcher will read out the instruction to the children. The children will answer each sub-item, and every correct answer will be given one score. The answers are then analyzed according to scores obtained from each part and as total scores obtained for each sub-items. The total marks of this instrument are 50. The higher the score, the stronger the phonological awareness of the child.

### ***Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS)***

The ERAS developed by McKenna and Kear in the year 1990 provides a rapid indicator of student attitudes toward reading. The ERAS score is based on a Likert scale with a 4-point pictorial response system. Each item is assigned 1 to 4 points with a '1' indicating the Very Upset Garfield, '2' the Mildly Upset Garfield, '3' the 'Slightly Smiling Garfield, and '4' the Happiest Garfield. Three scores will be gained for each student; (1) the total for the first ten items related to recreational reading attitude, the total for the second 10 items related to academic reading attitude, and the composite total, which indicate the overall reading attitude. The researcher only focuses on the academic reading subscale as the researcher only interested in the children's academic reading which is item 11 to 20 in the original instrument.

The ERAS will be administered individually after the children answer the Phonological Awareness Test. The administration of the Phonological Awareness Test and Elementary Reading Attitude Survey will conduct together with the individual child in the preschool classroom. Every child who participated in the survey will be rewarded with a storybook.

### **Participants**

Population means the entire group of individuals, events, or items of interest that the researcher desires to explore (Chua 2012). In order to obtain information on the phonological awareness level of the preschoolers, the study targeted all private preschoolers in Johor, Malaysia. The samples chosen from each preschool are based on the number of preschoolers registered in the preschools. The respondents are the preschoolers and their respective parents, either father or mother. Hence, there are a total number of 374 parent-child dyads for data analysis.

### **Analysis of Data**

The data will be quantitatively analysed using SPSS version 21 software and Smart PLS 2. This study aimed to investigate the relationship between parent-child interaction in language and literacy activities (independent variable), reading attitude (mediating variable), and English phonological awareness (dependent variable). Data first demonstrate in descriptive statistics to show the basic information on the levels of the variables. Next, inferential statistics in Bivariate Correlation Analysis (Pearson Product-Moment Coefficient) will be employed to show the relationship between variables. Structural equation modeling (SEM) procedures with SmartPLS will be employed to examine the mediating effect of the variables.

### **Results**

As illustrated in Table 1, the total number of mother respondents (84.8%, n=317) is much higher than the number of father respondents (15.2%, n=57). The majority of the respondents are in the age range of 31-40 years old, which is 228 respondents (61.0%). Besides, 88.2% of the respondents speaks Mandarin at home.

According to Table 2, the average score for Parent-child Interaction in Language and Literacy Activities is 3.50, with a standard deviation of 0.75, indicating that the children in this group have medium-level of parent-child interaction in language and literacy activities, with a relatively small spread in their scores. In terms of English Phonological Awareness, the mean score is 28.51 with a larger standard deviation of 13.42, suggesting a medium level of phonological awareness, but with a wider range of individual performance among the children.



Table 3 shows the frequency table according to each range of score of reading attitude indicators. The majority (63.64%) of the participants, consisting of 238 individuals, are extremely happy to be engaged, while 106 participants (28.34%) are slightly happy to be engaged. A smaller proportion, 27 participants (7.22%), are slightly unhappy to be engaged, and only 3 individuals (0.8%) are extremely unhappy to be engaged. Overall, the majority of the group demonstrates a positive attitude towards engagement, with over 90% of participants expressing some degree of happiness.

**Table 1: Profiles of Respondents According to Demographic Characteristics (N=374)**

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<u>Relationship</u>		
Mother	317	84.8
Father	57	15.2
<u>Parent's Age</u>		
Below 18	3	0.8
19-30 years old	57	15.2
31-40 years old	228	61.0
41-50 years old	79	21.1
51-60 years old	7	1.9
<u>Usual language</u>		
Mandarin	230	88.2
Malay language	25	6.7
English	15	4.0
Other	4	1.1

**Table 2: Mean, Standard Deviation and the Level of Parent-Child Interaction in Language and Literacy Activities and English Phonological Awareness (N=374)**

Dimension	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
Parent-child Interaction in Language and Literacy Activities	3.50	.75	Medium
English phonological awareness	28.51	13.42	Medium

**Table 3: Frequency Table according to Each Range of Score of Reading Attitude Indicators (N=374)**

Range of Score	Interpretation	n	%
21-24	Extremely happy to be engaged	238	63.64%
16-20	Slightly happy to be engaged	106	28.34%
11-15	Slightly unhappy to be engaged	27	7.22%
6-10	Extremely unhappy to be engaged	3	0.8%
Total		374	100

Note: M=20.78, S.D. =3.21

The data presented in Table 4 shows Pearson correlation coefficients and significance values (two-tailed) for the relationships between three variables: PA (Phonological Awareness),

PILLA (Parent-Child Interaction for Language and Literacy Activities), and RA (Reading Attitude). There is a significant positive correlation between PA and PILLA ( $r = .174$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $N = 374$ ), indicating that as the interactions between parent and children in reading activities increase, their English phonological awareness also improved. Similarly, there is a significant positive correlation between PA and RA ( $r = .167$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $N = 374$ ), suggesting that higher phonological awareness is associated with better reading attitude. Lastly, there is significant relationship observed between PILLA and RA ( $r = .146$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $N = 374$ ), implying that parent-child interaction in language and literacy activities do affect children's reading attitude.

**Table 4: Pearson Correlation among Parent-Child Interaction in Language and Literacy Activities, English Phonological Awareness and Reading Attitude**

		PA	PILLA	RA
PA	Pearson Correlation	1	.174**	.167**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001	.001
	N	374	374	374
RA	Pearson Correlation	.167**	.146**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.005	
	N	374	374	374

Note: \*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Key: PA=English Phonological Awareness, PILLA=Parent-child Interaction in Language and Literacy Activities, RA=reading attitude

Based on the Bootstrapping result in Table 5, SEM analysis with Smart PLS shows that t-statistics values for all the individual paths, i.e., parent-child interactions in language and literacy activities towards reading attitude ( $\beta=.166$ ,  $t=2.860$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), reading attitude towards English phonological awareness ( $\beta=.152$ ,  $t=3.151$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) and parent-child interaction in language and literacy activities ( $\beta=.185$ ,  $t=3.503$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) are greater than 1.96, meaning that it is statistically significant.  $R^2$  for English phonological awareness is 0.067, it is a relatively low  $R^2$  value (Cohen, 1988), and meaning 6.7% of private preschoolers' English phonological awareness is due to the children's reading attitude and the parent-child interaction in language and literacy activities. There is only a 2.7 % reading attitude due to the parent-child interaction for language and literacy activities. Figure 4.9 demonstrates the path coefficients of each of the relationships in the mediating model and the mediating effect model of reading attitude on the relationship between the parent-child interaction in language and literacy activities and English phonological awareness. All the three direct relationships, parent-child interaction in language and literacy activities to reading attitude, reading attitude to English phonological awareness, and parent-child interaction in language and literacy activities to English phonological awareness shows the statistically significant result.

As stated in Table 5, the indirect relationship of reading attitude towards the relationship between parent-child interaction in language and literacy activities and English phonological awareness ( $\beta=.025$ ,  $t=1.961$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) also shows a statistically significant result. When there is a direct effect between the causal variable and outcome variable, it indicated that partial mediating effect occurs (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Hence, it has proven that there is a partial mediating effect of reading attitude on the relationship between parent-child interaction in language and literacy activities and English phonological awareness.

**Table 5: Mediating Effect Analysis of Reading Attitude on the Relationship between Parent-Child Interaction in Language and Literacy Activities and English Phonological Awareness**

	Beta	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P Values	R <sup>2</sup>	Result
<b>PILLA -&gt; RA</b> <b>a</b>	0.166	0.058	2.860	0.004	0.027	Significant
<b>RA -&gt; PA</b> <b>b</b>	0.152	0.048	3.151	0.002	0.067	Significant
<b>PILLA -&gt; PA</b> <b>c'</b>	0.185	0.053	3.503	0.000	0.067	Significant
<b>PILLA -&gt; RA -&gt; PA</b> <b>axb</b>	0.025	0.013	1.961	0.050		Significant

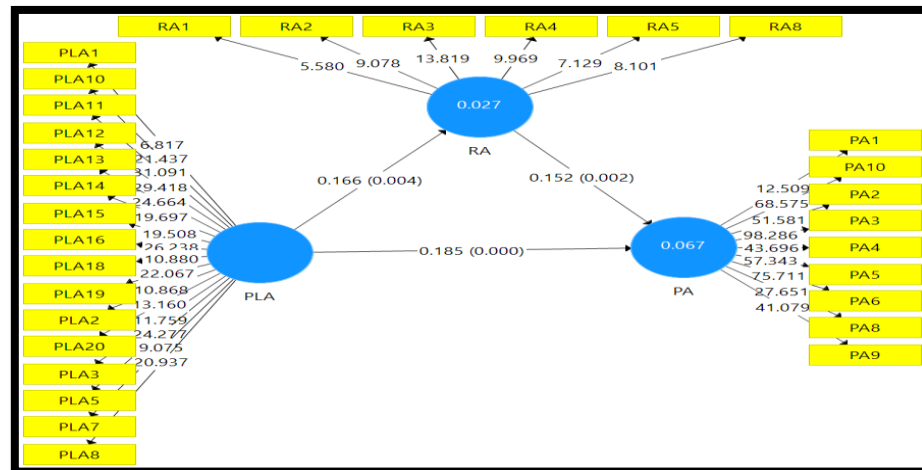
Key: PILLA = Parent-child Interaction for Language and Literacy Activities; RA = Reading Attitude; PA = English Phonological Awareness

In addition, the total effect of parent-child interaction in language and literacy activities on private preschoolers' English phonological awareness had increased from .185 to .210 when reading attitude entered the model. Therefore, it is confirmed that reading attitude boosts the relationship between parent-child interaction in language and literacy activities and private preschoolers' English phonological awareness. Moreover, the total effects of parent-child interactions in language and literacy activities on private preschoolers' English phonological awareness are .210 (.025+.185) at a significant level of  $p < .05$ , it showed that parent-child interaction in language and literacy activities and reading attitude have a modest effect on private preschoolers' English phonological awareness based on Muijs' (2011) table of beta value and strength of effect size. Figure 1 showed the SEM for the mediating effect of preschoolers' reading attitude in the relationship between parent-child interactions for language and literacy activities and English phonological awareness.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Mediating effect} &= a \times b = 0.166 \times 0.152 = 0.025 \\ \text{Direct effect} &= 0.185 \\ \text{Total effect} &= \text{direct effect} + \text{mediating effect} \\ &= .185 + .025 = .210 \end{aligned}$$



**Figure 1: SEM of The Mediating Effect Of Preschoolers' Reading Attitude On The Relationship Between Parent-Child Interaction For Language And Literacy Activities and English Phonological Awareness**



## Discussion

The level of private preschoolers' parent-child interaction for language and literacy activities is medium. There are a total of 16 items under this dimension. However, only 3 out of the 16 are at a high level, which is the parents often teach simple verbal manners to the child, and they encourage the children to take and take time to listen as well, as the parents will teach nursery rhymes and songs to the children. The other forms of interactions are at the medium level, where the parents will sometimes engage the children in these activities but only sometimes. Research from Altun et al. (2022) revealed that 66.3% of parents spent less than 61 minutes in shared reading experiences with their children in a week. In Malaysia, Ahmad et al. (2017) found that parents willing to spare time to do the activity with their children are at a medium level. Isa et al. (2020) suggest that parents should encourage children to use polite words in order to promote children's language development. Desale & Kumbhar (2022) perceived that time constraint is one of the challenges parents face in involving themselves in spending time with children. Brown et al. (2019) agreed that the child and parent must interact well. Parent-child interactions are at the heart of a child's literacy development because they bring children and parents together to work, play, read and learn, which has a good impact on language and literacy progress. Children get a chance to understand the relationship between letters and sounds in words and develop sensitivity to spoken language's phonological composition through parent-child reading (Xu & Gao, 2021).

The Pearson product-moment correlation test showed a statistically positive relationship between parent-child interaction for language and literacy activities with English phonological awareness, where the relationship is very weak. This positive correlation revealed that if the parent interacts more frequently with children in language and literacy activities, the children's English phonological awareness will also increase. Thus, parent-child interaction for language and literacy activities is identified as one factor influencing children's English phonological awareness. A very weak relationship between parent-child interactions in language and literacy activities and English phonological awareness suggests that there is little correlation between the two. In other words, the amount or quality of language and literacy activities that parents engage in with their children may not have a significant impact on the children's development

of English phonological awareness. Other factors may play a greater role in this area of language development.

Additionally, this weak relationship does not mean that parent-child interactions in language and literacy activities are completely unrelated to English phonological awareness. This dimension is crucial for children's overall language and literacy development, social skills and emotional well-being. It's possible that the relationship is more complex and that other factors, such as the child's own individual characteristics, may play a more significant role in phonological awareness development.

The relationship that exists between parent-child interaction for language and literacy activities could be supported by many research (Wiescholek et al., 2017; Ahmad, 2020; Xu & Gao, 2021; Ma, 2021). Wirth et al. (2020) in the study also revealed that the relationship between time and frequency a parent spent on a child in reading activities is significantly correlated with their linguistic abilities, and the strength of the relationship is 0.17, which is very close to the result obtained from the current study. Besides that, Gengeç et al. (2022) measured home literacy practices as reading-related activities and the children's phonological awareness; the result showed a significant low and positive correlation between home literacy practices and phonological awareness.

The relationship is significant but weak; parents may need to be aware of how much their interactions with their children can significantly impact their language and literacy skills. The frequency of interaction significantly impacts language and literacy skills (Stutzel, 2019; Thurman, 2017). The research found that an active home literacy environment, such as a home story-telling session, was more impactful on child interest and early literacy skills than passive home literacy environments, such as parental belief about literacy and the provision of reading-related materials. (Wiescholek et al., 2017)

From the parents' perspective, reading with their children favors their child's educational success. Parents are equally involved in their children's behavioral and communication development; however, mothers are more involved in their children's academic development than fathers, siblings, or legal guardians (Ahmad, 2020). Parents believed their school involvement was vital, particularly in their children's early literacy development, which aided their children's overall literacy development. Furthermore, as their children entered kindergarten, their level of involvement changed (Harris, 2018).

Though the strength of the relationship between parent-child interaction for language and literacy skills and English phonological awareness is lower than the strength of the relationship between physical literacy environment and English phonological awareness, Alsubaie (2022) in the recent study found another view that the effect of home literacy resources on children's reading ability is not as strong as parental involvement in their literacy activities. Quach et al. (2018) found that paternal home reading when the child was two years did not predict their phonological awareness when the child turned 4.

With reference to the result from Pearson's bivariate correlation analysis, the result showed that there is a statistically significant relationship between parent-child interaction for language and literacy activities and reading attitude. However, the strength is very weak. Even so, this dimension showed the highest correlation strength among all the five dimensions of the home

literacy environment. As such, parent-child interaction for language and literacy activities is said to be the main factor contributing to children's reading attitude in the home literacy environment. A weak relationship between parent-child interactions for language and literacy activities and reading attitude suggests that while there may be some connection between the two, but it is not strong. This could mean that other factors, such as the child's individual interest in reading or their school's reading program, may have a greater impact on their reading attitude. It could also indicate that the parent-child interactions for language and literacy activities may not be the most effective way to improve reading attitude. Combine efforts with other home literacy dimensions might bring greater impact on their reading attitude.

Lukie et al. (2014), as cited in Wiescholek et al. (2017), agreed that children's interest in literacy was favourably influenced by parent-child interaction in literacy activities. Besides that, Flores (2019) also indicated that the time parents spend reading picture books to their children will enhance their enjoyment of reading. Capotosto et al. (2017) found that children's own motivation to read is frequently influenced by parents' efforts and support in children's reading development. Besides that, Nicolien van Haeften (2021) discovered a significant weak effect between early literacy activities and reading enjoyment among young children.

The result of the mediation analysis showed that parent-child interaction for language and literacy activities was a significant predictor for both reading attitude and English phonological awareness. In the presence of reading attitude as mediating variable, the size of the direct effect increased, indicating that a partial mediation exists.

Result of the study shown that parent-child interactions in language and literacy activities can impact children's reading attitudes. For example, parental involvement in a child's reading development, through activities such as reading aloud, discussing books, and providing access to books, may have a positive impact on a child's reading attitude. Positive reading attitudes, in turn, may lead a more engagement in reading activities and ultimately better phonological awareness.

Parents' home learning environments in Asia often align with their educational targets and expectations for their children. They promote their children's early literacy development by providing a more significant amount of home resources available at home and increasing the frequency of home learning activities to support greater reading competency and interest of children (Cheung et al., 2021). O'Brien et al. (2019) in Singapore, the researchers revealed that the home literacy environment, specifically in the shared reading factor, strongly related to both language and literacy, which predicted reading outcomes. Besides, the child interest factor also predicted literacy outcomes. Apart from that, Wiescholek et al. (2017) agreed that home story-telling sessions strongly impact children's reading interests and early literacy skills.

### Implications

The research findings contribute to the body of knowledge on literacy development by emphasizing the interplay between parent-child interaction for language and literacy activities, reading attitude, and phonological awareness. Parents can understand their role played in enhancing their children's English language development. There is significantly less the school can do to change the home environment in which the parents are the party who play an active role. Therefore, after knowing the challenges, the children might face when looking into the home environment that the children experience, the school can provide extra assistance for the

children in the school context to fill in the gap that the children are facing to achieve better reading outcomes. Furthermore, this study is a reference for the policymakers to plan to create awareness for the caretakers of the importance of their roles in their children's development. Policymakers, such as local authorities and town councils, can design campaigns and organize events and expert talks for the parents to participate in with their children.

There are a handful of limitations when conducting this research. The pandemic, which attacked worldwide, restricted the data collection method throughout the data collection period, from physical to virtual. Hence, it is suggested that further in-depth investigation be done fully face-to-face with the children and the parents in order to obtain more genuine responses. Apart from that, due to logistical constraints, this study is focusing on the northernmost state of Malaysia, Johor. Therefore, the results of the study only represent the population of Johor and would not be able to be generalised as a whole. As a result of this, future studies can extend the research coverage to different parts of the country, as the lifestyles and cultures of different states might vary.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, parent-child interaction for language and literacy activities influence children's reading attitude but not in a strong way. However, this reflected that the more parents and children interact in language and literacy activities, such as shared reading and playing board games, the more children's reading attitude could be positively promoted. Hence, parents are encouraged to make time for children to do meaningful and impactful language and literacy activities to let the children feel enjoyment of reading.

This study's findings clearly showed a statistically significant correlation between parent-child interactions for language and literacy activities and English phonological awareness among private preschoolers in Johor. Based on this finding, the researcher argues that to increase the level of parent-child interactions for language and literacy activities; parents should arrange more leisure time to spend with their children despite busy work schedules.

Preschoolers' reading attitude partially mediated the relationship between parent-child interaction in language and literacy activities and English phonological awareness. Children's reading attitude could be further enhanced by their interactions with their parents in reading activities, encouraging them to perform better in their early literacy development.

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