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Mothers reading children's books to preschoolers A Greek study

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ABSTRACT: This article presents the results of a Greek study on the extratextual interactions between mothers and their preschoolers during repeated readings of the same storybook. Eleven (11) mothers with tertiary and eleven mothers (11) with secondary education read out loud the book “The three little wolves and the big bad pig” three times, once every three days and the fourth time they narrated it to their 4–5 year olds. All four times, which were recorded by the parents, were done in one-to-one settings, in their homes. Mothers with a tertiary education during the first reading made more extratextual interactions overall, as well as more verbal exchanges in the low-level abstraction categories: organizing the reading, names, clarifying, and in high-level abstraction category relating the story to real life. Mothers with secondary education during the second reading made more extratextual interactions overall, as well as more verbal exchanges in the low-level abstraction categories: clarifying and attention. Both categories of mothers progressively decreased their insertions with subsequent readings. During the first two readings mothers with tertiary education made more extratextual interactions overall, as well as more low- and high-level abstraction insertions, than mothers with secondary education. Children whose mothers had a tertiary education made more insertions overall, including more low- and high-level abstraction extratextual interactions, than the other preschoolers. It was found that all mothers and children had a high percentage of low-level abstraction extratextual interactions. More specifically, this was noted in the following categories for mothers: clarifying, feedback and names; for children: clarifying and asking for clarification. Nevertheless, mothers with a tertiary education and their children made more high-level abstract extratextual interactions in the category relating the story to real life than the others.

KEY- WORDS: Preschoolers, repeated reading, extratextual interactions