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**Use of Picturebooks for Teaching Adult Learners in the EFL Classroom**

Trabajo de titulación previo a la obtención del título de Licenciada en Ciencias de la Educación en Lengua y Literatura Inglesa.

**Autora:**

Paola Estefanía Andrade Macías

CI: 0926801572

Correo: pao.andradem94@gmail.com

**Director:**

María Catalina Jaramillo Astudillo

CI: 0103637724

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**Resumen**

En el presente estudio se busca revisar el uso de libros ilustrados en el aula de adultos de inglés como Lengua Extranjera (EFL). Quince estudios primarios fueron seleccionados y analizados para desarrollar esta síntesis de investigación. La información relacionada al uso de libros ilustrados en clase que se encontró en los diferentes estudios se clasificó en tres categorías principales, en concreto, "Ventajas y desventajas de usar libros ilustrados para enseñar a estudiantes adultos de EFL", "Actividades y técnicas utilizadas en conjunto con los libros ilustrados en el aula de estudiantes adultos de EFL", y la "Adquisición de elementos léxicos y estructuras gramaticales". Posteriormente, esta información fue comparada, contrastada y discutida. Los resultados mostraron que las ventajas más comunes que brindaban las clases basadas en libros ilustrados fueron la mejora de las cuatro habilidades de inglés como lengua extranjera, una mayor adquisición de vocabulario y un impacto positivo en el filtro afectivo de los alumnos. Además, las actividades basadas en libros ilustrados que fueron realizadas con mayor frecuencia fueron lecturas en voz alta y debates. Finalmente, casi la mitad de los estudios de investigación informaron que los libros ilustrados permitieron un cierto grado de adquisición léxica y gramatical. Para concluir, este trabajo incluye algunas recomendaciones y limitaciones a considerar para futuras investigaciones.

**Palabras clave:** El libro ilustrado. Inglés como lengua extranjera. Estudiantes adultos. Ventajas y desventajas de utilizar libros ilustrados. Grado de adquisición gramatical y léxica. Actividades basadas en el uso de libros ilustrados. Comprehensible input o entrada comprensible. Filtro afectivo.

**Abstract**

The present study aimed to report on the use of picturebooks in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) adult classroom. Fifteen primary studies were selected and analyzed to develop this research synthesis. The information related to picturebook-based classes that was found in the research studies was classified into three main categories, namely, *"Advantages and Disadvantages of Using Picturebooks to Teach Adult EFL Students," "Activities and Techniques used with Picturebooks in the Adult EFL Classroom,"* and *"Acquisition of Lexical Items and Grammatical Structures."* Later, this information was compared, contrasted, and discussed. The results showed that the most common advantages that picturebook-based classes provided were the improvement of *EFL skills*, the increase of *vocabulary acquisition*, and the positive impact on learners' *affective filter*. In addition, the most frequent picturebook-based activities implemented were read-alouds and discussions. Almost half of the research studies reported that picturebooks enabled a certain degree of lexical and grammatical acquisition. To conclude, this paper includes some recommendations and limitations to be taken into consideration for future research.

**Keywords:** Picturebooks. EFL. Adult learners. Advantages and disadvantages of using picturebooks. Degree of grammatical and lexical acquisition. Picturebook-based activities. Comprehensible input. Affective filter.

**General Index**

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Paola Estefanía Andrade Macías

C.I: 0926801572

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**Dedication**

To my precious parents and sisters, to my lovely friends (especially, Andrea and Angel), and

to my beloved 방탄소년단 (BTS) for helping me find strength and love in myself throughout

the hardships of life.

Paola

**List of Tables**

**Introduction**

Language educators have always considered important to use reading texts in the classroom since they provide an opportunity for learners to come into contact with useful examples of the target language and to enhance their acquisition of new words and structures (Chen, 2006; Harmer, 2007b). Thus, it is not uncommon that teachers incorporate various types of texts in their classes. However, picturebooks are rarely explored outside the pre-primary and primary levels of education. Furthermore, research focused on picturebooks used with adult EFL learners is quite precarious in contrast to their use with young learners (Birketveit, 2015). There are underlying reasons behind this. Namely, the preconceived notion that adult learners will react negatively to their use (Sharp, 1991), and the belief that picturebooks are boring, infantile, and poor in terms of useful language content (Ho, 2000; Malu, 2013).

Nevertheless, researchers who have explored the use of picturebooks in the adult EFL classroom differ with these claims. For instance, Ho (2000) noticed that college students improved their pronunciation and reading comprehension after engaging in picturebook-based activities. Moreover, Chen (2006) and Birketveit and Rimmereide (2013) found that picturebook-based prompts were useful to develop learners' writing skills. Lee (2007) and Sun (2010) also discovered that the repetitive nature of the text in picturebooks helped to develop learners' lexis acquisition. In addition, Kochiyama (2015), Sun (2015), and Yang (2019) agreed that picturebooks fostered positive attitudes towards the target language. In this way, other authors (Huang, 2015; Restanto, 2016; Sun, 2017; Sun, 2019) also contributed to and corroborated previous findings.

Based on these findings, this paper attempts to provide a deeper insight on the use of picturebooks in the adult EFL classroom and to encourage educators to use picturebooks in

their own classes. To achieve these goals, this research synthesis attempts to present relevant information to answer the proposed research questions.

This paper consists of six chapters. The first one presents the description of the research which includes the background, problem statement, rationale, and the research questions. Then, the second chapter presents the theoretical framework which entails various definitions and key terms that are useful for the understanding of this paper. The third chapter corresponds to the literature review which contains condensed and relevant information pertaining to the primary research papers. Next, the fourth chapter explains the methodology implemented throughout the elaboration of this synthesis. Following, the fifth chapter presents the analysis of the results pertaining to the revised papers. Finally, the sixth chapter includes the conclusions drawn from the analysis and the recommendations for future research studies.

**Chapter I**

**Description of the Research**

*1.1. Background*

'Picturebook' may be a familiar and even a nostalgic word to many of us. Who did not have at least one of them or even an entire collection at home? In fact, children find learning more enjoyable in the form of stories read and told at home and school (Mixon and Temu, 2006). This means that picturebook-reading is usually their first positive contact in terms of acquiring the base structure of a language.

Now, we know what a picture book looks like, but what is a picturebook? Wolfenbarger and Shipe (2007) consider it as '...a unique visual and literary art form that engages readers of all ages in many levels of learning and pleasure.' There are a variety of spellings: picture book, picture-books, or picturebook. However, I have decided to use the last one. The union of art and text which function cohesively to convey meaning is an intentional act by both the author and illustrator, and it emphasizes that these elements cannot be separated from each other (Wolfenbarger & Shipe, 2007). While the use of picturebooks is widespread in both households and the primary levels of education, the case is opposite in other levels. Universities, colleges, and private language institutes use picturebooks scarcely or they might not use them at all.

## *1.2. Problem Statement*

There is a preconceived notion that picturebooks are only for children. When EFL teacher Kathleen Malu decided to pack picturebooks for a teaching assignment abroad, she was met with dismissive comments from her colleagues which referred to the material as 'boring' and 'too childish' for her adult and adolescent students (Malu, 2013). Teachers of an adult classroom know that these people, including themselves, have an extensive amount of life experience and deserve respect. Because of this, picturebooks may be regarded as unsuitable material for an adult learner (Sharp, 1991). However, Malu (2013) found positive results with the students who regarded the book as interesting, thought-provoking, and culturally adequate for them as Rwandan citizens.

Another negative aspect that teachers might find about picturebooks is that they offer a lesser variety of grammatical structures and lexical items compared to other literary forms. While it is true that children's literature offers 'simpler language, fewer lengthy stories, fewer abstract ideas, and less complicated themes' (Ho, 2000), this should be considered as a strength, especially for beginner learners who might feel that starting their reading journey with a novel can be overwhelming.

It is important to research this topic in order to clear misconceptions about the use of picturebooks in the EFL adult classroom, and to inform teachers of the tools and techniques that they can use to engage their adult students in meaningful learning activities.

*1.3. Rationale*

The use of literature in the classroom has always been regarded as an essential part of the learning process. This is true regardless of context, whether it is a first language (L1) or second language (L2) environment. Literature has proved to be a useful asset to develop reading and writing skills in students, and to teach them about their own world (Chen, 2006). In the L2 context, literature is the vehicle by which students come into contact not only with the target language itself but also with its underlying culture. However, we may find ourselves overwhelmed by the vast amount of literature available and the task of choosing the appropriate material for our EFL students can become hard. As a solution to this problematic situation, Chen (2006) proposes three main aspects to take into consideration: language, content, and length.

Picturebooks are created with a specific audience in mind, that is, children of an L1 language who therefore, are native speakers. Because of this, the lexical and grammatical structures used in this type of reading material may be simple but it also remains "authentic, contextualized, funny, playful, predictable, and filled with repetitive language patterns" (Malu, 2013), which certifies their usefulness when it comes to exposing EFL learners to genuine examples of the target language. Moreover, the repetitive patterns and their 'musicality' makes it exceptional for read-aloud activities and for memorizing and internalizing structures in an enjoyable way (Malu, 2013).

Now, it would be wrong to believe that because the language in picturebooks is simpler than in other types of reading material, its content will also be simple. Picturebooks can address a variety of different topics, even mature issues like social problems which can result relatable to older learners (Sun, 2015) and may prompt rather insightful discussions in the classroom. Moreover, multiple reflections might arise from reading this kind of authentic literature, which

in return, will enhance "the interpretative skills and high emotional intelligence" of learners (Lee, 2015, p. 67).

The last of the aspects proposed by Chen (2006) is the length of the material. According to Sun (2015), the shorter length of the text in picturebooks makes it easier for learners to finish a book in less time. As a result, learners feel a boost to their own confidence and may be motivated to continue reading other books. Sharp (1991) seconds this belief by stating that "[it gives] them the confidence that comes with accomplishment" (p. 217). This feeling of success encourages adult readers to read more, and consequently, they may read more difficult texts and other types of literature as they gain more self-confidence.

Having stated the inherent characteristics and benefits that picturebooks offer, the following question should be posed; what type of adult learners can benefit from reading picturebooks? Sun (2017) believes that young adult learners which are at a beginner level are able to benefit from reading picturebooks. Due to their lack of a vast vocabulary, they may find picturebooks fairly easy to follow and to read in a class period, followed by a discussion or other activities. Sharp (1991) also regards older adult learners as people who can benefit from starting their reading journey with picturebooks. These older adults may be parents or grandparents, and their concern for the children under their care and their learning may motivate them to become more efficient L2 readers.

Despite all the advantages that different researchers have stated in regards to the use of picturebooks in the EFL classroom, there is a lack of research focused on their use with adult EFL learners. Hence, I believe it important to dive more profoundly in this topic and to expose more insight on the use of this type of literature with older EFL learners. EFL teachers should know more about this asset and how it can be complemented with other activities to enhance the acquisition of English as a foreign language in the adult classroom.

## 1.4. Research questions

- What are the benefits and disadvantages of using picturebooks to teach EFL adult students?

- What techniques/activities can be used to engage both EFL adult learners and teachers in the reading of picturebooks?

- What is the degree of acquisition that adult learners can achieve in regards to grammatical structures and lexical items through engagement with picturebook related activities?

**Chapter II**

**Theoretical Framework**

Relevant concepts related to the use of picturebooks in the EFL classroom are explained in this section. First, a definition of 'picturebooks' will be provided, along with their elements and characteristics. Following that, the four EFL skills and their connection to the use of picturebooks will be explained briefly. Next, the most common picturebook-based activities and strategies used in the studies will be detailed. Additionally, Krashen's Natural Approach along with his Input Hypothesis and Affective Filter Theory will be shortly presented since these concepts provide a basis to consider the use of authentic L1 texts like picturebooks in the EFL classroom. Finally, the tool for assessing vocabulary acquisition that was used in some of the primary research studies will be explained.

**2. 1. Definition and elements of Picturebooks**

Wolfenbarger and Sipe (2007) consider a picturebook as "a unique visual and literary art form that engages readers of all ages in many levels of learning and pleasure" (p. 273). Similarly, Nikolajeva and Scott (2001) consider that the uniqueness of picturebooks can be attributed to how these books use "two levels of communication," visual and verbal, to convey its complete meaning (p. 1).

The union of art and text which function cohesively is an intentional act by both the author and the illustrator, and it emphasizes that they are elements which cannot be separated from each other (Wolfenbarger & Sipe, 2007). The text in picturebooks "narrates" the story in verbal form, using a specific linguistic code, and it usually presents the information in a linear way (Nikolajeva & Scott, 2001), meaning that the events of the story unfold in a sequential order. On the other hand, images "describe or represent" the story in the visual form, mirroring elements of the real world. Images are nonlinear, and therefore, there is not only one way to

interpret them (Nikolajeva & Scott, 2001). Despite their different functions, both elements, text and image are of equal importance. Sipe (1998) describes their relationship as a 'synergy' in which the interaction of both is what creates the complete "effect" of picturebooks (p. 98-99).

### 2.1.1. Characteristics of Picturebooks

To further understand how picturebooks present stories, two important characteristics will be briefly described below.

#### 2.1.1.1. Language

Picturebooks can facilitate access to more authentic language input than the one found in formal course texts (Birketveit, 2015). This is because they are created with a specific audience in mind, that is, children of an L1 language who, therefore, are native speakers. Due to this, the lexical and grammatical structures used in this type of reading material may be simple but they also remain "authentic, contextualized, funny, playful, predictable, and filled with repetitive language patterns" (Malu, 2013, p. 11). Moreover, adult learners who lack vocabulary in the target language may find picturebooks fairly easy to follow and to read within a class period (Sun, 2017).

#### 2.1.1.2. Content and themes

It would be wrong to believe that because the language in picturebooks is simple and fairly easy to understand, its content will also be simple. Picturebooks often depict emotional and profound conflicts between characters (Nikolajeva, 2013; Malu, 2013), and they can address a variety of topics, ranging from divergent beliefs to "memorable historical personalities and events" (Malu, 2013). Furthermore, picturebooks employ the 'point of view' creatively. Thus, the protagonist of the story may be an adult or a young boy, but that person would still be someone relatable to different audiences (Bloem & Padak, 1996).

## 2.2. English Language Skills

Teachers focus on the development of four main skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Harmer (2007a) explains that these skills are important because they help with language activation. In other words, when students engage in an activity that requires them to use the language skills to create their own sentences, they activate new language. According to this author, these skills are often classified into two categories, receptive and productive, which are constantly working in an integrated way. Reading and listening are considered receptive skills, while writing and speaking are identified as productive skills.

The importance of the development of these skills will be explained below. In the same way, the connections between these skills and the use of picturebooks will also be included.

### 2.2.1. Reading

According to Broughton, et al (2003), there are three main factors that contribute to the successful performance of this skill in EFL learning. First, the recognition of the letters pertaining to the Roman alphabet. Second, the identification of the words formed by these letters as verbs, nouns, adjectives, etc. Finally, the full understanding of the message that these words represent. Once the first factor is met, learners can start developing the other two through the reading of beginner-level material.

Harmer (2007b) states that reading is a helpful tool for language acquisition and the improvement of students' vocabulary, spelling, and writing, as long as learners have a fair understanding of what they are reading. Thus, the author mentions that students should read texts according to their level of proficiency. These texts must present comprehensible input, engaging content, and authentic language (Harmer, 2007b; Muranoi, 2006, as cited in Kochiyama, 2015).

### 2.2.2. Listening

In contrast to reading, when students listen to a passage, they focus first on hearing and understanding the complete message rather than identifying isolated words (Broughton, et al, 2003). Similar to reading, however, students' level of proficiency should be taken into consideration to choose practice material (Broughton, et al, 2003). For beginner learners, the voice of their teacher is the most common and efficient source for listening practice (Broughton, et al, 2003; Harmer, 2007b). Listening allows learners to gather useful language models which they can later replicate in the production of oral messages (Broughton, et al, 2003). The more students listen and understand spoken English, the better they will speak as they acquire correct features such as pronunciation, intonation, and stress (Harmer, 2007b).

### 2.2.3. Speaking

According to Broughton, et al. (2003), the first step to achieve oral fluency is regular listening practice. Students naturally start to produce oral messages after they listen to models of the language repeatedly. Nonetheless, the inclusion of speaking activities aids in this transition process (Broughton, et al, 2003). These activities provide students with the opportunity to practice the features and language structures previously acquired during listening (Harmer, 2007b). At the beginning, oral production activities are 'controlled,' thus, they're heavily monitored by the teacher. Later, activities are only guided by the teacher, and finally, students are free to practice on their own (Broughton, et al, 2003).

### 2.2.4. Writing

Okari (2016) states that in contrast to speaking, writing is less spontaneous. In conversation, students adapt their responses based on their interaction with other speakers; however, in writing, students plan their message beforehand based on their audience and

the purpose of the text (Broughton, et al, 2003; Harmer, 2007a; Okari, 2016). Students usually start writing for learning; thus, they give special attention to the grammar and lexis they use (Broughton, et al, 2003; Harmer, 2007a). Teachers can provide models that show students how to use specific language constructions and text structures to guide them in the production of written messages (Harmer, 2007a; Booker, 2012).

## 2.3. Picturebook-based activities and techniques to develop EFL skills

In this section of the theoretical framework, the activities used along with picturebooks in EFL teaching will be explained. All of these activities start off with reading as the initial step. In later stages, they focus on the use of one or more of the other language skills. The development of the four skills is used as a medium to reach the final aim, which is the target language acquisition.

### 2.3.1. Guided reading

In guided reading, teachers work with small groups of students that are similar in regards to reading style, personal interests, and language proficiency (Booker, 2012). Students are encouraged to choose a book based on their interests since it increases their willingness to read the material and to engage in discussion with their peers and their teacher (Booker, 2012; Huang, 2015). Nonetheless, teachers must check that the level of the text is just above students' current level (Iaquinta, 2006). Reading these texts offers a challenge to students because they are required to use problem-solving skills to decipher the meaning of new words and new structures in order to understand a story (Iaquinta, 2006).

### 2.3.2. Vocabulary Instruction

Sun (2010) mentions the need to include activities focused on vocabulary acquisition after picturebook reading. The author states that students are not able to

retain new words if they only read them in a text. Therefore, Sun (2010; 2015) proposes five different activities after picturebook-reading which focus on vocabulary acquisition through collaborative-learning.

- **Graphic Representation** Students represent elements of a story by creating a poster which includes words, quotes, specific colours, drawings, etc.

- **I AM Poem** Students write a reflective poem in three stanzas using models provided by the teacher.

- **Open Mind** Students illustrate a specific character's thoughts, values, and perceptions of other characters, inside an oval figure.

- **Character Web** Students write the name of a specific character in the center of a web. They complete the web by writing different qualities of the character based on specific scenes from the book.

- **Poster (Predicting activity)** Students are asked to read a picturebook in small sections. After reading each section, they complete a chart given by the teacher with their own predictions.

In all of the activities described above, students receive the guidance and feedback from their teacher. They also receive support from their peers during discussions focused on word-meaning and the overall understanding of the story (Sun, 2010; Sun, 2015).

Additionally, Sun (2017) describes three strategies that teachers can use to enhance EFL learners' vocabulary acquisition and retention; these are:

- **PRO (Picture-book reading-only)**

    The teacher starts the reading session with a talk about the themes present in the chosen picturebook. Then, students are instructed to skim through

the text, look for new words, and infer their meaning by looking at the images in the picturebook. After that, students are given 30 minutes to read silently and 10 minutes to answer comprehension questions to check their understanding of the text.

- **PRVI (Picture-book reading plus vocabulary instruction)**

    After students complete the comprehension questions, the teacher spends the next 40 minutes on vocabulary instruction. Students are taught how to infer the meaning of a word based on the context and images from the picturebook, instead of being given the definition of each word. In order to solidify meaning, the teacher uses synonyms, drawings on the board, or actions to explain a difficult word.

- **PRCOA (Picture-book reading plus reading-based collaborative output activity)**

    Students form groups of four and complete a collaborative output activity. This activity focuses on the stimulation of students' creativity through art, and it promotes the use of the target language through peer discussion about the text. Through this group activity, students can reinforce the comprehension of the picturebook and the new words they encountered during their reading session.

### 2.3.3. Read-alouds

In read-alouds, teachers use both their voice and picturebooks to tell stories to their students (Booker, 2012). This activity allows students to hear a clear model of spoken language from a familiar source, their teacher (Harmer, 2007a). Teachers vary their intonation, substitute difficult vocabulary words, and constantly check their

students' understanding through questions and comments (Chen, 2006). Ellis and Brewster (as cited in Kochiyama, 2015) emphasize that read-aloud sessions help learners develop their listening skill and pay more attention to rhythm, intonation, and pronunciation.

### 2.3.4. Discussions and debates

According to Harmer (2007a), discussions and debates can occur in formal and in informal settings, and they can be carried out by big and small groups. Discussions can happen spontaneously throughout the lesson; and with the teacher's support, they can be very enjoyable for students (Harmer, 2007a). On the other hand, debates are usually planned activities. Teachers should give students enough preparation time, so students can have a clearer idea of what they want to say (Harmer, 2007a).

Sun (2015) proposes different topics for discussion and debates based on picturebook stories, such as: the characteristics of specific roles, the students' own feelings regarding themes, the pros and cons of situations, relationships among characters and their similarities to students' lives, the main message of the story, and what the students' have learned from it.

### 2.3.5. Prompts

Students can use picturebook stories as a source of inspiration to write their own original stories (Chen, 2006). According to Frank (as cited in Booker, 2012), there are steps that teachers should follow to use picturebooks as writing prompts. First, teachers should motivate students to connect to the stories on a personal level. After that, students should write down all of their ideas in a notebook, regardless of whether they may use everything or just part of their ideas in the story. Then, students organize their ideas, connect them, and start writing their first draft.   In this stage, teachers should

encourage students to focus on the writing task and not on spelling or punctuation. Later, students receive the teacher's and their peers' feedback and proceed to edit and revise spelling, grammar, and punctuation. Finally, students will finish their piece of writing and present it to an audience. Chen (2006) adds that students can share their stories on the web, within the classroom, with other classes, or in any publication medium available at the end of the process.

## 2.4. The Natural Approach

The Natural Approach involves the teaching of language structures in an inductive way; therefore, grammar rules are not explicitly taught to learners but rather, learners are exposed to them unconsciously (Krashen, 2009). There are various key points that are part of this approach. However, two of them are relevant to the use of picturebooks in the EFL/ESL classroom: comprehensible input and the affective filter level.

### 2.4.1. The Input Hypothesis

Krashen's (2009) input hypothesis attempts to answer the question 'how do people acquire language?' This hypothesis suggests that learners are able to understand language structures that are a little more challenging than what they are used to encountering. The difficulty that these structures present gives learners an opportunity to use more of their linguistic competence and world-knowledge to compensate for their lack of lexical and grammatical knowledge. Therefore, students are pushed to decipher the meaning of new vocabulary items and the overall message of the material presented to them. Nonetheless, it is important to state that the input given to learners should be slightly above their current level for comprehension and acquisition of new structures to take place.

### 2.4.2. The Affective Filter Theory

Krashen (2009) discusses the benefits of positive feelings in the Affective Filter Theory, which states that motivation, self-confidence, and low anxiety levels contribute to a good self-image of the learner and a higher degree of second language acquisition. Mixon and Temu (2006) state that reading stories in class is a natural way to learn a new language, and that it lowers learner's stress and anxiety levels; thus, allowing them to learn easily. Likewise, Yang (2019) agrees that "learners are less likely to feel overwhelmed and anxious" (p.58) when teachers provide reading material that follows the Input Hypothesis because students can enjoy the learning process when they are challenged with reading texts that are slightly above their current proficiency level.

In addition, Birketveit (2015) mentions that picturebooks are short enough to be read in a lesson. When learners finish reading a picturebook in a short amount of time, they feel confident about their skills, and they may be motivated to read more (Sharp, 1991; Birketveit, 2015; Yang, 2019). Moreover, Sharp (1991) explains that as adult learners read more and gain more self-confidence, they progressively enhance their reading scopes by reading more difficult texts and exploring new types of literature.

## 2.5. Tools for Assessing Vocabulary Acquisition

There are different ways of measuring learners' acquisition of lexical items such as observation, read-alouds, and tests (Lee, 2007; Huang, 2017). Nonetheless, researchers (Lee, 2007; Ikbal & Komal, 2017; Sun, 2010) find that the Vocabulary Knowledge Scale is one of the most reliable and effective tools for assessing vocabulary acquisition.

### 2.5.1 Vocabulary Knowledge Scale (VKS)

The VKS test was developed by Paribakht and Wesche in 1993 and it is used to distinguish the different stages of learners' acquisition and retention of particular words

(Paribakht & Wesche, 1997). The test combines self-report and performance items to elicit students' perceptions of their own learning and to obtain evidence of students' knowledge of specific target words in written form. The VKS uses a 5-point scale where ratings go from unfamiliarity, through recognition of the word and some idea of its meaning, to the ability to successfully use the word in different sentences (Paribakht & Wesche, 1997). Nonetheless, researchers can modify the test according to the necessities of their own research studies (Iqbal & Komal, 2017; Sun, 2017).

**Chapter III**

**Literature Review**

Various authors (Ho, 2000; Sun, 2010; Malu, 2013; Lee, 2015; Yang, 2019) have explored the role that picturebooks play in language learning and have recommended their use in the adult EFL classroom based on their experiences, observations, and students' feedback. In this section of the exploratory research synthesis, a total of 15 studies will be reviewed. The studies were classified into three main categories related to the use of picturebooks in class: advantages and disadvantages of the use of picturebooks in adult EFL classrooms, vocabulary and grammar acquisition through the use of picturebooks, and activities and techniques used with picturebooks to develop the four EFL skills. Additionally, some of the picturebooks used in the research studies will be mentioned throughout this chapter. A complete list of all the picturebooks used can be found in the appendix 2.

**3.1 Advantages and Disadvantages of Using Picturebooks to teach Adult EFL Students**

Researchers noted that there were many advantages and setbacks regarding the use of picturebooks to teach adult EFL students. In this part of the literature review, both sides will be presented, compared, and contrasted.

Ho (2000) and Huang (2015) observed that students' reading comprehension and pronunciation was improved through picturebook-reading. On one hand, Ho (2000) explored the use of children's literature with adult learners in a general way. The researcher carried out a 3-year study at an English centre where English and communication skills were taught to 20 foreign college undergraduate students from Asia. The author used picturebooks for oral language practice and to teach them figurative language and literary devices. Through the implementation of read-alouds and discussions, Ho observed that picturebook-reading was beneficial for improving students' pronunciation. The participants found the repetitive pattern

of the language in picturebooks more interesting for practice than the drills found in their usual textbooks. Additionally, the researcher mentioned that students' overall reading comprehension improved based on their interactions and responses in discussions which reflected a better understanding of the book's plot.

On the other hand, Huang (2015) carried out a longitudinal qualitative study throughout one year in which 17 college students were encouraged to read as many picturebooks and children's novels as possible. Like Ho (2000), Huang also implemented read-alouds and discussions as data collection techniques. The read-aloud sessions were audio recorded and analyzed by the researcher. According to the analysis, Huang found that students commonly mistook the meaning of a word if it had multiple meanings. Additionally, the participants were confused when they encountered culture-related expressions like piggy in the middle, playing tag, etc. Moreover, the participants had pronunciation mistakes regarding the -ed ending of verbs, vowel teams, and the pronunciation of silent consonants like t and b. Therefore, the author further made two participants, Sandy and Emma, to read more books than their peers, and then analyzed their progress. According to the data collected by the researcher, Sandy's mispronunciation rate decreased from 9.75% to 4.2% while Emma's decreased from 2.8% to 2.4%. Huang (2015) concluded that the learners' reading comprehension and pronunciation improved after engaging in picturebook-reading sessions and receiving appropriate feedback from their instructor.

Moreover, Chen (2006) and Birketveit and Rimmereide (2013) stated that picturebooks and children's books were useful to improve learners' writing skills. For instance, Chen (2006) developed a qualitative study in which a project for writing stories was implemented. The participants were 43 first-year university students who read various stories and developed activities such as guided reading, read-alouds, and writing based on prompts throughout the

intervention. The researcher collected data through reflective statements and interviews to analyze students' perceptions. According to the findings, students believed that the stories they read were valuable writing models which helped them in the brainstorming, reviewing, and revising phases of the writing process. Thus, they improved their writing and narrative skills (Chen, 2006).

In contrast, Birketveit and Rimmereide (2013) developed a mixed-method study in which they implemented a project to improve the writing skill of 21 sixth graders over the course of 5 weeks. The participants were required to read as many books as possible and to write two texts based on prompts from the picturebooks they read. In addition, the authors (2013) implemented log books, questionnaires, and interviews to assess students' enjoyment of picturesbooks, as well as their perceived progress, and perception of picture-text interaction. Based on the information collected, the researchers reported that learners increased their use of complex verb forms, adverbials, longer sentences, and narrative devices in their texts. They noticed that learners had modelled their writings on the picturebooks they read during the project. The researchers added that, overall, all of them enjoyed the project and felt their English level was improved.

Furthermore, other researchers (Kochiyama, 2015; Sun, 2015; Yang, 2019) affirmed that reading picturebooks had a positive impact on students' affective filter. Kochiyama (2015) carried out a qualitative study with 28 Japanese college students with the aim of enhancing their motivation towards English language learning. The author chose the picturebook called *The Paper Bag Princess* for the research intervention. Kochiyama stated that reading this picturebook was an opportunity for the participants to think critically about the portrayal of men and women in children's literature and to compare the story to their own life. Through a survey, the author found that 77% of the participants enjoyed the picturebook classes and

concluded that reading a carefully selected picturebook promoted students' positive attitudes towards EFL learning and their sensibility towards the target culture.

Likewise, Sun (2015) found that including picturebooks in EFL lessons fostered students' positive attitudes and engagement towards learning. The researcher developed a qualitative study with 27 university freshmen from non-English majors. The participants' proficiency was measured with a university English placement test which determined that the average level of the group was intermediate. Additionally, through a survey, Sun (2015) asked the students to select the themes they would like to read in picturebooks. The five themes chosen by the participants were "family relationship, friendship, nontraditional gender roles, fractured fairy tales, and to be oneself" (p. 185). Then, the author selected one picturebook for each theme and carried out five picturebook lessons throughout a semester. Each lesson lasted 100 minutes. During the lessons, Sun acted as an observer and teacher assistant whose role was to support the instructor by interacting with students, observing their engagement, and joining group discussions. After the intervention, the researcher asked all the students to complete a questionnaire to assess their experience with picturebook lessons. Based on students' answers to the questionnaire and follow-up interviews, the author confirmed that picturebook lessons enhanced learners' engagement by promoting positive attitudes towards EFL instruction.

In contrast, Lee (2015) found that the inclusion of picturebooks in the EFL classroom sparked both positive and negative opinions among the participants. Lee's qualitative research took place throughout a semester and it aimed to discover the reactions of young college students to reading children's literature. The author used 2 movies and 8 picturebooks as the main teaching materials. She selected a small group of students who were in charge of preparing a pre-reading activity as an introduction to each picturebook. Additionally, this same group of students were responsible of bringing in an article related to the main subject of the

picturebook that the class would read each week. After each book was read, the researcher reviewed key vocabulary and phrases through different literacy activities. At the end of the semester, the participants prepared a play based on *Willy The Wimp which was* one of the picturebooks they read. On the day of the final exam, the author used a 2-page English survey to assess students' perceptions about the use of picturebooks in adult education. Some of the participants favoured picturebooks because of their inspirational message and interesting plot; however, other students found some of the picturebooks uninteresting and useless for learning. Nevertheless, Lee (2015) concluded that picturebooks were a useful teaching and learning tool since the majority of students responded positively to their use in their lessons.

Yang (2019) supported the previous findings of Kochiyama (2015) and Sun (2015) regarding the positive influence that picturebooks have on learners' affective filter. The researcher studied the impact of picturebooks on 25 college students' anxiety levels through a qualitative study during one semester by using a journal and three questionnaires to collect the data These were: a background questionnaire, applied before the intervention; an anxiety questionnaire, applied before and after the intervention; and a questionnaire about students' perceptions and attitudes towards English picturebooks, applied before and after the intervention. Based on students' answers to the questionnaires, the researcher determined that students had no confidence in their reading skills before the study. Moreover, they rarely read in English for pleasure because they felt it was too difficult and boring. For the intervention, the participants required to read at least 2 picturebooks each week. After reading, they wrote down their thoughts and shared them with their peers. Students answered the questionnaires again after the intervention. This time, their answers were positive and encouraging. They reported to feel more confident about their English reading proficiency and less anxious about reading and learning. Students also mentioned that English picturebooks were interesting to

read. Furthermore, learners felt motivated to continue reading for pleasure and learning the target language.

In addition, authors such as Ho (2000) and Malu (2013) commented that picturebooks were useful for developing student's intercultural awareness. For example, Ho (2000) reported that at the beginning of the study, students found the Western stories presented in children's books difficult to relate to or to understand since their own world views and values differed from the ones presented in the books. Nevertheless, the author reported that this difficulty also became an opportunity for the students to know more about other cultures and to be respectful towards them. Conversely, Malu (2013) stated that picturebooks provided an opportunity for students to reflect about their own culture. The author developed a qualitative study to explore the use of picturebooks with adult and adolescent EFL learners from Rwanda. The author implemented read-alouds and discussions to promote students' engagement during the picturebook classes and to check students' comprehension of the text. Malu noted that reading the picturebook *Little Blue and Little Yellow* allowed students to think profoundly about their own cultural history; even though the book did not depict one specific culture in particular.

A final advantage of using picturebooks was noted by Birketveit and Rimmereide (2013). The authors mentioned that picturebooks provided access to authentic and comprehensible language input in comparison to the language samples that were usually found in formal textbooks. Yang (2019) emphasized the latter and stated that English picturebooks provided more comprehensible input than class textbooks, and thus, college EFL students found learning from picture books more interesting than learning from grammar books.

**3.2. Activities and Techniques Used with Picturebooks in the Adult EFL Classroom**

Just as various authors (Sun, 2010, Birketveit & Rimmereide, 2013; Yang, 2019) revised the advantages and disadvantages of using picturebooks in the EFL classroom, other researchers (Lee, 2015; Huang, 2017; Sun, 2019) have also explored the use of various activities along with picturebooks to improve EFL learning.

Restanto (2016) and Huang (2017) explored the use of picturebooks and guided reading for improving reading skills. For instance, Restanto (2016) observed that students were not able to comprehend stories and infer word meaning just by reading the text. Therefore, the author developed a qualitative study with 59 junior high school students. The teacher, who played a major role in the research study, presented model questions that students asked themselves before and during reading. Throughout the reading session, the teacher helped students to connect their own experiences and knowledge to the story and to predict what would happen in the plot. The teacher was also in charge of directing students to look at illustrations to comprehend new vocabulary words. After reading, students engaged in discussions to deepen their comprehension of the story. The researcher used observations and students' answers to questionnaires to assess the effectiveness of using the selected picturebook for teaching reading. So, it was concluded that the illustrations in the picturebook helped students comprehend the vocabulary and story of the book. Moreover, the author stated that the pictures and characters of the book allowed the teacher to create a connection between the students and the story and to help them understand the plot (Restanto, 2016).

Similarly, Huang (2017) also studied the development of reading skills through the use of picturebooks. The researcher carried out a case study research in which a participant, Sally, received guidance from an instructor to strengthen her reading comprehension. The participant read a total of 6 picturebooks with the assistance of the instructor. The instructor helped Sally

understand the stories and infer word meaning from context and illustrations. After reading each book, the researcher engaged in discussions with the participant and observed Sally's level of reading comprehension. At the end of the research, the author concluded that Sally's reading comprehension improved and suggested that other college students with a low EFL proficiency could benefit from reading picturebooks if they received appropriate guidance from a teacher or instructor.

Additionally, other researchers (Ho, 2000; Chen, 2006; Sun, 2010; Sun, 2019) claimed that using picturebooks along with read-alouds was beneficial for improving pronunciation, and word-inferring skills.

Respectively, Ho (2000) stated that picturebooks can be used for effective oral language practice. According to the author, when the teacher read a picturebook story aloud, she set an example of how to read with appropriate intonation, pitch, stress, diction, and enunciation, which students followed. Similarly, Chen (2006) assumed the role of researcher and teacher during the intervention. She read the picturebook story aloud to students to enhance their comprehension. The researcher mentioned that she had to read slowly, replace difficult words when necessary, comment on the text, and add pauses for dramatic effect for facilitating students' understanding of the text. Thus, the author mentioned that she, as the teacher, became the main source of comprehensible oral input for students. Furthermore, the author concluded that picturebook read-alouds allowed students to learn how people communicate in other cultures and to visualize the characters' personality through the teacher's voice.

On the other hand, Sun (2010) claimed that some students did not appreciate read-alouds with picturebooks, and that reading interest decreased when students encountered repetitive sequences which are common in picturebooks. To draw this conclusion, the author developed a mixed-methods study which explored the influence of picturebook-based activities

in learners' vocabulary acquisition and learning engagement. The participants expressed that read-alouds were difficult to understand because of the speaker's American accent, and that they found this activity tedious and boring. Hence, the researcher suggested that learners' negative response to reading picturebooks aloud might have hindered students' word learning in the long run.

Despite the negative feedback Sun (2010) received in the previous study, The author developed a qualitative study which aimed to explore the use of read-alouds and picturebooks for improving students' word-inferring ability (Sun 2019). The participants were 24 university students with low EFL proficiency. The researcher incorporated six read-alouds which were read to students. Then, the researcher taught the participants word-inferring techniques and provided guidance only when it was necessary. Additionally, the author used a pre-test and a post-test to assess participants' knowledge of 5 words selected from the picturebooks. The average result of the participants' vocabulary pretest was 7.54 points out of a 20-point scale. In contrast, their posttest resulted in an average of 17.38 points.

Based on this data, Sun (2019) reported that students improved their ability to use their own previous knowledge and context for inferring word meaning. The participants also commented that read-alouds fostered their interest and built their confidence in reading in the target language. Moreover, the participants described that read-alouds were fun, engaging, and challenging. Then, the researcher added that students' affective filter was also influenced positively since they felt that read-alouds did not cause them stress or anxiety. So, they were not held accountable for their reading performance. In fact, almost all students believed that read-alouds and picturebooks were enjoyable and valuable.

Furthermore, Malu (2013) and Lee (2015) defended the use of read-alouds in picturebook-based classes because of the positive influence they had on participants. Malu

(2013) stated that the repetitive patterns of the text in picturebooks allowed teachers to maintain a steady rhythm when they read the picturebooks aloud to their students; and thus, students could comprehend the story in a clearer way. The author added that read-alouds provided opportunities for teachers to check comprehension, encourage predictions, and promote discussions while students were reading. Moreover, Lee (2015) observed that students gained more confidence to speak in front of their classmates after practicing pronunciation by reading picturebooks aloud.

Additionally, authors such as Malu (2013), Resanto (2016), and Sun (2019) implemented discussions and debates along with picturebook-reading in their studies.

Malu (2013) implemented discussions in small groups at first and later transitioned to class discussions. The researcher observed that students were engaged with the picturebook story on a personal level which led them to reflect about their own lives as Rwandan citizens. Likewise, the participants of Restanto's research discussed moral value and the message presented in *The Lorax*. The author stated that the pictures in the book helped students understand the underlying meaning of the story, the problem of air and water pollution, and to relate this problem to their own reality (Restanto, 2016).

Similar to Malu and Restanto, Sun (2019) prompted students to discuss their personal experiences and relate them to the topic of the picturebook they read. This activity activated students' background knowledge which later became important for word guessing. The authors (Malu, 2013; Restanto, 2016; Sun, 2019) considered that discussions and debates were useful for overall comprehension, critical thinking, and word acquisition when students read picturebooks.

Lastly, Chen (2006), and Birketveit & Rimmereide (2013) also explored the use of picturebooks as prompts for writing. In the research developed by Chen (2006), students

participated in a 4-week writing workshop. The objective of the workshop was to enhance student's narrative thinking and writing ability. During the first week, students read different picturebook stories. The researcher used guiding questions to help students identify essential elements that were present in the stories they read, such as: a catchy title, an interesting plot, well defined characters, narrator's viewpoint, and an intriguing conflict or climax.

The researcher also motivated students to analyze why they liked or disliked a specific character, scene, or the author's writing style. During the following three weeks, students focused on writing their own original stories using the picturebooks they read as prompts. Students were encouraged to share their stories with their classmates using online tools, and to provide feedback. After the intervention, Chen gathered students' opinions and feedback through interviews and reflective statements to examine the efficacy of the writing workshop. Students considered picturebook stories as "appropriate choices for writing models" (p. 227) and that the workshop helped them become more involved in the writing process.

Chen (2006) concluded that using picturebook stories as prompts can be beneficial for promoting creative writing in the EFL classroom. She also emphasized that students should be provided with personalized teacher guidance, time, support, and regular writing practice using picturebooks as prompts for better results.

Similarly, Birketveit and Rimmereide (2013) encouraged the participants of their research to read a variety of picturebooks throughout 4 weeks. After reading each book, participants were expected to write or draw in their log books about any aspect from the picturebooks that they considered interesting such as grammar structures or the plot of the book. The researchers implemented two writing tasks based on illustrations from selected picturebooks, one at the beginning of the research and one at the end. Both illustrations were different, but they depicted the same theme which was fear.

The authors compared both texts and observed that students' language level and narrative skills were enhanced after having read several picturebooks and written about them on their log books. Students' first texts were approximately 62 words long while their second ones had an estimate of 82 words. In the second text, students used longer sentences and more complex language, including compound sentences, adverbials, and progressive verb forms. Moreover, students used a clearer story structure, better punctuation, and the inclusion of narrative devices like dialogues, conflicts, and plot-twists in the second text. Both Chen (2016) and Birketveit and Rimmereide (2013) concluded that picturebooks served as appropriate writing models for enhancing learners' writing skills.

### 3.3. Acquisition of Lexical Items and Grammatical Structures

Lee (2007) investigated the use of picturebooks to enhance vocabulary acquisition in adult learners. The author carried out a mixed-methods study in which 15 female EFL university students participated. The study aimed to establish the relation between learners' enjoyment of two picturebooks and their vocabulary acquisition. Lee developed the study in 1-hour sessions throughout 2 weeks in which observations and surveys for collecting data pertaining to students' enjoyment were used.

Additionally, the author applied two VKS tests, a pretest and a posttest, for assessing participants' lexical acquisition. Based on students' survey responses and test results, the researcher determined that it was unclear whether enjoyment affected vocabulary learning or not. Rather, it was established that word characteristics such as appearance rate in the text, recognizable morphemes, and familiarity influenced directly on learners' vocabulary acquisition. At the end of the research, Lee (2007) concluded that picturebooks were useful to increase learners' lexical acquisition because of the repetitiveness and familiarity of certain words.

On the other hand, Sun (2010) questioned Lee's (2007) results by noting that students' vocabulary knowledge was tested right after they read. Thus, learners' word retention over a longer period of time was not corroborated. Sun (2010) opted for assessing students right after reading and three weeks after the reading sessions took place in order to decrease the error rate in data collection. The author designed a custom VKS test for each of the five picturebooks used. Each test included 10 target words and 2 control words. The results in Sun's study showed that students learned approximately 26% more words thanks to picturebook-reading combined with literacy activities and teacher support. In comparison, students who only read picturebooks without any accompaniment gained 12% new vocabulary words.

Nonetheless, Sun (2010) concluded that long-term acquisition was more prominent in students who participated in literacy activities together with picturebooks than those who received explicit vocabulary instruction from the teacher (Sun, 2010).

Other authors (Sun, 2015; Huang, 2015; Restanto, 2016) did not focus on vocabulary acquisition, but still reported an increase in students' lexicon. For instance, Sun (2015) affirmed that integrating picturebooks in EFL lessons could expand word learning since collaborative activities used along with picturebooks made students understand the "meanings and usages of unfamiliar words" that appeared in the text (p. 193). In fact, one student's question prompted the others to use the illustrations in the picturebook and their own vocabulary knowledge to guess the meaning of an unfamiliar word. Thus, Sun (2015) stated that negotiation for meaning among peers enriched students' understanding of new vocabulary words that they encountered in the text.

Huang (2015) reported another example of vocabulary acquisition through picturebook classes. The author expressed that the 17 participants of the study saw an increase in their vocabulary acquisition as well as their pronunciation and reading comprehension were

enhanced. According to the author, participants gained an approximate of 15 to 30 new words per picturebook and 10 to 20 new words per chapter in children's novels. Moreover, the two participants who were further analyzed by Huang showed a significant increment of their vocabulary comprehension. The researcher checked the comprehension of random words taken from the books they read. Sandy read 7 picturebooks and increased her vocabulary comprehension in 28%. On the other hand, Emma read 1 picturebook and 4 children's novels and her vocabulary comprehension increased in 25%.

Huang (2015) determined that the use of children's literature at a college level class was beneficial for exposing students to new words and for improving their vocabulary acquisition.

In contrast, Restanto (2016) did not measure students' vocabulary acquisition quantitatively. Instead, the researcher considered students' responses to surveys. Approximately 68% of students agreed that the use of the picturebook expanded their English vocabulary and an estimate of 27% of students had a strong perception of their English vocabulary growth. Furthermore, Restanto (2016) reported that 76.5% of students agreed that the use of the picturebook *The Lorax* made vocabulary learning more interesting.

Sun (2017) explored the use of picturebooks and three types of vocabulary instruction to enhance vocabulary retention. Three groups of students participated in the intervention. Group A included 26 students, group B had 29 students and group C, 25 students. The intervention was carried out in three reading sessions. Each session was 100 minutes long and took place in intervals of three weeks. The three groups read the same picturebook each session; however, each group was exposed to a different type of vocabulary instruction during each session. Thus, at the end of the intervention, all three groups experienced the three types of

vocabulary instruction in different order. The researcher applied a VKS test at the end of each session and one month after each session to assess students' vocabulary retention.

Based on the tests results, the author found that PRO instruction allowed learners to acquire 54% of the target words after reading. However, learners retained only 40% of those words after a month. However, when the researcher implemented the PRVI instruction, students acquired almost all target words (94%) after the vocabulary teaching, but they retained only 42% of those words after a month. Finally, Sun (2017) observed that after the application of PRCOA instruction, students were able to acquire 76% of the target words, and they retained 61% of those words. The researcher stated that picturebook-reading along with collaborative output activities used in vocabulary instruction enhanced learners' vocabulary retention over a considerable period of time.

**Chapter IV**

**Research Methodology**

In order to answer the proposed research questions, this study was conducted as an exploratory research synthesis. An exploratory research synthesis consists in looking into the available literature of a specific problem in a systematic way to generalize theories, analyze findings critically, and determine relevant points for future studies (Norris & Ortega, 2006).

Thus, this exploratory research synthesis analyzed different research papers which studied the use of picturebooks to teach adult learners in the EFL classroom. Most of articles were peer-reviewed and published in journals such as *The Language Learning Journal, Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, Asian EFL Journal, Journal of Arts and Humanities, Indonesian EFL Journal, etc*. Master theses and Ph.D. dissertations were also included in the primary list of studies for the analysis. All of the selected studies were accessed entirely through online search engines and databases such as *Google Scholar, Google Books, SpringerLink, ERIC (Educational Resource Information Center), JSTOR (Journal Storage), ProQuest, among others*.

A total of 15 research papers were selected for this exploratory research synthesis. They included qualitative, quantitative, or mixed method characteristics. The only criterion for choosing the research papers was that they had to focus on the use of picturebooks or children's literature for teaching EFL adult students. The reasoning for this was to establish the techniques and activities that teachers use along with picturebooks, as well as the students' responses to this type of reading material.

It is important to mention that some of the studies also included younger and adolescent EFL students among the participants; however, the authors of the studies did not report any significant impact to the final results of their studies. The participants in these studies were

EFL learners at a beginner or intermediate level of proficiency since they are the students who could benefit the most from the acquisition of lexical items and grammatical structures, as well as the development of their EFL skills. The L1 of the participants was not of relevance to this research paper since the main focus was on how picturebooks helped these students to learn English as a foreign language (FL), and not how their L1 influenced on their learning.

Research papers were excluded from the primary list of studies if they focused on the use of picturebooks for learning languages other than English. Additionally, studies in which the participants were native-speakers of English or whose EFL proficiency was at an advanced or expert level were also dismissed. This was because the benefits of using picturebooks would be more evident in students of beginner levels, who lack more regarding vocabulary and language skills, than in students of higher proficiency levels (Sun, 2017). Likewise, studies in which the participants were younger than 10 years old were also excluded. This is justified on the basis that younger participants have different needs and preferences than their older counterparts; thus, the results among both groups might differ in various aspects (Iagarreta, 2018). Finally, studies that were secondary reviews were also not taken into consideration for the analysis.

In conclusion, this exploratory research synthesis examined the advantages and disadvantages of using picturebooks for teaching adult EFL learners, the degree of grammatical and lexical acquisition that students achieved after participating in picturebook-based activities, and the techniques and activities that enabled teachers and students to engage with this type of reading material in a genuine way.

**Chapter V**

**Analysis of the Results**

The main objective of this research synthesis is to report on the use of picturebooks to teach adult EFL students. Thus, studies were collected and analyzed based on the aforementioned criteria in order to answer the research questions. First, the studies were categorized according to methodological features such as their research approach, data-collection tools, and focus. Second, the studies were classified according to common categories that emerged inductively. These categories are the advantages and disadvantages of using picturebooks to teach adult EFL students, activities and techniques used with picturebooks in the adult EFL classroom, and the degree of acquisition of grammatical and lexical items after the implementation of picturebook-based activities. Additionally, it has to be mentioned that some of the selected studies presented characteristics pertaining to different categories, so they were counted for more than one category. Finally, the data were organized in tables which are presented with their corresponding description and discussion.

**5.1 Classification of studies according to their methodological features**

Table 1

*Research Approaches Used in the Primary Research Studies*

| Research Approach | Number of Studies | % |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Qualitative Research | 11 | 73.3% |
| Quantitative Research | 1 | 6.6% |
| Mixed Methods | 3 | 20% |

N= 15

Table 1 presents the 15 research studies categorized according to their type of research approach. The majority of studies used a qualitative approach since researchers such as Malu (2013), Kochiyama (2015) and Yang (2019) were mostly interested in obtaining a clear insight of students' reactions, feelings, attitudes, and perceptions regarding picturebook-based classes. Moreover, two studies from this group were longitudinal qualitative studies in which the results of 3 participants were explored in more detail (Huang, 2015; Huang, 2017). Additionally, only one researcher developed a study using a quantitative research approach in which she measured statistically the improvement of the participants' vocabulary acquisition and retention. Finally, according to the table, 3 studies had a mixed-methods approach because the authors focused on analyzing both the perceptions of students about the use of picturebooks in class and the numerical results of students' development after the implementation of picturebook-based activities (Lee, 2007; Sun, 2010; Birketveit & Rimmereide, 2013).

Table 2

*Data Collection Instruments Used in the Primary Research Studies*

| Data collection instruments | Number of Studies | % |
|---|---|---|
| Surveys[a] | 6 | 40% |
| Observations[a] | 6 | 40% |
| Field notes | 1 | 6.6% |
| Analytic rubric | 1 | 6.6% |
| Questionnaires[a] | 5 | 33.3% |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Semi-structured interviews | 4 | 26.6% |
| Informal conversations | 4 | 26.6% |
| VKS Tests / Evaluation sheets[a] | 4 | 26.6% |
| Audio recordings | 4 | 26.6% |
| Video recordings | 1 | 6.6% |
| Diaries/Log books/Reflective statements | 3 | 20% |
| Teaching journal[a] | 1 | 6.6% |

N= 15

[a] Studies may be counted in more than one category if applicable.

Table 2 shows the different data collection instruments used in the research studies. Researchers (Lee, 2007; Sun, 2010; Sun, 2019) applied surveys, semi-structured interviews, evaluation sheets, and VKS tests to assess students' level, performance, and opinions at the beginning and at the end of the interventions. Other authors (Kochiyama, 2015; Restanto, 2016; Sun, 2017; Yang, 2019) used questionnaires to determine students' background, opinions, anxiety levels, and perceptions about the use of picturebooks and picturebook-based activities in class. Additionally, diaries, log books, and reflective statements were used because they provided the authors with a deeper insight of participants' personal impressions. The least used instruments were field notes, analytic rubric for word inference ability, video recordings, and

teaching journals. These instruments were only reported by one study each (Sun, 2010; Sun, 2015; Sun, 2019).

Table 3

*Focus of the Primary Research Studies*

| Focus | Number of Studies | % |
|---|---|---|
| Language acquisition[a] | 4 | 26.6% |
| Vocabulary retention | 1 | 6.6% |
| Word inference ability | 1 | 6.6% |
| Literary competence[a] | 1 | 6.6% |
| Reading skill[a] | 4 | 26.6% |
| Writing skill[a] | 2 | 13.3% |
| Pronunciation | 1 | 6.6% |
| Affective Filter[a] | 5 | 33.3% |

N= 15
[a] Studies may be counted in more than one category if applicable.

The different research studies focused on analyzing how the use of picturebooks influenced different aspects of language learning in the adult EFL classroom. The most common categories were related to the effect of picturebooks on student's affective filter, reading skill, and language acquisition. A third part of the research studies focused on how using picturebooks impacted learners' affective filter (Sun, 2010; Lee, 2015; Kochiyama, 2015; Sun, 2019; Yang, 2019). This category included subcategories such as learning engagement, motivation, and anxiety. The following category was the reading skill. Reading was the

language skill analyzed by a higher number of studies in comparison to other skills. This is probably because of the nature of picturebooks which were the main material used for the interventions. The next category was language acquisition which also included studies that focused solely on vocabulary acquisition through the use of picturebooks (Lee, 2007; Sun, 2010). The rest of the categories were revised by a smaller number of studies which may reflect the lack of interest that researchers have in how picturebooks influence these aspects of language learning.

## 5.2. Classification of studies according to the research questions

### 5.2.1. Advantages and Disadvantages of Using Picturebooks to Teach Adult EFL Students

All 15 research studies presented useful information regarding the advantages and disadvantages of using picturebooks in the adult EFL classroom. The studies were classified in table 4 according to their reported findings. Considerably, all the studies presented advantages. In contrast, only 5 studies described disadvantages.

Table 4

*Number of studies according to the Advantages and Disadvantages of the use of picturebooks in Adult EFL teaching*

| Criteria | Number of Studies | % |
|---|---|---|
| Advantages[a] | 15 | 33.3% |
| Disadvantages[a] | 5 | 53.3% |

N= 15
[a] Studies may be counted in more than one category if applicable.

The reported advantages and disadvantages of using picturebooks in EFL classrooms were carefully organized in the following tables which will be thoroughly explained below.

Table 5

*Advantages of Using Picturebooks in the EFL Classroom*

| Advantages | Number of Studies | % |
|---|---|---|
| Improvement of EFL skills[a] | 10 | 66.6% |
| Enhancement of inference skills[a] | 4 | 26.6% |
| Increment in vocabulary acquisition[a] | 7 | 46.6% |
| Access to authentic language | 1 | 6.6% |
| Access to comprehensible input[a] | 2 | 13.3% |
| Positive impact on learners' affective filter[a] | 7 | 46.6% |
| Development of learners' cultural awareness[a] | 3 | 20% |

N= 15
[a] Studies may be counted in more than one category if applicable.

Table 5 presents the reported advantages of using picturebooks in the EFL classroom. The three that stood out the most were the improvement of EFL skills: reading, writing, listening, and speaking; the increase in vocabulary acquisition; and the positive impact on learners' affective filter regarding their motivation, anxiety,

confidence, and engagement. The improvement of EFL skills was reported by 10 of the 15 research studies. From the four language skills, reading proficiency and oral production were the most developed skills in comparison to listening and writing. Harmer (2007b) states that reading is a useful tool for language acquisition and for the enhancement of vocabulary, spelling, and writing. Thus, it makes sense that researchers gave more attention to this skill than to others (Chen, 2006; Lee, 2015; Huang, 2015; Restanto, 2016; Huang, 2017). Additionally, Muranoi (as cited in Kochiyama, 2015) expresses that, texts used for reading should provide comprehensible input, interesting content, and authentic language. All of which are elements that picturebooks contain (Malu, 2013). Thus, there is a close connection between reading and picturebooks.

Similar to reading, the improvement of oral production was also demonstrated by the authors (Ho, 2000; Chen, 2006; Lee, 2015; Huang, 2017). At first, they focused on developing learners' literacy competence through read-alouds and discussions. However, they found that features of oral production such as intonation, stress, diction, and enunciation were also improved.

On the other hand, only 2 studies reported that listening was improved through the use of picturebooks together with read-alouds (Chen, 2006; Sun, 2019). Broughton et. al (2003) states that listening is the first step to achieve oral fluency. Additionally, Ellis & Brewster (as cited in Kochiyama, 2015) mention that read-alouds help learners develop their listening skills because they listen more carefully to features like intonation and pronunciation, which would later benefit oral production. Thus, even though only two researchers mentioned that the use of picturebooks enhanced listening, there is a possibility that the studies which reported an improvement in oral production may have developed listening as well.

Finally, the use of picturebook activities to improve writing was explored by Chen (2006) and Birketveit and Rimmereide (2013). Harmer (2007a) mentions that teachers can provide models that facilitate the writing process for students. In both research studies, picturebooks contained examples of punctuation, grammar, narrative devices, and prompts for story-writing. Thus, researchers affirmed that picturebooks served as writing guidelines and were useful for developing learners' writing skills.

The second most reported advantage was vocabulary acquisition. Authors such as Huang (2015) and Restanto (2016) agreed that implementing activities like read-alouds, guided reading, and discussions helped to develop learners' understanding of unfamiliar words. Additionally, other researchers (Sun, 2015; Huang, 2017) emphasized that interaction was key for facilitating meaning. Hence, they included personalized feedback, teacher guidance, and peer-collaboration in their interventions to enhance learners' comprehension of new vocabulary words. Researchers concluded that picturebooks and picturebook-based activities were helpful for vocabulary acquisition because they allowed learners to infer the meaning of new words based on their previous knowledge, context, and illustrations with the help of their teacher or classmates.

The third most notable advantage was the positive impact on learners' affective filter which was reported by approximately 47% of the research studies. This category is explored in more detail in table 6.

Table 6

*Positive impact on Learners' Affective Filter*

| Affective Filter advantages | Number of Studies | % |
|---|---|---|
| Motivation | 5 | 71.4% |
| Anxiety[a] | 2 | 28.5% |
| Confidence[a] | 1 | 14.2% |
| Learning engagement | 2 | 28.5% |

N= 7

[a] Studies may be counted in more than one category if applicable.

According to table 6, motivation was the most common advantage among the research studies (Kochiyama, 2015; Yang, 2019; Sun, 2019). Indeed, the participants of the studies commented that they were motivated to read more in English and to continue learning the target language because picturebooks were fun and relaxing to read (Lee, 2015; Kochiyama, 2015). Malu (2013) also mentions that picturebooks are funny and playful texts that students can enjoy. Additionally, Sun (2017) affirms that picturebook stories are easy to follow. The 28.5% of the analyzed articles reported that learning with picturebooks decreased learners' anxiety while others outlined that participants increased their confidence and learning engagement in the long run (Chen, 2006; Sun, 2017).

Finally, advantages such as the enhancement of inference skills, the development of learners' intercultural awareness, and the access to comprehensible

input and authentic language are reported by a very limited number of studies (Ho, 2000; Malu, 2013, Chen, 2006).

In contrast to the reported number of advantages, there were very few disadvantages. Namely, lack of impact on language acquisition and the negative impact on learners' affective filter.

Table 7

*Disadvantages of Using Picturebooks in the EFL Classroom*

| Disadvantages | Number of Studies | % |
|---|---|---|
| Lack of impact on language acquisition[a] | 2 | 66.6% |
| Negative impact on learners' affective filter[a] | 3 | 100% |

N= 3
[a] Studies may be counted in more than one category if applicable.

Table 7 shows the disadvantages of using picturebooks in EFL learning. Actually, 3 studies reported that their participants commented that picturebooks were useless for acquiring useful language for work or study matters, too difficult to read, and just a waste of time (Sun, 2010; Lee, 2015; Sun, 2019). Therefore, participants' affective filter was impacted negatively in different areas as shown in table 8.

Table 8

*Negative impact on Learners' Affective Filter*

| Affective Filter disadvantages | Number of Studies | % |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Motivation[a] | 1 | 33.3% |
| Confidence[a] | 1 | 33.3% |
| Learning engagement | 2 | 66.6% |

N= 3

[a] Studies may be counted in more than one category if applicable.

Sun (2010) commented that learners' interest decreased when reading picturebooks because they found that the repetitive patterns of the text were boring. Likewise, learners in Lee (2015) study also described the content of picturebooks as uninteresting, uncomfortable, and senseless. Another reported factor that had a negative influence on students' motivation and confidence was the comments of the peers. Two participants of the research study developed by Sun (2019) commented that, while they loved reading picturebooks and doing read-alouds, the comments from their friends bothered them and led them to question the appropriateness of learning with picturebooks in college.

**5.2.2. Activities and Techniques Used with Picturebooks in the Adult EFL Classroom**

Table 9

*Activities Used along with Picturebooks*

| Activities | Number of Studies | % |
|---|---|---|
| Guided Reading[a] | 2 | 20% |
| Vocabulary instruction (PRO-PRVI-PRCOA) | 2 | 20% |
| Read Alouds[a] | 7 | 70% |
| Discussions/Debates[a] | 3 | 30% |
| Prompts[a] | 2 | 20% |

N= 10
[a] Studies may be counted in more than one category if applicable.

Table 9 shows the activities and techniques used along with picturebooks in the research studies. The activities were guided reading, read-alouds, discussions and debates, and prompts. Only 2 research studies reported using a technique, vocabulary instruction, which had 3 variations: picturebook-reading only, picturebook-reading plus vocabulary instruction, and picturebook-reading plus reading-based collaborative output activity (Sun, 2010; Sun, 2017). These activities and techniques were included in EFL picturebook-based lessons at the different instances such as before reading, during reading, and after reading, with the purpose of developing the four EFL skills

and promoting language learning (Chen, 2006; Birketveit & Rimmereide, 2013; Restanto, 2016; Huang, 2017).

In the same manner, the majority of researchers used the read-aloud activity in the implementation of picturebooks in EFL classes (Sun, 2010; Lee, 2015; Huang, 2017; Ho, 2000; Chen, 2006; & Malu, 2013). These authors reported that this activity was beneficial for developing listening comprehension and oral production. Ellis and Brewster (as cited in Kochiyama, 2015) affirmed that read-alouds prompted learners to develop their listening skills by paying more attention to rhythm, intonation, and pronunciation. Additionally, Harmer (2007a) explains that this activity provides a clear speaking model which students can use as reference to replicate in their oral production. Furthermore, Lee (2015) and Sun (2019) commented that learners reported that they felt less anxious, and more engaged and confident during read-alouds.

In comparison to read-alouds, 30% of the studies implemented discussions and debates. Harmer (2007a) explains that these activities can be carried out in big or small groups, and that they can be formal or informal in nature. Based on these guidelines, authors such as Malu (2013), Restanto (2016), and Sun (2019) implemented these activities with adolescent and adult students and claimed that they were useful for developing literary comprehension, reflective thinking, and critical thinking. Moreover, these researchers reported that students shared their personal experiences, related them to the story, and reflected about moral values during discussions with their peers.

Harmer (2007a) expresses that discussions and debates can be very enjoyable for students. However, Sun (2019) reported that not all participants enjoyed these activities since shy students did not appreciate interacting with their peers in discussions or debates.

The rest of the activities and techniques that Table 9 shows were supported by two research studies. Nevertheless, all of them helped to develop learners' language competence. For example, guided reading was useful for developing participants' reading skills (Restanto, 2016; Huang, 2017) while prompts served to develop students' writing skills in different aspects such as punctuation, text structure, grammar, and narration (Chen, 2006; Birketveit & Rimmereide, 2013).

**5.2.3. Degree of Acquisition of Grammatical Structures and Lexical Items After the Implementation of Picturebook-based Activities**

The activities and techniques implemented along with picturebooks focused not only on developing learners' EFL skills, but also on enhancing the acquisition of grammar structures and vocabulary words. Table 10 shows a comparison between them.

Table 10

*Research Studies that Reported Grammar and Vocabulary Acquisition*

| Language features | Number of Studies | % |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Grammar | 2 | 33.33% |
| Vocabulary | 4 | 66.66% |

N= 6

Only 2 research studies in this category claimed that picturebooks allowed the acquisition of grammatical forms (Malu, 2013; Kochiyama, 2015). Nonetheless, neither of the authors provided quantitative data to support their findings.

On one hand, Malu (2013) reasoned that the repetitive patterns and the call-and-response format of the text in picturebooks allowed students to analyze the grammar structures in use. Thus, they had a better understanding of how these structures functioned in an authentic text. On the other hand, Kochiyama (2015) explained that the picturebook that participants used in the research study provided them with many examples of various grammar structures such as present tense, past progressive, present perfect, imperative sentences, comparison structures, passive voice, among others. Furthermore, the author mentioned that 56% of the participants considered that reading more picturebooks would directly improve their language proficiency in the long run.

In contrast to grammar acquisition, 4 research studies reported some degree of acquisition in terms of vocabulary. Table 11 shows the percentages of acquisition as well as the type of vocabulary knowledge (Sun, 2010; Huang, 2015; Sun, 2017; Huang, 2017).

Table 11

*Degree of Vocabulary Acquisition Reported by the Research Studies*

| Author, Year | Degree of acquisition | Type of vocabulary knowledge |
|---|---|---|
| Sun, 2010 | 20.46% | Vocabulary breadth |
| Huang, 2015 | Between 25% and 30% | Vocabulary breadth |
| Sun, 2017 | 94% | Vocabulary breadth |
| Huang, 2017 | 3.71% | Vocabulary depth |

N= 4

Sun (2010) demonstrated that the participants of the focus group increased their vocabulary breadth by 20.46% after being exposed to PRCOA, a type of vocabulary instruction technique. According to the author, learners who read picturebooks and completed literacy activites surpassed learners who only read picturebooks. Actually, 26% of the participants learned more words in comparison to the control group where only 12% of the participants showed an increment of new words. Similarly, Huang (2015) noted that read-alouds, guided reading, and discussions impacted lexical acquisition positively since the participants gained between 15 to 30 words per picturebook and 10 to 20 new words per chapter in children's' novels. The author remarked that two participants, whose progress was further analyzed, gained between 25% to 30% of new vocabulary words.

Furthermore, Sun (2017) reported positive findings regarding vocabulary acquisition and retention. According to the author, the PRVI technique was the most effective in terms of immediate vocabulary acquisition after picturebook-reading. The author reported that participants learned 94% of the target words selected from the picturebooks. However, the PRCOA technique remained the most efficient for vocabulary retention after one month with a percentage of 61% in comparison to 42% of word retention after PRVI.

All of the aforementioned studies focused on measuring vocabulary breadth. On the other hand, Huang (2017) reported that the participant Sally improved her vocabulary since she remembered a lot of the new vocabulary words and was able to distinguish between homonyms according to context. The author considered this last finding as an accomplishment since Sally was not aware that many words have different meanings at the beginning of the research. On the contrary, after the picturebook-based

intervention, Sally read 6 picturebooks with a total word count of 4522 words and learned 168 new words which represented a 3,71% of vocabulary acquisition.

Other research studies (Lee, 2015; Sun, 2019) that were not included in tables 10 and 11 also provided interesting views about the impact of picturebooks and picturebook activities on vocabulary acquisition. For instance, Lee (2015) mentions that there was no acquisition of lexical items after the implementation of picturebook-based activities. The participants of the study commented that they did not learn a noteworthy number of words. Thus, they felt that picturebooks were not helpful for acquiring new vocabulary. In contrast, Sun (2019) stated that picturebooks and read-alouds were beneficial for developing word inference skills which can be useful for vocabulary acquisition. Nonetheless, the author recognized that this skill is not a determining factor in terms of vocabulary gain.

To conclude, it can be affirmed that the different research studies analyzed in this section reported that the implementation of picturebook-reading together with picturebook-based activities and an adequate teacher guidance had the potential to enhance learners' vocabulary and grammar acquisition. However, it is important to recognize that authors who claimed that picturebooks promoted grammar acquisition did not provide concrete data to prove this aspect; therefore, this claim is inconclusive (Malu, 2013; Kochiyama, 2015).

In contrast, other researchers (Sun, 2010; Huang, 2015; Sun, 2017; Huang, 2017) demonstrated that picturebooks encourage vocabulary gain, though they showed more interest in increasing vocabulary breadth rather than vocabulary depth. Overall, this data suggests that picturebooks can positively influence grammatical and lexical

acquisition. Nonetheless, further quantitative research is needed to measure language

gain more accurately.

**Chapter VI**

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

**6.1. Conclusions**

This exploratory research synthesis found relevant information regarding the use of picturebooks in the EFL classroom. Furthermore, this paper answered the research questions stated in Chapter I, which focused on three aspects: the benefits and disadvantages of using picturebooks with EFL adult students, the techniques and activities used along with picturebooks, and the degree of acquisition of grammar structures and vocabulary words achieved by learners.

The inclusion of different activities and techniques such as guided reading, vocabulary instruction, read-alouds, discussions, and debates. used along with picturebooks allowed students to develop their four language skills. Though, it was noted that reading comprehension (Restanto, 2016; Huang; 2017) and oral production features (Ho, 2000; Chen, 2006) were developed by more studies than writing and listening. Nevertheless, this finding supports Harmer's statement about the importance of developing the four language skills in order to improve learners' language activation and acquisition.

Likewise, learners' vocabulary acquisition was also favored after picturebook-based lessons (Lee, 2007; Sun, 2017; Huang; 2017). Students were able to use their prior linguistic knowledge along with elements from the picturebooks like context clues, comprehensible input, and illustrations to infer the meaning of unfamiliar words (Huang, 2015; Sun, 2015). Krashen (2009) explained the importance of providing comprehensible input to students. According to the author, it gives learners the opportunity to identify unfamiliar words and decipher their meaning by using more of their linguistic competence and word-knowledge.

Furthermore, different researchers such as Kochiyama (2015), Sun (2017), Sun (2019), and Yang (2019) found that using picturebooks and implementing activities based on their content was beneficial for the EFL students' affective filter, and their development of proficiency, as well as they foster positive attitudes towards language learning. Certainly, students reported higher levels of motivation and engagement, and lower levels of anxiety during picturebook-based activities which consequently influenced positively on their disposition towards learning (Lee, 2015; Chen, 2006; Sun, 2019). These findings corroborate the idea that picturebook-reading has a positive impact on learners' affective filter (Sharp, 1991). Moreover, this positive impact allows students to learn easily and to acquire a higher level of second language acquisition (Krashen, 2009).

It can also be concluded that integrating picturebooks in EFL lessons is highly helpful for adolescent and adult learners of lower and intermediate proficiency levels since they promote access to authentic language and comprehensible input, and increase vocabulary acquisition.

Finally, picturebooks are an excellent teaching and learning material because of their singular set of characteristics. In fact, they offer authentic language, good grammar examples, vocabulary in context, helpful illustrations, and interesting content to students to rely on their improvement of the language (Chen, 2006; Malu, 2013; Sun, 2015).

To conclude, picturebooks are useful teaching materials that language instructors can use in the adult EFL classroom. The advantages found in the 15 research studies that were revised outnumber the disadvantages. Therefore, even though picturebooks are not widely used in the adult EFL classroom, it was worth exploring their usage to report the benefits older

language learners can obtain; and to discover more of their advantages and pitfalls in respect to language teaching and learning.

## 6.2. Recommendations

During the preliminary stages of the research process which focused on gathering relevant studies, it was noted that there was a wide range of papers that explored the use of picturebooks with young learners. In contrast, there were not many research studies that explored the use of picturebooks with adult learners. Thus, it was very difficult to ensure that all of the selected studies included adult participants. That is the reason 3 of the studies included adolescent learners among their participants. This reflects the lack of research in this area of EFL teaching and learning.

Then, taking into consideration the findings that this exploratory research presents, it can be affirmed that the advantages of using picturebooks greatly outweigh the disadvantages. Thus, EFL teachers should consider implementing this kind of material in the adult classroom to enhance learners' overall EFL skills.

Moreover, both educators and researchers should study the use of picturebooks with adult EFL participants, as well as to explore the most suitable activities and techniques that can be beneficial to use in picturebook-based lessons with adult learners. In fact, this research should study the improvement of language skills and vocabulary acquisition that students achieve through the use of picturebooks. As Malu (2013) pointed out, it would be commendable for educators to diversify the resources they use in the classroom and to break out of the outdated belief that picturebooks are only for children.

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**Appendix 1**

**List of Primary Studies for Analysis**

Birketveit, A., & Rimmereide, H. E. (2013). Using authentic picture books and illustrated books to improve L2 writing among 11-year-olds. *The Language    Learning Journal, 45*(1), 100–116. doi:10.1080/09571736.2013.833280

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Yang, P. (2019). Investigating the Impact of English Picture Books on EFL Learners Anxiety in Taiwan. *Humanities and Social Sciences Letters, 7*(2), 56-63. doi: 10.18488/journal.73.2019.72.56.63

**Appendix 2**

**List of Picturebooks used in the Research Studies**

*Picturebooks used in the Research Studies*

| Research Study | Picturebook Title |
|---|---|
| Lee, 2007 | Tea with Milk |
| | The Girl Who Loved Caterpillars |
| Sun, 2010 | The Paper Bag Princess[a] |
| | Alexander and the Wind-up Mouse[a] |
| | Enemy Pie |
| | Julius, the Baby of the World |
| | The Three Little Wolves and the Big Bad Pig |
| Malu, 2013 | Little Blue andLittle Yellow |
| Restanto, 2016 | The Lorax |
| Lee, 2015 | The Missing Piece |
| | The Missing Piece Meets the Big O |
| | Ish |
| | Willy the Wimp |
| | King & King & Family |
| | Voices in the Park |
| | Faithful Elephants |
| | The Giving Tree |
| | The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs |
| Kochiyama, 2015 | The Paper Bag Princess[a] |
| Huang, 2017 | Alexander and the Wind-up Mouse[a] |
| | One Fine Day |

Rita and Whatsit at the Beach

Circle of Hope

Badger's Parting Gift

Stellaluna

Sun, 2019 | The Three Little Wolves and The Big Bad Pig

My Lucky Day

The Paper Bag Princess[a]

And Tango Makes Three

The Three Robbers

Extra Yarn

[a] Picturebook appears in other studies as well.