

行政院國家科學委員會專題研究計畫 成果報告

漢語兒童敘事中心智語言的發展：質量並重的長期觀察 研究成果報告(精簡版)

計畫類別：個別型
計畫編號：NSC 95-2411-H-004-033-
執行期間：95年08月01日至96年07月31日
執行單位：國立政治大學英國語文學系

計畫主持人：薩文蕙

計畫參與人員：碩士班研究生-兼任助理：陳玫秀
大學生-兼任助理：涂惠文、葉侃彧、林詩敏

處理方式：本計畫涉及專利或其他智慧財產權，2年後可公開查詢

中華民國 96年10月30日

行政院國家科學委員會補助專題研究計畫成果報告

漢語兒童敘事中心智語言的發展：
質量並重的長期觀察

計畫類別：# 個別型計畫 整合型計畫
計畫編號：NSC 95- 2411- H - 004 - 033
執行期間：95 年 8 月 1 日至 96 年 7 月 31 日

計畫主持人：薩文蕙
計畫參與人員：林詩敏、葉侃彧、涂惠文

成果報告類型(依經費核定清單規定繳交)：精簡報告

執行單位：國立政治大學英國語文學系

中 華 民 國 96 年 10 月 日

摘 要

敘事者常藉由心智語言 (references to frames of mind) 描述自己或他人的情緒、心智活動或心智狀態。學齡前兒童的敘事能力進步神速，其認知能力的進步使心智理論得以開展，連帶地，此期間兒童其心智語言的運用，亦有豐富的變化。緣於此，在探討兒童敘事發展的文獻中，心智語言的使用受到諸多關注與討論。文獻中對心智語言方面的研究多針對以英語為母語的兒童為主，以漢語兒童為對象的相關研究有如鳳毛麟角。鑑於此，本研究旨在剖析漢語學齡前兒童敘事中心智語言的發展歷程。

我們以十二位來自中產階級家庭的學齡前兒童為對象，其中六位男童，六位女童。以孩童平均年齡五歲五個月為起點，進行為期十個月的觀察。我們將心智語言細分為三類，並以其為依變項：以年齡與性別為獨立變項，探討變項間的互動關係。此外，我們以 *Frog, where are you?* 為題材，來引發研究對象的敘事表達。

研究結果分為量與質兩個層面。就量而言，隨孩童年齡的成長，其敘事表達中心智語言的語彙總量亦隨之增加，雖無年齡、類別及性別顯著效應，但所呈現的成長趨勢，與文獻中跨年齡層為取向的研究其結果一致。在質的方面，我們發現敘事焦點與敘事者角度切換的能力與心智語言的使用息息相關。研究初期，孩童的敘事僅只是對圖片中物件做靜態描繪，此期未見其運用心智語言的語彙。隨年齡增長，孩童對同一張圖片的敘述轉而以事件的動態過程為重點，並開始使用心智語言來評論表述。此外，在研究後期，由於孩童認知能力的前進，其角度切換的能力亦隨之進展，並開始以多焦點的方式切入詮釋，致心智語彙的使用愈見豐富。

本研究之結果，讓我們對漢語學齡前兒童其心智語言的使用發展有進一步認識，同時，亦為台灣的孩童在 *Frog story* 的敘事研究上，留下珍貴的漢語語料。

關鍵詞：心智語言、漢語兒童、敘事焦點、角度切換能力、靜態描繪、動態事件

ABSTRACT

'Frames of mind (FOM)' expressions consist of references to emotional states, mental states or activities, the importance of which has been widely recognized. In Bamberg and Damrad-Frye's (1991) cross-sectional study, they note that there are quantitative and qualitative differences between older and younger children in terms of the use of references to FOM. It is thus the goal of the present work to explore the development of the use of FOM references in Mandarin-speaking preschoolers' narratives.

Twelve Mandarin-speaking preschoolers, six boys and six girls, served as subjects in this study. The narrative data were collected at four time points throughout the observation period. The mean age of the children was 5;5 months at the first session of data collection, and 6;2 months at the last session. Children's narratives were elicited on the basis of the wordless book, *Frog, where are you*. Quantitative as well as qualitative analyses were performed to examine the research issues.

Our quantitative data suggest that Mandarin-speaking preschoolers tend to increase their use of FOM expressions over time. Our results, however, do not yield main effect for Age, Type or Gender. Qualitatively, we detect that preschoolers' narrative focus progresses from static picture description to dynamic event narration, and that female preschoolers evolve into the event-oriented stage earlier than their male counterparts. Once children enter the event-oriented stage, they begin to include more FOM references, along with other elaborate expressions, to interpret story events. We note that not only narrative focus but perspective-shifting ability may influence the employ of FOM expressions. With gradual unfolding of the perspective-shifting ability, children begin to interpret story characters' states of mind more often and consider the perspectives from more than one character.

The outcome of our work not only advances our understanding of the use of FOM expressions in young children, but contributes to the sample pool of the frog story some valuable narrative data from Mandarin-speaking children in Taiwan.

Keyword: Mandarin-speaking children , frames of mind , narrative focus, perspective-shifting, frog story, static picture description, dynamic event narration

1. Introduction

People reveal themselves directly or indirectly via their narratives. Earlier findings note that children improve the structure and the quality of their narratives with increasing age, which implies that language development does not finish with the development of sentence structures (Tager-Flusberg and Sullivan 1995). Accordingly, a full account of children's language development must take into account their emerging ability in narration.

Narratives encompass reference and evaluation. The former helps to orient the hearer to whom the narrative is about and where and when the action takes place. The latter reveals the narrator's attitude and lets the hearer know why the narrative is told and what its point is (Labov 1972). Despite widespread interest in emerging narrative ability, however, we lack information on how young children develop evaluative language skills. As a matter of fact, children's narratives bristle with evaluation (Peterson and McCabe 1983, Ukrainetz et al. 2005). Among various evaluative devices, the importance of references to 'frames of mind (FOM)' has been widely recognized. It is, thus, the task of the present study to investigate the developmental trajectory of Mandarin-speaking children's FOM expressions in narratives.

2. Literature Review

FOM expressions consist of references to emotional states, mental states or activities, which is crucial for a good narrative. As Tager-Flusberg and Sullivan (1995) state, a good story often explains story characters' actions by referring to their motivations or mental states. The use of FOM expressions is one such way to interpret one's own and others' actions. The felicitous use of FOM expressions requires perspective shifting which involves the integration of cognitive and linguistic capacities.

Bamberg and Damrad-Frye (1991) explore children's ability to provide evaluative comments. They observe that, among various evaluative devices, references to FOM are especially preferred by children of older age. More importantly, they detect quantitative and qualitative differences among 5-year-olds, 9-year-olds and adults in terms of FOM expressions.¹

Recent studies on narrative production from Mandarin preschoolers detect an increasing trend in the use of FOM expressions over time (Chang 2000, Chang 2001).

¹ They note that younger children tend to use FOM references to highlight perspectives pertinent to local aspects of events or persons in the narrative; with increasing age, children begin to use the same devices more and more to signal the hierarchical organization of the linear sequence of events.

In particular, Chang (2001) points out that FOM is the only evaluative device shows significant Age main effect. Similarly, studies on English-speaking children find out an ascending trend for this device, though its magnitude of increase does not reach significance (Peterson and McCabe 1983, Bamberg and Damrad-Frye 1991).

In the study on Venezuelan children's evaluative stance, Shiro (2003) notes that, among various evaluative categories, only the frequency of FOM references is responsible for the interaction between age and socioeconomic status. Likewise, Ukrainetz and her colleagues (2005) find that the expressions elaborating internal mental or emotional states increase in variety over time.

2.2 Perspective-Taking and Perspective-Shifting

The use of FOM expressions closely links to perspective-taking which requires proper cognitive ability. Such perspective-taking ability is crucial for a narrative in two ways. One is the focus which the narrator values most while interpreting the narrative; the other is the stance which the narrator takes towards the story world.² In their cross-linguistic work, Berman and Slobin (1994) point out that some of their younger children, 3- and 4-year-olds, rely much on purely static descriptions while narrating story events. On the other hand, older children tend to take a dynamically motivated perspective on the events. In other words, children of different developmental stage may take different perspectives and thus have different narrative focuses, static description or dynamic events, while producing the narrative work.³

Regarding the narrator's stance, in fictional narratives, the narrator needs to adopt not only a narrator's stance but the character's perspective in the story world (Chafe 1994). In other words, when narrating, a narrator has to be able to go beyond him-/her-self to elaborate the story character's emotion, attitude, belief or affect so as to provide psychological motivations to explain the character's actions.

The successful shift between the narrator's own stance and the story character's perspective requires mature perspective-shifting ability, which involves the realization that just as I have feelings, desires and beliefs so do other people. Piaget (1962, 1969) point out that children's knowledge about others' perspectives takes several

² Perspective-taking is a general term, which covers a narrator's various perspectives toward the narratives and the narrator's shifts between his own and other persons' perspectives. For the clarification of our following discussion, we restrict perspective-taking for the former case, while we use perspective-shifting for the shifts among different persons' perspectives.

³ Berman and Slobin (1994) define choice of perspective as filtering. According to them, experiences are filtered through the choice of perspective and through the set of options provided by the particular language. And cognitive and psycholinguistic development leads to mature filtering skills. Pertinent to narration, the key point to be chosen in narration is the choice of events to be recounted. To present elaborate or artful stories, children, thus, must learn how to take expressive options in the selection and arrangement of events and in downgrading or highlighting certain portions of events so that they can guide their listeners towards the understanding of the plot.

years to develop and that this knowledge cannot be unfolded fully by the preschool years. According to him, preschoolers belong to the intuitive period. They tend to be rather egocentric; therefore, they cannot accurately infer other people's states of mind. Presumably, children at the end of preschool years evolve from pre-operation to concrete-operation stage so that they may display the transition from egocentrism to perspective-shifting.

The developmental observations on preschool children's use of FOM expressions, thus, may not only unveil such transition but also lead us to speculate the relation between language and cognition. Accordingly, the present study aims to explore to what extent narrative focus influences the use of FOM expressions, and how perspective-shifting ability manifests itself in the use of such expressions.

3. Method

3.1 Research Question

By answering the following research questions, the present study attempts to explore the development of Mandarin-speaking preschoolers' use of FOM expressions.

- (1) How do Age and Gender effects manifest themselves in preschoolers' use of FOM expressions ?
- (2) How do different types of FOM expressions vary with increasing years?
- (3) How do perspective-taking and perspective-shifting abilities influence preschoolers' use of FOM expressions?

3.2 Hypothesis

Based on the afore-reviewed literature and the preliminary findings of my pilot study, the general hypotheses are put forward.

- (1) There are differences in preschoolers' use of FOM expressions over time and between genders.
- (2) Preschoolers include more FOM expressions in their narratives with increasing age.
- (3) Both perspective-taking and perspective-shifting abilities may influence the use of FOM expressions in narratives.

3.3 Subject

Twelve Mandarin-speaking children, six boys and six girls, chosen from nursery

schools, participate in the present study. All subjects are from similar middle-class socio-economic backgrounds. The mean age of the children is 5;5 months at the first session of data collection, and 6;2 months at the last session.

3.4. Material

In order to control the content of the fictional narratives, we use a twenty-four-picture story book entitled *Frog, where are you* (Mayer 1969) as the material to elicit fictional narratives from subjects. This book is chosen not only because it is a worldwide research tool which renders the cross-linguistic comparisons possible, but also because it is wordless and its structure has been extensively analyzed (Bamberg 1987, Bamberg and Marchman 1990).

The frog story represents a typical children's story with a hero, a problem, a series of actions following the problem and a happy ending. More than that, its content and context are age-appropriate to preschoolers. This picture book is suitable to our research goals since it depicts an elaborate series of events which allow the narrator to relate to various topics and to take different perspectives on events. Moreover, this story involves emotions which are appropriate for examining children's use of FOM expressions.

3.5 Data Collection and Data Analysis

The narrative data were collected at four time points throughout the year (Wooldridge et al. 1982). And the entire interviews were audio-taped and subsequently transcribed.

For the quantitative part, three-way ANOVA (an analysis of variance) and LSD post hoc comparisons were employed to assess differences between variables. For the qualitative part, illustrative excerpts are used to display children's narrative progression. Based on previous studies (Bamberg and Damrad-Frye 1991, Chang 2000, Chang 2001, Miller and Sperry 1988, Peterson and McCabe 1983, Huang 2002), references to FOM are defined in terms of three categories: descriptions of cognitive states (COG), descriptions of emotional states (EMO), and descriptions of physical states (PHY). The examples are as follows, with FOM expressions underlined.

COG: 我 以為 那是我的球。
I thought that was my ball.

EMO: 小 男孩 就 生氣 了。
The little boy was then angry.

PHY: 小 男孩 頭暈。
The little boy was dizzy.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Quantitative Findings

The first two research questions concern about the developmental trajectory of preschoolers' use of FOM expressions in terms of quantity. Recent studies on Mandarin-speaking preschoolers detect an increasing trend in the use of FOM over time (Chang 2000, Chang 2001). Similarly, studies on English-speaking children find out an ascending trend for this device, though its magnitude of increase does not reach significance (Peterson and McCabe 1983, Bamberg and Damrad-Frye 1991). Consistent with earlier findings, our data reflects that preschoolers employ more FOM references with increasing age, though the Age main effect fails to display. On the other hand, gender difference is unlikely to influence the amount of FOM expressions used by preschoolers.

In addition to Age and Gender, we also consider the possible contribution of Type effect in the developmental trajectory of young children's use of FOM expressions. The ANOVA fail to yield significant Type effect for this linguistic device, which suggests that the distribution of these FOM sub-types is dynamic at this developmental stage.

In the study by Chang (2001), Age main effect is established only for FOM but not for other evaluative devices. Similarly, in Bamberg and Damrad's work (1991), FOM is one of the two devices which display Age main effect. The significance of FOM is also evident in Shiro's (2003) work, in which FOM references are responsible for the interaction between age and socioeconomic status. Likewise, the present work detects a growing trend for FOM expressions, though the Age main effect fails to display. The discrepancies in research findings regarding Age main effect for FOM expressions may be attributed to differences in research design. Chang, Shiro, and Bamberg & Damrad-Frye gather cross-sectional data, whereas we collect longitudinal ones. Moreover, different studies involve subject populations of varied nature. Therefore, before any conclusion is reached, we need more research works, both cross-sectional and longitudinal, to further investigate the plausible Age main effect in this regard.

4.2 Qualitative Findings

The third question concerns about the qualitative shift in children's use of FOM

terms. The assumptions underlying our analyses are that children's perspective toward the story, i.e., the narrative focus, progresses from static picture description to dynamic event narration, and that they may become better at shifting among different persons' perspectives over time.

In Berman and Slobin's study (1994), some of the youngest children, 3- and 4-year-olds, rely on purely static descriptions of pictures while narrating the frog story. In the present work, four out of the six male preschoolers generate similar narrative productions at Time 1.⁴ What they do is just read off pictures from the book by delineating the pictures in static terms. Over time, these children begin to take a dynamically motivated approach and try to interpret what the story characters did or what happened to them, which indicates that the children can then conceive of the pictures as events. The transition from static picture-description to dynamic event-narration is revealed in the following excerpts.

Excerpt 1: CRS (Time 1)

狗 青蛙 人 衣服 - 有一隻狗 - 一個人在睡覺 - 一個拖鞋 一個衣服 椅子 - 瓶子 青蛙 - 拖鞋 - 月亮 窗戶 燈 - 馬靴 - 人 - 狗 - 枕頭 - 椅子 - 拖鞋 - 瓶子 - 單腳 青蛙 - 狗 - 還有人.

Dog, frog, boy, clothes. There is a dog, a sleeping boy, a slipper, a shirt, a chair. A jar, a frog. A slipper. Moon, window, lamp. Boots. Boy. Dog. Pillow. Chair. Slipper. Jar. Single-legged frog. Dog. And a boy.

Excerpt 2: CRS (Time 2)

有一天 小男孩 跟 狗狗 去看 他的 青蛙 - 坐在 床的 下面 狗狗 站著 - 已經是 晚上 了 - 沒開 燈 - 衣服 掉到 地上 - 還有 襪子 - 後來 他跟 狗狗 在 床上 睡覺 的 時候 - 青蛙 偷偷 伸 一隻 腳 - 然後 呢 - 天亮 的 時候 呢 - 它 都 跑 - 它 都 已經 都 跑 出去 了 - 然後 呢 - 小 男孩 跟 那個 狗狗 都 覺得 青蛙 跑到 哪 去了.

One day, the little boy and the dog are looking at his frog. The dog who sat under the bed stands up. It is already night time. The light is not on. The clothes fall on the floor. There is a sock. Later, the boy and the dog are sleeping on the bed. The frog secretly sticks out one leg. And then when the sky turns bright, it runs away. It runs out already. And then, the little boy and the dog both think about where the frog ran to.

⁴ They are CRS, LCY, TK, and TYH.

Excerpt 3: CRS (Time 3)

有一個小朋友 - 坐在床上 - 跟狗狗看青蛙 - 現在有月亮了 - 晚上衣服掉在地上了 - 好好笑 - 還有椅子放在地上 - 今天睡覺的時候 - 青蛙就跑走了 - 他今天睡覺青蛙就跑走了 - 後來他們起來的時候 - 發現青蛙跑掉了 - 不見了。

There is a kid, sitting on the bed, watching the frog together with the dog. Now there comes the moon. Night shirt falls on the floor. It is very funny. And a chair is placed on the floor. Today, while sleeping, the frog runs away. He sleeps today and the frog just runs away. Then, when they get up, they realize that the frog ran away. It's gone.

Excerpt 4: CRS (Time 4)

小男孩在床上看著青蛙 - 現在是晚上 - 衣服掉在地上忘了撿起來 - 地上還有椅子 - 小男孩睡覺的時候 - 因為青蛙不喜歡住在罐子裡 - 青蛙就偷偷跑走了 - 小青蛙腳先伸出 - 再把頭弄出來 - 後來小男孩他們起來的時候 - 難過的發現青蛙不見了。

The boy is looking at the frog while sitting on the bed. It is at night. The clothes fall on the floor but the boy forgets to pick it up. There is also a chair on the floor. While the little boy is sleeping. Because the frog does not like to live in the jar, it secretly runs away. The little frog first sticks out its leg, then its head. Then, when the little boy wakes up, they sadly find that the frog is gone.

Excerpts 1 through 4, from the same boy, reveal the developmental progression from static item-based description to dynamic event-based narration. For example, in Excerpts 2, 3 and 4, CRS regards Picture 2 as an event, taking a dynamically motivated approach and stating 衣服掉到地上 'the clothes fall onto the floor', which could have been interpreted in purely static term 衣服 'clothes', as in Excerpt 1. Another interesting evidence for the static-dynamic contrast is that 單腳青蛙 'one-legged frog' in Excerpt 1 is rephrased as 青蛙偷偷伸一隻腳 'the frog secretly sticks out one leg' in Excerpt 2. Moreover, CRS employs more FOM terms in Excerpt 4.

Furthermore, in Excerpt 3, CRS steps outside the story world and makes commentary evaluation such as 好好笑 'very funny', which indicates that he can

travel between the story world and the real world. It is interesting to note that the child does not provide such an omnipresent comment until Time 3, which suggests that perspective shifts from story world to real world is cognitively demanding and hence takes longer time to develop. As a result, such perspective shifts in narratives do not emerge until later developmental stage.

CRS increases his use of FOM terms from Excerpt 2 to 4, such as 覺得 'think', 發現 'realize' and 喜歡 'like'. These FOM expressions imply that the narrator can begin to interpret others' inner states of mind, which embody Chafe's (1994) claim that, when narrating a fictional story, a narrator adopts not only a narrator's stance but also the story character's perspective. More interestingly, CRS begins to shift among different perspectives, for he makes inferences not only about the protagonist's states of mind, but also the dog's inner mental states: 小男孩跟那個狗狗都覺得青蛙跑到哪去了 'the little boy and the dog both think about where the frog ran to'; 青蛙不喜歡住在罐子裡 'the frog does not like to live in the jar'. The successful employ of FOM expressions requires proper ability in perspective-shifting, which is cognitively demanding. Consequently, these FOM terms do not emerge in CRS's narration until he evolves into the event-oriented stage at Time 2.

Compared with some male preschoolers' picture-by-picture description at Time 1, all our female preschoolers are more advanced in this regard, for they produce event-oriented narration throughout the four time points. Excerpt 5 is an example which shows that a female preschooler can produce dynamic event narration at Time 1.

Excerpt 5: KHC (Time 1)

有一隻青蛙 - 有一隻狗狗伸出去看青蛙 - 小孩也有在看 - 有幾隻有在這裡 - 這邊是 - 青蛙是長腳 - 一隻伸出來 - 另外一隻再伸出來 - 然後就不見了 - 就是青蛙把這隻長腳伸出來 - 這隻再伸出來 - 然後頭再起來 - 手爬洞出來 - 然後就跳出來 - 跳出來了。

There is a frog. There is a dog sticks out to see the frog. The child is also watching. There are several here. Here is. The frog is long leg. The frog sticks out one leg. Then it sticks out the other leg. Then, it is gone. It is the frog which sticks out this long leg. The other leg sticks out. And then the head comes out of the jar. The hands creep out. Then it jumps out of the jar. Jump out.

Excerpts 6 through 9, from LCF, clearly show an increase in narrative length, and provides richer lexicon than Excerpts 1 through 4. Regarding FOM expressions,

in Excerpts 6 through 9, LCF provides several FOM terms, including 發現 'realize', 累 'tired', 喜歡 'like', 覺得 'notice'. As mentioned earlier, the use of FOM expressions involves perspective-shifting. In Excerpts 6 and 7, LCF tries to interpret only the protagonist's mental states. In Excerpt 8, however, she makes inferences not only about the protagonist's states of mind, but also the dog's and the frog's inner mental states. As Perry and Bussey (1984) indicate, with increasing age and with more experiences in social interactions with others in kindergarten, children turn out to be more skillful at interpreting others' motivations, feelings and thought. In particular, LCF wavers between interest in the frog by the boy and that by the dog, and happiness of the frog. The increasing amount of FOM expressions from Excerpt 6 through Excerpt 9 echoes findings from earlier research (Chang 2001, Bamberg and Damrad-Frye 1991) and the present one, which detect a growing trend for FOM expressions over time.

Excerpt 6: LCF (Time 1)

有一天呢 - 這個男孩就就在觀察青蛙 - 然後跑出去了 - 結果他早上起床的時候就發現青蛙不見。

One day, this boy is observing the frog. So he does not sleep until it is very very late. And then when he falls asleep, the frog secretly runs away. So when he gets up in the morning, he realizes that the frog is gone.

Excerpt 7: LCF (Time 2)

有一天晚上男孩跟狗看了好久好久的青蛙 - 然後呢他們就看到晚上三點了 - 然後呢男孩很累了 - 他就上床睡覺了 - 狗也上床睡覺了 - 只有青蛙還沒有睡覺 - 結果他就偷偷跑出玻璃罐裡面 - 他就跳跳跳跳 - 然後走了 - 結果到了早上的時候呢 - 狗跟男孩都起來的時候 - 他發現玻璃罐裡面已經沒有青蛙。

One night the boy and the dog look at the frog for a long, long time. And then they look at it until it is three in the morning. And then the boy is very tired. So he goes to bed. The dog also sleeps on the bed. Only the frog does not fall asleep. So it secretly climbs out of the glass jar. It just hops, hops, hops, and hops. Then, it leaves. Then, in the morning, the dog and the boy both get up. He notices that the frog is no longer

inside the glass jar.

Excerpt 8: LCF (Time 3)

有一天有一個小男孩 - 他很喜歡青蛙 - 他的名字叫做小文 - 他的狗狗叫做小安 - 然後他他就把他抓來的一隻青蛙放到他最喜歡的罐子裡面 - 然後小文還有小狗狗小安 - 都很喜歡那隻青蛙 - 然後呢小文就把那隻青蛙叫做小蛙 - 然後呢那個小蛙就很貪心 - 他就在瓶子裡面笑嘻嘻的 - 然後呢他然後呢小男孩就去睡覺了 - 小狗狗小安也去睡覺了 - 可是呢小青蛙覺得這個瓶子沒有水 - 他不喜歡住這個地方 - 他就想走出去走一走 - 然後呢去看看有沒有適合他的家 - 然後一早起來小男孩就說：「啊！小蛙不見了。小狗狗小安快點起床。」

One day, there is a little boy. He really likes the frog. The boy's name is Little Wen. His dog is called Little Ann. So he puts the frog that he caught into his favorite jar. And then, Little Wen and his little dog, Little Ann, both adore the frog. And then, Little Wen names that frog Little Frog. And then, that frog is very greedy. It begins laughing and smiling inside the jar. And then, and then, the little boy goes to sleep. The dog Little Ann goes to sleep as well. Yet, the little frog notices that there is no water in this jar. It does not like to live in here. It wants to go out. And then to explore and see if there is a place suitable to be its home. And then, when the little boy gets up in the morning, he said, "Ahh! Little Frog is gone! Little Ann, hurry up and get up!"

Excerpt 9: LCF (Time 4)

有一個小男孩住在這裡 - 非常喜歡青蛙 - 他的狗狗也喜歡青蛙 - 有一天 - 男孩抓到一隻小青蛙 - 男孩把抓到的小青蛙放在罐子裡面 - 然後小青蛙就在瓶子裡面 - 笑嘻嘻很開心 - 然後小男孩看著小青蛙就很高興 - 他和小狗狗一直看青蛙 - 他們都累了就去睡覺了 - 然後 - 罐子很不舒服 - 小青蛙覺得不喜歡這個家 - 它想到池塘去找地方住 - 然後小青蛙就跳出來 - 偷偷跑走了 - 早上 - 小男孩和小狗發現青蛙不見了 - 他們要去找青蛙。

A little boy lives here. He likes frogs very much. His dog also likes frogs. One day, the boy catches a little frog. The boy puts the little frog that he caught in the jar. Then the little frog stays in the jar. Smiling and very happy. Then the little boy happily

looks at the little frog. He and the little dog keeps looking at the frog. They are very tired so they go to sleep. And then. The jar is so uncomfortable. The little frog doesn't like this home. It wants to go to the pond to look for a place to stay. Then the little frog jumps out. Secretly runs away. In the morning, the little boy and the dog find that the frog is gone. They set out to search for the frog.

To sum up, the qualitative analyses suggest that preschoolers' narrative focus evolves from static picture-oriented stage, at which children merely describe stative objects in pictures, to dynamic event-oriented stage, at which they tend to interpret pictures as story events. In general, female preschoolers enter the event-oriented stage earlier than their male counterparts. From this stage on, young children start to refer to the states of mind or motivations for actions of story characters, which is missing in the picture-bound descriptions at earlier developmental stage. Furthermore, their ability in perspective-shifting manifests in endeavors to interpret others' mental states, ranging from only one story character at earlier stage to more than one person at later stage, which implies the progression in cognitive and linguistic capacities.

5. Conclusion and Suggestions for Future Research

The present study, based on the frog story, aims to assess the developmental trajectory of preschoolers' FOM expressions in narratives. The main findings are summarized as follows.

The first two research questions address the developmental pattern for FOM expressions in terms of quantitative analysis. Our results fail to show main effect for Age, Gender or Type, though a growing trend for the use of FOM expressions is found.

Qualitatively, we detect that preschoolers' narration progresses from picture-oriented stage to event-oriented stage. Once children evolve into the event-oriented stage, they more and more rely on evaluative expressions, which include more FOM terms, to emphasize their viewpoints. Thus, narrative focus, either event-oriented or picture-oriented, may influence the employ of FOM expressions.

It is also noted that female preschoolers evolve into the event-oriented stage earlier than their male counterparts. After children evolve into the event-oriented stage, a growth in preschoolers' use of FOM expressions is shown, which suggests that these children turn out to be more skillful at interpreting others' inner states of mind.

6. Bibliography

- Bamberg, M. 1987. *The Acquisition of Narrative: Learning to Use Language*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Bamberg, M., and R. Damrad-Frye. 1991. On the ability to provide evaluative comments: further explorations of children's narrative competences. *Journal of Child Language* 18: 689-710.
- Bamberg, M., and V. Marchman. 1990. What holds a narrative together? The linguistic encoding of episode boundaries. *Papers in Pragmatics* 4: 58-121.
- Berman, R., and D. Slobin. 1994. *Relating Events in Narrative: A Crosslinguistic Developmental Study*. Hillsdale, N J: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Chafe, W. 1994. *Discourse, Consciousness and Time*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Chang, C. J. 2000. *Narrative Performance across Contexts and over Time: Preschool Chinese Children and Mothers*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Graduate School of Education, Harvard University.
- Chang, J. W. 2001. *A Developmental Study of Narrative Structure and Evaluative Devices*. M.A. thesis, Graduate School of English Language, Literature and Linguistics, Providence University.
- Huang, J. R. 2002. *A Developmental Study on Children's Evaluative Comments in Narration*. M. A. thesis, Graduate School of Linguistics, Fu Jen Catholic University.
- Labov, W. 1972. The transformation of experience in narrative syntax. *Language in the Inner City*, 354-396. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Mayer, M. 1969. *Frog, where are you?* New York: Dial Press.
- Michaels, S. 1981. "Sharing rime": Children's narrative styles and differential access to literacy. *Language in Society* 10: 423-442.
- Miller, P, and L. Sperry. 1988. Early talk about the past: the origins of conversational stories of personal experience. *Journal of Child Language* 15: 293-315.
- Perry, G., and K. Bussey. 1984. *Social Development*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.
- Peterson, C., and A. McCabe. 1983. *Developmental Psycholinguistics: Three Ways of Looking at a Child's Narrative*. New York: Plenum.
- Piaget, J. 1969. *Judgment and Reasoning in the Child*. New York: Humanities Press.
- . 1962. *The Language and Thought of the Child*. New York: Brace Harcourt.
- Shiro, M. 2003. Genre and evaluation in narrative development. *Journal of Child Language* 30: 165-195.
- Tager-Flusberg, H., and K. Sullivan. 1995. Attributing mental states to story

characters: a comparison of narratives produced by autistic and mentally retarded individuals. *Applied Psycholinguistics* 16: 241-256.

Ukrainetz, T., L. Justice, J. Kaderavek, S. Eisenberg, R. Gillam, and H. Harm. 2005. The development of expressive elaboration in fictional narratives. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research* 48: 1363-1377.

Wooldridge, P., L. Nall, L. Hughes, T. Rauch, G. Stewart, and C. L. Richman. 1982. Prose recall in first-grade children using imagery, pictures, and questions. *Bulletin of the Psychonomic Society* 20: 249-252.

7. Self-evaluation of the Project (計畫成果自評)

The present work examines the development of Mandarin-speaking preschoolers' use of FOM expressions in narratives. This study is significant for providing narrative data based on the frog story, the worldwide research tool. In the pool of samples from nearly 50 languages, our work contributes valuable data from Mandarin-speaking children in Taiwan. Hence, findings based on this study will be written out and submitted as journal paper.

Great care has been taken to minimize the potential flaws in the present work; there remain, nevertheless, several limitations. To begin with, our sample size is far too small, and hence we yield only limited amount of information regarding the research topic. The second limitation is that our preschoolers are selected from a middle-class community. Actually, children from different socioeconomic conditions may experience different set of social interactions and related narrative genre practice (Michaels 1981). Third, the time span for observation in the present work is not long enough. Though we note growth in use of FOM expressions at certain time points, it could be merely the peak of a minor tremor, or the seemingly growth might turn out to be just a minor fluctuation in the extended developmental progression. To better understand children's use of FOM expressions, future research should include a larger number of subjects of varied socioeconomic backgrounds and follow the developmental path over a longer period of time.