The Influence of Children’s Literature Books on Children’s Reading Development
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Abstract. Children’s literature books are children’s exclusive literary works, which have an important impact on children’s reading development. At present, there are many problems in children’s reading, such as passive reading, narrow reading range and utilitarian reading, which lead to the backward development of children’s reading in China. Among them, there are not only external factors such as social environment, and family and school atmosphere, but also internal factors of children’s literature book industry. Writers and publishers, as creators and editors and verifiers of children’s literature, also need reflection and improvement in order to create excellent and educational works of the times, which will have a positive impact on the development of children’s reading in China.

Introduction
Children’s literature books are an important force in China’s book publishing industry. As the media of knowledge dissemination, they have exerted a profound influence on children’s reading and intellectual development. Children’s literature books are not only children’s spiritual food, but also the guide of children’s mental health development. In recent years, with the vigorous development of China’s literature industry, the children’s literature book industry is also showing vigorous vitality. Various publications emerge in endlessly, including literary stories, literary paintings, etc, which attract children’s attention to publications again, laying the foundation for the healthy development of children’s reading. However, throughout the whole children’s literature book industry and children’s reading status, there are still some problems.

The Current Development of Children’s Literature Books
Children’s literature books, as the main after-school reading materials for children, not only promote children’s reading, but also lay an important foundation for children’s intellectual development and character cultivation. Especially in recent years, with the development of literature in China, the book publishing industry has also shown a trend of diversification. Children’s literature books have also been developed to a certain extent, but obviously there is still a big gap with foreign countries.

Definition of Children’s Literature Books.
First of all, we need to define children’s literature books. Although as an important branch of literature books, children’s literature has distinct characteristics. According to the relevant provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990), anyone under the age of 18 is a minor, that is, a child. This can clearly define children’s literature books, that are books for minors under the age of 18. However, as far as the types of books are concerned, it is also necessary to use “Introduction to Children’s Literature” to make a concrete definition, that is, it is divided into rhyme, fairy tale, fantasy books, realistic books, documentary, scientific literature and art, animal books, picture books, etc., including picture books that have emerged in recent years, all of which belong to the scope of children’s literature. Children’s literature books are the passage for children to the literary world. Prose, novel, fairy tale, poetry and so on, whatever kind of passage, can open a door of wisdom for children.

The Current Situation of Children’s Literature Book Industry.
With the steady development of China’s book publishing industry in recent years, children’s
Children’s literature books have also achieved gratifying results. Especially in the past two years, children’s literature books have gradually become a rising force in the book publishing industry and the fastest growing subdivision. According to the data released by Beijing Open Book Information Technology Co., Ltd., the total price proportion of children’s books in the book retail market reached 24.64% in 2017, accounting for 1/4 of the book retail market. The dynamic sales varieties reached 259,400, with a year-on-year growth rate of 21.18%, which has maintained a high growth rate for six consecutive years. From the proportion of book variety structure shown in Fig.1, children’s literature still occupies nearly 30% of the total, while the demand proportion of children’s Chinese classics, children’s art, children’s picture books, children’s popular science encyclopedia and other literature-related industries reaches 76.76%. It can be said that such books have a dominant advantage in the retail market of children’s books, which is also an important basis for the enduring prosperity of children’s literature books.

![A Survey of the Market Structure of Children's Books in 2017](image)

**Figure. 1** An overview of the market structure of children's books in 2017
Data Source: Beijing Open Book Information Technology Co., Ltd.

**Analysis of the Current Situation and Causes of Children’s Reading**

While the market for children’s literature books is booming, children’s reading is not showing the same momentum. Many parents complain that the books they buy are a decoration, that their children do not want to read them, or that they just skim a few pages and give them up. For all these problems, this paper combs them one by one:

**Common Problems in Children’s Reading.**

Firstly, passive reading is a common problem among children. Many children do not have the subjective initiative of reading. On the one hand, they are not interested in reading content. On the other hand, they are influenced by learning pressure. A lot of extracurricular reading is completed by children as homework, rather than by their subjective choice of reading, which results in children’s rebellious psychology towards reading and makes it difficult for them to enter the world of literature books and understand the knowledge and philosophy of books. Passive reading caused
by lack of interest is the main common problem in children’s reading at present.

Secondly, children generally have the problem of narrow reading range. Although the variety of children’s books is abundant enough, there is little room for children to choose. On the one hand, children’s extracurricular reading materials are mainly chosen by teachers and parents, and children have little room to choose independently, so it is difficult to make reading choices according to children’s wishes. On the other hand, from the sales of children’s literature books, foreign fantasy books, such as Harry Potter, Little Prince, and other literary works are sought after, making other works neglected. These external factors interfere with children’s choice of reading content.

Thirdly, utilitarian reading is a common problem among children. This is an unavoidable problem under the influence of objective factors such as large population, high pressure of entering school and employment, fierce social competition and so on. Many parents, in order to enable their children to gain more competitive advantages, also require their children to choose the content related to the examination in reading, while neglecting the children’s real interest in reading. As a result, children will become more and more depressed, and forget what they are interested in reading, which affects the sales of children’s literary works. For example, literary books such as composition selections, famous quotations and epigrams are popular, but these literary books can not reflect children’s real interest in reading and the current situation of reading.

Cause Analysis.

From the above problems, the reason why children’s reading situation is not ideal is caused by the interference of internal and external factors. The role of external causes leads to the change of internal causes, which leads to the above problems.

Firstly, external factors affect the choice of children’s literature books. It is undeniable that external factors have great influence on the creation and publication of children’s literature books. Social environment has a far-reaching impact on consumption concept and values. Consumption concept mainly refers to parents’ consumption concept, which is vulnerable to the influence of social environment. For example, under the psychological influence, parents will blindly buy some children’s literature books with high enthusiasm, but they do not care about the content of books and children’s interest. They just blindly think that what books other children have read and their children can’t fall behind. The values also mainly come from the parents’ level. Parents are vulnerable to the influence of social values, such as pressure of entering higher education and employment pressure, which will lead to parent’s misconceptions of values and stimulate utilitarian reading. They believe that children need to read more before they are at a disadvantage in social competition, but they do not care about the quality and effect of reading.

In addition, it is hard to avoid the situation of “what one person says goes” in the guidance of children’s reading in schools. Schools are supposed to be places where children can read extensively, but there is a different picture in the actual teaching. Many schools assign extracurricular reading as homework to students. However, the choice of extracurricular reading does not respect students’ right of choice and willingness to read, but the school directly assigns reading tasks to students. In this way, some students lose their interest in reading and just finish reading homework mechanically, and children inevitably tend to converge in choosing literary books, strangling their reading pleasure.

Secondly, the internal causes of authors and publishers of children’s literature books have an impact on children’s reading development. As the content creator and subject selector of books, what kind of literary books are suitable for children to read, the artistic value and reading effect of works and other factors should be concerned by the authors and publishers. However, in actual reading, influenced by market factors, both authors and publishers are inevitably affected by market environment and children’s reading demands in terms of sales results and payment for books written. However, the author’s values, social values and aesthetics are difficult to show through his works and pass on to children. This is unavoidable, and it is also the contradiction between the author and the reader. On the other hand, the publisher’s lack of public welfare and cultural awareness is also an important factor affecting the creation of children’s literature books. As many publishing houses turn to commercial operation, they have to consider the reading habits of the
It is unavoidable to give up some publicly beneficial manuscripts for sale. It can be said that the creation of children’s literature books is more difficult than that of adult literature books.

**Promotion of Children’s Literature Books to Children’s Reading Development**

Of course, no matter how the market changes and social values change, children’s literature books are the mainstay of promoting children’s reading development. They play an irreplaceable role in shaping children’s moral character, improving children’s accomplishment and improving knowledge level.

**Diversification of Children’s Literature Books Publishing to Promote Children’s Reading Development.**

Children’s literature books should be published in a diversified way and read in different levels. For children of different ages, the publication of books in line with their age characteristics and reading interests can not only achieve targeted scientific reading, but also realize the sales of book publishing, which is a book publishing mode that accords with the law of the market. At present, China has published two graded publishing standards, the Selection Criteria of Graded Reading Contents for Children and Adolescents in China and the Evaluation Criteria of Graded Reading Level for Children and Adolescents in China, which opens up a channel for the diversification of the publication of children’s literature books. On the other hand, with the development of digital reading, the form of books is also changing. The appearance of digital books is not only welcomed by adults, but also by children. Of course, the publication of digital books, including picture books and comic books, should be strictly controlled by publishing institutions and educational institutions. While satisfying children’s reading interests, the value and moral quality of publications should be controlled, so as to give positive incentives to children’s thoughts.

**Diversified Creation of Children’s Literature Books Leads the Development of Children’s Reading.**

In literary book reading, children are more open than adults, mainly reflected in the internationalization trend of children’s literary books and reading choices. As mentioned above, new or traditional foreign children’s literature, such as Harry Potter and Little Prince, has a great influence on children’s reading in China. These publications occupy half of the children’s literature market. However, our original works, such as Han Han’s “My Country” and other emerging representative works of children’s literature, come to the fore and successfully occupy the other half of the country. However, many of these literary works are adapted from traditional literary works, such as the comics version of the Four Great Classical Novels, or the picture editions of “Hundred Thousand Whys”, etc. In the true sense, there are fewer original works, which is the main problem in the creation of children’s literary books in our country, and this will also affect the development of children’s reading in our country. Of course, one of the indispensable branches in the creation of children’s literature books in China is utilitarian literature books, such as books on emotional intelligence and personality development, which are popular with parents and schools. Only by properly controlling such books and encouraging the development of original children’s literary works can children’s reading be truly developed.

**Diversified Choice of Children’s Literature Books to Encourage Children’s Reading Development.**

No matter how children’s literature is created, how books are published and how classified publishing is carried out, the implementation of these measures can not ignore the stimulating effect of reading choice on children’s reading development. If children do not choose to read such works, it will be difficult to achieve the desired effect of children’s reading development. Therefore, schools should appropriately liberalize students’ choices of reading, and change after-school reading to suggestive reading rather than rigidly arranging reading for after-school homework. At the same time, parents should fully respect children’s opinions and interests and listen to their children’s voices when they help children choose reading works, instead of imposing their own personal wishes and values on children, so that children can enjoy reading.

Reading cultivates people’s accomplishment and moral character. Children’s reading is related to
children’s future development, and children are the hope of the country. Therefore, to do a good job in children’s literature books is not only related to the development of children’s reading, but also related to the cultivation of children and the shaping of their moral character. Children’s literature books should keep pace with the times, dig deeply into children’s reading needs, effectively abandon the common problems in children’s reading, conform to the characteristics of the times and children’s reading characteristics from creation to publication, take shaping children’s character as the starting point, and take leading children’s reading development as the goal to create, thus effectively promoting children’s reading development.

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