

# Jieli Implements Quality-oriented Strategy to Foster its Growth

A: Bai Bing (Editor-in-Chief of Jieli Publishing House)

Q: Qu Jingfan

**Q: According to book-sales data company Open-Book, the sales revenue of children's books in China accounted for 28.19% of the total turnover, but the proportion decreased by 2.33% (the biggest decline) in H1 2023. What do you think of this?**

**A:** The retail market of children's books in China in H1 2023 has entered the stage of slowing down from rapid development. The proportion of each category of children's books has changed: children's literature has declined while popular science and encyclopedia have constituted the largest part, China-themed publishing has been rapidly improved, and there is still huge market for picture books. After the recovery of offline customers, physical store sales did not increase significantly. The main growth was still from online platforms, mainly from short video and livestreaming platforms. Moreover, the per customer transaction is obviously reduced, and the sales of book sets and series are far from ideal because of the high pricing.

**Q: Could you please analyze the factors that lead to these changes in the children's book market?**

**A:** The reasons for these market changes are as follows. Firstly, after the pandemic, there was a downgrade in consumer spending, and readers paid more attention to the cost performance when buying books. Secondly, within the category of children's literature, there has been an increase in books with repeated versions. Children's literature needs breakthroughs and innovations, requiring established authors to produce new works or emerging authors to present new creations in order to potentially drive a new wave of sales. Thirdly, there is an enhanced societal emphasis on scientific literacy and an urgent demand for quality improvement, which has propelled the growth of children's encyclopedia books. Fourthly, the demand for picture books has been steadily increasing. The age range of readership has decreased, with even newborn infants now engaging in reading. This increase in readers has led to a greater demand for picture books. Meanwhile, as the import of picture books from European and American countries by Chinese publishers approaches saturation, the number of original picture books by Chinese publishers has continued to expand, and the sales also rose.

**Q: How was the market performance of Jieli Publishing House (Jieli) in H1 of the year?**

**A:** From January to June 2023, the total turnover of Jieli reached 350 million yuan, a 5.53% increase year-on-year. The net turnover reached 310 million yuan, showing a 2.20% increase from the same period last year. A total of 123 new books were published, marking a 19.42% growth comparatively. The reprint rate was 86.97%, decreasing by 0.33% from a year ago. The turnover of new books reached 50.113 million yuan, experiencing a 93.23% increase over the same period last year.

Jieli continues to enhance its reserves of unpublished titles, improve the pace and efficiency of new book publishing. In H1 2023, the title, number and sales of new books all increased steadily. Additionally, Jieli has always adhered to the strategy of selecting the best among the good and the excellent among the fine, emphasized value-based publishing. The number of unpublished titles is strictly controlled. Therefore, the ratio of new titles to backlist books has maintained a 2:8 proportion, creating a healthy product structure.



**Q: What are the new works from Jieli that have created buzz?**

**A:** In H1 2023, Jieli's China-themed publishing segment accounted for 16%, marking a 4.4% increase compared to the same period last year. The jointly published *Chinese Pioneers Story Collection* ("中华先锋人物故事汇") by Party Building Books Publishing House and Jieli launched its fourth batch in January 2023. Till now, this series has sold over 13 million copies. *The Junior Space Agency Series* ("少年航天局"), written by children's literature authors Duan Lixin and Sun Rui, tells the story of the Junior Space Agency members who embark on a series of investigations after tracking a mysterious signal source following the discovery of the first probe to land on the far side of the moon.

Children's popular science accounts for 21.2%, with the turnover increased by 2.943 million yuan. The popular science brand *Friend of Science* (《科学之友》) launched in 2020, has sold 1.59 million copies so far. *The Repository of Classic Series for Children* ("少儿万有经典文库") has published a total of 14 books to date, with a total distribution of 880,000 copies and a total turnover of 65.707 million yuan. The best-selling classic scientific work *A Short History of Nearly Everything Series* (《万物简史》) has been on the market for 17 years, with sales exceeding 1.8 million copies, making it one of the most outstanding popular science books in recent years.

Children's literature accounts for 23.5%, with a year-on-year increase of 3.72 million yuan in turnover. The *David Williams Fictions* ("大卫·少年幽默小说系列") introduced the sequel of *Gangsta Granny* (《了不起的大盗奶奶》), *Gangsta Granny Strikes Again* (《大盗奶奶的完美冒险》), which incorporates humor, comedy, and family education. It's a humorous and healing growth novel suitable for readers aged 8 to 14.

The picture book segment accounts for 19.8%. *The Barbapapa Series* ("巴巴爸爸"), and the *Baby Dragon Original Picture Book Series* ("娃娃龙原创图画书系列") continuously introduce new works. *A Very Busy Town* (《好忙好忙小镇》) book set has exceeded 30,000 copies in sales upon its presale on Xiaohongshu platform, with turnover surpassing 2.2 million yuan. Within two months, the turnover hit nearly 10 million yuan. As of now, the cumulative turnover has reached over 25 million yuan, with a total sales of 370,000 copies. Additionally, the *Mr. Octopus Has*

*an Idea Series* ("章鱼先生有办法") also performed exceptionally well. *The 32 Series* ("32个系列") created by author Peng Yi introduced the new work *I Did Not Defeat My Son with 32 Nightmare Goblins* (《我用32个睡魔怪没有打败我儿子》). It continued the exaggerated and dynamic artistic style of the previous works, narrating relatable stories of children's growth, conveying the warmth of friendship and the courage to overcome challenges.

**Q: What is Jieli's publishing plan for the H2 of the year?**

**A:** In H2 of the year, Jieli will focus on three aspects and two major segments to carry out effective publishing. Firstly, we will reserve best-selling book topics and enhance major project marketing. The title selection strategy will be further adjusted to control the title number, make full use of topics that demonstrate significant benefits. We shall stick to the quality-oriented strategy, the emphasis will be producing high-quality publications by selecting the best among the good. Moreover, effective marketing planning for major best-selling book projects will be prioritized.

Secondly, we will focus on exploring original topics and ensuring quality China-themed publishing. Emphasis will be placed on key China-themed publishing projects such as the *Chinese Pioneers Story Collection* -Picture Book Edition, the fifth batch of the series, and the *New Jieli Epistolary Collection* (《新接力书信集》). Effective planning for original publishing projects will be carried out, including the selection for the 4th Jieli Cup Jin Bo Childhood Literature Award and the 4th Jieli Cup Cao Wenxuan Children's Fiction Award. We will strive to unveil these projects in H2 of this year.

Thirdly, we will center on effective marketing and promotion of key new book projects. In the infant and toddler book segment, we are going to continue the expansion of *Baby Dragon Original Picture Book Series* and release works as *I Did Not Defeat My Son with 32 Nightmare Goblins*, *The Bears of Oroqen* (《鄂伦春的熊》), and *Once Upon A Mooncake Village* (《从前有个月饼村》) on schedule. We will give priority to the independently developed IP *Mimi and Tete Series* ("米米特特"). In September, we will publish ten volumes of *Mimi and Tete Body Novelty Books*, and customize marketing and promotion plans for different channels. Additionally, we shall seize the important milestones such as the 40th anniversary of the *14 Mice* (《14只老鼠》), the 50th anniversary of Usborne, and the 65th anniversary of *The Smurfs* to carry out marketing and promotional activities accordingly.

In the segment of children's book, we will closely collaborate with the distribution department to expand campus activities and carry out effective marketing activities for key new projects such as *Building Blocks of Finance* (《这才是金融》), the first volume of the *Good Science Book Collection* (《好好科学书库》), and the *David Williams Fictions*.

In the adult book segment, we will focus on preliminary promotion of new books through new media platforms. We are about to give special emphasis to new media, develop marketing plans on the basis of stages, channels, and timing, generate discussions for distinctive marketing, particularly for key new books like *The Bullet That Missed: A Thursday Murder Club Mystery* (《周四推理俱乐部: 消失的子弹》), *Anna* (《第二个安娜》), and *A Solitary Walker* (《孤独者的漫步》).