What are the specific effects of shared reading activities to support emergent literacy skills? A randomized control study on French-speaking preschool children

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Introduction

Oral language and early literacy skills are assumed to develop through school interaction routines such as bookstory reading.

In particular, interactive reading activities were found to have a positive impact on children language development. For example, in a shared reading intervention program (Whitehurst & al., 1994), children are encouraged to become active during the reading experience by asking questions, adding information or making inference about the story.

Method

Eighty-five 4-year-old children were randomly assigned to 1 of 3 conditions:

- A shared reading (SR) intervention (see Lefebre et al., 2018)
- A numerical training program dedicated to early numeracy skills development (see Vossius et al., 2018)
- A motor training program in which children were trained to improve their gross motor skills

The different trainings were conducted by group of 15 children.

Results

Specific effects of the SR intervention on

1. Specific vocabulary : word definition task

   List A : targeted words
   List B : untargeted words

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<th>PRE</th>
<th>POST</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shared</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>1.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numerical</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor</td>
<td>2.26</td>
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   Group by time interaction, F(2,82) = 1.47, p = .23

   * Children learned only the trained words during the bookstory reading

2. Print knowledge

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shared</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.61</td>
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<tr>
<td>Numerical</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor</td>
<td>0.85</td>
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   Group by time interaction, F(2,82) = 0.46, p = .64

   * All children improved their print concept knowledge due to school teaching.
   * The children who were trained by the shared reading intervention performed significantly better

Discussion

- Confirming previous studies, gains were observed after the SR intervention on all languages and early literacy measures.
- Specific effects of the SR intervention were found for some but not all languages and early literacy measures.
- Further researches were needed to explore the active ingredients and the specific contribution of SR intervention on literacy development.

Dosage : 10 weeks intervention / 5 times a week / 30 minutes a day

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Pre- and post-standardized measures:

- Oral language (discrimination, vocabulary, morphosyntactic skills, discourse skills) & early literacy skills (phonological awareness, knowledge of letters, print knowledge)
- Numerical abilities (cardinality, counting skills)
- Global control measures (gross motor skills)

Developmental but not specific effects on

3. Phonological abilities
4. M5 – sentence repetition
5. Discursive skills
6. Phonological awareness
7. Knowledge of letters

References


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