

# The Effect of Parent Involvement on Children's Reading Acquisition

Monique Sénéchal  
Carleton University  
Ottawa

# Goal of the Meta-Analysis

Assess the causal role of  
parent involvement  
in children's literacy development

# Some Definitions

- *Parent involvement*: parent-child activities that focus on reading
- *Intervention*: A planned change in how parents support children's literacy
- *Reading acquisition*: Growth in early and advanced literacy behaviors

# Reading Acquisition

## Early Literacy Behaviors

- Knowledge of letter names and letter sounds
- Phoneme awareness
- Early decoding abilities
- Early or invented spelling

# Reading Acquisition

## Advanced Reading Behaviors

- Word reading
- Reading comprehension

# Methodology

1. Establish selection criteria for studies
2. Search for studies
3. Select the studies
4. Code the studies
5. Analyze the findings
6. Assess the implications of the findings

# Step 1: What research to include?

- Tested whether parent involvement would enhance children's literacy
- With control groups

## Step 2: The search

- Search result: 214 articles

## Step 3: The selection

- Out of 214 articles, only 15 met criteria for inclusion.
- Main reason for exclusion:
  - No control group: 62%

## Step 3: The selection

- The 15 articles that met criteria for inclusion
  - represented 16 studies

# Step 4: Coding the studies

Coded the characteristics of the:

- Interventions
- Participant characteristics

## Step 5: The findings

- 16 studies
- 1340 families

## Step 5: The findings

Parent involvement does have a positive effect on children's reading acquisition

## Step 5: The findings

Effect size (ES) = .65

On average, the intervention children made gains of 10 points on a hypothetical reading test above the control children

## Step 5: The findings

But....

there was considerable variability in effectiveness across studies

range of ES: .07 to 2.02

# Intervention Characteristics

- Type of parent involvement

# Type of Parent Involvement

- Parents read to child (3 studies)
- Parents listen to their child read (6 studies)
- Parents tutor their child to read (7 studies)

# Type of Parent Involvement

Read	Listen	Teach

# Type of Parent Involvement

Read	Listen	Teach
No diff.		

# Type of Parent Involvement

Read	Listen	Teach
No diff.	8-pt gain	

# Type of Parent Involvement

Read	Listen	Teach
No diff.	8-pt gain	17-pt gain

# Type of Parent Involvement

Read	Listen	Teach
No diff. (ES = .18)	8-pt gain (ES = .51)	17-pt gain (ES = 1.15)

# Participants Characteristics

# Participants Characteristics

No difference across studies for:

- Socio-economic level of the families
- Reading level of the children
- Grade level of children

# Final Step: Implications

- For education...
- For research...

# Implications for Education

Should educators train parents to teach their child to read?

# Implications for Education

- Yes, parents are most helpful when they are trained to teach skills to their child
- Issues:
  - Need to know which techniques and strategies are most effective
  - Training and preparing teaching materials requires more resources

# Implications for Education

Should educators train and encourage parents to listen to their child read?

# Implications for Education

- Yes, training parents to listen to their child read enhances reading skills
- Issues:
  - Need to know which techniques and strategies are most effective
  - Less resources required

# Implications for Education

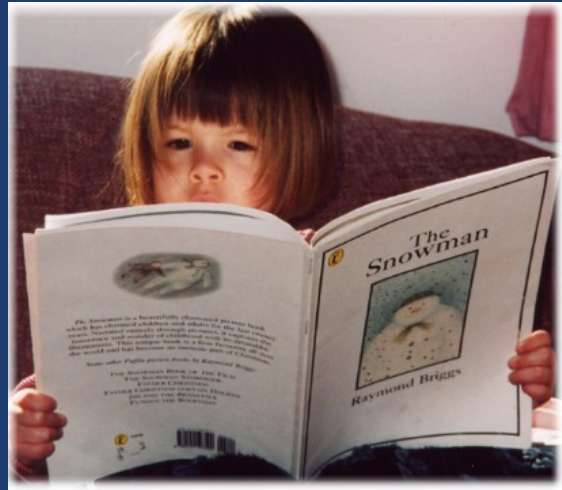
Should educators encourage parents to read to their child to enhance reading acquisition?

# Implications for Education

- No, reading to children did not enhance reading acquisition
- Be cautious in claims about the benefits of parent book reading
- Issues:
  - Only 3 studies
  - Reading to children can enhance oral language skills

# Implications for Research

- More research to determine specifically what aspects of the interventions are effective
- Better research reports with complete demographic information, intervention descriptions, measures used, and statistics
- Higher quality of research design



Thank you