

Personality characteristics, cognitive-linguistic factors, and environmental features and their connection to early literacy and reading in young children

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Research topic: Literacy skills are influenced by various factors, including cognitive and linguistic factors, personality characteristics, and environmental features such as the home and kindergarten. This study seeks to identify the contribution of these components to early (preschool) literacy and to early (1st grade) reading development. A special focus of the research is on children's attitudes and motivation with regard to learning to read. These issues will be investigated based on the data collected in the Safra longitudinal study.

Why is my study unique? A great deal of literacy research has focused on cognitive and linguistic precursors of early reading acquisition, less on environmental factors, and very little on personality variables. This study will exploit the exceptionally comprehensive range of skills and abilities assessed in the Safra longitudinal study to examine all these variables and their inter-relationships in a single study. I will also be examining the different profiles of the motivation and self-perception of young children towards reading. The children in this study performed different tests in many domains, such as literacy, cognitive and linguistic skills, and different questionnaires. In addition, the parents completed a questionnaire regarding home literacy, and kindergarten teachers also completed a questionnaire.

Analyses underway: In order to answer the research questions, I tried to unify the variables of the different components (personal characteristics, cognitive-linguistic factors, and environmental features, as well as home environment, kindergarten environment, and 1st grade reading abilities). In the next step, I will examine the connection between these different variables and their contribution to the different early literacy skills and reading in 1st grade with regression analyses. In addition, different children's profiles will be created based on the different variables and will be followed to 1st grade to examine their reading outcomes.

Why is my research important for education? Conclusions from this research could change educational practices among preschool teachers, which in turn will contribute to better preparation of the children for formal schooling. Furthermore, a broader understanding of which factors contribute to early literacy skills and reading abilities will help identify children at risk and help them progress.