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Antecedents of self-regulation in early childhood

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Abstract

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Presenter: David Hammer

Organisation: University of Wollongong

Co-authors: Edward Melhuish; Steven Howard

Stream: Stream D: Cognitive Development

Format: Oral

Title: "Antecedents of Self-Regulation in Early Childhood"

Abstract: Self-regulation is defined as a "child's ability to modulate behaviours according to the cognitive, emotional and social demands of a particular situation" (Calkins & Fox, 2002, p. 479). A review of the literature highlights that different components of self-regulation are used interchangeably in the identification of the construct (i.e., behavioural self-regulation, emotional self-regulation, and social self-regulation), leading to a lack of clarity and the nature of its development. Hammer, Melhuish, Howard & Leeson (2015) found that self-regulation could be explained by four different factors (Academic, Persistence, Behavioural and Fidget), with each influencing different outcomes in the child's academic achievement, social and emotional competence. While the importance of self-regulation has been well-established (e.g., academic achievement, social and emotional competence; Sylva, Melhuish, Sammons, Siraj-Blatchford, & Taggart, 2007), the antecedents of self-regulation are less clear (although it has been shown to be influenced by the child's home learning environments, socio-economic status, parenting style and social interactions; (Karreman, van Tuijl, van Aken, & Deokovic, 2006). Even less clear is the influence these antecedents on the development of self-regulation. The current study presents findings from research that investigated the antecedents of various components of self-regulation, using the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (LSAC). The LSAC followed 10,090 children and their families from March 2002, in two cohorts (birth: n =5,107; kindergarten: n = 4,983). Results of the analysis identified differential influences of the antecedents on components of self-regulation. This has important implications for education and future interventions.

Presenter: Jessica Johnston

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Stream: Stream D: Cognitive Development

Format: Oral

Title: "Promoting Print-Related Talk: The Rhyme and Reason for Why Genre Matters"

Abstract: Print-related talk during shared picture book-reading is hypothesized to scaffold children's emergent literacy skills; however, this link has been hard to assess because parents rarely refer to print when reading with their preschool-aged children. As rhyme may make print features in picture books more salient, we hypothesized that a) rhyming books would afford more parental print-related talk than prose, and b) increased print-related talk would correlate positively with children's literacy and language skills. Sixty-eight parent-child dyads from Dunedin, New Zealand shared two narrative picture books with their preschoolers: one rhyming and one prose. These sessions were then audio recorded, transcribed, and coded for all extra-textual talk. Children were assessed on their alphabet knowledge, phonological awareness, vocabulary level, and reading comprehension. Overall, parents made more print-related references when reading the rhyming book ($M=3.31$, $SD=4.25$) compared to the prose ($M=1.75$, $SD=2.78$; $t(66)=-3.54$, $p<0.01$). Furthermore, the total number of parental print-related statements during the rhyming book was positively correlated with children's letter naming fluency ($r=0.37$, $p<0.01$), alphabet knowledge ($r=0.30$, $p=0.04$), story recall ($r=0.29$, $p=0.05$), and story comprehension ($r=.33$, $p=0.02$). Conversely, no correlations were found between print-related statements made during the prose book and children's language and literacy skills. As there were positive links between parental print-related talk and child language and literacy skills for rhyming books but not prose, book genre should be considered in all future studies on shared reading. Further research into the benefits of rhyming books may also prove valuable for supporting children's development.