Effectiveness of a Program of Family Involvement in Reading Students of 1st Primary

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Abstract

There is evidence that family involvement (FI) affects various educational skills such as reading. This study aims to evaluate the implantation of the family program "Would you read me a story, please?" and its effect on reading achievement, in order to improve the reading skills of students and guide educational practices of parents. The sample consists of 206 students from 1st of Primary and their families enrolled in five schools. The reading achievement was assessed before and after the program using the subscales of lexical and semantic processes PROLEC-R. Finally, the reading motivation of students was observed and qualitative information was collected through a record of weekly monitoring completed by each family. The results show significant differences between groups on all subscales.

Keywords: family involvement, program evaluation, reading comprehension, reading motivation.

Resumen

Existe evidencia de que la implicación familiar (IF) influye sobre distintos productos educativos como la lectura. Este estudio pretende evaluar la implantación del programa familiar "¿Me lees un cuento, por favor?" y su efecto sobre el rendimiento lector, con la finalidad de mejorar la capacidad lectora de los estudiantes y orientar la práctica educativa de los padres. La muestra está compuesta por 206 estudiantes de 1.º de Primaria y sus familias, escolarizados en cinco colegios. El rendimiento lector (RL) se evaluó antes y después del programa mediante las subescalas de procesos léxicos y semánticos del PROLEC-R. Por último, se observó la motivación lectora (ML) que muestran los alumnos y también se recogió información cualitativa sobre la actitud de los hijos hacia la lectura a través de un registro de seguimiento semanal. Los resultados muestran diferencias significativas entre los grupos en todas las subescalas del RL y en la ML.

Palabras clave: implicación familiar, evaluación de programas, comprensión lectora, motivación lectora.

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Introduction

Education in the knowledge-based society of today requires considerable adaptation in the face of new social challenges and changes. Yet the importance of reading skills continues to be a primary concern in the early stages of schooling due to its impact on learning development. It is at the age of 6-7 years that students acquire and cement their fundamental grasp of reading. It is a decisive period and is the ideal time for carrying out psycho-pedagogical interventions in order to bolster efficiency and ensure success. (Lyon et al., 2001). Families and schools need to work together to create educational communities in which responsibilities can be shared among family, school and society, while parents must be made aware of the fundamental role that they play in their children's learning process (Van Voorhis, Maier, Epstein, Lloyd, & Leung, 2013).

The positive influence that the family can have on their children's learning processes, motivation and school performance has been shown in numerous studies (Blanch, Durán, Valdebenito, & Flores, 2013; Fuentes, García, Gracia, & Alarcón, 2015; Villiger, Wandeler, & Niggli, 2014). This influence is associated with the practice of certain measures that favor a positive environment and adaptation in the home. Research in the field has shown that a family environment that is properly oriented from an educational point of view tends to provide a context with well-defined characteristics, among which are: an attitude on the part of the parents that reflects high but realistic expectations towards their children; an accurate knowledge of their personalities along with a reasonable concern for the work that each child does in school; it is also important that the parents encourage and stimulate their children to read and explore other learning experiences and that they express appreciation and respect for the importance of school (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Sénéchal, 2006).

Family Implication (FI) has been shown to be related positively to a number of indicators of academic success, including the perception of competence on the teacher's part, school grades and achievement scores (Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Hill & Taylor, 2004). It has also been associated with other parameters of learning adaptation such as a decrease in the rate of grade repetition, a lower percentage of dropping out among teenage students, a greater number of students earning a diploma and a larger number of students studying in advanced courses (Sukhram & Hsu, 2012).

In addition to said benefits, a family's implication can also have an effect on psychological processes and aptitudes that influence the student's performance in motivational, cognitive, social and behavioral ways. The attitudes deriving

from these processes are especially relevant, as they can be addressed directly by parents and educators. These attitudes include a heightened sense of personal competence and self-sufficiency in learning, a greater development of language skills, a sense of self-control, a realistic causal attribution of results obtained and self-regulation skills (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). We should also mention social competence and adaptive behavior in the school, an interest in school work and a sense of the importance of education (Etxeberria, Intxausti, & Joaristi, 2013).

While the positive influence of family involvement in the education of children seems to be clear, it is worth examining the ways in which the interaction between parents and children can be made more efficient. We should also consider how such programs, promoted by educational institutions with the objective of creating real learning communities, are best organized (Azpillaga, Intxausti, & Joaristi, 2014).

To begin with, a number of practical aspects need to be clarified. Family members and professional educators should be ready to address concerns involving the appropriate approach to take regarding questions such as: What is the ideal means of communication between the school and the family? How often should this communication take place? Where (the school, the home, etc.) should FI activities take place? To what extent should

the children's work be praised and/or corrected? How can schools and teachers encourage parents to take on greater responsibility in their children's education? Can excessive implication on the family's part be counter-productive?

One of the variables that can most strongly condition reading habits —and subsequently, reading skills— is motivation towards reading (Goikoetxea & Martínez, 2015; Spörer & Schünemann, 2014). Research has shown motivational attitudes to be a result of family implication (Beltrán, López, & Rodríguez, 2006), of certain features of the home environment (Sénéchal, 2006) and of educational activities practiced by the parents as their children learn to read (Baker, 2003; Topping, Dekhinet, & Zeedyk, 2011). It is in this context that this particular study wishes to make a contribution; in it we attempt to reach a greater understanding of the relationship between FI variables, reading motivation and reading achievement (Dezcallar, Clariana, Cladelles, Badia, & Gotzens, 2014).

One way of improving the relationship between family implication, motivation and performance is by promoting educational activities at home with family reading programs that are easily carried out by parents (Blanch et al., 2013). The program we designed in this study takes into account the considerable limitations imposed by the difficulty that parents have finding time

for their children. We proposed activities that allowed families to discover new ways of helping their children gain skill and confidence as readers (De la Guardia & Santana, 2010).

Support activities for reading tend to be more common when a child shows a learning difficulty. Our program, however, aims to improve reading aptitude and motivation regardless of whether pupils have reading difficulties. It is important therefore that the positive environment we strive for in the home not be limited to solving problematic situations, but that all students have a chance to improve their reading abilities. A constructive, positive attitude within the family provides a solid base, the best possible foundation upon which children can acquire confidence in their own ability while acquiring a desire to read for fun (Villiger, Niggli, Wandeler, & Kutzelmann, 2012).

Hypothesis and objective

The general goal of this study is to confirm the relevance of FI in the acquisition of reading skills from the perspective of educational activities taking place in the home. Our objective is to confirm the effectiveness of the program "Would you read me a story, please?" in improving reading motivation and achievement. A second goal, closely linked to the first, is to determine whether the

features of this program (strategies suggested to parents in order to get them involved in their children's acquisition of reading skills) are truly effective.

With these objectives in mind we pose the following hypotheses:

— There is evidence of a positive effect resulting from the parents' implication in the program "Would you read me a story, please?" and its role in improving their children's reading motivation and achievement.
— The perception and expectations of family members regarding reading motivation and skills does improve with the implementation of the program.

Method

The study is of a quasi-experimental type based on a pretest/posttest design with a control group. We attempt to verify the existence of differences in learning and motivation towards reading of students from the first year of primary school in the experimental group (i.e., the group that followed the family reading program "Would you read me a story, please?").

In order to interpret and contextualize the quantitative results of the effects of the program we used the qualitative technique of content analysis, focused on open questions included in one of the measurement indicators.

Participants

The children participating in this study were enrolled in grade 1 of primary education (6-7 years old). Given the quasi-experimental nature of the study and its use of an incidental sample, emphasis was placed on finding the most representative range of schools possible, taking into account factors such as property ownership and socio-economic levels.

The sample comprises 206 students, 53% of them girls ($n = 110$) and 47% of them boys ($n = 96$), along with their families. Students were enrolled in two public schools ($n = 87$, 47 girls, 40 boys), 2 private schools ($n = 79$: 45 girls, 34 boys), and one 'concertado' (semi-public) school ($n = 40$, 18 girls, 22 boys). The schools are located in different areas of the Madrid Region, Alcobendas, Las Rozas and Vallecas, and the families belong to different socio-economic groups. The students participating in the program were distributed as follows: 24.3% ($n = 50$) made up the control group; 35.9% ($n = 74$) comprised the unmonitored experimental group; 39.8% ($n = 82$) made up the experimental group.

Procedure

To verify the effectiveness of the program, two groups were formed: the experimental group was made up of students belonging to families that applied the program and kept track of it with a weekly log. The control group was made up of students whose families allowed data to be gathered relating to variables under investigation, but who decided from the start not to participate in the program. Finally, there was a third group —not present in the initial design of the study, and which we have chosen to call "unmonitored experimental group"— made up of families that initially decided to participate in the program but eventually abandoned it.

Over the course of the first trimester of the school year we visited schools that we were considering as candidates for participation, meeting with school directors and staff. In these meetings we explained the features and details of the program as well as the time frame for its application.

We also explained in detail to the teachers of the grades that were going to participate in the program the goals and procedures that we had established. This enabled them to decide whether they would participate in the study and provided them with a basic background so as to be able to respond to any queries from the parents. We provided an email as well as a telephone number for them to consult about any doubts or difficulties.

Once we had received an affirmative response from the school head, we went on to present the program. First, we prepped the teachers so that they would be able to respond to questions posed by the families,

and then we presented the program to all of the families of first grade students. We used written and electronic correspondence, signed by the principal's office and by the head researcher. The letter of presentation was accompanied by a pamphlet explaining features of the program, and parents were encouraged to consult about any points needing clarification. For the next several days the teachers helped to gather and organize the families' inscriptions. For a class to participate in the program a minimum participation level of 25% was established.

The program is called "Would you read me a story, please?" First, families were asked to become involved in their children's learning of reading skills for the twelve weeks that the program was designed to last. More specifically, they were asked to have two daily reading sessions with their child, during which they would spend a little time reading together, albeit with a number of recommendations. A minimum of four days a week was recommended; this was both an acknowledgement of the difficulty of carrying out the reading sessions on a daily basis and way of offering flexibility so that each family could organize its time in accordance with specific family circumstances. The two daily reading sessions were supposed to be different:

1. At some point during the afternoon or evening, a family member was to ask the child to read —preferably out loud— for some 10-15 minutes. While the child read, the family member was to be present in the room, as actively focused on the child as possible. In order to complement the reading and as a way of encouraging the sense of a shared activity, the family was instructed to engage the child, alternating from day to day, with some of the following ideas:

— Ask the child to recount something about what he or she has read.
— Ask if he or she knows any other similar story.
— Ask them to make up what happens next.
— Ask the child questions when they've finished to see how much he or she understood.
— Ask them to imagine that another character suddenly appeared.
— Ask them to try to guess what might happen next in the story.

2. Secondly, after dinner or just before going to bed, someone from the family was to read to the child. If they weren't too tired, or if the child requested it, the reader could talk with the child about what they just read.

Among the ethical considerations of the study, families were given one week from the time of the program's presentation to decide if they would participate and to give their consent to gathering data about the student, even if they were not participating. Over the course of the following several days the families consulted the researchers about nu-

merous aspects of the program such as the time required to carry it out, the confidentiality of the data gathered, the type of reading that was recommended, the sort of monitoring that the program would have, etc. Families were then provided with a list of recommended reading for the students' age, drawn up with the help of four early primary school language teachers.

At the start of the program families were given questionnaires in order to evaluate the FI indicators and the reading environment in the home. The next step was to carry out an initial reading assessment, after which the twelve-week program got under way. To ensure its proper implementation, during this time the families were provided with means for contacting, consulting and following up on the program both by phone and electronic mail. The program was monitored in several different ways:

— The researchers visited each school, meeting with the principal, the pedagogical team and, particularly, the teachers, in order to see what kinds of comments they had received from the families. In this way measures could be taken to solve any problems that arose in each school.
— Researchers also contacted each family twice during the course of the program, by phone or by email, to check up on progress, gather information from the weekly logs and offer advice. This contact took place after the Easter holiday and during the first days of May.
— During this stage of the process it was discovered that some families had abandoned the program while other families required orientation.
— Families filled out weekly log sheets with various closed questions regarding the way in which they were carrying out the program as well as an open question allowing them to expound on any suggestions or difficulties deriving from their personal circumstances and giving researchers an idea of how the family was following the program and what their opinion of it was. The weekly logs were collected from the families twice: at the halfway point and at the termination of the program.

Finally, students were subjected to a final assessment which, in addition to measuring the students' reading achievement, evaluated their attitude and motivation towards reading.

Instruments used for data collection

Reading achievement

To evaluate reading progress, we applied some of the subscales of the standardized PROLEC-R Test (Cuetos, Rodríguez, & Ruano, 2007) which serve to assess the different processes involved in reading. PROLEC-R applies a normative

category to each of these processes (a result of between one and two deviations below the average is classified as "mild difficulty"; a result beyond two deviations is classified as "severe difficulty") and has a total internal consistency of .79.

Two of the subscales correspond to the lexical process —*word reading (WR)* and *pseudoword reading (SR)* while another two refer to the semantic process— *text comprehension (TC)* and *oral comprehension (OC)*. Data shown in the tables reflects the marks obtained directly. The subscales of the lexical process measure the number of right answers and the time the student takes to read the words. For the subscales of the semantic process, the *TC* mark uses a scale that goes from 1 to 16, while the *OC* scale ranges from 0-8. According to the PROLEC-R technical manual, the reliability of the subscales used in this investigation is as follows: *WR* .74, *SR* .68, *TC* .72, y *OC* .67.

Reading motivation indicators

In order to evaluate students' attitudes towards reading and the perception they had of themselves as readers, an instrument was fashioned based on work carried out by Baker and Wigfield (1999) and on international reading assessments (Martin, Mullis, Foy, & Arora, 2012). Total reliability (Cronbach α internal consistency) on the motivation scale is .82. This is an adequate value, especially when taking

into account the subjects' age and the sample size. In fact, the age of the subjects is what led us to choose a short scale with three small subscales that were designed after the reference tests mentioned above, whose validity is based on original trials and content homogeneity.

Students were presented with examples of reading motivation as represented by different characters; they were then to choose which one they most identified with. They were also asked to state to what degree they identified with this character: closely, moderately or not very much. The dichotomous responses cover a range of 1-4 depending on whether the student identified with the model of the situation shown or with its opposite.

Program evaluation. Weekly log entries and monitoring of the program's application

For the purpose of monitoring the program, families were asked to fill out a log on a weekly basis, in which they described how the sessions had gone each day. With this information, the experimental groups with and without monitoring were established. The entries filled in by the families consisted of a first section with five closed questions and another section in which they could write freely their comments or suggestions or describe any problems that may have arisen during the week. These open questions provided information that was useful for identifying weaknesses

or potential for improvement in the program (Patton, 2011).

Data analysis

First of all, we elaborated a descriptive analysis of the variables measured in the initial and final evaluations. The effects of the variables being studied were analyzed by means of variation analysis. The effect size used was .05. Analyses were carried out using the 19.0 version of the SPSS program.

Results

As could be expected, the family implication program was not followed in exactly the same way in each home. The general characteristics of its implementation are shown in Table 1, in which we find aspects

Table 1

Descriptive Elements of Program Monitoring

		Frequency	Percentage
Reading Motivation	Very positive attitude	29	35.3
	Positive attitude	39	47.6
	Negative attitude	14	17.1
	Total	82	100.0
Support of Reading Comprehension. Most frequent interventions by parents.	Dialog	20	24.4
	Questions	43	52.4
	Inferences	3	3.7
	None	15	18.3
	Total	81	100.0
Support of Reading Comprehension. Engaged in some activity.	Do not engage in reading comprehension activities	13	15.9
	Do engage in reading comprehension activities	69	84.1
	Total	82	100.0
Time spent reading	Less than 10 minutes	14	17.1
	Between 10 and 15 minutes	48	58.5
	More than 15 minutes	17	20.7
	Do not keep track	3	3.7
	Total	82	100.0
Reading to the child	Do not read to the child	23	28.1
	Do read to the child	59	71.9
	Total	82	100.0

such as the students' attitude towards reading as perceived by the parents, the way in which the family helps and encourages reading comprehension, the time spent reading or how regularly the children read.

According to Mora-Figueroa, Galán and López-Jurado (2016), the averages of the four reading achievement scales increased from the initial evaluation to the final evaluation except in the *oral comprehension* of the control group. The following evolution was observed, respectively, in the pretest and posttest scores of the control group, the unmonitored experimental group and the experimental group: *word reading* +7.6, +11.8 y +18.2; *pseudoword reading* +3.6, +7.9 y +9.5; *text comprehension* +1.1, +1.8 y +2.1; *oral comprehension* −.2, +.7 y +1.0. We can also observe how in the four scales the greatest increase consistently took place in the experimental group, while the smallest increase is found in the control group.

A comparison of the averages in reading achievement in the initial assessment (pretest) among the groups participating in the program did not evidence statistically significant differences. However, differences were observed at the completion of the program (posttest) in the four reading achievement dimensions (WR $p = .012$; SR $p = .021$; TC $p = .003$; OC $p = .001$). The effect size for the scales of *word reading* and *pseudoword reading* is small: $\eta^2 = .04$ in both cases.

The value for *text comprehension* and *oral comprehension*, on the other hand, is moderate: $\eta^2 = .06$ y $\eta^2 = .11$, respectively. We can thus observe that the program's efficacy is relevant, especially for the scales of semantic processing.

In the multiple post hoc comparisons carried out (Scheffé) significant differences can be observed between the experimental group and the other groups. In particular, the differences in RA *word reading* and *pseudoword reading* between the experimental group and the unmonitored experimental group are considerable ($p = .026$ and .046 respectively). In *text comprehension* and *oral comprehension* on the other hand, there is a significant difference between the experimental group and the control group ($p = .003$ and $< .001$. The effects sizes (Cohen d) for the contrasts of each of these RA scales in the multiple comparisons are of moderate magnitude except for in *oral comprehension*, where it is high: $d = 0.37$ for *word reading*; $d = 0.36$ for *pseudoword reading*; $d = 0.64$ for *text comprehension* and $d = 0.95$ in *oral comprehension*.

In much the same way as RA evolved from the initial to the final evaluation, the mean values of the *reading motivation* scales (Table 2) show the control group consistently receiving the lowest scores while the experimental group receives the highest. The positive differences between the experimental group and the control group are as follows: in

reading self-esteem 1.12; in *source of pleasure* 1.84; in *acquisition of skills and knowledge* .84 and in the RM total 2.81.

Table 2 illustrates a comparison of mean values by means of an ANOVA of the RM indicators of the different groups participating in the program. Results of the analysis demonstrate that the differences among the groups are significant for the total RM values and for the dimensions of *reading self-esteem* and *acquisition of skills and knowledge*. The effect sizes detected were minimal, with measured values of $\eta^2 = .05$ for the three scales that show significant differences among the groups cited previously and $\eta^2 = .02$ in *RM for fun*.

In the multiple post hoc analysis comparisons (Scheffé and Bonferroni were used, with no notable changes in *p* values), the only

Table 2

Descriptive Elements and ANOVA of the Reading Motivation Indicators (RM) of the Different Groups Participating in the Program

Variable	Group	*N*	Average	Typical deviation	*F*	*p*	η^2
RM Reading self-esteem	Control	38	9.71	2.31			
	Experimental unmonitored	66	10.53	1.92			
	Experimental	70	10.83	1.71	4.148	.017	.05†
	Total	174	10.47	1.97			
RM Source of pleasure	Control	38	9.90	2.54			
	Experimental unmonitored	66	10.38	2.25			
	Experimental	70	10.74	2.05	1.774	.173	.02†
	Total	174	10.42	2.25			
RM Acquisition of skills and knowledge	Control	38	10.55	1.94			
	Experimental unmonitored	66	11.33	1.16			
	Experimental	70	11.39	1.27	4.886	.009	.05†
	Total	174	11.18	1.44			
RM TOTAL	Control	38	30.15	6.05			
	Experimental unmonitored	66	32.24	4.32			
	Experimental	70	32.96	4.31	4.357	.014	.05†
	Total	174	32.07	4.83			

$\eta^2 = .01 - .06$ (slight effect†), > .06 − .14 (moderate effect ††), > .14 (large effect †††).

significant differences were found between the experimental group and the control group. More specifically, the differences in *reading self-esteem,* and *acquisition of skills and knowledge* and general RM scale are significant ($p = .018$, .015 y .015, respectively). The size effects (Cohen *d*) for these contrasts for each of the RM scales in the multiple comparisons are of moderate magnitude: $d = 0.57$ for *reading self-esteem*; $d = 0.38$ for *reading for fun*; $d = 0.54$ for *acquisition of skills and knowledge* and $d = 0.56$ for Total RM.

At this point we would like to underline some elements of the qualitative analysis that corroborate the quantitative results, complementing and providing a context for the program's efficacy. Although the responses to the open questions used in monitoring were voluntary, 36.3% of the families offered such information. And while parents were asked to relate any "observations, incidences or suggestions", in many cases they not only described their involvement with the program but they went on to offer a personal assessment of it. 49% of the families that responded to the open question voiced a positive view of the program and their child's experience with it.

An analysis of the answers given attests to a high degree of satisfaction within the families. The content of this input can be grouped into three blocks: 1. Gratitude for the program, coupled with an appreciation for the opportunity to spend more time with their children and share reading time with them ("today our child asked for more books from the library", "he read a story to his sister", "Friday we went to the neighborhood storytelling session"). 2. Perception of a considerable improvement in the child's RA ("he reads faster", "she understands what she reads much better"). And 3. Perception of a notable increase in reading motivation and a more positive attitude towards reading ("after the program my child is more likely to pick up a book", "she's asked for more books from the library, she's really excited about it", "he's more and more interested in reading", "she's crazy about reading, not like before").

Discussion

This investigation was driven by two objectives: on the one hand, we wanted to confirm a hypothesis regarding the effects of family implication on reading motivation and achievement by means of the program "Would you read me a story, please?"; on the other hand, if this program did indeed prove effective, we wished to put forth strategies for parents to involve themselves in their children's reading.

The reality is that many families today have a hard time helping with their children's learning for myriad reasons: scarce time owing to long workdays, often of both

parents; minimal communication between husband and wife; a lack of common objectives; excessive time spent with audio-visual devices (video games, television, internet, social networks, etc.) (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 2015; European Commission, 2015). This makes it all the more important that research in our field come up with guidelines and an educational orientation that can help parents find a level of implication that is adequately balanced with their children's autonomy (Van Voorhis et al., 2013). In this spirit, our program offers different strategies for involving the family in their children's education and encouraging an atmosphere in the home that is conducive to a positive attitude towards reading as an unparalleled source of intellectual development.

At the completion of the program significant differences can be seen among the groups. The increase in *reading achievement* in the four subscales of the experimental group, measured in the initial and final assessments, is greater in the experimental group than in the control group. This data confirms the hypothesis regarding the effectiveness of family implication in reading through participation in the program "Would you read me a story, please?" The results are also consistent with other, similar studies (Sukhram & Hsu, 2012; Van Steensel, McElvany, Kurvers, & Herppich, 2011; Van Voorhis et al., 2013). The greater increase in *read-ing achievement* within the experimental group applies to the four subscales that were evaluated, thus demonstrating that the positive effects of the program hold true for both the lexical and semantic aspects of *reading*. In other words, there is improvement in the decodifying process as well as in written and oral comprehension.

The *reading motivation* variable was followed through the perceptions that parents had of their children's attitude at the start of the reading sessions, by use of the reading motivation indicators. These indicators were evaluated at the completion of the program and, in keeping with other research dealing with this same material, (Sonnenschein & Munsterman, 2002; Sénéchal, 2006; Miller, Topping, & Thurston, 2010), the scores obtained in all dimensions of reading motivation were greater for the experimental group. The differences among groups are considerable for the dimensions *reading self-esteem, acquisition of skills and knowledge,* and *total reading motivation*. Here again the effect size is similar to that of other studies; in research by Miller et al. (2010) the different dimensions of reading self-esteem gave η^2 values of .02, .00 and .04.

In addition to using the standardized RA and RM indicators to evaluate the effectiveness of the program, we can also reach conclusions by analyzing the participating families' reactions. A qualitative

analysis of the program taken from answers to the open questions completed in the weekly logs offers interesting information on various aspects (Patton, 2011). The parents' personal assessments of the program's effectiveness in improving their children's reading were very positive. There are no negative assessments of the overall program, while expressions of gratitude and satisfaction with the way the program improved their children's reading achievement and motivation abound. One of the objectives of the program was precisely this, to encourage a positive exchange of reading experiences between parents and children, with this leading to an improvement in the children's reading motivation and achievement.

Answers to the open questions did include mention of certain specific problems, which in general had to do with a lack of initial interest in reading on the child's part. Although such observations were for the most part anecdotal, it is important to keep in mind that in a learning process as complex as reading —with so many variables coming to bear on the concept of reading motivation— we cannot expect a program such as this one to offer totally homogeneous results (Conradi, Jang, & McKenna, 2014). We must continue, therefore, to search for ways to motivate those students who were not drawn to this method.

The most positive attitude shown by the experimental group seems to be related to two factors: the increased number of positive reading sessions with the family on the one hand, and on the other, the fact that improved reading skills lead the children to enjoy books more and gain confidence in their reading. The link between reading motivation and its positive effects on the affective relationship between parents and children concurs with results obtained by other authors (Sonnenschein & Munsterman, 2002; Villiger et al., 2012).

Results confirm the positive role that can be played by parents in different aspects of their children's education, as we have seen in the case of reading. It is crucial that we continue on this path, verifying the effectiveness of programs such as that of Blanch et al. (2013) that offer guidelines and an orientation for family implication that may be applied in different cultural circumstances.

One limitation of this study derives from the fact that the number of families participating in the program decreased considerably over the course of the program. Although the researchers kept in contact with the parents through various channels (email and phone calls), it seems that this was not enough. A way must be found to monitor more closely the way in which the families are following the program, especially in its first weeks. With regard to the evaluation of reading motivation, carrying out such an assessment with children of this age

presented its own difficulties; evaluations of this sort are generally done with older children whose capacity for abstraction is greater (Baker & Wigfield, 1999). Finally, we resorted to two sources of informa-

tion that provided relevant data for the initial hypothesis, but we need to delve further into our assessment of the attitude towards reading of children who are beginning primary school.

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