

-analysis. Overall, the results provide both compelling and suggestive evidence that dialogic book reading improves expressive and receptive language skills in preschoolers, with more positive effects demonstrated by measures of expressive language. Differences in effectiveness were found for various environments, specific types of agents, and preschoolers with specific characteristics.

The primary objective of this paper is to critically evaluate existing literature

Exposure to books is a major factor in the development of both expressive and receptive language in children. Dialogic book reading is a form of shared reading and more specifically, is an interaction between an adult and a child in which they take turns in a conversation about a book (Whitehurst et al., 1988). This technique involves reading with, rather than to, the child (Fielding-Barnsley & Purdie, 2002). It is a strategy that can (c)-3 8t

focusing on both expressive and receptive vocabulary, 7 studies testing only receptive vocabulary and 1 focusing solely on expressive

Mixed (between and within) design

Valdez-Menchaca & Whitehurst (1992) examined the effects of a 7-week dialogic reading intervention for

higher socioeconomic risk for language problems included in the study.

There are also some strengths that can be acknowledged. A high inter-rater reliability of 90% and close monitoring of the intervention program were reported.

The study provides Level II evidence that is equivocal regarding a dialogic reading intervention and its effects on preschoolers' oral language based on the results of a single substudy. No differences were found in measures of receptive language. Therefore, this study does not provide any existent support for the dialogic reading intervention, but rather, the quality time spent reading books between parent and child.

Overall, the critical appraisal of the evidence included in this review suggests that dialogic book reading may have an effect on improving preschoolers' expressive and receptive language. All four studies have suggested that this specific book reading strategy has positive effects on increasing preschoolers' expressive language skills. Only two of the studies displayed positive effects on measures of receptive language.

Mol, Bus, de Jong, & Smeets (2008) presented compelling Level II+ evidence that dialogic book reading interventions intensify the effects of children's expressive vocabulary and has a more significant impact on children who are not at risk for language impairments.

Arnold et al (1994) presented suggestive Level II evidence that dialogic book reading has large effects on children's language when provided by parents. Videotape training was demonstrated to be more effective than the traditional direct training techniques. Valdez-Menchaca & Whitehurst (1992) also presented suggestive Level II evidence suggesting that this shared book reading strategy, when provided by a day-care teacher, is effective for children who come from low-income families. Heubner (2000) also demonstrated with Level II evidence that a dialogic book reading intervention was effective for preschoolers when delivered by parents who were efficiently trained.

Therefore, all studies reviewed suggest that, in general, dialogic book reading utilized with preschoolers enhances overall language skills, with a more significant effect on expressive language skills. The intervention strategy was most effective for preschoolers not at risk for language impairments, and

best utilized by trained professionals in a day care setting.

Some of the studies failed to find differences between dialogic book reading and other activities involving books. This finding underscores well known evidence that any form of shared book reading is better than none at all. Children from low SES families are known to be at risk for language impairments because of the role that the environment plays in children's learning (Rice & Schiefelbusch, 1989). Therefore, this dialogic book reading strategy, when implemented, can have positive effects on children's language skills despite the type of environment they are exposed to. The study by Valdez-Menchaca & Whitehurst (1992) supports this theory by demonstrating that demand for verbal production within socially meaningful verbal exchanges are major facilitators of the language-learning process (Whitehurst & DeBaryshe, 1989). Therefore, dialogic book reading is best

