As the field of children’s literature has grown and changed over the past several years, an increasing number of awards have emerged to recognize quality children’s books. The award lists are developed by committees of adults, but previous research (Lehman, 1991; Nilsen, Peterson & Searfoss, 1980; Ujiie & Krashen, 2002) has shown evidence of a large gap between adult and child preferences in literature. This study seeks to gain an updated picture of the discrepancies between adult-selected “award-winning” literature and literature that is “popular” with children, particularly given the appearance of new awards aimed more at specific age groups and formats. Books from the Newbery Medal, Caldecott Medal, Sibert Medal, and Geisel Award lists from 2010 to 2014 were examined and coded based on several characteristics and compared to top selections on the International Literacy Association’s “Children’s Choices” Award lists for the same years, in order to determine crossover and differences in adult and child literature preference.

The study examined differences in genre, major topic, and other structural characteristics of books between the two general types of awards. In addition, the study looked at possible differences that relate to diversity as there has not been an examination of its presence in child-selected awards in particular, nor consideration of how that may differ from diversity present in adult-selected awards. The results of this study suggest that children and adults continue to express different preferences in their selection of literature, in both literary characteristics and formats. Differences exist for both literary characteristics (tone, genre and protagonist characteristics) and formats (series and type). Selection of individual titles markedly showed the differences; only two titles in the over 250 books examined won both an adult-selected and a child-selected award. No noticeable differences emerged related to presence of ethnic diversity in child-selected vs. adult-selected awards. There was a significant lack of diverse
authors, illustrators and characters in both the child- and adult-selected awards, thus mirroring the current lack of diversity in books published in the United States (CBBC, 2016). Overall the study suggests that there are considerable differences in what children prefer and what adults select, something that educators should keep in mind when deciding on books for use with students.
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRESCHOOLERS’ ENGAGEMENT IN BOOK READING AND SELF-REGULATION

by

Aalia Fields

ABSTRACT

Children’s engagement in literacy-related tasks has been identified as a contributor of literacy skills and achievement for elementary age children (Guthrie, Wigfield, & You, 2012). However, literature is limited on the development of reading engagement and its predictors, especially for young preschool children who are beginning to experience reading activities at school and develop literacy interest.

Engagement in learning tasks is a multidimensional concept, encompassing regulation of behavioral (e.g., involvement in activities and following directions), cognitive (e.g., regulation of attention and commitment to the learning process), and emotional elements (e.g., affective reactions to teachers, peers, and activities) (Fredericks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004). Given the importance of regulation of these components, it is likely that engagement may be influenced by children’s self-regulation (SR) skills—regulation of attention, working memory, and inhibitory control. Our current study assessed children’s engagement during a whole-class reading activity with a multifaceted measure in an attempt to answer the following research questions: (1) How do preschoolers’ reading engagement develop over the school year?; and (2) Are reading engagement and SR scores associated?

Participants of the study were preschoolers from low-income backgrounds (N=175, aged 3-5) from three Head Start sites in urban areas of Mountain West Regions. Preschoolers’ skills were assessed during fall and spring of the school year. Teachers reported children’s engagement in classroom reading, and SR skills were directly observed using a behavioral regulation task. Analysis showed that children’s reading engagement improved over the school year ($t = 11.41, p < .000$). In addition, reading engagement was associated with SR skills. Correlation analysis showed significant correlations between fall SR scores and fall engagement scores ($r = .442, p < .001$), as well as between spring SR and spring reading
engagement scores ($r = .475, p<.001$). Though development of SR skills over the school year did not predict changes in book reading engagement over time, increased reading engagement over time significantly predicted development of SR skills. Ultimately, results indicate a bidirectional relationship between engagement in book reading and SR skills.
FIDELITY TO THE SHELTERED INSTRUCTION OBSERVATION PROTOCOL (SIOP): IS IT POSSIBLE?

by

Elizabeth Cook

There are many English Language Learners (ELLs) present in today’s school system. Many of them are actually native U. S. Citizens. However there is a large gap between the learning of ELLs and their native English speaking peers. There are many programs that have been suggested and used to make this gap smaller. This study challenges traditional or more common practices for ELLs and finds the best practice to use. The program that has been suggested as the best practice is the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol or SIOP model. This model includes 8 components and 30 features. It has been said that all components and features need to be implemented in the classroom for the best results. However, because of the enormity of the model it may be hard to implement all components and features into the classroom. This study also explores what are the easiest and the most difficult components to implement from the SIOP model to help teachers get a start on implementing this program.
International comparisons in education can be used as a baseline to see how a country is doing in comparison with education systems across countries. Performance analyses are essential when looking to inform or modify existing policies. In this research, I compare the educational system of the United States with that of Finland. My research consists of an in-depth literature review, as well as a mixed method study utilizing a survey and interview of four participants in different areas of the education field.

Keywords: international comparison, Finland, United States