

Improving Struggling Readers’ Reading Attitude and Comprehension using LINKS (An Integrated Literature-Skills Instructional Framework)

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Students who struggle to meet the demands of reading expected at their age and grade should be given a lot of opportunities to read real and relatable materials and be explicitly taught skills in the context of good literature. In response to this need, this study looked into the effects of using LINKS (An Integrated Literature-Skills Instructional Framework) on the reading attitude and reading comprehension of 13 struggling readers between the ages of 10 and 13.

After a 5-week, 30-hour exposure to the program, results showed a statistically significant difference in the students’ reading comprehension. However, there was still no significant difference in reading attitude after intervention though quantitative and qualitative measures indicate improvement. This implies that with explicit teaching and many opportunities for learning and practicing reading skills and strategies in the context of good quality literature, struggling readers will be able to overcome their difficulty in understanding what they read. There is a need to lengthen the program’s implementation and exposure of readers to authentic reading materials, as well as the need to further explore how family literacy practices and the home environment affect reading attitude and comprehension.

Introduction

Reading is an active process which enables one to make sense of print (Farrel, 2009). The ultimate goal of reading is comprehension which involves constructing meaning using information found in the text, the reader’s linguistic knowledge and schematic knowledge, and the application of various strategies for a goal or purpose (Padilla, 2002; Pardo, 2004; Boardman et al., 2008).

However, students develop literacy at different paces (McGill-Franzen, Payne, & Dennis, 2010). Struggling readers find it difficult to meet the demands of reading and writing expected at a certain phase or at their age and grade levels (Balajthy & Lipa-Wade, 2003). These difficulties may be a combination of physical, psychological, socio-economic, and educational factors (Shanker & Cockrum, 2009) that often result in a lag in literacy development and negative attitudes toward reading, which eventually lead to academic, personal, and social failure (Balajthy & Lipa-Wade, 2003).

Teachers and reading specialists usually identify struggling readers by administering standardized tests, such as the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test (GMRT), or informal reading inventories, such as the Analytical Reading Inventory (ARI) and the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI), to assess vocabulary, reading comprehension, and/or reading speed (Department of Education, n.d.; Fortson, n.d.). Once identified, struggling readers are usually instructed or given intervention alone or in small groups with other children who also have reading problems (Rasinski & Padak, 2004). Research recommends that they be instructed in small groups outside the regular classroom since students who find reading difficult often fail to read because large class sizes make it almost impossible for teachers to give them the concentrated instruction they need (Richek et al., 2002; McCormick, 2003; Rasinski & Padak, 2004; Shanker & Cockrum, 2009; Vaughn et al., 2012). In these small intervention groups, they are often taught to read through traditional, skills-based methods which usually involve mastering a series of skills and doing a set of drills (Rasinski & Padak, 2004).

As a result, they often think negatively of reading, feeling that it is a difficult, boring, and/or mechanical activity they would rather not engage in (Hermosa, 1992; Locsin, 1992; Rasinski & Padak, 2004; Orenca, 2005; Reoperez, 2006).

These struggling readers, who have been previously frustrated, often associate reading with unpleasant experiences and tend to view it negatively (Henk & Melnick, 1995; McKenna et al., 1995; Hermosa, 1996; Minskoff, 2005). Thus, they must be provided with materials from which they can choose and read those that are personally interesting to help improve their reading attitude and performance. They also need to be taught to recognize and fix their reading when it does make sense. They must be explicitly taught reading skills and strategies that will help them make meaning of text before, during, and after reading. By doing so, it is believed that a more positive reading attitude will be developed in struggling readers so that they will become more engaged and interested readers (Worthy et al., 1999; Richek et al., 2002; Balajthy & Lipa-Wade, 2003; Rasinski & Padak, 2004).

Studies have shown that a more positive reading attitude helps develop a more strategic and successful reader. Reading attitude is defined as the reader’s affect toward reading (Baker & Wigfield, 1999). Alexander & Filler (in McKenna, Kear, & Ellsworth, 1995) refer to it as “a system of feelings related to reading which causes the learner to approach or avoid a reading situation” (p. 934). Therefore, the more positive the attitude, the more motivated the reader (McKenna et al., 1995; Baker & Wigfield, 1999; Rasinski & Padak, 2004).

Several factors within and outside an individual affect reading attitude. Mathewson identified cornerstone concepts—the reader’s values, goals, and self-concept—as the basic components of reading attitude (McKenna et al., 1995). Values are beliefs that influence attitude while goals are the reader’s desired outcomes (Lim, 2001). Self-concept is the individual’s view of both his/her present and possible selves as a result of resolution of past issues, treatment of people important to him/her, and success or failure in tasks (Hermosa, 1996; Lim, 2001).

Taking into consideration the long-term development of reading attitudes, McKenna synthesized the work of Mathewson and others to come up with the McKenna model of reading attitude acquisition, which illustrated that an individual's attitude toward reading is a result of three factors: (1) normative beliefs, (2) beliefs about the outcome of reading, and (3) specific reading experiences (McKenna et al., 1995).

The reading attitude of parents also has a great impact on their children's reading attitude (Chen, Chang, & Ko, 2011). Parents who display a positive reading attitude and provide rich literacy environments and learning resources inspire a positive reading attitude in their children while those who show negative reading attitude or those who view reading as functional rather than enjoyable often find it difficult to foster a positive reading attitude in their children (McKenna & Kear, 1990).

Parental encouragement and family literacy practices and reading instruction in school are especially crucial in middle school students or adolescent readers from Grades 4 to 8 because they usually have negative attitudes toward reading and they seldom do voluntary reading (Worthy et al., 1999). Baker and Wigfield (1999) also found that children's motivation becomes less positive as students go through elementary school.

Struggling readers do not often focus on making meaning so it is important that they draw on the many levels of comprehension such as background experiences, literal comprehension, and inferential or higher-level comprehension in order to understand more effectively (Richek et al., 2002).

Also, they have difficulty in comprehending because they lack knowledge of the strategies which could help them monitor their comprehension mainly because they fail to identify that a breakdown in understanding has already occurred (Boardman et al., 2008). Thus, they need to be taught to recognize and fix their reading when it does not make sense. They must be explicitly taught reading strategies that will help them make meaning of text before, during, and after reading (Closs, n.d.; Boardman et al., 2008).

Since there is a connection between reading attitude and reading ability—the more positive the attitude, the more strategic and successful a reader becomes (Closs, n.d.; McKenna & Kear, 1990; Rasinski & Padak, 2004; Boardman et al., 2008)—those who can connect with the text and choose to read voluntarily can comprehend better since they are goal-oriented and reading for them is more purposeful (Vellutino, 2003).

Struggling readers are often unenthusiastic to construct their own meaning and interpretation of the text because of previous unpleasant and frustrating experiences. The fear of doing something wrong while reading prevents them from even trying to pick out details clearly described in the text (Richek et al., 2002). To improve comprehension, these readers must view reading positively; they must realize that it is an engaging, pleasurable, and purposeful activity rather than a meaningless, frustrating task. They would want to learn more if what they read, how they read it, and how they respond to it is connected to the real world (Rasinski & Padak, 2004).

The connection could be achieved by looking at reading as a holistic process as opposed to viewing it as a set of skills which need to be mastered separately. The use of an integrated literature-based framework provides children with opportunities to hone their skills in the context of good literature so they can have authentic reading experiences (Hermosa, 1992; Shanker & Cockrum, 2009).

LINKS (An Integrated Literature-Skills Instructional Framework) was developed for a literature-based integrated reading/language program. This “follows the DRL format with pre-reading, reading and post-reading components but has been expanded to include a variety of activities which reflect the principles of integration and whole language” (Hermosa, 1997, p. 115).

A typical lesson using LINKS is described below:

In **pre-reading**, new words and concepts are unlocked. It also focuses on making the connection with the pupils' prior knowledge

about the topic.

During reading, students are encouraged to make predictions. Aside from read-alouds, other formats for reading include silent reading, shared reading, guided reading, and assigned reading.

After reading, children are then allowed to respond to the text on their own, with minimum guidance, through a variety of media-visualization, construction, writing, and other creative activities before these responses are processed through sharing and discussion. Collaborative learning is encouraged through these activities. Enrichment activities that go beyond the essential elements of the story or activities across the curriculum may also be given after.

Skills instruction appropriate to the selection is given after the literature lesson. After introducing and explicitly teaching the skill to be learned, the teaching/modeling part requires the teacher to provide input using the context of the selection studied. Then, the teacher guides the pupils to apply the strategy before they are asked to do it on their own (Hermosa, 1997, pp. 117-120).

LINKS exposes readers to different kinds of texts which they can relate to and are interested in. The framework has cognitive and affective benefits to learners, and gives equal importance to explicit instruction in language and literacy skills (Padilla, 2010). It allows many and varied opportunities for holistic practice—those that involve reading whole, contextual material and not isolated items in worksheets—so that students permanently retain the new things they have learned (Hermosa, 1997).

The Study

Aims

This study aimed to find out the effects of using LINKS on the reading attitude and reading comprehension of middle school-aged struggling readers in a remedial reading class. It sought to answer the following research questions:

1. Does the reading attitude of struggling readers

significantly improve through LINKS?

2. Does the reading comprehension of struggling readers significantly improve through LINKS?

Method

Research Design

This study made use of the quasi-experimental pre-test-post-test within subjects design wherein a single group of subjects was treated and observed over a certain period of time. Results of tests developed or adapted by the researcher were used to gather quantitative data while reports from post-lesson questionnaires and observations were used for qualitative data.

Sample

The purposive sampling technique was used to determine the participants of the study. Thirteen (13) incoming Grades 5 to 7 students between the ages of 10 and 13 and whose reading grades fell at least two levels below the expected reading grade based on the results of the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test (GMRT) were selected to be participants of the study. The GMRT was used to determine participants of the study as it allows students to be placed at appropriate instructional groups so they can receive instruction that will be most beneficial for them (Briggs, n.d.; Fortson, n.d.; P. Padilla, interview, March 2012).

The students who took part in the program were enrolled in Reading Link from April-May 2012. Reading Link is the enrichment and remediation program run every summer by the University of the Philippines College of Education's Reading Education Area. Reading classes are taught by MA Reading Education students enrolled in EDR 278 (Practicum in Corrective Reading) and supervised by the department's faculty members (P. Padilla, interview, March 2012).

Through a letter, parents or guardians of the chosen participants were informed about the nature and objective of the study and were asked for their consent.

Instruments

To find out if the reading attitude of struggling

readers significantly improved through LINKS, this study used the following instruments:

1. Reading Attitude Scale (RAS)

The Reading Attitude Scale (RAS), an adapted version of Lim's (2001) Bilingual Reading Attitude Scale for Grades 3-6 (BRAS), was developed by the UP EDR 278 instructor and students in 2008. Since then, teachers and researchers in the Philippines have used or adapted these scales to identify their students' attitude toward reading (Esparar, 2010; Firman & Ocampo, 2011; Perez, 2012; P. Padilla, interview, March 2012).

The RAS uses a 5 point Likert scale with responses that range from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The scale also follows the pictorial response format but only includes 14 items from the original 40. The chosen statements reflect the reader's reading attitude based on three factors: reading goals, values and self-concept as a reader, and social environment.

2. Interview

An adaptation of the Seven Questions about Reading by Lara Robb (1995, in Woods & Moe, 2007) was used to interview participants as the questions in this form are similar to albeit more general versions of those in the RAS.

Participants were interviewed one at a time before intervention. This was important to do because children often answer survey questions with what they think is the right answer rather than with what they really think or feel (Richek et al., 2002). This interview provided some background information about the participants' reading interests and reading habits at home. This also gave the researcher the opportunity to establish rapport with each of the participants (Perez, 2012) and to extend or clarify some of their answers in the RAS and the Post Lesson Questionnaire (PLQ).

3. Parent's Questionnaire (PQ)

The Parent's Questionnaire (PQ) was answered by the parents or guardians of the

participants. This instrument was used to gather more information about the students' reading habits at home and the family's literacy practices. This is necessary because parental encouragement and family literacy practices have a great impact on children's reading attitude (McKenna & Kear, 1990; McKenna et al., 1995; Chen, Chang, & Ko, 2011).

The questionnaire is the checklist part of Fariduddin's (2007) Reading Questionnaire for Parents. It consists of 15 statements about the parents' perception of their child's ability to read, interest in reading and the family's literacy practices. The informant was asked to indicate how often the child or the family exhibits the reading or literacy behavior described in each statement by checking one of the three boxes labelled Usually, Sometimes, and Rarely. The researcher used the parents' responses to confirm or support children's reports in the RAS.

To find out if the reading comprehension of struggling readers significantly improved through LINKS, this study used the following instruments:

1. Reading Test (RT)

The Reading Test (RT) is a researcher-developed 10-item test that aims to measure reading comprehension.

Two texts from the 8th edition of the Analytical Reading Inventory (ARI) Level 6 were used. Form A, Level 6 was used for pre-test, while Form C, Level 6 was used for post-test. Different selections were given to avoid familiarity with the text. Ten comprehension questions were developed for each text. Specifically, the questions aimed to find out how a reader comprehends literally and inferentially by retelling in fact (3 items), putting information together (3 items), connecting author and reader (2 items), and evaluating and substantiating (2 items) (Woods & Moe, 2007).

2. Post Lesson Assessments (PLA) and Independent Exercises

After the reading part of each lesson, a short quiz, which includes 5-7 items, about the selection discussed was given as post lesson assessment (PLA). Similarly, during the last lesson on each target skill, independent exercises were given after explicit teaching and guided practice (Hermosa, 1997) to evaluate the participants' mastery.

The students' scores and outputs in the PLAs and exercises were used by the researcher to monitor the progress in reading comprehension on a lesson to lesson basis. These provided additional information on the participants' reading comprehension aside from the results of the RT.

The following instruments were also used to gather qualitative data that would validate or support the quantitative results of the investigation:

1. Post Lesson Questionnaire (PLQ)

The Post Lesson Questionnaire (PLQ), which the students filled out after every lesson, allowed the researcher to find out their evaluation of the selection and activities, and their own performance. Like the RAS, it follows a pictorial response format but students were given the option to further explain their answers to some questions.

The PLQ allowed the researcher to gauge if the texts and activities given in class were interesting and engaging enough to elicit good participation, and if they could be a factor in the improvement or non-improvement of reading attitude and reading comprehension after intervention.

2. PLQ – Teacher's Observation Sheet (PLQ-TOS)

The researcher filled out a teacher's version of the PLQ after every lesson. This checklist contains statements that evaluate the student's interest in and understanding of the lesson, and participation and attitude in class.

It also includes 4 items on observable reading behavior. A space for other notable observations in terms of reading attitude, reading comprehension, and general behavior especially during presentation and discussion is also provided.

Data Collection

Before intervention, the participants were given the RAS and RT as pre-tests. They were also interviewed individually and their parents were given a copy of the PQ to accomplish.

The LINKS program was conducted for 5 weeks. The students were taught for 2 hours, thrice a week.

To expose students to materials of different genres, the package included lessons using 7 narratives, 3 poems, 3 expository texts, and 2 non-traditional texts. The materials chosen were in relation to the program's theme: "Understanding myself will help me in understanding and relating with others."

The target comprehension skills were noting details, making inferences, and using the text-to-self strategy. These were aimed at helping the students in comprehending literally by retelling fact and putting information together, and inferentially by connecting author and reader, and evaluating and substantiating (Woods & Moe, 2007).

The typical format of a LINKS lesson used in the intervention and the estimated time allotment for each are outlined in Table 1.

During intervention, the first 15 minutes of each session was allotted to sharing familiar or chosen books to encourage students to talk about their feelings and opinions about it, and to increase their feeling of success. Though not technically a part of LINKS, allowing students to share about something that is personally interesting can help them overcome motivational difficulties and improve reading attitude (Worth et al., 1999; Balajthy & Lipa-Wade, 2003). Each meeting, one student was assigned to share about his/her favorite book, a book he/she has recently read, or the text discussed and read in class the previous meeting. The rest of the class was encouraged to ask questions or give comments.

Table 1.
Links Lesson Outline

Parts	Activities
	Sharing of Familiar or Chosen Book/Selection (15 minutes)
Pre-reading (15 minutes)	Pre-lesson Assessment
	Unlocking of Difficulties
	Motivation
	Motive Question
During Reading (10 minutes)	Reading of or Listening to the Selection to answer the Motive Question
Post-reading (40 minutes)	Initial Discussion
	Engagement Activities (group or individual)
	Presentation or Sharing of Outputs and Class Discussion
	Post-lesson Assessment
	Enrichment Activity (optional)
Skills Development (40 minutes)	Introduction
	Teaching/Modeling
	Guided Practice
	Independent Practice
	Evaluation

A new text was then taught following the format of LINKS. Lessons started with a pre-lesson assessment which aims to find out what the students already know about the topic or theme of the chosen selection. Then difficult and/or unfamiliar words or concepts were unlocked. Next, prior knowledge was activated usually by drawing on students' personal experiences. Sometimes, the motivation question or activity doubled as pre-lesson assessment. Before the students read or listened to the text, the motive question was given. The motive question was related to the motivation question or activity but, unlike the motivation question, the students had to read or listen to the text to find out the answer during reading/

listening.

After reading, initial discussion was done to answer the motive question and introduce engagement activities, which are individual or group activities that allowed the students to respond to the text on their own with minimum supervision. During class discussion, these outputs or ideas were presented and processed. After discussion, post-lesson assessment was given to check students' understanding of the lesson. Enrichment activities, creative activities that go beyond the essentials of the literary text, were also given occasionally.

Then the skills development part of the lesson was introduced using material taken from or related to

the text the students read. After introduction, the skill/strategy was explicitly taught and its use modeled by the teacher. Then the teacher guided the students in applying it before they were asked to do it on their own. After the last lesson on each target skill, an additional independent exercise was given to evaluate their mastery and understanding of the skill/strategy.

After the intervention, the RAS and RT were given as post-tests. An interview with each student was also conducted. Instructions and reminders were similar to those given in the pre-test.

Data Analysis

To find out if using LINKS had significantly improved the reading attitude of struggling readers, the scores in the RAS before and after intervention were analyzed quantitatively using the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test. Information obtained from the students' Interviews and the Parent's Questionnaire were used to give qualitative support to the results of the RAS.

To find out if using LINKS had significantly improved the reading comprehension of struggling readers, the scores in the RT before and after intervention were analyzed using the Wilcoxon Signed Rank

Test. The students' scores in the PLAs and independent exercises given after the last lesson on each target skill/strategy were not statistically analyzed but were used to monitor progress in reading comprehension on a lesson to lesson basis and to support the results of the RT after intervention.

Information gathered from the students' PLQ, the PLQ-TOS, students' outputs, and some information from the students' Interviews and Parent's Questionnaire were not statistically analyzed but were used to give qualitative support to the results of the tests.

Results and Discussion

Reading Attitude

The Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test for the pre-test and post-test scores in reading attitude of the participants yielded a p-value = 0.555. Since this is higher than the significance level of $p < 0.05$ set for the study, the null hypothesis must be accepted. Therefore, there is no significant difference in the reading attitude of the participants before and after intervention.

Though there is a positive change in the students' attitude toward reading based on the increase in

Table 2.
Mean Scores in Reading Attitude and Comprehension Pre-test and Post-test

Variable	N	Pre-test		Post-test	
		Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
Reading Comprehension	13	4.62	1.609	6.38	2.534
Reading Attitude	13	49.85	9.780	52.38	8.704

Table 3.
Statistical Analysis of Reading Attitude per Factor

Factor	N	Mean Scores Pre-test	Mean Scores Post-test	p-value
Reading Goals	13	13.08	13.38	0.797
Values and Self-concept as a Reader	13	16.92	17.77	0.752
Social Environment (Home and School)	13	19.85	21.23	0.320

the mean score in the RAS from 49.85 to 52.38 after treatment (see Table 2) reading attitude develops in the long-term so despite the improvements, it may also take a long time before a significant change in the participants' attitude toward reading occurs (McKenna et al., 1995; Firman & Ocampo, 2011).

Several factors such as one's reading goals, values and self-concept as a reader, and social environment contribute to the development of reading attitude (McKenna et al, 1995; Hermosa, 1996; Lim, 2001; Chen et al., 2011). Based on the results (see Table 3), there is no statistically significant change in all three factors of reading attitude tested in the RAS. The non-significance could be attributed to these factors.

The non-significance may also be caused by the value given to reading at home, in school, and other social circles. Reading attitude is influenced by parental or peer attitude toward reading so the value given to reading by people important to the participants, such as family members or friends, contributes to the development of their reading attitude (McKenna & Kear, 1990; Soiferman, 2002; Chen et al., 2011).

The period during which the study was conducted could also be a factor in the non-significant improvement of reading attitude. Since the research was conducted during summer vacation, students may have had other activities planned but were asked to attend by their parents or upon the recommendation of their teachers.

Despite these factors, results of the RAS revealed that participants had clear reading goals or were aware of purposes for reading before and after intervention. They agreed that reading well is a great help in schoolwork and that reading books can help them find out about things. Data from the RAS also showed a slight increase in the participants' scores in the items for values and self-concept as a reader after intervention. Most of them gave more specific reasons (e.g. getting the meaning of words more easily; correctly guessing what happens next; answering questions correctly and more quickly) pertaining to their ability to read during the post-intervention interview.

Reading Comprehension

Table 2 shows the difference pre-test and post-test means. The Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test for the pre-test and post-test scores in reading comprehension of the participants yielded a p-value = 0.013. Since this is lower than the significance level of $p < 0.05$ set for the study, the null hypothesis must be rejected. Thus, there is a statistically significant difference in the reading comprehension of the participants before and after intervention was given.

An increase in the average scores in the 4 target comprehension skills after intervention (Table 4) supports this finding.

This affirms that using LINKS, which involves reading of real and authentic texts that serve a particular purpose, explicit teaching of reading skills and strategies, and providing opportunities for independent use of such skills and strategies, will help in the improvement of the reading comprehension of struggling readers (Hermosa, 1992; Block, 2003; Shanker & Cockrum, 2009; Padilla, 2010).

Results of post-lesson assessments (PLAs) consistently showed students' comprehension of the selection read and discussed in class. Most of them (usually 8 out of 13 students) got high scores, often with only 1 or 2 mistakes, in the PLAs. Similarly, there was generally an upward trend in the students' understanding of the lessons on a day-to-day basis based on data from the PLQ and PLQ-TOS.

There was also an upward trend in students' participation based on lesson-to-lesson student reports and teacher's observations. Generally, students became more active during class discussions and activities toward the end of the program. Though this can also be attributed to the increase in the interest in selection and activities, the improvement in the ability to comprehend also played a major role in encouraging participation. According to studies, when one expects success in a task, he/she is more willing to engage in it. Thus, he/she tends to try harder (Baker & Wigfield, 1999; Rasinski & Padak, 2004; Applegate & Applegate,

Table 4. Average Reading Comprehension Pre- and Post-test Scores per Target Comprehension Skill

Target Comprehension Skill	N	Average Scores Pre-intervention	Average Scores Post-intervention	p-value
Retelling in fact	13	1.308	1.538	0.426
Putting information together	13	0.769	1.769	0.023*
Connecting author and reader	13	0.615	0.769	0.564
Evaluating and substantiating	13	1.923	2.154	0.496

*Significant at $p < 0.05$

2010). This could be the reason why students became more willing to participate as the program progressed.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Considering the connection between a positive reading attitude and successful reading, this study sought to find out if using LINKS to teach struggling readers would improve their reading attitude and reading comprehension.

That the reading comprehension of struggling readers significantly improved with the use of LINKS implies that with explicit teaching and many opportunities for learning and practicing reading skills and strategies in the context of good quality literature, struggling readers will be able to overcome their difficulty in understanding what they read. They would also be able to make the necessary connections between what they already know and what they read in the text.

That the reading attitude of struggling readers did not significantly improve with the use of LINKS implies the need to lengthen intervention and exposure to authentic reading materials. The literacy practices in the students' social circles such as their family and peers must also be studied

further to see how they affect the reading attitude of these readers.

Based on the results of this research and the observations made as it was conducted, it is recommended that struggling readers undergo intervention using LINKS for a longer period of time, perhaps at least a semester, preferably during regular school days. The length and regularity of instruction will allow more exposure to authentic and interesting materials and the explicit teaching of skills and strategies.

Remedial reading teachers may analyze the regular and special instruction given to struggling readers particularly in terms of the materials used in the classroom and the teaching and practice of reading strategies. Insights on these will help reading teachers, reading specialists, and parents understand how regular classroom instruction affect the development of struggling readers' reading attitude and how a specialized program can help in the improvement of their reading attitude and comprehension.

The parents and families of struggling readers should involve themselves in the intervention. The home literacy environment supports the kind of

instruction given in school by providing readers with authentic and interesting materials, and encouraging reading for pleasure and enjoyment.

It is recommended for future researchers to conduct further local studies in using an integrated literature-based reading program in teaching struggling readers in order to enrich available data on how to help these readers improve their reading attitude and overcome their difficulties in reading. A follow-up on this research considering revision and further validation of the Reading Attitude Scale and the Reading Test and an additional 10-item test using a different text type (e.g. poem, essay) as part of the Reading Test can provide more data on the effectiveness of LINKS in improving struggling reader's reading comprehension. Individual interviews with the parents or guardians of the participants before and after intervention to confirm given information about family reading practices and students' self-reports about their reading attitude should also be done. Observations of students' behavior during lessons may be done by someone other than the teacher to confirm the teacher's observations and provide more information and data. The investigation of other variables that relate to reading attitude and reading ability such as gender, socio-economic status, and culture, among others, could also be explored.

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