Effects of Interactive Book Reading Activities on Improvement of Elementary School Students' Reading Skills

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Abstract

This research investigated how interactive book reading activities affect elementary school students' reading fluency and reading comprehension skills. The research was performed in 2017-2018 academic year with 705 students (358 males, 347 females) studying at four state schools of low socio-economic level in Polatlı district of Ankara. 309 of the students were in the second grade, 200 of them were in the third and 196 of them were in the fourth grade. The implementation stage of the research was conducted in the interactive reading classrooms established at the four schools. These classrooms were equipped with wallpapers, shoe racks, stools, bookcases, puppets, wooden geometric shapes, hanging lights, light-proof curtains, material cupboards, computers and sound systems so that the students might feel that they were in a different environment and might gain different learning experiences. Pretest-posttest one-group quasi-experimental design was used in the research. Students' reading fluency and reading comprehension skills were measured before and after the procedure. The findings showed that the interactive book reading activities performed during the study revealed a significant difference in favor of students' posttest scores in regard to reading fluency and reading comprehension. The results were discussed within the context of the related literature and recommendations were made accordingly.

Keywords: Children's picture books, elementary school students, interactive book reading, reading, reading comprehension

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INTRODUCTION

In this study, the effects of interactive book reading activities on improvement of Turkish elementary school students' reading skills are explored. Reading can be regarded as one of the most important skills learners gain as they progress through their early school years. As a foundation for learning across all subjects, reading can be used for recreation and personal growth, while simultaneously providing young children with the ability to take part more extensively in their communities and societies (Van Staden & Bosker, 2014). Several research studies have shown that children who grow in an environment rich in terms of literacy are better readers and make meaning of texts easier than their peers who did not (Rosenhouse, Feitelson, Kita & Goldstein, 1997). Family, various institutions and teachers are essential elements that determine the quality of such an environment. Starting to be carried out as of early childhood, interactive reading activities are some of the most important parameters that enhance the quality of this environment and contribute to children's literacy skills. Indeed, increasing children's experiences with books are considered among the main parameters in gaining and improving literacy skills (Juel, 2006; Mol, Bus & Jong, 2009; Senechal & LeFevre, 2002). Interactive reading opportunities, which are social exchanges, facilitate enriched language exposure, foster the development of receptive language and spelling, increase vocabulary knowledge, and establish essential foundational literacy skills. Additionally, interactive book reading activities activate brain parts related to narrative comprehension and mental imaginary (Merga, 2017).

Overview of Existing Literature

Previous meta-analysis studies have shown that interactive book reading experiences make major contributions to gaining alphabetic knowledge and the phonetic and written awareness, development of vocabulary, and developing sensitivity toward syntactic and semantic structures (Wasik & Bond, 2001; Whitehurst, Arnold, Epstein, Angeli, Smith & Fischel, 1988). Books include several words, concepts and idioms which children may not encounter in daily life. Interactive reading activities make these structures more meaningful for children. As children develop an awareness of writing and syntax in this process, analyses conducted within the context of interactive reading through books that involve pictures-texts together contribute to children's gaining positive experience with important aspects of the reading-writing process such as word recognition, discrimination, comprehension and text production.

Interactive reading activities enable conversations between adult and child rich in content. Meanwhile, the child-adult interaction transforms by getting out of the text in the book. Conversations going beyond the story in the book allow children to earn more words and pave the way for conversations requiring top-level mental activity through a richer content.

Interactive book reading activities can be mentioned in a different name such as shared or dialogical reading in the literature. Despite potential changing aspects, children generally play an active role rather than a passive listener in the reading process in such activities. Reader–parents, teacher or any other adult–asks questions or make comments to help the child to achieve the implicit information that is not presented in the text. Drawing children's attention both to pictures and story enable them to give clearer and more understandable answers to questions. Consequently, their ideas enrich. Further reinforcement of the reading process with games and materials contribute to children's playing more active role (Kim & Hall, 2002). Teale and Sulzby (1989) stated in their study which examined several research studies that activities such as writing awareness, monitoring the comprehension process while retelling the story and models set by adults about the written materials enable children's active participation, and these activities make significant contributions to bringing reading and writing skills to children as of early childhood. Researchers (Seheridan, 1995; Teale, Hieber & Chittenden, 1987) state that such interactions between parents and children in preschool and teacher and children during the school years are crucial for the development of reading and writing skills.

In the international literature, there are several studies which investigate the effectiveness of interactive reading activities starting from early childhood to advanced levels. Many of these studies have addressed the effects of interactive book reading activities on the development of reading and writing skills of children from low socioeconomic levels (Dickinson & Smith, 1994; Senechal, Thomas & Monker, 1995; Wasik & Bond, 2001; Whitehurst et al., 1988), relationships between interactive book reading activities and children's mental development (Adrian, Clemente & Villaunueva, 2005), how certain book reading methods affect the development of children's linguistic skills (Reese & Cox, 1999), effects of interactive book reading activities on children's awareness of written language (Bus, Van Ijzendoorn & Pellegrini, 1995; DeBaryshe, 1993), relationships between interactive book reading activities and listening comprehension (Senechal & LeFevre, 2002), and effects of asking questions when and how in the interactive book reading process (Blewitt, Rump, Shealy & Cook, 2009). It can be assumed that the most basic variables featured in such interactive reading-based studies are a child, the quality of children's books and interaction type. In Turkey, there have been positive developments in the qualified children's books in recent years. It is thought that adaptation of several awarded foreign children's books by Turkish and foreign publishers and their presentation to the Turkish readers as well as foreign publishers starting to sell books in Turkey have sped up these positive developments. However, how and in what ways to bring children's book with children despite these positive developments are still to be a matter studied adequately in Turkey and remains as an important problem in the agenda. Several variables such as efficient family participation, qualifications of teacher, quality of children's books, educational expenditures for children and socioeconomic indicators, and content of the activities performed with children may affect this process either in a positive or negative way (Cakmak, 2010; Erbay & Ozturk Samur, 2010; Erdogan, 2015; Erdogan & Akay, 2015; Gonen & Balat, 2002; Gurler, 2017; Sahin & Kalburan, 2009; Uzmen & Magden, 2002; Veziroglu & Gonen, 2012).

It is observed in the national scientific literature that there are several studies on interactive reading. Cengiz (2010) examined the language and interaction types used by Turkish mothers while reading a book. Akoglu, Ergul and Duman (2014) investigated how interactive book reading activities affect receptive and expressive linguistic skills of children in need of protection. The research results showed that such activities affected the number of different words that children know. Simsek and Erdogan (2015) examined the effects of interactive reading and traditional reading techniques on linguistic development among children. The findings showed that interactive reading activities contributed to their linguistic developments in a positive way. In the study conducted by Ergul, Akoglu, Karaman and Sarica (2017), they addressed the effects of interactive reading program applied in the preschool on later reading skills. According to the research findings, the first-grade students who participated in the interactive reading activities performed more successfully in reading fluency and reading comprehension than their peers who did not participate. In their study, Bıcakci, Er and Aral (2017) received the mothers' opinions on the interactive book reading activities they performed with their children. It was concluded that the activities contribute to children's developments and mothers' interactive book reading skills. Again, Erdogan, Simşek and Canbeldek (2017) stated that home-based interactive book reading activities have important impacts on the development of children's linguistic skills in early childhood. Ergul, Akoglu, Sarica, Tufan and Karaman (2015) examined the effects of interactive book reading activities on preschool children's linguistic skills. Their study showed that these activities are important for the development of linguistic skills. The study performed by Oncu (2016) investigated how interactive book reading activities affect five-six-year-old children approaches to social situations. The findings put forth that the children who read books performed positively in understanding and proposing solutions to social situations. Likewise, Tetik and Erdogan (2016) concluded the positive effects of interactive book reading activities on children's linguistic developments.

Problem Statement

Considering the studies on the national level, there has been a significant increase in numbers. It is, however, understood that these studies generally focus on preschool and aim to improve

development of linguistic skills among children in these periods. However, it is also stated in the literature that interactive reading activities and children's books are crucial parts of formal school education and some of the most important tools that can be used for improving children's reading and writing skills (Merga, 2017; Mol et al., 2009). On the other hand, several scientific studies emphasize that interactive reading and children's picture books function importantly in bringing many skills to school-age children. Particularly, whole language approaches (Cullinan, 1992), literature-based reading programs (Giddings, 1991) and programs adapting the balanced reading approach (Rupley, Logan & Nichols, 1998) highlight the requirement of integrating the children's books with the instructional process in phonics-based or other reading-writing instruction systems. It is thought that this study is of great value for understanding the importance of elementary school-level interactive book reading activities. Beside this, Turkey is one of the advanced emerging economies in the world (e.g., Greece, Hungary, Mexico, South Africa). The changing power capacity, policy preferences and role conceptions of emerging markets are becoming key properties that will inform the future of regional and global governance (Jednak, 2017; Onis & Kutlay, 2017). Turkey invests in education, market development, institutions, and management. It is estimated that these economies will push forward world economy and surpass advanced countries like Turkey. Consequently, the results obtained from this study would also make contributions to the other emerging economies sharing the similarities with Turkish educational context. The same procedures would be used in their contexts to improve children's reading skills through the similar activities. Within this framework, answers to the following questions were sought for:

1. Do interactive reading activities create a significant difference between elementary school second-grade students' pretest-posttest scores of reading comprehension and reading fluency?

2. Do interactive reading activities create a significant difference between elementary school third-grade students' pretest-posttest scores of reading comprehension and reading fluency?

3. Do interactive reading activities create a significant difference between elementary school fourth-grade students' pretest-posttest scores of reading comprehension and reading fluency?

METHOD

This study investigated how interactive reading method affects reading skills. It is a quasi-experimental study. Quasi-experimental designs are used in many cases where the controls required by true experimental designs cannot be established or even these controls are not sufficient. Because of the variables that affected the groups and could not be controlled and since the participants in the groups were non-randomly created by including the whole classrooms, this study used the "pretest-posttest one-group design" which is a quasi-experimental model and used frequently in social sciences (Campbell & Riecken, 1968).

Participants

The research was conducted with 705 students (358 males, 347 females) attending four different public elementary schools which were from low socioeconomic status in Polatlı district of Ankara in the school year of 2017-2018. 309 of them were second-grade, 200 were third-grade and 196 were fourth-grade students.

Materials

The implementation stage of the research was conducted in the interactive reading classrooms established at the four schools. These classrooms were equipped with wallpapers, shoe racks, stools, bookcases, puppets, wooden geometric shapes, hanging lights, light-proof curtains, Tatami mattress floors, material cupboards, computers and sound systems so that the students might feel in a different environment and might gain different learning experiences. It was observed during the procedure that

both our teachers and students take part in the interactive reading classrooms very eagerly. The researchers and teachers decided the children's picture books used in the research. Teachers used same 95 books in the interactive reading classroom of each school. 15 out of 95 books were chosen for the teacher training. Teachers used the books at four different schools in the same order. The interactive reading activities were performed by the researchers with these books (author one). They paid attention to the fact that the books were visible and accessible at all times for the participant during the procedure. Information on the books used in the awareness program for the teachers are in the following table.

Table 1. Children's picture books used in the training program for the teachers

	Name	Author	Publisher
1	Nokta (or. ti. The Dot)	Peter H. Reynolds	Altın Kitaplar
2	Kim Korkar Kirmizi Baslikli Kızdan (transl. ti. Who's Afraid of Little Red Riding Hood)	Sara Sahinkanat / AySe Inan Alican	YKY
3	Bu Kis Kimse Usumeyecek (transl. ti. Nobody Will Be Cold This Winter)	Feridun Oral	YKY
4	Balikci Osman (or. ti. Osman, der Angler)	Anne Hofman	YKY
5	Babaannem Kime Benziyor? (transl. ti. Whom Does my Nanny Resemble?)	Feridun Oral	YKY
6	Ac Titrtil (or. ti. The Very Hungry Caterpillar)	Eric Carle	Mavibulut
7	Kucuk Kara Balik (transl. ti. Little Black Fish)	Samed Behrengi	Can Cocuk
8	Mamut Avcisi (or. ti. Chasseur de Mammouths)	Gérard Moncomble	YKY
9	Farkli ama Ayni (transl. ti. Different but the Same)	Feridun Oral	YKY
10	Kulaktan Kulaga (transl. ti. Chinese Whispers)	Filiz Ozdem	YKY
11	Nerede Bu Fil (or. ti. Where's the Elephant?)	Barroux	Redkidz
12	Temiz (or. ti. Tidy)	Emily Gravett	Beta Kids
13	Neden Okula Gitmek Zorundayim? (transl. ti. Why Must I Go to School?)	Muge Erel	TUDEM
14	Bir Seftali Bin Seftali (transl. ti. One Peach One Thousand Peach)	Samed Behrengi	Can Çocuk
15	Annemin Cantasi (transl. ti. My Mother's Purse)	Sara Sahinkanat	YKY

Measures

The same texts were used for pretest and posttest in the research. It was ensured that the chosen books were the ones which the students did not see before. Lengths, levels and subjects of the text chosen from the Turkish course books are below.

Table 2. Lengths, levels and subjects of the texts chosen for evaluating students' reading comprehension levels

Grade Level	Length of Text	Title
Fourth-Grade	263 words	Edison
Third-Grade	184 words	Bucket with a Hole
Second-Grade	121 words	White Pigeon

The literal and inferential comprehension questions used in the pretest and posttest were open-ended questions; the literal comprehension questions had their answers in the text whereas the inferential comprehension questions had their answers outside the text or required intertextual meaning-making.

Procedure

The study was conducted at four different elementary schools under Polatli District Directorate of National Education in Ankara. After having established the interactive reading classrooms at the schools, both theoretical and practical activities on interactive reading were carried out with the classroom teachers serving at those schools. The awareness program was conducted with 12 classroom teachers each in two schools and 17 classroom teachers each in other two. Exemplary procedures were applied following the presentations about the importance of interactive reading by the researchers. In these awareness applications, examples were given the teachers about the contents and contributions of the interactive book reading activities and how they would be constructed, and the teachers conducted workshops. Feedbacks were provided during these exemplary procedures, and teachers' shortcomings were eliminated in an effort. The following examples are about the activities performed with the teachers:

Example 1: Out of the 95 books which were decided for using in the interactive reading classrooms, story cards were created about the book "Nokta" which was one of the books chosen for the teacher training. Teachers gave these cards to the groups created after the warm-up activity with the teachers in a mixed manner, and they asked students to order them in accordance with their opinion. After absorbing the story ordered by the teachers, each group was asked to act out the story. Following the performances of the groups, students opened their books and the teacher asked: "Do you wonder what kind of a text the author wrote with the same visuals?" and they started to read the book aloud. This way, the book turned into a center which the whole group focused on and listened curiously. After reading aloud, participants' stated opinions on the book and the procedure and the activity ended with participants' feedbacks.

Example 2: Out of the 95 books which were decided for using in the interactive reading classrooms, the book "Nerede Bu Fil?" which was one of the books chosen for the teacher training is a silent book. In this book not involving any texts, students try to find an elephant, a bird and a monkey hidden among the trees; when they noticed all of them, the page is turned, and they try to find the same animals in the next page. In each page, the number of trees decreases while the number of skyscrapers increases. The book was interrupted at a right point and main characteristics of some trees were discussed with the help of nature cards named "Agaclar" ("Trees") published by TUBITAK Popular Science Books, and it was pretended that the classroom was a big forest and the participants were asked to be trees. They were asked to touch each tree and talk about their proximity to water, length, leaves, ages, etc., and the book continued to be read aloud following the activity. The participants discussed about the subjects of industrialization, forest fires and technology after the activity, which increased their awareness of the process.

The trainings involving the abovementioned examples were 15 hours for each school. The children's picture books that would be used during the procedure by the teachers were utilized in the exemplary application, and matters such as introduction to the book, reading aloud of the book, pauses during reading aloud, questions for predicting skills and intertextual meaning making, content of evaluation and activities to be performed after reading aloud were addressed in detail. The teachers agreed at the end of the 15-hour training that interactive reading is an important tool that will contribute to a child's development in every area, sufficient information was provided theoretically on the subject, and information was provided on the process through several exemplary applications. It was told to the teachers who now had faith in performing this procedure as a leader that guidance would be provided for the potential problems during the procedure.

A pretest had been conducted before the teachers started the procedure with the students, and texts from Turkish course books approved by the Ministry of Education appropriate for each grade level were chosen. It was ensured that the chosen books were the ones which the students did not see before. Each student read aloud the texts once and completed the test by answering 3 literal and 3 inferential comprehension questions. Through the recorded reading process, the researchers identified the number of words read by the students per minute. Following the pretest, the teachers started the

interactive reading activities. Students performed two interactive reading activities at least at three schools each week, and they performed only one activity at the other school in some weeks because of a high number of students. It was ensured that each student spent their 30 class ours in these classrooms. This process added up to 6 months. The posttest was conducted with the same texts after the completion of the interactive reading activities.

FINDINGS

The results achieved in the independent groups' t-test analyses are presented in the tables below. Findings on whether interactive reading created a significant difference in the second-grade students' reading fluency skills and reading comprehensions are given in Table 4. The results regarding the normal distribution of the second-grade students' pretest and posttest scores are primarily presented. Central tendency measures of the data were obtained in these results, and the values of kurtosis and skewness are in Table 3.

Table 3. Measures of central tendency regarding the normal distribution of the second-grade students' pretest and posttest scores

		M	Median	*SD*	Skewness	Kurtosis
Fluency	Pretest	57.66	57.00	25.57	.063	-.618
	Posttest	69.82	71.00	25.70	-.090	-.531
Literal Comprehension	Pretest	2.10	2.00	.93	-.785	-.316
	Posttest	2.43	3.00	.75	-1.219	.958
Inferential Comprehension	Pretest	1.27	1.00	.97	.22	-.942
	Posttest	1.80	2.00	1.01	-.253	-1.121

According to the measures of central tendency regarding the second-grade students' pretest and posttest scores, the kurtosis and skewness values varied between -2 and +2. This shows that these values are within an acceptable range in terms of normality (Field, 2013). Standard deviation and mean values regarding the second-grade students' reading skills are in Table 4.

Table 4. Mean and standard deviation scores regarding the second-grade students' reading skills

	Group	*N*	*M*	*SD*
Fluency	Pretest	309	57.66	25.57
	Posttest	309	69.82	25.70
Literal Comprehension	Pretest	309	2.10	.93
	Posttest	309	2.43	.75
Inferential Comprehension	Pretest	309	1.27	.96
	Posttest	309	1.80	1.01

The independent groups' *t*-test analyses performed to see whether interactive reading was effective in the second-grade students' reading fluency and reading comprehension skills showed that there was a significant difference by reading fluency ($t(616)= 5.916$, $p= .000$), literal ($t(616)= 588.889$, $p= .000$) and inferential comprehension ($t(616)= 6.662$, $p= .000$) in favor of the group's posttest scores. Central tendency measures regarding the third-grade students' pretest and posttest scores are in Table 5.

Table 5. Measures of central tendency regarding the normal distribution of the third-grade students' pretest and posttest scores

		M	Median	*SD*	Skewness	Kurtosis
Fluency	Pretest	72.54	70.00	34.45	.554	.653
	Posttest	86.17	83.500	35.92	.519	.653
Literal	Pretest	2.10	2.00	.97	-.733	-.587
Comprehension	Posttest	2.41	3.00	.81	-1.240	.705
Inferential	Pretest	1.80	2.00	.91	-.367	-.645
Comprehension	Posttest	2.22	2.00	.86	-.783	-.389

According to the measures of central tendency regarding the third-grade students' pretest and posttest scores, the kurtosis and skewness values varied between -2 and +2. This shows that these values are within an acceptable range in terms of normality (Field, 2013). Standard deviation and mean values regarding the third-grade students' reading skills are in Table 6.

Table 6. Mean and standard deviation scores regarding the third-grade students' reading skills

	Group	*N*	*M*	*SD*
Fluency	Pretest	200	72.54	34.45
	Posttest	200	86.17	35.93
Literal	Pretest	200	2.10	.97
Comprehension	Posttest	200	2.41	.81
Inferential	Pretest	200	1.80	.91
Comprehension	Posttest	200	2.22	.86

The independent groups *t*-test analyses performed to see whether interactive reading was effective in the third-grade students' reading fluency and reading comprehension skills showed that there was a significant difference by reading fluency ($t(398)= 3.874$, $p= .000$), literal ($t(398)= 3.521$, $p= .000$) and inferential comprehension ($t(398)= 4.726$, $p= .000$) in favor of the group's posttest scores. Central tendency measures regarding the fourth-grade students' pretest and posttest scores are in Table 7.

Table 7. Measures of central tendency regarding the normal distribution of the fourth-grade students' pretest and posttest scores

		M	Median	*SD*	Skewness	Kurtosis
Fluency	Pretest	85.57	87.50	27.51	-.129	-.111
	Posttest	94.75	95.50	29.13	-.298	-.353
Literal	Pretest	2.12	2.00	.91	-.749	-.367
Comprehension	Posttest	2.35	3.00	.85	-1.151	.458
Inferential	Pretest	1.84	2.00	1.02	-.253	-1.181
Comprehension	Posttest	2.14	2.00	.92	-.610	-.835

According to the measures of central tendency regarding the fourth-grade students' pretest and posttest scores, the kurtosis and skewness values varied between -2 and +2. This shows that these values are within an acceptable range in terms of normality (Field, 2013). Standard deviation and mean values regarding the fourth-grade students' reading skills are in Table 8.

Table 8. Arithmetic Mean and Standard Deviation Values Regarding the Fourth-Grade Students' Reading Skills

	Group	N	M	SD
Fluency	Pretest	196	85.57	27.51
	Posttest	196	94.75	29.13
Literal Comprehension	Pretest	196	2.13	.91
	Posttest	196	2.35	.85
Inferential Comprehension	Pretest	196	1.84	1.02
	Posttest	196	2.14	.92

The independent groups' t-test analyses performed to see whether interactive reading was effective in the fourth-grade students' reading fluency and reading comprehension skills showed that there was a significant difference by reading fluency ($t(390)= 3.209$, $p= .001$), literal ($t(390)= 2.523$, $p= .012$) and inferential comprehension ($t(390)= 3.125$, $p= .002$) in favor of the group's posttest scores.

DISCUSSION

This research investigated how interactive book reading activities affect elementary school students' reading fluency and reading comprehension skills. The research results showed that the interactive reading activities performed in different grade levels were effective in children's reading fluency and reading comprehension skills. These results coincide with the results of many other research studies (e.g., Klesius & Griffith, 1996; Martinez & Teale, 1993; Morrow, 1984, 1988).

Reading aloud is one of the most important cornerstones in the development of reading and writing skills and classroom applications (Huey, 1908; Snow, Burns & Griffin, 1998; Teale, 1984). Listening to stories contribute to how children understand the relationships between the written and spoken language (Clay, 1993), written and oral styles (Feitelson, Golstein & Sahare, 1993); and gain experience with different standard and non-standard language (Cullinan, Jaggar & Stricklan, 1974). Such activities also play a crucial role in transferring cultural values. Activities performed in classrooms even if children have not such an experience at home or in their surroundings help them with introduction to cultural literacy (as cited in Brabham & Lynch-Brown, 2002).

Interactive book reading activities and reading aloud by the teachers in classrooms assist students to understand the components of reading and writing. Children learn the content through these activities, enriching their vocabularies in a considerable extent (Brabham, Boyd & Edgington, 2000). These results achieved in previous studies increase the expectations that interactive book reading activities should become part of the programs applied at schools and teachers should improve themselves in this matter (Brabham & Lynch-Brown, 2002). Yet, another important issue is how teachers carry out these pieces of interactive reading. Several researches have shown that reading aloud for students alone does not contribute to reading and writing achievements of elementary school students (e.g., Meyer, Stahl, Linn & Wardrop, 1994; Morrow, 1984, 1988; Morrow, Rand & Smith, 1995). On the other hand, many studies (Dickinson & Keebler, 1989; Kleisus & Griffith, 1996; Martinez & Teale, 1993; Teale & Martinez, 1986) showed that student participation about the content of text presented during reading, pictures associated with content and other physical characteristics of the book increases, learning occurs on the top level and students have more esthetic and knowledge-based reactions toward literature when book reading activities are carried out in an interactive or performance-based manner. Similarly, it was observed in this research that content-based interactive reading activities contributed to the students' reading comprehension and reading fluency skills. In order to understand the results about what the present study reveals, it needs to be given more attention to two underlying profound effects of the study. One is that this study provides new insight into understanding the importance of interactive book reading activities on the elementary grade students' reading skills improvement beyond the early childhood years. Because, despite the importance of interactive book reading, relatively there is not much information about older children's experiences of

interactive reading beyond the period of initial independent reading skill acquisition (Merga, 2017). Another importance of the study is that this research took place in Turkey which is one of the emerging economies and emerging economies are developing economies where economic development and growth is much faster and efficient than in other developing countries. Also, it is drawn attention to educational expansion and income inequalities in emerging economies to decrease inequalities. Expansion of education is often seen as an important policy instrument for combating rising income inequality over the medium term. Not only is education expansion viewed as being important for promoting economic growth but it can also help to break the intergenerational transmission of poverty and reduce inequality of opportunity, which reduces future income inequality (as cited in Coady & Dizioli, 2018). That's why, some of emerging economies sharing the similar educational contexts and features, would have benefit as much as Turkish students would have.

CONCLUSION

The results of this research are of importance in that it puts forth the effectiveness of interactive book reading activities on elementary school students' reading skills. Particularly assuming we confine children to obligatory school programs and their requirements through the formal school education, activities such as interactive book reading that can be integrated with the instructional process will provide children with alternatives and help them to learn by having fun. Such activities will also enable students to encounter original texts outside the course books and experience different problems and their solutions. In addition, the study will contribute to the training of individuals who internalize this process positively rather than those who do not like "reading and writing "and do not adopt "lifelong learning", which we do not accept as a social notion all the time.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

This research used the pretest-posttest one-group method as a quasi-experimental design. The nature of this quasi-experimental design brings about several negative situations in terms of internal and external validity and mitigates the manipulation of both the researcher and the method used in the research. Therefore, several problems arise regarding the internal and external validity. Considering these in future similar studies, stronger quasi-experimental designs can be included in the process. Effectiveness of interactive book reading activities can also be tested in higher grade levels (secondary school, etc.) Effectiveness of the interactive reading process in this research was only explored statistically. In future research, qualitative paradigm techniques such as interview and observation that can provide more in-depth data can be utilized, presenting a richer perspective of interactive reading process. In this process, the interactive book reading activities were conducted indirectly through the concept of teacher as only a reader. Future studies can investigate the effectiveness of interactive book reading activities with family participation in a similar experimental process.

Funding

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