

Field for Dissertations

Reading competence and discourse experience in the family

State of the art: Reading competence addresses an essential ability for the accomplishment in diverse areas of every-day life. Therefore, it is alarming that in this country social background has a much higher impact on achievement development than in many other countries participating in PISA. In the past, research in different fields contributed to apportioning mechanisms and family socialisation processes that play an important role in the formation of disparity in students' development of competences. The functionality of children's discourse experience for the emergence of global text competences is widely unexplored. Indeed, reconstructive case analyses indicate that especially (informal) interactions which provide children with multiple discourse experiences - structured by the parents and/or other listeners - are beneficial for children's language competences. Replicability and generalisation remain to be investigated. Further, the influence of dialogic support on the development of communication competences and reading comprehension has to be examined more closely. Furthermore, it shall be studied, whether the acquisition of implicit knowledge about genre specific structuring and phrasing is associated by the promotion of adolescents' reading competence.

Objective: The project focuses on processes of acquirement beyond elementary alphabetisation and on the reception of written texts. It aims at identification of differences in (informal) dialogic support systems due to SES and milieu, respectively. Additionally, their functionality for knowledge acquisition shall be analysed. The generalisation of interrelation found in qualitative analyses of single cases shall be examined by combining (linguistic-discourse analytic) microanalytic and quantitative analyses. Furthermore, ideographic data will be used for elaboration of relations found in nomothetic analyses.

Method: In this longitudinal study, 200 families will be visited at home at the beginning and at the end of fourth and fifth grade. Data will be gathered by means of tests, questionnaires and semi-standardized interviews as well as behavioural monitoring. The videotaped parent-child-communication of a subsample of 20 families will be analysed in order to reconstruct children's discourse experiences.

Sample: 200 students (50% male) and their parents. 50% students attending the lowest school track (Hauptschule) and 50% attending the highest school track (Gymnasium)