

BAR-ILAN UNIVERSITY

**Emergent Reading literacy of children of speech therapist
mothers compares to children of mothers of other
professions
and child's individual aspects**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Master's Degree in the School of Education Bar-Ilan University

Ramat-Gan, Israel

2021

ABSTRACT

Emergent literacy in early childhood comprises a solid foundation for the acquisition of reading and writing in school. Speech therapists who work with preschoolers diagnose and support children in these domains. The literature indicates a correlation between the mother's level of education and profession and her child's academic achievements. However, few studies examined the relationship between the mother's specific profession and her child's achievements. No previous studies were found on the correlation between speech therapist mothers and their children's emergent reading. In the present study we examined the following questions: (a) Will a difference be found between the level of emergent reading of children whose mothers are speech therapists and children whose mothers have an academic education but are not speech therapists and do not work in therapeutic or educational professions? (b) Will a correlation be found between the children's age and gender and their emergent reading level? (c) What is the contribution of each of the above measures to the development of the children's emergent reading? Sixty children aged 5-6 years and their mothers participated in this study. Thirty of the mothers were speech therapists and 30 were mothers, who have an academic education but do not work in the therapeutic or educational professions. The children's emergent reading levels were tested using the tests: letters naming, letter-sound correspondence, phonological awareness, and emergent word reading. Results showed that the emergent reading of children whose mothers are speech therapists is higher than that of mothers who work in other professions. Furthermore, the children's age made the greatest contribution to their emergent reading, followed by the mother's profession. The parents' age and education did not contribute to the children's emergent reading. This study's findings emphasize the importance of the parents' profession for the development of their child's emergent reading. The study highlights the need for parental guidance in order to cultivate children's emergent reading in the general population, including among educated parents.

Key words: emergent literacy, emergent reading, speech therapy, mother's profession, family literacy.