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# Lexical Development in Kindergarden: Incidence of Reading Tales within Literature Workshop

# Desarrollo léxico en el jardín de infantes: incidencia de la lectura de cuentos en la dinámica del taller literario

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## Abstract

The article shows the results of a research that assesed the incidence on lexical child development of only reading tales vs reading tales and setting up lexical specific activities.
We have carried out a expost-factum research in which we compared the performance of a group of 24 (twenty four) 5 year-old children (μ: 5; 9:16, range: 4;10-5;9) in different lexical development indicators. The results have shown that reading tales seems to have possitive influence in lexical development but the impact of a specific design within a literature workshop seems to be significative.

***Keywords***: Lexical development, Literature workshop, Reading tales, Language development, Orality

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## Resumen

Este trabajo presenta los resultados de una investigación cuyo objetivo ha sido reconocer si existe algún tipo de incidencia diferencial en el desarrollo léxico infantil entre la mera lectura de cuentos y/o la implementación de actividades específicas de comprensión y producción léxica. Para ello se ha realizado una investigación ex post-facto en la que se compara el rendimiento, en diferentes indicadores de desarrollo léxico, en un grupo de 24 (veinticuatro) niños de 5 años (: 5; 9: 16, rango:4;10-5;9). Los resultados indican que, aunque la lectura de cuentos parece incidir positivamente en el desarrollo léxico infantil, el impacto que, sobre esas habilidades, posee un dispositivo de intervención específico organizado desde la dinámica del taller literario resulta significativo.


***Palabras clave***: desarrollo léxico, taller literario, lectura de cuentos, desarrollodel lenguaje, oralidad

## Development of Language and Lexical Development: Points of Intersection and Notes for Education

The development of language is closely related to general psychological evolution (Landen, 2013) and its acquisition is immersed in the psychic world of the individual, and, as recent research indicates (Cabrejo Parra, 2000), it is also associated with progressive neurological evolution.

Although there are a range of theories about the development of language (cf. Tomasello, 2003), there is agreement that lexical development is key for cognitive and linguistic development; not only in skills that are related to lexical competence (e.g. accurate comprehension of oral language and reading), but also in the development of skills associated with the acquisition of scientific and artistic knowledge[1]. That is, the increase in and quality of the lexicon affects the development of language and is closely linked to the ability of achieving different learning in other areas.

Children of four and five years of age have a striking command of language. Although they have not yet acquired the subtlest syntactic structures at five years old, they are able to dominate articulatory, phonological, syntactic, and certain discursive characteristics of their language and initiate a process of reflection on it, something which enhances oral expression and conversation (Silva & Plana, 2014). These characteristics allow us to infer that, compared to children of younger ages, the lexical organization of a five-year-old child is clearer and more organized than at previous stages (Silva & Plana, 2016).

Bruner (1995) believes that lexical development is the resource that allows children to introduce themselves into broader horizons, while consolidating acquired knowledge at the same time. Lexical development involves a complex process that not only implies acquisition in the comprehensive and productive levels of vocabulary, but also the domination of thematic and taxonomic relationships and pragmatic and contextual appropriateness. In this regard, Isacoff and Stromwold (2014) found that, depending on the ages considered, the tasks of standardized lexical assessment elicit other skills in addition to pure lexical knowledge. These results indicate that the lexicon is knowledge that depends heavily on certain linguistic skills (syntactic, discursive, and pragmatic), cognitive skills (processing capacity and memory), and conceptual organization (discrimination, prioritization).

Reading stories has been used as a traditional teaching practice in kindergartens to address oral development, acquisition of vocabulary, and the development of reading and writing. In this regard there is a long tradition of research that has explored the relationship between storytelling and lexical development. Nelson (1996) considers that frequent experience with extended discourse—listening to and retelling stories and/or tales of personal experiences—provides the necessary practice to become a competent narrator, while promoting the realization of conceptual relationships, inferences, and hierarchization of information.

Borzone (2005) argues that frequent reading provides the appropriate context for a rich exchange that goes beyond the text, and broadens the lexicon and the conceptual world, as well as promoting the development of comprehension and discursive production strategies. Various studies have pointed out that children learn

1 Acquisition, mastery, and expertise in other areas of knowledge are heavily dependent on the relationship between the lexicon and conceptual mastery.

the lexicon only with exposure to instances of reading aloud both in their mother tongue (Eller, Pappas, & Brown, 1988; Kindle, 2013; Robbins & Ehri, 1994) and when learning a Second Language (L2) (Brown, Waring, & DonKaewbua, 2008; Mason & Krashen, 2004). On the other hand, there is evidence suggesting that specific activities, if they are designed in accordance with certain parameters, have a more significant impact than merely reading aloud (Fien, Santoro, Baker, Park, Chard, Williams, & Haria, 2011; Robbins & Ehri, 1994; Senechal, Thomas, & Monker, 1995; Whitehurst, Zevenbergen, Crone, Schultz, Velting, & Fischel, 1999). These strategies include presenting the term within a context that anchors the meaning before then re-contextualizing—expanding, restricting, establishing analogies, or transferring the term under focus—highlighting, and discussing the contribution of the term to the comprehension of the text, adding information, designing situations that functionalize the term (for example, if the word is scientific, using experimentation). Research in lexical learning in L2 showed that specific comprehension tasks enhance learning (Lee, Lee, & Krashen, 2014). Other studies allow us to conclude that, for children that have marked sociocultural differences regarding urban middle-class children, for those who show cognitive or linguistic difficulties, with a restricted lexical stock, and/or those with limited operational memory capacity, these teaching strategies are essential in order to increase their lexical knowledge (Amado, 2010; Coyne, Simmons, Kame'enui, & Stoolmiller, 2010; Ewers & Brownson, 2010). Research into assessment methods has found that methods based on the theme are the most beneficial in teaching contexts (Blachowicz, 2005; Rochester & Wang, 2011).

As regards the relationship between lexical development and other linguistic and cognitive skills, there is evidence that lexical knowledge has a significant impact. When researching the abilities involved in reading comprehension in Argentine children aged 9-10 years, Penna, Sabaté, and Burín (2014) found significant correlations between lexical knowledge and general inferences, recognizing lexical knowledge as a predictor of reading comprehension. Other studies, however, did not find this unidirectional casuistic relationship. Snow, Tabors, Nicholson, and Kurland (1995) found that vocabulary and lexical amplitude could be aspects that have a certain relevance in learning reading and writing, and Goswami (2003) points to an indirect relationship between them: vocabulary is associated with the phonological representation of the word that affects the development of phonological awareness and this affects learning of reading and writing of words.

Although in recent years there has been a marked and varied increase in actions in Argentina intended to expand and promote reading of stories in institutional spaces, results on the impact that these interventions may have had on children's linguistic development have not yet been systematized or provided, possibly because of the low level of systematization of these projects. It should be noted that both classroom practices in kindergartens and curricular regulations favor reading of stories as a recreational activity with certain purposes of aesthetic appreciation[2]. In this regard, lexical development activities appear to be disconnected from story reading activities.

On the one hand, the research that is reported explored the possibility of placing systematic activities of lexical development within the framework of a literary workshop and, on the other, comparatively assessing the impact of reading stories without teaching activities with the dynamics of a literary workshop focused on lexical development. In this dynamic the coordinator/teacher is the one who plans the objectives, selects the stories, and frames the activities, at the same time as assuming the role of encouraging the children to participate and make their contributions, favoring the circulation of knowledge among the participants (Troglia, Stapich, & Hermida, 2008).

2 The curricular design that is in force in the CABA district (Argentina) states in this regard that: "The function of the Initial Level is to guarantee a rich interaction of the children with the literary texts ... The literary texts should be specially selected, particularly on the basis of their aesthetic quality ... [It should be sought to] provide different reading experiences with a rich variety of genres, leading not only to appreciation as cultural production, but the progressive construction of knowledge about these literary manifestations: folk and literary stories, novels, legends, poetry of various kinds (nursery rhymes, games, and riddles, among others), and also artistic expressions that include literary elements, as is the case of theater". (Diseño Curricular para la Educación Inicial, 2000: 156). That is, it is explicitly considered that the educational functionality of literary text is, in addition to promoting literary aesthetic pleasure, to ensure that children approach the rudiments of knowledge about the writing system; there is no minimum consideration of the pedagogical and cognitive potential of the relationship between poetic function and linguistic metacognition (Bruner, 1996).

The objective of this study is to try to discern whether story reading activity allows the expansion of vocabulary or if it is required in order for the application of a sequence of systematized activities to have an impact. It is expected that all of the children will show a significant increase in their level of lexical knowledge at the end of the planned teaching sequences compared to the time prior to implementation. On the other hand, the children that participate in the reading sequence along with the activities in the literary workshop (Experimental Group, EG) are expected to show a more significant subsequent increase than that observed in the group that participated solely in reading stories (Control Group, CG).

## Methodology

### Participants

The sample consisted of 24 children of 5 years of age (μ: 5;9: 16, range: 4;10-5;9), of Medium Socioeconomic Level (Medium SEL)[3] from the city of Buenos Aires (CABA), Argentina. Because the design included the application and assessment of the impact of a teaching intervention strategy[4], two groups of 12 children were formed (Experimental Group, GE, and Control Group, CG), paired by gender and age (chronological band of three months). Each period had only one section, so we decided to assign a research group to each period, with the allocation of groups being random. The educational institution where the data was taken is privately managed. None of the participating children had any linguistic and/or cognitive disorders and they were all native Spanish speakers who used a Rioplatense dialect. As regards the educational level of the parents, the average length of schooling for the mothers was 17.3 years (range: 12-16 years) and 15.6 years for the fathers (range: 10-16 years).

### Instruments for evaluation

We decided to use an adaptation of the Peabody Language Test (PPTV III, 2006), considering that it evaluates comprehensive lexical level and the scales it produces are updated and regulated for Spanish[5]. From this test 20 stimuli were selected, considered as stimulus words (SW)[6]. Since the objective was not only to verify whether reading of stories and/or the strategy affect lexical development, but also whether it was possible that the influence of the lexical activities of the strategy were projected to other words of a similar kind and, therefore, a similar lexical function, the SW were divided into two groups, to form with each group the texts that would be presented at the two assessment times. We ensured that both lists were equated according to the kind of word (noun and verb) and semantic level (word of basic, general, or taxonomic order)[7]. The SW were chosen according to their adaptation to the Rioplatense dialect, based on expert judgment[8]. The stimuli whose semantic interpretations were not consistent were rejected.

Children from series 3 to 6 were assessed, but only series 4 to 6 were considered for the evaluation and to

3 Consideration of the SEL ʷas carried out according to the characteristics of the area in which the institution is located and the socioeconomic characteristics of the parents of the children, characteristics reported by the teaching population, by information registered with the institution (professions and occupation of the parents), and by the responses provided by parents on the highest level of education they attained.

4 The design is quasi-experimental correlational exposure, that is, evaluations of child performance are carried out before and after the intervention (León & Montero, 2003).

5 However we make the proviso that there are no obtainable and consensual adaptations for the Rioplatense dialect.

6 Of the 20 stimuli considered, 10 belong to the 6/7 year level of language development of PPTV III (2006) and the other 10 to the 8/9 level. The 4/5 level of language was not used because previous exploratory studies indicated that the children in this community had a lexical level of 6 years.

7 This requirement implied that the PPTV III stimulus set was modified, creating a new test stimulus, which should have been piloted to ensure that it would be adaptable to the test. Expert judgment was also used to assess the consistency of the stimulus with PPTV III (2006). The experts agreed that the stimulus and the design were compatible with the original stimuli. For the piloting, a population of six children that had already been evaluated with the original version of PPTV III (2006) was assessed with the reformed version and it was observed that their performance did not vary with the reformed version.

8 Thus, for example, in the set of stimuli, the word "animar" (encourage) is a target, but in Rioplatense usage this verb does not have frequent transitive use as is considered appropriate in the test (for example "to encourage a team") but rather a reflexive use (for example "to be encouraged").

obtain particular language data. For the evaluation of the productive lexicon, we considered the production of retelling elicited in individual sessions subsequent to the reading of stories.

**Procedure**

The sequence of activities in the strategy was complex, ensuring that the project respected the guidelines of collaborative research. The process started three weeks before implementation of the strategy, with a visit to the kindergarten in order to get to know the group and the respective teachers. We conducted detailed observation of the dynamics of classroom interaction[9] in order to familiarize ourselves with and try to reproduce the usual dynamics of the classroom during the intervention. Differences were observed in the two groups: the morning period was very active and talkative, with a greater tendency for distraction than the later period. The teacher in the morning period had a style that was more ordered, strict, and restrictive regarding the spontaneous participation of the children, but the teacher in the later period had a more flexible and expressive style. On the other hand, informative meetings were held with managers and teachers to present the design and accept suggestions and/or modifications. Then the explanatory and consent notes were sent. We visited the kindergarten one week after the delivery of the informed consent of the children. The morning period was denoted as the Experimental Group (EG) and the afternoon group as the Control Group (CG). With regard to reading stories, two gatherings were held in each room and the application of the strategy involved four gatherings[10]. Regarding the reading of stories and the application of the strategy, all children participated in the activities, although only 12 in each room were evaluated.

For the intervention, an instrument was created to organize and sequence the activities to evaluate the children's lexical development in a short period of time.

After the selection of the children that would be included in the sample and the formation of the two groups, the intervention strategy (Experimental Group, GE) was applied to one of the groups. To evaluate their performance, the two groups were assessed on tasks of lexical comprehension, production of lexical items in contexts, and production of retelling at two times, before and after the application of the strategy.

**Intervention strategy**

The intervention strategy was designed by organizing and structuring activities that would tend to increase the level of comprehension and production of a group of SW[11]. To provide context to the SW, two homologous stories were created[12], one for each time (*El Paracaídas de Joaquín* and *Alan y el Mar*, see Appendix 1). In the CG, the stories were only read, while in the EG the stories were read and the strategy was applied. Efforts were also made to increase the development of oral narrative skills: identification, recovery, and restructuring of motivational and causal relationships, identification and recovery of episodes—essentially framework, conflict and resolution—structuring of images to contextualize unknown lexical terms and recalling them contextually. The technique of retelling to an external participant was also observed (Vivas & Silva, 2016), since this type of technique hinders excessive erosion of the narrative. In the research presented here, these results are not analyzed

The strategy was designed considering the teaching characteristics of the workshop activities, because, among other qualities in this environment, the role of the teacher is decentralized, the autonomy of the learner is prioritized, it is ideal for inclusion of the play-work dynamic, it is simple to articulate different tasks in procedural terms, and the learner does not perceive the situation as a strict instance of learning (See Appendix 1, summary of activities).

9 During the observations, an observation system was implemented that focuses on recording the characteristics of the management of classroom dynamics during the round and story reading and comprehension activities. We considered and adapted Borenson's recording suggestions (2005). The observations were made by two researchers who then compared their records and established the management profile of each teacher in each group.

10 The whole intervention process was carried out in a period of seven school days.

11 The selected and homologated words of Peabody III (2006) were: *vehículo-cardumen* (vehicle-shoal), *paracaídas-cerebro* (parachute-brain), *óvalo-par* (oval-pair), *rectángulo-terror* (rectangle-terror), *hortalizas-animal marino* (vegetables-marine animal), *estatua-mandíbula* (statue-jaw), *molestar-dirigir* (annoy-direct), *gotear-premiar* (drip-reward), *tronco-enorme* (trunk-enormous), and *colmena-isla* (hive-island).

12 Standardizing the texts involved creating two texts with a similar number of episodes, words, and sentences. We also ensured that they had similar syntactic structures even though each of them had different conflicts and characters.

**Analysis**

In order to evaluate the scores in lexical comprehension, the scores of the applied Peabody test (PPVT-III, 2006) were considered, with the score studied by the series level and by stimulus. The amount of errors that the children made in each evaluation was also considered. To evaluate the scores for production of lexical items, the retellings were transcribed orthographically and the presence/absence and numbers of SW in each of them were recorded.

For the performance analysis we used descriptive statistics (Frequencies and Means), while we used a non-parametric measurement of the difference between means (Kruskal-Wallis test, $\rho \leq 0.05$) to calculate the influence of the story reading activity and of the strategy. To enter the data and calculate the descriptive statistics, we used the statistical software SPSS, version 18. To calculate the inferential statistics, we used Statistix, version 10.0.

## Results

The results of the research are presented below, comparing the performance of each group of children according to the two assessment times (pre- and post-intervention).

First, the results of lexical comprehension are presented and second, the results of the performance in the production of lexicon in the context of the retelling.

Table 1.

*Lexical Comprehension: Comparative Performance According to Peak Series Achieved*

| Serie | 4 | | 5 | | 6 | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Moments | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| Control | 6 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 12 | 12 |
| % | 50% | 33% | 25% | 33% | 25% | 33% | 100% | 100% |
| Experimental | 6 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 8 | 12 | 12 |
| % | 50% | 25% | 33% | 8% | 17% | 67% | 100% | 100% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

The results in Table 1 allow us to see that, in the two groups, there was a better performance at time 2. Thus, if we analyze series 4, for example, while at time 1 in both groups 50% of children reach that level, at time 2 this percentage decreases in both groups, to 33% and 25% for the CG and EG, respectively. In the same regard, it can be observed that, while at time 1 series 6 (which corresponds to the level of a child of 9 years of age) is only achieved by 25% and 17% of the CG and EG, respectively, at time 2 this percentage increases for both groups, to 33% and 67% for the CG and EG, respectively.

In summary, it would seem that in both groups the performance curve in lexical comprehension is upward, indicating an improvement at time 2.

However, given that in addition to identifying the level of series that the children reach, we are also interested in identifying how many stimuli they comprise, we will analyze the number of items that they can correctly identify.

Table 2.

*Lexical Comprehension: Comparative Performance According to Number of Stimuli Correctly Recognized*

| Stimuli | 39- 43 | | 44- 54 | | 55- 66 | | 67 y + | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Moments | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| Control | 4 | 3 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 12 | 12 |
| % | 33 | 25 | 42 | 33 | 25 | 25 | - | - | 100% | 100% |
| Experimental | 6 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 2 | 7 | 12 | 12 |
| % | 50 | 25 | 33 | 8 | 8 | 50 | 17 | 58 | 100% | 100% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

The results in Table 2 show that the CG at time 1 is at a higher lexical level than the EG. It is thus observed that in the lower band (39-43), while the CG is at 33%, the EG is at 50%. In the two following ranges (44-54 and 55-66), the GC is at 67%, while the EG is at 41%, although in the upper range (67+), the EG population

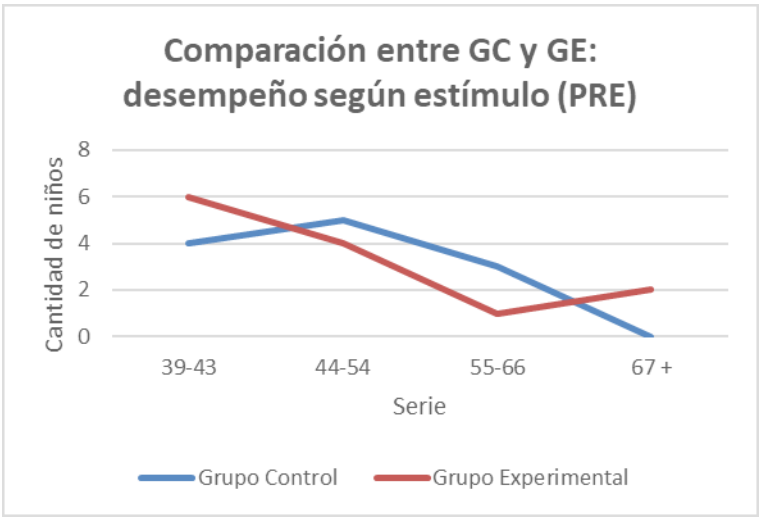
is at 17%, while in the EG no child managed to identify any of the stimuli in that series. These data lead us to think that the CG seems not only to be a group with a superior initial lexical development level to that of the EG, but the children in the CG also have a more homogeneous lexical performance.

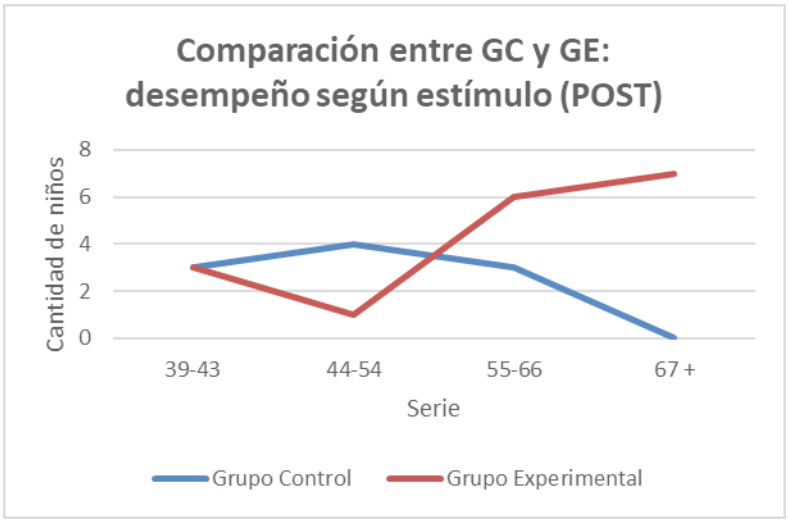
Although the CG initially achieved a performance superior to the EG, it can be seen that at time 2 the children in this group clearly surpass the CG. In fact, at time 2, in the lower stimulus bands (39-40) the EG population decreases (from 50% to 25% and from 33% to 8% in bands 39-43 and 44-54, respectively), while the percentage of the population in the upper ranges increases (from 8% to 50% and from 17% to 58% in bands 55-66 and 67+, respectively). In the CG, we also observed an improvement in performance, since the percentage of the population that correctly identifies few stimuli decreases (from 33% to 25% and from 42% to 33% in the 39-43 and 44-54 ranges, respectively) and there are subjects that identify the upper band of stimuli (17% in the band 67+).

In summary, while in the EG one can identify a notable improvement in performance at time 2 (post-intervention), in the CG there are improvements in performance but they are not so marked.

The performances curves in the graphs allow us to identify the processes described more clearly.

Comparative Graph 1 (CG EG). Lexical Comprehension at Time 1 and 2 According to Peak Stimulus Achieved




Post Comparative Graph of Performance Between CG and EG

Below we compare the number of errors made by both groups and we note that this count includes errors in the total number of erroneous indications of images provided that they do not exceed two consecutive errors in series 4, 5, and 6[13]. In this case we assess the processes of increasing or decreasing the number of errors in each group and between the different times of the evaluations.

Table 3.

*Lexical Comprehension: Comparative Performance According to Number of Errors*

| | Cantidad de errores / Number of Errors | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 a 3 | | 4 a 6 | | 7 a 9 | | 10 a 13 | | Total | |
| GROUP | 1 to 3 | | 4 to 6 | | 7 to 9 | | 10 to 13 | | Total | |
| Moments | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| Control | 1 | 1 | 7 | 6 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 12 | 12 |
| % | 8% | 8% | 58% | 50% | 8% | 25% | 25% | 17% | 100% | 100% |
| Exp. | 6 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 12 | 12 |
| % | 50% | 17% | 25% | 33% | 17% | 33% | 8% | 17% | 100% | 100% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

13 We note that the PPTV III (2006) indicates that the evaluation should be suspended when two consecutive errors are made.

The results in Table 3 show us that at time 1 there is an initial difference between the EG and CG. In the EG we find that 50% of the population makes between one and three errors, while in the CG 58% make four to six errors. If the lower number of errors functions as an indication of better performance, this seems to indicate that at time 1 the EG shows a better performance than the CG. However, as mentioned previously, the results indicate that at time 1 the CG has a better performance than the EG.

As regards the comparison between the two assessment times, it can be observed that in the EG there is an increase in the number of errors at time 2, although this pattern of performance is also observed in the CG. It should be noted that the children in the CG make fewer errors (band 7-9). That is, it appears that the process of lexical improvement is not simple, because even though it may include an increase in level, it does not always mean there is a decrease in the number of errors.

Below we will analyze the process of recalling SW in the retellings with the aim of studying the processes of lexical production.

**Productive vocabulary**

Table 4.

*Lexical Production: Comparative Performance According to Number of Lexical Items Recalled in Retelling.*

| GROUP | Lexical Items Recalled in Retelling | | | | | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | None | | Only 1 | | 2 | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| Control | 8 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 2 | 12 | 12 |
| % | 67% | 50% | 33% | 33% | 0% | 17% | 100% | 100% |
| Experimental | 4 | 5 | 7 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 12 | 12 |
| % | 33% | 42% | 58% | 42% | 8% | 17% | 100% | 100% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

In both groups we see that the largest number of SW is 2 words out of a total of 10. Both groups are consistent on this number at the two assessment times. These data seem to indicate that the recall limit for this task is two words at this age. On the other hand, what we observed at time 1 is that the EG has a better performance, with 58% recalling one SW, while in the CG 33% recall one SW. It seems that the CG produces a performance that is more in accordance with the expectations of the description of lexical development, that is, as the number of children that do not recall any word decreases, the number of children who recall two words increases. This is not the case in the EG, where we observe that there are increases in the number of children who recall none as well as those who recall two.

However, taking into account that the purpose of this research is to identify differences in the EG and CG, we have calculated the Average and Deviation values to proceed with the analysis of differences.

Table 5.

*Comparative Performance of CG and EG at the Two Times of Assessment (Averages and Deviations)*

| | Serie | | Stimuli | | Errors | | Lexical Stimuli Recalled | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Moments | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| GE | 1,67 | 2,42 | 49,75 | 60,0 | 1,83 | 2,5 | 0,75 | 0,75 |
| SD | 0,77 | 0,9 | 10,67 | 13,25 | 1,03 | 1,0 | 0,62 | 0,75 |
| CG | 1,75 | 2,0 | 50,5 | 55,33 | 2,5 | 2,5 | 0,33 | 0,67 |
| SD | 0,86 | 0,85 | 9,19 | 12,12 | 1,00 | 0,9 | 0,49 | 0,77 |
| Total | 1,71 | 2,21 | 50,13 | 57,67 | 2,17 | 2,5 | 0,54 | 0,71 |
| SD | 0,8 | 0,88 | 9,75 | 12,64 | 1,04 | 0,93 | 0,58 | 0,75 |

As regards the analysis of mean differences (Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis), a significant difference can only be observed in the EG in lexical comprehension between times 1 and 2 in series F (4.89) = ρ: 0.03 (with ρ≤ 0.05)[14].

14 No significant differences are observed between the EG and CG at the pre-intervention time, namely for SW F (0.00)

In summary, the results indicate that the performance in vocabulary comprehension at time 2 improves for both groups, although only the EG shows a statistically significant increase in terms of the number of series. In terms of the productive lexicon, the observations indicate that the increase in performance is more difficult to understand.

## Discussion and Conclusions

The results presented in the previous section allow us to describe not only the characteristics of certain specific phenomena that address the descriptive aspect of the processes of lexical acquisition and development in childhood, but also the contributions that the implementation of the strategy inform for the pedagogical-didactic field.

As regards the characteristics of the lexical development process, we observed that it is far from being a cumulative type of process, with simple and univocal relations between the emergence/appearance of the item, display of its meaning, and appropriate use in context. The results of this research could validate the hypothesis that lexical development is a complex and dynamic process that involves, on the one hand, the increase in lexical stock (initially of a comprehensive nature) by interaction with contexts in which familiarization is sought with the new item and, on the other, this also process includes the presence of a greater number of errors before the correct assignment of meaning is made. The characteristics of this dynamic seem to be consistent with the characterizations of lexical development provided in recent theories that highlight the multicausality and the importance of input to explain the process (Nelson, 1998; Tomasello, 2003).

In this respect, the relationship observed in each of the groups when comparing performances in the tasks of comprehension at times 1 and 2 regarding the increase in the series, the increase in the number of stimuli, and the number of errors committed is complex. On the one hand, evaluations at time 2 show an increase in the population that manages to correctly recognize a greater number of stimuli, although this increase does not always translate into progress at the series level. Depending on the bias and limitations of the tests that have been applied (PPTV III, 2006), it can be considered that the relationships observed between the increase in items and the increase in errors is an observable feature of the interaction characteristics between linguistic and cognitive skills. In other words, it is possible to think that the described dynamic shows how the processes of semantic memory, long-term memory, phonological loop processes, and conceptual organization interact to articulate and structure the lexical and semantic representation of an item. Accordingly, it can be thought that, in agreement with the results of Isacoff and Stromwold (2014), in addition to lexical knowledge, the test assesses another type of knowledge, but also records the dynamics of the processes involved. However, as previously stated, it is necessary to evaluate the process of lexical development with tests that can provide information on the structure and organization of lexical representations and not merely the increase or deficit.

The comparative analysis of the performances between both groups at times 1 and 2, given that significant differences were found in the EG in the series indicator, seems to indicate that story reading activity has a marked favorable influence on lexical development. These results are in line with reflection (Borzone, 2005; Bruner, 1995; and Nelson, 1996) and results of previous research (Kindle, 2013; Robbins & Ehri, 1994; Whitehurst et al., 1999).

= ρ: 0.95, for Series F (0.03)= ρ: 0.85 and for Errors F (3.19) = ρ: 0.08. There are also no significant differences observed in Words recalled F (0.09) = ρ: 0.76.

Nor can differences be seen between the EG and CG at the post-intervention time, namely for SW F (0.76) = ρ: 0.39, for Series F (1.63) = ρ: 0.21, and for Errors F (0.00) = ρ: 0.95. There are also no significant differences observed in Words recalled F (3.16) = ρ: 0.08.

In terms of intra-group comparisons regarding the pre-post intervention times, no significant differences can be observed in the following items: for the EG in SW F (2.76) = ρ: 0.11, and for Errors F (2.85) = ρ: 0.10; for the CG in SW F (1.52) = ρ: 0.23, for Series F (0.53) = ρ: 0.47, and for Errors F (0.02) = ρ: 0.90. For the intra-group comparison of words recalled, we also failed to find significant differences in the EG F (0.01) = ρ: 0.92 and the CG F (1.12) = ρ: 0.30. We not that in all cases it was considered significant if ≤0.05.

On the other hand, given that the same instrument was used to evaluate the performance of the population on lexical comprehension at the two assessment times, it is possible to think that the results could be caused by what has been called the "training effect". This describes a slight improvement in performance observed in studies when assessing subjects with the same instrument. In this regard, it somewhat implausible to attribute the increase observed in the EG at time 2 purely to this training effect, since it tends only to produce slight increases, although it would not be entirely wrong to assign the increase (or part of it) in performance of lexical comprehension in the CG to the training effect.

With regard to the analysis of the number of Stimulus Words (SW) recalled, the results appear to contradict the results of the performance analysis in lexical comprehension. The results in Table 4 indicate an improved performance by the CG. This result poses a recurring questioning about studies that involve the implementation and testing of an intervention strategy, because when assessing children on a retelling task, there is also an evaluation of the mode of fluid interaction and the level of empathy between the children and the test administrators. This implies that it is possible that the form of intervention and the style of the administrators[15] may have influences on the results of the number of SW recalled in the retelling tasks. If this assumption is corroborated, it raises the question of how it is possible to control variables that can be affected by human interaction. In other words, is it possible to assume that any learning strategy can be implemented that does not involve relations of empathy, affection, or identification, or also relationships of rejection or dislike between administrators and children? Can it be considered that these particular contextual, dynamic relationships do not have impact on the results of the performance tests and, thereby, do not affect the validity of the results? The concept of the paradigm of Item Response Theory (Hambleton, 1991) includes the factor of dispositional variability and ecological assessments (Herman, 1998) are intended to observe the effects of human interactions to create conditions for assessment that tend to achieve performance with greater efficiency. It can be considered that that the result observed in the production tasks is not an autonomous characteristic of the groups, but that it is also the product of the dynamic of administrator-child interaction.

In terms of specific activities, despite the fact that previous research considers that the activities that are most beneficial are those organized under the thematic axis (Blachowicz, 2005; Rochester & Wang, 2011), the fact that significant differences are found at times 1 and 2 in the EG gives us an indication of how much the organization and design of the activities of the strategy have had an influence. The results are not only consistent with the results of previous research on the greater influence of a strategy over mere reading (Fien, Santoro, Baker, Park, Chard, Williams, & Haria, 2011; Robbins & Ehri, 1994; Senechal, Thomas, & Monker, 1995; Whitehurst et al., 1999), but also indicate that a strategy focused on the dynamics of the literary workshop also provides a favorable framework for lexical development. The strategy was initially designed to create contexts of knowledge circulation and literary procedures in the classroom, that is, to create in classrooms dynamics of appropriation and circulation of knowledge with greater symmetry between learners and teachers (Silva & Toledo, 2017), in which it was possible not only for children to conduct activities to listen to and comprehend stories, but mainly for them to participate in playful and creative activities that could involve them in the story, that would relate the conflicts of the character with their own, or allow them to imagine hypothetical situations, etc. Although simple, these considerations require careful work on planning, systematization, and monitoring. The first job was to prepare literary texts that fulfilled the characteristics for the study, but which were also in accordance with the age and interests of the children and had sufficient literary quality. It is thus possible to extract a set of teaching suggestions based on the results and the experience. In summary, we observed that in classroom situations, lexical development is favored by: systematic activities of gradually increasing complexity that allow lexical items to be organized into domains (thematic, or of narrative organization), that clearly place the lexical item to be understood/taught (for example, procuring correct articulation and focusing on the item), which develop activities in which, after the work on comprehension—contextual, thematic, taxonomic relationships for the meaning or derivation processes for the signifier—production of these terms is achieved

15 It should be noted that each group had a pair of specific administrators, although they were trained in a similar manner.

in the creation of other texts and contexts. These activities should be dynamic, collaborative and playful, and should also appeal to the creativity and experience of the children. We believe that by preparing original narrative literary texts that are entertaining and focused, with a sequence of activities designed to broaden comprehension, an activity that is primarily recreational in many kindergartens could be transformed into a dynamic learning sequence that expands children's lexicon and improves their comprehension and narrative ability[16]. In this process, imagination and play are great allies of learning.

Finally, we believe that although the results of this research indicate the didactic importance of designing intervention strategies of the workshop type based on literary texts, we need to look at them in greater depth in future research that addresses the complexity of the phenomenon, taking into account other variables not considered of an individual, social, or pedagogical nature (for example, the lexical repertory of homes, the lexicon of the teachers, the history of the dynamics of reading stories in schools, etc.).

As regards the pedagogical perspective, the impact of the teaching strategy indicates the feasibility of integrating curricular content into certain fictional contexts, creating ad hoc literary texts in order to implement a progression of activities that promote linguistic and cognitive development.

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16 The results of these dimensions are not presented in this study despite the fact that a sequence of the activities specifically contemplated these aspects.

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## Apendix 1

Cuento 1 "El paracaídas de Joaquín[17]"

Cuando Joaquín era un niño, disfrutaba mirar el cielo. Siempre quiso subirse a un avión y *atravesar las nubes.*

*De todos sus **vehículos** de juguete: camiones, autos, helicópteros, barcos y lanchas, su favorito era el avión. Siempre llevaba su avión preferido en el bolsillo.*

*Jugaba a lanzarse en un **paracaídas**. Hacía pruebas con sábanas viejas, tirándose desde el tobogán. ¡Solo conseguía golpearse!… algunas veces más, otras menos.*

*Cuando cumplió 20 años aprendió a pilotear un avión; con su primer trabajo ¡se compró un paracaídas profesional! Tomó clases con un instructor. Aprendió todos los trucos: como abrocharlo rápidoy tirar de la soga en el momento justo.*

*La primera vez que saltó del avión estaba asustado, tanto que pensó que se iba a olvidar todo lo que tenía que hacer. El instructor gritó ¡ahora! Joaquín cerró los ojos y saltó del avión. Cuando los abrió, el viento le hacía lagrimear los ojos. ¡Qué lindo se veía todo desde arriba…parecía un dibujo!*

*Mientras estaba descendiendo. Podía ver un **óvalo** de agua y un gran **rectángulo** de tierra sembrada de **hortalizas.***

*A 600 metros de la tierra, Joaquín tiró de la soga y el paracaídas se abrió. Se balanceaba en el aire. El viento comenzó a soplar más fuerte. Se asomaba una rama cortada del **tronco** de un árbol. Temía engancharse… Por suerte el viento lo alejó del peligro, ya casi pisaba tierra…*

*En su desesperación por hacer pie, pataleó muy fuerte y ¡zas!, sacudió la **colmena** que estaba en el suelo al lado del tronco.*

*Apenas cayó al piso las abejas salieron furiosas de la colmena, lo empezaron a **molestar** y, finalmente, lo picaron por todo el cuerpo.*

*¡Pobre Joaquín! estaba inmóvil como una **estatua**. No supo si se desmayó o se quedó dormido.*

*Cuando se despertó sintió un sabor dulce en los labios. Tenía la boca llena de miel. ¡La patada había roto la colmena y comenzó a **gotear**! Mientras miraba sus ronchas pensaba que no era tan amarga la aventura.*

***Cuento 2 "Alan y el mar"***

*Cuando Alan era un niño le encantaba nadar. Se pasaba horas en la pelopincho con su **par** de patas de rana.*

*De todas las carreras que conocía: de río, lago y mar, su favorita era la de mar abierto. Siempre llevaba unas antiparras en la mochila.*

*Practicaba nadando en la pileta del club. Alan nadaba muchas veces, haciéndolo cada vez mejor. A veces más rápido a veces menos.*

*Cuando cumplió 25 años fue a nadar en el mar. Recibió los consejos de otro nadador que lo **dirigiría** en una competencia. Aprendió todo: como entrar en el mar, cómo bracear más rápido y soportar el frío.*

*La primera vez que escuchó el silbato estaba nervioso, tanto que pensó que se iba a olvidar como llegar a la isla. El organizador dijo ¡vamos! Alan respiró hondo y nadó en el mar.*

*El agua le hacía sentir mucho frío. Miró adelante: ¡Qué linda se veía la **isla** desde el agua… parecía una foto!*

*A cincuenta metros de la orilla, Alan vio delante una gran mancha oscura en el agua y se detuvo. El agua se llenó de espuma. Pensó que podía ser un **enorme animal marino**. Temía ser atacado. Mejor que fuera un **cardumen** de pececitos. Por suerte controló su **terror**, y nadó más rápido hacia la isla…*

*En su desesperación por llegar, pataleó muy fuerte y ¡zas!, le entró un montón de agua por la nariz.*

*Apenas levantó la cabeza, respiró, pero su **cerebro** conservaba la imagen de la **mandíbula** de un tiburón. Sintió que algo lo pinchaba en la cara.*

*¡Pobre Alan! Flotaba desesperado del susto. No supo si pataleaba o si hacía la plancha.*

*Cuando se recuperó sintió un gran alivio. Vio los bigotes y la nariz de una foca. Otros nadadores se habían adelantado y comenzó a bracear más rápido. Mientras llegaba a la meta, pensaba que ¡esta vez sí lo iban a **premiar**!*

17 Las PE se encuentran resaltadas en negrita.

***Taller literario Secuencia de actividades (lineamientos)***

*1er encuentro: Se presenta el cuento a través de láminas gigantes ilustradas. Se procede a la lectura en voz alta. Luego los niñosrenarran colaborativamente la historia.*

*2do encuentro (pasible de segmentar en diferentes sesiones): Renarración colaborativa de la historia. Trabajo sobre habilidades narrativas (jerarquización, discriminación, reorganización, motivación) Focalización sobre las palabras target.Lectura del fragmento que presenta el término. Trabajo sobre el significado dependiendo de la palabra: trabajo sobre el significado a partir de las imágenes del texto o complementarias, de experiencias, de narraciones complementarias anécdoticas. Se consideran todas las palabras estímulo endiferentes sesiones*

*3er encuentro: Recopilación de saberes. Cierre del taller: técnicas lúdicas, artísticas, dinámicas*
*grupalesque permitan desde la experiencia organizar conceptualmente actividades y conocimientos*