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Selected aspects of Home Literacy Environments and reading motivation versus metacognitive reading strategies of students with and without dyslexia – empirical premises for designing educational support

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Home Literacy Environment, metacognitive reading strategies, global motivation, dyslexia, adolescence

Abstract

Research objectives (aims) and problem(s): The aim of this study was to identify the factors determining students' choice of reading strategies – both for those with and without dyslexia – and examine how motivation to read mediates the relationship between the Home Literacy Environment (HLE), including both active and passive components and the use of specific reading strategies.

Research methods: The study employed the following tools: the *Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory (MARSI)* by K. Mokhtari and C. A. Reichard, the *Motivations for Reading Questionnaire* by A. Wigfield and J. T. Guthrie, and an original HLE Questionnaire developed by the authors. A correlational research design was used. Data analysis included descriptive statistics, Pearson's r correlations, and regression analysis using A. Hayes' PROCESS macro for SPSS and SAS. The sample included 252 students diagnosed with dyslexia and 250 students without dyslexia, all aged 14–15.

Process of argumentation: The article begins with an outline of the theoretical background of the research problem, taking into account the importance of the HLE, motivation, and metacognitive reading strategies in students with and without dyslexia. It then details the methodology, sample characteristics, and tools used. Following a presentation of the findings, the article concludes with a discussion of the results and offers recommendations for educational practice.

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Research findings and their impact on the development of educational sciences: The study identified links between students' retrospective assessments of their HLE (active and passive components), their overall reading motivation, and their self-reported use of reading strategies (global, support, and problem-solving). The findings indicate the mediating role of global reading motivation in the relationship between HLE and reading strategy use – but only among students with dyslexia.

Conclusions and/or recommendations: The results allowed us to outline guidelines for designing educational environments conducive to literacy development, including targeted parent psychoeducation about the importance of HLE in academic achievement and specific goals for remedial and compensatory work with students with dyslexia.

Introduction

The development of reading skills is a complex process determined not only by a child's intellectual and cognitive abilities, but also by motivational and volitional factors, as well as environmental influences. These include both formal instruction in preschool and school settings, and early literacy experiences that take place at home through family interactions and play (Katzir et al., 2018; Segal et al., 2018; Sénéchal, 2006). Moreover, reading development may be influenced by multigenerational learning and collaborative educational partnership between families, schools, and child-focused institutions (Kuracki, 2023; 2024).

Home Literacy Environments (HLE) are of particular importance in the development of children's language skills, which determine their later academic achievement. According to the concept proposed by Sénéchal and LeFevre (2002), HLE includes both meaning-focused activities (such as shared reading and storytelling) and code-focused activities (such as modeling and direct instruction in reading and writing). This applies to both typically developing children and those considered at risk for dyslexia. Research has shown numerous positive associations between reading and reading-related practices within the HLE and later outcomes, including stronger reading skills, a richer vocabulary, and greater motivation to read and learn (Inoue et al., 2018; Silinskas et al., 2012; Torppa et al., 2022;

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Zuilkowski et al., 2019). However, there is a lack of research specifically investigating the importance of HLE in the development of metacognitive reading strategies in later stages of education, despite the fact that these strategies are known predictors of reading success and learning outcomes (Keskin, 2013; Li, 2010).

In addition to the distinctions based on meaning and code, HLE should also be considered in terms of two components: active – refer-ring to children's direct engagement in interactions that develop literacy skills – and passive – referring to learning literacy skills through obser-vation and modeling, without active participation (Burgess et al., 2003; Gottfried et al., 2015; van Tonder et al., 2019; Yeo et al., 2014). On the one hand, the literature emphasizes that the most significant impact on later academic success comes from HLE factors involving direct interaction between parents and children during joint activities (Bracken & Fischel, 2008; Caro, 2018; Mol & Bus, 2011). On the other hand, some studies attribute greater importance to observational learning from more experienced caregivers (e.g., Rashid et al., 2005).

Empirical evidence also shows that active family reading practices translate into increased intrinsic motivation to read (Baker et al., 1997; Silinskas, 2020; Wieschолek et al., 2018), although it is unclear whether this effect is equally strong for students with and without dyslexia. This relationship is especially important given that long-term reading motivation can promote consistent reading habits, support the development of metacognitive skills, and enhance reading comprehension (Torppa et al., 2020; Wigfield and Guthrie, 1997). For students with dyslexia, motivation can also act as an important mediator between exam anxiety and the use of metacognitive reading strategies, including global strategies that involve overall analysis of the text, support strategies such as taking notes while reading, summarizing content, or highlighting important information in the text, and problem-solving strategies aimed at thorough understanding through careful reading or visualization (Kuracki & Dłużniewska, 2023) Although motivation appears to play a meaningful role for all students, it may be particularly important for those with dyslexia, as it helps them activate metacognitive resources that facilitate reading in high-pressure testing situations (Stevens et al., 2019).

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Given the limited research on the importance of HLE for the use of metacognitive reading strategies among students with and without specific learning disabilities, as well as the factors influencing this relationship, this study aims to fill these gaps and provide a foundation for designing effective educational support strategies.

Methods

The aim of the study was to identify the factors that influence the choice of reading strategies among students with and without dyslexia, as well as the mediating role of reading motivation in the relationship between the HLE (both active and passive components) and the use of specific reading strategies. The following research questions were developed in line with these objectives:

1. Are there differences in students' retrospective assessments of their own HLE (active and passive components), their overall motivation to read, and their self-reported use of metacognitive reading strategies?
2. Are there relationships between students' retrospective assessments of their own HLE (active and passive components), their level of overall motivation to read, and their self-reported use of metacognitive reading strategies (global, support, and problem-solving strategies), among students with and without dyslexia?
3. Does global reading motivation mediate the relationship between the HLE (active and passive components) and the use of specific metacognitive reading strategies in students with and without dyslexia?

Data

The study sample consisted of 502 students – 252 with dyslexia and 250 without – recruited from randomly selected schools across Poland. The students diagnosed with dyslexia had formal documentation from

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psychological and educational counseling centers. The participants were between the ages of 14 and 15 (M = 14.31, SD = 0.44).

Research tools

Three psychometric instruments were used in this study. The *Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory* (MARSI), developed by K. Mokhtari and C. A. Reichard (2002), was administered in a Polish adaptation prepared by the author of this study to assess students' self-reported use of reading strategies. The tool uses a 5-point Likert scale (1 = "I never or almost never do this"; 5 = "I always or almost always do this"). In this sample, Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for the subscales were as follows: Global Reading Strategies – 0.88 (original version – 0.92), Problem-Solving Strategies – 0.86 (original version – 0.79), and Support Reading Strategies – 0.86 (original version – 0.87).

To assess students' motivation to read, the *Motivations for Reading Questionnaire* developed by A. Wigfield and J. T. Guthrie (1995) was used in a Polish adaptation by the author of this study. The questionnaire uses a 4-point Likert scale (1 = "very different from me," 2 = "somewhat different from me," 3 = "somewhat similar to me," 4 = "very similar to me"). While the original version includes 11 subscales with Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranging from 0.43 to 0.80, this study used a revised version based on factor analysis, which consolidated the instrument into eight subscales: Social, Evaluation–Compliance, Curiosity, Competition, Engagement, Avoidance of reading-related tasks, Efficacy, and Recognition. In the current sample, the overall Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.91, with subscale values ranging from 0.63 to 0.85. For the purposes of this study, only the composite Global Motivation score was used in the analysis.

The *HLE Questionnaire*, developed by the author, was used to assess students' retrospective evaluations of their Home Literacy Environment. It consists of 14 items divided into two subscales and uses a 4-point Likert scale. Response options ranged from "never – we didn't do it at all" to "we did it often – 4 or more times a week," and from "I disagree" to "I completely

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agree." The HLE active subscale includes 8 items reflecting past experiences of being directly involved in reading and writing activities with caregivers, such as looking at or reading books together, telling stories, playing word games, and writing simple words (e.g., "Together with my parents, I told stories about books I had read"). The HLE passive subscale includes 6 items referring to students' experiences of having their parents model reading and writing behaviors, as well as estimating the size of the home library (e.g., "My parents read books, textbooks, or newspapers in my presence"). In this study, Cronbach's alpha values were 0.81 for the HLE active subscale, 0.89 for the HLE passive subscale, and 0.86 for the full HLE scale.

Results

In order to address the first research question, which examined whether there are differences in the levels of HLE active, HLE passive, self-reported use of reading strategies, and Global Motivation for reading between students with and without dyslexia, mean scores for each variable were calculated for both groups and compared using independent samples t-tests. As shown in Table 1, students with dyslexia reported significantly higher evaluations of both the active and passive components of their HLE compared to their peers without dyslexia. It is worth noting that in both groups, the active HLE component received higher ratings than the passive one.

In addition, students with dyslexia scored significantly higher than their non-dyslexic peers in their use of Global Reading Strategies (GLOB) – the most frequently used reading strategies in both groups – as well as in Problem-Solving Strategies (PROB). However, no significant differences were found between the two groups in terms of Global Motivation or the use of Support Reading Strategies (SUP).

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Table 1. Differences in mean scores for the study variables

Variable	Students with dyslexia		Students without dyslexia		Student's t-test		
	M	SD	M	SD	t	df	p
HLE active	3.24	0.54	3.02	0.68	-4.128	475.136	**0.001**
HLE passive	2.89	0.79	2.49	0.71	-6.058	492.800	**0.001**
Global Motivation	83.97	19.261	82.12	24.48	-0.943	475.360	0.346
Global Reading Strategies (GLOB)	40.42	10.39	37.90	11.55	-2.561	500	**0.011**
Support Reading Strategies (SUP)	24.78	8.38	23.82	8.42	-1.273	500	0.204
Problem-Solving Strategies (PROB)	24.16	5.84	22.37	7.07	-3.097	484.101	**0.001**

M – mean; SD – standard deviation; p – significance level; bold – statistically significant results ($p < 0.05$); df – degrees of freedom. Analysis conducted using SPSS 29.0.2.0

In order to explore the second research question, which investigated the relationships between HLE active, HLE passive, Global Motivation, and the use of reading strategies (global, support, and problem-solving), Pearson correlation analyses were conducted (see Table 2).

Table 2. Pearson's r correlations between study variables for students with dyslexia (N = 252) and without dyslexia (N = 250)

		1	2	3	4	5
1. HLE active	D					
	WD					
2. HLE passive	D	0.317**				
	WD	0.364**				
3. Global Motivation	D	0.261**	0.148*			
	WD	0.124*	0.028			
4. Global Reading Strategies (GLOB)	D	0.219**	0.210**	0.697**		
	WD	0.017	-0.036	0.642**		
5. Support Reading Strategies (SUP)	D	0.128**	0.170**	0.561**	0.750**	
	WD	0.026	-0.046	0.537**	0.776**	
6. Problem-Solving Strategies (PROB)	D	0.268**	0.173**	0.615**	0.685**	0.717**
	WD	0.076	-0.037	0.543**	0.758**	0.639**

D – students with dyslexia; WD – students without dyslexia; Correlation significant at $p < 0.01$; Correlation significant at $p < 0.05$ Analysis conducted using SPSS 29.0.2.0

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In both groups, the analysis revealed moderate positive correlations (ranging from 0.54 to 0.69) between Global Motivation and the individual reading strategies (GLOB, SUP, PROB), as well as weak positive correlations (ranging from 0.12 to 0.26) between Global Motivation and both active and passive components of the HLE. Additionally, in both groups, moderate to strong positive correlations (ranging from 0.64 to 0.78) were found among the individual metacognitive reading strategies (GLOB, SUP, PROB), and weak positive correlations (ranging from 0.32 to 0.36) were found between the active and passive components of HLE. The analysis shows that only in the group of students with dyslexia were there weak but statistically significant relationships (ranging from 0.13 to 0.27) between HLE active and individual reading strategies (GLOB, SUP, PROB), as well as similarly weak significant relationships (ranging from 0.17 to 0.21) between HLE passive and the same reading strategies. These findings represent an important step toward answering the question of whether Global Motivation mediates the relationship between specific components of the HLE and students' use of reading strategies.

The correlation analysis provided the foundation for the subsequent regression analysis, which revealed that, among students with dyslexia, both HLE active ($\beta = 0.098$; $p < .005$) and Global Motivation ($\beta = 0.581$; $p < .001$) were significant predictors of the use of Problem Reading Strategies (PROB). Using Hayes' (2013) Model 4 for mediation analysis, it was found that both the model including only HLE active ($F(1, 248) = 19.158$; $p < .001$) and the model including both HLE active and Global Motivation as a mediator ($F(2, 247) = 79.262$; $p < .001$) showed a good fit. These models explained 7% and 39% of the variance in the dependent variable, respectively. This indicates that the model including the mediator more effectively predicts adolescents' use of Problem Reading Strategies (see Table 3). Before introducing the mediator, the direct effect of HLE active on Problem-Solving Strategies was $\beta = 0.268$ ($p < 0.001$). After including the mediator in the model, HLE active remained a significant predictor, but the strength of the relationship decreased to $\beta = 0.115$ ($p = 0.002$), while Global Motivation emerged as a strong predictor ($\beta = 0.585$, $p < 0.001$). This supports the presence of partial mediation by Global Motivation (Table 4).

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Table 3. Statistics showing the percentage of variance explained (R^2) by two models: the first including only the main effect, and the second including the mediating variable

Model	R	R^2	Standard error	F	df1	df2	p
1	0.268	0.072	31.753	19.158	1	248	<0.001
2	0.625	0.391	20.918	79.262	2	247	<0.001

**Predictors in the model: HLE active; **Predictors in the model: HLE active, Global Motivation*
Based on SPSS 20.0.2.0 (Model 4, Hayes, 2013)

Table 4. Unstandardized and standardized coefficients of two regression models: the first including the main predictor, HLE active, and the second including the mediator, Global Motivation

Variables	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	p
	B	Standard Error	β		
1 (Constant)	14.695	2.191	0.268	6.707	<0.001
HLE active	2.916	0.666		4.377	<0.001
2 (Constant)	5.202	1.964	0.115 0.585	2.649	0.008
HLE active	1.251	0.560		2.234	0.002
Global Motivation	0.177	0.015		11.377	<0.001

Dependent Variable: Problem Reading Strategies (PROB)
Based on SPSS 29.0.2.0 (Model 4, Hayes, 2013)

The analyses also identified the predictors of students' use of Global Reading Strategies (GLOB). Regression analysis showed that both HLE passive ($\beta = 0.107$; $p = 0.002$) and Global Motivation ($\beta = 0.680$; $p < 0.001$) significantly predict the use of these strategies. Using Model 4 with a mediating variable (Hayes, 2013), it was found that both the model including only the HLE passive variable ($F(1, 248) = 11.387$, $p < 0.001$) and the model including HLE passive and Global Motivation as a mediator ($F(2, 247) = 54.613$, $p < 0.001$) fit the data well. These models explain approximately 4% and nearly 50% of the variance in the dependent variable, respectively, with

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the model that includes the mediator providing a significantly better prediction of adolescents' use of Global Reading Strategies (Table 5).

Before the mediator was introduced, the direct effect of HLE passive on Global Reading Strategies was $\beta = 0.209$ ($p < 0.001$). After the mediator was added to the model, the effect decreased to $\beta = 0.115$ ($p = 0.002$), which indicates partial mediation by Global Motivation ($\beta = 0.681$, $p < 0.001$) (Table 6). It should be emphasized that the strength of the mediating role of Global Motivation was confirmed in all analyzed cases by the standardized indirect effect obtained through the bootstrapping method with 5,000 resamples.

Table 5. Statistics indicating the percentage of variance explained (R^2) by two models: the first including only the main effect, and the second including the mediator

Model	R	R^2	Standard error	F	df1	df2	p
1	0.209	0.039	103.524	11.387	1	248	<0.001
2	0.705	0.498	54.613	122.343	2	247	<0.001

**Predictors in the model: HLE passive; **Predictors in the model: HLE passive, Global Motivation*
Based on SPSS 29.0.2.0 (Model 4, Hayes, 2013)

Table 6. Unstandardized and standardized coefficients of two regression models: the first including the main predictor, HLE passive, and the second including the mediator, Global Motivation

Variables	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	p
	B	Standard Error	β		
1 (Constant)	32.487	2.436	0.209	13.336	<0.001
HLE active	2.742	0.813		3.375	<0.0012
(Constant)	5.461	2.531	0.109	2.158	0.003
HLE active	1.425	0.597	0.681	2.388	0.001
Global Motivation	0.367	0.025		14.937	<0.001

Dependent Variable: Global Reading Strategies (GLOB). Based on SPSS 29.0.2.0 (Model 4, Hayes, 2013)

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Discussion and Conclusions

The analyses conducted in this study indicate that students with dyslexia and those without do not differ in their levels of Global Motivation to read. This suggests that factors other than special educational needs influence both intrinsic and extrinsic reading motivation. However, it is not surprising that moderate positive relationships were observed in both groups between Global Motivation to read, the two components of the HLE, and all metacognitive reading strategies. As shown in numerous previous studies (Bracken & Fischel, 2008; Caro, 2018; Inoue et al., 2018; Mol & Bus, 2011; Rashid et al., 2005; Torppa et al., 2022), both active engagement of children in early reading experiences and parental modeling of reading and writing behaviors can influence not only the development of interest and attitudes toward reading and learning, but also an understanding of the importance of reading skills for becoming an active participant in social life. Moreover, both components of HLE may contribute significantly to the development of phonological awareness and cognitive functions necessary for decoding, text comprehension, and analyzing content and structure. Regardless of the actual motives for reading, increasing reading practice is an important step toward developing the ability to use a variety of strategies when engaging with printed text.

Significant differences between the two groups were observed in their retrospective assessments of the HLE and in their self-reported use of specific metacognitive reading strategies. The fact that students with dyslexia reported higher ratings for both HLE active and HLE passive components may reflect greater parental involvement in activities that support the development of children's language and reading skills. This could be attributed to the need for early developmental support, as well as to how these parents perceive their parental roles (Kuracki & Dłużniewska, 2023a). It can be assumed that parents of at-risk children invest more effort in their children's development, which manifests in increased early reading activities such as dialogic reading in parent–child dyads and participation in reading-related games. These activities – typically part of joint engagement episodes – are often guided by instructions from teachers and specialists

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in kindergartens and early support centers, and they may contribute to cognitive training, paving the way for more frequent use of metacognitive reading strategies among students with dyslexia at later stages of education.

The relationships observed between the HLE and individual reading strategies (GLOB, SUP, PROB) in the group of students with dyslexia also confirmed the findings from the correlation analyses. In future research, however, it would be worthwhile to examine whether, among students without dyslexia, early reading activities initiated by parents differed in their purpose – i.e., whether they were more focused on play rather than intervention.

The results of the regression analysis are noteworthy, as they confirm the partial mediation of Global Motivation in the relationship between HLE active and the self-reported use of Problem Reading Strategies (PROB), as well as in the relationship between HLE passive and Global Reading Strategies (GLOB), in the group of students with dyslexia. While the mediating role of Global Motivation in the relationship between the independent and dependent variables corresponds with theoretical premises previously outlined (Baker et al., 1997; Kuracki & Dłużniewska, 2023; Silinskas, 2020; Wiescholek et al., 2018), it is somewhat surprising that HLE active emerged as a significant predictor only for Problem Reading Strategies (PROB), and HLE passive only for Global Reading Strategies (GLOB).

In the first case, this may be explained by the nature of HLE active, which involves engaging in joint activities with the child – such as dialogic reading, word games, puzzles, or storytelling. These interactions provide many opportunities for children to acquire metacognitive knowledge in practice and to receive feedback from a more experienced partner. As students progress through their education, these early experiences may translate into the use of skills such as reading carefully, adjusting reading speed to text difficulty, maintaining attention, and visualizing content: core elements of Problem Reading Strategies. In the second case, it can be assumed that observing adults engaged in reading and writing various types of materials in many different contexts and situations helps children

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develop skills associated with understanding the purpose of reading, identifying the structure of a text, and using visual aids like tables, diagrams, and graphs, i.e., behaviors characteristic of Global Reading Strategies.

The findings of this study provide important insights for designing educational support for at-risk students and those with specific learning difficulties. For children in at-risk groups during early and middle childhood, it appears particularly important to raise parental awareness about the role of the HLE in early literacy development and its impact on later academic achievement. Additionally, efforts should be made to enhance parents' methodological skills in supporting their children's reading development

Psychoeducational efforts targeting parents carried out in both preschool settings and early childhood development centers should aim to increase parents' actual involvement in early literacy activities. This includes the implementation of dialogic reading in the home environment, participation in reading-related games, and consistent modeling of reading and writing behaviors by adult caregivers. Achieving these goals may be most effective through educational partnerships that connect the home, preschools, and other institutions, working together to support children's language and literacy development (Kuracki, 2024). Initiatives implemented through such multilateral collaboration can enhance the appeal of reading activities and, in turn, inspire greater motivation to read and learn among children.

For students with dyslexia in later stages of education, it is essential that corrective and compensatory efforts not only focus on improving individual cognitive functions but also on developing the reading motivation and metacognitive awareness. Strengthening students' ability to reflect on and apply appropriate reading strategies is key. Multi-tiered psychological and educational support structured in this way can more effectively contribute to improving the academic outcomes of students with specific learning difficulties.

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Limitations

The results presented here may act as a starting point for more in-depth research, ideally conducted using a longitudinal design. A limitation of the current study is that students' assessments of both HLE components were retrospective, and the use of metacognitive reading strategies was based on self-report. Future research would benefit from a larger and more representative sample to enhance the generalizability of findings.

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