



Early intervention, home background and school success: Preliminary results of a longitudinal study

VAN STEENSEL, R.

Abstract

In order to prepare children from disadvantaged backgrounds for primary education, early intervention programs are used. Generally, a distinction is made between home-based and center-based programs. In the research project described in this article, it is investigated whether there is a relation between participation in such programs and the educational achievements of 119 primary school pupils from two cities in the Netherlands. As Leseman (1992) suggests, the effectiveness of early intervention activities is partly determined by the family background of children taking part. An important aspect of family background seems to be the presence or lack of a literacy tradition. For this reason a parent questionnaire was developed which focused on 'home literacy environment': the extent to which parents themselves make use of written materials, and the way in which they provide their children with literacy-related experiences. In this article, preliminary outcomes on this work will be discussed.

Key words: early intervention, home literacy, early school success, disadvantaged pupils

Research shows that, in spite of various educational policy measures, children from lower SES, immigrant families still lag behind their native peers in Dutch primary education (Tesser & Iedema, 2001). The fact that this educational lag can already be observed in the early years of primary school, leads to the assumption that these children were not provided with the necessary cognitive and linguistic skills in the preschool period (Vallen & Kurvers, 2003). In order to stimulate children in the development of these cognitive and linguistic skills before they enter formal education, early intervention activities are used. Generally, a distinction is made between two types of intervention activities (Emmelot et al., 1987). On the one hand, there are activities that take place in the homes of children (the home-based approach): these types of activities aim at stimulating development by improving the pedagogical interaction between parent and child. On the other hand, there are activities that are carried out by trained teachers in more professional environments, such as playgroups and day-care centers (the center-based approach).

In a current research project, initiated by the Faculty of Arts of Tilburg University, the effectiveness of both types of early intervention activities is investigated. The research aims at establishing to what extent participating in such activities contributes to the early school success of children from disadvantaged backgrounds, and – if such a relation can be found – whether there is a difference between home-based and center-based activities. In addition, an attempt

is made to determine which factors influence the effectiveness of intervention activities. Referring to Singer (1993) and Van Tuijl et al. (2001) one can assume that, in particular, the home situation of participating children is important. In the initial phase of the project, therefore, data were collected on home background characteristics of the children taking part in the research. The results of this initial phase are presented in this article.

Overview of early intervention activities in the Netherlands and their effects

A Dutch home-based program: “Opstap Opnieuw”

In recent years the attention of educational policy makers in the Netherlands has been directed towards a center-based approach of early intervention. For a considerable period of time, however, the focus was on the use of home-based programs. One of the most used home-based programs in the Dutch context is “Opstap Opnieuw” (‘Step-up Anew’). The original version of the program, Opstap, was an adaptation of the Israeli HIPPIY-program (cf. Lombard, 1981). Opstap Opnieuw is aimed at children from disadvantaged backgrounds (both immigrant and native) in the age between 4 and 6, the period in which Dutch children attend kindergarten. The goal of the program is to contribute to cognitive and linguistic development, and to emergent literacy and numeracy, by improving pedagogical practices in the home. For this purpose, parent and child, over a period of two years, weekly engage in a series of activities, such as joint reading/listening to stories on tape, doing puzzles, playing right or wrong games, playing language games, rhyming, singing songs (cf. Vallen & Kurvers, 2003). The program is available in three language versions – Dutch, Turkish and Moroccan-Arabic –, so that parents can carry out the program in their native language.

Families taking part in “Opstap Opnieuw” are supported by so-called ‘paraprofessional’ helpers (cf. Leseman & Van Tuijl, 2001; Van Tuijl et al., 2001). These paraprofessional helpers are, in most cases, women who are mothers themselves. They live in the same neighbourhood and have the same ethnic and language background as the families they support, but are usually somewhat better educated. They receive an introductory training and are supervised by a professional coordinator. Because of their shared ethnic and language background, the paraprofessionals have a relatively easy access to families that are usually hard to reach for regular welfare work. During two-weekly visits they assist parents in carrying out the program with their child: they explain program activities and offer examples of stimulating pedagogical interaction. In addition, group meetings are organized, during which all parents participating in “Opstap Opnieuw” come together. These meetings are aimed at discussing child-rearing issues, providing information, for instance on the Dutch educational system, and practicing stimulating, sensitive-responsive interaction styles (by means of video tapes).

Van Tuijl carried out a large-scale research into the effectiveness of “Opstap Opnieuw” for Turkish and Moroccan immigrant children (as reported by Leseman & Van Tuijl, 2001; Van Tuijl, 2001; Van Tuijl et al., 2001). The research produced mixed and, on some levels, disappointing results. For the Turkish children Van Tuijl found modest but significant effects on pre-mathematic skills and on Turkish language development. No effects were found on Dutch language development, which was to be expected as the program is carried out in Turkish. For the Moroccan children no effects were found at all. The differences between the subgroups seem, in part, due to differences in the quality of implementation of the program. The overall lack in substantial effects, however, seems to be caused by characteristics of the home situation of children taking part. According to Van Tuijl et al. (2001) one of the most influential aspects of the home situation is the lack or presence of a literacy tradition, or, as Wood

(2002) and Burgess et al. (2002) say, the 'home literacy environment'. As mentioned earlier, "Opstap Opnieuw" consists of several rather 'literate' activities such as joint reading, rhyming, playing language games. The assumption is that parents who, because of a low educational level, do not have much experience with written language, have great difficulty in effectively carrying out these activities.

Center-based activities in the Netherlands

In the Netherlands, three types of preschool centers can be distinguished (Emmelot & Schaufeli, 1987): (regular) day-care centers, playgroups and day-care during educational activities for immigrant parents (the Dutch abbreviation CKO, of CursistenKinderOpvang will be used here). Day-care centers are intended for 0- to 4-year-old children of working parents, which is why they have long opening hours. Day-care centers, as it were, take over the caring role of parents. Within the Dutch context they do not have explicit educational objectives. Playgroups are for children in the age between 2 and 4. Their opening hours are more restricted than those of day-care centers. They do not aim to take over the caring role of parents, but are focused on children's social and emotional development. They offer young children a stimulating environment in which they can play freely, and learn them to interact with peers. In addition, they provide children with school-like experiences, which is meant to help them when moving on to kindergarten. CKO's, finally, provide day-care for children whose parents take Dutch language courses. Like regular day-care centers they are meant for 4- to 6-year-olds.

Much of the research into the effects of center-based activities has been carried out in the United States. Evaluation studies of center-based programs that were part of the Head Start project showed some substantial short-term effects on children's IQ scores, school readiness and socio-emotional development (Singer 1989, 1993). One or two years after, these short-term effects seemed to have faded away. However, in the longer term (up to 20 years after a program had finished), program influences were visible once again. Singer (1993) comments that these long-term outcomes may well be the result of a selection effect: it is likely that parents who chose to participate had higher expectations of their children, as a result of which the home situation may have been more supportive.

In the Netherlands the amount of research into the effectiveness of center-based activities has, for a long period of time, been rather limited. Studies that were carried out mainly focused on socio-emotional development, and in particular on the development of attachment relationships (between child and caregiver, and between child and parent) (for an overview, see Clerckx & Van IJzendoorn, 1992). Effects on children's school success, however, were not examined. In recent years, the situation has changed. Recent governmental interest in playgroups as a means of fighting educational inequality has led to the development of two center-based programs ("Piramide" and "Kaleidoscoop"), aimed at 2½- to 6-year-old children attending playgroups and kindergarten. Schonewille et al. (2000) report on an evaluation study of both programs, which shows that they have weak to modest effects on the cognitive and linguistic development of the Dutch, Turkish and Moroccan children taking part. In the study, the children participating in Piramide and Kaleidoscoop were compared with children who attended playgroups and kindergarten but did not take part in the programs. A comparison with children who did not participate in any center-based activity (control group) was not made.

Considerations for future research

In sum, evaluation studies of Dutch early intervention programs show differential and, at best, modest effects on the cognitive and linguistic development of children from disadvantaged backgrounds. The studies discussed here leave some relevant issues untouched:

- in recent years Dutch educational policy has shifted towards a more center-based approach of early intervention. This shift seems to be based on the idea that center-based programs will produce more positive outcomes for children in disadvantaged situations than home-based programs. However, no studies in which a comparison is made between both types of approaches have been conducted so far;
- the assumption is that supporting children's cognitive and linguistic development by using early intervention programs will improve their school career. For this reason it would be interesting to follow children who participated in intervention activities through at least part of the primary school period, instead of just measuring short-term program effects;
- both Van Tuijl et al. (2001) and Singer (1993) argue that the effectiveness of intervention programs is influenced by aspects of the home situation and family background of children taking part (see supra). An important feature of the home situation, according to Van Tuijl et al. (2001), is the presence or lack of a literacy tradition (the 'home literacy environment'). However, the evaluation studies discussed here do not include data on the home literacy environment.¹

The present study

Research design and methodological issues

The goal of the present study is to find out whether children who participated in an early intervention activity are better prepared for the early years of formal education than children who did not take part in such an activity. In addition, a comparison is made between the effects of home-based and center-based activities. Finally, the study examines to what extent the effectiveness of intervention activities is determined by aspects of the family background and home situation of children taking part. With respect to the influence of family background and home situation, there is a special focus on the home literacy environment.

The objective was to compare the early school career of three groups of children: a group taking part in the program "Opstap Opnieuw" (the home-based group), a group participating in a playgroup or visiting a day-care center (the center-based group) and a group not taking part in early intervention activities (the control group). During the first phase of data collection, however, a fourth group was identified. Children belonging to this group had participated in "Opstap Opnieuw" and taken part in a center-based activity. Because American research shows that combined home- and center-based programs, such as the Perry Preschool Project, lead to positive outcomes (cf. Leseman, 1992), this fourth group was also included.

Random assignment of children to the four subgroups was not possible: the research project started after children had finished participating in the intervention programs. In order to compile four comparable groups, a matching procedure was used: foursomes of children were selected (one home-based child, one center-based child, one combination child (home-based plus center-based) and one control child) that matched on three background variables shown to correlate with school success (cf. De Jong et al., 1995): age, ethnic background and mother's educational level. However, due to practical problems it proved to be impossible to form perfectly matched groups. As a result the four subgroups (total N = 114) differ in size:

- the home-based group consists of 24 children;
- the center-based group consists of 42 children;
- the combination group consists of 30 children;
- the control group consists of 18 children.

In addition, the subgroups differ in ethnic background: the home-based and combination group consist, for a large part, of immigrant families, while most families in the center-based

group are Dutch natives; in the control group there is a more equal distribution. The same holds for mother's educational level: the mothers from the home-based and combination group have the lowest mean educational level, while the mothers from the center-based and control group have the highest. The mean age of the children is the same in each subgroup.

Instruments

The research design required the collection of several types of data: data on family background and home situation, data on the characteristics of the early intervention activities (that is, characteristics of the implementation of "Opstap Opnieuw" and characteristics of the play-groups, day-care centers and CKO's involved) and school results.

Family background and home situation

Data on family background and home situation were collected using a parent questionnaire, which was divided into two parts. The first part consisted of questions on:

- general background characteristics, such as date and country of birth of child, father and mother; parents' educational and employment level; presence of other children; religion; for immigrant families: socio-cultural orientation (more directed towards Dutch mainstream society or more directed towards the own ethnic community);
- characteristics of the family's language situation. This part of the questionnaire started by asking whether other languages than Dutch were used at home. If so, additional questions were asked about parents' language dominance and preference, and parents' language choice in interaction with husband/wife, children, other family members, friends and colleagues.

The second part of the questionnaire focused on the home literacy environment. Based on Teale's (1986) work, two aspects of the home literacy environment were examined. First of all, questions were included on literacy activities of parents and other family members. According to Stainthorp & Hughes (2000) early literacy development (or 'emergent literacy' as it is often referred to) is encouraged by 'incidental learning': children learn about the nature and function of written language as a result of seeing their parents read and write in various contexts. Evidence is provided by Weinberger (1996), who studied the relation between literacy experiences of young children at home, and their later reading proficiency. She found that children whose parents frequently took part in reading activities had significantly better scores on reading tests than children whose parents did not. Williams & Gregory (2001) argue that parents are not the only family members that affect children's emergent literacy development. They showed that the extent to which older brothers and sisters read and write was related to children's reading and writing skills. In immigrant families, in particular, the role of older brothers and sisters seemed important, as they were often the only ones who had experience with mainstream education.

On the basis of Purcell-Gates (1996) questions were included on the occurrence of five types of literacy activities:

- literacy activities that are part of everyday routines: making shopping lists, reading advertising brochures;
- literacy activities for entertainment purposes: reading books, newspapers, magazines, the TV-guide;
- school- or work-related literacy activities: homework made by elder brothers/sisters or by parents taking courses, use of a computer for school or work;
- literacy activities for religious purposes: reading the Bible, the Quran;
- literacy activities for interpersonal communication: writing letters, postcards.

For each activity additional questions were asked on the frequency with which this activity took place (once or more times a week/once or more times a month/hardly ever), who took

part in the activity (father, mother, elder brothers/sisters), which materials were used and in which language these were.

The second aspect of the home literacy environment concerns joint literacy activities involving the child. Many researchers established the significance of shared reading activities for emergent literacy and later reading ability. Weinberger (1996) found a positive and significant relationship between the frequency with which parents read to their children at age 3 and their scores on reading tests 4 years later. Jap-a-Joe and Leseman (1993) showed that, in immigrant families in the Netherlands, story-telling (without the use of books) often took the place of joint reading activities. Weinberger (1996) also looked into the occurrence of joint rhyming activities: she stressed the importance of phonological awareness for early literacy development and of sensitivity to rhyme as an important indicator of later reading skills. Jordan et al. (2000) include joint watching of educational TV programs such as Sesame Street and joint library visits in their conceptualization of home literacy environment. Stainthorp & Hughes (2000), finally, found a relationship between early reading ability and parents' and children's playing of language games.

On the basis of this, questions were included on: watching educational TV programs, playing language games/other games (such as 'memory'), singing songs, rhyming, joint writing activities, joint reading activities, story-telling (without the help of children's books) and joint library visits. Again, additional questions were asked on the frequency with which an activity took place, who took part in the activity, which materials were used and in which language these were.

The questionnaire was administered between March and September 2001 to the parents of all children taking part in the research. Some of the parents were interviewed by the paraprofessional helpers of the "Opstap" project (see above), other parents were interviewed by the researcher or a research assistant.

Characteristics of the early intervention activities

Since the effectiveness of early intervention activities also depends on the characteristics of the activities (cf. Leseman, 1992), data was collected on:

- the implementation of "Opstap Opnieuw". In an interview, the paraprofessional helpers of the Opstap-project were asked to judge the quality of implementation of the program in the families they had supported;
- the organisation of playgroups, day-care centers and CKO's. In an interview, teachers of the centers involved in the research were asked questions on group organisation, contact with parents, contact with other institutions (primary education, health-care, library), use of programs and observation methods, daily schedule and quality of teacher-child interaction. The data collection still goes on.

School results

Children's school results were measured on three moments during about two-and-a-half years: at the end of kindergarten (when children were 5 to 6 years old), at the end of 1st grade (when children were 6 to 7 years old) and at the end of 2nd grade (when children were 7 to 8 years old). These data are still being collected. Several types of school results are used:

- scores on standard tests (developed by Cito, the Dutch Central Institute for Test Development). In kindergarten, tests were administered for measuring receptive school vocabulary and early math skills. In 1st and 2nd grade tests were (and are still being) collected for measuring reading skills, text comprehension, receptive vocabulary, spelling and math skills;
- report cards;
- teacher judgements on early literacy development (only at the end of kindergarten).

Results

Since the study is still in progress, we will present only the results of the parent questionnaires. The results are limited to both aspects of the home literacy environment: literacy activities of parents and elder brothers/sisters (as presented in Table 1) and literacy activities involving the child (as presented in Table 2).

Table 1 shows, for the four subgroups, which literacy activities take place in the homes.

Table 1

Literacy activities in the homes, per subgroup; percentages refer to the proportion of families in which an activity occurs

	Home-based group (N = 24)	Combination group (N = 30)	Center-based group (N = 42)	Control group (N = 18)
Reading advertising brochures	91.7%	100.0%	97.6%	100.0%
Reading magazines	45.8%	46.7%	88.1%	66.7%
Reading newspapers	50.0%	50.0%	66.7%	72.2%
Reading books	73.9%	63.3%	78.6%	77.8%
Writing shopping lists	66.7%	70.0%	81.0%	88.9%
Writing postcards, letters	62.5%	86.7%	95.2%	88.9%
Making homework	79.2%	43.3%	52.4%	44.4%
Use of personal computer	52.2%	55.2%	76.2%	72.3%

Table 1 shows some differences between the home-based and combination group on the one hand, and the center-based and control group on the other.² First of all, more families read magazines in the latter groups (45.8% and 46.7% respectively) than in the former (88.1% and 66.7% respectively). The same holds for reading newspapers: in the home-based and combination group less families read newspapers than in the center-based and control group (50.0% and 50.0% versus 66.7% and 72.2%). In the center-based and control group more families make use of shopping lists than in the home-based and combination group (81.0% and 88.9% versus 66.7% and 70.0%). Finally, the use of personal computers is higher in the center-based and control group (76.2% and 72.3% respectively) than in the home-based and combination group (52.2% and 55.2% respectively).

There are also exceptions. Nearly all families, irrespective of subgroup, read advertising brochures, probably due to the fact that they are so readily available. In addition, many families in the home-based group seem to make use of books (contrary to what one would expect based on the previously discussed findings): the percentage of book reading families in this group is almost as high as in the center-based and control group (73.9% versus 78.6% and 77.8%). An explanation for this finding is the observation that a lot of the book reading in the home-based families is done by elder brothers and sisters. As regards the writing of letters and postcards there is a difference between the home-based group on the one hand (62.5% of families write letters/postcards) and the combination, center-based and control group on the other (86.7%, 95.2% and 88.9%, respectively, write letters/postcards). As regards the making of homework there are, again, relatively high scores for the home-based group (79.2%). This seems to be caused by the presence of elder (that is, school-aged) brothers and sisters, and by the fact that part of the parents in the home-based group take (Dutch language) courses, for which they are assigned homework.

Table 2 shows, for the four subgroups, which literacy activities involving the child take place in the homes.

Table 2

Literacy activities in the homes involving the child, per subgroup; percentages refer to the proportion of families in which an activity occurs

	Home-based group (N = 24)	Combination group (N = 30)	Center-based group (N = 42)	Control group (N = 18)
Watching educational TV programs	63.6%	53.3%	58.5%	35.3%
Singing songs, rhyming	69.6%	72.4%	80.5%	88.9%
Writing letters, words	91.7%	89.7%	90.5%	94.4%
Shared reading activities	66.7%	80.0%	95.2%	94.4%
Story-telling activities	91.7%	60.0%	57.1%	61.1%
Joint library visits	45.8%	46.7%	64.3%	61.1%

Once more, there are differences between the home-based and combination group on the one hand and the center-based and control group on the other. In nearly all center-based and control families children are read to (95.2% and 94.4% respectively); in the home-based and combination group percentages are lower: 66.7% and 80.0% respectively. Story-telling seems to be an important activity in the home-based group – more than 90% of the families in this group engage in story-telling activities –, which seems to confirm Jap-a-Joe and Leseman's hypothesis (1993; see above) that, in immigrant families in the Netherlands, story-telling often takes the place of shared reading activities. There are also differences between the home-based/combination group and the center-based/control group with respect to joint library visits. In the former groups less parents or elder brothers/sisters visit the library together with the child than in the latter groups (45.8% and 46.7% versus 64.3% and 61.1%). In addition, more families in the center-based and the combination group engage in singing and rhyming activities than in the home-based and control group, although percentages are somewhat closer together (80.5% and 88.9% versus 69.6% and 72.4%).

Again, there are some exceptions: as regards watching educational TV programs there is a difference between the control families on the one hand (35.3% watch such programs with the child) and the home-based, combination and center-based families on the other hand (63.6%, 53.3% and 58.5% respectively). In all four groups most families engage in joint writing activities.

Conclusions

In this article, preliminary results of a research project on the contribution of early intervention activities to early school success of children from disadvantaged backgrounds were presented. A comparison is made between children who took part in a home-based program ("Opstap Opnieuw"), children who participated in a center-based activity (playgroups, day-care centers, CKO's), children who did both and children who did not participate in any intervention activity. The assumption is that the effectiveness of early intervention activities is influenced by aspects of the home situation of children taking part. The home literacy environment, in particular, seems to be of importance. For this reason, a substantial part of the

present research is dedicated to mapping the home literacy environment of the children in the four subgroups. The results showed that there are differences between the groups: firstly, these groups differed in the extent to which parents and elder brothers and sisters took part in literacy activities (such as reading books, newspapers, magazines); secondly, the groups differed in the extent to which parents and elder children engaged in joint literacy activities with the child (such as shared reading, singing songs, or library visits). When judging the effectiveness of the early intervention activities under study, these differences will have to be taken into account.

Notes

1. The same observation is made by Wood (2002) with regard to intervention studies in other countries.
2. As shown above these groups also differ in background characteristics such as ethnic origin and mother's educational level.

References

- BURGESS, S.R., HECHT, S.A., & LONIGAN, C.J. (2002). Relations of the home literacy environment (HLE) to the development of reading-related abilities: A one-year longitudinal study. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 37, 408-426.
- CLERKX, L., & VAN IJZENDOORN, M. (1992). Child care in a Dutch context: On the history, current status, and evaluation of nonmaternal child care in the Netherlands. In M. LAMB, K. STERNBERG, C.-D. HWANG & A. BROBERG (Eds.), *Child care in context. Cross-cultural perspectives* (pp. 55-80). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- EMMELOT, Y., & SCHAUFELI, A. (1987). *Kindercentra en tweede-taalverwerving. SCO-rapport 127*. Amsterdam: Stichting Kohnstammfonds voor Onderwijsresearch.
- JAP-A-JOE, S., & LESEMAN, P. (1993). Interventie in allochtone gezinnen: een confrontatie van normen, waarden en gewoonten. In P. VEDDER & B. BEKKERS (Eds.), *Opstap: Onderzoek & praktijk* (pp. 99-118). Amsterdam: Averroësstichting.
- JONG, P.F. DE, KLAPWIJK, M.J.G., & VAN DER LEIJ, A. (1995). Cognitieve en sociaal-emotionele vaardigheden van kleuters in relatie tot hun etnische herkomst. *Pedagogische studiën*, 72, 172-185.
- JORDAN, G., SNOW, C., & PORCHE, M. (2000). Project EASE: The effect of a family literacy project on kindergarten students' early literacy skills. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 35, 524-546.
- LESEMAN, P.P.M. (1992). Doel en strategie van voorschoolse stimuleringsprogramma's. In J. RISPENS & B.F. VAN DER MEULEN (Eds.), *Gezinsgerichte stimulering van kinderen in achterstandssituaties* (pp. 37-60). Amsterdam/Lisse: Swets & Zeitlinger.
- LESEMAN, P.P.M., & DE JONG, P.F. (1998). Home literacy: Opportunity, instruction, cooperation, and social-emotional quality predicting early reading achievement. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 33, 294-318.
- LESEMAN, P.P.M., & VAN TUIJL, C. (2001). Home support for bilingual development of Turkish 4-6-year-old immigrant children in the Netherlands: Efficacy of a home-based educational programme. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 22, 309-324.
- LOMBARD, A. (1981). *Success begins at home. Educational foundations for preschoolers*. Lexington, Massachusetts: D.C. Heath & Co.
- PURCELL-GATES, V. (1996). Stories, coupons, and the TV Guide: Relationships between home literacy experiences and emergent literacy knowledge. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 31, 406-428.

- SCHONEWILLE, B., KLOPROGGE, J., & VAN DER LEIJ, A. (2000). *Kaleidoscoop en Piramide: Samenvattend evaluatierapport*. Utrecht: Sardes.
- SINGER, E. (1989). *Kinderopvang en de moeder-kindrelatie: Pedagogen, psychologen en sociale hervormers over moeders en jonge kinderen*. Deventer: Van Loghum Slaterus.
- SINGER, E. (1993). *Kinderopvang: Goed of slecht? Een literatuurstudie naar de effecten van kinderopvang*. Utrecht: SWP.
- STAINTHORP, R., & HUGHES, D. (2000). Family literacy activities in the homes of successful young readers. *Journal of Research in Reading*, 23, 41-54.
- TEALE, W.H. (1986). Home background and young children's literacy development. In W.H. TEALE & E. SULZBY (Eds.), *Emergent literacy: Writing and reading* (pp. 173-206). Norwood: Ablex.
- TESSER, P.T.M., & IEDEMA, J. (2001). *Rapportage minderheden 2001. Deel 1. Vorderingen op school*. Den Haag: SCP.
- TUIJL, C. VAN (2001). *Effecten van Opstap Opnieuw. Effecten van een gezinsgericht stimuleringsprogramma bij Turkse en Marokkaanse gezinnen*. Alkmaar: Extern Print.
- TUIJL, C. VAN, LESEMAN, P.P.M., & RISPENS, J. (2001). Efficacy of an intensive home-based educational intervention programme for 4- to 6-year-old ethnic minority children in the Netherlands. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 25, 148-159.
- VALLEN, A.L.M., & KURVERS, J.J. (2003). "All's well that starts well?" Pre-school and elementary school promotion programmes as a contribution to the integration of immigrant children and their families. Experience from the Netherlands. Integration of families of foreign origin. *Documentation on the Trade Conference*. Berlin: Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth.
- WEINBERGER, J. (1996). A longitudinal study of children's early literacy experiences at home and later literacy development at home and school. *Journal of Research in Reading*, 19, 14-24.
- WILLIAMS, A., & GREGORY, E. (2001). Siblings bridging literacies in multilingual contexts. *Journal of Research in Reading*, 24, 248-265.
- WOOD, C. (2002). Parent-child pre-school activities can affect the development of literacy skills. *Journal of Research in Reading*, 25, 241-258.

Author note

Roel van Steensel, Ph.D.
Babylon Research Center
Tilburg University
Postbus 90153
5000 LE Tilburg
The Netherlands
R.C.M.Steensel@uvt.nl