

COMPREHENSION AND DECODING: USING 'INDEPENDENT ENQUIRER' STRAND IN CHILDREN WITH READING DIFFICULTIES- DYSLEXIA

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Abstract: Dyslexia is a language learning disorder that results in deficits in reading, spelling.... (Balise, Black, Nussbaum, Oakland Stanford, 1998). Children with dyslexia encounter difficulty in reading through conventional methods. The primary question in the scientific community is "What causes dyslexia?" However, medical science has discovered that dyslexia is not a disease with a cure. Keeping those conditions, it highly demands that only teachers can assist students with dyslexia at its early stage. Researchers have been carried out that there is no consensus on the definition of dyslexia and its underlying cause (Smythe and Everatt, 2002).

Keywords: Readability levels, Independent thinking, PLTS Methodology, Dyslexia

Introduction:

Participants: The primary method is to understand the process and linguistic abnormalities of dyslexic school students. This study composed of selected dyslexic students of Cambridge International School.

Procedure: In order to understand the learning behavior within the organizational systems, the researcher has chosen Phonological Deficit Hypothesis (PDH), Turner and Pughe's Activity theory as a theoretical framework for the data collection and analysis and Independent Enquirer(PLTS) as a research strand. The researcher has divided the task in two different parts as Pre Task and Core Task.

Research Design: Qualitative research design based on purposive sampling through semi-structured interviews, conversational interviews and participant generated photographs.

Data Collection Method: The researcher has three main forms of data collection in the qualitative paradigm: direct observation, in-depth, open-ended interviews and written documents (Patton, 2002, p4). An adapted strategy teaching approach was used in the following way:

- 3 sessions in which the strategy was demonstrated and explained explicitly
- 3 sessions in which the student was guided to apply the strategies.
- 2 sessions in which the student, practiced the strategy independently.

Research Setting: Research has been distributed among 15 minutes of 8 classes within in the school premises. Direct and explicit instruction is used to successfully teach these strategies. This approach is particularly effective in helping students to develop appropriate phonological strategies, which increase their understanding of what they read. (Casteel, Isom, Jordan, 2000) (Fountas & Pinnell, 2001)

Scope of the Study: Dyslexia is neither an illness nor a disease. It is about learning disabilities. Learning

disabilities, also named as specific learning difficulties, is a generic term that "refers to a heterogeneous group of disorders manifested by significant difficulties in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning, or mathematical abilities" (National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities, 1987). Ten years ago in schools, teachers hardly dealt with students' reading disabilities or any training were given to overcome student's reading disability. Researches proposes that only 10 percent of children in particular to India suffer from learning disabilities, but the number is growing because of parents' expectations and faster lifestyles.

This research draws a natural approach possibly providing teachers on how to perceive dyslexics and intervene them easily.

Significance of the Study: The main purpose of this research is to investigate how students with dyslexia can get better provision from teachers by making students more of an independent enquirer. Secondly, to examine the positive or negative result of activity tasks and phonological diagnostic tests to be conducted by the teachers among students with dyslexia. For example, tests such as Vocabulary, Repeated Words, Describe the scene have been used in a way to understand the sound production, occurrence and spelling barriers of dyslexics. In conclusion, the researcher's contribution is to provide help to teachers through Phonological coding and help them to understand the cognitive, mental and visual processes of dyslexics.

Rationale of the Study: The purpose of this study is to identify the techniques and learning improvement of dyslexics with parameters such as

- to recognize the differences based upon how much time required to teach with respect to the demographic information such as gender, age and severity of the condition

- to understand prevailing selected students with dyslexia in Cambridge International School, Dubai and provide necessary Literacy Spelling, Grammar, Punctuation practice with respect to each students' condition
- Further, to develop strategies in a way to increase an awareness of dyslexia and utilize parameters through auditory and visual perception difficulties
- To investigate and improve students with dyslexia differ from other control group in terms of their performance on phonological tasks and reading comprehension
- To find the gaps in phonological skills through experimental studies and get to the root of it with first course of action.

Methodology: Pre-Task: Session 1: Discuss with the student some of the difficulties she has with reading. Tell her that she is going to learn about a strategy that will help her with reading. It is a strategy that she is going to learn to use it and will help her to understand the pattern of her reading difficult.

Introduce a Reading with Strategies poster to student. Ask student to describe / discuss the poster¹. Explain that you are going to make some statements about the poster and that she has to listen carefully and decide if the statement sounds right.

Check the students understanding on each statement. When the student identifies and nullifies the statements' meaning, ask the student to explain why it didn't make sense and to suggest how to change the statement with appropriate meaning.

Guide the students in terms of:

- Look at the pictures and predict about the story
- Listen to yourself as you read
- Ask yourself does it make sense? does it sound right?
- When it doesn't make sense or sound right

STOP

Reread.

- Explicit modeling of the strategy using a shared text Guided reading
- Cued practice
- Text: Popcorn Fun

Core Task:

Before reading

- Introduce book, discuss with student and invite predictions about the text
- Remind student about rereading.
- Ask her to say what she is going to do

During reading

- If the student hesitates, ask why
- Constantly ask the student what they are doing and why using the guidelines
- If meaning is lost, ask does that make sense? Does that sound right?

- Remind to reread, model where to go back to (where meaning was lost)

After reading

- How did you feel about your reading
- What did you do while you were reading
- Why did you reread that part?
- What did you learn?

Running Record: Record Word - Accuracy, Errors, Rereading, Errors Corrected.

Session 2:

Pre- Task:

- Developing self-management at sentence level Materials

Cards for sentence manipulation – copy attached

Core Task:

Shared Reading

- Guidelines on Rereading strategies poster (Phonics).
- Students says what she will do and say to herself before and during reading and why.
- Student sequences cards to make sentences related to posters. Cue student to frequently reread to help clarify / gain meaning
- Model strategy explicitly on a shared text. Stop after each sentence. Model self-talk-Did that make sense? Did it sound right? Model self-talk to reread to regain meaning

Guided reading

- Cued practice procedure as for session 1

Analysis: The preliminary aim of this literature review is to systematically put all studies that have examined teacher knowledge of “basic language concepts” which includes the elements of English language such as phonology giving a better understanding on how words should be spoken and broken.

- i) Snowling, an influential proponent of Phonological Deficit Hypothesis (2000), asserts that phonological skills in dyslexics are selectively impaired while other aspects of their language are intact. During the late twentieth century, PDH has been the dominant descriptive framework for Dyslexia. Taking this hypothesis, the researcher has postulated this theory in the research by consciously recognizing the phonemic and poor phonological skills. Keeping PDH as a key framework, the researcher has drawn sessions for dyslexics in a way to scan their phonological abilities and intervene if necessary.
- ii) Siegal and Vanderwelden (1997) contributed on the use of phonological techniques in helping children how to read. This has been designed in the research to facilitate the usage of letter-phoneme relationships of dyslexics in early reading and spelling.
- iii) When it comes to Activity theory, Turner and Pughe's classroom mechanisms are the key

principle to understand and modify the teaching strategies of dyslexics. Turner claims, that good dyslexic teaching practice is a good teaching practice (Turner 2001). In other words, Turner claimed that dyslexics highly learn only in mainstream classroom. Dyslexics should have access and can only improve their reading abilities in classroom. Understanding this theory, the

researcher has applied Turner and Pughe's technique throughout the sessions. However, this research is a microcosmic picture of a macro world of dyslexics. It mostly dealt with learning disabilities of students to a minimal extent. Further, with more time frame the researcher's task is to provide teachers with knowledge and skills related to technology in order to support learning for a diverse range of students.

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