Action research report

Abstract (200 – 300 words)

This is a brief overview of the project report. It should include the

- hypothesis,
- brief outline of the method you used
- summary of the findings
- their implications.

Students are often identified with a visual perception problem, needing Vision Therapy.

They may be word guessers who don't bring their other strengths to the text.

The subject of this study has a rich experiential background and excellent oral language and verbal memory. His general self-esteem is very high. On the other hand he has an impoverished letter cluster knowledge and low reading self-efficacy. He has no self –management strategies for reading, rarely checking on himself.

HYPOTHESIS:

Improvement in self-management strategies, particularly re-reading strategies, will help students with visual perception problems bring their strengths to the text . In turn, this will assist with visual checking on text, helping students to attend to the letter clusters and words they know.

METHOD

Tactile use of a Velcro "helping hand", teaching self-talk for strategy development. Followed by guided reading and practising the strategy use.

The final activity is students reading onto tape to self-identify their use of the strategies .

This activity attempts to hand the ownership of the task over to the students, encouraging adoption of the self-management strategies into their daily repertoire of independent strategies.

FINDINGS

The hypothesis worked, partially.

Student A showed significant adoption of the strategies and an interest in improving his reading behavior. Further investigation into his extrinsic behavioral motivation is needed.

His strong give-up attitude surfaces if outward gratification is not available.. He doesn't believe he can reach a high level with reading and generally displays an attitude of not wanting to improve his reading for his own sake.

IMPLICATIONS:

Global assessments is needed.

More time for ensuring that the strategies are part of their self-management system could be instigated through extension of the process into daily classroom small group lessons.

Structured letter cluster pre-testing, with a developmental program, implemented through a parallel learning centre process, would compliment the "looking closer" strategies.

Reading self-efficacy is central to future implications but psychological assessment would need to be subtle. (Student sensing that he has problems).

School inclusiveness of an Individual learning Improvement Plan approach could be seen as an alternative to Vision therapy. It would need strong commitment from all in his network .

If Student A 's parents wish to persue Vision therapy, it should be integrated into a whole approach, a concept supported by the literature study.

Introduction This section indicates

- The underlying Problem you are Examining.
- Current relevant literature that supports your study.
- Links between the literature and the problem you are examining.
- The hypothesis you are investigating.

THE PROBLEM

Many students with visual perception problems don't bring their strengths to the reading task.

They often have very rich oral language but do not take advantage of this during their decoding attempts.

They see reading as "working out words" and as focusing is hard for them, they give up easily and become "word guessers".

Clay, M (1991) says on visual perception strategies,

"Tasks like the presentation of (single) letters or words, matching pairs of letters or words, naming sequentially presented letters or words identifying or matching non-alphabetical symbols or recognition of letter sequences which are not lexical items in language are skills but they are not reading.

A theory of text reading cannot be studied in experiments with single letters or words.

Learning how to direct attention and what information to search for in order to make a decision is learning that is best done on information – rich texts.

Learning how to hold on to the message being processed while searching for information at another level (in words or letters) can be done effectively by young children on stories."

Student A is waiting to start a vision therapy program that involves 45 minutes per day on a computer program for 6 weeks- several months.

"The therapy program follows a similar development sequence to PMP that is run in many schools. It follows a hierarchy of teaching body knowledge and awareness through movement and motor activities. It expands as it progresses and is highly geared to simulate visual thinking"

(Optometrists, handout to parents ... December 2001)

The Optometrists stated that Student A's program will involve chunking of pictures, letters and words progressively as each is mastered. It is hard to justify the amount of time and the type of activity for such students who have so much language to bring to their learning process.

There is also the question of whether the vision therapy strategy will transfer to closer checking on text?

(Vision Therapy, What is Vision Therapy, www.smbs.buffalo.edu/oph/ped/vt.htm)

On-going, natural written language teaching has been interrupted for Student A. This is the intervention he requires involving focused teaching for self-management strategies.

His classroom teacher, (who is just one year into the guided reading literacy strategy), with sincerity admits that because of hard social issues in her class, including Student A,

she has not been able to give him daily instruction on text this year.

A school inclusive strategy could be attempted to solve the problem with this research project as the starting point, followed by daily classroom teaching strategies.

Student A's teacher supports the idea and is keen to try a strategy at school level with Student A and a group of similar students.

The idea is supported in theory by Clay's statement. (above) and again when speaking of the 25% of children who pay too little attention to print features as they read.....

"He requires procedures and information that will allow to detect and correct errors.

He requires several ways of solving a problem so that when the visual perception aspects of learning cause error, another approach to problem solving is possible (for example language prediction)"

Clay, M (1991)

A policy statement formulated by college of Optometrists in Vision Development, the American Academy of Optometry and the American Optometry Association refers to 29 articles related to vision problems in relationship to learning to read.

Their summary specifies that vision problems do interfere with learning, that optometric intervention can alleviate signs and symptoms, that prompt redemption will enhance performance towards true potential and finally... "People with learning problems require help from many disciplines to meet that challenges they face. Optometric involvement constitutes one aspect of the multi-disciplinary management approach required to prepare the individual for life-long learning"

(www.children's vision.com/dyslexia.htm)

This is in line with Clay's theory in that it suggests several ways are needed to solve the problem but specifies the need for the vision therapy as part of the multi-disciplinary process where Clay would see carefully handled text strategies as the solution.

The concern is that there are often more underlying issues compounding the problem and over emphasis on the visual perception aspect may mask a bigger problem. Also, out of school referrals and programs generally have a long time frame. This is time that could be better used

in assisting teachers to understand a holistic approach like the MLOTP model (Munro, J) and get a process started to aid the development of visual perception in the more naturalistic way that Clay describes .ie. while reading stories e.g. Guided reading strategies.

There is some contrast to the multi-disciplinary theory in the vision therapy program that comes from www.growthroughplay.

It is the basis of the vision therapy program identified for my subject, Student A, by his behavioral optometrist. It puts Student A in the "word gusser" category and says, : treating the reading problems of these children is often difficult as well defined global patterns need to be changed and supplemented with an emphasis on attention to detail."

(www.growthrough play.com)

It does not focus on a holistic approach for the student during the therapy time. The optometrist suggested that some of the 45 mins per day lessons be done at school.

the issue of the value of the program needs further investigation if it is going to substitute for text reading time where self-management strategies can be taught.

Summary of Discussion:

Student A has low self-efficacy with regard to reading work. He has high oral language and rich experiential background.

He does need to attend to visual detail but Clay's idea of doing it effectively on stories seems more logical when talking about helping an intelligent child to learn to read. The issue of vision therapy program needs to be viewed in light of the holistic model by all those in the relevant student's network. There is a danger that vision vherapy will become the driving force of the remediation and valuable time that should be spent on text reading improvement strategies will be wasted.

Prediction:

Focussing on teaching self-management strategies to year 2 child with visual perception problems, i.e. how to use his strengths to help himself to read will develop self-monitoring and improvement of reading decoding through closer checking.

Further Presumption:

Follow this project by Individual Learning Improvement Plans (including social plans) that contain goals of self-management strategies and letter cluster knowledge, to allow visual perception to be aided and improved continually The purpose is to provide a powerful, school inckusive way to solve the problem rather than the off-site non-inclusive program of vision therapy.

Method This section should provide enough information to allow the reader to re-do or replicate your study. You should provide information about

- the participant/s
 - who was involved in the project,
 - how they were selected /identified.
 - relevant characteristic s (their age, entry abilities in reading, etc).
- the materials you used, the formal / informal assessment measures you used for data collection
- the procedure you followed, for example,
 - what you did- the nature of the activities / intervention.
 - where the project occurred,
 - how often sessions were conducted
- how you use the data you collected.

Design:

The design is a case study OXO design in which the gain in self management strategies is monitored for a child who has visual perception problems and low reading self-efficacy with a strong goal that self-management becomes part of his daily practice.

Participants: The participants are a group of two year students with similar problems to student A who has a visual perception problem and is not bringing his other strengths to the reading process.

For the purpose of this study the details of Student A only are necessary. The group aspect is to provide a naturalistic setting for Student A who has already had a lot of individual intervention, which hasn't transferred successfully into his self-management system.

Student A: Student A is 8 years of age and is in year 2. In reference to the Multi Level of text Processing Model he has a specific problem in the visual input area of the sensory input to the knowledge base. This is creating problems at the word level, sentence level and self-management levels.

Student A's past achievements thoughout his Prep Year and Grade One-Year, including Reading Recovery, provided the feedback he needed. He responded very well to the one-to one-aspect of Reading Recovery and moved from level 6 to 20 in his 18 week program . His level of achievement was acceptable for a beginning student in his early stages of literacy. However he has not maintained the strategies in his self-management system and has developed a give-up attitude if he needs to look closer or think more about what it could be.

He scored 38/42 on the Clay Record of Oral Language at the end of year one. His pre test Yr. 2 was level 16 instructional level and for this project he scored 80% accuracy on level band 18 (Table 1).

His teacher explained that the Year 2 class has a lot of social problems and there has been a slow start academically.

Materials:

Assessment... text running records unseen at pre-test and on a daily basis to analyze self-management strategies as shown in table 1.

Daily recording of recitation of strategies being fostered and self-talk

Teaching Stimulus... Velcro cut-outs for Helping Hand strategies, high interest junior fiction text, (level 18) accompanying word games. Reading with strategies Kit

Teaching Procedure:

Focus of sessions is building up a "helping hand" of strategies that they can refer to when in difficulty. i.e. use fingers for cue

Does it sound right? ... Re-read......Look closer......What else could it be?.....Self correct

A second Helping Hand can be used during the LOOK CLOSER stage i.e. what can you do when you look closer...

Point to the words... Look at the first letter or blend..Get your mouth ready for the sound..Look for chunks.

In each of these aspects self-talk is instilled in them and the understanding that the time spent on getting it right will make the next bit of text easier. The Multi Levels of Text Processing model is used top frame questioning and prompting, particularly referring to the sentence, topic, dispositional, self-management and oral language aspects of the model.

After 10-15 minute discussion and practice of the strategies, a 15-min Guided reading session provides time to practice the strategy use. Eight 30-min. sessions were conducted on consecutive school days.

Running record data determines daily priority. i.e. give examples of good reading behavior and prompt for strategy use.....

"When you were reading here you saidyou noticed that it didn't sound right so you re-read from the start of the sentence, had a closer look at this word and

self-corrected ... etc..etc"

"You did some good reading work here...can you remember what you did?" The eight teaching session were:

Session 1..... Helping yourself to learn.. learning to read..focus..Re-reading helping hand.

Session 2..... Looking Closer as you read..Looking closer helping hand..begin .. Guided reading Chapter 1.

Sessions 3,4,5 ..

Using the two helping hands for the self-management strategy of re-reading at the sentence level. Guided reading (Chapters 3,4,5 &6) followed by the word game.

Sessions 6,7,8.

Scaffolding of learning to self-management for the child by tape-recording their reading in order to compile a group effort chart of how they are using the "Helping Hand" Strategies.

Results

This section should contain an analysis of the data you obtained. Table 1....Observation of improvement in self-monitoring strategies on unseen text for student A

The student's performance is described in five sections

Each section is calculated a percentage in relation to the number of the words in the text i.e. 110 to 160 words.

Columns 1 shows general accuracy

Column 2 show ignoring of errors (a behavior that was dominant at the start of the project).

Columns 3,4 & 5 show behaviors that are a result of self-checking.

The use of percentages has no real relevance except to provide a common measure to show growth pattern and trends

8.0 mm pen	terri ana irenas				
	2.	3.	4.	5.	
1	Read – ons	Stops,	Re-/reads /	Re-reads /	
	After errors	hesitates or	makes better	Self corrects	
Reading	Ie. I gnores	appeals or	attempt	And self- correction rate	
Accurac	errors	Re-reads			
y					
Pre-test.	15.9 %	1.7 %		1.7 % 1: 11	
80%					
Sess	6.5 %			2.8 % 1: 3	
2 94					
%					
Sess	10.2 %	0.85 %		2.5 % 1: 5	
3 89					
%					
Sess	8.7 %	1.21 %		5 % 1: 3	
490 %					
Sess	8.6 %	3.1 %	0.74 %	6.2% 1:3	
587 %					
Sess	4 .8 %	1.6 %	1.61	5.61% 1:2	
690 %			%		
Sess 7	3.2 %	0.8 %	3.2 %	3.21 % 1 : 3	
92 %					
Sess 8	9.3 %		1.8	4.67 % 1: 3	
89 %			%		
Post-test	9.3%	2.3%	0.7 %	4.69 % 1: 4	
89 %					

Following strong input of self-management strategy teaching via the "helping hand" process,

Student A's reading accuracy at level 18 improved immediately and then stabilized at just instructional level . (Column 1) The gain in accuracy was not great but was a more acceptable description of instructional level than the pre-test of $80\,\%$ accuracy

Column 2 shows a marked decrease in ignoring of errors at first and then averaging out to a 6% improvement, except for two sessions.... 6&7 where there a 12% improvement . A 6% improvement was scored between pre and post testing.

Column 3 was of little significance, except to say that there is little change in stopping to decide what to do or re-read to simply confirm.

Column 4 shows improvement trends in better attempts through re-reading that were not existent until session 5.

Column 5 shows improved re-reading percentages and self-correction rates

Self correction rates improved on average by 1:7

Further investigation of the running records show that meaning and structure is often being ignored and Student A relies on the distinctive visual features of words, indicating the need for letter cluster work for visual accuracy and "read and think" for meaningful prediction.

Student A is very aware of running record assessment and realized this could be shown to his teacher. Therefore these results support the idea that he is keen to do well for self-esteem purposes.

Behavioral Assessment:

The other assessment which was not planned at the start of the project, was the Data Collection Coding sheet (Deppeler, J M). The following is a summary of the types of behaviors that were noted at

30/60 second intervals during four, 4 minute observations during the classroom reading hour.

Positive scores On-task = 2 / 20

Initiating appropriate social interaction = 2/20

Negative scores

Off-task / self absorbed = 6 / 20

Off-task / disruptive = 2 / 20

Off -task / passive = 1/20

Off -task / attention seeking = 5/20

Responding to social interaction inappropriately = 1/20

Not part of group initiating social interaction = 1/20

The 4 positive scores were scored during the small group teaching time and the 16 negative scores we scored during the whole class group times at the beginning and end of the reading hour.

The indications are that Student A does not cope well in the large group because there is less chance of getting the attention he needs.

Discussion

In this section

- interpret the data you have collected in relation to your hypothesis. This may include possible reasons for why unexpected results were obtained.
- discuss implications for teaching practice.
- directions for future research.

The focus of the study was at the sentence and self-management levels of the MLOTP model.

The lessons went as planned with respect to a group of children with high verbal / oral language skills being able to engage well and remember self- management talk and strategies.

By day three the students were reciting the "helping hand" and telling me why and how they could use it in reading.

The concept of "if you talk the talk they will take it on" worked well with this verbally motivated group.

When applying the knowledge to text at the sentence level Student A showed marked improvement as described in the analysis above.

His impoverished letter cluster knowledge and poor self-efficacy as a reader showed up significantly.

During discussions about the "Looking Closer" helping hand and about being a "word inspector rather than a word guesser" he said he didn't like looking for chunks he knew and would rather just guess the words.

To counteract this we used highlighters the next day to locate known onsets and rimes and he agreed that that was a fun way to find chunks. More importantly it lead to self-management talk.....

"If we work out words by thinking about what would make sense we are having a guess.

But we are not just guessing we are "predicting" which is a very good reading strategy.

If we are good at predicting then we don't need to say the chunks but we do need to check that we are right by making sure the right letter clusters are there."

At this point it was necessary to discuss his reading efficacy with his teacher and she said that she felt he came in each day with a purpose to be the center of attention in a behavioral way because literacy is the one area of his life where he could not achieve to the level of his self-esteem.

Student A is the youngest and only boy with two high achieving sisters. He is intelligent and has a very rich background of experiences.

The following day I observed this behavior using the Data Collecting Coding sheet (Deppeler, J.M. 1997). The results are described above and included in the appendix. They supported Student A's Teacher's beliefs.

Student A has developed social strategies that are subtle to others but very significant to him to ensure that he is noticed during literacy time.

This sort of behavior was evident at times during my teaching sessions For example, during the word game where the focus was to learn the chunks for the key words.

Eg..tele/sc/ope

He made the comment, "I know the word so I don't need to learn the chunks." I explained that by playing the game with the chunks you would have them in your memory for when you see them in another word, like 'telephone' or 'microscope'. The rest of the group accepted this concept more readily than Student A.

Having said this I would like to indicate some areas of the lessons where Student A made considerable progress with bringing his knowledge to the literacy process.

During running record taking he was keen to show that he could use strategies. During tape- recording sessions he was quick to notice use of the strategies and compliment his partner appropriately.

During his own re-reading onto tape i.e. second reading of a passage he was fluent and pleased with himself. He was excited with the group when we tallied the results of the strategies used from the taped sessions on the whiteboard.

Relating this back to the hypothesis I think that the improvement student A made indicated that he can improve his visual perception on text but there is an emerging attitude against word analysis which is related to Student A's learned helplessness in this respect. He is a child with high self-esteem and he can't achieve in the same way as his peers during the literacy block.

His teacher is very fair and provides the opportunities that he needs for peer approval, but says that his behaviors are mostly more inappropriate during the literacy block. She is committed to using this project as a start to get the daily strategy development going for this group of children.

Directions for new research and teaching implications:

Continued observation of Student A on the Data Collection Coding sheet (

	Deppeler, J.M.
	1997) throughout the time that his class teacher continues to focus on self-management strategies through guided reading would be useful. Parallel to this process, letter cluster teaching through learning center games. A pre-test on the Orthographic Word Reading test,(Munro J,) would provide a means of measuring improvement. The MLOTP (Munro, J) model should be used (global assessment procedures, necessary) as a basis for an Individual Learning Improvement Plan for Student A. All in his network should understand this and support it.
References /	
Bibliography	BIBLOGRAPHY
Dibliography	DIDLOGRAFITI
Style Guide	Clay, M (1991) Visual perception strategies: One kind of inner control (pp258-287)
Format	in
recommended.	
recommended.	Becoming Literate the construction of inner control Reed Publishing NZ.
	Clay, M (1979) Reading The Patterning of Complex Behavior Heinemann
	Educational Books NZ
	www.growthroughplay.com/.htm (3/5/02)
	www.children'svision.com/dyslexia (30/4/02)
	Deppeler, J (1998) Professional Development Workshops, Supporting People with Disabilities.
	www.smbs.buffalo.ed./oph/ped.vt.htm (15/5/02)
	Teaching resources:
	Celebration Press, Reading with Strategies KitStage 2
	Blake Education, Sparklers Junior Fiction titles.

Appendix A

Describe your teaching unit in an appendix.

For the unit,

Describe the	The teaching unit will change the primary teaching area of self-management through
type of	re-reading at the sentence level. Secondary areas of closer checking either through
outcome;	word, structure or meaning levels will effect reading accuracy and self-correction
• What	rates. Increased accuracy will improve comprehension and reading self-efficacy will
reading	increase due to improved self-management strategies.
behavior	Cells of the MLOTP model:
will it	Sentence level de-codingself-management strategies of re-reading and self talk.
change, the	Self-management and control strategiesmonitor, initiate, self-correct, self-question.
things	Use of existing knowledge
students	Sensory input to the knowledge basestimulate the visual input area by using strong
will be able	verbal auditory ability.
to do /	
know	
having	
gone	
through it	
(primary	
reading	
areas,	
secondary	

	reading	
	areas) ?	
•	Into which	
	cell/s in the	
	model does	
	it fit?	
des	cribe the	Lesson 1
	activity	Focus:
•	what	Self-management strategies to promote re-reading at sentence level.
	teacher will	Method: Introduction to HELPING HAND
	do in steps,	intended introduction to Tibble 110 Till 170
	the	1. STORY "HELPING" (pmGiggling Gerties)
	instructiona	Who did the little girl help in the story? mother, sister, aunt etc
		How did she help them?
	l language	*
	used to	What did she do to help herself at the end of the story?
	teach it, the	What do you do to help yourself? How do you learn new things?
	materials to	(teaching from someone, practice by me.)
	be used	We call the things we do to help us learn "Strategies"
•	what	(Build up chart of things they have helped themselves to learn)
	children	How do you help yourself to learn to read? (oral responses)
	will do	Why do we read
•	what does it	
	assume	to get meaning and know what the story is about ?
	students	
	already	you need to listen to what you are reading
	know / can	
	do ?	"so you don't keep going like it doesn't matter if it
•	how will	**
	key	doesn't sound right."
	behaviors	doesn't bound right
	taught be	How do you help yourself to learn to read? (oral responses)
	stored in	from do you help yourself to learn to lead: (oral responses)
	memory /	
	transferred	
	?	2 W
	•	2. We are going to put some clues on each finger of the "helping hand " to help you
		to remember what to do to help yourself to be a good reader.
		They will be Reading Strategies to use to help you help yourself to read
		• When you are reading you must listen to yourself and stop if it doesn't sound
		right put on first finger of HELPING hand.
		DOES IT SOUND RIGHT?
		• If it doesn't sound right you must go back to the start of the sentencePut on
		second fingerRE-READ
		As you re-read you must look closer at each word.
		y y
		Put on third fingerLOOK CLOSER
		Tut on third hingorDoor of officer
		As you are leaking alocar you must think shout fixing it
		As you are looking closer you must think about fixing it
		So you say WHAT ELSE COULD IT BE?
		Put on fourth finger.
		 Now you can have another go at the sentence and if you've had
		A good look and a good think you might SELF-CORRECT

.....Put on fifth finger.

If you self- correct when you are reading that's the best thing.

You can do to help yourself.

Now I've done some teaching so you can do some practicing...

Get your "Helping Hand ready" (practice reciting prompts as each finger is held up)

After turn-taking etc. take Velcro fingers off main Helping Hand and distribute have children come up in correct sequence and place the finger on the hand as they recite the prompt.

3. Time to begin to use helping hand strategies.

Reading with Strategies kit.... Pictures with a sentence children take turns at reading a sentence and praise is given for the use of the Helping Hand Strategies.

Pathway...tomorrow we are going to learn another Helping Hand that tells us what to try as we are..... Looking Closer

For six lessons after that we will be reading a little Chapter book and practicing all our "Helping Hand Strategies" so that you will always remember how to help yourself to be a good reader.

Conclusion: Each child will recite the strategies using their own hand before they leave the room. Student A will recite first.

LESSON TWO

Focus: Self management strategies

Method: Recite General Helping Hand for re-reading,

Introduce "Looking Closer" Helping Hand to use for closer visual checking strategies when needed...

For examples..use Reading with Strategies kit as oral cloze (see photo's in appendix)

Point to the words....look at the first letter of blendget your mouth ready for that sound....look for chunks....you're a star.

(This helping hand it is really for further teaching to help achieve working out word strategies if found to be necessary)

Give children the components they need to build their own Velcro helping hands. (photo)

Say "As we read we are listening and sometimes we need to stop and say ... Does

that sound right?...Find it and put it on your hand.

If the answer is "no" we need to re-read....find that finger and put it on your helping hand.

Continue to do this process for all strategies on the helping hands.

3. Guided Reading teaching strategy for Sparklers title

"Spaced out" Level 15-18 band Reading Recovery level.

Chapters 1 and 2.

Follow teacher resource book for questioning and during the

Child's working individually on the text assist by prompting

Them to use the helping hand strategies.

A running record of approximately 100 words will be taken on student A before he is prompted to use strategies.

LESSONS 3, 4, & 5 will follow the same procedure as lesson two but the guided reading will be for chapters 3,4, 5 and 6. (WORD INSPECTOR GAME..key words...matching, CHUNKING GAME WITH KEY WORDS)

LESSONS 6, 7 & 8

Focus: to assist the children to self-monitor the use of the helping hand strategies i.e. give them the responsibility to put what they have been learning into action.

Method: Practice time to re-read the guided reading book from lessons 2-5 and time to tape-record their reading so that a group chart of their strategy use can be plotted. It will be a group effort.

ASSESSMENT: RUNNING RECORDS

At the end of each session the assessment chart will be filled in for student A. During sessions 2-5 a running record will be taken on Sparklers title "Spaced Out " so the readers will have prior knowledge to bring to the text.

During sessions 6, 7 & 8 an unseen running record will be taken on the next Red level Sparklers bookYou Can't Catch Me, (for Student A and the other students to a lesser degree). The reason for the change to a completely unseen text is to scaffold the use of the strategies to independent reading i.e... to assess and note changes.

spe	ecity the
	format
•	the grad

- the grade level
- format small
 group,
 individual,
 large group

Four year two students. Focus teaching time during the reading hour. Work area used for groups just outside their classroom.

Naturalistic approach...group activity because three of the children have had withdrawal for Reading Recovery.

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