

Explicit teaching during individual or group sessions of self-management and control strategies improves prose reading accuracy and self-efficacy in year 1 and 2 student with reading difficulties.

ABSTRACT

The quandary of educators since the beginning of time has been how to counteract the negativity of the poor learner. No matter what the reasons, we are always searching for strong, effective methods and materials to provide the optimum in learning opportunity.

Most educators know what needs to be learnt or unlearnt by a student. A great deal of research has been done, many avenues and approaches tried. However, it is in the early years of education that intervention and assistance is vital.

This project deals with students at the Year 1 and 2 levels, who, are taken through a range of processes in a small group environment to enhance literacy and self-efficacy.

A planned sequence of procedures was carried out, beginning with a background and literacy profile for each student, followed by a series of sessions over 6 weeks. Throughout all sessions, the participants were involved in this approach, using self-analysis and evaluation to provide a springboard for self determined learning.

All students developed additional strategies and have improved their prose reading. Although these improvements are not dramatic, they are stepping stones to further growth.

This leads me to stress that explicit, continued support is required for these and other students, who have not yet found the skills and pleasure of reading.

INTRODUCTION

Over many years of teaching, I have observed year after year, students who struggle to make sense of the whole reading process. While their peers, who are given the same instruction, at school, seem to understand what reading is all about and appear to move through the levels with apparent ease, they are left struggling somewhere in the first few levels, not enjoying the process, not progressing easily and often it seems having no real idea of what it is that their friends do in order to read.

“Successful readers view reading as an interactive, meaning making process” (Beggs and Golding, 1999). They expect, what they read, will make sense, they make predictions on the basis of their understandings of content, language and print, they check those predictions and make corrections when they are not happy with their predictions (Beggs and Golding, 1999). These are students who have confidence in their ability to succeed. They are probably aware that there is still more that they have to learn, but they have learnt or developed a “self-extending system” (Clay, 1993). These students know that they will eventually achieve the desired result. They already are readers and they will continue to become better readers. They have self-efficacy.

Children who are struggling with reading are often difficult to motivate, find it hard to concentrate, are not interested in looking at or sharing books and resist all opportunities to practice reading. They believe they are not good at reading, so really there is no point in actively engaging in any activities associated with it! “Students whose self-efficacy for reading is low often resist or apathetically go through the motions of learning to read” (McCabe and Margolis, 2001).

“Empowering the students to become more self-reliant readers” (Sowell, 2003) is the task that educators have in guiding their students through the reading process. Much of the research conducted in this area suggests that one of the key issues in working with readers, who are struggling, is to explicitly teach them strategies or self-scripts. These are the “plans of action readers use for dealing with unknown words and with confusion when meaning isn’t clear” (Phinney, 1988). The teacher’s role is to help their students to use effectively the strategies they already know, extend their knowledge of strategies that they could use and to integrate these strategies into an effective self-monitoring system (Ed Dept WA, 1997).

The names for the different strategies, each of the researchers use may differ and there also seems to be some disagreement about whether the strategies should be taught sequentially or as a student displays a need for assistance at a particular point of difficulty. However, all the researchers and writers do agree that to improve the self-efficacy and the prose reading accuracy of students with reading difficulties, you do need to explicitly teach them strategies to help them make sense before, during and after the reading process. “Teaching for strategies is a key part of literacy instruction in the primary grades and for older students struggling with reading” (Schwartz, 1997).

All students need a context before they read, pre-reading strategies allow the reader to “activate prior knowledge” and “hook into or activate networks of knowledge in the reader’s head” (Smith, 2000). During reading strategies, allow the students to construct a system of support scaffolds that allow them to problem solve, self-monitor, search and self-correct during the reading process (Schwartz, 1997). “Post-reading strategies can be employed to help synthesise and consolidate what has been encountered in the text” (Smith, 2000). These need to be implemented within a program which “provides students with a wealth of successful reading experiences” (McCabe and Margolis 2001) who go on to list 22 practical suggestions which teachers could use to assist students with low self-efficacy and indeed assist all students, to improve in their reading abilities.

This present study aims to extend the earlier research by examining the influence of explicit teaching of strategies on (1) prose reading ability and (2) self-efficacy.

PREDICTION

Explicit teaching during individual or group sessions of self-management and control strategies improves prose reading accuracy and self-efficacy in year 1 and 2 student with reading difficulties.

METHOD

Design

The study uses a case study OXO design in which the gain in self-efficacy and prose reading accuracy is monitored for year 1 and 2 students who are having reading difficulties.

Participants

All participants attend a school in the outer north-western suburbs of Melbourne. Unlike many suburbs to the west of Melbourne, there is only a minority of students from non-English speaking families or ESL backgrounds at the school. Generally, the students are from families with Anglo-Saxon backgrounds.

The participants are 5 Year one/two students (2 – year two and 3 – year one), who have a history of reading difficulties. All students are reading at levels below the benchmarks for their year level, with varying levels of comprehension and ability to retell the story in their own words.

At the completion of the most recent Observation Survey, for their current year level, all students recorded scores, which gave cause for concern, in most of the areas tested.

Table 1

Student	Date Completed	Burt	Letter Id (0 –54)	Concepts About Print (0 – 20)	Marie Clay Word Test (0 – 15)	Writing Vocab.	Dictation Task (0 – 37)
J	Oct 2003	10	53	15	9	11	13
B	Nov 2003	10	38	14	7	17	24
D	Feb 2004	17	45	14	9	13	15
M	Feb 2004	12	48	15	9	19	17
H	Feb 2004	19	49	14	10	30	32

The student's sex, age, year level and entry reading ability, is shown below.

Table2

Name	J	B	D	M	H
DOB	5/06/1996	26/09/1996	28/06/1997	27/10/1997	16/04/1998
Sex	M	M	M	F	F
Age as of 1-9-2004	8.3	8	7.3	6.11	6.5
Year of Schooling	2	2	1	1	1
Burt Score - Term 1\04	15	-	17	12	19
100 most used words - reading Term 3/04	34	69	78	73	86
Running Record Term 4\03 -Level	3	2	5	4	8
Running Record Term 4\03 - %	94%	90%	99%	90%	92%
Running Record Term 2\04 -Level	5	7	7	8	9
Running Record Term 2\04 - %	92%	90%	89%	89%	95%

Other relevant information regarding each student is listed below.

J – ESL background. Epileptic. Recent psychological assessment on the WISC III, placed him in the very low range for the full result. His verbal scale and his performance scale were both in the borderline range. A recent speech assessment indicated that he is significantly below average in both receptive oral language and expressive oral language.

B – A recent speech assessment indicated that he is in the moderately below average range for receptive oral language and the just below average range for expressive oral language.

D – Is currently working with speech pathologist to correct numerous articulation errors in his speech. A recent full language assessment has recommended that D see a psychologist for an assessment, as some of his scores were two standard deviations below the average range.

M – Nothing of significance to mention here.

H – At the completion of her Prep year, her teacher has noted that H was absent from school on 36.5 days. During this year, her teacher has also been concerned about H's regular absences (over 30 days up to September), but as well her regular late arrival at school when she does attend, means she often misses significant parts of the literacy block.

Materials

How Do I Learn Survey.

Self-Efficacy Survey.

(Both of these surveys were difficult for young students with reading difficulties to complete. I would make changes to these, to make the format even more simple, if I were to use them again with students this young.)

PM Benchmarks 1.

PM Benchmarks 2.

Running Record Format (Marie Clay).

Guided Reading Texts – for teaching purposes.

1. Ben's Teddy Bear (PM Storybooks)
2. Ben's Treasure Hunt (PM Storybooks)
3. We Make Music (Literacy Links)
4. At The Beach (Literacy Links – Satellites)
5. Spots (Literacy Links – Satellites)
6. Baby's Birthday (Literacy Links)

Charts made by me.

1. Reading is easy when I...(A3 size)
2. Before I read I...(wall chart size) Later on a small one was made up for the students to keep in their reading folders, etc.

Stickers and lollies to be used as rewards for positive behaviours, effort, etc

Procedure

All sessions took place in the school meeting room, which is a small room in the administration end of the building and is quite separate from the classroom areas of the building.

These were conducted twice a week, for a period of six weeks. As often as possible, these were conducted during the first two-hour block of the school day. However, there were days when the sessions had to be worked around book week parades, special visitors and class masses and therefore they were conducted in either of the

two remaining time blocks in the day. The afternoon block was avoided as much as was possible. The duration of all sessions, whether individual or group, was 30 – 40 minutes.

Day One and Two

Consisted of one to two sessions where the students were seen individually to complete Running Records as a pre-test. These were administered at the level as suggested by their classroom teacher. This first Running Record was scored. Running Records continued to be administered, at a higher or lower level, until an instructional level was identified. As part of these sessions, the children were engaged in a discussion to identify the current strategies they were using to work on text. The students also completed a survey where they were asked to rate “How do I Learn?”

Day Three

The third session involved the children meeting each other as a group, as they are from two different classes. During this session, the students completed a Self-Efficacy survey, which involved them rating some of their reading behaviours, articulating and/or writing some of the strategies they use while reading and then drawing pictures to show how they felt about their reading and learning.

Day Four

During this session, the students were given a blank copy of the chart “Reading is easy when I....” (See appendix). They were encouraged to articulate the strategies, which they already used while reading. These were recorded on their charts. Each strategy was recorded in a different colour and where possible a picture or a symbol was recorded with it as well.

Day Five – Ten

Consisted of Guided Reading sessions, which included lots of discussion about strategies we can use before, during and after reading. The students were encouraged to notice the strategies, which they used and also those used by other students and to articulate these. As a new strategy, was used by a student, it was added to their personal list. Day six also included the writing of a chart to be used by the group as a whole, which included strategies to be used before reading. “Before I read I.....” (See appendix). Day eight included a discussion for the first time, which introduced for the first time that you can think about your reading after you have finished reading something. At the conclusion of each session, one student from the group completed a Running Record of the text studied that day.

It is obvious when considering the students entry levels and scores from previous testing, that there are two distinct levels of ability within the group. It was during these six sessions that the group was divided into two. The three lower students, B, D and J, came to all five sessions. While M and H, came individually before the day 8 and 9 sessions, respectively.

It had originally been intended at the outset of this study, to use M and H as peer tutors. Their reading levels were higher than those of B, D and J, and originally they were using more strategies in their reading. Two things happened which changed my intentions here. Firstly, both M and H had found it difficult to articulate many of the strategies they were using and secondly, by the conclusion of day 7, B, D and J had all added to their list of strategies, a few of the strategies currently listed on M and H’s charts.

So M and H now became a second teaching group. They both saw me individually on day 8 or 9. During those sessions they completed a Running Record from PM Benchmarks 1 or 2 and again engaged in a discussion about their use of strategies. Any strategies, which they used well and were able to articulate, were added to their lists.

Day Eleven and Twelve

Consisted of one to two sessions where the students were seen individually to complete Running Records as a post-test. The students were also required to complete the Self-Efficacy survey again.

RESULTS

Data on each of the students was collected by way of observation of the student's reading behaviours during sessions and during running records and through the completion of a survey at the commencement and completion of the intervention.

Self-Efficacy is not a thing, which is easily measured, however it was notable during the post testing, that all students had improved in this area. They all approached their reading tasks with more confidence, were using a greater number of strategies to work through their reading tasks and all were managing to self-correct or have multiple attempts at unknown words.

All students have also made gains with their Prose Reading Accuracy. Although for some students this was a far larger gain than for others. The two students, who made the greatest gains in this area, were the girls M and H, who it has been noted earlier, were reading at a higher level than the others and were also able to articulate the most strategies at the commencement of the intervention. These two also spent the least amount of time working with me. One could perhaps surmise that they already had greater self-efficacy than the others and therefore it took less teaching to get them moving along or maybe they were ready to begin moving along, without the intervention.

Although all students have developed in their abilities to use and apply strategies to manage and control their reading, it is also notable to mention that they struggle to articulate many more than those first few that they mentioned at the commencement of the intervention. Those few that they had already learnt and internalised previously, whether they used them effectively or not, were generally the ones they mentioned again at the completion of the intervention. The pleasing thing is that they were all able to articulate some other strategies as well and they all demonstrated the use of even more, even if they couldn't put into words what it was they were doing. Their use of strategies has become spread more evenly amongst a wider selection of strategies than they previously used. Although they may still tend to over-use one strategy, they have begun to think about the possibility of using other strategies and are all using more strategies than they previously were.

Tables 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 show the student's answers, pre and post intervention to six open ended questions, about their reading management and control strategies.

Table 3 – Student J

Pre intervention strategies	Post intervention strategies
A. Before I begin reading I....	A. Before I begin reading I....
Read the title.	I look at the picture. I look at the sentence.
B. Before I begin reading a question I ask myself is....	B. Before I begin reading a question I ask myself is....
Could not give a response.	The question of what the story will be about.
C. When I am reading and come to a word I don't know I....	C. When I am reading and come to a word I don't know I....
I spell it. I look at the pictures.	Look at the picture. Look at the sentence. Look at the pages inside
D. When I make mistakes in reading I....	D. When I make mistakes in reading I....
Could not give a response.	Go back and re-read.
E. When words are hard to read I....	E. When words are hard to read I....
Could not give a response.	Could not give a response
F. When I am reading something that doesn't make sense, I....	F. When I am reading something that doesn't make sense, I....
I don't do anything.	I re-read.

Table 4 – Student B

Pre intervention strategies	Post intervention strategies
A. Before I begin reading I....	A. Before I begin reading I....
Have a big breath. Look at the title. Look at the cover.	Look at the front cover. Look at the picture. Flick through the pages. Check if it's an information or story, book.
B. Before I begin reading a question I ask myself is....	B. Before I begin reading a question I ask myself is....
Could not give a response.	Is it a story or information book?
C. When I am reading and come to a word I don't know I....	C. When I am reading and come to a word I don't know I....
I sound out quietly.	Sound out. Look at the pictures.
D. When I make mistakes in reading I....	D. When I make mistakes in reading I....
Could not give a response.	Sound it out. I go back to the word.
E. When words are hard to read I....	E. When words are hard to read I....
I sound it quietly.	I ask someone. Look for little words. I sound out.
F. When I am reading something that doesn't make sense, I....	F. When I am reading something that doesn't make sense, I....
I do nothing.	I tell another person.

Table 5 – Student D

Pre intervention strategies	Post intervention strategies
A. Before I begin reading I....	A. Before I begin reading I....
Read the title. Look at the front cover.	Look at the picture. Look at the title. Look at all the pictures.
B. Before I begin reading a question I ask myself is....	B. Before I begin reading a question I ask myself is....
When can I play football?	What kind of words will be in this book?
C. When I am reading and come to a word I don't know I....	C. When I am reading and come to a word I don't know I....
I sound. I look at the pictures.	Sound it out. Look at the pictures.
D. When I make mistakes in reading I....	D. When I make mistakes in reading I....
Could not give a response.	I figure it out. Look at the word. Look at the pictures.
E. When words are hard to read I....	E. When words are hard to read I....
Sound it out quietly.	Sound them out.
F. When I am reading something that doesn't make sense, I....	F. When I am reading something that doesn't make sense, I....
Do nothing.	Turn to the next page.

Table 6 – Student M

Pre intervention strategies	Post intervention strategies
A. Before I begin reading I....	A. Before I begin reading I....
Take a big breath. Read the title. Look at the front cover.	Read the title. Look at the picture.
B. Before I begin reading a question I ask myself is....	B. Before I begin reading a question I ask myself is....
Could not give a response.	Could not give a response.
C. When I am reading and come to a word I don't know I....	C. When I am reading and come to a word I don't know I....
I sound it quietly. I look at the pictures.	Go back and read the sentence. Try to figure it out in my head. Sound it out loud so I can hear it.
D. When I make mistakes in reading I....	D. When I make mistakes in reading I....
I sound it.	Go back and tell whoever is reading with you that I made a mistake. Try and fix it. Try to sound it out. Look at the picture. Look at the letters. Look at the other words on the page.
E. When words are hard to read I....	E. When words are hard to read I....
Sound it out.	Sound it out. Try and say it.
F. When I am reading something that doesn't make sense, I....	F. When I am reading something that doesn't make sense, I....
I ignore it.	Tell the teacher. Try to say it. Look at the pictures more carefully.

Table 7 – Student H

Pre intervention strategies	Post intervention strategies
A. Before I begin reading I....	A. Before I begin reading I....
Read the title. Look at the front cover.	Look at the front cover. Look at the title and the picture
B. Before I begin reading a question I ask myself is....	B. Before I begin reading a question I ask myself is....
Could not give a response.	What is it about?
C. When I am reading and come to a word I don't know I....	C. When I am reading and come to a word I don't know I....
I figure it out.	I can get help by asking. I think, "what do I do?"
D. When I make mistakes in reading I....	D. When I make mistakes in reading I....
I sound it out.	Ask for help.
E. When words are hard to read I....	E. When words are hard to read I....
Sound it out.	Try and look at the pictures.
F. When I am reading something that doesn't make sense, I....	F. When I am reading something that doesn't make sense, I....
Skip it.	Go back to the start of the sentence.

Tables 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 and show each individual student's prose reading scores, use of strategies and articulation of strategies, pre, during and post intervention.

Table 8				
J				
Pre				
				Strategies demonstrated during Running Records - Strategies marked with (*) the student was able to articulate
	Level 5	Level 5		
	90%	85.50%		Spelt out word(1)
	SC1:5	SC1:8		Looked at picture (6)
	Little Teddy Helps Mouse	Sam and Little Bear		Self-corrected prediction using visual cues (3)
				* Went back to beginning of sentence(1)
				Predicting (4)
				Looking at letters (1)
				Pausing (2)
				Talk about text (2)
During				
	Level 5	Level 6		
	99%	89%		Noticed words were rhyming (1)
	SC1:1	SC1:4		Repeat (2)
	Ben's Treasure Hunt	SPOTS		Re-read to self-correct (1)
				* Searching picture (4)
				Looked back at another part of text (1)
				Self-corrected prediction using visual cues (1)
				Pausing (4)
				Predicting (4)
				* Sounding (1)
				Talking about story (2)
Post				
	Level 5	Level 6		
	94%	91%		Predicting (9)
	SC 1:13	SC 1:3		* Sounding (2)
	Sam and Little Bear	The Merry - Go Around		Looked back at another part of the text (1)
				Self-corrected prediction using visual cues (3)
				One to One matching (1)
				* Working on Letters (2)
				* Searching picture (4)

			Pausing (1)
			Talking about story (1)
			* Re- Reading (2)
			Repeating (3)

Table 9			
B			
Pre			
	Level 7	Level 7	Strategies demonstrated during Running Records - Strategies marked with (*) the student was able to articulate
	83%	94%	* Sound it Quietly (0)
	SC1:16	SC1:2	*Re -Read (0)
	Baby Bear and the Big Fish	Little Rabbits Party	Self-corrected prediction using visual cues (5)
			* Searching Picture (2)
			Predicting (21)
			Looking at letters (1)
			Pausing (4)
			* Repeat (1)
During			
	Level 6	Level 6	
	80%	92%	* Searching picture (1)
	0	0	Pausing (1)
	We Make Music	Babies Birthday	Predicting (11)
			Looking at letters (1)
			*Re -Read (2)
			* Matching Prediction & Text (0)
			* Looking for Small Words (0)
			* Looking for Similar Words (0)
Post			
	Level 8	Level 8	
	83%	86%	Predicting (26)
	SC 1:16	SC 1:8	* Looking for Small Words (3)
	The Cat & The Mice	My Big Sister	Self-corrected prediction using visual cues (3)
			* Tell another person (0)
			Self-corrected prediction using meaning cues (1)
			* Searching Picture (5)
			Pausing (5)
			* Sounding (1)
			* Re- Reading from beginning of sentence (1)
			Re- Reading -Second attempt (1)
			Looking at letters (3)

Table 10				
D				
Pre				
	Level 6	Level 5		Strategies demonstrated during Running Records - Strategies marked with (*) the student was able to articulate
	89%	89%		* Sound it Quietly (4)
	0	SC1:6		Re -Read (2)
	Nick's Snowman	Sam & Little Bear		Self-corrected prediction using visual cues (2)
				* Searching Picture (11)
				Predicting (28)
				Talked about Story (1)
				Pausing (3)
				Non Verbal Appeal (1)
During				
	Level 5	Level 6		* Searching picture (0)
	99%	80%		Self-corrected prediction using visual cues (3)
	0	SC1:3		Predicting (8)
	Ben's Teddy Bear	At the Beach		Looking at letters (1)
				* Listen for Rhyme in Words ((0)
				* Matching Prediction & Text (0)
				* Looking for Similar Words (0)
Post				
	Level 5	Level 6	Level 6	
	90%	90%	93%	Predicting (28)
	0	SC 1:5	0	* Sounding (1)
	Little Teddy Helps Mouse	The Merry - Go Round	Nick's Snowman	
				Self-corrected prediction using visual cues (2)
				* Tell another person (0)
				Self-corrected prediction using meaning cues (1)
				* Searching Picture (6)
				Pausing (1)
				Re -Reading (1)
				Non Verbal Appeal (1)
				* Looking at letters (6)

Table 11				
M				
Pre				
	Level 8	Level 8	Level 9	Strategies demonstrated during Running Records - Strategies marked with (*) the student was able to articulate
	90%	96%	93%	* Sound it Quietly (5)
	0	0	0	Re -Read (1)
	The Cat & The Mice	My Big Sister	Stuck in the Ditch	* Ignore it (1)
				* Searching Picture (10)
				Predicting (16)

			Looking at Letters (2)
			Pausing (12)
			* Verbal Appeal (2)
			Repeat (3)
			Say word Quietly (1)
During			
	Level 10		* Sounding (5)
	96%		* Searching Picture (5)
	0		* Verbal Appeal (2)
	The Helpful Bulldozer		Predicting (3)
			Looking at Letters (4)
			Pausing (2)
			Say word Quietly (1)
			* Say word out loud (1)
			* Read onto end of Sentence (0)
Post			
	Level 11	Level 12	Predicting (11)
	96%	93%	* Searching Picture (8)
	SC 1:5	SC 1:9	* Sounding (6)
	Late for School	Football at School	Self-corrected prediction using visual cues (2)
			Pausing (5)
			* Re -Reading (1)
			* Verbal Appeal (3)
			* Looking at Letters (7)
			Go back to beginning of Sentence (1)
			* Chunking (1)
			Non - Verbal Appeal (3)
			* Say word out loud (1)
			* Looking for Similar Words (0)

Table 12			
H			
Pre			
	Level 9	Level 10	Strategies demonstrated during Running Records - Strategies marked with (*) the student was able to articulate
	90%	96%	Looking at Letters (2)
	SC 1:2	SC 1:2	* Searching Picture (5)
	Clever Little Dinosaur	The Helpful Bulldozer	Predicting (16)
			* Sounding (1)
			Verbal Appeal (4)
			Non - Verbal Appeal (3)
			Pausing (12)
			* Verbal Appeal (2)
			Repeating (2)
			Self-corrected prediction using visual cues (2)
			Looking for Small Words (1)
			* Skip it (0)
			Pausing (2)

			Re-Read beginning of Sentence (1)
During			
	Level 11		* Searching Picture (2)
	92%		* Verbal Appeal (1)
	SC 1:10		Predicting (8)
	Tom's Train Ride		Pausing (2)
			* Non - Verbal Appeal (1)
			* Re-Read beginning of Sentence (1)
			Self-corrected prediction using visual cues (1)
			Re -Read (1)
Post			
	Level 11	Level 12	Predicting (11)
	96%	93%	* Searching Picture (4)
	SC 1:5	SC 1:9	* Sound it out (0)
	Late for School	Football at School	Self-corrected prediction using visual cues (3)
			Pausing (4)
			* Verbal Appeal (2)
			Looking at Letters (2)
			* Go back to beginning of Sentence (0)
			* Non - Verbal Appeal (3)

J – Began the intervention able to articulate useful answers to 2/6 strategy questions. At the conclusion he was able to give an answer for 5/6 of the questions and in some instances was able to give more than one suggestion as an answer. He was reading level 5 at an instructional level (where he has been sitting for most of this year). At the completion of the intervention he was able to read a level 6 text at an instructional level and was able to demonstrate during running records the use of a diverse range of strategies than used previously. He approached his reading with far more confidence and enthusiasm than previously noted. He appeared very pleased with himself at the completion of his running records during testing. He knew he had read them well. His mother was present during the post testing (they came in to school during the holidays!) and he was very happy that she had seen him read so well.

B – Began the intervention able to articulate useful answers to 3/6 strategy questions. At the conclusion he was able to give an answer for all of the questions and answer some questions with suggestions of multiple strategies he could use in those instances. B is a little boy in a big hurry. He was always first out of the classroom to come to our sessions, first into the room, first to give answers and the first one to lose concentration and be ready to move onto the next thing. He began the intervention reading a level 7, text at an instructional level. He was unable to achieve an instructional level at level 8, however, I am pretty sure that if he slowed down his hurry to race through life and reading, etc, he may do better on text levels. He did, however, demonstrate the use of quite a few different and new strategies we had not seen him use before.

D – was able to give 3/6 useful answers to the strategy questions at the commencement of the intervention. At the completion, he was able to answer 5/6 of the questions with relevant reading strategies and was able to further expand on some of his original answers. He was not able to read a level 5 or 6 text at an instructional level but by the post-test he was able to read both levels at an instructional level. He

was also demonstrating the use of a number of strategies that he had not previously used. He was reading with far more confidence and on the last text he read, he demonstrated some use of vocal expression in order to help add interest to the text for the listener.

M – was able to give reasonable answers to 3/6 of the strategy questions at the commencement of the intervention. At the conclusion, M was able to articulate a large number of responses to the strategy questions. She was very confident in answering these as well. She had made the largest gain in terms of Prose Reading Accuracy as well. She began reading level 8 and 9 at an instructional level and at the completion of post testing had been able to read a level 12 at an instructional level. The gains in her confidence were also tangible. She read with noticeable confidence and was willing to take more risks in having a go when words were tricky and was having more success with those predictions too. She couldn't wait to get back to her classroom and tell her teacher about her latest reading success.

H – was able to give an answer for 5/6 questions about reading strategies, which she used. At the completion she was able to answer each of the questions again. Some of her answers changed, but did not give more than one response to any of the questions. Her reading levels also improved. She began reading at level 9 instructional and during her last running record, was able to record an instructional level for level 12. Her use of strategies she was able to demonstrate also improved. However, H remained unsure and would seek assurance through verbal and non-verbal appeals at regular intervals. Of the five students, she is the one who seeks the most help from whoever, she is reading with. She was pleased that she had made some improvements, but still needs convincing that she can do lots of things for herself in reading and do them well.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this project support the initial hypothesis the explicit teaching of self-management and control strategies improves prose reading accuracy and self-efficacy.

Over the duration of the sessions, it became clear that the approach had benefits and there was overall a change in the reading behaviours and attitudes of all students and also a change in their levels of prose reading accuracy.

The students, who made the greater changes in their reading levels, were the two students who were originally intended to be peer tutors. M and H attended sessions mostly as individuals, so the strategy discussions, in which they were involved, related to themselves and their reading behaviours and took place after a running record.

The other three students J, B and D, all made gains to their reading levels, however theirs were not as large as those of M and H. It must be noted however, that these students were all reading at much lower levels than M and H and two of these students J and B are year two students and therefore have been struggling with the reading process for much longer. It could be argued that their self-efficacy for reading is going to be much harder to change to positive thoughts, efforts and attitudes. Perhaps these children may benefit more from being involved in this approach on an

individual basis. The original intention for the students to work as a group was so that they could be involved in discussion and share ideas about the strategies they were using. These children did not have enough strategies under control to make discussion dynamic and perhaps do not possess the oral language skills necessary as yet. They tended to parrot the strategies that other children had articulated, but as their reading had not “needed” that particular strategy, they had no real understanding of its usefulness in the reading process.

The three students, who were involved in the group sessions and therefore, spent a lot of time discussing pre-reading strategies, noticed that it did make a difference to their ability to read a book and found it much easier to read the text and to apply strategies to unknowns or confusions. Their “meaning making motors” (Munro, 2004) were switched on. Although this has had positive effects on their reading, this has not become an automatic behaviour for these children. They must be reminded to do the whole process each time they are given a new book, otherwise they slip straight back into their old pre intervention habits. It will take many, many repeated practices and reminders before this becomes an automatic and habituated behaviour.

Evidence in the Running Records of all students, that the teaching of strategies has had an impact on the children’s self-efficacy is that all students are noticing more of their difficulties and implementing many more useful strategies in their attempts to work through problems. They know they are being successful more often and therefore they are all feeling more positive about their own reading abilities. They all approached their post-test Running Records with more confidence, all tried to use many more strategies than they had previously had while they were reading. After prompting to complete a book orientation, they are all talking about the book and asking themselves some of the questions they need to in order to make effective use of this before reading strategy.

Implications from this study for further teaching would be to:

- Introduce strategy discussions during guided reading sessions.
- Introduce Before I read charts to all junior classes and to specific middle and senior students who are identified as struggling readers.
- Introduce Reading is easy when I charts to all junior and middle classes and specific senior students.
- To continue to support these students on a regular basis, so that they are able to have individual discussions with regard to their use of strategies.
- To utilise this same approach, individually with other identified students.
- To further explore post-reading strategies with the intervention group, as this was an area we were only able to touch on briefly due to time constraints.
- To introduce and discuss with the teachers the idea of “explicit teaching” and its implications within their classrooms.

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APPENDIX 1

Teaching Unit

To teach self-management and control strategies, before during and after reading, to improve the students prose reading accuracy and self-efficacy.

Outcomes

- Improve self-efficacy in reading.
- Identify and articulate current self-management and control strategies.
- Identify and teach the use of further self-management and control strategies.
- Improve prose reading accuracy.
- Improve the self-esteem of the students.
- Improve the self-correction rate.
- Improve risk taking behaviours (it's okay to have a go)
- Improving reading accuracy will have an impact on the student's comprehension of texts.
- Articulation of strategies and the recording of these, will help to internalise them and thus make their use automatic.

The Model

This intervention is directed at the self-management and control strategies of the MLOTP model of reading. The students were directed to consider strategies, which they used before reading or in the orientation phase of reading, strategies which they used while reading, the processing of text and the self-monitoring stage and strategies which they used after reading, or the reviewing stage of reading.

Day One

Each child was seen individually to complete a Running Record as a pre-test. These were administered at the level as suggested by their classroom teacher. This first Running Record was scored. Running Records continued to be administered, at a higher or lower level, until an instructional level was identified. As part of these sessions, the children were engaged in a discussion to identify the current strategies they were using to work on text. These were listed on the running record form. The students also completed a survey where they were asked to rate "How do I Learn?"

Day Two

Continued to administer pre-test schedule until all students had completed all facets.

Day Three

The children meet each other as a group, as they are from two different classes. During this session, the students completed a Self- Efficacy survey, which involved them rating some of their reading behaviours, articulating and/or writing some of the strategies they use while reading and then drawing pictures to show how they felt about their reading and learning. The section of the survey, which proved to be the most useful, was the section, which included open ended questions about strategies. (See Tables 3-7 for the questions asked.)

Day Four

The students came individually to this session. During this session, the students were given a blank copy of the chart “Reading is easy when I....” (See appendix 2). They were encouraged to articulate the strategies, which they already used while reading. These were recorded on their charts. Each strategy was recorded in a different colour and where possible a picture or a symbol was recorded with it as well. (See Appendix 3, 4 and 5 for examples of filled in charts)

Day Five

“Ben’s Teddy Bear”

Introduced idea of book orientation. Looked at title, cover picture and discussed it. Talked about what type of book we thought it would be. Then we looked at all the pictures in the book.

Discussed strategies we could use while reading the book if we encountered difficulties. All children were expected to tell me at least one other thing they could do besides sounding or looking at the pictures.

Each child took turns at reading a page. Whenever they used a strategy, they were asked if they could tell us what they just did to work out the tricky word. If they couldn’t the other students were invited to tell us if they had noticed what they did. If they couldn’t, I would talk them through the process, which I thought they had gone through. Strategies, which the students used, were recorded on their charts. Again using a different colour and a picture or symbol if possible.

Running Record on daily text – D

Day Six

“Ben’s Treasure Hunt”

The students articulated what they did the previous day before they began reading. They were invited to discuss whether they found it useful or helpful for their reading. We recorded this process on a Before I read chart (See appendix 6) for the wall. As for other charts, this was recorded in different colours and included symbols or pictures, where possible.

Discussed strategies we could use while reading the book if we encountered difficulties. All children were expected to tell me at least one other thing they could do besides sounding or looking at the pictures.

Each child took turns at reading a page. Whenever they used a strategy, they were asked if they could tell us what they just did to work out the tricky word. If they couldn’t the other students were invited to tell us if they had noticed what they did. If they couldn’t, I would talk them through the process, which I thought they had gone through. Strategies, which the students used, were recorded on their charts. Again using a different colour and a picture or symbol if possible.

Running Record on daily text – J

Day Seven

“We Make Music”

The students were encouraged to remember and articulate as much as possible about the orientation process as they could, using the chart to help them if they needed it. As part of this session we also included questions we could ask ourselves as we are looking through the pictures in a text. We also included the 6th step of our orientation process here – if you are reading with someone, you could talk to them about the book before you begin reading.

Discussed strategies we could use while reading the book if we encountered difficulties. All children were expected to tell me at least one other thing they could do besides sounding or looking at the pictures.

Each child took turns at reading a page. Whenever they used a strategy, they were asked if they could tell us what they just did to work out the tricky word. If they couldn't the other students were invited to tell us if they had noticed what they did. If they couldn't, I would talk them through the process, which I thought they had gone through. Strategies, which the students used, were recorded on their charts. Again using a different colour and a picture or symbol if possible.

Running Record on daily text – B

Day Eight

Strategy discussion and Running record using appropriate level text from PM Benchmark with M. After reading, M and I discussed the strategies she used and added to her chart.

“At the Beach”

The students were encouraged to remember and articulate as much as possible about the orientation process as they could, using the chart to help them if they needed it. Discussed strategies we could use while reading the book if we encountered difficulties. All children were expected to tell me at least one other thing they could do besides sounding or looking at the pictures.

Each child took turns at reading a page. Whenever they used a strategy, they were asked if they could tell us what they just did to work out the tricky word. If they couldn't the other students were invited to tell us if they had noticed what they did. If they couldn't, I would talk them through the process, which I thought they had gone through. Strategies, which the students used, were recorded on their charts. Again using a different colour and a picture or symbol if possible.

This session included for the first time, a discussion, which introduced the idea, you can think about your reading, after you have finished reading - Did I learn any new words today? Did I learn a new strategy today? Did I learn anything else today?

Running Record on daily text – D

Day Nine

Strategy discussion and running record using appropriate level text from PM Benchmark with H. After reading, H & I discussed strategies used and added to chart. “SPOTS”

The students were encouraged to remember and articulate as much as possible about the orientation process as they could, using the chart to help them if they needed it. Discussed strategies we could use while reading the book if we encountered difficulties. All children were expected to tell me at least one other thing they could do besides sounding or looking at the pictures.

Each child took turns at reading a page. Whenever they used a strategy, they were asked if they could tell us what they just did to work out the tricky word. If they couldn't the other students were invited to tell us if they had noticed what they did. If they couldn't, I would talk them through the process, which I thought they had gone through. Strategies, which the students used, were recorded on their charts. Again using a different colour and a picture or symbol if possible.

The students were then encouraged to engage in a post-reading discussion, which detailed anything new they may have learnt from their reading.

Running Record on daily text - J

Day Ten

“Baby’s Birthday”

During this session, the children were invited to answer the following question “What will you do when I give you this book today?” I hoped the students would have begun to internalise the pre-reading strategies and are able to articulate some or all of the steps on the chart.

Discussed strategies we could use while reading the book if we encountered difficulties. All children were expected to tell me at least one other thing they could do besides sounding or looking at the pictures.

Each child took turns at reading a page. Whenever they used a strategy, they were asked if they could tell us what they just did to work out the tricky word. If they couldn’t the other students were invited to tell us if they had noticed what they did. If they couldn’t, I would talk them through the process, which I thought they had gone through. Strategies, which the students used, were recorded on their charts. Again using a different colour and a picture or symbol if possible.

The students were then encouraged to engage in a post-reading discussion, which detailed anything new they may have learnt from their reading.

Running Record on daily text - B


Day Eleven and Day Twelve





Consisted of one to two sessions where the students were seen individually to complete Running Records as a post-test. The students were also required to complete the Self-Efficacy survey again.

Appendix 2

D's strategies


Reading is easy
when I.....




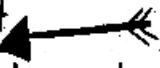


- * sound it out so I can hear it. d-o-g 
- * look at the picture 
- * make sure what I say when I read matches what is written down
- * looked back at the page before to see if it was the same word. 
- * look at words which rhyme. b-oat boat, m-oat meat. 

J's strategies

Reading is easy
when I.....




- * look at the pictures. 
- * spell out the words. C-A-T
- * sound out the words c-a-t
- * Stop if it does not make sense. Try to fix it. 
- * think about sounds at the beginning of the words. 
- * go back to re-read something that was not quite right. 
- * look at a similar word bang dang

Blank - reading is easy when I...

Appendix 2

Reading is easy
when I.....



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