Introduction

- Learning to read is challenging for many students.
- Less than half of the county’s fourth, eighth, and twelfth grade students read at or above the proficient level (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2003).
- The earlier below average readers receive reading interventions the more their reading might improve.
- Teachers typically select interventions based on personal preference and recommendations from others.
- This method is not the best because it does not account for student differences and learning limitations.
- Finding effective methods to empirically select academic interventions might help educators engage in effective data based decision making.
- Brief Experimental Analysis (BEA) is one approach that allows educators to compare the effects of various reading interventions (Burn & Wagner, 2008).
- The purpose of this study was to evaluate BEA as a tool to identify effective reading interventions for second grade students.

Method

Participants and Setting

- Two second grade students who were identified as below average readers
- The study was conducted in an elementary school in a medium sized, Midwestern city
- The study was conducted during the school’s after school program

Dependent Measure

- Correct words read per minute (CWRM): Students read instructional level passages for one minute and the number of words read correctly was calculated.

Conditions

- Repeated Reading (RR): Students read the same passage three times, and on the third time data were collected
- Listening Passage Preview (LPP): Student had the passage read to them first, and then the student read the passage for one minute and data were collected
- Sight Words (SW): Student read sight words before reading the passage, and then the student read the passage for one minute and data were collected
- All combinations were also included in the analysis (e.g., RR + LPP, RR + SW, LPP + SW, RR + LPP + SW)

Procedure

- Step 1: Collected baseline data
- Step 2: Implemented conditions
- Step 3: Compared conditions: chose the condition that produced the highest number of correct words read per minute (CWRM)
- Step 4: Extended Analysis: The condition that produced the highest number of CWPM was chosen and then implemented during the remainder of the study
- Step 5: Collected follow up data

Results and Discussion

- For Shari, BEA identified Sight Word + Listening Passage Preview + Repeated Reading as the most effective condition.
- Shari’s CWRM more than doubled from baseline to follow up (baseline mean = 31, follow up mean = 78).
- For Vanna, BEA identified Sight Word + Repeated Reading as the most effective condition.
- Vanna’s CWRM almost doubled from baseline to follow up (baseline mean = 11.67, follow up mean = 22.67).
- These results suggest that the empirically selected condition had a strong positive effect on each participant’s oral reading fluency.
- This study implies that BEA can be an effective and efficient method of selecting interventions that have the potential to improve student reading.
- Teachers might consider using BEA to empirically select interventions for students who are below average in reading when compared to their peers.
- Limitations of this study include the participants’ grade, the study’s duration, and the participants’ exposure to reading instruction outside of the study.

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