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EFFECTIVE READING INTERVENTION STRATEGIES FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS WITH AUTISM

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Research Question

What reading intervention strategies are effective in helping meet the needs of students with autism?

Literature Review

- ❖ Students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) often experience difficulties with emotional and/or behavioral regulation that impede their rate of learning (Maskey, Warnell, Parr, Le Couteur, & McConachie, 2013; Pearson et al., 2006).
- ❖ According to the American Psychological Association (APA) (2000), students with ASD often display self-stimulatory behaviors, impaired communication and language skills, and resistance to participation in instructional activities.
- ❖ According to Whalon, Otaiba, and Delano (2009), some students with ASD learn to read with fluency but struggle with comprehension, while others have difficulty with early literacy skills such as sight-word recognition.
- ❖ Students with ASD may also have difficulties developing abstract connections from the text and linking these to new concepts, which can hinder their (Åsberg & Sandberg, 2010; Carnahan & Williamson, 2013).

Methodology

- ❖ Searched for studies with keywords including reading intervention strategies, effectiveness, students with autism, elementary, sight word recognition, reading comprehension.
- ❖ Determined studies based on their focus of identifying effectiveness of improving target areas of sight word recognition and reading comprehension.
- ❖ Integrated a conceptual framework in order to draw conclusions based on multiple different concepts (Imenda, 2014).
- ❖ Applied Ryan & Bernard's (2003) techniques in identify themes within the data that identified similarities and differences within findings, repetitive findings, and areas where data may be missing.

Results and Data Analysis

- ❖ Traditional drill and practice and incremental rehearsal strategies were both effective in helping a student learn and maintain sight words, with evidence showing that he learned best with words aligned with his grade (2nd) (Mulé, Bolpe, Fefer, Leslie, Luiselli, 2015).
- ❖ Question development and anaphoric cueing are two strategies that are shown to be effective when applied behavior analytics were integrated to focus and direct the behaviors of students with autism (Solis, Zein, Vaughn, McCulley, and Falcomata, 2016).
- ❖ Because students with autism have a difficulty with learning instruction due to challenging behaviors (Goodman & Williams, 2007; Marks et al., 2003), the addition of applied behavior analytics helps students by directing their focus on the reading, resulting in an increase in comprehension of the readings.
- ❖ Swain, Lane, & Gast (2014) and Akcin (2013) conducted studies with the Constant Time Delay strategy that resulted in an increase in the number of correct responses of sight words recognition and reduction of reading errors.
- ❖ A modified experiment design was implemented in order to collect more accurate data, supporting Neitzel & Worley's (2009) point of monitoring data in order to modify variables for more successful outcomes.
- ❖ Students with autism can achieve success with the Constant Time Delay strategy if modifications to the delay of stimuli and amount of time for stimulus fading are made to match the student's progress.

Conclusion

- ❖ Students with autism have shown increases in learning capabilities through reading intervention strategies that focus the students' attention on acquiring sight word recognition and questioning text for reading comprehension.
- ❖ For educators determining the most effective intervention strategies for their students, it is important that they have an understanding of their students' capabilities in order to implement best strategy.
- ❖ Future research should focus on how to implement strategies within a classroom setting.