

Walden University

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Saundra Bowens

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

Review Committee

Dr. Ella Benson, Committee Chairperson, Education Faculty

Dr. Gerald Giraud, Committee Member, Education Faculty

Dr. Michelle Brown, University Reviewer, Education Faculty

Chief Academic Officer

Eric Riedel, Ph.D.

Walden University
2013

Abstract

The Relationship Between Using the Scrambled Words Reading Strategy and the
Vocabulary of Struggling Readers

by

Saundra Ward Bowens

M.H.R., University of Oklahoma, 1997

B.S., University of Southern Mississippi, 1991

B.S., University of Southern Mississippi, 1991

A.A., Community College of the Air Force, 1989

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the

Degree of Doctor of Education

Teacher Leadership

Walden University

August 2013

Abstract

About 1 million children encounter reading problems during the first 3 years in school. Numerous teaching methods and various strategies are employed to teach children how to read. Reading provides the foundation for all school-based learning. When one of these foundation skills is missing or deficient, the child may have difficulty learning to read. The purpose of this repeated measures quantitative study was to explore whether using the scrambled words reading strategy helped struggling readers improve their sight word vocabulary. The theoretical basis was the constructivist theory. The research question compared vocabulary pretest and posttest scores using the easyCBM Word Reading Fluency measures test. Criteria for participant selection included struggling readers from primary grades falling below the 25th percentile on the Measures of Academic Progress test. A paired samples *t* test was used to compare the means of 12 pretest and posttest scores before and after using the reading strategy. There was a significant difference between pretest mean scores ($M = 24.2500$, $SD = 17.49351$) and posttest mean scores ($M = 28.4167$, $SD = 20.45153$); $t(11) = 3.633$, $p = .004$. The results suggest that using the scrambled words reading strategy may result in increased sight word vocabulary for struggling readers in the primary grades. Teaching reading through different strategies and methods of instruction may result in positive social change by helping struggling readers become literate by the end of 3rd grade, therefore decreasing their chances of dropping out of school before they receive their high school diploma.

PREVIEW

The Relationship Between Using the Scrambled Words Reading Strategy and the
Vocabulary of Struggling Readers

by

Saundra Ward Bowens

M.H.R., University of Oklahoma, 1997

B.S., University of Southern Mississippi, 1991

B.S., University of Southern Mississippi, 1991

A.A., Community College of the Air Force, 1989

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the

Degree of Doctor of Education

Teacher Leadership

Walden University

August 2013

UMI Number: 3561169

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



UMI 3561169

Published by ProQuest LLC (2013). Copyright in the Dissertation held by the Author.

Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

All rights reserved. This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code



ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 - 1346

Dedication

This page is dedicated to so many people that are always in my heart but who are not here to see me finish this chapter in my life: my grandparents parents: Reuben, Sr. and Mary Grant. My parents: John Ward, Juanita Ward Broderick, and John Broderick. So many others have also impacted my life and helped me to become the person God designed me to be. Dwight Barnes who helped me to always feel special no matter what I did or did not do. Russell McClarin who taught me almost everything he knew about nursing and helping others. Johnathan Grant who left us early in life, but who always believed you could do anything if you set your mind to it. Edward Ward, Wilmot Grant, Reuben Grant, Jr., Joseph Myers, Rosalee Ware, Vernel Wilson, Edward Stroud, Eugene Anderson, Reverend Gibson, and Frank Wilkinson who encouraged me and were my role models and mentors before I understood what these words meant.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank God for allowing me to finish this task. I would also like to thank my family, the Rosemont community in Charleston, S.C., Dr. Ella Benson, Dr. Michelle Brown, and Dr. Gerald Giraud for being patient with me. Without the guidance of Dr. Benson, I would have never made it to this point. Dr. Benson, I truly appreciate having you there with me each step of the way. Just knowing that you were here for us has made what seemed like an insurmountable task, less daunting. Dr. Giraud and Dr. Brown, thanks for your suggestions about how to make this something I could be proud of.

Lest we remember and not forget that life is but a circle; and one day the circle will be complete. I would like to thank the love of my life: my sister and best friend, Jackie Ward for always having my back no matter what and for giving me the support and encouragement to do what I needed to do. I would like to thank my husband, also my first love and confidante: Andrew Bowens for loving me across time and space, for being my personal cheerleader, and always believing that no matter what I did I would be very successful at it. I would also like to thank Dr. Teresa Callahan, Dr. Louis Elias, and United States Air Force Retired Chief Master Sergeants Tommy Adkins and Russell Heidelberg for being my mentors and helping me to believe in reaching higher and achieving more through higher education. I would like to thank Dr. George Henderson for the inspiration to travel down a road less traveled by so many.

There are so many other people in my circle that have stuck with me throughout the years and it would be remiss of me not to say thank you and I love you to some of

you for all that you have given to me: Anthony Ward, Gladys Ward, Rowena Grant, Israel Broderick, Linda Wilkinson-Bradley, Deborah Wilkinson-Brown, Michael Hicks, Dwayne Bryant, Mike Gillison, Rodney Quick, Gary Sargent, Sherry Sargent, Aleshia Bailey, Alonzo Bailey, Mya Frost, Kira Bailey, Juiliano Bailey, Teresa Richardson, Robert Wynn, Lorenzo Bethea, Andre Robinson, Burnice Forte, Cynthia Laughlin, Brian Lake, Thomas Payne, Michella Cohen Thomas, Sara Brooks, Wheeler Hughes, Linda Brinson, Redento Johnson, Naomi Ellis, Weldon Grant, John T. Ward, Phalandra Ward-Guy, Joanna Aldridge, Cynthia Simmons, Wanda Mullins, Russell Mullins, Bennie Holland, Vennie Davis, Veronica Sanders, Michelle Chiles, Christia Thornton, Helen Rogers, Sylvia Jefferson, James Holland, Victor Franklin, Barry Jeter, Nathaniel Jett, Antonia Scialdo, Ricky Webb, Ron Richard, Henry Sykes, Don Owens, Bradley Belford, Tomeka Smith, Mildred Thomas, Alton Houston, Cynthia Williams, Jeff Williams, Gordon Barnett, Elida Barnett, Greg Bachhuber, Mark Flammer, Ronald Sarno, Fred Karkowski, Rick Kooima, Cheryl Jenkins, and Steve Tankersley.

Thank you for helping me to grow. My life has been better because you have all shared it with me. May God forever bless you and keep you in His care.

Table of Contents

List of Tables ...	iv
List of Figures...	v
Section 1: Introduction to the Study ...	1
Problem Statement.....	4
Nature of the Study	5
Research Questions.....	6
Purpose of the Study	6
Theoretical Framework.....	10
Definitions of Terms	14
Assumptions.....	16
Limitations	16
Scope and Delimitations	18
Significance of the Study.....	18
Summary	21
Section 2: Literature Review	24
Language and Reading.....	30
Explicit and Systematic Reading Instruction.....	35
Technology as a Learning Tool	39
Methodology	43
Summary	44

Section 3: Research Method	46
Research Design.....	47
Setting and Sample	48
Instrumentation and Data Collection	49
Researcher's Role	49
Threats to Validity and Reliability.....	52
Data Collection Procedures and Analysis.....	53
Ethical Standards	55
Summary	56
Section 4: Results.....	57
Statistical Analysis.....	58
Summary.....	62
Section 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations.....	63
Discussion.....	63
Interpretations	64
Conclusions.....	66
Implications for Social Change.....	69
Recommendations for Action	70
Recommendations for Further Study	71
Summary	73
References.....	74

Appendix A: Researcher-Developed Scrambled Words List 1	98
Appendix B: Researcher-Developed Scrambled Words List 2.....	99
Appendix C: Researcher-Developed Scrambled Words List 3.....	100
Appendix D: Researcher Developed Scrambled Words Vocabulary List	101
Appendix E: Researcher Developed Data Sheet.....	102
Curriculum Vitae	103

PREVIEW

List of Tables

Table 1. Computed Differences in Scores	59
Table 2. Paired Samples Statistics	60
Table 3. Pretest and Posttest Variance	60
Table 4. Paired Samples Test.....	61

PREVIEW

List of Figures

Figure 1. Repeated Measures Experimental Design	54
---	----

PREVIEW

Section 1: Introduction to the Study

Reading provides the major academic foundation for all school-based learning and does not develop naturally (Carver, 2000; Catts, & Kahmi, 2005; Gillet, Temple, & Crawford, 2004; Lerner & Kline, 2006; Lyons, 2003; Nation, 2005; National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000; Nevills & Wolfe, 2009; O'Connor & Bell, 2004; Pinnell & Fountas, 2009; Rego, 2006; Ruddell, 2009; Sadoski, 2004; Scarborough, 1993; Snowling, 2005; Triller, 2002; Velluntino, Scanlon, Sipay, Small, Chen, Pratt, & Denckla, 1996). The National Reading Panel reported that about 1 million children encounter reading problems during the first 3 years in school (as cited in Lerner & Kline, 2006; National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000). Reading must be taught through different strategies and methods of instruction. Lerner and Kline believed children must learn to read in order to read to learn. I wanted to determine if using the scrambled words reading strategy increased the sight word vocabulary of struggling readers in the primary grades. Afflerbach, Pearson, and Paris (2008) and McKenna and Stahl (2009) agreed that reading strategies are deliberate, goal-directed attempts to control and modify the reader's efforts to decode text, understand words, and construct meanings from text.

Struggling readers who have not learned the basic reading skills or developed an adequate sight word vocabulary by third grade face many challenges within the school environment (Lerner & Kline, 2006; Pinnell & Fountas, 2009). Chapman and King (2003) agreed that one of the teacher's greatest challenges is to provide ability-level resources and materials to match the student's ability and knowledge level. Lyons (2003)

asserted challenges can be motivating to students, stimulate curiosity, and help them to develop capabilities to learn new things. One way to do this was to differentiate instruction by creating opportunities for students to be successful. Chapman and King proposed using varied strategies to provide higher-order thinking skills and mind-challenging activities to help students learn new information.

Legislative reformers and educational researchers have continued to discuss ways to help at-risk children with specific reading difficulties learn to read in the primary grades. The National Institute for Literacy (2008) and Schumm and Arguelles (2006a) identified literacy failure as a major social problem that hindered educational and life choices for people. Lerner and Kline (2006) and the National Commission on Teaching (1996) asserted there was little room for those who cannot read, write, or compute proficiently; find and use resources; frame and solve problems; or learn new technologies, skills, and occupations in today's society.

Vocabulary instruction is essential to effective reading instruction. Students may learn new vocabulary words through different teacher-created activities such as drill and isolated practice, in context, sequencing, guided reading, or other strategies. The child is expected to learn to read, graduate from high school, and live independently within mainstream society (Lerner & Kline, 2006). This does not happen for every child who enters through the school doors. Some struggling readers experience failure after failure even when exposed to local curriculum standards (Bender, 1996; Bender & Larkin, 2003; Carnine, Silbert, Kameenui, & Tarver, 2004; Carver, 2000; Friend & Bursuck, 2002; Gillet et al., 2004; Goldsworthy, 1996; Hammill & Bartell, 2004; Henley, Ramsey, &

Algozzine, 2002; May & Rizzardi, 2002; Olsen & Platt, 20004; Pinnell & Fountas, 2009; Prater, 2007; Raymond, 2008; Robinson, Patton, Polloway, & Sargent, 1998; Gillet et al., 2004). One area struggling readers continually have difficulty with is early literacy development in the primary grades. The struggling reader may have difficulty learning the letters of the alphabet, the letter sounds for each letter, or developing an adequate sight word vocabulary to enable them to read on the appropriate grade level by third grade (Ehri & Snowling, 2004).

Numerous teaching methods and various strategies are employed to teach struggling readers how to read. Teachers have to decide which methods or strategies to use for reading instruction. Carnine et al (2004) and Tarver (2004) showed that struggling readers can be successful using explicit and systematic instruction. While many teachers still use whole group instruction to teach reading in the primary grades, Carnine et al. found that this method has not been successfully used to teach reading to struggling readers. The National Reading Panel (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000) and Lerner and Kline (2006) concurred children with reading disabilities need varied strategies to learn to read. In August 2010, 11 struggling readers in kindergarten to third grades knew an average of 39 sight words. By June 2011, these students knew an average of 85 sight words using the same tests. They learned an average of 46 new sight words for 2010-2011. In August 2011, 15 struggling readers knew an average of 65 sight words. There was a regression of 20 words. This difference could be attributed to the 10 new students which were added to the group. Four of the 11 students

tested in June 2011 moved to other schools within the district prior to August 2011.

Therefore, these scores were unavailable and could not be included in this average.

Problem Statement

The problem addressed in this study was the need to determine if using the scrambled words reading strategy would increase the sight word vocabulary of struggling readers in the primary grades. Reading and writing present a challenge for at-risk children in the primary grades (Pinnell & Fountas, 2009). This creates an instructional dilemma for the public school teacher who must bridge the gap between learning to read and a state-approved general education curriculum in the primary grades (Chapman & King, 2003; Lerner & Kline, 2003; National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000). Researchers have found that no single reading instructional approach has proven to be equally effective for all learners to acquire reading foundation skills in the primary grades (Bender, 2002; Carver, 2002; Hammill & Bartel, 2004; Lerch, & Stopka, 1992; Love & Litton, 1994; Lyons, 2003; Pinnell & Fountas, 2009; Polloway & Patton, 1997; Robinson et al., 1998). Bender and Larkin (2003) believed reading skills do not develop naturally within the brain and may be influenced by genetic and environmental factors. Bender and Larkin found that deficiencies in reading may be associated with timing problems, a lack of automaticities of letter-sound relationships, visual discrimination problems, language delays, auditory problems, or nonlanguage problems. Bender and Larkin agreed that reading is a teachable skill which is dependent upon the development of language.

Public school teachers in South Carolina school districts have suggested various reading programs to use for instructional remediation at the elementary school level. The public school teacher used the state-approved general education curriculum standards and determined what instructional methodologies to use to improve the reading achievement of struggling readers during the school year. The enrollment at the selected school was 377 students with over 20-30% of the students falling below the 25th percentile on the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) state-wide assessment tests.

One method currently used to learn new vocabulary words was student selected study with no teacher interaction to learn the words. The students chose the way they wanted to learn the new words. Students were given 10 to 20 vocabulary words each week by the teacher, told to write the words 3 times each, and wrote a sentence with each word. The students were given a spelling test each week to determine which words had been learned.

Nature of the Study

This repeated measures quantitative study could contribute to the body of knowledge and would provide another strategy to increase the sight word vocabulary for struggling readers in the primary grades. A more detailed discussion of reading and struggling readers is presented in the literature review in Section 2.

The participants for this study were selected from an urban school district in southeastern South Carolina. The research criterion for selection in the study was struggling readers in the primary grades. After the MAP scores were reviewed, only

struggling readers with the selection criteria who were below the 25th percentile in reading were selected to be included in the study. The results of the study could help educators provide more supportive curriculum accommodations to general education curriculum standards, provide educators with various reading strategies, include classroom modifications for struggling readers, decrease illiteracy among struggling readers in the upper grades, and eventually help increase the high school graduation rate within this state.

Research Question

Years of observations of children in public elementary schools and their struggles to learn to read piqued an interest in the study. Many questions continually arose during daily classroom activities about the acquisition of reading foundation skills and the effect on struggling readers in the primary grades. I investigated the following question: Does using the scrambled words reading strategy increase the sight word vocabulary in struggling readers in the primary grades?

H_0 : Scrambled words reading strategy makes no difference in sight word vocabulary for struggling readers in the primary grades.

H_1 : Scrambled words reading strategy does make a significant difference in sight word vocabulary for struggling readers in the primary grades.

Purpose of the Study

An adequate vocabulary is necessary in order to be a successful reader. Chapman and King (2003) contended that certain elements are keys to becoming a successful reader: diagnosis and treatment of specific reading problems, varied instruction,

purposeful tools and strategies, text-related materials, and an environment conducive to learning. Struggling readers have difficulty with vocabulary development. The purpose of this repeated measures quantitative study was to determine if the scrambled words reading strategy made a significant difference in sight word vocabulary for struggling readers in the primary grades. The quantitative data provided content analysis of whether the struggling reader would increase their sight word vocabulary by using the scrambled words reading strategy to teach and reinforce automaticity when identifying sight words in print materials.

Teachers should have knowledge about which instructional methods are effective for different students, grade level content, and how to teach or model teaching strategies (Chiappone, 2006; Cuevas, 2006; Friend & Bursuck, 2002; Gillet et al., 2004; May & Rizzardi, 2002; National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000; Rego, 2006; Schumm & Arguelles, 2006a, 2006b). Various instructional methods help to extend knowledge and create meaningful experiences within the school environment for all students. The constructivist paradigm helped to understand if the scrambled words reading strategy increased the sight word vocabulary of struggling readers in the primary grades.

For decades, researchers have reviewed the growth of special education programs, struggling readers, language disorders, and the need to educate students with reading disabilities (Bigge, 1971, 1982; Deiner, 1993; Ehri & Snowling, 2004; Goldsworthy, 1996; Hulme, 1981; Jorm, 1983; Love & Litton, 1994; Nation, 2005; O'Connor & Bell, 2004; Olson & Platt, 2004; Piaget, 1970; Reason & Boote, 1986; Robinson et al., 1998;

1998; Scarborough, 2005; Snowling, 2005; Strang, 1965; Triller, 2002). The purpose of this repeated measures quantitative study was to determine if using the scrambled words reading strategy increased the sight word vocabulary of struggling readers in the primary grades.

In 1997, Congress authorized the National Reading Panel to expound on the work of the National Research Council. The panel decided to conduct an extensive study of alphabetics, phonemic awareness instruction, phonics instruction, fluency, comprehension, vocabulary instruction, text comprehension instruction, teacher preparation, comprehension strategies instruction, teacher education and reading instruction, computer technology, and reading instruction (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000). The panel examined past studies to determine its applicability to the classroom and its effectiveness in learning to read. The panel identified vocabulary instruction as one of the five essential components of effective reading instruction. The general consensus of the panel continued to support previous theories that in order to read better, students needed to read more (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000).

The revised South Carolina Education Accountability Act of 2008 continued to support an accountability system to push schools and students towards higher performance which reflected the highest levels of academic skills to improve instruction and curriculum at unprecedented levels at each grade level (South Carolina Department of Education, 2010). South Carolina Regulation R43-234, Section 59-29-10 required the county board of education and the board of trustees for each school district to see that

reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, English grammar, and instruction in phonics were taught. A typical South Carolina elementary school contained kindergarten through grade five. If a school included kindergarten through grade six, it was considered elementary (South Carolina Department of Education, 2007).

Until 2005, many school districts in South Carolina used various instructional materials to teach struggling readers. Basal series were used in elementary schools throughout the state. In 2005, the South Carolina State Department of Education implemented this mandate: all academic interventions would be research-based (South Carolina Department of Education, 2007).

Since the 2005-2006 school years, schools that served students enrolled in only grade two and below were not required to do achievement testing. The educational focus for these age groups was on assisting with developmental tasks as well as the acquisition of content for the upper grades and teacher behaviors, classroom and school practices, and parental and child behaviors for school success (South Carolina Department of Education, 2007). Response-to-intervention (RTI) became the new framework used to meet the needs of at risk students (Lerner & Kline, 2006; Wanzek & Vaughn, 2007). This evidence-based approach would be aligned to the accountability guidelines of No Child Left Behind 2001 (Public Law 107-110) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (South Carolina Department of Education, 2007). These guidelines did not focus on using the discrepancy model or intelligence tests to determine academic responsiveness to instruction (Gerber, 2005; Hale, Kaufman, Naglieri, & Kavale, 2006;

Lerner & Kline, 2006; Velluntino et al., 1996). The new South Carolina State Board of Education guidelines were released during the summer of 2007.

Hale et al. (2006) described RTI as a process that involved the use of research-based interventions, progress monitoring of students, single-subject experimentation, and empirical decision making prior to referring students for a special education evaluation. The authors stated the focus of RTI was to provide children with preventative services through individualized adaptations, early identification, and remediation to optimize educational outcomes. Klingner and Edwards (2006) concurred that RTI held promise for preventing academic failures.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical basis for this study was the constructivist paradigm (Carnine et al., 2004; Hatch, 2002; Lambert, Walker, Zimmerman, Cooper, Lambert, Gardner, & Szabo, 2002). The constructivist theory is grounded in the works of the progressive educators Piaget, Montessori, Dewey, and Vygotsky. Hatch (2002) believed that researchers and participants in a study with a constructivist view were: joined together, involved in mutual engagement, and composed personal constructions about their experiences. May and Rizzardi (2002) concurred that everything a person learns should lead to further intuitive learning or a drive to want to learn at higher and higher levels. Lambert et al. (2002) and Gillet et al. (2004) agreed that ingrained within these experiences were the belief systems of educators in the learning process.

Dewey (1938) believed teachers are the agents which prepare the young for future responsibilities and success in life. Prior learning is segregated from the experience and