Collaborative Inquiry Project: Reading Assessment and Intervention

- **Course Number:** APL 341
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- **Date:** 2nd May 2019
- **Term:** Spring 2019

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INTRODUCTION

The main goal of this case study is to do an intervention after assessing the learner to find out what the learner is struggling with. The paper is focused primarily on the strategies that we have chosen to help the learner overcome the problem. The intends of the study is to see how the strategies helped or doesn't helped the learner to overcome the problem. In this case study, we will be introducing strategies that we used with the learner to help the learner with matching English alphabetic uppercases and lowercases. we have chosen this topic because it is important to help children to learn what they feel difficulty with to help them to become good readers in the future. And, it is important to teach lowercase letters as they are used a lot in everywhere and if the child did not learn them he or she will have difficulties on reading and writing, so it may affect child's interesting on reading and writing. This case study can help other people when choosing strategies to help their children who struggle with matching uppercase and the lowercase and to know that the help they will provide for a struggling child will help him or her to overcome the problem and improving his or her skills to become a good reader in the future.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this case study, we covered a very important area which focused on building at the intervention that fit student's weak area, and we tried to improve the student in this specific area. The area that we chose was the ability to match uppercase letters with lowercase letters. Matching uppercase letters with lowercase letters are important as it has a big role in building and improving learners, language skills. According to Bowles, Pentimonti, Gerde, & Montroy (2014) Letter name knowledge at a very young age is a predictor that this learner will have a strong reading ability in the future. Also, Alphabet knowledge considers being foundational for important skills such as reading and writing. It is common that young children show interest in learning the letters of the alphabet. Furthermore, among children at a young age, some learn the alphabet quickly, and some children need more time and support to learn the alphabet. This support can be done in many ways such as singing an alphabet song, playing with the alphabet Puzzles, reading alphabet books, and using sandpaper Letters. (Thayer, 2019)

The reading achievement of the first-year is depended on the ability of the child to recognizing and naming the uppercase letters as well as the lowercase letters of the alphabet. A child young learner with automatic recognition of letters in both cases will be having an easier time when learning word spelling and letter sounds that who does not learn about the alphabet letters in both cases. (Wood, & McLemore, 2001) According to Worder & Boetcher (1990) usually, young children appear to recognize letters with uppercase more than a letter with lowercase. It is indicated in many studies that letters with uppercase tended to be easier to learn than letters with lowercase. (Bowles, Pentimonti, Gerde, & Montroy, 2014) In addition, having knowledge of both letter names as well as shapes help the learner with most of the literacy skills. While not knowing the name of the letters is linked with learner's difficulty in learning things like the sound that the letter made, and in recognizing words. Moreover, it is very clear that children follow a sequence when learning about the alphabet that begins with letter names, then letter shapes, and finally letter sounds. Also, he recommends that when teaching young learner, it is more effective to sing an alphabet song and reciting rhyming words to learn the letter. Also, he recommended using alphabet books blocks, letters, to help the learner when learning the shape of each alphabet letters. (Reading Rockets, 2002)

METHODOLOGY

1)Learner:

Maria (anonymized name) is a young girl about 5 years old. She is smart, wants to learn things, likes to try new things, and she is a very active child. She is a student in the first grade at Alshoroq public kindergarten. Maria's first language is Arabic, and the books that she is choosing and the TV shows that she is watching are supporting her development on the Arabic. Now Maria can write and is aware of some written Arabic letters, and she likes to pretend that she is reading. Maria's school began with an English language program for children this year since September, and Maria's parents registered her on this program. Every Sunday and Monday, the teacher work with the children for one hour, they do many things such as; learning the alphabet, doing activities, playing songs about the alphabet and sometimes about each letter.

2) Intervention procedures:

To improve Maria's recognizing of the uppercase and lowercase letters, we used six strategies to help Maria recognize and learn to match uppercase with lowercase letters. For the first Activity, we will use an ABC book to introduce the letters to the child. By reading an ABC book with both the uppercase and the lowercase the child will understand the relationship between both letter cases. The second activity that we have chosen is uppercase lowercase letter matching puzzles. Where the child will be matching the pictures together and then recognize both uppercase and lowercase letters in the matching puzzle. Another strategy that we will use is, on a big paper we will print a letter of the uppercase and the lowercase in the top, with some words under them, and on the rest of the paper, we will print the uppercase and the lowercase letter. This activity can reinforce recognition of the letter of the day that the child is learning, and explore uppercase and lowercase form. For the forth Activity, we will be using salt trays to make it easier for the child to recognize the letter and to help with the writing process and help the child build her muscle memory. In the fifth activity, the child will be encouraged to point to the letter name that she hears by pointing to it by hitting the card that has the letter on, using the fly swatter to hit the correct fly, to help the child with alphabet recognition. To make sure that the child can match the letter with both uppercase and lowercase together, in the last activity we will do another puzzle game but this time with no picture, and with all the letters that we were teaching her in whole the week that are h, k, r, y, e, j, and g.

3) Data collection techniques & instruments Used for pre & post assessment:

Pre-assessment: The objective of this case study is to measure child's alphabet knowledge and the ability to recognize English alphabetic letters in both uppercase and lowercase. Therefore, we used an assessment sheet from (http://dibels.uoregon.edu/) and ask the child to name the letters she know while we go through the letters. Based on the results of the assessment we found that Maria Could not recognize many of the lowercase letters, and matching them with the uppercase letters. When assessing her with uppercase letters she got 26 out of 26, while when it comes to the lowercase letters she got 13 out of 26.

Post-assessment: Maria's post-assessment showed that she learned the 7 letters that we were working on and she was doing the assessment confidently. Also, to not make it hard and confused to Maria we did not include other letters that she has problems with include letters like, d, n, p, q, u, and b. For these letters, we recommend to teach them in more than 2 days for each letter because they have same shapes and most children have difficulties when learning them.

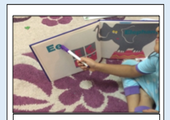
4) Data recording & organization methods:

The methods that were used to gather the data are asking questions, taking notes, and observation. The child was trying to tell the name of each letter in both lowercase and uppercase, we were taking notes of the letters that the child could recognize, and the ones that she could not recognize. Also, asking questions helped us to know the letters that the child know both forms of its uppercase and lowercase. When observing, the child acting when seeing each letter and by her acting, we could see what letters that she knows well and can recognize faster and what is less familiar, or the child tried hard to remember it. Also, using these methods were very effective when trying the sixth activities with the child as asking questions make the child think before acting, and have farther understanding. Also, by taking notes and observation we could see the child's reacting in each activity when made us see which activities are effective and what activities were not.

5) Data analysis methods:

We created tables in the result of both pre-assessment and post-assessment of the student's recognition and naming both uppercase and lowercase letters. The result on post-assessment shows that the student improved and that the student successfully learned the letters that she doesn't know before.

Pictures from the activities


Activity 1: Reading ABC story book.


Activity 2: Matching pictures, uppercase and lowercase letters.


Activity 3: Maria was identifying the lowercase of the letter e.

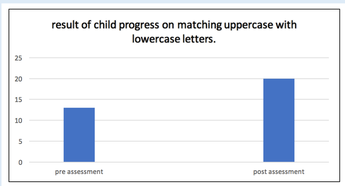

Activity 4: Sand trays strategy.


Activity 5: "swat the fly"


Activity 6: Matching lowercase letter with uppercase letter.

FINDINGS

We worked with the child for 2 weeks with letters include, h, k, r, y, e, j, and g. In each day, we worked with the child on one letter at the time by providing activities and strategies that helped the child overcome the problem. Based on the post-assessment, we can see the progress of the child on alphabet recognition when learning to match uppercase and lowercase letters.



DISCUSSION and RECOMMENDATIONS

The results and the findings shows that the activities that we used were very effective and that can clearly show in the child's performance and the results of the post-assessment. Through working on many activities, we have learned that children learn best when they are active, involving the using of their senses when working on the activity. Also, children learn best when the learning process is created like a game that the child has fun and enjoy his or her learning experience. We have learned that to teach a child a new letter or help the child in a letter that he or she has a problem with, we should provide a time that gives the child an opportunity to explore the world of each letter, we should be working on each letter and be sure that all the strategies support children's' learning style to create effective activities. The things that we did well on teaching Maria, are we choose activities that are on her level, the activities were fun and developmentally appropriate practices for a child at a young age. Also, the order of the activity was an effective order that starts by introducing the letter and ending by playing a game that gives the child opportunity to work with letters recognitions like puzzles and swat the fly game. The things that we could have done better are using strategies that help the child with more than matching lowercase and uppercase letter like for example, using strategies to teach the child the other letters that she is struggling with include the letters d, n, p, q, u, and b. In future, when we will become teachers we will choose activities that create a fun learning experience for children, and we will observe children when working on literacy activities to make sure that no one has an issue and if one of the children is struggling we will provide additional help. Moreover, our classroom will support children learning and as we learned the classroom environment should be a print-rich environment with lots of literacy props and other things that support literacy.

References