Case Study on Self-Regulated Strategy Development: COPS Strategy for a Second Grade Student with SLD

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Introduction

- Writing is a complex process which includes cognitive linguistic skills such as transcription, text generation, self-regulation, and memory. Students with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) can exhibit difficulty in any one of these skills and may require explicit instruction and scaffolding to engage in the writing process and to do so at multiple levels of language.
- According to Ritchey et al. (2016), the writing process centers around the Simple View of Writing (Berninger and Amtmann, 2003), and includes scaffolding and levels of language framework.
- One approach to writing instruction with substantial evidence is SRSD instruction whereby a student is taught six recursive phases: Develop background knowledge, Discuss it, Model it, Memorize it, Support it, and Independent performance (Graham & Harris, 2005).

Purpose

- The purpose of this case study was to provide an intensive intervention targeting mechanics and accuracy of writing in a second-grade student with SLD using an SRSD.
- The SRSD mnemonic was COPS, which stands for **C**apitalization, **O**rganization, **P**unctuation, and **S**pelling (Graham & Harris, 2005).
- COPS is a revision strategy that cues students to improve their writing by editing it for mechanics and accuracy.

References:
- Berninger, V.W., & Amtmann, D. (2003). Preventing written expression disabilities through early and continuing assessment and intervention for handwriting and/or spelling problems: research into practice. In H.L. Swanson, K. Harris, and S. Graham (Eds.) Handbook of Learning Difficulties (pp. 345-363), New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Graham, S. & Harris, K.R. (2005). Writing better: Effective strategies for teaching students with learning difficulties. Baltimore, MD: Brookes Publishing.
- Ritchey, K. D., McMaster, K. L., Al Otaiba, S., Puranik, C. S., Kim, Y-S., Parker, D. C., & Ortiz, M. (2016). Indicators of fluency writing in beginning writers. In K. Cummings, & Y. Petscher (Eds.), The fluency construct (pp. 21-66). Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Case Study

Student Descriptors

Age	9 years
Gender	Male
Grade	2nd Grade
IEP Qualifying Category	Specific Learning Disability
Classroom Mandate	Inclusion Classroom

Related Services

Speech-Language Therapy	Individual session 1x a week for 20 min
Occupational Therapy	Individual session 1x a week for 30 min

Intervention

This Intervention was provided 1x per week for 20 minutes in an individual sessions from May to June, for a total of 6 weeks. The intervention took place in a pull-out, speech therapy classroom.

Goals Targeted for Intervention

1. When responding to a story prompt, the student will produce a written narrative that includes appropriate subject-verb-object organization in 4 out of 5 sentences.
2. When responding to a story prompt, the student will use appropriate letter sizing and positioning in 80% of total letters.
3. When responding to a story prompt, the student will use capitalization in the first word of a sentence or in proper nouns in 4 out of 5 sentences.
4. When responding to a story prompt, the student will use appropriate punctuation in 4 out of 5 sentences.
5. When responding to a story prompt, the student will apply spelling strategies to spell words appropriately or phonologically in 4 out of 5 sentences.

Results

Measures	Pre-Assessment	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5	Session 6	Post-Assessment
% Capitalization	0.29	0.25	0.80	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.80	0.80
% Letters hanging below the line (g, j, p, q, y)	0.60	0.86	0.80	0.33	0.60	0.60	1.00	0.91
% tall letters (b, d, f, h, k, l, t)	0.50	0.72	0.67	0.58	0.50	0.77	0.74	0.84
% Complete Sentences	0.86	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
% Punctuation	0.29	0.50	0.86	0.80	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
% Spelling	0.89	0.76	0.91	0.87	0.59	0.73	0.92	0.77

***Values in red were targeted during that week's speech therapy session.

Quality Writing Rubric. From a scale of 1 to 5, the student's pre-assessment received an average quality rating of 3 and the post-assessment received an average quality rating of 3.25. Quality ratings were obtained in a blind manner from graduate SLP and OT students.

Summary

- This case study demonstrated the effectiveness of the COPS strategy on the mechanics and accuracy of the writing of a second-grade student with SLD.
- The greatest improvements were seen in capitalization and punctuation.
  - Capitalization accuracy increased from 29% in the pre-assessment to 80% in the post-assessment and punctuation accuracy increased from 29% in the pre-assessment to 100% in the post-assessment.
- Improvement was also made in writing organization (complete sentences and letter sizing and positioning).
- Spelling varied throughout the intervention due to different words used during each writing response.
- The quality of writing from the pre-assessment to the post-assessment increased from 3 to 3.25 which is significant, given that this intervention focused on superficial features of writing mechanics.

Conclusion

Conclusions:
- It is important for speech language pathologists to target writing mechanics because not only is it in their scope of practice, but writing is a form of expressive language.
- Additionally, literacy skills improve academic and occupational outcomes for students.

Limitations and Future Directions:
- To improve this intervention, it is recommended that direct instruction on spelling strategies occur during session 1 to allow for practicing the strategies and incorporating them into writing lessons across multiple sessions.
- At the end of the intervention, at least one session should be held in the classroom in order to promote generalization and carryover into multiple settings.