

A Comparative Study on the Effectiveness of Teacher-Assisted and Computer-Assisted Repeated Reading Training on Early Literacy Development of 6th Graders in Taiwan

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Abstract

The development of fluency is an essential stage in learning to read. One predictor of reading success is gaining reading fluency on instructional and grade-level text. In its narrowest form, reading fluency has been conceptualized as reading rate and accuracy (Archer, Gleason, & Vachon, 2003; Samuels, 1979; Torgesen, 2000; Torgesen, Rashotte, & Alexander, 2001). Empirical studies, though limited, conducted in an L1 context have endeavored to show that the Read Naturally fluency intervention program (Kemp, 2006; Tindal, 2006) is effective in increasing reading fluency. With the advent of the software edition of the Read Naturally program, it remains to be empirically shown the effectiveness of the computer-assisted modeled repeated oral reading on facilitating fluency. This study thus aims to compare the effects of computer-assisted repeated reading and teacher-assisted repeated reading training on early literacy development of elementary school students in Taiwan. The subjects of this study are 3 intact classes of six grade students from an elementary school in central Taiwan. They were given the Cambridge Young Learner English Test to establish their initial reading proficiency levels. The Dynamic Indicator of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) were used as the pretest and the posttest to measure their early literacy development (Coulter, Shavin, & Gichuru, 2009; Good & Kaminski, 2002, 2007; Hintze, 2004). Five Read Naturally grade-level passages were practiced over a 5-week period. The subjects were also given weekly assessments to monitor their fluency progress and their decoding problems. Running counter to the findings of previous studies, the results showed that the computer-assisted modeled repeated oral reading practice is particularly more effective than the teacher-assisted repeated reading in promoting Taiwanese sixth graders' reading accuracy. The positive effect is likely due to the vocabulary audio pronunciation function provided by Read Naturally software edition.