



Itinerant Teachers' Writing Instruction

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Topic & Purpose

The majority of deaf students are taught in public schools served by itinerant teachers of the deaf (ITODs). ITODs report that they typically provide instruction in the areas of language, reading, and writing. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to investigate: (1) how three ITODs implemented SIWI during their first year of using the framework within their unique contexts (i.e., a rural, an affluent, and an urban school district) and (2) what context-specific factors impact their writing instruction.

Data for this study included a combination of historical data collected during the participants' involvement in the experimental groups of large SIWI studies, as well as new data collected during the year following their participation. Historical data included videos of teachers' writing instruction, fidelity scores, artifacts, and end-of-the-year interviews. Additional data collected were interviews and observations. Instructional videos were analyzed using the SIWI fidelity instrument, and all teacher interviews were coded for common themes.

Study Outline

Findings

The three ITOD's writing instruction using SIWI was similar to classroom teachers in their first year of using SIWI, as measured by their fidelity scores. One instructional indicator, facilitating peer interaction, was not feasible when working with one student. Four types of context-specific factors were reported to impact ITOD's writing instruction: working with general education teachers, district-related factors, time, and physical space & organization. The ITOD's reflections revealed benefits to using SIWI in the itinerant setting; among them were: improved pacing, language instruction, responsiveness to students' needs, and more risk-taking by students during writing.

Because peer interaction is an important part of interactive instruction, exploring its application in the itinerant setting is needed. Factors reported to impact ITOD's writing instruction in this study match general barriers existing in research with ITODs. It is important for professional development (PD) opportunities to address these factors and for improved access to such PDs.

Ideas to Consider

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