



Does Strategic and Interactive Writing Instruction (SIWI) Work for Deaf Learners?: An Experiment

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Topic & Purpose

SIWI is built upon a cognitive and sociocultural framework and is directed by the strengths of deaf students. Prior research from quasi-experimental studies and single-case design studies indicates that SIWI has the potential to positively impact the writing of deaf students. The purpose of this study was to examine the efficacy of Strategic Interactive Writing Instruction (SIWI) across one academic year when compared to Business as Usual (BAU) instruction.

Teachers and their students were randomly assigned to treatment (SIWI) and BAU groups. There were 8 teachers and 43 students in the SIWI group, and 7 teachers and 36 students in the BAU group. SIWI teachers participated in a week of professional development during the summer, 2 days in the fall, 2 on-site school visits, and 8 online consultations during the academic year. SIWI teachers' faithfulness to the SIWI program averaged at 72%. Writing samples were collected from students across three genres of writing (i.e., recount, information report, and persuasive) at 9-weeks each. All writing samples across the three genres were analyzed for writing traits, language clarity, and language complexity.

Study Outline

Findings

Students in the SIWI group made significant gains in recount and information report writing compared to students in the BAU group. There was not a statistically significant difference between SIWI and BAU students' performance in persuasive writing, taught in the last nine weeks; however, there was a moderately strong experimental effect. The SIWI group showed gains in written language clarity and complexity that were not evident in the BAU group. Writing and language gains that were observed in the treatment group on the genre-based writing samples were also evident on the Woodcock-Johnson Broad Written Language III with a large effect size, 1.88.

SIWI holds considerable promise to positively impact the writing, language, and motivation of deaf elementary students compared to current approaches. SIWI creates a community of writers engaging collaboratively in writing activities with authentic purposes and audiences.

Ideas to Consider

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