

Fostering Student Independent Behaviors
During Reading Recovery Lessons

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(ABSTRACT)

This instructional study of fostering student independence while teaching them to read revealed how first grade students develop independent reading behaviors during their 18-22 weeks of instruction. The observations were made of three Reading Recovery teacher/student dyad behaviors during three videotaped lessons; one in the beginning of instruction, one near the middle of instruction and the last just before the students discontinued from their respective programs. Individual units of reading behaviors were identified and labeled as assisted, assisted dependent, assisted independent, or independent based on specific behaviors observed when miscues occurred. The questions guiding the study were directed at student behaviors, teacher behaviors, and student changes over time.

The data collected comprised transcripts of the taped sessions, daily lesson plans, running records, and results from scheduled Observation Survey assessments. The concept of independence was discussed as (1) a disposition for independence, (2) functional independence, (3) independence as a self-regulatory behavior, and (4) examples of how children contribute to and extend their learning independently.

When they began, the students, Title I students, were among the bottom 10% of readers in their classrooms. When they discontinued (graduated), they functioned as average readers in their classrooms. When the students were assessed again in June after Reading Recovery lessons had ended, they had maintained their gains. In addition each student had acquired an expanding disposition of independence that is expected to be maintained as learning continued. The findings suggest that fostering independence in tutorial settings accelerates learning and enables students to become average readers.

DEDICATION

Dedicated to
my parents
Nancy and Tom

(Captain and Mrs. James Thomas Reed)

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