Case study approach to diagnosis and remediation of reading and language arts difficulties.

This study examines the strengths and weaknesses of case studies in evaluating candidates’ understanding and application of diagnostic and remedial principles and techniques in a clinical setting. Research team: Clinical Faculty, Department of Reading and Language Arts

Impact of a Course in Diagnosis of Reading and Language Arts Difficulties on Reading Specialists’ Implementation of the Diagnostic Problem-Solving Process

How predictably profound and effective are students in the reading specialist certification strand in implementing the diagnostic problem-solving process? What are their strengths and weaknesses? In this aspect of the study we examine the impact of a course in diagnosis of reading and language arts difficulties, the first course of a 12-credit clinical sequence, on the preparation of Master of Science degree candidates in reading and language arts pursuing a reading specialist certification, in applying their knowledge of the principles of diagnosis and diagnostic problem-solving process on k-12 students. Participants were enrolled in a one semester, 3-credit course in diagnosis of reading and language arts difficulties that met once a week. The course provides students with an in-depth knowledge and understanding of research-based diagnostic frameworks and approaches, principles of diagnosis, diagnostic tools, and diagnostic problem-solving process. Students are also immersed in opportunities to apply these knowledge and understandings, specifically through a Case Study. Data sources include a Case Report, which is a student’s documentation of the diagnostic assessment, using a Case Report Format by Manzo, Manzo, & Albee (2004), Course Summary Reflections, and focus group interviews. A researcher-designed rubric that factored in the elements of sound diagnostic problem-solving process and aligned with the IRA Standards for Reading Professionals was applied to evaluate the Case Report. For data transcripts, content analysis (Bogden & Biklen, 1982; Guba & Lincoln, 1986) will be used. The researcher will design a coding procedure based on identifiable patterns from data sources that organized the data into representational categories and subcategories that will be identified by the researcher based on the principles of diagnosis, and the elements of a sound and effective diagnostic problem-solving process (Manzo, et al., 2004). Following qualitative procedures (Glaser, 1978), two members of the research team who also teach the clinical sequence courses will review the coding procedure, data analysis and interpretations to ensure the absence of subjectivity on the part of the researcher. The researchers will then meet to discuss their findings and interpretations, and to provide triangulation of data. NVivo7, a qualitative data analysis program will also be used. Results will be reported descriptively, identifying the areas of strengths and weaknesses of our candidates for reading specialist certification in implementing an effective diagnostic problem-solving process. Recommendations for course improvement will be discussed and implemented.
Impact of a Course in Remedial and Corrective Techniques in Reading and Language Arts on Reading Specialists’ Planning and Implementation of Remedial Intervention Programs

How predictably profound and effective are students in the reading specialist certification strand in planning and implementing remedial intervention programs for k-12 students? What are their strengths and weaknesses? In this aspect of the study we examine the impact of a course in remedial and corrective techniques in reading and language arts, the second course of a 12-credit clinical sequence, on the preparation of our Master of Science degree candidates in reading and language arts pursuing a reading specialist certification, in applying their knowledge of the principles and elements of sound and effective remedial intervention programs for k-12 students. Participants were enrolled in a one semester, 3-credit course in remedial and corrective techniques in reading and language arts that met once a week. The course provides students with an in-depth knowledge and understanding of research-based remedial intervention frameworks and approaches, principles of remediation, remedial techniques and methods, and authentic instructional literacy strategies. Students are also immersed in opportunities to apply these knowledge and understandings, specifically through a Case Study. Data sources include a Case Report (complete diagnosis and remediation), using a Case Report Format by Manzo, Manzo, & Albee (2004), Course Summary Reflections, and focus group interviews. For the purpose of this study data focusing on student’s documentation of plans and implementation of remedial intervention programs were used. Similar to the data analysis procedures described in the earlier section, a researcher-designed rubric that factored in the elements of sound remedial intervention process and aligned with the IRA Standards for Reading Professionals will be applied to evaluate the Case Report. For data transcripts, content analysis (Bogden & Biklen, 1982; Guba & Lincoln, 1986) will be used. The researcher will design a coding procedure based on identifiable patterns from data sources that organized the data into representational categories and subcategories that have been identified by the researcher based on the principles of remediation, and the elements of a sound and effective remedial intervention program (Manzo, et al., 2004). Thus, the appropriateness of the remedial intervention program based on diagnosis of the child’s reading and language arts difficulties will be included in the categories. Following qualitative procedures (Glaser, 1978), two members of the research team who also teach the clinical sequence courses will review the coding procedure, data analysis and interpretations to ensure the absence of subjectivity on the part of the researcher. The researchers will then meet to discuss their findings and interpretations, and to provide triangulation of data. NVivo7, a qualitative data analysis program will also be used. Results will be reported descriptively, identifying the areas of strengths and weaknesses of our candidates for reading specialist certification in implementing sound and effective remedial intervention programs. Recommendations for course improvement will be discussed and implemented.

Impact of Clinical Experience of Reading Specialists on K-12 Student Literacy Learning

What is the impact of intensive clinical experience in diagnosis and remediation for students in the reading specialist certification strand on the literacy learning of k-12 students? In this aspect of the study we examine the impact of an intensive clinical
experience in reading and language arts on the literacy learning of k-12 students. Participants are Master of Science degree candidates in reading and language arts pursuing a reading specialist certification, who were enrolled in a one semester, 6-credit course in clinical practices in reading and language arts, the third and last course of a 12-credit clinical sequence, that met twice a week. In this course participants work one-on-one with k-12 students in providing intensive remedial intervention that appropriately meets students’ literacy needs. Data sources include a Case Report, using a Case Report Format by Manzo, Manzo, & Albee (2004), Course Summary Reflections, instructor’s observations, pre- and post-assessments of k-12 students in the program, and interviews with these k-12 students and their teachers in school. Similar to the data analysis procedures described in the earlier sections, the researcher will apply the rubrics that were developed to evaluate Case Reports in diagnosis and remediation to the Case Report in clinical practices. For data transcripts, content analysis (Bogden & Biklen, 1982; Guba & Lincoln, 1986) using a modified coding procedure based on the two coding procedures developed to evaluate the data transcripts in diagnosis and remediation that factored in the elements of sound diagnostic problem-solving and remedial intervention processes and aligned with the IRA Standards for Reading Professionals will be applied. Analysis of data transcripts will follow similar procedures as described in the earlier sections to determine the appropriateness of the diagnostic problem-solving process and the planning and implementation of remedial intervention programs in addressing the child’s reading and language arts difficulties. The pre- and post-assessment results will also be used to determine the impact of intensive remedial intervention programs on student literacy learning. Results will be reported descriptively. Recommendations for improvement of course and clinical sequence will be discussed and implemented.

References