Author: Fong, Pei Yi
Title: Evaluating a reading comprehension curriculum and factors predicting reading comprehension performance
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Abstract

The current study comprises two parts. The first is part of an on-going study at the Dyslexia Association of Singapore to monitor the progress of students undergoing literacy intervention with an enhanced reading comprehension curriculum. The reading comprehension performance of primary school students with dyslexia (n = 42) was monitored at three time-points (Time 1: baseline, Time 2: pre-enhanced curriculum and Time 3: post-enhanced curriculum) over the course of two years. Analysis of variance revealed significant improvement in reading comprehension performance from Time 1 to Time 2 and Time 1 to Time 3, but no significant difference between Time 2 and Time 3. Significant improvements were observed only in students with weaker verbal ability from Time 1 to Time 2 whereas students with stronger verbal ability showed no significant changes in reading comprehension performance over time. The second part of the study explored the ability of cognitive factors, namely verbal ability, non-verbal ability, phonological awareness, working memory and rapid naming ability, to predict concurrent (n = 31) and future reading comprehension performance at the end of one (n = 48) and two years (n = 44). There were neither significant correlations between rapid naming ability and reading comprehension performance at any of the time-points, nor between phonological awareness and future reading comprehension performance after one and two years. Verbal ability was a consistent and significant predictor of reading comprehension at the three time-points. Phonological awareness significantly correlated with concurrent reading comprehension performance but did not significantly predict it. Non-verbal ability and working memory significantly correlated with reading comprehension at all time-points but were not significant predictors of reading comprehension across time. Implications and future considerations for reading
comprehension intervention are discussed, and theoretical implications with regard to the Simple View of Reading are considered as well.