The Effects of Self-Regulated Strategy Development on the Writing Process for Grade 11 Students With Mild/Moderate Specific Learning Disabilities

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ABSTRACT
The purpose of this study was to observe the relationship between executive function and the writing process. Students with learning disabilities typically display signs of executive dysfunctions which can make completing a lengthy synthesis writing assignment difficult. The data from this study was collected from students, through executive function assessments, student work samples, and student reflections on tracking sheets. The data was analyzed by evaluating students’ responses to the targeted executive function assignments. The results from this study will also address the strategies that instructors must use to help students with learning disabilities complete these writing assignments. The goal of the study is to explore how students with learning disabilities can be helped through strengthening their executive functions.

THEORETICAL BASES
The theoretical bases for this study was founded on the learning theory of metacognition. Flanders (1993) identified self-talk as one of the elements of metacognition as a knowledge of cognition and regulation of cognition. The findings of Kahn, & Foster, (2013) show that the strategies are intended to help students complete their writing assignments. The strategies are intended to help students complete their writing assignments.

BACKGROUND
The synthesis writing process includes combining a number of variables into a coherent whole. This process is the basis for the writing that happens in today’s United States classroom. The California Common Core English Language Arts Standards require that a student write a clear and complete, longer, and of higher quality. Planning time and writing time also increased (Negretti, 2012).

LITERATURE REVIEW
Kellogg (2008) argues that “learning to become an accomplished writer is parallel to becoming an expert in any other complex cognitively-dense domains.” Negretti & Flanders (2013) focus on the studies on executive function. The results of this study were that executive function strategies can help students complete the writing assignments.

INSTRUCTION PHASE
Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) is a model of writing strategies paired with self-regulation strategies to help students with learning disabilities complete their writing assignments. The model is designed to help teachers scaffold students with learning disabilities into the writing process.

Step 1: Develop Background Knowledge
The teachers must identify the skills students will need to complete a particular strategy.

Step 2: Discuss
The teacher and the students explore how and when to apply the strategy, whether the strategy can be generalized to other tasks, and how the students will benefit from the strategy.

Step 3: Model The Teacher models the writing process
- A definition of the problem (”I must write an essay in eight parts.”)
- A focus on planning and organizing (“I need to organize.”)
- Implementation of the strategies (“I know what to do. I am going to use the first strategy.”)
- Self-evaluation and modification (“I think of all of the steps of the strategy. I have not used one.”)
- Self-control (“I can do this. I am going to do down and take my time.”)
- Positive reinforcement (“I made this part of my essay.”)

Step 4: Motivate
The students participate in fun, engaging activities that assist them in memorizing the steps of the strategy and the actions involved in completing each step.

Step 5: Support
The teacher supports the students as they apply the writing and self-regulation strategies during a guided writing task.

Step 6: Independent Work
- Students identify opportunities to use the writing strategies and self-regulation strategies in other situations.
- Teachers create homework assignments requiring the students to use the strategies in other contexts.
- Students evaluate the success of their efforts.

REFERENCES

METHODS
The sample used was both a convenience and a purposeful sample. The students are all my current students, but the data was only collected from students with learning disabilities.

DATA ANALYSIS
For the first research question, the students had administered a rating scale questionnaire. Students responses yielded valid values for various areas of executive functions. Students rated each area from a scale of 1-7. The means were then compared to determine which executive functions were used most frequently.

For the second research question, the effects of implementing the SRSD will be assessed using a mixed-effects model. The mixed-effects model will be used to examine the effects of the SRSD on student writing performance. The mixed-effects model will allow us to examine the effects of the SRSD on student writing performance.

KEY TERMS
Executive functions: The ability to plan, organize, and monitor one’s own thoughts and actions. Time management: The ability to manage time effectively. Metacognition: The ability to think about one’s own thinking.