SELECTING AND PREPARING INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS FOR PRE-SCHOOLERS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

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Research has acknowledged the importance of early childhood education for children aged between birth and six years of age who have deviated from the norm in terms of physical, cognitive, social, emotional and adaptive developments. Theories such as behaviourism, constructivism and ecology have made great contributions towards this field in terms of teaching strategies and methods. These strategies and methods comprise the value-based and empirical-based practices that are known as recommended practices for early childhood special education. Application of these practices in educating children with learning disabilities has been proven to enhance their performance. Recommended practices are implemented using a variety of instructional materials. However, certain criteria have to be adhered to when selecting, preparing and using instructional material for children with learning disabilities. This study looked at how three teachers assessed the students, and how they planned and implemented the lessons in their pre-schools for children with learning disabilities. However, for the purpose of this paper, only the selection and preparation of instructional materials is discussed. Suitable for the students and/or the objective of the lesson, quality as well as the safety features was the common criteria for the selection and/or preparation of instructional materials among the three teachers. Some other criteria also considered were multi-dimensional use of the material, its cost effectiveness and how much time was saved through using the specific instructional material. Although the three participants adhered to some of the criteria stated in the recommended practices when selecting and preparing instructional material they varied in how they implemented them in practice.

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