

IMPACT OF REMEDIAL READING INTERVENTIONS ON A SECONDARY
STUDENT WITH EMOTIONAL BEHAVIOR DISORDER: A CASE STUDY

by

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Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

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ABSTRACT

Students who struggle with emotional behavior disorders (EBD) often enter high school with reading levels far below those of their peers. At the secondary level, these at-risk students must regularly read and write proficiently in order to demonstrate their literacy achievement and potential for success either in college or on the job. As a result, many EBD students choose to drop out of school instead of daily feeling that they do not measure up. This instrumental qualitative case study examined the impact of the five essential components of reading instruction, teacher modeling, repeated readings, and progress monitoring on the disruptive and antisocial behaviors of a student with EBD.

Descriptors: Emotional Behavior Disorder, reading intervention, reading instruction, disruptive and antisocial behaviors

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM)

Emotional Behavior Disorder (EBD)

Grade Equivalents (GE)

In School Suspension (ISS)

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

National Reading Panel (NRP)

No Child Left Behind (NCLB)

Opportunities To Respond (OTR)

Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS)

Phonemic Awareness (PA)

Words Correct Per Minute (WCPM)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Background

Students with emotional/behavioral disorders (EBD) often present behavioral issues during academic instruction (Benner, Nelson, Ralston, & Mooney, 2010). These students typically exhibit: (a) an inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors; (b) an inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers; (c) inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances; (d) a general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; and (e) a tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems (Individuals With Disabilities Education Improvement Act, 2004, 34 CFR 300 8(c) 4). As a result of these behaviors, scholars have noted that “middle and high school teachers can expect secondary students verified with emotional disturbance to have reading deficits” (Mooney, Benner, Nelson, Lane, & Beckers, 2008, p. 3).

Other researchers reported that 31% to 81% of students with EBD have reading delays ranging from one-half year to 2 years behind expected reading levels (Epstein, Nelson, Trout, & Mooney, 2005). Furthermore, studies found that the combination of “academic deficits and associated behavioral difficulties that typifies students with EBD are a strong predictor of problems throughout life” (Scott & Shearer-Lingo, 2002, p. 167). For example: (a) an estimated 62% of EBD students identified in the ninth grade will drop out; (b) 70% of these drop outs will be arrested within three years; and (c) all are at a much higher risk of jail, unemployment, involvement with social services, and criminal drug use (Scott & Shearer-Lingo, 2002). Representing between 2% and 20% of the school-age population (Lane, Kalberg, & Shepcaro, 2009), EBD students have behavioral, social, and academic deficits that not only affect their success in school (Falk

&Wehby, 2005), but also result in longer delays in securing employment after graduation, lower percentages of employment, and poorer employment rates overall (Jolivet, Stichter, Nelson, Scott, & Liaupsin, 2000).

Problem Statement

“Students with EBD experience difficulty in the educational environment at two levels: behaviorally and academically” (Payne, Marks, & Bogan, 2007, p. 3). Behavior and academic difficulties are reciprocal in nature with problem behaviors leading to disturbances in key academic engagement skills necessary for reading acquisition such as attending to instruction, classroom participation, and assignment completion. Whether the behaviors lead to reading deficiencies or reading deficiencies lead to the behaviors, without these academic skills, 31% to 81% of students with EBD enter high school with reading levels from about one-half year to 2 years below grade level (Mooney et al., 2007).

Secondary school students with EBD are immersed in literacy throughout the school day with students being required to regularly read and write proficiently in order to display their literacy achievement (Benner et al., 2010). When discussing these literacy challenges, Mooney et al. (2007) stated the following:

Reading rich environments require short stories and novels to read, comprehend, and analyzed; civics and science texts whose content must be mastered; math problems that must be understood and then successfully solved; and even high-stakes tests that must be passed for advancement or graduation to take place. (p. 3)

Daily academic activities provide EBD students with few opportunities for positive reinforcement of academic behaviors. Over time, the student begins to view academic

activities as negative stimuli and begin to engage in avoidance behaviors that cause them to fall even further behind (Payne, et al., 2007).

Beck, Burns, and Lau (2009) report that “the result of this cycle of failure can be educationally catastrophic in that more than 50% of students diagnosed as emotionally or behaviorally disordered drop out of school” instead of daily facing the fact that they do not measure up” (p. 91) Regrettably, outcomes do not improve after EBD students leave high school as illustrated by employment difficulties, involvement with the juvenile justice system, limited community involvement, and high rates of mental health services (Lane, et al., 2009).

There is an urgency to provide effective reading interventions for secondary students with EBD in order to reduce the disruptive and antisocial behaviors associated with poor academic performance in reading. Therefore, the problem of this study is the impact of selected remedial reading interventions on a secondary student with emotional behavior disorder. Existing studies show that supplemental reading instruction for EBD students produces mixed results, creating more uncertainty in this area (Lane, 2004). For that reason, it is important to examine the impact of reading interventions on the disruptive and antisocial behaviors of secondary students with EBD to ensure that these students have the reading skills necessary to graduate from high school.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this instrumental case study was to examine how reading interventions impacted the disruptive and antisocial behaviors of a secondary student with EBD. This case study examined the impact of the five essential components of reading instruction, plus teacher modeling, repeated readings, and progress monitoring on the disruptive and antisocial behaviors of a student with EBD. The antisocial and

disruptive classroom behaviors include, lack of student engagement, poor communication skills, and deficient interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers. These social skills are seen as essential to success in both the classroom and on the job and greatly contribute to overall quality of life.

The findings of this study will provide insight to educators into the impact of reading interventions on the overall behaviors of students with EBD. A reduction in anti-social behaviors provide EBD students with a more positive school experience, thus leading to a reduction in the high dropout rates among this segment of the population. Successful completion of high school can provide EBD students with the academic and social skills necessary for positive lifelong outcomes.

Research Questions

The following questions guided this study:

1. How do reading interventions impact the disruptive and antisocial behaviors of a ninth grade student with EBD?
2. How does a high school student with EBD respond to reading interventions?
3. How do changes in high school EBD student on-task behaviors, communication skills, and interpersonal relationships occur with peers and teachers?
4. How do reading interventions impact a high school EBD student's self-confidence?

Significance of the Study

Research literature has documented the relationship between academic underachievement and EBD (Lembke, 2006; McDaniel, Duchaine, & Jolivette, 2010; Wehby, Falk, Barton-Arowood, Lane, & Cooley, 2003). However, researchers and

practitioners in recent times have focused primarily on the behavior management and emotional adjustment for students with EBD instead of their academic deficiencies (Vaughn, Levy, Coleman, & Bos, 2002). Known as a keystone skill, reading is a prerequisite for all content areas at the secondary level and mastering this skill is necessary for proficient work at the high school level (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2005). Students with deficient reading abilities quickly fall behind their classmates and become victims of what researchers referred to as the “Matthew Effect” from the Bible where “rich readers become richer and poor readers become poorer” (Benner et al., 2010, p. 86). Without effective intervention strategies, students with EBD who struggle with reading are not only at a greater risk of experiencing negative results while in school, but will continue to struggle with the long-term outcomes of drop out, incarceration, and lifelong unemployment (McDaniel et al., 2010).

In 2010 Gage, Lewis, and Adamson reported an increase in the number of research articles addressing the specific needs of EBD students with reading deficits; a gap in research still remains for reading interventions at the secondary level. Because little research has been conducted on secondary students with comorbid reading and behavioral difficulties (Lane, 2004), the present study could provide administrators and teachers with insight into the impact of reading interventions on the disruptive and antisocial behaviors associated with EBD. More importantly, the long-term benefits for individual student outcomes could be realized in better quality of life through improved employment opportunities, advanced training, and civic participation (The National Association of State Board of Educators, 2006, p. 8).

Delimitations and Limitations

Limitations. According to Creswell (2007) a single instrumental case study allows the researcher to “focus on an issue or concern and then select one bounded case to illustrate this issue” (p. 74). While this form of exploratory research can provide valuable insight into an issue affecting a small segment of the EBD population, limitations exist. According to Flyvbjerg (2006) the case study lacks representativeness and rigor in the collection, construction, and analysis of its empirical materials. This lack of rigor could lead to the problem of bias in this study due to the extent to which the student and staff members are able to express their views and opinions truthfully. While the ability of the research participant to remain objective and detached was a concern due to day-to-day interactions with the student, Denscombe (2003) noted that the researcher’s identity, beliefs, and values are always an integral part of any research analysis.

Additionally, the issue of generalizability of findings may have existed as this within-site case study focused on a single student. However, readers should be able to learn from the narrative description and be able to transfer this knowledge to other teaching situations. Flyvbjerg (2006) noted that the single case studies and experiments of Galileo, Newton, Einstein, Bohr, Darwin, Marx and Freud advanced both human and natural sciences. Flyvbjerg (2006) also argues that generalizations based on large samples are overestimated in their contribution to the body of scientific knowledge.

Delimitations. This research explored a bounded system, one ninth grade EBD student with delayed reading ability, within a single self-contained EBD high school program. Representing only 2% to 20% of school-age children, students with EBD are much more likely to be served in the separate school setting. Bradley, Henderson, and Monfore (2004) reported that approximately one-third (31%) of all children with EBD

are served in a more restrictive setting. This research used a case study design due to the unusually small EBD population that exists within the public school setting for the study.

Research Plan

For the single instrumental case study, Creswell (2007) maintains the researcher should “focus on an issue or concern, and then select one bounded case to illustrate the issue” (p. 74). This single instrumental case study examined how reading interventions impacted the disruptive and antisocial behaviors of a secondary student with EBD. The researcher evaluated archival documents and records, observations, and physical artifacts. This study used the instrumental case study design so that an in-depth understanding of the viewpoints of the participants could be better understood.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The purpose of this instrumental case study was to investigate how reading interventions impacted the disruptive and antisocial behaviors of a secondary student with EBD. With the limited research that has been conducted on reading interventions at the secondary level, middle and high school teachers are uncertain about what reading interventions will reduce the disruptive and antisocial behaviors associated with EBD. Specifically, this chapter will provide an understanding of the theoretical framework that guided this study as well a review of the related literature relevant to this study, including reading characteristics of secondary students with EBD, a discussion of reading instruction, an examination of effective reading interventions, and a review of similar studies related to reading and EBD.

Theoretical Framework

Challenging behaviors. There are a variety of theories that have developed to explain the behaviors of students who struggle with EBD. These theories include: (a) the psychoanalytic model (Freud, 1946), which states that pathological development is largely due to unresolved psychological conflict; (b) social learning theory, which proposes that behavior problems are due to environmental factors (Watson, 1913; Skinner, 1953); and (c) biological theory, which asserts that emotional and behavioral disorders are due to physical attributes that lead an individual to act badly (Christensen et al., 2005).

Current theory in the study of youth with EBD is the developmental psychopathology theory. According to Wicks-Nelson and Israel (2003), “Developmental psychopathology is a general framework for understanding disordered behavior in

relation to normal development. It acts as a way of integrating multiple perspectives or theories around a core of developmental issues and questions” (p.22). The developmental psychopathological theory asserts that emotional and behavioral problems are the result of multiple factors leading to multiple causes of behavior. The developmental psychopathological theory allows teachers of EBD students to understand the relationship between the student’s history, current environments, behavior styles, and the interventions designed for effective treatment (Jones, Dohrn, & Dunn, 2004).

Reading theory. Psychological theories and the sociopolitical events of the past are evident in the development of current theories of reading. The two main types of reading instruction that evolved are whole language and phonics (Alexander & Fox, 2004). Phonics draws heavily on the behaviorist theory that is associated with the psychologist B.F. Skinner and relies on Freire’s Banking Model of education where teachers deposit information and skills into students. Considered a bottom-up approach, phonics focuses on teaching the student to decode the meaning of the text (Smith, 1998). Gestalt theory, constructivist learning theory, and psycholinguistic theory are credited with the development of whole language reading theory. In Gestalt theory, holistic concepts and top-down processing led to a focus on word recognition and comprehension through context clues, while the constructivist learning theory stressed the impact of prior knowledge and the need for children to be exposed to large amounts of vocabulary, literature and reading (Alexander & Fox, 2004).

Phonics instruction was used by the ancient Greeks who taught reading by first teaching the letters and the letter-sound relationships (Emans, 1968). By the mid-1800s, the educational reformer Horace Mann criticized this phonics approach to reading instruction and advocated the whole word approach (Burnett, 2007). From the late 1800s

to the early 1900s, the pendulum had swung back towards the skills and drills phonics based instruction found in the McGuffey and Beacon basal readers (Collins & Parris, 2008). However, by the late 1930s, reading instruction returned to the more repetitive, highly predictable sight words found in Scott Foresman's *Dick and Jane* reading books (Spiker, 1998).

During the 1950s, the baby boom children entered school and created an increase in the number of children with reading difficulties. As a result, Rudolph Flesh, author of the 1955 book *Why Johnny Can't Read*, recommended the use of systematic phonics instruction over the use of current basal readers asserting that the basal readers did not adequately prepare children to read (Reyner, 2008).

Flesh's efforts to bring attention to the inadequacies of whole language caused the pendulum to swing back toward phonics instruction in the 1960s. During the 1970s, one of the main methods of teaching reading and correcting reading problems was through behavioral principals of systematic phonics instruction. According to Devaney (2011), "learning to read was broken down into its component skills and each skill was taught as a link in the chain of learning" (p.7). Reading problems were treated as problems in skill achievement and reading was seen as a perceptual activity. While phonics examined the relationships between the perceptions of sounds and symbols and became the preferred method of reading instruction (Alexander & Fox, 2004), it missed the comprehension piece and reading instruction became lost in worksheets.

In the 1980s, educators rebelled against the skills and drills worksheets that were part of the phonics curriculum and returned to the whole language approach. The program credited with spreading the whole language approach throughout American schools during the 1980s was known as Reading Recovery (Rodgers, McGee, & Pinnell,

2010). Drawing upon both phonics and whole-language theory, Reading Recovery served as a transmission device to the balanced approach of the 1990s where phonics skills and comprehension were taught simultaneously (Lemann, 1997). Along with the new millennium came the implementation of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of (2001). Instead of creating lessons based on a specific philosophy or approach, this federal law required teachers to use information provided by research based practices to create instructional strategies that would meet the needs of individual students (Kim, 2008).

Characteristics of EBD students. The National Association of Special Education Teachers (NASSET) (2008) defined the standard required for EBD eligibility under IDEA criteria. Emotional disturbance is 1 of 12 disability categories specified under IDEA. The term emotional disturbance means a condition exhibiting one or more of the following: (a) an inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors; (b) an inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers; (c) inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances; (d) a general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; and (e) a tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems (Individuals With Disabilities Education Improvement Act, 2004, 34 CFR 300.8(c) 4). These characteristics must be exhibited over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affect a child's educational performance.

Representing between 2% and 20% of the school-age population, many educators find EBD students among the most challenging students to teach (Lane, et al., 2009). According to Kauffman (2005), the behavioral, social, and academic deficits of EBD student's greatly impair their social skills and lead to strained relationships with teachers

and peers. Among the most difficult behaviors for teachers to manage within the classroom setting are the antisocial behaviors (McGrath, 2005) and disruptive behaviors (Theodore, 2004) exhibited by EBD students.

Antisocial behaviors. According to Kauffman and Landrum (2009), the antisocial behaviors associated with EBD are among the most serious disabilities in the EBD category. Antisocial behaviors include “hostility towards others, aggression, a willingness to commit rule infractions, defiance of adult authority, and violation of the social norms and mores of society” (Walker, Colvin, & Ramsey, 1995, p. 2). Zions, Zions, and Simpson (2002) assert that when in the classroom, students with antisocial behaviors will show disregard for rules or policies, challenge adults who are in positions of authority, bully peers, and engage in verbal and physical aggression toward others.

Disruptive behaviors. Another category of behaviors associated with EBD are the disruptive behaviors that are exhibited in the classroom setting. During academic situations, Salomon (2006) discovered that students with EBD often engage in impulsive and uncontrollable behaviors, frequently fall off-task, and consistently defy classroom rules. Additionally, Gunter, Coutinho, and Cade (2002) noted that 70% of a student’s academic day is spent in independent academic work. Teachers reported that these independent work times are periods when EBD students struggle with social behaviors (Salomon, 2006). During this independent work time, Kostewicz, Ruhl, and Kubina (2006) established that EBD students are aggressive, unruly and off task. A study by Gunter, Coutinho, and Cade (2002) found that due largely to the frequency of problematic behaviors, teachers report that they often become frustrated with EBD students and spend less time engaging these students in instruction and more time addressing their inappropriate behaviors. According to Salmon, (2006) this reduction in

instruction exacerbates both social interaction and academic performance problems and has resulted in this group of students having the lowest grade-point average of all students with disabilities, with approximately 50% failing one or more classes per year. In particular, Wehby et al. (2003) argued that students who struggle with EBD most often exhibit deficiencies in academic functioning in the area of reading.

Furthermore, Sutherland, Lewis-Palmer, Stichter, and Morgan (2008) discovered that EBD students spent less time attending to lessons and complying with group directions; displayed higher rates of aggressive and out-of-seat and noise making type behaviors; and had higher rates of negative interactions with teachers and peers. These high rates of problem behaviors are the root cause of negative patterns of interactions between the EBD students and others within the school environment, ultimately result in lower rates of student engagement, and greatly undermine a student's academic progress (Sutherland et al., 2008). Additionally, Miles and Stipek (2006) reported that as students grow older and enter the high school setting, they become increasingly aware of their abilities and inabilities when compared to their peers, thus increasing the rate and intensity of negative behaviors.

Self-esteem. Maughan, Rowe, Loeber, and Stouthamer-Loeber (2003) assert that reading is a key developmental skill that allows students to access all subsequent learning and that a student's success or failure in mastering this critical skill occurs in the very public setting of a classroom. Failure to acquire this vital skill, often results in the development of reading difficulties, emotional problems, difficulties in peer relations, and a sense of lowered self-confidence. Moreover, students with EBD who exhibit reading difficulties and overlaps of disruptive behaviors are among the most likely to lack the self-confidence necessary to effectively participate in whole class activities or

discussions, leading to further isolation and academic failure (Arseneau, 2011). However, Niesyn (2009) argued that when EBD students with poor reading abilities and lowered self-confidence are provided with opportunities for academic success and teacher praise, self confidence in their academic abilities will improve over time.

Moreover, Sutherland, et al., (2008) discovered that deviant peer associations were directly associated with problem behaviors and that when deviant peer associations were no longer a factor, self-esteem no longer predicted problem behaviors. While a complex pattern of variables exist associated with behavior problems making it difficult to determine the relationships between academic and behavior problems and self-esteem (Lembke, 2006), improvements in academic performance should lead to improved peer relations, fewer problem behaviors, and increased ultimately student self-esteem.

Reading characteristics. Since 1994, researchers have attempted to identify the learner characteristics of students who struggle with reading acquisition (Blachman, 1994; Nelson et al., 2003; Shaywitz, 2004). Weaknesses most frequently mentioned by teachers of reading included problems with phonological processing, attention, behavior, working memory, rapid naming, low cognitive ability, language delays, English proficiency, and low socioeconomic status (Harris, Oakes, Lane, & Rutherford, 2009). Similarly, when Nelson et al. (2003) conducted a meta-analysis of the factors most relevant to reading outcomes they identified rapid naming ability, behavior problems, and phonological processing variables as being most predictive of reading difficulties. Harris et al. (2009) state that while it is not clear whether reading difficulties lead to behavioral problems or whether behavior problems lead to reading difficulties, studies indicate that the two conditions often coexist (Beck et al., 2009; Benner et al., 2010; Payne et al., 2007).

Students with emotional or behavioral disabilities often face significant challenges learning to read, resulting in added delays that can exacerbate other academic, emotional, and behavioral difficulties (Eisenbraun et al., 2009). Research has shown that reading difficulties are associated with conduct disorder and delinquent behaviors in older students with EBD (Payne et al., 2007). Students with EBD not only demonstrate a history of underachievement in reading, but they also are faced with a complex pattern of risk factors associated with behavior problems including attention problems, low socio-economic status, and limited language proficiency (Beck et al., 2009). Lembke (2006) believes that the variety of factors at play makes it impossible to conclusively determine the impact of behavior problems on academic achievement. In addition, Lane (2004) predicted that students with both reading and behavioral problems are among the most at-risk populations for poor outcomes over time.

Bradely et al. (2004) identified EBD students as predominantly male, disproportionally African American, and under the influence of psychotropic medicine such as stimulants, antidepressants and anti-anxiety drugs. According to the National Association of School Psychologists (2002), EBD student's disabilities include affective disorders, anxiety disorders, schizophrenia, and conduct, attention, or adjustment disturbances. Furthermore, Nelson et al. (2003) noted that EBD students are more resistant to reading interventions than any other group of students because little difference was identified in any particular sub-category of students with EBD combined with other research in the area of treatment resistance.

According to Mooney et al. (2008) teachers can expect secondary EBD students to have reading deficits. Research indicates that 31% to 81% of these students experience reading delays, with the average deficits ranging from one-half to more than two years

behind their current grade level (Mooney et al., 2008). According to Falk and Wehby (2005) these delays contribute to the high rates of student disengagement in school, absenteeism, course failure, and dropout of EBD students when compared to students with other kinds of disabilities. Specifically, these EBD students have significant delays in phonological awareness, decoding, fluency, and comprehension. Falk and Wehby (2005) found that as student's age, these delays multiply exponentially making it increasingly more difficult to remediate EBD students as they progress through school, thus preventing them from experiencing any meaningful academic success.

Reading intervention. The wide range of characteristics of emotional or behavioral disabilities makes it difficult to select a single learning strategy that would be effective for all EBD students. The skill areas identified as most important by the National Reading Panel (NRP) (2000) include: phonemic awareness, vocabulary, phonics, fluency, and comprehension. Teachers often have a difficult time deciding whether they should target instruction of specific skills, behavior, or other issues. Generally, educators must approach instruction both academically and behaviorally when delivering reading instruction to EBD students. Eisenbraun et al. (2006) further stressed the importance of educators considering the student's current reading ability, history of behavioral control, oppositional behavior, and emotional regulation prior to beginning any intervention strategy.

Phonemic awareness. Shaywitz (2004) defines phonemic awareness (PA) as the ability to "notice, identify, and manipulate the smallest particles that make up a word: phonemes" (p. 144). When teaching PA, students are taught to focus on and manipulate phonemes in spoken syllables and words. For example, hearing and saying that the word *car* has three sounds, or phonemes /k/ /a/ /r/ is an example of PA ability.

According to the most recent report by the NRP (2000) PA combined with letter recognition are the best predictors of a student's potential for learning to read. When teaching PA, the NRP (2000) recommends a systematic instruction approach in phoneme manipulation be used. Moreover, this systematic instruction approach is most effective when conducted in a small group setting with a focus on one or two phoneme types at a time.

Vocabulary. Collins and Collins (2004) defined vocabulary as the words we need to know in order to communicate with others. The four categories of vocabulary identified by NRP (2000) are listening, speaking reading, and writing. Each category of vocabulary contributes to other reading skills including word recognition, comprehension, and reading to learn.

As early as 1924, Whipple (1925) noted that growth in reading power means constant growth in word knowledge. In an attempt to find the most effective approach to increasing word knowledge today , the NPR (2000) reviewed more than 50 studies dating from 1979 and determined that vocabulary instruction should comprise a variety of instructional methods including direct and indirect instruction, repetition, learning in rich contexts, and incidental learning. Furthermore, the NPR (2000) determined that the use of computers in vocabulary instruction can be more effective than some traditional instructional methods due to their capacity to address the varying needs and abilities of multiple readers.

Phonics. “Learning about and using different sound and letter combinations to decode words” is how Shaywitz (2004) defines phonics (p. 188). According to Shaywitz (2004) phonics helps the student to construct the precise neural replica of a word, combining the way the word sounds with its spelling and provides the foundation for all

reading. Additionally, Collins and Collins (2004) noted that phonics acquisition helps readers to understand and use the alphabetic principle, which states that there is a systematic relationship between graphemes and phonemes.

The NRP (2000) found that the programs that teach phonics systematically and explicitly are the most effective. Systematic phonics instruction introduces the student to the simplest, most consistent, and most frequent letter sound pairings and then progresses to cover more complex and unusual ones (Shaywitz, 2004). When teaching phonics explicitly, the instructor moves from the smallest parts to the whole. Hiskes (1998) explains that with explicit phonics instruction, the student first learns letters and their sounds, and then builds and recombines them into syllables and words. With explicit phonics, “participle” and “particle” would be read by syllables: par-ti-ci-ple and par-ti-cle. When read by syllables, there is no chance of ever confusing one with the other.

Fluency. Fluency in reading is the rapid, accurate and expressive reading of text that increases as the need to decode words decreases and more sight words are acquired. The theory of automaticity (Lagerge & Samuels, 1974) asserts that fluent reading frees the reader’s attention to focus on reading comprehension, allowing them to be successful at the task of understanding what they are reading. According to Collins and Collins (2004) the ability to read rapidly frees up space in the reader’s working memory for use in understanding what it being read. Kuhn and Stahl (2003) identified repeated reading and guided repeated oral reading as the two main types of fluency instruction that have been shown to improve reading fluency. Research has found that the large quantity of attentional resources used by dysfluent reader’s results in a mental exhaustion that fluent readers do not experience. Typical behaviors exhibited by struggling readers include daydreaming and inattention to task (Oakes, Mathur, & Lane, 2010). The theory of

automaticity (Laberg& Samuels, 1974) asserts that fluent reading frees the reader's attention to focus on reading comprehension, allowing them to be successful at the task of understanding what they are reading.

Collins and Collins (2004) noted that in guided repeated oral reading, the instructor provides a model of “what fluent reading sounds like, telling students unfamiliar words rather than having them sound the words out, having students read along with a taped version of the story, or helping students see how words can be grouped into meaningful passages” (p. 18). When participating in the repeated reading strategic, a student independently rereads a passage until meeting a preset criterion level. Kuhn and Stahl (2003) found that while both methods have led to improvement in fluency speed and accuracy, guided reading methods are more effective in improving expressive reading.

Comprehension. While fluent decoding is an essential element of skilled reading, comprehension is the final goal of reading instruction (Block & Pressley, 2002). Collins and Collins (2004) defines reading comprehension as the “constructing of meaning that is reasonable and accurate by connecting what has been read to what the reader already knows and then thinking about all of this information until it is understood” (p. 30). Two of the most common comprehension strategies include questions and summarization. When educators are considering strategies for reading comprehension improvement, the NRP (2000) recommends a combination of reading comprehension techniques where readers are encouraged to “actively relate the ideas represented in print to their own knowledge and experiences” (p. 14).

Reading interventions. As previously noted, few studies have addressed reading intervention for EBD students. For example, Coleman and Vaughn (2000) found only

eight studies that examined interventions for students with emotional or behavioral disabilities. Based on findings from these eight studies and interviews conducted with experienced teachers of EBD students, Coleman and Vaughn (2000) found four practices believed to be effective: student engagement, peer-mediated interventions, direct instruction, and progress monitoring.

Student engagement. According to Reschly and Christenson (2006) one of the most vulnerable populations for school dropout is students with disabilities. Additionally, students with EBD are consistently found to have the highest dropout rates among students with disabilities. A recent government report on dropout among students with EBD reported rates of 65.1% (U.S. Department of Education, 2003). While the label *drop-out* implies a short-term event, scholars noted dropping out is actually a gradual progression of withdrawal from school (Reschly & Christenson, 2006). This progression can be explained best through theories of student engagement, with student engagement being identified as the critical variable in dropout prevention. In Finn's (1993) Participation Identification Model, student engagement includes both behavioral and psychological components with a focus on students' involvement in classroom and school activities and feelings of belonging at school. The Participation Identification Model encompasses four levels of involvement in school ranging from basic participation (e.g., attending school, work preparation, responding to the teacher's directions) to student involvement in decision-making at school (e.g., student government or academic goal setting).

Lembke (2006) listed student engagement, active responding, or opportunity-to-respond as key to the academic achievement of all students, and vital for EBD students who can be distracted, belligerent, uninterested, depressed, or quiet and removed. He

contends that when students are engaged they are less likely to exhibit the inappropriate behaviors associated with emotional behavior disability. When students are engaged, they are not simply “on-task,” but are actively involved in written, motoric, or oral activities that are a part of the curriculum. While identifying activities for each lesson that will keep students actively engaged can be challenging to teachers, it allows students to be involved in the positive act of learning instead of the negative act of being punished.

Peer-mediated interventions. Vaughn et al., has observed that instead of focusing on academic outcomes, educators have traditionally focused on the inappropriate social behaviors of EBD students. However, since the implementation of NCLB in 2001, a new need has been placed upon addressing reading deficiencies as a way of offsetting or minimizing the occurrence of unwanted behaviors in EBD students. For example, peer-mediated interventions (e.g., peer tutoring, cooperative learning), as identified by Coleman and Vaughn (2000), provide a method of reading practice that allows students to simultaneously build social skills.

For example, peer-mediated interventions involve the implementation of teacher-selected instruction by students to their peers. One peer-mediated intervention is Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies or PALS (Fuchs, Fuchs, & Burish, 2000). PALS pairs a “reader” with a coach who engages in the critical reading skill of fluency, comprehension, summarizing, predicting, and paraphrasing. This technique pairs students with similar abilities where one is somewhat more advanced than the other is, and teaches them to work together to improve their academic skills. PALS lessons consist of direct instruction, repeated reading, and reciprocal teaching, which make this approach affective for all students, with or without disabilities (Lembke, 2006). Cochran, Fent, Cartledge,

and Hamilton (1993) also noted increases in sight word recognition for both tutors and tutees.

Direct instruction. An effective strategy that has proven highly effective in the teaching of reading to EBD students is direct instruction (Gaylord, Quinn, McComas, & Lehr, 2005). Direct instruction consists of explicit, scientifically based instruction that focuses on interactions between teachers and students and includes the key components of teacher modeling, reinforcement, feedback, and successive approximations. Active learning is central to direct instruction and was a major component of B.F. Skinner's (1968) behavioral modification model, which is currently utilized in today's Functional Behavior Plans for all EBD students (Nichols, 2000). Skinner believed that students should not sit and passively take in knowledge, but should be encouraged to take an active role that includes responding both verbally and nonverbally during the learning process.

Specific features of direct instruction as described by Eaves and McLaughlin (1993) include (a) an explicit problem-solving strategy, (b) teaching of steps in the strategy, (c) specific correction procedures, (d) scaffolding from teacher-directed to independent work, and (f) reviews of previously taught concepts. With a focus on curriculum design and effective instructional delivery, direct instruction allows students to be actively engaged in the "big idea" of the lesson in order to build knowledge, skills, and dispositions related to the performance standards being taught. Additionally, it provides frequent opportunities for ongoing assessment and correction when needed (Payne et al., 2007).

Progress monitoring. The implementation of an ongoing system of progress monitoring is a strategy that can be used to determine if a reading intervention is working

is the implementation of an ongoing system of progress monitoring. When implemented correctly, this scientifically based practice can accelerate learning through the delivery of more appropriate instruction, lead to more informed instructional decisions, provide documentation of student progress, facilitate more efficient communication with families and other professionals, supply documentation of student progress, and lead to higher expectations for students by teachers. Generally, progress monitoring results in better-organized and targeted instructional techniques that facilitates student achievement of state proficiency standards (National Center on Student Progress Monitoring n.d.). While progress monitoring is most associated with the elementary school setting, it is also utilized by both middle and high school teachers as a way to assess the present performance and growth of students (Mooney et al., 2008).

Curriculum-based measurement. Another system of progress monitoring that is utilized in the EBD setting is curriculum-based measurement (CBM). Utilizing CBM, a student's data related to one-minute probes of oral reading performance are graphed. These data then provide a visual depiction of student performance and progress in reading over time and in response to teacher directed interventions. Ramsey, Jolivette, and Patton (2007) suggests that when students have daily opportunities to be successful in reading and can monitor their progress, they are more likely to experience positive academic and social results, leaving fewer opportunities for negative social behaviors to occur.

Review of the Literature

Students with EBD experience shortfalls in social, behavioral, and academic areas. McDaniel et al., (2010) argue that an area of significant concern is the academic area of reading achievement. Without effective reading interventions, Wagner et al.

(2005) have found negative outcomes both in school and post-school including drop-out, incarceration, and unemployment. These negative outcomes are of special concern to the EBD population at the secondary level, as their opportunities for academic learning will soon end. For this reason, Wagner et al. recommend evidence-based programs implemented at high levels in order to increase student reading ability and involvement and decrease the negative behaviors and outcomes associated with EBD.

Antisocial Behavior

One negative social behavior associated with EBD is antisocial behavior. Severson and Walker (2002) noted that early identification of students who demonstrate patterns of aggressive, inappropriate or withdrawn social behavior is the single most important factor in preventing lifelong antisocial behaviors. However, McGrath (2005) suggests that significant positive changes in social behavior can be made at the high school level. To attain long-term success, McGrath (2005) recommends the matching of teaching intervention to each student, generalization of learned social skills across settings, an implementation of strategies for changing negative social reputations, and opportunities for positive peer supports.

Disruptive Behavior

Disruptive behaviors are also common among EBD students and a significant amount of research exists in strategies used to reduce the disruptive behaviors of EBD students. Salmon (2006) outlined one effective method of educating EBD students that focuses on an increase in the rates of Opportunities To Respond (OTR). This strategy encourages students to be “active participants in class, leading to increased educational outcomes, increased task management, and decreased inappropriate and disruptive behavior of students with EBD” (Salmon, 2006, p. 50). Another study by Sutherland,

Wehby, and Yoder (2002) established a relationship between increased OTR and teacher praise and the resulting decrease in disruptive behaviors associated with EBD students. Additionally, research shows that educators must reverse the negative cycle of student failure so that student motivation does not drop. Because students with EBD have a history of academic failures, Furlong, Morison, and Fisher (2005) believe positive teacher responses are critical. Reinke and Herman (2002) suggest positive responses would include adjusting task demands and providing additional teacher support for learning.

Furthermore, Sutherland, Lewis-Palmer, Stichter, and Morgan (2008) discovered that EBD students spent less time attending to lessons and complying with group directions; displayed higher rates of aggressive and out-of-seat and noise making type behaviors; and had higher rates of negative integrations with teachers and peers. These high rates of problem behaviors are the root cause of negative patterns of interactions between the EBD students and others within the school environment, ultimately result in lower rates of student engagement, and greatly undermine a student's academic progress (Sutherland et al., 2008). Additionally, Miles and Stipek (2006) reported that as students grow older and enter the high school setting, they become increasingly aware of their abilities and inabilities when compared to their peers, thus increasing the rate and intensity of negative behaviors.

Academic Failure

The beginning of the negative cycle of student/ teacher interactions starts when students fail academically. Lerner and Johns (2009) have found that when EBD students experience repeated failures in reading they often show low levels of school or task engagement and display reduced motivation for learning. Student engagement is best explained as an interaction over time between students and the system in which the

student develops. According to a study conducted by Kauffman and Landrum (2009), students with EBD develop slower academically and perform consistently lower on IQ and achievement measures leading to a learning experience that is difficult and unpleasant. Additionally, Kauffman and Landrum (2009) noted that when these learning difficulties are combined with social, emotional, and behavioral issue, the risk of school disengagement, failure, and dropping out is greatly increased.

Peer Mediation

Greenwood, Maheady and Delquardi (2002) established a connection between peer-mediated intervention technique and an increase in academic engagement of all students. Furthermore, in a review of 14 studies that focused on academic outcomes of peer-mediated interventions for students with EBD, Ryan, Reid, and Epstein (2004) found that peer-mediated interventions consistently produce effective academic and interpersonal benefits for students with EBD. While peer-mediated strategies were found to produce large academic gains across subject areas for both tutors and tutees, Ryan et al. (2004) concluded that their review was limited as none of the studies included addressed the issue of peer-mediated behaviors in the context of the inclusion classroom where the majority of EBD students are now served. Additionally, Ryan, et al. (2004) found a continued decline in the number of intervention studies conducted with the EBD population as a whole.

Direct Instruction

One instructional method that has proven to be highly effective in addressing the academic delays of the EBD population is direct instruction (Falk & Wehby, 2005). This highly scripted strategy involves frequent teacher questioning and allows for student engagement and immediate corrective feedback. Project Follow Through was a direct

instruction educational study conducted in the 1970s. Costing \$600 million dollars, including 79,000 students from 180 communities, and lasting more than 10 years, Project Follow Through examined a variety of educational methods and philosophies to determine how to improve education for disadvantaged students grades K-3 (Grossen, 1995). Improvement in basic skills, cognitive skills (higher order thinking) and affective gains (self-esteem) were among the desired positive outcomes. Grossen (1995) noted that the study results indicated the program that produced the best results in academic improvement was direct instruction. Additionally, Lindsay (2009) found that not only did students receiving direct instruction perform better than those in all other programs in the areas of reading, arithmetic, spelling, and language, but they also showed the highest improvement in self-esteem scores. Additionally, Morrell, Morrell, and Kubina, (1995) discovered that student reading gains were more rapid than any of the other methods and were retained two and three years later.

Curriculum-Based Measurement

Another strategy that has proven to be effective in reading intervention for EBD students is CBM. Research by Fore, Boon, Burke, and Martin (2008) found that CBM can prevent EBD students from falling behind and becoming disengaged by providing educators with continuous and ongoing information regarding what reading intervention is and is not working. Deno (2003) observed widespread dissatisfaction with the traditional approach to identifying the needs of special education students by relying solely on standardized tests. As a result, the President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education (2002) recommended the responsiveness to treatment approach. The response to treatment approach relies on the progress monitoring strategy of (CBM) of increased levels of intensity in instructional interventions. While CBM was originally

developed initially for teachers in elementary school, Deno (2003) noted that secondary school teachers have begun applying similar formative evaluation approaches with their students. Additionally Deno (2003) discovered that technical developments in using CBM progress monitoring for assessing student growth has proceeded and has shown promising growth in both reading and writing for EBD students at the secondary level.

While CBM can provide educators with vitally important academic progress information, a study by Deno (2003) established that almost 85% of the 300 teachers surveyed reported they were aware of student progress monitoring strategies, but only half were using them. Additionally, a study by Yell, Deno, and Marston (1992) found teachers identified time as the major barrier to employing progress monitoring procedures in their classrooms. In a related finding, they discovered that teachers using CBM estimated that it took less than 10% of their instructional time to perform the evaluation. Yell et al. (1992) explained that the increase in demands on teacher time leaves them believing that any further requirement cannot be accommodated into their busy schedules.

Summary

Chapter 2 presented the theoretical framework that guided the study and provided the context for its findings. The chapter began with the theories developed to explain the behaviors of students with EBD and highlighted past and current reading theories. The concepts related to EBD student characteristics, reading characteristics, reading instruction, and reading intervention were also presented. A review of the literature regarding the impact of EBD student antisocial and disruptive behavior on reading ability was then presented beginning with a review of learner characteristics associated with EBD. Additionally, this chapter focused on students who struggle with reading

acquisition including the impact of EBD behaviors on reading weakness. Next, an explanation of reading theory was provided noting the need for educators to approach reading instruction both academically and behaviorally when delivering instruction to EBD students. This chapter also explained reading interventions and the four practices of student engagement, peer-mediated interventions, direct instruction, and progress monitoring. Finally, the chapter concluded with studies concerning antisocial behaviors, disruptive behaviors, student engagement, peer-mediated interventions, direct instruction, and curriculum based measurement.

The current literature indicates that students with EBD often present behavioral issues during academic instruction. EBD students have behavioral, social, and academic deficits that not only impact their success in school but also contribute to negative outcomes after high school (Falk & Wehby, 2005). Additionally, a report from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (Grigg, Daane, Jin, & Cambell, 2003) indicated that roughly two thirds of all the nation's 8th and 12th grade students read below the proficient level and one-quarter do not possess the literacy skill necessary to read at a basic level. Combine these literacy skills deficits with the reading-rich environments of secondary schools and addressing the likely reading deficiencies of middle and high school students with EBD takes on an increased urgency

Regrettably, little research has been done on effective interventions among secondary students with comorbid reading and behavioral difficulties. Existing studies have shown, however, that supplemental reading instruction for secondary EBD students has produced mixed results, creating more uncertainty in this area (Lane, 2004). Moreover, this researcher is an advocate for literacy and special education due to

personal experience with close family members who have faced the lifelong struggles associated with dyslexia, low reading abilities, and poor self-esteem.

Chapter 3 will describe the methodology that was used in this study. The research framework is outlined, and the literacy and behavior intervention and data collection methods are described in detail.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this case study was to investigate how remedial reading interventions impacted the disruptive and antisocial behaviors of a secondary student with EBD. This chapter explains the methods of inquiry used in this case study. Specifically, this chapter's contents include an introduction, research design, participants, setting, role of the researcher, data collection, data analysis, trustworthiness, and ethical issues.

Research Design

This study employed an instrumental case study design and was intended to examine the impact of corrective reading interventions on the behavioral risk factors for a secondary student with EBD. The instrumental case study research method allowed the researcher to focus “on an issue or concern, and then select one bounded case to illustrate the issue” (Creswell, 2007, p. 74). This within-site study addressed the issue of academic factors that contribute to the behaviors of students with EBD and provides insight into strategies to improve overall reading abilities and behaviors for this select group of EBD students.

The following questions guided this study:

1. How do reading interventions impact the disruptive and antisocial behaviors of a ninth grade student with EBD?
2. How does a high school student with EBD respond to reading interventions?
3. How do changes in high school EBD student on-task behaviors, communication skills, and interpersonal relationships occur with peers and teachers?

4. How do reading interventions impact a high school EBD student's self-confidence?

Read Live Reading Intervention

Read Live is an on-line reading intervention developed by Read Naturally. Utilizing the research proven strategies of teacher modeling, repeated reading and progress monitoring, the Read Naturally strategy addresses the five essential components of reading including: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency vocabulary, and comprehension. Additionally, Read Live is designed to support the Common Core State Standards for reading including fluency and word recognition, improving vocabulary, and promoting comprehension. Read Live's versatile web technology platform allows educators to easily differentiate instruction to address the varying needs of students from first grade to adult.

According to NCLB (2001), states must close the gap of specific subgroups in order to improve student performance. Students in these subgroups include Black students, special education students, and students who receive free/reduced-price lunches. While many features impact the current achievement gap and much information is available about ways to decrease that gap, there are many ways in which Read Naturally intervention programs support the learning of students who are not yet proficient readers.

Researcher's Role

While Denscombe (2007) defines the role of the researcher in quantitative research as being one of detachment, the qualitative researcher takes a more involved role. The qualitative researcher is considered a constructor of data and a crucial measurement device whose "social background, values, identity and beliefs have a

significant bearing on the nature of the data collection and the interpretations of that data” (p. 250). Moreover, according to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (2009) “I or we (meaning the author or authors) can replace the experiment” (p. 69). Therefore, in this qualitative study, I will refer to myself in the first person.

My role in this case study involved the collection of data from archival documents and records, supervision of student reading interventions, evaluation of daily goal frequency data and anecdotal records, and collection of student work samples. Both the daily goal frequency data and anecdotal records were generated through two additional staff members who work closely with the research participant. These data were then analyzed through interpretational analysis that indicated patterns that explained any observable changes in behavior, structural analysis that identified patterns in conversations and activities, and finally, reflective analysis that described any behavioral changes based on my expertise and experience with the EBD population (Leedy, 2009).

I have been a self-contained Special Education teacher in a state sponsored program for students with severe emotional/behavior disorders for the past six years. I am Highly Qualified in the content area of reading and have a Reading Endorsement certificate. Additionally, I am an advocate for literacy and special education because my father and sister both struggled with dyslexia, low reading abilities, and poor self-esteem.

Participants

The participant in this study was chosen via purposeful sampling. This type of sampling allows the researcher to select participants who meet an informational need necessary in order to complete the research. According to Creswell (2007) the researcher uses purposeful sampling to “purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study” (p. 125). Based on the assumption that the

researcher wanted to discover, understand, and gain insight, a sample was selected from which the most could be learned (Merriam, 2009).

The participant selected for this study was identified by the pseudonym John. John is a ninth grade African American male student with emotional/behavior disorder and also has a below average reading level. Because EBD students are predominantly male, African American, under the influence of psychotropic medications, and attend low-income schools (Bradely et al., 2004), John is representative of the larger EBD population.

John was identified under Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) as EBD and participates in a self-contained, psychoeducational program located in a low-income, public high school in the Southeastern United States. John was referred to the self-contained, EBD setting in the first grade. Since the beginning of his placement in the EBD program, his teachers reported moody and sporadic behaviors with John displaying rude and disrespectful behaviors to anyone with whom he had contact. He would call students names under his breath, lie about others, and appear paranoid at times. While in the classroom, John would frequently look around to see if others were looking at him. After calling his teachers names such as “stupid” or “retarded,” John would tell his father that his teachers were picking on him and calling him names.

Based on the results of his last re-evaluation testing, John’s academic performance scores range from borderline to mildly cognitively deficient. He scored the grade equivalents (GE) of 3.4 in Letter and Word recognition and 2.3 in Reading Comprehension. In reading, John’s word attack skills have been hampered by inconsistent use of vowel rules, syllabication, and blending. He makes some omissions or

reversal of sounds in pronunciation. He is impulsive in his approach to find answers in a passage and missed nearly all inferential reading questions.

John is currently under the care of a psychiatrist and receives monthly therapy and daily medication. The goals listed on John's Individual Education Plan (IEP) include:

- John will attend to lessons in class.
- John will refrain from silly actions (refrain from staring, picking at others, making faces or calling out, making noises, turning around in desk, echoing words, various gestures with head or hands, other silly distractions).
- John will refrain from arguing with teachers or peers.
- When redirected, John will refrain from any inappropriate response (denying fault, mocking, echoing words at teacher, etc).
- John will correctly complete 7 out of 10 math problems on his six weeks test.
- John will achieve 28 out of 40 points on his book report by correctly identifying protagonist, antagonist, conflict, setting, plot, climax, denouement, and theme.
- John will achieve 7 out of 10 points on the spelling grammar section of his book report.

Setting

John receives special education service in a self-contained setting located on a public high school campus in the Southeastern United States. The school that John attends will be identified by the pseudonym Central High School. The student population of Central High School is comprised of 856 students, which consists of approximately 81% African American, 16% White, 2% Latino, and 1% other. The school participates in

State and Federal Title I Programs with 75% of the students receiving free or reduced breakfast and lunch due to low household income status.

This self-contained setting is part of a state supported network for educational and therapeutic support. Local school systems are supported through a continuum of services by providing comprehensive special education and therapeutic support for students whose behavior severely impedes their learning. The network serves children ages 3 through 21 through one of 24 programs serving every school system in the state. The student population of this self-contained EBD setting includes 3 girls and 18 boys ranging from grades 9 through 12. Eight of the students are White and 10 are African American. All self-contained students have been identified under Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) as qualifying as EBD. Staff members include one male lead teacher, one special education teacher, one parent social worker, and one para professional. This site was selected because it is the only school of its type serving high school EBD students within a five county area.

Data Collection Procedures

Before data collection began, Institutional Review Board approval and informed assent from the participant were secured. Once approval and assent were secured three forms of data collection were utilized in order to “build an in-depth picture of the case” (Creswell, 2007, p. 132). This triangulation of data sources ensured that the research produces valid findings based upon varied perspectives other than those of the researcher alone (Berg, 2007).

Using a single instrument case study as the framework, this study examined how reading interventions impacted the disruptive and antisocial behaviors of a secondary student with EBD. Case studies utilize multiple methods of data collection including

observations, interviews, and document analysis (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh, & Sorensen, 2006). In this study, data was collected through evaluations of archival documents and records (student records), observations (goal frequency data), and physical artifacts (student work).

Archival documents and records. As part of this study, I first evaluated the student's archival documents and academic and behavioral records. Marshall and Rossman (2011) defined archival documents as routinely gathered records of a society, community, or organization. Archival documents and records are private documents gathered by someone other than the researcher and include letters, diaries, and documents of a private corporation or organization (Lapan, Quartaroli, & Riemer, 2012). Stommel and Willis (2004) assert that this type of historical research involves "interpreting past records and uncovering previously unknown facts and relationships about the past, it generates new knowledge, and this characteristic differentiates it from a standard summary of literature" (p. 185).

Archival documents and records for this study included the student's previous and current Special Education Eligibility reports. These reports have been maintained and updated during his participation in this psychoeducational program. These reports contain the following information: (a) a history of the student's educational progress in the general curriculum; (b) an assessment of the student's attention skills, participation behaviors, communication skills, memory, and social relations with groups, peers, and adults; (c) an evaluation and narrative description of the student's educational and developmental potential; (b) a psychological assessment by a licensed school psychologist, including an individual psychological examination; and (e) a home assessment that includes information on pertinent family history and home situation.

Observations. Observation can be defined as “the systematic description of events, behaviors, and artifacts in the social setting chosen for study” (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 79). Researchers conduct observations through simply being present in a setting while getting to know people and their routines to conducting strict time samplings (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). They provide the researcher with a way to better understand the context and phenomenon being studied by providing the researcher with a way to check for nonverbal expressions or feelings, monitor interactions among participants, and verify the amount of time spent on various activities (Kawulich, 2005).

Student observations were conducted by the two teachers, paraprofessional, and parent social worker assigned to this site. Observations were conducted in the form of daily anecdotal records, daily behavior points, and monitoring of Goal Frequency Charts at the end of each class period. Anecdotal records and daily monitoring of Goal Frequency Charts were evaluated for changes in student’s behaviors over time. Guddemi and Case (2004) define anecdotal records as “short, factual, narrative description of child behaviors and skill over time” (p. 6). These records were updated daily and were primary the responsibility of the parent social worker. Goal Frequency Chart data were generated from specific goals outlined in the student’s Individual Education Plan and were based upon the results and finding of the most recent special education eligibility report and specific behavior deficits.

Physical artifacts. Savenye and Robinson (2005) define artifacts of interest as things that people make and do. Classroom artifacts are objects used in the process of teaching and learning or products that result from the process of teaching and learning and include textbooks, smart boards, manipulatives, school newspapers, journals, personal letters, and student work (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtle, 2010). Andrew and

Haute (1997) assert that these artifacts allow the researcher to build a theory of material culture and determine how a setting may change over time (Andrew & Haute, 1997).

This study evaluated student-produced artifacts generated during reading interventions. These artifacts included work generated from the student's participation in the Read Live computer based reading assessment and intervention program. Artifacts included oral reading fluency scores, typed story retells, and computer generated graphs of student scores. Student-produced artifacts generated during reading interventions were also evaluated.

Data Analysis Procedures

The data analysis was directed by the research objectives, questions and design. According to Fredrick (2008) data analysis consists of "looking for themes, patterns, or categories of similarities" (p. 362). Creswell (2007) outlines five forms of data analysis and interpretation: (a) categorical aggregation, (b) patterns, (c) naturalistic interpretations, and (d) description of the case.

Categorical aggregation. Categorical aggregation is a strategy of piecing collected data together until something important can be said about the case as a whole (Stake, 1995). Because I was trying to determine the impact reading interventions had on the disruptive and antisocial behaviors of a student with EBD, my data to be analyzed included archival records and documents, and observations relative to the student's past and current behaviors.

Patterns. The data analysis model used in this study was the Open Model, where no categories exist in the beginning. In order to identify major themes that developed over the nine-week study period, I merged data pieces into categories so that patterns could be detected (Ary, et al., 2006). The Open Model allowed patterns, themes, and

categories to come from the data itself, rather than from pre-determined categories (Weasmer & Mays, 2003).

Naturalistic interpretations. The last step in the data analysis process was the development of naturalistic generalizations. Through representation and visualization, an in-depth picture of the case developed through the use of narratives, tables, and figures. The case and its context were described and direct interpretations and naturalistic generalizations were developed. Wolcott (1994) noted that the goal during the naturalistic interpretation stage of data analysis is to formulate theories relative to the data by constructing interpretations, inferences, and implications relative to the data for the field of education. Findings from the data can be used to make generalizations that can be applied to the behaviors of EBD students or that special education teachers can apply to reading intervention programs within the EBD setting.

Trustworthiness.

Frederick (2008) defined trustworthiness as “an overreaching term for validity and reliability” (p. 362). Closely associated with dependability, conformability, and credibility, trustworthiness in this qualitative case study was achieved through utilizing the strategies of the member/peer checks, triangulation, and reflexivity.

Guba and Lincoln (1989) state that member/peer checks are “the single most critical technique for establishing credibility. When conducting member/peer checks, the researcher asks the study’s participants to confirm that the findings are based upon their experiences during the study (Pitney & Parker, 2009). These checks can be conducted through transcript verification where the participants review transcripts of interviews or through interpretive verification where participants review their researcher’s findings (Mills, 2007). Member/peer checks where participants and peers were asked to reflect on

the accuracy of the researcher's interpretations increased the reliability of the study by ensuring that the researcher correctly interpreted the participant's views.

When combined with member/peer checks, Pitney and Parker (2009) state that triangulation is considered an excellent way to ensure trustworthiness. Data triangulation in qualitative research means that the findings are verified by other sources (Patton, 2002). In order to ensure that the researcher's findings, interpretations, and conclusions are supported by data, an external auditor with expertise in the field of reading and behavior modification examined the accuracy of both the research process and finished product.

Reflexivity in qualitative research entails "the use of self in attempting to be open to the world-views of others." (Gilgun, 2008, p. 183). This fundamental concept of qualitative research challenges the researcher to scrutinize how their research agenda and assumptions, emotions, and personal beliefs enter into their research. According to Hsiung (2008) this openness conceptualize the researcher as an active participant in the creation of knowledge rather than as a passive observer. Cohn and Crabtree (2006) suggests the steps that can be taken to foster reflexivity in research include designing research that has multiple investigators, maintaining a reflexive journal, and documenting research perspectives, positions, values, and beliefs within the manuscript. Reflexivity was achieved through a researcher journal where continuous self-reflection of any bias was explored (Fredrick, 2008).

Ethical Issues

Gay, Mills, and Airasain (2012) have stated the role of ethics in qualitative research is based upon "how we treat the individuals with whom we interact in research settings" (p. 407). Ethical considerations in this study were addressed by maintaining the

anonymity of participants through the use of pseudonyms for the student, teachers, and name and location of the study. Furthermore, the researcher respected the individuality of the participant by allowing him to have a voice in the research process through the utilization of participant journal writing.

Central to ethical issues in this study was my personal ethical position (Gay et al., 2012). The ethical position of complete honesty and Christ-like consideration for my fellow man was the driving force behind my ethical behaviors during this study. This meant continuously reflecting upon the principles found within the Golden Rule by regularly asking myself if I was treating the subject in a manner that I would want to be treated. Additionally, my research findings are reported in a truthful and accurate way so that this study will be of use to the special education field and enrich the educational opportunities and long-term outcomes of the EBD student.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to examine how reading interventions impacted the disruptive and antisocial behaviors of a secondary student with EBD. This study focused on the impact of the five essential components of reading instruction, plus teacher modeling, repeated readings, and progress monitoring on the disruptive and antisocial behaviors of a student with EBD. The antisocial behaviors observed included, lack of student engagement, poor communication skills, and deficient interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers. To maintain confidentiality, pseudonyms were provided for the student, teachers, and name and location of the study. Archival documents and academic and behavioral records, including the student's previous and current Special Education Eligibility reports, were initially examined in order to uncover previously unknown facts and establish a pattern of disruptive and antisocial behaviors. Later, observations were conducted and physical artifacts were collected to explore how reading interventions impacted behaviors. Finally, categorical aggregation was utilized to determine what impact, if any, reading interventions had on the identified disruptive and antisocial behaviors of the EBD student in this study.

This chapter begins with a review of the research questions that guided this study. The participant's disruptive and antisocial behaviors are then discussed. Identified themes related to the impact reading interventions had on disruptive and antisocial behaviors are also described. Changes in a high school EBD student's on-task behaviors, communication skills, and interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers are then identified. Finally, the connections between and among reading interventions and disruptive and antisocial behaviors and student self-confidence are addressed.

The following questions guided this study:

Research question one. How do reading interventions impact the disruptive and antisocial behaviors of a ninth grade student with EBD?

Research question two. How does a high school student with EBD respond to reading interventions?

Research question three. How do changes in high school EBD student on-task behaviors, communication skills, and interpersonal relationships occur with peers and teachers?

Research question four. How do reading interventions impact a high school EBD student's self-confidence?

Research Question One Findings

Due to behavioral problems associated with EBD, John has been receiving EBD services through Special Education since 1st grade and was placed in the separate school setting during the 2nd grade. Teachers in the regular education setting reported that John was aggressive and defiant with teachers, talked back and argued with them and occasionally hit them. John also displayed poor social skills, was rough and aggressive with peers, and as a result, was often rejected by peers. John's mother described him as a happy child, although she did report that he often got mad, angry, and irritable. He would throw temper tantrums and cry when he did not get his own way. He was often aggressive towards his mother and had threatened to kill her on several occasions. His mother also reported that John had difficulty sitting still and following rules and often ran off (Psychological Report: 06/14/2005).

During testing for initial placement, the physiologist reported that John was restless, fidgety, silly and loud. He ran around the room, engaged in loud noises and

mumbled his responses. He had difficulty being redirected and was often off task, distractible and playful. His overall affect was labile as his mood vacillated between cheerfulness, irritability, and anger when being confronted with his behavior or trying to be redirected toward testing. Halfway through testing his mother had to be called in to obtain John's cooperation. John seemed to seek attention for negative behaviors frequently. Based on testing results, the psychologist recommended that John be placed in the separated school setting within a psychoeducational program (Psychological Report: 06/14/2005).

John's most recent psychological report was conducted during the 8th grade and stated that he is often off task, is moody and has sporadic behaviors. However, the report noted he could be attentive and easily redirected when he chose. John's behaviors could easily change and he could be rude and disrespectful to anyone he comes in contact with. John has murmured profanities directed towards others under his breath, lied and appeared to be paranoid at times and constantly looked to see if others were looking at him. John often insulted his teachers and other adults by calling them obscene names (Psychological Report: 06/14/2005).

Intervention results. Monitoring of John's disruptive and antisocial behaviors was conducted by two teachers, a paraprofessional, and a parent social worker who worked at the separate school that he attends. Daily anecdotal records and data tracker point sheets recorded at the end of each class period were used to monitor John's behaviors. While the anecdotal records were the primary responsibility of the parent social worker, the data tracker point sheets were the responsibility of the two teachers and paraprofessional. Goals outlined on the data tracker point sheets were based upon

targeted disruptive and antisocial behaviors identified in John's psychological report and are outlined in John's IEP. The behaviors being monitored in his IEP included:

- John will attend to lessons in class.
- John will refrain from silly actions (refrain from staring, picking at others, making faces or calling out, making noises, turning around in desk, echoing words, various gestures with head or hands, other silly distractions).
- John will refrain from arguing with teachers or peers.
- When redirected, John will refrain from any inappropriate response (denying fault, mocking, echoing words at teacher, etc.).

The reading intervention was conducted as part of John's regular, daily language arts instruction and was monitored for one full 9 week grading period.

Daily anecdotal records from the previous 9 week period indicated that John had 12 reported incidents of not attending to lessons, 12 demonstrations of silly behaviors, 7 occurrences of arguing with teachers, and 2 episodes of refusing to follow directions. During the 9 weeks of reading interventions, John had 16 incidents of not attending to lessons, 9 demonstrations of silly behaviors, 5 occurrences of arguing with teachers, and 5 episodes of refusing to follow directions. This data indicates a 33% increase in not attending to lessons, a 25% decrease in silly behaviors, a 29% reduction in arguing with teachers, and an increase of 150% in refusing to follow directions.

Table 1 provides a summary of the occurrences of participant's disruptive and antisocial behaviors as recorded in his daily anecdotal records during the 9 weeks period prior to and during the reading interventions.

Table 1

Daily Anecdotal Records Results

Disruptive and Antisocial Behaviors	Prior to Research	During Research
Not Attending to Lesson	12	16
Silly Behaviors	12	9
Arguing with Teachers	7	5
Refusing to Follow Directions	2	5

Daily data tracker point sheets from the 9 weeks prior to the study indicated that John stayed on task for approximately 9 minutes per class period, demonstrated silly behaviors 5.4 times per day, argued with teachers or peers 1.63 times per day, and refused to follow directions 1.63 times per day. Data tracker results also recorded that John was sent to ISS (In-School Suspension) 4 times, lost Fun Friday privileges 5 times, and was suspended from school 2 times. During the 9 weeks of reading interventions, teachers reported that John was on task approximately 22 minutes per class period, demonstrated silly behaviors 5.47 times per day, argued with teachers or peers 3.31 times per day and refused to follow directions 4.38 times per day. John was placed in ISS 6 times, lost Fun Friday privileges 6 times, and had no reported suspensions from school. These data indicate a 13 minute increase in on task behaviors, no significant change in silly behaviors, an increase in arguing with teachers or peers of 1.68 times per day, and an increase in refusal to follow directions of 2.75 times per day. John had an increase of 2 placements in ISS, 1 additional loss of Fun Friday privileges, and 2 fewer suspensions from school.

Table 2 provides a summary of the occurrences of participant’s disruptive and antisocial behaviors as recorded in his daily data tracker point sheets during the 9 weeks period prior to and during the reading interventions.

Table 2

Daily Data Tracker Point Sheets Results

Disruptive and Antisocial Behaviors	Prior to Research	During Research
Minutes on Task (per class period)	9	22
Silly Behaviors (per day)	5.4	5.47
Argued (per day)	1.63	3.31
Did Not Follow Directions (per day)	1.63	4.68
Days Served In School Suspension (ISS)	4	6
Days Lost Fun Friday Privileges	5	6
Days Suspended	2	0

Research Question Two Findings

During the 9 weeks period prior to the study, John’s language arts instruction was consistent with that of his freshmen classmates. Assignments over the 9 week period consisted of a unit lesson plan designed to focus on reading and figurative language activities related to the book *Hatchet* by Gary Paulson. John’s 2012 Individual Student Lexile Report indicated that he had a Lexile Measure reading grade equivalent score of 3.7. This score means that John was reading on a third grade at the seventh month level. Because *Hatchet* has a Lexile Measure grade equivalent of 6.3, lesson differentiation strategies were used so that John could participate at the 9th grade level. John also had a daily 5W’s of Geography worksheet assignment that required him to summarize a newspaper article and mark its location on a map.

Differentiation strategies for both of these assignments were incorporated by using a variety of instructional approaches to modify content (what student needed to learn), process (how student learned it), products (how student showed what they learned), and/or learning environment (where student was seated). Differentiation strategies that were used during this unit were outlines, reading guides, audio recordings, graphic organizers, slower pacing, smaller grouping, increased time to complete assignments, peer tutoring, cooperative learning groups, modification in assignment length, grades reflecting student ability, student located near teacher, and student located near peer tutor.

During the 9 weeks of the study, John's language arts instruction consisted of daily Read Live activities. This computer based reading program allowed John to engage in a comprehensive set of research-based activities that assessed his reading ability and involved him in a self-motivating curriculum that supported fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and phonics. After first assessing John's oral reading fluency level, Read Live placed John in the lowest level, the Phonics Series/0.8b (word families/short vowels). Read Live fluency levels are determined based upon data from a compilation of studies by Hasbrouck and Tindal (2006).

Once John's placement level was determined, a reasonable WPM goal was set and the instructional program began. The first part of the instructional process involved John choosing from among 24 non-fiction, high interest stories that were a part of this and all other thirteen levels within the Read Live program. After John engaged in a key words read along activity that focused on the pronunciation of the key words, he then wrote a prediction of his chosen story based on the title, picture, and key words. With

teacher assistance, John then conducted a one-minute “cold timing” score after which the computer generated a graph showing how many words he read correctly.

In order to increase his fluency score, John read the story along with the audio a predetermined number of times, vocalizing quietly with the narration. John continued to practice the reading of his story without the audio support several times until he was able to read it accurately at his set goal rate. John then answered comprehension questions and read a word list until he was able to read it accurately at a predetermined goal rate. To pass, John had to read at his goal rate, using appropriate expression and making three or fewer errors. Then, the computer generated a graph that showed how many words he had read correctly. Before he could move to the next story in the series, John had to meet his WPM goal, answer all comprehension questions correctly, and pass the Word List step for each story on that level.

Intervention results. Both John’s cold timing scores and his hot timing scores improved over the 9 weeks period of the research. Additionally, John’s response to reading interventions not only showed improvement in fluency, but improvements were also made in comprehension. While average comprehension scores only increased slightly, cold timing scores went from an average of 105 to 111, and hot timing scores increased from an average of 123 to 127.

Table 3 shows the series level, average fluency scores, and average quiz comprehension scores.

Table 3

Student Scores

Series Level	Cold Timing Fluency Score (WPM)	Hot Timing Fluency Score (WPM)	Comprehension Score
Phonics level 0.8a	105	123	90
Phonics level 0.8b	121	131	83
Phonics level 1.3a	113	130	97
Phonics level 1.3b	111	127	93

Research Question Three Findings

Previous and current teacher reports indicate that one of John's greatest difficulties is remaining on-task during instruction and seat work time. Re-evaluation testing conducted by a school psychologist indicated that John's elementary, middle and high school teachers reported that John engaged in avoidance behaviors during instruction and seat work times including staring, picking at others, making faces, calling out, making noises, turning around in desk, echoing words, various gestures with head or hands and silly distractions (Psychological Report: 03/16/2011). Cook et al., (2008) hypothesized that these avoidance behaviors are a result of students being continuously taught at a frustrations level opposed to an instructional level.

Because of the frequency of avoidance behaviors associated with EBD, both classmates and teachers become frustrated when problematic situations occur (Salmon, 2006). In John's case, this frustration often led to further isolation from classmates and less instruction time from teachers and resulted in John arguing with and engaging in other negative behaviors with both teachers and peers.

Intervention results. Monitoring of John's anecdotal records was the responsibility of the parent social worker assigned to the site. Information relative to

individual student behaviors was provided to the social worker through personal observations, teacher reports, and interactions with parents. During the 9 weeks period prior to the study, John's anecdotal records contained 14 recorded occurrences of off task behaviors. Anecdotal records described John as "refusing to attempt to do his Math assignment" (Anecdotal Record: 03/21/12), "no work observed in Science" (Anecdotal Records: 03/22/12), "refusal to take practice test to prepare him for the EOCT" (End of Course Test) (Anecdotal Records: 04/23/12), and "surfing the web instead of completing assignment" (Anecdotal Records: 05/08/12).

During the 9 week period of the research, Anecdotal Records recorded 13 occurrences of off task behaviors including "horse playing during transition" (Anecdotal Records: 08/17/12), not participating in the class activity during P.E. (Anecdotal Records: 08/24/12), and failure to "complete any of his assignments" (Anecdotal Records: 09/06/12). This indicates a reduction of only one occurrence of off task behaviors during the research period.

John had 10 reported incidences of inappropriate communication skills prior to the 9 weeks period of the research. Inappropriate communication skills included John being "observed between classes standing outside yelling the word "Ho", as loud as he could" (Anecdotal Records: 04/4/12) and coming in off the bus in the morning yelling and running in the building saying "I don't want those girls to see me, see those girls out there, see them!" (Anecdotal Records: 04/16/12). John was calling another student names (Anecdotal Records: 05/04/12), calling female students "hookers" (Anecdotal Records: 05/11/12), and cursing and yelling at students during his lunch period (Anecdotal Records: 05/14/12).

John had three reported occurrences of inappropriate communications during the 9 weeks of the research period indicating a reduction of seven occurrences. These incidences included yelling during transitions (Anecdotal Records: 08/17/12), disrupting class (Anecdotal Records: 08/29/12), and arguing with peers (Anecdotal Records: 09/05/12). This indicates a reduction of seven reported occurrences of inappropriate communications during the 9 week period of the research.

John's anecdotal records contained nine occurrences of negative interpersonal relations with teachers and peers and no occurrences of positive behaviors or interactions in the 9 weeks prior to the research. The parent social worker highlights John's difficulty with peer interactions due to feeling of isolation:

John has been tearing up student work which has been posted on the wall, tearing student names off of their notebooks after they place them on the shelf at the end of the period, along with other malicious acts in class. When asked about this behavior, John states he did these things a long time ago. He never denied destroying others work. When reminded he has been spoken to about this several times before and told he would be disciplined if he did it again, John again stated "I did that last year. I did that a long time ago!" The work destroyed was current work. John would not listen when being talked to and continued saying he did it a long time ago. John has been suspended for two days for repeated destruction of property and disrespect of his teacher (Anecdotal Records: 03/12/12).

Anecdotal records also indicate that John struggles with personal hygiene and often comes to school without brushing his hair or teeth. When questioned about this lack of attention to hygiene, John "admitted to not combing his hair or brushing his teeth. He stated he woke up late and just did not do it" (Anecdotal Records: 03/20/12). This results

in further isolation from his peers due to his un-kept appearance and severe halitosis. Additionally, John was observed teasing another student (Anecdotal Records: 04/09/12) and throwing paper at another student (Anecdotal Records: 04/25/12).

John had five reported occurrences of negative interpersonal relations with teachers or peers during the 9 weeks period of the research. This indicates a reduction of four inappropriate interpersonal relations. John also has a new interest in girls and reported to the parent social worker that he now had two girlfriends. However, when she asked him how he was getting these girlfriends, he informed her that “you have to be mean to them and then they will be your girlfriend” (Anecdotal Records: 08/09/12).

Table 4

Summary of Anecdotal Records

Behaviors	Prior to Research	During Research
Off Task	14	13
Inappropriate Communications	10	3
Negative Interpersonal Relations	9	5

Research Question Four Findings

John’s teachers believed that he often displayed problem behaviors associated with lowered self-confidence as result of his reading and other academic deficits (Psychological Report: 03/16/2011). He would rather have his peers think he was “bad” instead of “stupid.” John demonstrated that he was aware of his academic deficiencies at the beginning of the research period when he recorded the following in his Student Journal: “I like about read live because it help me with my reading. and help me with the words I don’t know” (Student Journal: 08/20/12). Later John explained, “I misbehave

because I have problem in class, My reading is getting better. Am on the 3 level.. I do thing because I am bad. reading is alright to me I'll it get much better and my behavior is too. I'll improve on it too" (Student Journal: 09/28/12).

Based on teacher observations, John had 11 recorded incidences of engaging in distracting behaviors in order to avoid work during instructional time in the 9 week period prior to the research. These distracting behaviors were also observed 11 times during the 9 weeks of the research indicating that these behaviors were unchanged. However, John's last entry in his Student Journal indicated that he felt his reading had improved and that he was confident that his behaviors would improve as well. John wrote: "I like about read live is it is boring an fun sometime on it. I hate about when I miss some word's on it. Yep I enjoy read lived sometime. My reading improved very much lately sofar. My Behavior is mostly tha same it will get much better soon" (Student Journal: 10/25/12).

During the 9 weeks prior to the research period, John's teachers report that he often fails to complete his academic assignments, which results in failing grades on his report card. When receiving his report card, he often becomes angry initially, then withdraws, and pouts (Anecdotal Records: 03/16/12& 04/18/12). During the 9 weeks of the research period, John's teacher recorded in her Reflective Journal that he had gone 18 days without a recorded behavioral issue. Problem behaviors during the 9 weeks period consisted of not having supplies for class and not following directions. However, she also indicated that he did not have any noteworthy behaviors issues during 2nd period when he was engaged in his Read Live session (Reflective Journal: 09/24/12).

Summary

This chapter described the reading intervention of one student with EBD who struggles with reading deficits. During the 9 week period of the research, John's average reading WPM score improved by 18 points and his comprehension scores were consistently in the 90s. All of John's teachers noted improvements in his overall behaviors and slight improvements in his academic performance. Most notable is John's improvement in his self-confidence resulting from his progress in reading as expressed in his Student Journal. Additionally, John notably expresses hope that while his behaviors are "mostly the same," they will "get much better soon" (Student Journal: 10/25/12).

While teachers reported improvements in John's on task behaviors and interest level during Literature class, there was no reported generalization of these behaviors in other academic subjects. Additionally, there was no notable difference in antisocial behaviors during the research period.

The purpose of this chapter was to report on the impact reading interventions had on the disruptive and antisocial behaviors of a secondary student who struggles with EBD. The results revealed a mixed response to reading interventions. Chapter 5 will provide a summary of these findings as well as a discussion on the implications these findings might have on future research.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

Chapter 5 emphasizes the impact reading interventions had on the disruptive and antisocial behaviors of a secondary student with EBD. This chapter contains a brief summary of the study, a discussion of the findings, limitations of the study, and recommendations for future studies.

The findings of this study are supported in the literature review on several key factors regarding reading interventions and secondary students with EBD. For example, Lane and Menzies (2010) stated that “it is essential that we identify methods of support that general education as well as special education teachers can use in meeting these students’ academic needs” (p. 83). The results of this study indicate a need for teachers and administrators to address the immediate reading deficits of secondary students with EBD to ensure academic success in high school, improve overall quality of life, and increase their ability to obtain and retain employment.

Summary of Study

Secondary schools are reading rich environments staffed with professionals whose main purpose is to prepare youth for the increasingly technological post school environment. Students at the secondary level must daily meet increasingly rigorous academic demands including complex reading and writing assignments, detailed science and social studies texts, math problems that must be understood and solved and high stakes test that determine promotion and graduation (Mooney et al., 2008). After the implementation of NCLB, students with EBD were expected to meet the same academic requirements of their regular education peers. As a result, the academic deficits that were once considered tributary to the behavioral difficulties associated with EBD were considered equally important when addressing the students overall educational needs.

and Menzies (2010) stress that reading is the “key that unlocks all other learning as well as numerous recreational and leisure activities” (p. 82). As a result, shortfalls in reading abilities “pose significant limitations to students within and beyond the academic setting as it affects their performance in school, interpersonal relationships, quality of life and ability to obtain and retain employment” (Lane & Menzies, 2010, p.82).

Research question two explored the responses of a student with EBD to reading interventions. Understanding how a student with EBD responds to reading interventions can assist in creating and delivering future reading interventions that encourage student engagement to this population of special education students. Research conducted by Willis, Kamps, Abbott, Bannister, and Kaufman (2010) indicates that EBD students who respond to reading interventions by actively engaging in the learning process have better outcomes both academically and behaviorally.

The next question asked how changes in high school EBD student on-task behaviors, communication skills, and interpersonal relationships occur with peers and teachers. Identifying how an EBD student’s on-task behaviors, communication skills, and interpersonal relationships occur with peers and teachers could be helpful in creating and delivering reading interventions for children with behavioral difficulties. Beck, Burns, and Lau (2009) believe these changes in social behaviors could be especially important given the link between reading interventions to improved social competence for this population of special education students.

The final research question explored the impact interventions had on the EBD student’s self-confidence. Awareness of the impact reading interventions have on a student’s self-confidence would assist educators in identifying variables that might moderate a treatment program’s effectiveness. Research conducted by Nicholson (2005)

indicates that effective academic interventions, especially in reading, not only boost self-confidence, but also lead to improved learning, better behaviors and more positive attitudes.

Chapter 2 provided the theoretical framework that guided this study. Developmental psychopathology theory was identified as the current approach for effective treatment used by teachers of EBD students to better understand the interventions designed for effective treatment (Jones, et al., 2004). Reading theory based on a balanced approach, which is now advocated by the NRP and conforms with NCLB as a research-based approach, was the basis of the intervention in this study. The professional literature detailed the reading characteristics of secondary students with EBD, defined effective reading instruction, provided an examination of effective reading interventions, and featured a review of similar studies related to reading and EBD. The gap in literature on effective interventions among secondary students with comorbid reading and behavioral difficulties exposed the need for more research on this topic.

Chapter 3 explained the methodology of the study. A qualitative research design was used to conduct this instrumental case study in one specific self-contained classroom located on a public high school campus. Data were collected from archival documents, student observations, and physical artifacts.

Chapter 4 reported the findings of this study through the response of the participant to reading interventions. The participant is representative of the larger EBD population being serviced by this separate school providing services to a five county area.

Discussion of Findings

Children with EBD not only exhibit academic problems, but they also display the behavioral problems characteristic of EBD including aggressive and unruly behaviors, disobedience, tantrums, and disruptive verbalizations (Hoang & Oshiro, 2011). Without effective interventions, Wagner (2005) found that this combination of academic and behavior problems can result in reading deficits of approximately 2.2 grade levels and internalizing behaviors of isolation, depression, and anxiety by mid to late adolescence.

Research question one. The first research question investigated the impact reading interventions had on the disruptive and antisocial behaviors of a ninth grade student with EBD. Table 1 showed that results were mixed with reductions in both silly behaviors and arguing with teachers, and increases in not attending to lessons and refusing to follow directions. The findings indicated that improvements in silly behaviors and arguing with teachers occurred as a result of the student engaging in academic assignments that were more appropriate to his ability and interest level. As noted in the literature, higher rates of on-task behavior and decreased disruptive behaviors occurred when students were presented with appropriate challenging tasks (Beck, Burns, & Lau, 2009). One explanation for improvements in behaviors may be that a more positive learning environment existed allowing for more positive student-teacher interactions and increased academic engagement and success.

However, because many of the challenging behaviors displayed by this student had become engrained due to his long history of reading and behavior problems, I believe that more positive social interactions and academic successes will be necessary for improvements in the behaviors of attending to lessons and refusing to follow directions. Research conducted by Harjusola-Webb, Hubbell, and Bedesem (2012) found that

improvements in entrenched challenging behaviors can be especially difficult for EBD students as they are often prevented from having the opportunities to share in positive social interactions with their peers and teachers due to repeated social isolation and discipline procedures.

Research question two. The second research question examined how a high school student with EBD responded to reading interventions. Results of this study showed improvements in the areas of fluency, comprehension, and expression. Increases in fluency scores were the result of daily repeated reading activities that the student engaged in while improvements in the areas of comprehension and expression can be attributed to the student's increase in reading fluency. Previous research conducted by Oakes, Mathur, & Lane (2010) found that the large quantity of attentional resources used by dysfluent reader's results in a mental exhaustion that fluent readers do not experience and noted that behaviors exhibited by struggling readers included daydreaming and inattention to tasks. The results in this study are similar to those reported by Scott and Shearer-Lingo (2002) that showed implementing reading fluency in self-contained classrooms for students with EBD can positively affect reading achievement and on-task behaviors.

Furthermore, the theory of automaticity (LaBerg & Samuels, 1974) was used as a framework for this study and states that a fluent reader's attention is freed to focus on comprehension and expression. The repeated reading strategy used in this study to increase reading fluency has been widely researched and the literature indicates that the repeated readings and timed readings used in the Read Live program have been shown to be effective and efficient in building reading fluency (Pruitt & Cooper, 2008). Because John was able to engage in daily reading activities that were at his current reading ability,

he immediately began experiencing increases in his reading fluency scores. Increased fluency scores allowed John to comprehend what he was reading, thus providing him with better understanding of the text and successful outcomes on his comprehension quizzes. John soon began to experience an overall enjoyment of the reading process which led to a more engaged reader with noticeable improvements in reading expression.

Research question three. The third research question studied the changes that occurred in high school EBD student on-task behaviors, communication skills, and interpersonal relationships with teachers and peers. The study results showed increases in on-task behaviors, communication skills, and interpersonal relationships with others. The behavioral results obtained in the current study are similar to those reported in a study conducted by Barton-Arwood, Wehbly, and Falk (2005) where results showed lower rates of total inappropriate behaviors and high percentages of engagement. As John began spending more time engaged in his reading activities, he had less time to engage in behaviors that isolated him from teachers and peers and provided him with more opportunities to engage in positive interactions with others.

Research question four. The fourth research question examined how reading interventions impacted a high school EBD student's self-confidence. This study showed that John's recorded incidences of engaging in distracting behaviors associated with lowered self-confidence were unchanged but, that he had gone one 18 day period without any recorded behavioral issue. Furthermore, during the 9 weeks period of the research, John had no noteworthy incidences of distracting behaviors during the daily Literature class when he was engaged in his Read Live session. As noted in the literature Sutherland, Lewis-Palmer, Stichter, and Morgan (2008) found that self-confidence was associated with deviant peer associations, and deviant peer associations were associated

with distracting behaviors. But, without the effect of deviant peer associations, self-confidence no longer predicted problem behavior, suggesting that deviant peer associations lead to problem behaviors resulting in poor self-confidence. This reduction in distracting behaviors during his Literature class should provide John with an increase in positive peer interactions resulting in a higher self-confidence over time.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study identifying how reading interventions impacted the disruptive and antisocial behaviors of a secondary student with EBD aligns with previous research in this area. The need for reading interventions that will reduce the disruptive and antisocial behaviors associated with EBD students continues to rise. Therefore, the following recommendations for further research are offered.

First, the positive results of this limited study reinforced the need for further research in the area of reading instruction for secondary students with EBD. As stated previously, limited research exists in this area and a better understanding of effective reading interventions in the EBD classroom would benefit this neglected segment of the special education population by providing a reduction in antisocial behaviors, more positive school experiences, reductions in high dropout rates, and more positive lifelong outcomes. .

Next, the barriers that prevent effective implementation of reading programs in EBD classrooms should be better understood. While the shift has begun, many EBD classrooms continue to focus predominantly on the reduction of problem behaviors, giving little attention to academic achievement. While behaviors should remain the primary focus, this study has demonstrated that when improvements are made in reading ability, improved behaviors will follow.

Then, based on the results of this study, long-term intervention research using the Read Live program should be conducted with secondary students identified with EBD so that educators can provide targeted reading instruction to this vulnerable segment of the special education population. As noted earlier, there is a sense of urgency for high school students with EBD and comorbid reading deficits as they have very little time before entering the workforce where reading is a necessary skill.

Finally, more research is needed that includes a larger number of EBD students with comorbid reading deficits. Due to the singular nature of the case study, more research including a larger number of participants would be needed in order to more effectively generalize the findings to the larger population of EBD students receiving services in the separate school setting.

Implications for Practice

The results of this study underscore the practical utility of selected remedial reading interventions in the improvement of the disruptive and antisocial behaviors of secondary students with EBD. A clear link exists between these results and the day-to-day practices in the secondary EBD classroom. Educators who are interested in generating higher rates of on-task behaviors and decreased disruptive behaviors should consider providing secondary EBD students with reading interventions more suited to their current reading ability. When students are provided with the opportunities to be successful, more positive student-teacher interactions and increased academic engagement and success will follow.

Additionally, this study showed that it is never too late to address the reading deficits of secondary EBD students. For this reason, teachers must provide secondary EBD students with the most effective research based reading interventions available. This

study demonstrated that when improvements are made in the areas of fluency and comprehension, dysfluent readers become more engaged and reading achievement and on-task behaviors are more probable. Furthermore, when any student is engaged in the learning process, there is less time for him to engage in behaviors that will further isolate him from teachers and peers and more opportunities to engage in positive interactions with others; leading to higher self-confidence over time. Therefore, when educators are selecting reading interventions, they must consider the students reading ability and ensure that age appropriate, high interest reading programs are provided so that high levels of student engagement will be probable.

Conclusion

The number of studies addressing the issue of reading interventions among secondary students with EBD is limited. This study attempts to remedy this issue. Given the abundance of information provided by a case study, I feel it is a valuable type of research that would be effective in other studies of students with EBD.

The Read Live program proved to be particularly effective when used within the secondary school setting and its use of technology as an instructional tool should be of particular interest in the self-contained setting where instructional resources are often limited. It is particularly encouraging to note that remedial reading interventions did have a positive impact on the behaviors of a student with EBD. More studies focusing upon reading interventions among this population will validate effective instructional strategies and facilitate improved student behaviors.

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APPENDIX A: PARENTAL CONSENT FORM
**Impact of Remedial Reading Interventions on a Secondary Student With Emotional
Behavior Disorders: A Case Study**

LuCinda Nance Cooper
Liberty University
School of Education

I give my consent for my child _____ to participate in a research study that will investigate impact of reading interventions on the classroom behaviors of students who struggle with reading. Your child was selected as a possible participant because they have classroom behaviors that may be affected by their reading deficits. We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to allow your child to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by: LuCinda N. Cooper, School of Education, Liberty University.

Background Information

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of reading interventions on the classroom behaviors of students who struggle with reading.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, your child would be asked to do the following things:

The research project will take place in my child's Language Arts class over a period of six weeks. During this time, my child will be asked to participate in the Read Live computer reading program for one class period per day. Read Naturally products support and reinforce the essential components of reading as outlined by the National Reading Panel. Over this six weeks period, the researcher will be collecting data using a variety of instruments and techniques (student records, observations, physical artifacts, and tape recorded interviews). I understand that the researcher might be asking my child to participate using a combination of these data collection instruments and techniques.

Risks and Benefits of being in the Study

The risks in this study are minimal and are no more than your child would encounter in a typical educational task.

The benefits that your child may expect from the research are improvements in his behaviors and reading abilities.

Confidentiality:

The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report we might publish, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers will have access to the records.

The results of this participation will be confidential, and will not be released in any individually identifiable form without the prior consent of you and your child. Interviews of my child will be tape recorded and transcribed, and the words of my child may be quoted. If so, a pseudonym will be used to ensure that my child cannot be identified in any way. All Data will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in the Principle Investigators classroom and will be destroyed after 3 years.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

I understand that this participation is voluntary; you or your child can withdraw consent without penalty and have the results of the participation removed from the research records or destroyed. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time.

Contacts and Questions:

The researcher conducting this study is: LuCinda Cooper. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at, 229-886-3681, lucinda.cooper@docoschools.org. You may also contact the Committee Chair associated with this study: Dr. Kenneth Tierce, 860-484-3723, krtierce@liberty.edu .

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, Dr. Fernando Garzon, Chair, 1971 University Blvd, Suite 1582, Lynchburg, VA 24502 or email at fgarzon@liberty.edu.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I give my consent for my child to participate in the study.

Signature of parent or guardian: _____ Date: _____

(If minors are involved)

Signature of Investigator: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX B: STUDENT ASSENT FORM
**Impact of Remedial Reading Interventions on a Secondary Student With Emotional
Behavior Disorders: A Case Study**

LuCinda Nance Cooper
Liberty University
School of Education

You are invited to be in a research study that will investigate the impact of reading interventions on the classroom behaviors of students who struggle with reading. You were selected as a possible participant because you have classroom behaviors that may be affected by your reading problems. I will read this form with you and you can ask me any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by: LuCinda N. Cooper, School of Education, Liberty University.

Background Information

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of reading interventions on the classroom behaviors of students who struggle with reading.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to do the following things:

The research project will take place during your Language Arts class over a period of six weeks. During this time, you will be asked to participate in the Read Live computer reading program for one class period per day. During this time, you will read and write stories, answer questions, and monitor your own reading improvement through computer-generated graphs of your scores. Over this six week period, the researcher will be collecting data in several ways (student records, observations, student work, and tape recorded interviews). I understand that the researcher might ask me to participate using a combination of these data collection instruments and techniques.

Risks and Benefits of being in the Study

There are very few risks in this study and are no more than you would encounter in a typical educational task.

The benefits that you may expect from the research are improvements in your behaviors and reading abilities.

Confidentiality:

The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report we might publish, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers will have access to the records.

The information about your participation in this study will be confidential and will not be released in any way that you could be identified without your permission. Interviews will be tape recorded and transcribed, and your words may be quoted. If so, a made-up name will be used to make sure that you cannot be identified in any way. All study results will be stored in a locked filing cabinet will be destroyed after 3 years.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

You do not have to participate in this study and you can stop participating any time you want to without getting in trouble or making a bad grade in your Literature class. If you choose to stop, any information I have gathered will be destroyed. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or to withdraw at any time.

Contacts and Questions:

The researcher conducting this study is: LuCinda Cooper. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at, 229-886-3681, lucinda.cooper@docoschools.org. You may also contact the Committee Chair associated with this study: Dr. Kenneth Tierce, 860-484-3723, krtierce@liberty.edu .

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, Dr. Fernando Garzon, Chair, 1971 University Blvd, Suite 1582, Lynchburg, VA 24502 or email at fgarzon@liberty.edu.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Investigator: _____ Date: _____

Appendix C: Principal Consent Form

November 5, 2011

[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

As part of my postgraduate studies at Liberty University, I am preparing to conduct a qualitative case study. The purpose of this study is to examine how reading interventions impact the disruptive and antisocial behaviors of a secondary student with EBD. This study will focus specifically upon how remedial reading instruction in the five essential components of reading combined with repeated readings and progress monitoring strategies will influence the student's overall classroom behaviors. The classroom behaviors include, remaining on task, improved communication skills, and improved interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers. These social skills are seen as essential to success in both the classroom and on the job and greatly contribute to overall quality of life. Dr. Kenneth Tierce, Assistant Professor of Education, Liberty University, is supervising my research project. I am writing to you seeking your approval to undertake this research in your school.

The *Read Live* computer based comprehensive reading assessment and intervention program will be used to implement the reading intervention in this study. *Read Live's* structured intervention programs combine teacher modeling, repeated reading, and progress monitoring — three strategies that research has shown are effective in improving students' reading proficiency. The *Read Live* strategy begins by assessing the student's oral reading fluency using Benchmark Assessor Live. Once the appropriate reading level and words correct per minute (wcpm) goal are determined, the student will generate a cold time score for a chosen story and begin the repeated reading assignment. When the student's wcpm goal is achieved, the student will answer the comprehension questions and type a retell of the story. *Read Live* then provides student progress monitoring through computer generated graphs of student scores.

Research has established the links between the positive impact reading interventions can have on the overall behaviors of students with EBD. A reduction in anti-social behaviors will provide EBD students with a more positive school experience, thus leading to a reduction in the high dropout rates among this segment of the population. Successful completion of high school can provide EBD students with the academic and social skills necessary for positive lifelong outcomes. It is hoped that the subject in this study will benefit from an increase in literacy skills which will lead to a reduction in the disruptive and antisocial behaviors associated with his disability.

Generally, children find computer based learning enjoyable. However should the student become anxious during any activity associated with this study, the study would cease. Should consent be granted, ethical considerations will be addressed by maintaining the anonymity of participants through the use of pseudonyms for the student, teachers, and name and location of the study.

If you have any questions regarding this request please do not hesitate to contact me (details below).

Thank you for your consideration.
Sincerely,

LuCinda Cooper

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

I grant permission for this research study to be conducted in my school.

Signature of principal

Appendix D: Superintendent Consent Form

November 5, 2011

[REDACTED]

Superintendent

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Dear Dr. [REDACTED]

As part of my postgraduate studies at Liberty University, I am preparing to conduct a qualitative case study. The purpose of this study is to examine how reading interventions impact the disruptive and antisocial behaviors of a secondary student with EBD. This study will focus specifically upon how remedial reading instruction in the five essential components of reading combined with repeated readings and progress monitoring strategies will influence the student's overall classroom behaviors. The classroom behaviors include, remaining on task, improved communication skills, and improved interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers. These social skills are seen as essential to success in both the classroom and on the job and greatly contribute to overall quality of life. Dr. Kenneth Tierce, Assistant Professor of Education, Liberty University, is supervising my research project. I am writing to you seeking your approval to undertake this research in your school.

The *Read Live* computer based comprehensive reading assessment and intervention program will be used to implement the reading intervention in this study. *Read Live's* structured intervention programs combine teacher modeling, repeated reading, and progress monitoring — three strategies that research has shown are effective in improving students' reading proficiency. The *Read Live* strategy begins by assessing the student's oral reading fluency using Benchmark Assessor Live. Once the appropriate reading level and words correct per minute (wcpm) goal are determined, the student will generate a cold time score for a chosen story and begin the repeated reading assignment. When the student's wcpm goal is achieved, the student will answer the comprehension questions and type a retell of the story. *Read Live* then provides student progress monitoring through computer generated graphs of student scores.

Research has established the links between the positive impact reading interventions can have on the overall behaviors of students with EBD. A reduction in anti-social behaviors will provide EBD students with a more positive school experience, thus leading to a reduction in the high dropout rates among this segment of the population. Successful completion of high school can provide EBD students with the academic and social skills necessary for positive lifelong outcomes. It is hoped that the subject in this study will benefit from an increase in literacy skills which will lead to a reduction in the disruptive and antisocial behaviors associated with his disability.

Generally, children find computer based learning enjoyable. However should the student become anxious during any activity associated with this study, the study would cease. Should consent be granted, ethical considerations will be addressed by maintaining the anonymity of participants through the use of pseudonyms for the student, teachers, and name and location of the study.

If you have any questions regarding this request, please do not hesitate to contact me (details below).

Thank you for your consideration.
Sincerely,

LuCinda Cooper

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

I grant permission for this research study to be conducted in the [REDACTED] School System.

Signature of Superintendent