PARENTAL AND ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY-BASED EARLY LITERACY INTERVENTION FOR PRESCHOOLER WITH DOWN SYNDROME

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The main purpose of this case study was to explore parental and assistive technology-based early literacy intervention. A preschooler with Down syndrome and his mother were selected to participate in this intervention. Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening for Preschool (PALS-Pre K) was used to test the proficiency of letter knowledge and the beginning sound awareness of this child. The mother then participated in a parental training session and practised the intervention for 3 weeks at home. The results of this study successfully demonstrated an increased level of proficiency in mastering letter knowledge and the beginning sound awareness skills. This article proposes the integration of assistive technology in early literacy intervention as a medium of teaching and learning stimulant to help parents educate their children with more confidence.

Keywords: Parental-based early intervention, assistive technology-based intervention, early literacy, children with Down syndrome

Previous studies have shown that reading is not only a critical skill for success in the field of education, but also important for independent living; many studies have shown that exposure to early literacy will benefit children, whether for typical children or those with disability (Erickson, Hatch, & Clendon, 2010; Trenholm & Mirenda, 2006). In other words, reading skill not only acts as a catalyst for learning in a school environment (Buckley & Bird, 2001), but it is important and will have significant implications in life (Thatcher & Fletcher, 2008).

However, the reading achievements of children with Down syndrome will vary differently (Buckley & Johnson-Glenberg, 2008; Burgoyne et al., 2012). This is caused by factors during the reading intervention approach (Baylis & Snowling, 2012), the influence of home environment (Byrne et al., 2006) and the parents' role in literacy practices at home (Foy & Mann, 2003). In fact, there is still not one strong evidence to show how best to intervene for reading ability (Burgoyne et al., 2012) and mastery of literacy in children with Down syndrome (Martin, Klusek, Estigarribia, & Roberts, 2009).