

ABSTRACT

This research study used qualitative methods to examine the learning processes of four fourth-grade students with learning disabilities as they engaged in dialogic problem solving of addition and subtraction word problems. The students learned specific problem solving steps through direct instruction in how to use Representational Schema Diagrams, developed by Jitendra and Hoff (1996). To practice the strategy, the students engaged in conversation and explanation in teacher directed small groups and in student paired groupings. They used the strategy steps and the schema diagrams to guide their dialogic process as they solved “rich” word problems. The researcher documents both improvements in the students’ process and communication skills and points of confusion the students encountered.