Instructional Case Study

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Abstract

Through a triangulation of theory, research and experience various aspects of one learner have been examined, analyzed and considered in developing appropriate educator response strategies. The cultural and institutional influence on a female kindergartner at a public school has been examined. In response to the student’s cultural, institutional, linguistic, social-emotional, behavioral, phonetic, psychological, metacognitive, critical thinking skills and lexical development, various plans and methods for teacher instruction have been provided. Through the cognitive, language, social-emotional, action research, family engagement and moral plans devised, the student will have an opportunity for academic success that is tailored to her unique needs. Upon analyzation, an ideal behavioral environment has been determined, appropriate assessment strategies have been suggested and recommendations for instruction have been devised. By approaching the student’s development from an inquiry perspective, I have been able to determine the necessary accommodations to benefit her learning, development and achievement while bettering myself as a future educator.

Instructional Case Study

# The following paper is a case study focusing upon a female elementary age student under my direct observation for approximately 12 weeks. My observations will be presented for each of the following domains: cultural, institutional, socioemotional, linguistics, behavioral, phonetic, psychological, metacognitive and lexical. Each domain has been analyzed and my findings are recorded below. Also, instructional plans and programs have been theorized and applied to help this student’s academic experience in order to best meet the needs of the student. Through the triangulation of theory, research and experience I have considered aspects of my focus students’ personal and academic needs to support their development.

# Cultural Influence

For the purposes of focusing on a single student, I chose the young learner Lucy Heerdt\*. Lucy is a five-year old female in Mrs. Smith’s\* diverse kindergarten class. Lucy lives with her mother and father, who both read to her and seem to of taken an active interest in their daughter’s education. Lucy is a middle child, she has an older and younger sister. She is excited to see her older sister, who is in the 3rd grade, around school. Through an informal interview with the student I was able to uncover Lucy’s preferences both in and out of school. Lucy enjoys books about the adored Clifford the Big Red Dog and books about animals in general, especially horses. She also chooses to spend her free time playing outside. Lucy can ride a bike with training wheels, demonstrating that she has competent motor skills. In school, Lucy enjoys being able to attend the Art class special on Tuesdays. Part of the behavior management system in Mrs. Smith’s class includes a behavior tracking chart utilizing colors to represent behavior, red indicating bad behavior and green for following all the classroom rules. Students are able to earn a blue or purple day if they show exceptional behavior choices. Lucy is a kind-hearted girl who rarely moves her color to a negative indication. For helping a fellow student up on the playground and escorting him to the teachers during recess, she was able to earn a blue day. Her kind behavior gives her an advantage in social environments, like school. As indicated by the Kindergarten Reading Test (KRT) administered in the beginning of the school year, Lucy has room for improvement in her literacy skills. While being tested on letter identification and sound recognition, Lucy only correctly recognized 15 out of 83 assessment questions. Lucy was unable to accurately identify any factors in the phonemic awareness portion of the KRT. She could not identify rhyming words, initial or final letter sounds. Lucy scored 9 out of 18 possible action prompts correct while being assessed on concepts of print. Though Lucy’s test scores have indicated that she is a low-achieving student in the beginning of the year, she has the potential and support to catch up to or surpass her peers.

(\* = Pseudonym)

**Institutional Influence**

Wheelus\* Elementary’s vision is to “ACHIEVE- A Community of High-performing Individuals Emphasizing the Value of Education.” Of the entire school, 69% of the student body is eligible for free or reduced lunch, classifying Wheelus Elementary as a Title I school. As a young learner in a Title I school, Lucy should be receiving additional instruction and benefit from the financial support being provided to the school. In the past two years, Wheelus Elementary has received a C rating, and B’s the two years prior. A new principal has been brought in this year with the intention to improve school performance. She is highly involved in planning and meetings between all the kindergarten teachers. Mrs. Smith’s classroom is dominated by White students (40%), with an even 26% for both Hispanic and African American students. Demographically, Lucy is labeled as Hispanic in the school system. Though she is a minority, the racial diversity within the class should ensure that she doesn’t feel isolated. The student’s social experiences support this claim. She is accepted and supported amongst her peers. Only one student (6%) identifies as Multi-racial. Schoolwide, the minority rate is at 54%. Of the 678 total student enrollment, 45% of the school is White with Hispanic rates the next highest at 30%. Of the whole class, 66% are eligible for free or reduced lunch. Seven students are able to obtain their lunches at no cost, based on their families’ financial situation. Lucy benefits from the free lunch promotion. She is allergic to peanuts, but the school accommodates her health needs accordingly and she sits at a separate table to assure her health. Reduced lunch prices are offered to three students in the class.

Four of the young learners in Lucy’s classroom have specified Individualized Education Plans (IEP’s). IEP’s are in place to set appropriate goals for student development, and ensure they are met with the support necessary for academic success. A Speech Language Pathologist tutors five learners from the class to help with their speech impediments and more students are being tested for eligibility for speech services. Lucy will gain improvement in her speech capabilities through intensive group therapy. It is often near impossible to determine what Lucy is trying to say, and she clarifies through miming her intentions. I am concerned that her speech impediment is impacting her ability to achieve in school, and is partly responsible for her below average scores on the KRT. Through the additional help, Lucy will gain the ability to communicate effectively. However, time out of the classroom may have a negative impact on her academic learning.

(\* = Pseudonym)

**Linguistics**

When initially assessed phonemically through the 2015-2016 Kindergarten Reading Pre-Test, it is clear that Lucy is below level in linguistic development. Lucy often falls victim to common articulation problems, like substituting similar sounds, physical pronunciation errors, sound distortions and mispronouncing blends (Bohlin, Durwin, Weber, 2012). When assessed on sound identification Lucy only recognized 4 of 31 possibilities. She recognized the G sound, and three long vowel sounds. Lucy has been placed in a reading group that focuses on the needs of students with low phonemic awareness.

As an Elementary teacher, it is important to speak to Lucy in an unhurried way and convey that I am listening to her utterances through appropriate eye contact, body language and feedback. (Bohlin, Durwin, Weber. 2012, p.144). According to testing in the beginning of the year, Lucy understands half the concepts of print she should, which corresponds with about half of the class’ ability to comprehend at least nine of eighteen book element identifications. She was able to identify covers, where to begin reading, follow along accordingly, guide print directionality, turn pages appropriately and recognize words and letters. Lucy was unable to recognize any rhyming sounds, nor any beginning or final letter sounds. Through Lucy’s behavior and language pragmatics it is evident that she comprehends the English language. Since Lucy is an emergent learner in kindergarten she lacks lexical or grammatical knowledge, or any ability to demonstrate it.

**Social-Emotional Development**

Socially, Lucy has reached the fourth stage of Erikson’s Psychosocial Theory. She is confronting the crisis of industry versus inferiority, highlighted by her desire to accomplish tasks. Lucy enjoys her assigned job for the week, like being the door holder for the class or paper passer for her side of the room. A sense of pride, productivity and accomplishment is developed through her engagement in the task, as supported by Mrs. Smith and I. Also, Lucy was excited to tell me that she can ride her bike when I interviewed her personal and reading preferences. Erikson acknowledges that children are mastering many skills, like physical skills, and I was sure to encourage her feelings of accomplishment in my response. (Bohlin, Durwin, Weber, 2012). Emotionally, Lucy’s temperament is generally shy and easily distracted. It is hypothesized that Lucy’s distractibility may impede her academic achievement. (Bohlin, Durwin, Weber, 2012). Socially, Lucy shows signs of compassion and empathy. For example, when a friend was injured on the playground, Lucy held his hand and escorted him to the teachers for help. From this example, it can be inferred that Lucy is in the preconventional level of Lawrence Kohlberg’s theory of moral reasoning. At this stage, Lucy focuses on the personal reward of behavior, naïve hedonistic, as she was promoted to a higher behavior color for the day for helping a friend (Bohlin, Durwin, Weber, 2012, pg 77).

**Behavior**

Lucy is one of the best-behaved students in the classroom. She consistently follows directions, obeys class rules concerning respect and actively participates in lessons. Lucy is rarely scolded for conversing out of turn or mistreating a peer. She constantly makes an effort to be involved in academic discussions and is always volunteering to help her teachers and classmates. For behavior management, Mrs. Smith has a color system. Students begin on green, and can excel to blue or purple for good behavior. If students break rules, like those addressing disrespect, they move their colors down to yellow or red. I collected data on the student’s behavior through their planners, where their daily colors are marked. At the time of collection, thirty-six days into school, Lucy earned a blue day nearly 26% of the time. She was one of four students to of achieved a purple day, and leads the class with two days on purple. Lucy has never reported home on a red or yellow day. With a strong positive behavioral track record, she has earned an advantage in learning.

**Cognitive Ability**

Piaget’s theory of genetic epistemology considers children’s thinking as a result of biological maturation, active exploration of the physical environment, social experiences and self-regulation. (Bohlin, Durwin, Weber, 2012). Through his research, knowledge is claimed to develop through four stages: sensorimotor, pre-operational, concrete operational and formal operational. Children 2 to 7 years old are considered to be in the pre-operational stage, characterized by one-way thinking. As a student in the pre-operational stage of Piaget’s cognitive development theory, Lucy is developing the ability to represent objects and actions with signs and symbols through language and drawing. Though her handwriting is often challenging to decode and her illustrations lack an artistic flair, she is able to explain the meaning behind her pictures.

In Lucy’s “Response to Reading” notebook, she illustrates definitions to terms she has learned through read alouds. For example, I read the book *One Dog Canoe* by Mary Casanova to the class. We focused on four vocabulary terms. In Lucy’s response journal, she wrote the focus word “crew” and drew a group of students. In asking for her explanation, I was able to deduct that she comprehended the meaning of the word and could portray it in illustrations and writing. She is egocentric in thought and behavior, seemingly unaware of future events that have she has not yet experienced. The student exhibits centration in organization tasks for science. The students have studied the topic of sorting, in which Lucy was able to sort shapes by color or size, but not both simultaneously.

**Metacognitive/Intellectual Development**

Lucy’s academic records thus far and disabling speech impediment have supported her eligibility for an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA). The IEP will be developed by a multidisciplinary team of educators and specialists, like the speech-language pathologist, at Lucy’s school as a plan outlining curricula, educational modifications and provisions of services to enhance or improve Lucy’s academic skills. (Bohlin, Durwin, Weber, 2012). Lucy’s conceptual skills are limited, declining her adaptive behavior. Hindered by a level of low phonemic awareness, Lucy is lagging behind in development of reading and writing skills that are necessary to function in society. The reading problems of poor readers, like Lucy, can be attributed to various factors: difficulty with phonological processing (implying a reading disability), below-average oral language comprehension, poor strategy use or a lower IQ. (Bohlin, Durwin, Weber, 2012). Lucy’s low scores of phonemic awareness and lack of letter recognition or automaticity imply she may be eligible to receive special services regarding a reading disability. Services provided by school’s the speech-language pathologist will include group therapy to improve Lucy’s phonemic awareness.

Lucy’s communication and social skills are acceptable, increasing her adaptive behavior abilities. She follows directions, showcases appropriate listening skills, acts with good manners, follows rules and is developing interpersonal skills. The IEP team will revise and adjust Lucy’s IEP annually to ensure consistent development. Direct instruction and cooperative learning are effective instructional methods that should be considered in planning for Lucy’s academic acquisitions. Also, hands-on learning, a focus on repetition of knowledge and skills and generalizing skills in a variety of contexts will encourage learning regardless of intellectual disabilities.

**Cognitive Development Plan**

In order to meet the needs of Lucy’s cognitive development, I will center lessons on strategic ways to build concept understanding. Concepts can be best understood by pre-operational children by teaching abstract ideas generalized from specific examples. Concept formation will allow the learner to organize large amounts of information into manageable units. (Bohlin, Durwin, Weber, 2012). In order to do this, lessons will begin by accessing prior knowledge, initiating learning through common examples of the concept and using visual aids like maps, charts and illustrations. For example, in comprehending the characteristics of a quadrilateral, it will be beneficial to focus on shapes the student is familiar with, such as a square or rectangle. Lucy will be given references to materials she already knows in order to assimilate new information. By capitalizing on prior knowledge, Lucy will be able to develop identity constancy and move to Piaget’s next stage of development, concrete operational.

Also, Lucy will be given a Tier 3 intervention for her RTI (Response of Intervention) focus. RTI is an approach addressing early identification and support for students with learning and behavioral needs. A one-to-one intervention will be given in helping Lucy develop her concept knowledge of letter identification and sounds. The student will focus on 5 letters each day. Through auditory learning styles, hearing the letter and letter sounds, writing the letter and reading the letter to the teacher Lucy will practice the repetition needed to develop her cognitive awareness. With individualized attention and responses from the teacher, through daily responses and weekly assessments, adjustments will be made to assist Lucy in her development.

**Language Development Plan**

In order to meet the language needs of the focus student, Lucy’s metalinguistic awareness skills need to be heightened. “Phonological awareness is a unit of metalinguistic awareness that is important for later reading acquisition.” (Bohlin, Durwin, Weber 2012). According the Bohlin, Durwin and Weber beginning kindergartners should be able to tell whether two words rhyme and generate simple word rhymes. Lucy lacks rhyming abilities, as her test scores have indicated a zero achievement in those areas. Lucy is also unable to isolate and produce beginning sounds of words and blend phoneme segments in words, characteristic of final kindergarten tasks. (Bohlin, Durwin, Weber, 2012). In order to develop Lucy’s linguistic skills to include higher levels of understanding the concept of spoken words containing smaller units of sound, fun activities such as songs, nursery rhymes and games have been credited to offer adequate development in phonological awareness. Language development can be supported by talking, singing and reading to Lucy in ways that encourage attention to rhythm, repetition and expressive intonation. Songs call attention to the component sounds in words, which will further Lucy’s phonemic awareness. Lucy enjoys in class songs that consist of silly rhymes and repetitive alliterations that focus on linguistic development.

Also, I will be sensitive to Lucy’s individual differences and corresponding needs. In Lucy’s learning, she could fall victim to her speech impediment under the pressure of group reading and be unable to accurately answer reading comprehension questions instantly on the carpet among her peers. Instead of dismissing Lucy’s hurried attempt at vocalization, it will be beneficial to her learning and linguistic development if I encourage the student to take her time in her response. When Lucy is given a calm and appropriate setting, she is better able to focus on her annunciations. Language acquisition can be supported by asking question, clarifying and expanding on the student’s utterances. (Bohlin, Durwin, Weber, 2012).

**Socioemotional Plan**

Erik Erikson’s proposed theory of social emotional development cites a psychosocial crisis for each stage. Elementary age students are addressing the milestone of industry versus inferiority. Children develop a sense of industry as they are provided opportunities to successfully complete tasks, learn information and become competent or skilled in particular areas. (Bohlon, Durwin, Weber, 2012). The text states that students like Lucy who are being considered to have a learning disability are less likely to develop a sense of industry. Therefore, teachers should be sensitive to Lucy’s attempts to increase her feelings of success and competence. Positive reinforcement of good behaviors and academic practices will ensure Lucy’s continued effort. Lucy’s frustration while reading, exemplified by her stating “I can’t do it,” should be instantly responded with reassurance of her capability to succeed in reading. The fourth stage recognizes that teachers become increasingly influential in the child’s emotional development. Displaying high expectations for Lucy in subtle ways, instead of offering unsolicited help or praising attempts, will ensure she feels competent. I will take special care to emphasize mastery of skills over competition with other students. Lucy will not feel pressured to identify all the letter sounds, but instead encouraged to pursue her own educational path.

Additionally, peers develop significant relations with the elementary age student. Activities and teaching strategies that promote competition between students will be avoided. Spelling bees and other practices that draw attention to skill-level differences between students could lead Lucy to feelings of inferiority. (Bohlin, Durwin, Weber, 2012). Increasing Lucy’s self-esteem, by decreasing her feelings of being compared to others, will lead her to achieving an active role in understanding her own identity and goals.

**Moral Development Plan**

According to Lawrence Kohlberg’s theory of moral reasoning, Lucy’s egocentric state of mind places her in the preconventional level. The color system in place for behavior management appeals to her position in the second stage, naïve hedonistic, in which she behaves in regard to whether or not there will be a reward for her behavior. (Bohlin, Durwin, Weber, 2012). To promote development, efforts will be made to ensure Lucy understands the reasoning behind rules. In the class rule of respecting others, it appeals to Lucy’s sense of manipulative reciprocity to clarify that she wouldn’t want to be treated in a disrespectful manner. In order to provoke further moral development, Lucy should be exposed to people and situations that introduce new ideas, outside of her own perspectives, to meet Kohlberg’s conventional level of development. In the school context, I will create an environment of trust and support in which students will feel safe in exploring opinions of topics of unfamiliarity to them. Also, consistency in the structure of instruction will build a reliable foundation and foster a sense of trustworthiness. Challenging the status quo in class discussions with a safe and trusting learning environment will further her perspective-taking skills when addressing standards and social conventions. Addressing ambiguity in situations will advance Lucy’s level of moral reasoning. Discussion of moral dilemmas is a major factor in Kohlberg’s theory of moral development. (Bohlin, Durwin, Weber, 2012).

**Ideal Behavioral and Social Cognitive Environment**

Research has indicated that the relationships students develop with their teacher in the early elementary grades greatly influence student achievement throughout learners’ academic careers. (Bohlin, Durwin, Weber, 2012). Maintaining an ideal behavioral and social cognitive environment will begin with building a classroom community that fosters trust, growth and respect. In order to develop a positive student-teacher relationship with students like Lucy, I will make an effort to get to know the students personally. Lucy is shy and would benefit from individual time, which will create a trusting bond. “Empirical research indicates that quality academic instruction and positive student-teacher relationships can lessen the impact of factors commonly associated with poor achievement” (Bohlin, Durwin, Weber, pg 338).

As a teacher, it is important to be aware of explicit and implicit messages being sent to perceptive young learners. These indicative messages are communicated physically and verbally. Through my actions, students will be reassured that I care about them as individuals and learners; therefore, they will be more likely to adhere to classroom rules and my expectations. Lucy is occasionally distracted by her peers during instructional time, as most young students are. Often this boredom or distraction will lead students to undesirable behaviors. “Students are more likely to pay attention and stay on task when lessons are designed to be meaningful and important to them,” (Bohlin, Durwin, Weber, 2012). To promote student learning and engagement, I will implement lessons that involve student’s families and interests. For Lucy, lessons involving animals she is interested in, like horses, will maintain her attention. Also, Lucy frequently mentions her sister. Integrating family values and aspects to school assignments will hinder misbehavior and guide attention to the curriculum.

**Recommendations for Instruction**

Lucy will undoubtedly benefit from a speech language pathologist to help build her foundational linguistic skills, which will positively impact her academic achievement. Additionally, I believe Lucy’s teacher should make an effort to have more individual time with the learner. While students are independently reading during their Daily 5 rotations, Lucy would be able to enhance her literacy skills with private attention.

Currently, Lucy is in a small group focused on phonemic awareness. Instead of small group instruction, I really feel that Lucy needs individualized tutoring whenever possible. She is perceptive to her peers, and exhibits high interpersonal skills, so it seems that she is able to hide in the shadow of her peers during group reading. I also believe that a mastery learning style of instruction will benefit Lucy’s academic progress. In mastery learning, students are all expected to learn curricular material when given sufficient time, but are permitted to move at their own pace until complete comprehension. (Bohlin, Durwin, Weber, 2012). A particularly important component of this instructional style is to provide students with feedback about their progress and reinforcement of learning. Lucy will enjoy the positive reinforcement and will excel with a desire to please her teacher.

**Critical Thinking Skills**

Encoding is a vital component of the information-processing theory in which the process of human cognition is examined. Lucy does not learn through maintenance rehearsal, in which she is expected to repeat information over and over to install knowledge in her working memory. Instead, elaborative rehearsal, supported by schema theory, involves connecting new information students are trying to remember to prior knowledge and would maximize Lucy’s learning potential. (Bohlin, Durwin, Weber, 2012). Creating meaningful stimuli will give contextual meaning to the new concepts Lucy is struggling to grasp. Lucy also enjoys illustrating and coloring, so visual imagery would benefit her memory. Visual imagery involves constructing mental pictures through drawing and modeling to assist in memory maintenance. (Bohlin, Durwin, Weber, 2012).

In order to foster critical thinking skills with Lucy’s more individualized instructional approach, questioning and discussion will provoke critical thinking and analysis. When Lucy shows interest in the curriculum, through lessons that are tailored to her interests (like animals and family), spontaneous discussion will allow Lucy to discover her personal beliefs. Providing sufficient wait time, at least 3 seconds, is especially important in supporting shy student’s like Lucy’s thinking process. Once a foundation for critical thinking has been established, specific instructional strategies can help students think critically. Problem-based learning involves hands-on learning organized around the investigation and resolution of real-world problems. This learning style fosters critical thinking by constructing an extensive and flexible knowledge base, developing effective problem-solving skills, further intrinsic motivation to learn and developing self-directed learning skills. (Bohlin, Durwin, Weber, 2012).

Lucy appears to be a kinesthetic learner, as she enjoys hands-on activities during science and math and grasps those concepts during assessment. Problem-based learning would allow her to use real life tools and further her self-directed learning and problem-solving skills.

**Family Engagement Plan**

Parental involvement in student’s education has been associated with better attendance, more positive student attitudes and behaviors and a greater willingness to complete homework with higher levels of academic achievement. (Bohlin, Durwin, Weber, 2012). Encouraging

Lucy’s parents to take an active role in her education, through the application of home-based reinforcements, will improve behavior, attentiveness and academic productivity. Lucy’s parent’s roles in developing her Individualized Education Plan will promote academic socialization. In academic socialization, parents communicate their expectations for achievement and value for education, foster educational aspirations and make preparations and plans for the future. (Bohlin, Durwin, Weber, 2012). The IEP will give her family the opportunity to discuss Lucy’s academic needs and goals with the school and a team of educators. As a teacher, it is vital to maintain communication with Lucy’s parents. Through communication, by newsletters, calls home or e-mails, teachers will be better able to understand the conditions in Lucy’s home life that may be affecting her learning. Keeping Lucy’s parents informed about school events, academic expectations and her academic progress will promote a positive and involved home-school relationship.

**Assessment Strategies**

Lucy’s test and assessment scores thus far have been unsatisfactory. She is struggling to keep up with her peers and her performance on assessments indicates trouble in responding to typical formal testing scenarios. Accommodations like additional time and individual testing may alleviate her anxiety and improve her test scores. Informal assessment occurs over day-to-day observation of student performance in class. (Bohlin, Durwin, Weber, 2012). In this way, the teacher would be able to observe Lucy’s progress under stress-free conditions through listening, observing student interactions and asking questions to prompt reasoning.

Also, measuring development through authentic assessment is an appropriate way to determine Lucy’s progress. In problem-based learning, authentic assessment uses methods that stimulate the application of academic abilities to real-world intellectual situations. (Bohlin, Durwin, Weber, 2012). Instead of relying on paper and pencil traditional testing methods, this assessment would test Lucy’s ability to demonstrate the skill or knowledge by carrying out an activity or developing a product.

Simulation tasks encourage students to show connections among concepts and apply their learning in contexts reflective of real life. (Bohlin, Durwin, Weber, 2012). The teacher could determine Lucy’s math knowledge by applying hands-on activities involving counters or other familiar objects instead of paper tests. For reading comprehension checks, thought-provoking questions that further explanation will appropriately accommodate Lucy’s display of understanding. Observing Lucy’s responses during dialogue and discussions will indicate learning. Also, constructing a portfolio will demonstrate Lucy’s accomplishments, growth and reflection on her own learning. (Bohlin, Durwin, Weber, 2012). This collection of student work will be particularly helpful in revising her Individualized Education Plan.

**Action Research Plan**

Assessments and observations should be made frequently to determine student progress and differentiate instructional methods to accommodate Lucy’s learning needs. In order to meet the student’s academic goals, I believe her learning process and academic achievement should be examined weekly. Given the severity of Lucy’s academic situation, I believe weekly assessments and application of new strategies are necessary. Summative assessments help teachers evaluate student progress as well as the effectiveness of instructional methods. (Bohlin, Durwin, Weber, 2012). With frequent analyzation of Lucy’s development, the teacher will be better able to steer curriculum and teaching methods in a direction to benefit Lucy’s development. To track Lucy’s progress, summative assessment includes written documentation like scores on rating scales and student portfolios that will demonstrate learning. By scaling Lucy’s scores the teacher will be able to determine if she is making adequate progress in meeting her peers’ learning goals. Summative assessment will also help inform and determine if Lucy would benefit from remedial placement decisions. When examining Lucy’s development, her linguistic, behavioral, cognitive and intellectual skills should be considered.

**Conclusion**

Through my time with Lucy, I have found further purpose in the art of teaching. Not only will my actions as an educator bring change to the next generation, but the impact on one student will transform their whole world. It is so important to focus on each student’s needs and offer them the guidance and services they need to meet all the academic, social and personal goals they aspire to and need. This case study has helped me to recognize the impact one person can make that will change a student’s early school experience, thus impacting the rest of their future academic career. Lucy helped me realize the importance of noticing a student’s personal restrictions, like her speech impediment, that may keep students from appropriate academic success. By addressing one inhibiting problem, the doors to success open for the student. Lucy’s linguistic struggles do not necessarily indicate a cognitive or intellectual inability, but rather highlight the importance of a well-rounded education that considers the needs of the learner. Recognizing the necessary accommodations for students during assessment is an especially vital part to proving students with an equitable education. I am honored to of worked with such a bright, sweet young girl and I am excited to see her progress throughout the school years to come.

References

Bohlin, L., Durwin, C., & Weber, M. (2012). *Ed Psych Modules* (2nd ed.). New York, New York: McGraw-Hill.