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A case study in using explicit instruction to teach young children counting skills.

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Summary: Number sense is one's ability to understand what numbers mean, perform mental mathematics, and look at the world and make comparisons. Researchers show instruction that teaches children how to classify numbers, put numbers in sequence, conserve numbers effectively, and count builds their number sense skills. Targeted instruction that teaches children to count in a flexible manner increases number knowledge, therefore improves number sense. A common manner of providing targeted instruction for children who have mathematics difficulties is called explicit instruction. Explicit instruction that utilizes objects and pictures teaches conceptual and procedural knowledge for specific mathematical skills. Researchers show explicit instruction improves mathematical skills which range from place value to algebra equations for students who have mathematic difficulties. The purpose of this case study was to explore and investigate if further research should be conducted on the use of explicit instruction to teach young children counting skills that lead to flexibility with numbers. Results and implications are discussed.

Classification: C40 C30 F30

Keywords: counting skills; number sense; mental mathematics

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