

The Promoting Effect of Emotional Picture Books on the Communication Ability of Autistic Children

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Abstract: Through the form of picture book reading intervention for two autistic children, to explore the intervention effect of picture books with emotional guidance on autistic children. Two children with autism were randomly divided into experimental group (n=1) and control group (n=1). The intervention scheme of picture books with emotional guiding significance was used in the experimental group, and the cognitive picture books were used in the control group. The changes of communication ability of the two control groups were investigated by the combination of observation and measurement and interview. The results show that emotional picture books have a better effect on the communication ability of autistic children.

Keywords: Picture Books; Autistic Children; Communicative Ability.

1. Introduction

The research on autism in China started relatively late and developed relatively slowly. According to the 2016 Blue Book Report on the Development of China's Autism Education and Rehabilitation Industry, there are more than 10 million people with autism in China, with a prevalence of about 1%. Therefore, the number of children with autism is not large, but there are not many ways to intervene and treat them. Compared with other children, autistic children's communication ability is very weak, which will lead to language disorders, behavioral abnormalities and social communication difficulties. Language barriers may lead to children being alone for a long time, lack of ability to talk with others, and even conflict. Behavioral abnormalities may lead to young children's attachment to specific things, repetitive behaviors or irregular behaviors; Difficulties in social interaction may lead to differences between children and their peers in communication and non-verbal behavior disorders. However, from the review of existing literature, it can be found that the results of foreign research on reading intervention for autistic children are very rich, and the research objects include preschool autistic children, school-age autistic children and adolescents, and even autistic adults. The content of this study includes reading characteristics, reading strategies and reading interventions of autistic individuals. [1] Therefore, the research on autism is necessary and urgent.

Picture books have many positive effects on children. Picture books can arouse children's interest in reading through vivid and interesting stories and pictures, and are helpful to cultivate children's good habit of loving reading. The story lines and pictures in picture books can stimulate children's imagination, make children produce "empathy phenomenon" in the process of reading, along with the emotional changes of the protagonists in picture books, happiness or sadness, further promote the development of creativity and imagination. Reading picture books requires children to calm down, can help exercise children's concentration. At the same time, picture books provide a comprehensive vocabulary of language expression, is conducive to the development of children's language ability. picture books, by telling a variety of stories and knowledge, can help children broaden their

horizons and promote their all-round development.

Picture books have been widely used in the rehabilitation training of autistic children. The interesting stories and rich color changes in the picture book content attract and benefit autistic children with strong visual learning ability. In this kind of rehabilitation treatment, picture books broaden the vision of autistic children through rich pictures, so as to improve their cognitive ability; Through its content to draw the distance between autistic children and life, stimulate their desire for expression; A small amount of text can reduce the reading difficulty of autistic children and develop their language skills. However, these are not relatively directivity or pertinence, so this study aims to explore whether picture books with emotional guidance have better intervention effects than ordinary picture books.

2. Literature Review

2.1. It is Necessary for Children to Have Corresponding Communication Ability

The Guide to the Learning and Development of 3-6 year old Children points out that the basic path to the development of children's social communication ability is the interpersonal interaction between children. The Kindergarten Guidelines (Trial) also emphasizes the full cultivation of children's positive interpersonal skills and the promotion of children's learning of the basic skills of social communication. Therefore, it is very important for children to have the communication skills corresponding to their age. As early as the 1930s, Piaget pointed out that children's peer communication is conducive to the development of their social perspective-picking ability. [2] Peer communication is the key to the formation and development of children's cognition, attitude and ability, and has a very important impact on the generation and development of children's character, morality, emotion, mental health and learning ability. [3]

2.2. Characteristics and Treatment of Autistic Children

Autism is a subtype of generalized developmental disorder, more common in males, onset in infants, mainly manifested by varying degrees of speech development disorders,

interpersonal communication disorders, narrow interests and rigid behavior. About 3/4 of the patients were accompanied by obvious mental retardation, and some children had better abilities in some aspects in the background of general mental retardation.

Treatment for children with autism generally includes cognitive behavioral therapy and medication. The cognitive behavioral therapist corrects the abnormal behavior of the child, such as reinforcing the expected behavior of the child, removing or reducing the encouragement of the undesired behavior, or mildly criticizing the unexpected behavior of the child. For drug treatment, haloperidol and methylphenidate are generally selected to improve the aggressive behavior of children and reduce stereotypical behavior. There are currently 33 types of interventions, including music therapy, game interventions, and social stories. [4]

2.3. Comparison of Communication Ability between Autistic Children and Normal Children

In terms of interpersonal communication, autistic children are extremely lonely, obviously lack of social-emotional response, lack of attachment with parents, lack of eye contact with people, and rarely or cannot take the initiative to communicate with others. Do not use gaze, expression, posture or gestures to communicate. However, it is in the early stages (under 2 years of age) that normal toddlers begin to react to their peers' behavior, and often try to control or imitate. At this stage, children's interactions with each other become more direct and interactive. By (around age 3), typical social signals such as how well they can make eye contact with their parents, how well they respond to parental calls, and how well they respond to external stimuli. In addition, young children may also exhibit mumbling or emotional expressions. From 4 to 6 years of age, prosocial behaviors such as cooperation and sharing behavior of normal children develop with age, and children's sharing behavior and equalization concept are enhanced.

2.4. Application of Picture Books in Preschool Education

Through its unique combination of vision and text, picture books can provide children with a diversified learning environment and stimulate children's language ability, thinking ability and creative ability. At the same time, the teaching of picture books emphasizes the active participation of children, which can promote the development of children's interpersonal communication by resonating with the story plot and characters. Picture books are divided into emotional categories, cognitive categories, science and science categories. The focus of emotional picture books is to help children accumulate a variety of beautiful and standard languages, to improve children's expression, intentional memory and retelling performance, so as to improve children's interpersonal skills through these abilities. The focus of cognitive picture books is enlightenment education, to help children understand the basic concepts such as shapes, colors, animals, objects, numbers, and to stimulate children's curiosity and imagination through interactive design. picture science books focus on teaching children about science in a fun and engaging way, while promoting parent-child interaction and enhancing the reading experience. For autistic children, it has been found that picture-book teaching can improve their social skills, language communication

skills and stereotyped behaviors.

3. Methods

3.1. Subjects

Two autistic children of roughly the same age in a special education school in Shanghai, one in the experimental group and one in the control group. Both children had passed specialized tests for autism and had similar levels of intelligence.

3.2. Screening of Intervention Materials

3.2.1. Emotional Picture Books

In the emotional picture book category, "Fifi Is Angry" and "The 17 Emotions of Felix" are selected. Among them, "Fifi Is Angry" uses exaggerated colors and corresponding color variations to guide children to understand the story and enlighten them on how to use the right way to deal with anger and get along with others when they are angry. "The 17 Emotions of Felix" is based on the daily life of a little boy Felix, teaching children how to express and regulate emotions to enhance their ability to socialize with others.

3.2.2. Cognitive Picture Books

In the cognitive category, I chose "Wings of Color" and "Traveling with the Clouds." "Wings of Color" leads children to know different colors through a bird that collects colors. Travel With the Clouds teaches children how clouds are formed and how the wind works.

3.3. Experimental Design

Children in the experimental group were subjected to emotional picture book intervention, while children in the control group were subjected to cognitive picture book intervention. Evaluation method The Evaluation Form of Social Communication Skills of Children with Autism was used to measure and analyze the children in the experimental group and the control group, that is, the method of participatory observation was used to observe the communication ability of children with autism as a teaching assistant teacher. The Evaluation Table of Social Interaction Skills of Children with Autism was used to observe and score the children in the experimental group and the control group, and the difference between picture books with emotional guidance and cognitive picture books on the improvement of autistic children's communication ability was compared, as a basis for the improvement of autistic children's communication ability by picture books with emotional guidance. In addition, two teachers were invited in the experiment. One teacher shared the reading of picture books, and the other teacher scored the children as a scorer, so as to make the data more accurate and without personal emotion. Further analysis was conducted through structured interviews with researchers. Teachers of autistic children were interviewed from multiple perspectives before and after the intervention, focusing on the children's communication ability, so as to verify the improvement effect of emotional picture books on autistic children. Finally, the contents of the two interviews were compared and analyzed to observe whether the children with autism had improved their communication ability. The eight-week period was set to four weeks and four weeks respectively, namely the intervention period and the follow-up period.

(1) During the intervention period (1-4 weeks), the experimental group received emotional picture book teaching

and the control group received cognitive picture book teaching. This was done at a frequency of 15 minutes three times a week, and the first rating was performed using the scale after the intervention.

(2) During the follow-up period (5-8 weeks), children in both experimental groups were not forced to read picture

books (except children reading picture books by themselves) to evaluate whether picture books with emotional guidance had a sustained effect on the intervention effect.

3.4. Choosing an Evaluation Tool

Table 1. Social tendency rating scale of social interaction skills in children with autism

No.	Items	Options			
1	Ability to observe simple movements or gestures	1	2	3	4
2	Be aware of other people's eyes	1	2	3	4
3	Be able to direct the attention of others to see facial expressions	1	2	3	4
4	Respond to someone's voice (find the source of the voice)	1	2	3	4
5	Be able to listen to others and pay attention to their activities	1	2	3	4

Table 2. Social cognitive assessment of social interaction skills in children with autism

No.	Items	Options			
1	Be able to recognize simple body movements	1	2	3	4
2	Be able to judge happy and unhappy expressions	1	2	3	4
3	Be able to see happiness and anger in other people's eyes	1	2	3	4
4	Have a simple understanding of the causes of emotions	1	2	3	4
5	Be able to pick up on the emotional ups and downs of other people's tones	1	2	3	4

4. Conclusion

At the beginning, the initial data of the two children's social interaction skills were similar, but after the intervention, the values of the emotional picture books were slightly higher than those of the cognitive picture books. In addition, children with emotional picture book intervention are more able to accept the friendly communication from teachers and classmates and can divert their attention through picture books when they cannot control their emotions. Therefore, emotional picture books have a better promotion effect on the communication ability of autistic children than cognitive picture books. Generally, autistic children who can carry out picture book intervention are not of low intelligence level, so it is important to find better intervention methods for them. Compared with other developed countries, the research on autistic children in our country started late and is slightly immature. Therefore, the research on autistic groups and their intervention methods needs something diversified and localized. Compared with ordinary children, autistic children have different visual preferences when reading picture books. [5] In the future, it may be more helpful for children to design more targeted picture books based on visual bias or interest

bias for autistic children. After all, interest and attention are the only mentors for children, and only with these children can they better complete this kind of intervention learning.

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