

The Impact of the Montessori Method's Three-Period Lesson on the Word Learning of Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

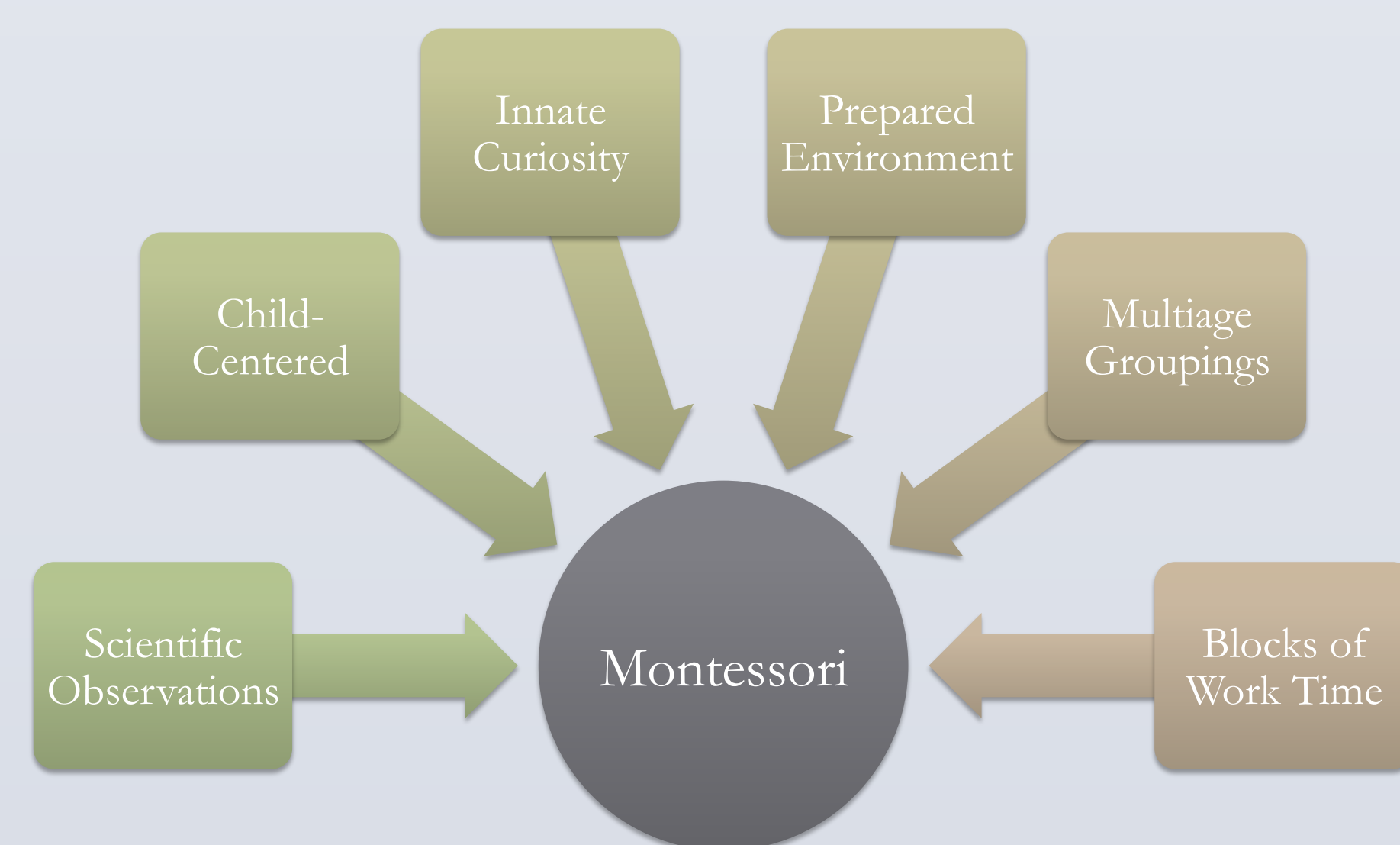
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Introduction

It has been well established in the literature that the acquisition of literacy presents a significant challenge for most students who are deaf or hard of hearing (Allen, 1986; Babbini & Quigley, 1970; Holt, 1993; Lane & Baker, 1974; Marschark, Lang, & Albertini, 2002; Moog & Geers, 1985; Traxler, 2000; Trybus & Karchmer, 1977). Vocabulary, which has been identified as one of the critical skills necessary for reading (NRP, 2000), is an area of language acquisition in which students with hearing loss demonstrate particular weakness (Davey & King, 1990; Gilbertson & Kamhi, 1995; LaSasso & Davey, 1987; Paul & Gustafson, 1991; Paul & O'Rourke, 1988). The Montessori Method uses Seguin's three-period lesson as a way to introduce new words to students. The individualization provided by the three-period lesson, as well as the simplicity of language and lack of feedback involved all hold potential benefit for students who are deaf or hard of hearing. The current study examined the impact two different types of vocabulary instruction on the word learning of students. Six students from a first-grade classroom in a school serving students who are deaf participated in this study. A mixed-model design with alternating treatments employing the framework of qualitative analyses and single-subject design was used. The dependent variable was long-term retention of vocabulary items. The independent variable was the type of vocabulary instruction.

Five of six participants retained more words taught to them using the Montessori Method than those taught to them using traditional direct instruction. The study also demonstrated the efficiency of the Montessori Method in teaching vocabulary as compared with direct instruction that included verbal feedback and tangible reinforcement.

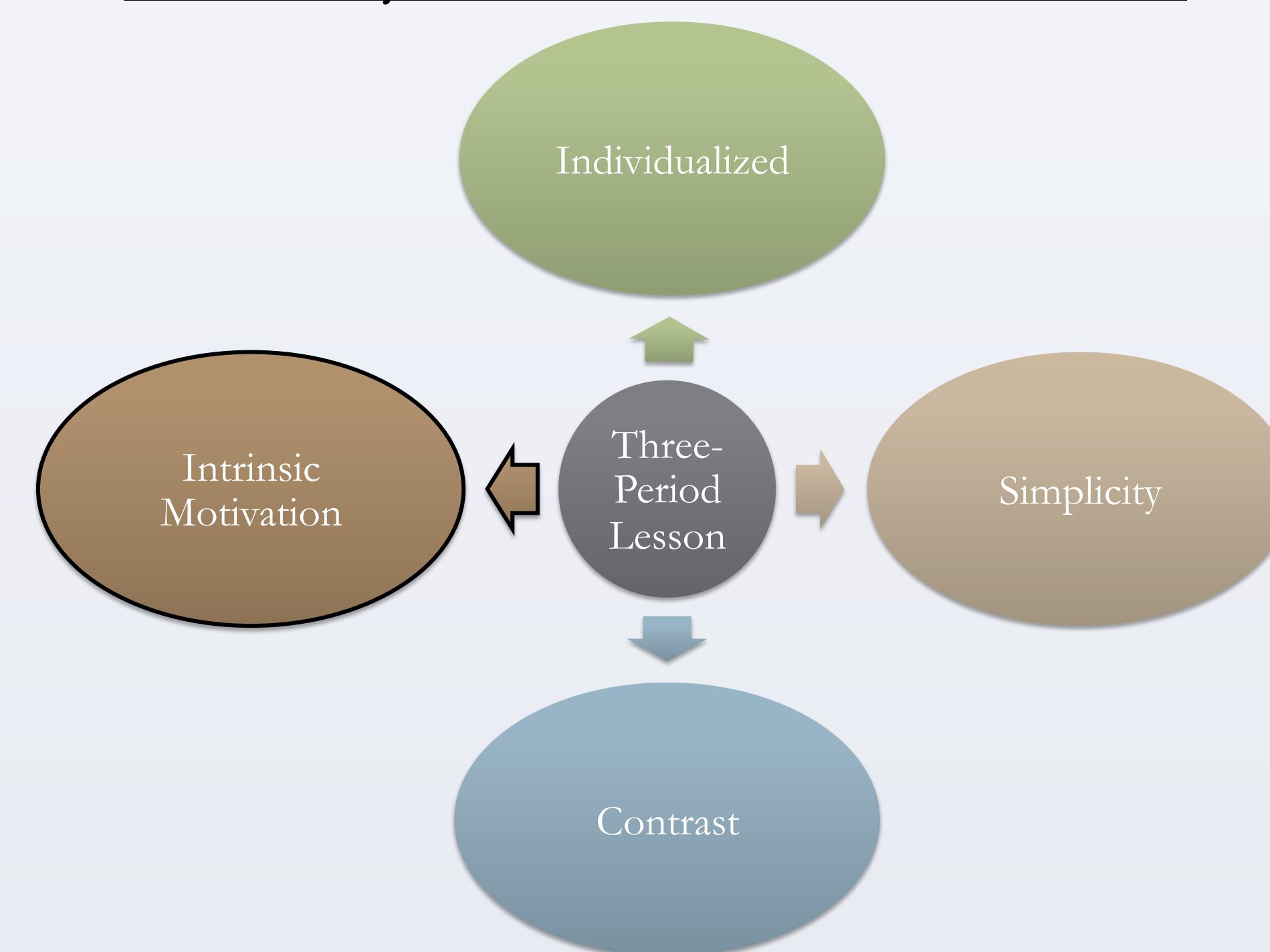
The Montessori Method



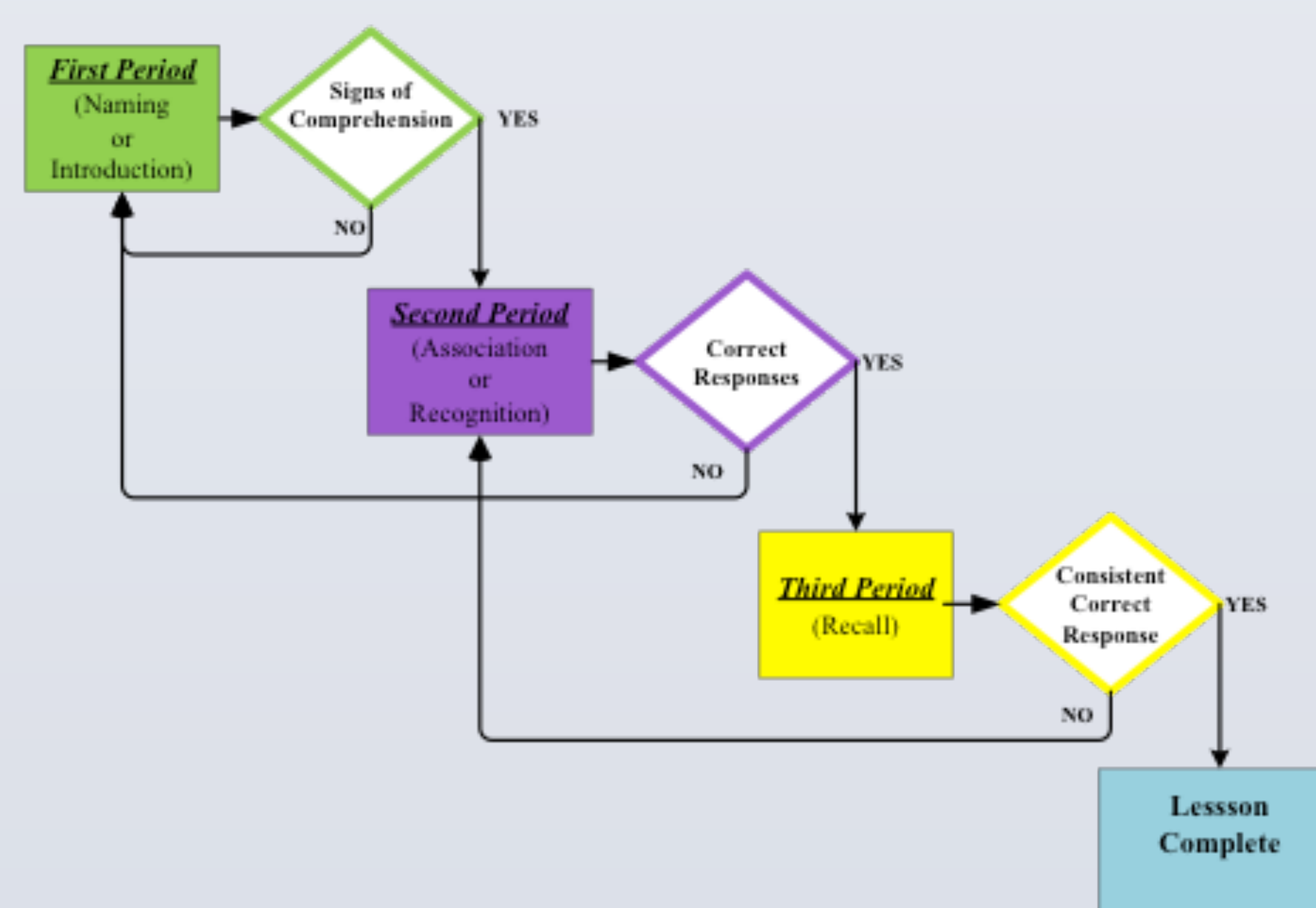
Research Question

Will the use of the Three-Period Lesson (without feedback or reinforcement) lead to greater vocabulary learning than the use of Direct Instruction (with verbal and tangible feedback and reinforcement)?

The Theory Behind the Three-Period Lesson



The Three-Period Lesson



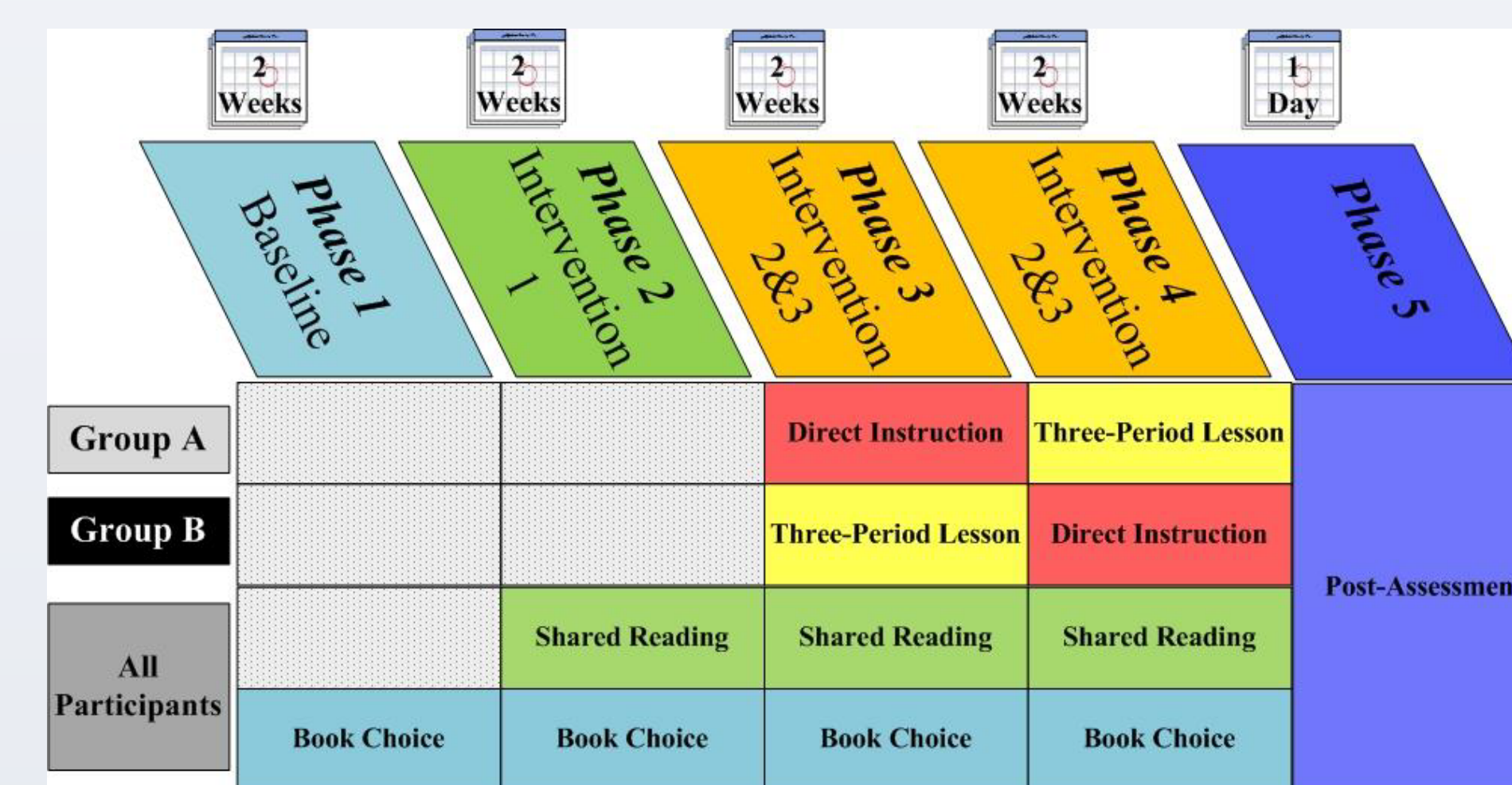
Montessori Research

“Ironically, the first educational philosophy to strive for a unified scientific approach to the child...has failed miserably to mount a credible research base.” (Schapiro, 1990, p.1)

Method

A mixed-model design with alternating treatments employing the framework of qualitative analyses and single-subject design was used. Six students from a school serving students who are deaf participated in this study. The dependent variable was long-term retention of vocabulary items. The independent variable was the type of vocabulary instruction.

Phases of Research



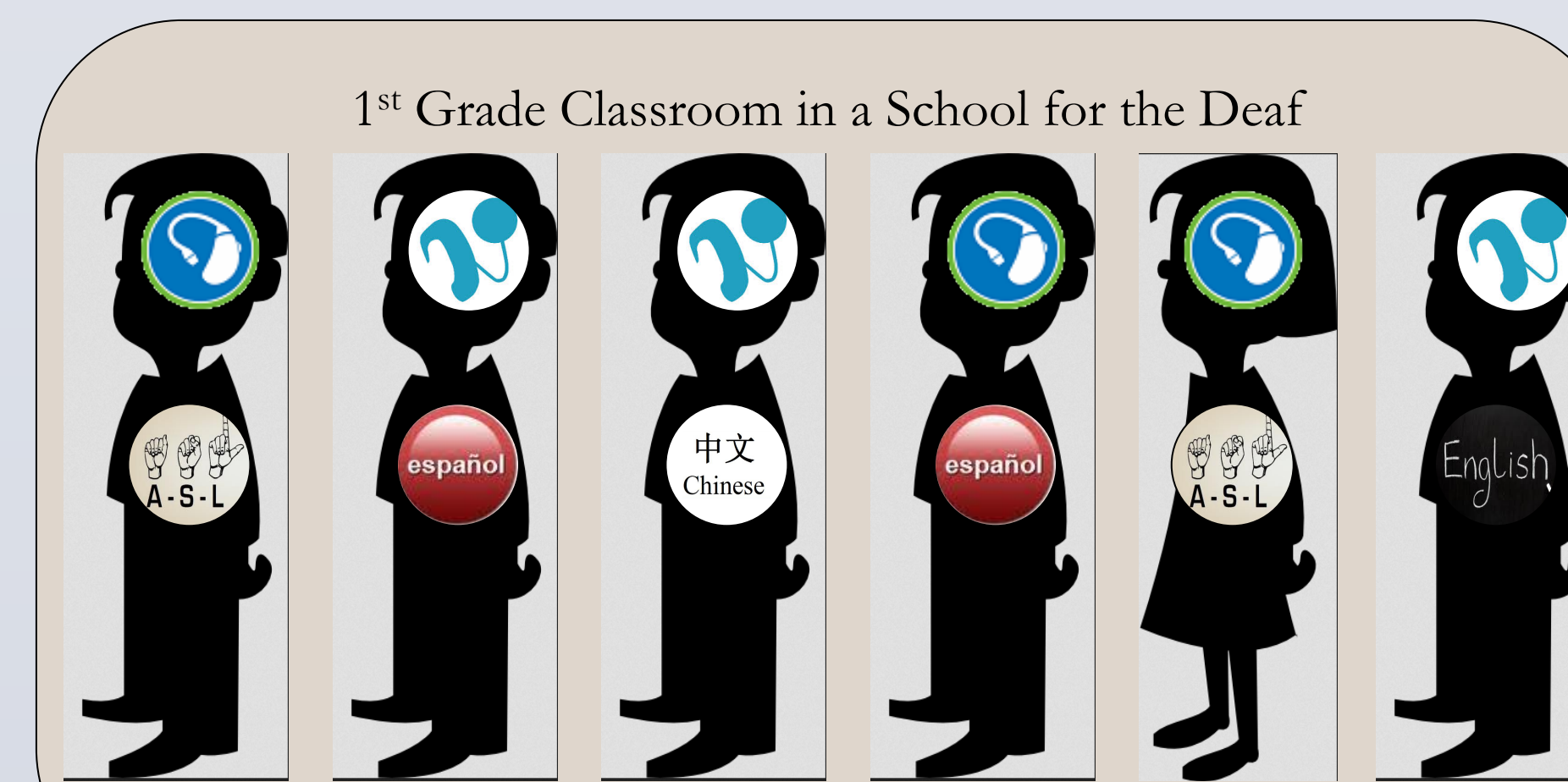
Book Rotation and Vocabulary Selection

Weeks of Data Collection	Books											
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
1	X			X		X						X
2		X			X		X					X
3			X		X				X		X	
4		X		X			X		X		X	
5	X				X	X						X
6			X	X				X	X			

X= Current Intervention Book X= Past Intervention Book
 X= Future Intervention Book X= Distractor Book

- Book A: Word 1, Word 2, Word 3
- Book B: Word 4, Word 5, Word 6
- Book C: Word 7, Word 8, Word 9
- Book D: Word 10, Word 11, Word 12
- Book E: Word 13, Word 14, Word 15
- Book F: Word 16, Word 17, Word 18

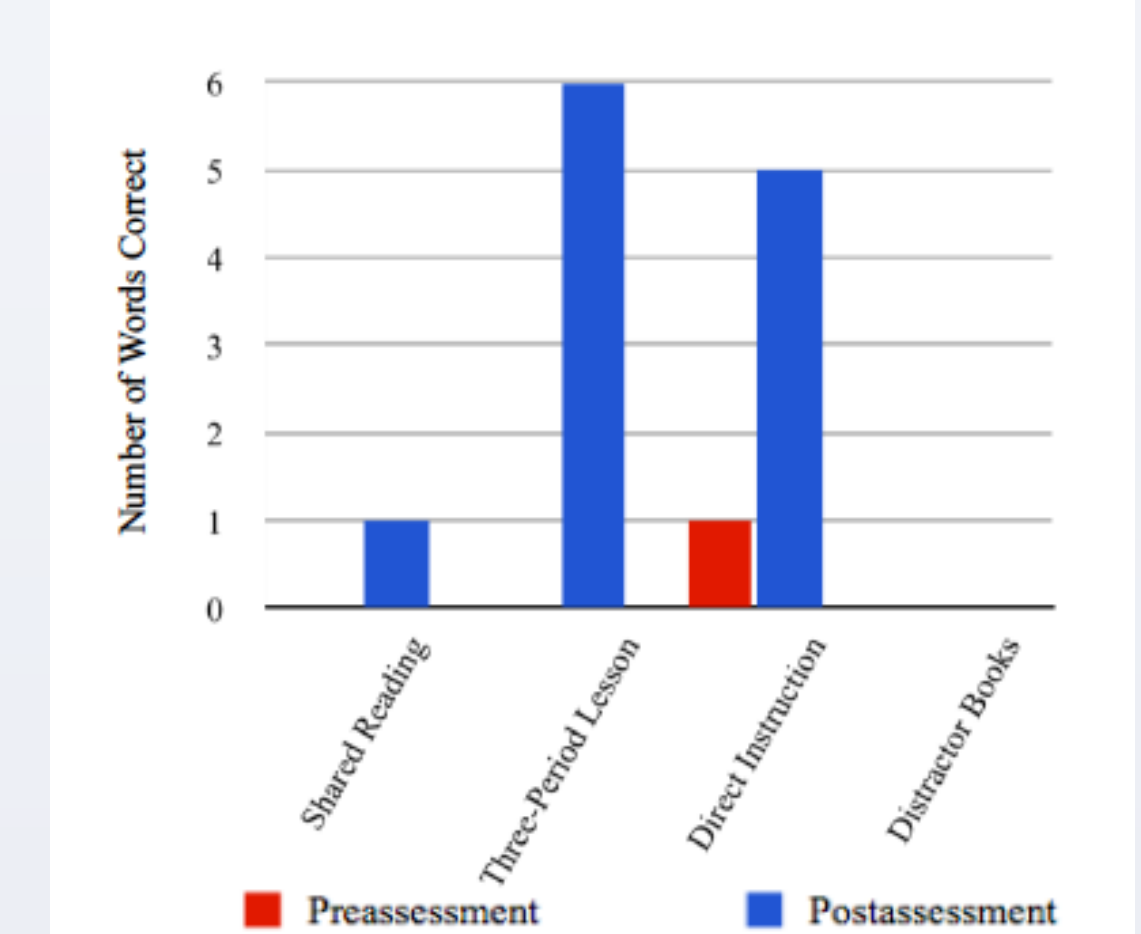
Participant Demographics



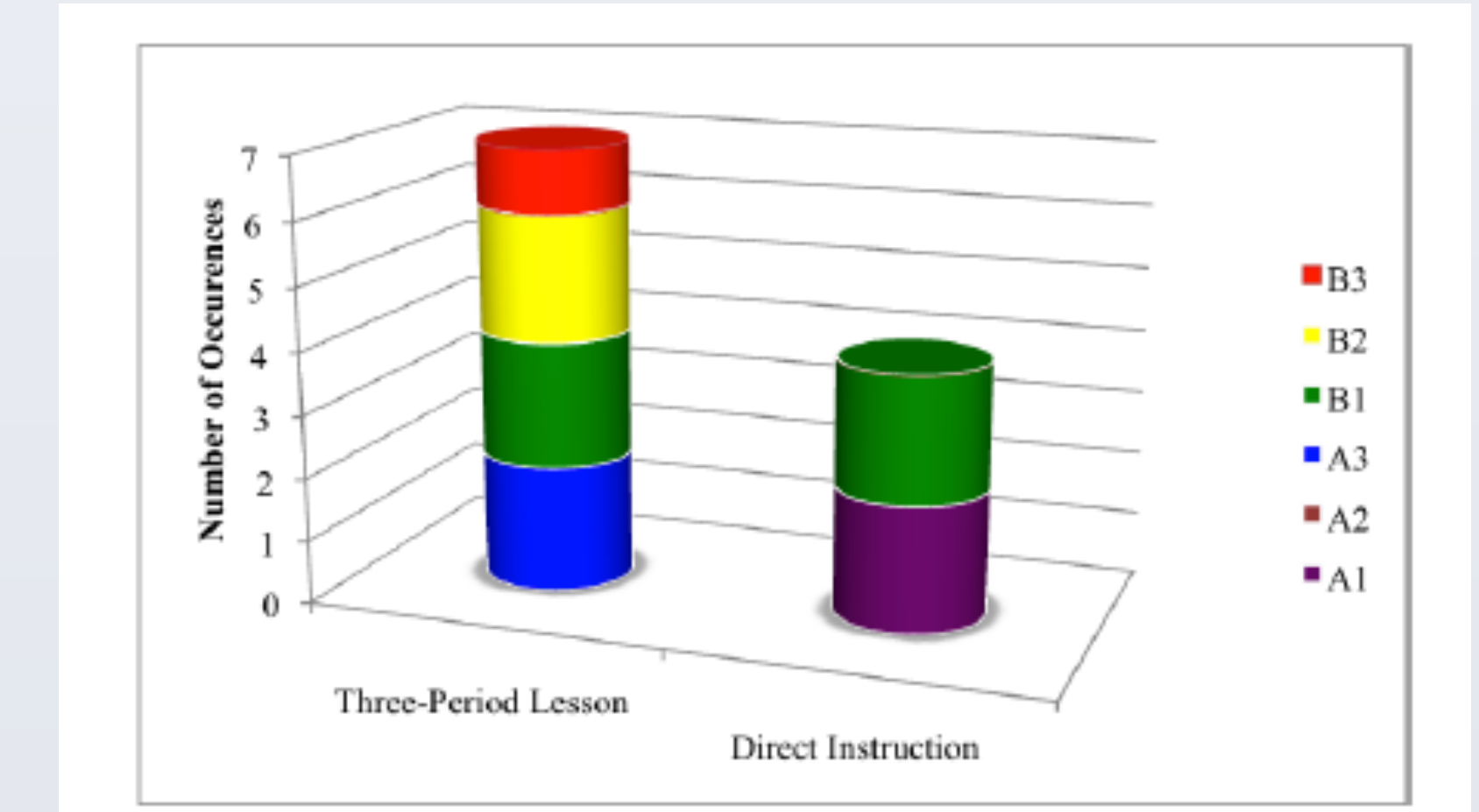
Results

Five of six participants retained more words taught to them using the Montessori Method than those taught to them using traditional direct instruction.

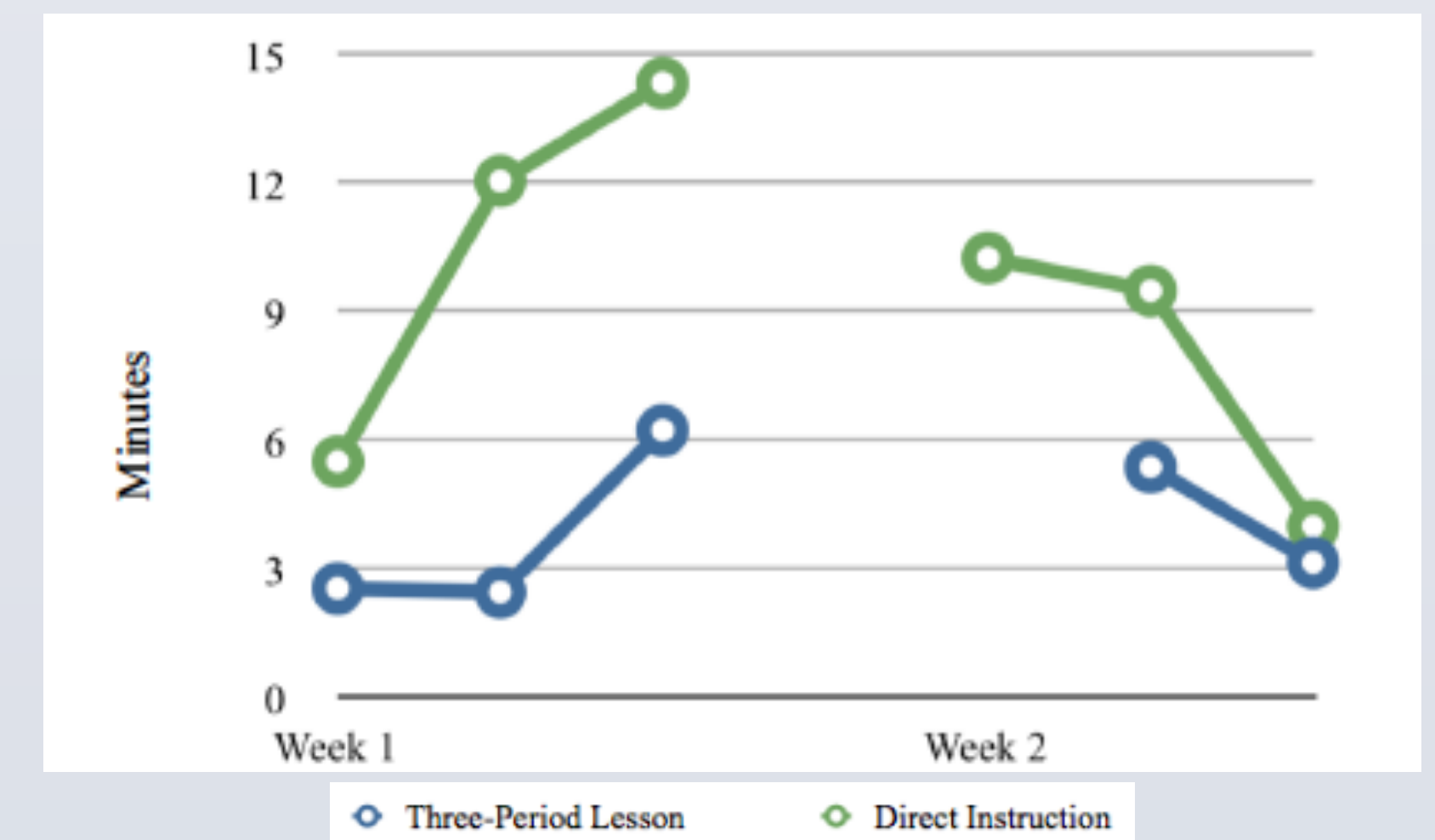
Pre- and Post-Assessment Data (m)



Participants' Connections to Vocabulary Instruction During Shared Reading Sessions



Time Required to Complete Sessions (m)



Conclusions

The three-period lesson was a more effective method of teaching vocabulary. It was also a more efficient mode of instruction, and it prompted more vocabulary connections during shared reading sessions. Taken together, the findings of this study point to the Three-Period Lesson as a potentially effective and efficient method of introducing vocabulary to students who are deaf or hard of hearing.

References

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