

Visual impairment: behavioral approaches to education with aids

Beneš, P. (2019). *Zraková postižení: behaviorální přístupy při edukaci s pomůckami*. Praha: Grada

Reviewed by Lucie Flekačová

Applied behavioral analysis (ABA), which comes predominantly from the Anglo-American countries, is becoming more and more prominent in the Czech environment. ABA analyses human behavior from the point of view of this behavior change, reactions to these changes and the person's response. In the first four chapters of the book, the author Pavel Beneš presents theoretical grounds of the ABA, while the last chapter deals with the research itself.

The introductory chapter defines the basic terminology and thus briefly presents the topic to the reader. Firstly, the author specifies and differentiates the terms "integration" and "inclusion", then outlines different branches of special pedagogy. The first chapter focuses on the term "ABA" as a science which is based on the norms of behavior with the aim to improve this behavior according to social norms. The author presents seven dimensions of ABA: applied, behavioral, analytic, technological, conceptually systematic, effective and generalizing. Furthermore, the three steps on which the ABA analysis is based on are emphasized. It is an ABC model: antecedent, behavior, consequence.

The second chapter deals with general notes on the key topic. The methods of evaluation of obtaining information are listed, such as interview, questionnaire, test, direct and indirect observation. Additionally, ABA techniques are presented. An example of such techniques can be fading, shaping or generalization. The author also mentions the variables of the analysis.

The following third chapter briefly defines who the person with a disability is and what the visual impairment classifications are. The author writes about the basic terminology in special education of visually impaired, such as visual acuity, optotypes, contrast sensitivity, convergence, accommodation, visual field and many others. Sub-chapters about refractive errors and other eye diseases are also included.

For the theory to complete the research, the fourth chapter deals with corrective optical aids for people with visual impairment. The author writes about glasses and contact lenses for corrections of refractive errors, specifically for myopia and astigmatism. Nowadays, people with visual impairment can use not only classic corrective aids, but also the ones on the basis of assistive technology. The author emphasizes that the rehabilitation process with the use of an aid is different for every individual. Besides other factors, the process is influenced by the progressive character of the eye disease.

The research part of the publication aims to compare the data of each group and evaluate the practice time of each optic and electronic aid used by intact, visually impaired and mentally disabled people. The participants are divided into three groups: the first group is of persons with mild mental disability, the second, control group is of intact persons, and the third group is of persons with visual impairment. A total of 699 people participated in the study. The results show the need of an individual approach to each person, either with mental disabilities or visual impairment, as well as intact persons.

This scientific publication focuses on a current topic of ABA in scientific research. Although the ABA is usually used with persons with autism spectrum disorder, mentally disabled persons or persons with another disability, the author uses it also with visually impaired persons. That is why this publication brings a new and unique viewpoint on the target group of people with visual impairment, primarily in the possibility of using the ABA with this specific group.

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