

Title

From Page to Practice: An Interprofessional Perspective on Nudging Language Growth Through Book Sharing

Speakers:

Brittany Hall, PhD, CCC-SLP, LSL Cert. AVT

Dr. Brittany Hall is an Assistant Professor and Program Director in the Department of Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center. Dr. Hall's research focuses on early language development, aural habilitation, and the application of evidence-based practices in clinical settings. This research directly informs her commitment to improving communication outcomes for young children, as she strives to translate research findings into effective clinical interventions. Dr. Hall has a strong background in clinical practice, having worked as a speech-language pathologist in school, private practice, and university clinic settings. She enjoys mentoring the next generation of speech-language pathologists and is dedicated to advancing the field of communication sciences and disorders.

Hesper Holland, Ph.D., CCC-SLP

Hesper is a speech-language pathologist with over 20 years experience working in a variety of settings including education, home health, and a university clinic. Currently she serves as an Assistant Professor and Assistant Program Director at the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center in Lubbock, TX. Areas of professional interest and research include preschool-speech and language disorders, AAC, and treatment and assessment of individuals with complex communication needs.

Abstract

Rediscover the joy of using children's books to facilitate language development! This interprofessional session will equip participants with practical techniques to incorporate interactive prompts into children's books, sparking engagement and enhancing language development in young children. Explore strategies to make book sharing more captivating and effective across various settings, fostering collaboration between speech-language pathologists (SLPs), educators, occupational therapists, and other professionals involved in early childhood development. Learn to empower parents, teachers, and caregivers to implement these strategies, maximizing language-rich interactions beyond therapy sessions and promoting a cohesive approach to supporting young children's communication and overall development.

Description

In the fast-paced environment of early childhood intervention, professionals can sometimes find themselves limited by time constraints and a focus on traditional therapy approaches. While children's books offer a rich resource for language development, their potential for engaging and effective intervention can be underutilized. This interprofessional presentation aims to revitalize the use of children's books as a valuable tool for language development in young children. We will introduce a powerful strategy: embedding interactive prompts directly within children's books to enhance engagement and facilitate meaningful learning experiences. This approach will benefit a variety of professionals, including speech-language pathologists (SLPs), educators, occupational therapists, and others involved in early childhood intervention. By incorporating interactive prompts, we can maximize the impact of book sharing across various settings and foster a more collaborative and engaging approach to supporting young children's language and developmental needs.

Shared Reading: A Powerful Tool for Language Development

A robust body of research supports the positive influence of read-aloud experiences and the incorporation of interactive strategies during these experiences on young children's language development. These strategies encourage the adult reader to transcend a passive recitation of the text. By employing interactive elements such as pointing to illustrations, iconic gestures, language facilitation techniques, and fostering conversation about the story, adults facilitate a shared, interactive book-reading experience. These interactive elements appear key in promoting word learning in young children during read-aloud experiences.

Implementation science emphasizes translating research findings into real-world applications. Shared reading, with minimal training, is already a well-established strategy for building language skills in homes and classrooms. Embedding language-boosting prompts directly within children's books can further enhance how adults (e.g., SLPs, teachers, caregivers) interact with young children during shared reading. Nudge theory, a concept from behavioral economics, focuses on influencing behavior through subtle cues and suggestions. Imagine children's books that gently nudge a reader towards using more gestures and language strategies! Embedded prompts within the books can act as these nudges, promoting improved implementation of the strategies while enhancing language development in young children.

Research on Interactive Prompts: Supporting Language Growth

Current research highlights the potential benefits of interactive prompts. These prompts can encourage adults to use a wider range of language-boosting strategies, such as asking

open-ended questions, labeling objects, and providing vocabulary definitions. Additionally, the research suggests an increase in overall gestures, including iconic (directly related to the meaning of words) and deictic gestures (pointing, reaching), which can significantly enhance a child's understanding of the story. Beyond the SLP using interactive prompts in therapy, these prompts can empower parents, teachers, and caregivers to foster language-rich interactions beyond the clinical setting. Programs for caregivers and educators can incorporate the use of embedded prompts to equip them with practical strategies for promoting language development in young children.

Learning Objectives

Identify and apply at least 3 specific interactive prompting strategies to enhance language development during book sharing.

- Describe ways to empower professionals, parents, teachers, and caregivers to implement interactive book-sharing strategies at home and in the classroom.
- Apply principles of nudge theory, such as choice architecture, to encourage young children's engagement during book sharing.