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Winter 2019

A Resource Manual for Speech-Language Pathology Graduate Students on Culturally Relevant Therapy Materials

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Recommended Citation

Yates, Anna; Harbers, Heidi M.; and Lorio, Ciera M., "A Resource Manual for Speech-Language Pathology Graduate Students on Culturally Relevant Therapy Materials" (2019). *Graduate Independent Studies - Communication Sciences and Disorders*. 17.

<https://ir.library.illinoisstate.edu/giscsd/17>

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A RESOURCE MANUAL FOR SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY GRADUATE
STUDENTS ON CULTURALLY RELEVANT THERAPY MATERIALS

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An Independent Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders
ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY
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Introduction

Literacy, or the ability to read and write, is a skill not only crucial for academic success, but for communicating efficiently and effectively with a variety of listeners (World Education Services, 2017). Literacy skills are beneficial to children as they move throughout school. Children with well-developed literacy skills tend to be better students overall across subject areas (Alston-Abel & Berninger, 2018; Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997). In order to foster future academic success, it is imperative children come to school with some foundation of emergent literacy skills.

Emergent literacy skills are the foundational skills for reading and writing. These skills can be divided into four concepts: print awareness, phonological awareness, alphabetic knowledge, and oral language (Lonigan, Schatschneider, & Westberg, 2008a). The combination of these skills assists in the development of reading and writing. The first skill, print awareness, refers to the direction of print as well as how words are oriented on the page and that standard English text moves from left to right and top to bottom (Reading Rockets, n.d.). Phonological awareness refers to the ability of a child to comprehend and manipulate segments of spoken language, including sentences, words, and sounds (Wagner & Torgesen, 1987). Alphabetic knowledge refers to the knowledge of the shapes, sounds, and names of upper and lowercase letters (Texas Education Agency, 2002). The final emergent literacy skill is oral language, or the spoken understanding and expression of language.

Young children's emergent literacy skills are often predictors of how well they will perform academically as they move through primary and secondary grades (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997). Caregivers can also focus on these skills at home through shared book reading

since emergent literacy skills develop before formal educational instruction (Bishop & Leonard, 2000; Roth, Paul, & Pierotti, 2006).

Since caregivers typically provide the first exposure to literacy for children, they play an important role in emergent literacy acquisition. One way in which caregivers can introduce and support emergent literacy is through shared book reading. Shared book reading describes an interactive and collaborative experience between a child and an adult while reading a book (Reading Rockets, n.d.). In terms of supporting emergent literacy skills during shared book reading, caregivers talking about the text on the page, following the text from left to right with their finger, and pointing to the illustrations encourages the child to pay attention to print and understand there is meaning behind the symbols on the page (Ezell, Justice, & Parsons, 2000). In order to engage in shared book reading, caregivers can first introduce the book by reading the title and showing the child the cover illustration. Then they can read the book with a variety of inflection, making sure to pause and ask brief questions to ensure their child's understanding of the story. When the book is finished, caregivers can allow time for the child to make comments or connect events or characters in the book to their own experiences (Reading Rockets, n.d.). If caregivers allow children to engage with the story, such as holding the book, pretending to read, or talking about the illustrations, the child is creating the connection that print carries meaning and there are certain conventions associated with reading (Justice & Kaderavek, 2002).

A specific protocol commonly used during shared book reading is dialogic reading. Dialogic reading requires caregivers to follow a specific sequence of techniques (i.e., prompts, evaluate expand/extend, and repetition) when reading with their children. The acronym CROWD is used to cue parents to use selected prompts: completion, recall, open-ended, Wh- questions, and distancing (Whitehurst et al. 1988). Knowledge about how to implement dialogic reading

strategies can be provided by a speech-language pathologist (SLP). The SLP has the opportunity to educate parents and caregivers about the importance of emergent literacy, as well as how shared book reading can be used to support the development of emergent literacy skills. While the importance of shared reading activities can be stressed by professionals, it is essential that the caregivers are willing to engage in these activities with their children. Children who are able to see the value and enjoyment of being read to by the caregivers in their life will be more likely see the ways in which literacy skills matter (Neuman & Copple, 2000).

It is important to consider that while parents and caregivers may want to engage in shared book reading practices, they and their children may not be a part of the mainstream culture, which can also include speaking the mainstream language. This creates a potential barrier for literacy development in home and educational environments. For example, compared to monolingual peers, English language learners (ELLs) who speak Spanish as a first language are twice as likely to have below-average literacy skills (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). It should be noted, however, that these children may already have developed literacy skills in their home language. The development of literacy skills in the home language has the potential to generalize to the second language (e.g., English) (Huennekens & Xu, 2016). If a child and their caregivers have the ability to engage in shared literacy activities using their home language, the child has the opportunity to strengthen their literacy skills. Similarly, when a child and their caregivers engage in shared literacy and language activities using a second language, like English, the potential for English vocabulary learning increases (Roberts, 2008).

While shared book reading is a collaborative interaction between caregivers and their children, further collaboration with an SLP may occur to enhance shared reading outcomes. It is within an SLP's scope of practice to collaborate with children and their caregivers (American

Speech Language Hearing Association [ASHA], 2016). Cultural considerations should be made while collaborating and educating families from different cultural backgrounds. While approximately 23% of the U.S. population comes from a diverse background, only 8% of practicing SLPs in the United States fall into this demographic (ASHA, n.d.; United States Census Bureau, 2018). This difference in representation needs to be taken into consideration when providing services to children and their families from different cultural backgrounds. One way to address this is to use culturally relevant materials during intervention (ASHA, 2016). SLPs should incorporate materials that are representative of the cultures of the children and families they are serving (ASHA, n.d.; Lee & Low Books, 2018). SLPs could suggest books that reflect the families' experiences or include the families' home language. Caregivers may want to be more involved with supporting their child's literacy skills if they feel comfortable with the reading materials and can use them to teach their children more about their family culture.

The following literature review will discuss the effects of shared book reading interventions on the language outcomes of young children from mainstream and diverse backgrounds. The first three studies will identify parent-child shared book reading interventions with children from the dominant culture. The next three studies will discuss the effects of providing shared book reading interventions to children who are bilingual. The final four studies will examine the use of culturally relevant materials in bilingual shared book reading interventions.

Literature Review

Shared Book Reading

Shared book reading is one way in which parents can support literacy development with their young children. Whitehurst et al. (1988) examined the language skills of toddlers and the reading behaviors of parents after participation in an intervention focused on shared book reading. The ability to maintain language gains was also analyzed. Participants included 29 middle-class, parent-child pairs from the United States. The children ranged in age from 21 to 35 months and were typically developing. All intervention training and assessments occurred in a university setting.

Parent-child pairs were randomly assigned to experimental and control groups. Those in the experimental group were assigned to attend two 25- to 30-minute training sessions across 4 weeks. During the training sessions, parents learned 14 target techniques, observed researchers using the techniques, and practiced and received feedback. Training sessions concluded by researchers providing a handout to remind parents to utilize the newly learned techniques 3-4 times during the week during shared book reading. The control group was instructed to read as they typically would, 3-4 times a week throughout the 4-week period. The first visit consisted of parent interviews and a training session for the experimental group. Parents in both groups were informed on the importance of picture book reading on their child's language, given a log to record the date and duration of reading, and provided an audio recorder to document reading sessions.

After 4 weeks, the children's expressive and receptive language skills were assessed using the verbal expressive subscale of the *Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities* (ITPA; Kirk,

McCarthy, & Kirk, 1968), the Peabody *Picture Vocabulary Test-Revised* (PPVT; Dunn & Dunn, 1981), and the *Expressive One-Word Picture Vocabulary Test* (EOWPVT; Gardner, 1981). The children's Mean Length of Utterance in Words (MLU-W) and parent's reading behaviors were also evaluated. Maintenance of skills was analyzed by using the same standardized assessments 9 months after the intervention concluded.

Results of this study indicated that the expressive and receptive language skills of young children can be improved by their parents reading to them using specific techniques. Posttest scores for two of the three standardized assessments and MLU-W were significantly higher for the children in the experimental group than children in the control group. The significant difference in child language scores was not maintained at follow-up; however, the experimental group demonstrated higher scores than the control group on expressive language measures after the 9-month maintenance period. The parents in the experimental group significantly increased their use of praise, expansion, and asking open-ended questions after the intervention period, but these behaviors were not measured at follow-up.

Blom-Hoffman, O'Neil-Pirozzi, Volpe, Cutting, and Bissinger (2007) also investigated the effects on parents' use and maintenance of dialogic reading (DR) strategies through the use of a video-based training intervention. Children's responses to DR prompts were also investigated. Participants included 18 parent-preschooler dyads. Children ranged in age from 29 to 53 months old. English was the home language and all participants lived in the United States.

The dyads were randomly assigned to experimental or control conditions. The intervention lasted 12 weeks and consisted of three visits. The baseline measures during the first visit were identical for both groups. Each dyad was video recorded for 5 minutes, with parents instructed to read with their child as they typically would. All children received three books at

the end of the visit. After the video recording, parents in the experimental group viewed the 15-minute *Read Together, Talk Together* (RTTT; Pearson Early Learning, 2002) video and received a summary sheet and bookmark with key points from the video. Parents then completed a questionnaire regarding their opinion of the video and DR strategies. Parents in the control group did not view the RTTT video and were given a bookmark with generic suggestions for interacting with children. Six weeks after the first visit, all dyads were recorded during shared book reading. The recordings lasted 5 minutes. This recording process was repeated 6 weeks later for the last visit. Parent verbalizations during interactions were coded according to seven dialogic reading prompts and one attending prompt, while child verbalizations during interactions were coded according to relevant or irrelevant comments or answers.

Results of this study revealed that video-based parent training can improve the use and maintenance of parent DR practices as well as increase book-relevant verbalizations in children. The verbalizations from parents that included dialogic reading techniques in the experimental group doubled from the first to second visits and remained stable through the third visit. By the last visit, relevant verbalizations from children in the experimental group had doubled when compared to their first visit. In contrast, the verbalizations from the parents in the control group including dialogic reading techniques decreased slightly from the first to the third visits. At the third visit, the number of relevant verbalizations from children in the control group were fewer than the first visit.

Zevenbergen, Whitehurst, and Zevenbergen (2003) examined the effects of a shared-reading program on the narrative and expressive language skills of school-age children. Participants included 123 children, their parents, and their classroom teachers. Children were

enrolled at one of four Head Start programs in the United States and had a mean age of 56 months.

The children were randomly assigned to experimental or control conditions. All children were administered a standardized narrative retelling task before and after the intervention period. All responses were audio-recorded, transcribed into T-Units, and scored according to frequency and quality of evaluative narrative devices. Evaluative narrative devices were categorized on topics such as reference to character's point of view, direct quotes of characters, use of comments for emphasis, and expressing one's own emotions to the narrative. Transcripts were also analyzed to determine the accuracy and amount of information recalled. The *Expressive One-Word Picture Vocabulary Test-Revised* (EOWPVT-R; Gardner, 1990), was administered to all children post-intervention.

The 30-week intervention program consisted of an adult-child shared book reading program that occurred within the children's classrooms and homes. Parents and teachers were trained on dialogic reading practices through video training. Opportunities to role play with graduate assistants or Head Start employees were provided. The parents were instructed to read to children three times each week at home. Teachers were instructed to read to groups of three to five children using dialogic reading strategies. The same 30 books were rotated between home and school during the intervention. Each book had specific hints and guiding questions with prompts added by researchers. The parents and teachers of children in the control group did not receive training, and teachers were instructed to read according to typical Head Start curriculum.

Results indicated that participation in an adult-child shared book reading program positively impacted the narrative and expressive language skills of young children. After the 30-week intervention, children in the experimental group utilized significantly more evaluative

devices during the narrative retelling task. These children also included significantly more instances of describing characters' points of view and dialogue than children in the control group. Additionally, children in the experimental group scored significantly higher than children in the control group on standardized measures of expressive vocabulary. There were no significant differences in the accuracy or amount of recalled information of narratives between the groups.

Shared Book Reading with Bilingual Families

While shared book reading can promote language development in monolingual children, there is also evidence that shared book reading can be beneficial for bilingual children. Huennekens and Xu (2010) studied the effects of language transfer from participants' home language (L1) to their second language (L2) used in school through parent shared book reading in L1. Social validity of the intervention was also studied. Participants included two ELL students whose L1 was Spanish and their parents. The students' ages were 58 and 65 months old. Both children were considered to be sequential bilingual students because they learned English after the age of 3. The families of both children spoke Spanish at home.

The study consisted of a single subject design across two settings (i.e., home and school) over 5 to 7 weeks. Baseline measures for the children's frequency of utterances, Mean Length of Utterance-Words (MLU-W), frequency of child-initiated utterances, and child's responses to others in L2 were obtained through classroom observation in large group, storybook, and independent choice settings. These measures were recorded, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed.

The parents of both children underwent dialogic reading training that consisted of modeling, parent practice, and time for questions. After the training, parents were provided with a storybook in Spanish marked with points on where to stop and ask book-specific questions.

Suggestions on how to extend their child's responses were also provided. Parents were also given a handout with DR strategies as well as a reading log to record duration and frequency of shared book reading sessions. The parents were instructed to read the book to their child three to five times a week. During intervention, children were observed during the same classroom activities as baseline. Their responses were recorded verbatim for transcription. After the intervention, parents and children were given surveys to complete to determine the social validity of the intervention.

The results of the study indicated that a parent shared book reading intervention in L1 can support language transfer to L2. The frequency of utterances in L2 increased over 20% for both children in a large group setting, and over 35% in an independent choice setting. The MLU-W for both children displayed the smallest increase in both settings. The frequency of child-initiated utterances for both children increased after intervention across classroom settings. In contrast, the mean responses to others for both children decreased after intervention across classroom settings. Post-intervention surveys revealed that both children enjoyed reading with their parents in their home language, but each preferred speaking with friends in the language that was the most comfortable for the friend to use. One parent indicated that he found the intervention useful, positive, and applicable to future shared reading experiences.

Additional research with language transfer of young children was conducted by Huennekens and Xu (2016). They examined the effects of a DR intervention in children's L1 on the alphabetic knowledge (AK) and phonological awareness (PA) in L1 and L2 of preschoolers who were dual-language learners (DLLs). The social validity of the intervention was also analyzed. The participants included 15 DLL preschoolers whose L1 was Spanish. Preschoolers

were 4 to 5 years old, came from homes where Spanish was spoken at least half of the time, and received classroom instruction in English.

The six-week intervention consisted of a maximum of 18 sessions and was conducted using a single-subject multiple baseline design. All books used for the intervention were in Spanish. If the original publication was in English, the story was rewritten to have a more accurate representation of rhyming patterns in Spanish. The ability to recognize and manipulate rhyme is an emergent literacy skill, which is why authors included this consideration.

Interventionists were trained in DR strategies before the intervention. The preschoolers were divided into three groups. Each group varied in the amounts of baseline and intervention. The groups received three, five, or nine sessions of baseline condition, resulting in 15, 13, or 9 intervention sessions, respectively. The baseline condition consisted of the interventionist reading to the child in Spanish without any dialogic reading strategies. Interventionists would instead ask the children questions about letter names and sounds and rhyming words specific to the book.

The children's AK and PA skills were assessed before and after the intervention using the *Get Ready to Read! Screening Tool -- Revised* (GRTR; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 2009) in English and Spanish. Before the intervention, all children had language skills in English and Spanish that were average or below average for their ages. The intervention consisted of 20-minute DR sessions between the child and an interventionist five days a week. While reading in Spanish, interventionists embedded explicit AK and PA instruction, such as letter names and sounds, initial letter sounds, and rhyming into DR strategies. Target letters and words were also embedded into DR instruction and utilized in 8 to 15 questions that were asked after completion of the book to assess the child's AK and PA skills. During the intervention, children were

administered daily reading assessments to determine the effects of the intervention on the AK and PA skills in English and Spanish. Social validity was assessed by classroom teachers and parents completing a seven-item questionnaire after the intervention.

Results indicated that a DR intervention in a child's first language can improve the emergent literacy skills in both languages for preschoolers who were DLLs. The children's AK and PA skills significantly improved after the intervention, as determined by increases in post-test scores in both English and Spanish. There was no significant difference in growth rate of emergent literacy skills between English and Spanish. Parents reported valuing the maintenance of the home language and would participate in similar studies in the future. Teachers believed the intervention was beneficial to the preschoolers' language development.

Roberts (2008) also focused on language transfer when he examined the effects of a combined home and school storybook reading intervention on preschool ELL children's L1 and L2 vocabulary and language skills. Parent participation and their opinion of the intervention was also analyzed. Participants included 33 preschool children (age: $M = 52$ months), 20 whose L1 was Hmong and 13 whose L1 was Spanish, and their caregivers, residing in a low-income neighborhood in the United States. In the classroom, instruction was conducted in English.

The intervention consisted of two six-week periods, Weeks 1-6 and Weeks 7-12. The children's skills were assessed before the intervention, after Week 6, and after Week 12. Vocabulary was measured formally with the *Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Third Edition* (PPVT-III; Dunn & Dunn, 1997) and the *Test de Vocabulario en Imagenes de Peabody* (Dunn, Padilla, Lugo, & Dunn, 1986) if the child's primary language was Spanish. Informal measurements of vocabulary were taken from books used during the intervention. English oral proficiency was assessed using the Preschool IDEA Oral Language Proficiency Test (Pre-IPT;

Williams, Ballard, & Tighe, 1988). Caregivers were instructed to complete surveys after Week 6 and Week 12 regarding their own English oral proficiency and the language literacy environment at home.

Parent training on DR occurred before Weeks 1 and 7 in the caregivers' primary language. The trainings included a presentation, encouraging caregivers to discuss the story if they did not speak or read English, followed by an opportunity to engage in storybook reading. After training, caregivers were provided with a bookmark written in their primary language in each book the child brought home to serve as a reminder of the suggestions given during the training. The teachers were provided with specific lesson plans for each book to be completed at least twice a week over the 12 weeks.

For the intervention, children were divided into groups based on their primary language then divided randomly to one of two treatment groups. Half of the total number of children took home a different book each week in their primary language for Weeks 1-6, while the other half took home the same books in English. During Weeks 7-12, children used the same books as they had read in Weeks 1-6, but in the other language that was not targeted in Weeks 1-6.

The results of this study indicated a storybook intervention including books in a child's primary and secondary languages led to improvements in the secondary language. After the intervention, the children who received books in their primary language during Weeks 1-6 named significantly more English storybook words and significantly increased their PPVT-III and Pre-IPT scores. In contrast, children who received story books in their primary language after 6 weeks of intervention using L2 displayed similar PPVT-III scores before and after the intervention. These results indicate that having the background knowledge of the book in L1 may have supported children in their understanding of the book when it was read in L2. Both groups

of children increased in English oral proficiency after each 6-week period. Significantly more caregivers indicated they preferred to read in their primary language. Results from parent surveys indicated that caregivers read significantly more to their children when the book was in their primary language (i.e., Spanish or Hmong).

Shared Book Reading with Bilingual Families using Culturally Relevant Materials

Using culturally relevant materials can also affect the outcomes of shared book reading for diverse populations. Caesar and Nelson (2014) investigated the effects of using family-created materials in the classroom on the emergent literacy skills of bilingual (English and Spanish) preschoolers. The participation of low-income, low-literacy parents in a home-school collaboration focusing on improving their child's emergent literacy skills was also examined. Participants included 19 bilingual preschoolers who ranged in age from 34 to 62 months, their parents, SLP graduate clinicians, and Head Start teachers. All children were from migrant farm worker families and attended an English-Spanish Head Start program in southwest Michigan. None of the parents spoke English as a first language. All Head Start teachers spoke English and Spanish.

Children were randomly assigned to experimental or control groups. Children were administered pre-testing for one week, participated in experimental or control activities for five weeks, and then were administered post-tests for one week. All pre and post-testing occurred in English and Spanish and was completed using the *Early Literacy Skills Assessment* (ELSA; Cheadle, 2007), which focuses on language comprehension, phonological awareness, the alphabetic principle, and print concepts. To determine parent participation, researchers recorded the number of journal entries that the child brought to the classroom compared to the total number of opportunities the child could return with an entry. After the intervention, parents were

given the opportunity to provide feedback and answer open-ended questions about their participation in the intervention.

Before the intervention began, parents were invited to the Head Start to learn about the program and what was involved in the study but were blind to group assignment. Children in the experimental group received bags to take home every weekend. Bags contained a journal and coloring supplies for parents to record and illustrate family activities. Children in this group then received oral language and emergent literacy instruction using the family-authored journals as materials in the classroom. Once a week, children would then share their family-created stories in circle time. Afterwards, they recreated the stories with assistance from classroom teachers and graduate clinicians to add more vocabulary and details. Children in the control group also received weekly bags, but they contained books related to colors, shapes, and numbers in which parents were told to read to their children as they typically would (i.e., reading the book with the child and talking about the concepts in the book). Circle time for these children included graduate clinicians assisting classroom teachers in rhyming, shape, and color activities.

The results indicated that a joint school-home collaborative emergent literacy program had positive effects on the emergent literacy skills of bilingual children. After the intervention, children in the experimental group scored significantly better than children in the control group on measures of the alphabetic principle and print concepts in both English and Spanish. Children in the experimental group also scored higher than children in the control group on measures of phonological awareness in English and Spanish; however, these results were not significant. All children scored significantly better when the tests were administered in Spanish. Children in the experimental group scored higher on measures of phonemic awareness at posttest, while children in the control group decreased in this measure. In terms of parent participation, 94% of parents in

the experimental group complied with the intervention, compared to 80% of parents in the control group. Parent feedback from the experimental group was in favor of the intervention, with parents saying it gave them an opportunity to be involved in their child's academic success. Parents in the control group stated that the intervention materials they received were not interesting.

The use of materials created at home was also examined by Bernhard et al. (2006), who studied the effectiveness of an early literacy program on the language and literacy skills of preschool ELLs who were at risk for learning disabilities. Teacher implementation and reactions to the intervention were also investigated. Participants included 367 children, 57 teachers, and 13 literacy specialists. Children had a mean age of 37.3 months before the intervention and 48.4 months after the intervention. Out of all of the children, 349 were classified as Latino, Caribbean/Haitian, or Other/Haitian.

All children's' receptive and expressive language skills were assessed two months prior to the intervention and two months following using *The Language Accomplishment Profile-Diagnostic Edition* (LAP-D; Nehring, Nehring, Bruni, & Randolph, 1992) and the *Preschool Language Scales-Revised Fourth Edition* (PLS-R; Zimmerman, Steiner, & Evatt Pond, 2002) in their dominant language. The LAP-D also assessed cognition and fine motor skills. Surveys regarding child book interest and engagement were distributed to teachers before the intervention. An interview was held with each literacy specialist post-intervention to determine the effects of the intervention on both children and teachers.

Children were randomly assigned to the intervention program or control conditions. The intervention group utilized the *Early Authors Program (EAP)*, a program focused on promoting language literacy development for at-risk preschoolers. The 12-month program consisted of three

components. The first component was creating personalized books, which included family photos provided by families and pictures captured by the teacher. The children's descriptions were written underneath the pictures in either English or Spanish. Two copies of each book were made, with one kept in the classroom library and one sent home. Parents also created two copies of personalized books over four 2-hour meetings, with one copy used at home, and one kept at the child's school library. Literacy specialists were also trained regarding education pedagogy and ways to assist parents, teachers, and children in the book-making process. The specialists attended a week-long training to learn appropriate administration of pre- and post-test assessments, followed by weekly professional development meetings. The second component required teaching children to say poems in their home language. Teachers were provided with culturally relevant art, literacy materials, and common phrases from the researchers. The third component involved teachers connecting letters of the alphabet to children's names, family members, and friends. Children in the control group did not participate in the EAP but followed the established classroom curriculum.

Results indicated that a literacy intervention focused on individualized materials maintained and improved children's overall language skills. Expressive and receptive language scores were significantly higher on the PLS-R and LAP-D for children who received intervention as compared to children who did not. Cognitive and fine motor skills decreased for children in the intervention group after the intervention, however, indicating that the intervention effects were literacy specific. Surveys completed by teachers after the intervention indicated that the intervention had a positive impact on fostering a literacy-rich classroom environment. They reported that they believed that they implemented the intervention effectively and could do so independently in the future. Furthermore, teachers providing intervention stated that the

intervention increased self-confidence in children and their families because they were the protagonists of the stories.

Hammer and Sawyer (2016) also examined the language skills of preschoolers who were dual-language learners (DLLs) after involvement in an interactive book reading program that used culturally relevant materials. Additionally, researchers investigated the social and cultural validity of the program. Seventy-three mother-child pairs were involved in the program. Children ranged in age from 43 to 66 months, were typically developing, enrolled in Head Start, and were spoken to in English and Spanish in their home. All mothers were required to be native Spanish-speakers.

The intervention group was comprised of 35 mother-child pairs while the control group included 38 mother-child pairs. The intervention group was visited eight times by one of five home visitors. Home visitors were bilingual members of the community who were knowledgeable of the goals of the specific visit and the culturally relevant books to be used. The intervention consisted of the home visitor introducing and summarizing a culturally relevant book and explicitly teaching an interactive book reading strategy (e.g., asking text-relevant questions, highlighting target vocabulary). Visits ended with home visitors reviewing instructions for activities for the mothers to complete before the next home visit. This review included instructing mothers to read the book using target strategies, highlighting target vocabulary, telling their children stories related to them in the book, and creating a self-made version of the book. During these home sessions, home visitors also interviewed and recorded mothers using questions regarding social and cultural accurateness, use of the strategies, and suggestions for improvement for the intervention. Mothers' responses were summarized and analyzed regarding completion of the intervention as well as their remarks about participation.

The control group received math activities that were distributed through the child's classroom teachers every two weeks. The pairs in the control group were not visited in the home.

All children's expressive and receptive language abilities were assessed before and after the intervention using two standardized assessments in English, two in Spanish, and one that was in both languages. Language samples were also collected during a narrative and shared book reading task, in which the child and mother were requested to respond in the language they were most confident. Responses from this task were transcribed and analyzed in terms of mean length of utterance in words (MLU-W) to describe syntactic complexity and Number of Different Words (NDW) to describe expressive vocabulary.

Gain scores, or the pre-test score subtracted from the post-test score, were used to measure the effectiveness of participation in the program. Children in the intervention group had significantly higher NDW gains related to narrative tasks compared to the control group. For book-reading tasks, the intervention group had significantly higher MLU-W gains compared to the control group. There was no significant difference in gains on standardized measures of language. Over half of the mothers reported that involvement in the study was beneficial to themselves and their children. Furthermore, they reported that the books enabled them to share their culture with their children.

Further research regarding collaborative efforts from the home and school was conducted by Rowe and Fain (2013), who investigated the effects of a collaborative language and literacy program on family book reading practices. Participants included 249 preschool children from urban classrooms and their parents or caregivers, which included children who were English Language Learners (ELLs) speaking Spanish, Arabic, Kurdish or Somali at home.

All children participated in the program over the course of three units that was part of a larger educational incentive from the U.S. Department of Education. As part of the larger incentive, classroom teachers focused on reading, play, and literacy as well as providing additional support for emergent writing skills and ELL students. Classroom libraries were supplied with books that met criteria for culturally appropriate texts after discussions with family and community members. The home component of the project involved backpacks that included two books, one that was being read three to four times in school related to a specific classroom unit, and another that supplemented the classroom book based on its relation to the unit, cultural appropriateness, and diverse vocabulary. If books were not available in the language of the family, translations in Spanish, Arabic, Somali, or Kurdish were provided and taped under the English text, creating a dual-language text. Furthermore, all books were audio recorded in English on a CD and included in the backpack. Five to six backpacks were given to each classroom and each child was allowed to take the backpack home for one week out of the four-week period. Blank journals with writing instruments were included as well.

Parents were invited to a meeting at their child's school to be introduced to the materials. They were provided books and encouraged to read, interact, and journal about the books with their children in any way they liked. Then, parents were shown examples of journal entries from a previous study and then encouraged to talk about the books sent home in backpacks in their preferred language and create their own journal responses. Frequency of family participation and reactions, methods of shared book reading, and how families created journal responses were collected after each home visit via journal responses and a parent attitude survey.

Results indicated that each child took home a backpack three times, meaning that it was taken home once for every classroom unit. Only 79 families responded to the survey discussing

parent attitudes, however, responses were positive, with parents discussing the importance of shared book reading as effective practice for the child as well as being a mutual family activity. Parents of children who were ELL who received dual-language materials gave particularly positive responses. They indicated that the dual-language materials allowed them to engage in shared reading and interact with their child in both languages. While there was no recommended number of times to read the books sent home, of the 79 parents that responded, over 30% read the books three or more times during the week. Parents indicated that shared book reading allowed them to embrace a student role (i.e. learn about the new information as their children were). Overall, parents surpassed expectations of reading to their children and fostered conversations that promoted deeper conversations and comprehension of the text. By the end of the program, over 60% of families with children who were ELL had completed at least one journal. This percentage increased to over 70% for families with children who were ELL who received dual language materials. Over half of the journal entries were co-authored by parents and children, with parents typically writing or assisting their child to write in the journal, and children providing pictures. Family journal responses typically consisted of a retelling of the story, or personal connections that were made to the books. Both responses went beyond literal interpretations and displayed a deeper comprehension of the text from the family.

Conclusion

Research has established that emergent literacy skills are necessary for academic success, and that caregivers are crucial facilitators of this development (Bishop & Leonard, 2000; Reading Rockets, n.d.). One way children can begin to develop and strengthen these early literacy and language skills is through shared book reading. Research has shown that improvements in expressive and receptive language skills can be attributed to engagement in

shared book reading (Blom-Hoffman et al., 2007; Whitehurst et al., 1988; Zevenbergen et al., 2003). Furthermore, shared book reading is a method that can improve literacy and narrative skills in children who are bilingual or ELL (Huennekens & Xu, 2010; Huennekens & Xu, 2016).

The type of materials used in shared book reading can also have positive implications for literacy outcomes. Specifically, materials that were made by the child and their family had a positive impact on language and literacy skills in both L1 and L2 for children as well as positive parent feedback (Bernhard et al., 2006; Caesar & Nelson, 2014; Hammer & Sawyer, 2016; Roberts, 2008). Hammer and Sawyer (2016) specifically interviewed Latino families to create the books used in the study because they found many of the families did not relate to the traditions or customs in published children's literature.

The creation of personalized materials highlights the need for culturally relevant literacy materials. Not only did creating materials benefit the children, parents indicated they also found the interventions useful. Many parents indicated the experiences during the interventions allowed them to interact with their children on a more personal level and educate them about their cultures (Caesar & Nelson, 2014; Hammer & Sawyer, 2016; Rowe & Fain, 2013).

While there is research that studied the effects of shared book reading and using culturally relevant materials, there are still issues that should be investigated further. Out of the 10 studies reviewed, only two had a sample sizes over 100 (Bernhard et al., 2006; Rowe & Fain, 2013). This presents as an issue because results may not be representative of all families in all areas of the country. Another component of the selected studies that could be investigated further is the linguistic diversity of the ELL and bilingual children. Only two studies, conducted by Roberts (2008) and Rowe and Fain (2013), addressed ELL children who spoke languages other than English and Spanish. This is an important consideration moving forward as the United

States has over 350 languages other than English that are spoken in the home (United States Census Bureau, 2015). While research may not be able to target all of these languages, it is important to consider that SLPs may be working with children and parents that speak languages other than English and Spanish.

SLPs should consider parents as equal stakeholders in shared book reading and early literacy success. Research indicated that parents were willing to participate, regardless of language and cultural background, in joint activities that improve their child's language skills (Bernhard et al., 2013; Caesar & Nelson, 2014; Rowe & Fain, 2013). Parent participation in a child's academic endeavors can improve the child's academic outcomes, as well as the parents' confidence that they are actively contributing to their child's education.

It is within the SLPs' scope of practice to serve children and their families who speak a language other than English, as well as to consider the culture of these families. Being cognizant of the materials used in therapy sessions or within the classroom should be a priority for SLPs. Being a culturally competent clinician entails researching the culture of the child and verifying cultural information with families to ensure information is accurate and representative. Further awareness of differences by the clinician allows identification and use of meaningful, culturally relevant materials for intervention sessions. By doing this, the SLP provides an opportunity for the child and family to feel as though they are being represented through the materials, as well as the opportunity for the clinician to offer use of this material at home with instructions for generalization of therapy targets.

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Rationale

As a future professional, I hope to provide services that benefit all of my clients. I have an interest in early literacy as well as multicultural populations, both of which have combined to provide the underlying theme of this project. I have always been a reader and was fortunate enough to not only have parents and a caregiver who read to me daily, but also books that had characters that were representative of my language, culture, and lifestyle. While approximately 23% of the U.S. population come from a racially diverse background (United States Census Bureau, 2018), only 8% of SLPs who practice in the U.S. fall into this demographic (American Speech-Language Hearing Association, 2019). In terms of representing this demographic in children's books, only 13% of children's books from 1994 to 2014 contained multicultural content (Lee & Low Books, 2018).

I believe considering representative therapy materials is one way graduate clinicians could be encouraged to begin thinking about their clients more holistically. Utilizing culturally relevant materials shows children and their families that while the book may not represent all aspects of their culture, extra time and effort was spent in choosing these materials in an attempt to meaningfully connect.

My goal was to try to select at least one book from the cultures that I have seen our clinic serve at Illinois State University. I hope clinicians will begin to have a more accurate perspective that there is a discrepancy between their own culture and the culture of their clients. I believe this discrepancy can be lessened if the clinician makes a genuine effort to understand and accept cultural differences. Furthermore, while not all families or cultures may prioritize shared book reading, I wanted to make the resource available if it was of interest to the family. I included the parent handout in the hope that clinicians will consider that parents and caregivers are

instrumental in therapy success and consider how to offer resources that can be successfully utilized by parents.

A detailed description of the materials developed/detailed instructions for how these materials should be used.

This resource consists of 20 books, representative of seven cultures: African American (3), Asian Pacific Islander Desi American (APIDA) (5), Latinx (2), LGBTQ+ (2), Middle Eastern (2), Special Needs (2) and general diversity (4). The books target children ages 3 through 8, with a target age or age range specified for each book. Books are organized alphabetically by title. Each book is designated a page that contains the title, author, and a summary in addition to potential language targets that could be used in therapy. Each of the language domains (e.g., semantics, syntax, morphology, phonology, and pragmatics) most salient in each book will be highlighted in relation to an estimated number of occurrences (e.g. 10+, 15+, 20+, etc.). The explanation for the most apparent domains was subjective. Other domains may be targeted in therapy if the clinician sees fit. The explanation of the target domain offers suggestions for clinicians to use during therapy.

A general handout is provided as a guide for parents to accompany each book. This handout will serve as a catalyst for clinicians to discuss the importance of shared book reading in addition to the language targets focused on in therapy. The handout provides instructions and example prompts for how to engage in shared book reading in addition to a space for the clinician to offer his or her suggestions for using the book to reinforce therapy targets. General recommendations for shared book reading are also offered at the bottom of the page.

A description of your intended audience.

My intended audience is Speech-Language Pathology graduate students and parents of children from culturally diverse backgrounds. From my own experience, there are not many individuals from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds from my cohort, but we serve individuals who are representative of these diverse backgrounds. While some clinicians may not have a desire to work with children or have an interest in shared book reading, the use of materials that attempt to represent a client's culture shows that the clinician is attempting to make a genuine connection with their client.

What are the potential benefits (what you hope will be the potential benefits) derived from the use of your project?

After my first year as a graduate clinician, one of my biggest challenges was finding appropriate materials for my clients. I did not have any clients that were from culturally or linguistically diverse populations, but I can imagine this element could have added additional challenges to selecting therapy materials. Through this resource, I hope to ease the stress of graduate clinicians when they are choosing culturally relevant materials. I hope the use of this resource will not only offer clinicians the opportunity to think about culture and choosing appropriate resources, but also think about how these resources could be used outside of therapy. In terms of benefits to the child, I hope their engagement and willingness to participate in therapy or shared book reading increases because they see themselves represented in the books. Finally, I hope that the parents and families feel represented through the selection of culturally relevant books. Additionally, I hope the handouts and discussions with the graduate clinicians foster the parents' confidence to incorporate language targets focused on in therapy in their daily routines.

Describe your organizational framework

I chose cultures based on what I have observed in the clinic at Illinois State as well as in the Bloomington-Normal community. While I know this is not all encompassing, nor is it representative of all aspects of a child or family's culture, I attempted to select books I thought would be most applicable to the populations graduate clinicians could encounter during their clinical practica.

In terms of presenting each book, I organized the book-related in the following format. I included a picture of the book to ensure that the clinician select the correct book when searching for it online or at any of the local libraries. I also included a summary of the book, followed by potential language targets appropriate for the age of the client. These language targets are not all encompassing but were the targets I saw as most salient. The general handout included a greeting and space for the clinician to summarize language goals targeted in therapy through use of one of the books. Prompts and examples for questions to ask during shared book reading were also included. A tip for reading and/or discussing the pictures in the book in the language most comfortable for the parents or caregivers was included to ensure the best language exposure for the child.