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Case Study #1

Developmental Analysis

Phonology (Receptive and Expressive)

Phonology is the study of sound so children who are developing language skills need to be able to perceive the difference between sounds of letters such as the “a” in cat and the “e” in bread. These are called phonemes and all together there are 44 of them. Since the students in case study 1 have low test scores in sound and letter recognition (naming letters of the alphabet and their sounds), rhyming words such as cat sat bat, and concepts about print, they will not be able to distinguish phonemes since they don’t know all the letters or their sounds, this will be very difficult for their receptive language especially.

Morphology (Receptive and Expressive)

This is the study of morphemes which is the smallest unit of meaning. Students should be able to tell the difference between “Ball” and if you add an “S” on the end it makes it plural “Balls” If you have the word “Walk” and add an “ed” at the end it makes the word past tense, “Walked.” Students also have trouble with over generalizing meaning of words such as “my two foots” when they should say my two feet. Words can also have a prefix such as un-met or un-necessary. Children in kindergarten should be able to make these identifications with receptive language but students who cannot make letter recognition or sounds may not be able to understand.

Syntax (Receptive and Expressive)

Syntax is grammar which means making sure there are commas where there should be a pause and a period at the end of a sentence and to indent to make a new paragraph when making a new thought. Putting words in the proper order in a sentence is also part of grammar for example; “Went boy to the store” doesn’t really make any sense because it should say “The boy went to the store.” The adjective comes before the noun then the verb. Students need to understand what an adjective, noun and verb is and where a period, comma, quotations, semicolon and question mark goes before being able to understand syntax which is receptive language.

Semantics (Receptive and Expressive)

Semantics is vocabulary, word meaning. Concrete-contextualized(current situation) Abstract- decontextualized(ideas, concepts). Remembering vocabulary is receptive language which many students have trouble with. Without knowing the meaning of words, expressive language is going to be very limited. They will not be able

to elaborate on information that they may know, but not be able to express in the way they would like to. By having strong vocabulary skills, students will become stronger readers therefore be able to right more fluently.

Pragmatics (Receptive and Expressive)

Pragmatics is the goal, purpose or intent of communication. Students should think about the point they are trying to make when communicating such as asking questions, feelings, information, ideas, wants/needs, and persuasion. Trying to think about the purpose of communicating takes receptive language and once they have identified it and expressed it then it becomes their expressive language.

Discourse & Fluency (Receptive and Expressive)

Once students have mastered typical language development then they can make sentences into paragraphs which is also called discourse. A paragraph is a body of information, stories or ideas and by having and understanding of what you're communicating about, the paragraph will have fluency. When creating a paragraph it takes all of these skills; grammar, vocabulary, pragmatics and morphology. Students who do not have a steady receptive language for all of the above will have a hard time creating successful communication.

Cultural or Experiential Factors

People may think that if a student has another language other than English as their first language then they will have a harder time in school and may fall behind the other students in class. Perceiving the differences in sounds for the 44 different phonemes may be more difficult for them to understand and maybe even pronounce. Some children are born with speech impediments, therefore certain letter pronunciations are more difficult. In this case they would need to see a speech therapist to train their mouths to pronounce the letters correctly. These students may also have difficulties with morphology, being able to understand that if something is plural it needs to have an "s" at the end or an "ed" if it's in past tense. English is the hardest language to learn and those who are bilingual have an easier time picking up other languages.

Impact on Learning

Receptive language can affect a student's academic performance because if they do not understand the information taught by the teacher then their grades are going to suffer. Reading, writing and mathematics are the most crucial subjects for receptive language. When reading, comprehending the information in the book and then spitting the information back out is expressive language, being able to express what you just learned. The same goes when writing and learning mathematics. Being frustrated with academics can affect your relationships with peers, teachers and family members. It may make the student feel agitated and anxious all the time. Teachers and family are always there to offer help and support when needed. Because of this hard time in school, they

may express the frustration and anxiety in a way that is not appropriate. They may need to see a therapist to deal with the emotions. This is another reason why the relationships may suffer, as well as academically.

Strategies for Intervention

There are many different strategies that teachers and family members can do to help strengthen language development. One option is called the emergent reader and it is most common among toddlers, pre-school and kindergarteners. According to Special Connections, characteristics of an emergent reader include recognizing logographic symbols or environmental print such as the “golden arches” of McDonalds. The emergent reader is also learning basic concepts about prints such as how to hold a book, which direction to read the text and that illustrations tell the story in pictures(1). Some others are speech synthesis which is a program that converts text to artificial speech so the student would be able to read out loud along with the tape. Cooperative learning where the students are put into heterogeneous groups working together to achieve a common goal. By working in groups the students are forced to talk to each other and express ideas and information.