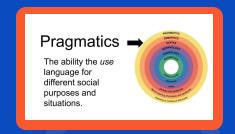# Preparing Speech-Language Pathology Students to Analyze Language Samples of Preschool Children who are DHH

Kristina Blaiser, Lydia Webb, Daphne Darling

Many speech-language pathologists (SLPs) lack confidence and experience serving children who are Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing, particularly in giving and using language samples as part of an ongoing assessment process (Blaiser & Mahshie, in review; Blaiser & Shannahan, 2019). This leaves children who are DHH underidentified and underserved in their specific areas of need. To better train future professionals to use and interpret language samples, a university-based language sample collection and interpretation project has been developed for graduate and undergraduate students in Communication Sciences and Disorders (i.e., speech-language pathology and audiology). Students were asked to analyze recorded language samples specifically looking at the five domains of language (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics), Students gained experience presenting this information to each other via Zoom while sharing video clips of the child and providing ideas for intervention focused on the needs of the individual child.

Students are asked to define a domain of language in family-friendly terms. This is an important part of family-centered practice as well as making sure the concepts are understood.

Pragmatics →

The ability the *use* language for different social purposes and situations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Summary of Article

This call to action, reviewed the reasons why children who are DHH are vulnerable to pragmatic developmental challenges and the potential to create positive change. In this call to action, they then urge (1) medical providers to recognize the need to monitor for risk of pragmatic difficulty and to refer for timely intervention (beginning in infancy), (2) allied health professionals involved in supporting children who are DHH to incorporate development of pragmatic abilities into their work and to foster awareness among caregivers, and (3) the research community to deepen our understanding of pragmatics in children who are DHH with investigations that include pragmatics and with longitudinal studies that chart the paths to positive outcomes while respecting the diversity of this population.

Relation to Case Study: The child in this case study is a child who is DHH who uses LSL. We do not know if an assessment of pragmatics has been done for him. It is important to advocate for children who are DHH that pragmatics is included in their assessment.
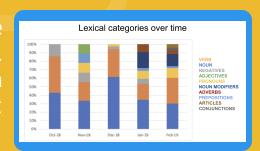
Szarkowski, A., Young, A., Matthews, D., & Meinzen-Derr, J. (2020). Pragmatics Development in Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children: A Call to Action. *Pediatrics, 146*(Supplement 3), S310–S315. https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2020-0242L.

Students complete a literature search to understand how that domain may be impacted by a presence of a hearing loss. Students report on recent assessment and intervention outcomes.

Pragmatic Skills over Time

Students analyze performance over time in the different domains. Outcomes are reported in data visualizations to make transparent to families and other providers

Lexical categories over time

VERB
NOUN
NEGATIVES
ADJECTIVES
PRONOUNS
NOUN MODIFIERS
ADVERBS
PREPOSITIONS
ARTICLES
CONJUNCTIONS

INTERVENTION PLANS

Ideas for Intervention

- Asking questions:asking for wants/needs, requesting clarification, or WH questions.
  - **Activity: Playing 20 questions with the child to learn the process of asking questions and receiving appropriate responses.**
- Expressing feelings-identifying feelings, explaining feelings, providing information on request.
  - **Teaching the child feelings words and provide examples of the emotions that they correspond using picture cards containing various emotions.**
- Giving commands-providing directions to play a game or make something.
  - **Explain to the child the rules of a simple game such as hide-and-seek. Then, ask the child to direct the game by providing commands and directions to facilitate game play.**

Given the evidence and assessment data, students are asked to identify potential goals, intervention stratgies and activities that might be used to address the goals in the classroom and with the family.

Idaho State University