Assessment and Treatment of Language Disorders in West Virginia Schools
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### Introduction

What are the recommendations assessment and treatment of language disorders?
- Speech-language pathologists (SLPs) in the schools have been included as support personnel and no longer necessitate special permission to work within the general education classroom (ISSA, 2015).
- Academically relevant evaluations and treatment of language disorders is necessitated by IDEA (2004) as well as recommended within the literature to accommodate a functional approach to the identification of individuals with a language disorder (Westby & Washington, 2017).

Therefore, the current study was designed to accomplish the alignment with research, ASHA, and IDEA.

There is little evidence to indicate that current practice is in alignment with research, ASHA, and IDEA (ASHA, 2008, 2012, 2014, 2016).

SLPs continue to spend the majority of time in direct service delivery (ASHA, 2012). Some variation in frequency of services (i.e., one or two times per week) is observed in relation to the severity of the language disorder. (Brandel & Loeb, 2011)

How has service delivery within the schools evolved?

### Purpose

- There is little evidence to indicate that current practice is in alignment with research, ASHA, and IDEA in regards to the diagnosis or treatment for students with language disorders. Therefore, the current study was designed to accomplish the following:
  1. Identify the current practices of school-based SLPs who are evaluating and treating students with language disorders in West Virginia?
  2. Provide specific support to identified areas which are not aligned with best practice and legal mandates.
  3. Establish an ongoing system of evaluation regarding practice and impact of state funded professional development.

### Phase 1: Current Practice

#### Participants
- 131 Speech-Language Pathologists working in the public schools of West Virginia completed the survey.
  - 95.4% worked full-time
  - 88.3% had ASHA CCCs
  - White (96.9%), African American (3.1%); No Response (2.3%)
  - Non-Hispanic (96%); Hispanic (4%)
  - School Setting
    - 61.4% rural
    - 24.3% suburban
    - 10% urban
  - Average year of graduation = 2000 (range =1972 to 2017)
  - Average caseload = 42 students (range = 10 to 68 students)

#### Survey
- 31 questions using Qualtrics

#### Current Assessment Practice For Students with Language Disorders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Activities</th>
<th>Number of SLPs Available (N=131)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standardized tests</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language sampling</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Language sampling completed as part of evaluation (N=128)
  - Yes (oral) = 77.3%
  - Yes (written) = 5.9%
  - No = 18.8%

### Phase 1: Current Practice cont.

#### Current Intervention Practice for Students with Language Disorders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intervention Characteristics</th>
<th>Number of SLPs Available (N=127)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language sampling used for progress monitoring</td>
<td>72.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes (oral)</td>
<td>72.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes (written)</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- SLP decision making regarding service delivery

- Place for language services by severity

- Time for language services by severity

### Phase 2: University and State Partnership

- Established the WV SLP Resource Library Fall of 2017 with language materials related to academic state standards for SLPs to utilize through a loan process at no cost which includes the following materials:
  - Standardized Tests
  - Academically related intervention materials
  - Language Transcription Services
    - SLPs in the WV schools upload audio and written language samples for transcription and analysis using SALT (2016).
    - Transcript analysis and interpretation of data is emailed back to SLP.
  - Professional development related to language assessment and treatment at no cost to SLPs was implemented by the Office of Special Education at the West Virginia Department of Education.
    - Summer 2018 – Moving Beyond MLU: Understanding the Language Sample Analysis (Number of attendees = )
    - Fall 2018 – Make it a REOT Comprehensive Language Evaluations (Number of attendees = )
    - Spring 2019 – Academically Relevant Language Goals and Treatment

### Phase 3: Efficacy of Activities

- SLP Use of WV SLP Resource Library has increased.
  - 15 test requests in 2017, 23 test requests thus far in 2018-19
  - 16 language samples transcribed in 2017-18, 23 transcribed thus far in 2018-19

Selected References


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