

Approaches to Grammar Intervention by SLPs: A National Survey

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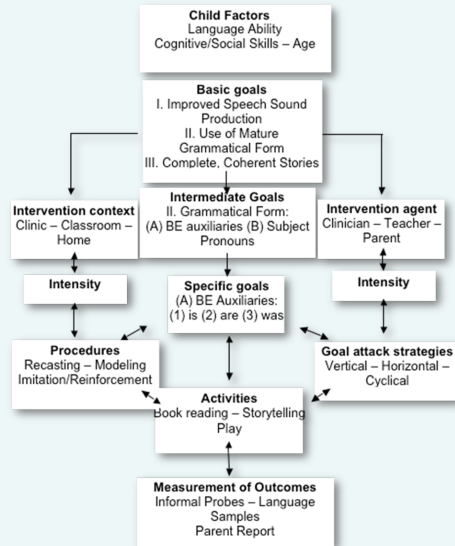
Introduction

- Despite the frequent use of grammatical interventions by clinicians, relatively little is known about current grammatical intervention practices of speech-language pathologists (SLPs).
- Such information is needed to guide the development and evaluation of grammatical interventions.
- The purpose of this study was to examine the procedures speech-language pathologists employ when targeting grammatical forms in intervention by surveying currently practicing clinicians.

Research Questions

- When targeting grammatical forms, how do currently practicing speech-language pathologists working in early education and elementary school settings implement the intervention components defined by McCauley and Fey (2006).
- If resources were unlimited, would currently practicing speech-language pathologists alter the intervention context or dosage? If so, how?

Grammar Intervention Hierarchy



From Fey, M. E., & Finestack, L. H. (2009). Research and development in children's language intervention: A 5-phase model.

This study was supported by an Advancing Academic-Research Careers (AARC) Award from the American Speech-Language Hearing Association. The authors have no financial or nonfinancial relationships to disclose.

Method

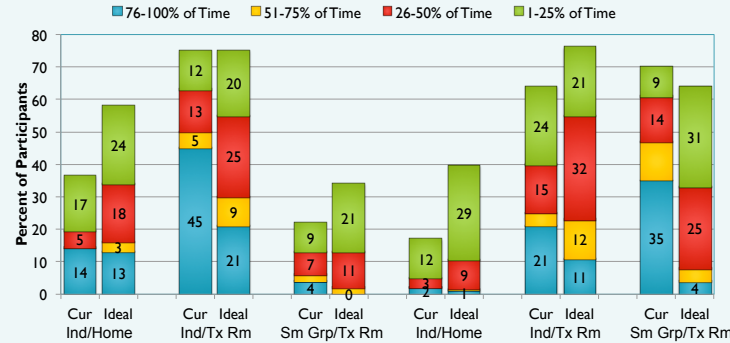
- We sent ~10,100 participation invitations to SLPs using ASHA's 'Find a Professional' portal and posted invitations on ASHA listservs.
- A total of 388 participants fully completed the survey. Here we included participants who reported that the largest proportion of their caseload included children in Early Education (birth through preschool) ($n = 114$) or Elementary school ($n = 224$).
- Vast majority of participants were Caucasian females who held a master's degree and had been practicing for more than 10 years.

Results

Goals

Target	Early Education	Elementary
Expanding Utterances	25%	43%
Plural -s	56%	50%
Possessive -s	28%	12%
Present Progressive Verbs	55%	35%
Pronouns	38%	51%
Regular and Irregular Past Tense	40%	60%

Contexts



Intensity

Intensity	Early Education		Elementary	
	Current	Ideal	Current	Ideal
Opportunities/Session	0-10	21%	12%	24%
	11-20	33%	14%	37%
	>21	45%	66%	28%
Length of Session (min)	1-20	32%	12%	23%
	21-40	46%	28%	64%
	>40	22%	32%	12%
Sessions per Month	0-4	57%	23%	58%
	5-6	12%	6%	13%
	7-8	18%	38%	19%
	>8	11%	30%	8%
				30%

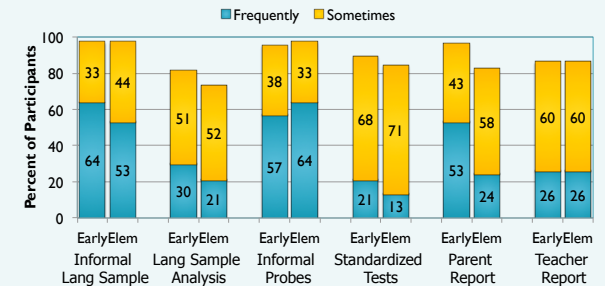
Agents, Procedures, and Activities

Intervention Component	Early Education		Elementary	
	Never	Frequently	Never	Frequently
Agents				
Parent	1%	75%	11%	34%
Teacher	31%	29%	14%	21%
Other Caregiver	15%	22%	17%	19%
Procedures				
Models	0%	98%	0%	90%
Recasts	2%	74%	3%	65%
Requests for Imitation	0%	73%	2%	61%
Explicit Presentations	4%	64%	1%	69%
Activities				
Drill	15%	37%	9%	50%
Play with Toys	0%	81%	13%	35%
Conversation	<1%	77%	1%	67%
Worksheets	50%	2%	27%	16%
Book Reading	2%	54%	6%	42%
Narrative Development	19%	33%	12%	42%
Academic Coursework	66%	3%	22%	13%
Writing	72%	<1%	27%	15%

Goal Attack Strategies

Target	Early Education	Elementary
Horizontal	24%	30%
Vertical	15%	11%
Cyclical	24%	23%
Combination of 2 Approaches	18%	23%
Combination of 3 Approaches	15%	11%

Measurement of Outcomes



Conclusions

- This study provides general guidelines of current clinical practice to help inform research that aims to improve grammatical intervention outcomes and the implementation of evidence-based grammatical interventions.
- We advocate that researchers carefully consider results from this study to guide the focus and design of future investigations of child language interventions.