Communication & Language Interventions Assignment

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Introduction

Educators are constantly searching for quality interventions to enable students with learning

difficulties such as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) to succeed in the classroom and beyond.

Evidence-based practices are based on rigorous research and effectively improve communication

and language skills in individuals, particularly those on the spectrum. By using these

interventions, educators can have confidence in using methods with a proven track record of

success. The following paper will review three communication and language evidence-based

practices.

Communication and Language Evidence-Based Practice #1: (Augmented and Alternative

Communication)

      Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) is an evidence-based practice used

to support individuals with communication disorders or disabilities in expressing themselves

effectively when they have difficulty using spoken language. AAC encompasses a range of

strategies and tools designed to enhance or replace natural speech. (Peters et al., 2022)

This EBP includes a variety of methods and tools, such as communication boards,

speech-generating devices, sign language, and picture exchange systems. The specific AAC

method or tool chosen depends on the individual's needs, abilities, and preferences.

AAC interventions are considered evidence-based because a substantial body of research

supports them and effectively improves communication outcomes for individuals with

communication difficulties. Researchers and educators have conducted numerous studies to

evaluate the impact of AAC interventions on communication skills and quality of life.

AAC is highly individualized, with interventions tailored to each person's unique needs and abilities. This personalized approach is crucial to the success of AAC interventions, as it ensures that the method chosen is the most appropriate for the individual's specific communication goals. Many individuals who use AAC may use various communication methods, including gestures, speech, and AAC devices. The goal is to provide a comprehensive communication system allowing individuals to express themselves in multiple contexts. (Chavers et al., 2021) Effective implementation of AAC often requires training and ongoing support for both the individual using AAC and their communication partners, such as family members, caregivers, and educators. Training helps ensure that everyone involved understands how to use the AAC system effectively. AAC interventions emphasize the importance of involving communication partners in the process. Communication partners are encouraged to provide support, respond to communication attempts, and create opportunities for the individual to use AAC. (Chavers et al., 2021)

AAC interventions also focus on supporting language development and growth. AAC users are encouraged to expand their vocabulary and use their communication systems to express various thoughts, needs, and emotions. Like other evidence-based practices, AAC involves data collection and progress monitoring to assess the effectiveness of the intervention. This data-driven approach helps educators and professionals make informed decisions about adjustments to the AAC system or strategies. AAC promotes inclusion by enabling individuals with communication challenges to participate more fully in social, educational, and community activities. It helps break down communication barriers and fosters greater independence. Overall, evidence-based AAC practices are a vital resource for individuals with communication disorders or disabilities, as they offer a structured, researched-based approach to improving

communication and the overall quality of life for those who use AAC systems. These practices empower individuals to communicate effectively and participate more fully in their communities. (Peters et al., 2022)

Communication and Language Evidence-Based Practice #2: (Prompting)

Prompts are vital to evidence-based practices, including education, speech therapy, and applied behavior analysis (ABA). Prompts help individuals acquire new skills, develop independence, and improve their abilities. A prompt is a cue, hint, or assistance provided to an individual to help them perform a specific task or behavior. The goal of prompting is to guide the individual toward the correct response and facilitate learning. (Neitzel & Wolery, 2009) There are various types of prompts. There are verbal, visual, physical, modeling, and textual prompts and multiple ways to use them. For example, Least-to-Most Prompting is an evidence-based prompting hierarchy where prompts are initially provided at the least intrusive level, and only if necessary, they increase in intensity or intrusiveness. This approach ensures that individuals can respond independently before more assistance is provided. Prompt Fading is an essential aspect of prompting, gradually reducing or fading the prompts as the individual becomes more proficient in the targeted skill. Prompt fading involves decreasing the level of assistance over time to promote independent performance. (Neitzel & Wolery, 2009)

In errorless learning, prompts are used to ensure that the individual makes correct responses from the beginning, minimizing the occurrence of errors. This strategy can be highly effective for individuals with difficulty correcting mistakes. Prompt delay involves introducing a delay between the presentation of the instruction or cue and the prompt. This delay encourages individuals to rely on their memory and problem-solving skills before receiving assistance.

Collecting data on using prompts and the individual's responses is essential to evidence-based prompting practices. Data help track progress and determine when and how to adjust prompting strategies. Prompting strategies should be individualized based on the person's needs, abilities, and preferences. What works for one individual may not work for another, so it is essential to tailor prompts to specific learners. Prompts should be designed to promote generalization, meaning students are able to apply the skills they have learned in various settings and situations. Maintenance strategies help ensure that the skills are used and developed over time. (Neitzel & Wolery, 2009)

Evidence-based prompting practices are essential for educators, therapists, and caregivers working with individuals learning new skills or overcoming challenges. Professionals can support skill development and enhance learning by using effective prompting techniques and individualizing their approach. (Neitzel & Wolery, 2009)

Communication and Language Evidence-Based Practice #1: (Time Delay)

Time Delay is an evidence-based practice used in various educational and therapeutic settings. It is a systematic instructional strategy designed to promote skills acquisition in individuals on the spectrum. Time Delay is a teaching procedure in which a prompt (a cue or assistance) is intentionally delayed for a set amount of time after giving an instruction or presenting a question. The delay allows the learner to respond independently before receiving any assistance. (Neitzel, 2009)

Time delay encourages learners to initiate responses independently and minimizes reliance on prompts or assistance. It helps establish a stronger connection between the instruction or question and the learner's answer, enhancing the individual's understanding of the task. If a learner does

not respond correctly during the initial delay, it allows immediate correction and reinforcement once the prompt is provided. (Neitzel, 2009)

There are various types of time delays that can be used. In constant time delay, the time delay between the instruction and prompt remains consistent across trials. For example, a teacher might wait three seconds after asking a question before providing a prompt. In progressive time delay, the delay duration gradually increases across trials. The goal is to fade the prompt over time as the learner becomes more proficient with the skill. Time delay can be used within a least-to-most prompting hierarchy, starting with the least intrusive prompt and increasing the delay if necessary. (Neitzel, 2009)

The Time Delay strategy can be used in several areas, including language and communication. Time delay is often used in speech therapy and language intervention to help individuals learn new vocabulary, answer questions, or express themselves.

Like other evidence-based practices, time delay involves data collection to track the learner's progress, measure response accuracy, and adjust the time delay duration as needed. Time delay should be tailored to the individual's specific needs and abilities. The delay's length and the prompt type may vary based on the learner's skill level. Time delay aims to facilitate skill generalization, enabling learners to use their skills in different settings and with various people. Maintenance strategies ensure that the acquired skills are retained over time.

Time delay is a valuable evidence-based practice supporting skill acquisition, independence, and effective learning. When applied appropriately and systematically, time delay can be a powerful tool for educators, therapists, and caregivers working with individuals learning new skills or overcoming challenges. (Neitzel, 2009)

Conclusion

Evidence-based practices are based on rigorous research and effectively improve communication and language skills in individuals, particularly those on the spectrum. By using these interventions, educators can have confidence in using methods with a proven track record of success. Educators should use evidence-based communication and language interventions because they are grounded in research, effective, and aligned with ethical principles. By doing so, educators can provide the best possible support for their students and enhance their professional practice.

References

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