



How to Target Grammar and Vocabulary Goals Using Literacy-Based Therapy

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Disclosures

Financial

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Objectives

- ▶ Explain how a language-rich activity can be used to target numerous goals.
- ▶ Describe three evidence-backed strategies that can be used when targeting vocabulary goals using books/articles in therapy.
- ▶ Describe three evidence-backed strategies that can be used when targeting grammar goals using books/articles in therapy.



Let's Talk About...
Grammar Intervention

SLPnow

Setting the Stage

“

The basic goal of all grammatical interventions should be to help the child to **achieve greater facility in the comprehension and use of syntax and morphology** in the service of conversation, narration, exposition, and other textual genres in both written and oral modalities.

- Fey, Long, & Finestack, 2013

”

“

The use of **discrete skill instruction** [e.g., grammar analysis, modeling, imitation drills, error detection, and sentence combining] **as the sole intervention approach**, without embedding use of newly acquired structures in meaningful activities, **is not recommended.**

- Eisenberg, 2007

”

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Authenticity is crucial. Students must have a reason for doing the things that lead them to learn and use grammar so that they can read, write, and speak better.

- Eisenberg, 2007

”

A Framework

A Framework

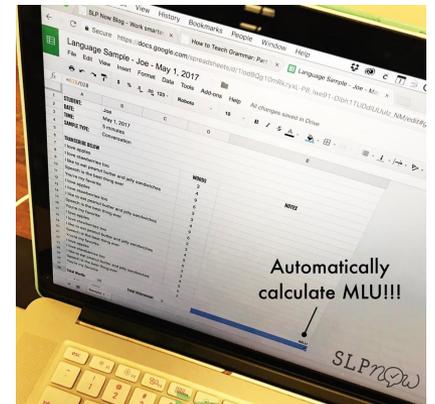
- ▶ 1. Assessment
- ▶ 2. Teaching
- ▶ 3. Focused Stimulation
- ▶ 4. Structured Practice
- ▶ 5. Embedded Practice

1.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment

- ▶ Collect a language sample
 - ▶ Across contexts
 - Story retell/generation
 - Conversation
 - Picture description
 - Classroom
- ▶ Probe specific skills based on results



The Why

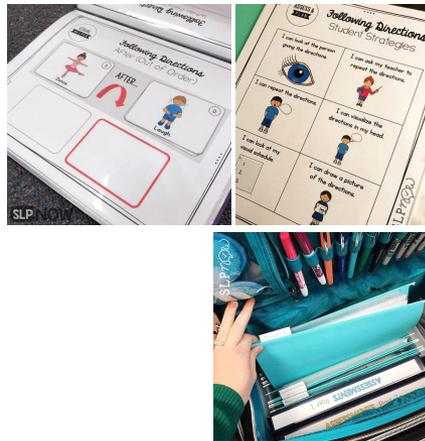
- ▶ Why students might “care” about grammar?
 - ▶ Being understood by friends
 - ◆ Their stories might get really confusing if they’re not using appropriate verb tenses!
 - ▶ Needed in any writing/speaking career
 - ◆ sports announcers, singers, teachers, authors
 - ▶ Miscommunication
 - ◆ Google grammar jokes and you’ll get some funny examples.
- ▶ Encourage them to think of their own reasons! The more personal, the better!

2.

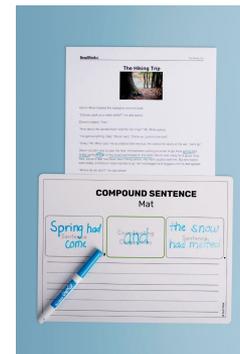
TEACHING

Why Visuals?

- ▶ The student can take ownership and begin to use the tools independently.
- ▶ *Consistency!*



Teaching Example



3.

FOCUSED STIMULATION

Focused Stimulation

- ▷ Frequent models and recasts in a variety of activities
 - ▶ *Model*: Highlight the features naturally in conversation
 - ▶ *Recast*: Correct what the child says or modify the modality (e.g., turn a statement into a question)

4.

STRUCTURED PRACTICE

A Note on Structured Practice

- ▷ Some students may need more traditional drill practice, but we don't stay here long.

A Review of Drills

- ▶ Drills supported in the literature include...
 - ▶ **1. Imitating contrasting sentences** (Connell, 1982)
 - ▶ **2. Modeling combined with production** (Fey & Proctor-Williams, 2000)
 - ▶ **3. Combining sentences** (Strong, 1986; Weaver, 1996)
- ▶ “Grammar analysis [i.e., teaching labels for grammar concepts, dissecting sentences] and detecting errors for isolated sentences do not seem to be beneficial” ([Eisenberg, 2007](#)).

1. Modeling Combined with Production

- ▶ Modeling (with or without student imitation) helps students produce new targets (Connell, 1987).
- ▶ Students produce more untrained exemplars when they do have the opportunity to imitate the model.
- ▶ Despite these positive results, research suggests that these improvements don't generalize well ([Connell, 1982](#)).

2. Imitating Contrasting Sentences

- ▶ The child imitates both the target and a contrasting form that is semantically and/or grammatically related to the target.
 - ▶ *Pronouns*: The boy is walking. He is walking.
 - ▶ *Past Tense Verbs*: He is eating. He ate.
 - ▶ *Auxiliary Verbs*: He will eat. He is eating.
- ▶ [Connell \(1982\)](#) also includes a step-by-step training procedure.

2. Imitating Contrasting Sentences

- ▶ “The **most effective timing** of the imitation drill is immediately prior to an activity that involves contextual use of the same structure” ([Eisenberg, 2007](#)).

3. Combining Sentences

- ▶ Provide students with two or more sentences and prompt them to create a single, longer sentence ([Strong, 1986](#))
- ▶ **Cued Combining:** The therapist underlines components to be combined and/or gives students to use (e.g., conjunctions).
 - ▶ Example: I sometimes wonder SOMETHING. Superheroes do exist. (WHETHER) → I sometimes wonder whether superheroes do exist.
- ▶ **Open Combining:** The therapist doesn't give specific instructions and allows the student to creatively combine the sentence.
 - ▶ Example: I like to eat cereal. I watch TV. → I like to eat cereal before I watch TV.

Combining Sentences Example (Strong, 1982)

X. I would say SOMETHING.
My intelligence was the key. (THAT)
My intelligence is natural.

I would say that my natural intelligence was the key.

Y. Please tell me more.
I am fascinated by this. (BECAUSE)
My fascination is complete. (-LY)

-- Please tell me more, because I am completely fascinated by this.

Sentence Expansion

- ▶ Students can also be prompted to expand sentences ([Gould, 2001](#)).
- ▶ The therapist gives the student a simple sentence to start with and has the student build the sentence by increasing the length and complexity.
 - ▶ Example: I saw a monkey. → I saw a silly monkey eating bananas at the zoo.

Making it Fun!



Making it Fun!



5.

EMBEDDED PRACTICE

“

Different activity types might best be used in a complementary way within our therapy sessions, using **high-structure drills to highlight and prime linguistic features** and then **immediately incorporating those features into embedded activities**.

- Eisenberg, 2014

”

Making the Most of Embedded Practice

- ▶ We can **manipulate the context** to create more opportunities for the student to use the target.
 - ▶ Carefully selecting activities, books, conversation topics, etc.
- ▶ When you're deciding which activities to use in therapy, think about how you can modify them for this purpose!

1. Picture Books

- ▷ Repetitive Books
 - ▶ High intensity modeling of a concept
- ▷ Describe the Picture
 - ▶ Opportunities to use a target structure
- ▷ Strategic Questions
 - ▶ Ask questions designed to elicit a target structure



2. Reading Passages

- ▷ Modified Mad Libs
 - ▶ Remove word from a reading passage
 - ▶ Fill in the appropriate noun, verb, adjective, conjunction, etc.
- ▷ Add or Replace
 - ▶ Add or replace words and phrases in a text
- ▷ Sentence Games
 - ▶ Pull sentence and create compound/complex sentences

3. Student-Generated Books

- ▷ Paper or digital
- ▷ Structure the story for optimal opportunities to practice a target structure
 - ▶ For example, tell the story in the past tense if targeting past tense verbs.

6.

PUTTING IT TOGETHER

Putting it all Together

- The steps aren't linear!
- You'll jump around from step to step, as needed.
- I put them in this order because the research suggests that...
 - Students shouldn't imitate sentences (Step 3) until they've heard several examples of the grammar target (Step 2)
 - Eisenhower (2014) also recommends doing quick drill (Step 3) before jumping into embedded practice (Step 4).

References

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Let's Talk About...

Vocabulary Intervention

SLP NOW

Why vocabulary?

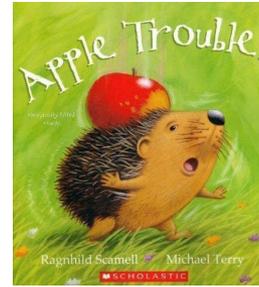
4 Criteria for Target Selection

- ▶ 1. Select words for direct instruction.
- ▶ 2. Select words that are unfamiliar.
- ▶ 3. Select words that are not too difficult to explain.
- ▶ 4. Select words that could easily be used in spoken language in a number of contexts.

Bringing Words to Life (Beck et al., 2013)

Example of Target Selection: Lowman, Stone, & Guo (2018)

YOUNGER



Categories: fruits, animals, plants
Opposites: asleep/awake, safe/danger, inside/outside

OLDER



Tier 2:
inefficient, trend, relationship, advocate

Key Strategies

- ▶ 1. Define New Words
- ▶ 2. Discuss New Words (Ask Questions)
- ▶ 3. Reread
- ▶ 4. Retell
- ▶ 5. Integrate New Words into Activities

Snell, Hindman, & Wasik, 2016

1.

DEFINE NEW WORDS

Snell, Hindman, & Wasik, 2016

YOUNGER



OLDER



2.

DISCUSS NEW WORDS

Snell, Hindman, & Wasik, 2016

YOUNGER

Categories

"Show me the fruit!"
"Which fruits do you see on this page?"
"Which fruits were on the porcupine's back?"

Opposites

asleep/awake
"What is the porcupine doing?"
"What will he do at night?"

safe/danger

"Is the porcupine safe?"
"What can he do to be safe?"

OLDER

advocate

"What is Dr. Golden an advocate for?"
"What do advocates do?"
"Do you know anyone who is an advocate?"

inefficient

"What does Dr. Golden say about parking lots?"
"Why are large parking lots inefficient?"
"What is inefficient here at school? Why?"

3.

REREAD

Snell, Hindman, & Wasik, 2016

4.

RETELL

Snell, Hindman, & Wasik, 2016

YOUNGER

Act out the story (take role of animals).

Create a digital book.

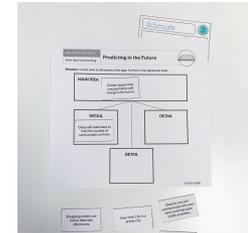
Fill in a graphic organizer.



OLDER

Use apps to summarize the passage (e.g., Camera, ToonTastic, ChatterPix, Notability).

Fill in a graphic organizer.



YOUNGER

Play-based activities that reinforce the vocabulary in the book.

- Build the hedgehog's nest.
- Taste fruit.
- Discuss fall picture scenes.
- Read other fall-related books.

Collaborate with teachers to target words that can be used in the classroom!

OLDER

Create a video animation of what they expect the future to look like.

Create a newscast from the future.

Use their new vocabulary words in the classroom.

5.

INTEGRATE NEW WORDS

Snell, Hindman, & Wasik, 2016

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