

Introduction to Language and Literacy Development

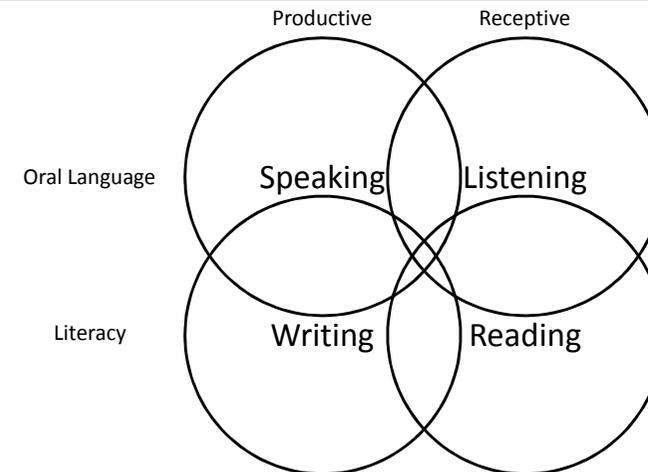
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Paradigm Shift

- **Paradigm Shift:** Significant change in ideas or practice
- **FACT:** Young children learn how to read through **enriched, natural activities**
 - **Natural activities:** Something children do in their ordinary lives
 - **Enriched:** “Nutrients” are added to make the ordinary activity a more powerful learning activity
- This requires a paradigm shift away from the concept of: Direct instruction
 - If it is not a natural activity, it is probably not helpful for young children to learn

Examples of UNHelpful Language Learning Activities in the Early Years

- Pronounce the word of an object/picture
- Identify an object with the letter (e.g., b is for ball)
 - This is oftentimes linked to phonics. However, the word *ball* has more than just the letter b in it, so this is not helpful
- Worksheets where children match pictures to words or fill in the blank with letters



Think-Pair-Share

- **Agree or Disagree. Why?:** Young children who cannot read do not need to have books.
- **Agree or Disagree. Why?:** Young children must be “ready” to learn how to read.
- At what age should children be exposed to books? Why?

Emergent Literacy

- **Emergent Literacy:** Skills, knowledge, and attitudes that are foundational to learning to read and write
 - Children begin to develop emergent literacy skills from birth
 - **IMPLICATION:** Children should have books read to them and taught developmentally appropriate reading skills from Crèche
 - Emergent literacy skills are developed by interaction with adults and older children in meaningful activities with talking and print

Importance of Reading to Young Children

- Infants who have been read to develop **book babble**
- By 15 months, infants who are read to can point to pictures in a book
- By 18 months, children can imitate events from books that are read to them
- By two years of age, children who have been read to can understand what is read to them

Emergent Literacy Skills

- Emergent Literacy Skills
 - ***Oral language:** Speaking, Listening, and Vocabulary
 - ***Print Awareness:** Knowledge about the rules of print and how books work
 - ***Phonological Awareness:** Identify and manipulate sounds in words
 - Alphabet knowledge: Names and sounds of letters
 - Interest in Reading
 - Pretend Reading
 - Ability to manipulate a pencil
 - Pretend Writing

Importance of Language

- Communication enables social interaction
- Higher academic performance
- Better thinking skills
- Related to higher income and better health

Importance of Reading

- Reading is necessary for:
 - Learning other academic subjects
 - Lifelong learning
 - Vocabulary and language development
- Better reading skills are related to:
 - Better jobs
 - Higher salaries
 - Less likelihood of becoming a criminal

Importance of Writing

- Writing improves the ability to communicate with others
- Writing helps to improve the thinking process
- Better writing skills lead to better reading skills
- Better writing improves academic performance

Conclusion

- The most important skill for children to learn from birth is language development
- The most important subject in early childhood education is Reading