



THE ROLE OF ORAL SPEECH DEVELOPMENT IN THE LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT	KEYWORDS
<p>Oral language development involves more than learning words. It also entails the development of speech skills that enable children to express themselves clearly and effectively. Verbal expression gives way to creative communication, which also boosts self-esteem. Communication is the act of interacting and exchanging ideas with other people. Basically, when communicating, people send and receive messages. There are two primary forms of communication: verbal and nonverbal. With verbal communication, people express their thoughts, ideas, and feelings through spoken or written language. Nonverbal communication uses other methods, such as body language including facial expressions, gestures, and other body movements. We are going to discuss both of these forms of communication and give verbal and nonverbal communication examples to help you understand them better so as to improve your information transfer.</p>	<p>Non verbal, express, communication, understand</p>

Introduction

Supporting young children’s language and literacy development has long been considered a practice that yields strong readers and writers later in life. The results of the National Early Literacy Panel’s (NELP) six years of scientific research synthesis supports the practice and its role in language development among children ages zero to five.

The NELP was brought together in 2002 to compile research that would contribute to educational policy and practice decisions that impact early literacy development. It was also charged with determining how teachers and families could support young children’s language and literacy development. Outcomes found in the panel’s report (2008) would be used in the creation of literacy-specific materials for parents, teachers, and staff development for early childhood educators and family-literacy practitioners. Through its work, the NELP uncovered a set of abilities such as alphabet knowledge, oral language, or phonological awareness present in the preschool years that provides the basis for later reading success.

It also found that measures of complex and discourse- level skills are particularly strong predictors of reading success – a finding that is consistent with the fact that language is a complex, multidimensional system that supports decoding and comprehension as children learn to read. In our book *Early Childhood Literacy: The National Early Literacy Panel and Beyond*, we explore the NELP report, as well as newer research findings and the effectiveness of specific approaches to teaching early oral language development to establish a solid foundation for later reading comprehension.

Below we expand on concepts to help educators understand how oral language relates to reading comprehension, word reading, and language development; where Common Core State Standards factor into the equation; and what teachers can do to foster literacy development.

Laying Down the Building Blocks

Through its research, the NELP discovered that the more complex aspects of oral language, including syntax or grammar, complex measures of vocabulary (such as those in which children actually define or explain word meanings), and listening comprehension were clearly related to later reading comprehension, but that simpler measures of oral language (e.g., the widely used Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test) had very limited associations with reading comprehension.

Put simply, readers must translate print to language and then, much as in listening, they must interpret the meaning of that language. Numerous studies support this approach by showing that word reading and language comprehension are relatively independent skills, but that each contributes significantly to reading comprehension. Simple measures of vocabulary in which children simply point to the picture of a word or name a picture are not strongly connected with later reading comprehension. Nevertheless, many studies have shown that vocabulary plays an important role in fostering reading development in the years before and during formal reading instruction.

The role of vocabulary is likely two-fold. The words, and the concepts that they represent, are obviously of functional importance in comprehension, and vocabulary might also support decoding or the translation of text into language. The NELP established phonological awareness as a key contributor to children's ability to learn to read. Of course, phonological representations are part of the linguistic system and the ability to gain access to these representations may in part be a by-product of early vocabulary development (Metsala & Walley, 1998). Reading comprehension depends on language abilities that have been developing since birth. Basic vocabulary and grammar are clearly essential to comprehension because each enables understanding of words and their interrelationships in and across individual sentences in a text (Kintsch & Kintsch, 2005).

However, children who comprehend well go beyond word and sentence comprehension to construct a representation of the situation or state of affairs described by the text. In some theories, this is referred to as a "mental model" (Kintsch & Kintsch, 2005) and it involves organizing a text's multiple ideas into an integrated whole, using both information from the text and the reader's own world knowledge. To do this, successful comprehenders draw upon a set of higherlevel cognitive and linguistic skills, including inferencing, monitoring comprehension, and using text structure knowledge. Take the following story for example: "Johnny carried a jug of water. He tripped on a step. Mom grabbed the mop."

The literal representation of the individual words and sentences does not enable the reader to integrate their meanings and construct a mental model. Successful comprehenders understand narrative structure and couple it with their knowledge to infer that Johnny spilled the water. They then understand why Mom grabbed a mop.

They also monitor their comprehension of stories-either written or spoken-and realize the need to make an inference (that Johnny spilled the water) to make sense of Mom's response. High-level language skills used to create mental models of text are not exclusive to reading. In fact, children begin developing these language skills well before formal reading instruction in a range of language comprehension situations. For example, young children rely on knowledge of narrative structure to

do things like follow a set of instructions, share their daily activities around the dinner table, or understand spoken stories, cartoons, and movies.

Assessing Early-Stage Development

The skills needed for reading comprehension come into play as students progress. In the early grades, for example, reading comprehension depends heavily on emerging word-reading skills. As children accomplish the ability to automatically and fluently read printed words, language comprehension begins to contribute more to individual differences in reading comprehension. Most children who score poorly on reading comprehension tests have difficulty decoding words and understanding language.

Those with poor word-reading abilities (i.e., poor decoders) lag behind their typically developing peers on reading comprehension measures in the early grades, even if they have good language development. However, those with poor language comprehension, in spite of relatively proficient word-reading ability, usually do not lag behind their typically developing peers on reading comprehension tests until they have had one or two years of reading instruction (Catts et al., 2005). It's important to point out that what appears to be a decline in reading comprehension for poor comprehenders is not the result of declining language skills. In fact, these students' language skills were already poor compared with their typically developing peers at the onset of schooling.

People use verbal communication to express themselves in many ways during discussions, speeches, and everyday conversations. Just how effective this style of communication is can vary. It will depend on the receiver's listening skills, as well as a number of verbal communication skills, such as the volume of your voice, the tone you use, the clarity of your speech, and the caliber of the words you use. You'll probably get some idea of how effective your communication is through the feedback you receive.

You can help improve the effectiveness of your communication by considering your target audience and how you can adjust your message so they will pay attention to you and understand you. With verbal communication, you have a lot of control over adapting your message if you feel it is not effective.

In order to do this, you should first ensure that you have expressed your intended message. It's possible for the people to whom you are trying to communicate to misunderstand your words or the intention behind those words.

Whether or not your communication is effective depends on the listener as well as yourself, and you can't control the listener—but you can try to make your message as clear as possible. This can be particularly helpful if the person you are speaking to is not an active listener. To do this, you also need to consider nonverbal communication.

Nonverbal communication involves communicating without using words. Instead, individuals use nonverbal behaviors to communicate. These types of nonverbal communication can emphasize spoken words, or contradict them.

The three main aspects of nonverbal communication are tone of voice, body language, and eye contact, each of which has an impact on how people receive your message.

- **Tone of Voice:** The volume, pitch, and pace of your voice display your feelings. It can help other people determine whether you're upset, confident, angry, etc.
- **Body Language:** Body language is probably the clearest type of nonverbal communication. It can tell a person a lot about how you feel. If someone sees that your arms are folded while

speaking to you, they will likely feel you are not very receptive to what they have to say, whereas if you face the speaker with your arms at your sides, you will appear more interested.

- Eye Contact: Making eye contact lets a speaker know you are interested in their message. It can also help you stay engaged in the conversation and better understand the speaker.

Do these verbal and nonverbal communication examples make sense to you?

Nonverbal communication skills are a crucial part of articulating your message. People often rely primarily on nonverbal cues to derive the meaning of the message. This makes it vital that you work on improving your nonverbal communication skills.

Conclusion

Communication skills are critical in all aspects of life, whether verbal, nonverbal, or written communication. Improving your communication skills requires understanding the differences between verbal and nonverbal communication. Simply understanding communication cues, such as maintaining eye contact and using body language that shows you are interested in what the speaker has to say, can go a long way toward achieving effective communication.

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