Captioning Provided by:

Partners Interpreting

www.partnersinterpreting.com

508-699-1477 (V)

508-809-4894 (VP)

\* \* \* \* \*

EHDI Annual Conference

Developing Vocabulary in Very Young Children

March 18, 2024

\* \* \* \* \*

This text, document, or file is based on live transcription. Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART), captioning and/or live transcription are provided in order to facilitate communication accessibility and may not be a totally verbatim record of the proceedings. This text, document, or file is not to be distributed or used in any way that may violate copyright law.

\* \* \* \* \*

(Captions provided by a live Captioner.)

\* \* \* \* \*

>> All right, as everybody starts coming in, I wanted to tell you some logistics of the room. I am Jamie, the room moderator. There is our lovely presenter.

There is some drinks in the back if you would like to grab some of those. If there is a fire, our fire exits are on the back and on the side and right behind me. Enjoy. Thank you.

>> BETSY MOOG BROOKS: According to my clock we have about one more minute, so I'm going to be respectful of those people that run in at the last second.

Okay, my clock shows 1:55 PM, so I'm going to go ahead and get started because I have the pleasure of only speaking for 25 minutes which I think is sometimes harder than speaking for an hour and 25 minutes. It's really hard to figure out how to pare down the key points into 25 minutes and have an info and questions and your comments in the middle.

My name is Betsy Moog Brooks and I am with the Moog Center for Deaf education in St. Louis. It is a private oral school that teaches children to listen and talk. But I want everyone to know that everything I am going to say during this presentation absolutely applies to working with families who are using sign language.

I want to thank you for coming. After lunch I always feel like if I eat lunch and then I have to present, the good thing is I am standing up because otherwise I could be inclined to take a nap. Hopefully I won't fall asleep and that will maybe help you not fall asleep.

I want you to know I do have some notes in front of me because of the time limit. So that will allow me to be watching my time and make sure I don't speed up my rate of speech so fast to get through my slides that these fine people are not able to assist me.

Just so that I have a little background and where you all are coming from and what your position is related to vocabulary, are there any parents in the room? Wow, thank you so much for coming. I will be sure to address you then. And anyone who is a provider in birth to 3 or 3 to 5, and are there any audiologists? Yay, doublecheck to raise your hand. We are proud of our audiologists. Without you we would not be able to do what we do, so I think the audiologists for coming.

Vocabulary is one of a very few topics about which I am incredibly passionate. And single word vocabulary in particular. I think that in our field, people don't recognize that without single word vocabulary, we cannot do anything else. And people look at language more broadly and forget that we can't do the big parts of language without the little parts of language.

So although I could spend all day talking to you about single word vocabulary development, because I only have one I was probably 23 minutes, I am going to really try to focus on some very key points and hope that when you leave you are also more passionate about single word vocabulary.

Here is what we know about single word vocabulary. In order for children, for any children to learn to develop language, they have to have single word vocabulary. And so for the children who are Deaf or hard of hearing, they absolutely need that single word vocabulary whether it is in spoken language or in sign language to communicate a thought or a concept. You have to have the words to put the words together to be able to express that thought before that concept.

So research tells us that we need to here 45 million words by age 4, or if you are signing be exposed to 45 million words by age 4 to develop sufficient language skills for reading. So we need to start today. We probably should have started yesterday, because 45 million is a lot of words. So it makes sense that we need to get started with the children that are very, very young at the very, very beginning.

So the focus of this presentation is going to be on strategies for providing that exposure. That is going to be the key of what we are talking about. And what we also know is that children who are Deaf or hard of hearing are often deficient in vocabulary all the way up into adulthood. And so this is something that needs to start at the very beginning and probably continue as long as it possibly can.

These are my learner objectives. And I am going to actually go through them only because they add significantly to the presentation.

My first objective is that you will be able to list vocabulary words appropriate for teaching very young children you are Deaf or hard of hearing using either sign language or spoken language. And as we move for the presentation, I am going to be referencing some vocabulary lists. And you will have access to those if you are interested in getting access to vocabulary lists.

For those of you who just came in, if you are not embarrassed to come towards the front of the room, there are two seats it together if you are willing to make that voyage in front of all of these people.

Okay, the second goal that I have for the second learner objective is to describe strategies for encouraging parents of children who are Deaf or hard of hearing to include vocabulary development in their daily routines and activities. I happen to have the pleasure of giving this presentation, and then we have a five minute break, and then I have a presentation on using materials in the home. And I am going to be addressing this idea of how to use vocabulary in the context of activities in the home in that second presentation. So I am not going to cover that now because of the time limit.

And then to be able to stay the rationale for providing instruction related to the acquisition a single word vocabulary, and I think I have already addressed that in my introduction by talking about the importance of having the words to be able to describe concepts.

Here is just a brief agenda of what I plan to do today. I am going to provide you with a little bit more of a rationale. I am going to review some research relatively briefly, but just to support my point that we need to be doing this. I am going to talk about the three tiers of vocabulary to help you understand how there are differences in the kinds of words that children moving into adulthood need to learn. We are going to talk about sources for vocabulary. You will see when we get to this part I am not talking about places to buy flashcards and things like that. I am talking about what should you be thinking about as a place to uncover words that children might not know that you could be teaching them in the context of the work you are doing with them.

We will talk about strategies for incorporating vocabulary practice. And then I have a slide to help you get access to some of these resources I am going to talk about.

Here is the rationale. I started in my intro by talking about that in order to express one's thoughts and ideas, one needs to have a single words. So I am going to continue to reiterate that over and over again. And the important thing is that we need to be exposing children to all of these different kinds of words. So not just all of the different words in the child's environment, but the different word types so that we are not just talking about nouns, we are not just talking about verbs or action words. But we are helping children develop all of the different kinds of word types they are going to need to put words together to build sentences.

And parents and caregivers need to think about how important it is to be using the variety of words. Oftentimes we might find ourselves simplifying what we say. We are talking almost like in a baby talk where we are skipping some of the smaller words. And my suggestion is to encourage you not to do that, because that is denying the child access to important words in the language.

And we need to help families figure out a way to provide this vocabulary exposure and vocabulary practice without having to feel like they are setting up a lesson time in their home, but instead to just incorporate that into what they are doing every day with the children throughout their daily routines.

It seems clear that in order to express one's thoughts and ideas, one must have the vocabulary to express those thoughts and ideas. But I don't think we always think about that. I think for example to express your emotions, you need emotion words. And we often teach very basic emotion words, but we don't teach the more specific emotion words. So that is another challenge, and it is especially a challenge because of the subtleties on the differences in those words for the children who are Deaf or hard of hearing.

It also seems obvious that in order to put words together to form sentences, you must also have those individual words. But this is another concept that is often overlooked.

Reading and written language. I am going to talk specifically about reading on the next slide, so I'm not going to really talk about it right now.

When we look at the rationale here, without vocabulary one cannot understand what someone is saying to you. So if you don't have the vocabulary when someone is speaking to you and you can only pull out keywords maybe, you are not going to get the message as the message is intended.

If our goal is for students who are Deaf or hard of hearing to be for participants in a general education setting or in any education setting, they have to be able to understand what is being told to them, to follow directions, to learn new information, etc.

If a school age child doesn't have the knowledge of the words that his peers are using or that the teacher is using, then it becomes impossible to understand and follow directions. And it becomes impossible for the student even to engage in something social. If one student says to the other student do you want a Dorito, and the only word we have talked that word for chips is chip, they don't know what a Dorito is. And I think sometimes we forget that not all cookies are created equally, so we need to be teaching the children that not all cereal is created equally. And those are things often get overlooked.

And again this is going to be true in both spoken language and in sign language.

Parents and caregivers need to understand how to provide this vocabulary exposure and practice, and providers need to understand how to support parents and caregivers in doing that. For this conference when we are talking about very young children from zero to 3, it is up to the parents. We as providers are not with the children enough to be able to provide the children with what they need related to vocabulary development. And therefore it is our job to teach the parents and help the parents and support the parents and the caregivers in their ability to be able to develop the vocabulary.

All right. So reading is a language based experience. I think this is the reason that I am so passionate about single word vocabulary, is because the capacity to read changes everything about a one's life and one's ability to learn and gain information from reading. And even for our children who are Deaf or hard of hearing, reading helps change their access to language. They can learn new vocabulary and new language through reading. So if we can build enough vocabulary to teach the children to read, then we can help the children learn more vocabulary through reading.

If you were in Uma Soman's presentation before lunch in this room, she had made a few comments about this exact point. That the children need to be able to read, but they need the language because reading is a language based experience.

Children with deficient vocabulary and language delays at age 2 or age 3 are absolutely at risk for not becoming good readers because they are already behind. And so it is very important that for very young children that we begin teaching them vocabulary and that we have the expectation that they will learn the vocabulary and learn it for the purpose of being able to read, as well as being able to express their ideas through language.

Uma also spoke this morning, she did an example for anyone who was in the room when she put up a slide that has Chinese print on it. I am assuming it was Chinese, maybe it was gibberish. And asked can you decal this. And of course I am guessing most people could not.

Then she put up Spanish, and we could all read it but did not have any understanding of what it said to show that even when you can decode, that doesn't mean you can comprehend. And the reason we could not comprehend is because we did not know what the words we were reading meant. So we can read it and we could sound good, but we would not have been able to say or answer any questions about what we read.

Another problem for older children once they are already readers is the English language. The hominins, the words with multiple meaning are a problem. The homophones, the words that sound the same but mean something different. The homographs, the words are spelled the same but are pronounced differently. English just makes it very difficult for all of us, but it is even more difficult for children who are Deaf or hard of hearing.

And so vocabulary can also be very challenging for those reasons.

However, if we begin to teach vocabulary when the children are very young, then maybe we can overcome some of those challenges.

So here is the research. I am just going to show you a few studies. On this slide it is research related to children with hearing, and I'm providing this research to support the whole concept of vocabulary development is important. I'm not going to talk about the research, but I'm going to explain you in one sense what the research says.

In the first study it support the idea that vocabulary development has an impact on reading comprehension, and those on overall academic success.

In the second bullet point, the study refers to the need of the benefit for purposeful vocabulary instruction.

In the third bullet point which is the one that many of you may be familiar with, this is the Hart and [can't understand] study which indicates that the number of what the child hears in one day appears to play a role in their overall language development. In the fourth bullet point refers to the lexicon size. That is the number of words that no one knows and is able to use, and how the size of one's vocabulary is a predictor for later learning.

This slide has to do with research related to children with hearing loss. And on this slide the first bullet point refers to two studies that demonstrate the effectiveness of explicit and intentional vocabulary instruction for children who are Deaf or hard of hearing.

The second bullet point indicates that children who are Deaf or hard of hearing have smaller vocabularies, as I mentioned earlier, which results in widening achievement gaps when compared to their peers who have typical hearing.

And then the last bullet point is research that supports the concept that delayed access to quality auditory input and intervention negatively affects vocabulary development.

There are three tiers of vocabulary. This is not my idea, this is something that really does exist out in the world. And there is tier 1, tier 2, and tier 3. I don't have a lot of time to go over and explain all of this, but in a general and broad term tier 1 is just basic vocabulary. It is the vocabulary that typical developing hearing children learn and acquire just by living life. And these are words that we very often have to teach to very young children. Children who are Deaf or hard of hearing who are just getting started in their life and maybe are not good listeners yet, and so they don't have good access to the information. They are not overhearing conversations. They need to be taught often these very basic vocabulary words.

So these are going to be words, just common words. Dog, walk, spoon, things that come up all the time in their environment. And I'm going to talk in a minute about how to access some word lists that will give you these tier 1 words.

The words in tier 2 are high-frequency words that are used by what we refer to as mature language learners. And they are often words that are not frequently used necessarily in speech or spoken language, but they appear in reading. These words are important for reading comprehension. These are also the words -- when I made the comment about not all cookies are created equal and not everything is called a chip -- these are also those words that would delineate Cheerios from Froot Loops from sugar smacks. You could get by by saying cereal and people will know what you want, but if you want a specific cereal, you would need to know that vocabulary word for that specific item.

And the words also in tier 2, it is the multiple meaning words. So it starts to get a little bit more complicated. But it is not words that are sort of uncommon and only use for specific purposes. Those words in tier 3 are low-frequency words that are very context specific and very subject specific. They might be words that are related to medical terms, legal terms, biology terms. Things like that.

You can see across the bottom I have given the common or the tier 1 word is man. The tier 2 words which we all understand but we might not use it all that often is scientist. And a paleontologist is something very, very specific.

So now we think about the vocabulary words. I have explained the rationale for developing single word vocabulary. I have provided research to support that idea. Now I want to help you just think about when we think about vocabulary words, how should we be framing that.

For the purpose of being here at the EHDI conference, we want to think about a words at a very young child needs. To me those other words that the child needs to get through their day. And for children under the age of three, and maybe even almost under the age of five, we can almost predict if we are the primary caregiver, we can predict what the child needs. They only have so many ideas in their head anyway. They only eat certain foods, there were certain clothes. So if we think about it that way, it is not this enormous list of words and how are we going to cover that.

If we just look at what do they need to get their wants and needs met in this context, what do they need to talk about how they feel in another context. Then that will help us be able to pare down our list for very early developing vocabulary words. Maybe it includes toys the child plays with her actions the child does. Those are the kinds of things we want to be thinking about.

Then we have to look at how can we provide practice to be able to use these words. And what we have to think about is how do we create those opportunities to provide children to the vocabulary as well as to the different word types. So we need to remember to be including prepositions -- in, on, under -- and not skipping those words. We need to be including adverbs -- carefully, slowly -- we don't want to be skipping those words because they seem hard. If they come up, we want to be using them.

So here are some sources for vocabulary, and again I remind you that when I talk about sources, I don't mean where to go to buy flashcards. I mean where in your head can you be thinking of places to find new words to teach. So this slide is showing you different categories, let's call them, of vocabulary words that you could be thinking about for a child.

At the Moog Center we have what we call our vocabulary word list, and we have the first 100 words, the next 150 words, and a following 300. And we work to teach our children before they are three all of those words which will give them over 500 words at age 3. That still is not enough words to be the same as a child who is typically developing with normal hearing, but it's a good start.

And when I was talking about the children under the age of three have sort of a limited vocabulary need in the sense that they only say so many words, then it helps you understand that you can cover these topics. And in the first 100 words list are about 100 words that come from these different topics.

This is another place to look for vocabulary. It's going to be moving you into that tier 2. It is category words, and then the sub-categories. You can see here that furniture is another vocabulary word, as well as indoor furniture and outdoor furniture. But also if you think about teaching the furniture that is in a bedroom, the furniture that is in a living room, so when you look at that slide you can just start in your head saying oh my gosh, it is so many words. That is true, it is so many words.

These are other sources for vocabulary words. The rooms in the house. Again, I am just try to help you begin to think about where you can find all of those different words.

You told me that I had two minutes. Doesn't this end at 2:25 PM?

>> [Away from microphone]

>> BETSY MOOG BROOKS: Thank you. Okay, moving right along.

So then this is another place for sources for vocabulary. All of these different things, this is my example of the different specific cookies, crackers, chips, and those things.

The same is true for clothing words. There is all of the different clothing words. I gave the example here of all of the different kinds of shirts, but the same could apply to plants, coats, and other things like that.

Then regarding practicing the vocabulary. If as a parent you think about if you have a routine for your day and just beginning to include the words that you would use in that routine, that will help you be able to practice at home. If you are playing games with your child, reading books, taking walks, all of these different things. And if you do the same things repeatedly, then the same vocabulary words will come up over and over again.

And as practitioners we need to think about how to support parents in making those decisions.

So this is the page that you might want to take a snapshot of on the Moog Center website which is listed up there, we have the first 100 words list, the next 150, and the following 300. And they are free. The list is there and you are welcome to have it. This tells you to go to -- first is just going to the website, but then the next two hard to get to where those words are. If you go to the website and go to resources, you will find the word lists.

Another opportunity on our website which is also free, on our homepage we have an activity of the month and a language calendar. They are shown on the front page and they are also under resources. Those are other places to get ideas for things to be doing to be able to practice vocabulary.

And we have an app that is available in the app store. It is only for the iPad, though, it has an opportunity for vocabulary practice on it.

And I am over by one minute. So my summary is that direct and intentional single word vocabulary can enhance one's vocabulary, vocabulary instruction can enhance one's vocabulary. Vocabulary can be introduced in practice within a variety of activities and exposure to early varieties of vocabulary which can make a difference.

Thank you.

>> Thank you, guys. We will be starting our next presentation in four minutes.