

Bridging Research to Practice: A Service-Learning Model Supporting Spanish-Speaking Families of Children Who Are D/HH

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Background:

This longitudinal service-learning project addresses a research to practice gap in dual language development for children who are deaf or hard of hearing (D/HH) by equipping graduate students in speech-language pathology (SLP) with the tools to support Spanish-speaking families using Listening and Spoken Language (LSL) as their primary communication mode (Bunta et al., 2016; Vosa & Bunta, 2019; Guiberson, 2013). In partnership with a local early intervention (EI) provider, this project creates meaningful, sustainable resources for Spanish-speaking families of young children who are D/HH, as well as student-developed continuing education for community practitioners.

Method:

- Recruit a cohort of ≥ 5 graduate students annually for 3 years
- Partner with local EI provider with current access to English-only resources - Woolley Institute for Spoken Language Education (WISE)
- Build student clinical competencies in dual language development for children who are D/HH using a competency-based skill framework
- Curate resources for WISE:
 - Learning to Listen bags
 - Spanish/bilingual books
 - Spanish handout re: shared reading with QR codes linking YouTube read alouds
- Develop a student-led, continuing education program for WISE on evidence-based practices for Spanish speaking families of children who are DHH receiving EI

Student-led, evidence-based training and resources strengthened provider perceptions of cultural awareness and community involvement, demonstrating a scalable model for enhancing EI practice through graduate service-learning.



Scan here to check out our Spanish handout !



Scan here for references!



Pilot Results:

Graduate Student Participants

- Year 1 cohort: 8 female first year students (30.8% of cohort)
- Ages 22–23 (M = 23.45, SD = 0.44)
- Average direct contact hours = 210.54 (SD = 40.25)

EI Provider Participants

- 8 practitioners attended student-led 1-hour training
- 7 SLPs (4 with dual cert. in AVT), 1 teacher of the deaf/hard of hearing
- All worked in EI; 6 had >10 years experience
- 6 currently served Spanish-speaking families
- Translator use: 5 weekly, 3 rarely, 1 never

Outcome Measures

- Pre-training: demographics + Cultural Awareness and Competence Scales (CACS)
- Post-training: CACS + Community Partner Evaluation
- Paired samples t-test for CACS domain scores showed a significant difference in pre/post scores in the domain of *Cultural Awareness and Community Involvement* ($t(7)=2.743, p=.029$)

Satisfaction Outcomes

- 100% reported being *very satisfied* with student performance
- 100% would recommend the training to other organizations

Conclusion:

This Expanding Access service-learning program equips EI providers serving Spanish-speaking families of children who are DHH using LSL with resources and training in dual spoken language development evidence-based practices. EI provider participants report a high level of satisfaction with student engagement and the service-learning partnership.