Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life
Literacy Session 2
Mild General Learning Disability
5 – 12 years

Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life
Communication and Language Seminar Outline

1. Overview

2. Challenges

3. Assessment

4. Strategies / Interventions
Literacy and Numeracy for Learning for Life

Definition of Literacy

Literacy includes the capacity to read, understand and critically appreciate various forms of communication including spoken language, printed text, broadcast media, and digital media.

*Literacy & Numeracy for Learning and Life 2011, p.*
Skill in oral language a developmental pre-cursor to reading acquisition

Planned language learning experiences can enrich vocabulary
The Cognitive Foundations of Learning to Read: A Framework

The Cognitive Foundations of Learning to Read: A Framework

1. **big picture** understanding

2. **good assessment**

3. **focused and purposeful interventions**

Handout 2: Framework
What do we mean when we talk about communication and language?

How do we communicate?

What does communication look like in your school?
Communication

Communication is the exchange of ideas, information, thoughts and feelings.
Communication Process

Sender Encoding

Intention

Idea

Message

Behaviour

Receiver Decoding

Acknowledge

React

Respond

Special Education Support Service
Channels of Communication
Effective Interpersonal Communication

- Tolerance
- Support Materials
- Subject Area
- Values
- Behaviour
- Empathy
- Confidence
- SKILLS
- Paraphrase
- Summarise
- Questions
- Listening
- Patience
- Flexibility
- Appropriate language
Methods of Communication

- Coy
- Confident
- Cocky
- Disgust
- Doubt or Worry
- Sneaky
- Defeated or Contemplative
- Defensive
- Scared
- Shock
- Disinterest or Boredom

Why the silent treatment?
Communication

Non-linguistic

• Gesture
• Posture
• Eye Contact
• Facial Expression
• Head / Body Movement

Linguistic

Speech

language

Special Education Support Service
True or False

1. Pupils with speech disorders have difficulty with vocabulary
2. Articulation is fully developed at age 6.
3. Pupils with a language disorder have difficulty conveying what they mean.
4. The use of language in a social context is called morphology.
5. Pupils with language disorders have difficulty with expression and understanding of language
Speech disorders include

- problem producing speech sounds (articulation disorders)
- controlling sounds that are produced (voice disorders)
- controlling the rate and rhythm of speech (fluency disorders)
Components of Language

- Phonology
- Morphology
- Semantics
- Syntax
- Pragmatics
Components of Language

- **Phonology**: the sound system of a language

- **Morphology**: study of word formation
  - free morpheme: tidy danger
  - bound morpheme: untidy dangerous

- **Semantics**: the meaning of words, bits of words and phrases and sentences
  - The girl loved the boy
  - The boy loved the girl

  Same words – different meaning

- **Syntax**: grammar system of a language - the way that words and parts of words combine in phrases and sentences

- **Prosody**

- **Pragmatics**: how we use language in different situations and how we convey feelings

Handout 3: Terminology
Importance of Language

• Language enables us to make our needs, opinions and ideas known

• Language is important for cognitive development; without language we lack much of the raw material with which to reason and think

• Positive social interactions with other people are heavily dependent upon effective language and communication skills

• Language is important for regulating our own behaviour and responses (self-talk)

(adapted from Westwood, 2003)
Communication / Language Difficulties

- Learning disability
- Hearing impairment
- Physical disability e.g. cerebral palsy
- Structural abnormality e.g. cleft palate
- Autistic spectrum disorder
- Dyspraxia (DCD)
- Dyslexia
- Specific Speech and Language Difficulty
What are the challenges for your students?
Speech Language & Communication Needs

- **Expressive Language**: Word Finding Difficulties
- **Pragmatics**: Social Use of language
- **Receptive Language**: Processing & Comprehension
- **Speech Clarity & Fluency**:

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Receptive Language Skills

- Attention
- Listening
- Auditory processing
- Memory
- Sequencing skills
- Understanding vocabulary
- Conceptual language
- Grammatical concepts
- Inferential language
- Reasoning skills

‘In one ear and out the other’

‘Kick the bucket’
Auditory Processing
Processing Chain

Audio Processing
The accuracy and speed with which the brain processes information from the ears

Phonological Processing & Awareness
Awareness that words are made up of sounds. Tasks include rhyming, blending, segmenting.

Phonics
Relating sounds to letters

Decoding
Applying letter-sound relationships to read written words
The Processing Loop

working memory

central executive

test audio

visuo-spatial sketchpad

phonological loop
Central Executive
Monitors and coordinates all other functions in working memory

Visuo-spatial Sketch Pad
Encodes visual information in terms of separate objects as well as the arrangement of these objects in one’s visual field

Episodic Buffer
Receives input from many sources, temporarily stores this information, and then integrates it in order to construct a mental episode of what is being experienced

Phonological Loop
Subdivided into phonological store (inner ear) and articulatory process (inner voice). Encodes speech sounds into working memory, typically involving maintenance rehearsal. This is why it is referred to a ‘loop’.

Long-term Memory
Memory Pathways - Strategies

Semantic: Provide context – a ‘coat hook’

Episodic: Visual Prompts – colour coding, display boards, visual cues

Procedural: Add movement – finger spelling, tapping syllables, ‘sky-writing’

Automatic: Add music, a jingle, mnemonics
  - necessary: not every cat eats sardines – some are really yummy

Emotional: Music, costume, role-play

Read extract from CC
Expressive Language Skills

- Use of vocabulary
- Word order
- Sequencing ideas, events
- Sentence structure
- Use of verb tenses etc
- Social communication
- Asking questions
- Responding to questions
- Making requests
Pragmatics

• Irrelevant / inappropriate remarks
• Turn-taking
• Listener / speaker relationship
• Eye contact
• Staying on topic
• Limited language use
  • jokes; predict outcomes; needs / feelings; imaginative; explain; central meaning.
• Stereotypical phrases
Reading and writing float on a sea of talk
Britton 1973
Stop and Think..
The Cognitive Foundations of Learning to Read: A Framework

1. **big picture** understanding

2. **good assessment**

3. **focused and purposeful interventions**

Handout 2: Framework
"Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?"

"That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," said the Cat.

"I don't much care where—" said Alice.

"Then it doesn't matter which way you go," said the Cat.

Lewis Carroll, Alice's Adventures in Wonderland
Ensure that schools prioritise the tracking, assessment and analysis of the achievement of students with special educational needs as part of the school’s self-evaluation and improvement process.
‘If I had to reduce all of educational psychology to just one principle I would say this: the most important single factor influencing learning is what the learner already knows. Ascertain this and teach him accordingly.’

Gathering Data - Assessment

Assessment Cycle

1. Identify
2. Select
3. Apply
4. Evaluate
5. Improve

Literacy Core Team

SSE Six Steps

- Gather the evidence
- Analyse the evidence
- Make judgements about strengths and areas for development
- Write school self-evaluation report
- Devise a 3-year school improvement plan
- Implement and monitor improvement plan

Special Education Support Service
Assessment Communication and Language

What assessment procedures are used in your school?

What assessment tests have you found useful?

What other type of assessment information do you gather?

Activity: Discuss Handout
A Continuum of Assessment Methods
Assessment in the Primary School Curriculum NCCA Continuum of Methods

- Concept Mapping
- Questioning
- Portfolio Assessment
- Teacher Observation
- Teacher designed tasks and tests
- Self-Assessment
- Standardised Assessment
- Conferencing

Student leads the assessment
Teacher leads the assessment
Key to Assessment

What do I already know

What do I need to find out?

Will the assessment add to your knowledge and understanding of what to do next?
Which Assessments?

Validity and reliability: suitable for purpose
Clear focus / maximal information
Ease of administration
Screening potential
Diagnostic potential
Clear directions
Set in the context of current educational language and concerns

Does the assessment add to your knowledge and understanding of what to do now??
Assessment: Formal

- Standardised Norm Referenced Tests
- Criterion-Referenced Assessment
- Diagnostic Testing

Glossary of Terms used in Assessment – www.sess.ie
Assessment of Language

Language in the Curriculum

- Vocabulary
  - Subject Specific
  - Dual Meaning
  - Similar Meaning
- Semantic Links
- Processing
  - Listening for Information
  - Checking Understanding
  - Listeners Needs
- Listening Skills
  - Complex Grammar
  - Non-literal Meaning
  - Inference Reasoning
Formal Language Assessments
Literacy Skills

- **Reading**
  - Diagnostic Reading Analysis
  - York Assessment of Reading for Comprehension
  - Neale Analysis of Reading Ability
Literacy

• **Phonological Skills**
  - Sound Linkage
  - Phonological Awareness Profile
  - Phonological Abilities Test
  - South Tyneside Assessment of Phonology (STAP)

• **Spelling**
  - Diagnostic Spelling Tests 1–3
  - Graded Word Spelling Test
# Analytical Assessment of Deaf Children’s Writing

**Name:** ___________________________  
**Date:** ___________________________  
**Class:** ___________________________

**Does the child . . .?**

1. **Include spaces between groups of alphabetical letters to resemble words?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No evidence (rakfz esanr Fvkdsmbr)</th>
<th>Beginning to (evident once, e.g. wmsm amsdmr)</th>
<th>Sometimes (evident two or three times)</th>
<th>Mostly (evidence present under most pictures)</th>
<th>Systematically and correctly (all writing resembles words)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

2. **Put words in subject–verb order (e.g. ‘mum put’ or ‘boy go’)?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No evidence</th>
<th>Beginning to (evident once)</th>
<th>Sometimes (evident two or three times)</th>
<th>Mostly (evidence present under most pictures)</th>
<th>Systematically; may have one or two errors (appropriate subject–verb order)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

3. **Form noun and verb phrases (e.g. ‘clothes in car’ or ‘going holiday’)?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No evidence (uses isolated words, not forming noun or verb phrases)</th>
<th>Beginning to (evident once)</th>
<th>Sometimes (evident two or three times)</th>
<th>Often (at least three-quarters of text shows some connection)</th>
<th>Systematically; may have one or two isolated words (appropriate noun–verb phrases)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

[www.education.ox.ac.uk/ndcs/](http://www.education.ox.ac.uk/ndcs/)
Assessment Workshop
Stop and Think..
Key Messages

- The link teacher for literacy is a facilitator of change for improvement.
- A number of key components inform the planning, teaching and assessment of literacy in the context of your school.