BEST PRACTICE SERVICE DELIVERY FOR SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN WITH LANGUAGE DISORDERS: WHAT DOES THE EVIDENCE SAY?

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SLT CHATTER ABOUT LANGUAGE INTERVENTION IN NZ
LITERATURE REVIEW:

Research question:
What evidence is there to inform service delivery model decisions for school-aged children with primary language disorders?

- Experimental studies and systematic reviews
- Focused on how intervention is delivered
- Not secondary to other conditions e.g. ASD
- CINAHL / PSYC INFO and hand searching
Bulk of evidence is based on pull-out direct service delivery (19/21)

- Vocabulary, syntax, morphology, pragmatics, phonological awareness, language processing, metalinguistic skills …

- Intensity = 1 - 3 x weekly, over 8 – 16 weeks

- Mostly on 5-6 year olds

- Generally moderate - large effect sizes on probes are reported
However,

- Generalisation, pragmatics and functionality
- Time in therapy = time out of class
- Cost effectiveness?

Cirrin and Gillam (2008)
BOYLE ET AL. (2007)

- N=161
- Children aged 6-11 years
- Language scores <1.25 SD below mean on receptive and or expressive
- Non-verbal IQ >75
- 3 x week over 15 weeks = 19-25 hours
- Language activities from manual
A RARE COMPARISON OF 4 OPTIONS

SLT takes group
SLTA takes group
SLT 1-1
SLTA 1-1

Boyle et al. (2007)
RESULTS

- Expressive language vs receptive language
- SELI vs Mixed R/ELI
- No effect of non-verbal IQ
- No group effect
- Cost effectiveness

Boyle et al. (2007)
What was the same?
- Manual
- Criteria for children

What was different this time?
- School teaching assistants
- Individual or group
- SLT role set up / halfway check
RESULTS

- No intervention effect for EL or RL
- Less intervention delivered
- Some mid-way SLT visits cancelled

McCartney et al. (2009)
THRONEBURG ET AL. (2001)

- N=177
- Mainstream schools
- Children with S/L impairment (1SD<mean)
- Aged 5-9 years
- Vocabulary targets
A COMPARISON OF THREE OPTIONS

1. SLT-teacher collaboration in class
2. SLT directly teaching vocab in class (plus 15 min pull-out 1/week)
3. SLT pull-out

Throneburg et al. (2001)
RESULTS

- All groups made gains
- Both TD and children with S/L impairments made gains
- (1.) SLT-teacher collaboration group made the **largest gains**
- (3.) “Pull-out” more gains than (2.) “SLT teaching vocab in class”
- Collaborative model (1.) was the most costly

Throneburg et al. (2001)
STARLING ET AL. (2012)

- 2 mainstream high schools with high language needs
- 13 teachers
- 43 Year 8 students with language impairment (1 SD<mean)
- Control group
- SLT consultative / collaborative role
- Teachers to modify instructional language in class
RESULTS

- Significant and lasting increase in teacher use of modifications
- Students improved in writing / listening immediately post-intervention
- Students had no further gains at 3 month follow-up

Starling et al. (2012)
CONCLUSIONS

- Sparse evidence available
- Positive indicators for
  - 1-1 intervention
  - collaborating with teachers in class (vocab, PA)
  - well trained / supported assistants (language activities)
- Specialist intensive intervention required for some e.g. RL / plateau
- **Response to Intervention** model recommended (Ebbels et al., 2018)
- Talking Together / Korero Tahi research partnership with MOE (2019)
REFERENCES


