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PROJECT SIGNATURE PAGE

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TITLE: Promoting Early Literacy for Children of Spanish-Speaking Parents

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Promoting Early Literacy for Children of Spanish-Speaking Parents

Rocio Myers

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Abstract

The purpose of this project was to explore effective ways of developing emergent literacy skills at home and use that research to develop a website and handout for Spanish-speaking parents. The project addressed the problem that few resources for Spanish-speaking parents exist to help them engage in literacy building practices at home. The resulting webpage includes three different pages each defining and explaining step-by-step how to engage in literacy practices at home to support language play, a print-rich environment, and shared reading. This project is significant because it provides a resource specifically designed for Spanish-speaking parents that involved them being becoming their child's first teachers.

KEYWORDS: shared reading, emergent literacy, home literacy, Spanish-speaking parents, English learners, print-rich environment, language play

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Chapter 1: Definition of Problem

Research suggests substantial achievement gaps exist between middle-income children and low-income children upon entering school (Welsh, Nix, Blair, Bierman, &Nelson, 2010). Young children, especially English learners in contemporary elementary school contexts do not have a wide range of vocabulary knowledge when starting school because many children under five do not attend prekindergarten programs (Collins, 2010). Based on my own experience as a first-grade classroom teacher, I have observed many students who lack proficiency in oral vocabulary knowledge in English and Spanish. Research supports that lack of vocabulary knowledge may negatively impact young children's literacy development, widen the achievement gap, and it also has the potential to contribute to severe disparities in learning educational attainment, and long-term employment potential (O'Brien, Paratore, Leighton, Cassano, Krol-Sinclair, & Green 2014). Vocabulary acquisition rate differences begin in early childhood and, once established, are difficult to change (Collins, 2010). Many English learners also live in low-income households. The 2009 U.S. Census Bureau statistics showed that 35% of Latino children under age 5 lived at or below the poverty level, compared with 14% of white children under age 5 (Farver, Logan, Xu, and Epps, 2012). When compared with their more advantaged peers, 3- to 5-year-old children living in low-income homes had smaller vocabularies and delayed language skills (Farver, Logan, Xu, & Epps, 2012).

Purpose of project

The purpose of this project was to design a website and handout which Spanish speaking parents can use to help develop their child's literacy at home.   Current research on the development of early literacy skills for young children was used to develop the website and handout to educate Spanish-speaking parents about ways to promote early literacy skills at home.

Research revealed several indicators that show the progress of a child's early literacy development such as oral language, phonological awareness, and print knowledge (Farver, Yiyuan, Lonigan, & Eppep, 2013) informed the development of the activities parents could use at home. The activities included shared reading, teaching, and modeling literacy-related skills, providing books, and educational games (Farver et al., 2013; Weigel, Martin, & Bennett, 2010).

Preview of Literature

Substantial research has been done on emergent literacy development, and the activities parents can do to support this at home. The question that guided this literature review was, how can Spanish-speaking parents support literacy development at home? This project provided resources that parents could use to support literacy development. The literature review first looked at early literacy development and then the strategies that are proven to support it.

Preview of Methodology

This project created a resource Spanish-speaking parents might use to support the development of literacy skills at home. The project included a website and handout in Spanish for parents to use. The website and handout included activities for parents to follow with their children at home, such a shared reading, conversations, and instructions on how to create a print-rich environment. The website included videos to demonstrate to parents exactly how the activities should be completed. The handout included steps for parents to follow. The information included in the resources is in Spanish and is based upon a review of research-based best practices for supporting literacy development.

Significance of Project

By creating a website and handout that is tailored for Spanish speaking parents, the goal of this project was to provide support for parents to help with their child's literacy development

at home. Spanish speaking parents were given the tools to engage with literacy building activities at home in their native language which will enable students to have a broader vocabulary when entering school. The project allowed Spanish speaking parents to have access to a resource in their native language that helps them be their child's first teacher.

Project Limitations

Students considered English learners do not always speak Spanish as their first language. Since this project is tailored for Spanish speaking parents, the parents of English learners who do not speak Spanish will not be able to benefit from the resources created. Another limitation of the project is that even though the resources will be made available to parents, participation in the literacy-building activities is not guaranteed so some parents may not see the immediate benefits of engaging in these activities. Spanish speaking students at times also come from a low socioeconomic background in which parents must work long hours in sometimes several jobs. Students from these backgrounds will not have the same access to time and attention of their parents since they will be working.

Chapter Summary

Parents engaging in reading practices at home can help develop literacy skills in children before they start school. There are many resources for parents who are English speaking available but very few for parents who speak Spanish. Children who are English learners start school already behind their peers, and even though teachers have made a great effort to help with developing their literacy, very few involve encouraging Spanish speaking parents to support literacy at home. These children also are likely to be living in low-income, often residentially segregated households with parents of limited education and long working hours (Quiroz, Snow, & Jing 201). Parents who are not fluent in English may not have the confidence in reading to

their children because they may not have much prior experience with shared book reading,

limited literacy skills, or lack of English proficiency (Wessels, 2014). Many children who are

English learners (ELs) come from homes or cultures where storybook readings may not be a

common practice.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

This is a specific review of studies about the factors associated with early literacy

development and the home environment that will lead to program development guidelines to

enhance growth in both areas. Children with supportive home literacy environments where

parents and guardians read books interactively with their children and develop interpersonal

communication skills, even in a different language, tend to have enhanced literacy development

(Farver, Yiyuan, Lonigan, & Eppep, 2013). Policies and practices that support families in

fostering home literacy and promote the child's literacy development have been researched and

are available for parents to create a supportive home literacy environment. In addition, a variety

of literacy events like living routines, entertainment, storybook time, and interpersonal

communication can help young children develop literacy skills. The themes discussed in this

chapter were identified through a wide review of various sources including theoretical articles

and current research.

Early Literacy Development

Oral Language Development

Learning to read is easier for children with higher levels of emergent literacy skills

(Whitehurst and Lonigan, 1998). Several early indicators show the progress of a child's early

literacy development such as oral language, phonological awareness or ability to hear, identify,

and manipulate the sounds of the language, and print knowledge (Farver, Yiyuan, Lonigan, &

Eppep, 2013). Most children begin speaking around the age of 12-18 months by mastering a

shared and existing system of language through language input. According to Piaget (1962),

play is an important part of developing language. He stressed the importance of play in the

child's cognitive development as a way of learning new information and connecting past

experiences through symbolic means. Exposure to print and play help a child develop oral

language. Children learn a language with conversations and shared experiences with adults

(Vygotsky, 1962). Language skills support cognitive development in children as they learn,

work, and play together. Vygotsky believed children acquire language skills the best by

interacting with people. Talking, thinking, and language have different functions (Vygotsky,

1962). When children talk alone, they are learning new concepts. When they talk aloud, it helps

them control their emotions, actions, or attention. Talking alone happens as they copy adults

through play. When children watch, and listen to parents, they may copy them quietly. As the

child grows, private speech becomes inward talk. This process is important as it encourages

concentration and focuses in the children's language processes (Vygotsky, 1962).

Phonological Awareness & Comprehension

Phonological awareness is an essential factor of emergent literacy development. It

involves awareness and manipulation of individual sounds in spoken words, rhyming, and

alliteration (Dickinson, McCabe, Anastasopoulos, Peisner-Feinberg, and Poe 2003). Phonemic

awareness greatly facilitates learning to decode printed words which also helps with reading

comprehension. In fact, several reading researchers argue that students who become fluent

readers develop their orthographic, phonological, and semantic knowledge of words and word

parts at the same time (Carlson, Jenkins, Li, and Brownell 2013). They develop stronger

connections between those knowledge bases, allowing them to rapidly retrieve words and

understand them and therefore having the ability to comprehend what they are reading (Carlson

et al. 2013).

According to Alvermann, Unrau, and Ruddell (2013), "Phonological processes directly influence working memory and comprehension, such as phonological memory, which facilitates holding words in memory to integrate meaning while reading or listening to text, although working memory also may play a role in decoding" (p.416). Children also develop environmental print awareness through natural interactions for example when a family member reads to them; they develop concepts of print related to books through multiple experiences with print. These concepts of print include a variety of conventions about books, including how a book is held, the directionality of print, and one-to-one correspondence between letter and sound (Reyes & Azuara, 2008). According to Alvermann et al. (2013), "In addition to making discoveries on their own, children are influenced by feedback from others around them as they attempt to understand print in their environment and eventually in different writing systems" (p.230). Children begin to understand that meaningful print is individual letters put together make words, the words make sentence, and sentences tell a story. When parents point out that the written words on the page are matched to the words spoken when reading aloud, children also begin to understand how oral language is represented by words. Each word is a puzzle that is made up of individual letters of the alphabet, each with its own shape and name (Whitehurst & Lonnigan, 2001).

Reciprocity of Reading, Listening, Writing and Speaking

The four language systems, speaking, listening, reading, and writing develop in overlapping and parallel waves rather than in discrete sequential stages (Shanahan, MacArthur, Graham, & Fitzgerald, 2006). Vocabulary development also has been associated with literacy development. Children who have learned more vocabulary words, to begin with, are more likely to continue to have an increased vocabulary growth rate, which, in turn, may promote additional

reading development (O'Brien, Paratore, Leighton, Cassano, Krol-Sinclair, & Green, 2014).

Possible transfer skills associated with English and Spanish can benefit English learners because

the languages share commonalities in syllable structure and the influence of word linguistic

properties on phonological awareness (Farver, et al., 2013). The knowledge of indicators of early

literacy development will help develop the strategies Spanish-speaking parents can use to

support early literacy development at home.

Strategies For Parents

There are practices parents and guardians can use to foster home literacy to promote the

child's literacy development. Parents can support children's early literacy skill development by

engaging in shared reading, teaching, and modeling literacy-related skills and by providing

books, educational games, and an overall print-rich environment in their homes (Farver, et al.,

2013; Weigel, Martin, & Bennett, 2010). Dickinson, McCabe, Anastasopoulos, Peisner-

Feinberg, and Poe (2003) found that reading books to preliterate children is most importantly a

means of supporting language acquisition, which in turn may bolster phonological awareness.

Language Play

Another way parents can support early literacy development is to encourage children to

pretend to read books to their parents. Dickinson, et al. state, "The language children use when

pretending to read carries multiple subtle indications of their awareness and growing control of

language patterns (vocabulary, syntax, and discourse markers) found in books" (p.469). It is

important for children to pretend to read because they can practice handling books while

developing their concepts of print.

Print-Rich Environment

Parents can also support early literacy development with the resources they provide at home. Books, print materials, and educational toys and games provide opportunities for meaningful adult-child interaction and support the development of children's early literacy skills, intrinsic motivation, and positive attitudes toward learning the important predictors of later reading achievement (Farver et al., 2013). For example, Burgess, Hecht, and Lonigan (2002) looked at the relation between parents' ability and inclination to provide home literacy opportunities and children's emergent literacy skills. Their results demonstrated that for English-speaking middle-class families, parents' direct teaching and structuring of the home literacy environment created the strongest effects on children's oral language, phonological sensitivity, and print knowledge. Children will be more motivated to want to read if they have a variety of books and other resources available at home.

Shared/Dialogic Reading

By focusing on effective and frequent use of activities such as shared book reading and language play in contexts, parents can help build on ecologically valid family routines (O'Brien, et al., 2014). These activities can make a meaningful contribution to closing the vocabulary gap often evident upon school entry and typically widens in subsequent years. Nagy, Anderson, and Herman (1987) found that third-, fifth-, and seventh-grade students made small but reliable gains in vocabulary because of reading texts. They also found that regular reading must be the major avenue of large-scale, long-term vocabulary growth. Consistent with this view, the frequency of reading is a big predictor of adults' and school-aged children's vocabulary development. Similarly, listening to storybooks may enhance vocabulary acquisition for children who cannot yet read (Nagy, Anderson, & Herman, 1987).   In a study conducted by Sénéchal, LeFevre,

Hudson, and Lawson (1996), when asked to write a list of storybooks children had read, they

found that children's familiarity with storybooks was linked to their vocabulary and reading

skills.

Theoretical Framework

Several studies suggest emergent literacy support intervention program development

guidelines based on developmental theories. One theory often referenced is Vygotsky's zone of

proximal development in regards to identifying the social guidance and scaffolding, can help

advance their literacy skills (Eldering & Leseman, 1993; Reyes & Azuara 2008). Because

writing and literacy development emerge in response to not only children's interactions with

objects and people but also of their own internal representations and transformation of thoughts

and ideas and the biological basis allows this learning, programs should incorporate these

factors.

Regarding English learners' early literacy skills, research suggests language knowledge

and skills acquired through the native language can be transferred to English, but degrees of

language transfer vary depending on individual differences and their proficiency in the native

language (Farver, et al., 2013). This is known as the transference theory, which details how

knowledge and language skills in the first language transfer to the second language.

Development of the native language provides a basis for learning to read. The transfer theory is

important because it illustrates ways in which family literacy practices in one language can

transfer to school outcomes in English (Wessels, 2014).

Conclusion

A review of existing literature revealed insightful connections between the practices parents use to support early literacy development and the implications for developing a program to support parents. It was not until I had the opportunity to work with first-grade students that I realized how limited the volume of their vocabulary in their first language was. The empirical and theoretical studies discussed here provide both the practices to help develop early literacy along with the theories to use in developing a program to support parents. Early literacy development includes several key indicators such as oral language, phonological awareness, and print knowledge. Vocabulary development and concepts of print are also a part of early literacy development skills. Early literacy skills learned in one language can be transferred to another language and is useful knowledge with regards to designing a program to help support the early literacy skills development of children coming from a Spanish- speaking home environment.

Chapter 3: Methodology

One in six children not reading proficiently in the third grade does not graduate from high school on time (Hernandez, 2011). This rate is four times greater than proficient readers. This rate is higher in children from low-income families and rural areas (Hernandez, 2011). Hispanics are the largest single ethnic group in California, and Spanish is the state's second most spoken language (United States Census, 2010). Many kindergarteners come to school speaking Spanish as their primary language instead of English and without the language or social skills necessary to learn academic content. The change in demographics in California suggests the need for resources for Spanish-speaking parents of children coming to school without the early literacy skills needed to succeed academically. A review of literature in chapter two identified both the practices to help develop early literacy along with the theories used in developing a program to support parents. These evidence-based best practices guided the design of an interactive website and a printable parent guide in Spanish to support the development of early literacy skills of children from a Spanish speaking home environment.

Design

According to the Public Policy Institute of California in an article titled *California's Digital Divide*, only 35% foreign-born Latinos have access to internet at home. Foreign-born, Spanish-speaking Latinos, only 28% have internet access. With technology becoming more easily accessible to most people, a website in Spanish is a good fit for the project because it also allows for more frequent updates and revisions. Since not all people have technology access, however, a printable handout will also be created to ensure that access to the resource does not create an unnecessary barrier. Creating a website and a printable handout will help address the

increasing technological needs and the continued digital divide, giving access to the information

for all Spanish-speaking parents whether they have internet or not.

Following a detailed review of literature, I identified practices to help develop early

literacy along with the theories upon which to ground a program to support parents. Both the

website and handout include ways to promote early literacy development by supporting the

development of oral language, phonological awareness, and print knowledge. Since early

literacy skills learned in one language can be transferred to another language, the importance of

supporting these skills even in Spanish will be emphasized throughout the handout and website.

Practices found to support early literacy development include reading with children from

birth, shared reading, singing, enjoying nursery rhymes, constant conversing, oral storytelling,

reading environmental print and use of digital media (Shoghi, Willersdorf, Braganza, &

McDonald, 2013). Steps on how to accomplish these tasks as well as resources to use for each of

the task are included in the website and the handout. Informed by current research on early

literacy skills for young children, I created well-developed a program to educate Spanish

speaking parents about knowledge of the practices to facilitate the development of these skills.

Setting and Audience

The project website and handout were designed for Spanish-speaking parents of children

not yet attending school – including newborn infants. These parents may or may not have

internet access, and their home environments sometimes lack literacy support resources such as

books in Spanish or English. These parents need information to support the literacy

development of their children.

Instruments

The materials and resources used to create this project were based on a review of the current literature in regards to practices to support early literacy skills. Early literacy development includes several key indicators such as oral language, phonological awareness, and print knowledge (Farver, Yiyuan, Lonigan, & Eppep, 2013). Early literacy skills learned in one language can be transferred to another language and can help design a program to help support the early literacy skills development of children from a Spanish-speaking home environment (Wessels, 2014). For this reason, parents speaking only Spanish can engage in the practices to develop literacy in their native language. The practices parents can use to support children's early literacy skill development include engaging in shared reading, teaching, and modeling literacy-related skills and by providing books, educational games, and an overall print-rich environment in their homes (Farver, et al., 2013; Weigel, Martin, & Bennett, 2010). A website was created in Spanish after reviewing the literature and current available websites in English available for parents. The handout was also created using the information gained from the literature review. The practices to support literacy development in English were translated to Spanish so Spanish-speaking parents could engage in these practices to support their children's literacy development. Materials available in English for parents are also reviewed when designing the handout.

Procedures

When designing the project, I first analyzed current and relevant literature in regards to early literacy development. I also carefully inspected current resources available to families in English to translate them over to Spanish. I selected the practices to support literacy development based on the review of literature to be included in the handout and website.

In order to create the website, a Google search of free website hosting sites was conducted. I selected Weebly as the platform to host the website due to its user-friendly drag and drop interface, no cost-for educators, and no advertisements. The content to share with parents regarding the practices to support early literacy development was added, along with resources to print, and suggestions of places to find books or other materials in Spanish.

I created the handout using Canva an online visual graphic content creator. I selected this resource due to the easy to use free templates with visuals with text. Using the content I selected from the literature review to share with parents, I created the handout to print and share with parents. Colleagues reviewed the website and handout, and their feedback was used to refine them.

Summary

The goal of this project website and handout is to educate Spanish-speaking parents about knowledge of the practices to facilitate the development of early literacy skill development. The website and handout are aimed at helping parents understand the importance of promoting early literacy development by engaging in practices to support this such as reading since birth, shared reading and so forth. These resources will help in promoting the development of the skills children need to be ready to enter school and be successful readers.

Chapter 4: Project

Website and Handout

https://lecturaylenguajeinfantil.weebly.com/

https://www.canva.com/design/DACoiIyreMc/s8uKE_vfbVQf3hKueTx0fA/view?utm_content=

DACoiIyreMc&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=sharebutton

Homepage Spanish Text

Lectura y Lenguaje Infantil

Los padres somos los primeros maestros.

Bienvenido a la página de

Lectura y Lenguaje Infantil

Existen prácticas que los padres pueden usar para fomentar la alfabetización en el hogar y promover el desarrollo de la lectura de sus hijos. Usted puede apoyar el desarrollo de las habilidades de lectoescritura temprana de su hijo/a participando varias actividades en su hogar antes de comenzar la escuela. Esta página está diseñada para ayudarle a participar en esas actividades.

 Usted tiene las herramientas que necesita para ayudar a su hijo a estar listo para aprender a leer.

Homepage Picture

Language Play Page Spanish Content

Juegos de Lenguaje

Los padres pueden apoyar el desarrollo temprano de la alfabetización apoyando a los niños a

fingir que leen libros a sus padres. El lenguaje que los niños usan cuando pretenden leer lleva

múltiples indicaciones sutiles de su conocimiento y un control creciente de los patrones del

lenguaje que se encuentran en los libros. Es importante que los niños finjan leer porque pueden

practicar la manipulación de libros mientras desarrollan sus conceptos de impresión.

Pasos para alentar a su hijo fingir leer.

1. Consiga varios libros en inglés o español.

2. Modele como usarlos abriéndolos y cerrándolos.

3. Lea varias páginas.

4. Anime a su hijo para que le lea.

5. Pregúntele sobre lo que está leyendo para animarlo a que continúe hablando.

Language Play Page Picture

INICIO   JUEGOS DE LENGUAJE   AMBIENTE   LECTURA COMPARTIDA

Juegos de Lenguaje

Los padres pueden apoyar el desarrollo temprano de la alfabetización apoyando a los niños a fingir que leen libros a sus padres. El lenguaje que los niños usan cuando pretenden leer lleva múltiples indicaciones sutiles de su conocimiento y un control creciente de los patrones del lenguaje que se encuentran en los libros. Es importante que los niños finjan leer porque pueden practicar la manipulación de libros mientras desarrollan sus conceptos de impresión.

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Print-Rich Environment Page Spanish Content

Ambiente de literario

Los padres también pueden apoyar el desarrollo de la literario temprana con los recursos que proporcionan en el hogar. Los libros, materiales escritos, juguetes y juegos educativos brindan oportunidades para la interacción significativa entre adultos y niños y respaldan el desarrollo de las habilidades de literario temprana de los niños. También afectan la motivación intrínseca y las actitudes positivas hacia el aprendizaje de predictores importantes del rendimiento posterior en lectura. Los niños estarán más motivados para querer leer si tienen una variedad de libros y otros recursos disponibles en el hogar.

Pasos para establecer un ambiente que promueva la lectura.

1. Incluir libros en los estantes de la sala de juegos.

2. Crear un lenguaje significativo en contexto: tener una razón auténtica para leer y escribir.

3. leer para encontrar respuestas

4. escribir listas

5. escribe preguntas

6. escribir postales

7. escribe tarjetas de agradecimiento

8. escribe tarjetas de recetas, mapas del tesoro, o reglas para los juegos

9. Proporcionar materiales de escritura con juguetes.

10. Leyendo. Leer ampliamente y a menudo.

11. Cantar canciones en inglés o español.

Print-Rich Environment Page Picture

Ambiente de literacia

Los padres también pueden apoyar el desarrollo de la literacia temprana con los recursos que proporcionan en el hogar. Los libros, materiales escritos, juguetes y juegos educativos brindan oportunidades para la interacción significativa entre adultos y niños y respaldan el desarrollo de las habilidades de literacia temprana de los niños. También afectan la motivación intrínseca y las actitudes positivas hacia el aprendizaje de predictores importantes del rendimiento posterior en lectura. Los niños estarán más motivados para querer leer si tienen una variedad de libros y otros recursos disponibles en el hogar.

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Shared Reading Page Spanish Content

Lectura Compartida

Los padres pueden ayudar a desarrollar rutinas familiares participando en lectura compartida de libros. Al enfocarse en el uso efectivo y frecuente de lectura compartida los padres pueden hacer una contribución significativa al cierre de la brecha de vocabulario que a menudo es evidente al ingresar a la escuela y generalmente se amplía en los años siguientes. La frecuencia de lectura es un gran predictor del desarrollo del vocabulario de los adultos y los niños en edad escolar. De manera similar, escuchar libros de cuentos puede mejorar la adquisición de vocabulario para niños que todavía no pueden leer. La lectura compartida puede ser en español porque el conocimiento del idioma y las habilidades adquiridas a través del idioma nativo se pueden transferir al inglés.

Pasos para la lectura compartida.

1. El padre/madre les introduce el texto a los niños para ayudarlos a desarrollar un esquema para el tema.

2. El padre lee el texto apuntando a las palabras con un dedo para ayudar a los niños a seguir mientras están leyendo.

3. Durante la lectura, el padre invita a los niños a una discusión de texto a través del uso de preguntas "Me pregunto"

4. Durante varios días, deben volver a leer el texto.

5. Cada vez que los niños observen las nuevas características del texto y participen más activamente en la lectura.

6. Con el tiempo, los niños se vuelven lectores independientes del texto.

**Shared Reading Page Picture**

INICIO   JUEGOS DE LENGUAJE   AMBIENTE   LECTURA COMPARTIDA

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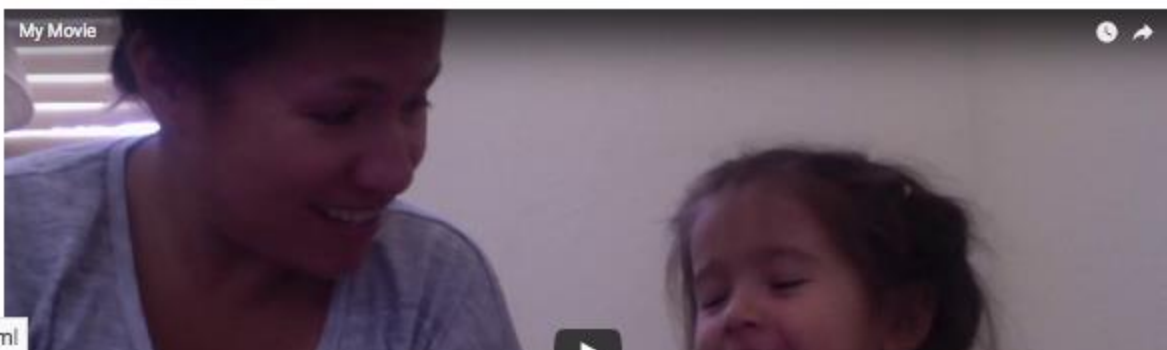
Chapter 5: Reflection

Introduction

There exists a need for more parent resources to teach home literacy practice for Spanish-speaking parents. There are many programs currently in preschools that develop literacy skills away from home, but it is necessary to increase the access to literacy building practices at home. The purpose of this project was to design a website and handout which Spanish speaking parents can use in helping develop their child's literacy at home. This project was designed to meet the need of Spanish speaking parents, who may lack access to the knowledge to support literacy development.

Lessons Learned

The website that was created for this project consists of three different pages based on the most important information about emergent literacy development I found and the strategies that support it. Each page is in Spanish and addressed a research-based approach to building literacy at home. The first page discussed the need for parents to encourage language plat at home. Talking, thinking, and language have different functions (Vygotsky, 1962). When children talk alone, they are learning new concepts. When they talk aloud, it helps them control their emotions, actions, or attention. Talking alone happens as they copy adults through play. The page included a summary of what language play is and the steps parents can take to encourage language play at home with their children. The page also included a video example of how a parent may be able to support literacy by encouraging to their child to pretend to read a book on their own therefore encouraging language play.

The next page included in the website contained the instructions on how to build a print-rich environment at home that will support literacy skills development, Burgess, Hecht, and

Lonigan (2002) looked at the relation between parents' ability and inclination to provide home

literacy opportunities and children's emergent literacy skills and the results demonstrated that for

English-speaking middle-class families, parents' direct teaching and structuring of the home

literacy environment created the strongest effects on children's oral language, phonological

sensitivity, and print knowledge.. The page described the print-rich environment and the

suggestions on steps to take to build this environment were included in this section. The page

also included a video example of how a parent may be able to build the literacy supporting

environment by singing a song to their child.

The last page included in the website had the definition and steps for parents to engage in

shared reading. Dickinson, McCabe, Anastasopoulos, Peisner-Feinberg, and Poe (2003) found

that reading books to preliterate children is most importantly a means of supporting language

acquisition, which in turn may bolster phonological awareness. This page also included a video

example of how a parent may engage in shared reading at home with their child. The different

pages included in the website are also summarized and included in the paper handout that was

created in Spanish as well.

Recommendations for Implementation

This project will be useful for educators because they can share the webpage or handout

with Spanish-speaking parents of children who struggle with literacy skills. It is most useful to

the families of children that come from homes in which parents only speak Spanish because they

can use the provided information to engage in the literacy building practices at home. In order to

implement the use of handout and webpage, access to parents of young children is necessary.

The handout could be printed and distributed in places where you can find parents who speak

Spanish and have young children at home. These places could include preschool registration or

kindergarten registration areas. The handout includes the information to access the webpage.

When distributing the handout, educators can point out that more information can be found on

the website. The information to access the website could also be included in the school's

webpage or an educator's website as well.

Limitations

This project addressed a need for resources in Spanish for Spanish-speaking families to

support emergent literacy development at home. The website and handout has all Spanish

components designed for Spanish-speaking parents that are literate in their native language.

Some parents do not have the benefit of any formal schooling and would not be able to access

the resources developed in this project even if they are in Spanish.

Future Directions

Early delays are magnified at each additional step as the gap increases between what

children bring to the curriculum and what the curriculum demands (Whitehurst & Lonigan

1998). Research suggests that parents' interventions at home with shared reading, support of

language play, and building a print-rich environment do support emergent literacy development.

The question remains, what more will parents need to do as children begin school? The project

addresses early emergent literacy development for children before they begin school. What

additional resources will parents need to support their children as they begin school and

transition through the different elementary grades? Additional programs need to be developed to

help parents support their children as they transition from preschool to kindergarten and other

elementary grades.

Conclusion

The website and handout created in this project is a small part of addressing the specific need for emergent literacy supportive practices for parents who speak Spanish only at home. The website and handout serve as a beginning resource to support parent involvement in early literacy education. In Whitehurst and Lonigan's study (1998), they showed that the early delays children enter within school are only magnified as their education years go on. This project focused on the different activities that have been shown to develop emergent literacy skills.

This website used current research to teach parents how to employ the different literacy building practices at home such as supporting language play, building a print-rich environment, and engaging in shared-reading. If all parents realized that they are their child's first teacher no matter what language is spoken at home, the future of their literacy development would be so much brighter. We need to embrace families as an important part of child development and learning no matter what their native language at home is.

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