



Early Intervention of Preschoolers with Speech and Language Impairments by Parents as First Teachers: A Case Study on Four Families in Kuching, Sarawak

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ABSTRACT

Parental involvement during early childhood development is important especially when the child has learning disabilities. This research aims to study the effectiveness of parental-based speech training programs for preschoolers with Speech Language Impairments (SLI) in a localized setting. The method used was qualitative and data was collected from selected preschoolers (N = 5) with different types of SLI symptoms. Each participant was assessed using a standardized assessment protocol to measure his/her language scale. The participants were given the intervention program by their own parents using the Hanen's It Takes Two to Talk program. The progress of each subject and observations from these sessions were documented. The participants were assessed again once the intervention had been implemented. Substantial results were achieved when all subjects showed improvements in language comprehension and production skills. These results highlight the importance of parental involvement as first teachers in the early intervention of children with SLI.

Keywords: Early intervention; speech language impairments; preschoolers; parents as first teacher

INTRODUCTION

Language is a cognition that truly makes us human. Unlike other species, humans can express infinite ideas with one another through sets of symbols in the form of words, speech and writings. Speech

and language impairments (SLI) is defined as a communication disorder such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment, or a voice impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance (Individuals with Disabilities Act [IDEA], 2004). SLI is a learning disorder faced by many children around the world and it is a major concern among parents. Traditionally, these disabilities or impairments are widely accepted by locals to be delays in learning development. Terms like "slow learner" come to mind and most parents

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