MIDDLE YEARS
COMMUNICATION AND
THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM
THE MYCAC SERIES OF TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR TEACHERS OF STUDENTS WITH SPEECH LANGUAGE IMPAIRMENT
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WHAT CAN A TEAM FROM QUEENSLAND ADD TO YOUR JOURNEY?

WHERE HAS THE ACSA JOURNEY TAKEN US SO FAR?

What can a team from Queensland add to your journey?

Equity
Respect
Innovation
WHO, WHERE, WHAT, WHY

Brisbane Catholic Education - School Services South

- Inclusive Education Team
- 5 FT SP positions
- 6 FT EO:IE
- 76 Schools
- P-12
- Supporting school teams
- Consultative Services
- Reporting
WHAT IS IT LIKE TO HAVE SPEECH LANGUAGE IMPAIRMENT?

- Invisible
- Hard to identify
- Exclusionary criteria
- Profound impact on
  - Academic
  - Social
  - Behavioral
  - Emotional outcomes

Source: European Day of Speech and Language Therapy Logo 2013
Two DET criteria for verification in SLI:

1) Severe ongoing primary spoken communication disorder;

2) Resulting in:
   - activity limitations, and participation restrictions;
   - requiring significant education adjustments.
Education Qld, 2000

Special Needs in Communication (14%)

Specific Language Impairment (5-7%)

Students verified with SLI (1%)
WHAT DOES IT FEEL LIKE?
Three full day sessions

- Features of students language in Years 4-9 including environmental modifications
- The value and how to of explicit vocabulary instruction
- Making written language accessible

Between sessions

- Teachers to complete action plans and trial implementation of key strategies
- Teachers to document and reflect on trials through reflective journal

Further support

- Allocated member of SSCS team as key contact
- Follow up and opportunities to mentor other staff

PROJECT DESIGN

SUSTAINABILITY – QUALITY – COLLABORATION – FLEXIBILITY & INNOVATION
PARTICIPANT SELECTION

- Priorities identified by school leadership teams
- Students verified with SLI in participants classrooms
- Roles of participants – Class Teachers, Support Teachers, Assistant Principal, Heads of Department
SERIES OVERVIEW

Session One:
Features of students language in Years 5-9 and environmental adjustments

Session Two:
Explicit vocabulary instruction

Session Three:
Making written language accessible

Showcase:
Professional sharing and reflection
Reorder the cards on your desk to demonstrate the process that occurs within the student when you ask them a question and they formulate their response.

**ACTIVITY**
Communication chain

- Teacher asks a question
- Student comprehends question
- Student formulates response
- Student says answer
AFTER SESSION 1

- Conversations about reports, exemptions, adjustments, verifications, etc.
- People became aware of who should be exempt, what does a verification mean, adjustments of lesson content and assessment.
- People started communicating! → some things changed.
- Student services, classroom teachers, academic coordinators, pastoral coordinators, etc.
- Identification of students at risk as a way to link our Positive Behaviour for Learning System.
MIDDLE YEARS COMMUNICATION AND AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM: SESSION 1

FOUR VOCABULARIES

SPEAKING VOCABULARY
- The most important vocabulary
- Forms the basis of growth in other vocabularies
- Most dynamic – reflects the changing nature of our language as words become “fashionable” and others die out

LISTENING VOCABULARY
- The largest of the four vocabularies
- Includes words that are understood but rarely used
- Expands as we infer meaning from the context in which words are said

FOUR VOCABULARIES

READING VOCABULARY
- Develops from reading and being read to
- Becomes increasingly important as children move from ‘learning to read’ to ‘reading to learn’
- More time to work out context therefore leads to growth in speaking and writing vocabularies
- Fosters development of literate vocabulary

WRITTEN VOCABULARY
- Smallest of the four vocabularies
- Requires skill in word retrieval and spelling
- Written performance may not reflect true vocabulary knowledge

Three Tiers of Words

Tier One
- Basic words that rarely require instructional attention
- Examples include: clock, baby, happy, walk

Tier Two
- Rich words for sophisticated language use
- Examples include: subtle, inevitable, spontaneous, arrogant, perpetual

Tier Three
- Low frequency words that are often limited to specific domains
- Examples: include isotope, peninsular, photosynthesis, archaeologist

STRESS the new word to focus your child’s attention
SHOW your child what the word means
TELL your child what the word means
AND
RELATE the word to your child’s personal experiences and knowledge, as well as to other words and situations
SAY it again – and read the book again

Select “Goldilocks Words”
Not too difficult – Not too easy – Just Right!
(Stahl & Stahl, 2004)
HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW THESE WORDS?

- Languid
- Malignant
- Keelhaul
- Apparition
- Contrite
- Precarious
TWO GOALS FOR TEACHING WORDS

Vocabulary Teaching

Comprehension of the text at the time

Adding new vocabulary to the students repertoire
**HOW DO I KNOW WHICH WORDS TO TEACH MY STUDENTS?**

**Three Tiers of Words**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tier One</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Lauren’s self reflection

Weaknesses:
1. When we do writing, I’m really bad at spelling.
2. When the teacher says do you understand I actually do not understand all the time.
3. I can’t always read questions and understand them. I need someone to explain it more clearly to me.
4. I’m too afraid to ask for help so I just guess or work with my peers.

Strengths:
1. I always try my best even though I know I will get it wrong.
2. When we have a test/exam I always study so I can get the best result.
3. If there is stuff on the test that the teacher puts on the board I always right it down for me to know what I am doing and to give me help.
End of session feedback: Questionnaires

Showcase was a means of gathering anecdotal feedback from participants about what they had done with the information

Review of MYCAC 2014/2015 currently underway: Measuring how often/in what depth teachers are engaging in changed practice
Over the course of the series, we had to make changes and additions along the way.

- Terms used between disciplines
- Bridge analogy
- Adjustments and interventions
- Equity and Equality
NEXT STEPS

- Professional learning delivered to whole staff at a school level.
- Professional learning as a way of working for the speech pathology service.
- Ongoing improvement and expansion of school communities of practice.
- Consideration of options for support of teachers in the senior years (Year 10 – 12).
FINAL THOUGHTS

Equity
Respect
Innovation

Questions and discussion