Definition of Language Learning Differences

A language-learning different child shall be defined as a child with:

- average or above-average intelligence
- adequate vision and hearing
- without primary emotional disturbance
- who has failed or is at high risk to fail when exposed to school experiences using conventional educational techniques.

PROCESSING CHART

5 SENSES INPUT
- See
- Hear
- Feel
- Smell
- Taste

Brain Interpretation

Percept

Concept

Higher Cognitive Functions

Sustained Attention

Memory
A Few Thoughts:

“There is just much more self-centered behavior on the part of kids now. They cheat more, they kill one another more. They’re more sexually exploitive of one another.” – Kevin Ryan

“In addition to the fact that Johnny still can’t read, we are now faced with the more serious problem that Johnny can’t tell right from wrong.” – William Kirkpatrick

“Learning is more than literacy. Our children must be educated in reading and writing but also in right and wrong.” – President George W. Bush

A Few More Thoughts:

“Social interventions are the new frontier in education.” – Rick LaVoie

“Childhood and adolescence are critical windows of opportunity for setting down the essential emotional habits that will govern our lives.” – Daniel Goleman, Emotional Intelligence

“Schools must unabashedly teach students about such key virtues as honesty, dependability, trust, responsibility, tolerance, respect, and other commonly held values.” – Breaking Rank: Changing an American Institution, National Association of Secondary School Principals
What Is Social Competence?

Social Competence

Definition of Social Competence

• Analogous to intelligence
• Social competence is a higher-order construct made up of many components.

Social Competence

Includes:

• Positive relations with others
• Accurate and age appropriate social cognition
• Absence of maladaptive behaviors
• Effective social behaviors

Adapted from Vaughn and Hogan, 1990
Correlates of Peer Acceptance

Behavioral Correlates:
- Enjoyment of peer relationships
- Joining ongoing peer relationships
- Participating in peer activities
- Initiating peer contact
- Cooperation/taking turns
- Sharing
- Helping others
- Playing fairly
- Ability to give affection
- Resolving conflicts/differences


Correlates of Peer Acceptance

Personal Attributes:
- Physical Appearance
- Athletic Prowess
- Academic Ability
- Language/Communication Skill

Understanding Learning Differences

Normal Brains
That Process
Differently
Unexpected

In relation to:
• Age
• Exposure to social situations
• Cognitive abilities
• Academic abilities

**Dyslexia**
Definition Adopted by National Institutes of Health

• One of several distinct learning disabilities;
• Specific language-based disorder of constitutional origin characterized by single word decoding
• Reflects insufficient phonological processing abilities
• Difficulties in single word decoding - unexpected in relation to age & other cognitive & academic abilities.

**Dyslexia - NIH Definition continued**

• Not the result of generalized developmental disability or sensory impairment
• Manifested by variable difficulty with different forms of language, including in addition to problems reading, conspicuous problem with acquiring proficiency in writing and spelling.
Related Disorders
refers to learning differences in reading comprehension, attention, math, coordination, social skills and oral language disorders.

Attention Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD)

- ADHD refers to a family of chronic neurobiological disorders that interfere with people’s capacity to attend to tasks, regulate activity, and inhibit behavior in ways appropriate to their age and circumstances.

DSM-5 Definition of Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

Three Subtypes:

- Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Predominantly Inattentive Presentation
- Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Predominantly Hyperactive-Impulsive Presentation
- Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Combined Presentation
### Autism Spectrum Disorder *

**Diagnostic Criteria:**

A. Persistent deficits in social communication and social interaction across multiple contexts, as manifested by the following:

- Deficits in social-emotional reciprocity
- Deficits in nonverbal communicative behaviors used for social interaction
- Deficits in developing, maintaining, and understanding relationships

*Not classified as a Learning Disorder

---

### Autism Spectrum Disorder

**B. Restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities as manifested by at least two of the following:**

- Stereotyped or repetitive motor movements, use of objects, or speech
- Insistence on sameness, inflexible adherence to routines, or ritualized patterns of verbal or nonverbal behavior
- Highly restricted, fixated interests that are abnormal in intensity or focus
- Hyper- or hyporeactivity to sensory input or unusual interest in sensory aspects of the environment

---

### Autism Spectrum Disorder

**C. Symptoms must be present in early developmental period (but may not become fully manifest until social demands exceed limited capacities)**

**D. Symptoms cause clinically significant impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of current functioning**

DSM-5, page 50
Delays in Social Development of the Child with Learning Differences
Common Social Skills Deficits in Children with Learning Differences

- Inappropriate Interactions
- Communication Difficulties
- Deficit Social Cognitive Skill
- Poor Emotional Regulation

Inappropriate Interactions

- Fewer active friendship making skills
- Initiate more negative, competitive statements
- Excessive talking
- Impulsive and unfocused
- Dominating or disruptive

Communication Difficulties

- Fewer positive and self-disclosing comments
- Poor reciprocity
- Difficulty monitoring discourse
- Less assertive verbally
- Difficulty giving and receiving criticism
Communication Difficulties

- Less responsive to other’s initiations
- Inappropriate verbal exchanges
- Difficulty shifting between giving and receiving information

Deficit Social Cognitive Skill

- Less eye contact and affection
- Poor role-playing ability
- Poor social insight
- Poor comprehension of emotions and non-verbal cues

Deficit Social Cognitive Skill

- Limited self-awareness
- Fewer acquisition skills
- Poor social problem-solving skill
- Misinterpreting actions and words of others
Poor Emotional Regulation

- Moody, unpredictable
- Choose less socially acceptable behaviors
- Aggressive outbursts
- Excitability, silliness
- Poor transitioning from one activity to another

If you lack social interactions then you fail to develop social relationships in which you practice social skills. If you lack opportunities to interact with others, then you are labeled maladjusted & excluded from social interactions. If you are socially incompetent, then you fail to develop the social skills needed to be socially competent.

A Negative Cycle of Social Incompetence

If you lack social interactions, then you fail to develop social relationships in which you practice social skills. If you lack opportunities to interact with others, then you are labeled maladjusted & excluded from social interactions. If you are socially incompetent, then you fail to develop the social skills needed to be socially competent.

A Negative Cycle of Negative Behavior

Adults have to help him break the circle. How?

A. Improve academic skills.
B. Direct teach social skills/coping strategies.
C. Provide success experiences in school and through areas of talent.
Why We Teach Social Skills

- Peer relationships are important
- Poor peer relationships place children “at risk” for long-term problems in adjustment
- Some children with learning differences are not accepted by peers

Why We Teach Social Skills

- Communication skills
- Problem solving
- Decision making
- Clarify abstract concepts and societal values

Why We Teach Social Skills

To improve behavior:
- Self-regulation
- Impulse control
- Understand cause and effect
- Acceptance of responsibility
- Practice appropriate roles
To improve feedback sensitivity:
• Social interaction skills
• Empathy
• Understand relationship requirements

How can we apply what we know from the research to interventions that improve social behavior?

What is Choices?
• Evolved from the Social Values work of Dr. Charles Shedd, clinical psychologist
• Intervention program which is structured, multisensory, taught daily for 30 minutes to grades 1 through 9
• Joyce Pickering added oral language development components
• Laure Ames rewrote Dr. Shedd’s stories and role plays and related the difficulties in social development of the learning different child to current research.
Choices
Four Levels

- Early Childhood – Kindergarten
- Lower Elementary (1st – 3rd Grades)
- Upper Elementary (4th – 6th Grades)
- Middle School (7th – 9th Grades)

Lessons
Skills for Success

- Communication Skill
- Decision Making Skill (Stop, Think, Choose)
- Problem Solving Skill (PACT)

Lessons
Responsibility

At School
At Home

Self-Discipline

- Courage
- Respect
- Integrity
- Perseverance
- Truth
- Attitude
Lessons

**Self-Control**
- Prudence
- Communicating
- Feelings
- Assertiveness, Not Aggressiveness
- Handling Stress

**Consideration of Others**
- Compassion
- Tolerance
- Cooperation
- Manners

Direct Instruction of Social Skills: *Choices*

*Choices*
- Incorporates salient features of social skills training, problem-solving techniques, affective regulation, cognitive restructuring, and behavior modification
- Easy to use
- Involves parents
- Challenging and fun
A Four-Step Teaching Method

1. Introduce the concept
2. Read the story
   ✓ Discuss the vocabulary
   ✓ Analyze cause and effect
   ✓ Discuss questions related to the story
3. Role play
   ✓ Critique verbal and non-verbal communication using the Communication Checklist
4. Research activities

Lesson Format

I. Thinking It Through
II. Story
III. Let’s Talk
IV. Let’s Act
V. Let’s Investigate

How We Teach Social Skills
Habits are the behaviors you use in certain situations all the time. Habits become habits when you do the same thing over and over. There can be either good habits, like brushing your teeth, or bad habits, like slamming doors. Bad habits should be broken if they develop. Bad habits frequently bother other people or do not help you to be your best.
Stories – Level One

A Summary

The Berenstain Bears and the Bad Habit by Stan & Jan Berenstain

Sister Bear is in first grade. She and some of the other cubs have developed nervous habits that they use when they have to concentrate. Lizzy twirls her hair and Sister bites her nails. She nibbles them down so far that her fingers get sore. She tried putting tape over them, but that did not work. Mama Bear worries because “nail biting is a very difficult habit to break.” Sister asks what a habit is and Mama tells her a habit “is something you do so often you don’t even have to think about it. There are good habits, like brushing your teeth, but there are also bad habits.” Papa Bear gets angry when he learns Sister is biting her nails, but Mama tells him getting angry will only make the habit worse. Mama Bear tries giving Sister ten pennies at the start of every day. She had to give back a penny every time she bit her nails. The plan worked and Sister felt so proud of breaking her bad habit and being responsible!

LEVEL ONE

1. Why do you think Sister Bear started biting her nails? What do you do when you have to concentrate or are nervous in school?
2. How did Sister feel when the other children teased her? Have you ever been teased about a bad habit? How did it make you feel?
3. Use “Draw a Picture of the Story” found in the Appendix. Draw a picture of how Sister’s nails looked when she broke her bad habit.

LEVEL TWO

1. What are some of this boy’s good habits? Why is this a “boy we want”?
2. How do these type of boys become people you can depend on?
3. Are these good habits the same for boys and girls?

UNDERSTANDING CAUSE & EFFECT

Example Chart: The Berenstain Bears and the Bad Habit

The Problem

Sister Bear bites her fingernails.

The Cause

Sister Bear gets nervous at school when she has to concentrate, as she begins biting her nails. Nervous habits are easy to get into, but hard to break.

The Effect (What Happened?)

Biting her nails becomes a habit that Sister Bear has a hard time breaking. The work hard to break it, though, because it is hurting her fingers.
LET'S ACT!

After each role-play, use the "Communication Checklist" (Appendix).

LEVEL ONE
1. Jane is a first grader who still sucks her thumb. Another student should assume the role of an adult who explains to Jane that a lot of kids suck their thumbs as babies but that her thumb sucking has now become a bad habit. The actors should discuss other things to do when Jane feels like sucking her thumb.
2. Billy does not like to hurry in the mornings so he lays his clothes out the night before so they are ready the next day when he gets dressed. His mother praises him for developing a good habit that will help him all his life.

Let's Act

SHELTON
LET'S INVESTIGATE!

LEVELS ONE AND TWO

Have each student think about and then decide on a bad habit they would like to break or a good habit they would like to make stronger. Have them place a “Compliment Chart” on the corner of their desk. The student should put a small sticker (or smile) on the chart every time they are successful and the teacher compliments them.

COMPLIMENT CHART FOR HABITS

LEVELS ONE, TWO, AND THREE

REFERENCES

Students:
Bennett, William. Boy We Want. The Book of Virtues (p. 186).
Bennett, William. Little Fred. The Children’s Book of Virtues (p. 31).
Berenstain, Stan, & Jan. The Berenstain Bears and the Bad Habit.
MacDonald, Betty. Any story about “habits” from Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle; Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle’s Magic; Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle’s Farm; or Hello, Mrs. Piggle-Wiggle.
Wood, Audrey. Elbert’s Bad Word.
Closing Remarks

To help students break out of the vicious cycle of social incompetence, students need:

- Direct specific instruction in therapeutic techniques which improve academic skills
- Mature adult direct teaching of a specific social skills program
- A comprehensive program which remediates weaknesses and celebrates strengths through success at school and through areas of talent

---

Choices Become Habits
Habits Become Character
Character Becomes Destiny

THE SHELTON WAY
A World Model for Educating Students Who Learn Differently

---

CHOICES
The Shelton Model for Teaching Social Skills and Social Values

www.shelton.org/store

Some Media Elements used in this presentation are the property of Microsoft Office, 2003
For further information about trainings and materials, please visit the Shelton website www.shelton.org/training

Montessori Applied To Children At Risk For Learning Differences
MACAR
Shelton School in Dallas, Texas
JULY 6-15, 2015
(no class on Sunday)
MACAR is designed to assist the Montessori teacher to serve students with learning differences in the regular classroom.
Materials provided electronically and include:
- Administrative Manual
- Oral Language/Written Language
- Practical Life
- Choices
- Sensorial
- Perceptual Motor Skills
- Math
- Oral Language/Written Language

www.shelton.org/macar

AMS MACAR Track
Join the MACAR course this summer in Dallas, Texas for the second half of your training.
If you complete all 8 sessions of the AMS MACAR track (Thursday-Sunday), you will be able to register for the second half of the course for half the cost.

JULY 10-15, 2015
(no class on Sunday)