

4-17-2013

Exploring Different Factors of Language Development

Elizabeth Scribner
Eastern Illinois University

Follow this and additional works at: http://thekeep.eiu.edu/lib_awards_2013_docs

 Part of the [Education Commons](#), and the [Linguistics Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Scribner, Elizabeth, "Exploring Different Factors of Language Development" (2013). *2013 Awards for Excellence in Student Research & Creative Activity - Documents*. 1.
http://thekeep.eiu.edu/lib_awards_2013_docs/1

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the 2013 Awards for Excellence in Student Research and Creativity at The Keep. It has been accepted for inclusion in 2013 Awards for Excellence in Student Research & Creative Activity - Documents by an authorized administrator of The Keep. For more information, please contact tabruns@eiu.edu.

Exploring Different Factors of Language Development

Elizabeth Scribner

Eastern Illinois University

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to explore the different factors that affect language development and examine successful intervention strategies. It includes descriptions of home exposure and involvement, bilingualism and culture awareness, as well as the importance of early intervention. Teaching opportunities and coaching features are also explored. Language is a feature every individual should have the opportunity to explore, and can be done in a variety of different ways. The term 'language' does not necessarily refer to English; it can be applied to most languages and language users. Language is needed for both, receptive and expressive functioning. Receptive includes the ability to listen and read; expressive includes the ability to speak and write.

Keywords: language, development, parents, testing, education, intervention

Exploring Different Factors of Language Development

According to Raymond (2012), students with speech and language impairments comprise close to 20% of all students served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (age 6-21) and almost half of all preschool children (age 3-5) with disabilities. This makes speech and language disorders one of the most prevalent IDEA categories. Language is defined as any method of code employing signs, symbols, or gestures that is used for communicating ideas meaningfully between human beings. It is also a social tool that is used to communicate meanings, feelings, and intentions by means of a symbol system specifically designed to transmit and receive social messages. It is an essential part of learning and thinking.

Language is something everyone has the opportunity to acquire, no matter their sex, age, socioeconomic status, or culture. When a child has a language delay or disorder, their form of development is delayed. Due to these delays, the child may have more difficulty developing both academically and socially. Parents and educators must be aware of this discrepancy and provide interventions in hopes to catch the student up with his/her peers developmentally.

The purpose of this paper is to explore the different factors that affect language development and examine successful intervention strategies. The follow research questions will be explored:

1. How does home environment and parent interaction affect a child's language development?
2. How does culture relate with language development?
3. Are early intervention services effective for language development and what styles are best?

Review of Literature

An immense amount of research has been done in the area of language development and the factors that affect it. Development is a continuous part of life. It is vital that a child be exposed to language early, as well as different contents of it.

Home Environment and Parent Interaction

Typically, a child's home is the first place they are exposed to language, or any skill for that matter. It is the place they are introduced to interactions, activities, involvement and communication, so naturally it should be full of several positive opportunities. Children whose mothers reported that they frequently read to them, went to the library and puppet theater or cinema, were involved in the process of joint reading, and stimulated their reading and learning of the letters, and guided them to the zone of proximal development achieved higher scores on the Language Development Scale and told more coherent stories with a textless picture book (Fekonja, Podlesek, & Umek, 2005). These children are getting all of the essentials to prepare them for preschool and most likely be more successful than the children that did not receive this stimulus the beginning years of life, or will not require assistants to catch them up with the peers.

Not only should parents expose their children early and in a variety of ways, but they should also begin their children's phonological awareness correctly in a standard form. In a study done by Liow (2005) on Malay families, the families speak a non-standard form of language at home, yet the children learn to read and write the standard form at school. When given a spelling test at school from a tape recorder of words verbally stated, the children incorrectly spelled words (i.e. vowel substitutions) as a result of hearing the non-standard words at home. Thus, the results confirmed that home language does influence the nature of literacy development.

Although the above stated study was a poor exposure of language, adult-child conversations are the most essential component of a child's development. Each 100 conversational turns per day is associated with a 1.92 increase in language scores, and children participate in about 400 adult-child conversational turns per day (Christakis et al., 2009). They hear around 13,000 words spoken to them by adults. McHale and Cowan (1996) proved that conversations with all three components- father, mother, and child are most beneficial. Conversations are the most effortless involvement; they can be done while driving in the car, shopping, or even while cooking dinner. Technology has made it possible to have conversations with someone that is not physically with us or in the same country.

Culture

According to Tseng (2002), competence in language use is determined not only by the ability to use language with grammatical accuracy, but also to use language appropriately to a particular context. A primary example is culture. Culture is not just a set body of facts to be acquired by learners, but something actively created by learners through interactions that focus on meaning-making. This should be highlighted as an important element in language classrooms. Facilitating a learning environment that supports tensions is the only way for teachers to ensure that culture can be learned as a process rather than as a collection of facts. If children are educated on different cultural languages at an early age, they will be able to understand that the meanings have knowledge of their or other's background. This can be done by introducing sign language symbols, counting numbers in Spanish, or sharing different family stories. All of these can be done in a child's home or school.

If going beyond simply counting in Spanish, and a child is fluent in that language (or any other language), results show that children that are bilingual speakers, show faster reaction time.

These results were interpreted to suggest both general and specific effects of bilingualism boosts general knowledge (Baruca & Bialystok, 2012). Reaction time can be important in development. It can be an early indicator of a delay or difference in verbal or nonverbal development.

If a student is bilingual, then it is likely that they will need a cross-culture assessment. According to Carter, Lees, Murira, Gona, Nevelle, and Newton (2005), there is an increasing demand for the assessment of speech and language in clinical and research situations in countries where there are few assessment resources. Due to the nature of cultural variation and the potential for culture bias, new assessment tools need to be developed or existing tools require adaptations. Awareness of cultural variation and bias, and cooperative efforts to develop and administer culturally appropriate assessment tools are the foundation of effective, valid treatment programs. If this is not done, then a child may be wrongly diagnosed.

Early Interventions

The earlier language intervention is implemented, the better. Ward (1999) did a study to test the hypothesis that a group of language-delayed infants detected in the first year of life, and receiving intervention at that stage, would not show language impairment at the age at which children are usually referred for speech and language therapy, whereas an untreated group would do so. Her results showed that at 3 years of age, 85% of controls showed language delay, while only 5% of the experimental group did so. Also, 30% of the controls had been referred for therapy, while none of the experimental group needed it. Delay in language development is the most common single difficulty in the preschool years (Ward, 1999). Those that show difficulty in language continue to show problems in learning, some problems are life-long. If this setback is noticed early, then delays may be prevented or better managed. As quoted by Peck, Odom, and Bricker (1993), "legislation such as PL 94-142 and PL 99-457 mandated more extensive

early childhood special education. The beliefs in the importance of the early years and in the early socialization of children outside the family have been combined with numerous resources, materials, and known strategies to develop curricula for early intervention programs for children with special needs” (p.88).

In a previous section of this paper, Home Environment and Parent Interaction, it was suggested that parent-child conversations was an effective early strategy to promote language. True, however, once children hit school age, small group conversations are more valuable. King and Saxton (2010) stated that group conversations create shared contexts and provide opportunity for the group as a whole. It also gives individual children an opportunity to contribute to the conversation. Being part of a group activity, allows lower-interaction children to make brief contributions. Group conversations provides the advantage of hearing an answer being modeled by others, with the possibility of picking up on ideas introduced by other children (King & Saxton, 2012). Sending children to daycare is an opportunity for children to be introduced to group conversations. They are able to interact with others their age and they have turn taking practice before entering preschool or kindergarten.

Once children enter school, they are provided with never ending opportunities to learn. Some opportunities are from their peers; however most are from their teachers. It is imperative that preschool or kindergarten teachers attend professional development to maintain their knowledge on educating the youth. A study, which resulted in an increase in children’s vocabulary development, showed that teachers talked more with young children and used more book-related vocabulary after being trained in multiple strategies to enhance children’s language and vocabulary (Waski, 2010). Scaffolding instruction, as defined by Raymond (2012), is Vygotsky’s term for the role of teachers and others in supporting learners’ development. This

professional development trained teachers to scaffold children's language through meaningful interactions with adults. Vocabulary development is a critical aspect of preschoolers' learning experience, given the important role that it plays in learning to read (Waski, 2010). The program that was used in the examined study was ExCELL- Exceptional Coaching for Early Language and Literacy.

Discussion

Different issues discussed have an impact of language development in young children. The first five years of development are when they are exposed to opportunities for the first time. This language is critical, whether is negative or positive, it can be built upon. Language is critical to success as a learner. It is also when a young person develops a sense of personal identity as an individual in society. The earlier a prospective student is exposed to language, the earlier he/she will begin to define themselves and begin learning.

The environment that a child is exposed to and the involvement that child's parents give them while at home impact their language development. Mother's, or father's, involvement should come as early as the day their child is born, if not sooner while they are still in the womb. Their examples should be positive and the correct form in their respective culture. Adult-child conversations are the most beneficial form of exposure for young children while in the home environment.

Culture is related with language development. It is not only facts of a different group of individuals; it is the background and meaning of that culture. A child that is bilingual has a boost in language and may demonstrate those when entering school. The subject of culture is an area assessment needs to be conscious about; cross-culture assessment needs to be applied if necessary.

Early intervention services are effective for language development. Studies show that when intervention is implemented at an early stage, the individuals are less likely to show a delay. Once children get to school age, small group interactions are most valuable to promote learning. It is important that the school teacher attend professional development to maintain a high level of knowledge to promote those opportunity to their students.

Having a language delay can create many challenges in a child's education. However, by exposing them early and continuously and having better prepared teachers we can help the development. The choices we, as models, make for our young children create positive examples for their future.

Conclusion

After researching language development, it is obvious how important exposure, type of relationship, and education of the subject matter is to development in young children. Most of the research focuses on the value of early introduction; others simply give advice on techniques. All information can be beneficial to parents or teachers.

Implications for Educational Practice

The research displayed implies that introducing a child to a variety of different learning techniques can only benefit them. If students with disabilities are not gaining from their current program, a new one may need to be implemented. As stated, one-on-one conversations and group activities showed to benefit children's language. Different activities and techniques can be brought into these. If a student is monitored for a possible delay, these techniques may help to prevent that diagnosis.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research in these areas may need to look at the different levels of education of the child's mother, father, or any individual that may influence their learning. This may enable them to provide more material that supports child language competencies. Another consideration for future studies would be larger study groups. A bigger sample would aid in giving a better representation of results. A larger variety of groups would also help in the future. The last recommendation for future research is to determine if children develop language by merely overhearing adult speech.

As discussed, language development is one of the most important exposures young children should have. Language determines what way you will communicate, characteristics you will have, and the type of future you will set for yourself. There are alternatives if language is delayed or lacking, it will simply be a different way of life.

References

- Baruca, R. & Bialystok, E. (2012). Bilingual effects on cognitive and linguistic development: Role of language, cultural background, and education. *Child Development, 83*(2), 413-422. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-8624.2011.01707.x
- Carter, J., Lees J., Murira G., Gona J., Neville, B., & Newton C. (2005). Issues in the development of cross-cultural assessments of speech and language for children. *International Journal of Language & Communication Disorders, 40*(4), 385-401. doi: 10.1080/13682820500057301
- Christakis, D. A., Giklerson, J., Gray, S., Richards, J. A., Xu, D., Yapanel, U., & Zimmerman, F. J. (2009). Teaching by listening: The importance of adult-child conversations to language development. *Pediatrics, 124*(1), 342-349. doi: 10.1542/peds.2008-2276
- Fekonja, U., Podlesek, A., & Umek, L. (2005). Assessing the home literacy environment. *European Journal of Psychological Assessment, 21*(4), 217-281. doi: 10.1027/1015-5759.21.4.271
- King, S., & Saxton, M. (2010). Opportunities for language development: Small group conversations in the nursery class. *Educational & Child Psychology, 27*(4), 31-44.
- Liow, S. (2005). Home language influences literacy development. *Innovation, 5*(3), 28-29.
- McHale, J. P., & Cowan, P. A. (1996). *Understanding how family-level dynamics affect children's development: Studies to two-parent families* (no. 74). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Inc.
- Peck, A. C., Odom, S. L., & Bricker (1993). *Integrating young children with disabilities into community programs*. Maryland: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Raymond, E. B. (2012). *Learners with mild disabilities* (4th Ed.). New Jersey: Pearson Education Inc.

Tseng, Y. (2002). A lesson in culture. *ELT Journal*, 56(1), 11-21.

Ward, S. (1999). An investigation into the effectiveness of an early intervention method for delayed language development in young children. *International Journal of Language & Communication Disorders*, 34(3), 243-264.

Waski, B. (2010). What teachers can do to promote preschoolers' vocabulary development: Strategies from an effective language and literacy professional development coaching model. *The Reading Teacher*, 63(8), 621-633. doi: 10.1598/RT.63.8.1

Booth Library: *Award for Excellence in Student Research and Creativity*

All of the following resources were using to complete my research paper:

Baruca, R. & Bialystok, E. (2012). Bilingual effects on cognitive and linguistic development: Role of language, cultural background, and education. *Child Development*, 83(2), 413-422. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-8624.2011.01707.x

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of language similarity, cultural background, and educational experience on the verbal and nonverbal outcomes of bilingualism. Participants included 104 children composed of 26 English monolingual, 30 Chinese-English bilingual, 28 French-English bilingual, and 20 Spanish-English bilingual children. Procedures consisted of two background measures (Kaufman Brief Intelligence Text, 2nd edition [KBIT-2] and box completion), 3 language measures (Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, 3rd edition [PPVT-3], the Wugs test, and formulated sentences from the Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals, 4th edition [CLEF-4]), and a computerized executive control task (color-shape task switching). There were 200 trials across 2 non-switch blocks and 3 switch blocks. Reaction time (RT) and accuracy were recorded for each trial. Results showed that the children that spoke one language and the children that speak Spanish-English outperformed the other 2 bilingual groups on PPVT and CLEF, the children that spoke Spanish-English outperformed the other 3 groups on the Wugs. All 3 bilingual groups showed faster RT, and in non-switch blocks. These results were interpreted to suggest both general and specific effects of bilingualism boosts general knowledge related to print. Limitations could be possible because of a greater similarity

between Spanish and English language. More varieties of language could be assessed for future research.

Carter, J., Lees J., Murira G., Gona J., Neville, B., & Newton C. (2005). Issues in the development of cross-cultural assessments of speech and language for children. *International Journal of Language & Communication Disorders*, 40(4), 385-401. doi: 10.1080/13682820500057301

There is an increasing demand for the assessment of speech and language in different cultural backgrounds where there are few resources. Therefore, new assessment tools need to be developed or adapt existing tools. This article reviewed literature on cross-cultural assessment in order to identify the major issues in the development and adaptation. Five broad categories pertaining to cross-cultural assessment development were identified: influence of culture on performance, familiarity with the testing situation, effect of formal education, language issues, and picture recognition. The target audience is any professional who may assess a child's speech or language, or parent/guardian of that child. Awareness of cultural variation and bias cooperative efforts to develop and administer culturally appropriate assessment tools are the foundation of effective, valid treatment programs. Limitations may arise if an individual is bias towards a culture. Future research could be done on different styles of communication, such as gestures, simple signs, or eye pointing.

Christakis, D. A., Giklerson, J., Gray, S., Richards, J. A., Xu, D., Yapanel, U., & Zimmerman, F. J. (2009). Teaching by listening: The importance of adult-child conversations to language development. *Pediatrics*, *124*(1), 342-349. doi: 10.1542/peds.2008-2276

The purpose of this study was to test the independent association of adult language input, television viewing, and adult-child conversations on language acquisition among toddlers. Participants included 275 children aged 2 to 48 months to be enrolled in a cross sectional study of home language environment and child language development for 6 months (phase 1). Of these, a representative sample of 71 families continued for a longitudinal assessment over 18 months (phase 2). All data were collected in children's own environment. Parents recorded their children upon waking up in the morning until bedtime. A Language Environment Analysis (LENA), a small digital recorder placed in a vest pocket that processes language, was used for recording. The software estimated the number of words spoken by adults, vocalizations by the key-child, child-adult conversational turns, and the amount of time the child was exposed to television. Language capacity was formally assessed by a Speech Language Pathologist (SLP) using the PLS throughout the 6-month study. Television viewing was measured in number of hours per day. Exposure to adult language input was measured as the estimated number of words spoken by adults. Results showed television exposure is not independently associated with child language development. It limits opportunity for parental language input, as well as limits a child's speech. On the contrary, conversational turns between adult and child are an essential component of a child's language development. On average, each hour of television viewing per day is associated with a 2.68 decrease in the language score. Each 100 conversational turns per day is associated with a 1.92 increase in the language score. Children hear around 13,000 words spoken to them by adults and participate in about 400 adult-child

conversational turns per day. The ideal conversations should be within the “zone of proximal development”, not too simplistic that the child learns nothing and not too sophisticated that the child is bewildered. LENA was unable to identify whether the child was attending to the television while hearing it, as well as distinguish between viewing the television and background exposure. Emotional tone, questions and responses, whether adult speech is directed to the key child or merely overheard by him or her is another limitation to using LENA. While the longitudinal analysis was a stronger study, it had fewer participants than the cross-section study. Future studies could be done to determine if children develop language by merely overhearing adult speech.

Fekonja, U., Podlesek, A., & Umek, L. (2005). Assessing the home literacy environment.

European Journal of Psychological Assessment, 21(4), 217-281. doi: 10.1027/1015-5759.21.4.271

The purpose of this study shows various factors and aspects of the family environment, which helps determine child language development; this is done with the Home Literacy Environment Questionnaire (HLEQ). In the study, HLEQ was intended to measure the characteristics of the home environment that might affect children’s development in conjunction with preschool education. Participants were 308 children, ages ranged from 43-58 months. Mothers of the children completed questionnaires and gave them in a sealed envelope to the researchers. Five areas made up the questionnaire: 1) Stimulation to use language, explanation, 2) Reading books to the child, visiting the library and the puppet theater, 3) Joint activities and conversations, 4) Interactive reading, and 5) Zone-of-proximal-development stimulation. Mother’s education was also determined. Each child was tested separately in a quiet room for

language comprehension and expression, as well as their ability in pragmatics by a trained professional. Results found that children's scores correlated positively with the level of maternal education. This correlates with the finding that specific behaviors of the mothers contribute to higher scores on the Language Development Scale and told more coherent stories with a textless picture book, such as reading books, visiting the library or puppet theaters (2) interactive reading (4), and zone-of-proximal-development stimulation (5). Future research could include the various education levels of the mothers, as well as have observers complete questionnaires instead of self reported by mothers. Limitations of this study may be influenced by the higher economic status of mothers with a higher level of education, enabling them to provide more material that supports child language competencies.

King, S., & Saxton, M. (2010). Opportunities for language development: Small group conversations in the nursery class. *Educational & Child Psychology, 27*(4), 31-44.

This study provided a detailed examination of how one adult and the children she works with interact during small group discussions in a nursery setting. Participants were nine 3-4 year olds and their key worker during 'family group' sessions in a nursery class. Video recordings were made on 10 separate occasions over a 2 month period, with sessions varying in length from 13 to 39 minutes. Two measures of language progress were taken at the start and again five months later. Four key measures of interaction emerged: adult interactions, child interactions, responses to a child, and responses by a child. The findings showed a vast majority of talk took place between the adult and children; only 11.5% of verbal interaction was child to child. The adult provided opportunities for the children to talk, both through the group as a whole (43.8%) and addressed to specific children (56.2%). Results showed high cognitive outcomes in joint,

group interactions for ideas and vocabulary, rather than one-on-one interaction. Group conversation provided the advantage of hearing an answer being modeled by others, with the possibility of picking up on ideas introduced by others. Some children are less likely to initiate or respond and less persistent or less successful in gaining attention. Future research could be examined for the role of repetitions and means by which children make themselves understood.

Liow, S. (2005). Home language influences literacy development. *Innovation*, 5(3), 28-29.

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of spelling development in multilingual communities by looking at metalinguistic awareness (abstract language knowledge). Participants were 80 children that were bilingual in Singapore age 5-6 years old. A single word spelling test was designed to elicit particular kinds of errors. The words chosen were tape-recorded using standard Malay pronunciation and used in a context sentence. The errors represented transcription of the non-standard Malay words that Singaporean children regularly hear at home, not the standard form presented on tape. Thus far, the results confirmed that home language does influence the nature of literacy development. A limitation may be the widespread use of non-standard English (Singlish) in Singapore. Future research could be done later in the children's school years, a follow up from this study when they were age 5-6.

McHale, J. P., & Cowan, P. A. (1996). *Understanding how family-level dynamics affect children's development: Studies of two-parent families* (no. 74). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc.

This study looked at the different triadic family relationships during infancy development- mother and infant as active partners with the father as third party, father and infant as active partners with the mother as third party, the three active together, and mother and father as active partners with the infant as third party. Participants included 28 families that consisted of a mother, a father, and an infant that ranged in age from 2 to 9 months. The procedures took place in seats set up as an equilateral triangle, which allowed anyone to interact with the other. Cameras and videotapes surrounded the seats. One parent (the active parent) would interact with the infant while the other (the third party) observed, then roles would switch until all four had been completed. Professional made observations and analyses of the interactions. The authors found that optimal participation requires that everyone be included in the interaction. Limitations from this study may include the fact that data is obtained by observations. One individual's data may vary from another's observations. Future research could be done by observing more families.

Peck, A. C., Odom, S. L., & Bricker (1993). *Integrating young children with disabilities into community programs*. Maryland: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

This book discussed the important of the curriculum for young children with disabilities. The beliefs in the importance of the early years and in the early socialization of children outside the family have been combined with numerous resources, materials, and strategies to develop curricula for early intervention programs for children with special needs. The idea that deficits could be remedied through repeated drills, exercises, and high-teacher directed methods. This information could be helpful for any educator of individuals with special needs.

Tseng, Y. (2002). A lesson in culture. *ELT Journal*, 56(1), 11-21.

This article discussed the way culture is viewed and its relationship to language, as well as the roles of second language learning and teaching. Suggestions for creating a classroom environment that supports learning are addressed too. The target audiences of this reading are any educators or individuals that may deal with another culture or language. Linguistic and learning theories suggest that culture should be highlighted as an important element in language classrooms. Culture is not just a set body of facts to be acquired by learners, but something actively created by learners through interactions that focus on meaning-making. Classroom environments must allow and encourage students to recognize their culture, such as through “Who am I?” projects, family stories, journaling into culture, confronting taboos, culture as eating, and exploring culture through aesthetics. Competence in language use is determined not only by the ability to use language with grammatical accuracy, but also to use language appropriately to particular context. Thus, successful language learning requires language users to know the culture that underlies language. Limitations to this topic may arise if a parent does not agree with another culture’s characteristics being brought into their child’s school. Future research could be done to determine if children’s cultural language increases by having a variety of cultures in their classrooms or by solely being educated on the topics by their teacher.

Ward, S. (1999). An investigation into the effectiveness of an early intervention method for delayed language development in young children. *International Journal of Language & Communication Disorders*, 34(3), 243-264.

The purpose of this study was to test the hypothesis that a group of language-delayed infants detected in the first year, and receiving interventions at that stage, would not show

language therapy, whereas an untreated control group would. Participants consisted of a range of children 8-12 months. The sample of language-delayed children was divided into matched experimental and control groups. The experimental group received intervention, and both groups were followed up until they were 3 years of age. The results showed that at 3 years, 85% of controls showed language delay while only 5% of the experimental group did so. Also, 30% of the controls had been referred for speech and language therapy, while none of the experimental group needed it. A weakness of this study would include the parental interaction the infants received at home throughout the study. A re-assessment could be conducted 'blind' to the original status of the children in future research.

Waski, B. (2010). What teachers can do to promote preschoolers' vocabulary development:

Strategies from an effective language and literacy professional development coaching model. *The Reading Teacher*, 63(8), 621-633. doi: 10.1598/RT.63.8.1

The purpose of this article is to provide a detailed description of the intensive, ongoing professional development in the Exceptional Coaching for Early Language and Literacy (ExCELL) program that resulted in changes in teachers' behavior and, in turn, positively impacted children's language. The coaching featured in this article can provide teachers with the skills and strategies to successfully teach young children new words and develop oral language in general. A total of 19 female teachers participated, along with 15-18 children in each Head Start classroom. Three centers were selected randomly from a pool of 6 that showed interest. Of the 3 selected, 2 were involved in professional development, while the other did not and served as a comparison site. In ExCELL, teachers were trained in multiple strategies to enhance children's language and vocabulary. Videotaped analysis of classroom practices

showed that ExCELL teachers talked more with young children and used more book-related vocabulary. The findings from the ExCELL program suggest that effective preschool programs need to include teacher professional development that trains teachers to scaffold children's language through meaningful interactions with adults. Limitations may include if a teacher missed a day of training of the program or day of work with children on the program. Future research could be done on a larger experimental group.

Booth Library: Award for Excellence in Student Research and Creativity

My entry is a research paper titled *Exploring Different Factors of Language Development*. This is an undergraduate special education course that is required for the completion of my Master's program. I took this course, SPE 3200: Learning Differences of Individuals with Mild/Moderate Exceptional Learning Needs, during the fall semester of 2012. I chose to research language development because of my history in the field. I obtained my Bachelor's degree in Speech Pathology from Eastern Illinois University.

Using the reference room at Booth Library, I searched for research-based and informative articles to support my paper's research questions. With the assistance of a library specialist, I found numerous resources to complete my paper. The library specialist showed me how to word my search title differently, as well as explore a variety of databases. Free printing from the reference computers was another excellent service provided by Booth Library that helped me organize my work and complete my project in a timely manner. In addition to articles, I was able to find books to provide me with language development information. I searched for them on the library website, wrote down the reference number, and was escorted to the appropriate row to find the books needed. The library's convenient hours were also helpful with my busy class schedule; opening as early as 8:00am on most days and as late as 1:00am on several nights. EIU's Booth Library staff and resources played a vital role in the success of my project. The end result earned me a 98% on the paper. Ultimately, the assistance from Booth Library allowed me to focus on my content and write a paper I was happy to share with others.