

# You can draw it you can talk it

Description of A Cued Drawing Program aimed  
at developing Narrative Skills in Students with  
Language Delays

Carolyn Sutton Windsor SLP and Michaelle  
MacDonald Teacher

# Background to development of program

- SK students with moderate language delays
- Focus on development of vocabulary and concepts, grammatical structures, narratives social language, and early literacy skills.
- Follow provincial curriculum
- Intensive instruction
- Closely monitored outcomes
- Area of need in program was to develop “Journaling skills”

# Standard Curriculum

- Strong emphasis on reading and writing within the statutory curriculum,
- Kress ( 1997) draws attention for a wider view of literacy both reading and the making of visual signs
- Multi model representations play, dance, toys and includes drawing as a way to act out narratives
- Drawings have considerable value for children's dev. Matthews (1999), Ring (2004)

- The role of drawing in children's learning is frequently misunderstood. Even in classrooms where the opportunity to draw is often freely available, there is usually an adult focus upon mark making to writing rather than communication.

# Why Drawing ?

- Drawing is a language children use to talk about their world both to themselves and others - Props (Dyson 1993)
- Children's drawings are thought to be a mirror of a child's representational development
- With age children develop more complex and symbolic representational strategies.
- Drawing is Graphic speech

# Drawing and Narratives

- Drawing-telling your story on paper
- Non verbal- graphic depiction
- Verbal- “telling the drawing”
- Intratextuality – relations within the text
- Developmental stages of drawing linked to stages of language development

# Research

- Represents internalized thought Vygotsk, (1978)
- Silent language that embodies thinking
- Gallas (1994)-expanded view of children's narratives
- Malchiodo (1998) gives drawing a dual role as a narrative form, providing a focusor talking
- Speech organizes and guides children's use of symbolic tools well before alphabet writing emerges Vygostky (1978)

# Research

- Children often use drawings as a narrative form to “talk” to themselves and to others and therefore construct new meanings
- Drawing and talking personal narrative is usually intensively personal and Kress ( 1997) also enables children to be able and powerful story tellers.



# Drawing and Speaking

- Matthews(1994) sees drawing as a reflection of a Childs inner schematic representation.
- Speech and drawing interact with each other as parallel and mutually transformative processes.

# Drawing and Delayed Language

- To draw an object and to embed it in a context you have a narrative – very difficult for language delayed kids
- Some kids have concurrent motor or visual perceptual difficulties and in the classroom support is given as necessary

# Introduction to Cued drawing program

- Why is cued drawing necessary?
- Students struggled with narrative both personal and story retelling
- Most students were unable to “think of something to draw”

# Draw-a-Man Test

“The nature and content of children’s drawings are dependent primarily upon intellectual development.”

Florence L. Goodenough



# Draw a Man Test scoring

- Subjective judgement
- Analyzes fourteen different aspects of child's drawing
- Marks for presence of body parts, details and proportion
- Gives standard score
- Norms for girls and boys

# Draw-a-Man Test: Findings of Others

- In the drawings of young children, a close relationship exists between concept development and general intelligence.
- To the child, drawing is a form of expression rather than a representation of beauty.
- A child draws what he knows, not what he sees.
- The child exaggerates the size of objects which seem interesting or important.
- Marked sex differences, usually in favor of the girls, are frequently observed.



# Mat Man

- Teaches children to draw and develop body awareness
- Uses manipulatives, singing and drawing
- [www.hwtears.com](http://www.hwtears.com)



# Mat Man research

- 2006-2007-Head Start program
- 12 week period
- Assessed using Goodenough- Harris Draw – A –Person (DAP) Test
- Retest ( DAP) for retention 6 weeks later
- Results -299% improvement for Mat Man group
- 80% improvement for control



# Cued Drawing

- Children learn best from structure and repetition
- Part of a routine
- Social activity
- Attention to detail
- Developing a process – sequential thinking

# Cued Drawing

- Cued drawing systematically explicit instruction that teaches children to draw recognizable pictures that they can use as a framework to “hang” their language onto.

# Advantages of Cued Drawing

- Listening and following instructions
- Vocabulary development
- Concept development
- Sentence structure
- Grammatical structures
- Early narrative skills
- Phonemic skills

# Cued Drawing Study

- Groups of children with similar language delays
- Similar # in treatment group and control group

## Results:

- Students in treatment group drew more recognizable and detailed pictures
- Students in treatment group generated longer sentences to accompany their drawings

# Cued Drawing

- Child is made aware of errors
- Corrections are modelled
- Opportunity to practice correct sentence
- Reinforces therapy goals
- Natural and functional setting

# What's next?

- Transition of skills when leaving the program
- Colouring
- Students with special needs

# References

- Dyson, H.A. (1993) 'From Prop to Mediator: The Changing Role of Written Language in Children's Symbolic Repertoires' in Spodek, B. and Saracho, O.N. *Yearbook in Early Childhood Education: Language and Literacy in Early Childhood Education* Volume 4, pp21-41 New York: Teachers College Press
- Gallas, K. (1994) *The Languages of Learning: How children talk, write, dance, draw, and sing their understanding of the world* New York: Teachers College Press.
- Kress, G. (1997) *Before Writing: Rethinking the Paths to Literacy* London: Routledge  
Malchiodi, C. (1998) *Understanding Children's Drawings* London: Jessica Kingsley

# References

- Matthews, J. (1994) *Helping Children to Draw and Paint in Early Childhood* London: Hodder & Stoughton
- Matthews, J. (1999) *The Art of Childhood and Adolescence: The Construction of Meaning*. London: Falmer Press
- Ring ,K. ( 2001) Young children drawing: the significance of the context. Paper presented at the British Educational Research Association Annual Conference, University of Leeds, 13-15 September 2001
- Vygotsky L.S. (1978) *Mind in Society*. Cambridge MA:Harvard University Press