

Book Review / Évaluation de ressource écrit

Textbook of Voice Disorders

Albert L. Merati and Steven A. Bielamowicz
(Editors) (2007)

Publisher: Plural Publishing Inc., San Diego, California

Cost: \$101.00 (CAD)

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As an instructor of a graduate course in voice disorders, I am always on the lookout for new textbooks. Thus I enthusiastically accepted the request to review *Textbook of Voice Disorders*. My initial reward for doing so was to experience the enticement of the book's cover and glossy pages filled with beautiful color photography of the larynx. It is an edited book that features 18 chapters addressing topics related to anatomy and physiology, diagnostic procedures, principles of therapy, and disorders of the larynx. The editors' purpose was to create a work "that distills and collates the fundamentals of voice science and its direct clinical applications in one approachable volume." They also wished to include representatives from major centers of clinical and research excellence "to ensure a credible and collaborative presentation." Indeed, 28 authors from France, Stockholm, and 16 centers across the United States contributed the chapters.

The editors stated that their goal was to create a "core textbook for graduate course work for speech language pathologists, as part of Otolaryngology residency reading, or as a resource for maintenance of certification review by established otolaryngologists." That goal was reflected in the editors' choice of contributors. Twenty-one of the chapter authors listed their credentials as M.D., five as Ph.D., and four as certified speech-language pathologists. The editors wanted "to provide a direct, cohesive, and instructional work" and thus asked contributors to write within a uniform format featuring core information, key points, review material, and study questions. Writers separated established information from theories under development by presenting the latter in "Thought," "Controversy," and "Emerging Concept" boxes within chapters.

The readership goal for this book was too broad. It is too much to expect it to be a "core textbook" for graduate speech-language pathologists and otolaryngology residents and established otolaryngologists doing certification review. While the representation of authors from many different geographical centers was excellent, the fact that 21 of the 28 authors were physicians points to the predominant medical "voice" (pun intended) of the text. The foreword by Dr.

Thomas Murry stated that chapters were presented in a team-like fashion in the modern model of otolaryngologist with speech-language pathologist, but only four of the 18 chapters were actually written by interdisciplinary co-authors. In my opinion Dr. Murry was more accurate in characterizing the book as an update for mature clinicians and a reference for young clinicians.

The editors set out to present a work that distilled and collated fundamentals of voice science and direct clinical applications. They succeeded on several levels. The references listed and cited by the authors were superb and very current. Most of the authors beautifully synthesized the current state of clinical care and the most recent research contributions. The major contributions of this book to communication science and disorders are the numerous and remarkable color photographs that beautifully illustrate many conditions of the larynx and the several cogent and clinically relevant discussions of the coordination across neurological subsystems to accomplish phonation and to perform swallowing and speech functions. Of special note was Christy Ludlow's chapter on "Physiology of Airway Regulation" that employed everyday observations to illustrate underlying physiology and clinical principles. The relative weakness of the text for communication science and disorders was the heavy bias toward a medical audience. Unless "Trendelenburg position," "sialorrhoea," "Kerrison punch," and "anastomosis" are part of your everyday vocabulary, you will need, as I did, an excellent medical dictionary at your side while reading most chapters. One chapter actually stated, "As otolaryngologists we..." Only three pages of the entire text were devoted to descriptions of voice therapy to facilitate breath control and support, increase airflow during phonation, and facilitate oral resonance. For the field of otolaryngology the contribution of the book is more apparent.

The editors stated that they wished to provide a direct, cohesive, instructional work. The foreword by Dr. Murry described the text as written in an easily readable style, making it appropriate as a companion to basic science lectures. I do not share that opinion. While I am used to the joy of interacting with very intelligent, graduate, speech-language pathology students each year, I would not select this work as the primary textbook for a voice disorders course. I would recommend it for the mature clinician, the researcher, and the instructor of a voice disorders course as a wonderfully illustrated resource of supplemental information about laryngology and voice. Another reason I would not select it as a primary text is that there is no inclusion of the topic of laryngectomy, a topic most instructors of voice disorders would be obligated to include in a course. The editors and publisher provided superb cross-references of material in each chapter, contributing to cohesion. The uniform format across chapters also contributed to unity. I have also already

applauded the beautiful photographs that offer the reader so much insight. However, I was very disappointed to note approximately 50 typographical errors in the text. Some were simply misspellings, but others included the use of the outdated term “spastic dysphonia” and a partially printed last line of a figure caption on page 103. Even the beautiful photographs sometimes were not labeled well enough to enable the reader to interpret them.

Experienced voice clinicians, researchers, and instructors of voice disorders courses would find that the *Textbook of Voice Disorders* is worth acquiring, given its beautiful photographs and its synthesis of information about the current state of clinical care and the contributions of recent research. It would also be a worthwhile resource for university libraries and clinics specializing in voice care. However, much of the work is biased toward the physician reader. It could serve as an excellent information supplement for clinical training of speech-language pathology students, but requires too much background knowledge or experience to be used to advantage as a primary textbook.



*Sharing Books and Stories to Promote
Language and Literacy*

Anne van Kleeck (Editor) (2006)

Publisher: Plural Publishing, San Diego, CA.

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This volume is part of a series on emergent and early literacy development. The goal of the entire series is to provide practical and evidence-based resources across a wide range of emergent literacy skills to encourage professionals to include literacy activities as an integral part of their services to toddlers, preschoolers and school-aged children. The focus of this particular volume is using stories and book sharing activities to facilitate language and literacy development. Chapter 1 provides an overview, after which the volume is divided into two sections. Section 1 (Chapters 2 - 4) focuses on using book sharing to foster skills related to print (e.g., phonological awareness, print awareness, and letter knowledge). Section 2 (Chapters 5 - 9) focuses on using book sharing to foster oral language development (e.g., vocabulary, inferential language, and syntactic and narrative skills). Several chapters include information on cultural considerations when using stories or books in assessment and intervention contexts. Of interest to Canadian readers is that several of these examples are drawn from Canadian studies.

Chapter 2 focuses on teaching a wide array of phonological awareness (PA) skills. The authors first provide an overview of the current empirical evidence related to the importance of PA training with young children. The remainder of the chapter describes a phonological awareness training program developed by the authors based on empirical findings. The authors provide both teaching examples for a variety of PA tasks using trade storybooks along with an appendix listing PA skills that may be targeted in numerous trade storybooks. The utility of this section is that it shows the reader how to take empirical evidence and design a treatment program using available resources. However, given the target audience, there are two important aspects not addressed by the authors. First, empirical evidence has revealed that PA is important but not sufficient condition in learning to read. From this chapter a reader would be likely to conclude that all children would benefit from PA instruction when this is not necessarily the case. Secondly, Spector (1992) revealed that many kindergarten children fail to perform well on PA tasks due to task demands (i.e., complexity and unfamiliarity) rather than poor PA skills. While the authors point out that task complexity needs to be considered, many of the tasks in the described program are highly complex. Without a clear explanation of the impact of complexity on task performance professionals attempting to implement this program may incorrectly

conclude that a child who performs poorly on a task has poor PA skills when performance difficulties may be due to other factors.

In Chapter 3, ways in which print awareness can be fostered during shared book reading are described. To begin, the authors describe the components of print awareness (e.g., print functions, print conventions, and print forms). Next, the authors describe a technique termed 'print referencing', which refers to ways adults can focus children's attention on print while engaged in book sharing. Examples of print referencing techniques are provided for each of the print awareness components in addition to 'high' and 'low' levels of scaffolding support. A 30-week, author-developed program to teach print awareness to preschoolers in a classroom setting is outlined. The chapter appendix provides a list of books used in the program along with the targeted print concept. These authors also present some very interesting preliminary data on a coding system developed to examine the type of language used by adults during book sharing activities. The only difficulty the targeted audience may encounter with this chapter is that distinctions between the descriptors of 'high' and 'low' scaffolding support are at times difficult to discern. This may impact a professional's ability to utilize the techniques at least as described in the chapter.

Chapter 4 focuses on teaching letter naming knowledge (LNK) during book sharing activities. The author begins with discussion on the importance of LNK. An excellent synthesis of the history of research on LNK is provided with particular reference to why LNK has received little attention in the research literature and in clinical or educational applications even though this skill is highly predictive of early reading success. The author provides a very compelling argument for teaching LNK that will be of interest to clinicians and educators alike. The second half of the chapter examines research using shared book reading as an opportunity to teach LNK. Of interest to the reader is the way in which books tend to be used differently to teach LNK by families depending on cultural background. Consideration of cultural differences is an integral part of the suggestions provided by the author for teaching LNK during shared book reading.

In Chapter 5 the author explains the need for parent training techniques to promote language development with toddlers. Even though this is a critical language-learning period, toddlers often do not receive community support because they no longer have frequent contact with the health care system and they are typically not enrolled in educational programs. The author then provides compelling evidence for teaching parents to use an interactive book sharing technique, 'dialogic reading,' to promote the development of oral language and preliteracy skills of toddlers. This chapter provides the reader with excellent examples for adapting research conducted in controlled laboratory settings to real world settings. Unfortunately the author does not report data on the effectiveness of this technique with families from non-mainstream cultures. Thus, it is important for

professionals interested in this technique to read Chapter 6 in addition to this chapter to obtain a complete picture of the benefits and circumspect use of dialogic reading within and across cultural groups.

While the information presented in Chapter 6 is important in its own right, it is an essential read for professionals interested in implementing dialogic reading techniques with families from non-mainstream backgrounds. The author presents a wide variety of research findings, beginning with findings for middle-class European American families, followed by findings for families of Latino, African American, and Asian backgrounds. As stated by the author, this body of research suggests that professionals need to be judicious in applying dialogic reading techniques with families from other than middle-class European or American backgrounds. The author focuses her discussion of family literacy practices by examining differences in values and beliefs associated with belonging to 'collectivist' or 'individualist' cultural groups. The author suggests that open discussions about cultural differences in home literacy practices with families from non-mainstream cultural backgrounds who choose to anticipate in family literacy programs will likely avoid any inadvertent stereotyping or denigration of family values and beliefs that may differ from those advocated in dialogic reading.

The authors of Chapter 7 focus on ways to optimize preschoolers' vocabulary development through book sharing activities. They first describe the importance of enhancing vocabulary development in the preschool years for later language and school success. The authors point out that the potential of book sharing as a means to enhance vocabulary development requires more than just reading stories to children. To this end they describe and demonstrate five steps to build vocabulary during shared book reading. They conclude with suggestions on book choice, group size, type and number of strategies to use when focusing on vocabulary development. An appendix is provided which describes the planning of a shared book reading activity using a trade storybook in a preschool classroom.

Chapter 8 emphasizes the importance of fostering inferential language skills in preschoolers. This is not commonly targeted with this age group; however, the author makes a strong argument for targeting inferential language skills due to the crucial role such knowledge has in later higher level reading comprehension. The author re-examines data from cross-cultural studies looking for examples of parents fostering inferential language during shared book reading experiences. Considerable variability within and across cultural groups was found in how preschoolers were socialized to use inferential language. This is important information for professionals, as children are entering formal schooling differently prepared in an aspect of language use that is critical to school success and often is not systematically taught in the early grades. The chapter concludes with a description of a shared reading

intervention designed to fostering inferential language skills in a group of at-risk preschoolers.

Chapter 9 focuses on using stories to simultaneously improve narrative language skills and use of complex grammatical structures needed to produce narratives. The authors introduce an intervention approach to address both skills, which they call narrative-based language intervention (NBLI). The NBLI program can be administered individually or in small groups and is tailored to individual child needs. There are numerous examples of specific program elements provided within the chapter and appendix. Within each lesson there are opportunities for focused attention on specific grammatical structures after which children practice using that structure in a variety of narrative contexts. This chapter offers professionals a view into the evolution of applying research evidence to real world clinical or classroom settings as the authors have described the changes they have made to the program since the original conception.

Sharing Books and Stories to Promote Language and Literacy (a volume in the Emergent and Early Literacy Series) would be a valuable resource for professionals who are not able to access research journals and are interested in applying empirical research findings into practice. The volume has been written with audience in mind and fulfills that goal. For professionals interested in 'evidenced-based practice' this volume provides a plethora of examples on how to take research evidence and apply it to real world settings and the evolution of such endeavors. This volume would also be a valuable resource for pre-service teachers and speech-language pathology students. Additionally, the editor points to several areas where additional research is needed, often with specific suggestions. Thus, the volume may support students in choosing a line of research for a thesis or capping project.

Reference

Spector, J.E. (1992). Predicting progress in beginning reading: Dynamic assessment of phonemic awareness. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 84(3), 353-363.

