

This unedited transcript of a SpeechPathology.com webinar is provided in order to facilitate communication accessibility for the viewer and may not be a totally verbatim record of the proceedings. This transcript may contain errors. Copying or distributing this transcript without the express written consent of SpeechPathology.com is strictly prohibited. For any questions, please contact customerservice@SpeechPathology.com.

Principles Driving Effective Narrative-Based
Language Intervention
Recorded May 19th, 2020

Presenter: Douglas Petersen, PhD, CCC-SLP
SpeechPathology.com Course #9296

- [Amy] All right, once again, welcome to our webinar today, which is presented in joint partnership between speechpathology.com and the American Board of Child Language and Language Disorders. Our webinar title is "Principles Driving "Effective Narrative-Based Language Intervention." Our presenter today is Dr. Douglas Petersen. I'm going to introduce to you Linda Schreiber, who is our guest editor for these series of events that we're doing with ABCLLD. Linda is an ASHA Fellow and the owner of Linda R. Schreiber and Associates, and the Cognitive Press. She is a Board Certified Specialist in Child Language, and she is Vice Chair of the American Board of Child Language and Language Disorders. So welcome, Linda, thanks for being our guest editor today, and I'm gonna turn over the mic to you to introduce Doug.

- [Linda] Okay, thank you Amy, and good afternoon to all of you out there listening. As Amy said, this program is presented in partnership with the American Board of Child Language and Language Disorders, also known as the ABCLLD, and before I introduce Dr. Petersen to you, I did want to mention that if any of you think you are an expert in child language, if you think you have advanced knowledge or advanced skills or leadership in child language and are interested in becoming a certified child language specialist, be sure to visit our website, which is childlanguagespecialist.org. Those of us who are specialists have found many benefits to being certified as an expert in child language, and I know that we all work very hard to ensure that children and adolescents receive high quality services, and that families can find experts in their geographic areas. So there are a lot of benefits, and I invite you to consider becoming a specialist. So today it's my honor to introduce our presenter, Dr. Douglas Petersen. Doug is an Associate Professor in the Department of Communication Disorders at Brigham Young University. His research focuses on child language and literacy, and has a particular emphasis on learning potential. His psychometric research examines the validity and reliability of dynamic assessments and progress monitoring procedures for language and literacy, and his intervention research is focused on examining the efficacy, effectiveness, and implementation of multi-tiered systems of language

support. So I'm so looking forward to his presentation today, we're very fortunate to have him present to us today, and we welcome you, Dr. Petersen, and thank you for sharing your knowledge with us this afternoon, and I turn it over to you.

- [Douglas] Thank you so very much for that very gracious introduction. It's a pleasure to be here today with everyone. So today we're gonna talk about "Principles Driving Effective Narrative-Based "Language Intervention," and there are several principles. I've actually toned this down a little bit, trying to narrow things down to what I consider to be the most important, most relevant that you can take away. First of all, I do need to disclose that I'm Vice President of Research for Language Dynamics Group, and I do receive royalties for materials sold through that company, including "Story Champs," which we'll talk about today, and this learning content or event doesn't focus exclusively on just one product, however, which I will make clear. We are talking about principles of intervention that apply across the board. You don't need some particular program to make this happen or to implement it. I do wanna thank speechpathology.com for inviting me to do this presentation.

Most of what I'm gonna talk about, as I mentioned, will come from my own experience or the experiences that I've had working with Dr. Trina Spencer. I have to acknowledge her partnership. She has been a colleague of mine for many, many years now, and we do a lot of work together. She is crucial in establishing the evidence base of narrative intervention. So there are a few learning outcomes for you. Hoping that you can walk away with listing the 10 key principles of narrative-based language intervention, and also, list examples of how these principles can be use to drive intervention, and explain how to implement individual, small-group, and large-group narrative-based language intervention. I am going to try to cover those to a certain degree, although that's a lot to handle in one hour. I think we can get a lot of this done. So first of all, I just wanna highlight a few things. This is from the National Assessment of Educational Progress, or NAEP. This is a test that's administered to thousands of children across the United

States every year. You'll notice the date here at the top is 2015. It doesn't really matter. Sadly, the most recent 2019 data came out and they look about exactly the same. What I have highlighted here are the percentage of students who are reading at grade level in fourth grade, and right now I have Native American, Alaskan Native students highlighted with 21%, reading at grade level 46% of white children, 18% African American or black, 21% Hispanic, 57% Asian, 28% Native Hawaiian, and you can see that percentages are about the same over here for eighth grade. The reason why I highlight this is because people consider this to be a considerable disaster in our country. We have less than 50%, most of the time, of the population not meeting grade level expectation when it comes to reading.

So how have we done historically? Well, not very well. You'll notice on this graph on the top here, we have 1992, here, I'll just put my little arrow on there, we have 1992 right here, and we have 2017 here. Now, what you can see is this little yellow line. This line is delineating the percent of students at grade level for reading comprehension, or well, just generally, for reading, and you can see that we had 22, and then this is advanced, and 6%, so 28% right here in 1992, and, oh don't tax my, don't tax my math here, but anyways, a little bit more here in 2017. Now, this is a pretty long time ago, it's sad to say, 1992 to 2017. We are making some progress, but really not that much at all. We still have a considerable number of students who are struggling.

I wanna highlight just the most recent data here from 2013, 2015, 2017. This is the percent of students who are not meeting grade level expectations. You can see that the needle is just really hardly changing at all here. That's quite a problem. So we have to ask ourselves what the problem really is. Now, I hope that most of you are familiar with this, this is Hollis Scarborough's Reading Rope. It's a great illustration of what is reading, this construct that we're always referring to, and I love Alan Kamhi's definition of reading, or the way he characterizes it. He talks about it as being a conflation of two constructs, language and decoding. I love that word conflation, because it is like this

forcible merging of two different constructs. I think it really does characterize reading very well. When we talk about reading and we just say reading, it's not clear whether we're talking about language-related factors here, or whether we're talking about code-based factors. Now, I realize there's some overlap, but I'm gonna try to simplify the world a little bit here today. I just wanna make it clear that both of these are crucial, of course, for reading to happen, but I do wanna make the case that for the majority of children not meeting grade level reading expectations, and I wanna make this clear, for the majority who are not meeting grade level reading expectations, it is a comprehension factor. We can see this because when you follow children longitudinally over time, even those who are culturally and linguistically diverse, you'll notice that they are able to learn to decode or access the words on the page just like most other children. It's not disproportionately more difficult for them to learn the code. However, you can see that there is a major achievement gap in the ethnicities and races.

Of course, this is not a racial factor. This is related to other factors that all boil down to difficulty understanding what's being read. I'm not really talking about a language disorder, of course, for most children, right. Let's be clear about that as well. 80% of African American children are not meeting grade level reading expectations. This does not mean 80% of those children have a language disorder. But they are having difficulty understanding a particular dialect or the vocabulary or whatever it might be that they're accessing through the code.

I love Hirsch's quote here. "It's now well accepted that the chief cause "of the academic achievement gap "between socioeconomic groups is a language gap." Or from Snow and Uccelli, "Academic language is the pivotal skill repertoire "for closing the achievement gap "and attention to it is nearly absent in primary grades." Now that is really actually a very remarkable statement. Sit back and think about this. We generally know what the problem is. We understand that the majority of children are struggling with comprehension, yet attention to it is nearly absent in primary grades.

Now this has a lot to do with speech language pathologists, because of course, we are the language experts in our schools and in whatever organization we're working in, usually. Now, I'm talking about reading comprehension, but I keep using language as some sort of synonym for it, and sometimes I get called out for that. You know, people say, "Listen, that's not the same thing. "Listening comprehension and reading comprehension "are not the same thing," and I don't know how to say this other than I'm not really sure that's true. You can say anything you write down, and you can write down anything you say. Now, if we're talking about conversational skills or conversational language, true, it's generally more informal, less precise, and so forth, but it doesn't have to be. Oral language can be just as complex as written language. Here is just a study that we did recently where we looked at the percent, or the correlation between here, on your x-axis, this is listening comprehension, and this here, on the y, is reading comprehension.

You can see that there's a very strong correlation here. This is for a large group of students who were culturally and linguistically diverse, and here we singled out the Latino Hispanic students. You can see that, generally speaking, if you get a score of 30 on your listening comprehension task, you're gonna get about a score of 30 on your reading comprehension task. It's not a perfect relationship, of course. Multiple variables to explain for that, or multiple reasons to explain for why it's not a perfect relationship, but it certainly is very strong.

As a speech language pathologist, educator, you should be able to start making some connections here. If we have a difficult time with reading comprehension, and if reading comprehension is highly related to listening comprehension, then it stands to reason that we could actually start working on reading comprehension with preschools and with kindergartners and with first graders even before they're reading. How do we do that? Through an oral language modality. I realize that most of you probably that I'm talking to today are speech language pathologists, and you have a caseload, and on

your caseload you have a lot of students who have language disorders, and that is, of course, an important population. We dedicate so much of our lives to those children. Today though, I do want to highlight the need that this country has, and the world has, actually, for our influence across all of the children, not just those who have a language disorder. That's why I'm really going to talk about a multi-tiered system of support today, meaning it's a system that's not just designed for those who have IEPs or a diagnosed disability. Instead, it's a system that's designed to help anyone who needs it for whatever reason, and I love that. It is essentially a concept of special education for everyone.

So I'm gonna focus a lot on narratives, and the reason why is because narratives are, first of all, culturally relevant. Across cultures, there is narration. Now, it's not the same. There are different narratives structures of story grammar that you can find. However, conceptually it's there. It's how we tend to make meaning out of our world. Narratives are simply a causal, casually related sequence of events that are told in an order that's temporal. Now those two terms are very important, this causal and temporal connection. This means that things are explicitly, usually explicitly connected, and that there's a time order to them in a narrative. So in addition to helping children tell stories with this structure, this story grammar, we also need to help them understand that there are causal and temporal relationships.

Now, narratives and oral language are very much acknowledged in the curriculum standards that you will find across the United States. Some states have adopted the Common Core State Standards, some haven't. Those states that haven't adopted the Common Core I have found tend to have standards that look a lot like those anyways. Here's an excerpt from a Common Core State Standards. "Children's oral language competence "is strongly predictive of their facility "in learning to read and write, "listening and speaking vocabulary "and even mastery of syntax "set boundaries as to what children can read "and understand no matter how well they can decode." There

are very clear, explicit goals or objectives in the Common Core State Standards that focus on narrative. The reason why is because narratives force you to talk like a book. Most of the time, when you're telling a story, you have to use academic language to some degree. Now, I don't wanna speak in absolutes, this is not all the time, of course, but if you want someone to understand your story and they have never been where you're trying to take them with your words, they have never witnessed or seen what it is you're trying to describe, you have to use specific language that uses Tier 2 and Tier 3 vocabulary, complex syntax. You don't use complex syntax just to sound complex, but instead, to be precise and clear. It is the language that's used in the school. It is the dialect that's used in the school.

Of course, our Latino children who are coming to the schools who are unfamiliar with this particular dialect, our African American children, or anyone, any child that's unfamiliar with this dialect is going to struggle with understanding it. It's just like opening up a Shakespearean play and reading it for the first time. There is considerable difficulty with understanding it. It is not an impossible task, however, and it would be an easy task if since birth you had been exposed to that dialect your whole life.

So today, we're gonna talk about exposing children early on to the dialect, I hope I'm using that word right, you'd think that I could or should, but I'm gonna call it a dialect, okay, to exposing them to the dialect of academic language as early as possible so that it's not a shock to their system when they enter into the school system, and also, even if they're in school and they have not been exposed to academic language, we're going to explicitly teach them academic language, put it at the front of their minds. So some of the things were put together, Carol Strong, Carol Westby, Marilyn Napol and several others have delineated for us what it is that makes language academic language. It's things like this, adverbs, temporal subordination, causal subordination, elaborated noun phrases, using words like decided, considered, that are these mental and linguistic verbs, conjunctions that are both coordinating and subordinating, and

less common, and then dialogue. Now there's more things, of course, that make up academic language, but we can wrap our minds around this, and some of you may not be that familiar with some of these things. But believe it or not, you are probably more familiar with these things than your fellow peers, than those who are working alongside of you. You know a lot more about language than they do, most likely. Most of your peers still are not sure what the difference is between speech and language. So let's talk about some research-based principles. Generally speaking, for narrative-based language intervention, but it certainly applies to expository language, and really even conversational language.

So I'm gonna cover all of these principles, I'm hoping, today. The first one is building story structure first, then promoting metalinguistic knowledge, keeping children active, using a whole-part-whole instruction, using visuals, and fading them as quickly as possible, delivering immediate corrective feedback, using two-step prompting, differentiating and individualizing the intervention, arranging for generalization, and the principle that perhaps is the most challenging, but shouldn't be, making it fun. So first, let's start out with building story structure first. It's our very first principle. Now of course, I wanna make it clear that what I'm saying here is not the gospel truth. It doesn't have to be this case or this way every time, but I am talking about things that have been established through the research to have been effective.

Some of this is certainly coming from clinical experience that Dr. Spencer and I have built up over the years, in addition to the research that we've done. But we have found that building story structure first is a great way to build academic language. Now, it's essentially like building the frame of a house, and then after that, you establish all of the other things that need to go into the house, all the wiring, drywall, and so forth. But first you have to have the frame, and that is the story structure, sometimes referred to as story grammar. So a study that Dr. Spencer and I did with a couple of our colleagues a little while ago followed this sort of procedure. We worked with three and

four-year-old preschool children, and for 12 intervention sessions, individual intervention sessions, we focused just on story grammar. Then once the children were able to produce a narrative with a complete episode, an initiating event, an attempt, and a consequence, after they were able to do that, then we started to layer on language complexity, and we had great results. Now, we've replicated a study like this multiple times, and we tend to start always in this sort of pattern. You'll also find that other people who do narrative intervention research like the Gillams, Ron and Sandy Gillam, they follow this same pattern as well. In their skill program, they start out with story grammar, establishing that foundation first, and then they build the grammar onto, or the language complexity on top of it.

So what happens though, often, is we'll establish beautifully the story grammar, but then, we'll feel like we're, we've been very successful, but in truth, that's just the very beginning to establish academic language, and after you have established the story grammar, then you start to shoot for the stars, really, and we've had some pushback sometimes. We've had some people say to us, "It's not developmentally appropriate "to teach preschool children to talk like a book, "to teach them this complex academic language." Dr. Spencer and I have always thought, we don't really know what that means, because we've been able to work with preschool children and actually build their language up to a point where they're developing language and producing language that has the complexity that you see in much older children.

Developmentally appropriate or not, I don't know, but possible, absolutely, and possible without a lot of torture, too, at the same time. So when you build story structure as your foundation, you then layer on complex language, which I'll explain a little bit more a little later, vocabulary, and then of course you can always tell different kinds of stories, personal stories, fictional stories, they can be told with pictures, without pictures and so forth. Then of course they can be also produced in different modalities, in written form, in oral form, in signed form, whatever it might be.

Expository language, as well, is very related to narrative in many ways. In fact, we have this sort of false dichotomy of narrative and expository language. In reality, most children experience a mixture of a combination of the two as they advance through the schools, through the grades. Okay, principle two, Promoting Metalinguistic Knowledge. Now, how does that help? How does learning about language and gaining knowledge about knowledge help our students? Well, what it does is it first helps to establish a schema, a framework, and we actually do give these story grammar elements names. Now, some people can get really hung up on this, you know, and they can say, "Well, I don't know why you're calling this a problem. "In a lot of stories it could just be "an initiating the event "that maybe isn't a problem, "or maybe this should be stated "Stein and Glenn stated feelings, "it should be internal response, "or this action should be attempt," which actually, it probably should be attempt, but for our little preschoolers, we just keep it clean and simple, and then an ending.

Well, is that a consequence, is that a resolution? Just, later on, you can really get into the nitpicky parts of out, but when you're starting out, just keep it simple, and we actually do have the children identify these elements of the story grammar, but we don't do it outside of the context of telling story. So as we're telling the story, we will highlight that there is a character in our story, highlight the icon right here, and we'll say, "That's our character. "John's the character in our story."

But it's a story that we're unfolding as we go. So how do you build this metalinguistic knowledge, this generalized pattern? Well, we use multiple exemplars, and that's pretty important. When I first started out doing narrative intervention, and this would have been about 20 years ago, I had one story. I drew and I wrote this story about a frog who liked to eat different animals, and then its behavior resembled the behavior of the animal. So if you eat a, oh my goodness, I can't even remember the story anymore, it was a terrible story. But what I did was, I had this one story and I just kept increasing the complexity of the story, and I have the children retell it, and then over time, I just

keep adding more elements to the story, greater vocabulary, complexity, and so forth. It was great. I would love to, at the beginning of the school year, record a sample of this story from a child, and then, at the end of the school year, have them retell the same story. Well, there's pretty weak data though, right, when it comes to actually showing progress. I mean, I even recognized that. I thought, well, okay, so they're getting better at telling the same story over and over again. It didn't take very long for me to figure out that I also needed to try to figure out if this was actually making an impact at all in their language. So I would have them generate their own stories as well. Now we've come a long ways, and thankfully, Dr. Spencer's helped shape that, but this idea of using multiple exemplars is all about the idea of using multiple stories that have the same or similar story grammar or whatever target it is you're focused on.

What you want to do is expose children to many of these different stories. This teaches them that it's not just about the content of the story, but instead it's about the structure, both the story grammar or the macrostructure, as well as the microstructure that you want them to learn and generalize over time. Here's an example of something from "Story Champs." These are three different stories. We have a story about Michelle who's going to the dentist, Daniel, here, who's, who somebody spilled water on his writing, and then this is Lily.

I think it used to be Jenna, my daughter, but we changed it. She didn't like having a story about somebody spilling their cereal named after her, so this is now about Lily. Now, each one of these stories has the same story grammar elements in them, down to, actually, the same number of characters, the same number of times the character's been mentioned by name, and in "Story Champs," it goes a lot deeper than that. Every one of these stories has the exact same number of adverbs and adjectives and temporal and causal subordinating conjunctions and so forth. But we've done that very much for our, on purpose, right. This is just a certain level of story that is replicated, and we have multiple versions, or multiple stories, I should say, like this, of this degree

of complexity. I'll show you later on that we also have other stories that are more complex and other stories that are less complex, but the point is, of course, we don't just teach one story and then move on. We have the children practice retelling these stories, and we make sure that they include the pieces that we want across every one of these stories. That brings out metalinguistic knowledge, or brings out awareness of these sorts of elements, because we draw attention to them as we go. So we use multiple exemplars, they learn, children learn the concept of story grammar, and it helps them to organize that content, and it's not about memorizing, but it's all about using, in our case, we start out with specialized stories so that we kind of control the environment, and control the situation, so that there are truly multiple exemplars. Then we do, of course, introduce storybooks, as well, and things that are not just generated by researchers. Keeping children active, I cannot emphasize this enough.

This principle is so crucial. We are learning that one of the key ingredients, if not the key ingredient to narrative-based language intervention is having children actually produce the language. I had a student who did a study a couple of years ago. I thought it was a really interesting study. She had three groups of children that she randomly assigned. One group of children participated in "Story Champs" where they did narrative retelling with pictures and icons and all of these things built in to the research that Dr. Spencer and I have been doing.

Another group of children just retold stories. So the teacher would tell them a story and then the story would retell that story. The other group was just a no treatment control, was just business as usual. At the end of, I think it was about 12 weeks, at the end of this intervention, we found that the children who did the "Story Champs" program and the children who were in the retell activity, just retell only, though, those children had significantly higher retells and writing outcomes than the children who were in the no treatment control group. We also found that there was no significant difference between the children who did the full-blown "Story Champs" and all of the pictures and

the icons and the children who just practiced retelling stories. Now, there was a big difference in the behavior of the children and the extent to which they were engaged and wanted to participate, there's no doubt about that. Just retelling the stories over and over again got pretty dry, and the teachers didn't enjoy that activity very much, nor did the children. But when it comes to actual outcomes, it was all about having them just practice talking. It's not just listening to books, it's not just listening to the academic language, it's also having to produce it. If anyone's tried to learn a second language, you can understand what I'm talking about here. If you really want to learn a second language, the best way to do it, maybe I shouldn't say the best way, but an incredibly effective way is to put yourself in another country where you're forced to speak that language. You will find accelerated growth. Now, what does that have to do with keeping children active? It means that they are not just listening like all of you are right now, unfortunately. I'm sorry we can't have a conversation together. But they are actually needing to use the words.

So active student responding certainly reduces behavior problems. If I had some of you here today where we could actually have a conversation and you could say things back to me, when you're, if I asked you to tell me a story, for example, about a time when you got hurt or a time when you were really scared, you would all of a sudden have all of your attention, or most of it, on this presentation. You wouldn't be bored because you'd be talking about an experience that happened to you. You'd be talking about something that drives you emotionally, that impacted you emotionally. It's not boring. You don't, I wouldn't have to have you play Monopoly with me on the side to keep you going. We wouldn't have to be watching some sort of video to keep you interested. No, all I would have to do is say, "Tell me about a time when you were really scared "in your life." Your full attention would be on that topic, and you would be engaged. I mean, maybe I shouldn't guarantee it, but it's incredibly likely. The same applies for children. You have them talk about themselves, or you have them talk about something they're interested in, and actually impart information to you, they're

suddenly focused and interested. Of course when you have students respond, it increases their opportunities to practice. The more they can talk like a book, the more they'll be able to write like a book, and the more that they can write like a book, the more they'll, of course, be able to understand that kind of language when they're reading it. We focus a lot on retells, and the reason why is because when you're retelling something, that process loads onto two factors, both receptive language and expressive language. You first have to be able to understand what that person has said to you, and then you have to be able to produce it. So we do a lot of that. Also, especially with children who need more attention, we do a lot of small-group intervention. I mean, most of the time, we really don't do a lot of one-on-one intervention. It's not clinically feasible a lot of the time, so a lot of our research is with small groups of children.

When you do small-group intervention, of course students have more opportunities to respond, especially if you engineer it correctly. I'll show you a couple of videos on how we do that. Something that, actually I thought was a little bit weird was this group responding idea. When Dr. Spencer and I started doing this research with large-group intervention, she would have the whole classroom chorally respond, and she would snap at them, and I thought, oh, I can't handle that, it's just too behavioral, I hated it. I've become desensitized to it now, but you know, in the end, what's really happening is she is, and we are helping these children all at the same time say something so that they're actively producing this.

Then of course we have some games in listening. So if we could cue up this first video here, I just wanna show you briefly what it looks like to do this active responding. Before I start the video, I just wanna show you a few things. This is Dr. Spencer, and she has four children here with her, they're preschoolers. Now, there's only one student who will be speaking at a time, but the students all have these little story sticks that have the story grammar elements on them. Their job is to identify the story grammar

that their friend is talking about and to hold it up so that they are essentially helping their friend, they're teaching their friend, and they're attending. Now listen, I know that nothing's perfect, of course, and these are preschoolers, so it's a little unruly, but what you can see is some active responding in a small group setting.

- Tyrell went to the slide.

- Went to the park.

- Okay, you went to the park, and then what's happening here? Oh wait, we gotta do, he said Tyrell, that's our character.

- And Tyrell is.

- What the?

- [Trina] We got it, okay.

- Tyrell felled in the mud.

- That's right, he fell in the mud. What part of the story is that?

- [All] Thumbs down.

- That's our problem. Very good.

- Thumbs down.

- Okay, keep going Joseph, we're listening.

- That he, that he's, he was angry.

- Look at that.

- [Douglas] Okay, let's go back to the slides for a moment. So in that video, essential Trina is trying, and she's doing a pretty good job to get every one of those children to participate in this activity. So something that, if you are familiar with Dr. Ukraine, Dr. Teresa Ukrainetz, she has a great book. I don't get any money by saying this, by the way, but I love her book on contextualized language intervention, and then a latest version of that. She talks a lot about this in her book, about using this whole-part-whole instruction. It's all about contextualizing something then unpacking it and then reconstructing it again. Teresa talks about basketball, and I know from personal experience, she knows nothing about basketball, but it's still a great example where what you do is you first familiarize someone with the game.

They need to understand what this game is that they're playing, and then you often break out into different skills, dribbling, shooting, passing, whatever it might be, but then you put it back together again always in the game, and the students know, or the people know why they're practicing these things. They know why they're dribbling, they know why they're passing, they know why they're shooting. When it's put into a context, it of course puts meaning to this whole procedure and puts purpose behind it, so we try to follow that pretty closely.

In the intervention research that we've done, you'll find that we do that very thing. So we'll first display some pictures and we'll read the entire story to the children. That's our very first process right there. That's the whole piece, right. They get to hear the whole story. Then we'll do parts. We'll have them name the story grammar parts as needed, and then we'll have them do a team retell. Each student will tell a part of the

story and then the teacher will summarize the whole story, put it back into the whole again. Then we'll have the children retell a story with just, well, with the pictures and the icons on a table, and then tell the whole story, and we will focus on the parts of the child who needs help with. They'll tell the whole story, we'll stop them, we'll interrupt them, we'll be naturally rude to them. Not rude, but we'll say, "I don't really understand what you're talking about here, "I'm not quite sure who's in your story. "Can you tell me who the character is?" So again, we're bringing it back to the part. So you can see this whole process unfolds as we go through this intervention. So another thing that's really important is to use visuals but to fade them away. We wanna try to avoid dependency on visuals. In the real world when you're telling a story, it's pretty unusual for you to have a bunch of pictures next to you where you can flip through the picture book as you're telling the story.

So now I'm not suggesting that visuals sometimes are not perfectly relevant and applicable, but most of the we try to fade these things. So when we're working with our students, you'll notice that we have built in this process of first having illustrations for them to retell, and then illustrations and icons, and then we take the illustrations away and they just have the icons to retell, then another child is making up their own story with just the icons, and then this last student here, they are making up their own story with no pictures and no icons.

Of course we rotate the children through the steps here, through the sessions. But essentially, we're fading these visual materials as much as we can. This is not related to "Story Champs" or skill or anything else, right. This is anything, this is related to anything that you want to apply for narrative intervention or expository language intervention. You know, I'm really regretting not numbering these principles, by the way, 'cause I've lost count, but we're getting there. Okay, provide immediate corrective feedback. Now, there's a way to do this that's incredibly natural. So first of all, you wanna focus on what the child should do and not what they did wrong. So the child

tells a story and they say, "Him was, him was, him was crying," and you say, "Yeah, say it like this. "John was sad because he hurt his knee, okay, your turn." Now, I'm giving them feedback, and I'm also telling them what I want them to say. I'm not focusing on what they did wrong, I'm just saying, "Try this instead. "Try this flavor of academic language instead." Or how about this. "Wait, I'm a little confused. "How'd you feel about your problem?" Now, it's okay to be confused, and it's totally normal. We're pushing for as natural of a context as possible. Someone's telling you a story, you get lost in that story, you don't know where, what the problem is or you don't know who they're talking about, it's perfectly okay for you to stop them and say, "Uh, I'm not quite sure who you're talking about anymore," or, "I don't even know why that's a problem. "Why was it a problem for you?" something like that, and it's not rude, it's just totally naturally, and it's a great way to teach narratives.

Or, "Oh, you forgot something, "how'd you feel about his problem," or, "How did you feel about his problem." So recasting of course. This is the instructive way to give this feedback. So we use a two-step prompting procedure. So we had a pretty complex prompting procedure established many, many years ago, and it's really all been simplified to this. We found this to be the most effective approach. It goes like this. First of all, we ask a question.

The child is telling a story. "One day, I was riding my bike down the street "and a bear jumped out in front of me." That's actually a true story, but I don't have time to get into it. Now, and then I can say, "And so then I, I was okay." That's not a great story, right, there's things missing. So one of the things I could do is ask a question. "How did you feel as you were coming down the trail "and the saw a bear in front of you?" That's my open-ended question. If I don't have the language, I don't know how to say it, then I will say to them my second step, I'll model for them. "You were freaking out "because there were two cubs with that bear. "Now you say that." "Oh yeah, I was freaking out "because there were two cubs with that bear." That may not be the best example, but

the idea is first asking a question and then if they can get the answer and move forward with the story, great, but if not, then you give them the language and have them say it. You don't just give them the language and then walk away. You say, "John cut his knee, now you say that." The child says, "John cut his knee." Now often, we'll do one more thing. We'll say, "Okay, go back one step in your story "and make sure you tell me what happened to John. "Tell me the problem." So the child will go back one step. "One day John was riding his bike "and then John cut his knee." "Keep going." "Oh, and John was really sad." Sort of like that, so we're putting it all all back into context again. If we could cue up this story here I wanna, or this video, I wanna show you guys an example of this. Now this is Dr. Spencer again working with Stuart. Now, when we first found Stuart, he was over in a corner, playing with toys and he was saying single-word utterances. So Dr. Spencer had never worked with him before, and what she did was she just brought him to the table and started doing some narrative intervention now. Watch how she prompts Stuart here with this two-step procedure.

- Okay, I wanna hear this story about John. You tell me this story. Start right here, who was the story about, who's the character?

- John.

- That's right, John. Now say, John was riding his bike down the street. John was riding his bike, you say that. John was riding his bike.

- John was riding his bike.

- Right, down the street. Okay, say down the street.

- Down the street.

- Excellent, okay, tell me about this picture.

- He crashed into a rock.

- That's right, that was his problem. High five, way to go. How did he feel about his problem?

- He felt sick.

- He felt sad, that's right, he felt sad.

- I need a Band-Aid.

- That's right, John said, I need a Band-Aid. How'd the story end?

- His Band-Aid made him feel better.

- So he felt better because he got a Band-Aid. Say that, he felt better.

- He felt better.

- Because he got a Band Aid.

- Because he got a Band-Aid.

- [Trina] Woo hoo!

- All right, I love this video. I wish I had time to show you the whole process where Stuart is moving from the corner, playing with toys, saying a single word, to where at

the end of this whole video, he's actually generating his own story, and producing causal and temporal subordinate clauses and all of the story grammar at once. Okay, let's go back to our slides. Now in that video you'll notice that he needed quite a bit of support here, but Trina was using these open-ended questions, and then if she was not getting the language that she wanted, she would model for him what it was she wanted him to produce. I think I'm actually gonna skip this video. It's really the same thing, just a different example for you. Differentiating and individualizing, so of course we need to set the demands according to what each individual child needs. Now, you can differentiate in small groups, and some children may need to focus on story grammar, others may need to focus on complex language, vocab, inferencing, artic, speech-sound disorders, whatever it might be that you can differentiate in context if you are, well, aware of what each child needs, which of course you obtain through your assessments, and if you can control the environment. So we use two-step prompting, recasting, modeling, and repetition to shape their language. So if I could show, if we could cue you this next video here, I wanna show you guys what this looks like. Now we have a couple of students, a couple of children how don't produce, usually, complex academic language. I wanna show you what it looks like to elicit that language with them.

- Yeah, all right, tell us about it.

- And then my, and I run to my mommy and say, and then I say, "I wanna go home."

- [Trina] Okay, that sounds like an action, but how did you feel?

- Sad.

- [Trina] Okay, she was sad. Said, "I was sad because I was all dirty."

- I was sad because I was all dirty.

- That's right, there you go, there's our feeling, oh, yeah.

- [Douglas] Okay, oops, so "I was sad "because I was all dirty" is not at all what she had first said, right. She just had a very simple sentence and Trina's just trying to prompt something more complex. Let's go back to our slides please. Arranging for generalization, okay, so we wanna plan for these. Now I've got a few slides, but I can burn through them pretty quickly, and I don't think I'm gonna show you these videos that I've got embedded here, but they are essentially just parents working with their children, and of course, the more you can involve parents or other people in this child's environment, the better, right.

So one of the things that we've done is we've developed these take-home activities. We have them both in English and Spanish where the children can go home with these stories and they can practice retelling the stories with their caregiver or their parent, whoever it might be. A couple of really cool videos here, some children working with their parents. Of course getting teachers involved is crucial. This is where your influence as an SLP is crucial. If I can just take us back to the beginning for a moment, the majority of children are struggling with academic language in this country, and you may call it a knowledge gap, whatever you wanna call it, I'm just generally referring to it as language. Most of our children are struggling with academic language, our teachers are the ones who primarily are responsible for instructing those children who are in the general education setting. Getting them involved helps a lot with not just the children in our caseload, but with all children. We have these little posters that we use. Every one of our stories that we've constructed has multiple Tier 2 vocabulary words in them. What we've done is we've actually made a little poster for every one of those vocabulary words with synonyms. Now, what the children are supposed to do is they're supposed to see this poster in the school somewhere, in their classroom, in the hall,

whatever it might be, and any time they run across this word or one of the synonyms to it, or any time they use it, they can put a little check mark or a line in this box, and students are often rewarded for using this kind of language. Now another thing, talking about generalization, we found that oral language transfers to written language much, much easier than we ever imagined. At first when Dr. Spencer and I were doing this research, we thought that writing would be a major distal measure, but the reality is, is that we have found that when you teach oral narrative language, and I'm just talking about oral narrative language, when you teach that, it transfers, or generalizes to written language.

This is because children, especially the young ones, write how they talk. If you teach them to talk with academic language, then they can write like that. We found, and this is a study that we recently published showing that generalization across modalities. In this particular story, or study, what we did was we modeled the story with icons and pictures, had the students each retell a part of the story and the teacher paraphrased that story for them, and the students then had the opportunity to retell with pictures and icons, icons only, and then no pictures or icons. What we did was we had them generate their own stories, and the teacher would make a, or would write the story down on the whiteboard for the children.

Our outcome measures were all about writing even though the intervention was oral language. It was a multiple baseline design study. I wish I had time to really go into it with you, but it shows reasonable strong effect sizes. I love the outcomes. This is beginning, baseline story from a child. "My mummy is hairy, big, fat, and shaves a lot," and this is post-intervention. "Jane, the little artist about planets, "was in the castle. "A wicked man wanted her toy unicorn. "She hit him on the head with a wac-a-molde hammer. "He ran away, she laughed, the end." Same student, just a couple of weeks later, well, maybe about two months later, after doing narrative intervention. We have writing organizers that we've put together to help generalize, and specific procedures

as well. We generalize from telling personal stories to fictional stories and we practice fictional stories as well as making up your own story and retelling. Another thing that we've really focused on most recently is expository language, and we follow these same principles of narrative-based language intervention, we apply them to expository language as well. So in order to focus on the expository language, we rely on the content that is already out there. So we'll pull from content from the student's curriculum, and we'll find the passages that best reflect the content they're supposed to learn, simplify that passage sometimes, find pictures that go with the information they're supposed to learn, and we'll also teach the children how to take notes. It's quick and dirty and it's just kind of a lot like what Dr. Ukrainetz does, Tracy Ukrainetz with her sketch and speak I think is what it's called, where she's doing pictography. It doesn't matter, we just want them to learn to identify these main parts of information or main pieces of information.

We get a lot of our information from coreknowledge.org. So putting it altogether, I just have a couple of minutes, but we just finished a large study where we took about 650 kindergarten students, randomly assigned them to treatment and control condition, and we actually implemented a full MTSS, multi-tier system of support doing narrative intervention.

The SLPs worked with the children on their caseload and they helped with some children who needed Tier 2 services. The teachers did the heavy lifting as well. They worked at the classroom level with their children, all teaching them how to use this academic language in the context of narratives. Now at the end of the study, we found that the children, the kindergarten students, participated in the multi-tiered system of language support had significantly greater outcomes when it comes to oral language, expository language, and written language. We've also since followed these children longitudinally to the end of fourth grade, and found lasting effects with the Tier 2 students. The students who were at risk in the Tier 2 group who were different from

their peers significantly at pre-test, those students, at the end of fourth grade, were no longer significantly different in their ability to understand what they were listening to or reading, and their ability to produce language. The impact is profound, yet it's conceptually very simple. Most of our children, and even those with a disability, can learn to speak in a different dialect, they can learn to use academic vocabulary and complex syntax. This is just a visual representation of the outcomes there. Now the last principle is have fun. Now, the reality is, is that it doesn't have to be a contrived process. Language intervention does not have to be painful, it does not have to be torturous. It can be enjoyable, and if you have students talking about things that are most interesting to them, and they're the ones teaching or producing this language, their engagement is there, and they really will have a good time.

Maybe it's strange to have it as a principle, but I remember when RISE came out as an acronym, repeated, intensive, systematic, and explicit, and I know I keep talking about Teresa Ukrainetz today, but you know, this was a great acronym, I remember Teresa thinking there's one thing missing, which is this active engagement, and she was even going to maybe change the acronym even to ARISE, to put an A in there, because it's such a crucial thing for people to be attentive and to be engaged, and we're just calling that fun here, but essentially, they mean the same thing. Okay, now those are 10 principles of narrative-based language intervention. Of course there are other aspects as well to this, but those are the 10 that we've highlighted, that we've found to be most crucial in our research, in our clinical experience. Please contact me at my email here, I'd be more than happy to communicate with you, and listen from you and talk with you about any questions or any comments you might have. We have a little bit of time, so let's open it up to some questions, and I think Amy maybe is gonna, is going to moderate this a little bit for us.

- [Amy] Yes, thank you so much, Doug. I'll take a look at our Q&A pod, and this first question I think refers back to the chart that you showed, it was essentially, I think,

your first slide, and it showed which student groups scored at or above proficient as far as their language comprehensive. But our participant is asking, "If the reason for the lower comprehension scores, "for African American and Hispanic students, "is due primarily to language differences, "then why do Asian students score higher "than all the other ethnic groups in that chart?"

- [Doug] That's a great question. You know, it's not, of course, just about, well it's certainly not about ethnicity or race. It has so much to do with culture, and there's a culture there, and I'm not going to pretend to really know that generalized culture very well, but there's certainly something there to the culture that is promoting this acquisition of reading comprehension of this academic language. So I don't mean to oversimplify things there, it's multi, multi variable, but still, for the most part, we do know that there is something really there about this dialect, for lack of a better term, and maybe a linguist on board here can help me out a little bit better, but anyways, I do think that there's a cultural factor, too, that comes into play.

- [Amy] All right, thank you very much. Someone was asking, and I think this was something that was on the exam, too, which story grammar elements complete, or comprise a minimally complete episode?

- That's a great question.

- She missed that part.

- [Douglas] Sure, well let's them out. So a minimally complete episode is an initiating event or a problem, an attempt or a plan to solve that problem, and then a consequence, a result of that plan or attempt. So that's a minimally complete episode.

- [Amy] Thank you, we have a couple people who had somewhat related questions about using this sort of approach with children with autism. Laura was asking, "Would you recommend "the 'Story Champs' program for children "on the autism spectrum?"

- [Douglas] Yeah, it's a great.

- [Amy] And someone else, yes, there's a Ph.D. student here who's researching reading comprehension in children with ASD, and was wondering if you might have any comments related to that.

- [Douglas] Absolutely, we've done a couple of studies now with children with autism, actual we've done several studies. We have a couple of them published. One of them, just a few years go in LSHSH, "Language Speech Hearing Services in Schools," where we did "Story Champs" with children with autism, and we focused on personal stories. They were pretty good at retelling, but their ability to generate their own story was pretty limited, and we had really great effects with that study. We've actually been working quite a bit with children with autism recently, and have found really strong effect sizes with that group.

- [Amy] All right, thank you. We have a couple people who've asked if you have the story grammar icons available to reproduce for story sticks.

- [Douglas] It's all available, but it's totally controlled by my wife, who owns Language Dynamics Groups, so you'd have to go there. However, there is nothing stopping anyone from making up their own icons or drawing their own pictures and doing their own narrative intervention. The only reason why these things are for sale is just simply to make it easier for people to put the research in people's hands. But you are certainly welcome to apply these principles and create your own materials, of course.

- [Amy] Great, thank you so much. Someone was asking if you could go through a brief example of how this intervention approach might be applied to working with very young children, and she's asking about two-year-olds.

- [Douglas] That's great, yeah, so we've done quite a bit of this. In fact we're working on doing this right now with children in China. We were going to go to China, but that's sort of been suspended. So we absolutely simplify the story, but we still give them the complete story, like a model, the whole thing, right. But it can sometimes just be one or two words, you know, John was walking, John fell, John was sad, things like that, right. So we just build from that level with pictures and icons to support it, and then we just increase the complexity once they get that story grammar structure down.

- [Amy] Great, thank you very much, sorry I'm a little slow on my mute button. I think we will go ahead and wrap it up here. I don't wanna run too late. I'm sure people have clients to get back to, and Doug, I'd just like to thank you for being here today. This is some fascinating research and information that you provided to us, and I really do appreciate it. Linda, I know you're still out there

- I wanna say thank you, too.

- in the audience, yeah.

- [Linda] Yeah, yes, thank you Doug, it was an excellent presentation, and it just kind of whets our appetite for the Kay Butler Language Symposium that's coming up in August, which is "Personal Narratives Across Diverse Cultures." So if, I mean if, this is so exciting to hear all of this from you, and then if we wanna keep learning, we have some options in August via the Kay Butler Language Symposium, also offered in partnership with the speechpathology.com and ABCLLD. But just wanted to say thank you so much, so informative, and we want more .

- [Douglas] Well, thank you for having me, it was such a pleasure, thank you.

- [Linda] Yeah, thank you, too, bye.

- [Amy] Thank you very much. Oh, Elizabeth was asking, is this, you were talking about the course that will be on sp.com in August?

- [Linda] Yes, and it's the week of August 3rd through the 7th, one hour advanced level webinars every day that week on this topic of narratives across diverse cultures, so yeah, watch for it.

- [Amy] And I was just double checking, yeah, the dates are the 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and to Elizabeth, whoever was asking about it, we usually post the live webinars about, it's usually six to eight weeks ahead of time, so those aren't posted on our site yet, you can't register for them yet, but just keep your eye on our site, especially under the live webinars section of our library, and they will be appearing once we are, have all the materials together and are ready to post them.

- [Linda] Excellent.

- [Amy] Thanks very much everybody. We had some great questions today. Doug, thank you again. Linda, thank you for helping arrange for Doug to be here with us.

- You're welcome, thank you.

- I hope that our audience out there is, everybody's staying safe and healthy and sane, and we'll continue to hang in there together. We hope to see you at another webinar before too long, bye bye.

- [Linda] Bye bye.

- [Douglas] Wonderful, bye, thank you.