

Strategies used by SLTs when introducing parents to home-based training activities

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BACKGROUND

Parent involvement in the intervention for children with speech and language needs is an established component of many speech and language therapists' (SLTs) practice. Yet, little is known about how SLTs introduce parents to home-based training activities with their child. The literature points out needs for studies of the interaction between SLTs and parents in order to give insights into real-life practices of SLTs involving parents in the intervention process.

AIM

The aim of the present study is to scrutinize encounters between SLTs and parents in order to uncover real-life practices of SLTs when introducing parents to home-based training activities.

METHOD

Employing ethnomethodological conversation analysis (EMCA), the present study analyses actual interactions between SLTs, parents and children with speech, language and communication needs. With informed consent from all participants, video recordings of naturally occurring clinical encounters between three Danish SLTs and parents of children with speech and language needs were made. In all three cases the child was present as well. The speech and language needs of the children (aged four to six years) were in each case clinically identified and categorised by the participating SLT.

Prior to analysis, data was transcribed according to EMCA principles using the transcription notation developed by Jefferson (1984).

STRATEGY 1

M = mother, C = child

- 1 SLT:** hvad er det
what is this
((SLT looks at C))
(0.5)
- 2 C:** (en) (0.6) krans:
a wreath
- 3 SLT:** °flot°
good
(0.6)
- 4 SLT:** KRANS og I gentager bare lige efter ham
wreath and you just repeat right after him
((SLT looks at parents))
- 5** ((M nods her head))
- 6 SLT:** <også> selvom han gør det rig[tigt]
even if he says it correctly
- 7 C:** [skal] man vælge igen
does one have to choose again
- 8 SLT:** en til °ja°
one more yes
((SLT looks at C))

((activity continues))

STRATEGY 2

P = parent, C = child

- 1 P:** kan du se der
do you see that
((P puts a picture card on the table and looks at C))
- 2** (3.9)
- 3 C:** ng:: (1.6) <han spiser æb[le>]
he eats apple
- 4** ((SLT leans forward and points to the table))
- 5 SLT:** [ja:] men du skal [lige]
yes but you just need to
- 6 P:** [det gør han] (.)
he does
- 7 P:** og hvad (.) hvad gør han
and what what is he doing
((P points to the table across SLT's hand))
- 8** ((SLT leans back, pulls back her hand and laughs silently))
- 9 P:** hvad gør han der (.)
what is he
((P points to the picture card))
- 10 P:** ham der ikke (.) som den anden gjorde
that one not doing that the other one did

((activity continues))

STRATEGY 3

P = parent, C = child

- 1 SLT:** så lyder det sådan her prøv at kigge på mig
it sounds like this look at me
- 2** <dukke>
doll
((SLT looks at C and shows forwards and backwards with both hands))
- 3 C:** <dukke>
doll
- 4 SLT:** så ↑ flot
very good
((SLT looks at P))
- 5 C:** så er det dig mor
you're next mum
((C leans over the table))
- 6 P:** så siger vi (.) dukke
then we say doll
- 7** (0.5)
- 8 SLT:** dukke og så tager vi ham her
doll and then we take this one
- 9 P:** så kan du sige dukke
then you can say doll
((P touches C's nose with her finger puppet))
- 10** (0.8)
- 11 C:** dukke
doll
- 12 SLT:** ↑nemlig (.) og så har vi ham her
excactly and then we have this one

((activity continues))

TRANSCRIPTION NOTATION (Jefferson, 1984)

- [text]** Start and end points of overlapping speech.
- (0.5)** Time, in seconds, of a pause in speech.
- (.)** Brief pause, < 0.2 seconds.
- ↑** Rising pitch or intonation.
- ↓** Falling pitch or intonation.
- >text<** Speech is more rapid than usual for the speaker.
- <text>** Speech is slower than usual for the speaker.
- TEXT** Increased volume.
- °** Reduced volume.
- text** Emphasised speech.
- :::** Prolongation of sound.
- ((text))** Non-verbal activity or authors' comment.

RESULTS

The analysis revealed different strategies used by the SLTs to introduce parents to home activities:

1. SLT shows and informs the parents how to perform an activity with the child.
2. SLT initially shows the activity and then invites the parents to perform it with the child while SLT observes and instructs.
3. SLT involves the parents in her own activity with the child.

Although not the primary focus of the study, the analysis indicated that strategies 2 and 3 give the SLT an opportunity for a more detailed insight into the parents' understanding of the activity than strategy 1.

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

The identification of three different strategies used by three different SLTs suggests that more strategies may be identified when looking into other real-life encounters between SLTs and parents. Hence, it is suggested that the strategies identified in the present study should be considered as a starting point for further research. Further research may also point to strategies more efficient than others when it comes to SLTs' insight into parents' understanding of the activities to be performed at home.

REFERENCE

Jefferson, G. (1984). Transcription notation. In M. Atkinson and J. Heritage (Eds), Structures of Social Interaction: Studies in Conversation Analysis, ix-xvi. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.