



Increasing Classroom-based Speech and Language Intervention Across two Elementary Schools: A Program Evaluation

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Introduction

- This presentation is a program evaluation for the second year of a project termed, The SHU Collaborative, whereby **three** graduate students in SLP completed a school-based clinical placement (spring, summer) in a public school setting with **one** supervising SLP.
- The 3 to 1 ratio of graduate students to supervisor was developed to meet needs for both the university program and the partner school district. The latter of which had a goal of increasing classroom-based speech and language services, and the university program supported this initiative, by piloting the program in one school.
- There is research supporting the efficacy of therapeutic interventions provided within the classroom (e.g., Calvert et al. 2003; Farber & Klein, 1999; Gillam et al. 2014; Roberts et al. 1995; Smith-Lock et al. 2013; Swanson et al. 2005; Throneburg et al. 2000; Valdez & Montgomery, 1997; Wilcox et al. 1991).
- Findings from the pilot year of the program indicated success in one elementary school (Koutsoftas, Dayalu, & Maffucci, 2018) and important changes were applied to the second year of the program reported in this presentation, these were:
 - (i) expansion to a second elementary school within the partner district; and,
 - (ii) a caseload approach used by graduate students.

Program Evaluation

- This program evaluation was conducted to assess the effectiveness of the second year of the program’s implementation and identify challenges and triumphs associated with the following two program goals:
- 1) To augment speech-language therapy services being provided to students in two elementary schools.
 - 2) To train graduate students in SLP to provide high quality speech and language intervention in the classroom and therapy room to children in urban school settings.

- Three sources of data were used to conduct this program evaluation:
- (a) Surveys of classroom teachers;
 - (b) Structured interviews conducted with all program participants;
 - (c) Data collected from graduate students using tracking forms and data logs designed for the project.

Disclosure Statement:
The authors have no financial or nonfinancial relationships to disclose.

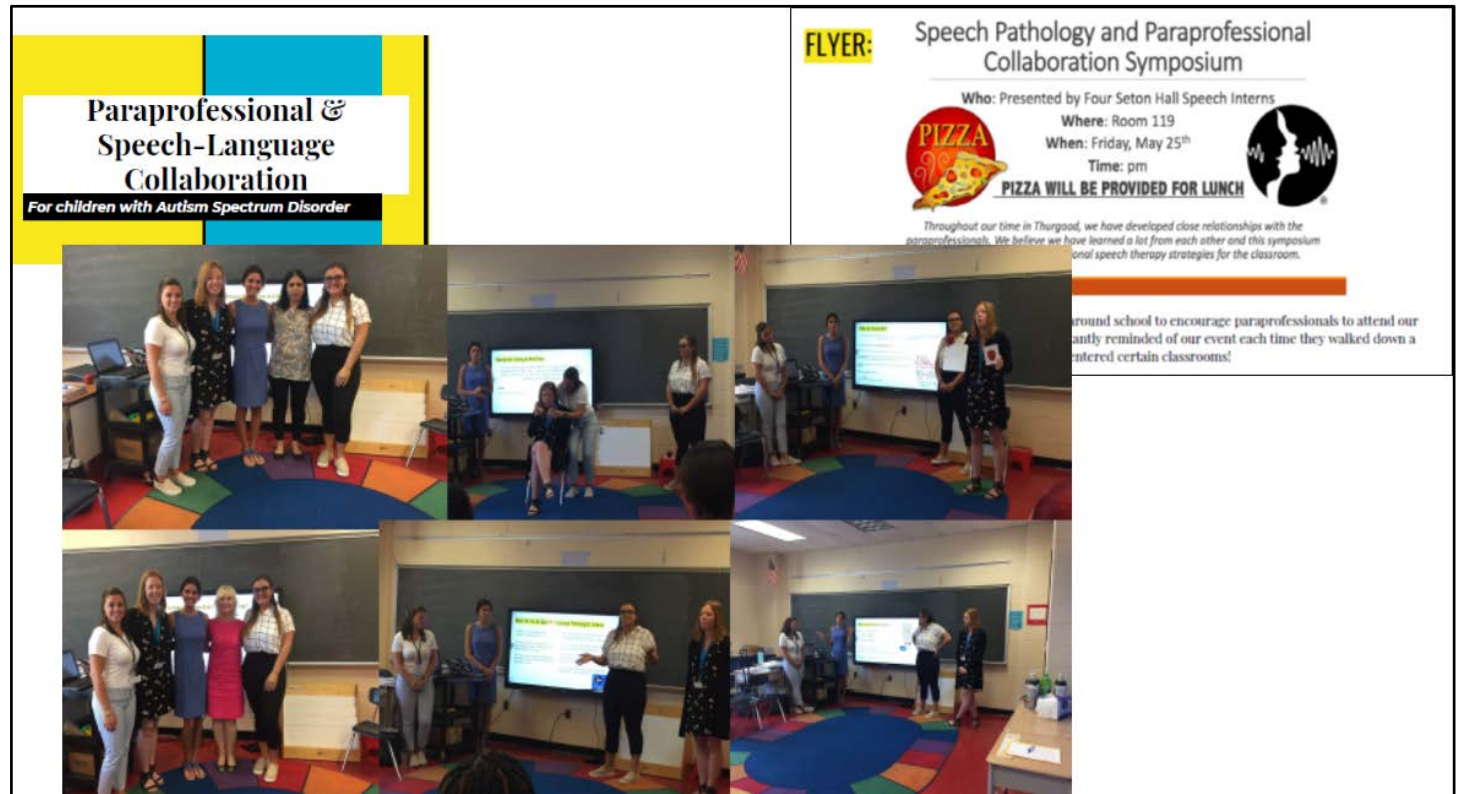
Outcome Data

Table 1. <i>Survey results from teachers who had an SLP student clinician provide services within their classroom across both elementary school sites</i>	Elementary School 1 (n = 14/22)						Elementary School 2 (n = 4/7)					
	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Somewhat Disagree	3 Neither Agree or Disagree	4 Somewhat Agree	5 Strongly Agree	Mean (SD)	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Somewhat Disagree	3 Neither Agree or Disagree	4 Somewhat Agree	5 Strongly Agree	Mean (SD)
I was satisfied with the way the program was explained to me prior to start.	1	0	1	3	9	4.36 (1.11)	1	0	1	0	2	3.50 (1.66)
I found that the program SLP student clinicians did not disrupt my classroom.	0	0	1	1	12	4.79 (0.56)	1	0	0	1	2	3.75 (1.64)
I found that the program faculty did not disrupt my classroom.	0	0	5	1	8	4.21 (0.94)	1	0	0	1	2	3.75 (1.64)
I found the SLP student clinicians to be helpful with the students they were working.	0	0	1	3	10	4.64 (0.61)	1	0	0	0	3	4.00 (1.73)
I saw improvements in the speech and language ability of the students in my class that worked with SLP student clinicians.	0	0	1	4	9	4.57 (0.62)	0	0	1	2	1	4.00 (0.71)
I found the program did not interfere with the learning of students in my classroom who do NOT receive speech language services.	0	0	2	3	9	4.50 (0.73)	1	0	0	1	2	3.75 (1.64)
I was able to learn how to better support my students’ speech and language needs as a result of the program.	0	0	5	4	5	4.00 (0.85)	0	0	1	1	2	4.25 (0.83)
I found the program to be beneficial to my students.	0	0	1	2	11	4.71 (0.59)	0	1	0	1	2	4.00 (1.22)
I would welcome the program and the SLP student clinicians into my classroom again.	0	0	1	1	12	4.79 (0.56)	1	0	0	0	3	4.00 (1.73)

Table 2. <i>Elementary School 1 (Year 2 of Program); SLP Caseload Descriptives (n = 33)*</i>	
Gender	Girls = 5; Boys = 28
Grade Level	Preschool = 12; Kindergarten = 4; First = 5; Second = 2; Third = 2; Fourth = 2; Fifth = 6
Qualifying Category	Autism = 21; Communication Impaired = 0; Specific Learning Disability = 2; Other Health Impaired = 0; Preschool Disability = 10
Classroom Mandate	Self-Contained = 19; General Education with Services = 2; Preschool Self-Contained = 12; Inclusion Classroom = 0
Related Services	Occupational Therapy = 27 Physical Therapy = 8
Classroom-Based Intervention	
Average hours per week	4.70 (2.71)

* Caseload descriptives represent the portion of the SLP caseload seen by the graduate students.

Special project completed by graduate SLP students at Elementary School 1: Professional Development for Paraprofessionals working with children receiving speech and language services.



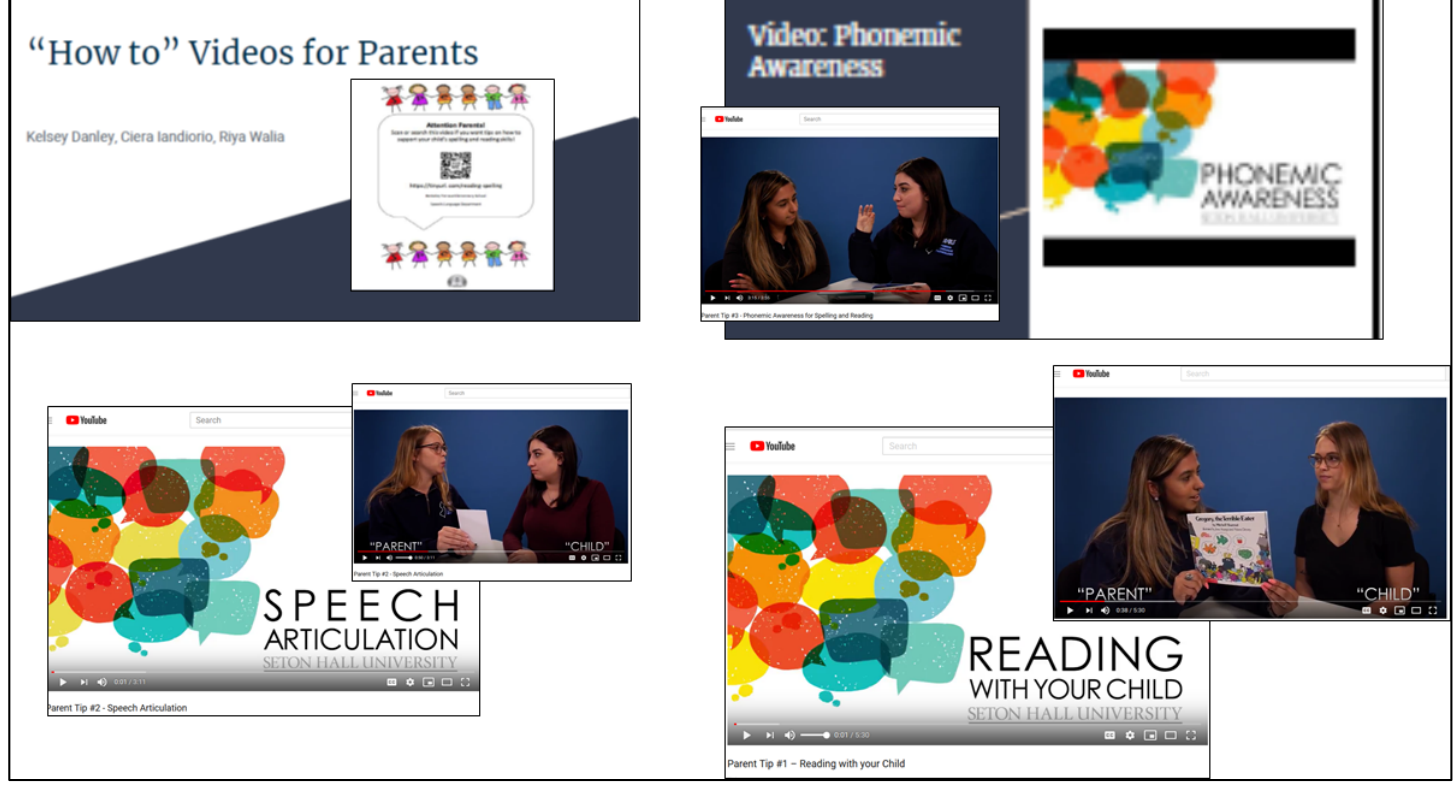
“I would definitely love to work in this type of environment one day, just to know we’re making a difference.”
- SLP Graduate Student

Table 4. <i>Descriptive information for student clinician participation in school-based SLP related activities during placement (n = 5)</i>	
Activity	Mean days or opportunities
Classroom observations	12.6 days (SD = 8.76; Range = 5 to 24)
Classroom-based Intervention	37.8 days (SD = 1.92; Range = 36 to 41)
Separate Location Therapy	39.2 days (SD = 1.79; Range = 37 to 41)
Evaluation observations (CST, Preschool, Speech/Language)	2.33 opportunities (SD = 1.15; Range = 1 to 3)
IEP Meetings (Annual Reviews, Child Study Team Meetings including Initials and Re-evaluations)	4.6 opportunities (SD = 0.89; Range = 4 to 6)
Assessment Related Activities	1.5 opportunities (SD = 1.38; Range = 0 to 4)
Interprofessional Practice (Co-treatment and Consultations)	3.4 opportunities (SD = 4.10; Range = 0 to 11)

Table 3. <i>Elementary School 2; (Year 1 of Program); SLP Caseload Descriptives (n = 25)*</i>	
Gender	Girls = 6; Boys = 19
Grade Level	Preschool = 8; Kindergarten = 7; First = 5; Second = 5;
Qualifying Category	Communication Impaired = 5; Multiply Disabled = 5; Intellectual Disability = 1; SLD = 2; OHI = 4; Preschool Disability = 8
Classroom Mandate	Self-Contained = 15; General Education with Services = 2; Preschool Self-Contained = 8; Inclusion Classroom = 0
Related Services	Occupational Therapy = 18 Physical Therapy = 9
Classroom-Based Intervention	
Average hours per week	6.87 (4.30)

* Caseload descriptives represent the portion of the SLP caseload seen by the graduate students.

Special Project Completed by graduate SLP students at Elementary School 2: Speech and Language HW Videos for parents to support carryover of skills at home.



Structured Interviews

- Highlighted quotes from the structured interviews conducted at the end of the clinical rotation:

SLP graduate student: “I feel like it is the best experience, I couldn't imagine not doing this...I just feel lucky that I get to experience this and be a part of something that it really is benefiting a lot of kids and I can't think of anything that I would want to change from what we've been doing...I think the program is great.”

SLP Supervisor: “I've gotten positive feedback from the teachers saying that even when the students are not doing the curriculum work, the interns are engaging them at lunch, when they have the lunches in the classroom itself. So it's teaching them social communication.”

SLP Graduate Student: “I have a lot of preschoolers who really didn't say much at all in the beginning of the year and now they're seeing things and they're naming everything that they see, which I didn't even know if that would be possible before.”

SLP Supervisor: “These are very bright (graduate) students and they ask amazing questions, and they're open to criticism and anything I have to offer. It really made me appreciate the field again, seeing it through their eyes, seeing how excited they were and reminding me that I should be excited about it too.”

SLP Graduate Student: “I felt the SHU supervisor was beneficial to our student learning experience. She was able to actually see what's going on in the classroom. So, her feedback was critical for me because she actually saw my students, she actually saw the environment so the feedback that she gave was more hands on, more practical and it was really beneficial to carry that over in the classroom.”

SHU Clinical Supervisor: “The graduate SLP students feel comfortable with these students. I've also noticed that they're more willing to participate and focus their attention a little more in the classroom.” “I really liked that the graduate students stayed with the same students throughout the semester. It was a good change from last year.”

Conclusion

- This program evaluation examined the second year of a University-Community partnership to improve outcomes for school children receiving speech and language services, while providing an innovative clinical practicum for SLP graduate student clinicians.
- Changes made to the program implementation including expansion to a second elementary school site and the use of a caseload approach were both deemed successful and will continue into the third year.
- Findings do indicate that the following needs to be considered for future implementation:
 - Improved data collection and child level outcome measures that can document change
 - Improve communication within classrooms between the SLP, clinical supervisor, and graduate students.

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 - Correspondence about this project should be directed to anthony.koutsoftas@shu.edu

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