Hanen Programs: Involving parents and teachers in young children’s language development
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Hanen Programs
Involving teachers in language development
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Mission Statement
The Hanen Centre provides the important people in a young child’s life with the knowledge and training they need to help the child develop the best possible language, social and literacy skills.

Agenda
Who we are
What we do
Our underlying philosophy
Supporting research
Our program strategies
How we work with teachers to change their behavior

How do children learn language?
- Daily routines, play and conversations
- Incidental learning
- Caregiver is the primary change agent

How do children learn language?
Naturalistic approach
How do children learn language?

Social-interactionist theories
- Responsiveness
- Extended interactions
- Developmentally appropriate language models

What do children learn?

Interaction
- Joint attention
- Intentionality
- Turn taking
- Topic maintenance

Information
- Vocabulary
- Syntax
- Morphology
- World knowledge

How do children learn language?

Social-interactionist theories
- Responsiveness
- Extended interactions
- Developmentally appropriate language models

What we teach

- Practical strategies for parents/educators to implement in daily routines in the home/classroom

How we teach

- Train-the-trainer model
- Group training and individualized coaching, videotaping and feedback
- Learner-centred approach

Hanen Programs

It Takes Two to Talk®
- The Hanen Program® for Parents

Target Word®
- The Hanen Program® for Parents of Children who are Late Talkers

More Than Words®
- The Hanen Program® for Parents of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder

TalkAbility™
- The Hanen Program® for Parents of Verbal Children on the Autism Spectrum
Why is it also important to involve early childhood educators?

Preschool experiences are important

Performance in kindergarten
1. Receptive vocabulary
2. Narrative production
3. Emergent literacy (letter knowledge, sound awareness, reading, writing)

Predict scores in reading comprehension and receptive vocabulary up to gr. 7

Dickinson & Tabor, 2002

How do children learn language?

Social-interactionist theories
- Responsive language
- Extended interactions
- Developmentally appropriate language
Talk matters!

“The most important aspect to evaluate in early childhood settings for very young children is the amount of talk actually going on, moment by moment, between children and their caregivers.”

Hart & Risley, 2002

Quality programs are ones where “responsive interpersonal relationships with teachers nurture young children’s dispositions to learn and their emerging abilities.”

US National Research Council, 2000

Quality in early childhood education settings

Structure
Physical Environment

Process
Interactive Environment

Structural components of quality

- Number of children
- Ratios
- Material, activities
- Child-centred
- Small groups

Process components of quality

- Responsive language
- Extended interactions
- Developmentally appropriate language models

Process components of quality

- Adults directive/detached
- Brief 1-2 interactions
- Too high/too low

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What does the research say?

**INTERACTION**
- 8% time – elaborated interaction with teachers
- 73% time – no teacher interaction
- 50% time – children actively engaged

**INFORMATION**
- Less than 20% time – conversations stayed on and deepened a topic
- 33% time – beyond here and now

Dickinson, 2001

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**Child Care Providers’ Interactions with Children with Language Impairments**
- Ignore or respond infrequently to non-verbal initiations
  - reduced opportunities for joint interaction in group contexts
- Use more directive language (twice as many utterances)
- Use less language-modelling input (labels & expansions)
- Did talk more to individual children & use lower MLU (but still twice as long as children’s MLU)

(Girolametto & Weitzman, 2000)

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**Roles teachers play**
- Timekeeper
- Entertainer
- Director
- Too quiet watcher
- Helper
- Cheerleader
- Responsive partner

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**Conversational styles are different**

**Children’s conversational styles impact on the teacher’s interaction**
- Sociable
- Reluctant
- Own Agenda
- Passive
- Own Agenda
How do children learn language?

**Social-interactionist theories**
- Interaction
  - Joint attention
  - Intentionality
  - Turn taking

**Responsive language**
- Information
  - Vocabulary
  - Syntax
  - Morphology
  - World knowledge

**Extended interactions**
- Developmentally appropriate language

Strategies to promote responsiveness
- Observe, Wait and Listen
- Be face to face
- Follow the child’s lead
- Join in the play

Strategies to extend interactions
- Use social routines
- Use comments and questions to cue turns
- Encourage extended turn taking
- SSCAN to encourage group interaction

Strategies to promote developmentally appropriate language
- Imitate
- Interpret
- Provide vocabulary
- Expand
- Extend the topic

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Learning Language and Loving It™ - The Hanen Program ® for Early Childhood Educators/Teachers

1. Take a Closer Look at Communication Video
2. Follow Child’s Lead Video
3. Take Turns Video
4. Encourage Group Interaction Video
5. Adjust Language, Extend the Topic Video
6. Language Leads to Literacy Video
7. Peer Interaction Video
8. Wrap-up

Post-Program Outcomes

- Increased talkativeness
- Become more child-centred
- Promoted children’s active participation & turn-taking
- Moved to viewing book-reading as a conversational activity
- Increased direct and indirect peer referrals
- Maintained changes over 9 month period

- Initiated more utterances to teacher & peers
- More diverse vocabulary
- Longer utterances
- Engaged in longer peer interactions
- Used more complex utterances in book reading

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Child-centred strategies

Follow the child’s lead

OWL
- Be face to face

Imitate

Interpret

Comment or ask an appropriate question

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Join in the play

Be a play partner
Build on the child’s focus
Don’t dominate
Have fun

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Keep the conversation going
Strive for 5

OWL
Follow the child’s lead
- Repeat what the child says
- Make a comment on the child’s topic
- Ask a question about the child’s topic

Wait for another turn

Keep the Conversation Going

Facial Expression
Eye Contact
Body Language
Gestures
Repetition
Questions
Comments
Intonation
Waiting

Social Routines
- Specific way of being played
- Only a few actions, sounds, words
- Predictable and repetitive turns
- Clearly defined turns
- Obvious cues to take a turn
- Fun!!

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Keep the Conversation Going

- Facial Expression
- Eye Contact
- Body Language
- Gestures
- Repetition
- Questions
- Comments
- Waiting
- Intonation

Encourage interaction in small groups

Strategies to promote responsiveness
- Observe, Wait and Listen
- Be face to face
- Follow the child’s lead
- Join in the play

Strategies to extend interactions
- Use social routines
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Carefully observe each child’s level of involvement

- Not Attending
- Attending
- Participating
- Interacting

Adapt your response to each child’s needs

Adjust the way You talk

- Say less and stress
- Go slow and show
- Imitate
- Interpret
- Label
- Expand

Vocabulary is key

- Predicts literacy success
- Tool for thinking and learning about the world
- Linked to overall school achievement

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Preschool years are critical for vocabulary development.

Meaningful differences, Hart & Risley

Building vocabulary
Step it up

Effects of parental input on child vocabulary (Rowe, 2012)

Not all parent input is equal

Shoot for the SS T a R S
Make new words sparkle

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Learning to Talk

Talking to Learn

Language for thinking and learning is key since it:
- Builds vocabulary
- Takes children beyond the here and now
- Mediates children’s thinking
- Impacts positively on literacy development

Use Language to Think and Learn About the World

Go beyond:
- the here and now
- our personal experiences
- the real world into the imagined world

Compare the type of language Sean uses in these examples.

Look, it’s getting leaves!

Our plant at home died because my mother gave it too much water. The water made the plant sick just like when I ate too much ice cream.

Extend the Topic

Use language to think and learn about the world

Inform
Explain
Talk about feelings and opinions
Pretend/Imagine
Talk about the future
Project

Extend the topic all through the day

Daily routines
Creative activities
Sensory activities
Dramatic play
Playtime
Science
Circle
Foster peer interaction

Plan ahead

Support the interaction

Support Peer Interaction

1. Make best use of space.
2. Plan appropriate groupings and activities

Plan ahead

Support the interaction

1. Step in, set up and fade out.
2. Set up a small group and stay to play.
3. Make suggestions to keep it going.
4. Direct conversation away.
5. Raise the child’s profile.

What we teach

• Practical strategies for parents/educators to implement in daily routines in the home/classroom

Hanen Programs

How we teach

• Train-the-trainer model
• Group training and individualized coaching, videotaping and feedback
• Learner-centred approach

Why might teachers resist?

Lack of time
Overwhelmed
Lack confidence
Competing priorities
Different philosophy (knowledge, values, beliefs, experiences)

How many psychologists does it take to change a light bulb?

Only one, but the light bulb has to want to change!
Seek to understand not to be understood.

A wise old owl sat in an oak
The more he saw, the less he spoke
The less he spoke, the more he heard
Why can't we all be like that wise old bird?

Seeking to understand in the Learning Language and Loving It Program

Group training sessions

Individualized videotaping, coaching and feedback sessions

Learning Language and Loving It ™ - The Hanen Program ® for Early Childhood Educators/Teachers

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Delivering effective group training sessions

Interactive
• Participative
• Non-judgmental

Relevant
• Personal experiences
• Specific examples

Include practice
• “Don’t know it till you try it”
• Step by step

Include personal Action Plans
• Transfer to classroom
• Accountability

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Seeking to understand in the Learning Language and Loving It Program

Group training sessions

Individualized videotaping, coaching and feedback sessions

How we use videotaping

Videotape teachers applying their Action Plan

Provide on-line coaching if necessary

View the video with the teacher

Seek to understand Ask don’t tell

Pause the video at specific points

Ask don’t tell. Have teacher reflect on the effectiveness of the interaction

• Teacher’s use of strategies?
• Children’s responses?

Videotaping and feedback is powerful

www.hanen.org

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