

Impact of Aided AAC Intervention on Other Communication Modalities

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Introduction

- The impact that aided AAC intervention has on other communication modes (such as speech) is not well documented
- Such findings would have direct clinical implications and might help alleviate fears that using aided AAC negatively impacts speech

Design

- Post-hoc analyses based on a single-subject, multiple baseline study (Binger et al., submitted)

Participants

- 3 preschoolers who required AAC

Materials

- Communication boards with 30-35 symbols for each storybook
 - Two children used voice output device; the third used low tech communication board
 - Go to www.cathybinger.com to download boards (site will be up and running by early January, 2008)

Independent Variable

- Parents taught techniques to encourage children's aided AAC multi-symbol messages during storybook reading at home
- Techniques: Aided AAC models, expectant delays, open-ended questions, contingent responses

Measures

- Post-hoc analyses to determine the number of aided AAC symbols, syllables vocalized, point references to books, symbolic gestures, pretend reading

Results

- Significant increase in aided AAC symbol use
- No significant change in the number of syllables vocalized
- Significant declines in point references to books and symbolic gesture use for 2 out of 3 participants
- Only one child pretended to read

Discussion

- As aided AAC use increased, there was **no negative impact on vocalizations** for these three children
- When highly symbolic communication modes (aided AAC + speech) are used, other modes (such as point references & gestures) may decline for some children
- The intervention techniques used in this investigation may promote emergent literacy for some children

Reference

Binger, C., Kent-Walsh, J., Berens, J., Del Campo, S., & Rivera, D. (submitted). Teaching Latino parents to support the multi-symbol message productions of their children who require AAC. *Augmentative and Alternative Communication*.

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