Print-Referencing Behaviors of Parents of Children with Hearing Loss

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this preliminary study was to compare print-referencing behaviors during shared book reading of parents of children with hearing loss to parents of children with normal hearing. Parents were videotaped reading two storybooks (one with high print salience and one with low print salience) to their child. The parent-child book-reading interactions were transcribed from videos and coded for print-referencing and illustration-referencing behaviors. Parents of children with normal hearing were more likely to use print referencing than parents of children with hearing loss. Overall, parents were more likely to use illustration referencing than print referencing. Parents’ use of print referencing strategies differed across print salience of storybooks. Within high print salience books, parents were more likely to use print-referencing behaviors with contextualized print. Given the substantially lower use of print-referencing behaviors by parents of children with hearing loss, future research should evaluate the effectiveness of parent training in this area.

RESULTS

Do parents of children with normal hearing use print-referencing behaviors more frequently than parents of children with hearing loss?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Normal Hearing</th>
<th>Hearing Loss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Print Salience</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Print Salience</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

T-tests revealed that parents of children with normal hearing use print-referencing behaviors more frequently than parents of children with hearing loss (p = .01; d = 1.53). Effect sizes indicated large effects for both verbal and nonverbal print referencing (verbal: p = .05; d = 1.25; nonverbal: p = .03; d = 1.26).

DISCUSSION

Consistent with previous findings, parents were more likely to reference illustrations than print. Novel findings from this study include (a) parents of children with hearing loss use print-referencing behaviors less than parents of children with normal hearing, and (b) contextualized print is more frequently referenced by parents.

Previous studies of print-referencing behaviors have not examined the different types of print that reference during shared book-reading. The present finding that contextualized print is more frequently referenced has important implications for intervention. Because contextualized print is a prominent feature in high print salience books, perhaps encouraging parents of children with hearing loss to read books with high print salience would result in a more frequent use of print-referencing behaviors.

Future research should evaluate whether training parents of children with hearing loss can increase print-referencing behaviors during shared book reading. In addition, future research should assess the effects of print-referencing behaviors on the literacy achievement of children with hearing loss. Another future direction is to further investigate the specific print features in high print salience books that cause parents to reference print more.

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References available upon request.