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Improving Learning Skills for Preschoolers with Developmental Delays

Elena Corona Alcantar

A Capstone project for the Bachelor of Arts in Human Development and Family Studies

Improving Learning Skills for Preschoolers with Developmental Delayed

Introduction

Preschool children with developmental delays need more social skill's education, which is often not offered in general classes. Although children with developmental delays can take longer to develop the skills appropriate to their age, they need more opportunities to learn about social interactions to maximize their learning environment and interact with peers. Therefore, I created a 10-day curriculum for the preschool children at Duncan Holbert in Watsonville, California.

Needs Statement

Children with developmental delay tend to need more help with social skills' education than students without need. According to Montana.gov, "Developmental delay refers to a child who is not achieving the appropriate development within the age range of that normal variability." Therefore, they require more support to develop specific skills according to their age. Students with delays are more demanding than those without; they need more social skill's education, which is often not offered in general classes. It is essential to help them acquire the missing skills; they have the same possibilities of learning and developing them over time. The development of children's delay can be identified in different areas during the first years of life. This is why I will focus on the development of motor skills and language development. In this case, I will support the first mother tongue, which is Spanish, and I will combine it with English words.

Learning skills may vary depending on the development of each child. DD can be identified in different areas such as; motor and language development and cognitive and mental delays. According to Nicholuson and Fawcett there is a combination of delays in developing coordination and language disorders in children. Language disorders are associated with attention disorders or abnormalities in motor skills, attention, and psychosocial development (Stich, H. L., Krämer, A., & Mikolajczyk, R. T. 2014). Preschool children with one or more delays can have poor motor skills. It is crucial to find help, make a doctor's appointment and ask for an evaluation for your child when there is a concern. Early intervention is recommended to identify the areas in which to work. It is advisable to have an assessment by a doctor, having parents, teachers, and other specialists involved. Once the child has been evaluated and diagnosed, it is crucial to follow the doctor, teacher and assigned specialists' recommendations.

Preschoolers with developmental delay can be at risk of poor motor skills; there are two types; gross motor and fine motor skills. Gross motor skill is the combination of thinking and practicing different movements of the body. These abilities allow people to move, jump, run, use the large muscles to walk, carry things, exercise, play. These movements are essential for young children; they practice and develop them at very young ages. When a child has difficulties developing gross motor skills, it is necessary to observe and find help from doctors or teachers. Depending on the children's age, parents should know the strengths and weaknesses of the child. Students with developmental delay take longer to develop motor skills; they need constant repetition and practice-specific movements.

A fine motor skill is more complicated for young children; they need more practice and repetition to perform tasks. For example, using a pencil, scissors, brushes, tying the shoes, and

buttoning up the shirt—the fine motor muscles’ coordination usually involved eye and fingers coordination. Children with DD need more help to develop those movements; they need constant repetition, daily routines, visual training, and teamwork. Motor skills interactions can provide DD children with organized and structured opportunities to learn about motor skills. Then, those skills can be reinforced and practiced with teachers, coaches, specialists, or parents (Kinesiol 2020). Unfortunately, regular classes often do not offer or have a curriculum that helps students with learning delays.

The development of language skills in the first five years of life is crucial for young children. Language development is always improving when children are exposed to practice and repetition. However poor language development can affect the learning and reading skills of young children. Unfortunately, more children are entering school with low language development levels (Lafferty, E, Gray, Shelley, & Wilcox, M, 2005). Preschoolers with DD can present poor language skills and low school performance at an early age. Early intervention is a great source for students with language delays the earliest the intervention the better will be the result.

Preschool children with developmental delays need more social skill's education, which is often not offered in general classes. In addition, children with developmental delays can take longer to develop the skills appropriate to their age; they need more opportunities to learn about social interactions to maximize their learning environment and interact with peers. Therefore, I created a 10-day curriculum for preschool children in Duncan Holbert in Watsonville, California. This curriculum supports the native language of Spanish-speaking students. The curriculum will be based on gross and fine motor needs and support the child's language development.

Theory

The Social Learning Theory suggests that children learn by observing people around them. They can imitate others' behaviors, attitudes, and emotional reactions. (Mcleod, 2016). The acquisition of learning skills for children with developmental delay can be affected by their limitations, especially when there is no early intervention. Early exposure to Especial Education classes can benefit the learning development of the student. Since children imitate positive or negative behaviors, it is important to place them in the correct class. Therefore, students with DD need to have the same opportunities to develop their social learning skills safely and positively. The learning process can vary depending on the ability and the knowledge of each individual. Direct experience to others is an essential tool for a successful learning process; "the observational learning or modeling can be acquired with practice" (Barclay, 1982). Students with delays have more opportunities to learn by repetition and observation when they have the chance to be exposed to a suitable curriculum. Life skills classes can be an excellent option for students with developmental delays; those classes may not be as practical for students without.

Consideration of Diversity

My project is going to take place at Duncan Holbert Preschool Center Room 7. According to the School Accountability Report (Zynergy; 2020-2021), Duncan Holbert has 65.69% Hispanic male, 12.4% Hispanic female, 8.3% White male, 2.92% White female. Due to Covid19, I will be working only in In-Room 7; 17 students; 13 male and 4 girls. 7 of them are Spanish speakers, 2 of them are Mixteco and Spanish speakers, 1 Spanish and English speaker, and 4, English speakers. "I expect my participants to reflect the ethnic composition of the school." I expect that all students who participate have developmental delays, as the school

focuses only on children with different types of special needs. Many students do not speak English since the vast majority of students are Hispanic, and the school supports Hispanic families by encouraging bilingualism. Because I will create a Spanish language curriculum, one of the participants' requirements is to be a Spanish speaker or to be able to understand and follow directions in Spanish. Non-Spanish speakers may then be excluded from participating. This project is created specifically for preschoolers with developmental delays or other disabilities that impede language development. Therefore, the curriculum would not apply to those who do not have disabilities or those who are older or younger than preschool age.

Learning outcomes

I will be giving 10 sessions in Spanish of 20 minutes Monday to Friday during center time in Google Classroom Room 7 Duncan Holbert Preschool.

By the end of my project, participants will be able to...

1. Identify their name.

Using phonics, Labels with their name, and practice with songs.

2. Trace the letters of their name.

Using paper, crayons, and markers.

3. Students will reflect their knowledge using simple sentences: I am, My name is...

Students' vocabulary will be supported by videos, songs, and activities related to the topic.

Method

I created a 10-day curriculum for preschool children at Duncan Holbert Preschool in Watsonville. The curriculum supports the native language of Spanish-speaking students, the

curriculum will focus on fine & gross motor skills and language development. I will describe and summarize the activities I developed during days 1, 4, 8, 10 and add a two weeks curriculum and a lesson plan.

Day 1

First, I welcomed the students and presented myself to the class on google meet. I continued to say hello to each of them by mentioning the students one by one. I waved my hand and mentioned the student's name "Hola, Mateo." Then, I said hello to the parents; I thanked them for supporting their children during virtual classes. Then, we continued with a song, "Hello, Matthew, how are you, who sits next to you?" clapping and singing with the parents' support. See Appendix-A. Then we watched a video, "Song's name" (<https://youtu.be/Ri5yuOqnvEM>). At the end of the video, I continue with a coloring activity; I send home a name sheet with the name of the child. See appendix-A.1. Each student had a worksheet with their names; first, we practiced reading the names; each child spelled the name with the parent's help, then we used crayons to color the name in the worksheet. At the end of the activity, we share the work with the rest of the group. I closed the center with a Goodbye song (Goodbye Mathew Goodbye M, Goodbye M is time to say Goodbye) See appendix-A.1.

Day 4

Today, I started centers with the song of the names. See appendix A. This time, I used a yellow frog with the student's name and a request to point out the name. Then, I presented an activity called "Planting Names." For this activity, I provided a laminated worksheet with their name, play-doh, and plastic letters. First, we traced the name; then, we made a long square with play-doh, we placed the plastic letters of the student name. Then I present a video,

<https://youtu.be/EDmWNJ144oY>. The students had the opportunity to practice two questions with the parents “ What is your name? How do you spell your name?” I finished center time with a Goodbye song.

Day 8

I started with a video called “What is your name?” https://youtu.be/yqlbn_nIf2w8. I created and sent home a book with different activities, “ My book of letters” we traced the name on the cover with crayons, then we went to the first page to add sticky letters. At the end of the activity, I presented a video, “ Pete the Cat Rocking in My School Shoes” <https://youtu.be/hCkdSB1TptU>. Then, I asked for the cat’s name, and I described the feelings and the colors of Pete’s shoes. I used three icons with a happy face, sad, and angry to describe Pete’s feelings. I closed centers with a goodbye. See Appendix-B.1.

Day 10

For the last session, I sang the song of Hello, see appendix B. Then I showed a video song of Letter Sounds- ASL Alphabet, Jack Hartmann <https://youtu.be/WP1blVh1ZQM>. See Appendix-B.1. We continued with a cutting and paste activity. The parents cut the fingerprints we made on day 9 in My book of Letters, the children add glue to the next page of My Book of Letters, and paste the handprints with the parents' help. We finished center time with a video “Pete the Cat: I Love My White Mask” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0VwfgBV_muc. I ask two questions; who has a mask-like Pete the Cat? What color is the mask? When we finish with the responses, I thank the students and the parents for their hard job and the parents for their help. I finished the centers with a goodbye song. See Appendix-B2.

Results

I had 18 participants in room 7 at Duncan Holbert Preschool, and only 17 of them participated. There were 13 males and 4 girls. Seven of them are only Spanish speakers, two of them are fluent in Mixteco, and eight are bilingual (English and Spanish). According to the participant parents' answers, almost all the students meet at least two out of the three learning outcomes. I agree with the results; I noticed the increasing attention and participation of the students during the second week. The students were sitting for more than 3 minutes, and the students were more focused on the activities.

Learning outcome one; students will be able to identify their names at the end of my project. According to the survey, most of the students achieved this outcome; 4 out of 17 learned a little, 10 out of 17 learned more or less, 3 out of 17 learned a lot. I agree with the result because, during those two weeks, I noticed the students' participation increased by the end of the first week. During the second week, the students could point to their names when I showed a visual with the student's name. They reflect their knowledge when we sing the song "Hello" in Spanish. Then, I showed a tag (heart shape) with the name of the student. All the students were able to point his/her name with and without parents' help.

Learning outcome two; students will be able to trace the letters of their names at the end of my project. They were able to achieve learning outcome two; my findings were confirmed by the parents' responses when they indicate that: 9 out of 17 learned a bit of tracing their names, 7 out of 17 learned more or less. According to the results, most of the students meet the goal except for one student. Sixteen students were able to trace their names in different activities using paper, crayons, and markers. The students could perform a 2 to 3 steps activity using their hands, listening, and following directions with parents' support if they need it. Finally, they

demonstrate their learning skills with an acceptable motor activity; Coloring Name; each student had a worksheet with their names; first, we read the name, spell the name, and color their name with crayons. At the end of the activity, they shared the work with the group and practiced simple sentences; “I see Matthews name / Yo veo el nombre de Mateo...”

Learning outcome three; students will reflect their knowledge using simple sentences such as; I am, My name is. The third learning outcome was achieved, and the parents’ responses supported my results; 2 out of 17 students learned little, 7 out of 17 students learned more or less, and 8 out of 17 learned a lot. For this learning outcome, I presented a video called “what is your name” <https://youtu.be/EDmWNJ144oY>. The students had the opportunity to practice two questions with the parents “What is your name? How do you spell your name?” They listened to other friends and practiced with their parents. Students were able to meet this learning outcome by reflecting on their knowledge acquired.

By the end of the two weeks, I noticed the improvement of the students: they were able to point, identify their name and participate in activities like tracing their name, making letters with playdough, calling their name, or interacting with the rest of the students during center time. I conclude that the three learning outcomes were a success according to the results of their work, their participation during the activities. My results support it with the survey results I send home to the parents of each student.

Discussion

I think my project was a success because most of the students reached at least two learning outcomes. My students have different limitations; however, they were busy singing, watching videos, and interacting with parents and peers during the reading and writing activities.

The students could practice song names, learn about the letters of their names, and share their job. They were also able to practice and develop writing and reading skills with the activities I created for them. I think this project helped the students to identify their names and expand their vocabulary. They learned to point and match their name, to pronounce it, and to use faces like Emma; I am Emma. I noticed that starting with a song that promotes movement helped the students with self-regulation. The video grabbed their attention and kept them entertained and this transition helped them to be ready for the activity. The activities of tracing the student's name, coloring the student's name, and cutting and pasting the letters of their names were helpful for the children (thanks to the parent's cooperation).

Regarding diversity, I could say that even though my project was created specifically for Spanish speakers, I realized that some students only understand a little Spanish since their mother tongue is Mixtec. I tried to include some sign language to facilitate learning skills, but I noticed that sometimes it was hard for all students to understand the content of the videos I shared. I believe that the curriculum that I planned for the students did work, and I could see the difference before and after. By the second week, the students were more focused, waiting for the sequence of activities. I would like to implement this curriculum again in face-to-face class the first two weeks of the beginning of the school year 2021-2022 to small groups of three to four students. Even though I taught my project online I think it was a good project and I would implement it again.

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Survey Parents Response

Total number of students 17

0 = nothing

1 = little

2 = more or less

3 = a lot

Question	Nothing	Little	More or Less	A Lot
1. How much do you think your child learned in these two weeks?	0 out 17	4 out 17	10 out 17	3 out 17
2. Does your child identify his/her name without help?	0 out 17	4 out 17	10 out 17	3 out 17
3. Does your child trace the letters of his/her name?	1 out 17	9 out 17	7 out 17	0 out 17
4. Can your child say or repeat simple sentences like; I am, My name is...	0 out 17	2 out 17	7 out 17	8 out 17
5. How hard was it for your child to learn about the letters, sounds, and word	1 out 17	4 out 17	6 out 17	6 out 17

repetition.				
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Categorie	Number of Answers	Percentage
A lot	20	24 %
More or Less	40	47%
Little	23	27%
Nothing	2	2%

Lesson Plan for preschoolers, Language, and literacy-for Spanish speakers

Prepared by Ms. Elena Corona Alcantar

OVERVIEW & PURPOSE

This lesson’s objective is to help students achieve their IEP-goals in the area of language and literacy. They will be able to listen, repeat, and learn Spanish vocabulary in an Especial Education Classroom.

EDUCATION STANDARDS

1. Language- Speaking - listening skills
2. Literacy- Listening - writing skills
3. English language development - speaking.

OBJECTIVES

1. To be able to identify their name
2. Tracing their name to improve the development of fine and motor skills.
3. Expand their vocabulary with repetition; I am, My name is.

MATERIALS NEEDED

1. Coloring name worksheet and crayons / Coloring my name.
2. Name Tracing Worksheets and crayons / Tracing my name.
3. Laminated Name worksheet - Frog shape / Reading and identifying my name.
4. Laminated worksheet name, playdough, crayons, and plastic letters / Planting my name.
5. White paper, letter of the name, and glue / Pasting big and little letters of my name.
6. Worksheet (Name) Markers or crayons, scissors, and glue / Tracing Cutting and pasting my name /
7. My book of letters, stickers, letters, glue, and crayons / Writing in my book of letters.
8. My book of letters, stickers, letters, glue, paper tissue, and crayons / Writing in my book of letters.
9. Brown paint, Book of letters, and a brush / Fingerprints
10. Book of letters-Fingerprints and markers / Writing my name

ACTIVITY

The student will perform a 2 to 3 step activity using their hands, listening, and following directions (parents will support and model their child when they need it.)

1. Get a paper-name worksheet, crayons, or markers.
2. Listen, observe and repeat vocabulary words.
3. Coloring, tracing, cutting, decorating, and pasting the letters of their name.

Activity example:

Fine motor activity; Coloring Name; each student had a worksheet with their names; first, we read the name, we spell the name, and then they color the name using crayons with the parents' help. At the end of the activity, we will share the work with the group and practice Spanish the vocabulary "I see Matthews name / Yo veo el nombre de Mateo..."

Appendix A-B

Weekly Curriculum / Currículo Semanal

Week 1 Semana 1	Monday Lunes	Tuesday Martes	Wednesday Miercoles	Thursday Jueves	Friday Viernes
Goals	Lenguaje & Literacy / English L. Dev.	Lenguaje & Literacy / English L. Dev.	Lenguaje & Literacy / English L. Dev.	Lenguaje & Literacy / English L. Dev.	Lenguaje & Literacy / English L. Dev.
	Lenguaje y alfabetización / Desarrollo del Inglés	Lenguaje y alfabetización / Desarrollo del Inglés	Lenguaje y alfabetización / Desarrollo del Inglés	Lenguaje y alfabetización / Desarrollo del Inglés	Lenguaje y alfabetización / Desarrollo del Inglés
Appendix-A	-Cancion Hola	-Cancion Hola	-Cancion Hola	-Cancion Hola	-Cancion Hola
Videos	"Songs name" https://youtu.be/Ri5yuOqnvEM	"Songs name" https://youtu.be/Ri5yuOqnvEM	"Songs name" https://youtu.be/Ri5yuOqnvEM	-Self-introduction Lesson, English Introduccion para niños en Ingles https://youtu.be/EDmWNJ144oY	-Self-introduction Lesson, English Introduccion para niños en Ingles https://youtu.be/EDmWNJ144oY
Appendix	-Painting my name Pintando				

<p>A.1</p> <p>Appendix-A.2</p> <p>Week 2 Semana 2</p>	<p>mi nombre</p> <p>-Goodbye Song Canción de despedida</p> <p>Monday</p>	<p>-Pasting big and little letters of my name. Pegando letras grandes y chicas de mi nombre</p> <p>- Goodbye Song Canción de despedida</p> <p>Tuesday</p>	<p>-Reading and identifying my name. Leyendo e identificando my nombre</p> <p>- Goodbye Song Canción de despedida</p> <p>Wednesday</p>	<p>-Planting my name. Plantando mi nombre</p> <p>- Goodbye Song Canción de despedida</p> <p>Thursday</p>	<p>-Planting my name. Plantando mi nombre</p> <p>- Goodbye Song Canción de despedida</p> <p>Friday</p>
<p>Appendix-B</p> <p>Appendix-B.1</p> <p>Videos</p> <p>Appendix-B.2</p>	<p>Cancion Hola</p> <p>My name song My nombre https://youtu.be/OWOkcpGIK5s</p> <p>My book of letters My libro de letras</p> <p>What's your name song Cual es tu nombre https://youtu.be/yqlbn_nl2w8</p> <p>Goodbye Song</p>	<p>Cancion Hola</p> <p>My name song My nombre https://youtu.be/OWOkcpGIK5s</p> <p>My book of letters My libro de letras</p> <p>What's your name song Cual es tu nombre https://youtu.be/yqlbn_nl2w8</p> <p>Goodbye Song</p>	<p>-Whats your name song</p> <p>Cual es tu nombre https://youtu.be/yqlbn_nl2w8</p> <p>My book of letters My libro de letras</p> <p>Pete the Cat Rocking in My School Shoes” El Gato Pete https://youtu.be/hCkdSB1TptU.</p>	<p>-Whats your name song</p> <p>Cual es tu nombre https://youtu.be/yqlbn_nl2w8</p> <p>My book of letters My libro de letras</p> <p>Letter Sounds-ASL Alphabet, Jack Hartmann Canción del ABC https://youtu.be/WP1bIVh1ZQM</p>	<p>Cancion Hola</p> <p>Letter Sounds-ASL Alphabet, Jack Hartmann Canción del ABC https://youtu.be/WP1bIVh1ZQM</p> <p>My book of letters My libro de letras</p> <p>“Pete the Cat I Love My White Mask” El gato Pete y su cubrebocas blanco https://youtu.be/0VwfgBV_muc.</p>

	Canción de despedida	Canción de despedida	Goodbye Song Canción de despedida	Goodbye Song Canción de despedida	Goodbye Song Canción de despedida
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