Case Study Analysis of a Consultative Service Delivery Model With Students With Speech or Language Impairments

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This chapter examines the speech or language impairment (SLI) disability. SLI is a disability that can be serviced across settings with the support of both a speech-language pathologist and teachers from both regular and special education classrooms. The chapter also examines causes and characteristics, educational placement and interventions, and eligibility criteria for students with an SLI. The interventions presented are diverse and can be taught across the curriculum. Furthermore, the chapter examines two case studies at the elementary and middle school levels that highlight how the consultative service delivery model can be employed with speech and language students. The chapter concludes with a discussion about future trends in the consultative service delivery model with SLI students.

INTRODUCTION

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004) defines a speech or language disorder as "a communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, language impairment, or a voice impairment, that adversely affects a child's educational performance" (§ 300.8[c] [11]).

According to the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (2012), there were 1,416,000 students with a diagnosis of a speech or language impairment (SLI) disorder in U.S. schools during the 2009-2010 school year. The incidence rate of this type of disability has changed little during the past 40 years. During the 1976-1977 school year, students with special needs who had a speech or language impairment diagnosis were at 2.9% of the total school population, and although this percentage has fluctuated between 2 to 3% over the years, it was also at 2.9% during the 2009-2010 school year. It should be noted here that these numbers only reflect students whose Individualized Education Pan (IEP) states that they are entitled to speech and language services only; it does not include students whose primary diagnosis is another type of disability but who may also require speech and/or language services.

According to Friend (2011), this type of disability tends to target more males than females, at a ratio of about 2 to 1. However, due to cultural and dialect differences, it is difficult to know whether speech and language disorders are more prevalent in one culture over another.

Students with speech or language impairments display a wide range of intellectual abilities. They can be gifted, have average intelligence, or if the speech and language disability is secondary to their primary disability of an intellectual disability (ID) or autism spectrum disorder (ASD), these students' intelligence can be below average. Despite their intellectual level, speech and language development affects the students' academic abilities. In school, one is constantly interacting with other persons and being asked to read something and write about it. For a student with a speech or language disorder, these can be very difficult and challenging tasks (Friend, 2011).

Students with speech and language disorders struggle with reading due to their inability to sound out words, hear and understand the patterns in reading and how a passage should flow, or even distinguish between specific sounds. As reading is a huge part of any academic career, students with a speech and language disorder tend to fall behind their age- and grade-level peers (Friend, 2011).

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