

## SOAR Research Proposal – Summer 2013

Project Title: The Development of Intervention Strategies and Instructional Materials for Children With Childhood Apraxia of Speech

Faculty Mentor: Dr. John R. Dilendik, Professor, Education Department

Student Researcher: Alyssa Miller, 2014, English/Early Childhood Ed.

Start Date: Monday, May 28, 2013

End Date: Friday, August 16, 2013

### ***Project Description***

The purposes of this research project are to:

- review the etiology, diagnostic criteria, and population characteristics of childhood apraxia of speech;
- conduct library research and interview practicing clinicians to identify current intervention strategies and the perceived success of those strategies;
- identify the services available in the local region for children with apraxia;
- identify existing collaborations between families, clinicians, and local educational agencies to provide support networks for children with apraxia and their families;
- develop instructional materials based on interviews and library research to support the work of special education professionals and general education teachers with children who have this disability.

### ***Background***

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association's Ad Hoc Committee on Childhood Apraxia of Speech defines the disability as follows:

*Childhood apraxia of speech (CAS) is a neurological childhood (pediatric) speech sound disorder in which the precision and consistency of movements underlying speech are impaired . . .* (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (2007). *Childhood apraxia of speech* [Position Statement]. Available from [www.asha.org/policy](http://www.asha.org/policy).)

The Ad Hoc Committee's position statement also emphasizes the need to foster collaborations between families, clinicians, and the local schools. Such collaboration provides an important support network for the child and her family, but is made even more critical by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004) that requires all children to be educated in the least restrictive environment feasible. Implementation of this statute is known as inclusion. A preliminary review of professional educational literature reveals little research on instructional strategies and accommodations to support children with apraxia in the general education classroom. An important goal of this research is to develop educational materials including unit plans, lesson plans and instructional activities to support the general education teacher who has a child with this disability included in her or his classroom.

### ***Roles of the Student and Mentor***

The student researcher will conduct library research and will interview clinicians and teachers with respect to current intervention strategies, support networks, and instructional materials available to the general education teacher. The researcher will, based on this research, develop instructional materials to assist in the education of a child with apraxia. The project will culminate with a formal research paper addressing all of the objectives above, with unit plans, lesson plans, and instructional activities designed to support the teacher who has an included CAS child, and with a plan to disseminate these materials to schools in the local geographic area. The mentor will meet with the student researcher twice a week throughout the research period to review the researcher's progress.

### ***Timetable***

Research will begin at the start of the summer session and continue through the ten-week period. Interviews with therapists and teachers will occur early in the research while schools are still in session. The completed research report with instructional materials will be submitted one week prior to the end of the project to allow time for final revisions.

### ***Discipline-Appropriate Scholarly Research***

The student researcher is working toward earning a certificate to teach young children. Interviewing teachers and support professionals about the effectiveness of intervention strategies and developing instructional materials to support children with apraxia is discipline-appropriate scholarship and will be of professional benefit to the researcher and to local educational agencies. Library research to complete her understanding of the etiology, diagnosis, estimated incidence, and proposed interventions of childhood apraxia of speech is also professionally beneficial and discipline-appropriate for the student researcher.

### ***Dissemination***

The student researcher will have the opportunity to share her research with her early childhood colleagues through the early childhood student teaching seminar scheduled for the fall term. In addition, the materials developed will be made available to special education and general education teachers in local educational agencies.