

Project proposal - introducing makaton to early years

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Introducing makaton to early education years - project proposal

Problem, Aims and objectives - What The aim of introducing Makaton in early education years in order to allow for gradual transition from simple to more complex ideas and concepts. For example, during the first stage, the children can be taught immediate needs such as foods and familiar people, while during the 6th stage, the children can be introduced to more complex concepts such as cinema, shops and other concepts of the wider community. Through a stage approach, the children's experience can be broadened, depending upon the type of concepts and ideas that are taught. There is growing body of opinions from researchers supporting that children in early years are faced with communication difficulties, hence making it important to find ways of helping them surmount this problem. A study by I CAN (2004), established that 89 per cent of kindergarten staff raised their concern that language, speech and communication difficulties among preschool children had become so prominent and a hindrance to the children's studies. What's more, research shows that children whose communication problem is not addressed using any intervention constantly record a poor outcome in different aspects of their lives. For example, Rosetti (1996) regarded children's communication in their early years as the single most variable that determines the success of their future school performance as well as cognitive skills. Elsewhere, Dockrell and Lindsay (1998) argued that language is the backbone of almost all educational skills, which implies that children with speech, communication, and language difficulties are considerably disadvantaged in their efforts to access educational skills. In view of this problem, the research will make efforts to

ensure that the children who are at the risk of performing poorly in their academic work due to problems of communication are assisted. Specific Objectives 1. To help children with disability to be able to express their wants, needs and aspirations. 2. To help the children use the vocabulary to enhance their communication skills. 3. To help the children understand what is happening in their vicinity. 4. To help the children acquire experience in the signs used in a usual conversation. 5. To help children with cognitive, linguistics and communications problems achieve their academic goals.

Methodology - How As part of the preparation for the introduction of makaton in early years, the researcher will sponsor a survey on head teachers for a sample of 10 schools from London. The survey will contain open-ended and closed-ended questions aimed at enquiring the head-teachers' perception of the linguistic and communication skills of children in their early school year. The Head-teachers will also be asked to document their perception on a selected group of children who are exposed to the risk of developing poor cognitive, linguistic and communication skills, as well as any change they have observed within duration of two years. The head teachers will also be asked to specify the percentage of pupils who entered the school with the ability to perform a number of tasks such as writing their own names - in either English of their home language or both. The data will then analyse and common themes and quantitative results obtained, which will be used to devise a good makaton program for implementation. Finally, the head-teachers will be asked to give recommendations on the benefits of implementation of makaton in their schools, as well as the best approach for such a program (Basic Skills Agency, 2002). Using the recommendations of

the head-teachers and the insights from the survey, the children under the 'risk' will be enrolled in a makaton program for two years, after which the head teachers will assess them and provide reports on possible improvements in terms of their cognitive, linguistic and communication skills. The target population - Who The study will involve a total of 10 head-teachers from 10 schools, who will participate in the survey. A total of 5 research assistants will aid in the collection of data from the survey - they will also help in analysis of this data. In each of the 10 schools, a total of 15 to 20 pupils, whom the head-teachers perceive to be exposed to the risk of poor cognitive, linguistic and communication skills will be sampled out to participate in the makaton program. All the children who will be selected will also have to be in their early schooling years (10 years and below). The parents to the children, the head-teachers, as well as the teachers will be called upon to help in the implementation of the program, with each group allocated some specified objectives and goals to achieve. References Basic Skills Agency, 2002. Survey into Young Children's Skill on Entry to Education. Wales: Basic Skills Agency. I CAN, 2004. Nursery Workers' poll says " Turn off the TV". (Online) Available from: (Accessed 1st Oct. 2013). Rosetti, L. M., 1996. Communication Intervention: Birth to Three. London: Singular. Dockrell, J. and Lindsay, G., 1998. The ways in which speech and language difficulties impact on children's access to the curriculum. Child Language Teaching and Therapy, 14, pp. 117-133.