EMT en Español: A Cultural and Linguistic Adaptation of Caregiver-Implemented Language Intervention

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Vanderbilt University
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What is EMT (Enhanced Milieu Teaching)?

- EMT is a naturalistic, conversation-based intervention that uses child interests and initiations as opportunities to model and prompt language in everyday contexts.
- EMT can be used throughout the day as part of the everyday interactions.
- EMT is an evidence-based intervention with 20 years of research.
- EMT is an effective intervention.

Why Spanish-speaking families?

• In 2011, 21% of people over age 5 spoke a language other than English at home (U.S. Census, 2011).
  • 62% spoke Spanish

• Hispanics are a young and growing population.
  • ~25% of children under 5 (Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, 2014)
Good things happen when you talk

Hispanic Children…

• comprise 24% of population in 2013, projected to 35% by 2050

• comprise over half of the population in some states

EMT en Español
EMT en Español:
Steps to Adapting the Intervention

1. Review of relevant literature
2. Interviews/surveys of Spanish-speaking parents and EI providers
3. Proposed adaptations of intervention strategies and caregiver training method
4. Practice using intervention strategies with Spanish-speaking children
5. Practice teaching Spanish-speaking caregivers how to use strategies
6. Single case study to measure effectiveness of caregiver implemented intervention
What We Learned

- Relationship building
- Words matter: disability stigma
- Including all caregivers
- Location for training
Why Teach Home Language
Good things happen when you talk

Teaching Home Language: Family and Cultural Connections

By learning their home language, children can:

• Maintain culture
• Maintain family connections
• Have healthier social-emotional development
• Generalize learned communication skills with family members

(Kohnert & Derr, 2012)
Teaching Home Language: Acquisition of English

Children can make greater and faster gains in English with strong foundation in their first language.

• Spanish oral language skills were associated with literacy outcomes in English (Miller et al., 2006).

• Spanish vocabulary may support English vocabulary (Snow & Kim, 2007).

• Use of Spanish at home does not interfere with growth in English vocabulary (Mancilla-Martinez & Lesaux, 2011).
Teaching Home Language: Linguistic Models

• Caregivers can model more complex and rich language in their native language (Hammer, Davison, Lawrence, & Miccio, 2009).

• Native speakers can provide linguistic models that aid in children’s language development (Hoff et al., 2014).
EMT Strategies & Adaptations for EMT en Español
EMT Strategies:
Setting a Context for Communication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition/Behaviors</th>
<th>Adaptations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Sit on the floor</td>
<td>• Play on the floor or at the table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Play together with toys</td>
<td>• Playfully use familiar materials/ engage playfully in familiar routines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Limit questions and directions to the child</td>
<td>• Notice child’s interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Follow the child’s lead</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# EMT Strategies: Responsive Interactions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition/Behaviors</th>
<th>Considerations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Mirror and map</td>
<td>• Use family dialect/words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Notice and respond to all child communication</td>
<td>• Ask caregivers every session</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Responsive Interactions: Examples
# EMT Strategy:
## Model Target Language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition/Behaviors</th>
<th>Considerations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Choose language targets based on child’s current communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use target level language 50% of the time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use slightly above target level language 50% of the time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use more verbs, model first person singular, first person plural, and third person singular inflection of verbs (Jackson-Maldonado, 2012)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
English Verb Inflections: An Illustration

+----------------+     +----------------+     +----------------+     +----------------+     +----------------+     +----------------+
|                |     |                |     |                |     |                |     |                |
| talk           |     | talked         |     | talking        |     | talks          |     | To              |
|                |     |                |     |                |     |                |     | talk            |
|                |     |                |     |                |     |                |     |                |
+----------------+     +----------------+     +----------------+     +----------------+     +----------------+
Spanish Verb Inflections: An Illustration

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Choosing Targets for Early Language Learners

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## EMT Strategies: Expand Activities and Language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition/Behaviors</th>
<th>Considerations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Expand child’s engagement in play and activities by adding steps or modeling new ideas</td>
<td>• Add words to make phrase grammatically correct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Expand child’s language by repeating child communication and adding a word</td>
<td>• Add verbs, nouns, or descriptive words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Delay</td>
<td>Prompting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set up request</td>
<td>Time delay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Assistance</td>
<td>• Open question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Inadequate portions</td>
<td>• Choice question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Pause in routine</td>
<td>• Say prompt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Choice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Time Delays and Prompting Examples
Teaching Caregivers EMT en Español
Teach-Model-Coach-Review

**Teach:** explain strategies being used
**Model:** show caregiver how to implement strategy
**Coach:** use guided practice
**Review:** ask caregiver for feedback on session, reflect and problem-solve

Assessments
# Standardized Assessments Used in EMT en Español

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Reasons for Choosing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PLS-5 (Zimmerman, Steiner, &amp; Pond, 2012)</td>
<td>• Adapted for and normed on Spanish-speakers or bilingual speakers residing in the U.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROWPVT-SBE (Martin, 2012)</td>
<td>• Can be used with young children</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Examples of Standardized Measures
Other Assessments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Reasons for Choosing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Inventarios MacArthur-Bates del Desarrollo de Habilidades Comunicativas (Jackson-Maldonado et al., 2003)</td>
<td>• Parent reported expressive language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Language Sampling</td>
<td>• Naturalistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Interactions with caregivers</td>
<td>• Provides rich linguistic information (Rojas &amp; Iglesias, 2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Interaction with “language teacher”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Language Sampling Example
Questions & Discussion

Contact: tatiana.n.peredo@Vanderbilt.edu
Website: vkc.mc.vanderbilt.edu/kidtalk
Friend us on facebook @ Vanderbilt kidtalk
References


References (Continued)


EMT en Español: Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why should we support home language?
   - Preservation of home language helps maintain culture and family connections needed for children’s healthy social-emotional development (Kohnert & Derr, 2012).
   - Children can make greater and faster gains in English to be successful in school when there is a stronger foundation in their first language (Kohnert & Derr, 2012; Miller et al., 2006; Páez & Rinaldi, 2006; Snow & Kim, 2007).
   - Children can generalize learned communication skills with family members (Kohnert & Derr, 2012).
   - Caregivers can model more complex and rich language in their native language (Hammer, Davison, Lawrence, & Miccio, 2009).
   - When caregivers who are not native English-speakers model language in English, it does NOT help with children’s language development in English and it hinders their children’s Spanish acquisition (Hoff, Rumiche, Burridge, Ribot, & Welsh, 2014).

2. If a child speaks Spanish at home and English at school what language should I provide intervention in?
   - Both! Children need language to communicate with family members and to succeed in school.
   - Choose targets in home language that are appropriate for social communication with family members and targets in English that are appropriate for school success (Kohnert & Derr, 2012).

3. Is it more “confusing” to children who demonstrate language delays to learn two languages?
   - This is a myth!
   - Research shows bilingualism does NOT delay or hinder language development (Kohnert & Medina, 2009).
   - There are social, cultural, and cognitive benefits to bilingualism that children miss out on when they lose their home language (Barac & Bialystok, 2012; Barac, Bialystok, Castro, & Sanchez, 2014; Hoff et al., 2014; Kohnert & Derr, 2012).

4. What can I do if I don’t speak Spanish?
   - Include caregivers in assessment and intervention planning (with an interpreter).
   - Conduct intervention in English for academic language, but teach parents strategies for them to support home language at home.
   - Do NOT tell parents to speak English to their child if they are not native English speakers.
   - Explain the benefits of maintenance of home language and benefits of bilingualism.
   - Respect parents choices.

5. What assessments are appropriate for young Spanish-speaking or Spanish/English bilingual children?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standardized Measures (selected)</th>
<th>Other Measures (selected)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual English Spanish Assessment (BESA; Peña, Gutiérrez-Clellen, Iglesias, Goldstein, &amp; Bedore, 2014.)</td>
<td>Language sampling/transcribing SALT (<a href="http://www.igdi.ku.edu">J. Miller &amp; Iglesias, 2012</a>)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
References


