

Critical Appraisal Form

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Article: Peterson, D.B., Brown, C. L., Ukrainets, T. A., Wise, C., Spencer, T.D., Zebre, J. (2014). Systematic individualized narrative language intervention on the personal narratives of children with autism. *Language Speech and Hearing Services in Schools*, 45, 67-86.

Participants: 3 monolingual males with ASD: ages 8;5, 6;4, 6;6. Verbal communicators with significant difficulties with communication and social interaction; attending public school & university clinic. MLU's 2.63-7.2.

Control or Comparison Group/s: n/a

Methods: Single Case design. Multiple baseline across participants and language features. 2-3 story grammar (SG) elements (i.e. Problem, consequence) and 2-4 linguistic complexity (LC) targets (i.e. Temporal conjunctions, adverbs) selected per child. 3-12 baseline sessions (no intervention) where story grammar data indicated a stable baseline for each participant. Up to 12 individual intervention sessions of 30-40 mins with SLP grad students. New SG and LC features were added progressively. Maintenance probes 2 and 7 weeks post.

Outcomes: Test of Personal Generation School age (TPG-SA) story macrostructure (SG elements), and microstructure (LC). SG: Percent of non-overlapping data 45%-100%; Gain – difference between intervention and baseline mean score with Max of 3 was .50-3.

For Linguistic Complexity – No maximum possible gains – range 0 – 4.7, for percent non-overlapping data it was 0-91% (numbers are for each element or each linguistic complexity target). Mixed results with maintenance scores 2 and 7 weeks post intervention.

Strengths and Limitations of Research: Small participant group; cannot discern relative benefits of each teaching component; inexperienced student SLP's; no random sampling; Personal story generation (dependent variable) measured immediately after intervention. Therapy methods (8 steps) described clearly for replication

	Compelling	Suggestive	Equivocal/Uncertain
Validity		x	
Clinical importance		x	

Clinical Implications:

For school aged children with ASD, this study provides preliminary evidence that personal narrative intervention can result in gains in personal narrative for both story elements and linguistic complexity. Mixed results were found for long lasting gains.

Long-term results mixed – Longer or more frequent intervention likely needed for consistent lasting improvement.

We liked the narrative intervention procedure where elements of personal narratives were sketched quickly on sticky notes by the clinician. Both retell and personal narrative were included in each lesson.

Trajectory of improvement for these children generally trended upward but was not linear. This is something to consider when interpreting our clinical data.