

SPEECH-LANGUAGE LINKS

ISSUE 1

MARCH 2010

*A Newsletter for Resource Teachers of the Deaf in the
Central and Southern Regions of New Zealand*

Hi everyone!

By now you will all be well underway with your language assessments, and the school holidays will seem like a distant memory! I hope they were enjoyable.

During this term, each area will be receiving a Language Processing Test-3 kit. This has / will be sent to the Lead Teacher in your area. For those of you who have not had the pleasure of my company(!) while attempting your first LPT-3, your Lead Teacher will support you with this. The Lead Teachers will be receiving an observation checklist to use, and each RTD will get a copy of the checklist before attempting to administer the test. This should help you to feel fully prepared! If you have any questions about the test administration, please refer to the test book or email me.

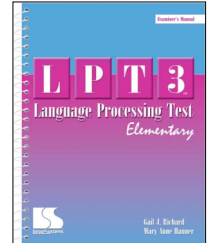
In this issue:

- [Some guidelines to follow when deciding whether to discontinue testing with the LPT-3](#)
- [A list of resources available to you for building language processing \(semantic\) skills](#)
- [notes from a book called "The Source for Learning and Memory Strategies" that I read during the holidays](#)



Who should be tested with the LPT-3?

The LPT-3 was designed for use with students aged 5.0 through 11.11 years; however, we know that many of our older students' language skills fall within this range. We also need some baseline data for all our students, so we can determine which students require more advanced assessment / intervention. So, we have decided that **ALL students on the caseload aged 5.0 years and older** will be tested on the LPT-3.



Once we have this data, I can then analyse the results, and work with individual RTDs whose students require more in-depth assessment.

Guidelines for ending testing:

One question I've been asked a number of times is "Should I stop here, or keep going?" According to the test book, the test should be administered in its entirety, and in one session. However, the test was not designed for use with students with a hearing loss, and we know this test requires a lot of listening. I would rather that we got a fair assessment of the students' skills in this area – so if you really feel you need to, you can complete the test over 2 sessions (although it is still preferable to complete it in 1 session).

Remember, that the Multiple Meanings subtest will not be administered to any 5 year olds.

If your student has had a lot of difficulty with a particular subtest (most commonly this occurs with the Similarities and Differences subtest), then finish that subtest and stop. During your next session with the student try the next subtest. You will soon know if they are ok to continue or whether you stopped at an appropriate place.

Resources for semantic skills work:

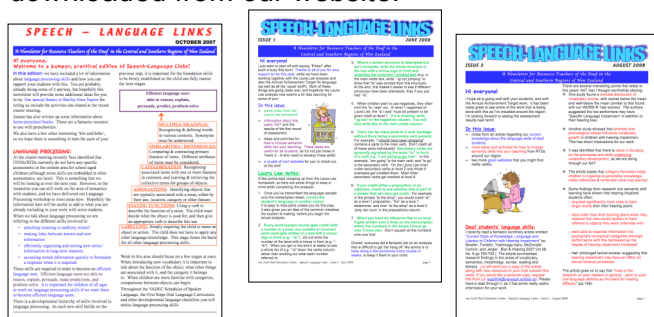
Several past issues of Speech-Language Links have had semantic skills and activities as the focus. The main issues to refer to are:

- October 2007
- June 2008
- August 2008.

These issues also contain information about other sources of activities, such as:

- **VADEC-produced resources**
- **Black Sheep printable resources**
- **First Steps Oral Language Resource Book**
- **Beginning School Maths (BSM) games**
- **ASP activities**
- **other RTD's!**

Please have another read of each of these 3 issues. Other issues also have a few semantic activities in them. All past issues can be downloaded from our website.



Notes from "The Source for Learning and Memory Strategies"

(by R.G. Richards, 2003):

- **Students need consolidation time** after practising a new skill (6+ hours) for the memory pathways to be established (p27)
- **If the student immediately practices a second, similar skill, the pathways for the 2 skills become confused** (p27)
- Two important implications were identified:
 - 1) **avoid teaching 2 skills or concepts that are similar to each other in the same day**
 - 2) **when teaching the second skill / concept, focus on the differences between the skills first.** When the similarities between the skills / concepts overwhelm the differences, it is easy to attach the same retrieval cues to both concepts. Then, when the student uses those cues later to retrieve the information, retrieval could produce either or both concepts, causing a struggle to identify which is correct (p27)
- **Comprehension and memory increase when students receive a visual demonstration of a**

new learning task, followed by a verbal explanation, and then the learner rephrases the technique into their own words (p51)

- Several studies have shown that **listening to music can stimulate parts of the brain that are responsible for memory recall and visual imagery** (p52)
- **Some students learn in ways that are more format-bound than others**, and this is a common reason they appear to have memory problems e.g. if the student practises their spelling words at home verbally, but is then tested on these words in a written test s/he may struggle. **If the format of the test is going to differ, it may be necessary to help some students with this transition** (p55)
- **Our brains like patterns, and therefore seek out similarities. We store information by similarity, and retrieve information by differences. Visual organisers help integrate information by organising similarities as well as differences** (p109)
- **Because the brain learns and remembers by patterns, it is important to help students to develop the habit of looking for patterns within new concepts** (p149)
- **The best way to remember something is to change it** – transform the information in some way! e.g. If it's visual, make it verbal; if it's verbal, make a diagram of it... (p168)
- **Teachers need to remember the concept of: "Too much too fast – it won't last!"** and realise that sometimes it's better to cover less material, but do so with more depth, elaboration and rehearsal (p168)
- **Both thinking and language comprehension are founded in imagery. Individuals with weak language comprehension do not visualise concepts and therefore do not easily connect to language. Imagery increases depth of understanding, which then increases the student's abilities to recall the concept at a later time** (p199)
- **We do not teach the brain to think. Our task is to help our students organise content in a way that will facilitate more complex processing and increase retention of the information** (p205)

The next challenge: how to incorporate all of this into our teaching...?!?!?

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