Introduction

- Hart and Risley (1995) reported that low SES children in their first years of life were at risk of not developing vocabulary on track due to a 30 Million Word Gap in exposure to language in the home.
- Prevention depends on our capacity to change the individual communication styles of adults and young children using evidence-based practices.
- This knowledge depends on the trustworthiness of findings and quality of methods used to evaluate impacts.
- Given that 26% of children in the U.S. grow up in poverty, the scale of vulnerability is catastrophic.
- Our purpose was to examine the quality of the methods and analyses of extant language intervention research that has included low SES children and families vulnerable to the Word Gap.

Prevention Research Quality Framework

- Ecological validity reflects success in the real-world.
- Scientific rigor determines trustworthiness of findings.
- Scalability indicates ease and ability to increase in size.

Research Questions

1. Were the interventions implemented by low SES participants in authentic settings?
2. Did interventions happen as expected?
3. Were the interventions trustworthy?
4. Was there evidence regarding why or how interventions were working?
5. Were interventions accessible and usable at scale?

Methods

The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA) was used (Liberati et al., 2009).
- From 1495 studies located, 534 were identified as language intervention studies and sent to workgroups in an IBM SPSS file for analysis.

Results

- From a population of 534 intervention studies, only 140 (26%) included low SES participants.
- The implementers of the interventions in these studies were: 53% (parents), 35%, non-parent caregivers, and 15% (both).

Discussion/Implications

- Implications from this synthesis indicated that much more is needed in future intervention research to improve the ecological validity, trustworthiness, and accessibility/usability for scaling up.
- Policy should support this effort, and some strategies that are ready for practice may be difficult to access, learn, and use.

Handout Attached

References


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