

Mechanisms of a shared-decision making tool for parents and speech and language therapists (SLTs)



Aim: To make explicit the mechanisms of the tool ENGAGE*.

Method: Realist interviews with seven SLTs skilled in using the tool ENGAGE.

Results: Potential context factors, mechanisms and outcomes. Three drafts of CMO-configurations.

Discussion: The findings need additional testing and research.

Context factors (C)	Mechanisms (M)	Outcomes (O)
Parental factors -Language level -Expectations (e.g. high expectations of child) -Attitude (e.g. socially acceptable answers) -Beliefs (e.g. child doesn't need therapy) -Knowledge (e.g. about language development) -Confidence in SLT -Priorities (e.g. hectic home situation)	-SLTs offer parents room to develop an opinion on their child's language problems -Parents use ENGAGE material and are stimulated to make choices. -The concept 'language' is diverged in different aspects of language -Texts are easy to understand and supported visually -Parents articulate relevant goals for their child -Parents and SLTs share knowledge about the child and its language problems	-Relationship between parents and SLT is strengthened -Parents take on a more active role in therapy -Relevant SMART goal developed jointly by parents and SLTs -Better collaboration between parents and SLTs
Child factors -Severity language problems -Behavioural problems		
SLT factors -Attitude (e.g. works solely with the child) -Knowledge and experience -Work style -Time available -Frequency of contact with parents (e.g. every week or twice per year)		

1. When a SLT asks open-ended questions, listens attentively and has an open conversation style parents will be stimulated to participate in the conversation

"Normally I have the feeling that I have to make suggestions and support parents to say something. And now they could read it and develop their own opinion, which I really appreciated."
(Esmee, SLT at special education)

"With the tool you split up all language areas in an understandable way for parents. So parents can think along about their child's challenges in those areas."
(Anne, SLT practice)

2. Mutual understanding between a SLT and a parent helps them to formulate a relevant goal for the child

3. Shared-decision making has a positive influence on the engagement and involvement of parents with speech and language therapy sessions

"When using the tool I've experienced that we both had the same goal, we wanted to stimulate the child's development. Together we had to figure out what the child's needs were, in a very specific way. We set up and formulated a goal together. By doing this, I really think that a shared responsibility has been increased."
(Maja, SLT at special education)



Learn more about the development of the tool ENGAGE