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Improving children's language, literacy and mental health: evaluating the impact of the classroom promotion of oral language (CPOL) approach

Submission date
17/12/2013

Recruitment status
No longer recruiting

Registration date
22/01/2014

Overall study status
Completed

Last Edited
06/03/2023

Condition category
Other

[X] Prospectively registered
[X] Protocol
[X] Statistical analysis plan
[X] Results
[_] Individual participant data

Plain English summary of protocol
Background and study aims
Language competence (including spoken communication and literacy) is a major influence on children's development and life success. The ability to communicate and use language effectively impacts upon the capacity of children to learn, on their mental health and behaviour, on their future educational and employment achievements, and on their social and community participation opportunities. As a teacher's effectiveness has a powerful impact on students, this study will determine whether a teacher professional development program (called CPOL) can lead to improved teacher knowledge and practice leading to improved student outcomes in oral language, literacy and mental health for early years primary school children.

Who can participate?
Schools will be selected for inclusion in this study based upon the 2009 and 2012 Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) data for their school. Schools with AEDI results in the language and cognitive skills domain with vulnerability rates of ≥ 10% who had at least 10 children participate in the AEDI will be eligible to participate in this study. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) and Catholic Education Commission of Victoria (CECV) will arrange their own calls for expressions of interest from the pool of eligible schools across the state of Victoria. From this pool, schools that were identified as vulnerable in both the 2009 and 2012 AEDI data will be approached first, after which schools vulnerable only on the 2012 AEDI will be approached. The aim will be to recruit 50 eligible schools in each sector, to a total of 100 schools.

What does the study involve?
Schools will be allocated to one of two groups: intervention group (CPOL) or control group (no CPOL). As a result all the children in one classroom at each school will be either part of the intervention group or of the control group.
Children - With the exception of the completion of Reading Progress Test (RPT) at the end of Grade 1, the students in the study will not be asked to engage in any activities outside of their

normal classroom experiences managed by their usual classroom teacher(s). Completion of the RPT will be the students' only point of interaction with a member of the research team.
Teachers - In April 2014, teachers in the intervention group of the study will attend two face-to-face days of professional learning convened by the research team, and will also engage in a self-directed manner in an online learning network of teachers in like-schools in the first half of 2014. Two additional days of face-to-face learning will be held in late 2014/early 2015. In addition to these formal days of professional learning and access to the online forum, teachers will liaise with CPOL Support Officers, via intermittent face-to-face, telephone, and online contact, in order that questions are addressed and program fidelity is enhanced. Teachers will also provide data relating to the consented students' English Online Interview (EOI) results. Teachers will also complete the Strengths & Difficulties Questionnaire on each child in their classroom, at baseline and follow-up points. Casual teaching relief (CRT) will be funded from by the Partner Organisations for these periods. Teachers will also be asked to record reflections (either in hard copy or electronically) for the research team on their application of new knowledge and practices derived from the professional learning program. They will be asked to identify challenges and how these were overcome, as well as additional innovations they have developed as a result of the CPOL intervention. At the conclusion of this study, a purposively selected sample of teachers will be asked to participate in either a focus group or an in-depth interview, so that their reflections on the CPOL intervention can be explored in some depth. Teacher knowledge concerning oral language and its role in supporting the transition to literacy will also be explored at that point.
Parents/Guardians - Parents/guardians will be asked to complete the Strengths & Difficulties Questionnaire on their child, at the beginning of the study and at certain points during the follow-up. Parents will also be asked for permission to access and use their child's National Assessment program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) data, that will be routinely collected as a part of normal classroom procedures when their child is in Grade 3 in 2017.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?
We do not anticipate that participation in the study will entail any significant risk beyond that associated with everyday life for any participant group (students, teachers, parents). Possible benefits to teachers of the intervention group include developing new knowledge through the teacher professional learning intervention days. The students in the teacher's classes may also benefit as the teacher may develop more effective teacher practices. Benefits to schools include the backfill of staff whilst teachers are participating in the intervention days.

Where is the study run from?
The study will be run from 2 private locations for the intervention days plus online interaction. The teachers will implement new practice across 100 primary schools in Victoria, Australia.

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?
The study will run from June 2013 to June 2018. The study will recruit participants for 2 months ending January 2014.

Who is funding the study?
ARC Linkage Grant and The Ian Potter Foundation (Australia).

Who is the main contact?
Professor Sharon Goldfeld
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Contact information

Type(s)
Scientific

Contact name
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Additional identifiers

Protocol serial number
LP130100308

Study information

Scientific Title
The classroom promotion of oral language: a cluster randomised controlled trial

Acronym
CPOL

Study objectives
Improving teacher knowledge and practice relating to teaching oral language improves primary school students' achievements in oral language and literacy and improves their social and emotional wellbeing.

Ethics approval required
Old ethics approval format

Ethics approval(s)
Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee, ref: CF13/2634-2013001403, later transferred to the University of Melbourne Human Research Ethics Committee, ref: #1545540

Primary study design
Interventional

Study design
Cluster randomised controlled trial

Study type(s)
Quality of life

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied
Early Years Education, Oral Language Development, Teacher Profession Learning

Interventions
Schools are randomised to two arms: intervention arm and the control arm. All children in one classroom at each school will be allocated together as a single unit for randomisation ('the cluster'). This is the most appropriate approach to randomisation given the intervention will be focused on teacher professional learning and the implementation of that knowledge within a whole-of-classroom approach.
In April 2014, teachers in the intervention arm of the study will attend two face-to-face days of professional learning convened by the research team, and will also engage in a self-directed manner in an online learning network of teachers in like-schools in the first half of 2014. Two additional days of face-to-face learning will be held in late 2014/early 2015. The professional learning delivered to teachers is based on Munro's (2011) ICPALER (Ideas, Conventions, Purposes, Ability to Learn, and Reception), Framework, and was the subject of a successful large-scale pilot led by CI Snow (Snow et al., in press). In addition to these formal days of professional learning and access to the online forum, teachers will liaise with CPOL Support Officers, via intermittent face-to-face, telephone, and online contact, in order that questions are addressed and program fidelity is enhanced.

Intervention Type
Other

Phase
Not Applicable

Primary outcome(s)
Current primary outcome measures as of 31/01/2018:
Reading scale score, assessed using NAPLAN (accessed via data linkage from VCAA) in the middle of grade 3

Previous primary outcome measures:
1. National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN): a full description of the way in which NAPLAN is administered is available at: http://www.nap.edu.au/naplan/naplan.html
2. The Strengths & Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)
3. Reading Progress Test (RPT)

Key secondary outcome(s)
Current secondary outcome measures as of 31/01/2018:
1. Writing, language and numeracy scale scores, assessed using NAPLAN (accessed via data linkage from VCAA) in the middle of grade 3
2. Mental health, assessed using the Strengths & Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) at baseline and the end of grade 1
3. Reading comprehension, assessed using the Reading Progress Test (RPT) at the end of grade 1
4. Language (receptive language, receptive vocabulary, expressive language), assessed using CELF 4: concepts and following directions, NIH Toolbox Picture Vocabulary Test, and Renfrew Language Scales (4th ed) Bus Story Test at the end of grade 1
5. Teacher knowledge, assessed using survey at baseline, end of foundation and end of grade 1
6. Teacher practice, assessed using audio recordings at end of foundation and end of grade 1

Previous secondary outcome measures:
English Online Interview (EOI)
At the conclusion of the CPOL trial, a purposively selected sample of teachers will be asked to participate in either a focus group or an in-depth interview, so that their reflections on the CPOL

intervention can be explored in some depth. Teacher knowledge concerning oral language and its role in supporting the transition to literacy will also be explored at that point.

Completion date
01/06/2018

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria
Victorian Primary Schools (25 Government Schools and 25 Catholic Schools) with >10% children identified as vulnerable in the language and cognition domain of the 2012 Australian Early Development Index (AEDI - http://www.rch.org.au/aedi/)

Participant type(s)
Other

Healthy volunteers allowed
No

Age group
Child

Sex
All

Total final enrolment
1360

Key exclusion criteria
N/A

Date of first enrolment
03/02/2014

Date of final enrolment
28/02/2014

Locations

Countries of recruitment
Australia

Study participating centre
Royal Children's Hospital
Parkville
Australia
3052

Sponsor information

Organisation
The University of Melbourne (Australia)

ROR
https://ror.org/01ej9dk98

Funder(s)

Funder type
Research council

Funder Name
Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Grant (LP130100308)

Alternative Name(s)
arc_gov_au, The Australian Research Council, Australian Government Australian Research Council (ARC), ARC

Funding Body Type
Government organisation

Funding Body Subtype
Other non-profit organizations

Location
Australia

Funder Name
Ian Potter Foundation (20130004)

Alternative Name(s)
The Ian Potter Foundation, IanPanFon, IPF

Funding Body Type
Private sector organisation

Funding Body Subtype
Trusts, charities, foundations (both public and private)

Location

Australia

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study are not expected to be made available due to the limitations of study ethics approval.

IPD sharing plan summary

Not expected to be made available

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Results article	results	19/04/2019	14/02/2020	Yes	No
Results article		24/11/2022	12/12/2022	Yes	No
Results article		09/12/2021	12/12/2022	Yes	No
Results article		11/02/2020	12/12/2022	Yes	No
Protocol article	protocol	20/11/2017		Yes	No
Other publications	background analysis	01/04/2016	14/02/2020	Yes	No
Statistical Analysis Plan		13/09/2022	06/03/2023	No	No