Educating and Communicating through Sociolinguistic Registers: Adolescent Client

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EDUCATING AND COMMUNICATING THROUGH
SOCIOLINGUISTIC REGISTERS: ADOLESCENT CLIENT

by

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A Scholarly Project
Submitted to the Occupational Therapy Department
of the
University of North Dakota
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
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Approval Page

This Scholarly Project Paper, submitted by Chanaé Jones and Brittany Mayer in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Master’s of Occupational Therapy from the University of North Dakota, has been read by the Faculty Advisor under whom the work has been done and is hereby approved.

_________________________________________________________________________
Faculty Advisor

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Title: Educating and Communicating Through Sociolinguistic Registers: Adolescent Client

Department: Occupational Therapy

Degree: Master’s of Occupational Therapy

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ABSTRACT

PROBLEM: Currently tests such as the SAT (Scholastic Assessment Test) and ACT (American College Testing), as well as employment use what is identified as formal sociolinguistic register (Joos, 1967 & Payne, 2005). Payne (2005) built upon Joos’ (1967) definition and presented five registers: frozen, formal, consultative, casual, and intimates. Formal register is defined as; one-way participation, no interruption such as is seen with introductions between strangers. Technical vocabulary; “fuzzy semantics” or exact definitions are important.

Montano-Harmon (1991) found that many minority and poor students do not have access to formal register at home but rather tend to rely primarily in the causal/informal register. According to Joos (1967), “one can go one sociolinguistic register down in the same conversation and that is socially accepted, but to drop two registers or more in the same conversation is thought to be socially offensive” (p. 27). If adolescents of low- socioeconomic status not have access to the formal register in the home environment, they may be placed at a significant disadvantage.

METHODOLOGY: A comprehensive literature review was conducted to explore the relationship between low- socioeconomic status, culture, family dynamics, sociolinguistic registers/communication, and education. For this scholarly project the focus was placed on the areas of occupation, specifically education and communication with activities or occupations arranged into categories. “All people need to be able or enabled to engage in the occupations of their need and choice, to grow through what they do, and to experience independence or interdependence, equality, participation, security, health, and well-being” (Wilcock & Townsend, 2008, p. 198).

RESULTS: The result of the literature review is the development of Educating & Communicating through Sociolinguistic Registers: Adolescent Clients. This guide has been developed for use with adolescent clients 13-17 years-old. The scholarly project itself was guided by using the Ecological Model. The purpose of this scholarly project was two-fold:

1. Develop a guide designed to strengthen the adolescent’s use and comfort with formal register, to strengthen their confidence in the occupation of education and transfer to the occupation of employment resulting in more success with these endeavors.
2. Strengthen the occupational therapist’s communication skills with the adolescent client in a school, community, or mental health setting. The aim is to enhance their therapeutic-use-of-self and intervention approaches in these settings to ensure client centered care. Methods include leaning about sociolinguistic registers, culture, family dynamics and how to implement these resources.

CONCLUSIONS: Although there are many factors that influence an adolescent’s success or not in society, there are very few an individual clinician has the ability to control. Due to the challenge of addressing these needs, Educating & Communicating through Sociolinguistic
Registers: Adolescent Clients was developed using the Ecological Model. The one area that can be influenced is how occupational therapists communicate with clients both orally and written. When adolescents are not able to adequately use the formal register, such as in conversation or writing skills, they are not able to participate in areas of occupation such as formal/informal education and communication. It is essential that they are able to independently participate in these areas of occupation to fulfill their role as family members, adolescents, successful students, and society as well. Occupational therapy (OT) can play a significant role in addressing these needs of adolescents. The guide can serve as a resource regarding sociolinguistic registers, cultural competency, and understanding low-socioeconomic status. It will be made available to practicing occupational therapists as a resources and reference.
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

“A record number of Americans were in poverty last year” (New York Post, 2011, ¶1-2). Over 25% of children of low-income homes have peer interaction deficits and socially disruptive behavior such as aggressive and oppositional behavioral problems (Bulotsky-Shearer, Fantuzzo & McDermott, 2010). Therefore addressing behavioral or psychosocial needs of children from low-income homes is essential. There are numerous programs and ideas that are trying to address these issues. One area that has not had any mention in occupational therapy is the concept of formal language.

An area of particular concern is the concept of formal registers, which we believe plays a significant role in the areas of emotional, mental, spiritual, physical, and relationship resources. Dr. Payne (2005) presents five registers: frozen, formal, consultative, casual, and intimate registers.

1. Frozen register is a language that remains the same. An example would be the bible. Although the interpretations vary, the words largely remain the same.

2. Formal register involves one-way participation with no to minimal interruption. An example would be introductions between strangers. Joos (1967) defined formal registers as, “the standard sentence syntax and word choice of work and school, it has complete sentence and specific word choice” (p. 27).
3. Consultative register is two-way participation. Background information is provided and prior knowledge is not assumed. Examples include teacher/student, doctor/patient, expert/apprentice, etc.

4. Casual register is between friends. Slang and interruptions are among friends in a social setting. Casual/informal register, defined by Joos (1967), is the language used around family/friends or slang, being the language mostly used by those of low-socioeconomic status.

5. Intimate is non-public and the intonation is more important than wording or grammar. This is most common among family members and close friends. A drop from formal to casual registers is deemed socially offensive, going against societal norms. Montano-Harmon (1991) found that many minority and poor students do not have access to formal register at home but rather tend to rely primarily in the casual/informal register. According to Joos, “one can go one sociolinguistic register down in the same conversation and that is socially accepted, but to drop two registers or more in the same conversation is thought to be socially offensive” (p. 27).

Currently schools use state tests such as the SAT (Scholastic Assessment Test) and ACT (American College Testing) and the world of employment all function within the formal register. Adolescents living in low-socioeconomic status neighborhoods tend to receive a poorer quality of education compared to those of higher-income (Spring, 1995, p. 60). Inequality in the U.S. public school systems results in continuous inequalities in society. If adolescents of low-socioeconomic status not have access to the formal register in the home environment, they may be placed at a significant disadvantage.
Although there are many factors that influence an adolescent’s success or not in society, there are very few an individual clinician has the ability to control. Due to the challenge of addressing these needs, *Educating & Communicating through Sociolinguistic Registers: Adolescent Clients* was developed. The one area that can be influenced is how occupational therapists communicate with clients both orally and written and how they can strengthen the adolescent’s communication skills. When adolescents are not able to adequately use the formal register, such as in conversation or writing skills, they are not able to participate in areas of occupation such as formal/informal education and communication. It is essential that they are able to independently participate in these areas of occupation to fulfill their role as family members, adolescents, successful students and society as a whole. Occupational therapy (OT) can play a significant role in addressing these needs of adolescents.

The scholarly project focuses on adolescents of low socioeconomic status and diverse cultural backgrounds. Socioeconomic status (SES) or social class involves the "classification of persons into groups based on shared socio-economic conditions ... a relational set of inequalities with economic, social, political and ideological dimensions" (Baker, 2003). It is often measured via a combination of education, income and occupation. In the United States one’s occupation is a prime factor of social class and closely linked to an individual’s identity.

A comprehensive literature review was conducted to explore the relationship between poverty, culture, family dynamics, sociolinguistic registers/communication and education. For this scholarly project the authors feel it is essential to address two specific areas of occupation; education and communication. Within these areas there are broad ranges of activities or occupations arranged into categories. These areas of occupation are of great importance for adolescents in the school setting. “All people need to be able or enabled to engage in the
occupations of their need and choice, to grow through what they do, and to experience independence or interdependence, equality, participation, security, health, and well-being” (Wilcock & Townsend, 2008, p. 198).

After researching various models of practice, it was determined that the Ecological Model of Occupation would provide a solid base for this project. The constructs of the Ecology of Human Performance Model (EOHP) provide a useful framework for addressing social participation and the influence of sociolinguistic register on the client. The following summarizes its application to the project:

1. EOHP emphasizes a preventative, health-promotional, and rehabilitative objective.
2. Ecology is the transactions between persons and their contexts, affecting human behavior and task performance (Cole & Tufano, 2008). This system focuses on the relationship between individuals, their environment, and the application to occupational therapy.
3. The task performance of the client is the object of the intervention.

Based upon the literature review, *Educating & Communicating through Sociolinguistic Registers: Adolescent Clients* was developed. This guide is designed for use with adolescent clients 13-17 years-old. The purpose of this scholarly project was two-fold:

1. Develop a guide designed to strengthen the adolescent’s use and comfort with formal register, to strengthen their confidence in the occupation of education and transfer to the occupation of employment resulting in more success with these endeavors.
2. Strengthen the occupational therapist’s communication skills with the adolescent client in a school, community, or mental health setting. The aim is to enhance their therapeutic-use-of-self and intervention approaches in these settings while providing client centered
care. Methods include learning about sociolinguistic registers, culture, family dynamics and how to implement these resources.

The remainder of the literature review presents the data and resources that were instrumental in identifying and supporting the need and direction of the guide. The authors chose this area of focus because it has not been explored in this context at all OT.

**Key Concepts & Terminology**

The following consist of terms used throughout the scholarly project.

- **Culture**: 
  - a: the integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief, and behavior that depends upon the capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations
  - b: the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group; also: the characteristic features of everyday existence (as diversions or a way of life) shared by people in a place or time <popular culture> <southern culture> 
  - c: the set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterizes an institution or organization <a corporate culture focused on the bottom line> (Merriam-Webster, 2011, ¶1-6).

- **Cultural Competency**: 'Culture' refers to integrated patterns of human behavior that include the language, thoughts, communications, actions, customs, beliefs, values, and institutions of racial, ethnic, religious, or social groups. 'Competence' implies having the capacity to function effectively as an individual and an organization within the context of the cultural beliefs, behaviors, and needs presented by consumers and their communities (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2003, p. 7).
• Cultural Literacy: Knowledge of history, contributions, and perspectives of different cultural groups, including one's own group, necessary for understanding of reading, writing, and other media (Dictionary.com, 2011, ¶1).

• Socioeconomic Status: Involves the classification of persons into groups based on shared socio-economic conditions. A relational set of inequalities with economic, social, political and ideological dimensions” (Baker, 2003, p.436).

• Sociolinguistic Registers (Payne, 2005, p. 27)
  o Frozen register is a language that remains the same. An example would be the bible. Although the interpretations vary, the words largely remain the same.
  o Formal register involves one-way participation with no to minimal interruption. An example would be introductions between strangers.
  o Consultative register is two-way participation. Background information is provided and prior knowledge is not assumed. Examples include teacher/student, doctor/patient, expert/apprentice, etc.
  o Casual register is between friends. Slang and interruptions are among friends in a social setting.
  o Intimate is non-public and the intonation is more important than wording or grammar. This is most common among family members and close friends. A drop from formal to casual registers is deemed socially offensive, going against societal norms

• Adolescent: The development of children 12 through 18 years old. It is expected to include predictable physical and mental (Medlineplus, 2011, ¶1).
• Family Dynamics: The ways in which members of a family interact with each other and in relation to the group as a whole (Mosby’s Medical Dictionary, 2009, ¶1).

• Communication: Any act by which one person gives to or receives from another person information about that person's needs, desires, perceptions, knowledge, or affective states. Communication may be intentional or unintentional, may involve conventional or unconventional signals, may take linguistic or nonlinguistic forms, and may occur through spoken or other modes (National Joint Committee for the Communicative Needs of Persons with Severe Disabilities, 1992, p. 2).


• Economic Mobility: The ability to transition out of poverty (Baker, 2003, p. 436).

• Social Mobility: Moving from one position to another within the same social level such as changing jobs without altering a person’s social status or movement from one social level to another; social hierarchy (Baker, 2003, p. 436).

• Ecology of Human Performance (EOHP) Model: Preventative, health- promotional, and rehabilitative model that focuses on the transactions between persons and their contexts, affecting human behavior and task performance (Cole & Tufano, 2008). This system focuses on the relationship between individuals, their environment, and the application to occupational therapy.

• Poverty: The state of one who lacks a usual or socially acceptable amount of money or material possession (Miriam-Webster, 2011, ¶1).
  o Situational: A lack of resources due to a specific life event (Payne, 2005, p. 47).
o Generational: A continual family pattern of poverty for more than two generations (Payne, 2005, p. 47).

The scholarly project will be presented in the remaining four chapters. Chapter II presents the review of literature that was used to support the design of the product, focusing on poverty, culture, cultural literacy, communication, and education. Chapter III describes the process and theory uses in the design of the product. Chapter IV includes an introduction to the product and then the product in its entirety. Lastly, Chapter V summarizes the purpose, key information found throughout the development of this product, as well as recommendation for implementation.
CHAPTER II
LITIRATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Poverty is defined as the state of one who lacks a usual or socially acceptable amount of money or material possession (Miriam-Webster, 2011, ¶1). It is not just a lack of financial resources; it can also be seen as a lack of emotional, mental, spiritual, physical, and relationship resources (Payne, 2005, p. 8). An area of particular concern is the concept of formal registers which we authors believe plays a significant role in the areas of emotional, mental, spiritual, physical and relationship resources. This concept has not been explored in occupational therapy.

Joos (1967) defined formal registers as, “the standard sentence syntax and word choice of work and school, it has complete sentence and specific word choice” (p. 27). Montano-Harmon (1991) found that many minority and poor adolescents do not have access to formal register at home but rather tend to rely primarily in the causal/informal register. Casual/informal register, defined by Joos (1967), is the language used around family/friends or slang, being the language mostly used by those of low-socioeconomic status. According to Joos, “one can go one sociolinguistic register down in the same conversation and that is socially accepted. However, to drop two registers or more in the same conversation is thought to be socially offensive” (p. 27).

Currently schools use tests such as the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) and American College Testing (ACT) and the world of employment all function within the formal register. If minority and adolescents of low socioeconomic status do not have access to the formal register in the home environment, they may be placed at a significant disadvantage.
The scholarly project focuses on adolescents of low socioeconomic status (LSES) and diverse cultural backgrounds. Socioeconomic status or social class involves the "classification of persons into groups based on shared socio-economic conditions ... a relational set of inequalities with economic, social, political and ideological dimensions” (Baker, 2003). It is often measured via a combination of education, income and occupation. In the United States one’s occupation is a prime factor of social class and closely linked to an individual’s identity.

An in-depth literature review was conducted to explore the relationship among poverty, culture, family dynamics, sociolinguistic registers/communication and education. For this scholarly project the authors feel it is essential to address the areas of occupation, specifically education and communication. Within these areas there are broad ranges of activities or occupations arranged into categories. The categories include activities of daily living, instrumental activities of daily living, rest and sleep, education, work, play, leisure and social participation (AOTA, 2008). These areas of occupation are of great importance for adolescents in the school setting. “All people need to be able or enabled to engage in the occupations of their need and choice, to grow through what they do, and to experience independence or interdependence, equality, participation, security, health, and well-being” (Wilcock & Townsend, 2008, p. 198).

Based upon the literature review, *Educating & Communicating through Sociolinguistic Registers: Adolescent Clients* was developed. This guide is designed for use with adolescent clients 13-17 years-old. The purpose of this scholarly project was two-fold:

1. Develop a guide designed to strengthen the adolescent’s use and comfort with formal register, to strengthen their confidence in the occupation of education and transfer to the occupation of employment resulting in more success with these endeavors.
2. Strengthen the occupational therapist’s communication skills with the adolescent client in a school, community, or mental health setting. The aim is to enhance their therapeutic-use-of-self and intervention approaches in these settings. Methods include learning about sociolinguistic registers, culture, family dynamics and how to implement these resources.

The remainder of the literature review presents the data and resources that were instrumental in identifying and supporting the need and direction of the guide.

**Poverty**

“Record numbers of Americans were in poverty last year. The 46.2 million people in poverty in 2010 was the largest group for the 52 years that estimates have been published, of those 15.5 million children ages 0-17 lived in poverty ” (New York Post, 2011, ¶1-2). This poverty rate was three times higher for Black children and nearly three times higher for Hispanic children compared to White children (childstats.gov, 2011, ¶2). “Children living in poverty are vulnerable to environmental, educational, health and safety risks. Compared with their peers, young children are more likely to have cognitive, behavioral and socio-emotional difficulties” (childstats.gov, 2011, ¶1). Findings present that over 25% of children of low-income homes have peer interaction deficits and socially disruptive behavior such as aggressive and oppositional behavioral problems therefore addressing behavioral or psychosocial needs of low-income children is important (Bulotsky-Shearer, Fantuzzo & McDermott, 2010).

There are two classifications of poverty; generational and situational. Generational poverty is a continual family pattern of poverty for more than two generations and situational poverty is a lack of resources due to a specific life event (Payne, 2005). It is important to understand the differences between these two because they can carry with them different beliefs
and values. Pachter, Auinger, Palmer and Weitzman (2006) found that chronic or generational poverty as well as an individual’s neighborhood effects can negatively impact a child’s behavior.

Vortruba-Drzal, Coley, and Chase-Lansdal (2004) studied the effects of quality of childcare and low socioeconomic status. The results indicated low-quality care, correlated with low socioeconomic status, can cause developmental delays. Parent’s involvement in school activities is related to the achievement of the children. Lee and Bowen (2006) and found that higher achievement rates were correlated with ethnicity; European Americans were classified as the highest achievers, followed by Hispanic Americans and African Americans. The author identified contributing factors among African American and Hispanic Americans, as low-income and less educated parents. Findings of this study suggest that there are variations among parents with different background in terms of how involved parents are with their children’s education (Lee & Bowen, 2006).

The impact of poverty, on every aspect of an individual’s life is evident. It is important to address how culture and family dynamics play a role in adolescent development. Due to generational poverty parents may lack an understanding the importance of education and the opportunities it can provide based on their home environment and they pass this onto their children.

The methods to decrease the impact of poverty are controversial. There is the societal norm, in the United States, that if you work hard enough you can succeed, even though significant research has negated this for various marginalized groups, the belief remains. Over many decades the debate continues as to what strategies can be implemented to help individuals mobilize economically and socially. The ability to transition out of poverty is called economic mobility which is closely associated with social mobility. Social mobility can involve moving
from one position to another within the same social level such as changing jobs without altering a person’s social status or movement form one social level to another; social hierarchy (Baker, 2003). To transition successfully is a complex process deeply rooted in culture; the individual’s culture, the community’s culture, racial and ethnic culture and the cultural attitude and values of the United States in general. Transitioning from one socioeconomic class to another is not easy or only dependent upon acquiring a lot of money; it is a cultural transition that needs to occur.

**Culture**

Culture is a significant part of each individual’s life no matter the socioeconomic status. It aids in defining both mental and emotional situations, and creates meaningful clusters of behavior according to particular situations. Different cultures are organized by different logics, values, and beliefs causing there to be wide differences in behavior between youth of different cultures (Leung & Cohen, 2011). Lewis (1996, 1999, p. 7) states:

> The people in the culture of poverty have a strong feeling of marginality, of helplessness, of dependency, of not belonging. They are like aliens in their own country, convinced that the existing institutions do not serve their interests and needs. Along with this feeling of powerlessness is a widespread feeling of inferiority, of personal unworthiness. People with a culture of poverty have very little sense of history. They are a marginal people who know only their own troubles, their own local conditions, their own neighborhood, their own way of life. Usually, they have neither the knowledge, the vision nor the ideology to see the similarities between their problems and those of others like themselves elsewhere in the world. In other words, they are not class conscious, although they are very sensitive indeed to status distinctions. When the poor become class conscious or members of trade union organizations, or when they adopt an internationalist outlook on the world they are, in my view, no longer part of the culture of poverty although they may still be desperately poor.

The individual’s limited knowledge of the world, in a sense, places them at a significant disadvantage to learn how to develop the skills they will need to successfully interact with other cultures. When they have an increase in knowledge of the world they become more culturally literate.
Cultural Literacy

Cultural literacy is knowledge of history, contributions, and perspectives of different cultural groups, including one's own group, necessary for understanding of reading, writing, and other media (Dictionary.com, 2011, ¶1). The majority of American schools teach from an ethnocentric approach based on the dominant culture of the United States (Spring, 1995, p. 25). An ethnocentric approach does not embrace cultural literacy so those cultures not viewed a part of the dominant culture are typically marginalized in the educational system. “Poverty is perpetuated by a lack of cultural literacy,” once those of lower socioeconomic status overcome this issue it will provide more opportunities for them to succeed (Spring 1995, p. 158). A shift from causing and exploiting adolescents’ shame, regarding aspects connected to the culture of poverty, to the use of their cultural and linguistic differences could have a very strong and positive outcome in educational success (Spring, 1995, p. 25).

Sociolinguistic Registers/Communication

The home environment is the strongest predictor of an adolescent’s language and literacy skills (Roberts, Jurgen & Burchinal, 2005). Dr. Payne (2005) presents five sociolinguistic registers: frozen, formal, consultative, casual, and intimate.

1. Frozen register is a language that remains the same. An example would be the bible. Although the interpretations vary, the words largely remain the same.

2. Formal register involves one-way participation with no to minimal interruption. An example would be introductions between strangers.

3. Consultative register is two-way participation. Background information is provided and prior knowledge is not assumed. Examples include teacher/student, doctor/patient, expert/apprentice, etc.
4. Casual register is between friends. Slang and interruptions are among friends in a social setting.

5. Intimate is non-public and the intonation is more important than wording or grammar. This is most common among family members and close friends. A drop from formal to casual registers is deemed socially offensive, going against societal norms.

Wagner, Greene-Havas, and Gillespie (2010) investigated children’s ability to develop the ability to understand the social implications of using a particular register. The results showed that at age 4 the children began to apply the flexibility of different registers, but by age 5 they understand the use of registers. Maria Montano-Harmon (1991) found that many low-income students do not speak formal register and only know casual register. Most of the discipline referrals in the school setting occur because the student has spoken in casual register (Montano-Harmon, 1991). Children with regular developmental literacy environments performed at normative levels, whereas those with low literacy experiences scored below the norm (Rodriquez et. al., 2009). Reynolds and Fish (2010) state that a high number of children from low-income families start kindergarten with language skills that is behind those of their peers from higher income families. Research indicates those who continue to have relatively poor knowledge of oral vocabulary are normally of low-SES environments. Children from lower socioeconomic environments use fewer words than do children from higher-SES backgrounds (Reynolds & Fish, 2010).

Zevenbergen, Whitehurst, and Zevenbergen (2003) developed a program that consisted of a 30-week shared-reading element as well as an at-home 16-week phonemic awareness program. They found that after participating in a shared-reading program, participants gained narrative skills through their shared-reading experiences. These participants were more likely than
children in the control group to include references to internal states of characters and dialogue in their narratives (Zevenbergen, Whitehurst & Zevenbergen, 2003). Students who had strong language and reading skills who reside in integrated communities had an advantage in being exposed to high linguistic resources opposed to those of large low-income communities. The more elaborate the dialect use, the better the children’s performance on standardized tests of receptive oral vocabulary and reading (Craig & Washington, 2004). If there was a question as to how all of this relates to education, the research has been presented.

**Education**

Adolescents living in low-income neighborhoods tend to receive a poorer quality of education compared to those of higher-income (Spring, 1995, p. 60). Inequality in the U.S. public school systems results in continuous inequalities in society. School counselors have a tendency to place adolescents of LSES into low-income careers. Teacher’s views also tend to discriminate against low-income students because standardized tests are used to place adolescents into ability groups. This was a contributing factor to the legislation of the Head Start Act of 1981.

The Head Start Act of 1981 is designed to “promote the school readiness of low-income children by enhancing their cognitive, social, and emotional development: (1) in a learning environment that supports children’s growth in language, literacy, mathematics, science, social and emotional functioning, creative arts, physical skills, and approaches to learning; and (2) through the provision of low-income children and their families of health, educational, nutritional, social, and other services that are determined, based on family needs assessments, to be necessary” (Administration of Children and Families, 2011, Section 636). Research based on 829 children enrolled in a large urban school district Head Start Program, indicated 25% of
children had patterns of problem behavior and 33% of children exhibited mild classroom adjustment problems (Bulotsky-Shearer, Fantuzzo & McDermott, 2010). The American Psychological Association (APA, n.d, ¶6) has identified the following connection between SES and academic achievement:

1. Students from low-SES environments acquire low language skills and are at risk for reading difficulties.
2. Students with low-SES entered high school 3.3 grade levels behind students from higher SES. They also learned less over the 4 years of high school and graduated 4.3 grade levels behind those of higher SES groups.
3. In 2007, the high school drop rate among 16-24 year olds was highest in low-income families (16.7% compared to 3.2%).
4. Children from lower SES homes are about twice more likely to display learning-related behavior problems. A mother’s SES was also related to her child’s inattention, disinterest and lack of cooperation in school.
5. Identified as being a part of a lower SES has been associated with feelings of not belonging in school and intentions to drop out before graduation.
6. Perception of family economic stress and personal financial constraints affected emotional distress/depression in students and their academic outcomes.

DoSomething.Org (2011, ¶4-8) builds upon the statistics and findings of the APA.

1. Students from low-income families are 2.4 times more likely to drop out of school than children from middle-income families.
2. Students with disabilities are also more likely to drop out. An estimate from the National Transition Study estimates that as many as 36.4% of students who are disabled drop out of school.

3. Hispanics and African Americans are at greater risk to drop out.

4. Student’s perceptions of economic opportunities available to them also play a role in their decision to drop out or stay in school. Dropouts often have lower occupational aspirations than their peers.

Childstats.gov also identified several risks that children living in poverty face: “compared with their peers these children are more likely to have cognitive, behavioral and socio-emotional difficulties and throughout their lifetime, they are more likely to complete fewer years of school and experience more years of unemployment” (2011, ¶1).

Occupational therapy can plan a significant role in addressing these educational and communication needs. Although there are many factors that influence an adolescent’s success or not in society, there are very few factors an individual clinician has the ability to control.

**Section Summary**

The one area OTs can influence is how we communicate with our clients and enhance their communication skills both orally and written. When adolescents are not able to adequately use the formal register, such as in conversation or writing skills, they are not able to fully participate in areas of occupation such as formal/informal education and social participation. It is essential that they are able to independently participate in these areas of occupation to fulfill their role as family members, adolescents, successful students, and in society as a whole.

Occupational therapy can plan a significant role in addressing these needs of adolescents.
Role of Occupational Therapy

Occupational therapy practitioners recognize that health is supported and maintained when clients are able to engage in occupations and activities that allow desired or needed participation in home, school, workplace, and community life. Thus, occupational therapy practitioners are concerned not only with occupations but also the complexity of factors that empower and make possible clients’ engagement and participation in positive health-promoting occupations (Wilcock & Townsend, 2008).

Practitioners need to be educated in all occupational therapy concepts, be able to apply knowledge, and be culturally competent. Cultural competence is an important core skill in OT practice and practitioners need to adapt intervention techniques to fit the target population (Balcazar, et al, 2009). It is essential for client centered care. There is a clear role for occupational scientists to explore these possibilities and an equally clear role for occupational therapists to promote occupational enrichment for adolescents at risk of or experiencing occupational deprivation (Bayzak & Bayzak, 2009). Adolescents who are experience poverty may not have the social or financial resources needed to be exposed to and engage in a variety of structured leisure occupations (Bayzak & Bayzak, 2009). Adolescents need to engage in a balance of occupations to achieve optimal development and to experience health and well-being. Adolescents need opportunities to develop social–emotional skills and close connections with caring adults (Bayzak & Bayzak, 2009).

Creating the just-right challenge however, demands thoughtful planning involving a careful consideration of the adolescent’s skills and interests combined with an analysis of the activity demands and the group dynamics. Meeting an adolescent’s need for human connectedness and moral meaning is essential for health and development. Occupational
therapists and therapy assistants can design and implement groups to address the occupational and social–emotional needs of adolescents (Bayzak & Bayzak, 2009).

According to the OT Framework, the OT domain consists of overlapping of: activity demands, context and environment, performance skills, performance patterns, client factors, and areas of occupation (AOTA, 2008). Occupational therapists are trained to use their knowledge and skills to consider the psychosocial, physical, environmental, spiritual factors, as well as cultural traditions and perspectives of their clients. This approach is essential to working with adolescents, especially those who are from a lower socioeconomic status (AOTA, 2007). These factors address the attitudes and values of all contexts, while promoting self-concept, motivation, goal setting and resilience (AOTA, 2010).

Areas of occupation addressed pertaining to the targeted populations entail: social participation specifically communication and education; while performance factors attend to: emotional regulation, cognitive, communication and social skills. A role of the OT practitioner is to understand that a client’s ongoing occupational performance which is sustained by and based on the interrelationships of patterns of daily living, personal history, experiences, interests, values, and beliefs (AOTA, 2010). OTs conduct activity analysis to identify the needs of the clients and any possible environmental adaptations. They are responsible to find options that meet the needs of each individual adolescent and provide training on these options for teachers, parents, and other professionals. Based upon those needs, the OT will set meaningful and effective goals to motivate adolescents, plan, and implement strategies for intervention (AOTA, 2007 and AOTA, 2010). Programming that OTs create can include community programming, education programs, home/school modifications, adaptations/equipment, compensatory training, and wellness programming (AOTA, 2007 and AOTA, 2010). Taking into consideration all of
the information from the literature review and the academic preparation of occupational therapists, a communication guide was developed.

**Proposed Guide**

Based upon the literature review, *Educating & Communicating through Sociolinguistic Registers: Adolescent Clients* was developed. This guide is designed for use with adolescent clients 13-17 years-old. The purpose of this scholarly project was two-fold:

1. Develop a guide designed to strengthen the adolescent’s use and comfort with formal register, to strengthen their confidence in the occupation of education and transfer to the occupation of employment resulting in more success with these endeavors.

2. Strengthen the occupational therapist’s communication skills with the adolescent client in a school, community, or mental health setting. The aim is to enhance the occupational therapist’s therapeutic-use-of-self and intervention approaches in these settings and; increase intervention options for the OT that are culturally relevant and client centered. Methods include leaning about sociolinguistic registers, culture, family dynamics and how to implement these resources.

It is essential to address the areas of occupation of education and communication. This provides the adolescent with the skills and preparation so that they are able to engage in formal and informal educational and social venues.

**Theoretical Model/Framework**

In the development of *Educating & Communicating through Sociolinguistic Registers: Adolescent Clients*, it was determined that the Ecological Model of Occupation would provide a solid base for this project. The constructs of the Ecology of Human Performance Model (EOHP)
provide a useful framework to understand and address social participation and the influence of sociolinguistic register on the client.

- EOHP emphasizes a preventative, health-promotional, and rehabilitative objective.
- Ecology is the transactions between persons and their contexts, affecting human behavior and task performance (Cole & Tufano, 2008). This system focuses on the relationship between individuals, their environment, and the application to occupational therapy.
- The task performance of the client is the object of the intervention. It entails analyzing:
  1. **The person:** The clinician needs to begin here with the idea that each adolescent is an individual comprised of unique and complex abilities. The meaning that the adolescent attaches to the tasks and contextual variables strongly influences his or her performance. The OT needs to identify what the adolescent wants to accomplish pertaining to the desired task and how it will strengthen education and communication in formal register.
  2. **The task:** The adolescent and context work together to determine the range of tasks the adolescent is able to perform. Groups of tasks form the adolescent’s roles and occupations. It is essential for the occupational therapist to remember that it is the adolescent who defines the tasks and their meaning. The adolescent’s performance is influenced by his or her cultural context. The aim of the task is to enhance the educational and work skills of the adolescent.
  3. **The context:** Is defined as an adolescent’s background, friends, classroom arrangement and demands for performance. Evaluation can determine how contextual factors, adolescents and their contexts affect each other. Cultural, physical, and social contexts are the target context of the tasks. While these
contexts will be supported by the OT, they may present barriers to the areas of occupation due to beliefs, values, customs, knowledge, and ability of the client. OTs need to be aware of how the context will affect participation and work toward getting the best performance to emerge. The abilities and participation of an adolescent cannot be assessed until the context in which they live is understood (Dunbar, 2007). The tasks in the guide will address the cultural needs if the adolescent. The context in which the adolescents learns, are modified to aid the transition for casual register to formal register.

4. **Performance:** Performance is achieved when there is success in participation and balance of personal and environmental demands. The inability to attain performance can be related to 1) deficits in ability and skill 2) restrictive barriers or 3) a lack of resources. The goal of each task is to enhance the performance ability of the adolescent and contribute to future success based on education and communication through registers.

5. **Personal-contextual-task transaction:** Tasks the individual can complete are endless within in a specific context of that individual. This in turn completes the personal-contextual-task transaction, promoting human performance. The overall goal of the product is to address the person-context- and task transaction which will; 1. Strengthen the adolescents use and comfort with formal register and; 2. Strengthen the communication with the adolescent clients of various cultural backgrounds.

This model will aid in identifying what task(s) the adolescent wants to accomplish and what the meaning is for that task within his or her cultural context. For purposes of this project,
each task should enhance the educational ability, and address the cultural needs and environment of the adolescent. Lastly, the person-contextual-task transaction will enhance the performance ability of the adolescent and contribute to future success based on education and communication through registers.

**Ecological Model Interventions:** The model “describes five therapeutic intervention strategies that address the complexity of the person/context/task relationship” (Dunn, Brown & Youngstrom, 2003, p. 231). Interventions can be aimed specifically at the adolescent, the context or the task but often are in combination. The ultimate goal of each intervention strategy is that it supports the performance needs of the adolescent.

1. **Establish/Restore:** The aim of establish/restore interventions are to improve the adolescents’ skills (Dunn, Brown & Youngstrom, 2003). The therapist will be facilitating the establishment of skills that the adolescent has not yet learned in regard to successfully apply casual register knowledge to a formal register setting.

2. **Alter:** When using this intervention strategy, the therapist focuses on the context in which the person performs the task (Dunn, Brown & Youngstrom, 2003). The goal is the find the best match between the adolescent’s current skills and abilities and the context options that are available such as the classroom and work environments. This may include but is not limited to: altering the perception of the adolescent that speaking in the formal register does not mean you are ‘trying to be white’ or someone you are not. There may be resistance from members of the adolescent’s life that can push against using formal register.

3. **Adapt/Modify:** The aim of adapt/modify is to increase task performance by modifying the context and task features (Dunn, Brown & Youngstrom, 2003). The
goal of this guide is to modify the way the clients conducts tasks related to social participation and education based on prior knowledge of the client. This guide will provide the adolescent with alternative/adaptive ways to enhance social participation skills and education.

4. **Prevent:** The aim of prevent is to change person, context, or task variables to decrease negative outcomes (Dunn, Brown & Youngstrom, 2003). This guide will provide activities, with the aim to prevent future negative outcomes pertaining to social participation and education such as how to interact in the formal setting and continue to be their self at the same time.

5. **Create:** The aim of create is to maximize the person’s performance range by creating supportive conditions (Dunn, Brown & Youngstrom, 2003). It can focus on person, context or task but is used before a problem occurs or when no problem exists. The guide is designed to help the occupational therapist create a supportive environment that elicits optimal performance of the adolescent. This may strengthen their confidence in the occupation of education and transfer to the occupation of employment resulting in more success with these endeavors.

**ORGANIZATION**

*Educating & Communicating through Sociolinguistic Registers: Adolescent Clients* is divided into several sections to enable the therapist to understand how to apply the use of formal and casual registers to adolescents and then implement and focus on target areas of need pertaining to the population.

I. Introduction to the Guide
   a. Background Information & Purpose
   b. Design and Theory
II. Occupational Therapist Section
a. OT Knowledge  
b. Understanding Casual Register  
c. Switching from Formal to Casual Register  
d. Applying Formal Register to Casual Register  

III. Adolescent Section:  
1. Application to Practice  
2. Intervention Tasks  
   1. Communication  
      • Body Language Charades  
      • Conflict Resolution  
      • Scrabble®  
      • Life Skills Role Play  
      • Communication Scavenger Hunt  
   2. Education  
      • Using the Thesaurus  
      • Understanding News: Formal to Casual  
      • Bean Bag Toss Trivia  
      • Analogies  
      • Cultural Myths vs. Realities  

IV. Conclusion  
V. Resources  
VI. Glossary  
VII. References  

**Conclusion**  

It is important to understand the family dynamics of different cultures and the varying situations of poverty that adolescents grow up in. These differences can have an effect on academic performance as well as behavior in the school setting. Due to different family dynamics and cultures: there is a need to pay attention to how to treat and educate youth, with respect to learning styles and emotional, social, and behavioral development (Feldman, 2005).

There are, however, needs that all adolescents have in common. All adolescents, irrespective of gender, ethnicity, and social class, deserve to be treated as individuals, not labeled, and entitled to grow up in secure, protected, and nurturing surroundings. Too many adolescents face the stresses and obstacles of poverty, unstable homes, racism and bigotry, dilapidated and unsafe school buildings, overcrowded schools and classrooms, and a popular
culture that glorifies gangsters, drugs, and guns (Feldman, 2005). There is a need for occupational therapists to understand that cultural competency is not a politically correct term but a concept very much ingrained into one of our foundational beliefs of therapeutic use of self.

Chapter III will present the methodology and the activities used to develop the product. The product in its entirety is available in Chapter IV. Chapter V will provide the summary, limitations, and recommendations.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The process of developing *Educating & Communicating through Sociolinguistic Registers: Adolescent Clients* began with personal interests and dedication to aiding at-risk, minority adolescents. One author has ten years of experience working with adolescents of diverse cultures and LSES in Louisiana.

The authors of this project identified a need to gain an understanding of the relationship between culture, low-socioeconomic status and sociolinguistic registers in order to address low-income, minority adolescents in the clinical setting. Due to not being able to locate any literature or research on this topic in the field of OT, it was felt that there was a need to build an awareness of the importance of addressing the culture and linguistic registers within the role of the occupational therapist. There is also a need to enhance the OT’s therapeutic-use-of-self and expand his/her intervention approaches through the use of understanding sociolinguistic register, culture and family dynamics in the clinical setting.

An extensive review of literature was conducted spanning from 1966-2011. The process of researching information consisted of exploring research on search engines such as PubMed and Google Scholar. Key terms used in the search included: *culture, sociolinguistic registers, casual register, formal register, low-socioeconomic status youth, education of adolescents who live in the lower socioeconomic status level, communication, and occupational therapy*.

The literature review relied on research from other health and education professions in the U.S. to assist in developing the resource guidelines. The best practice information studied for
these cultural groups was in the professional fields of education, psychology, and health services. The American Journal of Occupational Therapy contains few articles related to low-socioeconomic status and diverse cultural background in relation to education and communication.

The information was then complied into the following common areas:

1. The statistics of poverty in relation to youth in America;
2. Diverse cultures and cultural literacy in America;
3. Sociolinguistic register/communication differences in families who live in the lower socioeconomic status;
4. Educational statistics and disadvantages in lower socioeconomic status versus those of higher socioeconomic statuses and
5. The role of the occupational therapist working with adolescents of lower socioeconomic status level and diverse cultural backgrounds.

The resulting product provides students and clinician with the access to a resource to use in their daily clinical interactions in a school, mental health, or community setting as a part their therapeutic-use-of-self and intervention approaches. The guide is designed to strengthen the adolescents’ use and comfort with formal register and strengthen the communication with the adolescent client. The assumption is that this will strengthen the adolescent’s confidence in the occupation of education and transfer to the occupation of employment resulting in more success with these endeavors. It is also designed to strengthen the OT’s knowledge and confidence with the sociolinguistic registers.

It is important to consider the information provided in this resource as a base of interventions and guidelines rather than best practice due to various cultures and the evolving
nature of the discussion surrounding this diverse population also, since the research of this type is limited in the field of OT. It is not intended to stand alone as a single guide on educating and communicating with LSES, diverse adolescents. Rather, the intention is to increase awareness and drive for self-directed learning towards cultural competency with adolescents of lower socioeconomic status level and diverse cultures.
CHAPTER IV
PRODUCT

As occupational therapists it is important to understand the family dynamics of different cultures and the varying situations of poverty that adolescents grow up in. These differences can have an effect on, not only academic performance but mental health and behavior in the community and school setting. The scholarly project began with the assumption on how to specifically address the needs of education and communication for low-socioeconomic adolescents of diverse cultures. The authors of this project have vested interest in advocating, educating, and enhancing the development of this population. With minimal evidence of best practices in the professional literature, the goal became to develop a guide that could be beneficial for occupational therapy clinicians to implement in the school, community, and mental health setting.

Statistics and lack of OT research regarding sociolinguistic registers in interventions, displayed there is a need to enhance how we communicate with our clients both orally and written. When adolescents are not able to adequately use the formal register, such as in conversation or writing skills, they are not able to participate in areas of occupation such as formal/informal education and social participation, specifically communication skills. It is essential that they are able to independently participate in these areas of occupation to fulfill their role as family members, adolescents, and people in general. Based on this information a guide has been developed to assist occupational therapy students and clinicians enhance the
development of adolescents and therapeutic-use of self on school, community, and mental health settings.

Based upon the literature review, *Educating & Communicating through Sociolinguistic Registers: Adolescent Clients* was developed. This guide is designed for use with adolescent clients 13-17 years-old. The purpose of this scholarly project was two-fold:

1. Develop a guide designed to strengthen the adolescent’s use and comfort with formal register, to strengthen their confidence in the occupation of education and transfer to the occupation of employment resulting in more success with these endeavors.

2. Strengthen the occupational therapists communication skills with the adolescent client in a school, community, or mental health setting. The aim is to enhance the occupational therapists therapeutic-use-of-self and intervention approaches in these settings and; increase intervention options for the OT that are culturally relevant and client centered. Methods include leaning about sociolinguistic registers, culture, family dynamics and how to implement these resources.

It is important to consider the information provided in this resource as a base of interventions and guidelines rather than best practice due to various cultures and the evolving nature of the discussion surrounding this diverse population. It is not intended to stand alone as a single guide on educating and communicating with diverse adolescents who are in the lower socioeconomic class. Rather, the intention is to increase awareness and drive for self-directed learning towards cultural competency with adolescents of lower socioeconomic class and diverse cultures.

The theoretical design of *Educating & Communicating through Sociolinguistic Registers: Adolescent Clients* is based on the fact that occupational therapy students and
clinicians are adult learners who have been trained to self-reflect, practice, self-educate and then educate clients.

A general summary of the topics discussed in the product is listed as follows.

1. The **Introduction to the Guide** provides the OT with background information on poverty, culture, cultural literacy, sociolinguistic registers/communication, and education for adolescents of LSES and diverse cultures. It also provides the theoretical framework used in the development of the product and the interventions along with information on what the OT need to know in order to implement the guide.

2. The **Purpose of the Guide** section identifies the design and objective of the guide, tools the OT can use when implementing the guide to adolescent clients and the organization of the guide. The organization of the guide will enable the therapist the understand how to apply the use of formal and casual registers to adolescents and then implement and focus on target areas of need pertaining to the population.

3. The **Occupational Therapist Section** consists of activities that will enable the therapist to better understand and apply formal and casual register in group activities. There are four activities within the occupational therapist section that are designed to take the therapist through a process of first understanding the registers and then applying and interchanging between registers. This product has guided activities and discussions about culture and communication in order to enhance cultural competency and understanding of sociolinguistic registers.

4. **Application to practice** identifies the areas the adolescents need to strengthen by transitioning between casual and formal registers and ways to implement interventions.
5. The Adolescent Section: Intervention Tasks section provides activities/ideas for the OT to use registers in practice to maximize the communication with the aim to see successful outcomes in interventions with adolescents of different cultures. These activities specifically target communication, social interaction, and strengthening academic skills (education).

6. The Conclusion provides the OT with a summary of the aim of the interventions and reasoning behind the development of Educating & Communicating through Sociolinguistic Registers: Adolescent Clients.

7. The Resource section provides the users of the guide with an avenue to find more activities to implement with the targeted population, information on yearly statistics, and information to relay to adolescents and family members.

8. The Glossary section provides the OT with basic knowledge of terminology used when dealing with culture and lower socioeconomic class needs. A glossary and resource section is included in the product in order to assist in developing a knowledge base on cultural competency for the OT, adolescent, and parents.

The product, Educating & Communicating through Sociolinguistic Registers: Adolescent Clients, will now be presented in its entirety.
Educating & Communicating
Through Sociolinguistic Registers:
Adolescent Clients

Developed by Chanaé Jones B.S., MOTS & Brittany Mayer MOTS

Advisor: LaVonne Fox, PhD
Forward

The very essence of the continuation of life is dependent on future generations and their dedication to thrive in life. I have been dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for at risk youth and will continue to do so for the rest of my life. I feel it is important to be culturally competent in the practice of occupational therapy. We work with clients who are a part of many different cultures. If we are not culturally competent to the views and needs of our clients many different cultural aspects then we are not truly implementing therapeutic-use-of-self and client centered practice. This guide is dear to my heart in that it is the beginning of interventions that not only educate OT’s but enhance the quality of life in adolescents through areas of occupation. I would like to thank GOD, my advisor, and mom for being hard on me so I could grow into the person I am today. I would also like to thank my partner for all her hard work and dedication to this guide. This is dedicated the values my family and community instilled in me growing up and to the youth in my community who struggle every day to not be a product of their environment.

- Chanaé Jones

When we started this project I was interested to learn more about poverty and how it affects the adolescents growing up in poverty. The more we researched, the more it evolved into the effects of language registers on those in low-socioeconomic status. It was a concept that hadn’t been explored by occupational therapy and I was interested to learn what research we could find. It was exciting to come up with something that was new and unique to the field of OT. I’m also thankful for my partner for all of her hard work.

- Brittany Mayer
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1. Introduction
The *Educating & Communicating through Sociolinguistic Registers: Adolescent Clients Guide* will provide the occupational therapist with several learning opportunities based on sociolinguistic registers for adolescents 13-17 years of age. The goal is two-fold:

A. The adolescents will engage in formal and informal educational avenues more confidently understanding and using the sociolinguistic registers and;

B. You, the occupational therapist, will also be more confident in using the sociolinguistic registers to assist the adolescent in navigating between and within formal and informal educational avenues. It also contributes to the OT’s ability to provide culturally competent client-centered care. This guide serves as a resource for occupational therapists to use in their daily clinical interactions in a school, community, or mental health setting as a part their therapeutic-use-of-self and intervention approaches.

This section provides background information on: culture, cultural literacy, registers/communication, poverty, and education needed to implement the guide.
Background Information

Problem

Currently tests such as the SAT (Scholastic Assessment Test) and ACT (American College Testing), as well as the world of employment, use what is identified as the formal sociolinguistic register (Joos, 1967 & Payne, 2005). Payne (2005) built upon Joos’ (1967) definition and presented five registers: frozen, formal, consultative, casual, and intimate. Formal register is defined as; one-way participation, no interruption such as is seen with introduction between strangers. Technical vocabulary; "fuzzy semantics" or exact definitions are important.

Montano-Harmon (1991) found that many minority and poor students do not have access to formal register at home but rather tend to rely primarily in the causal/informal register. According to Joos,

“one can go one sociolinguistic register down in the same conversation and that is socially accepted, but to drop two registers or more in the same conversation is thought to be socially offensive” (p. 27).

If adolescents of low-socioeconomic status do not have access to the formal register in the home environment, they may be placed at a significant disadvantage when attempting to act in more formal social situations.

Poverty

A “record numbers of Americans were in poverty last year. The 46.2 million people in poverty in 2010 was the largest group for the 52 years that estimates have been published, of those 15.5 million children ages 0-17 lived in poverty ” (New York Post, 2011, ¶1-2). This poverty rate was three times higher for Black children and nearly three times higher for Hispanic children compared to White children (childstats.gov, 2011, ¶2). “Children living in poverty are vulnerable to environmental, educational, health and safety risks. Compared with their peers, young children are more likely to have cognitive, behavioral and socio-emotional difficulties” (childstats.gov, 2011, ¶1). Findings present that over 25% of children of low-income homes have peer interaction deficits and socially disruptive behavior such as aggressive and oppositional behavioral problems therefore addressing behavioral or psychosocial needs of low-income children is important (Bulotsky-Shearer, Fantuzzo & McDermott, 2010).
There are two classifications of poverty; generational and situational. Generational poverty is a continual family pattern of poverty for more than two generations and situational poverty is a lack of resources due to a specific life event (Payne, 2005). It is important to understand the differences between these two because they can carry with them different beliefs and values. Pachter et. al. (2006) found that chronic or generational poverty as well as an individual’s neighborhood effects can negatively impact a child’s behavior. The impact of poverty, on every aspect of an individual’s life is evident. It is important to address how culture and family dynamics play a role in adolescent development. Due to generational poverty parents may lack an understanding the importance of education and the opportunities it can provide based on their home environment and they pass this onto their children.

**Culture**

Culture is a significant part of each individual’s life no matter the socioeconomic status. It aids in defining both mental and emotional situations, and creates meaningful clusters of behavior according to particular situations. Different cultures are organized by different logics, values, and beliefs causing there to be wide differences in behavior between youth of different cultures (Leung & Cohen, 2011). Lewis (1996, 1999, p. 7) states:

The people in the culture of poverty have a strong feeling of marginality, of helplessness, of dependency, of not belonging. They are like aliens in their own country, convinced that the existing institutions do not serve their interests and needs. Along with this feeling of powerlessness is a widespread feeling of inferiority, of personal unworthiness. People with a culture of poverty have very little sense of history. They are a marginal people who know only their own troubles, their own local conditions, their own neighborhood, their own way of life. Usually, they have neither the knowledge, the vision nor the ideology to see the similarities between their problems and those of others like themselves elsewhere in the world. In other words, they are not class conscious, although they are very sensitive indeed to status distinctions. When the poor become class conscious or members of trade union organizations, or when they adopt an internationalist outlook on the world they are, in my view, no longer part of the culture of poverty although they may still be desperately poor.
The individual’s limited knowledge of the world, in a sense, places them at a significant disadvantage to learn how to develop the skills they will need to successfully interact with other cultures. When they have an increased knowledge of the world they become more culturally literate.

**Cultural Literacy**

Cultural literacy is knowledge of history, contributions, and perspectives of different cultural groups, including one's own group, necessary for understanding of reading, writing, and other media (Dictionary.com, 2011, ¶1). The majority of American schools teach from an ethnocentric approach based on the dominant culture of the United States (Spring, 1995, p. 25). An ethnocentric approach does not embrace cultural literacy so those cultures not viewed as part of the dominant culture are typically marginalized in the educational system. “Poverty is perpetuated by a lack of cultural literacy,” once those of lower socioeconomic status overcome this issue it will provide more opportunities for them to succeed (Spring 1995, p. 158). A shift from causing and exploiting adolescents’ shame, regarding aspects connected to the culture of poverty, to the use of their cultural and linguistic differences could have a very strong and positive outcome in educational success (Spring, 1995 p. 25).

**Sociolinguistic Registers/Communication**

The home environment is the strongest predictor of an adolescent’s language and literacy skills (Roberts, Jurgen & Burchinal, 2005). Dr. Payne (2005) presents five sociolinguistic registers: frozen, formal, consultative, casual, and intimate.

1. Frozen register is a language that remains the same. An example would be the bible. Although the interpretations vary, the words largely remain the same.
2. Formal register involves one-way participation with no to minimal interruption. An example would be introductions between strangers.
3. Consultative register is two-way participation. Background information is provided and prior knowledge is not assumed. Examples include teacher/student, doctor/patient, expert/apprentice, etc.
4. Casual register is between friends. Slang and interruptions are among friends in a social setting.
5. Intimate is non-public and the intonation is more important than wording or grammar. This is most common among family members and close friends. As stated prior, a drop from formal to casual registers is deemed socially offensive, going against societal norms.

Wagner, Greene-Havas, and Gillespie (2010) investigated children’s ability to develop the ability to understand the social implications of using a particular register. The results showed that at age 4 the children began to apply the flexibility of different registers, but age by 5 they understand the use of registers. Maria Montano-Harmon (1991) found that many low-income students do not speak formal register and only know casual register. Most of the discipline referrals in the school setting occur because the student has spoken in casual register (Montano-Harmon, 1991). Children with regular developmental literacy environments performed at normative levels, whereas those with low literacy experiences scored below the norm (Rodriquez et. al., 2009). Reynolds and Fish (2010) state that a high number of children from low-income families start kindergarten with language skills that are behind those of their peers from higher income families. Research indicates those who continue to have relatively poor knowledge of oral vocabulary are normally of low-SES environments. Children from lower socioeconomic environments use fewer words than do children from higher-SES backgrounds (Reynolds & Fish, 2010).

**Education**

Adolescents living in low-income neighborhoods tend to receive a poorer quality of education compared to those of higher-income (Spring, 1995, p. 60). Inequality in the U.S. public school systems results in continuous inequalities in society. School counselors have a tendency to place adolescents of LSES into low-income careers. Teacher’s views also tend to discriminate against low-income students because standardized tests are used to place adolescents into ability groups. This was a contributing factor to the legislation of the Head Start Act of 1981.

The Head Start Act of 1981 is designed to “promote the school readiness of low-income children by enhancing their cognitive, social, and emotional development: (1) in a learning environment that supports children’s growth in language, literacy, mathematics, science, social and emotional functioning, creative arts, physical skills, and approaches to learning; and (2) through the provision of low-income children and their families of health, educational,
nutritional, social, and other services that are determined, based on family needs assessments, to be necessary” (Administration of Children and Families, 2011, Section 636). Research based on 829 children enrolled in a large urban school district Head Start Program, indicated 25% of children had patterns of problem behavior and 33% of children exhibited mild classroom adjustment problems (Bulotsky-Shearer, Fantuzzo & McDermott, 2010). The American Psychological Association (APA, n.d, ¶6) has identified the following connection between SES and academic achievement:

1. Students from low-SES environments acquire low language skills and are at risk for reading difficulties.
2. Students with low-SES entered high school 3.3 grade levels behind students from higher SES. They also learned less over the 4 years of high school and graduated 4.3 grade levels behind those of higher SES groups.
3. In 2007, the high school drop rate among 16-24 year-olds was highest in low-income families (16.7% compared to 3.2%).
4. Children from lower SES homes are about twice more likely to display learning-related behavior problems. A mother’s SES was also related to her child’s inattention, disinterest and lack of cooperation in school.
5. Identified as being a part of a lower SES has been associated with feelings of not belonging in school and intentions to drop out before graduation.
6. Perception of family economic stress and personal financial constraints affected emotional distress/depression in students and their academic outcomes.

DoSomething.Org (2011, ¶4-8) identified the following statistics that support the findings of the APA and add additional information:

1. Students from low-income families are 2.4 times more likely to drop out of school than children from middle-income families.
2. Students with disabilities are also more likely to drop out. An estimate from the National Transition Study estimates that as many as 36.4% of students who are disabled drop out of school.
3. Hispanics and African Americans are at greater risk to drop out.
4. Student’s perceptions of economic opportunities available to them also play a role in their decision to drop out or stay in school. Dropouts often have lower occupational aspirations than their peers.

Childstats.gov also identified several risks that children living in poverty face: “compared with their peers these children are more likely to have cognitive, behavioral and socio-emotional difficulties and throughout their lifetime, they are more likely to complete fewer years of school and experience more years of unemployment” (2011, ¶1).

**Summary**

Occupational therapy can play a significant role in addressing these educational and communication needs. Although there are many factors that influence an adolescent’s success or not in society, there are very few individual clinicians that have the ability to control. The one area OTs can influence is how we communicate with our clients and enhance their communication skills. When adolescents are not able to adequately use the formal register, such as in conversation or writing skills, they are not able to participate in areas of occupation such as formal/informal education and social participation. It is essential that they are able to independently participate in these areas of occupation to fulfill their role as family members, adolescents, and people in general. Occupational therapy can plan a significant role in addressing these needs of adolescents.
Theory

Based upon a literature review, *Educating & Communicating through Sociolinguistic Registers: Adolescent Clients* was developed. This guide is designed for use with adolescent clients 13-17 years-old. The purpose of this scholarly project was two-fold:

- Develop a guide designed to strengthen the adolescent’s use and comfort with formal register, to strengthen their confidence in the occupation of education and transfer to the occupation of employment resulting in more success with these endeavors.
- Strengthen the occupational therapist’s communication skills with the adolescent client in a school, community, or mental health setting. The aim is to enhance the occupational therapist’s therapeutic-use-of-self and intervention approaches in these settings and; increase intervention options for the OT that are culturally relevant and client centered. Methods include leaning about sociolinguistic registers, culture, family dynamics and how to implement these resources.

It is essential to address the areas of occupation of education and social participation/communication in order to provide the learning approach and sociolinguistic registers for each adolescent so that they are able to engage in formal and informal educational and social venues.

Theoretical Model/ Framework

The Ecological Model of Occupation provide a solid theoretical base for this project. The constructs of the Ecology of Human Performance Model (EOHP) provide a useful framework to understand and address social participation and the influence of sociolinguistic register on the client.

- EOHP emphasizes a preventative, health-promotional, and rehabilitative objective.
- Ecology is the transactions between persons and their contexts, affecting human behavior and task performance (Cole & Tufano, 2008). This system focuses on the relationship between individuals, their environment, and the application to occupational therapy.
- The task performance of the client is the object of the intervention. It entails analyzing:
  1. **The person:** The clinician needs to begin here with the idea that each adolescent is an individual comprised of unique and complex abilities. The meaning that the adolescent attaches to the tasks and contextual variables strongly influences his or her performance. The OT needs to identify what the adolescent wants to
accomplish pertaining to the desired task and how it will strengthen education and 
communication in formal register.

2. **The task:** The adolescent and context work together to determine the range of 
tasks the adolescent is able to perform. Groups of tasks form the adolescent’s 
roles and occupations. It is essential for the occupational therapist to remember 
that it is the adolescent who defines the tasks and their meaning. The adolescent’s 
performance is influenced by his or her cultural context. The aim of the task is to 
enhance the educational and work skills of the adolescent.

3. **The context:** Is defined as an adolescent’s background, friends, classroom 
arrangement and demands for performance. Evaluation can determine how 
contextual factors, adolescents and their contexts affect each other. Cultural, 
physical, and social contexts are the target context of the tasks. While these 
contexts will be supported by the OT, they may present barriers to the areas of 
occupation due to beliefs, values, customs, knowledge, and ability of the client. 
OTs need to be aware of how the context will affect participation and work 
toward getting the best performance to emerge. The abilities and participation of 
an adolescent cannot be assessed until the context in which they live is understood 
(Dunbar, 2007). The tasks in the guide will address the cultural needs of the 
adolescent. The context in which the adolescent learns are modified to aid the 
transition for casual register to formal register.

4. **Performance:** Performance is achieved when there is success in participation 
and balance of personal and environmental demands. The inability to attain 
performance can be related to 1) deficits in ability and skill 2) restrictive barriers 
or 3) a lack of resources. The goal of each task is to enhance the performance 
ability of the adolescent and contribute to future success based on education and 
communication through registers.

5. **Personal-contextual-task transaction:** Tasks the individual can complete are 
endless within in a specific context of that individual. This in turn completes the 
personal-contextual-task transaction, promoting human performance. The overall 
goal of the product is to address the person-context- and task transaction which 
will; 1. Strengthen the adolescent’s use and comfort with formal register and; 2.
Strengthen the communication with the adolescent clients of various cultural backgrounds.

This model will aid in identifying what task(s) the adolescent wants to accomplish and what the meaning is for that task within his or her cultural context. For purposes of this project, each task should enhance the educational ability, and address the cultural needs and environment of the adolescent. Lastly, the person-contextual-task transaction will enhance the performance ability of the adolescent and contribute to future success based on education and communication through registers.

**Ecological Model Interventions:** The model “describes five therapeutic intervention strategies that address the complexity of the person/context/task relationship” (Dunn, Brown & Youngstrom, 2003, p. 231). Interventions can be aimed specifically at the adolescent, the context or the task but often are in combination. The ultimate goal of each intervention strategy, is that it supports the performance needs of the adolescent.

1. **Establish/Restore:** The aim of establish/restore interventions are to improve the adolescent’s skills (Dunn, Brown & Youngstrom, 2003). The therapist will be facilitating the establishment of skills that the adolescent has not yet learned in regard to successfully apply casual register knowledge to a formal register setting.

2. **Alter:** When using this intervention strategy, the therapist focuses on the context in which the person performs the task (Dunn, Brown & Youngstrom, 2003). The goal is the find the best match between the adolescent’s current skills and abilities and the context options that are available such as the classroom and work environments. This may include but is not limited to: altering the perception of the adolescent that speaking in the formal register does not mean you are ‘trying to be white’ or someone you are not. There may be resistance from members of the adolescent’s life that can push against using formal register.

3. **Adapt/Modify:** The aim of adapt/modify is to increase task performance by modifying the context and task features (Dunn, Brown & Youngstrom, 2003). The goal of this guide is to modify the way the client conducts tasks related to social participation and education based on prior knowledge of the client. This guide will provide the adolescent with alternative/adaptive ways to enhance social participation skills and education.
4. **Prevent:** The aim of prevent is to change person, context, or task variables to decrease negative outcomes (Dunn, Brown & Youngstrom, 2003). This guide will provide activities, with the aim to prevent future negative outcomes pertaining to social participation and education such as how to interact in the formal setting and continue to be who they are at the same time.

5. **Create:** The aim of create is to maximize the person’s performance range by creating supportive conditions (Dunn, Brown & Youngstrom, 2003). It can focus on person, context or task but is used before a problem occurs or when no problem exists. The guide is designed to help the occupational therapist create a supportive environment that elicits optimal performance of the adolescent. This may strengthen their confidence in the occupation of education and transfer to the occupation of employment resulting in more success with these endeavors.

**Guide Design & Organization**

As stated prior, this guide is designed for use with adolescent clients 13-17 years-old. The purpose of this scholarly project was two-fold:

- Develop a guide designed to strengthen the adolescent’s use and comfort with formal register, to strengthen their confidence in the occupation of education and transfer to the occupation of employment resulting in more success with these endeavors.

- To strengthen the occupational therapist’s communication skills with the adolescent client in a school, community, or mental health setting. The aim is to enhance the occupational therapist’s therapeutic-use-of-self and intervention approaches in these settings and; increase intervention options for the OT that are culturally relevant.

  Methods include leaning about sociolinguistic registers, culture, family dynamics and how to implement these resources.

  The authors chose this area of focus because it has not been explored in the OT context at all. The assumption is that if the occupational therapist can implement strategies to help the adolescent understand the importance and relevance of casual and formal registers, the adolescent can gain confidence in the occupation of education and transfer it to employment resulting in more success.
The guide is divided into several sections designed to enable the therapist the understand how to apply the use of formal and casual registers to adolescents. It then focuses on target areas of need pertaining to the population and provides implementation strategies.

1. **Occupational Therapist Section**: The purpose of this section is to provide the OT with the knowledge and practice to implement register transition in educating and communicating with adolescents.
   a. There are four activities in this section that are designed to take you through a process of first understanding the registers and then applying and interchanging between registers. This section has guided activities and discussions about culture and communication to enhance cultural competency and understanding of sociolinguistic registers.
   b. This guide is a resource for occupational therapists to use in their daily clinical interactions in a school, mental health, or community setting as a part their therapeutic-use-of-self and intervention approaches.

2. **Adolescent Intervention Section**: This section has two sub-sections; communication and education. The authors began with these two because they felt communication in sociolinguistic registers is essential so the adolescent can begin to engage in formal and informal educational and social venues. The adolescent’s ability to effectively communicate within these registers may open up additional opportunities in education thus affecting future education plans and/or employment opportunities.
   a. Each section consists of five activities that focuses on aiding adolescents understand and successfully transition between registers.
   b. These activities for the OT and the adolescent will: strengthen the communication of OTs in relation to culture and register, increase the therapeutic-use-of-self and, increase intervention options for the OT that are culturally relevant and client centered.
   c. Pertaining to the student, the activities will: strengthen the student’s use and comfort with formal register and strengthen the communication others. It is
essential to address the area of occupation of education so that they are able to engage in formal and informal educational avenues.

d. It also focuses on creating a strong resource system both at school and home. It is essential to address the areas of occupation of education and social participation to provide the learning approach and sociolinguistic registers for each adolescent so that they are able to engage in formal and informal educational and social venues.
II. Occupational Therapist Section
Role of Occupational Therapy

Occupational therapy practitioners recognize that health is supported and maintained when clients are able to engage in occupations and activities that allow desired or needed participation in home, school, workplace, and community life. Thus, occupational therapy practitioners are concerned not only with occupations but also the complexity of factors that empower and make possible clients’ engagement and participation in positive health-promoting occupations (Wilcock & Townsend, 2008).

Practitioners need to be educated in all occupational therapy concepts, be able to apply knowledge, and be culturally competent. Cultural competence is an important core skill in OT practice and practitioners need to adapt intervention techniques to fit the target population (Balcazar, et al., 2009). There is a clear role for occupational scientists to explore these possibilities and an equally clear role for occupational therapists to promote occupational enrichment for adolescents at risk of or experiencing occupational deprivation (Bayzak & Bayzak, 2009). Adolescents who experience poverty may not have the social or financial resources needed to be exposed to and engage in a variety of structured leisure occupations (Bayzak & Bayzak, 2009). Adolescents need to engage in a balance of occupations to achieve optimal development and to experience health and well-being. Adolescents need opportunities to develop social–emotional skills and close connections with caring adults (Bayzak & Bayzak, 2009).

Creating the just-right challenge, however, demands thoughtful planning involving a careful consideration of the adolescent’s skills and interests combined with an analysis of the activity demands and the group dynamics. Meeting an adolescent’s need for human connectedness and moral meaning is essential for health and development. Occupational therapists and therapy assistants can design and implement groups to address the occupational and social–emotional needs of adolescents (Bayzak & Bayzak, 2009). As a part of intervention, occupational therapists can educate adolescents, after-school staff, and parents about the immediate and long-term mental health benefits of engaging in activities that promote flow (Bayzak & Bayzak, 2009). Flow is defined as the movement, change, energy, or force present within a sensory experience (Young, 2007).
According to the OT Framework, the OT domain consists of overlapping of: activity demands, context and environment, performance skills, performance patterns, client factors, and areas of occupation (AOTA, 2008). Occupational therapists are trained to use their knowledge and skills to consider the psychosocial, physical, environmental, spiritual factors, as well as cultural traditions and perspectives of their clients. This approach is essential to working with adolescents who are from a lower socioeconomic status (AOTA, 2007). These factors address the attitudes and values of all contexts, while promoting self-concept, motivation, goal setting and resilience (AOTA, 2010).

Areas of occupation addressed pertaining to the targeted populations entail: social participation specifically communication and education; while performance factors attend to: emotional regulation, cognitive, communication and social skills. A role of the OT practitioner is to understand that a client’s ongoing occupational performance which is sustained by and based on the interrelationships of patterns of daily living, personal history, experiences, interests, values, and beliefs (AOTA, 2010). OTs conduct activity analysis to identify the needs of the clients and any possible environmental adaptations. They are responsible to find options that meet the needs of each individual adolescent and provide training on these options for teachers, parents, and other professionals. Based upon those needs, the OT will set meaningful and effective goals to motivate adolescents, plan, and implement strategies for intervention (AOTA, 2007 and AOTA, 2010). Programming that OTs create can include community programming, education programs, home/school modifications, adaptations/equipment, compensatory training, and wellness programming (AOTA, 2007 and AOTA, 2010).

*Educating & Communicating through Sociolinguistic Registers: Adolescent Clients* was developed to influence how we as OTs communicate with our clients both orally and written. When adolescents are not able to adequately use the formal register, such as in conversation or writing skills, they are not able to fully participate in areas of occupation such as formal/informal education and social participation. It is essential that they are able to independently participate in these areas of occupation to fulfill their role as family members, adolescents, and people in general. Occupational therapy can plan a significant role in addressing these needs of adolescents.
## Guide Tools

**What tools and characteristics do I need to be successful in this process?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>The OT</th>
<th>The Adolescent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitude</td>
<td>Maintain a positive, optimistic, realistic, and open-minded attitude towards client and performance outcome.</td>
<td>Present with an open-minded approach to change and behaviors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area of occupation addressed</td>
<td>Understand cultural and socioeconomic differences in completing various areas of occupation.</td>
<td>Willing to modify, alter, and create different ways of carrying out different areas of occupation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Skills Addressed</td>
<td>Address population specific performance skills and adapt and modify according to population.</td>
<td>Willing to address, change, and reflect on current and future performance skills.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OT Knowledge
What do I need to know as an occupational therapist?

Culture:
Culture is an important part of the client’s life no matter his/her social class. It helps create meaning to the client’s behaviors according to certain situations. When an individual has a limited knowledge of the world, this in a sense, places them at a significant disadvantage to learn how to develop the skills they will need to successfully interact with other. This knowledge gain occurs in the area of becoming more culturally literate. A shift from causing and exploiting students’ shame, regarding aspects connected to the culture of poverty, to the use of their cultural and linguistic differences could have a very strong and positive outcome in educational success (Spring, 1995, p. 25). The OT needs to:

- Display cultural competency,
- Gain an understanding of the meaning of culture,
- Understand culture of current population and,
- Display ability to work with individuals of different cultural backgrounds in one group.

Socioeconomic Status: It is important to address how culture, poverty, and family dynamics play a role in adolescent development. Due to generational poverty parents may lack an understanding of the importance of education and the opportunities it can provide based on their home environment and they pass this onto their children. The OT needs to:

- Obtain knowledge of the impact of socioeconomic status on education and social participation,
- Have the desire to aid adolescents of all socioeconomic classes.

Sociolinguistic registers: The home environment is the strongest predictor of a child’s language and literacy skills (Roberts, Jurgen & Burchinal, 2005). Dr. Payne (2005) presents five registers: frozen, formal, consultative, casual, and intimate. Research indicates those who continue to have relatively poor knowledge of oral vocabulary are normally of low-SES environments.
Children from lower socioeconomic environments use fewer words than do children from higher-SES backgrounds (Reynolds & Fish, 2010). The OT needs to:

- Understand all sociolinguistic registers,
- Have the ability to interchange between formal and casual registers and,
- Aid the adolescent interchange between registers in performing tasks.

**Application of Ecology of Human Performance:** The OT needs to address the

- The person, the OT,
- The task, learning the registers,
- The context and,
- The performance
Learning about Sociolinguistic Registers

This section consists of activities that will enable you to better understand and apply formal and casual register in group activities. The following activities were chosen to help you understand effective transition between casual and formal register and vice versa. The activities are designed to help you:

1. Understand casual register,
2. Transition from formal to casual register,
3. Apply formal register to casual register and,
4. Writing a program in casual register.

- There are four activities within the occupational therapist section that are designed to take the therapist through a process of first understanding the registers and then applying and interchanging between registers.
- The purpose of the tasks is to apply the Ecological Model of Human Performance to the education and communication areas of occupation, education and communication, with outcomes to enhance performance tasks in sociolinguistic registers.
- The expectation is that you will be able to effectively implement register transition education and communication activities to the adolescent populations.
B. Therapist Activities
Activity 1: Understanding Casual Register

The following story has been written in two forms:

1. Formal register and
2. Casual register

Please read the two different versions then answer the reflection questions.

The wolf thought to himself, “The grandmother would be good to eat, and this little girl would be even better. I must think of a way to gobble them up.” The wolf asked Little Red Riding Hood, “Where does your grandmother live?” “Down at the end of this path,” said Little Red Riding Hood. “I will walk with you for a little while,” said the wolf. “Wouldn’t you like to stop and pick some flowers to take to your grandmother?”

“That is a good idea,” said Little Red Riding Hood. She stopped to pick some flowers, and as soon as she stooped down to pick a flower, the wolf went running off to grandmother’s house. When the wolf got to grandmother’s house, he knocked on the door. Tap. Tap. “Who’s there?” called out grandmother.

“Open the door.” “I am in bed,” said the grandmother. “Come in.”

The wolf ran into the house and started chasing the grandmother so he could catch her and eat her up, but the grandmother ran out the back door and into the woods before the wolf could catch her. After the grandmother ran away, the wolf found one of her nightcaps and one of her nightgowns and he put them on and jumped into her bed. Soon Little Red Riding Hood came to the house. The door to the house was open. She went in and walked up to her grandmother’s bed.

“But grandmother,” she said, “What big ears you have!” “All the better to hear you with, my dear,” said the wolf. “And grandmother, what big eyes you have!” said Little Red Riding Hood.

“All the better to see you with, my dear,” said the wolf. “Grandmother, what big teeth you have!” gasped Little Red Riding Hood. “All the better to eat you with, my dear,” said the wolf. And he jumped out of bed and began chasing Little Red Riding Hood around the room so that he could catch her and eat her up. But just then the grandmother returned to the house with a hunter she had found in the woods. The hunter ran in and chased the wolf away with his big gun. Then the grandmother, the hunter, and Little Red Riding Hood all sat down and ate all the goodies in the basket, and lived happily ever after.
Little Red Riding Hood
in Casual Register

Have you heard the story of Little Red Riding Hood? Well let me tell you…. One day Red was walkin’ through the woods to get to her grannie’s house. A wolf came up to her and asked her where she was going. She answered, “To see my grannie.” So then the Wolf asked her, “What you got in that basket?” “Something good to eat,” Red answered.

The wolf starts to think to himself, “Red and her grannie would sure be good to eat. I should probly talk to Red a while, find out where grannie lives. Then I could get to grannie’s house first, eat her, then wait for Red.” So he asked Red, “Where does your grannie live girl?” “Down at the end of this path wolf, why you being so nosey?” Wolf was kind of nosey, asking Red all her business. But when you think about it, Red had no business being out in the woods by herself, somebody should have went with her. “Just asking,” says the Wolf. “Red since you have that food in that basket for your grannie, don’t you think that flowers for her would be nice too?” “Yeah you are probly right, I’ll stop and pick some now,” says Red. So when Red stopped to pick flowers, Wolf said bye and ran to grannie’s house.

And then he gets to grannie’s house, walks right, no manners, just walks right in there because grannie said “Come in child, I’m in bed,” when wolf knocked. What was grannie thinking not having her doors locked up, now-a-days a woman has to be careful. Anyway, you know that grannie must’ve been in pretty good shape for an old lady ’cause she got away from that ole wolf and went right out and found her neighbor in the woods. He was a hunter, she knew exactly who to find. Imagine just running right out and finding him and him with a gun, what you think is gonna happen to that wolf?

So while grannie was doing that Red walks in, Wolf is under the covers acting like grannie. But Red knew something wasn’t right, she said “Hey grannie, your ears sure got big!” “Oh baby, that’s what happens when you get old,” said the wolf. “And, grannie, what’s wrong with your eyes, they big too!” said Red. “That’s my new glasses baby, grannie can’t see like she used to,” said the wolf. “Aww no grannie, your fake teeth are too big!” gasped Red. “That’s cause imma eat you girl,” said the wolf. And he jumped out of bed and started running after Red, they must have ran around the room for about five minutes. But soon enough grannie came back with her neighbor. That man ran in and chased the wolf away with his big gun. Red, grannie and their neighbor got to eat all that stuff in the basket. As for that wolf, he was so scared; he didn’t ever bother going back there.
Reflection questions:

1. Which of your clients may speak in casual register more than formal register?

2. How can understanding casual register help you when working within a variety of populations?

3. What physical material can you use to aid clients to switch registers?

4. Which way would you rather tell the story and why?
Activity 2: Switching from Formal to Casual Register

Now it’s your turn to write the story in casual register. Read the following story and then write it in your casual register. Don’t think too hard; just write it as if you were speaking to a friend outside of the work setting.

Lunar Litter – Astronauts Left a Wealth of it Behind
By Cindy Schreuder of the Sentinel Staff

Neil Armstrong left more than footprints when he took his giant leap for mankind. He also left his boots. He wasn’t alone. All 12 of the U.S. astronauts who walked on the moon during the Apollo program left their boots—along with six top-quality still cameras, three moon rovers, sections of six spaceships, plus assorted tools, sample bags and hundreds of other items. Just about everything NASA sent to the moon, except for the astronauts, was deemed too heavy to tote home. So anything that could be junked to lighten the load, even bags of human waste, were left behind and there it will stay for thousands of years because the moon has no atmosphere to cause decay or corrosion.

“They may have a little lunar dust on them, but they would not have changed,” said Terry White, a former NASA official who compiled a 28-page list of items left behind during the six lunar-landing missions. Scavengers on the moon could find everything needed for a nostalgic field trip. Whether the equipment would work—after several decades of disuse, exposure to dust and the moon’s nearly 500-degree temperature extremes—is another matter.

“I know if I were going back I wouldn’t want to plan on using anything,” said Larry Haskin, a former NASA scientist. “It would be a pleasant surprise if it worked.” Some of the stuff should still work, at least theoretically.

Upon landing, moon visitors could strap on abandoned lunar backpacks and use the emergency supply of oxygen in the tanks. They could zip around on lunar rovers, though they’d need fresh batteries because the originals probably conked out long ago. “If you don’t start your car for several decades, you can be sure your battery is dead,” Haskin said.

To remember the visit, tourists could snap still photos with discarded Hasselblad cameras, widely regarded as the world’s finest. Lenses caked with lunar dust could be cleaned with the brushes that were left behind. More stylish visitors could opt to use discarded video cameras to record their own small steps and giant leaps. The scientifically curious could check out the now-defunct experiments, including one gizmo that measured moonquakes and another that detected solar wind. Homesick visitors could salute the six American flags, which remain upright absent a breeze and unfurled thanks to a special spring sewn into the cloth.

Six Apollo missions landed on the moon, each in a different spot. “Whenever people go, they’re going to leave their mark,” said Brain Welch, a NASA spokesman at the Johnson Space Center in Houston. “Those sites will be in the condition we left them for a million years. “Whether that’s terrible or not, history will judge.”
Now re-write the story in Casual Register:
Reflection Questions:

1. How can you implement this activity within your interventions?

2. Were you able to effectively translate the article into casual register? If so, at what reading literacy?

3. How can you further modify this to fit various client populations?

4. What did you learn from completing this activity?
Activity 3
Applying Formal Register to Casual Register

Now that you know how to write a story from formal to casual register, let’s write it from casual to formal register. Read the following story and re-write it in formal register.

**Competition for a Girl**
By Zora Neale Hurston

It was three mens went to court a girl, Ah told you. Dis was a real pretty girl wid shiny black hair and coal black eyes. And all dese men wanted to marry her, so they all went and ast her pa if they could have her. He looked ‘em all over, but he couldn’t decide which one of ‘em would make de best husband and de girl, she couldn’t make up her mind, so one Sunday night when he walked into de parlor where they was all sittin’ and said to ‘em, “Well, all y’all want to marry my daughter and youse all good men and Ah can’t decide which one will make her de best husband. So y’all be here tomorrow mornin’ at daybreak and we’ll have a contest and de one dat can do de quickest trick kin have de girl.” Nex’ mornin’ de first one got up seen it wasn’t no water in de bucket to cook breakfast wid. So he tole de girl’s mama to give him de water bucket and he would go to the spring and git her some.

He took de bucket in his hand and then he found out dat de spring was ten miles off. But he said he didn’t mind dat. He went on and dipped up de water and hurried on back wid it. When he got to de five-mile post he looked down into de bucket and seen dat de bottom had done dropped out. Then he recollected dat he heard somethin’ fall when he dipped up de water so he turned round and run back to de spring and clapped in dat bottom before de water had time to spill.

De ole man thought dat was a pretty quick trick, but de second man says, “Wait a minute. Ah want a grubbin’ hoe and a axe and a plow and a harrow.” So he got everything he ast for. There was ten acres of wood lot rightnex’ to de house. He went out dere and chopped down all de trees, grubbed up de roots, ploughed de field, harrowed it, planted it in cow-peas, and had green peas for dinner.

De ole man says, “Dat’s de quickest trick. Can’t nobody beat dat. No use in tryin’. He done won de girl.” De last man said, “You ain’t even givin’ me a chance to win de girl.” So he took his high-powered rifle and went out into de woods about seben or eight miles until he spied a deer. He took aim and fired. Then he run home, run round behind de house and set his gun down and then run back out in de woods and caught de deer and held ‘im till de bullet hit ‘im. So he won de girl.
Re-write in Formal Register:
Reflection Questions:

1. How can you implement this activity within your interventions?

2. Were you able to effectively translate the article into casual register? If so, at what reading literacy?

3. How can you further modify this to fit various client populations?

4. What did you learn from completing this activity?
Activity 4

Re-writing a home program:

The following home program is for a client who recently experienced severe burns. Please read and address the questions at the end.

The most difficult part has passed; now let’s get back to living your life!

Cleaning and taking care: Face mask and pressure garments

- Clean your face mask and garments AT LEAST 3 times a week.
  - Use warm water and soap.
  - It is important to keep these materials clean to decrease possible infections and irritations.
  - If you sweat easily clean mask and garments daily.

Endurance and leisure.

- To increase your endurance and do something fun here are a few suggestions:
  - Take a walk in the park where there are multiple benches.
  - Take a walk with family members.
  - Place games indoors with family members that will increase your endurance such as charades or monopoly while standing as long as you can.
    - NOTE: Be sure to go before sunrise or after sunrise so you are no directly exposed to sunlight.

Preparing for work:

YOU want to get back to WORK and you need movement in your fingers. Here are some exercises to increase movement of your fingers and wrists.

- Complete these exercises 3 times a day and hold each hand position for 3 seconds.
  - Only do what you can, you should experience mild discomfort.
  - If the activity is too painful STOP!
  - These exercises will help with the movements of your hands and help prepare you for work.
Complete the Alphabet in sign language

**Precautions:** DO NOT do the following until you get the okay from your DOCTOR!

- **NO** heavy activity until instructed
  - Your skin is not completely healed and heavy activity (such as lifting more that 25 lbs) can cause it to tear or stretch.
- **DO NOT** go around smells or places that can cause breathing problems!
  - You can get infections easier now because your immune system is still working to get better, so things such as smoke can make you sick.
- **DO NOT** allow your skin to be exposed to things that may irritate it!
  - When your skin is exposed, sun can harm it, car fumes, etc. so STAY AWAY from those types of environments. Try to stay out of the sun, if you are exposed, stay covered up.

Developed by: Chanaé Jones B.S., MOTS.

**Re-write the previous program to:**

1. Fit a client who has a fourth grade reading level ability
Reflection:

1. How does this activity cater to client-centered care?

2. What techniques did you use to adapt the home program?

3. What did you learn about your ability to adapt while altering this task to fit client needs?
III. Adolescent Section: Intervention
The following are activities/ideas for how you, the OT, can use registers in practice to maximize the communication with the aim to see successful outcomes in interventions with adolescents of different cultures. These activities will focus on areas the adolescents need to strengthen by transitioning between casual and formal registers specifically in regard to:

- Communication
- Social Interaction
- Strengthening Academic Skills (education)

For Communication, Social Interaction and Academic Skills (education) we will identify the following:

- **The person:** is the student
- **The task:** learning the registers, applying the registers and transitioning between the registers. An important point to consider is that students realize that when they start learning the formal register, they may face some negative feedback by some peers that they are trying to ‘talk white’.
- **The context:** could refer to the clinic, school, classroom, home, etc. and;
- **The performance:** what do you want to see as outcomes by the clinicians, what should they see as their performance.

We will follow the areas for each activity. Each activity presented does give you information that is applicable to each of the following:

- **Establish/Restore:** Is it a new skill we are establishing? (For the most part, yes). The focus of establish/restore is to cause a change in skills and abilities.
- **Alter/Adapt/Modify:** Does anything in the student’s context need to be altered, adapted or modified or in what ways does the student need to alter, adapt and modify to apply the information?
  - **Alter:** Aim is to change the context to match the abilities and skills of the person. So you would alter features of the tasks, components and characteristics of the physical environment and social context.
  - **Adapt/Modify:** Refers to increasing task performance by modifying the context and task features.
- **Prevent:** Is to change the person, context or task variables to decrease negative outcomes.
- **Create**: Maximize the person’s performance range by creating supportive conditions. It is used before a problem occurs or when none exists and it can focus on the person, context or task.
A. Communication
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task 1</th>
<th><strong>Body Language Charades</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area of Occupation</td>
<td>Social Participation: Communication</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Objectives | 1. Provide education on body language and how it is perceived by others  
2. Encourage appropriate participation with peers  
3. Promote the use of formal register  
4. Promote positive behaviors throughout activity |
| Time | 30 Minutes |
| Intervention Strategy(ies) | 1. Establish/Restore: Establishing baseline knowledge of how body language can hinder and/or enhance communication skills. Also how formal language is important in conveying emotions.  
2. Alter/Adapt/Modify: To change this activity to match a student’s abilities the following alterations could be made:  
   i. Increasing/decreasing the number of students in the activity  
   ii. Increasing/decreasing the difficulty of the emotions in the activity  
   iii. Changing the arrangement of the room to encourage participation  
   iv. Grouping students with similar age ranges  
3. Prevent: This activity encourages proper communication skills that prevent miscommunication in future situations.  
4. Create a positive learning environment that promotes education and learning. |
| Context | This activity can occur in a classroom setting with a group of up to 12 peers. |
| Directions | • Facilitator will encourage a discussion on body language and how it is perceived by others.  
• After the discussion is held, the students will draw paper slips with different emotions written on them.  
• They will act out the emotion and have the group guess what it is.  
• After the correct emotion is guessed, the students will form a sentence in *formal register* to verbally state how they are ‘feeling.’ |
Questions/Statements can include but are not limited to:

- What is body language?
- Why do you think that body language is important?
- How can our body language affect those around us?
- Do you have any examples of a time that your body language was taken wrong?
- It is important that our body language is congruent with our actual emotions
- Why do you think this is?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Requirements</th>
<th>Emotional-Regulation: Controlling and displaying emotions, responding to and displaying appropriate emotions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cognitive skills: Answering questions and understanding others’ body language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communication and Social Skills: Taking turns, acknowledging others, answering questions, gesturing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Outcomes</th>
<th>Students will develop an understanding of how body language is perceived</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students will be familiarized of common emotions and the associated body language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students will be able to verbalize how they are feeling in formal register</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 2</td>
<td>Conflict Resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Area of Occupation</strong></td>
<td>Social Participation: Communication</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Objectives** | 1. Understand how language can effectively handle conflict  
2. Understand the difference among aggressive, assertive, and passive |
| **Time** | 30 Minutes |
| **Intervention Strategy(ies)** | 1. Establish/Restore: Establishing the ability to recognize and address conflict assertively with formal language.  
2. Alter/Adapt/Modify: To change this activity to match a student’s abilities the following alterations could be made:  
   i. Concrete examples of role plays can be used instead of an abstract idea of conflict  
   ii. Increase/decrease number of students  
   iii. Provide education on what aggressive/assertive/passive are before this session  
4. Create a positive learning environment that promotes education and learning. |
| **Context** | This activity can occur in a classroom setting with a group of up to 12 peers. |
| **Directions** |  
* Group facilitator will stand in the center of the room. The facilitator represents conflict.  
* Ask the group members how they react when they witness or personally experience conflict happening nearby.  
* Group members will position themselves, in relation to the facilitator, somewhere around the room in a way that indicates their first response to conflict.  
* Ask the group members to take note of their body position, direction they are facing, and distance from the ‘conflict.’  
* Ask group members why their position is different from those around them.  
* Discuss aggressive/assertive/passive ways to handle conflict.  
* How does language play a role?  
* What are some assertive strategies to utilize during a time of conflict?  
  o Use ‘I’ statements  
  o Use a calm voice  
  o Assess the situation  
  o Plan what you are going to say |
Discuss ways that casual verses formal registers are ineffective in conflict.

If students can’t understand the abstract idea of conflict, role-plays can be used.

| Performance Requirements | Emotional Regulation: Controlling frustrations, responding to feelings of others  
|                         | Cognitive Skills: Judging and prioritizing actions and thoughts  
|                         | Communication and Social Skills: Initiating and answering questions, taking turns, acknowledging others |
| Performance Outcomes    | Students will understand aggressive/assertive/passive  
|                         | Students will understand how formal registers can be used in conflict  
<p>|                         | Students will understand how to assertively handle conflict |
| Resources               | Amy Ferguson, OTS &amp; Lindsey Wolsky, OTS, The University of North Dakota, 2010 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Task 3</strong></th>
<th><strong>Scrabble®</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Area of Occupation</strong></td>
<td>Social Participation: Communication</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Objectives** | 1. Encourage positive social interaction  
2. How to use of formal register words  
3. Encourage use of dictionary  
4. Establish an understanding of the use of formal register through a dictionary |
| **Time** | 45 Minutes |
| **Intervention Strategy(ies)** | 1. Establish/Restore: The activity establishes and/or encourages the use of a dictionary which may be a new skill to some students.  
2. Alter/Adapt/Modify: To change this activity to match a student’s abilities the following alterations could be made:  
   i. Providing additional assistance or requiring that the students do it independently with a dictionary  
   ii. Increase/decrease number of students  
   iii. Keeping score or not can be a way to keep the students focused on the language component  
3. Create a positive learning environment that promotes education and learning. |
| **Context** | This activity can occur in a classroom setting with a group of up to 12 peers. |
| **Directions** | - Group splits up so 2–4 players are at a board.  
- Facilitator explains that only formal words and no slang are to be used.  
- A dictionary is allowed to be used for ideas.  
- Briefly explain how the students may use the dictionary.  
- After the games are ended the facilitator will ask students how difficult it was to play using formal register with no slang. |
| **Performance Requirements** | - Sensory-Perceptual: Visually determining the spaces on the Scrabble® board  
- Emotional Regulation: Controlling and displaying appropriate emotions, persisting through a task  
- Cognitive Skills: Judging, selecting, organizing, and prioritizing letters and words  
- Communication and Social Skills: Taking turns, acknowledging others |
| **Performance** | Students will be familiar with dictionary use |
Outcomes

- Students will interact with peers appropriately
- Students will only work with formal registers words (no slang)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Task 4</strong></th>
<th><strong>Life Skills Role Play</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Area of Occupation</strong></td>
<td>Social Participation: Communication</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Objectives** | 1. Encourage positive social interaction  
2. Encourage use of formal register words  
3. Assist in preparation for future life situations |
| **Time** | 45 Minutes |
| **Intervention Strategy(ies)** | 1. Establish/Restore: Establishing ways to handle everyday situations in formal register.  
2. Alter/Adapt/Modify: To change this activity to match a student’s abilities the following alterations could be made:  
   i. Students can come up with role-play situations on their own  
   ii. Increase/decrease number of students  
   iii. Provide assistance as to what would be appropriate versus not  
3. Prevent: Any future ineffective conflict  
4. Create a positive learning environment that promotes education and learning. |
| **Context** | This activity can occur in a classroom setting with a group of up to 12 peers. |
| **Directions** | • Students will break into groups of 2-4 people.  
• The facilitator will have different real-life situations that students will draw out of a bowl.  
• Situations may include, but aren’t limited to:  
  ▪ Job interviewing, working out a disagreement in retail, asking a teacher for clarification, opening a checking account, etc.  
• The students will act out their situations in front of the group.  
• Discussion will follow each role play to talk about additional ideas.  
***It is important to explain why formal register is essential to use in these situations*** |
| **Performance Requirements** | • Emotional Regulation: Responding to situations, controlling and displaying emotions  
• Cognitive Skills: Judging, sequencing, prioritizing, and creating solutions to situations  
• Communication and Social Skills: Using appropriate space and eye contact throughout role-plays, acknowledging others’ |
opinions, initiating and answering questions

| Performance Outcomes | Students will be made aware of typical situations that they may encounter
|                      | Students will be able to handle situations in formal register
<p>|                      | Students will work together with peers to develop a plan of action |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Task 5</strong></th>
<th><strong>Communication Scavenger Hunt</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Area of Occupation</strong></td>
<td>Social Participation: Communication</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Objectives** | 1. Encourage positive social interaction  
2. Encourage use of formal register words  
3. Practice using formal register to discuss information |
| **Time** | 30-45 Minutes |
| **Intervention Strategy(ies)** | 1. Establish/Restore: Establishing ways to introduce self and communicate in the formal register.  
2. Alter/Adapt/Modify: To change this activity to match a student’s abilities the following alterations could be made:  
   i. Students can work in pairs  
   ii. The number of students can be increased/decreased  
   iii. The difficulty of the questions can be modified  
3. Create a positive learning environment that promotes education and learning. |
| **Context** | This activity can occur in a classroom setting with a group of up to 12 peers. |
| **Directions** | • Ask adolescents how they would introduce themselves to someone new.  
• Appropriate versus inappropriate content may need to be discussed.  
• The importance of formal register is emphasized.  
• Hand out the activity sheets which contain questions that allow adolescents to get to know each other.  
  - Do you have any pets? How many siblings do you have? Have you ever moved? What is the last book you’ve read?  
• After they have completed the activity regroup and discuss the use of casual verses formal register and which seems easier or more professional. |
| **Performance Requirements** | • Sensory-Perceptual: Hearing other students as well as writing down answers  
• Cognitive Skills: Being able to understand the activity and how to carry it out  
• Communication and Social Skills: Using appropriate space and eye contact throughout activity, acknowledging others’, initiating and answering questions |
| **Performance** | • Students will be able to practice introducing themselves and |
| Outcomes       | asking questions in the formal register  
|               | • Students will interact with peers in a positive learning environment |
| Resources      | Kelsey Miller, OTS and Kayla Petersen, OTS, The University of North Dakota, 2009 |
B. Education
### Task 1  
**Using the Thesaurus**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Occupation</th>
<th>Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>It is important that adolescents become more aware of language and that different words can be used to say similar things.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Objectives | 1. How to use the thesaurus  
|            | 2. How to use written formal register in place of casual  
|            | 3. Establish an understanding of the use of formal register through a thesaurus |

| Time | 30 Minutes |

| Intervention Strategy(ies) | 1. Establish/Restore: The activity establishes the adolescents’ awareness of written language. It also encourages the use of a thesaurus which may be a new skill to some adolescents.  
|                           | 2. Alter/Adapt/Modify: To change this activity to match an adolescent’s abilities the following alterations could be made:  
|                           | i. Encouraging the adolescents to either write a single sentence or whole story  
|                           | ii. Providing additional assistance or requiring that the adolescents do it independently with a thesaurus  
|                           | iii. Providing private workstations to promote adolescents’ concentration.  
|                           | 3. Prevent repeated word usage  
|                           | 4. Create a positive environment that promotes education on language and thesaurus use. |

| Context | This activity can occur in a classroom setting with one adolescent or a group of up to 12 peers. |

| Directions | • Ask each adolescent to write a short story.  
|            | • Once adolescents have completed their stories, ask them to underline all parts of their story that are written in casual register. Also ask them to find words that they have used repeatedly.  
|            | • Briefly explain what a thesaurus is used for and how it works.  
|            | • Ask the adolescents to look up some of the words that they have used in their stories and replace them using the thesaurus.  
|            | • Have them reword their stories in formal register, using words they have found in the thesaurus. |

| Performance Requirements | • Motor and Praxis: Coordinating body movements to sit and write  
|                          | • Emotional-Regulation: Controlling and displaying emotions despite possible frustrations  
|                          | • Cognitive skills: Being able to recognize if they use casual register or words repeatedly  
|                          | • Sensory-Perceptual: Positioning the body to write |
| Performance Outcomes | - Adolescents will have an understanding of thesaurus use  
|                      | - Adolescents will be familiar with written formal register  
<p>|                      | - Adolescents will understand how to proofread and edit written language and make translation to formal register |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task 2</th>
<th>Understanding News: Formal to Casual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Area of Occupation</strong></td>
<td>Education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Objectives** | 1. Provide knowledge on worldwide current event  
2. Encourage the use of formal register.  
3. Promote positive behaviors throughout activity |
| **Time** | 30-60 Minutes : 1 to 2 sessions |
| **Intervention Strategy(ies)** | 1. Establish/Restore: The skill of using a formal register is being established. The adolescents are required to speak in formal register, reinforcing the skill.  
2. Alter/Adapt/Modify: To change this activity to match an adolescent’s abilities the following alterations could be made:  
   i. The adolescents can be given an article to summarize or they can be required to find one on their own.  
   ii. The difficulty/complexity of the articles can be increased/decreased.  
   iii. The room can be arranged to represent what an actual newsroom would appear like.  
   iv. When reviewing the tape, adolescents can write down their reworded sentences and hand them in.  
3. Create a positive learning environment that promotes education and learning. |
| **Context** | This activity can occur in a classroom setting with a group of up to 12 peers. |
| **Directions** | • The group facilitator will assign current event stories or request that the adolescents find their own.  
• Two adolescents will be the ‘anchors’ of the newscast and the rest will each have a story to summarize and report on.  
• After they have summarized their articles they put on and record a newscast in order to report on their stories.  
• The facilitator will record, while the adolescents act out their parts as if they were recording an actual newscast.  
• It is important for the adolescents to speak in formal register as they present their stories.  
• After the newscast is completed, the adolescents will watch the tape and listen for any casual register. The tape will be paused and each casual register phrase and the sentence will be reworded in formal register as a whole group. |
| **Performance Requirements** | • Emotional Regulation: Controlling and displaying emotions, using relaxation strategies if nervous |
| Performance Outcomes | • Cognitive skills: Judging the importance of detail in summaries, ability to organize and prioritize ideas  
• Communication and Social Skills: Looking at the camera, making appropriate gestures, acknowledging others  
• Adolescents will become familiar with current news  
• Adolescents will work on improving confidence speaking in front of group  
• Adolescents will practice transitioning casual register to formal register |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Task 3</strong></th>
<th><strong>Bean Bag Toss Trivia</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Area of Occupation</strong></td>
<td>Education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Objectives** | 1. Provide knowledge on current event or class trivia  
2. Encourage appropriate participation with peers  
3. Transition from casual to formal register  
4. Promote positive behaviors throughout activity |
| **Time** | 45 Minutes |
| **Intervention Strategy(ies)** | 1. Establish/Restore: Establishing/reinforcing the formal to/from casual register transition. It is encouraging the adolescents to transition between the two without having to make a conscious effort.  
2. Alter/Adapt/Modify: To change this activity to match an adolescent’s abilities the following alterations could be made:  
   i. Increasing/decreasing the number of adolescents in the activity  
   ii. Increasing/decreasing the difficulty of the questions asked  
   iii. Changing the arrangement of the room to encourage participation  
   iv. Grouping adolescents with similar age ranges  
3. Create a positive learning environment that promotes education and learning. |
| **Context** | This activity can occur in a classroom setting with a group of up to 12 peers. |
| **Directions** | • The group facilitator will have questions pertaining to a class/course the adolescents attend or general current event trivia.  
• The group will split into 2-3 teams.  
• The teams will use the beanbag toss before each question to determine how many points it is worth.  
• After the points are determined, the facilitator will ask the group the question. The group is able to talk amongst each other to answer the question; casual register may be used to deliberate.  
• A representative from the group must give the answer in a formal register; if the answer is correct but given in casual register (slang, incomplete sentences, etc.) the group only scores half of the points possible. |
| **Performance Requirements** | • Emotional Regulation: Controlling and displaying emotions  
• Cognitive skills: Answering questions and cognitive awareness of what registers to use |
Motor and Praxis: Coordinating body, adjusting posture, coordinating movements
Sensory-Perceptual: Positioning body, timing the throw
Communication and Social Skills: Taking turns, acknowledging others, answering questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Outcomes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adolescents will participate in an educational game that requires active listening and thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adolescents will transition between formal and casual registers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adolescents will work cooperatively with peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Task 4</strong></td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Area of Occupation</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| **Objectives** | 1. Introduce adolescents to the concept of analogies  
2. Prepare adolescents for formal testing such as placement tests or the ACT  
3. Encourage positive peer interaction |
| **Time** | 45 Minutes |
| **Intervention Strategy(ies)** | 1. Establish/Restore: Establishing knowledge of analogies and how they work.  
2. Alter/Adapt/Modify: To change this activity to match a adolescent’s abilities the following alterations could be made:  
   i. Increasing/decreasing the number of adolescents in the activity  
   ii. Increasing/decreasing the difficulty of the analogies asked  
   iii. Changing the arrangement of the room to encourage participation  
3. Prevent: May prevent the adolescents from not doing well on the SAT or ACT or a standardized test because of lack of knowledge  
4. Create a positive learning environment that promotes education and learning. |
| **Context** | This activity can occur in a classroom setting with one adolescent or a group of up to 12 peers. |
| **Directions** | - Explain to the adolescents that analogies are looking for similar relationships, not similar meanings. To answer analogy questions, you must first figure out the relationship between the two words in capital letters. Then look for the pair of words that has the same relationship.  
- Explain what a “test sentence” is:  
- A test sentence allows you to plug in the answers and see what one makes sense.  
  I. **SCISSORS : CUT ::**  
     a. window : close  
     b. spice : season  
     c. cloth : weave  
     d. country : vote  
  II. **Scissors** are used to **cut**  
  III. ______ are used to ______  
- Once adolescents understand the concept have them break into groups and assign them to come up with analogies in the different |
categories; be sure to provide examples of each so they understand
the idea.

- The categories include:
  - Opposite analogies: crying and laughing, fire and water, question and answer
  - Object and Classification analogies: fork and kitchenware, red and color, pants and clothing
  - Object and Related Object analogies: cat and kitten, dog and puppy, plant and seed
  - Object and Group analogies: wolf and pack, tree and forest, goose and flock
  - Degrees of Characteristics analogies: tired and exhausted, warm and hot, cold and freezing
  - Cause and Effect analogies: spin and dizzy, fire and burn, read and learn
  - Effort and Result analogies: build and house, write and letter, paint and painting
  - Problem and Solution analogies: itch and scratch, tired and sleep, hungry and eat
  - Verb Tenses analogies: walk and walked, eat and ate, sent and send
  - Performer and Action analogies: painter and paint, scientist and research, firefighter and fire
  - Object and Part of a Whole analogies: brick and wall, glass and window, page and book
  - Object and Function analogies: keyboard and type, telephone and call, paintbrush and paint
  - Object and Location analogies: dog and doghouse, car and garage, milk and fridge
  - Things That Go Together analogies: salt and pepper, fork and spoon, screw and screwdriver

* Explain to adolescents how analogies can be used in formal written writing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Requirements</th>
<th>Performance Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Emotional Regulation: Persisting despite frustrations, displaying appropriate emotions</td>
<td>• Students will have an understanding of what analogies are</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cognitive Skills: Judging, organizing, and classifying objects to fit the analogy</td>
<td>• Students will have and understating of how analogies are used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Communication and Social Skills: Taking turns, collaborating with group member, acknowledging others’ answers</td>
<td>• Students will develop knowledge of how to apply analogies to formal written language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task 5</td>
<td>Myths or Truths</td>
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<tr>
<td>Area of Occupation</td>
<td>Education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Objectives | 1. Promote formal to casual register through analyzing statements  
2. Promote social interaction  
3. Encourage using resources such as the internet, dictionary, or encyclopedia |
| Time | 45 Minutes |
| Intervention Strategy(ies) | 1. Establish/Restore: The activity establishes and/or encourages the use of a dictionary, encyclopedia, and internet sources which may be a new skill to some students.  
2. Alter/Adapt/Modify: To change this activity to match a student’s abilities the following alterations could be made:  
   i. Providing additional assistance or requiring that the students do it independently with a dictionary  
   ii. Students themselves or facilitator can initiate and facilitate the discussion  
   iii. Either having students come up with their own or provide superstitions to research  
3. Create a positive learning environment that promotes education and learning |
| Context | This activity can occur in a classroom setting with a group of up to 12 peers. |
| Directions | • Each member writes down a superstition or “old saying” on a piece of paper.  
  • “Knock on wood to overt an omen,” “4-leaf clovers are lucky,” etc.  
• Allow time to write down superstitions, collect the paper, and place them in the center of the group.  
• Divide the group into teams of 2-3 students.  
• One by one go through the pieces of paper.  
• Allow social interaction and time for research in dictionaries, encyclopedias, or on-line in order to disprove or prove the statement. Each team will get 2-4 superstitions to research.  
• Discuss the truths and untruths to the superstition and the possible origins.  
  • When reporting to the class, the students are required to use the formal language register. |
| Performance Requirements | • Emotional Regulation: Controlling and displaying emotions  
Cognitive Skills: Answering questions and cognitive awareness of |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Outcomes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>what language to use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Motor Praxis: Coordinating body and movements and adjusting posture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Communication and Social Skills: Taking turns, acknowledging others, answering questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students will be familiar with dictionary, encyclopedia, and internet use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students will interact with peers appropriately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students will only work with formal language words (no slang)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
IV. Conclusion
Addressing both oral and written communication with adolescent clients is an avenue that can lead to engagement in areas of occupation such as education and social participation. Through the review of literature, a need appeared for occupational therapy to address the lack of research on language registers.

The *Educating & Communicating through Sociolinguistic Registers: Adolescent Clients* guide was designed for occupational therapists to learn about language registers, culture, and family dynamics as well as teach adolescents how to transition smoothly between the casual and formal registers. This resource has the potential to provide many benefits to the occupational therapy profession and adolescent clients 13-17 years-old.

All of the resources, research and information could be available to ensure culturally competent care but if the occupational therapy clinician or student is not willing to honestly self-evaluate and challenge his or her own biases and possible prejudices change will not happen. “You are the only problem you will ever have and you are the only solution. Change is inevitable, personal growth is always a personal decision” (Proctor, 2011).
V. Resources
Article Resources:


Text Resources:


Online Resources:

3. Administration of Children and Families
   http://www.acf.hhs.gov/

   ACF Mailing Address

   Administration for Children and Families
   370 L'Enfant Promenade, S.W.
   Washington, D.C. 20447

4. Medlineplus

5. Demand Media
   http://www.livestrong.com/article/172058-the-definition-of-family-dynamics/

6. National Joint Committee for the Communicative Needs of Persons with Severe Disabilities
   http://www.asha.org/njc/

7. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
   http://www.hhs.gov/
Mailing Address and Telephone Number

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

200 Independence Avenue, S.W.

Washington, D.C. 20201

Toll Free: 1-877-696-6775
VI. Glossary
TERMS USED

The following consists of terms used throughout Educating & Communicating through Sociolinguistic Registers: Adolescent Clients.

- Culture: **a:** the integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief, and behavior that depends upon the capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations  
  **b:** the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group; **also:** the characteristic features of everyday existence (as diversions or a way of life) shared by people in a place or time <popular culture> <southern culture>  
  **c:** the set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterizes an institution or organization <a corporate culture focused on the bottom line> (Merriam-Webster, 2011, ¶1-6).

- Cultural Competency: 'Culture' refers to integrated patterns of human behavior that include the language, thoughts, communications, actions, customs, beliefs, values, and institutions of racial, ethnic, religious, or social groups. 'Competence' implies having the capacity to function effectively as an individual and an organization within the context of the cultural beliefs, behaviors, and needs presented by consumers and their communities (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2003, p.7).

- Cultural Literacy: Knowledge of history, contributions, and perspectives of different cultural groups, including one's own group, necessary for understanding of reading, writing, and other media (Dictionary.com, 2011, ¶1).
Socioeconomic Status: Involves the classification of persons into groups based on shared socio-economic conditions. A relational set of inequalities with economic, social, political and ideological dimensions (Baker, 2003, p. 436).

Sociolinguistic Registers (Payne, 2005, p. 27)
- Frozen register is a language that remains the same. An example would be the bible. Although the interpretations vary, the words largely remain the same.
- Formal register involves one-way participation with no to minimal interruption. An example would be introductions between strangers.
- Consultative register is two-way participation. Background information is provided and prior knowledge is not assumed. Examples include teacher/student, doctor/patient, expert/apprentice, etc.
- Casual register is between friends. Slang and interruptions are among friends in a social setting.
- Intimate is non-public and the intonation is more important than wording or grammar. This is most common among family members and close friends. A drop from formal to casual registers is deemed socially offensive, going against societal norms.

Adolescent: The development of children 12 through 18 years old it is expected to include predictable physical and mental (Medlineplus, 2011, ¶1).

Family Dynamics: The ways in which members of a family interact with each other and in relation to the group as a whole (Mosby’s Medical Dictionary, 2009, ¶1).

Communication: Any act by which one person gives to or receives from another person information about that person's needs, desires, perceptions, knowledge, or affective states.
Communication may be intentional or unintentional, may involve conventional or unconventional signals, may take linguistic or nonlinguistic forms, and may occur through spoken or other modes (National Joint Committee for the Communicative Needs of Persons with Severe Disabilities, 1992, p. 2).

- Economic Mobility: The ability to transition out of poverty (Baker, 2003, p.436).
- Social Mobility: Moving from one position to another within the same social level such as changing jobs without altering a person’s social status or movement from one social level to another; social hierarchy (Baker, 2003, p.436).
- Ecology of Human Performance (EOHP) Model: Preventative, health- promotional, and rehabilitative model that focuses on the transactions between persons and their contexts, affecting human behavior and task performance (Cole & Tufano, 2008). This system focuses on the relationship between individuals, their environment, and the application to occupational therapy.
- Poverty: The state of one who lacks a usual or socially acceptable amount of money or material possession (Miriam-Webster, 2011, ¶1).
  - Situational: A lack of resources due to a specific life event (Payne, 2005, p. 47).
VII. References
REFERENCES


CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

The purpose of this scholarly project was to develop *Educating & Communicating through Sociolinguistic Registers: Adolescent Clients*. This guide is designed for use with adolescent clients 13-17 years-old. The purpose of this scholarly project was two-fold:

1. Develop a guide designed to strengthen the adolescent’s use and comfort with formal register, to strengthen their confidence in the occupation of education and transfer to the occupation of employment resulting in more success with these endeavors.

2. Strengthen the occupational therapist’s communication skills with the adolescent client in a school, community, or mental health setting. The aim is to enhance the occupational therapist’s therapeutic-use-of-self and intervention approaches in these settings and; increase intervention options for the OT that are culturally relevant.

Methods include leaning about sociolinguistic registers, culture, family dynamics and how to implement these resources. It is designed for occupational therapists to learn about language registers, culture, and family dynamics as well as teach adolescents how to transition smoothly between the casual and formal registers. The aim is to enhance the occupational therapist’s therapeutic-use-of-self and intervention approaches in schools, communities, or mental health settings and ensuring client centered care.

*Educating & Communicating through Sociolinguistic Registers: Adolescent Clients* was developed based on that the Ecological Model of Occupation. The constructs of the Ecology of Human Performance Model provide a useful framework for addressing social participation and the influence of sociolinguistic register on the client. EOHP emphasizes preventative, health-
promotional, and rehabilitative objects and also focuses on the relationship between the individual and their environment (Cole & Tufano, 2008).

Implementation

Clinical strengths of this project

1. *Educating & Communicating through Sociolinguistic Registers: Adolescent Clients* has the potential to provide many benefits to the occupational therapy profession and adolescent clients 13-17 years-old.

2. *Educating & Communicating through Sociolinguistic Registers: Adolescent Clients* was developed to be implemented as a resource for occupational therapists to use in their daily clinical interactions in a school, community, or mental health setting as a part their therapeutic-use-of-self and intervention approaches.

3. It is designed to teach methods to instruct/learn register, understand culture and family dynamics, and how to implement these resources were identified for the therapist and strengthen the adolescent’s use and comfort with formal register and strengthen the communication.

Roadblocks to implementation

1. Some occupational therapists may disregard the importance of culture and the impact of socioeconomic status on the adolescent’s ability to communicate both orally and written. These influences are vital to understanding the disadvantage that these adolescents have.

2. Some occupational therapist may feel they already know or understand. There is a need to look below the superficial.
3. OT professionals may have unresolved or unidentified stereotypes or biases due to lack of self-evaluation and reflection.

4. OT professionals may think they are culturally competent but do not engage in self-directed learning and challenging their own perceptions for professional growth.

Limitations

1. This guide is designed for adolescents 13-17 years old, doesn’t address younger children and their early use of sociolinguistic registers.

2. The intervention time spent with the adolescents is just a small part of their daily lives. Research indicates that consistency is needed to reinforce the use of the formal language register.

3. The guide is a starting point and is not meant to stand alone.

4. The therapist education activities can help to OTs understand the language registers, but true cultural competence cannot be taught without the open-mindedness of the clinician and self-directed continued learning.

5. This guide addresses education and social participation, but it could be expanded to include work.

Recommendations

1. Formal research can be conducted to determine the reliability, validity, and application for clinical use.

2. More intervention ideas for the adolescents could be developed.

3. The intervention section for the occupational therapists could be expanded to include a practicum that would allow them to practice what they have learned by leading a group
of their peers. This would potentially give them confidence to implement what they have learned through attending the session.

**Conclusions**

All of the resources, research and information could be available to ensure culturally competent care but if the occupational therapy clinician or student is not willing to honestly self-evaluate and challenge his or her own biases and possible prejudices change will not happen. “You are the only problem you will ever have and you are the only solution. Change is inevitable, personal growth is always a personal decision” (Proctor, 2011).
REFERENCES


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http://www.livestrong.com/article/172058-the-definition-of-family-dynamics/


