



Presents

69th Annual Speech/Language Study Conference

January 19, 2024

8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Cost: Registration \$50 on or before January 12, 2024

Virtual Online Conference

**Using Natural Language Acquisition
to Support
Language Development
in Gestalt Language Processors**
Marge Blanc, M.A. CCC-SLP

Course Objectives/Summary/Description

Gestalt language processing is a natural way of developing language that has been known in our field since the 1980s. However, it has been largely ignored because children who use gestalt processes were regularly misidentified as disordered analytic language processors. When gestalt language processors (GLPs) were treated like analytic language processors (ALPs), their progress has been limited. When they were treated like disordered ALPs, their potential progress was undermined by the compensatory and stilted language they were taught to use, instead of developing language naturally.

When supported as GLPs, autistic and neuro-typical gestalt language processors develop language naturally, and they are able to achieve the same self-generated language as ALPs.

This training will prepare you to approach all your students from the lenses of both analytic and gestalt language development. You will be able to use the protocol of Natural Language Acquisition (NLA) to assess and support gestalt language development, and feel confident that you can approach all students with your knowledge of both styles of language development. Case examples will illustrate the progress of two students who were initially misidentified as ALPs, and who progressed in their natural language development once they were identified as gestalt language processors.

This 6 hour training is presented by Marge Blanc, the SLP who conducted the 15+ years of longitudinal clinical research which culminated in the Natural Language Acquisition protocol. Her work has inspired the current international movement to honor gestalt language development in the way first envisioned by Ann Peters, Barry Prizant, and other pioneer researchers.

Learner Outcomes:

At the conclusion of this session the participants will be able to:

- Outline the six stages of gestalt language development as described by NLA, compared with the stages of analytic language development.
- Describe the research that discovered, explored, and quantified gestalt language development.
- Outline general supports for gestalt language processors at all language development stages.
- Describe supports for gestalt language processors at each NLA Stage of gestalt language development.
- Write goal statements for gestalt language processors at each Stage of gestalt language development.
- Score a subset of utterances produced by a child at Stages 1-5 of gestalt language development.
- Describe characteristics of older gestalt language processors, and unique supports for older GLPs.
- Describe considerations for supporting non-speaking and minimally-speaking students who might be GLPs.

- Prepare a set of slides to use in an informal presentation to colleagues about NLA and gestalt language development.
- Outline considerations for using NLA in settings outside of clinical settings.



Speaker Description: Marge Blanc, M.A., C.C.C., has been a Speech-Language Pathologist for 50 years. She was a public school SLP in the US and Canada for 20 years, including two years at Florence Nightingale School in Long Beach. Moving to Madison, WI in 1993, Marge was a Clinical Associate Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where she met her first clients with autism. She applied the principles of gestalt language development she had learned from the research of Barry Prizant, Ann Peters, and colleagues — and they worked immediately!

Marge then conducted clinical research as part of her service-delivery at the Communication Development Center (CDC), the physically-supportive clinic she co-founded in Madison. Her research described gestalt language development in a wide variety of children, primarily children with autism, further detailing the findings of Barry Prizant and colleagues. Her elaboration and quantification of gestalt language development were published as Natural Language Acquisition on the Autism Spectrum: the Journey from Echolalia to Self-Generated Language in 2012, and first presented to the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association in 2014.

Since that time, Marge has actively shared education and consultation about NLA, via the CDC website, www.communicationdevelopmentcenter.com, webinars, trainings, courses, and graduate school presentations. She has authored or collaborated on NLA courses with Northern Speech Services, Meaningful Speech, Natural Communication, and Uncleft Edtech in India. She co-authored the article “Using the Natural Language Acquisition Protocol to Support Gestalt Language Development” (Blanc, Blackwell, & Elias, 2023), published in ASHA Perspectives. The article is available as Open Access through generous donations to the Communication Development Center.

Speaker Disclosure: *Marge will receive an honorarium to speak at this conference. This training is largely based on the book Natural Language Acquisition on the Autism Spectrum: the Journey from Echolalia to Self-Generated Language (Blanc, 2012). The book is owned by the Communication Development Center (CDC), the non-profit corporation Marge directs. CDC receives all royalties from Northern Speech Services for the sale of the book and the three NLA courses Marge authored, and from the Natural Communication and Uncleft courses, and all webinars and other trainings. Marge does not receive royalties, or other compensation, but the CDC is able to pursue its educational endeavors through these reimbursements. Marge has no non-financial disclosures.*

Cost: \$50 via CREDIT CARD ONLY – NO PO's Accepted
FEES ARE NON-REFUNDABLE but could be TRANSFERABLE
Maximum Number of Participants: 2000

You can only register online through OMS by clicking on the URL below - Registration opens 11/01/23 thru 1/12/24

<https://socalsea.k12oms.org/2486-243322>
You MUST use this Password in order to register: 01192024

Time Ordered Agenda

8:00 am – 8:30 am	Registration/Log in
8:30 am – 10:00 am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction: What is Gestalt Language Development? • Research base of Gestalt Language Development and its relevance • Natural Language Acquisition Stages of Gestalt Language Development • Case example of a young GLP developing from Stage 1 to Stage 5
10:00 am -10:15 am	Break
10:15-11:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of language development for GLPs; principles of language sampling; scoring a small sample from the case example. • Recognizing and supporting gestalt language development at all stages: general considerations • Supporting gestalt language development at Stages 1-3: specific considerations
11:30 am – 12:00 pm	Lunch
12:00 pm-2:00 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting gestalt language development at Stages 4-6 • Pre-sentence and sentence grammar: development in Stages 4-6 • Application of NLA principles with older students • Case example, supports, and goal-writing for an older student
2:00 pm-2:15 pm	Break
2:15 pm-3:30 pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application of NLA principles with multi-modal communicators • Related considerations for supporting gestalt language development: speech development, regulation supports, music supports • Future considerations about applying principles in various settings, cultures, and languages

Please provide your California SLP or SLPA license number and ASHA account number when you register.

This course is offered for 0.6 ASHA CEUs (Intermediate level; Professional area)



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Intermediate Level

.6 ASHA CEUs