

This poster is the culmination of findings from a collaborative project initiated by J. Lim, a Speech-Language Pathologist (S-LP) from the Saskatchewan Health Authority, and developed (i.e., background, methods and materials) by a previous CSD 900 group (Lonneke de Groot, Meagan Friend and Allison Whitworth). **Contributions of the current CSD 900 group:** (1) Creation of parent handout; (2) Transcription, scoring, and analysis of pre- and post-data; (3) Interpretation of results.

INTRODUCTION

Background Information

- Early childhood experiences play an important role in children's health outcomes [4].
- Kindergarten readiness and literacy are significantly low in Northern Saskatchewan [5].
- Preschool language and early literacy skills predict success in school [3].
- Previous research has documented improvements in language and literacy for preschool children following a parent-child journaling program [1].
 - Current study used a similar intervention approach but was modified to meet the limited resources commonly present in a rural environment.

Research Questions:

1. Do language and early literacy skills improve with a parent-child journaling program relative to a no-treatment control group?
2. Is this program feasible from a parent and teacher perspective? Measured via:

- Parent-child participation rate
- Ease of use
- Enjoyability
- Interest in continuing the program

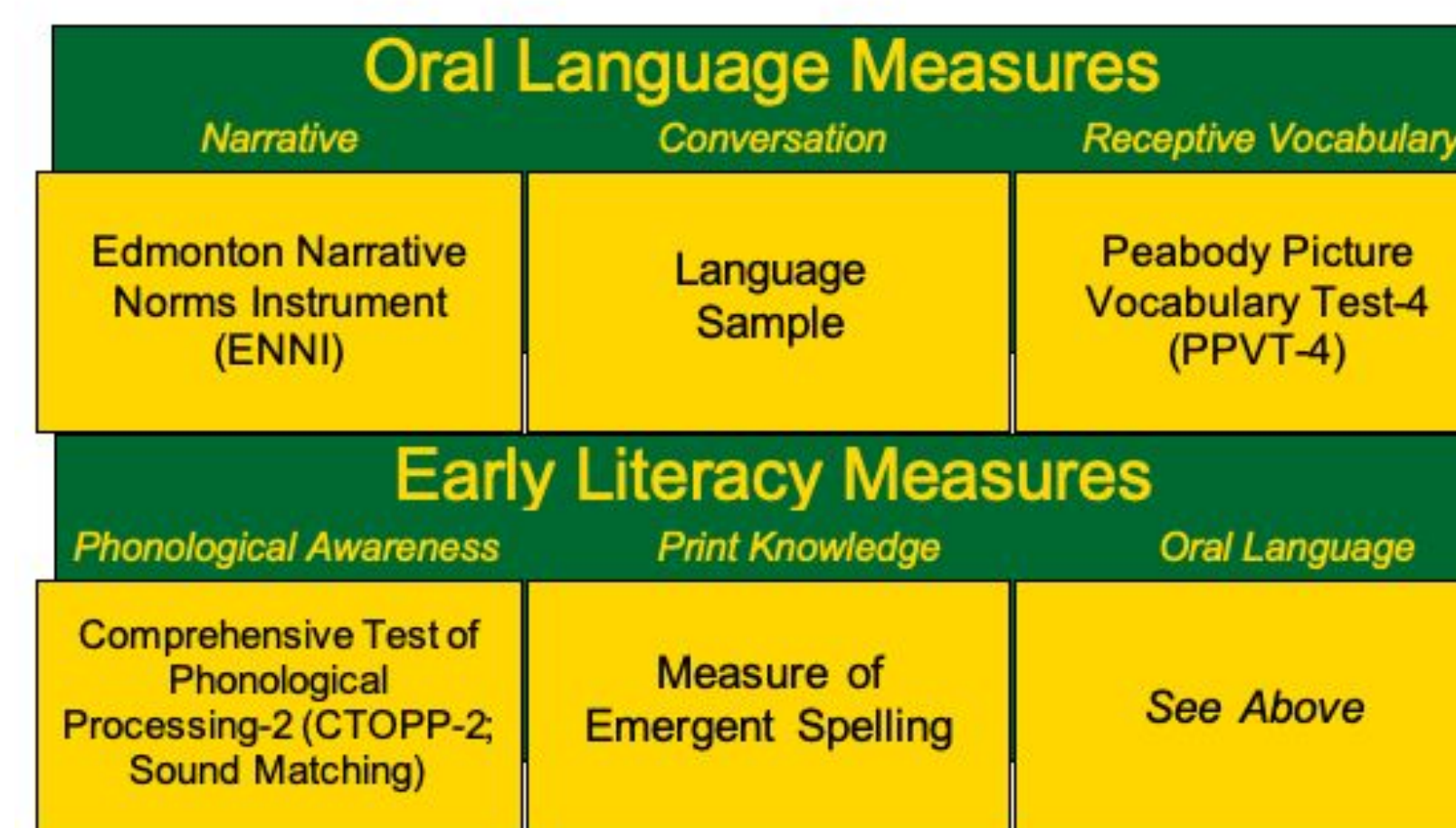
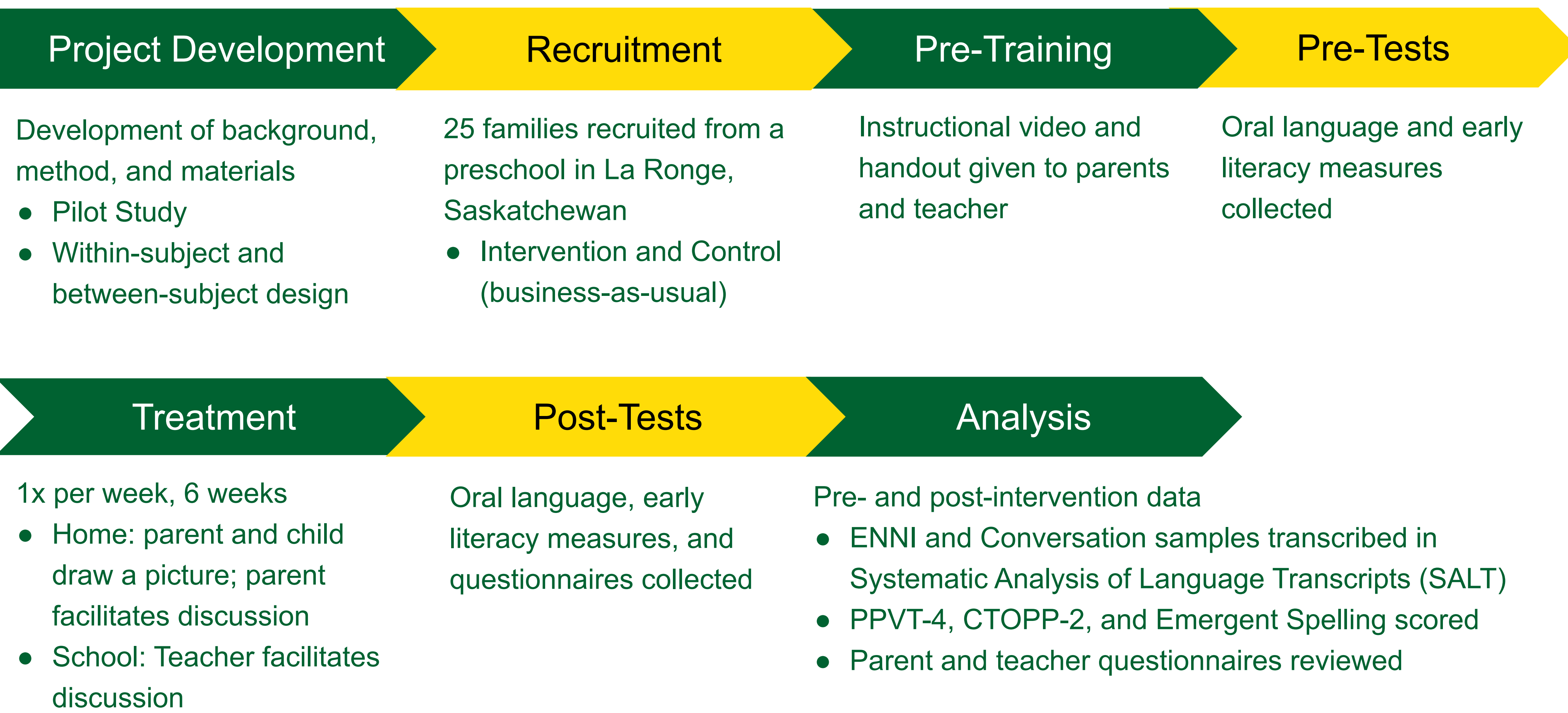


Figure 1. Oral Language and Early Literacy Measures.

METHOD



PARTICIPANTS

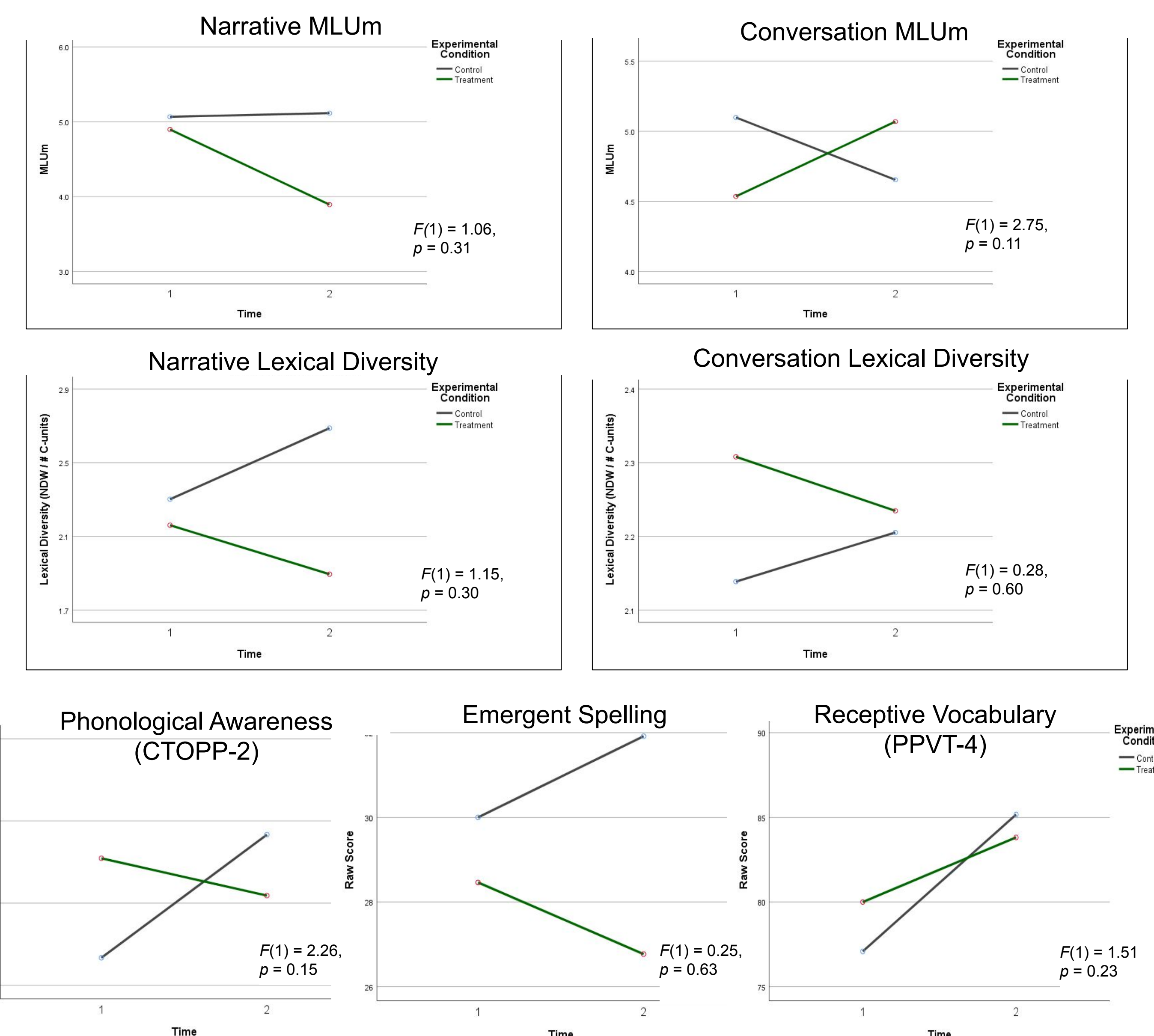
Variable	Experimental Group (n = 13)	Control Group (n = 12)
Age in months M(SD)	54.69 (5.56), Range = 45-61	50.58 (4.96), Range = 43-59
Sex	7 Female	7 Female
Pre-test Scores Mean (SD)		
Receptive Vocabulary	104.15 (12.94)	106.58 (14.43)
Phonological Awareness	9.85 (2.51)	9.25 (2.49)
Emergent Spelling	28.46 (26.66)	30.00 (22.10)
MLUm Conversation	4.30 (1.53)	5.10 (1.38)
Lexical Diversity Conversation ¹	2.22 (0.57)	2.14 (0.47)
MLUm Narrative	4.90 (2.47)	5.07 (1.33)
Lexical Diversity Narrative ¹	2.16 (1.25)	2.30 (0.78)

No significant group differences at pre-test for all measures, all $ps > 0.05$.
 Two participants were excluded from analysis due to unavailability at post-test.
¹Lexical diversity is defined as the average number of different words per utterance.

RESULTS

Language and Literacy Measures

- Repeated measures ANOVA were conducted within-subjects for time and between-subjects for group. No significant interaction results were found ($p > 0.05$ on all tests).
- Significant main effect of time for PPVT-4.
 - $F(1) = 11.75, p = 0.003$



Parent and Teacher Questionnaires

- Post-intervention questionnaire yielded overall positive ratings and comments
- Parent questionnaire (n=11) ratings:
 - This activity was fun for me (M=3.9/5)
 - This activity was fun for my child (M=3.5)
 - This activity was easy to do (M=4.0)
 - I found this useful (M=3.9)
- Teacher questionnaire (n=1) ratings:
 - This activity was easy to integrate into my classroom routine (5/5)
 - This activity was fun for the children (5)
 - The activity was fun for me (5)
 - I understood the instructions and knew what was expected of me (5)
 - I would be interested in continuing the program in my classroom (5)

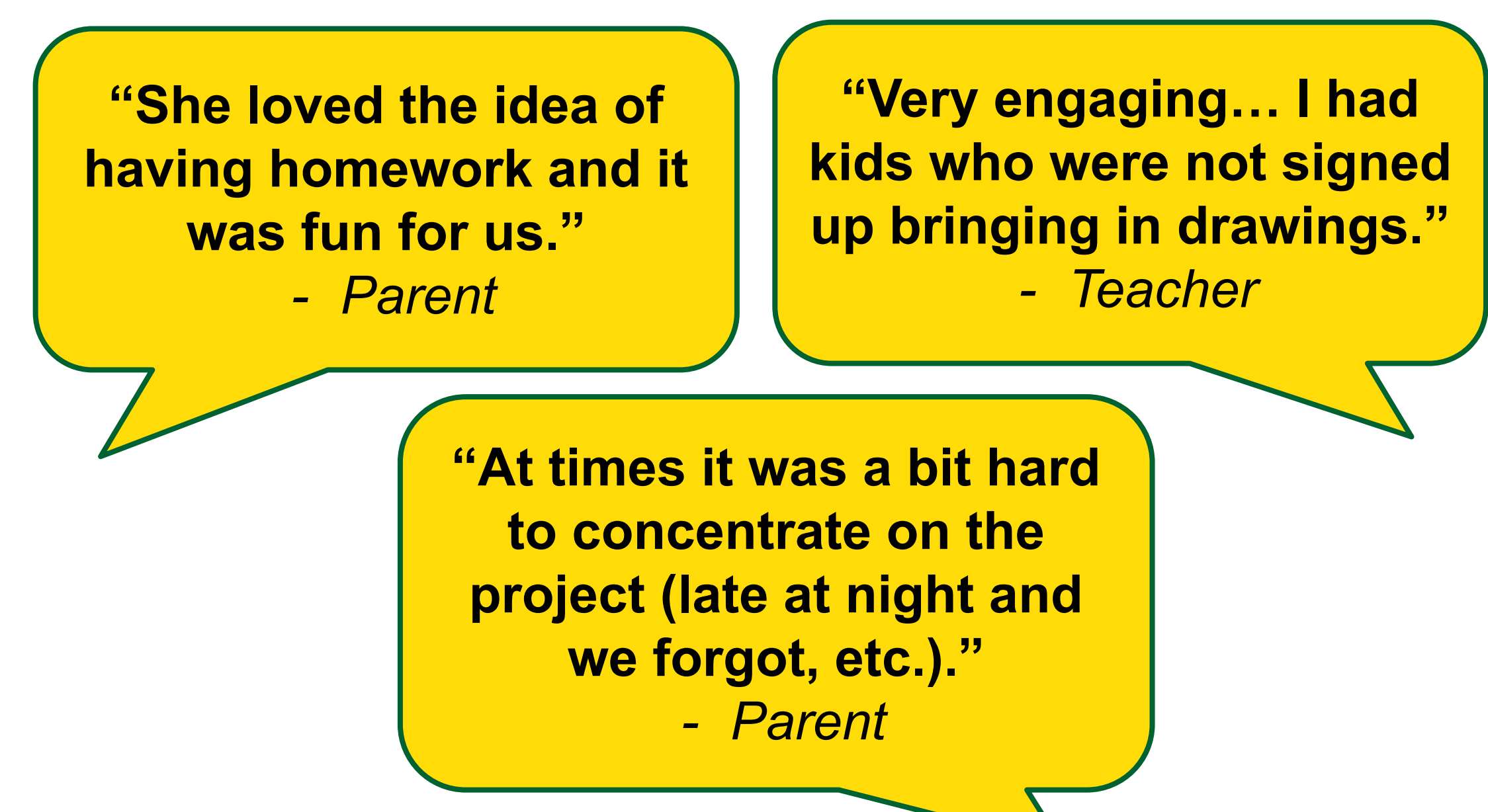


Figure 2. Parent and Teacher Comments from Questionnaires.

DISCUSSION

The findings did not provide evidence for significant growth in language or literacy in the experimental group as compared to the control group following the implementation of this program.

- Limitations that may have affected the results:
 - Low parent-child participation rate (52%)
 - Less SLP support compared to previous research [1]
 - Parent training delivered via pre-recorded video as opposed to parent-focus groups [1]
 - Frequency and intensity of intervention; 1x per week, 6 weeks
 - Small sample size; low power

This intervention may be feasible, as the participating parents and teacher valued the program and found it generally enjoyable.



Figure 3. Drawing Completed by Participant 19 in Week 2.

Future Research Considerations

- Future research should explore modifications to the intervention program in order to produce marked improvements in oral language and early literacy outcomes.
 - Would increased parent-child participation lead to different results? If so, how can it be increased?
 - Would a longer intervention period or increased frequency of sessions yield greater effects relative to a control group?

Conclusions

- The findings highlight the importance of feasibility studies as a step towards developing evidence-based interventions [2].
- Home-to-school collaborative programs may be a beneficial method of intervention for rural communities, as participating parents' and teacher feedback was positive overall.

REFERENCES

[1] Caesar, L. G., & Nelson, N. W. (2014). Parental involvement in language and literacy acquisition: A bilingual journaling approach. *Child Language Teaching and Therapy*, 30, 317-336.
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