

Melissa Rajaram, PhD, CCC-SLP

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PROFILE

I lead products in messy, resource-constrained environments, setting direction, establishing how the work will run, and staying close to delivery. I've owned a three-product portfolio, rebuilt Product after a major reduction in force, built an 11-person research and content function, and taken a new product from concept to working software. My clinical, research, and technical background supports product judgment in expert-facing and regulated settings.

EXPERIENCE

Co-founder & Chief Product Officer — Accord IEP | Apr 2026 – Present

Accord is a Texas special-education software company developing a product for the state's new funding-determination model and for tracking IEP services and goals. I lead product strategy and delivery, including regulatory research, interaction design, and the application's data and rules.

- Led Accord from zero to one, turning an uncertain policy opportunity into a working multi-role product spanning funding determination, service and goal tracking, district oversight, and a parent view on one shared student and IEP record
- Designed how Accord produces a funding determination: an LLM turns IEP content into structured data, deterministic rules traceable to the state rubric propose ratings, and the rater reviews each suggestion beside the evidence and rubric
- Narrowed an initial IEP-system concept to services and goals downstream of districts' existing systems, then made funding determination the lead product after the state published its rubric
- Designed progress documentation around each student's actual IEP goals, allowing providers to use whatever materials they choose
- Pivoted away from a district-funded SaaS model after market testing showed no viable district budget path, then researched a state-funded route

Independent product project — Arc | Jul 2026 – Present

I am independently developing a language-sampling application for speech-language pathologists. Market and clinical research showed that the practical barrier is producing a faithful transcript, not calculating measures or generating a report.

- Designed Arc around known speech-recognition failure states: AI supplies a draft, an acoustic check flags audio the draft did not account for, and the clinician corrects the transcript against the recording before any measures are calculated

VP Product — Amplio + eSpark | Oct 2025 – Mar 2026

After eSpark acquired Amplio and eliminated its product department, I became the only product person across the merged company's three products, working with two distributed development teams and roughly 14 people across product and engineering.

- Reestablished product planning for eSpark by bringing customer-facing and engineering teams back into the process, consolidating committed work, and setting its H1 2026 roadmap
- Led the recovery of eSpark's flagship district reporting feature after it had been declared complete but was failing across districts: brought developers, customer-facing teams, and Support together to diagnose the student-matching problem, stabilize the feature, and establish a repeatable triage process
- Continued developing Speech & Language around SLPs' daily work, shipping major usability improvements and the platform's first session calendar

Head of Product — Amplio | Mar 2024 – Oct 2025

After a reduction in force eliminated most of Product and Engineering, I became the only product person responsible for Amplio Speech & Language and Reading Intervention and partnered with a new distributed engineering team to restore product development.

- Established a new release cadence, requirements and documentation practices, and an open intake process that let customer-facing and clinical teams bring problems before solutions had been defined
- Created Intervention Hub, a new product area that expanded Speech & Language from special-education therapy into Tier 2 MTSS intervention, a new market for the company
- Focused the Speech & Language roadmap on barriers to daily use and district adoption: simplified session documentation, caseload-wide reporting, and onboarding without a Clever or ClassLink dependency
- Led the modernization of Reading Intervention, improving platform reliability, administration, reporting, and alignment with the source dyslexia curriculum

Director of Learning Programs and Research — Amplio | Jun 2022 – Mar 2024

I built and led Learning Programs & Research as Amplio launched a new Speech & Language platform. The function grew to 11 people across three branches—speech-language, dyslexia, and research—with a manager for each.

- Created the company's evidence-based methodology for turning speech-language research into instructional methods, materials, and student exercises, then led the work that earned Digital Promise's Research-Based Design certification
- Built the team's missing production tooling myself when Product and Engineering resources were unavailable: an authoring format specialists could use and a Python pipeline that converted it into the platform-specific structure required for upload
- Eliminated repetitive articulation authoring by building a deterministic generator from IPA data that produced hundreds of thousands of exercise combinations, allowing specialists to focus on clinical decisions instead of manual assembly

Director of Instruction — Amplio | Aug 2021 – Jun 2022

I led curriculum development, acquisition, and quality for the Speech & Language platform, managing one direct report.

Speech-Language Pathologist — EBS Healthcare | Jan 2017 – Sep 2021

I evaluated and treated elementary students as a school-based speech-language pathologist in Belmont, California, and Dallas ISD. At Dallas ISD, that work included therapy, testing, and IEP and ARD meetings conducted in Spanish.

EDUCATION

The University of Texas at Dallas

- PhD, Communication Sciences and Disorders
- MS, Communication Sciences and Disorders
- MS, Applied Cognition and Neuroscience (Mathematical Modeling)
- BS, Cognitive Science

Certified Speech-Language Pathologist (CCC-SLP)

RELEVANT CAPABILITIES

Product strategy and portfolio leadership, zero-to-one and turnaround execution, roadmaps and prioritization, function building and people leadership, customer and market discovery, cross-functional leadership with distributed engineering teams, B2B SaaS and expert-facing regulated software, AI product design and human-in-the-loop systems, AI-assisted product development