



*Auditory Verbal Therapy and Consultation Services*

# Teaching Spoken Language

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# Agenda

- Teaching Language
  - Tenets of a developmental approach
  - Methods of teaching
- Development of a Language Lesson Plan

# Goals of Teaching Language via a Developmental Approach

- Concurrent development of speech and spoken language
- Use of a developmental framework
- A typical rate of progress (i.e. one year of language growth in one year's time) or better
- Contemporary terminology: Listening and Spoken Language Approach (AV)



# Tenets of the LSLS approach

- The emphasis is not to be on how the professional can help the child but on how we can help the parents accomplish what is needed for the child
- Parents and Professionals are team members (each needs the “keys” that the other has)
- We begin by helping the parent provide abundant and appropriate communicative experiences

# Tenets of the LSLS Approach

- The LSLS professional must heighten the parent's awareness of how much they are naturally doing and encourage them to do more of it
- All children learn language most effectively in the course of typical, everyday event and activities.
- For HI children, the difference is that we must often *embellish* the typical environment

# Methods of Teaching

# Informal Learning/ Incidental Interaction

- Occurs in natural everyday conversation
- Usually begins in the home as a result of parent-child interactions
- Children with typical hearing usually develop spoken language almost entirely through informal learning

Informal learning is the by-product of an  
apparently unrelated activity,  
accomplished without deliberate  
attention being given to it

(Ling, 1989)





# Promoting Informal Learning

- Ensure optimal acoustic input and optimal acoustic environment
- Engage the child as often as possible in verbal activities
- Introduce new vocabulary or concepts in the course of everyday activities
- Provide the child with as many different experiences as possible
- *Use every opportunity to respond in an appropriate way to the child's vocalizations (Ling, 1989)*

# The Professional Role

- A large part of the job of the Early Interventionist is to “heighten the parents’ awareness of
  - how much they are already naturally doing
  - and to encourage them to do more of it.”  
(Flexer/Cole, 2010)
- When necessary work to improve the parents’ interactional skills
  - Cole’s “Framework for Maximizing Caregiver Effectiveness ...” pp 278-279 is an excellent tool for this work

# Embellished Informal Teaching

- Utilized with all children
- For children 0-3, is the most appropriate method along with encouraging incidental interaction
- Requires knowledge of child's current goals
- The adult “seizes the moment” in order to emphasize some auditory, speech, or language aspect during an everyday event



- “The idea is for the caregiver (professional) to make every effort to create a positive, accepting and interesting communicative environment, and to interact with the child in ways that will promote the child’s motivation to communicate verbally with increasing effectiveness.”
- Cole and Flexer, 2010 p. 287

# Informativeness Principle

- Greenfield and Smith (1976)
- Early in spoken language development, children verbally encode the most “informative” (novel, changing) idea
  - e.g. when he drops a cookie he says “uhoh, fell!” or “drop” etc. rather than “cookie”
- Adult’s job then is to focus on observing closely, talk about the most “informative” aspect of a situation

# Techniques

- Expansions
  - Recasting child’s utterance so that it is improved or corrected
- Extensions
  - Provide the improved version but add to it in order to “amplify” it’s meaning in some way
- Example – “Mommy shoe”
  - Expansion: “Yes, that’s mommy’s shoe”
  - Extension: “Yes, that’s mommy’s shoe. It’s red”

- Multiple Examples

- Creating repeated opportunities for the child to hear/process/practice specific language
- E.g. providing various wind-up toys and having fun with each “turn it, turn it”...”ready, go!”

- Sabotage

- Breaking an established routine or script to encourage comments, questions or specific language patterns

# Semiformal Teaching

- Adult directed
- Preplanned play activity with specific goals for the child's behavior
- Generally employed by professionals
- Appropriate for children who are at least 18 - 24 months of age
- May result in faster acquisition of targets
- Communicative and fun



# Maintaining Interest

- Play with age appropriate toys
- Change activities frequently and before the child loses interest
- Create interest and curiosity with tone of voice, facial expression and timing
- Design a *creative framework*
  - Give purpose to what you are doing
  - Create opportunities for action and communication
- Play with enthusiasm

# Formal Teaching

- Occurs more often in traditional educational settings for school aged children
- Direct, methodological teaching
- Children must first acquire some language through informal teaching
- Most appropriate for children over three

- As a rule of thumb, formal procedures for teaching any aspect of spoken language should be adopted only if a child does not acquire it within a reasonable time frame when given optimal opportunities to do so in the course of everyday living and learning (Ling, 1989)

# For Formal Teaching to be Effective

- Amplification must be worn during all waking hours
- Situations that permit optimal reception of spoken language must be created
- Highly competent professionals provide instruction based on phonetic, phonologic and linguistic evaluations

- Parents must participate in the sessions and provide appropriate carry-over at home
- The child should have contact and communication with speaking peers
- The child will need abundant opportunities to learn and practice speech communication skills in all aspects of life  
(Ling 1989)

# Guide to Teaching Spoken Language Using a LSL Approach

- Evaluate the child's present language level
- Determine the next appropriate target, considering:
  - Skills that have not been demonstrated
    - Are these “next step” goals or “remedial”?
  - Skills that have emerged but require mastery
  - Skills that have been mastered in specific contexts but require generalization
- Compare acoustic characteristics of the target with child's auditory potential
- Decide on method of teaching
- Evaluate progress at each teaching session

# Teaching/Learning Hierarchy

- Input
- Comprehension
- Imitation
- Spontaneous Use
  - In certain contexts
  - Across contexts

# Strategies for Eliciting *New Targets*

- Auditory Bombardment
  - Acoustic Highlighting
  - Modeling
  - Parentese
- 
- What method of teaching might we be describing?



# Strategies for Developing Consistency of *Emerging* Targets

- Prompting
- Imitation
- Delayed Imitation
- Spaced Practice
- Acoustic Highlighting
- An associated method of teaching?

# Prompting Strategies

- Set up a situation in a way that creates a reason for the child to communicate
  - sabotage, turn taking, obligatory context
- Stop talking! Provide frequent pauses in your input and wait for the child to respond or continue
- Use auditory closure
  - begin a sentence and WAIT for the child to continue
- Expectant look
- Lean forward, cup your ear and WAIT

# Imitation Strategies

- Model the target and then WAIT
- Direct the child to tell something to another person using the target language
- Use turn taking so that you or the parent is repeatedly modeling the target
- Give the child a choice of two words/phrases with the target language being the last choice
- Use handcue on yourself and then the child
- Last resort: “Can you say....?”

# Delayed Imitation Strategies

- Ask another person a question and then immediately ask the child the same question
- Direct the child to tell something to another person (e.g. “Tell Mommy ‘Here’s one for you’”) and then direct him or her to tell 2 or 3 others

# Tips for Lesson Planning

*Determine present level of function*

- Decide on next targets
  - New skills or establishing consistency?
  - Remedial or developmental?
  - Receptive or expressive?
- Will you work on this through...
  - Informal learning?
  - Embellished informal teaching?
  - Semi-formal or formal teaching?

- What strategies will you use to achieve your goal?
  - What strategies can you effectively share with parents?
- What materials will you use to make it fun and maintain interest?
- How will you evaluate progress?
  - How will you change directions if the target is too hard or too easy, etc?