Teaching Spoken Language

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Guide to Teaching Spoken Language Using a LSLS 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?
Agenda

• Identifying Classroom Issues
• Defining LSL strategies
• Infusing Auditory Opportunities into the Classroom
• Discussion and Questions
Challenges: Maximizing Auditory Learning in the Classroom
From Working Teachers …

- “Planning purposeful language ahead of time is difficult”
- “My kids have different auditory skill levels”
- “How do I balance content goals with language skill”
  - “choose targets when vocabulary needs are overwhelming”
- “There’s so much to cover, how do I fit it in?”
“Creating Listeners in the Classroom”

“Conceptualizing a relationship between grouping and instructional time may prove to overcome some of the barriers to building auditory skills in the classroom”

Nevins and Garber, HOPE archived sessions
For Example …

• Make small instructional groups based on auditory ability for at least part of the day; maximize the opportunity to individualize instruction for the children remaining in the classroom while others are out for speech or OT

• Scrutinize the schedule of each instructional day to find previously under-utilized time (e.g. 15 minutes between gym and lunch; time between art and dismissal) Design some purposeful listening activity to take place in that time

• Use classroom content as the vehicle for auditory work

Nevins and Garber, “Creating Listeners in the Classroom”, HOPE archived sessions
The classroom is the optimum venue for differentiating auditory learning approaches from auditory “training” via a focus on a connection between listening, language, and cognition.
• As teachers of deaf children, you will gain focus on
  – best practices in education
  – particular emphasis on teaching children with reduced auditory access

• The “Listening and Spoken Language Specialist” designation is conferred on those who have extended that knowledge base to include
  – “a focus on education, guidance, advocacy, family support, and the rigorous application of techniques, strategies, and procedures that promote optimal acquisition of spoken language through listening by … children who are deaf or hard of hearing “

(emphasis mine, www.agbellacademy.org)
Skills of Highly Qualified LSLS in Educational Settings

- In 2010, Ellen Estes laid out an “organizational schema” and description of the host of strategies required of an effective Listening and Spoken Language professional.
- She noted that, beyond the knowledge that forms a basis for LSL practice, it is the development of these skills that create the means for effectively supporting children with hearing loss in educational settings.

Volta Review, Volume 110, Number 2, pp 169-178.
Areas of Focus  (Estes, 2010)

• Optimizing the effectiveness of each interaction
• Organizing the setting
• Maximizing listening and spoken language access
Classroom Content + LSL Strategies = Optimizing Effectiveness
LSL Strategies

• Think in terms of activating students’ brains through listening and language as often and as quickly as possible
  – Present information “auditory first” or with an auditory focus as often as possible, i.e.
    • talk about activities before bringing materials into view
    • describe concepts before reading about them,
    • present new vocabulary in context before providing written lists
  – Allows for child to make auditory/language/experiential connections to the greatest degree possible

• Sandwich old information with new
  – the “teaching concept” of scaffolding
  – expand to auditory “sandwiching” as well
Optimizing Effectiveness

• Promote thinking skills
  – Make activities relevant and challenging
  – “What do you think about that?”
  – “How could we make that happen?”

• Get comfortable with “wait time”
  – Allow an opportunity for the child to respond to questions or prompts
  – Use an “expectant look” to show that you expect a response
  – Consider that these behaviors serve as a model for child’s listening behaviors as well
• Hold kids responsible for what they hear
  – From you (e.g. “What do you think I’m talking about?)
  – From others (e.g. “Kayla, do you agree with Marcus?”)

• Use others as models
  – Encourage turn taking so that students learn from each other

• Sabotage
  – Say one thing and do another
  – “reinforce the child’s appropriate response to the auditory signal when at odds with” other cues (Estes, 2010)
When Preparing, Plan for:

• Purposeful language
• Strategies that will facilitate goal acquisition
• Thinking turns
• Different skill levels
• May not be a matter of changing lesson plans, but searching for new places in existing plan in which to add emphasis on listening and language
Examples from Classroom Observations
Finger Painting

• Classroom grouping of children with hearing loss aged 3-5, limited language skills (late identification, recent implants, etc.)

• Core concepts:
  – mixing colors makes another color
  – Red, white, pink, paint
  – Print, messy, wash it, valentine, heart
Enhanced …

- Planned auditory first targets
  - Calling children’s names to offer materials
- Potential LSL opportunities
  - Describing activity before any materials are presented
  - Telling children that pink paint is needed and then realizing that no pink is available; therefore it has to be mixed
  - Thinking through the problem of which colors might make pink
Possible Script

• “It’s time to paint! Let’s get our smocks”… <go to cabinet to get paint smocks and paper>
• “Yep, it’s time to paint. Here’s your smock … Juan. Here’s your smock … Bella.”
• “I want to use pink paint today.” <get out box of paint bottles> … uhoh, there’s no pink!”
• Maybe we can mix red … <get out red> and white … <get out white>
• “Here’s some red <drip paint on table> and here’s some white. Let’s mix it!” … <hold up finger … start to mix>
• “Hooray, now it’s pink!”
Writing Personal Narratives

• Mixed age DHH classroom at approximately 3rd grade level
• Core concepts
  – Writing about self
  – Paragraph structure
  – Review of common text/punctuation requirements
• **Materials/Environment**
  – Teacher at front of table with chart paper
  – Models writing her own narrative before students tackle their own
  – Students have reference card for specific objectives of narrative writing (topic sentence etc.)
Enhanced...

• Describe task before presenting any materials
• Use of meta-language as part of teacher modeled paragraph (e.g. “I want to write about the time I went fishing, so I need to make sure I start with that and then write about the exciting things that happened”)
• Speaking each phrase/sentence before writing rather than speak/write word by word
• Ask for students to comment on each other’s thoughts/contributions as a means of checking in on their comprehension/attention to discourse
Math: Tangrams

• Mixed age classroom of children with hearing loss at approximate 3rd grade level

• Core concepts
  – shapes can be manipulated to fit together into larger shapes

• Language overlay
  – Content vocabulary
    • Shape names
    • Directional terms and adjectives
Yellow Flag Language

• “Let me show you”
• “You could turn this big triangle this way”
• “Put that one over there”
• “One of these”
Enhanced

• Have child verbally describe (plan) how they will approach task and then poll group “what do you think?” and then try the plan

• This is very definitely a thinking activity, so look for opportunities to add “thinking” vocabulary
  – e.g. “plan”, “evaluate”, “decide”

• When working as a group, there are always opportunities for “social” language overlay
  – e.g. “Success!” “You hit a roadblock,” “You nailed it!,” “confusing”
Self-mentoring

• As noted by Estes, these skills and strategies are best solidified through a mentoring process
  – Look for evidence of these strategies in your placements

• Outside of that kind of relationship
  – Video tape and review your own teaching sessions
  – Arrange for “observation swaps” as part of internal PD offerings
In Summary

• To optimize the effectiveness of each teaching moment
  – Embrace auditory learning as the juncture between listening, language and cognition
  – Follow a comprehensive model for auditory skill development
  – Create an environment that values and expects listening and speaking
  – Build auditory skills in the context of speech, language and content development