

TEACHING TECHNIQUES

**Tell me,
I forget.**

**Show me,
I remember.**

**Involve me,
I understand.**

Ancient Chinese Proverb

TEACHING TECHNIQUES
THE NATURAL APPROACH IN THE CLASSROOM

The Natural Approach is designed to develop basic communication skills. The development stages are: (1) Comprehension (preproduction), (2) Early Production, and (3) Speech Emergence. This approach to teaching language has been proven to be particularly effective with limited English proficient students.

STAGE I **COMPREHENSION**

In order to maximize opportunities for comprehension experiences. Natural Approach instructors (1) create activities designed to teach students to recognize the meaning in words used in meaningful contexts, and (2) teach students to guess at the meaning of phrases without knowing all of the words and structures of the sentences.

- a. ALWAYS USE VISUAL AIDS (pictures, realia, gestures).
- b. MODIFY YOUR SPEECH to aid comprehension, speak more slowly, emphasize key words, simplify vocabulary and grammar, use related ideas, do not talk out of context.
- c. DO NOT FORCE PRODUCTION. Students will use English when they are ready. They sometimes experience a “silent period” which can last days or weeks.
- d. FOCUS ATTENTION ON KEY VOCABULARY.

Teacher Activities in the Comprehension Stage.

- a. Total Physical Response (TPR). The teacher gives commands to which the students react with their bodies as well as their brains.
- b. Supplying meaningful input based on items in the classroom or brought to class. (Who has the _____ ? Who is wearing a _____ ?)
- c. Supplying meaningful input based on pictures.

Student Responses in the Comprehension Stage.

- a. An action (TPR).
- b. The name of a fellow student (from b., c. above).
- c. Gestures
- d. Students say yes/no in English.
- e. Students point to an item or picture.
- f. Children do not initially make many attempts to communicate using words, rather they indicate their comprehension nonverbally.

THE NATURAL APPROACH IN THE CLASSROOMStage 2 EARLY SPEECH

In non-threatening environments, students move voluntarily into Stage 2. Stage 2 begins when students begin using English words to give:

- a. yes/no answers
- b. one-word answers
- c. lists of words
- d. two word strings and short phrases

The following are instructor question techniques to encourage the transition from Stage I to Stage 2.

- a. Yes/no questions (Is Jimmy wearing a sweater today?)
- b. Choice questions (Is this a pencil or an eraser?)
- c. Questions which can be answered with a single word. (What does the woman have in her hand? Book. Where? When? Who?)
- d. General questions which encourage lists of words. (What do we see on the table now?)
- e. Open sentence with pause for student response. (Mike is wearing a blue shirt, but Ron is wearing a _____ shirt.)

During the Early Speech Stage, the instructor must give a meaningful and understandable input which will encourage the transition to Stage 3. Therefore all student responses should be expanded if possible. Here is a sample exchange between the teacher and the class:

- Instructor: What do we see in this picture?
 Class: Woman.
 Instructor: Yes, there is a woman in this picture. Is there a man?
 Class: Yes.
 Instructor: Yes, there is. There is a man and a woman. Where is the man?
 Class: Car.
 Instructor: Yes that's right. The man is in a car. Is he driving the car?
 Class: Yes.
 Instructor: Yes, he is. He's driving the car.

Other sorts of activities which can be used in Early Speech Stage:

- a. open dialogues
- b. guided interviews
- c. open-ended sentences
- d. charts, tables, graphs
- e. newspaper ads

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Stage 3 **SPEECH EMERGENCE**

In the Speech Emergence Stage, speech production will normally improve in both quantity and quality. The sentences that the students produce become longer, more complex and they use a wider range of vocabulary. Finally, the number of errors will slowly decrease.

Students need to be given the opportunity to use oral and written language whenever possible. When they reach the stage in which speech is emerging beyond the two-word stage, there are many sorts of activities which will foster more comprehension and speech. Some suggestions are:

- a. preference ranking
- b. games of all sorts
- c. problem-solving using charts, tables graphs, maps
- d. advertisements and signs
- e. group discussion
- f. skits (finger plays, flannel boards, puppets)
- g. music, radio, television, film strips, slides
- h. writing exercises (especially Language Experience Approach)
- i. reading
- j. culture

In general, we may classify language acquisition activities as those in which the focus is on the message, i.e., meaning. These may be of four types:

- a. content (culture, subject matter, new information, reading)
- b. affective-humanistic (student's own ideas, opinions, experiences)
- c. games (focus on using language to participate in the game)
- d. problem-solving (focus on using language to locate information)

(From: T.D. Terrell, Department of Languages, University of California, San Diego)

**Suggested Methods in Teaching Through
Total Physical Response**

I. Orientation

To introduce and motivate the class you might:

- " have a translator briefly explain the theory behind the method
- " show a documentary film of students learning through TPR, or
- " say commands rapidly in English and announce in the student's language that by the end of the class everyone will understand everything that you just said.

II. Preparation

Before you begin each unit or lesson:

- " have a detailed outline or script of the elements that you will teach, the various combinations and recombinations of elements, many commands, and a strategy for varying from individuals to small and large group movement.
- " get props together and have them handy;
- " arrange the class so that there is a large space for the action and so that everyone can see (possibly a semi-circle).

III. Classroom Procedure

A. The Method (taken from **Teaching English Through Action**)

- a. Demonstration - the students listen and respond to commands modeled by the instructor.
 - (1) Instructor commands and models with the entire group.
 - (2) Instructor commands and models with 2-3 or 4-6 students.
 - (3) Instructor commands and models with 1 student.
- b. Group responds to commands without instructor.
- c. Group of 3-5 students responds to commands without instructor.
- d. Individual student responds to commands without instructor.
- e. Instructor recombines old and new commands and models with the group.
 - (1) Group responds to recombined commands without instructor.
 - (2) 2-3 students respond to recombined commands:
 - without instructor modeling
 - without instructor.

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2. Progression of Commands - The steps in the development of a unit look something like this...
 - a. Simple actions (“walk”, “jump”)
 - b. Simple actions involving objects and locations (“walk to the door”)
 - c. Recombinations of actions and objects (“walk to the chair”, “touch the chair”)
 - d. Recombinations of actions and objects involving transferring meaning to a new situation (“shake your head”, “shake my hand”)
 - e. Chains of actions leading into an activity sequence (“Take the can”, “Open the can”, “Pour the water” “Drink the lemonade”).

3. Some pointers
 - a. Model ‘clean’ responses to commands so that students will not pick up extraneous gestures that are false to the meaning of the command. (For example, don’t swivel your head and then turn around with the command “turn”.)
 - b. Novel commands (new combinations of elements already mastered keep interest high and enhance self-confidence as students realize they have understood something never quite heard before.)
 - c. Introduce new vocabulary 3 items at a time and proceed only after students are responding confidently.
 - d. If students do not grasp a new item after a few trials, drop it until a future time. (For example, students may not be able to transfer from “point to the corner of your eye” to “walk to the corner of the room”.)
 - e. When commanding individuals, call on confident students. Sometimes invite volunteers by saying “one student”. A shy student may jump up and carry out a command because she or he was the first to understand it.
 - f. Keep varying who you call on by asking all the women, all the students on the right side, near the window, in row one, from Cuba. This keeps the students alert, never knowing who you will call on next.
 - g. Keep changing the order of the commands to increase listening attention.

B. The Expressive Stage (Speaking)

1. After about 10 hours of TPR the students will begin to reveal a readiness to speak by mouthing or mumbling your commands out loud. At this point you can:
 - a. Invite the students to command the teacher, other students, or the whole group:
 - b. Ask questions that involve yes or not answers. (Look at the clock.” “Is it 5 o’clock?”);
 - c. Progress to questions involving one word answers (“Go home.” “Where’s he going?”)

2. Students will begin to lengthen their answers as they hear and assimilate more. They will improve word order and pronunciation through closer and closer approximation of what they hear.

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3. As students become more proficient, the instructor can add substitution drills, transformation drills, dialogues, and conversations.
- C. The Expressive Stage (Written)
1. The instructor can give out study papers after a few lessons with the words used in class, demonstrating and saying each of the words. The students use the papers as they wish. This is good for those students who wish to have it “down”.
 2. For illiterate students or very basic beginners, numbers and simple words can be manipulated on cards (“put number 5 in front of number 2”). Commands can also include blackboard tasks (“Circle the date” or “Write your name next to number 1.”).
 3. Reading and Writing lessons can increase in complexity as the students progress.

UN: Parts Of The Body

REVIEW: stand, sit, turn, jump, walk

PROPS: pictures. (B.P. Faces), skeleton, bandaids, aspirin, hyperdermic, BP cuff, mirror, stethoscope, medicine, ointment

Nouns	Verbs and Verb Phrases	Pronouns	Prepositions	Adjectives	Adverbs	Conjunctions	Interjections	
head eye(s) ear(s) chin hair neck arm(s) hand(s) leg(s) ankle(s) chest hip(s) throat wrist(s) mirror flu bandage medicine cut ache tooth gums cough toe(s)	face mouth nose cheek eyebrow(s) shoulders elbow(s) finger(s) knee(s) stomach back tongue bone(s) heart fever cold bandaid shot temperature lip(s) teeth nails chill	touch look rub scratch put shake raise step hurt draw pull cut wash bleed burn break take feel listen fail give squeeze stick out say kiss hold	yours my his her their yourself	on in over under behind in front of near next to with around	right left bad tired happy sick well find better good pregnant broken sore	gently carefully	and	Ah! Ouch!

Coordination with texts, filmstrips.....Hepburn and Cabrera filmstrip on Parts of the Body, Everyday English unit on Health

Grammar points Present continuous tense... "You're stepping on my foot".
Present tense... "I have a cold."
Past tense..... "I cut my leg".

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1. How are you?
2. Not so good.
1. What's the matter?
2. I have a _____

1. Ouch! you're stepping on my foot..
2. I'm sorry.

My _____ hurts.

Dialogues...

I _____ my _____.

Role play activities

doctor's office, crowded bus, learning a dance, accident scene

Field trips

county health dept., health fair

Other extensions with games, stories, songs, drawings ... nurse's visit, drawing people and faces. "Hangman" game, songs "Hokey pokey" "head, shoulders, knees and toes", "Dam Bones" (for Halloween)

Steps in developing a lesson:

New words - out, box, bag, circle, made, blackboard, window, door, big, backside, frontside.

Props - mirror, box, bag,

1. touch your hand, leg, arm, head, foot, backside, front side, whole self.
2. look right, left, in my hand, put the window, at your arm
ear door foot
mouth yourself
the bag (hold mirror up)
the box
3. touch your left hand
right leg etc.
4. put your hand in the box ----- take your hand out
my hand ----- take your hand out
the bag ----- take your hand out
the box ----- take your hand out
the circle ----- take your hand out

(made with my hands)

5. shake your head, shoulders, leg, yourself, etc.
6. turn your head around
turn yourself around

UNIT: Lesson on Following Directions - Drawing a Halloween Picture

REVIEW: All

PROPS: Paper and Pencils

Nouns	Verbs and Verb Phrases	Pronouns	Prepositions	Adjectives	Adverbs	Conjunctions	Interjections
moon stars witch broom sky ghost cat fence pumpkin ground bottom paper seven anem left side) noun) with right side) modifier	riding draw write	your	on above in on top of in front of near at of on the top of				

Coordination with texts, filmstrip.....

Grammar points....

Dialogues

Role play activities.....

Field trips.....

other extensions with games, stories, songs, drawings

Halloween Puzzle

Halloween Song

Written Exercises - Students write about story in present time

Steps in developing lesson:

1. Draw a fence at the bottom of the paper.
2. Draw a cat on top of the fence.
3. Draw a pumpkin on the ground in front of the fence.
4. Draw a ghost above the fence.
5. Draw a moon at the top of the left side of the paper.
6. Draw a witch riding a broom in the sky near the moon.
7. Draw seven stars in the sky.
8. Write your name on the fence under the cat.

from **Live Action English ...**

GETTING HOME

1. Go home.
2. Walk upstairs.
3. Take out your key.
4. Put it in the keyhole.
5. Unlock the door.
6. Put the key away.
7. Turn the doorknob.
8. Open the door.
9. Go in.
10. Close the door.
11. Lock it.
12. Turn on the light.
13. Sit down and rest.

How to Use Dialogues or Conversations

For the non-English speaking migrant, we are teaching essential vocabulary necessary to function in the American setting with a minimum of language knowledge. A variety of presentation techniques are discussed in the introduction to **Young Adult HELP! KIT**. One of them is the use of dialogues. Dialogues are a very useful teaching technique once an initial set of vocabulary is understood. The purpose of using a dialogue is to present a situation of real language in which the student role plays in a safe environment before being met by the real thing. By using role-playing dialogues, the students come to own the language - to internalize the phrases used so they become a part of their repertoire of English. For this reason, dialogues should be performed with books closed allowing for the students' total attention to be focused on the oral language presented. They should be short, easily repeatable, and use everyday language with a wide application.

In many cases, migrant adults are illiterate in their own language so we can't depend on printed materials to initiate conversations. Create a "real" situation with "realia" or pictures to give all the contextual clues possible. Present important vocabulary first and then begin to introduce the conversation, keeping students' attention focused on the situation and oral language presented. Our goal in using "conversations" is for the student to be able to say each part of the conversation easily and without prompting. Many repetitions are necessary to do this. Repetitions must be fun, well-paced, varied and interesting. Each conversation should first be modeled by the teacher performing both (oral) parts of the conversation, but changing position or voice tone to indicate the different parts. (Puppets are helpful in these situations, or a simple costume such as a hat.)

Many repetitions while students listen are ideal for the very beginning student since they need to hear the sounds of English and the voice inflections several times before they can be expected to reproduce them. We want students to enjoy their lessons and to feel unthreatened by them, because in a comfortable setting they will learn more easily. Therefore, each new step should be non-threatening, and repeated sufficiently so everyone feels very comfortable before going on to a higher level of difficulty. Once the teacher has modeled 2-3 times, (or more if necessary), the students can begin to speak. Take each line or phrase one at a time and have the whole group repeat it together (3 times has been found to be about right for a fairly simple sentence). Then go on to the next line or person in the conversation and do the same, add the small parts together 3 times, etc. until you have gone through the whole conversation. Then repeat the whole conversation 3 times as a group. Move up the pace as it becomes more comfortable to keep it from getting dull.

LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE APPROACH

1. The "experience" which will be written about may be a drawing, something the student brought from home, a group experience planned by the teacher (field trip, science experiment, film strip, party, etc.), or simply a topic to discuss.
2. The student is asked to tell about his/her experience.
3. The student then dictates his or her story or experience to the teacher, aide, volunteer, or to another student. The writer copies down the story exactly as it is dictated (do not correct the student's grammar while the story is being written down).
4. The teacher reads the story back, pointing to the words, with the student reading along. With young children at very beginning levels, it may be necessary to read back each sentence as it is dictated.
5. The student reads the story silently and/or aloud to other students or to the teacher.
6. The experience stories are saved and can be used for instruction in all types of reading skills.
7. When students are ready, they can begin to write their own experience stories. A good way to introduce this is to discuss the experience, write a group experience story, and then have students write their own stories.
8. Students can re-write their own previous stories as their language development progresses, and then illustrate them to make books for other students to read.

(From: New England Multifunctional Resource Center for Language and Culture in Education, Prepared by Suzanne Iruio.)

SHARED READING

1. Choose a text--a story, song, poem, or other reading.
2. Enlarge the text so all students can see it at once. This can be done by using commercial big books, making your own big books, copying the text on chart paper, or using an opaque projector or overhead projector.
3. Read the text to the students, pointing to each word as you read it.
4. Encourage prediction by covering words that are easy to predict (because of context, pictures, rhyme, etc.) and having students guess them.
5. Use masking devices to uncover parts of words, teaching students how to use phonics to confirm predictions.
6. Masking devices can also be used to show prefixes, suffixes and roots, or to fix attention on any words for whatever reason.
7. After students have heard the text several times, they join in while you are reading. Continue to point at each word as it is read.
8. Have individual students read and point.
9. Have small copies of the text available for students to take home and read to their parents.
10. Shared reading texts that are predictable can be used for patterned writing, in which students write their own variations on the patterns in the text.

(FROM: New England Multifunctional Resource Center for Language and Culture in Education, and prepared by Suzanne Iruio.)

KEY WORDS (adapted from Sylvia Ashton Warner)

1. Prepare cards to write the words on (approximately 3" x 8", heavy tag board, with a hole punched in one corner if they are to be kept on rings).
2. Each day, engage each student in conversation and get him/her to tell you a word that's very important to him or her that day.
3. Write the word on the card while the student is watching, sounding it out as you write and then repeating the word.
4. Give the card to the student and have him or her read the word.
5. The students keep their words in boxes, coffee cans, or on rings. They read all their words to you or to another student each day. Any words that they can't remember are discarded, explaining that the word must not have been important enough to remember.
6. Students can draw pictures of their words, try to find them in books, classify them according to meaning or sound, alphabetize them, write them in sand, spell them on flannel or magnetic boards, etc.
7. As students learn to read their friends' words, they make copies of them and add them to their pack.
8. When they have 8 - 10 words, they can begin writing stories using them.

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The ERIC/CLL News Bulletin, Volume 13, No. 2 - March 1990 could not be located on the WWW. The article copied in the 1993 version of this kit was "Whole Language in Adult ESL Programs" by Pat Rigg. It may be possible to find the text on some ERIC disks or in hardcopy from:

<http://www.cal.org/ericcll/>

Page 114.

The ERIC Digest: "Talking Adult ESL Students into Writing: Building on Oral Fluency to Promote Literacy" by Linda Blanton released in August 1990 can be viewed at:

http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed321622.html

Page 116.

The ERIC Digest: "Using Newspapers in the ESL Literary Classroom" by Carolyn Ebel Chandler released in July 1990 can be viewed at:

http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed321619.html