

TESL and Speech Communication

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ENGLISH TEACHING OBJECTIVES:

Vocabulary

geometric shapes
prepositions of position
singular indefinite articles

Phonology

listening comprehension
oral production

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVE:

Given geometric shapes, the student will be able to communicate a set of instructions to a listener in a back-to-back situation within two minutes. The listener must be able to reproduce the speaker's arrangement of design.

UNIT OVERVIEW:

In second language learning, language proficiency should not stand alone as a goal. Language proficiency and Speech Communication proficiency should stand as concurrent goals. Language proficiency has to do with the use of the language while Speech Communication proficiency has to do with the effectiveness of the communicative act. Proficiency in language usage does not guarantee effective communication, therefore some consideration has to be given to the act of communication. This is the focal point of this unit, and it is hoped that the barriers of restraint which students often establish for themselves will be minimized and eventually lead to a more positive self-concept.

Although effective communication involves the interplay of several variables, for our purposes we will concentrate on only two. These two variables can be presented in very simple terms and yet are sufficiently significant that they may well spell the difference between intelligible and unintelligible speech. They are: (1) Loudness and (2) Vigor in articulation. Moderate level of loudness is the goal and by more vigor in articulation we refer to opening one's mouth to meet articulatory requirements.

In addition to the aforementioned variables, other facets which contribute toward effective communication will be considered. Among them will be the importance of the economy of words, usefulness of extensive vocabularies, influences of non-verbal communication, and individual responsibilities in the communication situation.

METHOD:

The tape-slide presentation method was chosen for Part I and a dyadic interchange was chosen for Part II. The tape-slide presentation method for Part I was decided upon to give students an opportunity to pursue the learning situation independently. The slide frames were presented in this order and accompanied by a taped monologue which occasionally changed into a dialogue with the narrator as the stimulus and the student as the respondent:

1. Title frame - "A Communication Exercise"
2. What is communication ?
3. Variable: Loudness
4. Variable: Articulation
5. Review of two variables (frames 3 and 4)
6. Introduction to geometric shapes (to be used in exercise)
7. Four types of lines
8. Review of frame 7
9. A circle
10. A triangle
11. Review frames 9 and 10
12. A square
13. A rectangle
14. A parallelogram
15. Review frames 12, 13, and 14
16. A trapezoid
17. A hexagon
18. An octagon
19. Review frames 16, 17, and 18
20. Trial exercise in following directions
21. Trial exercise in following directions
22. Instructions for exercise. End.

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The frames, as presented, show that each small segment of learning is reinforced by a review. After each review, the student is asked to proceed with the next frame if satisfactory results are achieved, or re-do the frames in question if the results are not satisfactory.

The geometric terms are presented so that the student will be able to identify all of the shapes that are used in the final dyadic activity. Two communication factors come into play at this point: (1) vocabulary expansion which, in turn, contributes to (2) the economy of words in that much can be said with one "technical"

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or "better" word. In other words, good vocabulary items contribute toward effective communication by promoting an economy of words, thus minimizing or eliminating confusion and error. All singular frames use the necessary indefinite article. Plurals may be introduced if desired without the article.

This unit was planned so that a student can be given a place or station, where he could work alone or with one other student. He would be given a slide projector, a tape recorder, and a set of earphones. In addition, he would be given an envelope containing the shapes introduced in the slides. When he completes Part I, he will communicate with his teacher so that a dyadic situation would be set up in which he and another student would be seated in a back-to-back situation as illustrated below:



The student will then be given the following instructions:

1. Take out all pieces from the envelope and count them. There should be 8.

If not, call to instructor's attention.

2. Students have only 2 minutes to communicate a design to listener. (See slide 20 and 21).

3. They may not place the pieces in a row - they must construct a design.

4. They may not look at each other's work unless permission is granted.

5. They must decide immediately who is to be "A" and who is to be "B".

In the first two minutes "A" will speak and "B" will not speak, make any sound, or send any signals. He will merely follow the directions he is given. After the first two minutes, allow them to look at each other's work and compare, but do not offer any explanations. In the second two minutes, have them compare their work again.

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After the discussion between the participants is completed, discuss these points thoroughly: The communicator must speak loud enough to be heard clearly, he must articulate with enough vigor so that his listener can understand him, he must use "technical" or "better" words in order to say a great deal in a short time. Students must be informed that this exercise is based strictly on verbal behavior, consequently, the back-to-back position.

In the next round, allow a free flow of communication with emphasis on the three-sentence chain. In essence, it refers to the use of 3 consecutive sentences to complete the exchange of information: (1) a statement, (2) a question, and (3) an answer. In other words, the listener should not merely be content with a response of "Yes" or "No". He should assume his role in the interchange. Allow person "A" and person "B" to alternate until both succeed in communicating directions to the listener successfully. Successful communication is demonstrated by a reproduction of the design by the listener.

This communication exercise is very useful in that it emphasizes the factors that are important in communication. It also can be developed or adapted to different phases of vocabulary development as well as conceptual development while reinforcing prepositions of position. Emphasize that listening comprehension and oral production are both necessary in good communication.