

Appendix F

Additional Considerations

ASL Immersion I: ASL Acquisition Materials

A plethora of hands-on materials is required to properly conduct ASL Immersion classes, which need to be context-embedded and less cognitively demanding. Students, who are still acquiring language, benefit from manipulatives and visuals in their absence of control of language and communication. Most materials are created in the strain of social studies and science themes such as family, temperature, plant growth, states of matter, et cetera.

ASL Immersion II: ASL Development Materials

There are far fewer hands-on materials used in this class because the focus has moved away from social language and has taken on more academic language functions. To encourage healthy debate among students, the teacher should have a list of controversial topics or red herrings such as political ideas, abortion, gun rights, women in the military, anti-vaccinations, et cetera. The teacher could ask the students to align themselves with one side and prepare arguments before starting a tightly-moderated debate. Conversely, the teacher can flip the tables and require students to argue in favor of an idea they disagree with (i.e., support eating beef when the student is a vegetarian). Students are required to present at least three logical or emotionally appealing points to support their opinion. This skill also supports the use of the ASL buoy.

Other ASL Services

What happens to students who exit from ASL immersion, do not demonstrate the need for ASL immersion, or are student transfers of ASL/English bilingual school from monolingual English school/program for the deaf? There are two additional available services: tutoring and language facilitation, and they are also short-term ranging from one quarter to a full year or longer, depending on individual student needs.

Tutoring

ASL tutoring is provided to students who show they need individualized support in receptive and expressive ASL, as evidenced by the P-Level assessment, and are given ASL goals. The goals are entered into the goals section of the IEP just like all other academic and related services goals. The responsible ASL specialist (or bilingual specialist) then develops an ASL rubric (document: tutoring rubrics) to show the tutor what the goal is and what benchmarks the student must meet each quarter before next year's IEP meeting. Data sheets (document: tutoring data sheets) are also created for the tutors. The data sheet is the document that every ASL tutor has in front of them while actually tutoring in order to document successful and unsuccessful trials. This document is used to state the topic of the session, the vocabulary covered, the materials used in the tutoring session, and a measure of the student's success. This document can also be used by the tutor to plan out future tutoring sessions with materials and strategy. The approach for each tutoring session roughly follows the E.D.G.E. method (Example, Demonstrate, Guide, Empower (see this structure illustrated in the EDGE Method). The EDGE Method clearly

explains different processes of warming up, reviewing previous material, introducing a new topic, guided practice, and independent performance. After the end of each quarter, the responsible ASL specialist (or bilingual specialist) meets with each tutor to discuss any adjustments that are needed for the next quarter in the way of using different materials, using different strategies, or introducing new topics.

ASL/English Language Facilitation

Language facilitation services act as a temporary support for ASL acquisition learning for students moving from mainstream public schools to an ASL/English Bilingual environment with little to no ASL skills. These students are not equipped to comprehend the academic, nor social ASL used in the classroom, but they do have variable access, albeit not barrier-free, to spoken and written English. (Attach Language Facilitator position description). The impetus of the idea for the use of Language Facilitators came from a CODA staff member at KSD on the verge of retirement. After one of our ASL Immersion classes ended one afternoon in 2010, we had a short conversation about the history of allowing new students to KSD with little or no proficiency in ASL to “sink or swim” from Day 1. This colleague shared her concerns from conversations with specific alumni students who typically mentioned that it was one of the toughest experiences (in many cases a very negative and traumatic experience) in their lives because they were in constant survival mode trying to acquire social ASL, but at the same time, trying to learn assigned content that was delivered in academic ASL. These students often had already developed social and academic spoken English, but were expected to apply that immediately to social and academic ASL in the classroom and all over campus with little or no support. While some of their peers had access to spoken English, it was not appropriate for them to bridge that gap on a daily basis for their newly arrived peers. It was also extremely cumbersome for teachers to facilitate communication for one student in class while 5-10 other ASL-fluent students were expecting a typical school lesson in math, science, or social studies. Keep in mind that these same students were also immediately enrolled in an ASL Immersion class, or they were receiving 1-on-1 ASL pull-out tutoring.

The break down of various tasks of a language facilitator encompasses:

1. Facilitating communication between the target student and their peers and teachers
2. Providing free and literal translations of any text in the school
3. using language allocation (varying degrees of ASL and English) to support the target student’s acquisition of ASL
4. Interpreting highly academic information that is out of the target student’s zone of proximal development (ZPD)
5. Using codeswitching for a purpose (attention-getting, emphasis, transition, et cetera)
6. Providing preview, view, and review (PVR) opportunities in different languages (switching between ASL and English)
7. Using translanguaging

8. Holding metalinguistic discussions of ASL and English
9. Directing the target student's attention to specific places in the classroom (student's answers, peer discussion, a teacher's reference to an object in the room)
10. Providing cultural mediation
11. Keeping target students on task
12. Keeping both languages separate (does not use simultaneous communication)
13. Providing spoken English support/opportunities
14. Working with small groups on content lessons using primarily spoken English
15. Providing vocabulary support during instruction through spoken English
16. Practicing with students rehearsing for spoken English presentations

The level of services includes how closely a language facilitator sits and works with each student in classes, and how much intervention to provide versus how much independence (translanguaging whole parts of lectures) is given the student along with the frequency of checks for understanding. The golden rule with checks for understanding is to never ask the student if they understand what is going on. Invariably, the student often answers this simple yes/no question with, "yes." Questions that are more beneficial include, "From what the teacher just instructed the class, what are you supposed to do now?", "Can you tell me what your peer just asked you?", "Can you summarize what they just said?", or "What is that student over there telling another student?" One common misconception people outside the residential school for the Deaf have is that there is an interpreter working with these students. It needs to be reiterated that the tasks of language facilitation services differ vastly from those of interpreting services.