

# ESOL TRAINING FOR CONTENT-AREA TEACHERS

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СЕМЕЙСТВО

ГЕРГАНА

ГЕОРГИ

ЖЕНА

ЖЕНЕНИ

МЪЖ

МАЙКА

БАЩА

ДЕЦА

СТАНИМИР

МИЛЕНА

СИН

ДЪЩЕРЯ

# HOW DID YOU DO?

- How many of you honestly paid complete and total attention through that whole lesson?
- Who honestly tried to understand the material but couldn't?
- Who tried and gave up halfway through?
- Who tuned out almost immediately?
- Who got it, but had trouble, or didn't feel comfortable, saying the words to answer the questions?
- Was there anyone who was frustrated by the fact that some people got it and you didn't?
- Was there anyone who tuned out and then proceeded to do something else (like doodle, get on your phone, or distract others)?



Do you see these activities among your international students?

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A STORY...

# TODAY'S PLAN

- How do we define language proficiency?
- Academic vs. Social Language
- Modifying language
- Learning strategies for international students
- Strategies for teachers

Ask questions when you've got 'em – there's lots of info, so we'll be moving quickly!

# TESOL LEVELS OF LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

## **Level 1 - Starting**

Students initially have limited or no understanding of English. They rarely use English for communication. They respond nonverbally to simple commands, statements, and questions. As their oral comprehension increases, they begin to imitate the verbalizations of others by using single words or simple phrases, and they begin to use English spontaneously. At the earliest stage, these learners construct meaning from text primarily through illustrations, graphs, maps, and tables.

# TESOL LEVELS OF LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY (CONT.)

## **Level 2 - Emerging**

Students can understand phrases and short sentences. They can communicate limited information in simple everyday and routine situations by using memorized phrases, groups of words, and formulae. They can use selected simple structures correctly but still systematically produce basic errors. Students begin to use general academic vocabulary and familiar everyday expressions. Errors in writing are present that often hinder communication.

# TESOL LEVELS OF LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY (CONT.)

## **Level 3 - Developing**

Students understand more complex speech but still may require some repetition. They use English spontaneously but may have difficulty expressing all their thoughts due to a restricted vocabulary and a limited command of language structure. Students at this level speak in simple sentences, which are comprehensible and appropriate, but which are frequently marked by grammatical errors. Proficiency in reading may vary considerably. Students are most successful constructing meaning from texts for which they have background knowledge upon which to build.

# TESOL LEVELS OF LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY (CONT.)

## **Level 4 - Expanding**

Students' language skills are adequate for most day-to-day communication needs. They communicate in English in new or unfamiliar settings but have occasional difficulty with complex structures and abstract academic concepts. Students at this level may read with considerable fluency and are able to locate and identify the specific facts within the text. However, they may not understand texts in which the concepts are presented in a decontextualized manner, the sentence structure is complex, or the vocabulary is abstract or has multiple meanings. They can read independently but may have occasional comprehension problems, especially when processing grade-level information.

# TESOL LEVELS OF LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY (CONT.)

## **Level 5 - Bridging**

Students can express themselves fluently and spontaneously on a wide range of personal, general, academic, or social topics in a variety of contexts. They are poised to function in an environment with native speaking peers with minimal language support or guidance. Students have a good command of technical and academic vocabulary as well as idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms. They can produce clear, smoothly flowing, well-structured texts of differing lengths and degrees of linguistic complexity. Errors are minimal, difficult to spot, and generally corrected when they occur.

## WHAT NATIVE SPEAKERS SEE:

Potentially, one of the most useful applications of biomimetics is the robot. Robots can perform tasks that might be too boring or dangerous for humans, but such robots are extremely difficult to build. Professor Ronald Fearing is creating a tiny robot fly that can be used in rescue operations.

# WHAT ADVANCED-LEVEL STUDENTS SEE:

Potentially, one of the most useful applications of \_\_\_\_\_ is the robot. Robots can perform tasks that might be too boring or dangerous for humans, but such robots are extremely difficult to build. Professor Ronald Fearing is creating a tiny robot fly that can be used in \_\_\_\_\_ operations.

# WHAT INTERMEDIATE- LEVEL STUDENTS SEE:

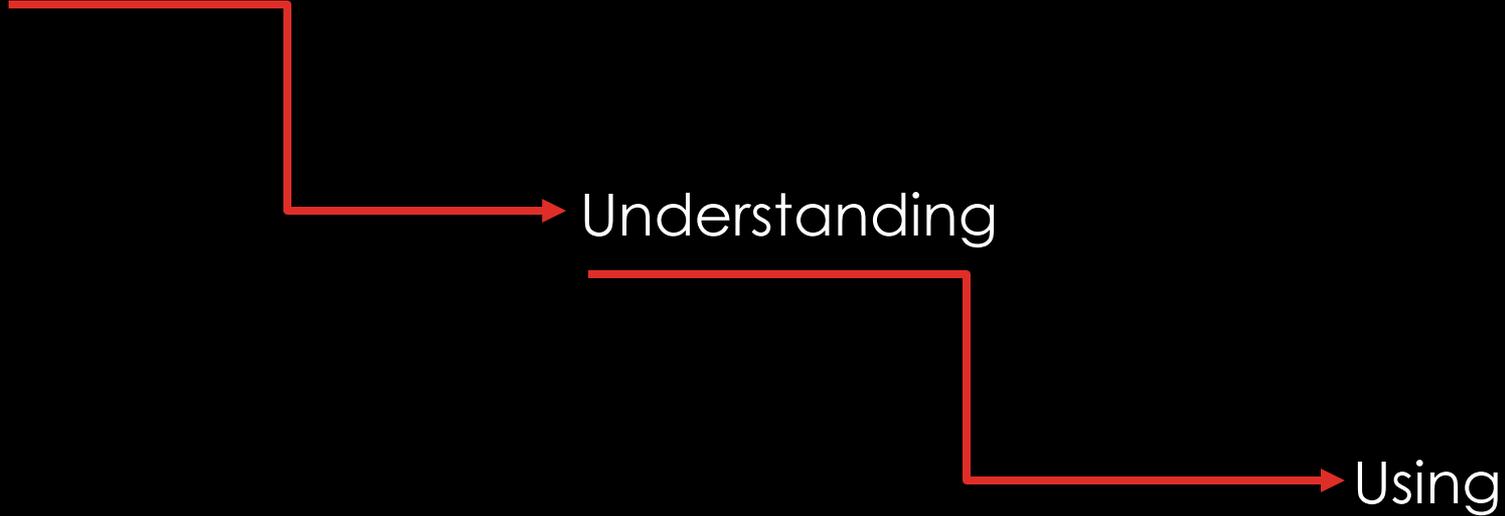
\_\_\_\_\_ , one of the most useful applications of \_\_\_\_\_ is the robot. Robots can \_\_\_\_\_ that might be too boring or \_\_\_\_\_ for humans, but \_\_\_\_\_ robots are \_\_\_\_\_ difficult to build. Professor Ronald Fearing is creating a tiny robot **fly** that can be used in \_\_\_\_\_.

# WHAT BEGINNING-LEVEL STUDENTS SEE:

\_\_\_\_\_, one of the most \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ is the  
robot. Robots can \_\_\_\_\_  
that might be too \_\_\_\_\_ or  
\_\_\_\_\_ for humans, but \_\_\_\_\_  
robots are \_\_\_\_\_ difficult to  
\_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_ is  
\_\_\_\_\_ a \_\_\_\_\_ robot fly that can  
be used in \_\_\_\_\_.

# SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Noticing [vocabulary/grammar]



# SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

- Vygotsky's "Zone of Proximal Development"
  - $i + 1$
  - Input (i) needs to be comprehensible, with a little information that is above the student's level (+1)
  - $i + 1$  input will help students acquire language more quickly AND will help students understand the input
- Order of Acquisition
  - The order in which grammar concepts are acquired

# BICS/CALP

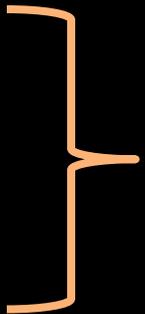
BICS = Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills

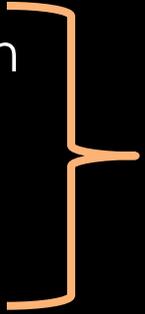
CALP = Cognitive Academic Language Proficiencies

The difference between these two types of language explains why we have very verbally proficient students who still struggle with classroom English.

- BICS is very easily acquired and used very often.
- CALP is more difficult to acquire and is only used in the classroom.

# BICS/CALP

- BICS is the language that is used in daily communication
  - two-way communication
  - simpler grammar
  - frequent-use vocabulary
  - immediate feedback on comprehension

**1-2 years**
- CALP is the language that is used in the classroom
  - lectures, textbooks – one-way communication
  - complex grammar
  - vocabulary only used in the classroom
  - little or no feedback on comprehension

**5-7 years**

# BICS/CALP EXERCISE

- What did you do over the weekend?
  - Speak with your partner.
  - Don't use the letter S.
  - You have one minute.
- What are the three branches of the federal government, and what do they do?
  - Write using complete sentences.
  - Don't use the letter L.
  - You have two minutes.

# LEARNING CALP

- Students need to learn academic language.
  - General academic language
    - Complex grammar
    - Skills (reading, writing, speaking, listening)
    - Strategies for understanding
  - Content-specific language
    - Vocabulary
    - Language use
- In general, **general academic language** should be taught/supported by the ESOL teacher, and **content-specific language** should be taught by the content teacher.

# LEARNING CALP – THE ESOL TEACHER

- What does an ESOL teacher teach?
  - General academic vocabulary (SAT words/AWL)
  - Sentence structure and grammar
  - Strategies for understanding when language is an issue
    - How to break apart long, complex sentences
    - How to use linguistic clues to figure out what an unknown word might mean
  - Academic classroom culture
  - Academic skills that are assumed of high school students (and therefore not explicitly taught in high school) but which may not be taught in other countries
    - This may include academic skills that are taught in early high school for older students who will go directly from ESOL into 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade mainstream classrooms

# MODIFYING ACADEMIC LANGUAGE

- Look at language use in your classroom:
  - Textbook
    - Vocabulary
    - Grammatical structure (active vs. passive voice, for example)
  - Assessments
    - Formal
    - Informal
  - Daily classroom use
    - Oral vs. written
    - Discussion vs. lecture
- Are language demands appropriate for the international students you have? If not, how can you keep the content demands the same (or nearly so) yet modify the language so that it's more appropriate?

# MODIFYING ACADEMIC LANGUAGE (EXAMPLES)

- Why is it that most ancient rocks are found on the continents and not on the ocean floor?
  - ➔ Why do we find most ancient rocks on continents, not at the bottom of the ocean?
- *Take out complex construction:*

Why is it that most ancient rocks are found... -> Why are most ancient rocks found...
- *Change passive voice to active voice:*

Why are most ancient rocks found... -> Why do we find most ancient rocks...

# MODIFYING ACADEMIC LANGUAGE (CONT.)

- In this autobiographical fragment, Dickens views the most painful episode of his childhood from the vantage point of maturity. **a.** What impression do you form of Dickens as a child from his relationship with the other boys in the blacking warehouse? **b.** From the description of his meals and his lodgings? **c.** From his solitary walks through the city?
- ➔ In this small part of his autobiography, Dickens relives the most painful story from his childhood when he is an adult. **a.** What do you learn about Dickens as a child when you read about his relationship with the other boys in the warehouse? **b.** What do you learn about Dickens as a child from the description of the meals he eats and place where he lives? **c.** What do you learn about Dickens as a child from his walks through the city alone?
- *Take out complex vocabulary:*  
In this autobiographical fragment... -> In this small part of his autobiography...  
...from the vantage point of maturity. -> ...when he is an adult.
- *Add explicit parallel structure:*  
(see b. and c. above – repeat “What do you learn about Dickens as a child from...”)

# MODIFYING ACADEMIC LANGUAGE (CONT.)

- Suppose you have a bag containing 3 red, 4 blue, 5 white, and 2 black marbles. One marble is selected at random. Find the theoretical probability of choosing each of the following:
  - You have a bag with 3 red, 4 blue, 5 white, and 2 black balls inside it. You choose one ball. What is the [theoretical] probability that you will choose:
    - *Take out complex construction:*  
Suppose you have a bag... -> You have a bag...
    - *Take out complex vocabulary/structure:*  
You have a bag containing ...marbles. -> You have a bag with...balls inside it.
    - *Change passive voice to active voice:*  
One marble is selected at random. -> You choose one ball [at random].
    - *Take out additional complex construction:*  
Find the theoretical probability of choosing each of the following: -> What is the [theoretical] probability that you will choose:

# WHAT LANGUAGE IS “DIFFICULT”?

- Complex verb tenses
  - Simple past vs. past perfect (I went vs. I have gone)
  - Perfect progressive tenses (have been going, had been going, will have been going)
  - Modals in the perfect progressives (could have been going, would have been going)
- Passive voice
  - Can you add “by zombies” to the sentence? If so, it’s passive.
    - They won the game in overtime.
    - The game was won in overtime.

# WHAT LANGUAGE IS “DIFFICULT”?

- Idioms and other figurative language
  - Phrases where the meaning has nothing to do with the words
    - barking up the wrong tree
    - let the cat out of the bag
    - take with a grain of salt
- Complex and compound sentences
  - “A few eminent scientists, notably Nicholas Theodore de Saussure in Switzerland, Justus von Liebig in Germany, and Humphry Davy in England, established a relationship between nitrogen and minerals on the one hand and soil fertility on the other, but how you got the former into the latter was still a matter of debate, so farmers everywhere continued to cast desperate and often ineffective dressings onto their fields.” (B. Bryson, At Home)

# WHAT LANGUAGE IS “DIFFICULT”?

- References to previous material
  - “...established a relationship between nitrogen and minerals on the one hand and soil fertility on the other, but how you got the **former** into the **latter** was still a matter of debate...”
  - “This” when referring to the previous sentence or paragraph
- Implicit parallel structure



NOW YOU TRY...



BREAK!

# STRATEGIES STUDENTS USE...

...that we wish they wouldn't:

- Plagiarism and other forms of cheating
  - Having a friend or family member “help”
  - Copying and pasting
  - Writing in the first language -> Google Translate
- Consulting a thesaurus
- Keeping tests from year to year
- “I don't understand” as an excuse

Students may use these strategies because they don't know what else to do when the language is overwhelming.

# LEARNING STRATEGIES FOR INT'L STUDENTS

- Five types of learning strategies
  - Metacognitive
  - Cognitive
  - Social
  - Memory
  - Compensation
- Many schools abroad focus primarily on memory (memorization) learning strategies, sometimes to the exclusion of others. Our students may need to be taught other strategies.

# LEARNING STRATEGIES

- Dividing long-term assignments into short-term tasks
- Setting deadlines for completion of short-term tasks
- Planning *how* to study for a test
  - Coming from systems where “studying” = memorizing
- Focusing on a specific aspect of a task
  - Planning to listen/read for key words or ideas
- Recognizing gaps in knowledge or learning weaknesses
- Highlighting important information while reading

# LEARNING STRATEGIES

- Note-taking (even if it's not in English)
- Creating graphic organizers, maps, charts, diagrams, time lines, etc. to organize information
- Working in pairs or groups to clarify content, solve problems, and complete projects
  - NB: Some students will do this whether or not you “allow” it. If there are assignments that you do NOT want your students to work together on, you will need to be specific about these.
- Observing peers to learn more

# COMPENSATION STRATEGIES

- Stalling for time while thinking of an appropriate response
  - What does your “wait time” look like?
- Making an educated guess that extends and generalizes what is known to what is not known
- Using circumlocution – using a phrase that works around an unknown word
  - When students say, “I don’t know the word,” encourage them to explain it to you.

# STRATEGIES FOR TEACHERS

- Modifying Assignments
  - Offer a word bank
  - Ask fewer questions
  - Allot extra time
  - Evaluate for content only
  - Offer models and outlines

# QUESTION: WHAT WAS THE GOAL OF THE OPEN DOOR POLICY IN CHINA? DID IT SUCCEED?

Modeled response:

The goal of the Open Door Policy in China was to  
\_\_\_\_\_. It (was/was not) successful  
because  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

# STRATEGIES FOR TEACHERS

- Modifying Assignments
  - Offer a word bank
  - Ask fewer questions
  - Allot extra time
  - Evaluate for content only
  - Offer models and outlines
  - Allow students to produce diagrams, maps, time lines, charts, or other visual representations of information in lieu of written descriptions



# STRATEGIES FOR TEACHERS

- Give a tour of the textbook.
- Preview vocabulary that has both general and content-specific meanings.

# GENERAL AND CONTENT-SPECIFIC MEANINGS

## • STRIKE

- Police thought the murderer would **strike** again.
- He tried to **strike** the match.
- The clock **struck** two.
- The dog was **struck** by a car.
- **Strike** it rich.
- **Strike** while the iron is hot.
- He tried to **strike** up a conversation.
- The workers went on **strike**.
- The prospectors were hoping to **strike** gold.
- Lightning can **strike** before a storm.
- The air **strike** was considered successful.
- **Strike** three! You're out!



# EXAMPLES?

- What are examples of multi-meaning words that have specific meanings in your content area?

# STRATEGIES FOR TEACHERS

- Give a tour of the textbook.
- Preview vocabulary that has both general and content-specific meanings.
- Teach word roots (Greek/Latin, etc.)
- Check comprehension.
  - **Don't** just ask "Do you understand?"
  - Check with students individually, especially on assessments.
- Give clear instructions.
- Give some credit for trying.

# STRATEGIES FOR TEACHERS

- Slow speech down, and enunciate.
- Become aware of the language you use.
  - Use fewer “SAT words” and/or define the ones you do use
  - Become aware of idiomatic language
  - Use simpler sentence structure
  - Use gestures or visuals and graphics
  - Define word roots that are particular to your discipline
- Scaffold readings
  - Provide vocabulary lists
  - Provide a summary before reading
  - Give students a task while reading
  - Use “jigsaw” reading assignments

# STRATEGIES FOR TEACHERS

- Allow students to process information in their native language
- Allow a variety of pairings in group work
- Find out more about the culture and academic expectations of the schools in the countries where your students come from
  - China: plagiarism is a non-issue
  - Korea: loyalty is more important than honesty
- Recognize when international students may not have cultural knowledge that is assumed of Americans



# QUESTIONS?

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