Working With Adult English Learners

- Identify with the challenges of language acquisition

- Discuss barriers for ELs

- Name two key principles in EL instruction

- Identify some strategies for classroom and activity management
A Japanese Lesson

漢字テストは難しかったです。

"We have to be explicit about whatever students cannot intuit."

Patsy Vinogradov
Language Acquisition
How long does it take?

- 120 - 235 hours of study for an individual learner to move up one SPL
- 5 - 7 years to go from not knowing any English to being able to perform most communication tasks (including academic tasks)

TESOL 901B

Activity #2
Barriers for Adult English Learners
What holds our students back?

- Emotional
- Cultural
- Time-based
- Learner Background
- Physical

Key Principles of English Language Instruction

Two Key Principles of ELA
- A Balance of Approaches
- Language Grading for Comprehensible Input

A Balance of Approaches
The Structural Approach

Versus

The Communicative Approach

Structural Language Teaching

Communicative Language Teaching

The Balance of Approaches

- Strictly structural – lacks communication
- Strictly communicative – lacks information

The Balance of Approaches

Most adults benefit from a blended approach!

Stop and Reflect

- Have you experienced an imbalance in your language studies?
- What about your own classroom?
Language Grading for Comprehensible Input

Content with 80% Comprehensibility
Despite often difficult moods, the lower delta people have their flaps of nocks. They enjoy market days and various torgals. Many of these celebrations have their sops in ancient tollian traditions. One of the most popular torgals is the Alacitas Fair. It is tind to honor Flako, the Mapla god of yap fortune. Small piets of this tristy are sold in the chrophet.

Content with 90% Comprehensibility
Despite often difficult moods, the lower delta people have their share of fun. They enjoy market days and various torgals. Many of these celebrations have their sops in ancient tollian traditions. One of the most popular torgals is the People's Fair. It is tind to honor Flako, the Sun god of good fortune. Small piets of this tristy are sold in the marketplace.

How would we do?
An ELA Cornerstone

- Instructional Language – At the learner’s level
- Instructional Content – One step above learner’s level

“Teacher Talk” Points to Remember

Students need:
- Total clarity at most lesson stages
- Limited level of confusion
- Opportunities for oral practice
  – Student Talk Time!

The Bottom Line

“If we use ungraded language, most students will be confused by us.”

Key Questions for Effective “Teacher Talk”

- What?
- How much?
- How easy?
- How slowly?
- How’s it going?

How To Grade and Limit “Teacher Talk”

1. Teach meaning
   - Model
   - Illustrate
   - Give examples
   - Show it, don’t explain it
How To Grade and Limit "Teacher Talk"

2. Use simple sentences
   - Avoid clauses, idioms and phrasal verbs.

3. Grade speaking with integrity
   - Keep it authentic and grammatically correct.

4. Slow down and pause longer than normal between sentences.

5. Use gestures and short instructional prompts.

6. Get to know your students "inter-language" — what they know, what they don't.

Always Anticipate
Unknown Vocabulary
Activity #3
Grading and Limiting "Teacher Talk"

Keep it Simple!
1. Know your bank of functional phrases
2. Gradually add to functional phrases through explicit instruction
3. Don’t assume anything
4. Always anticipate unknown vocabulary

Two Key Principles of ELA
1. A Balance of Approaches
2. Language Grading for Comprehensible Input

Strategies for Classroom and Activity Management

Adult EL Activity Management
1. Scenario 1 - Teacher Jane

Adult EL Activity Management Tips
1. Physical set-up
2. Simple, clear instructions
3. Model the activity
4. Check for understanding
5. Give handouts
Activity #4
"Exit Ticket" Sentence Frames
1. I will use this information to _____________________________.

2. Now I will ______________________ when I _________________________.

3. One concept I look away from this session that I will use with my own English learner customers is _______________________.

Adult EL Activity Management Tips
- Respectfully address student
- Use Humor
- Don’t assume anything
- Talk one-to-one, after class
- Learn about the culture
- Facilitate consensus on class rules

Stop and Reflect
- Identify with the challenges of language acquisition
- Discuss barriers
- Name 2 key principles in EL Instruction
- Identify some strategies for classroom and activity management

"To give real service you must add something which cannot be bought or measured with money, and that is sincerity and integrity."

Douglas Adams