WORKING WITH EMERGENT LANGUAGE

Fozilbek Orzibekov

Lecturer of Chemistry International University in Tashkent, Samarkand branch

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Abstract

Working with emergent language involves the process of interacting with and supporting the development of language that is still in the early stages of emergence. This can occur in various contexts, such as language acquisition in young children, second language learners, or individuals with communication disorders. By creating a supportive and nurturing environment, individuals with emergent language can be empowered to develop their communication skills and reach their full potential.

Keywords: acquisition, opportunities, supportive approach, communication disorders, gradual progression.

Working with emergent language involves the process of interacting with and supporting the development of language that is still in the early stages of emergence. This can occur in various contexts, such as language acquisition in young children, second language learners, or individuals with communication disorders. It is a crucial aspect of language development and requires a sensitive and supportive approach to facilitate effective communication and language growth.

One of the key principles of working with emergent language is creating a nurturing and responsive environment that encourages communication. This involves providing ample opportunities for individuals to express themselves and interact with others. Whether it is through verbal communication, gestures, or other forms of expression, creating an environment that values and supports all attempts at communication is essential for fostering language development.

- ✓ Unplanned language items arising naturally during interaction that are then focused on through modification or clarification

- ✓ Includes errors, but also alternative ways of expressing the same or related meanings and forms.

- ✓ Language that teachers or learners judge to be in some way new, interesting or useful to share.

- ✓ Responses to questions or problems raised by learners about an aspect of language.

This practical addition to the Teaching English series raises awareness of what emergent language (EL) is, highlights its importance and makes the case that focusing on EL is an essential part of learning a language and therefore a skill that every language teacher should possess or work to develop. It offers useful definitions and explains the pedagogy, alongside practical suggestions and opportunities for reflection, to help all teachers work with EL effectively and confidently.

Every unplanned language point that naturally comes out during classes that the instructor chooses to focus on for explanation or modification is known as emergent language (EL), and this method is becoming more and more popular every year. Its origins may be traced back to the Dogme movement, a popular movement that advocated using student and teacher-generated materials instead of course books or prescribed literature in the classroom. Emergent language incorporates the knowledge gained by employing Dogme and contemporary pedagogical approaches. But dealing with EL is seen to be an extremely challenging ability to learn, particularly for inexperienced or rookie instructors.

As a result, it is rarely covered in-depth in teacher training manuals or on training courses.

When working with emergent language, it is important to use strategies that support the gradual progression of language skills. Modeling language is a powerful tool in this regard, as it provides individuals with examples of how to use language effectively. By consistently modeling appropriate language use and providing rich language input, caregivers and educators can help individuals internalize language structures and expand their vocabulary.

Furthermore, using visual supports can aid comprehension and reinforce language learning. Visual aids such as pictures, charts, and graphic organizers can help individuals make connections between words and their meanings, as well as provide additional context for understanding language. Visual supports are particularly beneficial for individuals who may struggle with verbal communication or have difficulty processing auditory information.

It is crucial to recognize and celebrate the progress made by individuals with emergent language, regardless of how small it may seem. Positive reinforcement and acknowledgment of efforts can significantly boost confidence and motivation for further language development. By creating a supportive and encouraging atmosphere, individuals are more likely to engage in communication and take risks in using new language skills.

Flexibility and creativity are also essential when working with emergent language. Each individual has unique needs and abilities, so it is important to adapt communication strategies to suit their specific requirements. This may involve using alternative communication methods, such as gestures, pictures, or augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices. Understanding and respecting the individual's preferred mode of communication can greatly enhance their ability to express themselves effectively.

➢ Enhanced Communication Skills: Working with emergent language helps individuals develop and improve their communication skills, enabling them to express their thoughts, needs, and emotions more effectively.

➢ Increased Confidence: As individuals receive support and encouragement in using their emerging language skills, they gain confidence in their ability to communicate, leading to greater self-assurance in social interactions.

➢ Language Development: By providing a nurturing environment and using effective strategies, working with emergent language can facilitate the growth of vocabulary, grammar, and overall language comprehension.

➢ Improved Social Interaction: Developing language skills through support and guidance allows individuals to engage more actively in social interactions, fostering connections with others and enhancing their social skills.

➢ Cognitive Development: Engaging with emergent language can stimulate cognitive processes such as memory, problem-solving, and critical thinking, contributing to overall cognitive development.

To sum up, dealing with emergent language demands tolerance, compassion, and a thorough comprehension of the developmental stages associated with language learning. People with emerging language can be enabled to grow as communicators and realize their full potential by providing a safe and caring environment. In order to assist language skill development in people at different stages of language development, caregivers, educators, speech-language pathologists, and other professionals collaborate.

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