Navigating the Cs: Curriculum, Communication, and Core

Presented by

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Disclosure

There are no relevant financial or nonfinancial relationships to disclose
Objectives

➢ Increase understanding and awareness of Universal Core Vocabulary as it relates to communication and literacy development
➢ Gain an understanding of the benefits of Universal Core Vocabulary when incorporated in district and state-adopted curriculum
➢ Be able to name 3 levels of instructional support for utilization of Universal Core Vocabulary within a classroom or therapeutic setting

Emergent literacy activities can involve everybody.

- Communicating
- Reading
- Writing
- Listening

Koppenhaver et al (1993)

Learning to read and write

➢ Enhances cognitive development
➢ Facilitates fuller participation at school
➢ Increases employment opportunities
➢ Supports the use of mainstream technologies
➢ Facilitates social relationships
➢ Fosters personal expression
➢ Provides a meaningful and enjoyable leisure pursuit

For individuals with complex communication needs, learning to read and write also:

➢ Provides a means to communicate more effectively
➢ Has a profound impact on self-esteem
➢ Has a positive impact on others' perceptions or attitudes
“Communication is about touching other people and about having our lives touched by others. Communication is about laughing and arguing, learning and wondering why, telling stories, complaining about what is and what isn’t, sharing dreams, celebrating victories.”

- Janice Light

1. Core
What is Core Vocabulary?
Universal Core is
A limited set of highly useful words used in oral and written language, which apply across environments, comprised primarily of pronouns, verbs, descriptors and prepositions.

Dennis, Hatch and Erickson, 2013

Why Core?

➢ Prioritized list of words reflects the intersection of the most frequently occurring words in social communication and the most important expressive vocabulary.
➢ Words can be combined to increase semantic and syntactic complexity.
➢ Trade concreteness for dramatic increase in opportunities to teach and learn.
➢ Frequency with which students would encounter words in written text.

In 2003, Banjee, Stickland and Dicario studied 5 typically developing toddlers to determine the vocabulary they implemented most frequently. They found a total of 23 words accounted for 96% of the words this group of children used. None of these words were nouns.

80% of the words used by people are core vocabulary words according to researchers. Core vocabulary consist of about 300-350 words.
**Universal Core**
Useful for a wide range of purposes in a variety of contexts on numerous topics

**Fringe**
Useful for limited purposes in finite contexts on a specific topic
Teaching Core Vocabulary

- ALgS
- Modeling
- Meaningful teaching moments
- Descriptive teaching
- Pause with expectation

"The Least Dangerous Assumption"

"When we cannot be sure because we have too little information, we should base our efforts on assumptions which, if wrong, will have the least dangerous effects on outcomes."

- Anne Donnelan
2. Curriculum

Choosing universal core for a curriculum
Curriculum

Read it Once Again
A comprehensive preschool literacy curriculum
Uses familiar children’s literature to provide a solid educational foundation of the basic skills

PASS & TELL ME
PASS - phonological awareness curriculum for preschool and kindergarten implementing story books
TELL ME - uses familiar books to support beginning users of AAC.

Pathways & ELSB
Pathways to Literacy curriculum relies heavily on objects and adaptive books to systematically build comprehension and picture symbol use.
ELSB includes systematic and direct lessons aiding students to advance at their own pace.

Getting Started

Choosing an Icon
Language
➢ What system sets are most of the students using?
➢ What system do most of the district’s robust high-tech devices use?
➢ What system is used in visual supports in the classroom?
Original Pre-K Universal Core Poster

Examples of Fringe Vocabulary

Shared Reading

Research supports the potential for literacy practices like shared reading to promote the development of early symbolic communication skills (Koppenshaver, Erickson, & Skotin, 2001)
Shared Reading Activity

Read and model AAC (target core)
Ask ‘wh’ questions, NOT yes/no questions - model
Answer model using AAC
Prompt least to most, using AAC

Cathy Hoger and Jennifer Kent-Matich

32 Icon Universal Core Low-tech Board

Motor
Memory

➢ Every word has a unique motor plan
➢ Words stay in the same location
➢ Automaticity and speed increase over time
Students have their personal devices

Essential Instructional Applications

➢ Encourage Communication -
  ○ Provide ample wait time and ask for students to participate page by page
  ○ Acknowledge students efforts to communicate
  ○ Expand on students utterances
  ○ Focus on the communication act: “Tell me more”
  ○ Allow natural consequences to teach

➢ Attribute Meaning
  ○ Honor any form of communication, intentional or pre-intentional
  ○ Model an alternative with symbols
  ○ Embed core words in your curriculum, activities, reading, math, games, centers, art, music, predictable chart-writing, lunch………
Essential Instructional Applications

➢ Model
  ○ Core based comments are preplanned and modeled during the lesson
  ○ ALgs
  ○ Model in ways that mirror the manner students will or do select symbols
  ○ Modeling is talking, not just asking questions
  ○ Modeling alternative ways to say one thing

➢ Teach target core words

3. Communication
All day every day

The typically developing child will demonstrate language competency around 9-12 years of age having been immersed in and practicing oral language for approximately 36,500 waking hours. For 9-12 years that child has been using and receiving corrective feedback while practicing with the spoken word. At twice a week, 20-30 minutes each time, it will take the alternate symbol user 701 years to have the same experience with his symbols.

- Jane Korsten
OUR PROCESS IS EASY

Review
The curriculum

Choose
Core vocabulary

Employ
In natural events of each day

Our teachers and therapists employ 3 different levels of instructional support when using Core Boards

➢ Whole Class
➢ Small Group
➢ 1:1

Lesson Plan
“The Big Red Barn”

➢ Increase identification of/expressive labeling of objects by size.
➢ Visually discriminate big/little objects
➢ Match the big/little symbol to big/little farm animals
➢ Match the big/little symbol to big/little crackers at snack time
➢ Snack: big and little crackers/cut/deli/fruit
➢ Art: Color barn; have available big crayons and little crayons; paste on big and little animals from the story (curriculum provides this)
➢ Centers: Farm - barn with big and little animals; cars/trucks/trains, big and little; kitchen: big/little pans, food
Lesson Plan

Whole Class - Shared reading of the “Big Red Barn”
Pausing on double spread pages to emphasize the target words, big/little, with symbols and speech. Ask the class a question. Answer or repeat the answer while modeling AAC. Prompt if necessary.

Small group - Art table: paste big/little farm objects/animals onto paper with big barn design. Students have to request the big/little item; instructors model speech and AAC of same. Students color their pages, have big crayons and little crayons available.

1:1 - Student locates big/little on core poster or core system. With instructor, student sorts big/little farm animals and objects.

Look for promising communication and interaction moments.

➢ Modeling or Aided Language Stimulation (ALs) to communicate what you are doing, what the children are doing, what the toy is doing.

➢ Practice different communication functions
  - Turn taking
  - Sharing
  - Social roles
  - Opinions/perspective
  - Negotiation
On each double page spread of the book

- Provide adequate wait time
- Recognize the students’ efforts to communicate
- Expand on the students’ efforts to communicate
- The teacher comments, while reading, using the Core Vocabulary.

SMORRE’S

Slow speech rate
Model parallel talk verbally and AAC
Reflect and respect
Repeat
Expand
Stop expectant pause
4 students diagnosed with Severe Communication Disorder

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Receptive</th>
<th>Expressive</th>
<th>Total # of Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student 1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average length of time for first word acquisition was 3.75 weeks.

“The Impact of Modeling Alternative Communication for Students that are Severely Disabled” Aletha P. Corley

Identifying Teaching Opportunities:
Teaching Opportunities

Reflection
On instructional practices

Observation
Of naturally occurring opportunities

Using
High-interest activities

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**Shared writing activities**

**The Big Red Barn**

I see one little mouse.
I see one big mouse.
I see one big horse.
I see one little hay.
I see one ________.

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**Math**

Same is not equal (=)

1. 1 and 1 is 2
   1+1=2

2. 5 is more than 1
   5>1

3. 5 is bigger than 1
   5>1

4. 1 is little than 5
   1<5

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LET'S REVIEW SOME CONCEPTS

Curriculum  Universal Core  Communication

Without Curriculum

There is no knowledge.

Universal Core

Vocabulary

Language is communication in instruction.

Communication

is a basic right and is necessary for conveying needs, knowledge, and for writing, reading, and social interactions.

“Communication Competency is about having the words you want to say, when you want to say it, where you want to say it.”

Linda Burkhardt
We have discovered

➢ Teachers and IAs are willing to learn to implement Universal Core Vocabulary
➢ Universal Core Vocabulary instruction can improve students’ abilities to communicate and leads to literacy
➢ Modeling and use of Universal Core Vocabulary in identified opportunities are key to students learning in all areas

THANKS!
Any questions?
You can find me at tbowe@lexington1.net

Resources you can access

Special thanks to all the people who made and released these awesome resources for free:
➢ http://practicalaac.org/strategy/the-first-12-getting-started-with-core-words/ Getting Started on the First 12
➢ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iOVm8q0mCYA The Language Stealers
➢ http://www.project-core.com/
➢ http://www.ctecaac.org/star/login
Resources Continued

➢ http://aaliteracy.psu.edu/index.php/page/show/id/1/index.html
➢ http://aalanguagelab.com
➢ https://www.assistiveware.com/blog/teaching-core-words-building-blocks-communication-and-curriculum
➢ http://www.vantatenhove.com/papers.shtml

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Lori Geist, Karen Erickson, Penny Hatch and Lisa Feve-Davidson. "Core Vocabulary for Students with Significant Cognitive Disorders: Essential Tools, Teaching Strategies and Assessment Components" AACAH 2015


Lori Geist, Karen Erickson, Penny Hatch and Lisa Feve-Davidson. "Core Vocabulary Classroom Word List" PASAAC 2018

References

Lori Geist, Penny Hatch and Karen Erickson, Promoting Academic Achievement for Early Communicators of All Ages: Perspectives of the AACAH Special Interest Group. 23 September 2014, 176-181. https://pubs.asha.org/doi/abs/10.1044/aac23.4.176

Lori Geist, Karen Erickson, Penny Hatch, and Norma G. "Program Review for the Multi-Stage System for Augmenting Language" ATIA 2017


Jennifer Kent-Walsh. "Direct and Indirect Language Interventions for Children Using AAC" NCACA 2018 Conference
References

AAC FaCE. “The Language Stealers.” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iOVm8q0mCYA. Remake of Radiowaves Street Life project's animation. Produced by Michael Brian Reed.