Oral Language BTSD

Topic: Oral Language
Teaching Skill: Developing oral language in early literacy

Learning Outcome 1: Describe teaching strategies for developing oral language.

Standard 1: Foundational Knowledge
Candidates have knowledge of the foundations of reading and writing processes and instruction.

Standard Element 1.3: As a result, candidates will demonstrate knowledge of language development and reading acquisition and the variations related to cultural and linguistic diversity.

Candidates
- can articulate developmental aspects of oral language and its relationship to reading and writing.
- can summarize the developmental progression of reading acquisition and the variations related to cultural and linguistic diversity.
- can describe when students are meeting developmental benchmarks.
- know when to consult other professionals for guidance.

Standard 2: Instructional Strategies and Curriculum Materials
Candidates use a wide range of instructional practices, approaches, methods, and curriculum materials to support reading and writing instruction.

Standard Element 2.2: As a result, candidates use a wide range of instructional practices, approaches, and methods, including technology-based practices, for learners at differing stages of development and from differing cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Candidates
- use a wide range of instructional practices, approaches, and methods, including technology-based practices.
- make selections that are guided by an evidence-based rationale and accommodate the developmental, cultural, and linguistic differences of their students.

From Standards for Reading Professionals (Revised 2003). Copyright 2004 by the International Reading Association. Used with permission of the International Reading Association.

Introduction
Solid oral language skills are necessary for the development of reading and writing. Students must be able to communicate effectively with teachers and other students in
order to develop as learners. All future literacy skills (phonemic awareness, phonics, alphabetic principle, and comprehension) are dependent on oral language abilities. Oral language is best developed when students are exposed to:

- **Good language role models**: Young children benefit from having parents and teachers who take the time to engage children in meaningful conversations. Using a varied vocabulary and reading aloud to children are other beneficial ways parents and teachers can be a positive language role model.

- **Authentic learning situations**: Read-alouds and shared reading experiences (the teacher reads aloud from a big book while students listen or follow along) are effective teaching techniques for developing oral language abilities. Interactive read-alouds can also be used. An interactive read-aloud is a technique in which the teacher reads aloud while the students listen, and the teacher stops periodically to discuss vocabulary, make connections, teach the use of context clues, or develop awareness of an author’s technique. This process gives the teacher a chance to informally assess a student’s oral language development and guide the student in using new vocabulary and sentence structures. In addition, children should be involved in a variety of informal dramatic and social playtime experiences during their school day. Dramatic play centers give students a natural motivator for having authentic conversations with other students.

- **Supportive feedback**: When students communicate, teachers need to reinforce their good language behaviors through positive feedback. Recognizing positive language skills is an important step in guiding students’ oral language development.

In the following activities, you will see three different lessons designed to build oral language, and you will be asked to analyze their effectiveness based on the criteria discussed above.

**Part 1** (link to Part 1)  
**Part 2** (link to Part 2)  
**Part 3: Final Quiz** (link to Part 3)

**Part 1**  
**Part 1 Introductory Text**: Students in this preschool classroom set up a restaurant for their teacher and classmates. As they play, the students develop a wide variety of imaginary scenarios through their conversation and the use of classroom props.

**Video Title**: The Restaurant  
**Video Asset**:  

**Question 1 Text**: Evaluate the language role models in this lesson.  
**Question 1 Hint**: How is the teacher encouraging conversation? Is the teacher using a varied vocabulary? Does the teacher help the students expand their oral language skills?
**Question 1 Feedback:** The teacher in this video is a good oral language role model because she encourages the children to role-play and helps direct their conversations through specific questioning. The teacher uses vocabulary that would commonly be used in a restaurant to help activate the children’s background knowledge and help them develop new ideas for their play. The teacher could have spent more time modeling sentence structure and various vocabulary words with the students; however, they were students who were quite verbal and managed quite successfully on their own.

**Question 2 Text:** Describe and evaluate the authentic learning situation in this classroom.
**Question 2 Hint:** How does this teacher promote oral language? Are the students involved in any type of read-aloud? Are the students involved in dramatic play? Does the environment encourage oral language?
**Question 2 Feedback:** This environment was an authentic learning situation because the students were able to develop their oral language skills through dramatic play. The teacher provided the students with menus, kitchen supplies, a table and chairs, and even check pads to write on. The authentic materials inspired an elaborate role-playing situation for the students in which they enthusiastically took on the roles of the customer, chef, and waitress. Their conversation was varied and focused on the typical ideas discussed in a restaurant.

**Question 3 Text:** How does the teacher incorporate positive feedback for the students?
**Question 3 Hint:** What type of feedback does the teacher give to the students? How does the feedback encourage oral language development?
**Question 3 Feedback:** The teacher’s feedback is subtly done by positively reinforcing the ideas and questions the students propose. By answering the students’ questions, she encourages them to continue their conversation and gives them the necessary attention and feedback they need. By asking her own questions and adding her own ideas to the conversation, the teacher demonstrates that their conversation is worthwhile and should be continued.

**Part 2**
**Part 2 Introductory Text:** The teacher in this video clip sits with a child with language delays as they look through a toy catalog the child found in the library. The child discusses with the teacher the various items he sees in the catalog and makes connections to his background knowledge.

**Video Title:** Encouraging Conversation: Child with Language Delay
**Video Asset:**

**Question 1 Text:** Evaluate the language role models in this lesson.
**Question 1 Hint:** How is the teacher encouraging conversation? Is the teacher using a varied vocabulary? Does the teacher help the students expand their oral language skills?
Question 1 Feedback: The teacher allows the child to take the lead in the conversation but expands on what he says, models appropriate language, and asks questions to maintain and encourage further conversation. The teacher uses appropriate vocabulary for the situation and provides the student with words he does not use on his own to expand his vocabulary (for example, she uses the words **underground, train track**). Overall, she is an excellent role model for this student’s oral language development.

Question 2 Text: Describe and evaluate the authentic learning situation in this classroom.  
**Question 2 Hint:** How does this teacher promote oral language? Are the students involved in any type of read-aloud? Are the students involved in dramatic play? Does the environment encourage oral language?  
**Question 2 Feedback:** The student in this learning situation is not involved in a traditional learning environment; however, the situation is authentic. Children are often exposed to magazines and catalogs at home and may even engage in conversations about what they see in each. By encouraging the child to discuss the trains and other items in the catalog, the child not only practices oral language he may use in future situations but also learns how to initiate conversation.

Question 3 Text: How does the teacher incorporate positive feedback for the student?  
**Question 3 Hint:** What type of feedback does the teacher give to the students? How does the feedback encourage oral language development?  
**Question 3 Feedback:** The teacher creates an ideal language-learning opportunity by being warm, responsive, attentive, and available. Her positive attitude toward all of the child’s responses gives the child the necessary encouragement to continue the conversation.

Part 3: Final Quiz  
**Part 3 Introductory Text:** The child in this video clip lives with a foster family and is in the process of being adopted. His favorite story is about a spider that lost her mother and is eventually adopted by another family. The child asks for this story to be read to him everyday and it is part of his daily preschool routine. The teacher is aware of the importance of this story and accommodates his request.

**Video Title:** Individual Story Time: Preschool  
**Video Asset:**

**Question 1 Text:** Evaluate the language role models in this lesson.  
**Question 1 Hint:** How is the teacher encouraging conversation? Is the teacher using a varied vocabulary? Does the teacher help the students expand their oral language skills?  
**Question 1 Feedback:** The teacher in this story uses a read-aloud to demonstrate good oral fluency. The story introduces the child to common insects and also exposes him to some unique vocabulary (e.g., **plump, sly, gobbled**). She engages the child in
conversation by asking the child specific questions and encouraging him to respond with his own thoughts and ideas. The teacher does a great job encouraging the student to participate in a meaningful conversation; however, she sometimes uses nonstandard English in her responses, which should be considered inappropriate for an oral language role model. In this example, the use of nonstandard English does not present a problem because the child and teacher are using the same vernacular dialect within a more social, informal situation, rather than a formal lesson.

**Question 2 Text:** Describe and evaluate the authentic learning situation in this classroom.

**Question 2 Hint:** How does this teacher promote oral language? Are the students involved in any type of read-aloud? Are the students involved in dramatic play? Does the environment encourage oral language?

**Question 2 Feedback:** The teacher uses a book related to the child’s personal family situation to demonstrate oral language. This book is read through an interactive read-aloud where the teacher pauses and asks the student questions and shares thoughts and ideas. This technique is an excellent way to engage the student in the reading and also promote comprehension and oral language. Using a book that mirrors the child’s life makes it authentic and meaningful for the student.

**Question 3 Text:** How does the teacher incorporate positive feedback for the student?

**Question 3 Hint:** What type of feedback does the teacher give to the students? How does the feedback encourage oral language development?

**Question 3 Feedback:** The teacher is able to incorporate a significant amount of positive feedback because this story is read individually with the student. The teacher is able to engage in a one-on-one conversation with the student and to reinforce his ideas and language skills through a caring attitude and positive responses.

**Question 4 Text:** How can a typical preschool ensure that the environment encourages oral language development?

**Question 4 Hint:** Reflect on what components are necessary for a child’s oral language ability to thrive.

**Question 4 Feedback:** Preschools should be conscious of several ideas when attempting to build students’ oral language abilities. Preschools need to hire teachers who are good language role models and who are able to engage children in conversations. Teachers should also model a diverse vocabulary and be aware of regional and vernacular dialects. Preschools need to provide their teachers with a variety of books for read-alouds. In addition, they need to provide their teachers with an assortment of toys that encourage students to use their imagination to create scenarios that utilize realistic conversations. Finally, preschools need teachers who know how to give positive feedback to their students that encourages further conversation.