

# Fostering Independence Through the Use of Cueing Techniques

## PRINCIPLES TO ADJUST TEACHING APPROACHES

- Teach speech and language skills explicitly
- Repeat lessons and provide lots of practice
- Provide linguistic awareness training
- Consistently use modeling strategies throughout the entire day
- Plan and use cueing and prompting

## CUEING AND PROMPTING STRATEGIES

Cueing refers to a technique when a student is given help producing a specific language or phonological target.

When cueing is used as a teaching method, the student is given and taught the required form. Gradually, the amount of cueing is reduced, as the final goal is for the spontaneous use of the language target or of the target sound.

Prompting is often used as another word for cueing, although it is also often used to refer more specifically to the addition of visual and/or tactile prompts to the verbal cues. Some general principles that apply to both cueing and prompting are as follows:

- Use of cueing and prompting require some planning since a target must be established
- Each member of the team works on the same target
- Cueing and prompting are used to help the student focus and achieve a specific response
- Cueing and prompting help a student learn a specific response and then provide reminders to facilitate carryover
- Use of cueing and prompting is most successful when used as consistently and constantly as possible

## THE CUEING AND PROMPTING HIERARCHY

Begin by using the maximum amount of prompting. Gradually fade the amount of prompting until the student is able to produce the target sound or language target spontaneously. Repetition of the target response is essential. Below is a "Prompting Hierarchy" which is to be used to remind a child of the target response. It begins with the maximum amount and then fades to the minimum amount of prompting.

### MAXIMUM

1. Tell the child the desired response, then ask the question again.
  - a. e.g. "These are feet. What do we call these?"
  - b. e.g. "This is a spoon. What do we call this?"
  
2. Give the child a choice between two possible alternatives.
  - a. e.g. "Is it fooks or feet?"
  - b. e.g. "Is it spoon or poon?"
3. — *provide a gestural, visual, or auditory cue*
4. Give the child a puzzled look and repeat the error word.  
e.g. "fooks?" or "poon?"
  
5. Give the child a puzzled look and then he/she should self-correct.
  
6. The child uses the language or phonological target spontaneously.

### MINIMUM

It is preferable to use the least amount of cueing and prompting to achieve the desired response. Sometimes, the child responds incorrectly to the cue or prompt that you have given and a larger cue is required. Use your judgment to move up or down the hierarchy as necessary in order to maintain correct productions. If a child becomes upset, stop and attempt to elicit the correct response again later.

- Child: "My shoes are on my fooks"  
Adult: "Fooks?" (give a puzzled look) (#3)  
Child: "Yeah"  
Adult: "Are your shoes on your fooks or your feet?" (#2)  
Child: "Fooks"  
Adult: "They're on your feet. One foot - two feet." (#1)

### Additional Response Time

Many children with communication delays require more time to respond to a question or just take turns in a conversation. It is a natural tendency for others to fill-in or respond for another person when the response time becomes too long. Try to avoid answering for a child before you have given him extra time to formulate the response.

An adult can also use increased response time to signal a child that you are waiting for he/she to respond. When you pause for a response, ensure that you are looking with anticipation or briefly withholding reinforcement.

- Child: Points to his shoes.  
Adult: "What do you want?"  
Child: "Do dis pees"  
Adult: "What do you want me to do for you?" - pause and look  
Child: "Do up shoes pees"  
Adult: "Sure, I will do up your shoes"

### WORD-FINDING PROBLEMS

A word-finding problem is the inability to call up an intended word. For some children this problem may be severe enough to impair their ability to communicate effectively. A person with a word-finding problem may do some or all of the following:

- Overuse of indefinite, nonspecific words (e. g. "thing, stuff, something")
- Use of "filler" words such as "uh", "um", "well", "like"
- Circumlocute or "beat around the bush"
- Use a definition or a description of the word instead of the intended word
- Substitute a word with a similar meaning for the intended word
- Use a word which sounds similar to the intended word
- Use a very general verb in place of a more specific one (e.g. "got" for "caught")
- Frequently uses long pauses during and between sentences

A word-finding problem can create several difficulties for the child. These include problems explaining word meanings, expressing ideas, describing events, participating in discussions and retrieving information to answer questions in class.

# CUES TO FACILITATE WORD RETRIEVAL

After a child has tried unsuccessfully to retrieve a word without cues, presenting a specific retrieval cue may assist recall and retrieval from long-term memory. The following types of cues may be helpful:

## Phonemic Cues

- Say the beginning sound of the intended word
- Say a word fragment containing one or more of the beginning syllables of the intended word
- Give a rhyming word cue
- Use a phonetic placement (show the posture and position of the articulators for the beginning sound of the intended word)
- Say the beginning letter of the intended word

## Associative-Semantic Class Cues

- Use an antonym to facilitate the recall and retrieval of direct opposites
- Use synonyms as cue words
- Use an associated word that belongs in the same semantic class as a cue
- Use the name of a semantic category to elicit the name of a member of a group
- Use serial cueing

## Sentence Completion

- Use sentence completion with a well-known and established sentence pattern
- Use a nursery rhyme completion
- Use cueing by analogy to present a metaphor or simile
- Use proverb cueing

## Contextual Cues

- Describe the physical characteristics and/or functions of an object

## Melodic-Stress Cueing

- Sing a well-known tune to elicit a specific word, number or letter
- Use cueing by tapping the syllable stress pattern of a multisyllabic word

## Imagery

- Ask the child to visualize the meaning of the word and to think of where the object is usually found and who uses it

## Nonverbal Cues

- Use gestures, pretend actions or other nonverbal cues

## KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL CUEING/PROMPTING

- ESTABLISH THE TARGET IN CONSULTATION WITH THE SLP
- ESTABLISH APPROPRIATE HEIRARCHY LEVEL AND PROMPTS TO USE
- USE IN ALL COMMUNICATION
- ALL MEMBERS OF THE TEAM ARE TO TARGET THE SAME GOAL
- CONFERENCE WITH THE CHILD TO DISCUSS THE GOAL AND THE "REMINDERS" TO BE USED
- JUDGE THE RESPONSE AND USE THE HIERARCHY TO GO UP AND DOWN TO ENSURE SUCCESS
- REMEMBER TO FADE PROMPTS AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE
- USE MODELLING, QUESTIONS, CUEING AND PROMPTING TOGETHER

## REFERENCES

- Communication Services, Hamilton Board of Education
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- B. Ikuta and J. Gritzan; Word Recall and Retrieval: Strategies for Intervention, 1988

Susan Kowton

Speech-Language Pathologist

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