Don't Ask, Do Tell!
Non-Directive Language

Today's Topic: Location in the 5 STEPS

Creating a Rich Language Learning Environment

Directive Language

We aren't great partners.

Directive is a term used to describe the type of language typically used by the partner. Directives 'direct' or tell the student what to do, say, and focus on the technology rather than the individual.

Research shows that the partners of people with complex communication needs tend to ask predominantly yes/no questions, interrupt, take the majority of conversational turns, provide few opportunities for communicators, and focus on the technology rather than the individual.

Directives

We aren't great partners.

Directive Language

Know the difference between directive and non-directive.

Find questions, directives in language environment.

Replace questions and directives with non-directives.

Add modeling, scaffolding and engineering interactions.

1. Know the difference between directive and non-directive.
2. Find questions, directives in language environment.
3. Replace questions and directives with non-directives.
4. Add modeling, scaffolding and engineering interactions.

Research shows that the partners of people with complex communication needs tend to ask predominantly yes/no questions, interrupt, take the majority of conversational turns, provide few opportunities for communicators, and focus on the technology rather than the individual.

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Directive Language

- "Show me--"
- "Point to--"
- "Tell me--"
- "Say--"

Questions

- Valid question – question where you don’t already know the answer
- Test question – question where you already know the answer
- Questions also direct, by expecting a specific response
  - Test the student into the responder role

Test Questions

- "What do you want?" (when the answer is known)
- "What is it time for?" (e.g. schedule)
- "Where are we going?" (when you already know)
- "Where is (target word/icon on device)?"
- "Can you find _____?"
- "Can you tell me with your talker?"

Reasons We Use Directives and Ask Questions

- To engage students in interactions
- To get questions to test items in AAC use fine tool
- To test students' knowledge to determine for a topic or skill area
- To remind students of what they should know but do not know
- To get information from the student to find out about
- To know that the task, we used for learning, has not yet understood
Actual Outcomes of Directives and Questions

- Limit control
- Reduce genuine participation
- Encourage dependence
- Increase frustration
- Encourage apathy
- Create conversational imbalance
- Decrease motivation
- Create poor/inaccurate language models
- Generate inaccurate data
- Occupy the space intended for teaching and learning.

Non-Directive Language

- Know the difference between directive and non-directive language.
- Provides language input that does not direct students to say or do something.
- Models use of the student's communication system, without the expectation of student performance.
- Can include genuine questions (ones you don’t know the answer to).

Non-Directive Language Input and Model Examples

- Observations, comments, statements
- “I wonder...”
- “I think...”
- “I am going to...”
- “I see you are...”
- “That makes me think of...”
- “I see you are doing/looking/acting...”
- “That would make me feel...”

Appropriate Questions

- Valid question – question where you don’t already know the answer.
- Make sure the student has a way to answer that they are able to use consistently, reliably.
- If it is meant to assess knowledge, determine how you will record and use the data before you collect it.
- Keep testing/valid questions to a minimum, teaching/models maximized.
Genuine Questions
- Academic test questions
  "What is the setting of the story?"
  "Who do you want to sit with?"
- Social interaction and information-seeking questions
  "What are you going to be for Halloween?"
- Open, thought provoking questions
  "Ooooh! What do you think will happen next?"
Feeling or state of being questions
- "How do you feel?"

Monitoring the Language Environment
Find the questions, directives in language environment
- Changing behavior first requires awareness.
- We are not accurate judges of our own language perception is not reality.
- Important to have an accurate picture of student's experience.

Observation Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observation Chart Categories</th>
<th>Example I</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>What to eat?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directive</td>
<td>Student is waiting for lunch</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Statement | Which lunch?

Language Environment
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- Important to have an accurate picture of student’s experience.

Observation Chart Categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Adult asks a question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directive</td>
<td>Adult directs student to do something.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement</td>
<td>Adult makes a comment or gives information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response</td>
<td>Student replies to adult’s question or directive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiation</td>
<td>Student begins a conversation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example I
- Adult: "What is next?"
- Student: Responds by pointing to "lunch" on their schedule.
Example 2

Adult: “What is next?”

Student: no reply

Adult: “Do you know what's next?”

Student: looking around room

Adult: “Check your schedule and see what’s next.”

Student: looks towards schedule

Adult: “Is it time for lunch?”

Student: points to lunch picture

Common Distribution

- 50 utterances across adult and student
- 40 Adult utterances (80%)
- 37 / 40 were directives or questions
- 10 Student utterances (20%)
- Most of the adult questions/directives went with no response

Simple Chart

Changing the Language Environment

Replace questions and directives with non-directives.

Error—modeling, scaffolding, and engineering interactions.
Change is purposeful***

Being an effective communication partner or AAC facilitator is not intuitive. It often requires one to change long-established, unconscious ways of communicating.

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Monitoring Our Language

- Observation with immediate feedback
- Video
- Peer support
- Cheat sheet of options

Modeling is key intervention ***

Despite their diversity, the research reports summarized in this article all have a common thread—all studies investigate the use of aided AAC modeling as a key component of AAC instruction.

Drager, 2010

Modeling

- Partner use of communication mode/materials to represent
  - own words
  - communicator's words
  - instructor's words
  - others' words
  - words related to the current situation

Don't just tell, show***

"We just can’t tell beginning communicators how to interact using AAC — we need to show them. Then they’ll see the value. Communication — and demonstration that using AAC works and can work for them."

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Scaffolded Response Strategies

- Paraphrase
- partner repeats message that was expressed by communicator
- expand
- partner adds to message (e.g., person says “want”, partner expands to “want this”)

Partner
- Partner repeats message that was expressed by communicator
Engineered Interactions

Help encourage the individual to communicate by using strategies that:

- Are purposefully, consistently used
- Are highly motivating
- Include models as needed
- Incorporate wait times to communicate
- Ensure that communication supports are available and effective

Engineering Interactions Strategies

- Pause instead of immediately moving to the next step
- Missing item: item needed for activity is missing
- Interruption: remove an item that is part of a routine
- Partial presentation: give only some of the parts of the activity
- Wrong item: give an item that doesn’t match what they requested
- Inaccessible item: place item in visible but inaccessible location

Monitor and Change

Monitor yourself, student, interaction and environment and Change program to promote progress

- Go back to data collection process
- Compare to pre-intervention data
- Adjust training, support, intervention choices for specific team members as needed

Possible Next Steps

- Record directive/non-directives for one 10" period
- Count how many opportunities were missed
- Compare to data collection process
- Adjust training, support, intervention choices for specific team members as needed
- Wear 3 hair bands on one wrist each time you stop from using a directive or question and make it a non-directive, move a band to the other wrist
- Videotape yourself for 5" and watch for non-directive
- Try being non-directive for a week or a month, and see what changes you observe

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Thank You!