

ASLRT Round Table Discussion: **Kuntze Presentation**

Thursday, November 1, 2007

The roundtable discussion notes are for the 2007 ASLRT conference participants. The notes in its originality as possible were documented by the participants who had reflected and discussed guided questions that were assigned to them after each presentation. The notes are neither research based nor the representation of ASLRT. They reflect the participants' experiences and thoughts.

Reflective Questions:

1. How can we enhance the role of ASL as a language of learning?

- School administrators and teachers must be on same page on understanding the role of ASL as a language of learning
- Develop and incorporate ASL standards and curriculum (spiral)
- Schools must have ASL friendly environment
- Provide in-service training to teachers to maintain their ASL skills;
- Schools in general need to make stronger emphasis on the policy to incorporate ASL instruction in the classrooms;
- Have programs ready to give support to students who don't know ASL,
- Need to have public relations strategies to carry out the crucial information about the value of ASL acquisition to the public
- Use technology as tools to enhance the role of ASL as a language of learning:
- Encourage use of more video text and editing equipment for revision
- APRESO – one camera that rotates to follow who is signing
- Podcasts of streaming video with I-tunes (a free program)
- Needs more information relating to L1 students not L2 students
- Some schools require deaf studies/ASL class for graduation
- Teach ASL through structured activities
- Opportunity to play with ASL to develop language appreciation
- Language immersion class for students: English held for a later time. The classes last for 1 and half hours. Topics are set then students have lively discussions. The teachers provide structured discussion sometimes. The student leads discussion by allowing the student to sit in the front and facilitate the discussion sometimes.
- Academic standards... There is a literacy center with focus on social ASL, social English, Academic ASL and Academic English. English classes with their teachers come to the literacy center and carry discussions through the language use identified for that class time. Instruction is theme based. Students do presentations.
- Students who are on P Level 1-3 are not ready for academic based classes only. They need opportunities to participate in classes where opportunities for talk through ASL is provided and this provides foundations for students language so that they become more comfortable in their content/academic classes. (start slow by grades K-3 and expand offerings to upper grades later).
- ASL Tutoring- Works from where students are (students have different needs). Doesn't really teach classes. Focus is to build students language skills based on their needs (social use, conversational, etc). Need to change views of students who get ASL tutoring-they are not dumb. Change of attitude is important.

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- Other schools use assessment-based approach to develop, plan and tutor students using rubrics from assessment findings to guide 1-1 instruction. Attitude in that school is positive.
- Gaps between home and student are huge. School, students learn new vocabulary, etc and when they go home, many times their families do not sign and are unable to support their language development. Family involvement needs to be improved. (Formal ASL instruction is lacking for the students and the link between school and home is often weak). This can be a problem especially in the corners of the world where there are lack of deaf role models
- The responsibility of raising use of ASL in classroom doesn't fall only on the ASL teacher/specialist. All school wide should hold the responsibility.
- Need non-threatening parent involvement program where parents feel safe so that they are able to learn language and use it. Parent child program is effective way to include parents in language learning opportunity so that they can transfer skills. This needs to be expanded to upper grades. In addition parental roles have changed tremendously over the years. Parents are working more and have other challenges in addition to raising their children.
- Community group where deaf/hearing parents of deaf/hearing children participate in activities providing natural way for all members to participate in language learning and acquisition opportunities.
- Need to have the individuals who can be the language models for the children. This means teacher preparation programs need to prepare teachers well to be the language models.
- Early intervention specialists are needed to provide ASL role models for the families of deaf children. This means the full spectrum of services for early intervention programs need to be made aware to the families. This also means we need to work with the early identification centers (hospitals, etc.) where infants are identified. We need more ASL-aware professionals to be in the medical field providing the information to those who need it at an early age.
- State agencies can be a place/center of information dissemination as well.
- Make a strong statement to language policy/use in the classroom so that students are getting consistency in instruction
- Need for some type of assessment tool in evaluating the use of ASL by students in the classroom. This means we need milestones in language/literacy development related to ASL use for students.
- Develop an attitude of teamwork where all stakeholders are involved in the process of developing consistency in ASL use and instruction.
- Encourage the politics of the school administrators to support ASL.
- Look at providing bigger picture of the ASL role in their program.

2. How can an ASL curriculum be utilized by you and deaf bilingual education teachers?

- Have ASL classes for K- 8 students on daily basis
- New York State in process of developing English standards for 4th graders

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- We need a “signing naturally type” curriculum for deaf students’ acquisition of L1
- Student who are language delayed benefit from ASL class (immersion or maintenance)
- Curriculum should focus on structure of ASL. For example, English students learn through writing. Learning ASL could be through videotaping self.
- Use of TV programs as way to encourage student presentations in ASL.
- Develop curriculum/framework for ASL to help provide the consistency for instructors/schools.
- Increase research in the area of using ASL curriculum/materials to help standardize instructional/literacy activities in the classroom.
- ASL ‘spiral-like’ Curriculum will help make commitments and consistency in the classroom.

3. List some ideas, goals, or objectives for a strategic plan for making ASL more prominent in schools for the deaf.

- CAEBER must have a position on ASL standards, curriculum, assessment and the role of ASL in schools.
- Information on CAEBER’s AEBPD training need to reach all schools.
- Learn from other bilingual experts to find out what the tools they use for students’ competence in critical thinking and develop new curriculum based on that information.
- Establish language planning committee (or strategic planning)
- Form a website for parents, early intervention people and public including the information:
 - vLogs
 - IEP Development – ASL goals
 - ASL as a part of instruction
 - invite Deaf leaders/educators
 - to present at schools,
 - use what existing facts from state laws to promote ASL,
- Need clarification of the role of the ASL Specialist and this role needs the full support from the administration of each school.
 - strong Deaf community involvement
- Provide teacher preparation programs where candidates will gain experience as a classroom teacher AND an ASL Specialist – dual certification program.
- Integrate ASL with other subjects in classroom
- best practices
- ASL literature study and translating to English from ASL ...need to focus more on ASL literature study and not translating
- ASL PI requirements for teachers
- Diverse students in mind

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4. Parking Lot (other comments or questions you want to ask the presenter)

- Language/literacy: definition not important but purpose is sufficient. We need to define, don't you agree?
- How can we overcome the challenge to collaborate cross-curriculum thematic approach using ASL in classes?
- Literary and academic use – what is the difference?
- How can we work with deaf students with extra disabilities or who are delayed in language?
- How can we “push” those kids with deaf parents? (Most of us focus on kids who have hearing parents)
- The administration is asking the teachers to do this and that but where are the resources to help them accomplish?
- Who should be the developers for ASL curriculum?
- Clarification on why language should not be taught
- What can you (Dr. Kuntze) do to promote ASL in schools? Any ideas?
- How can we provide the same ASL policy/guidance to small schools and bigger schools?
- Clarification on that analogical and digital and primary and secondary information
- 3 biggest challenges: mainstream; parents and cochlear implants
- needs ANSWERS how to do it (solutions) not repeated presentations on problems we have today
- ASL specialists not clear on what they are supposed to do or what they expect from them-all different perspectives
 - how can we include “deaf studies” information into other subjects?
 - Challenge is how to align national level standards with curriculum development (ASL and existing English based curriculum/standards).
- some schools said that they couldn't include in ASL goals/objectives in the IEPs because of there is no ASL curriculum
- how does it work with primary teachers (ASL specialists work with teachers?)