



AIDED LANGUAGE STIMULATION

DEFINITION

Aided language stimulation (ALS) is a communication strategy, where a communication partner teaches symbol meaning and models language by combining his or her own verbal input with selection of vocabulary on the Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) system. This is done by simultaneously selecting vocabulary on the AAC system and speaking.

Comprehension and communication on the AAC system are promoted through modeled use of visual icons/graphic symbol and providing the corresponding verbal label. Learners are prompted to use symbols to communicate within context of motivating, frequently occurring routines by incorporation of time delays, sabotage of routines, and/or the use of verbal cues. Prompts are faded as the AAC user gains proficiency.

PROCEDURE

■ Attention

Make sure that the individual is attending.

■ Message & Icons

Create a message by selecting icons on the individual's AAC device. This step helps the individual to learn the system display, vocabulary items, and word order. While selecting the icon, also say the word (icon meaning).

■ Complete Sentence

Create a complete sentence with the selected icons and repeat it verbally to the individual.

■ Response

Ask the individual a follow-up question to keep the process going.

SUPPORT

Vary the number of selected icons according to the user's ability. Gradually increase the number of words selected as the individual's capabilities grow, e.g. "want," "want more," "I want more."

Model pointing to symbols according to the individual's pace. Provide enough time for the user to understand the word, word order and sentence structure.

Selecting words used in many activities across the day provides more opportunity to use ALS as a technique to gain language skills.

"GO IN"

- Make sure individual is attending to AAC device.
- Select "GO" and "IN." Say, "Go in."
- Say, "I want to go in."
- Say, "Would you like to go in?"

"GO OUT"

- Make sure individual is attending to AAC device.
- Select "GO" and "OUT." Say, "Go out."
- Say, "I want to go out."
- Say, "Would you like to go out?"

★ Ideas for other words to use in conversation with "GO" include: Up, down, left, right, on, off, here, there, etc.

"TURN UP"

- Make sure individual is attending to AAC device.
- Select "TURN" and "UP." Say, "Turn up."
- Say, "I want to turn it up."
- Say, "Would you like to turn it up?"

"TURN DOWN"

- Make sure individual is attending to AAC device.
- Select "TURN" and "DOWN." Say, "Turn down."
- Say, "I want to turn it down."
- Say, "Would you like to turn it down?"

★ Ideas for other words to use in conversation with "TURN" include: it, on, off, left, right, around, back, over, this, that.

RESOURCES

ARTICLES & BOOKS

- Binger, C. and Maguire-Marshall, M., and Kent-Walsh, J. (2011). Using aided AAC models, recasts, and contrastive targets to teach grammatical morphemes to child who use AAC. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research*, 54, 160-176.
- Dada, S., & Alant, E. (2009, Feb.). The effect of aided language stimulation on vocabulary acquisition in children with little or no functional speech. *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*. 18, 50-64.
- Elder, P., & Goossens', C. (1994). Engineering training environments for interactive augmentative communication: Strategies for adolescents and adults who are moderately/severely developmentally delayed. Birmingham, AL: Southeast Augmentative Communication Conference Publications.
- Goossens', C. (1989). Aided communication intervention before assessment: A case study of a child with cerebral palsy. *Augmentative and Alternative Communication*, 5, 14-26.
- Goossens', C.A., & Crain, S. (1986). Augmentative communication: Intervention Resource. Wauconda, IL: Don Johnston Incorporated.
- Goossens', C., Crain, S., & Elder, P. (1992). Engineering the preschool environment for interactive, symbolic communication. Birmingham, AL: Southeast Augmentative Communication Conference Publications.
- Harris, M. D., & Reichle, J. (2004, May). The impact of aided language stimulation on symbol comprehension and production in children with moderate cognitive disabilities. *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*. 13, 155-167.

Visit the following link for a demonstration of ALS in a classroom:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w7jUIhNixK8>

Visit the following link to our ICAN™ Talk Clinics

www.icantalkclinic.com



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EXTRA TIPS FROM PLLAN

- ★ Provide short, but complete verbal models.
- ★ Use an enlarged Communication Board Wall Chart and marker to point out words and provide more information on the topic (definition, synonyms, antonyms, etc.).
- ★ No matter what the individual selects on the board or device, the rule for communication partners is: RESPOND, RESPOND, RESPOND. Provide natural consequences to whatever the person said, even if it seems like a mistake.
- ★ After the person communicates something, expand upon it.
- ★ You do not have to model everything you are saying using ALS. Model the type of language you hope the child or adult will produce. Determine the person's current expressive language abilities and model 1 or 2 words beyond that level.
- ★ Model "definitions" and "word altering" strategies as part of your on-going communication process.

For more information on the Pixon Project Kit with PLLAN Notebook, please visit:

<http://www.aacoinstitute.org/Resources/ProductsandServices/Pixons/index.html>

For free and for-purchase therapy material and information suggested by Gail Van Tatenhove, visit the following link:
<http://www.vantatenhove.com/materials.html>