

For all grades: Researchers in second-language acquisition theory are shaping many current language teaching processes. Though educators are taking a variety of approaches, from dual-immersion settings to classes that take a more exploratory approach (a little bit of lots of languages), to specials programs like at St. Vincent's, the most successful programs strive for a focus on communication.

Communication is negotiation of meaning, asking for clarification for the things we don't understand, when we share ideas or connection with people who are important to us. It may not even happen among people. We might be negotiating meaning and communicating with a long-gone author when we sit down to read our favorite book or check out a newspaper article.

We all fail at communication sometimes, even in our first language. (How many little arguments have you had in your families that were based solely on the fact that you didn't fully understand the other person's perspective?) Consequently, if we view language acquisition as being a skill that develops over time (beginning with silent gestures and grunting to make our meanings known, much as our pre-verbal kids do with us, then progressing towards formal speeches or presentations), we can be less inclined to focus on "errors" and more inclined to focus on growth.

With that in mind, your students and I are all working on the following:

K-3: Continued storytelling about a cat and a fish, with details about how they might share friendships.

4-5: Reading and acting out Brandon Brown. We've had some hysterical classes as of late, with students acting out the parts of a boy and his friends who have found a lost puppy and have snuck it back home.

6-8: We had a great time with Wooly Week, watching new videos and working on nuggets. We've also been acting out parts of the graphic novel we will begin reading soon, *La Casa de la Dentista*. I heard Sr. Wooly described the other day as Stephen King for Spanish teachers. Ask your students about being trapped at school!