

Modeling and Recasting:

Facilitating Speech & Language Learning

TERMINOLOGY ...

'Modeling' – the term has two meanings in a speech pathology sense. One is the everyday model (or example) of how to communicate that children get all the time. The other is modeling an example of a specific speech or language target.

What is a 'target'? It is a speech or language behaviour that we want to encourage your child to use when communicating. For example, the target might be a speech sound or a grammatical structure.

The term 'recasting' refers to repeating an error utterance back to someone, but with the error corrected. It can be an effective form of modeling.

WHAT TO DO! ...

Providing a good model all the time means using:

- An unhurried speech rate
- Clear speech
- Short sentences
- Appropriate vocabulary
- More repetition and repeating than with an adult communicative partner

The best way to model corrections (recasting):

Example 1

Child: I like his punny face.

Adult: I like his funny face. It's a really funny face. A funny face. Do you know the guy with the funny face?

Example 2

Child: Det it down.

Adult: Get what down? Oh, get this down. Ok I'll get it for you. I think I can reach. Uh-huh I can get it.

There is no overt criticism, no interruption to the flow of conversation and does not get in the way of listening.

Ideal frequency of Recasting:

- Aim for 12-18 recasts a minute
- For 3-4 minutes a day
- For the SAME word / sound pattern / grammar structure

WHAT NOT TO DO! ...

Modeling with no model:

Child: He hurt his weg.

Adult: He hurt his weg?

In this example NO speech model has been provided!

Exaggerated modeling:

Child: Pease can I have one?

Adult: You mean puh-leeze. Puh-leeze may I have one?

This exaggerated sort of modeling is inadvisable as it distorts the sound so the child does not hear the target properly.

Pointless modeling:

Child: That's a bid bird.

Adult: Not a bid bird. A big bird.

What did the child hear? Bid was heard twice and big only once!

Ineffective modeling:

Child: That's a bid bird.

Adult: Not a bid bird. You don't say bid bird. You have to remember to say big bird.

The child tunes out. The child hears bid three times and big once (if they were listening!).