Put Context and Meaning in your Grammar Instruction

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http://esl-teacher.net
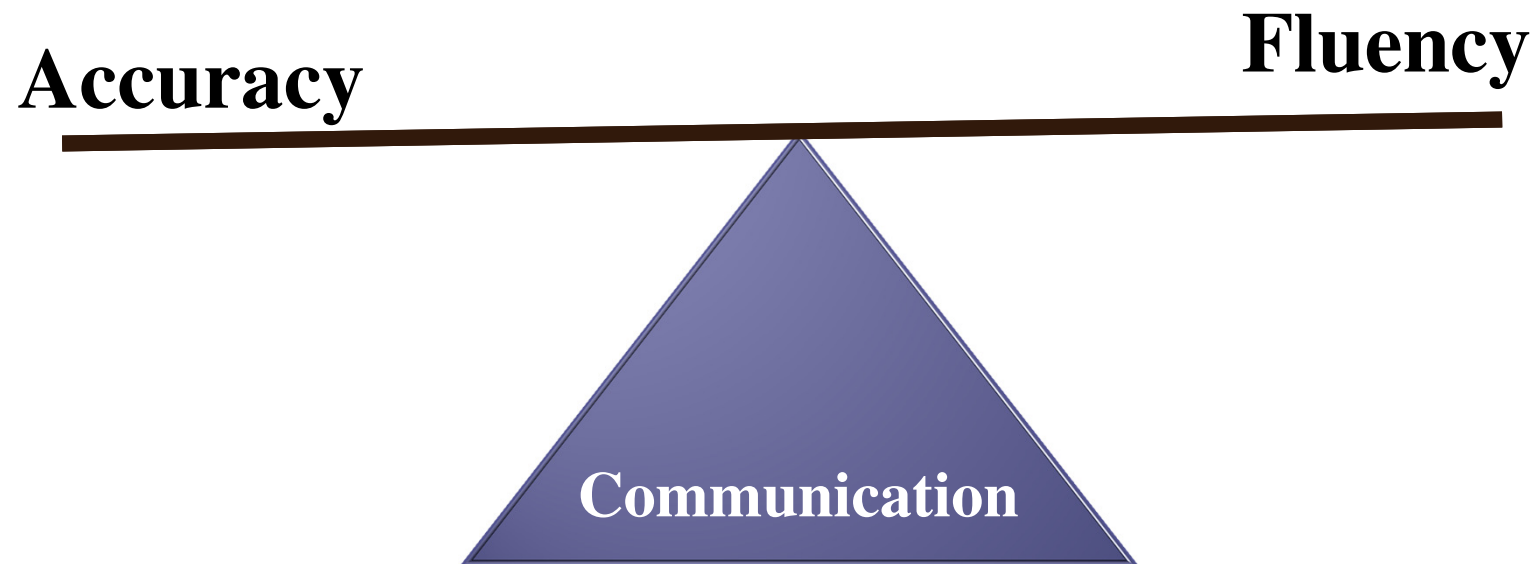
5 Principles to *LEARNING* Grammar

1. <u>Students</u> <u>learn</u> better within a context.

2. <u>Students</u> <u>learn</u> differently.

3. <u>Students</u> <u>learn</u> better in manageable chunks.

4. <u>Students</u> <u>learn</u> better by doing activities that move from controlled to open-ended.

5. If <u>students</u> <u>learn</u> how to <u>learn</u>, they will acquire grammar better.
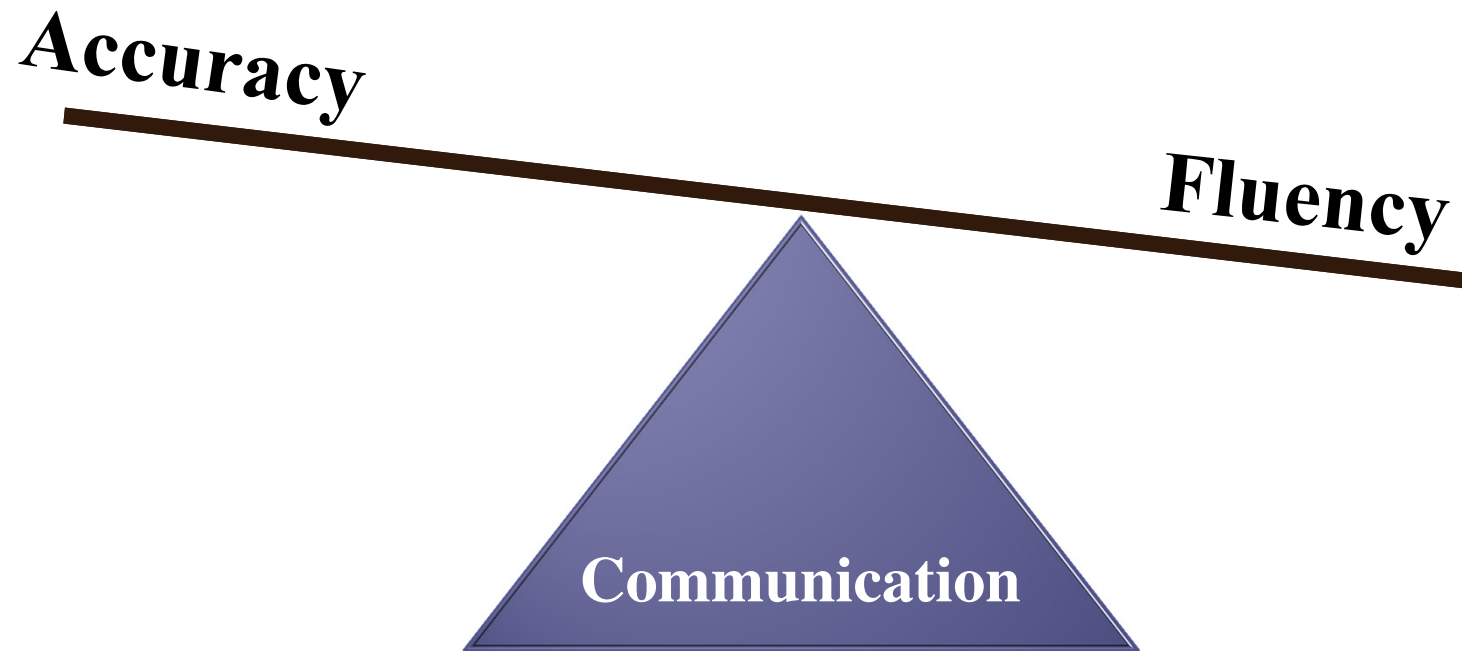
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Accuracy + Fluency = COMMUNICATION

Accuracy

Fluency

Communication

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Fluency

Accuracy

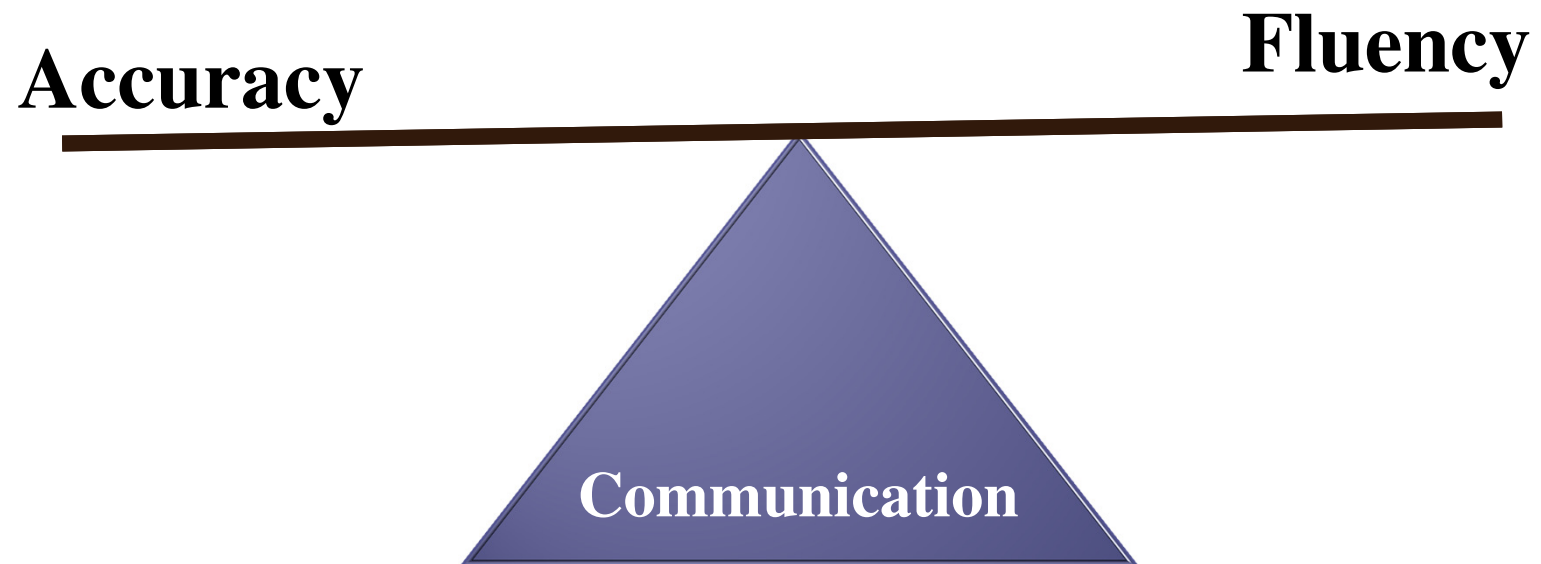**Communication**

Accuracy + Fluency = COMMUNICATION
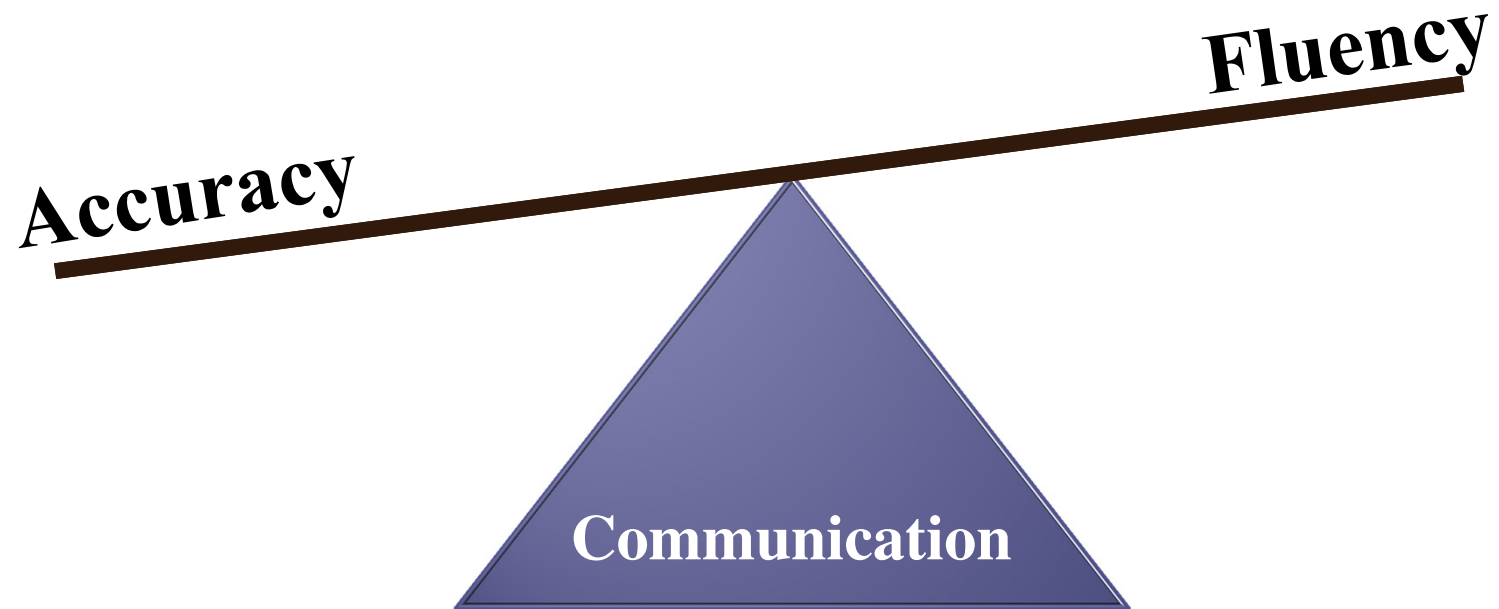
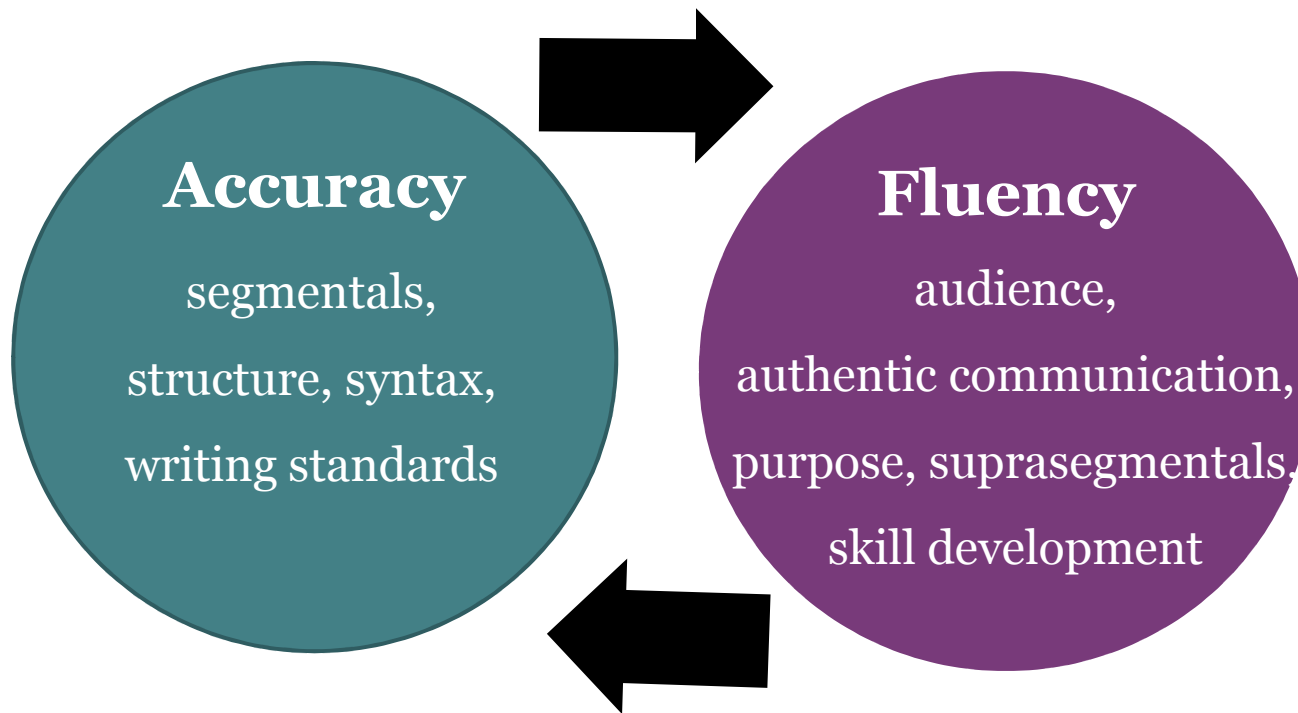# Accuracy + Fluency = COMMUNICATION

Accuracy

Fluency

Communication

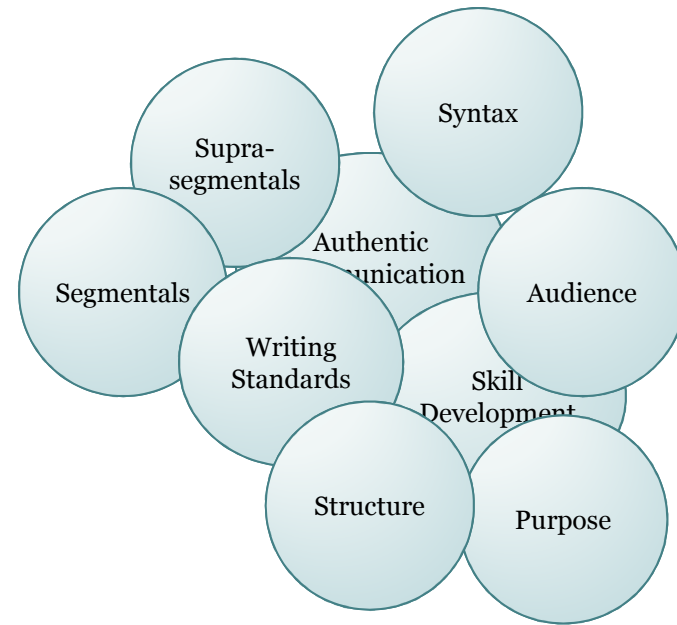# Grammar Instruction

Rank

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

What areas do your students spend most time practicing in class?

CONTEXT is the Secret!

"We believe, after examining the findings of cognitive science, that the most effective way of learning skills is "in context," placing learning objectives within a real environment rather than insisting that students first learn in the abstract what they will be expected to apply."

Executive Summary of the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS).

Context Provides

Purpose

Motivation

Relevancy

Interest
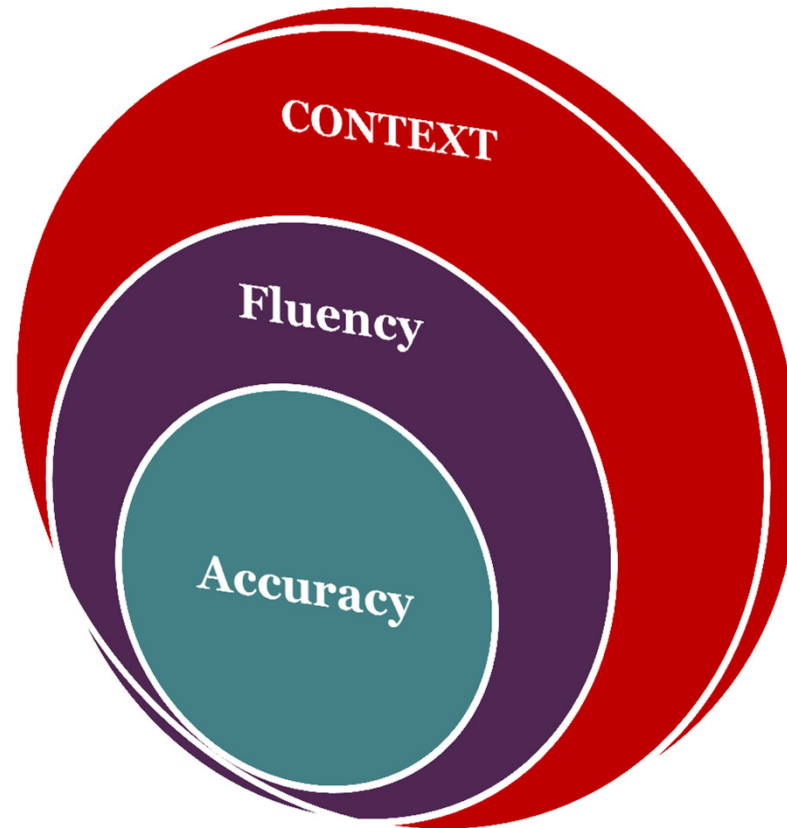
Usefulness

Examples of Context

1. On your handout, write different examples of how you might introduce context. For example, *a picture* could introduce context. Put your answers *above* the line.

2. Now walk around the room and speak to other people to see if they have additional ideas. Write *only one* new idea (if any) from each person *below* the line.

3. Share ideas with the group.

Examples of Context

- Pictures
- Readings
- Stories
- Video
- Realia
- Real-life tasks
- Real-life forms

- Dialog /Role play
- Audio
- Personal questions / Polls
- Problems / Situations / Data
- Charts / Graphs

Establishing Context

Context should be ***meaningful***.

Context should be ***relevant***.

Context should be ***interesting***.

Context should be ***engaging***.

Apply Learner-centered Instruction

"Learning is not a spectator sport. Students do not learn much just by sitting in class listening to teachers, memorizing prepackaged assignments, and spitting out answers. They must talk about what they are learning, write about it, relate to past experiences, and apply it to their daily lives. They must make what they learn part of themselves".

Chickering & Ganmson (1987)

Context is Always Present

Establish Context - Objectives
(Warm-up – Introduction)
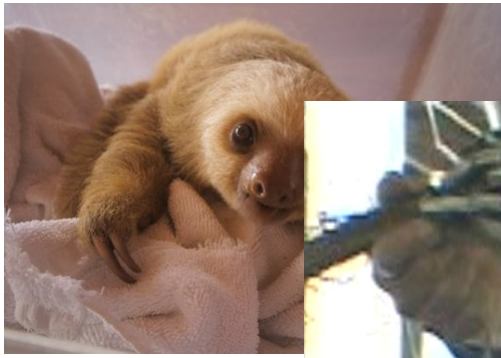
Maintain Context
(Presentation / Practice / Evaluation)

Apply Context - Outcomes
(Application)

Grammar Lesson Plan

✓ Establish context

✓ Present limited concepts (chunks)

✓ Practice each concept *mechanically*

✓ Practice concepts together *meaningfully*

✓ Practice concepts together *communicatively*

✓ Check for understanding in preparation for application

✓ Apply to the students' lives

For more on this lesson plan, see http://esl-teacher.net

Establish the Context

Maintain Context

Simple Present		
	Singular	Examples
I, you, we, they	hold show bring	I hold the monkey's hand.
		You show the monkey how to spin the coconut.
		We bring the monkey to a tree.
		They let the monkey play
He, she, it	holds shows spins	He holds the monkey's hand.
		She shows the monkey how to spin the coconut.
		It spins the coconut.
Notes		
We use the Simple Present to describe • actions that happen regularly • facts		

Mechanical exercises to follow with similar context.

Maintain Context

| Simple Present: 3rd Person Spelling Rules	
We add s to most verbs.	bring – brings encourage – encourages use – uses
We add es to verbs ending in s , ch, sh, x, z, o.	miss -misses
	teach - teaches
We change the y to i and add es to verbs ending in consonant + y.	study - studies
Pronunciation Notes	
Sometimes we pronounce the final *s* /s/: *lets, twists, picks* (After voiceless consonants) Sometimes we pronounce the final *s* /z/: *Holds, shows, brings* (After voiced consonants) We pronounce es /Iz/: *uses, encourages*	

Mechanical exercises to follow with similar context.

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MEANING PROGRESSION

Communication

Meaning

Meaningful
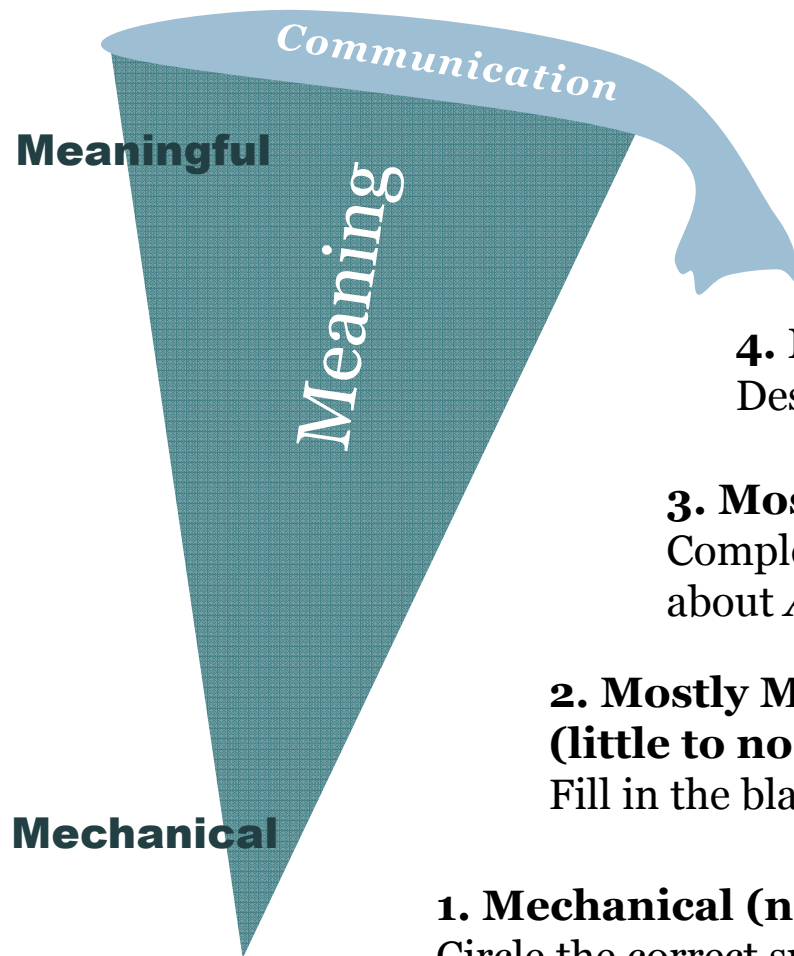
Mechanical

4. Meaningful
Describe the video about Monkey College to a partner.

3. Mostly Meaningful
Complete the sentences based on information from the chart about *Animal Training*.

2. Mostly Mechanical
(little to no meaning necessary)
Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the simple present.

1. Mechanical (no meaning necessary)
Circle the correct spelling of the 3rd person singular form of the verb.

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Apply Context

1. In groups, list "how –to" steps to training an animal to do something you want done. Use a real example if someone in your group has one.

2. Share your steps with another group.
   Albert trains his dog to get the paper.
   1. First he shows it the newspaper.
   2. Etc.

Our Mission

Give students

challenging opportunities

to be

successful

in their language-learning experience so they develop

confidence

and become

independent, **lifelong learners**.

More information

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